

LEXICAL SEMANTIC ANALYSIS ON THE LYRICS OF NIKI'S SONG "OCEANS AND ENGINES"

Aidil Syah Putra¹, Nurul Lailatul Qodriyati², Ika Shakila Maharani³

^{1,2,3} English Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Tangerang, Tangerang, Indonesia

Email: ¹aidilpoetra@gmail.com, ²nurullailatul298@gmail.com, ³ikashakila26@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received May 07, 2024

Revised June 10, 2024

Accepted July 05, 2024

Available Online July 15, 2024

Kata Kunci:

Semantik, Lirik Lagu,
Leksikal

Keywords:

Semantics, Song Lyric, Lexical

ABSTRAK

Lirik lagu "Oceans and Engines" dari NIKI dikaji secara leksikal dan semantik dalam penelitian ini. Menemukan makna leksikal dan semantik dalam lirik lagu adalah tujuan dari analisis ini. Metode analisis leksikal dan semantik yang diterapkan pada lirik lagu "Oceans and Engines" digunakan dalam penelitian ini. Istilah-istilah dalam lirik lagu ditemukan, dan makna leksikal dan semantiknya ditafsirkan, untuk melengkapi analisis ini. Istilah-istilah dalam lirik lagu tersebut ditemukan, dan makna leksikal dan semantiknya ditafsirkan, untuk melengkapi analisis ini. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa lirik lagu "Oceans and Engines" memiliki beragam interpretasi leksikal dan semantik yang berhubungan dengan tema kesepian, kesedihan, dan kesulitan untuk mengucapkan selamat tinggal kepada orang yang dicintai. Makna leksikal dari kata-kata seperti "lautan", "mesin", "matahari terbenam", "air mata", "ketakutan", dan "hantu" terhubung dengan tema-tema ini. Lagu "Oceans and Engines" memiliki lirik yang kompleks yang dapat dibaca dengan berbagai cara, seperti yang ditunjukkan oleh analisis semantik. Konotasi semantik dari frasa seperti "Aku akan selalu mencintaimu" dan "Aku melepaskanmu" terhubung dengan ide cinta dan perpisahan.

ABSTRACT

The lyrics to NIKI's song "Oceans and Engines" are examined lexically and semantically in this study. Finding the lexical and semantic meanings in the song lyrics is the goal of this analysis. The lexical and semantic analysis method applied to the lyrics of the song "Oceans and Engines" is used in this study. The terms in the song lyrics are located, and their lexical and semantic meanings are interpreted, to complete this analysis. The terms in the song lyrics are located, and their lexical and semantic meanings are interpreted, to complete this analysis. The examination's findings demonstrate that the lyrics to the song "Oceans and Engines" include a variety of lexical and semantic interpretations that are connected to the themes of loneliness, sadness, and the difficulties of saying goodbye to loved ones. Lexical meanings of words like "ocean", "engines", "sunset", "tears", "fears", and "ghost" are connected to these themes. The song "Oceans and Engines" has complex lyrics that can be read in a variety of ways, as demonstrated by semantic analysis. Semantic connotations of phrases like "I'll always love you" and "I'm letting go" are connected to the idea of love and separation.

INTRODUCTION

The impact of language on the human experience can't be overstated and its significance is perhaps most palpable in the realm of song lyrics (Meyer, 2008). These meticulously crafted verses

possess an unparalleled ability to stir emotions, challenge perspectives, and transport listeners into realms of imagination and self-reflection (Bonds, 2019). Song lyrics are a form of artistic expression that holds the power to shape cultural narratives and provide a poignant window into the depths of the human condition.

Songwriters have harnessed the art of wordsmithing to create evocative pieces that resonate with audiences on a profound and visceral level (Salle, 2016). From the poetic musings of ancient folk ballads to the raw intensity of contemporary genres, the lexical choices and semantic constructions employed in lyrics are instrumental in conveying intended meanings, symbolism, and emotional depth – forging an indelible connection between artist and listener.

