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Componential Analysis in Playboi Carti's Album "MUSIC – Sorry 4 Da Wait": Lexical Semantic Approach

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Abstract

This study aims to present ten key lexemes in the 34 tracks of the deluxe version of Playboi Carti's album MUSIC – Sorry 4 Da Wait and explores the connection between their repetition and the album's trap-vamp style. It is a blend of Nida's componential analysis and Leech's conceptual and associative meaning. The 10 lexemes are selected from a pre-established rule: the two most common lexemes in each of five semantic fields (violence, wealth, intimacy, identity, transgression), with only lexemes present in at least three tracks. Each lexeme is characterized by its conceptual meaning, its associative properties, and a limited number of semantic properties. The components are: [+monetary], [+derogatory], [+stylized persona]. Lexemes in a field share a basic set of components and vary by 1 to 4 diagnostic components, concern register and stance in some fields, and the role in an event or the form of wealth in others. The rule sets two lexemes per field, so the field descriptions refer only to those ten lexemes. Their total of 464 occurrences is split almost evenly between Intimacy & Sexuality (53.7%) and only one other field. Intimacy & Sexuality is the largest category with 53.7% of the 464 occurrences, with "Bitch" and "Ho" being the top two. These repeated lexemes exhibit affective features in many tracks. Some lexemes are fixed to a particular track, and "Bitch," "Nigga" and "Ho" reoccur throughout most of the album. The results are consistent with an affective architecture that is field-specific and partial, in which repetition. They are a source of mood and identity and do not provide equal weighting for all domains. The study demonstrates that slang lexemes can be described by componential analysis in combination with associative meaning. Popular music lyrics within contrasting sets.

Keywords: componential analysis, hip-hop, lexical semantics, Playboi Carti, rapper

1. Introduction

Song lyrics are aesthetic materials, social speech, and connect culture, identity, and creativity (Fauziyah et al., 2024). Language in hip-hop and trap has communicative and self-defining functions (Dung & Mai Hoa, 2024) while the artists make lexical and semantic choices to create personas that move across cultural spaces (Putirulan et al., 2023; Simanullang et al., 2025). The album MUSIC – Sorry 4 Da Wait by Playboi Carti is clearly a linguistic composition, one that is both economical and symbolic.

Lexical semantics is the analysis of the meaning of words in relation to other words in sense relations like synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, and polysemy (Leech, 1981; Lyons, 1995; Muhammad, 2024). Componential analysis is a technique that involves decomposing meaning into smaller semantic units and revealing conceptual distinctions (Athufa & Bustam, 2023; Nida, 1975). If these methods are applied to song lyrics, they reveal that lyrics carry the meaning of identity and influence besides literal meaning (Syahfitri, 2021). Linguistic expressions are capital, which is valued based on the position of the speaker in a linguistic market (Bourdieu, 1992). In the context of claims of authenticity, hip-hop sociolinguistics takes this perspective by arguing that slang and other marked forms are markers of group identity (Cutler, 2007; Zebrowski, 2010). Anti-languages, as described in Halliday (1976) are the vocabulary that groups develop in opposition to a mainstream society. These sources provide the study with a context for understanding slang as a social indicator. They do not indicate that any lexeme in the album has such a signal.

Playboi Carti, also known as Jordan Terrell Carter, is an American rapper from Atlanta, Georgia. He has helped shape the trap music scene and its subgenre, rage, with his previous releases such as Playboi Carti (2017), Die Lit (2018), and Whole Lotta Red (2020). His lyrics repeat the lexemes vamp and racks. This study considers them as potential markers of persona and status, and examines their potential association with disobedience, detachment, or hedonism by means of their collocations and affective properties in the data. The authors are not aware of any peer-reviewed analysis that makes these connections for Carti's lyrics, so they do not make these connections a priori. Such readings are possible based on the work of slang and group identity (Bourdieu, 1992; Halliday, 1976) and (Chin & Gunawan, 2024) found that lexical ambiguity in an album's lyrics enhances emotional depth. Forman (2002) demonstrates that the Atlanta context is relevant to the interpretation of local slang because of the connection of rap to identity and space.

The album has three analytical study reasons besides its commercial success (debuting at #1 on the Billboard 200; Section 2.3). First, the lyrics contain repetitions of single lexemes, meaning is condensed in individual words and their connections. This is a challenging test of the componential analysis and associative meaning of the corpus. Second, the lexicon is composed of both standard words, slang, and items from African American English, and it contains words that have multiple meanings and are subject to controversy, like “Bitch,” “Nigga,” and “Pop.” For these types of items, binary features have been found to be weak (Leech, 1981; Lyons, 1995). Thirdly, a 34-track release allows the study to be able to see the extent of each lexeme's repetition within a track, and how far it extends across the album. In terms of hip-hop, sociolinguistic studies have focused on language and identity (Cutler, 2007; Zebrowski, 2010), while the album-level lexical-semantic studies have focused on pop and indie albums (Section 2.2). The authors have not found any research that has investigated the micro-level semantics of a trap album.

This study investigates the meaning of the key lexemes and the thematic coherence that they create in the album, using lexical semantics and componential analysis. It explores the distribution of Carti's vocabulary within the semantic fields of violence, wealth, intimacy, identity, and transgression, and the system of associative meaning that these fields provide. The study also looks

at repetition, which it considers a potential semantic amplifier. The working notion used in this research is based on research on repetition as a cohesive device in lyrics (Dewi, 2023). The analysis does not include rhythm and phonetic emphasis. The analysis explains how some of the lexemes have associative and affective connotations that are related to the vamp style.

