Appraisal of Beyoncé Knowles as a popular artist: 
Analysing the evaluative discourse of the online fan base

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KEYWORDS

Appraisal
Appreciation
Attitudes
Beyoncé Knowles
Evaluation
Hip-Hop culture
Identity
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Message boards
Appraisal of Beyoncé Knowles as a popular artist: Analysing the evaluative discourses of the online fan base.

Abstract.

Appraisal of Beyoncé Knowles as a popular artist: Analysing the evaluative discourses of the online fan base.

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This research uses the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) approach, more specifically, the appraisal theory to analyse the online message postings by fans of the popular music artist, Beyoncé Knowles. Through their online writings, insight into their evaluative discourses is gained. This research focuses on the emotional, judgemental and evaluative stance in their writings, especially; the linguistic choices that the online fans use in order to convey their attitudes: appreciation and judgement and affect towards Knowles.

In order to do such an analysis, the study considers the different Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) levels of meaning (interpersonal, textual and experiential metafunctions). Several questions become pertinent: What kinds of interpersonal relations and identities are implicated on the message boards? (Interpersonal metafunction). How are these expressed textually? (Textual metafunction). What kinds of experiences/fields are implicated in the messages? (Experiential metafunction).

The research concludes that in terms of identity, fans tend to latch onto a Hip-Hop culture in order to create and maintain a connection to Knowles. Fans display this linguistically by writing certain words out phonetically as they would be pronounced orally. Gender boundaries are transgressed irrespective of the fans’ gender. Posts also demonstrate colourful expressive responses in relation to Knowles. Whether the fan is male or female, both feel comfortable in using emotive language to demonstrate the impact which she has on their lives. In terms
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of appreciation fans tend to express that she has inspired and changed their lives. Attitudes explored demonstrated that a number of Knowles’ fans hold positive viewpoints and therefore they would align themselves positively towards her. The element of judgement was explored from different perspectives in relation to Knowles. One, being a website which suggested that Knowles had undergone an evil transformation. For evidence, these fans used her lyrics, gestures and images selectively as a way to “prove” their arguments.

As a contribution to knowledge, this research is useful in the sense that when individuals log online and leave their posts on message boards, they do not always realise the impact of the message that they leave behind. Using SFL and the appraisal theory, one is able to establish the attitudes: judgements, appreciation and affect individuals hold towards a particular topic or person (in this case towards Knowles). Through linguistically analysing message boards, one is able to connect individuals to possible identity options. In essence, the letters and words which individuals have strung together create a greater picture than what was possibly intended. Linguistically, it opens more avenues for exploration.

Date: July 2011.
Appraisal of Beyoncé Knowles as a popular artist: Analysing the evaluative discourses of the online fan base.

Declaration.

I declare that Appraisal of Beyoncé Knowles as a popular artist: Analysing the evaluative discourses of the online fan base is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

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CHAPTER 1:
Introduction.

1.0 Preamble.

The shortage of literature in relation to analysing online postings in respect to popular singers/artists is astonishing for the fact that online postings are the most common medium used for fans to interact with these artists, as well as, with each other. Furthermore, literature in respect to analysing online postings using the appraisal theory is also non-existent. These online postings present themselves in the form of posts on Youtube, posts in response to blogs and generally posts in response to music videos and video clips posted online. This “space” of interaction allows fans to share their opinions, thoughts and, to some extent, their beliefs concerning what is morally acceptable or not and what is considered to be socially right or wrong.

To an extent, these “posts” can be seen as reviews in response to the video clip posted. These reviews in turn can inform the next viewer whether the music video or video clip is worth watching. Individuals leave their comments and linguistically fashion their posts to suit the context online. Through this process, their attitudes towards the particular singer/artist are revealed. Through the element of anonymity, online writers have the freedom to express their thoughts. Some websites, for example: Youtube, removes commentary that borders too much on hate speech.

The motivation for using Beyoncé Knowles’ fans’ online postings, as opposed to another artist, is simply because Knowles allows for two main genres (namely Rhythm and Blues and Hip-Hop) in music to mesh. This meshing of the two genres allows for a greater fan base. With this in mind, the analysis of my data has a wider range of responses in terms of attitudes.
Some theorists have written short articles on the analysis of online postings; however, their articles do not provide enough insight for my study. Apart from this, no ample research has been done in this field of investigation. Message boards, in relation to online postings, have been investigated mostly for the purpose of understanding how to interact within the space of the message boards/online postings, however, not focusing specifically on analysing the message board itself. With regards to literature that has been reviewed in relation to linguistically analysing message boards in relation to online postings, it can be noted that an analysis of this nature has not been done in this area. In addition, no literature on analysing message boards/online postings in terms of evaluative elements exists in South Africa.

The lack of literature has therefore motivated me to pursue this specific research. Because the literature falls short in respect to the importance of message boards/online postings as a vital tool in communication which displays evaluative stances, the investigation is essential. Applying the appraisal theory, this research analyses the evaluative discourses of the online fan base of Beyoncé Knowles.

1.1 Linguistic landscape.

Due to the fact that this research has its focus on Knowles’ fans’ online postings from different websites, a short description of message boards follows. Message boards or internet forums (as message boards are also known) may be described as the web version of an electronic mailing list or newsgroup. This form of communication enabled users to post comments and messages on other messages that were already present. As technology evolved, developments provided the space for different individual lists or newsgroups. These spaces offered more than just one forum, which focused on a particular topic. Internet forums seem to be more dominant in developed countries like Japan.
The function that forums perform is comparable to that of the bulletin board systems that were prevalent from the late 1970’s to the 1990’s\(^1\). These forums further serve to create a virtual community which maintains its regular users. Themes which are mostly explored in forums are: music, computer games, sports, fashion, video games, religion and politics. Frequent usage of message boards opens one up to the image macros and internet slang used within forums. In the case of most internet forums, users are required to register. These registered users then become members and are entitled to send or submit messages using the web application\(^2\).

It is these message boards/online postings which serve as a communication tool which have enabled me to access the data that I have used to proceed with my study. These message boards/online postings play an essential role for online writers and fans to post their messages. It is within this space that online writers and fans can interact, not only with each other, but also, to an extent, with their music icon. It is also within this space that online writers comment on each other’s posts, and in this way, attitudes are expressed.

1.2 Rationale.

The context described provides the background for pursuing this research. The motivation for this study is to analyse what the perceptions of the wider fan groups hold regarding Knowles. The message boards/online postings serve as a communication tool, not only towards her as an artist, but also amongst the fans themselves. By analysing three different websites, the linguistic choices that fans make use of may indicate how her fans feel towards her and her music. These three websites are namely: Contactmusic.com, YouTube; and The Vigilant


Citizen³. Her music meshes two popular genres of music, namely Rhythm and Blues and Hip-Hop. There is not a sufficient amount of literature regarding the role that online postings play with regards to relaying how her fans feel about her and her music. More importantly, there are even fewer linguistic studies on the language used in online postings. Critically, appraisal theory being a recent development in SFL theory, it has not been used to study online postings. Furthermore, not enough research has been done in this field of investigation, as well as, no literature on the analysis of message boards/online postings, in terms of evaluative elements exists in South Africa. Because the literature falls short in respect to the importance of online postings as a vital tool in communication which displays evaluative stances, the investigation is crucial.

1.3 Aims and objectives of the research.

1.3.1 Aim.

The main focus of this study is to explore the attitudes of Knowles’ fans online writings so as to gain insight into their evaluative discourses. This research’s focus is on the emotional, judgemental and evaluative stance in their writings.


http://www.youtube.com/comment_servlet?all_comments=1&v=dC06CMBQLM0 Date Accessed: 17 June 2010.

http://www.youtube.com/comment_servlet?all_comments=1&v=dC06CMBQLM0 Date Accessed: 17 June 2010.
1.3.2 Objectives.

This study will be limited within the following framework:

1. To analyse the data received from the online postings of Knowles’ fans in terms of attitudes.
2. To explore the data received using the appraisal theory.
3. To analyse the linguistic choices used as expression of appraisal from her fans towards her.
4. To investigate the constructions of (hybrid) identities of her online fans.
5. To discover how resemiotization plays a role in the analysis of images, thus shaping individuals’ opinions.

1.4 Research questions.

1. What does the data received from the online postings reflect in terms of:
   a) Attitudes
      i) Judgement
      ii) Appreciation
      iii) Affect

2. Can a connection be made through the linguistic choices of her fans as an expression as to how they perceive her?

3. What arising identities are evident amongst the responses in the online postings?

4. What are the dominant forms of linguistic choices used to construct these identities?

5. What role does resemiotization play in connecting images to linguistic viewpoints expressed?
1.5 **Scope of the study.**

This research was restricted to online posts which were collected on three different websites. The use of three different websites for analysis gave grounds for a better comparative research in terms of evaluative stances. Each website provided different and alike views of Knowles. However, linguistically “different” and “alike” these views were, they were rich in evaluative language and served the purpose of my study.

1.6 **Research design and methodology.**

My research makes use of a text-based qualitative research design. For textual analysis, the appraisal theory is used in discovering the main evaluative discourses (Martin and White, 2005). In addition, the appraisal theory explores transgressive theory and identity in relation to the data. This method therefore aids the qualitative analysis. The various posts are purposefully selected in order to demonstrate the variation in linguistic choices which indicate evaluative stances and identity. As previously mentioned, three specific websites were used to collect data. The use of this sampling method enabled a more comprehensive representation of posts selected in my data in terms of evaluative discourses.

1.7 **Chapter outline.**

Chapter 1 serves as an overview of my research by providing background information to the research, the reason for the study, the aims and objectives of the study, research questions, scope of the study and the research methodology undertaken. In the historical overview, I provide background information to message boards/online postings, which serves as the main focus of my research. The reasons for undertaking the research and making use of the appraisal framework is provided in the rationale section, as well as, why I chose to use Knowles’ fans’ online postings for the purpose of my study. Furthermore, Chapter 1 states the aim of the research, which is to explore the *attitudes* expressed by Knowles’ fans through their online posts to get insight into their evaluative
discourses. The focus is on their judgemental, emotional and evaluative writings. In addition, the focus is on the linguistic choices that the online fans use in order to convey their attitudes towards Knowles. The research questions and objectives supporting this aim are also stated.

Chapter 2 provides the literature that was reviewed in terms of Beyoncé Knowles as a popular artist, Hip-Hop culture, double voicing and multi-vocality, transgressive theory, evil symbolism, intertextuality, resemiotization, identity and lastly, discourse. Literature on Beyoncé Knowles serves to introduce her as a popular artist, as well as, to provide background information on her as an individual in the music industry. The section on Hip-Hop culture provides the framework to analyse what kind of identity Knowles’ fans are latching onto in order to create a connection with her. The section on transgressive theory reinforces that Knowles has indeed undergone a transformation which is evident in her music videos, this is further debated by her fans/online writers in their own posts. Evil symbolism is reviewed to provide a backdrop as to why Knowles’ online fans argue that she has undergone an evil transformation. In order to understand the analysis, one must understand the symbols which are discussed and explained. Literature on double-voicing and multi-vocality and resemiotization provides the means to analyse Knowles’ re-performing of gestures and lyrics for her own purpose. The section on identity provides the lens to view what the linguistic choices of the online fans project about their identity. Lastly, literature on discourse is provided to view these evaluative stances as discourse.

Chapter 3 describes the theoretical framework that is used for my research. It explains that the appraisal theory forms part of the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) approach to language. Language in this sense is located in a system of meanings. For the purpose of my research, the appraisal theory focuses on attitude and its sub-focus areas such as: judgement, affect and appreciation which also form part of this chapter. The appraisal framework has been criticised for being restricted to words only, instead it should incorporate the non-linguistic fundamentals as well.
Chapter 4 provides a description of the methodology, research design, analysis and ethical considerations. With regards to the research design, reasons for pursuing a qualitative method for the collection of my data are given in this chapter. In addition my research design is outlined along with my analysis and ethical considerations in this section.

Chapter 5 applies the appraisal theory in relation to my data. In this chapter the attitudinal elements of judgement and affect are explored in relation to my findings.

Chapter 6 focuses on appreciation and affect in relation to Hip-Hop culture. Through the analysis of these attitudinal elements, an investigation into the identity of Knowles’ online fan base is conducted in terms of Hip-Hop culture.

Chapter 7 provides the conclusions made from the particular objectives. These conclusions are based on the analysis of the data in terms of judgements, affect and appreciation. In addition to the evaluative discourses, it discusses the identities, gender and Hip-Hop culture exposed through SFL and particular observations demonstrated about the online writers/fans in relation to Beyoncé Knowles as a popular artist/ musician.
CHAPTER 2:

Literature review.

2.0 Introduction.

The following literature review begins by introducing Beyoncé Knowles. Hip-Hop culture being explored as well as notions of double voicing and multivoicality, transgressive theory, evil symbolism, intertextuality, identity and lastly, discourse.

A key aspect to take into consideration is that literature in respect of analysing online message boards/postings is inadequate for the purpose of my study. The subject of exploring online messages of fans in relation to popular artists in terms of attitudes: judgement, appreciation and affect have not been widely investigated. Literature on analysing online messages falls short in terms of: firstly, literature on analysing online messages is minimal. Secondly, literature with particular relation to the meshing of genres of music, and the outcome of hybrid identities, is scarce. Thirdly, the analysis of online message boards/postings has not been extensively investigated from a linguistic point of view. It is with this in mind, that the following literature review examines the appraisal theory, identity and Hip-Hop culture in depth.

2.1 Beyoncé Giselle Knowles as a popular artist.

By way of a brief introduction, Beyoncé Giselle Knowles was born 04 September 1981. Her occupation over the years has grown to include being a singer-songwriter, actress, dancer, model, choreographer, record producer and video director. In the late 1990’s Knowles shot to stardom as the lead singer in the R&B girl group “Destiny’s Child”. The group is also known as “DC”, the band was made up of Beyoncé Knowles, Kelly Rowland and Michelle Williams.

The group was formed in Housten, Texas, 1997. The members of Destiny’s Child started their musical endeavours in their teenage years under the name “Girls’ Tyme”\(^5\). At the time, the band comprised of Rowland, Knowles, LeToya Luckett and LaTivia Roberson. After years had passed of performing underground, they were signed to Columbia Records and their name changed to its current one. The group acquired mainstream recognition after the release of their best-selling second album. “The writing’s on the wall”. This album consisted of number-one hit singles “Say my name” and “Bills, bills, bills”. Even though the group achieved commercial success, it was weighed down by legal turmoil and internal conflict, as Luckett and Roberson tried “to split off the group’s manager Mathew Knowles”\(^6\). Not long after, they were replaced with Farrah Franklin and Williams. In 2000, however, Franklin also left the group, thus making Destiny’s Child a trio. Their third album “Survivor”, “which contains themes the public interpreted as a channel to the group’s experience”, consists of the hits “Bootylicious”, “Independent Women” and “Survivor”. Destiny’s Child announced a hiatus in 2002 to allow its members to pursue individual success. In 2004, they re-united with “Destiny Fulfilled”, one year later the group announced during their world tour that it would disband allowing its members to attain individual careers. It is interesting to note that when Destiny’s Child had finally changed their name in 1996, it was “taken from a passage in the Book of Isaiah [7] [13]”\(^7\).

Knowles’ record sales joint with that of the group has grown over 100 million, according to Sony. In 2003, Knowles pursued a solo career. She went on to release “Dangerously in love”, “Crazy in love” and “Baby Boy”; these hits went on to being one of the most booming albums of that year. Knowles also received a record-tying five Grammy awards. Knowles released more hits after the band’s disbandment, her third solo album “I am… Sasha Fierce” was released in 2008 which included “Single Ladies (Put a Ring on it)”. Taking home six Grammy awards, Knowles broke the record for the most “Grammy awards won by a female

artist in one night”\textsuperscript{8}. The awards that she has won to date are: 3 with Destiny’s Child and 13 for her solo career.

From the above, it is very evident that Knowles has established herself as a successful artist. Due to all of the press that she receives, it can be noted that she is very popular amongst her audience. To proceed with an analysis of the response of her fans in relation to her will certainly be interesting. Of late, there has been controversy regarding Knowles and her lyrics and what she represents. The argument is that the esoteric meaning exposed by certain symbols regarding her new persona appears to be much deeper. It seems as though Sasha Fierce, which is the name of her latest album, “is a symbolic representation of an artist taken over by evil to obtain success”\textsuperscript{9}. I have found posts by her fans which support how they perceive this information which has been brought to light. The message boards/online postings, in relation to Knowles, communicate her online fans’ attitudes towards Knowles in relation to her as an individual and how she is represented as Sasha Fierce.

For the purpose of my study, I will refer to the online messages as online writing, because indeed this is the case:

According to Spear (1988:3) “popular stereotypes depict writing as a lonely act. We envision the writer scribbling by candlelight in a chilly garret or, less romantically, clicking away at a computer terminal with only the blinking cursor for a friend. The isolation and tedium associated with these images colour people’s attitudes toward writing; they are not pleasant aspects”.


\textsuperscript{9} The Vigilant Citizen. Date Accessed: 06 March 2010.
Regardless of these familiar images, writing can be seen as a lively communal activity. The eternalness of written texts allows individuals to share something about their ideas and who they are. Writing is actually thought made more concrete, it is part of a social dialogue which enables individuals to check their perceptions against that of others. In this way, ideas are developed, modified and continue the process of thinking. Spear (1988:3) notes that whenever a writer seeks a response from other individuals by means of sharing drafts or verbalising their ideas, the writing process becomes a social one. This process of sharing enables writers “to hear what their ideas sound like and to solicit feedback as they continue to think about a topic, draft, or revise”. In relation to my research, one can treat the responses of the online messages as online “writing”; this form of “writing” allows the online fan base to share their thoughts, views and opinions. By sharing their thoughts, these individuals can scale their judgements and thoughts against those of other online fans.

Due to the fact that my research has its focus on a somewhat functional approach to language, I draw on Halliday (1973:22) that “the social functions of language clearly determine the pattern of language varieties, in the sense of what have been called ‘diatypic’”. He goes on to explain that the linguistic repertoire or register range of an individual or a community comes from a variety of language uses which serves in a specific sub-culture or culture. Further on, Halliday (1973:24) states that “learning language is learning how to mean”. Learning to make use of language comes hand-in-hand with using a text within its correct context in order for the meaning to be understood. The text, in turn, can serve as an indicator to the context. Hasan (1996) explains that the link between context of situation and text has different meanings to various people. In terms of my research, the context purely revolves around Knowles, her outward presentation and her music videos. Her online fans/writers respond to the particular context and respond accordingly. In my given data, I have found that is very rare that a fan/ online writer would leave a comment which has no link to the context. In the case of my research, I argue that those who view Knowles’ videos, whether they like Knowles or not- in the space for posts- they leave messages centred around the topic of Knowles.
This proves to be an indication that the context in which these fans are communicating is not lost.

2.2 Hip-Hop and cultural authenticity.

“Hip-Hop... represents a complex weave of black Atlantic style and African American homespun. As it gains audiences around the world, there is always the danger that it will be appropriated in such a way that its histories will be obscured, and its messages replaced by others... Even as it remains a global music, it is firmly rooted in the local and the temporal’ it is music about “where I’m from,” and as such proposes a new kind of universality” (Potter, 1995 in Mitchell, 2001:5).

Observing my data, one can note that the element of “Hip-Hop” is present in my data. Even though Knowles is renowned for being a Rhythm and Blues (R&B) performer, the fans leave traces of Hip-Hop in their messages. It can be noted that in some of Knowles’ songs, rap has been introduced, this could account for the coming together of fans that enjoy genres of R&B, rap and Hip-Hop. According to Mitchell (2001:1) “Hip-Hop and rap cannot be viewed simply as an expression of African American culture; it has become a vehicle for global youth affiliations”. He goes on to explain that Hip-Hop and rap serves as a tool for reconstructing local identity worldwide. Being an internationally accepted popular musical idiom, rap persists in provoking “attention to local specificities”.

Hip-Hop and rap outside the United States expose the workings of popular music in terms of being a culture industry fuelled just as much by local artists and their respective fans as by the demands of U.S cultural domination and global capitalism. It is interesting to note that the flow of consumption with regards to “rap music within the popular music industry continues to proceed hegemonically, from the USA to the rest of the world, with little or no flow in the opposite
direction” (Mitchell, 2001:2). Furthermore, idioms and models derived from the booming period of Hip-Hop in the United States in the mid and late 1980s have been combined in these particular countries as local vernaculars and musical idioms to create exhilarating distinctive syncretic manifestations of local indigenous elements and African American influences.

According to Pennycook (2007:102) the worldwide spread of Hip-Hop is greatly attested. This also applies to the range of interpretations of Hip-Hop culture. This has a specific regard to those positions that are of the opinion that Hip-Hop “is and always will be a culture of the African-American minority… an international language, a style that connects and defines the self-image of countless teenagers” (Bozza, 2003: 30 in Pennycook, 2007:102). Pennycook draws further on the view that (Perry, 2004:19 in Pennycook, 2007: 102) “black American music, as a commercial American product, is exported globally. Its signifying creates a subaltern voice in the midst of the imperialist exportation of culture”. Mitchell (2001: 1-2 in Pennycook, 2007:102) argues that rap and Hip-Hop cannot simply be seen “as an expression of African-American culture”, it has transformed into a vehicle for reconstructing local identity in almost everywhere in the world as well as for worldwide youth affiliations.

Pennycook (2007:103) goes on to note that the authenticity of the Hip-Hop ideology of “[k]eepin’ it real,’ presents a particular challenge for any understanding of global spread”. This perception regarding “the real” is often seen as an obsession with a certain story about drugs, violence and “life in the hood”, or in relation to the belief that there is something particularly authentic with regards to how brutal lifestyles are described. The connection between Hip-Hop culture and my research will focus on the fact that some of the linguistic choices within some of Knowles’ lyrics portray a sense of Hip-Hop culture. Some of her songs have the addition of a rap artist as part of a song who raps within the song. This then as a whole contributes to how the song is perceived by the wider audience. Alim, Ibrahim and Pennycook (2009:27) explore the meaning of Hip-Hop transforming to being localised. What will come of this exploration is not
only to understand Hip-Hop but also “for broader concerns in anthropology and linguistics”, it has particular reference to the concern of the global and rapid spread of English.

Alim, Ibrahim, and Pennycook (2009) suggests that if one holds the vision in mind of the worldwide spread of English or Hip-Hop that stems from one source before it became localised by means of being adoptive of different linguistic and cultural forms, one may not see the dynamics of struggle, change and appropriation. Robbins (2001 in, Alim, Ibrahim, and Pennycook 2009:27) points out that in an attempt to make sense to understand the link between modernity and tradition, the preference, amongst anthropologists mostly, is to place emphasis on the processes of appropriation and localisation. In this way, certain parts of modernity would become localised. However tempting it might be to follow suit in taking this approach to Hip-Hop localisation, it would then suggest that “keeping it real” actually means “keeping things culturally local” (Pennycook, 2007 in Pennycook, 2009:27).

