



The Denotative and Connotative Meaning in Song Lyrics Entitled “Sandals” by Khai Dreams

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ABSTRACT

Music is a personal representation of oneself that utter their meaning in harmonic way. Music can utter sign that was born and inherit the complex characteristic of object manifested directly within context of being represented. Messages manifest throughout every music come from extraction of cultural phenomenon and belief to make the identity of music become vulnerable. Love contains emotional feeling of person to another person in showing their care as a mean to build relationship close towards each other. Songs entitled “Sandals” by Khai Dreams tells a relation of love with a struggle to achieve his everlasting moment with his beloved one but the situation make it hard to deal for him that always put him in a one-sided love. This study use lyrics song of “Sandals” as a primary data and further to be analyzed according to its descriptive content of denotation, connotation and the myth around the object area. The denotative meaning in this song tell the story of a man resembled as “I”, “me” and “my” in a struggle to keep his love fulfilled within those long time of wait. The connotative meaning in this song expand the background of meaning within denotative perspective that the man anticipation of love event somehow feels like a journey that he never expect to make it out even with the rival of love he faced, an unperfect love he deal towards his loved one and his sincerity towards his loved one over his struggle.

INTRODUCTION

The language is the essence of human communication to interact between one person to another which was spoken or written directly or indirectly. Language contain sign system that express the meaning which giving its own thoughts and feelings (Jafar et al., 2021). People tend to bring the interpretation for every context included within ideas, thought or feelings which can occur at the basic level in lexical term of language. Pateda’s overview (2001, as cited in Hasanah & Habibullah, 2020) indicates that lexical meaning contains the words with a meaning that stand by itself as it was independent from aspect included within the usage and context. People adaptation in choosing the lexical feature of language can cause several causality and ambiguity in meaning. Lexical features involving the denotation complexity brings an abstract and exact meaning for what it will be delivered to people as in communication or even in written text.

According to Aryani et al. (2016), as noted in Ullrich et al., (2017), "the general affective meaning of a text probably closely relates to the reader's global affective appraisals concerning the overall theme and impression of the text." Music is a personal expression of one's identity that articulates its message in a harmonious manner. Cook's perspective on music is that it serves as "a potent symbol for aspiration, self-fulfillment, and the aspiration to "be what you want to be," as the voice-over proclaims" (Cook, 2000).

Music can utter sign that was born and inherit the complex characteristic of object manifested directly within context of being represented. The music creation is one of a lyrical tone that show every expression given from the creator of the song to manifest meaning in creative words behind it. Creativity that manages all the harmony of music are bound to make every meaningful word feels realistic and surreal for people to comprehend complex ideas of music. According to Webster (1990), as cited in Barbot & Lubart, (2012), creative thinking in music is a dynamic mental process that alternates between divergent and convergent thinking, moving in stages over time, aided by internal musical skills and external conditions, and resulting in a final musical product that is unique to the creator.

Creativity is a vital core to music heart where it brings the idea of whole experience within a human nature. According to Mart, the basis empowerment of creativity leads all the literary texts into engagement towards meaning making that communicate situations in meaningful way (Mart, 2019). Communication through this media have been a popular way for singer to express their emotions and feelings carried by the thoughts in explicit or even implicit meaning. The manifestation of music carries their purpose by entertain and educate people for giving a guidance in life while reflecting upon issues of human problematic society (Reimer, 2022).

Music connects people through a message which influence and affect people mentally to bring true meaning behind it (Herget, 2021). Messages manifest throughout every music come from extraction of cultural phenomenon and belief to make the identity of music become vulnerable (Cram, 2009). According to Turino, the artistic process and expressive cultural practice attached for an art rises on identity as an individual within one singularity of human itself (Turino, 2008). Surrounding these two factors, it become the basic rule that allows the music structure become unique with different style and genre creation. Expressive tendency of music creates a separate genre that stimulate a singer to build the tone or rhythm inspired by surrounding cultural phenomenon and belief.