Lexical semantics and componential analysis have been used in previous studies with song lyrics and with culturally loaded vocabulary, respectively, and there is limited evidence for trap lyricism. This study attempts to avoid the extremes of two recent album-level studies. The study of Kurniawan & Sari (2025) show six hyponymy relations, and five more are reported in their abstract; a few relations are based on words that are not reported in the quoted lyrics. Torang et al. (2026) focus on an entire album, and analyze only the grammatical meaning, with no counts of the affixes they label as dominant. Outside music, there are a few componential studies that provide limited guidance on slang, such as Neupane (2025) on nouns and Zulfikri (2022) on verbs of seeing, both of which are closed domains with features that are easy to state. This study uses a componential analysis (Nida, 1975) and a notion of associative meaning (Leech, 1981) in the analysis of 34 tracks of the album MUSIC – Sorry 4 Da Wait by Playboi Carti. It traces important slang lexemes to semantic fields and analyzes the way in which the repetition of lexemes creates affective meaning and subcultural identity.

Based on the research gap identified above, this study addresses the following research questions:

1. What semantic components and associative features are carried by the key lexemes in the 34 tracks of Playboi Carti's MUSIC – Sorry 4 Da Wait, and how are these lexemes grouped into semantic fields?

2. How does the repetition of these lexemes contribute to the construction of affective meaning and subcultural identity in the lyrics of the album?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Lexical Semantics and Componential Analysis

Lexical semantics deals with the meanings of words (lexemes) and with the systematic relations between them, such as synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy and polysemy (Leech, 1981; Lyons, 1995). Rather than considering the meaning of a word as an indivisible unit, the field questions the structure of meaning and the organisation of lexemes into networks. The semantic field is one of the organizing principles, in which a set of lexemes are interrelated in a conceptual domain, and whose meaning is partly determined by their neighbours in the conceptual domain (Lyons, 1995). It is therefore possible to say that grouping lexemes in fields like wealth, violence or intimacy is a method of transiting from the meaning of the individual word to the thematic organisation of a text or, in this study, an album.

Meaning is not all equal. Leech (1981) distinguishes seven types of meaning. Conceptual meaning is the denotative, logical content of an expression, and is distinguished from associative meaning, which includes connotative, social, affective, reflected, and collocative meaning; thematic meaning, which deals with the organisation of a message, is not included. Of these two types, two are particularly pertinent to slang lexemes. Social meaning gives information about the social context in which a word is used; affective meaning gives information about the attitude or feeling of the speaker. Therefore, a lexeme like racks can be characterized in terms of its conceptual meaning (a lot of money) and separately in terms of its status and materialism. This distinction is the basis for the analytical process of this study, where the conceptual meaning and associative characteristics of each lexeme are noted first, before the specification of its semantic components.

The main analytical method used in this study is componential analysis (CA). CA first emerged as a description of kinship terms in terms of distinctive features (Goodenough, 1956; Lounsbury, 1956) and was integrated into formal semantic theory by Katz & Fodor (1963). It was extended by Nida (1975) to a general method for describing lexical meaning by breaking up a lexeme into the smallest meaningful units, or semantic components. According to Nida, the components common to all members of a set are common components, the components that distinguish one member from another are diagnostic components, and the rest are supplementary components. In many applications, the components are conventionally written in square brackets and are marked as present [+] or absent [–] (Athufa & Bustam, 2023). A componential description is only meaningful in the context of a contrast set, since a component is only relevant to a lexeme in the sense that it makes it distinct from other lexemes of the same domain.

There are known limitations of CA. Domains that are tightly structured like kinship terms or verbs of perception work best with binary features. They do not work so well for abstract, gradable, or culturally variable meanings, in which the distinction between [+] and [–] may be arbitrary (Leech, 1981; Lyons, 1995). In applied studies, the same problem is evident in the printed data, for example, (Neupane, 2025) marks the abstract noun despair as [+concrete], [+animate] and [+human] and does not mention the assignment. The restrictions are more pronounced for slang, which has connotations and meanings that are context-dependent. This study thus employs CA as a tool to describe and compare the elements of lexemes in certain semantic fields and associates CA with (Leech, 1981) notion of associative meaning to record what binary features do not record.

2.2 Lexical Semantics in Song Lyrics and Albums

The language of music has an aesthetic and social role that connects culture, identity and creativity, and for this reason song lyrics are a valid object of lexical-semantic research (Fauziyah et al., 2024). In hip-hop and trap, language is employed as a communicative tool and a self-defining tool (Dung & Mai Hoa, 2024), and the artists make use of lexical and semantic elements to create personas that move around cultural space (Putirulan et al., 2023; Simanullang et al., 2025). Applied to lyrics, semantic analysis reveals that the lyrics carry meanings of identity and influence besides the meaning of literal content (Syahfitri, 2021).

There are few studies that use lexical semantics or CA on whole albums, and the latest ones demonstrate the boundaries that the present study tackles. Kurniawan & Sari (2025) analysed all 16 songs of Billie Eilish's Happier Than Ever with Saeed's lexical relations. They state that they have 16 polysemy, 13 antonymy, 12 synonymy, 5 hyponymy, 2 meronymy, and 1 member collection relation (abstract), and that polysemy is the most dominant relation. They are designed based on descriptive analysis, and the tools of the corpus are used for counting the occurrences of words. The counts must be supported by three points before they can be used as a baseline. Torang et al. (2026) examined all ten songs of "*Manusia"* by Tulus, but only grammatical meaning created by affixation, reduplication, and composition. They state that affixation is the most common process, and that the prefixes ber- and meN- are dominant, but they give no frequency table. Two illustrative examples are given for each affix type. The qualitative descriptive design is not used to report counts, and the authors report a narrow scope as a limitation. Even if a claim of dominance is made, it still requires counts. Both studies demonstrate that it is possible to perform album-level analysis and that the counting procedure and the connection between each claim and the lyric evidence should be made explicit.