Music has emerged as a universal language in our increasingly interconnected global landscape, transcending geographical boundaries and uniting diverse cultures and communities through a shared tapestry of melody and verse (Cohen, 2015). Song lyrics wield the extraordinary power to challenge deeply entrenched societal norms, ignite critical conversations on crucial issues, and amplify the voices of those long marginalized. The lexical semantics employed by artists can serve as a mirror, reflecting prevailing ideologies, social movements, and personal journeys, offering invaluable insights into the complexities and nuances of the human experience.

The significance of studying lexical semantics in song lyrics extends far beyond mere academic curiosity or linguistic analysis by delving into the intricate web of lexical choices, patterns, and semantic associations, researchers can unravel the underlying meanings, intentions, and cultural significance embedded within these artistic works. Such analyses not only contribute to our understanding of the artist's creative process but also offer a profound lens through which to examine the broader socio-cultural contexts that shape and influence artistic expression (Sullivan, 2010).

Understanding of lexical semantics in song lyrics can inform and inspire future creative endeavors, empowering artists to push the boundaries of their craft and explore new artistic frontiers (Wang et al., 2023). As they continue to navigate the uncharted territories of artistic expression, an awareness of the profound impact of language can elevate their ability to connect with audiences on a visceral level, evoking emotions and fostering a shared sense of understanding and empathy (Pavlisca, 2018).

The analysis of lexical semantics in song lyrics is a multifaceted pursuit that transcends linguistic boundaries, fostering cross-cultural dialogue, artistic appreciation, and a deeper understanding of the human experience. It is a testament to the enduring power of words and their ability to touch hearts, challenge minds, and leave an indelible mark on the tapestry of our shared cultural heritage. Through the exploration of lexical semantics, we not only unravel the intricacies of language but also unlock the doors to a deeper comprehension of ourselves and the world around us.

THEORITICAL REVIEW

Lexical Semantics

Lexical semantics is a branch of linguistics that studies the meanings of words (lexicon) and the relationships between these meanings (Goddard & Wierzbicka, 2013). It examines how words represent concepts and ideas, and how these meanings are structured and organized in our mental lexicon. A

crucial aspect is the different types of semantic relations that exist between words. Synonymy refers to words with similar or nearly identical meanings, such as "big" and "large." Antonymy involves words with opposite meanings, like "hot" and "cold." Hyponymy describes specific instances of a general concept, for instance, "rose" and "tulip" are hyponyms of the superordinate "flower." Meronymy captures part-whole relationships, such as "wheel" being a meronym of "car".

Lexical Semantics in Artistic Expression

In artistic works like poetry, prose, or song lyrics, lexical choices are crucial for conveying specific emotions, themes, and intended meanings to audiences (Rahman, Jamalullail, & Handrianto, 2021). Creators deliberately select words considering socio-cultural contexts that shape interpretation, as well as associative and symbolic resonances. In the famous line "I wandered lonely as a cloud" (Wordsworth), the metaphor of the speaker being like a solitary cloud sets a contemplative, pensive mood. Artistic license allows artists to play with language unconventionally to elicit desired responses. For instance, in the song "Imagine" (Lennon), using "brotherhood of man" despite being gender-exclusive aims to foster a sense of global unity. Such careful semantic crafting enables profound audience connection by inviting co-creation of meaning and exploration of the human experience.

Lexical Semantics in Song Lyrics

Song lyrics heavily rely on lexical semantics to convey powerful messages and evoke emotional responses. Careful word choices profoundly influence interpretation and resonance, as semantic associations and connotations evoke vivid imagery, symbolic representations, and emotional resonances. In "The Sound of Silence" (Simon & Garfunkel), the metaphor "people talking without speaking" portrays emotional disconnection amid societal noise.

Semantic devices like metaphors, symbolism, and connotations are prevalent across genres and eras, reflecting language's enduring power to captivate and connect audiences viscerally. The symbolic line "the tree of life is growing every brick" (Our Lady Peace) creatively merges nature and urban imagery, inviting contemplation on humanity's relationship with its environment.

