

TABOO WORDS IN *THE JACKASS* MOVIE

A GRADUATING PAPER

**Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for Gaining the
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A FINAL PROJECT STATEMENT

A FINAL PROJECT STATEMENT

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TABOO WORDS IN *THE JACKASS* MOVIE

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to investigate taboo words used by characters in *The Jackass* movie. The researcher describes what types and functions of taboo words used in *The Jackass* movie. The sources of the data are the video of *The Jackass* movie and its transcript. The data are collected by selecting dialogues containing taboo words after watching the video and matching the transcript with the video carefully. The researcher employs a theory from Batistella to describe the types of taboo words and a theory from Wardhaugh to describe the function of taboo words. The result of this research consists four types of taboo words, they are: 1. epithet 11,06%, 2. profanity 9,68%, 3. vulgarity 8%, and 4. obscenity 72,35%. Besides, there are four functions of taboo words, they are: 1. to draw attention to oneself 57,14%, 2. to show contempt 19,36%, 3. to be provocative 16,59%, and 4. to mock authority 6,91%. There are 217 cases of taboo words in *The Jackass* movie. Furthermore, the researcher find that the characters in *The Jackass* movie tend to use obscenity to draw attention to others as the movie contains extreme stunts.

Keywords: *The Jackass*, type and function, bad language, taboo utterances.

TABOO WORDS IN *THE JACKASS* MOVIE

Oleh: Wahyu Adi Putra

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kata-kata tabu yang digunakan karakter dalam film *The Jackass*. Peneliti mendeskripsikan jenis dan fungsi kata-kata tabu dalam film tersebut. Peneliti menggunakan teori dari Batistella untuk mendeskripsikan jenis kata-kata tabu dan teori dari Wardhaugh untuk mendeskripsikan fungsi dari kata-kata tabu. Penelitian ini menunjukkan hasil terdapat 4 jenis kata-kata tabu, yaitu: 1. julukan 11,06%, 2. tidak senonoh 9,68%, 3. vulgar 8%, dan 4. cabul 72,35%. Selain itu, terdapat 4 fungsi kata tabu, yaitu: 1. untuk menarik perhatian 57,14%, 2. untuk menunjukkan penghinaan 19,36%, 3. untuk memprovokasi 16,59%, dan 4. mengolok-olok otoritas 6,91%. Dalam film *The Jackass* terdapat 217 kasus kata-kata tabu. Peneliti menemukan bahwa karakter di dalam film *The Jackass* cenderung menggunakan kata-kata cabul untuk menarik perhatian orang lain.

Kata kunci: *The Jackass*, jenis dan fungsi, bahasa tidak santun, kata-kata tabu.

THIS GRADUATING PAPER, I DEDICATE TO:

MY BRIGHT FUTURE

MY BELOVED PARENTS

MY KINDHEARTED FRIENDS

MY MAYOR, ENGLISH LITERATURE DEPARTMENT,

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MOTTO

"If you can dream it, you can do it"

-Walt Disney-

***"You become what you believe. You are where you are today in
your life based on everything you have believed"***

-Oprah Winfrey-

"If there is a good will, there is a great way"

-William Shakespeare-

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Furthermore, I realized that this research is far from perfect due to the limited of knowledge. Therefore, the suggestion and criticism are really welcomed. Finally, I really hope this research can be useful for the readers.

Yogyakarta, February 19, 2015

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

1. Abbreviation EP for Ephitet
2. Abbreviation PR for Profanity
3. Abbreviation VU for Vulgarly
4. Abbreviation OB for Obscenity
5. Abbreviation TDA for To Draw Attention to Oneself
6. Abbreviation TSC for To Show Contempt
7. Abbreviation TBP for To Be Provocative
8. Abbreviation TMA for To Mock Authority

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of Study

Language has an important role in the daily life. Without language, people may not be able to carry out their life. Even the disabled people such as the deaf people still have their own language for communication; it is a sign language. It is a means of humans to communicate with others. In a daily life, people should have abilities of reading and listening to receive information and speaking and writing to give information.