CA has been used more frequently for lexical fields other than music. Zulfikri (2022) used the model of Nida to Arabic lexemes denoting the act of seeing (from textbooks and dictionaries) and concluded that the lexemes (abstracts) were separated by the device of seeing, the way of seeing, the

object, and the feeling. The CA procedure was used by Khairat & Tamim (2025) to evaluate the translations of Moroccan cultural terms into English. Neupane (2025) examined the English and Nepali nouns in two dictionaries and found that there was an equivalence in gender terms, an overlap in the case of leather, skin, and shell, and convergence and divergence in the case of kinship terms (abstract). The author acknowledges that there is not enough data to make accurate conclusions. These domains are closed sets that are recorded in dictionaries. Slang in an album is different, as the meaning of its words depends on context and has social and affective connotations.

These studies identify three gaps. First, there are very few lexical-semantic studies at the album level of analysis, and the two that were reviewed above have issues of counting and/or verifiability. This study tackles them by using a documented counting rule (Section 3.4) and a coding matrix that will document the track and line context of each item (Section 3.3). Second, the closed domain dictionary data used in the second set of CA studies reviewed here do not include slang in lyrics. Third, to the authors' best knowledge, CA has not been used to capture lyrics that use explicit contrast sets, nor has it been connected to the role played by lexical repetition in the creation of affective meaning.

2.3 The Album: MUSIC – Sorry 4 Da Wait

Playboi Carti (Jordan Terrell Carter) is an American rapper from Atlanta, Georgia, and is credited with the creation of trap and the subgenre of rage. He has previously worked on *Playboi Carti* (2017), *Die Lit* (2018), and *Whole Lotta Red* (2020). As seen in Table 1, there is a great repetition of a few lexemes, such as "Bitch" (140) and "Ho" (109). The question of whether repeated items like vamp and racks are a sign of disobedience, pleasure, or detachment is up to interpretation. The study provides an answer to it by the collocations and affective features in Table 2, and it does not take the answer from the previous study.

MUSIC was released on 14 March 2025 and has 30 songs. A deluxe edition, *MUSIC – SORRY 4 DA WAIT*, was released on 25 March 2025, adding four songs to the album – "DIFFERENT DAY," "2024," "BACKR00MS," and "FOMDJ" – all of which were previously available only in digital download album editions sold on the artist's website (The FADER, 2025). The album was the top-selling rap album of the week with 298,000 equivalent album units, the highest week for a rap album in 2025 to date (The FADER, 2025).

From the lexical-semantic point of view, the repetition of this type is the motivation for the present study: When the syntactic and propositional complexity is low, meaning has to be looked for in the associative load of the individual lexemes and in their repetition. This study is not an assessment of the quality of the album. It regards the lyrics as a set of lexemes that can be described systematically and whose parts and relations can be described. The corpus is composed of all 34 tracks of this deluxe release (Section 3.2).

2.4 Supporting Perspectives

The notion of lexical items as markers of identity is based on Bourdieu's (Bourdieu, 1992) notion of language as a form of capital. In this perspective, the linguistic exchanges occur in a linguistic market, where the value of expressions depends on the social position and legitimacy of their users, and linguistic capital can be transformed into symbolic capital. Slang, repetition, and metaphor, when applied to rap and trap, imply that they are symbolic capital that can be a sign of authenticity and dominance. This suggestion is a hypothesis for this study, and the data in Section 4 can support or weaken this hypothesis for each lexeme. From a sociolinguistic perspective, hip-hop language is a space where the identities of youth and the politics of language intersect (Cutler, 2007; Zebrowski, 2010). Bourdieu's theory is about social conditions for linguistic exchange, and not about the internal semantic structure of words. It is therefore employed as an interpretive lens for

the second research question, and no analytical categories are drawn from it for the first research question.

Trap can also be interpreted as a semiotic space. The following is an excerpt from (Forman, 2002) on the connection between rap and place and space. The five fields of this study (violence, wealth, intimacy, identity, and transgression) are working categories that are based on the album's own vocabulary, and no external definition of trap as a subculture is used in this study. A similar concept in sociolinguistics is (Halliday, 1976) notion of anti-language, which is the language of an anti-society with relexicalisation and overlexicalisation, that is, alternative words for familiar things and many words for activities central to the group. The slang use of the words money, drugs and violence in trap music follows a similar pattern. The study does not assert that trap is an 'anti-language' in Halliday's terms.

The second research question is related to repetition. Dewi (2023) analysed lexical and grammatical cohesion in song lyrics with a framework in which repetition is a cohesive device. Varnum et al. (2021) show that repetition, mostly in choruses and hooks, drives the growing simplicity of popular lyrics. Lexical ambiguity in an album's lyrics provides emotional depth and subjectivity (Chin & Gunawan, 2024). Together with (Leech, 1981) affective meaning, these results support a working hypothesis in this study, affective architecture, which refers to the construction of mood and persona by means of repeated lexemes with strong associative and affective content rather than a consistent propositional narrative. This is a working definition of the present study and is not a formal term in the literature; it is defined in Section 3.4.

To answer the first research question, a theoretical approach based on semantic field theory and Leech's conceptual and associative meaning is used, and to answer the second, a theoretical approach informed by the above-mentioned theories on repetition, affective meaning, and identity is used. The analysis is based on the written text of the lyrics, so it does not measure the listener's interpretation of the lexemes, but rather the meaning potential of the lexemes.