The tendency of music can be senses differently to listeners of song regarding to their own critical views. According to Faudree, the significant insight upon a deep study on boundary separating language and music create more concrete idea and covers an analysis on sign to displace its burden towards limitation of categorical distinction, this study helps to further move the basic assumptions of what inside the division of language and music then raise its perception towards expressive differences especially on ethnographic facts reinforced by specific cultural practices, institutions, and ideologies (Faudree, 2012; Rahman, 2023). Critical

approach of listeners on giving the appropriate reaction to music is based to their perception in personal preference. Personal view of one individual creates a variety clear reasonable meaning to understand song behind it hidden messages. Listeners of song become the key to build deep relationship upon emotional feelings linked to musician artistic work for message to be simplified directly to its original idea. According to Matherne, the process of expressive formalism as a term given by Matherne which a person only give opinion after responding with sensitive emotion expressed to beautiful music (Matherne, 2014). The most prominence idea created by a cultural phenomenon around the song topic is about the love story between man and woman or the story about regrets of living. One of the Issues regarding to love story and the struggle behind it was also carved in the songs entitled “Sandals” by Khai Dreams. Khai Dreams is an indie singer genre from Los Angeles who brought a lofi and pop style into his music tendency which brings a unique rhythm yet inspirational with a motivational lyric its bought. The songs entitled “Sandals” by Khai Dreams is a 3rd song from the album of “Now and Then” in total of 7 song in it.

Love contains emotional feeling of person to another person in showing their care as a mean to build relationship close towards each other. Anudo and Kodak stated that “Love is a natural phenomenon, an emotion that is exhibited by social beings and it is an avenue that has attracted the use of metaphorical language to describe it” (Anudo & Kodak, 2017). Implementation of love itself not always present in merely simple word like “I love you” but proven to show at how the process hinder its original destination when love means more than a process to get what you want but to take every move and hope that is not wasted. Ideal representation of unique story for being in relationship make this approach on love subject not always on the same track like any other teenage love with the boy express his feeling and the girl deny his confession towards her that only leave the boy feels in pain.

Songs entitled “Sandals” by Khai Dreams tells a relation of love with a struggle to achieve his everlasting moment with his beloved one but the situation make it hard to deal for him that always put him in a one-sided love. This story will make it a good opportunity to deliver a study on denotation, connotation meaning and myth that was implied and explicitly revealed within it. Study over this subject lead to analysis towards semiotics approach as to reveal the boundary of hidden context in lyrics song. Semiotics study applies their teaching over humanities aspect. Further, semiotics considers any cultural phenomena as symbolic formations which have symbolic mechanisms of fixation” (Lazutina & Lazutin, 2015). The theory of Semiotics to analyze whole content of this music is using Roland Barthes’s Semiotics approach. Roland Barthes is one of the leading Semiotics scientists who further develop Ferdinand de Saussure’s theory. Further study upon this object aspect will result in the clearer meaning behind identification of song lyrics. Roland Barthes divided the theory into two different states, which one of them begin as a Denotation that appears to be the first level in sign and the last level of sign is Connotation that followed by a myth with embodiment of cultural sign.

METHODS

The object study and source of this research was come from the lyrics song entitled “Sandals” by Khai Dreams taken from his album of “Now and Then” compilation album in 2019. This study used qualitative methods as a text collection of descriptive. Creswell (1994, as cited in Kirana & Permaludin, 2020) stated that qualitative study is an approach to build its consistency upon assumptions of qualitative paradigm. Qualitative descriptive methods are procedures contains a various model in descriptive data, including written and oral words of research objectives taken from articles or books in general study. Qualitative research approach gives a broader sense to conduct in-depth study of all its relevant topics carried towards interest in popular belief (Yin, 2015).

The data collection conducted in literal studies focused towards the object background. This study use lyrics song of “Sandals” as a primary data and further to be analyzed according to its descriptive content of denotation, connotation and the myth around the object area. The researchers used the descriptive content to further give a detail of the object interpretation based on reality perception. The study which researchers conduct does not intended to be generalized in this area of study as the phenomenon only concerns over its portrayal of Roland Barthes’s semiotics representation. Data result were only interpreted exclusively for linguistics study related to sign aspects of semiotics (Ramdani & Sakinah, 2023; de Shauma Andres, 2024).