Analytical Framework

Conducting comprehensive lexical semantic analysis of lyrics requires a structured framework. This outlines methods for identifying and categorizing devices like metaphors based on literary and linguistic theory. For example Lakoff and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory could inform categorization of metaphorical concepts. The framework determines prevalence and compositional patterns, noting distribution, frequency, and potential clustering around themes/motifs. If metaphors of natural imagery recur in environmental lyrics, this highlights their thematic significance. Crucially it provides strategies for interpreting underlying meanings and cultural significance considering context, genre, and themes. Feminist literary theory may reveal how gendered language challenges or reinforces patriarchal norms.

"Oceans and Engines" song writing by Niki

The indie pop/rock song "Oceans and Engines" by Indonesian singer-songwriter Niki explores themes of self-discovery, personal growth, and human relationships through evocative lexical choices and semantic devices. The analysis identifies key devices employed throughout the lyrics, such as extended metaphors comparing emotional experiences to nautical/ocean imagery, similes likening internal thoughts and feelings to tangible objects, and symbolic representations of abstract concepts through concrete words. For instance the song utilizes an extended metaphor portraying the speaker's journey of self-exploration through ocean-related language, suggesting a sense of vastness, depth, and fluidity in the emotional journey.

The analysis examines patterns in the semantic devices used, noting the prevalence of nautical metaphors and their clustering around central themes. It interprets how the lexical choices work together to convey the song's meanings on a deeper level, with recurring ocean metaphors and vocabulary hinting at the complexities and potential obstacles in the speaker's personal growth. The analysis considers the broader significance of the lexical semantics in "Oceans and Engines," reflecting on how the devices effectively communicate universal experiences of self-discovery and human connection in an evocative, poetic manner that resonates with listeners, showcasing Niki's artistic style within the indie pop/rock genre.

RESEARCH METHOD

The present study utilizes a descriptive qualitative methodology to examine the semantic meaning of words in the lyrics of Niki's song "Oceans and Engines." . This approach uses or visualizations to explain phenomena related to the research subjects' behavior, perception, motivation, action, and other experiences. With an emphasis on lexical and semantic elements, the inquiry seeks to deduce the meaning conveyed by the songs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the lyrics of Niki's song "Oceans and Engines", two things are covered, namely conceptual meaning and associative meaning. The conceptual meaning is classified into 3 parts, namely the meaning that states activities or events, which states objects, and which states attitudes or traits. Meanwhile, associative meanings are classified into 4 parts, namely meanings that express activities or events, that express objects, that express attitudes or traits, and that express feelings or emotions.

Song Lyric NIKI'S SONG "OCEANS AND ENGINES"

Saturday sunset

We're lying on my bed with five hours to go

Fingers entwined and so were our minds

Cryin', "I don't want you to go"

You wiped away your tears

But not fears under the still and clear indigo

*You said, "Baby, don't cry, we'll be fine
You're the one thing I swear I can't outgrow"
My mother said the younger me was a pretending prodigy
Well, nothing then, much has changed
'Cause while you're wolfin' down liquor
My soul, it gets sicker
But I'm stickin' to the screenplay
Gotta say I'm okay, but answer this, babe
How is it now that somehow you're a stranger?
You were mine just yesterday
I pray the block in my airway dissipates
And instead deters your airplane's way
But heaven denied
Destiny decried
Something beautiful died
Too soon
But I'm letting go
I'm givin' up the ghost
But don't get me wrong
I'll always love you, that's why
I wrote you this very last song
I guess this is where we say goodbye
I know I'll be alright
Someday I'll be fine
But just not tonight (ooh)
Plungin' into all kinds of diversions
Like blush wine and sonorous soirées
But even with gin and surgin' adrenaline
I see you're all that can intoxicate
Oceans and engines
You're skilled at infringin' on great love affairs
'Cause now my heart's home
All I've known is long gone and ten thousand miles away
And I'm not okay
But I'm letting go
I'm giving up the ghost
But don't get me wrong
I'll always love you, that's why
I wrote you this very last song*

*I guess this is where we say goodbye
 I know I'll be alright
 But just not
 Tonight was the first time I stared into seas
 Of beguiling sepia two years ago
 And the first time I learned real world superpowers lived in three words
 They revitalize my fraying bones, oh
 Now what do you do when your pillar crumbled down
 You've lost all solid ground
 Both dreams and demons drowned
 And this void's all you've found
 And doubts light it aglow?
 I have so many questions
 But I'm pouring them into the ocean
 And I'm starting up my engine
 And I'm letting go
 I'm givin' up your ghost
 It's come to a close
 I marked the end with this last song I wrote
 I'm letting go
 This is the last falsetto
 I'll ever sing to you
 My great lost love*

Associative meaning is also considered a symbol that is often used in society so there is a shift in its meaning. The following are the conceptive and associative meanings and associative meanings explained by the researcher through the following table.