3. Research Methods

This section describes the research design, the data and their sources, the instruments, and the procedure of analysis.

3.1 Research Design

The method used in this study is a qualitative descriptive design with a lexical semantics and componential analysis approach. Qualitative description is appropriate for research that seeks to describe a phenomenon that is near the data and in everyday language, not to develop a new theory (Sandelowski, 2000). The design is in line with the purposes of the study, which are related to the meaning of lexemes, that is, their semantic components and associative features, and the affective meaning that is created by repetition of lexemes. The analytical framework is based on lexical semantics (Leech, 1981; Lyons, 1995; Nida, 1975) componential analysis and (Leech, 1981) distinction between conceptual and associative meaning (as reviewed in section 2). Simple frequency counts are only used to identify repeated lexemes and to document repetition; they are not used for statistical inference but for qualitative interpretation.

3.2 Data and Data Source

The data are lexemes and short lexical phrases taken from the lyrics of all 34 tracks of Playboi Carti's MUSIC – Sorry 4 Da Wait. This deluxe edition contains 34 tracks: the 30 tracks of the original MUSIC and four added tracks. The lyrics were retrieved from two online sources, Genius and Spotify. The two transcriptions were compared line by line, and if there was any discrepancy,

the difference was corrected by listening to the recording; items that could not be corrected were not included in the analysis.

All 34 tracks are included in the corpus, in their original running order: *Pop Out, Crush, K Pop, Evil J0rdan, Mojo Jojo, Philly, Radar, Rather Lie, Fine Sh!.T, Backd00r, Toxic, Munyun, Crank, Charge Dem Hoes A Fee, Good Credit, I Seeeeee You Baby Boi, Wake Up F1lthy, Jumpin, Trim, Cocaine Nose, We Need All Da Vibes, Olympian, Opm Babi, Twin Trim, Like Weezy, Dis 1 Got It, Walk, Hba, Overly, South Atlanta Baby, Different Day*, 2024, BACKR00MS, and FOMDJ. No tracks were sampled out or excluded. The four deluxe tracks (31-34) were previously only offered in download versions on the artist's website (Section 2.3). They're included in the study because that's the album as it is now on the market.

The study does not make a sampling claim, but is a census of the album. The limits are in the coding, which one researcher did (Section 5.4). Section 5.1 reports the counts for tracks 1–18 and tracks 19–34 separately as a check on how stable the field shares are across the album. The lyrics are copyrighted, so only isolated lexemes and short phrases are quoted that are necessary for the analysis and not full verses.

3.3 Instruments

The main instrument is the researcher, who identifies, classifies, and interprets the lexemes. Three supporting instruments were used. The first is the lyric sheets from Genius and Spotify. The second is a coding matrix that includes the following columns: lexical item, track and line context, frequency, conceptual meaning, associative features, semantic field, and semantic components, which is also the foundation of the tables in the Results section. The third is a reference dictionary to define the reference conceptual meaning of standard and slang senses: Green's Dictionary of Slang (Green, 2005). For slang senses, only the secondarily consulted genius annotations were considered as authoritative.

3.4 Data Analysis

The analysis was conducted in six steps following the data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing steps proposed by Muhammad (2024). The first step was to compare, clean, and segment the transcripts into lines. Lexical ad-libs were included because they are a part of the repetition pattern, while purely nonlexical sounds were not included. Any repeated hooks, backing vocals, and guest verses were kept in the transcripts.

Second, key lexemes were determined. Words or multiword expressions that are non-standard (slang) or semantically loaded in context were considered as candidate lexemes. The number of each occurrence in the transcripts was recorded, including repetitions in a line, and inflected forms were counted under one lexeme (e.g., rack and racks). If a candidate appeared 5 or more times in the corpus or in 3 or more tracks, then it was considered to be a key lexeme. In reporting, two key lexemes were chosen for each semantic field, the ones with the highest frequency among the key lexemes that appear in at least three different tracks. The ten lexemes reported in Section 4 were chosen this way, and the rest of the key lexemes were retained as elements of the contrast sets for the componential analysis. The forms counted were: bodies, opp and opps, rack and racks, ice (in the jewelry sense, not "ice cup" or "Ice Spice" or one line that was ambiguous), bitch and bitches, and the spelling variation bih, ho and hoes, nigga and niggas, vamp and vamps, pop and popped, popping and poppin', and molly and mollys (not "pops" for "father" or "pop rocks"). Titles and section labels were not counted. Producer tags, ad-libs (e.g., "Swamp Izzo" and "schyeah"), artist name and crew/labeller names (e.g., "Opium", "Homixide" and "005") were not considered. Words in their common meaning (such as kill, money, die, gang, rich) and the generic

expletive, f*ck, were also not considered candidates unless they are given a field-specific meaning by the context of the line.

Third, the meaning of each key lexeme was described in two layers following (Leech, 1981). The dictionary meaning that is appropriate for the line context was used for conceptual meaning, and associative features (connotative, social, affective, and collocative) were described from the context of use. In the case of polysemous lexemes, the dominant sense in the line context was coded, and other senses were described in the description of the lexeme. Fourth, the lexemes were placed into semantic fields beginning with the above domains of interest and revising the fields as needed for the data.

Fifth, in each semantic field, the lexemes of similar meanings were grouped together into a contrast set (Nida, 1975), which may consist of two or more sets of lexemes in one semantic field. The components common to all members were first identified and then the diagnostic components that differentiate one member from another, in square brackets [+] or [–]. Only a component was retained that was different across at least two lexemes of the set. Components are reported in Table 2 as specified for the whole contrast set, which also includes key lexemes that are not reported in Section 4. This limitation of binary features (Leech, 1981; Lyons, 1995) is tackled explicitly by re-examining lexemes with identical feature vectors and either differentiating them by an additional diagnostic component or reporting them as near-synonyms (Zulfikri, 2022).