According to *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, “language is a system of communication consisting of sounds, words, and grammar, or the system of communication used by people of a particular country or profession, or way of expressing ideas and feelings using movements, symbols, and sounds”(UK Essays: 2015). From the definition, it can be seen that the language has a lot of functions that are used for day-to-day activities.

The function of language is to convey ideas and thoughts. In addition, the language can be used as a distinguishing feature from a social group because each social group has a different language and also as a manifestation of the unity of a group. In terms of psychology, language can be used as a means to understand ourselves and others. Language also serves as a means of self-development. As Janes Holmet said, there are many different groups in community, and so any individual may share linguistic features (1992:190).

From the social side, the language has a function as a means of social integration and adaptation. Language has an important role in social control. Language can serve a communication controller so that the people involved in the communication are able to understand each other. As an example of social control, the language is used to introduce the idea which is used to make rules or laws in order to reach the regular social conditions. Caroline Hodges Persell (1990) said, “A language is gaining a sense of the rules underlying a society's culture”.

In relation to communication, language must have good ways to convey an idea or notion. Whether a person is good or not in communication can be seen from the politeness of their speech including the dictions used and how the person uses the language. Even more, people who live in Indonesia, particularly in Java, tend to respect for the value of politeness. They tend to avoid the taboo words in their speech.

In Islam, there is a verse which states how a Moslem should speak rightly. Muslims are encouraged to speak politely to deliver and accept the meaning of utterances successfully. It is stated in Quran surah Al-Isra 53:

وَقُلْ لِّعِبَادِي يَقُولُوا الَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ يَنْزَغُ بَيْنَهُمْ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ كَانَ
لِلْإِنْسَانِ عَدُوًّا مُّبِينًا

“And say to my servants that they should only utter good things, surely Satan provokes discord between them, and Satan is surely to mankind an open enemy” (Ali, 1989: 199).

By the verse, Allah reminds people to always keep saying the good things. As Moslems, people must say the goodness in their speaking because there is

Satan who always persuades people into the bad acts. However, communication using good words is truly encouraged in Islam because a good attitude will bring harmony in language which would make the interaction conveyed properly.

The statement above does not definitely agree with phenomena in *The Jackass* movie. In this movie, the researcher finds many taboo words which are used by the characters. The characters use taboo words so much frequent almost in every minute. Although *The Jackass* is a movie from America which majority people are not moslems and the stunts of movie are appropriate with taboo words, a research of taboo words in this movie is still useful to be conducted due to the knowledge and giving new insights for Indonesian people which are mostly moslems.

In this research, the researcher attempts to analyze taboo words used by characters in *The Jackass* movie. It is a famous reality series, originally shown on MTV from 2000 to 2002, featuring people performing various dangerous, crude, and self-injuring stunts and pranks. It is a movie containing extreme stunts coming from America. It contains silly, funny, and challenging to adrenaline scenes, and even there are often porn scenes. On the language side, it also clearly shows that the actors use diction which is taboo in every speech they say.

Here are some examples of taboo words used in the characters' utterances in the movie; *holysh*t*, *what the f*ck is that*, *it's the f*cking stupidest thing I've ever seen*, *godd*mn it*, *I'm a sl*t*, *you idi*t*, *you *sshole*, *you bast*rd*, *there is no holding on to that mother*cker*, *we're already outside*, *numbn*ts*.

Among other movies, *The Jackass* belongs to a controversial movie because of its dangerous and extreme stunts that should not be imitated especially for children. According to Pamela McClintock (2001), Connecticut Senator Joe Lieberman followed up with a February 7, 2001 letter to MTV's parent company Viacom urging the company to take greater responsibility for its programming and do more to help parents protect their children. Besides, almost in every minutes taboo words are used by the characters. These phenomena are quite odd for Indonesian people mostly who usually still keep well manner in communication. It is highly different with what are portrayed in the movie.

This research is expected to provide new insights to the reader about the types of taboo words by applying Batistella's *Bad Language: Are Some Words Better Than Others?* and the functions of using taboo words by applying Wardhaugh's *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. These theories analyze comprehensively about taboo words. Besides, the theories are not complicated in giving the explanations. They are quite clear and easy to be understood. Both give explanation on type and function of taboo words in detail and simple way. The detail of this theory will be explained in the next chapter.