Denotation

The first level of sign in which the meaning is emphasized through a relation between signifier and sign to its own realistic original definition, this idea is what Barthes called a denotation. Sui and Fan give a contrast meaning of denotation “on the primary levels of signification and consist in what we think of as the literal, fixed, dictionary meaning of word, ideally one that can be universally agreed upon” (Sui & Fan, 2015). Denotation identify their designated object to match the names that interconnected between reasoning and part of their portrayal in image as a concrete being. Furthermore, direct representation of object create connection to its original names it inherited.

Connotation

The second level of sign in which the meaning implicitly delivers their hidden meaning inside the barrier of its original definition. Connotative meaning unfolds the limitation toward word or phrase for its emotional association to prompt one conceptual image in mind. Yan and Ming point out the process of Connotation that happens when signs are interacted with each other and the more complex sign are, the more concealing the forming process of connotations, and we tend to neglect the hidden transformation between signs (Sui & Fan, 2015, p. 60). Subjective perception in meaning of connotation give the sign that carry its cultural value of reader aspects to understand a hidden meaning inside it. Fauzan further explain the Roland Barthes overview of his theory framework that “the connotation is identical to the operation of ideology which is called a myth

and serves to express and justify the dominant values that apply in a certain period” (Fauzan, 2020, p. 13). Connotation value in interpretation area have the critical approach of reader to fully understand the right contextual idea from different associations over its own literal meaning.

Myth

Stolz’s explain the narrative perception of literature that indicates “myth is a communicative and experiential way that is submerged within the scope of the narration and not only in the mere description” (1988, as cited in Sola Morales, 2013). Myth contains a message or a speech that believed to be a reality but on other way hard to be proven. Myth in a sense of its context driven out the logical cultural believe that make the concept similar to how fairy tale considered as a hard to believe story and understanding towards the message may fail upon mass cultural belief. Myth context of a textual message give a justification over complicated or complex ideology on cultural view by the community portrayal (Righter, 2024). Identification of image in myth give a broader sense for the misconception over context to merge significantly on a exact narration that proven right. Complexity of myth inherit the guidance to whole concept of true nature behind narrative belief.

Interpersonal Relationship of Love

Interpersonal relationship is how a person create its connection towards each other to break the boundaries of difference interest. The type of interpersonal relationships is divided by DeVito In his book entitled “The Interpersonal Communication Book (13th edition)” (2013) into several example that include family, friendship, love or even relationship at workplace. The main research of this study of sign focused towards relationship of love between the main character as a boy who care his girl in various way. Love can be defined as “a feeling characterized by closeness and caring and by intimacy, passion, and commitment” (DeVito, 2013, p. 262). The process of relationship in which the love occurs while an intimacy between a person with same interest care each other. DeVito in his book give a further explanation on the type of love into 6 different areas.

The first one is eros that describe its aspect of beauty and sexuality which really are important to be carried in quality of beauty or attractiveness and the bond of love that cannot be last easily. The second one is ludus that embody the characteristics of entertainment and excitement which focuses on lover who just pretend to be in love for a fun only and not taking serious of love as to take have it for entertainment. The third one is storge that carry the love with peaceful and slow it means a relationship only seek for a companion in familial way to someone they know already. The fourth one is pragma that describe love as a practical and traditional way which means relationship that seek not for just play but seek compatible companion to match in same desire. The fifth one is mania that describe its aspect as elation and depression which means a relationship of a person that obsessed so much for loving their partner and sometimes intended to keep their lover to not go away. The sixth one is agape that embody the compassionate and selfless which love a people

at the spiritual level that does not need expect something in return or required to be loved back. The relationship that bound love towards the main character to his beloved girl is expected to be in type of eros as it experienced in general way like any normal relationship.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The song entitled “Sandals” tell about the love struggle of the main character “I” that wanted to keep his relationship and his patience to get over her love to him every moment. The significant detail of this song can be read throughout these lyrics from the song of Khai Dreams below.