Sixth, in the second research question, the frequency of key lexemes was recorded, and the distribution of these lexemes was recorded across the tracks. Then, the repeated lexemes were interpreted based on their associative and affective features, as well as the perspectives on symbolic capital, the trap as a semiotic space, and the perspective on the amplification of semantics described in Section 2.4 (Bourdieu, 1992; Dewi, 2023; Forman, 2002). In this study, affective architecture is defined as the case where the frequency of the lexemes of a semantic field is high, and the lexemes share affective features with each other within the same track.

4. Results

The results are presented in two parts in this section. The frequency, distribution across tracks, and conceptual meaning of the key lexemes coded from the 34 tracks are presented in Section 4.1. The associative features, semantic field, and semantic components of each lexeme are given in Section 4.2 (Table 2), in which the components are contrasted as present [+] or absent [–] within each contrast set. The two tables are based on the coding matrix outlined in Section 3.3, and record the ten key lexemes chosen on the basis of the criteria outlined in Section 3.4.

Freq. = frequency of the lexeme in the transcripts, including repetitions within a line (Section 3.4). Track Spread = number of tracks (out of 34) in which the lexeme is found. Share in top track = percentage of the lexeme's occurrences in the track that has the highest number of occurrences. In the case of polysemous lexemes, the dominant sense in context is reported.

4.1 Key Lexemes: Frequency, Distribution, and Conceptual Meaning

Table 1 shows the ten most salient lexemes that were coded from the 34 tracks. It provides the frequency of each lexeme, number of tracks in which it appears, its percentage in the top track, and its conceptual meaning for each lexeme.

Table 1. Frequency, Distribution, and Conceptual Meaning of the Ten Key Lexemes in the 34 Tracks of MUSIC – Sorry 4 Da Wait

No	Lexical Item	Freq	Track Spread (Of 34)	Share in top track	Conceptual Meaning
1.	Bodies	18	3	78%	Plural of body in the sense of corpses
2.	Opps	14	9	21%	Slang for an enemy or rival, short for opposition.
3.	Racks	11	5	55%	Slang for stacks/large sums of cash
4.	Ice	7	7	14%	Slang for diamonds or diamond jewelry.
5.	Bitch	140	32	11%	Adult woman; derogatory term for a woman.
6.	Ho	109	22	36%	Derogatory term for a woman, esp. one regarded as sexually promiscuous
7.	Nigga	70	23	17%	Vernacular term for a man or a friend (AAVE); a reclaimed in-group variant of a racial slur.
8.	Vamp	8	4	50%	Short for vampire; here a stylized subcultural persona/aesthetic.
9.	Pop	57	14	39%	To burst or appear suddenly; slang for arrive conspicuously; also shoot, take a pill, or be popular.
10.	Molly	30	11	53%	Slang for MDMA (ecstasy), in powder or capsule form.

Table 1 shows that "Bitch" is the most frequent item (140 occurrences) and the most widely distributed (32 of 34 tracks, with only about 11% in its top track), followed by "Ho" (109; 22 tracks) and "Nigga" (70; 23 tracks). These three items make up approximately 69% of the 464 occurrences, and are the only items appearing in over 14 tracks. Distribution is not always the same as frequency: "Bodies" (78% of the most popular track), "Racks" (55%), "Molly" (53%), "Vamp" (50%) are all found in a handful of tracks, while "Opps" (14, 9 tracks) and "Ice" (7, 7 tracks) are less popular, but more evenly distributed. "Pop" (57; 14 tracks) is in between the two groups, with 39% of its occurrences in the opening track. The items address violence, wealth, person reference, subcultural persona, substance use, and visibility; several of these items are polysemous (e.g., "Bitch," "Nigga," "Pop"), and for each polysemous item only the dominant sense in the context is reported (Section 3.4). They are discussed in more detail in Section 4.2 in terms of their associative features, semantic fields, and semantic components.

4.2 Associative Features, Semantic Fields, and Semantic Components

The associative features, semantic fields, and semantic components of each lexeme in Table 1 are given in Table 2. Associative features are described from the point of view of use, and each lexeme is assigned to a semantic field. The components are written in square brackets and contrasted between the lexemes of the same contrast set, with [+] indicating the presence of the component and [–] indicating its absence. Each field can have multiple contrast sets, and there are also key lexemes that are not reported in Table 1.

Table 2. Associative Features, Semantic Fields, and Semantic Components of the Ten Key Lexemes in the 34 Tracks of MUSIC – Sorry 4 Da Wait