1.2. Research Questions

In accordance with the background above, the researcher wants to analyze the use of taboo words in *The Jackass* movie. Thus, the research questions are:

1. What are the types of taboo words used in *The Jackass* movie?

2. What are the functions of taboo words uttered by the characters in *The Jackass* movie?

1.3. Objectives of Study

In line with the research questions, this study is aimed to find and to describe what types of taboo words are used in *The Jackass* movie and what the functions of taboo words are used by the characters.

1.4. Significances of Study

This research is very useful for Indonesian society which keep the value of decency and especially for educated people, who are accustomed to be critical of the phenomena that occurs outside of the Indonesian culture value.

Theoretically, this research shows to the reader about the use of taboo words in *The Jackass* movie specifically in what types of taboo words and also what the functions. By this research, it is expected that the readers will be more aware about taboo words, avoid it, and speak in well manner.

Practically, this research is expected to be useful for English Department students who are interested in analyzing taboo words. It gives knowledge and be a reference for the further researchers.

1.5. Literature Review

The researcher finds some prior researches related to taboo words. Among them, the first is a taboo words analysis written by Hendri Aditia entitled *An Analysis of Taboo Words and Swear Words in Dustin Lee Abraham's How High*

Movie from State Islamic University of Syarif Hidayatullah, Jakarta in 2011. The purpose of this study is to classify the types of taboo words and the factors which cause the characters use taboo words and the swear words in the movie. The writer uses content analysis method. The result of this study is that there are four taboo words found in *How High* movie: lavatory, private parts of body, religion, and sexuality.

The second prior research is written by Tiara Trulyfiona entitled *An Analysis of Taboo Words Used by Characters in Freedom Writer Movie* from Brawijaya University in 2013. The purpose of this research is to find out the types of taboo words and the purpose of using taboo words by the characters. In analyzing the type of taboo utterances, the writer uses the theory of Wardaugh (1986). In analyzing the factors affecting of using taboo words, the writer uses the theory of Holmes (1992). After analyzing the taboo words used by the character, the writer found out that most African - American using taboo words because of their social status, the writer found out the factors affecting them use taboo words. The writer also found that the types of taboo words that are mostly uttered are exertion, bodily function and religious matter terms.

The third prior research is entitled *Sociolinguistic Analysis of Taboo Words in Bad Teacher Movie* by Fika Nur Anggita from State University of Yogyakarta in 2015. The researcher investigates taboo words uttered by the characters in *Bad Teacher* movie using sociolinguistic approach. The objectives of this research are to identify the types and functions of taboo words uttered by the characters in the movie. This research employed descriptive qualitative as the

method for describing the existing condition in the movie. In addition, this research also used quantitative method to support the interpretation of data by presenting fixed percentages in numerical form. The results of this research are stated as follows. Firstly, four types of taboo words occur in the characters' utterances in *Bad Teacher* movie. They are obscenity, profanity, vulgarity, and epithet. From 32 data found in the movie, obscenity has the biggest number of occurrence.

Those prior researches above have differences and similarities with this research. All prior researches above have a similarity in the first objective of research that is to find the types of taboo words, but they have also a difference in the second objective of the research and theories which are used. Particularly, the third prior research has similarities in objective of the research and the theory which are used, but it is definitely different in the data as the object of research.

Besides that, the researcher finds that there are no prior researches analyzing *The Jackass* movie related on the taboo words. The researcher only finds the comment or opinion about taboo words in the movie, but it is clearly not included to research. There is no investigation or deep analysis to answer the question or to find something new.

1.6. Theoretical Approach

In the present study, the researcher use Batistella theory in analyzing the types of taboo words used by characters in *The Jackass* movie.

Batistella (2005: 72) suggests four types of taboo words:

1) Epithets

Epithet is characterized by the existence of several types of slurs, such as *b*tch* and *f*g*. Other references that are included as epithet are connected to race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, one's appearance, and disabilities such as *motherf*cker*.

2) Profanity

Profanity can be categorized as religious cursing because it usually includes the foul-mouthed use of what is considered to be sacred. The words that belong to this type are *Jesus Chr*st* and *god*mn*.