[Verse 1]

*I love it when you say
 What's really on your mind
 No need to overwhelm yourself, there's always time to unwind
 I wanna take a chance
 Can't say I didn't try
 I'm here for what I found, you're held up on what we left behind
 The timing's never perfect, love, that's just what people say
 When they think back to the moments not sweating the smaller things
 Sometimes I feel regret, sometimes I wish that things would change
 But sometimes is just sometimes and you know sometimes never stays*
 [Chorus]
*I love you all the same
 It's just a situation
 Don't let it get between what we want, yeah, what we could be
 I love you more each day
 Sometimes I can't explain it but I feel it and I don't want that to change
 I'm just dreaming
 I know you're thinking
 That the summer left us behind
 I'll be waiting
 I might be crazy
 But I think that it's worth my time*

[Verse 2]

*What was it that you lost?
 Been chasing all this time?
 I'll try to fill the gaps but I feel its a losing fight
 I know it's not ideal
 There's probably better ways*

*But this ain't my first time, although I've never been to this place
 We're coming around
 My heart starts to pound
 From everything, all the possibilities
 Ya know those things
 Once dragged me down
 But now they're a cloud
 Where I can wait there patiently, because*

[Chorus]

*I love you all the same
 It's just a situation
 Don't let it get between what we want, yeah, what we could be
 I love you more each day
 Sometimes I can't explain it but I feel it and I don't want that to change
 I'm just dreaming
 I know you're thinking
 That the summer left us behind
 I'll be waiting
 I might be crazy
 But I think that it's worth my time*

The lyrics of the song above mainly represent a love as it contains the man who find a way to be able find love in harsh way. The man represented as “I” really happy to see his loved one being honest and cheer his loved one to not overthinking everything that denotatively contrast the line “I love it when you say/ What's really on your mind/ No need to overwhelm yourself, there's always time to unwind”. The next lines “I wanna take a chance/ Can't say I didn't try/ I'm here for what I found, you're held up on what we left behind”, contrast that the man “I” take his opportunity “chance” but he might be failed as for what he did that atleast have some try in it. Afterwards, He meet his beloved one for what he really need “for what I found” is his love but then his loved one bragging on the thing that she have left behind. On the other hand, when it viewed through the connotative interpretation in which the girl cannot forget the past life in “left behind” and the things she cannot receive his feeling for awhile in “you’re held up”.

The next lines “The timing's never perfect, love, that's just what people say/ When they think back to the moments not sweating the smaller things/ sometimes I feel regret, sometimes I wish that things would change”, contrasted connotatively that some people told that love might be perfect at the time depend on relationship itself as in line “The timing’s never perfect, love” and in line “when they think back to the moments” people known everything of all it matter “not sweating the smaller things” what love is as it was a thing that happen towards everybody’s life. The result of previous line of song make the man “I” regret on

how he can never get a perfect love “sometimes I feel regret” that remind him of people perspective towards love and he want his relationship of love change to something better. The line “But sometimes is just sometimes and you know sometimes never stays” denotate that the condition will never stay that way even if its going to be in the same state as in the line “But sometimes is just sometimes and you know sometimes never stays”.

The chorus part of a line “I love you all the same/ It's just a situation/ Don't let it get between what we want, yeah, what we could be”. The man “I” love his beloved one in the same way like he used to love her. He believe the current state in line “it’s just a situation” and the line “Don't let it get between what we want” that make him know its interfering the love struggle he need to keep in touch with his loved one. The lines “I love you more each day/ Sometimes I can't explain it but I feel it and I don't want that to change” denotate that the man “I” begin to deepen his love toward her as the man did not know how he going to explain about the bond that grow stronger for his loved one and did not want the feeling he build for her to be vanished. The lines “I'm just dreaming/ I know you're thinking/ That the summer left us behind” connotatively give a hint that he eventually did not make a move for his relation to be grown as he “just dreaming” only thinking it that far. He hopes for the best after that summer left him for a while.