No	Lexical Item	Associative Feature	Semantic Field	Semantic Component
1.	Bodies	Connotative: death as outcome/spectacle of violence, desensitization. Affective: nonchalance. Collocative: 'pass out them bodies', 'movin' them bodies', 'I see bodies'.	Violence & Conflict (contrast set: death & conflict terms)	[+life-ending] [–agentive] [+resulting state] [+human referent] [–adversary] [+noun]
2.	Opps	Connotative: hostility and rivalry; the target of violence and of boasting. Social: street and trap slang for enemies. Affective: contempt, dismissal, bravado. Collocative: 'my opps', 'all my opps', 'opps rest'.	Violence & Conflict (contrast set: death & conflict terms)	[–life-ending] [–agentive] [–resulting state] [+human referent] [+adversary] [+noun]
3.	Racks	Connotative: abundance, bulk, readiness to spend. Social: trap/hip-hop in-group slang. Affective: pride, flaunting. Collocative: 'hundred thousand racks', 'racks up'.	Wealth & Status (contrast set: money, objects & transaction terms)	[+monetary] [+large amount] [+tangible] [–wearable luxury] [–transaction] [+coded slang] [–status/gain] [–act (verb)] [–vehicle]
4.	Ice	Connotative: wealth worn on the body, luxury, display. Social: hip-hop slang for diamonds and jewelry. Affective: pride, flaunting. Collocative: 'ice on my wrist', 'ice on my neck', 'ice up my bitches'.	Wealth & Status (contrast set: money, objects & transaction terms)	[–monetary] [–large amount] [+tangible] [+wearable luxury] [–transaction] [+coded slang] [+status/gain] [–act (verb)] [–vehicle]
5.	Bitch	Connotative: objectification, possession; reclaimed positive in 'bad bitch'. Social: pervasive hip-hop address/reference term. Affective: contempt or approval, depending on modifier. Collocative: 'my bitch', 'lil' bitch', 'bad bitch'.	Intimacy & Sexuality (contrast set: person-reference terms)	[+female] [+derogatory] [–sexualized/transactional] [–endearing] [–familiar register]
6.	Ho	Connotative: sexual availability, disposability, transaction. Social: hip-hop vernacular. Affective: contempt, possession. Collocative: 'charge them hoes a fee', 'my hoes'.	Intimacy & Sexuality (contrast set: person-reference terms)	[+female] [+derogatory] [+sexualized/transactional] [–endearing] [–familiar register]
7.	Nigga	Connotative: in-group solidarity when used as address; hostility when paired with insults ('pussy-ass niggas'). Social: race-linked and sensitive. Affective: camaraderie or contempt. Collocative: 'my nigga', 'these f*ck niggas'.	Identity & Affiliation (contrast set: social-reference terms)	[+human] [+individual] [–collective] [+solidarity] [–threat] [+address term] [–kinship metaphor] [–stylized persona]
8.	Vamp	Connotative: nocturnal, dark, predatory, exclusive. Social: Carti's coded aesthetic ('vamp life', 'members only'). Affective: allure, menace. Collocative: 'vamp life, spooky'. Also used for in-group authenticity ('ain't vamps ... posers').	Identity & Affiliation (contrast set: social-reference terms)	[+human] [+individual] [–collective] [–solidarity] [–threat] [–address term] [–kinship metaphor] [+stylized persona]
9.	Pop	Connotative: spectacle, display, violence ('poppin' that boy'). Social: Atlanta/rage slang. Affective: excitement. Collocative: 'pop out', 'pop, pop', 'poppin' that shit'.	Transgression & Hedonism (contrast set: intensity & display terms)	[+act] [–state] [+arrival/appearance] [+excitement] [–harm] [–evaluative]
10.	Molly	Connotative: euphoria, party culture, detachment ('alien off that molly'). Social: club/rave and rap slang. Affective: elation, numbness. Collocative: 'movin' on molly', 'off molly'.	Transgression & Hedonism (contrast set: substance terms)	[+substance] [–generic category] [+specific drug] [–liquid] [–container]

Table 2 shows that the ten lexemes fall into five semantic fields, with two lexemes in each: Violence & Conflict ("Bodies," "Opps"), Wealth & Status ("Racks," "Ice"), Intimacy & Sexuality ("Bitch," "Ho"), Identity & Affiliation ("Nigga," "Vamp"), and Transgression & Hedonism ("Pop," "Molly"). Lexemes in a field have a core meaning, but are distinguished by diagnostic components. "Bodies" and "Opps" share [+human referent], [–agentive] and [+noun] and differ in [±life-ending] and [±resulting state] and [±adversary]: "Bodies" names the resulting state of killing, "Opps" names the party that the violence targets. "Racks" and "Ice" share [+tangible] and [+coded slang], and differ in [±monetary] and [±large amount] and [±wearable luxury] and [±status/gain]: "Racks" is cash in quantity, "Ice" is wealth worn on the body. "Bitch" and "Ho" share [+female] and [+derogatory], and they only differ with respect to [±sexualized/transactional]. "Nigga" has [+solidarity] and [+address term], whereas "Vamp" has [+stylized persona]. "Pop" is part of a contrast set consisting of action and display features ([+act], [+arrival/appearance], [+excitement]); "Molly" is part of a contrast set consisting of substance features ([+substance], [+specific drug]).

The associative features are: pride and flaunting ("Racks," "Ice"), contempt and possession ("Bitch," "Ho"), nonchalance and contempt ("Bodies," "Opps"), and excitement or elation ("Pop," "Molly"). In some cases, a lexeme has conflicting values in different contexts, like solidarity and hostility for the term "Nigga" and contempt and approval for "Bitch." The relation of these patterns to repetition (RQ2) is discussed in Section 5.

5. Discussion

5.1 Semantic Fields and Components

The 10 key lexemes are distributed across 5 semantic fields, with an uneven distribution of the fields. Intimacy & Sexuality is the most frequently mentioned category in Table 1, with 464 mentions, or 53.7% of all mentions, and "bitch" is mentioned in 32 of the 34 tracks. Violence & Conflict + Wealth & Status = 10.8%. The 10 lexemes reported are fixed by the selection rule at 2 per field; hence the shares reported here refer to the 10 lexemes, and not to the entire vocabulary of the tracks. The shares are relatively consistent throughout the album, in part. The number of occurrences in Intimacy & Sexuality drops from 53.7% in tracks 1-18 to 4.4% in tracks 19-34, while the number of occurrences in the other tracks decreases as well: Violence & Conflict drops from 8.9% to 4.4%, and Wealth & Status drops from 5.4% to 2.0%. "Bodies" occurs only in tracks 15, 17, and 18. In these bounds, the data are not suitable for equal weighting of the five domains listed in the Introduction. The other domains are not as common or widespread as person-reference terms, with fewer lexemes having the other domains and several having only one.