### 2.3 Double-voicing and multi-vocality.

Higgins (2009) suggests that it is assumed, in most cases, that English provides a connection for local communities to the globalised world. In the same breath, however, the globalised language is also used to provide distinctively local needs. In this sense it is used as a local language within local areas. Higgins (2009:2) explores how a local shop owner named his shop “2PAC STORE”. This store, however, sells beans and rice. The name of the store is associated with the late US rapper, Tupac Shakur. From this example, Higgins (2009) demonstrates “how English can serve a local sphere of material consumption through intersecting with a sphere of global cultural production”. It furthermore demonstrates “how localised uses of English often creatively mix genres”. Through the exploitation of English by millions of speakers from around the world, it produces various types of “hybridisation”. Bhaktin (1981:358-359 in Higgins 2009:3) explains that hybridisation is a mixing of different “languages” which co-exist within
parameters “of a single dialect. A single national language, a single branch, a single group of different branches or different groups of such branches, in the historical as well as paleontological past of languages”.

Hybridity is conditioned by various domains of language use. Bhaktin (1986 in Higgins 2009) puts forth that each domain is constituted and conditioned by various speech genres. In turn, the linguistic features of each genre are formed by the particular nature of that specific sphere of communication. In terms of my research, this has specific reference to the message boards/online postings, the space in which these fans are interacting.

The context in which a communication takes place proves to be a key factor when understanding the communication. Higgins (2009:3) notes that the context-which includes the surrounding space-“does something to people when it comes to communicating”. It defines and organises “sociolinguistic regimes” in which particular elements are recognised by sets of expectations and norms with regards to communicative behaviour. Hybridised languages often challenge linguistic descriptions in their process of morphing and shifting-sometimes into novel languages, as they are used by speakers. They defy existing notions of bilingualism too, due to the fact that most speakers of hybrid languages are not able to distinguish discrete languages from the variety of languages which they speak.

Higgins (2009:6) proposes that the Bhaktinian notion of multi-vocality provides a more comprehensive framework for understanding and interpreting the transcultural and hybrid language used within such societies. “Multi-vocality refers to a set of interlinked concepts detailed in Bhaktin’s writings on voice as well as the multiple perspectives, or speaking positions articulated through language” (Higgins, 2009:6). The concept depicts the quality of “linguistic utterances as contested terrains” (Holquist, 2002:24 in Higgins, 2009:6) in which
different meanings of various utterances can be voiced, in addition, “where an indefinite number of interpretations are possible”.

Higgins (2009) uses the concept of multi-vocality in two interlinked ways which roughly correspond to a microlevel and macrolevel sociolinguistic analysis which are interlinked. *Multi-vocality* refers to the various *polyphony* or ‘voices’ that individual utterances “can yield due to their syncretic nature”. Applying the notions of hybridisation and multi-vocality to my data, it proves to be useful in the analysis. Through each online writer’s linguistic choices, a sense of hybrid identities crop up. Thus, language use is essential in my analysis. *Multi-vocality* aids in the positioning of each online writer- whether they articulate themselves to be in a positive or negative alignment/ disalignment to Knowles.

In addition to *multi-vocality*, Higgins (2009:37) discusses the notion of *double-voices*. In relation to my research, it can be noted that in some posts, there are online writers who do not communicate their messages in English like the majority of other online writers. It is interesting that instead of switching between languages, the online writers would communicate mostly in Spanish. Due to the fact that some words resemble English words, English speakers can make out some of what the Spanish writers are saying. In this light, the notion of *double-voicing* plays a role. To quote Bhaktin (1981:293-294 in Higgins 2009:37):

> “The word in language is half someone else’s. It becomes ‘one’s own’ only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention. Prior to this moment of appropriation, the word does not exist in a neutral and impersonal language but rather it exists in other people’s mouths, in other people’s contexts, serving other people’s intentions: it is from there that one must take the word, and make it one’s own”.

From the above, it is then evident that the online writers of Knowles’ online fan base have, to an extent, double-voiced their communicative language, thus making it their own way to communicate online. The notion of double-voicing can be found in the different ways that language mixing is made use of to produce novel meanings. A thought to ponder on: with regards to the online Spanish writers, could the purpose of writing mostly in Spanish be a way to keep what is being said solely amongst the Spanish online fan base? And if this is the case, is this online fan base a separate group that was deliberately created to exclude other fans? In other words, do these writers wish to keep others out of their social online “group”; in this way, excluding, with reference to my data- the English speakers? Or, could it plainly be that these Spanish speakers can only communicate in Spanish? (See Appendix B Messages B34- B39)

Higgins (2009) puts forth an interesting notion whereby it is stated that the names of Hip-Hop are essential pointers for the construction of identity. Looking at my research data, it can be noted that Knowles is sometimes referred to as “Queen B” in the online posts. Higgins (2009) notes that although the usage of high-status labels like: “Queen”, “Master” and “Prince”- the names of famous singers and bands- was at first seen as mimicry of west-based Hip-Hop. These particular naming practices are debatably just as African in their origin. Osumare (2007 in Higgins, 2009:94) suggests that this process of naming forms “part of the power of the word, the centre of African artistic expression that forms the ‘African aesthetic’ at the centre of all Hip-Hop”. This aesthetic, in particular, forms part of an extension of artistic expressions which originate from Africa; like storytelling and verbal word play. Naming is an empowering process and it is part of this aesthetic. It serves to recall one’s identity from repressive circumstances.

Drawing on the African trickster figure with regards to storytelling traditions, Hip-Hop artists use language as a means to cheat through verbal artistry, “a feat perhaps most clearly recognisable in verbal ‘battles’ in which the audience chooses the most talented emcee” (Higgins, 2009:94). Rappers, in particular, reinvent themselves and their identities through changing their names according
to what they wish to project: their skills or desired traits. Looking at the provided example by Higgins: Sean Combs renamed himself to become Puff Daddy; it was followed by P, Diddy and then just Puffy. Although Knowles does not purely fall into the category of solely Hip-Hop, but rather blends Hip-Hop and Rhythm and Blues (R&B), it can be noted that she too reinvented herself through naming. This can be seen where Knowles was first known as being part of the girl band “Destiny’s Child”, then she went solo to become just “Beyoncé Knowles” and then recently, she became “Sasha Fierce”.

2.4 An exploration into transgressive theories.

In relation to my research, according to Pennycook (2007:36), Hip-Hop- in a broader sense “may be seen as a set of transgressive semiotic practices, breaking the rules of dancing, scratching against the groove, rapping against the status quo, tagging the public space”. From its decline of notions of originality and authorship to its habitually aggressive challenges to politics, aesthetics and social norms, Hip-Hop transgresses what is seen as permissible and possible, “a set of ‘post-apocalyptic’ cultural forms set against decaying, postindustrial urban spaces around the world” (Potter, 1995:8 in Pennycook, 2007:36). Just as the trans of transsexual, transvestite and transgender, to be trans and to think, does not only imply to cross over, to go beyond the prescribed norms of cultural and social dictates, it also means to query the ontologies on which the different definitions of gender, sex and sexuality lies on (Butler, 2004 in Pennycook, 2007: 36). It is pointed out that transgressive sexuality is perceived as an offence against what is seen/ known as the so-called ‘real’, the contemporary structure of illusion and reality, it is viewed as an ontological “crime”, before being seen as a moral one (Jervis 1999 in Pennycook 2007).

Hooks (1994) suggests that to transgress is to push against, to oppose and to traverse the oppressive boundaries of class, race and gender domination. Furthermore, she puts forth that “transgressions” can be seen as “a movement against and beyond boundaries” (Hooks, 1994:12). Jervis (1999 in Pennycook,
2007:41) holds that transgression is more than mere subversion, reversal, inversion or opposition; instead it consists of “hybridisation, the mixing of categories and the questioning of the boundaries that separate categories”. Instead of directly challenging the status quo, it explores the various ways in which the normal, common sense, the taken-for-granted, the law, the given are in most cases, fixed arbitrarily around power relations yet also selective about what they exclude. Transgressive theory does not only defy the mechanisms and boundaries that maintain categories and ways of thinking but it also produces other and different ways of thinking.

Transgression can be seen as, not only an epistemological question but also central to desire. Lacan (1992 in Pennycook 2007:41) notes “without a transgression there is no access to jouissance, and that is precisely the function of the law. Transgression in the direction of jouissance only takes place if it is supported by the oppositional principle, by the forms of Law.” In other words, individuals’ desires are frequently produced within the limits of cultural and social regulation, and this jouissance then becomes reliant on the transgression of these limitations. It can be noted that Knowles transgresses in more than one way: firstly, Knowles transgresses the frame that is attached to her. By this, I mean that Knowles is known to be a Rhythm and Blues singer; further investigation proves that she brings two genres together and therefore brings two big fan groups together; namely- Rhythm and Blues and Hip-Hop. And secondly, Knowles’ transformation from good to evil through “Sasha Fierce” sheds light on further transgression. In light of this, Knowles demonstrates that she can push the boundaries- not only in terms of her music but also socially, where certain behaviour is deemed as either morally acceptable or morally unacceptable.

2.5 Evil symbolism in relation to Beyoncé Knowles.

By looking at the imagery displayed on Knowles’ outfit (Appendix C, Image CC) and the way in which she positions herself within other provided images suggests that her transformation is evil. In order to provide an accurate analysis of Knowles
in relation to evil, a brief understanding of terms and phrases will be provided. These terms and phrases are referred to on actual websites, as well as, within posts “written” by online writers.

In my analysis, it is clear to see that Knowles (Appendix C, Image CC) has a goat’s head (like the image on the left) on her outfit.

The “Sabbatic Goat” or “Occult figural candles of Baphomet” are mainly made use of by practitioners of occultism in order to acquire certain desires. Black Baphomet candles are symbolism for being devotional to the being known as Baphomet, however the individual conceives of him. Red Baphomet candles are believed to cause an individual to “burn with lust”, it is also used in spells of domination and sexual arousal. With regards to what the Baphomet actually refers to varies from one individual to the other. To a lot of Christians, the term “Baphomet” has no significance\textsuperscript{10}. Throughout the ages, there have been a variety of strange idols. It is the idol of the Baphomet which seems to be the most mysterious. What is more commonly known about this mysterious idol is that it is sometimes referred to or called the “goat idol of the Knights Templar and the deity of the sorcerers’ Sabbat”\textsuperscript{11}. In many accounts relating to the Baphomet, it is described as an idol with “a monstrous head, a demon in the form of a goat, a figure with a goat’s head and a body combining the characteristics of a dog, bull, and [an] ass”. It is believed that the body was thought to signify the burden of matter- from this arose the repentance from sin. The hands are noted to be human; this created a sign of esotericism in order to impress a certain mystery upon the initiates. At first, “they represented the sanctity of labour; and by pointing two lunar crescents, the upper

\textsuperscript{10} \url{http://www.theforbiddenknowledge.com/hardtruth/uspresidentasmasons} Date Accessed: 22 February 2011.

\textsuperscript{11} \url{http://www.themystica.com/mystica/articles/b/baphomet.html} Date Accessed: 28 February 2011.
being white and the lower black, they also represented good and evil, mercy and justice”. The lower half of the goat’s body was disguised suggesting the mysteries of the world wide generation, it is symbolised by the phallus or the caduceus. The female goat’s breasts represented the only symbols for toil, redemption and maternity\textsuperscript{12}. According to satanic/occultists doctrine (see picture left), “the upper four points of the goat’s head represent the four elements of the world: Fire, Water, Earth and Air. The bottom fifth point represents the spirit of Lucifer”\textsuperscript{13}. The fifth stretches down into the so-called mind of the goat, in this case it represents Lucifer.

In Appendix C, Image CC specifically, it is interesting to note that Knowles tries to emulate the satanic star. At the same time, as discussed in my analysis, she wears the Baphomet on her out fit. The backdrop to the evil symbolism to what Knowles projects in her images in relation to the Baphomet- it can be noted that the idol was said to “be worshipped by the Order of the Knights Templar of heresy, homosexuality and among other things, worshipping this idol and anointing it with the fat of murdered children”. It was however only 12 of the 231 knights whom were interrogated by the church who admitted to having knowledge of or to worshipping the Baphomet\textsuperscript{14}.

\textsuperscript{12} http://www.themystica.com/mystica/articles/b/baphomet.html Date Accessed: 28 February 2011.

\textsuperscript{13} http://www.theforbiddenknowledge.com/hardtruth/uspresidentasmasons Date Accessed: 22 February 2011.

\textsuperscript{14} http://www.satanic-kindred.org/baphomet.htm Date Accessed: 28 February 2011.
The symbol of the Baphomet (as seen on the bottom of the previous page) was made use of by the Knights Templar in order to represent “Satan”. “The Baphomet represents the powers of darkness combined with the regenerative fertility of the goat”\(^{15}\). In comparing to the two images, the pentagram is presented as “encompassing the figure of a man in the five points of the star - three points up, two pointing down symbolising man's spiritual nature." ["Temple of Satan", http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/Lofts/6877/]"\(^{16}\).

The Knights Templar is known for being one of the most famous Western Christian military orders. The association lasted for about two centuries in the Middle Ages. The Order was favoured charity by Christendom, and rapidly grew in power and membership. Templar Knights were known for their “distinctive white mantles with a red cross”\(^{17}\). They were one of the most skilled fighting groups of the Crusades. The existence of the Templars was closely tied to the Crusades. However, when the Holy Land was lost, support decreased. In 1307, many of the Templars’ members were arrested in France, tortured into giving confessions and then they were burned at the stake. In 1312, Pope Clement V disbanded the Order.

With this background in mind, the understanding is made clearer as to why Knowles’ fans identify that she has undergone an evil transformation. Clearly because she wears the head of the goat openly and in explicit colour on her out fit. In addition, the judgements made in relation to Knowles regarding religion also show that her fans do not only take note of how she projects herself through music but through her outward projection too. By this I am not only referring to what she projects in posed pictures but also what symbolism she makes use of in her music videos and in her on stage performances. Hence these judgements are influenced by what the fans have noticed about Knowles and how she has changed over time.

as well as, after she met her now husband, Jay-Z. For the fact that it was made somewhat known that Jay-Z was possibly part of a Secret Society\textsuperscript{18}, this fuels Knowles’ fans to believe that she has been influenced by her husband to become a “devil worshipper”. Whether this is true or not is beyond this thesis. However, a good number of online writers seem to believe that.

\section*{2.6 Drawing on intertextuality and resemiotization.}

When looking at the data, one will notice that the texts draw on prior texts. Intertextuality performs its function within this research. Foucault (1974:23) states that: “The frontiers of a book are never clear-cut: beyond the title, the first lines and the last full stop, beyond its internal configuration and its autonomous form, it is caught up in a system of references to other books, other texts, other sentences: it is a node within a network… The book is not simply the object that one holds in one's hands... Its unity is variable and relative”. Intertextuality shows how texts rely on prior texts to establish meaning. The text allows for individuals to provide a context in which texts may be formed and understood in. The text also allows for the reader to make the connection that the text may draw on both the textual and social, intertextuality can be seen as the “blurring” of genres.

According to Bhaktin (1986: 94 in De Fina, Schiffrin and Bamberg 2006: 11) intertextuality “is basically the property texts have of being full snatches of other texts, which may explicitly be demarcated and merged in, and which the text may assimilate, contradict, ironically echo, and so forth”. Kriesteva (1986 in Johnstone 2008:164) created the term “intertextuality” to refer to the way in which texts have ways of speaking. Texts build on or refer to prior or other discourses and texts. There are two kinds of “intertextuality”; horizontal and vertical intertextuality. Horizontal intertextuality refers to the way in which texts relate to

\textsuperscript{18} \url{http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=le_vSMrOkFU}, Date Accessed: 22 February 2011. See references.
other texts which follow or precede them. Vertical intertextuality refers to ways in which texts relate to each other that are of the same or similar category.

According to Wolfrey (2004) intertextuality refers to the ways in which all utterances, be they written or spoken, necessarily refer to other utterances, since words and linguistic/grammatical structures pre-exist the individual speaker and the individual’s speech. This means that grammatical structures and words exist before the individual and his or her speech. In addition, everyday speech and communication require intertextual elements to some extent; people therefore depend on prior background (schemata) knowledge in order to communicate in regular communication. Fairclough (2003: 47) adds to this by stating “that for any particular text or type of text, there is a set of other texts and a set of voices which are potentially relevant and potentially incorporated into the text”.

Fairclough (2003:37) also notes that genres, discourses and styles are both social elements and elements of texts. In texts, they are jointly structured in interdiscursive relations, relations wherein various discourses, genres and styles may be “mixed”, textured and articulated together in certain ways. As social elements, they are jointly articulated in specific ways in orders of discourse- this refers to the language aspects of social practices wherein language variation is controlled socially. From this, it can be seen that texts form part of social events which are fashioned by social practices (orders of discourses included), social agents on the one hand and by the causal powers of social structures (languages included) on the other. In relation to my data, it can be noted that social elements influence the way in which the online messages are formulated. Each participant will either add their own message or they will respond to another’s message. Each message is shaped through a social schema, having each individual responding in a way that he or she was taught within their society. Irrespectively, however, the linguistic choices of appraisal are still evident within the online messages.
In relation to intertextuality, Fairclough (2003: 39) takes a broad view. He states that in the most obvious sense, intertextuality refers to the presence of concrete elements of other texts within a text, for example: quotations. He draws on the use of writing, reported speech or thought, he states that it is indeed possible “not only to quote what has been said or written elsewhere, it is possible to summarise it”. This is the difference maker between forms of what is traditionally known as direct and indirect speech. The former claims to duplicate the actual words used in a conversation, while the latter does not. A summary can change the wording of what was actually written or said. Fairclough (2003:40) goes on to state that writing, reported speech or thought attributes what is summarised or quoted to the individuals who wrote, thought or said it. However, elements of other texts can also be integrated without attribution. Intertextuality therefore covers a variety of possibilities.

Fairclough (2003:40) establishes a connection between intertextuality and assumptions. He claims that the difference between intertextuality and assumptions is that the latter is not generally attributable or attributed to specific texts. Rather, it is a matter of relation between this text, what is written or what is said or thought elsewhere. An important difference between assumption and intertextuality is that intertextuality largely opens up difference by integrating other “voices” into the text whereas assumption diminishes it. The term “voice” is a useful means to focus on a co-presence in texts of the “voices” of certain individuals. People differ in various ways; orientation to difference is essential to social interaction. In relation to my data, the “voices” within the texts can be seen as the individuals that have taken part in the online postings.
When looking at these online messages, it can be noticed that a certain “voice” is prevalent within each message. Yancey (1994: 1) explores the term “voice” in relation to writing:

“Serious objections come from three points:

- Many traditional writing teachers have long been saying, in effect, ‘Don’t let students confuse writing and speaking. They are very different media. One of the big problems with student writing is too much speech orality in it.

- Derrida calls voice a major problem in our understanding of discourse- the idea that voice underlies writing and that writing always implies the ‘real presence’ of a person or a voice. This objection has spread beyond people who identify themselves as deconstructionists or poststructuralists.

- People committed to the social construction of knowledge, of language, and of the self tend to object to the concept of voice because it so often seems to imply a naïve model of the self as unique, single, and unchanging”.

Yancey (1994:3) goes on to dissect the term “voice”; voice is a production of the body. To refer to the voice in writing is to imply connotations of the body into the debate. By introducing this implication, it suggests an interest in the role the body plays in writing. One can distinguish between two dimensions to an individual’s ‘voice’: the style or manner in which they speak and the sound of their voice. Individuals demonstrably have unique voices, termed ‘voiceprints’. Voiceprints are very much the same as fingerprints used for identification. It is this sense of ‘voice’ which will provide the direction as to the stance that each individual online fan takes towards Beyoncé Knowles within their messages. It is noted that when one says a particular sentence, the tone of voice is recognisable and suggests which mood the individual is in. However, with regards to writing, the “options are comparatively small”; it is by the use of grammar: commas, full stops and exclamation marks which direct the reader as to the writer’s tone. It is with this in mind that one can dissect the online writers’ linguistic choices to convey their attitudes and thoughts towards Beyoncé Knowles.
Blommaert (2001:205 in Bock, 2007:54) refers the term ‘voice’ to “[Hymes’ notion of

The ways in which people manage to make themselves understood or fail to do so. This capacity to make oneself understood … is a capacity to generate an uptake of one’s words as close as possible to one’s desired contextualisation”.

It is as discourses travel across contexts that their status or value may alter in ways which are unpredictable; within one particular place, resources are functional, it is as they are shifted into other places that they become dysfunctional and thus contributing to a loss of voice (Bock 2007:54).

Higgins (2009:93) discusses the notion of re-entextualisation and how it explains the processes of cultural and linguistic reterritorialisation very well. “Re-entextualisation describes how speakers ‘take some fragment of discourse and quote it anew, making it seem to carry a meaning independent of its situation within two now distinct contexts” (Silverstein and Urban, 1996:2 in Higgins, 2009:93). This notion theoretically borrows from Bhaktin’s (1981) notion regarding polyphony and intertextuality in that an individual’s utterances are never authored exclusively because individual words have their own social history which were set with a variety of meanings obtained from previous listeners and speakers.

These prior meanings of utterances are not lost, in fact, they become a kind of platform on which novel meanings can be built on or added to. (Re)entextualisation is a handy context for the intertextual features of musical performances on different levels, because it explains the art of sampling. This can be seen in the practice of drawing out sections of older songs and layering them with new melodies, new rhymes and beats to produce a novel form of artistry.
This also highlights how artists over-use the earlier re-entextualisations of certain phrases and words to create a new meaning. According to Silverstein and Urban (1996:2) Re-entextualisation refers to the “re-quoting of text making it seems to carry meaning independent of its situation with two now distinct co(n)texts”. This notion could be used to explain and explore intertextuality which is dominant in almost every soapie, advert, and music genre (Hip-Hop in particular) “where ‘sampling’ is the new creativity”. With specific reference to my research and in agreement to Higgins (2009), this explains how the youth uses the worldwide capital of Hip-Hop language side-by-side the street savvy codes to produce simultaneous local and global identities for themselves.

With regards to resemiotization, as much as what individuals habitually re-voice and report words of others in talk, individuals also habitually tend to re-perform actions and gestures of others. They re-present ideas in various media (for example when a story is enacted in a play or read aloud), re-purpose objects, and re-make themselves and the environments along the way. The reworking of discourse that is displayed like this would habitually include multiple kinds of signs (gestures, design of spaces, talk, writing, making of objects). It can be noted, however, that researchers have not been fast enough to take up multimodality or semiotics to investigate anything more than interesting objects (like the screen of a computer with images, words and sounds) (Prior and Hengst 2010).