Conceptual Lexical Meaning

No	Word/Sentence	Meaning
1	Saturday sunset	The word "Saturday" describes Saturday, while "sunset" describes the time of sunset. Both describe a calm and beautiful atmosphere
2	Fingers entwined and so were our minds	The word "entwined" means intertwined, thus depicting a close relationship between two people.
3	But not fears under the still and clear indigo:	The word "indigo" means the color blue, thus describing a calm and clear atmosphere.

4	My mother said the younger me was a pretending prodigy	The word "pretending" means pretending, while "prodigy" means child prodigy. Both describe feelings that are not real.
5	Cause while you're wolfing down liquor :	The word "wolfing" means overeating, while "liquor" means liquor. Both describe feelings that are not good.
6	My soul, it gets sicker	The word "soul" means soul, while "sicker" means sicker. Both describe feelings that are getting sicker.
7	But I'm sticking to the screenplay	The word "screenplay" means screenplay, so it describes the feeling of sticking to what has been determined.
8	I pray the block in my airway dissipates	The word "pray" means to pray, while "block" means obstruction. Both describe the feeling of wanting to get rid of the block.
9	Destiny decried	The word "destiny" means fate, while "decried" means protested. Both describe a feeling of disagreeing with fate.
10	I'm giving up the ghost	The word "ghost" means spirit, thus describing the feeling of letting go of the spirit.
11	Like blush wine and sonorous soirées	The word "blush" means rosy, while "wine" means liquor. Both describe the feeling of being rosy.
12	I see you're all that can intoxicate	The word "intoxicate" means to thwart, thus describing the feeling of being thwarted.
13	Oceans and engines	The word "oceans" means oceans, while "engines" means machines. Both describe the feeling of having oceans and engines.
14	Now what do you do when your pillar crumbled down.	The word "now" means now, while "pillar" means pole. Both describe the feeling that now the pillar has crumbled down.
15	But I'm pouring them into the ocean	The word "pouring" means flowing, while "ocean" means ocean. Both describe the feeling of pouring questions into the ocean.
16	And I'm starting up my engine	The word "starting" means starting, while "engine" means machine. Both describe the feeling of starting the engine.

Associative Lexical Meaning

No	Word/Sentence	Meaning
1	Saturday sunset	Indicates a specific time that is full of memories or a particular moment that is vividly remembered

2	Fingers entwined	Depicts the physical and emotional closeness between two people, indicating intimacy and a close relationship.
3	Indigo	Refers to the color of the sky at dusk, giving an emotional feel and a deep, calm atmosphere.
4	Pretending prodigy	Implies a past where one was considered talented at pretending or performing something that was not real.
5	Wolfen' down liquor	Indicates destructive behavior or a way of coping with pain by drinking alcohol excessively.
6	My soul, it gets sicker	Describes a feeling of deep and persistent emotional suffering.
7	Stickin' to the screenplay	Indicates an effort to stick to a predetermined plan or scenario despite the difficulty.
8	Block in my airway	Describes a feeling of suffocation or difficulty breathing which can be interpreted as a metaphor for emotional distress
9	Destiny decried	Implies a rejection of destiny or fate that one feels is unfair.
10	Giving up the ghost	Refers to letting go or giving up on something that is dead or no longer hopeful.
11	Blush wine and sonorous soirées	Describes an attempt at distraction through social activities and drink.
12	Intoxicate	Denotes a person's strong influence that leaves others mesmerized or affected like a drunk.
13	Oceans and engines	Depicts distance and movement, possibly referring to separation caused by travel or migration.
14	Pillar crumbled down	Depicts losing an important foundation or support in life.
15	Pouring them into the ocean	Implies the act of releasing or throwing feelings or questions into something infinite and unreachable.
16	Starting up my engine	Indicates an attempt to restart or resume life after experiencing difficulties.