3) Vulgarity

Vulgarity and obscenity have the same reference especially to words or expressions that contain sexual anatomy and excretory function in a rough manner. The words that belong to this type are such as **ss* and *d*ck*.

4) Obscenity

Obscenity refers to expressions that are prohibited from public use since they involve repulsion to the sense, abhorrent, impolite and detestable to morality such as *f*ck* and *sh*tt*.

To describe the function of uttering taboo words in *The Jackass* movie, the researcher employs a theory from Wardhaugh (2006:239). Below are some short definitions and examples of the functions of taboo words.

- a. To draw attention to oneself: People utter taboo words to attract the attention of the listener by using strong, powerful language whose connotation can stimulate an instant reaction from the audience, e.g: hey you *son of a b*tch*!
- b. To show contempt: People utter taboo words to insult the addressee because they think that somebody or something is completely worthless and cannot be respected, for example: You're just *ret*rded* kid.
- c. To be provocative: Taboo words are uttered to provoke certain response such as violation or anger from the listeners. Taboo words are considered successful when the response meets the speaker's expectation, for example: hey stupid *ss! wanna fight me back huh?
- d. To mock authority: Taboo words are used when some people are not satisfied with public image like government or institution. Therefore, taboo words are used to express the disappointment about reality, for example: *f*ckking* stupid politicians!

1.7. Method of Research

1.7.1. Type of Research

The type used in this research is descriptive qualitative since the data is non-numerical data and it involves the collection of data for the purpose of describing the existing condition. A descriptive qualitative research is used to observe condition and situations in which the writer analyzes the data in forms of words, sentences, discourse, picture/photographs etcetera (Subroto, 1992: 7).

According to Vanderstoep and Johnson (2009:167) this method focuses on cultural, social, personal identity and its goal is more descriptive than predictive.

1.7.2. Source of the Data

The data sources are *The Jackass* movie that is downloaded from internet (www.cinemaindo.com). Its script is as primary data and the video is as secondary data. The data source analyzed in this research consists of the utterances used by the characters which are categorized as impoliteness.

1.7.3. Data Collection Technique

Data of this study are collected from *The Jackass* movie. The data collection technique is documentation. It is a process of collecting data that are from any documents. In collecting data, the researcher collects the data by watching the movie closely and numbering the dialogue. The data collected focuses on taboo words used by the characters in this movie and put into table for the discussion.

1.7.4. Data Analysis Technique

The procedures of the analysis are:

1. Classifying data based on type of utterances
2. Analyzing data containing taboo words by identifying the meaning and context of utterances
3. Drawing the conclusion

1.8. Paper Organization

This research contains four chapters. The first chapter is introduction. It includes the reason why the researcher chooses the topic and all necessary information in relation to the research plan. The second chapter is theoretical approach. It mainly provides the explanation of taboo words theory. The third chapter is research finding and data analysis. The last chapter is conclusion and suggestion.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

4.1. Conclusion

After analyzing the data, the researcher makes conclusion about the realization of what are the types and functions of taboo words used in *The Jackass* movie that can be seen as described below:

1. There are 217 taboo words used by character in *The Jackass* movie with the percentage of types: 24 cases (11,06%) of epithet, 21 cases (9,68%) of profanity, 15 cases (6,91%) of vulgarity, and 157 cases (72,35%) of obscenity. Obscenity type becomes the most frequently used taboo words because it is considered as the most effective way to get interest of others. Moreover, *The Jackass* movie contains extreme stunts mostly, so this kind of words used in the movie is appropriate.
2. The percentage of functions are: 124 cases (57,14%) to draw attention to oneself, 42 cases (19,36%) to show contempt, 36 cases (16,59%) to be provocative, and (6,91%) to mock authority. To draw attention to oneself appears as the most frequent function to occur in *The Jackass* movie because it can represent the speaker's intention of using taboo words that is to get the respect and interest of others. Moreover, it can be the most effective function to express the feeling toward other people since the stunts of the movie is directed and aimed to hurt someone for entertainment.