Iedema (2003:41) defines resemiotization/ semiotic remediation as being “about how meaning making shifts from context to context, from practice to practice, or from one stage of practice to the next”. Looking at the word as “re-semio-tised” demonstrates a displacement and translation from one semiotic mode to another, which could probably be more or less material/durable (cf. similarity to Prior and Hengst 2010 view of semiotic re-media-tion which follows). Resemiotization offers the analytical means for following how semiotics are transformed from one into the other whilst the social processes unfold questioning why these specific semiotics “mobilise” specific things at specific times. The notion of semiotic remediation does not seem to be that different from resemiotization (Prior and
It is perceived that in terms of being a practice, semiotic remediation is crucial to understanding communication and the work of culture.

Semiotic remediation pays attention to the various ways that semiotic performances are re-presented, reused, re-voiced and reported across media, chains of activities and modes. Prior and Hengst (2010) state that majority of texts that individuals are exposed to are the result of re-performing and re-purposing. Prior and Hengst (2010:142) furthermore state that resemiotization demonstrates how various practices take advantage of “making meanings oblique across different semiotic modes towards increasingly none bodied phenomena”. It is noticeable that Iedema’s (2003) view of resemiotization is not that different from Prior and Hengst’s (2010) view of semiotic remediation. Furthermore, semiotic remediation can be summarised as how individuals routinely re-voice and report other’s words in talk.

Semiotic remediation also focuses on how individuals, directors/ producers and/or actors in advertisements and movies habitually re-perform other individuals’ actions and gestures, re-present ideas in various modes/ media, repurpose objects and re-make themselves and their world in the process. This involves recontextualisation and intertextuality of various semiosis (signs) and discourses, as well as the mixing of semiosis (multimodality) and discourses. Resemiotization and semiotic remediation is a critical element for the analysis of Knowles’ images and lyrics. The focus is thus on Knowles’ attempt to re-construct herself as an evil icon.

2.7 Question of identities.

The notion of identity in terms of the online messages plays a function as one is able to distinguish between gender roles and whether or not these online writers have complied with these roles assigned to them. Also the notion of identity aids the analysis of my data as it highlights, linguistically, how each fan or online writer chooses to present him or herself to the wider online community. Identity
may be referred to as a process that will always be entrenched in social practices (Foucault 1984 in De Fina, Schiffrin and Bamberg 2006:2) where in discourse practice plays a key role (Foucault 1989 in De Fina, Schiffrin and Bamberg 2006:2). Discourse and social practices define and frame the way individuals, whether in groups or separately, present themselves to the broader community. Looking at the definition of identity, it suggests that the meaning of identity changes with time and space; this takes place in the ways in which membership is initiated and negotiated within a particular community within new boundaries; in particular social locations and in which ways the activity systems influence the development of constructing identity (Goodwin 1999 in De Fina, Schiffrin and Bamberg 2006:2).

The construction of identity is frequently related to the meaning of categories for exclusion and inclusion of the self and others, it also displays how this relates to their identification with everyday routines and activities. This would then reflect on identification categories and on the connection between individual identity and group membership. (Antaki and Widdicombe 1998b in De Fina, Schiffrin and Bamberg 2006: 3). The term “identity claims” can be noted as actions that individuals perform in order to create a definition of who they are to society. Throughout an individual’s life a change in their identity occurs, this is due to the fact that individuals are constantly responding to others’ actions and speech in several social worlds. The construction of identity can take place along two axes; “one is the larger cultural and socio-economic context of craftwork within a mass-production, late stage industrial society; the other, their more immediate family relationships” (De Fina, Schiffrin and Bamberg 2006:42) these are interdependent of each other. In addition, Blommaert (2005:205 in Bock, 2007) argues that “people don’t have an identity… their identities are constructed in practices that produce, enact, or perform identity”. However, these particular constructions are restricted by their “cultural repertoires” which individuals may choose to make use of if they wish to. It is evident that the question of identity plays a role in this research, as well as, the question of hybrid identities. The linguistic choices display different identities.
Looking at the various texts displayed in the online messages, it can be noted that, linguistically, different *styles* are made use of. Fairclough (2003 in Bock, 2007:51) refers style to the various ways in which speakers comprise their identities through their use of language. Fairclough points out that the process of identification is a complex one, it consists of the individual’s personality and social identity, for example: their social class and gender. This may not be intrinsic or fixed to people, but it is created through discourse and through language. He, however, argues that individuals have a “personality”, and a “self-consciousness” which has an effect on the way in which individuals interact with their surrounding environments. In relation to my research, the texts of the online messages note certain similarities (discussions about Beyoncé Knowles and expressing their views on the artist), they give rise to the personalities of these online writers. It is the text (the actual messages) that is constructed by and reflects styles, discourse and genres which are at the writers’ disposal to make use of when expressing views. It is their linguistic ‘way’ of bringing these messages across which reflect certain narrative personalities and styles of the online writers as individuals.

According to Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004:13) sociopsychological and variationist approaches may see identities as being reasonably independent and constant of language, social constructionists perceive identities “as an interactional accomplishment, produced and negotiated in discourse”\(^{19}\). It is argued by poststructuralists that “social constructionist agenda” does not place enough emphasis on the role of power with regards to the process of categorisation. Their research sheds light on ways in which certain identities are devalued or legitimised within the context: local, as well as, global political economies\(^{20}\). Of late, poststructuralist views are directed towards fissures and divides in categories that were previously viewed as being dichotomous or bounded. In addition, it brought to the focus transgendered, multiracial and hybrid

\(^{19}\) Davies and Harre, 1990; Edwards, 1997; Gergen, 1994; Harre and van Langenhove,1999 (in Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004:13).

identities that were previously disregarded. Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004:13) merge characteristics of both approaches, which in turn, appeals to the social constructionist perspective “on discursive construction of identities and to the poststructuralist emphasis on the role of power relations”.

Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004:14) discuss five aspects with regards to identities:

1) “Location within particular discourses and ideologies of language
2) Embedded-ness within the relations of power.
3) Multiplicity, fragmentation, and hybridity
4) The imagined nature of “new” identities; and
5) Location within particular narratives”.

When focusing on discourses, language ideologies and identities, Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004: 14) stand in agreement with a social constructionist perspective, they view identity choices as being validated, constructed, “and offered through discourses available to individuals at a particular point in time and place”. This particular discursive approach sees the connection between identity and language as being “mutually constitutive in at least two ways”. Firstly, languages, or certain discourses within language, provide the terms and other linguistic elements which identities are negotiated and constructed. Secondly, ideologies of identity and language lead the way in which people make use of linguistic resources to “index” their particular identities and to assess how others make use of their linguistic resources.

21 Bammer, 1994a, b; Bhabha, 1990; Brah, 1996; Hall, 1990 (in Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004:13).
With regards to identities which are “embedded in power relations”, Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004:15) note that poststructuralist thought, with particular reference to Bourdieu’s model “of symbolic domination”, allows one to criticise and analyse the “real-life” influence of discursive categories entrenched within global, as well as, local relations of power. Bourdieu argues that those individuals who are not speakers of the standard variety or official language are more prone to symbolic domination, if they support the variety of legitimacy of that language. These beliefs are moulded in the process of misrecognition, which in most cases, adds to the indexical connecting “of linguistic varieties with character types and cultural traits, whereby linguistic behaviours of others are seen as deriving from speakers’ social, political, intellectual, or moral character, rather than from historical accident” (Gal and Irvine 1995 in Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004:15).

Where fragmentation, multiplicity and hybridity are concerned; multiplicity serves as one of the important aspects. Early research of identity and language normally focused on one characteristic of language: either gender or ethnicity. The inquiry of poststructuralists pointed out the fact that identities are created “at the interstices of multiple axes, such as age, race, class, ethnicity, gender, generation, sexual orientation, geopolitical locale, institutional affiliation, and social status” where each characteristic of identity modifies and redefines the other (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004:16). Pavelenko and Blackledge (2004) argue that because people regularly adjust and change the ways in which they would position and identify themselves in diverse contexts, to aid understanding of identities- it would be better to view it in its entirety- instead of taking one subject position or single aspect into consideration, all aspects should contribute to the overall perception of identity.

Splintering and fragmentation gives rise to novel, hybrid, linguistic repertoires and identities. New identities may arise from novel discourses of class, ethnicity, sexuality or gender as other “options” become part of the background. According to Czarbiawska (2000 in Pavelenko and Blackledge 2004:17) identities are prone to “fashion individuals and institutions reform themselves according to identity
options that dominate certain times and places”. Realising this notion of “the emerging nature of identity” and of identity de-centering, shifts, fragmentation, and multiplicity can often be emphasised by transnational migration, which is led by poststructuralist philosophers to suggest the concept of hybridity “as a ‘third space’ that enables the appearance of new and alternative identity options” (Bhabha, 1990 in Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004:17). Looking at my data, it becomes evident that this sense of ‘hybridity’ plays a significant role with regards to the identity of the fans. The online fans tend to negotiate their identity to form a new identity which they think will be more acceptable to the rest of the online community. The linguistic choices of these fans indicate that they attempt to morph into a new persona or identity when writing their posts.

Looking at imagination in relation to identity, it is argued that the imagination plays an important part in the course of creating novel identity options. Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) go on to note that this particular process, in most cases, is supported by new “linguistic terms” such as: literary narratives and visual art. Combined, these produce “new practices of self-representation and thus new ‘imagined communities’”23. This notion of the imagination particularly dominates Kinginger’s, Pavlenko’s and Blackledge’s chapters. In relation to my research, it can be noted how the online fans wish to form some sort of interpersonal bond with Knowles. In some of the data (which will be discussed shortly), it can be seen that via linguistic choices, the fans try to form an identity which they believe connects with Knowles. They tend to use linguistic terms from Hip-Hop culture in their posts. Looking closer, it can also be noted that the fans attempt to write their posts in the way in which certain words are pronounced. This sense of “imagined identity” plays a substantial role in my research.

Identity narratives seem to play an important role in Pavlenko and Blackledge’s (2004) view of negotiation of identities. It is noted that “unprecedented

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transnational migration and displacement (Bammer, 1994a) and creation of new diasporas (Brah, 1996; Hall, 1990) are the hallmark of the twentieth century” (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004:18). Tension which occurs between decentred, shifting and fragmented identities experienced by individuals and groups and their quest for coherence and meaning are often a result of this phenomenon. Identity narratives provide an exclusive way in which this tension can be resolved, “(re) constructing the links between the past, present, and future, and imposing coherence where there was none” (Czarniawska, 2000; Hall, 1990; Pavlenko, 1998, 2001 in Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004: 18). Novel images and narratives provide a means to impress an imaginary coherence with regards to experience of fragmentation and dispersal, which has become the history of all imposed diasporas (Hall, 1990:224 in Pavelenko and Blackledge, 2004).

With regards to gender identity and music, Macdonald et al (2002:120) states that an observable characteristic of gender identity is that women and men interact in various kinds of activities and behaviours and are represented in various ways. For example: in Western culture, often times women are presented as passive in contrast to the active male characters. Women are portrayed to be interacting in a far narrower range of activities than men; furthermore women are placed in the domestic domain instead of the public domain. These gender roles can be observed in musical behaviours, preferences and beliefs. Musical consumption or the taste in music is perceived within the Western culture as personal and as an essential way in which each individual defines him or herself from others, because music is culturally positioned as an affective and expressive medium. “Taste” is however not ‘innocent’ or ‘natural’, instead it is the focal point to the way in which individuals define themselves. Studies in relation to musical consumption demonstrate “clear patterns of gender- and age-based genre preferences” Macdonald et al (2002:124). For example: studies of British and American music consumption show the importance of dancing (discos and clubs) for women in contrast to men. It is noted that dancing is seen as the only “out-of-home” leisure
activity that is engaged in more than men. Men are more likely to attend live concerts, visit the cinema or attend a sporting event\textsuperscript{24}.

Young girls have demonstrated a preference for romantic popular music, “love songs” and dancing. This has been attributed to placing an emphasis within female culture on establishing a home and finding a husband (Firth, 1983; Mc Robbie, 2000 in Macdonald et al 2002). The distinction between female and male musical tastes can be understood in the frame of the preservation of a positive social identity. With this in mind, drawing on social identity theory, Tarrent et al (2002 in Macdonald 2002:124) notes that “the social context in which affiliation with music takes place for adolescents is of central importance”, musical preference is a crucial factor in out-group and in-group membership, for the preservation of a positive social identity as well as for self-esteem. In this sense, music is seen as a platform on which extra-musical information regarding social judgements are made, this information is then used to create “a positive evaluation of an adolescent’s own group in order to maintain a positive social identity”. From this, it is evident that music plays somewhat of a crucial role in the lives of many individuals.

Looking at Knowles’ fans in relation to her, they position themselves, linguistically, in such a way to create a greater connection to Knowles. For the fact that Knowles is a popular artist, it is possible that a popular group for her genre of music is formed within social groups, because of this; individuals could possibly be listening to her music to fit in with that particular group. However, through my analysis, it appears that individuals who listen to Knowles’ music genuinely appreciate and like her music.

2.8 Gender as a role.

As mentioned above, linguistically, one is able to identify gender roles in the online messages. The identification of these gender roles, in turn, contributes to the different construction of identities and how the different online fans present themselves, linguistically. Cotterill and Ife (2001:25) discuss the construction of gender identity on a discursive level. These authors argue “that different conversational strategies and discourses contribute to the negotiation of (gender) identity”. This particular approach has played a critical role in current research on gender and language; it rejects the concept of gender as being natural, bipolar or fixed. Cotterill and Ife (2001) are of the position that gender identity is impacted by dominant cultural and social ideologies which is, in turn, manifested in talk as certain kinds of discourses. Simultaneously, leading discourses can be negotiated and resisted; it can potentially alter conventions and social norms (cf. Fairclough 1989, 1992 in Cotterill and Ife 2001:26). It is thus that the tensions between the traditional (“e.g. patriarchal”) and liberal (“e.g. feminist”) discourses, including the tensions between the discourses which represent the various cultural norms, enables speakers to portray themselves “as different gendered selves and to negotiate new gender positions”.

The notion of “hegemonic masculinity” was created by Robert Connell and his associates working in the field of feminist sociology. Connell (1995 in Cotterill and Ife, 2001: 3) notes that “in order to carry off ‘being a man’ in everyday life, men have to engage with hegemonic masculinity”. It is stated that hegemonic masculinity legitimates, naturalises, and maintains the interests of dominant and powerful men while, at the same time, subordinating others’ interests, with particular reference to the interests “of women and gay men”. Kiesling (1998:71 in Cotterill and Ife, 2001: 3) states that “hegemonic masculinity [is an] ideology based on hierarchy of dominant alignment roles, especially men over women, but also men over other men”. It is critical to keep in mind that the notion of

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hegemonic masculinity rests on the acknowledgement of several masculinities. It is also noted that in culture exists a variety of masculinities. Masculinity cannot be understood in isolation, the view is essentially relational. Masculinity is best understood and more meaningful in relation to femininity “and to the totality of gender relations” (Connell 1995:76 in Cotterill and Ife, 2001:3).

2.9 Evaluating discourse analysis.

According to Mayr (2004: 12):

“Discourse is often defined in two different ways that make different assumptions about the nature of language and the goals of Linguistics: the formalist paradigm views discourse as ‘language above the sentence or above the clause’ (Stubbs 1983:1 in Mayr 2004:12), whereas the functionalist paradigm regards discourse as ‘language in use’ (Broen and Yule, 1983 in Mayr 2004:12)”.

Looking at how online messages can be categorised as a discourse, the following literature proves necessary. According to Mayr (2004:13) if one should describe discourse as a social practice, it would simply be dealing with certain issues that are essential for social analysis, for example: in the institutional situation of the particular discursive event and how that moulds the nature of the constitutive effects of discourse and the discursive practices (Fairclough, 1992 in Mayr 2004:13). This particular definition of discourse creates a connection to Mayr’s (2004:2) view of institutional discourse “as being engaged in ‘reality construction’”.
According to Bock (2007:51) discourses are notable from texts. On the one hand, discourses refer to a wide range of patterns or ‘ways’ of talking, texts, on the other hand “refer to the actual linguistic interaction that takes place”. Discourses are informed by texts. Terre Blanche et al (2006:328 in Bock 2007:51) describes discourses as being wide ranging patterns of talk, “systems of statements”, that are made use of in certain conversations, discussions and speeches, however, not the conversations or speeches themselves. Conversations are most frequently referred to as “texts”, one can argue that particular discourse functions within certain texts, “or the text it draws on, or informed by, these discourses”.

According to Johnstone (2008:1) individuals in different academic disciplines and departments use the word “discourse analysis” for what it is that they do, or how they do it, or in some cases- both. A lot of these individuals have some sort of training in general linguistics, and some of them would “identify themselves as linguists”. Others would identify themselves chiefly with other fields of study, for example: communication, psychology, education, anthropology or cultural studies. Some would place their particular work in “the interdisciplinary endeavour of discourse studies”. Johnstone (2008:2) notes that the term “discourse” to discourse analysts often means the “actual instances of communicative action in the medium of language, although some define the term more broadly as ‘meaningful symbolic behaviour’ in any mode” (Blommaert 2005:2 in Johnstone 2008:2). It is in this sense that “discourse” is often a mass noun. Discourse analysts would normally speak of “discourse” instead of “discourses”, the way in which we speak of or refer to other things for which we would often use mass nouns, for example: “music” (“three pieces of music” or “some music” instead of “three musics”). Communication has the ability to include additional media other than language. Media such as: clothing, music, architecture and photography. Dance can also be included as it can be meaningful too. In this sense, discourse analysts are often required to ponder about the links between language and other similar modes of meaning-making or semiosis.
Fairclough’s (2003 in Bock, 2007:50) approach to discourse analysis consisted of taking into account three levels or strata: social structures, social events and social practices. Social structures function “at the highest level of generality and define the ‘potential set of possibilities’” (2003:23 in Bock, 2007:50). As a system, language functions at this level. Social practices mediate social structures; social practices direct linguistic changeability for certain areas of life. According to Bock (2007) these particular “orders of discourse”, or social practices, are linguistically evident through styles, genres and discourses. Social events can be defined as “concrete manifestations of these practices”. Bock (2007:50) notes that texts are the chief linguistic manifestation of these particular social events, they are fashioned by certain social structures and practices which limit, “at levels of abstraction”, the possible set of options that an individual may choose from.

The connection between these particular elements is illustrated in the table which follows as demonstrated by Bock (2007:50 after Fairclough 2003:24):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social structures</th>
<th>Language systems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social practices</td>
<td>Orders of discourse (discourses, genres, styles)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social events</td>
<td>Texts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discourse, According to Fairclough (2003:26 in Bock 2007:50) notes that, for his purpose, the term “discourse” is used in two ways: Firstly, it is used as an abstract noun, “to refer to language and other types of semiosis (the first stratum)”, and secondly, he uses it as a count noun (discourses) to refer to certain “ways of representing the world (the second stratum)”. 
CHAPTER 3:

Theoretical analytical framework.

3.0 Introduction.

My research is mainly informed by the appraisal theory. As used in this study, the appraisal theory is from the Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) perspective (Bock, 2007; Martin and White, 2005).

3.1 A brief outline of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL).

Bock (2007:55) describes Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) to be a theory about language as a social process. She defines it as an interpretive and descriptive framework which enables the systemic and detailed study of linguistic patterns within particular texts and how they are related to the context. Its chief view is that the centre of linguistic scrutiny should be on how individuals use language in order to make sense of each other and their surrounding environments, thus focusing on the process of making meanings. In the 1970’s, SFL was first developed by Halliday and then, with a team of individuals such as Jim Martin, Ruqaiya Hassan, Christian Matthiessen and others, it was polished and elaborated over the years to the present (Bock, 2007: 56). Halliday notes that the actual theory which SFL is grounded in is known as “systemic theory, which he defines as: a theory of meaning as choice, by which a language, or any other semiotic system, is interpreted as networks of interlocking options” (1994: xiv in Bock, 2007:56).

Halliday refers to his grammar as functional because:

1) It is created in such a way that it accounts for how an individual makes use of a language.

2) The key workings of meanings within a language are “functional components” (with reference to his three metafunctions: textual, ideational and interpersonal).
3) Every component in a language can be explained with reference to its particular function “in the total linguistic system” (1994:xiii in Bock 2007:56).

This description of language starts with the certain meanings which language is required to create, or the functions that language is used for (Bock, 2007).

Halliday\(^\text{26}\) portrays SFL to be a “social-semiotic” view on language: it is semiotic in a sense because language forms part of a system of signs which consists of culture. It is social in the sense that it centres on the social roles which establishes “what language is like and how it has evolved”. From Bock (2007), Halliday goes on to argue that through the study of texts, it uncovers the understanding of how language functions in connection to social structures. Texts, however, should always be viewed and analysed within their context to fuel interpretation.

Language can be seen as a semiotic system because it is structured as a set of options, every option within this system is impacted by and stacked against the outline of other options that a writer or speaker could have chosen to make use of in a given context (Eggins 2004:7 in Bock, 2007:57). Texts are born out of pure social interaction, thus texts act as pointers to the contexts in which they are produced. This allows one to conclude certain clues about the context in which the text was produced, it also enables one to predict, within a given context, which language might be used.

Halliday\(^\text{27}\) sheds light on three different kinds of meaning or metafunctions, these are the grammatical choices that exist within language which usually cluster around it. These metafunctions are known as the interpersonal, textual and the ideational metafunctions.


\(^{27}\) In Bock (2007:57).
Firstly, the interpersonal metafunction regards itself with the use of language to create and preserve social relationships, to express one’s thoughts, beliefs, attitudes in relation to the world (e.g: “a focus on the clause as an exchange of meaning”), to request and give information and the use of language to interact with people. Secondly, the ideational metafunction consists of the logical and experiential metafunctions. The experiential metafunction regards itself with the use of language to speak about one’s experience of the world, to portray participants and events and the circumstances involved in these events (e.g: “a focus on the content of the message: who does what to whom, in what circumstances”). The logical metafunction regards itself with how diverse clauses link to the other “through the logical relations” of parataxis and hypotaxis. And thirdly, the textual metafunction regards itself with the flow of information and refers to how language is used to structure our message to suit a given context of interaction (e.g: “a focus on the structure of the text”)28.

Reflecting, it can be seen that the SFL theory regards the use of language as being functional and its role is to make meanings. These particular meanings are discovered at different levels within “semiotic use of language” (Bock 2007: 58). It is the way in which these are organised and structured which is of interest to linguists whose focus is SFL. In relation to my research, it is important to analyse my data using SFL. Through the use of this theory, the different levels of meanings enables me to distinguish what the overview of each online message is thus indicating which linguistic choices were used to convey attitudes with regards to Beyoncé Knowles.

3.2 Appraisal theory.

According to White (2005) appraisal can be defined as the framework that can be used to analyse evaluation in language. It was born from within systemic functional linguistics (SFL) and in its early days, it was further driven by the work produced in educational linguistics and through the development of genre-based literacy programmes in Australia. The appraisal theory provides techniques regarding a systemic analysis of stance and an analysis as they function in groupings of texts and in texts as a whole. Its focus is on the social function of these particular resources and not just as a way for writers and speakers to express viewpoints and feelings, but as a way in which these speakers and writers interact with socially-determined value positions. From this, these individuals will dis-align and align themselves with certain social subjects who appear to have similar positions.