The words “summer” connotatively means that they have a place as indicated to be “summer” where he and the loved one have their good relationship at a sweet moment. The lines “I'll be waiting/ I might be crazy/ But I think that it's worth my time” denotate that He get excited to wait that time again to know how it was worth his time and connotate that he manage to get the time to gain the relationship they build upon it. The lines “What was it that you lost?/ Been chasing all this time?” denotate that the man question of what seems to be missing in part of his loved one thing is and connotate on what kind of things that she looking out for as it clearly suggest the idea of her to be chasing her long lost love this time all along.

The lines “I'll try to fill the gaps but I feel its a losing fight/ I know it's not ideal/ There's probably better ways” denotate that he attempt to get close to his loved one but he felt like there is a big gap or something more compatible as a couple for her than being with him that separate his love toward his loved one as he realize the insignificant of him to be beside his loved one as in “I know it’s not ideal”. The words in line “there’s probably better ways” connotate the man effort to give his best on trying any other plan that can help him to gain love from his loved one. The lines “But this ain't my first time, although I've never been to this place/ We're coming around” connotate that the man “my” have never known about the things that he visited but are connected towards the place as it feels like a déjà vu and the man visited the place with his loved one all around it.

The lines “My heart starts to pound/ From everything, all the possibilities” connotate that the man “my” is having his good time with his loved one throughout all times as the contrast of “all the possibilities” for what he spent for her. At the last of lyrics song, the man “me” feels hanged on upon his uncertain and

harsh but also pleasant situation of love in which to contrast “those things” that make him still caught or dragged into a love struggle. At the last line of verse 2, it connotate that the man “I” have a place to rest “they're a cloud” all his thought on love for a right time to come whenever he ready “Where I can wait there patiently” for another attempt in achieving affection from his loved one.

The myth found within the lyric songs entitled “Sandals” is about the role of male through a perspective in main character. The idea of a man who must struggle and carry the love he gives to take over her heart for himself to be loved. The main character carries the burdens to take a role of man in accepting his risk for an ambition he fought against love. Women wanted to be loved for what effort can a man do by giving her advice she never have it before as it contrasts the line “No need to overwhelm yourself, there's always time to unwind”. Woman need her moment for a man to be able to sit right beside her and take her to somewhere she will be happy with as long as she she can never forget after a thing that happen in a past for her to move on from it this explanation represent the line “But this ain't my first time, although I've never been to this place/ We're coming around”. A men should not give up upon hope to risk their life even its not really worth the effort for his beloved one as the women need more attention and take care towards her feelings in emotional way that represent the line “I'll try to fill the gaps but I feel its a losing fight”.

CONCLUSION

Music provides musicians/singers/song writers with a fundamental medium through which they can communicate their feelings and the complexities of their personalities through the use of words. Song lyrics, in contrast to poetry, do not always make use of too complicated language or words with symbolic connotations, nor do they frequently participate in the complexities of figurative language. On the other hand, the study of semiotics, more specifically denotation and connotation, can be of use in determining the core meaning contained within a song. This semiotic analysis focuses on the idea of love in relation to the song "Sandals," which is the subject of the analysis. A man, who is referred to as "I," "me," and "my," is the protagonist of the song's denotative meaning, which tells the story of a man who battles to keep his love for a long period of time. This interpretation, which is taken in its literal sense, offers a plain comprehension of the song's substance.

In addition to growing beyond the literal narrative, the connotative meaning of the song "Sandals" contributes to the enhancement of the interpretation. When viewed via a denotative lens, the man's expectation of love is shown as a journey that is full of unanticipated challenges. The singer/musician/song writer continues to suffer despite the fact that he/she is in love with someone else, that he/she is dealing with flaws in his relationship, and that he is demonstrating unflinching sincerity toward the person he/she loves unconditionally. Based on this research, it is clear that the path of a lover is not simply about waiting; rather, it is about enduring and persisting through the challenges that love presents. As a result of the singer's solid

commitment and the emotional struggles she/he undertakes, the complexities and depth of his/her affection are brought into sharper focus, and his journey becomes a moving investigation into the challenges and difficulties that love presents.

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