4.2. Suggestion

The researcher would like to give some suggestions for readers who have pretension to analyze the same topic, taboo words as mentioned below:

1. To Society

People who usually enjoy the movie or novel containing taboo words should have more attention to the purpose of using taboo words or impoliteness utterances. It does not always mean that the speaker wants to hurt other people's feeling. They can be functioned to show close relationship as one family (group) or to maintain a good relationship by mentioning one's name and speaking with certain type of taboo words.

2. To English Lecturers

Conducting a research that uses movie as the data or object of research can give some advantages for the researcher. Movie is a representation of real life. The cases happened in the movie are the illustration and the example of what really happened in the daily life, so the research is really useful for society especially in academic. Moreover, using a movie as the object of research will be more pleasant for the researchers because they can enjoy the story during conducting the research.

3. To English Students

English students who want to analyze taboo words as the next research can consider that type and function of taboo words is not the one subject. They can focus on other problems such as gender issue and social status issue, or even analyzing taboo words syntactically which are not conducted in this research.

Similar researches that will be conducted in the future are better to discuss those problems. By researching different cases, it can enrich the finding on taboo words problem as well as enrich the reader's knowledge in variation.



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APPENDICES

Type and Function Taboo Words in *The Jackass* movie

Note:

EP : Ephitet TDA : To Draw Attention to Oneself

PR : Profanity TSC : To Show Contempt

VU : Vulgarity TBP : To be Provocative

OB : Obscenity TMA : To Mock Authority

No.	Utterances	Type of Taboo Words				Function of Taboo Words			
		EP	PR	VU	OB	TDA	TSC	TBP	TMA
1	Holy shit!		√						√
2	What the fuck is that?				√	√			
3	Oh, you fucking dick.			√					√
4	It's fucking stupidest I've ever seen.				√	√			
5	Fucking hell!		√			√			
6	God damn it.		√						√
7	My ass hurts so fucking bad.				√	√			
8	Bravo, homo!	√					√		
9	Why would anybody ride this shit?				√	√			
10	Get back here, you little bastard!	√					√		
11	I'm a slut.	√				√			
12	Christ!		√			√			
13	You idiot!				√		√		

No.	Utterances	Type of Taboo Words				Function of Taboo Words			
		EP	PR	VU	OB	TDA	TSC	TBP	TMA
14	Dude, that hurts so fucking bad!				√	√			
15	You asshole!			√				√	
16	Oh, God damn that hurt so bad.		√			√			
17	God damn!		√						√
18	No, shit.				√	√			
19	There is no holding on that motherfucker.	√					√		
20	God damn it.		√			√			
21	Oh, shit!				√		√		
22	I am the fuck out of here.				√	√			
23	You already get the fucking shot!				√	√			
24	Fuck!				√		√		
25	You bastard.	√					√		
26	I'm not going to fucking sit there.				√				√
27	Okay, fuckers!	√					√		
28	No, there is a machine in here fucking doing it.				√	√			
29	You fucking fuckers.	√							√
30	Where's the fucking cards-throwing machine?				√	√			

No.	Utterances	Type of Taboo Words				Function of Taboo Words			
		EP	PR	VU	OB	TDA	TSC	TBP	TMA
31	You guys are a hell of a lot of more athletic than us.		√			√			
32	Piss off, Man.				√			√	
33	We're from your face.				√			√	
34	Mind your own business, asshole.			√				√	
35	We're already outside, numbnuts.				√			√	
36	This is bullshit.				√			√	
37	We're surrounded by cock suckers.	√						√	
38	Say good bye to the hippies.	√						√	
39	Not with you skinny sons of bitches.	√						√	
40	You're letting that bulldog mouth overload that puppy-dog ass.			√				√	
41	I don't give a fuck.				√			√	
42	Get the fuck out of here and go back to Mississippi.				√			√	
43	Piss off.				√			√	
44	Go crawl back in your mama's ass!			√					√
45	What the hell are you doing?		√			√			
46	Dude, close that fucking sun roof, dude!				√	√			
47	You guys are fucking dicks, man. Fuck.			√			√		