White (2005) goes on to mention that Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) holds the position that linguistic phenomena can be most adequately explained by location to its particular social functions that are performed by language, the reference is placed on the functional demands upon the language by its users. SFL also holds that the social functions may be placed into three broad types; the ideational, the interpersonal and the textual. The appraisal framework is focused on the development of an account of the interpersonal functionality, including the extension of understanding and descriptions of those parts of language which writers and speakers use to construct certain personae or identities for themselves and how they position themselves with regards to the people they address.

Martin and White (2005:7) state that “[A]t heart SFL is a multi-perspectival model, designed to provide analysts with complementary lenses for interpreting language in use”. The most basic of the complementaries is the notion of kinds of meaning; this refers to the suggestion that language is a “resource for mapping ideational, interpersonal and textual meaning onto one another in virtually every act of communication.” Ideational resources are linked with the “construing
experience”, for example: what is happening (including who is doing what to whom), when, where, why, how and the logical relation of “one going on to another”. Interpersonal resources are linked with the negotiating of social relations, for example: how people interact within a given turn, this includes the feelings that they try to share between them. Textual resources are linked with the flow of information: “the ways in which ideational and interpersonal meanings are distributed in waves of semiosis, including interconnections among waves and between language and attendant modalities (action, image, music etc)”. These greatly generalised types of meaning are referred to as metafunctions. As previously mentioned, in order to compile an analysis using the different SFL levels of meaning (interpersonal, textual and experiential metafunctions) need to be taken into consideration.

3.2.1 Attitude.

Attitude, according to Martin and White (2005:35) is centred on an individual’s feelings which include emotional reactions, evaluation of feelings and judgements of behaviour. Attitude can be divided into three categories of feelings, these being, “judgement”, “affect” and “appreciation”. Graduation is a separate system, it places its focus to grading phenomena where feelings are emphasised, and in turn, categories are blurred (Martin and White, 2005:36, 38). For the purpose of my thesis I will not make use of this system. Affect focuses on those components which construct emotional reactions. According to Vandenbergen (2008:5) the term ‘judgements’ consist of ethics and is a secondary component of affect. Judgement therefore refers to those constituents which are used for assessing an individual’s behaviour in accordance to normative principles.

Appreciation focuses on those constituents which construct the value of things, “including natural phenomena and semiosis”. Looking directly at the target and source of the attitude may be useful in enabling one to differentiate between the three categories. According to Martin and White (2005:59) “the source of affect is conscious participants, including persons, human collectives and institutions”.
The behaviour of these particular participants functions as the target of judgement. With regards to *appreciation*, “the target of appraisal is a ‘thing’” (state of affairs, object, process, except human behaviour).

According to White (2005 in Bock, 2007:77) appraisal meanings are realised better as being “carried” by whole propositions, they can however be lexically realised as phrases or single words. It is common that they would express a negative or positive dimension. This can be seen through the following example from Martin (1997:20 in Bock 2007:77):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Happy</td>
<td>Sad (<em>affect</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>Peculiar (<em>judgement</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beautiful</td>
<td>Ugly (<em>appreciation</em>)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2.2 Affect.

Speakers and writers have the ability to express their attitudes which are indicative of the emotional feelings and states, instead of their thinking. In most cases affective appraisals are normally lexical and have a negative or positive dimension. This group includes verbs of liking and hating, even though most realisations are normally adjectival. This is a process that is otherwise known as mental process of affection (Mayr, 2004:143). Martin and White (2005:58) note that “the canonical grammatical realisation” for identifying *affect* is adjectival (in agreement with Mayr, 2004). It would thus make sense to identify grammatical frames for differentiating the different kinds of attitude which fall in line with this realisation.
Examples adapted from Martin and White (2005:46):

- Affect as “quality”

  Describing participants  
  a sad captain  
  Epithet

  Attributed to participants  
  the captain was sad  
  Attribute

  Manner of processes  
  the captain left sadly  
  Circumstance

- Affect as “process”

  Affective mental

  His departure upset him  
  Process (effective)

  He missed them  
  Process (middle)

  Affective behavioural

  The captain wept  
  Process

- Affect as “comment”

  Desiderative  
  Sadly, he had to go  
  Modal adjunct

As demonstrated from the above examples, it is clear to see that certain affects can be seen as positive or negative. Depending on what is being communicated, linguistic choices may reveal a behavioural surge or a mental state or process.

3.2.3 Judgement.

The category of the appraisal theory of judgement expresses the social values of the individual’s behaviour, this is usually done through the use of lexical terms,
and this can also be signalled grammatically (Mayr, 2004:143). Judgement makes use of those resources that are used to assess behaviour in accordance to a variety of normative principles. Judgement comprises of dealing with attitudes that are directed towards behaviour, which is criticised, praised, condemned or admired (Martin and White, 2005:42). Like affect, judgement can identify positive or negative evaluations, depending on what is being communicated. In other words, one can pick out characteristics one can admire or criticise.

Appraisal theorists differentiate between two essential sub-categories of judgement: judgement of social sanction- which refers to how legal or moral behaviour is, and judgement of social esteem- which normally include “evaluations of admiration or criticism without legal implications” (Martin and White 2005:52). On the one hand, judgements of social esteem refer to one’s personal judgements, for example: capacity (how productive, capable, clever someone is), normality (how lucky, predictable, special, unusual someone is) and tenacity (how brave, resolute, dependable, adaptable someone is). On the other hand, social sanction concerns itself with moral judgements of propriety (how kind, ethical, good, responsible someone is) and veracity (how credible, truthful, honest someone is).

3.2.4 Appreciation.

Appreciation concerns itself with looking at resources “for construing the value of things, including natural phenomena and semiosis” (Martin and White, 2005:36). Appreciation deals with evaluations of natural and semiotic phenomena that result in accordance to the ways in which, in the given field, they are valued or not. Like judgement, appreciation is more oriented towards the “appraised” instead of the “appraiser”. It refers to the evaluations of natural phenomena, processes, objects and states of affairs; this includes abstract things like the quality of life and relationships. Unlike judgement, however, it does not refer “to the evaluation of human behaviour” (Bock 2007:80). Appreciation is further divided into sub-categories: reaction (which refers to one’s affection: if something grabs one’s
attention or whether something pleases us or not) composition (which refers to our perception, complexity and balance) and valuation (which refers to “cognition”, how authentic, timely, innovative, etc) Martin and White (2005:57).

Example adopted from Martin and White (2005:57) for demonstration:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appreciation</th>
<th>Mental process type</th>
<th>Metafunction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reaction</td>
<td>Affection</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composition</td>
<td>Perception</td>
<td>Textual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valuation</td>
<td>Cognition</td>
<td>Ideational</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2.5 Graduation.

Graduation is primarily concerned with gradability. If one looks at “attitude”, one can note that since “the resources are inherently gradable, graduation has to do with adjusting the degree of evaluation—how strong or weak the feeling is” (Martin and White, 2005: 37). This particular type of graduation is called “force”, realisations include comparative and superlative morphology, as well as: intensification, repetition and various phonological and graphological features. Graduation chiefly concerns itself with down-scaling and up-scaling. Gradability features as a general element of values of judgement, appreciation and affect that they can be understood by lesser or greater degrees of negativity or positivity. Gradability also forms part of a characteristic of the engagement system. In this case, the way in which meaning is scaled differs from sub-system to sub-system, more particularly, “engagement values scale for the degree of the speaker/writer’s intensity or the degree of their investment in the utterance” (Martin and White, 2005:135-136).
In relation to *affect*, *judgement* and *appreciation*, gradability of attitudinal meanings are demonstrated by adapted examples from Martin and White (2005:136):

**Judgement:** competen* * writer, good writer, excellent writer

Affect: slightly angry, somewhat angry, very angry, extremely angry

Appreciation: pretty, beautiful, exquisite

From the above examples, it is clear to see that the degree of gradability starts out low and proceeds with linguistic choice of intensity to the higher degree of the scale. The following diagram demonstrates the attitudinal elements of the appraisal theory.
Taking the appraisal theory into account, it serves as an essential element in the analysis of the data in terms of attitudes: judgements and beliefs (as mentioned previously). Through the use of this theory, I am able to highlight key linguistic indicators in respect of the diagram.
CHAPTER 4:
Research design and methodology.

4.0 Introduction.

This chapter will elaborate on how the research was carried out in terms of research methodology and design. This chapter will discuss how the data was collected and sampled and how I conducted the analysis of my data. In addition, this chapter will include a description of my data, ethical considerations whilst collecting my data, and lastly, the writing up and analysis of the research will be provided. This research incorporated a text-based analysis with regards to analysing the data. My research draws mostly on the appraisal theory (SFL) complemented by text/discourse analysis (cf. Fairclough, 2003). The text/discourse analysis approach used in my study is modelled on appraisal/ SFL studies associated with Suzanne Eggins, James Martin, Peter White, David Rose, Zannie Bock and Anne-Marie Vandenbergen.

4.1 Research design and data analysis.

As stated above, this research mostly uses the appraisal theory/ SFL to analyse the data. After the data was collected, selected posts were chosen for analysis. This research makes use of a qualitative text-based means for the collection of the data. This research specifically makes use of the data collected on the three websites in Chapter 129 as well as on other relevant websites. According to Fairclough (2003:6) regarding the analysis of any text which strives to be significant within a social scientific sphere has to link with theoretical questions about discourse. He further explains that no solid understanding of the social effects of discourse can be possible without looking critically at what occurs when people speak or write. Text analysis is an integral part of discourse analysis. Fairclough (2003:6) however states that “discourse analysis is not merely the linguistic analysis of

29 The Vigilant Citizen Date Accessed: 06 March 2010.

texts”. Fairclough perceives the discourse analysis as “oscillating” between a focus on what he calls the “order of discourse, the relatively durable and social structuring of language which is itself one element relatively durable structuring and networking of social practices” as well as a specific focus on texts.

It can be noted that text analysis can be seen, not only as a linguistic analysis; it also consists of what Fairclough calls the “interdiscursive analysis” which refers to placing texts in the different discourses, styles and genres that they draw from and articulate together. Fairclough (2003:6) refers to the word “texts” in a broad sense, for example: printed and written texts like newspaper articles and shopping lists may be classified as “texts”. In addition transcripts of interviews and spoken conversations, as well as, webpages and television programmes may also be classified as “texts”. My research thus makes use of text-based material. This text-based material consists of literature from various authors, as well as, data from different websites. My research can therefore be classified as qualitative research. Following, I further justify why I chose a qualitative (text-based) approach.

According to Brannen (1992) those that make use of the quantitative method of research would isolate and define variables and their categories. Each variable is then connected to the other to form a frame hypothesis, in most cases this is done before the data has been collected. These variables usually begin as concepts which come from either the hypothesis or the research questions. The notion behind a variable is that it can have various values, qualities of events, objects or human beings and “can be measured along some continuum that forms a uniform numerical scale” (Blaikie, 2003). Once the data was collected, this hypothesis is then tested on the data. In contrast, the qualitative research starts by mentioning and defining very general concepts. It is with the progression of research that there is change in the definition.

Brannen (1992:4) also mentions that those that make use of the qualitative method, make use of “looking through a wide lens” by thoroughly searching for
“patterns of inter-relationships between a previously unspecified set of concepts”. While the quantitative research method consists of having its perspective through a “narrow lens as a specified set of variables”. Another important difference between qualitative and quantitative research is that where the qualitative tradition is concerned, the researcher must use him or herself as the instrument. The researcher has to do this by taking him or herself, along with their own specific cultural assumptions, into account. May (2002) states that often there is a presumption among researchers that making use of qualitative methods will improve the potential for the individuals’ own values and voices to inform the research process, and in this way shed light, in a grounded manner the evaluation of a policy or project. “Underpinning this presumption is a view that qualitative research can provide a more informative picture of culturally based processes and practices and a depth to context-based explanations of events, processes, outcomes and ultimately future policy and practice” (May, 2002:261).

According to McCracken (1998 in Brannen 2009:5) in order for the qualitative researcher to succeed in imaginative insights into the participants’ “social worlds, the investigator is expected to be flexible and reflexive and yet somehow manufacture distance”. The result of this particular approach is that qualitative research “par excellence is participant observation”. In addition, qualitative methods include three types of data collection: (1) direct observation, (2) open-ended interviews (in-depth) and (3) written documents which include sources as open-ended items on personal diaries, programme records and questionnaires (Patton, 1987). In addition, Coffey and Atkinson (1996) state that qualitative data can occur in a number of ways, there is not one type in particular. It can take the form of transcribed recordings of natural interactions, field notes, documents, other graphic representations, pictures and interview transcripts.

In contrast to the qualitative method, according to Brannen (1992:5) the quantitative tradition uses the instrument of a “pre-determined and finely tuned technological tool which allows for much flexibility, imaginative input and reflexivity”. For example: the use of a questionnaire would be useful and
appropriate. From the above, one can establish that quantitative research is related to the procedure of “enumerative induction”. A main purpose is to find out what kinds and how many people in the parent or general population has a specific trait in common which has to be found within this particular sample population. A relationship between the variables and what is found within the existent sample has to be established.

Where qualitative research is concerned, categories and concepts are of significance, not their frequency or incidence. Qualitative research is theoretical in nature rather than descriptive, it tests theories that are applicable and significant and relevant to the specific research rather than the notion of inference or generalisability. Furthermore, I have collected my data from the previously mentioned websites, O’ Dochartaigh (2002) provides a guide as to how to collect data on the internet.

It is with this in my mind that I have chosen a qualitative method of research. In terms of data analysis, a select number of data was gathered from the websites. From this, a selection was made as to which posts were to be used for the purpose of my research. The data was analysed using the appraisal theory in terms of judgements, appreciation and affect. With the aid of the appraisal theory, the data reflects how Knowles’ online fans respond to her in their posts.

4.2 Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA).

For the purpose of my research, discourse analysis is linked to Ruth Wodak, Norman Fairclough, Teun van Dijk, amongst others.

Van Dijk (1998:1) describes the analytical research in relation to discourse of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as a study that principally focuses on the particular way in which social power abuse, inequality and dominance are
performed, resisted and reproduced in the political and social context. Its goal is to understand, expose and resist social inequality.

The theoretical foundation of CDA was created by Norman Fairclough\textsuperscript{30} where a theory for language as a type of social discourse, with the main focus on the role of ideology and power in terms of the construction and development of discourse (Banda and Mohammed, 2008:97). Critical Discourse Analysis examines language as being a socially constituted practice where the text (whether it is spoken or written) is considered to be a discourse which is produced by writers and speakers “who are socially signifiers”; “socially signifiers” being a certain domain of social practice from a certain perspective (Fairclough, 1995:14). This argument stems from the notion that when a text or a language is produced, it is affected by the social context in which it has occurred. In turn, the text is also fashioned by the social context in which it has occurred, placing emphasis on the interplay occurring between these features. Text as objects of inquiry are transcended in CDA. My study focuses on the analysis of the text in context (Cameron, 2001; Wodak, 2001; Banda and Mohammed, 2008), in which Beyoncé’s music evolves and is consumed by fans.

Fairclough (1995) explores the link between interactions of the text and context; he draws from SFL to construct his methodology. Fairclough developed ideational, identity and relational functions of language (Guerrero, 2008:4) which is similar to Halliday’s (1974) three metafunctions, namely: interpersonal, ideational and textual. This ideational, identity and relational functions of language are enacted in discourse in the following stages which complement each other in terms of interpretation, description and explanation. The interpretation stage centres on the text relating to other discourses, texts and how participants interpret their interactions. The description stage focuses on describing the formal-textual linguistic characteristics of text. In the explanation stage, the focus

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is on the link between text (with emphasis in relation to power) and the social context. It further explores the ideological view which fashions the discourse (Bock, 2007:49; Guerrero, 2008:4).

Although CDA is a powerful tool for analysis of texts, I am mindful that it has also been criticised. One of the major criticisms is that it falls short of producing a principled approach to linguistic description, and it is selective to linguistic characteristics for ideological purpose (Widdowson, 2004 in Ferris, 2010). Furthermore Halliday (Halliday, 1994: xvii) states that “discourse analysis that is not based on grammar is not an analysis at all, but simply a running commentary on a text”. Blommaert (2005: 35) is unimpressed with CDA for “its closure to particular kinds of societies.” He criticises Fairclough for assuming that “descriptions of such societies can usefully serve as a model for understanding discourse in the world today” (Blommaert, 2005: 35). On the other hand, Shi-Xu (2007) and Banda and Oketch (2009) have been critical of CDA for its tendency of universalising Western discourse. They argue that Western ways of doing discourse are not the only ones available. There are African, Asian and localised ways of doing discourse, which are equally useful to those that use them. Mindful of these criticisms, my research draws on some characteristics of discourse analysis in conjunction with SFL to conduct a more comprehensive analysis of text. In this regard, some of the characteristics I shall draw on relate to status roles, power and ideology, and attitudes, which relate the Appraisal theoretical underpinnings of the research.

4.3 Sampling.

Data was collected from three selected websites, including YouTube where online fans have posted their comments relating to Beyoncé Knowles. A select number of comments posted were used for the analysis of this research. The names of the three specific websites are as follows: The Vigilant Citizen, YouTube and contactmusic.com. The individuals involved in the posting of their commentary range from men and women and from teenagers to adults. Some online writers
openly mention their ages and through some of their posts, one is able to place which gender the online writer is.

4.4 Data collection method and description of data.

My data was collected on the websites: The Vigilant Citizen and other websites which include YouTube as well as contactmusic.com. The data was collected within a period of 6 months, the main months being January 2010 and June 2010. The data was captured directly from the websites. Data was sifted through and selected according to content in terms of judgements, affect and appreciation.

4.5 Ethical consideration.

i) Anonymity.

All of the posts published use pseudonym names to communicate their thoughts and attitudes. Making use of the pseudonym names enabled the online writers/fans to communicate their thoughts effectively without feeling directly judged by their posts written. The information which will be brought to light will not be used in a harmful manner to the posts published nor the artist which the posts are about.
CHAPTER 5:

A critical evaluation of Knowles.

5.0 Introduction.

This chapter will reflect that, in most cases, Knowles’ online fan base share similar evaluative stances towards the artist and her music. Both male and female fans position themselves in a path of gratitude expressing feelings of being inspired by Knowles. Irrespective of sex, the fans use emotive words when ascribing emotions towards Knowles. The majority of responses analysed in this chapter suggests that a lot of the fans look up to Knowles as a role model and a powerful icon in the music business. The age group that becomes evident reflects from those in their teenage years to those over 50 years of age. In order for each message to be analysed appropriately, its context needs to be taken into consideration. The reflection of linguistic choices indicates, to some extent, the identity of these individuals. Looking closer, linguistic choices also reflect a style of Hip-Hop/ Rhythm and Blues which the fans try to connect to. The posts reflect, to a great extent, that most of the evaluations/attitudes relate to judgements, followed by appreciation and very few are related to affect. These categories are not impervious. It is possible to have examples that might reflect two or three of the attitudes.

5.1 A backdrop underlying the judgements of online writers.

This section serves an exploration as to how Knowles’ online writers position themselves in relation to judgements with regards to judgement of social sanction and self esteem. In this section the writers of individual posts will be referred to as “online writers” instead of “fans” because of some of the negative views expressed. As mentioned previously, judgement mainly concerns itself with attitudes towards behaviour, which individuals criticise or admire, condemn or praise. The posts from which the following samples come from are different perspectives on Knowles, which were collected from The Vigilant Citizen. These posts demonstrate that Knowles is criticised on her behaviour, talent and physical
appearance, in terms of dress. The analysis includes how the online writers perceive Knowles as a performing artist, how they feel towards her music and what some of them believe was Knowles’ so-called transformation. In order to understand what Knowles’ online writers are discussing and commenting on, a brief introduction will be given. I have selected images from Appendix C to paint a picture of what Knowles’ online writers are discussing and referring to. These images and their captions have been obtained from the website: The Vigilant Citizen.

The messages which follow demonstrate how a different group of Knowles’ online fan base criticises Knowles with regards to what she displays in her pictures, music videos and in her lyrics. As mentioned in my literature review, a percentage of Knowles’ audience believes that there is controversy regarding Knowles’ lyrics and what she represents. According to the website from which I have acquired the messages, the argument is that the esoteric meaning exposed by certain symbols regarding “Sasha Fierce” (her new stage name and persona) has a deeper meaning. This new persona presented by Knowles is said to represent an “artist taken over by evil in order to obtain success”. The posts in relation to this topic are rich in linguistic criticism and opinions. The following pictures (from Appendix C), in specific, are linked to what the online writers discuss.

Image CA (left)

Good Beyoncé with cross
Image CB (left)

Evil Sasha Fierce mimicking devil horns

Image CD (above)

Sigil of Church of Satan

Image CC (left)

Baphomet’s vehicule
The pictures will be discussed in relation to *judgements* with specific reference to posts obtained from *The Vigilant Citizen*. There is a deeper meaning when Knowles transforms into Sasha Fierce, she embodies a different identity and different meanings. Through image and words, this transformation is multimodal. A recurring theme in terms of discourse in relation to the following posts reflects negative criticism and disappointment expressed by Knowles’ online writers due to the revelation on this website. The online writers are very critical of Knowles and her actions. Even though her online writers still acknowledge that she is talented and they adore her music, they *judge* what they believe is the change that she has undergone- and they criticise her for choosing (in their view) is the incorrect choice in her career. In most of the posts, in their *judgements*, the online writers attribute blame for this change of Knowles to her rapper boyfriend, now husband; Jay- Z.

Looking at Image CC, one can clearly see that Knowles tries to reformulate the exact image of the “Sigil of Church of Satan”. She does so in a number ways: Firstly, with her elbows pointing outwardly, she tries to form the two lower points of the star. Secondly, the supposed “mirrors” on the “vehicle” that she is riding forms the two upper points of the star. Thirdly, it can be noted that Knowles raises one of her feet against the wall behind her, leaving one foot firmly grounded. In this way Knowles *re-performs* the final point of the satanic star. Furthermore, the more obvious of the signs remain that the sharp and unmistaken image of the goat is placed in colour on Knowles’ outfit. Moving away from the image of the goat in the centre, it is clear to see the orange flames which surround its head. These flames can be linked to the flames of hell, which is associated to “Satan”.

From these images it becomes evident that the change in Knowles’ presentation is somewhat deliberate. By Knowles *re-making* herself by mimicking satanic gestures, she transforms herself into “Sasha Fierce”.

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5.2 Judgement of Social Sanction.

Most of the posts relate to judgements and particularly the “so-called” transformation that Knowles undergoes. The focus takes religion, to an extent, into account. From this perspective, the argument draws on what is morally correct and morally incorrect. In terms of the posts which follow, it is clear that the online writers criticise Knowles’ change- in terms of dress, how she is presented in pictures and her onstage performances. The posts will be discussed in terms of evaluation of Knowles’ behaviour and transformation with regards to truth value (veracity), capabilities (capacity) and dependability (tenacity).