Research on taboo expressions in other rap songs also shows a high density of derogative and/or vulgar items. Puri et al. (2024) analysed four songs by Nicki Minaj and found that vulgarity was the most frequent type of taboo expression and that attracting attention was its main function. In this study, Febriyanti (2024) analysed three tracks of Queen by Minaj and identified seven taboo words and three functions of taboo words; the most frequent words were vulgar and contempt. Table 2 confirms these results in two ways: first, the sexual and derogatory vocabulary is predominant, and second, the affective value of contempt is a frequent one for "Bitch" and "Ho." The studies are different from this one in unit and scope. While in the few songs used in this study, they classify expressions according to taboo type and function, the classification in the present study is done according to lexemes, fields, and components. The componential description provides additional information not captured by type labels: "Bitch" and "Ho" share [+female] and [+derogatory] but differ in [±sexualized/transactional], which is not recorded by the label "vulgar language."

Table 2 indicates that the core components is shared by lexemes in a field, while the differences are one to four diagnostic components. In the game of Violence & Conflict, "Bodies" and "Opps" have different [±life-ending], [±resulting state], and [±adversary]. The differences between "Racks" and "Ice" in Wealth & Status are [±monetary], [±wearable luxury], [±large amount], and [±status/gain]. In Intimacy & Sexuality, "Bitch" and "Ho" have different elements: [±sexualized/transactional]. This pattern is consistent with (Leech, 1981) distinction between conceptual and associative meaning for the person-reference and identity pairs, with the conceptual meanings being close and social, and the social/affective meaning separating the two. In the pairs Violence and Wealth, the conceptual meanings are more different, and the pairs have associative features: nonchalance and contempt in the first pair, pride and flaunting in the second.

Other dominant patterns are reported by album-level studies based on lexical relations. It was revealed that polysemy was the most common in the film Happier Than Ever, which had 16 out of 49 relations reported (Kurniawan & Sari, 2025). On the other Yule's lexical relations were merged with (Nida, 1975) related meanings and obtained antonymy as the most frequent lexical relation in Buzz by NIKI (17 of 40, 42.5%) (Aini & Rosyidah, 2026). The researchers in this study found 45 logical polysemy cases and 21 accidental polysemy cases in Conan Gray's Wishbone (Natalia & Handayani, 2026). Nabhila et al. (2025) found synonymy (10 items) more frequent than antonymy (7) and hyponymy (2) in three songs by Rony Parulian. Yastanti et al. (2025) studied five songs from the same Eilish album as Kurniawan and Sari and found that contextual meaning is more dominant than lexical meaning, and there are 28 contextual meanings in four types. Two studies of one album come up with different conclusions of dominance, and the difference is in the coding frame. The present study does not rank against these frequencies, because it does not code the components that distinguish lexemes within a contrast set, but only those that distinguish relations between words. The comparison does reveal a pattern, however: polysemy and context-dependent meaning are found throughout the albums. In at least three of the ten lexemes that are studied here, "Pop," "Bitch," and "Nigga," the polysemy is attached to social register and evaluative stance, such as solidarity versus hostility for "Nigga." This is only poorly captured by a single [+] or [–] value. Part of the reason for this study reporting its counting rule and its distribution measures is that a figure of dominance has meaning only relative to the frame that produced it. The results of lexical and contextual meaning were obtained from two songs (Wardhana et al., 2022) which were not sufficient to compare with the present distributions.

In the field of compositional studies in other disciplines, closed lexical sets are used, and these are found in dictionaries. Zulfikri (2022) distinguished the Arabic verbs of seeing based on the device, the way, the object, and the feeling of seeing. In English and Nepali, there is overlap between leather, skin, and shell (Neupane, 2025), and lists [+] for all the components of the abstract noun despair, as is the case with abstract items generally. Khairat & Tamim (2025) applied the CA procedure to evaluate the Moroccan cultural terms translations. In the data presented here, each lexeme in a contrast set was assigned a unique feature vector. Some differences like "Bitch" versus "Ho" are based on one element and rely on the analyst's judgment, and require a second coder. The slang data move CA into a domain which has less stable features than kinship or perception verbs, and they confirm the limits described by Leech (1981) and (Lyons, 1995).

5.2 Repetition and Affective Meaning

There are two repetition patterns in Table 1. There are some lexemes that are inevitably tied to one track: 78% of "Bodies," 55% of "Racks," 53% of "Molly," and 50% of "Vamp" are restricted to a single track. Others recur across tracks with no dominant track: "Bitch" (11% in its top track), "Ice" (14%), "Nigga" (17%), "Opps" (21%), "Ho" (36%), and "Pop" (39%). In this description, half

of all occurrences are cut off in one track, dividing the two groups. The second group is the more appropriate one for repetition at the level of the vocabulary of the album. It contains the person-reference terms "Bitch", "Nigga" and "Ho" (representing approximately 69% of all occurrences) and also the lower frequency terms "Ice", "Opps" and "Pop".

These two patterns improve on the previous patterns of repetition. Varnum et al. (2021) quantified lyric repetition by text compression in 14,661 songs on the Billboard charts from 1958 to 2016. Most of the compression was in choruses and hooks, and simpler songs were higher on the charts. The lexemes in Table 1 that are associated with the track (Bodies, Racks, Molly, and Vamp) are of that type. The lexemes that appear throughout the album, such as "Bitch," "Nigga," "Ho," "Pop," "Opps," and "Ice" do not appear in it, since compression within a song does not capture the frequency of a word's occurrence in the album. This second dimension is measured by the track spread and top track share in Table 1. The present results indicate that cohesion at the album level is composed of a different set of lexemes than cohesion within one song (Dewi, 2023).