No.	Utterances	Type of Taboo Words				Function of Taboo Words			
		EP	PR	VU	OB	TDA	TSC	TBP	TMA
48	The poor driver's running around, freaking out.	√					√		
49	That was really funny, fuckers.	√					√		
50	What an idiot.	√					√		
51	I'm going to pay this motherfucker right here.	√				√			
52	Fucking Christ.		√				√		
53	That thing blew the hell up.		√			√			
54	You're nuts.	√					√		
55	Son of a.... Fuck you.	√				√			
56	All you guys are fucking assholes.			√					√
57	You're fucking dicks.			√			√		
58	God damn it. Fucking shit. Fuck.		√				√		
59	You'd better shit piss, ass wipe!	√							√
60	Don't fucking push me.				√	√			
61	Get your fucking hands off me!				√	√			
62	I'm bouncing in my fucking head.				√	√			
63	You got a fat fucking ass.				√		√		
64	Just get it the fuck off me.				√	√			
65	A fucking cobra, dude?				√	√			

No.	Utterances	Type of Taboo Words				Function of Taboo Words			
		EP	PR	VU	OB	TDA	TSC	TBP	TMA
66	You guys are fucking such total dickheads.	√							√
67	My strategy is staying up on the fucking van because I don't trust anybody.				√	√			
68	You fuckers are asses.	√					√		
69	I got a shitty ass.			√		√			
70	Oh, Jesus.		√						√
71	I fucking don't understand.				√	√			
72	That fucked me up, man.				√	√			
73	It's like I'm chewing on this shit.				√			√	
74	It's none of your business.				√			√	
75	What size is your wife's breast?			√				√	
76	Do you want me to fucking pull over?				√			√	
77	Shit fucker! Shit fucker! Asshole!	√					√		
78	Fucking money, I give you money, lots of money!				√	√			
79	What the fuck is up?				√			√	
80	I fucking knew it, dude. He fucking carries a gun. This is bullshit.				√			√	
81	Just do what the fuck he says, dude.				√	√			

No.	Utterances	Type of Taboo Words				Function of Taboo Words			
		EP	PR	VU	OB	TDA	TSC	TBP	TMA
82	You piece of shit.	√						√	
83	Fuck! Just fucking relax, dude.				√	√			
84	What the fuck do you want from us?				√			√	
85	Just get the fuck up, dude. We gotta get the fuck out of here.				√	√			
86	He's got a fucking gun pointed at me, fuckface, asshole!	√					√		
87	If you fuck me up, I will fucking find you, somehow, or something.				√			√	
88	Why am I getting in the fucking back of this fucking cab, dude?				√	√			
89	Dude, just fucking put the gun down!				√	√			
90	You shut the fuck up!				√	√			
91	That's Bam Margera dumbshit!				√		√		
92	You fucking idiot.	√					√		
93	Why the fuck did I agree to do this shit?				√				√
94	It wasn't even my fucking idea.				√				√
95	I can't believe that shit, dude.				√	√			
96	What the fuck, are you an actor or some bullshit?	√							√

No.	Utterances	Type of Taboo Words				Function of Taboo Words			
		EP	PR	VU	OB	TDA	TSC	TBP	TMA
97	He fucking pulled out a gun on me, dude!				√	√			
98	Every time it gets fucking worse and worse.				√				√
99	You guys didn't fucking superglue that, did you?				√	√			
100	I got your dick hair all over my fucking face!			√		√			

Appendix B. List of Taboo Words Used in the Research

No.	Taboo Words	Taboo Words Written in Complete Spelling
1	A*s	Ass
2	A*shole	Asshole
3	Bast*ard	Bastard
4	B*tch	Bitch
5	C*ck	Cock
6	C*nt	Cunt
7	D*mn	Damn
8	D*ck	Dick
9	F*ck	Fuck
10	Fag*t	Fagot
11	Godd*mn	Goddamn
12	H*ll	Hell
13	Jesus Chr*st	Jesus Christ
14	Midg*et	Midget
15	Motherf*cker	Motherfucker
16	Numbn*ts	Numbnuts
17	Nigg*s	Niggas
18	Nigg*r	Nigger
19	R*tard	Retard
20	Sh*t	Shit
21	S*cks	Sucks
22	T*t	Tit

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