Social sanction, concerns itself with moral regulation or whether the behaviour of a group of people or an individual is seen as truthful or ethical. Judgement of social sanction concerns itself with veracity and propriety. Veracity being based on truth and propriety being based on ethics, of the two, judgements of propriety proves to be more evident amongst the online writers’ posts in relation to Knowles. Even so, in the minority, there are examples of judgements of veracity.

5.2.1 Judgements of Veracity and Propriety.

Males and females alike express negative opinions towards Knowles and her husband, Jay-Z. They clearly highlight the element of evil in Knowles’ new persona and way of life. The online writers thus base their judgements on what is considered as morally correct and incorrect. Some posts make reference to religion to back up their judgements whilst others purely express the stark difference between what is right and wrong.

Message D4: To everyone- This is extremely disturbing [judgement, veracity, neg]
news to me for I once had respect [judgement, veracity, pos]

for Beyonce as someone who had pulled herself to superstardom from meager beginnings. Meager beginnings may or may not be the case. The reason I am responding to this obvious transformation to evil [judgement, propriety, neg]

for Beyonce is because

I’ve just recently discovered Jay Z’s own relationship to evil. In fact it appears he is somehow connected to the Illuminati and there are several videos on Google video and Youtube which draw the correlation to hidden lyrics in his songs as well as esoteric hand gestures used in his media [judgement, veracity, neg].

It seems that Jay Z not only discovered wealth and power through a pact with Satan but of course he has now influenced Beyonce to evil [judgement, propriety, neg]

and this is the result. What’s really sad is all the influence they will have on the younger generations that buy their garbage and emulate them as successful “stars.” [judgement, veracity, neg]

From the post, it is evident that this particular online writer does not make reference to religion, but instead makes the distinction between good and evil. The writer admits “This is extremely disturbing”. By posting this, the writer expresses just how uneasy he/she feels about Knowles’ transformation. The writer further posts “I once had respect for Beyonce”; by stating this, the writer implies that she liked Knowles at some point before her “evil” transformation. In addition, this change from good to evil reflects what the online writer judges Knowles’ behaviour according to the truth value of her behaviour. It is further elaborated
that at some point Knowles was perceived as a *positive* icon because she somehow pulled “herself to superstardom from meager beginnings”. In this regard, it can be inferred that Knowles was seen as an inspiration because of this. The writer progresses with their *judgement* by mentioning Knowles’ husband and his connection to evil. By doing so, the source of who is responsible for her transformation is pointed a finger at. The writer’s *judgement* is backed up clearly by what is right and wrong, in terms of Knowles’ transformation to evil, signalling propriety. It is noted that: “I’ve just recently discovered Jay Z’s own relationship to evil and there are several videos on Google video and Youtube which draw the correlation to hidden lyrics in his songs as well as esoteric hand gestures used in his media”. By mentioning Jay Z’s relationship to evil and stating that on “Google video” and “Youtube”, videos have been explored in relation to evil shows that the writer has somewhat “researched” what he/she is writing about in order to colour his/her *judgement*. This online writer judges Knowles’ so-called transformation negatively.

Also, the writer mentions “Satan”- because the writer clearly expresses that he/she is “extremely” disturbed by Knowles’ evil transformation, it implies that the opposing good side would be God. It can be noted, however, that this online writer does not fill his/her post about religion but merely alludes to it. Instead the online writer expresses her *judgement* that what Knowles is doing is *wrong*, hence negatively criticising her based on what is considered to be right or wrong, religiously. The writer further seals her judgement by stating: “What’s really sad is all the influence they will have on the younger generations that buy their garbage and emulate them as successful “stars”. By using the word “sad” it indicates evidence of *affect*; the writer suggests that Knowles and stars alike will have a *negative* influence on the younger fan base. This *negative* judgement is finally carried through when the writer refers to Knowles’ (and artists alike) music as being “garbage”. By referring to their music as “garbage”, it is inferred that their music is of no use to the “younger generations” and could in fact be toxic to them. Furthermore the writer writes: “and emulate them as successful “stars”, by the writer putting the word “stars” in parenthesis, it suggests that it is a deception,
that in fact these individuals are transgressing and should not be followed or looked up to as inspirational personas.

From *Message D8*, it is demonstrated that this writer makes no exception - the judgement adamantly states that Knowles is fully aware of what she is doing. This example, like the previous one, projects a *negative* judgement in relation to Knowles and her transformation.

**Message D8:** I can sum the entire article up plain and simple [judgement, veracity, pos]

No one accidentally wears a GOAT SUIT, that displays the same image that the Church of _____ uses. Beyonce knows what she is doing, and she knows why she makes the devil horns, with her Sasha persona, it’s no accident people, [judgement, veracity, neg]

BEYONCE IS A SATANIST…….. [judgement, propriety, neg]

This message illustrates that this writer does not believe in shades of grey. This writer thinks that it is “plain and simple”, that Knowles is cognitive of her actions, and this reflects the truth value of Knowles’ behaviour according to the online writer. The writer’s *judgement* is based on so-called facts/ signs that are obvious to him/her. This can be seen from: “no one accidentally wears a GOAT SUIT, that displays the same image that the Church of _____ uses. Beyonce knows what she is doing, and she knows why she makes the devil horns, with her Sasha persona”. This writer, unlike that of the previous message, projects his/her judgement negatively with regards to Knowles’ transformation. However, this writer bases his/ her judgement on signs which indicate that she has changed more so than
making the distinction between good and evil. The online writer negatively judges Knowles in terms of *propriety* because the online writer feels that Knowles’ transformation was wrong. The writer makes a direct reference linking Knowles’ “GOAT SUIT” outfit to the “Church of ____”. The “Church of ___” actually refers to the “Church of Satan”. By the writer choosing to avoid typing the name “Satan” could suggest that the name is somewhat of a taboo and possibly by typing the name, the writer may feel that it would make the possibility of Knowles’ transformation more real. It is interesting to note that this writer does not explicitly state that he/ she is disappointed by Knowles’ transformation; the writer merely points out the obvious signs and passes his/ her judgement. Looking at the last phrase, the writer writes it in capital letters: “BEYONCE IS A SATANIST”, by doing so, the writer concludes his post with his/her judgement. By not expressing disappointment and just highlighting the facts, by concluding in this way, one can infer that the writer stands in agreement with the fact that Knowles has indeed transformed to something evil. This, in turn, reflects a negative judgement which evaluates Knowles’ behaviour negatively.

To further explore different kinds of *judgements* expressed by Knowles’ writers in relation to her transformation, in Message D11 below, it is noted that this particular writer takes the facts into consideration and then passes her judgement taking herself into consideration. By this I mean, because she is an entertainer herself, she believes that Knowles’ persona of “Sasha Fierce” is just for performance purposes rather than a reflection of who she is. Due to the fact that this writer is an entertainer herself, she takes a personal connection to how the other writers perceive how Knowles represents herself. It is in this light that she gives her judgement. Her judgement towards Knowles is thus not negative or positive, but the writer chooses to encourage the author of the website, as well as, the other writers to be careful as to what they speculate.

**Message D11:** Let me start by saying I’m not actually a big Beyonce fan
[judgement, veracity, neg]
neither love her nor hate her. So while I appreciate that everyone is entitled to their opinion and respect everyone’s right to express their thoughts and feelings, this piece does border on slander [judgement, veracity, neg]

since I don’t think you know the woman personally and instead are drawing on interpretations of things which are in the public domain. Which is the point — this is her public persona, not who she is. Not you nor me knows who the real Beyonce is. As a performer myself, I know that performing is very much about accessing the energy of a particular performance piece — whether it’s a play, a song, a dance — and portraying it. It’s not about demonic possession! [judgement, veracity, neg]

In Message D11, the writer makes it clear at the start of the post that she “is not actually a big Beyonce fan” and that she neither loves nor hates Knowles, this reflects the truth value of the online writer in relation to Knowles. This writer draws her judgement based on her own personal connection to the entertainment industry. In this regard, this writer passes a negative judgement, but instead of directing it towards Knowles, it is aimed at the other writers and the author of the website, “vigilant”. This can be seen from: “I don’t think you know the woman personally and instead are drawing on interpretations of things which are in the public domain. Which is the point — this is her public persona, not who she is”, taking this into consideration, this writer states that it is not about demonic possession but in fact part of the business of entertainment. By the writer referring to what is being communicated about Knowles as “slander”, it can be inferred that she believes that what is being said is based on lies and speculation rather than truth and concrete evidence. In addition, because (and most importantly) she is part of the entertainment business, her judgement opposes the posts previously discussed and instead suggests that Knowles has not transformed. The online writer thus criticises the other online writers negatively for reading the so-called signs incorrectly as it is just part of the entertainment business.
For the writer in Message D3, Beyoncé has transformed to such a ‘devilish’ extent that she is no longer human.

**Message D3:**  
Damn. It’s a shame to see a talentfull women transform like this. All the artist who are into devilish sh*t should die [judgement, propriety, neg]

, srry for that but they are not humans, they doesn’t apreciatethe gift that GOD have given them. they all pieces of SH*TT [judgement, propriety, neg].

In Message D3, the writer also acknowledges that Knowles has changed: “It’s a shame to see a talentfull women transform like this”. It is later written “All the artist who are into devilish sh*t should die”. This message evaluates the ethics and morals with regards to Knowles’ behaviour. She is negatively judged based on what is right and wrong where morals are concerned, according to the online writer. The writer clearly expresses both disappointment, “it’s a shame”, and anger in his/her post. This particular writer condemns Knowles for having the element of evil part of what she does. In the same breath, it is clear to see that this writer draws on religion. The writer mentions firstly that all artists who are into devilish practices should die and then later comments that “they doesn’t apreciatethe gift that GOD have given them”. The distinction between good and evil can be drawn from this. The online writer then seals his/her judgement by adding that: “they all pieces of SH*TT”.

The religious doctrine from which these judgements are drawn is clear in the *Message D10*:

**Message D10:**

It’s so sad to see such innocent ladies like Rihanna and Beyonce sacrificing their lives just for money and fame!  
[judgement, propriety, neg]

My prayer is that they will realise they are in bondage and give their lives to Christ. I honestly think that we are living in the last days. [judgement, propriety, neg]

In *Message D10*, the use of religious terminology is very evident. This particular online writer gives her judgement based on Christian faith; for example, she uses phrases such as “sacrificing their lives”, “my prayer”, “bondage” and “Christ”. She seals her judgement with a biblical prophecy phrase: “I honestly think that we are living in the last days”. This writer criticises Knowles with regards to propriety judging her with regards to what is right and wrong religiously, according to her. From this message, it is clear that a shift in judgement has occurred because the online writers are distinguishing the domains of “right” and “wrong”. This online writer, in particular, expresses that even though these “stars” have strayed from the righteous path, she still prays that they will “realise they are in bondage and give their lives to Christ”. The online writers have thus realised that there should be a boundary between fame and to which extent these artists should sell their souls for it.

### 5.3 Judgement of Self Esteem.

Eggins and Slade (1997:131) note that social esteem concerns itself with evaluative judgements where: to what extent individuals’ behaviour either meets up to or fails to meet up “to socially desirable standards”. While some online
writers evaluate Knowles positively, others evaluate her negatively. Knowles’ capabilities are negatively judged and her morals are criticised in terms of what is right and wrong. However, there are posts that are positive, with some stating that their lives were transformed for the better due to Knowles’ positive influence.

5.3.1 Capacity, Normality and Tenacity, the connection to Knowles.

Whilst observing the data in Appendix D, it is noted that the online writers engage in an online discussion which centres on judging Knowles in relation to their capacities, as well as, her own. As mentioned above, Knowles is judged according to her so-called transformation and the esoteric meaning behind the symbolism involved in her music, music videos and songs. These judgements, in almost all of the posts are negative. This positions the online writers to be critical of Knowles and her so-called change. In addition, a few of the posts are judged according to normality (how usual or special something is) and tenacity (how dependable an individual’s behaviour is).

From the examples from Appendix D which follow, it can be seen that the main topic of these conversations relate to the realisations that Knowles has changed. The following examples demonstrate that these online writers are concerned that Knowles has changed and that she has been transformed through the kind of music she plays and who she associates:

Message D1: i knew something was wrong when B hooked up with JZ cuz he was in the devil business long long time. and then “Crazy in love.” it makes so much sense now. look at the bridge for that song “i’m not myself, lately i’m foolish, i dont do this” she just transformed! because that was her intititation. her public intititation and so many followed her moves, so many emulated her. and i hated it.
The writer uses Knowles’ lyrics to justify his/her judgement. Knowles’ song’s title and line “Crazy in love” (Appendix F) is judged as the first sign of her transformation to evil. The writer also expresses that he/she knew that something was wrong “when B hooked up with JZ cuz he was in the devil business long long time”. “JZ” is Knowles’ husband and has been criticised for being involved in the illuminati or secret society\(^{31}\). In the same message, the writer exclaims “she just transformed!”. Later in the post she goes on to write: “I hated it”, thus expressing a negative judgement with regards to Knowles’ behaviour as the online writer feels that Knowles’ so-called transformation was negative. Knowles’ behaviour is further evaluated with regards to the ethics involved in her behaviour in terms of what is right and wrong. By the writer claiming that Knowles transformed and adding that she hated it, implies a negative judgement of Knowles’ transformation.

Looking at the extract which follows, it becomes evident just how great Knowles’ influence proves to be. This shows that not all posts are negatively evaluated. In Message AH, the fan expresses that because he noticed that Knowles “oozed confidence on stage” but was “polite in real life”, the fan copied this expression and thus he transformed into being confident.

**Message AH:**  
When i saw how u oozed confidence on stage and yet polite in real life [judgement, capacity, pos]  
i copied that and through u i became so confident that i got to go to law school shocking my friends whom thought, i was a weakling and coward. [judgement, capacity, pos]  

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I proudly declare to everyone I meet I am your fun even though I'll face rejection from my male friends I don't care cause you are the queen of pop in this generation a force to reckon with love you B and haters go hate on someone who is as talentless as you. [judgement, propriety, pos]

Looking at the text, one can note that the fan judges Knowles positively based on how capable she is. For example, she “oozed confidence” whilst performing, this implies that her ability to perform well onstage forms part of the qualities that artists are supposed to encompass. In the same line, the fan states that Knowles is “polite”. This indicates normality and how special she is. In the second fragment of the text, it is evident that the fan judges his capability (how he transformed through copying Knowles) and how others perceived him, for example: “weakling and coward”. In this same fragment, instances of affect are also evident. This fan indicates a sense of pride in his new-found confidence. It is even captured in emotions “shocking”. The word “shocking” in this text is used in a positive way as it reflects optimistically on the fan’s transformation. This captures the fan’s emotions in this point in time. Looking at the message, it is evident that the fan would “stand up” for Knowles as the individual who has turned his life around. He mentions that even though his male friends might reject him, he does not care. The fan admits to feelings of insecurity, for the fact he had to “copy” Knowles in order to become confident. It is interesting to note that the fan is a male and that the content of the message is rich in expression for Knowles.

According to Ferris (2010:16) there are many theorists that have focused on conversation between females and males. These are authors such as Coates and Cameron (1989), Banda and Oketch, Banda (2005) and Milroy (1980). The primary focus of most of these studies was on the differences which occurred between the “male versus the speech of the female”. A common pattern found in the literature is that females and males differ in linguistic behaviour. However, looking at my data, this does not prove to be the case. For the purpose of my thesis, I have taken one post from a male and female fan to represent the broader
online male and female fan base. From this I have deduced the following. Males and females, in their posts, write their posts quite similarly: this is seen in that both males and females fill their posts with similar emotional attachment to Knowles. Both groups seek to establish a personal connection to Knowles. This personal connection defies gender or sex differences. The connection also defies racial, ethnic and even national boundaries. Comparing to the two posts which follow, it is evident to see that even though the one post is from a male and the other is from a female, both illustrate posts rich in expressive thoughts and feelings towards Knowles:

**Message AH:**

Hi hi iam Lawson from kenya, Africa. Queen B has been my greatest inspiration in life, i used to have self-esteem issues and felt worthless, strangely iam a dude. When i saw how u oozed confidence on stage and yet polite in real life [judgement, capacity, pos]

i copied that and through u i became so confident that i got to go to law school shocking my friends whom thought, i was a weakling and coward. [judgement, capacity, pos]

I proudly declare to everyone i meet iam your fun even though i'll face rejection from my male friends i dont care cause u are the queen of pop in this generation a force to reckon with luv u B and haters go hate on someone who is as talentless as u. [judgement, propriety, pos]

**Message AM:**

i am 13 and i am starting in the entertainment bussines as an actress. u are one of the biggest inspirations to me as a very succesful african american women who carries her self in a well respected manor. i have always wanted to be u but i realized as i got older that i could never be u but i could follow ur exxample. my biggest dream is to star in a film with u. u r a wonderful actress and a pretty good all around
person. I'm sure you're used to people telling you that you're perfect but I know you're not and that's why I look up to you. You show me that I don't have to be perfect and before you I didn't understand that. You're a very beautiful person inside and out. I've never been a drop dead glamorous person and personally I don't think you are either but your inner beauty shines from within (sometimes) and by that I mean everyone makes mistakes. [judgement, capacity, pos]

Looking at the *Messages AH* and *AM*, both indicate judgement. *Message AH* was previously discussed. In *Message AM*, it can be noted that the fan positively criticises Knowles’ capabilities. This is can be seen in the text through the description of Knowles as an individual who “carries herself in a well respected manner”. Furthermore the fan goes on to positively ascribe qualities to Knowles’ behaviour and in the same breath she expresses her admiration for Knowles. For example, she writes: “wonderful actress” and “pretty good all around person”. Although this text indicates judgement it also contains evidence of *affect* where there is an evaluation of the self. This can be noted where the fan admits wanting to be like Knowles and then comparing her perception of Knowles’ physical beauty to herself. To this fan, Knowles symbolises success and respect.

From these messages, it is clear to see that the posts are similar in content— to some extent. Both posts express that Knowles is their biggest inspiration: In *Message AH*: the male posts that Knowles has contributed to making him a confident person. In *Message AM*, the female posts that because she would like to become an “actress”, Knowles is her biggest inspiration. In both posts, it can be noted that in *Message AH*, the writer posts: “When I saw how you oozed confidence on stage and yet polite in real life I copied that” and in *Message AM*, the writer posts: “I’ve always wanted to be like you but I realized as I got older that I could never be you but I could follow your example”. Looking at these phrases from both posts it is clear that both writers choose to either copy what she projects or follow her
example. Both follow the same pattern: which is that they look up to Knowles and see her as a positive icon and hence, a great influence in their lives.

The authors of both posts seek to find a personal link to Knowles. In *Message AH*, the male fan expresses that before Knowles he was considered a “weakling” and now he is confident. In *Message AM*, the female makes a connection to Knowles by identifying key physical and personality traits of Knowles and then breaking them up to present Knowles as being an “everyday” individual with flaws. The way in which this fan separates these characteristics is by a means of relating them to herself after each comparison: “iv never been a drop dead glamorous person and personally i dont think ur are either”, “ur perfect but i no ur not and thats why i look up to u”. This fan attempts to reassure herself as well as Knowles, that as human beings- we all have flaws. Regardless, she sees Knowles as her inspiration because Knowles is not perfect. In this sense, this fan can relate to her. With regards to males and females differing in terms of linguistic behaviour, I would argue in relation to my research that this is not the case. Both males and females appear to feel comfortable in expressing their thoughts in relation to Knowles: if indeed this one post from a male fan can represent the broader male fan base.

Tannen (1990) is a frequently referenced source with regards to literature on “gender talk”. Tannen refers to the conversation that takes place between female and male as cross cultural communication due to the variation in conversation because of socialisation. Tannen (1990) believes that, for the female, conversation serves to reach consensus, to provide support, to negotiate closeness and to give confirmation. The function of communication would be for maintaining or building relationships. Tannen (1990:25) further argues that, for the male, the function of conversation would be to obtain or give information.

In relation to my data both male and female *negotiate* what they use their posts for, in terms of: providing or obtaining information, building or maintaining
relationships. In terms of my data, both males and females provide information about Knowles. Males and females share their views and thoughts openly.

Males and females support each other’s positive views. This is demonstrated from the examples from Appendix B below. It can be noted that the messages below form part of affect, and both demonstrate a positive feeling towards Knowles’ music.

**Message B1:** 5scaleracer
love this song!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

**Message B2:** duvnjakica5
adorable

There is literature which supports that male and female differ in terms of linguistic behaviour: however my findings do not prove to support this literature. Coates and Cameron (1989:17) argue that the linguistic behaviour of the male is often seen as the norm against which the linguistic behaviour of females are evaluated. Ferris (2010) draws an article by Cameron (1997), entitled *Verbal Hygiene for Women: Linguistics Misapplied?* to demonstrate how the linguistic behaviour of females are viewed. Cameron (1997) argues in opposition to the linguistic behaviour of the female being seen as “deficient” in comparison to that of a male’s gender. The males are said “to be competitive, whilst females communicate to be co-operative; in addition males are said to communicate for status whereas women communicate for intimacy”.

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I stand in agreement with Cameron (1997) that males and females will “produce their own behaviour in light” of particular meanings associated with gender meanings.

The masculine and feminine roles which are assigned to males and females, linguistically, have undergone change. If indeed masculine roles are attached to males (with reference to my research) it is interesting to note that males openly express that a female has changed their lives. Being part of a masculine identity, the possibility of it being frowned upon would be rather high. Also, with regards to feminine roles, females are said to communicate to “bond” and build relationships. Females express that they admire and look up to Knowles- but so do males (referring to Messages AM, AH). Has a restructuring of gender roles indeed taken place? With regards to my research, it has.

It is further argued that it is essential to explore what is being re-affirmed and what the outcome of the re-affirmation is. In this view individuals are seen as social agents who have the ability to resist the gender roles which are ascribed to them. Looking at my data, it can be noted that males and females alike respond to Knowles in, mostly, the same way. Both express positive emotion towards Knowles. One of the most common features of Knowles’ online fan writings is that both express the extent of how Knowles has inspired them. Evidence of this is seen from the examples previously discussed (Message AH and Message AM). These fans in turn evaluate themselves and their capabilities in relation to Knowles. Thus Knowles’ capacity is evaluated positively and therefore her behaviour inspires these fans.

Comparing this to the literature, I would argue that Knowles’ fans indeed resist the gender roles ascribed to them. In support of this perspective, Cameron (1997:456 in Ferris, 2010: 19) argues that it is pointless for linguists to perceive masculinity and femininity as being monolithic “structures which automatically cause communicational patterns that are predictable”. Cameron (1997 in Ferris,
2010:19) is not in support of the use of models for gender speech and discourages linguists to make use of them. In addition, it is possible for females and males “to resist the persisting codes of gender in terms of performance” (Cameron, 1997: 456 in Ferris, 2010: 19).