Conceptual Meaning

Conceptual meaning is considered a major factor in any communication. Conceptual meaning is essential in language. Conceptual meaning can be known after connecting or comparing it at the language level (Suwandi, 2008). Conceptual meaning is a meaning that is in accordance with the concept and its referent, and is free from any association or relationship. (Chaer, 2013)

Assosiative Meaning

(Chaer, 2013) states that associative meaning is the meaning that a word has with regard to the relationship of that word with circumstances outside the language. The associative meaning is the same as the symbol used by the language community to express another concept language community to express another concept. Associative meaning has shifted from the real meaning, but if you think deeply, there is a connection with the real meaning related to the actual meaning. Therefore, associative meaning has therefore, associative meaning has a relationship with the moral values and outlook on life that prevail in a language society a language society which is also related to the values of language taste.

CONCLUSION

Exploring lexical semantics in song lyrics unveils a profound intersection where language, emotion, and cultural expression converge beyond linguistic confines. Throughout this investigation, song lyrics emerge not simply as compositions set to music, but as intricate narratives woven with semantic choices that evoke profound emotions and convey deep meanings. Language in song lyrics serves as a potent tool for artists to articulate intricate concepts, challenge societal norms, and reflect on personal and collective experiences. Through skillful use of metaphors, symbolism, and connotations, songwriters craft poetic landscapes that invite listeners to explore the complexities of human emotion and introspection. This creative process not only showcases the artistry of wordplay but also underscores music's role as a universal language that fosters empathy and cross-cultural understanding. The structured analytical framework employed in studying lexical semantics offers researchers a methodical approach to decode the nuanced meanings embedded within lyrical compositions. By identifying recurring patterns, thematic motifs, and metaphorical devices, analysts uncover layers of significance that enrich our understanding of the creative process and the broader socio-cultural contexts in which these works unfold. Moreover, the examination of Niki's song "Oceans and Engines" serves as a poignant example of how lexical semantics illuminate themes such as self-discovery, personal growth, and emotional resilience through artistic expression. This case study highlights how semantic devices like extended metaphors and symbolic imagery resonate universally, transcending language barriers and cultural differences.

In summary, the study of lexical semantics in song lyrics not only deepens our appreciation of artistic expression but also enhances our understanding of human experiences and societal narratives. It underscores language's enduring power to evoke emotions, provoke contemplation, and forge connections across diverse audiences, thereby leaving an indelible mark on our shared cultural heritage. Continued exploration and analysis of lexical semantics in music promise to inspire new creative endeavors and foster a deeper comprehension of ourselves and the world around us.

REFERENCES

- Bonds, M. E. (2019). *The Beethoven Syndrome: Hearing Music as Autobiography*. Oxford University Press.
- Chaer, A. (2013). Pengantar Semantik Bahasa Indonesia.
- Cohen, D. (2015). *Music: Its language, history, and culture*.
- Goddard, C., & Wierzbicka, A. (2013). *Words and meanings: Lexical semantics across domains, languages, and cultures*: OUP Oxford.
- Meyer, L. B. (2008). *Emotion and meaning in music*: University of Chicago Press.
- Pavliscak, P. (2018). *Emotionally intelligent design: Rethinking how we create products*: " O'Reilly Media, Inc."
- Rahman, M. A., Jamalullail, J., & Handrianto, C. (2021). An overview of the implementation of musical drama in the introduction to literature course. *Indonesian Journal of Educational Assessment*, 4(2), 9-19.
- Salle, D. (2016). *How to see: Looking, talking, and thinking about art*: WW Norton & Company.
- Sullivan, G. (2010). Artistic cognition and creativity. In *The Routledge companion to research in the arts* (pp. 99-119): Routledge.
- Suwandi, S. (2008). *Semantik: Pengantar kajian makna*.
- Wang, Q., Qu, Y., Nan, S., Jiang, W., Gu, B., & Gu, S. (2023). *A Survey on Edge Intelligence for Music Composition: Principles, Applications, and Privacy Implications*. Paper presented at the International Conference on Testbeds and Research Infrastructures.