The recurring affective values reported in Section 4.2 are similar to Chin & Gunawan (2024) who found that the lyrics of an album can be subjectively interpreted and have emotional depth due to lexical ambiguity. The ambiguity in the present data is related to social attitude: The modifier to nigga indicates solidarity or hostility, while the modifier to bitch indicates contempt or approval. One form thus has opposite affective values, but without a change in reference. According to the operational definition of affective architecture, the lexemes of a field should be frequent and should overlap in affective features between tracks. This is only fulfilled by Intimacy & Sexuality. It has a 53.7% ownership stake, and "Bitch" and "Ho" despise and possess each other on 32 and 22 songs. There are other fields with similar affective characteristics, but in lesser proportion and limited range. The claim is thus limited and qualified to the field.

The lexemes of identity (e.g., "Vamp") and the use of the in-group address "Nigga" fit into a (Bourdieu, 1992) definition of slang as a sign of affiliation and symbolic capital. This is still an interpretation. The data consist of transcripts and coded features; they are not tests of how listeners or the artist's community use these words. Nonthasen et al. (2025) profiled 671,051 tokens from Billboard and YouTube songs (2014-2023) for nine genres, including lexical variation and lexical density indices. The indices of this type would be able to measure the number of repetitions in Carti's lyrics and would support the qualitative description mentioned above.

The study has four contributions, each of which is methodological or descriptive. to fil lthe gaps regarding to the genre it uses CA with explicit contrast sets along with (Leech, 1981) associative meaning to a trap album. The above-mentioned lexical-semantic studies on the album level do not study a rap or trap album, and the above-mentioned taboo-word studies of rap lyrics (Kurniawan & Sari, 2025; Puri et al., 2024) classify taboo words by type and function but do not decompose meaning based on artist persona identities. Second, it resolves a counting and selection rule (at least five occurrences or three tracks to be a key lexeme, and two lexemes per field for reporting), and reports the spread of tracks and the share of top tracks for each lexeme. This solves the verifiability issues that were identified in previous counts at album level (Kurniawan & Sari, 2025; Torang et al., 2026). Third, it offers a definition of affective architecture in testable terms: a field's percentage of repeated items, and shared affective features across tracks, and the test yields a partial result: one of five fields qualifies. Fourth, it distinguishes between repetition that is bound to a hook and repetition that is bound to an album, whereas compression-based measures of lyric simplicity (Varnum et al., 2021) do not distinguish between these types of repetition. The study does not claim anything about listeners, trap as a genre, or the reasons for repetition, and the coding is from one researcher.

5.3 Implications and Limitations

Associative meaning can be used in conjunction with componential analysis to describe slang lexemes in contrast sets that are limited in scope. Diagnostic components are related to register and stance in some fields and role in event or form of wealth in others. Several limitations apply. No inter-coder agreement is available, and single-component contrasts (e.g., "Bitch" vs. "Ho") require a second coder. The reported shares refer to the ten lexemes selected with a rule of 2 lexemes per field, each having a minimum frequency of 3 tracks, and the rule is based on what is considered to be a candidate. If the pool were wider, five words would be in the top two of their fields: "f*ck" (119 in 26), "money" (18 in 11), "die" (18 in 4), "gang" (15 in 10), and "rich" (11 in 7, the other 11 tied with "Racks"). The study treated them and 'kill' as expletives or as words in their normal meaning (Section 3.4). If they are admitted, "Opps", "Ice", "Ho" and "Vamp" would be replaced in the reported set, and Intimacy & Sexuality would still be the biggest field. The counts include guest artists, and results are not split between the artist's voice and guest voices. The polysemous lexemes are only captured in binary features in the dominant sense. The analysis relates to written lexemes and does not claim to be about the way listeners interpret them. Further testing of the main findings would be provided by a second coder, a wider range of candidates, and separate counts for guest verses.

6. Conclusion

The aim of this study was to describe the semantic components and associative features of ten key lexemes from the 34 tracks of Playboi Carti's MUSIC – Sorry 4 Da Wait and to investigate the relationship between the repetition of these lexemes and their affective meaning and identity.

Firstly, the lexemes were grouped into five semantic fields: Violence & Conflict, Wealth & Status The lexemes were classified into five semantic fields for RQ1: Violence & Conflict, Wealth & Status, Intimacy & Sexuality, Identity & Affiliation, and Transgression & Hedonism. The lexemes varied by a few diagnostic components within each field. Some of these were about register and stance in certain fields, and about role in an event or the nature of wealth in others. There was a lack of balance in the fields. The ten lexemes were used in 53.7% of the incidents of Intimacy & Sexuality, with "Bitch" and "Ho" being the most common.

Secondly, repetition was either in the form of lexemes attached to a single track or lexemes that appeared in multiple tracks. The field of Intimacy & Sexuality was the only field that met the operational definition of affective architecture, which is a large proportion of repeated items with affective features across tracks. The repetition effect on mood and identity is valid for this field and only to a limited extent for the other fields.

The study indicates that the slang lexemes can be described by componential analysis within the given contrast sets in combination with associative meaning. Its boundaries are single-researcher coding (which influences the field shares and is dependent on the definition of the candidate lexeme) and binary features, which only record the dominant senses. Further studies could include a second coder, a broader range of artists, a comparison of the artist's verses and guest verses, and a comparison of other trap albums.

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