In relation to this, it is interesting to note that Message AH, being a male, relays so much emotion in relation to Knowles in his online message. To compare Message AH to Message AI, one will note the interpersonal connection the fan attempts to create with Knowles. Even though the online writer of Message AH is a male and Message AI is a female, it can be noted that both are lavished in emotive words and interpersonal connections. In this sense the strict division between genders do not play a role in the fans’ online writings. Both male and female openly express their admiration towards Knowles, and the role her influence has in their lives. These messages reflect evidence of affect as they express awe in relation to Knowles. Through affect, a comparison between a male fan and a female fan can be made in terms of linguistic evidence.

Message AI:

Hi B, you’re my MODEL and IDOL
i just love and admire u and Jay sooooo much. [affect, happiness, pos]

U’re talented, Godfearg, beautiful, disciplined and classy. 
Guess what? my greatest earthly wish is to meet u face to face. I just got to the USA and will be going back to africa.
Pls B and Jay Z, can i just grasp a life view of u, take life pics with u, i will return to africa feelg fulfilled. [affect, happiness, pos]

Hey, also taking your unwanted outfits along with me tooooooo (smiles) God Bless u B, more grease to ur elbows and God Bless u, and keep the flames high my dear, ur the ultimate sasha fierce! u know what? am 8months pregnant
In *Message AI*, the fan expresses the extent of her admiration for Knowles. One can note that the fan expresses feelings of happiness towards Knowles and thus evaluates Knowles positively. Looking at the message, the fan writes “i just love and admire u and Jay soooooo much”. By this, one can see that the emphasis is placed on “soooooo”. The length of the ‘o’ expresses just how much she adores Knowles. The fan places further emphasis on this adoration by claiming that Knowles is her “MODEL and IDOL”. The fan goes on to praise Knowles by using words such as “talented”, and *textese* such as “Godfearg” (presumed to be “God-fearing”), “beautiful”, “disciplined” and “classy” in relation to Knowles. This particular fan hovers between fantasy and the reality of musicians what is performed through mediums like the television, magazines and the radio. The fan posts: “a life view of u, take life pics with u”. This creates the distinction between their (popular artists like Knowles) world presented to us through these mediums and meeting Knowles face-to-face. Thus, there is a sense here in which the fan personalises her relationship with Knowles and it is as if she is having a conversation with her: “Guess what? Hey… your mom is a perfect exple for a mom”.

The construction of a personal relationship is taken a step further and sealed with the fan claiming: “u know what? am 8months pregnant and i bet u, my daughter will be called SASHA and u are her God mother”. She explains that she is “8 months pregnant” and that she will be naming her daughter “Sasha”. As mentioned previously, Knowles’ other stage name and the name of her third solo album is “I am Sasha Fierce”. Because this fan wishes to solidify her interpersonal bond with Knowles, she goes as far as to say that she will name her daughter after Knowles and claims that: “u are her God mother”. For the fact that this fan does not know Knowles personally, it highlights the adoration of this fan. By naming her daughter after Knowles, Knowles would have penetrated her everyday life
and, in a sense, become a part of her personal life. Furthermore, the fan draws on a personal tie to Knowles by writing: “your mom is a perfect exple for a mom”. It also demonstrates further the fan’s feeling of happiness towards Knowles, so much so, that she would incorporate Knowles’ stage name into her daily life. *Message AI* in particular is a perfect example to demonstrate the extent of Knowles’ online fan base adoration for her. From this message, it can be deduced that the attitude held from this fan with regards to Knowles is a positive one.

In *Message AK* and in the rest of *Message AB*, it becomes evident that although the fans hold positive views of Knowles, they are also critical of her actions. Taking the age of these online writers into consideration, it can be inferred that because they are reasonably older than the “teen” fans, their views differ as well.

**Message AK:**

I would like to start off by saying I am a 55 year old woman that has so much admiration for Beyonce. She appears to be rooted and grounded with a beautiful, humble spirit. My prayer is that she doesn't get so full of herself and start looking down on people.

[judgement, capacity, pos]

I said all of that to say, her remarks about the Jackson's was very mean spirited totally out of the character of the beautiful woman that I have perceived her to be Janet Jackson has all of the above mentioned gifts, why would Beyonce make such a mean spirited statement?

[judgement, capacity, neg]

**Message AB:**

I think beyonce knowles is a very talented/gifted singer and I am very proud of all of her accomplishments. As a wife and mother though, I cannot say she is a role model to my daughter or any other young lady for that matter. Her videos and onstage performances (and "Sasha Fierce"
costumes) are not classy and no different from strippers who use their bodies to make money. I think if you have as much talent as she has you don't have to stoop to such levels (Alicia Keys is a prime example). [judgement, capacity, neg]

Looking at the messages, it is clear that both fans express happiness and satisfaction when praising Knowles. In Message AK, the fan posts that she admires Knowles and that she appears “grounded” and “rooted”. And in Message AB, the fan (as discussed above) praises Knowles for being “talented/gifted”. However, even though both fans have expressed their praise, they also display criticism towards Knowles. In Message AK, the fan foregrounds her message praising Knowles and then expresses her dissatisfaction with Knowles for saying something “mean spirited” about another singer (Janet Jackson).

The fan goes on to question that if Knowles “appears” to be “rooted” and “grounded”, why is it then that she would make an ill comment about a fellow singer. For the fact that this fan questions what Knowles appears to be in comparison to what she says demonstrates that the fan bases her opinion towards Knowles not only on what she presents outwardly but based on what Knowles says as well. In this sense, it can be noted that Knowles’ fan base follow her every action—so to speak—and put it under a magnifying glass. Earlier in the message, the fan “prays” Knowles does not become too full of herself. By making such a statement, one can infer that Knowles plays a significant role in this fan’s life. This statement is also in direct contrast to praise associated with Knowles at the beginning of the message. This fan positions her judgement in such a way that it implies that sometimes Knowles behaves as though she might be conceited.

In Message AB, it becomes evident that the fan distinguishes between two identities via her linguistic choices. On the one hand she acknowledges that Knowles is a “gifted/talented” singer and that she is very proud of her, and on the
other, she differentiates her role to take the viewpoint as a wife and a mother. She goes on to state that Knowles’ on stage performances and videos “are not classy and no different from strippers who use their bodies to make money”. The conflict between identity roles is quite clear, as a mother and a wife; this fan does not feel that Knowles is a fitting role model. Knowles’ capability is negatively evaluated as the fan associates Knowles to being like a stripper as the fan sees no difference between Knowles and strippers as they both use their bodies as a tool to make money. This can be seen in Knowles’ provocative on stage costumes.

Looking at the posts, it also interesting to note that Message AK is posted by a “55 year old” and in Message AB, the fan is a wife and a mother; it can be inferred that the online writer is fairly older in age as she mentions that Knowles is not a good role model for her daughter. From this it can be inferred that her daughter could be an impressionable teenager.

With regards to judgement, it can be noted that Knowles’ online fan base express views of positivity with regards to her music and personal character. It is interesting that these fans do not know Knowles, so-to-speak, personally, but they structure their posts linguistically to present that perhaps they do. Knowles is seen as a role model to most whom her music has changed and inspired their lives in various ways. The fans pay close attention to Knowles and they differentiate her on stage performance with what she presents in interviews. On the one hand, her fans express that they are extremely proud of her and all of her achievements and on the other, her fans criticise her choice of dress and some of the things she says in public. I would argue that for the way in which her fans write their posts, it can be seen that, in their minds, they believe that their opinions are important to Knowles. Hence, their judgements portrayed in their messages are not restricted to evaluating Knowles capability but also her morals.

In Message AH, the fan posts the impact Knowles has made in his life and stands up for her: “haters go hate on someone who is as talentless as u”. It is clear that Knowles’ fans have a close attachment to her and what she represents in their
lives. With regards to identity, I would argue that the older online fan base would distinguish between what Knowles presents through her music and what she presents on stage (with regards to her dancing and dressing). The reason for this distinction, for an older online fan base- it is due to the fact that the older online fan base differentiates their roles in society; for example: as an individual that would admire Knowles’ music and then as a mother criticising the role model that she would present to their children. The younger online fan base highlights her features as an artist and look up to her as a role model. This sense of differing between roles and being placed in a particular age category partly makes up the identity of the fan base.

Making the connection of the social identity and its relation to discourse is shed light on by Johnstone (2008:155) in her discussion on the topic of “discourse and the self”. Johnstone (2008) highlights that:

The relationship between social identity and discourse is grounded in the thought “that the selves we present to others are changeable, strategic, and jointly constructed”. (Johnstone, 2008:155).

Looking at the given extract, it can be noted that the fans present a link between their linguistic choices and what they project with regards to identity. Johnstone (2008) states that individuals make use of particular resources of language in order to perform a web of different social identities, morphed to the different situations and domains one finds oneself in and the various ways in which individuals are “socially positioned by others”. In light of this, some fans distinguish themselves by noting their age and inferring that a certain identity comes with it: For example, the allusion of being wiser due to various experiences. Whereas others would announce themselves as what they believe contributes to their identity within their society, for example: they point out that they are a: mother, father, brother, sister, wife or husband etc. Language can be utilised to project and create a coherent, more resilient personal identity. This
requires that, as individuals, we are “autonomous agents and that we have temporally continuous life histories, biographies without gaps” (Johnstone, 2008: 155). One of the following examples (Message AM) has been explained earlier, and the other two (Message AB and AK) are other posts from my data; I have provided it below:

**Message AB:** I think beyonce knowles is a very talented/gifted singer and I am very proud of all of her accomplishments. [judgement, capacity, pos]

As a wife and mother though, I cannot say she is a role model to my daughter or any other young lady for that matter. Her videos and onstage performances (and "Sasha Fierce" costumes) are not classy and no different from strippers who use their bodies to make money. [judgement, propriety, neg]

**Message AK:** I would like to start off by saying I am a 55 year old woman that has so much admiration for Beyonce. [judgement, capacity, pos]

**Message AM:** i am 13 and i am starting in the entertainment bussines as an actress.

As mentioned previously, fans identify themselves socially by their age or by their roles within their families. By these fans willingly attaching a label to their identity by mentioning their age, it could possibly indicate the following. From Message AK, because the age group “55” is relatively higher than middle age, the suggestion behind mentioning the age could infer that because this fan is “older”, she has experienced more in life and she is therefore wiser. Her age could also suggest that she has seen (or heard of) a lot of other artists and thus she would be better equipped to distinguish the “quality” between different artists.
In *Message AM*, by the fan mentioning that she is “13”, it could suggest that she is very young to be “starting in the entertainment business as an actress”. Due to the fact that she is young, she could feel that it is an achievement and proclaims her age freely. In *Message AB*, the fan states that she is a “wife and mother”, by mentioning these roles, the fan attempts to assign an identity that is somewhat more “respectable”. Because this fan is ascribed these roles, she feels that what Knowles projects outwardly is not suitable for her child. For the fact that this fan mentions: “Her videos and onstage performances (and "Sasha Fierce" costumes) are not classy and no different from strippers who use their bodies to make money”, the fan clearly expresses her strong *beliefs* she holds that what strippers do is wrong and it is against what she believes. Linking Knowles to the occupation of strippers, she further emphasises that what Knowles does in her on stage performances and videos is wrong. In addition, she foregrounds her belief as a “mother and wife”. Hence, her post reflects a negative *judgement* of Knowles’ behaviour as a role model.

The messages which follow illustrate judgement with the exception of *Message AJ* showing evidence of *appreciation*. Some of these messages have been previously discussed; however, for the purpose of demonstrating how fans align or disalign themselves with respect to Knowles, I have chosen them again to demonstrate my point.

**Message AA:**  BEYONCE IS A TALENTED R&B SINGER [judgement, capacity, pos].

**Message AB:**  I think beyonce knowles is a very talented/gifted singer and I am very proud of all of her accomplishments. As a wife and mother though, I cannot say she is a role model to my daughter or any other young lady for that
matter. Her videos and onstage performances (and "Sasha Fierce" costumes) are not classy and no different from strippers who use their bodies to make money. [judgement, propriety, neg]

**Message AD:** hey yall this najee reparsenting shy town all day beyonce is the most gifted singer i know… [judgement, capacity, pos] she has a great heart God made a buetiful creation nce again bee [judgement, normality, pos]

**Message AF:** Beyonce Knowles is one of the best singers I have ever heard. Actually she is my favourite artists. [judgement, capacity, pos]

**Message AJ:** beyonce songs are good.loveable character.full of energy,skinny music,boosting Our interest on music,especially her songs. choclate to many fans. krishnamurthir [appreciation, quality, pos]

From the above messages, it is evident that Knowles’ fans enjoy her music but at the same time, they judge her based on her talent and her physical beauty. In Message AA, Message AB, and Message AD her fans judge her as being a “talented”, “gifted”, “best”, “favorite” and “most gifted” singer. From this, it can be noted that these fans evaluate Knowles’ performing capabilities positively. Describing Knowles’ “imagined” personality attributes, her online fans use phrases such as: “she has a great heart”, this fan’s judgement reveals how special she believes Knowles to be. In Message AJ, the fan expresses that Knowles is a “good.loveable character.full of energy”, this post demonstrates the fan’s appreciation for Knowles as the fan ascribes positive adjectives to describe Knowles. This can be seen from: “good”, “lovable” and “skinny”. It is interesting to note that the fan discusses Knowles’ qualities as if the fan knows her personally; the fan takes the representation of Knowles on television and her on
stage persona to be the actual person that Knowles is in “real life”. In Message AJ, the fan posts: “especially her songs. chocolate to manyfans”, the online writer assumes that “chocolate” is liked/loved by most women, and regarded as one of the best treats to women, and to an extent men. By implication, it can be inferred that Knowles’ songs and music is loved by many fans. This further emphasises the fan’s positive appreciation for Knowles as the fan personalises her post by stating “chocolate to manyfans”. This suggests that the fan enjoys chocolate and by comparing Knowles to “chocolate”, it further illustrates how much she enjoys Knowles as an artist.

In Message AD, the fan comments on Knowles’ personality (similar to Message AJ) as if the fan “knows” Knowles. The fan makes the assumption that “she has a great heart”. The fan goes further to express adoration by stating that God had made a beautiful creation, thus judging Knowles’ normality. Looking at these key choices of words, it is noted just how much emphasis the fans place on the assumption of knowing Knowles and then believing the projected persona. Some questions become pertinent: if these fans have never met Knowles, how would they know if she was “good” and “lovable”? Why is it that her fans feel that a personal connection has to be made to Knowles? Looking at Messages, AD, AH, AI: it can be noticed that this personal connection is evident, they refer to Knowles using a nickname: “B”, “Bee”, “Queen B” and even “BK”; in other messages.
Chapter 6: Appreciating Hip-Hop culture in relation to Knowles.

6.0 Introduction.

As previously indicated, identities can be given, ascribed or performed (Dimitriadis, 2004). In this section, I try to relate the notion of appreciation to the kinds of identities fans ascribe to Knowles.

Appreciation concerns itself with looking to meaning which construe our evaluations of objects, people or ‘things’. One makes particular reference to performances one gives and things that one makes. This includes natural phenomena (Martin and White: 2005:56). In addition, “appreciation refers to how speakers evaluate a text (e.g. a painting, music, a work of literature) or a process (e.g. the weather)” (Eggins and Slade, 1997:126). From the selected data from Appendix A, one can note that some fans have positive expressions of Knowles and others do not. In the few messages which follow, the fans have a positive expression of the artist. Some fans repeat their admiration for Knowles by not only praising one particular aspect of her, but by also praising her music. They tend to commend her from what they perceive her to be from the attributes they assign to her.

It is noted that when writers/ speakers proclaim their own attitudinal positions:

“They not only self-expressively ‘speak their own mind’, but simultaneously invite others to endorse and to share with them the feelings, tastes or normative assessments they are announcing” (Martin and White, 2005:95).

These declarations of attitude are directed towards lining the addressee, dialogically, into a community of shared belief and value. This can be noticed within the posts of Knowles where some fans share the same views as others. This
becomes evident when fans do not necessarily openly announce their alignment to one another. Instead, the fans would keep the posts going by adding positive comments below each other. This can be seen from the following examples used from Appendix B:

- **Message B20:** very nice music :D  [appreciation, valuation, pos]
- **Message B22:** the best song!  [appreciation, valuation, pos]
- **Message B23:** beatiful song  [appreciation, valuation, pos]
- **Message B25:** big love<3  [appreciation, valuation, pos]
- **Message B27:** this girl iz mad pretty  [appreciation, valuation, pos]

Martin and White (2005:95) explore the issue of negotiation of disalignment/alignment in the light that it is relevant to the link where the text can be interpreted as holding between the writer/speaker “and the text’s putative addressee”. The subject of intersubjectivity meaning is further explored by looking at certain indicators whether mass communicative or singly-constructed texts- how this creates (for the individual) an “imagined”, “ideal” or “envisaged” reader, “since it is with this putative addressee that the speaker/writer is presented as more or less aligned/disaligned”. By creating an “imagined” personal connection with Knowles, her online fan base feel somewhat closer to Knowles. It is interesting to note, however, that even though her fans leave their posts on Youtube, Knowles does not respond to these posts. Instead her fans tend to comment on each other’s opinions.
6.1 License to transgress.

As mentioned before, it can be noted that Knowles allows for the meshing of the cultures of Rhythm and Blues (R&B) and Hip-Hop. This is evident from the responses of her online fan base- specifically in Appendix A. It is known that Knowles was part of an R&B all-girl group, Destiny’s Child. Her genre of music was therefore R&B, however, looking at Appendix F (lines 42 to 71), it can be noted that Jay Z (Knowles’ boyfriend at the time, now husband) performs in the same song, “Crazy in love”. His performance, however, is a rap, which in this instance forms part of the Hip-Hop culture. With this inclusion and meshing of the two genres, it allows fans to come together. In this case, Knowles appeals to a wider audience. From the examples below from Appendix A and Appendix B, I will demonstrate that there are some fans who either demonstrate the culture of Hip-Hop or who genuinely belong in the category of a Hip-Hop culture. This distinction leads to fans who would like to be acknowledged as being a part of the Hip-Hop culture. Also, by these fans making use of linguistic words which belong to the Hip-Hop culture, do these fans believe that this will create a stronger connection to Knowles? In light of this, does this way of connecting to Knowles mean that these fans construct a sense of Hip-Hop identity to connect to Knowles? Following will be an exploration of the connection of occurrence of Hip-Hop culture in relation to Knowles.

Below, I will provide examples from my posts which indicate a sense of Hip-Hop culture.

Message AC: I’ve heard that Beyonce will be down at Wandsworth Palais on Friday 13thNovember. Also word is that Maxwell is coming down to see the gig as well

Message AD: hey **yall** this najee reparsenting shy town all day

Message AI: God Bless u B, **more grease to ur elbows** and God Bless u,

Message B27: this girl **iz mad pretty**

Message B28: **YO** she did her thing **on dis joint mad props ma**

In the above examples, I have bolded words and phrases which appear in Hip-Hop culture. In order to fully understand these words and phrases, exposure to Hip-Hop may be useful (cf. Alim, Ibrahim and Pennycook, 2009). For example, in Message AC, the fan writes: “I’ve heard that Beyonce will be down at Wandsworth Palais”. The phrase “Beyonce will be down at Wandsworth Palais” does not literally mean that she will, firstly, be “down” as in “sad” at Wandsworth Palais and, secondly, it does not mean that she will be facing the direction of being down at Wandsworth Palais. It simply means that Knowles will be present at Wandsworth Palais “on Friday 13 November”. In other words being “present” and “down” in this particular context are interchangeable.

Another brief example can be taken from Message B28: “Yo she did her thing on dis joint mad props ma”. The fan starts his message with “YO”, which is used as a means to say “hey”. By the online writer using the phrase “she did her thing on dis joint” it means that she impressed the audience with her song/ performance (in this case the Halo music video). The word “dis” is actually the word “this”, the writer writes the word as one in the Hip-Hop culture would phonetically say the word: [dәs]. The second part of the phrase: “mad props ma”, is in the Hip-Hop culture a way to express that the individual did a good job at what they do/did. By the writer using the word “mad” before the word “props”, the writer expresses just how much he was impressed by Knowles’ song/ performance/ music video. The writer does not literally mean “mad” as in angry or crazy but more as a way of emphasis on a job well done. In Hip-Hop culture, this word has clearly taken on a
different meaning. Furthermore, the fan ends the message by “on dis joint mad props ma”.

As previously discussed, “dis” is actually the word “this” and the word “joint” in this context means her performance in her music video, “Halo”. Finally, “mad props ma”, this phrase pays Knowles a compliment for a great music video. Lastly, by the writer referring to Knowles as “ma”, it does not literally mean “mother”. Rather the term “mother” shows respect and it is that respect that is implied rather than the meaning behind the term. Also in Hip-Hop culture, the term “ma” is also used to refer to a man’s “woman” or “girlfriend”.

It is interesting to note that the fan in Message AC makes mention that: “Maxwell is coming down to see the gig as well”. By way to provide a brief introduction to Maxwell, he is an American Rhythm and Blues artist, his full name is Gerald Maxwell Rivera. He is better known as Maxwell. He is known for playing an important role “in the development of the soul sub-genre, neo-soul”\(^34\). His connection to Knowles serves that he is an R&B artist, because Knowles’ music is largely classified as Rhythm and Blues, Maxwell shows his support. It is also interesting that Knowles transgresses between genres of R&B and Hip-Hop; however, her supporters remain true to supporting her.

In addition, the following examples further demonstrate the connection of Hip-Hop culture which the fans draw on to communicate with Knowles.

**Message AC:** I’ve heard that Beyonce will be **down** at Wandsworth Palais on Friday 13th November.

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Also **word** is that Maxwell is coming down to see the gig as well

**Message AD:**  
hey *yall* this najee **reparsenting** shy town all day

**Message AI:**  
God Bless u B, **more grease to ur elbows** and God Bless u,

To fully grasp the notion of Hip-Hop culture, it is useful (as stated previously) to have schemata about it, for example, looking at **Message AC**, the fan writes: “Also word is that Maxwell is coming down to see the gig as well”. In the context the word “word” means that someone has either heard that Maxwell was going to be at Knowles’ concert or the information received from whichever source stated that Maxwell was going to be at her concert. In my opinion, I think that it is derived from the saying “word of mouth”. In relation to Hip-Hop culture, it is used to say “I heard” that Maxwell is going to Knowles’ concert (in this particular context).

In **Message AD**, the online fan writes: “hey *yall* this najee reparsenting shy town all day”. In this context the fan uses the word “*yall*” to mean “you all”. This word is, however, not only used in Hip-Hop culture but in other cultures as well. The difference lies in the accent and the way in which this word is articulated. Furthermore, the fan writes: “this najee reparsenting shy town all day”. In Hip-Hop culture, identity plays an essential role as well. In this instance, it is evident, that this fan feels proud about where he comes from- as he proudly represents “shy town”. The fan in this post spells the actual word “representing” as “reparsenting”, this is because the fan spells the word as it is pronounced in the Hip-Hop culture. In this way the fan makes a solid connection to Hip-Hop when his spelling matches the pronunciation.

Looking at **Message AI**, the online fan writes: “more grease to ur elbows and God Bless u”. In this example, the fan makes use of a saying when giving advice to
Knowles. The message intended was not meant on a literal level, but rather a metaphorical level. In other words, the fan meant that Knowles should be strong and continue to do what she does in the entertainment industry instead of meaning that Knowles should put more grease to her elbows, physically and literally.

It is evident that these fans create a sense of Hip-Hop culture by their linguistic choices. Dimitriadis (2004:10) argues that “culture and identity must be constantly negotiated configured, and reconfigured in the present tense.” The previously discussed examples demonstrate that Knowles’ fans maintain the use of Hip-Hop words in their responses. In relation to Dimitriadis (2004), from these examples, it is evident that Knowles’ online fan base negotiates their identity and culture to align themselves with a Hip-Hop identity in relation to Knowles. In addition, this example typically demonstrates how the, so-to-speak, ‘theme’ of Hip-Hop is carried throughout the message, thus suggesting that the fan is part of the Hip-Hop culture.

Dimitriadis (2004:11) notes that the “notion of the performative throws into sharp relief how young people perform their own realities in particular times and places with available-though often quite limited- resources”. In relation to my data, this can be seen from the fact that Knowles’ online fan base uses the space of the online postings to shape their identity/ reality. This identity becomes active within this particular “space”. Furthermore, Dimitriadis (2004:11) explains that we see “how history, tradition, and identity are all performances, all the result of invested actors who position themselves vis-à-vis others in a complex and unfolding social reality not of their own making”.

With regards to my research, I argue that this proves to be the case, these fans construct their responses in such a way that the connection to Knowles will be stronger, by linguistically choosing to write their messages using Hip-Hop words and phrases, the fans believe that it would strengthen this connection. In the same
breath, I also argue that the possibility of a Hip-Hop fan base exists, and the few examples demonstrated previously indicate that, however, some fans could be using Hip-Hop terminology to conform to the existing Hip-Hop group. Regardless, whether these fans use Hip-Hop terminology to conform to its culture and identity or to connect to Knowles, in agreement to Dimitriadis (2004), their reality/identity is not of their own making but rather a construction of what is expected within a social space.

Once again, in agreement to Dimitriadis (2004:35) “young people today are using contemporary media to define themselves and to map their daily lives”. It can be noted that in relation to those posts where fans have expressed their age (being older) and their roles (being a mother and a wife)- the difference between posts indicates one being Hip-Hop- possibly a younger fan base and then one which excludes the use of Hip-Hop- being the older fan base. These younger fans are using this social space of the online message boards/postings (contemporary media) to construct and project a certain image/identity about them. In this instance it is this sense of a Hip-Hop culture and identity.

Ntarangwi (2009: xi) notes that “as products of different political, economic and cultural movements, (East) Africans embody a canvas on which to paint performance of Hip-Hop with broad colourful, and truncated strokes that highlight change, continuity, and even fragmentation in their individual and collective identities”. In relation to my data, I argue that Knowles’ fans use Hip-Hop culture as a platform to negotiate and construct their identity (the reasons for that as mentioned previously). It can be noted that this sense of Hip-Hop culture is no longer restricted to East Africans or African Americans, rather it has transcended ethnography. This in itself can be seen from Youtube videos: instead of having just African American Hip-Hop and rap artists it has grown to include white and coloured artists, a good example of this is Eminem\(^{35}\), also known as Marshall

\(^{35}\) See: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eJO5HU_7_1w](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eJO5HU_7_1w) Date Accessed: 14 February 2011.
Bruce Mathers. By these fans linguistically choosing to include Hip-Hop culture in their posts, it contributes to a portion of their identity. However, it does not necessarily solely make up their identity. I argue this because these fans use Hip-Hop culture to communicate within a social space; it would be interesting to observe if these fans interact daily within a Hip-Hop culture/theme.

Further literature on identity points out that individuals distinguish themselves as individuals from others. Once they have taken note that they can make different things happen and that various things can happen to them rather than to others. When gaps appear in their life histories, individuals can lose grip of their sanity. Psychotherapy entails creating a complete novel life narrative (Schafer, 1981 in Johnstone, 2008:155). Questions which arise from this concerning the posts are: Are the fans creating new identities for themselves via their linguistic choices which do not necessarily reflect who they really are? And is this construction of a new identity being used as a tool solely to create a personal connection to Knowles? In other words, do Knowles’ fans feel obligated to “fit in” linguistically to form part of her fan base or are they themselves part of the Hip-Hop culture?

Johnstone (2008) argues that individuals can project this more resilient type of identity (the experience of living from day-to-day as the same person from situation-to-situation) through manner of behaviour, linguistic means and “otherwise”. This would prevail to be the same from situation-to-situation, regardless of the unavoidable need to change. Part of achieving this, would consist of adopting a constant personal style, which could require calling on the attention to the aspect that individuals are often flexible, across various modes of situations and behaviour. With regards to personal style, some fans create a personal narrative about themselves to form their connection to Knowles. By doing so, it contributes to what they think Knowles would think about them. This can be seen in a prior example: the fan is 8 months pregnant and announces that she will be naming her child Sasha (after Knowles). By writing this in her post, she hopes that
Knowles would feel a personal connection to her and make an effort to meet her. This example shows how this fan presents her post from her identity as a mother:

**Message AI:** my dear, ur the ultimate sasha fierce! u know what? am 8months pregnant and i bet u, my daughter will be called SASHA and u are her God mother. your mom is a perfect exple for a mom.

She starts her post by attributing positive qualities to Knowles and ends her post by indicating part of her identity as a mother. The fan goes on to mention that “your mom is a perfect exple for a mom”, by adding this, this fan connects to Knowles’ mother, and in this way, the fan wishes to connect to Knowles-through a shared identity.

In relation to this observation, I found that Johnstone (2008) draws on Ochs and Capps’ (2001:2) argument that “Personal narrative is a way of using language or another symbolic system to imbue life events with temporal and logical order, to demystify them and establish coherence across past, present, and as yet unrealised experience”. Linde (1993 in Johnstone 2008: 155) notes that narrative is one of the most essential social resources for maintaining and creating personal identity. With regards to my research findings, I would argue that this rings true. From most of the examples that I have made use of in my data analysis, a common theme of the posts were that the fans assigned positive commentary to Knowles and then went on to explain the extent of how inspired they felt by Knowles. Also, in an example already discussed (*Message AH*), the fan starts by explaining that Knowles has inspired him: he then goes on to explain in which way she has changed his life. By his linguistic choices, he has shaped his identity with a *personal narrative* in order to establish a link to Knowles. This fan, in particular shapes his identity about gender as well (as previously discussed).
Johnstone (2008) notes that this is, firstly, established through the sequence of events in the narrative and the “causal connections” within the events that are established by the narrators. Stories can “represent the experience of continuity of the self over time”; it moulds our experience of taking hold of a lasting personal identity. The posts which I have already examined displayed evidence of “causal connections” with regards to events which have reference to their lives, respectively. Once their narrative has been told, they establish their connection to Knowles. For example: in Message AI, the fan foregrounds why she would like to name her child after Knowles. The fan firstly mentions that she is pregnant and then goes on to mention that Knowles is the child’s “God mother”. The fan ends the post by making a personal connection to Knowles’ mother hence personalising her narrative to create a stronger connection to Knowles.

Secondly, it is established through “markers of person” using pronouns like “you”, “I”, “she” and so forth. Because narratives occur in social interaction, life stories would then represent the connection of the self in relation to others. This morphs the experience of the individual’s viewpoint on the world as being diverse from those of others, in this way; it captures the various ways in which personal identities are fashioned both in contrast and by identification with others. This is evident in my data and can be seen clearly in Appendix A. The fans make use of the personal pronoun “I” and “you” a lot to refer to themselves and then to Knowles respectively. This in turn, allows the reader, supposedly being Knowles, and the fans to have a closer relationship through the casual “conversation” of the text between the fan and Knowles.

Lastly, “through the retrospective process of creating narratives”, and by pointing out what is essential in their stories, it is thus that narrators “represent the experience of one’s life as a meaningful whole” (Johnstone, 2008:156). In relation to my findings, through the use of the appraisal theory, and appreciation in particular, one can identify that the online fans attempt to connect with Knowles in the way in which they position themselves to her. Their sense of personal identity is created through nicknames (as mentioned previously) for Knowles and,
indeed, through key words of *appreciation* with regards to her music and her songs.

Demonstrated from the selected data from Appendix B\(^{36}\), I have found examples of how Knowles’ fans express their *appreciation* towards her music:

- **Message B20:** very nice music :D [appreciation, valuation, pos]
- **Message B22:** the best song! [appreciation, valuation, pos]
- **Message B23:** beatiful song [appreciation, valuation, pos]
- **Message B25:** big love<3 [appreciation, valuation, pos]
- **Message B27:** this girl iz mad pretty [appreciation, valuation, pos]
- **Message B40:** fucking hate this song. she says Halo 67 times. bet she didn’t write the lyrics. [appreciation, valuation, neg]
- **Message B41:** this song sucks [appreciation, valuation, neg]
- **Message B42:** the worse song ever written. never has there been a less melodic "melody" sung with less finesse, not that finesse would have solved such a fundamental problem. [appreciation, valuation, neg]

\(^{36}\) *YouTube*. Date Accessed: 17 June 2010.
Messages that displayed negative linguistic choices were far and few between, the majority of posts all expressed love and appreciation for Knowles and her music, thus positively evaluating Knowles and her music. I selected three posts (B40, 41 and 42) to demonstrate a difference in viewpoint by a very small percentage of Knowles’ online fan base. The above posts were found on Youtube in response to Knowles’ song entitled: “Halo” (Appendix E). It is evident that fans responded in a positive light in relation to the song, this is noted in: “very nice music”, “best song”, “beatiful song” and “big love”. The fans, in most posts, express their love for Knowles and her talent; in this case, it is specifically directed at the song uploaded on Youtube. In Message B27, the fan comments on Knowles’ physical appearance: “this girl iz mad pretty”. From this message, the element of Hip-Hop culture is evident: by the fan describing Knowles as “mad pretty” he actually means that she is “really” or “very” pretty. Furthermore, it can be noted that this particular fan spells the word “is” as “iz”. The fan spelt the word to be phonetically articulated as: [iz]. In terms of language and culture, this is under the canopy of Hip-Hop culture. Message B27 expresses appreciation towards Knowles’ physical beauty, by the fan stating the Knowles is “mad pretty”, “mad” emphasizes just how beautiful he thinks Knowles is. In this message Knowles’ beauty is positively evaluated.

By selecting three posts (through lack thereof), I wanted to illustrate that, although there is a small number of online writers that do not appreciate Knowles’ music, it does indeed exist. In Message B40 the online writer posts: “fucking hate this song. she says Halo 67 times. bet she did’nt write the lyrics”. The online writer expresses that he really does not like and appreciate this song, the online writer writes “fucking hate” which indicates the extent of much he dislikes the song. Also, by the online writer making mention of how many times Knowles says “Halo” in the song, it demonstrates his frustration with the song. In addition the online writer adds “bet she did’nt write the lyrics” this shows that the online writer believes Knowles does not write her own music and thus implying that she is not capable of it and that she performs songs that were written by someone else. In that sense, Knowles cannot be accredited, in the online writer’s opinion, for any
part of the song—be it the writing of the lyrics or the singing of the song. In this message the frustrations of the online writer are clear; the fan negatively evaluates Knowles’ music and Knowles’ capability to write her own lyrics.

*Message B41* is of the same view as *B40’s*, the online writer posts: “this song sucks”, by using the word “sucks”, the online writer implies that the song is of a poor quality and the online writer has a negative view towards the song. The fan negatively positions him/herself in relation to Knowles’ song, “Halo”. In agreement to *Message B40* and *B41*, *B42* further illustrates his frustration: “the worse song ever written. never has there been a less melodic "melody" sung with less finesse, not that finesse would have solved such a fundamental problem”. Looking at the post, the online writer uses the phrase “worse song ever written”, this is an indication of the extent of how much the online writer was not impressed with the lyrics of the song. To claim that it was “the worse song ever written” is a very strong claim to make and clearly positions this online writer from the beginning of his post. In the second half of his post, he writes: “never has there been a less melodic "melody" sung with less finesse”, again the online writer takes his claim further by stating “never has there been” thus suggesting that before Knowles’ song “Halo”, a song this bad (in his opinion) did not exist. He goes on to state that the song does not have much of a melody nor was the song sung with grace or skill that it demanded. Finally, the online writer ends his post: “not that finesse would have solved such a fundamental problem”. By this statement the online writer suggests that Knowles is a poor singer, and that even if she sang with “grace” or “skill” it would not solve “the fundamental problem” thus being the fact that she cannot sing (in his opinion). *Messages B40, B41* and *B42* indicate the rare instances of online writers who have expressed their dissatisfaction with Knowles and her music.

From the discussed posts, it is clear that each online writer/ fan positions themselves in a particular way towards Knowles, whether they view her in a positive or negative light. Martin and White (2005:95) provide the framework in
which they highlight the essential dialogistic effects which are associated with these particular meanings. Firstly, a look at the role they play with regards to the meaning making processes which the writer/speaker makes use of when negotiating relationships of disalignment/ alignment “vis-à-vis the various value positions referenced by the text and hence vis-à-vis the socially-constituted communities of shared attitude and belief associated with those positions”. In relation to my research, it is evident that Knowles’ online fan base would either align or disalign themselves towards Knowles via their linguistic choices.

With regards to appreciation, it is evident that her fans use positive adjectives to ascribe to her and/or her music. As I have mentioned before, negative posts and negative positionings are in the minority with regards to the song “Halo”. I would argue that her fans align themselves positively in order to create a personal connection with Knowles. When referring to “disalignment/ alignment”, it is linked to disagreement/agreement regarding both assumptions or belief and attitudinal assessments about the nature of the surrounding world, the way it was (its past) and how it should be.

6.2 Affect as an expression of feeling.

Martin and White (2005:45) note that “because we are developing attitude as a discourse semantic system, we can expect its realisations to diversify across a range of grammatical structures”. This holds true concerning affect. As previously mentioned, affect can be realised either as a “quality”, “process” or as a “comment”. In terms of affect, I found very few instances of messages in my data which reflected affect. From the selected data which follows, it becomes evident that Knowles’ online fan base displays affect as a “process” in terms of feeling joy in relation to Knowles thus aligning themselves positively in respect to Knowles. In the few posts of affect, the linguistic choices indicate that her fans absolutely adore and look up to her. Their linguistic choices are filled with positive descriptive adjectives to express their admiration.
Message AB: I think beyonce knowles is a very talented/gifted singer and I am very proud of all of her accomplishments. [affect, happiness, pos]

Message AE: hello just to say I LIKE U BE YOU ARE MY IDOL n u are the best artist of the planet [affect, happiness, pos]

Message AF: Her music is just the best. I really enjoy it!!!! [affect, happiness, pos]

Message AH: Queen B has been my greatest inspiration in life, i used to have self-esteem issues and felt worthless, strangely iam a dude. [affect, happiness, pos]

Analysing the above extracts, it is clear to see that these online fans express their adoration accordingly: For example in Message AB, the fan uses the phrase “I am very proud” with regards to Knowles’ achievements, this suggests that the fan feels a sense of pride and a somewhat interpersonal connection to the artist, thus expressing an affect of happiness. In Message AE, the fan starts out by using small letters and switches to capital letters to express just how much he/she likes Knowles. For the fact that the fan uses the word “like”, it suggests that the fan has a feeling of positivity and happiness towards the artist. In the next line the fan goes on to express that Knowles is indeed the fan’s idol. In Message AF, the fan expresses: “I really enjoy it!!!!” in relation to Knowles’ music. This indicates a sense of joy that the fan feels when listening to the artist’s music.

Looking at the message, the fan makes use of four exclamation marks after the phrase, “I really enjoy it!!!!”: the use of these exclamation marks emphasises that the fan really does enjoy Knowles’ music a lot. In Message AH, it is clear that this fan looks up to Knowles as an icon, if not a saviour in his life. He expresses that Knowles has been the greatest inspiration in his life. The rest of the text explains the troubles he has had with his personal self-esteem and how Knowles’
influence has made its impact on his life. By using the word “inspiration”, the fan suggests that to some extent, Knowles’ presence/ music has saved and transformed his life. For the fact that this fan refers to Knowles as “Queen B”, it shows, on the one hand, that he places her on a pedestal and thinks of her as royalty and on the other hand, it can be interpreted as the “Queen Bee” of the hive. In this sense it shows that Knowles is very important and that she is the “Queen” of her subjects. From the examples, it can be seen that the fans position themselves in a positive light in relation to Knowles.

6.3 Chapter conclusion

Looking at the evaluative stances which are evident from Knowles’ online fan base and writers, linguistically, I drew the following brief conclusions. It can be noted that Knowles’ fan base praises her for her talent and in numerous posts. Fans highlight what an inspiration she is and continues to be to them. In terms of affect, I found that both male and female, fans tend to voice what they think of Knowles, her talent and her music. In light of this, both males and females feel comfortable when expressing their feelings towards her. Based on my analysis, if one male fan can represent the broader online male fan base then males have transgressed the masculine role which has been assigned to them and have thus created an equal platform between gender in relation to Knowles in the space of the online message board. Fans put a lot of effort into trying to establish a connection to Knowles, so much so that it can be noted that fans feel ‘proud’ of her. Furthermore, a fan states that she will be naming her child after Knowles. Even though fans/ online writers express their positive or negative feelings towards Knowles they also judge her based on her capacity. Through observing Knowles’ capacities, they would compare her capabilities with their own. In this way, affect plays a role for the fans forming part of an evaluation of the self.

With regards to appreciation, fans express just how much they enjoy Knowles’ music and they have expressed themselves accordingly. Even though negative comments in terms of appreciation were in the minority, they do indeed exist.
With regards to judgement, online writers found it necessary to define themselves by their age or social roles as wives, mothers etc. The views that are expressed stem from a range of perspectives. I have found that those fans who have defined themselves as ‘mothers’ and ‘wives’ provide their views in terms of what is appropriate and what is inappropriate for their children. However, that aside, they still feel ‘proud’ of Knowles and her accomplishments. From this it can be noted that their ‘roles’ are distinguished from others. For example: as individuals, they are proud of Knowles but as ‘mothers’ and ‘wives’, they feel that her on stage performance and videos are inappropriate. Those online writers who have posted negative comments in relation to Knowles are greatly in the minority. It can be noted that the majority of posts on the message board are of a positive nature, where the fan/ online writer judges Knowles’ capabilites. Most of these posts judge Knowles’ capabilites positively. It is rare to find posts which have no relation to the context (for instance : comments which do not relate to what others are writing about, in this case : Knowles).

Furthermore, in relation to judgements, I have made use of a different website which explores other aspects of Knowles. The Vigilant Citizen\textsuperscript{37} investigates gestures in Knowles’ physical presentation in her images, lyrics and music videos. The website suggests the gestures can be linked to evil symbolism. In fact, it is from this perspective that the online writers in Appendix D, posted their online messages. I referred to the individuals who posted their messages on this particular website as ‘online writers’ instead of ‘fans’ for the simple reason that their criticism and judgement proves not to be in favour of Knowles. However, a good number of fans prove to be in favour of Knowles as well. The online posts judge Knowles as an individual who has undergone an evil transformation. For the purpose of making my argument clearer, I displayed images from the same website. It is these images that solidified change in belief of these online writers in relation to Knowles. For the fact that Knowles makes use of clear imagery (the head of the goat) on her costume, she seals the online writers’ judgement as

\textsuperscript{37}Date Accessed: 06 March 2010.
negative. A number of these online writers express their unhappiness and
disappointment of this ‘change’ in Knowles. Furthermore, they state that they
once had respect for Knowles but they no longer do. In their eyes Knowles is an
individual who has sold her soul to evil to obtain success. In this regard albeit
there are a good number of posts which judge Knowles positively, there are also a
number of posts that judge Knowles negatively in terms of propriety and veracity.

Where Hip-Hop culture is concerned, Knowles’ fans linguistically construct their
posts using Hip-Hop words and phrases. In this way, the fans may feel that it
creates a greater personal to Knowles. In addition, these fans also shape their
online identities accordingly.
CHAPTER 7 :

Conclusion.

7.0 Conclusion.

This thesis particularly focused on attitudes; it focused more on judgement and appreciation and touched on affect which was displayed linguistically in their posts. This research highlights the efficacy of using the appraisal theory in exploring the interpersonal meanings of the online fan base of Beyoncé Knowles. For the purpose of my research these message boards/online postings, as a fundamental tool of communication, are investigated as a discourse. Therefore, the way in which Knowles’ fans align themselves through these attitudes and the construction of their identity in terms of Hip Hop culture was analysed.

With regards to the attitudinal analysis, in terms of affect, Knowles’ online fan base, regardless of gender, demonstrated a sense of feeling ‘proud’ toward the singer. It was interesting to note that regardless of gender, both males and females felt comfortable making use of colourful words in order to describe what an impact Knowles has made on their lives. My research has thus brought about the argument that the differences between gender (for example what one would normally expect from a feminine and masculine identity) does not play a role in the online fan discourse. In other words, gender roles were negotiated for the purpose of writing an online post to Knowles and the fans do not allow themselves to stay fixed within these roles. Furthermore, fans felt a constant need to create a personal connection to Knowles. The fans constantly expressed just how much they consider her to be an inspiration and a role model. Another interesting observation was that some online fan/writers state their age. The age groups that are fairly high (50+) distinguish their roles in relation to Knowles.

On the one hand, the fans express how much they appreciate Knowles’ music and on the other they criticise how she conducts herself on stage and in her music
videos. Therefore in terms of *appreciation*, older fans felt the need to praise her for a talent as an individual and from the role of being a mother and a wife. However, these women judge her negatively for not being an appropriate role model for their impressionable daughters. Hence her capabilities were both positively and negatively criticised. By these fans separating their roles in relation to Knowles demonstrates the elements which contribute to the construction of their identity. For a younger online fans/writer (age 13), Knowles is seen as an inspiration for females who would like to pursue a career in the entertainment domain.

Social roles, however, are not the only contributions to identity in terms of Knowles’ fans. Through linguistic choices, it became sharply evident that a Hip-Hop sense of culture and identity were prevalent. An interesting point of this observation was that fans were making use of Hip-Hop words and phrases because they are genuinely part of that culture or they are using it to create a stronger connection to Knowles.

In terms of *judgements*, I included a different website which explored another angle to Knowles. These *judgements* were made based on the “evidence” presented to fans that perhaps Knowles had undergone an evil transformation. In most cases the posts revealed negative *judgements*, the online writers analysed Knowles’ outward projection in terms of a religious discourse, predicting that mankind is living “in the last days”. Hence Knowles was judged based on *veracity* and *propriety*. In relation to transgressive theory, Knowles produces imagery which created room for debate and criticism.

In addition, Knowles’ online writers criticised her for *re-imaging* and *re-purposing* the satanic star. In pictures provided, Knowles’ body was positioned in such a way that it indeed appeared to be re-performing the satanic star. Along with it she unwittingly confirms what the online writers suspect by wearing the
head of a “Baphomet” on her outfit. It was essential that Knowles’ outward projection be analysed through *resemiotization*.

The overall analysis of my data demonstrates that through the use of the appraisal theory on different websites, different evaluative stances can be detected. Through key linguistic choices, *attitudes* become evident.

In conclusion, using the appraisal theory has opened a new avenue to view evaluative discourse on popular individuals including musicians. It also opens one up to the importance of perceiving the online message boards/ postings as an essential tool in communication for sharing views. Through this analysis, a comprehensive observation has been drawn through linguistic choices selected by Knowles’ online fan base/ writers.
References


APPENDIX A

Message AA

jacqueline
BEYONCE IS A TALENTED R&B SINGER.

Message AB
dhusband

I think beyonce knowles is a very talented/gifted singer and I am very proud of all of her accomplishments. As a wife and mother though, I cannot say she is a role model to my daughter or any other young lady for that matter. Her videos and onstage performances (and "Sasha Fierce" costumes) are not classy and no different from strippers who use their bodies to make money. I think if you have as much talent as she has you don't have to stoop to such levels (alicia keys is a prime example).

Message AC
lucy88

I’ve heard that Beyonce will be down at Wandsworth Palais on Friday 13thNovember. Her all female touring band Suga Mama play a full live set at the venue with Tia Fuller (the sax player) fronting the show from around 10.30pm. Beyonce is coming to watch them perform and will be stay on for the after-show party. Also word is that Maxwell is coming down to see the gig as well

Message AD
najee curtis

hey yall this najee reparsenting shy town all day beyonce is the most gifted singer i know i love beyonce so much she is an inspiration to most young girls like me she not only can sing but she can dance act tap dance and more she has a great heart God made a buetiful creation once again bee all i want to tell you is God blessed you with a buetiful talent keep useing it and touching hearts like mine you inspired me that i can do anything know matter what i was raised by people telling me i cant do it but i can you did it and im going to do it so thanxx so much beyonce for you are my inspirer when i become a singer im gone tell every one you my idol in 13 so that gives me alot of time to focus on my career singing

Message AE

Hello

hello just to say I LIKE U BE YOU ARE MY IDOL n u are the best artist of the planet.so am in afica and also here your song influence a lot people. please continue and god bless you. please if u are fans like me please if u have pictures of beyonce just send it in my email: ghislainkapche@yahoo.fr thanks for all
**Message AF**

Precious Nyashanu

Beyonce Knowles is one of the best singers I have ever heard. Actually she is my favourite artists. She is just different from other artists in behaviour. Normally it's very rare to find an artist having a steady relationship for quite some number of years like hers. Her music is just the best. I really enjoy it!!!!

**Message AH**

Lawsonbenjamim

Hi hi iam Lawson from kenya, Africa. Queen B has been my greatest inspirationin life, i used to have self-esteem issues and felt worthless, strangely iam a dude. When i saw how u oozed confidence on stage and yet polite in real life i copied that and through u i became so confident that i got to go to law school shocking my friends whom thought, i was a weakling and coward. I proudly declare to everyone i meet iam your fun even though i'll face rejection from my male friends i dont care cause u are the queen of pop in this generation a force to reckon with luv u B and haters go hate on someone who is as talentless as u.

**Message AI**

specky

Hi B, you're my MODEL and IDOL, i just love and admire u and Jay soooooo much. U're talented, Godfearg, beautiful, disciplined and classy. Guess what? my greatest earthly wish is to meet u face to face. I just got to the USA and will be going back to africa. Pls B and Jay Z, can i just grasp a life view of u, take life pics with u, i will return to africa feelg fulfilled. Hey, also taking your unwanted outfits along with me toooooo (smiles) God Bless u B, more grease to ur elbows and God Bless u, and keep the flames high my dear, ur the ultimate sasha fierce! u know what? am 8months pregnant and i bet u, my daughter will be called SASHA and u are her God mother. your mom is a perfect exple for a mom.

**Message AJ**

krishnamurthir@contactmusic.co

beyonce songs are good.loveable character.full of energy,skinny music,boosting our interest on music,especially her songs. choclate to manyfans. krishnamurthir.
Message AK

loyal

I would like to start off by saying I am a 55 year old woman that has so much admiration for Beyonce. She appears to be rooted and grounded with a beautiful, humble spirit. My prayer is that she doesn't get so full of herself and start looking down on people. I said all of that to say, her remarks about the Jackson's was very mean spirited totally out of the character of the beautiful woman that I have perceived her to be. Janet Jackson has all of the above mentioned gifts, why would Beyonce make such a mean spirited statement?

Message AL

Kay Walton

Dear Beyonce & Jay-Z, Happy holidays to the both of you're all. Beyonce I had a daughter who went home to be with the Lord at the age of six. I consider you as a goddaughter not because of your career. It is because of who you are being yourself and working hard at what you love to do make beautiful music and perform. You will go along way in life. You are so God-gifted and very creative with your music and performance, I have some of your CD's nad you are so tremendous. I know that you don't know who I am. Maybe I will email a photo of me. I love to see young people succeed in life. You and Jay-Z put nothing but the best "smile". Well this is all for now. Get plenty of rest while you off. I'm an Head Start Lead Teacher J here in ackson, GA. I been teaching young children for about 8 or 9 years. I love what God has bless me to do. I hope to meet you and Jay-Z one day. Take care and I hope to hear from you soon. Until then "PEACE". Love, Kay Walton

Message AM

bluekaratemonkey

i am 13 and i am starting in the entertainment bussines as an actress. u are one of the biggest inspirations to me as a very succesful african american women who carries her self in a well respected manor. i have always wanted to be u but i realized as i got older that i could never be u but i could follow ur exxample. my biggest dream is to star in a film with u. u r a wonderful actress and a pretty good all round person. im sure u r use to people telling u that ur perfect but i no ur not and thats why i look up to u, u show me that i dont have to be perfect and before u i didnt understand that. u r a very beautiful person inside and out. iv never been a drop dead glamorsous person and personally i dont think ur are either but ur inner beauty shines from within (sometimes)and by that i mean every one makes mistakes. now im not gonna say that im ur biggest fan because im not im pretty sure. but if i was ur biggest fan it wouldnt be because ur pretty, or can sing, dance, and act but because u make me want more in life u make me want to become succesful like u so that i will have the power to make people listen and help those who need it and also because i need a more satisfying life im a young girl reaching for a big dream but u were to once right. thanks
http://www.youtube.com/comment_servlet?all_comments=1&v=dC06CMBQLM0 Date Accessed: 17 June 2010 (Website data was collected from)
Message B1

- 5scaleracer 1 day ago
  love this song!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Message B2

- duvnjakica5
  1 day ago
  adorable

Message B3

- TheNoples
  4 days ago
  so... is this song about the game halo, or what?

Message B4

- dylanray12345
  3 days ago
  @TheNoples No, it's about how her angel has awakened her and opened her eyes to love.

Message B5

- sorted65
  4 days ago
  pure spunker in it for the money, and her nose is out of whack never noticed that before, dont get me wrong she is beautifull
Message B6

- lauren2cute4u1

4 days ago

i luv diz song

Message B7

- FairyDeadMother

4 days ago

halo everyone :)

Message D8

- twakefield10

5 days ago

ok wtf is wrong with u people u in lov i was just seaching halo like the game

twakefield10 5 days ago

Message B9

- WhalesEatAngus

3 days ago

@twakefield10 I love that game!
Message B10

- WhalesEatAngus

3 days ago

Message B11

- yariktheman

5 days ago 2
is she black?

yariktheman 5 days ago 2

Message B12

- sara98844 B12

5 days ago

@yariktheman are you kidding

Message B13

- DkCPH33 B13

5 days ago

She's the best singer ever, she will go over in history just like Michael Jackson.
Love you Bee. <3 ;D
Message B14

- Frances3654
  6 days ago
  dang, this song sucks

Message B15

- TheDiva180
  6 days ago
  I love this song! and i good at singing it! that's the best part LOL

  TheDiva180 6 days ago

Message B16

- zahidasif72
  6 days ago
  I never thought of LOVE but now I want to LOVE

  zahidasif72 6 days ago

Message B17

- zahidasif72
  6 days ago
  I never loved bt now I wana fell in love after hearing Halo halo

  zahidasif72 6 days ago
Message B18

- kageERgud

1 week ago 2
She has the most AMAZING voice EVER

kageERgud 1 week ago 2

Message B19

- MsDiana56

1 week ago
LOVE the SONG!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Message B20

- yazan8002

1 week ago
very nice music :D

yazan8002 1 week ago

Message B21

- 11779amanda

1 week ago
i <3 this song

11779amanda 1 week ago
Message B22

- MrDiva806
  2 weeks ago
  the best song!
  MrDiva806 2 weeks ago

Message B23

- Isku17
  2 weeks ago
  beatiful song
  Isku17 2 weeks ago

Message B24

- andrefun20
  2 weeks ago
  it's just a amazing song

Message B25

- melovelailabagge
  2 weeks ago
  big love<3
  melovelailabagge 2 weeks ago
Message B26

- legero1604
  2 weeks ago 2
  Awesome

Message B27

- PaoRoxz
  3 weeks ago
  this girl iz mad pretty

Message B28

- ckallda
  3 weeks ago
  YO she did her thing on dis joint mad props ma
  ckallda 3 weeks ago

Message B29

- haloapa
  3 weeks ago
  WHat does Halo mean?
  haloapa 3 weeks ago
Message B30

- TitihRiantika

3 weeks ago 2

@haloapa: it is a ring of light that surrounding an object of a religious icon.

TitihRiantika 3 weeks ago 2

Message B31

- TeeTownSounds

3 weeks ago

@haloapa: What angels have over their head. Sometimes Jesus is depicted with one....

TeeTownSounds 3 weeks ago

Message B32

- corolex

3 weeks ago

@haloapa: it means testicles

corolex 3 weeks ago

Message B33

- MrLeenal

1 month ago

super music
Message B34

- julio12316
  2 weeks ago
  muito boa essa musica
  julio12316 2 weeks ago

Message B35

- Killakmet
  3 weeks ago
  kurčeu utube sovražm pičke jedne ne dovolijo komentirat
  Killakmet 3 weeks ago

Message B36

- sophia19711
  3 weeks ago
  arréter de faire senblen d etre anglais

Message B37

- catholicus1
  1 month ago
  bien bien xd tuvo bien pero... esa mujer es una diosa
  catholicus1 1 month ago
Message B38

- baiatulcelmaibun

1 month ago

cruciulita nu se tine la mana asa mai fata!

baiatulcelmaibun 1 month ago

Message B39

- diego11547

1 month ago

perra, se quiere colgar de la fama de halo ni siquiera sabe que significa perra puta diego11547 1 month ago

Message B40

- Penetrera

2 months ago

show hide

fucking hate this song. she says Halo 67 times. bet she did´nt write the lyrics.

Message B41

- bettyinbotta

2 months ago

this song sucks

bettyinbotta 2 months ago
Message B42

- funkbebe

2 months ago

the worse song ever written. never has there been a less melodic "melody" sung with less finesse, not that finesse would have solved such a fundamental problem.

funkbebe 2 months ago

Message B43

- funkbebe

2 months ago

beyonce is proof that the greedy are stupid.
APPENDIX C

Images from website: http://vigilantcitizen.com/?p=604 Date accessed: 06 March 2010
Good Beyoncé with cross - Image CA

Evil Sasha Fierce mimicking devil horns - Image CB
Baphomet’s vehicle- Image CC

Sigil of Church of Satan- Image CD
APPENDIX D

Message D1

Jade May 26th, 2009 1:06 am

this very informative article. but Vigilant, please continue reviewing.

i am Jamaican and i love Destiny’s Child. i have since…forever. their music was so pure and i just breathed it all in. i knew something was wrong when B hooked up with JZ cuz he was in the devil business long long time. and then “Crazy in love.” it makes so much sense now. look at the bridge for that song “i’m not myself, lately i’m foolish, i dont do this” she just transformed! because that was her intitation. her public intitation and so many followed her moves, so many emulated her. and i hated it. i hated what she had become, but she was puttin out albums like crazy…one after the other with so many dedications to JZ who calls himself J-hova in so many of his songs…that is blasphemy!!

Message D2

lesline May 26th, 2009 9:02 pm

im very sad to hear this story coz i love beyonce soooo much. but im trusting in God to bring her out of it. thanks for article

Message D3

Rey El King May 31st, 2009 2:35 pm

.Damn. It’s a shame to see a talentfull women transform like this. All the artist who are into devilish sh*t should die, srry for that but they are not humans, they doesn’t apreciatethe gift tha GOD have gave them. they all are pieces of SH*T

Message D4

Watcher June 2nd, 2009 5:07 pm

To everyone-

This is extremely disturbing news to me for I once had respect for Beyonce as someone who had pulled herself to superstardom from meager beginnings. Meager beginnings may or may not be the case. The reason I am responding to this obvious transformation to evil for Beyonce is because I’ve just recently discovered Jay Z’s own relationship to evil. In fact it appears he is somehow connected to the Illuminati and there are several videos on Google video and Youtube
which draw the correlation to hidden lyrics in his sions as well as esoteric hand gestures used in his media. It seems that Jay Z not only discovered wealth and power through a pact with Satan but of course he has now influenced Beyonce to evil and this is the result. What’s really sad is all the influence they will have on the younger generations that buy their garbage and emulate them as successful “stars.”

Message D5

desii June 4th, 2009 5:06 pm

I am a huge Beyonce’ fan and i really like her sasha feirce album……i’m saden by dis article, i tink i knew dat there was evil surrounding her simply because i am a Christian and well i kno better…but dey’re ALL MESSED UP ALLLLLLLL OF THE ARTISTS ARE i jus wanna tell ppl don’t dismis everything u read….there is truth behind it all….filter wat u listen and wat u read…BE AWARE VERY VERY AWARE… IF THERE IS “GOOD” U BETTER BELIEVE THERE IS “EVIL”…… i still loves me my beyonce doh..she is a gr8 entertainer ..lol

Message D6

Curious K June 13th, 2009 2:20 am

Ugh, I f***ing love Beyonce, and I hope she doesn’t go to hell. I’m surprised you don’t have an article up here about Jay-z who refers to himself as Jay-hova…and associates himself with the Rockefellers but then again i guess that’s just too obvious. I can’t help but wonder if she herself knows she is a party to something sinister… After all she didn’t need Sasha to help her perform destiny’s Child songs.

Great Vigilant now every time i hear her music and want to dance I’m going to feel guilty…

Message D7

debbie June 14th, 2009 6:43 am

this is so goood veryyyy veryyyy goood, she actually has no excuse to why the devils head is on her outfit and the nerve she has, its in color too, and makes the triangle, i strongly believe that God used this to save people from her music because now its just in our faces we either listen or be disobedient but this is good the evidence is powerful very powerful i did relies that she has become more dark and when i listen to her latest abulms the beats were more dark shes getting swallowed by the darkness, unfortuntly some people may see this and think its rubbish
because beyonce has it like that but the truth always overcomes the darkness. thank God for that.

**Message D8**

avalonia June 24th, 2009 7:29 pm

I can sum the entire article up plain and simple. No one accidentally wears a GOAT SUIT, that displays the same image that the Church of ______ uses. Beyonce knows what she is doing, and she knows why she makes the devil horns, with her Sasha persona, it’s no accident people,

BEYONCE IS A SATANIST………..

Avalonia

**Message D9**

Amil June 24th, 2009 8:05 pm

I agree with your article Vigilant, but I have trouble believing Beyonce knows what she’s doing; have you heard the girl give an interview?? She strikes me as someone who has been…well, sheltered, and someone who’s a bit naive? Then again, maybe she’s fooling all of us and she knows exactly what she’s doing. I don’t know. This stuff all just became apparent to me in the last year. It’s like I woke up and all these signs were so blatant all of a sudden, it was scary!

**Message D10**

Brenda June 30th, 2009 5:03 am

It’s so sad to see such innocent ladies like Rihanna and Beyonce sacrificing their lives just for money and fame!
My prayer is that they will realise they are in bondage and give their lives to Christ. I honestly think that we are living in the last days.
C.N.T May 31st, 2009 7:52 pm

Let me start by saying I’m not actually a big Beyonce fan — neither love her nor hate her. So while I appreciate that everyone is entitled to their opinion and respect everyone’s right to express their thoughts and feelings, this piece does border on slander since I don’t think you know the woman personally and instead are drawing on interpretations of things which are in the public domain. Which is the point — this is her public persona, not who she is. Not you nor me knows who the real Beyonce is. As a performer myself, I know that performing is very much about accessing the energy of a particular performance piece — whether it’s a play, a song, a dance — and portraying it. It’s not about demonic possession! I don’t think there’s anything satanic or dark about that, and think it’s dangerously reductive and destructive to think along those lines by default. I actually think it reflects more about you and your own fears and prejudices than it does about Beyonce, or the abstract (and subjective) concepts of good or evil. You are not God, so please do not make proclamations about things you can speculate on.
APPENDIX E

**Halo lyrics**

Songwriters: Bogart, Evan Kidd; Knowles, Beyoncé Gisselle; Tedder, Ryan Benjamin;

1. Remember those walls I built
2. Well, baby they're tumbling down
3. And they didn't even put up a fight
4. They didn't even make up a sound

5. I found a way to let you in
6. But I never really had a doubt
7. Standing in the light of your halo
8. I got my angel now

9. It's like I've been awakened
10. Every rule I had you breakin'
11. It's the risk that I'm takin'
12. I ain't never gonna shut you out

13. Everywhere I'm looking now
14. I'm surrounded by your embrace
15. Baby I can see your halo
16. You know you're my saving grace

17. You're everything I need and more
18. It's written all over your face
19. Baby I can feel your halo
20. Pray it won't fade away

21. I can feel your halo halo halo
22. I can see your halo halo halo
23. I can feel your halo halo halo
24. I can see your halo halo halo

25. Hit me like a ray of sun
26. Burning through my darkest night
27. You're the only one that I want
28. Think I'm addicted to your light

29. I swore I'd never fall again
30. But this don't even feel like falling
31. Gravity can't forget
32. To pull me back to the ground again

33. Feels like I've been awakened
34. Every rule I had you breakin'
35. The risk that I'm takin'
36. I'm never gonna shut you out
37. Everywhere I'm looking now
38. I'm surrounded by your embrace
39. Baby I can see your halo
40. You know you're my saving grace

41. You're everything I need and more
42. It's written all over your face
43. Baby I can feel your halo
44. Pray it won't fade away

45. I can feel your halo halo halo
46. I can see your halo halo halo
47. I can feel your halo halo halo
48. I can see your halo halo halo
49. I can feel your halo halo halo
50. I can see your halo halo halo
51. I can feel your halo halo halo
52. I can see your halo halo halo
53. Halo, halo

54. Everywhere I'm looking now
55. I'm surrounded by your embrace
56. Baby I can see your halo
57. You know you're my saving grace

58. You're everything I need and more
59. It's written all over your face
60. Baby I can feel your halo
61. Pray it won't fade away

62. I can feel your halo halo halo
63. I can see your halo halo halo
64. I can feel your halo halo halo
65. I can see your halo halo halo

66. I can feel your halo halo halo
67. I can see your halo halo halo
68. I can feel your halo halo halo
69. I can see your halo halo halo
Crazy in love lyrics

1. Yes! so crazy right now
2. Most incredibly
3. It's your girl b
4. It's your boy young
5. History in the makin

Part 2

6. I look and stare so deep in your eyes
7. I touch on you more and more every time
8. When you leave I'm beggin you not to go
9. Call your name two, three times in a row
10. Such a funny thing for me to try to explain
11. How I'm feeling and my pride is the one to blame
12. Yeah, cause I know I don't understand
13. Just how your love can do what no one else can

14. Got me lookin so crazy right now
15. Your love's got me lookin so crazy right now
16. (Your love)
17. Got me lookin so crazy right now your touch's
18. Got me lookin so crazy right now
19. (Your touch)
20. Got me hoping you page me right now your kiss's
21. Got me hoping you save me right now
22. Lookin so crazy your love's got me lookin
23. Got me lookin so crazy your love

24. When I talk to my friends so quietly
25. "Who he think he is?" Look at what you've done to me
26. Tennis shoes don't even need to buy a new dress
27. You ain't there, ain't nobody else to impress
28. It's the way that you know what I thought I knew
29. It's the beat that my heart skips when I'm with you
30. Yeah, but I still don't understand
31. Just how your love can do what no one else can

32. Got me lookin so crazy right now
33. Your love's got me lookin so crazy right now
34. (Your love)
35. Got me lookin so crazy right now your touch's
36. Got me lookin so crazy right now
37. (Your touch)
38. Got me hoping you page me right now your kiss's
39. Got me hoping you save me right now
40. Lookin so crazy your love's got me lookin
41. Got me lookin so crazy your love

42. I'm warmed up now
43. Let's go

44. Young hova
45. Ya'll know when the flow is loco
46. Young b and the r-o-c uh oh
47. O-g, big homie
48. The one and only
49. Stick boney but the pockets are fat like tony

50. Soprano the roc handle
51. Like van exel
52. I shake phonies man, you can't get next to
53. A genuine article, I do not sing tho
54. I sling though , if anything I bling yo

55. Star like ringo
56. War like a green berret
57. You're crazy bring your whole set
58. Jay-Z in the range
59. Crazy and deranged
60. They can't figure him out
61. They're like "hey is he insane?"

62. Yes sir I'm cut from a different cloth
63. My texture is the best fur, I'm chinchilla

64. I've been ill of the chain smokers
65. How you think I go the name hova
66. I've been reala'
67. The game's over

68. Fall back young ever since
69. I made you change over to platinum
70. The game's been a wrap
71. One

72. Got me looking so crazy, my baby
73. I'm not myself lately
74. I'm foolish, I don't do this
75. I've been played myself
76. Baby I don't care
77. Cuz your love got the best of me
78. And baby you're making a fool of me  
79. You got me sprung and I don't care who sees  
80. Cuz baby you got me so crazy  

81. Got me lookin so crazy right now  
82. Your love's got me lookin so crazy right now  
83. (Your love)  
84. Got me lookin so crazy right now your touch's  
85. Got me lookin so crazy right now  
86. (Your touch)  
87. Got me hoping you page me right now your kiss's  
88. Got me hoping you save me right now  
89. Lookin so crazy your love's got me lookin  
90. got me lookin so crazy your love  
(Repeat to end)