Jurnal Serunai Ilmu Pendidikan
Vol. 10 No.1, Juli 2024
e-ISSN 2621 – 2676, p-ISSN 2528 - 0775

AN INVESTIGATION OF BTS "LIFE GOES ON" SONG: A CONSIDER OF DENOTATIVE AND CONNOTATIVE MEANING (SEMANTIC ANALYSIS)

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ABSTRAK

Semantik adalah cabang linguistik yang menganalisis makna kalimat dan bahasa. Semantik hadir tidak hanya dalam percakapan sehari-hari tetapi juga dalam karya artistik, seperti lagu. Lagu adalah komposisi yang berisi pesan yang ingin dikomunikasikan oleh komposer. Menganalisis lirik lagu berarti mengetahui makna yang secara khusus ingin disampaikan oleh kreator. Setiap lirik lagu dapat menciptakan makna tergantung pada imajinasi dan perspektif pendengar. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap makna denotatif dan konotatif yang ditemukan dalam lirik lagu BTS "Life Goes On" melalui analisis semantik, sebagaimana diuraikan oleh penulis. Makna denotatif adalah definisi harfiah dan asli dari suatu kata atau frasa. Makna konotatif mengacu pada interpretasi makna simbolik atau abstrak. Para penulis menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dalam penelitian. Data dianalisis menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif berdasarkan teori analisis semantik Leech (1981), yang menekankan makna denotatif dan konotatif. Sumber data adalah salah satu lirik lagu yang diperoleh melalui website di internet. Lima belas frasa dari lagu BTS- Life Goes On ditemukan memiliki interpretasi denotatif dan konotatif serta tiga jenis makna konotatif dalam hasil penelitian ini. Lirik lagu ini membahas tantangan dan kesulitan yang dialami individu di tengah pandemi Covid-19.

Kata kunci: Arti, Denotatif, Konotatif, Lirik

ABSTRACT

Semantics is a branch of linguistics that analyzes the meaning of sentences and language. Semantics are present not only in daily conversations but also in artistics works, such as songs. A song is a composition containing messages that the composer intends to communicate. Analyzing song lyrics means to find out the meanings that the creator specifically wants to convey. Each song lyrics can create a meaning depending on the listener's imagination and perspective. This study aims to uncover the denotative and connotative meanings found in the lyrics of the BTS- song "Life Goes On" through semantic analysis, as outlined by the authors. The denotative meaning is literal and genuine definition of a word or phrase. Connotative meaning refers to a symbolic or abstract interpretation of meaning. The authors employed a qualitative descriptive method in study. The data were analyzed using qualitative descriptive methods based on Leech's (1981) semantic analysis theory, which emphasizes denotative and connotative meanings. The data source is one of the song lyrics obtained through the website on internet. Fifteen phrases of the song BTS- Life Goes On were found to have both denotative and connotative interpretations also three types of connotative meaning in this research results. The lyrics of this song addressed the challenges and hardships experiences by individuals amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

Keywords: Meaning, Denotative, Connotative, Lyrics

I. INTRODUCTION

Analyzing song lyrics means to find out the meanings that the creator specifically wants to convey. Meaning is one of the branches of semantics. Semantics is a branch of linguistics that analyzes the meaning of sentences and language. Semantics is a lexical that has meaning in its true meaning which meaning is naturally in accordance with human sensory observations (Wismawati et al.,2022). Crystal (1991) defines semantics as a primary field of linguistics that examines

the meaning of language. Lyon (1995) defines semantics as the study of meaning. Cole (1981) states that semantics is crucial in determining meaning. Fromkin (2001) states that the study of language meaning, known as semantics, involves analyzing morphemes, words, phrases, and sentences. Semantics is the scientific study of the origin, development, and evolution of meaning in words (Jakautama et al., 2022). On the other hand, the word "meaning" is derived from the word "mean". Psychology, philosophy, and linguistics are three more fields related to systematic meaning (Tussa'diah et al., 2020). Riemer (2010) emphasizes the significance of meaning in linguistics, stating that language's identity diminishes without an understanding of meaning.

At this time, songs are one of the works of art that are much liked from various circles. Songs are one of the tools of verbal communication. A song is a composition containing messages that the composer intends to communicate. The creator's intended message is typically expressed through a song lyric. Each song lyrics can create a meaning depending on the listerner's imagination and perspective. So, there are many different meanings in the lyrics of a song. Lyricists frequently utilize song lyrics as a means to convey their emotions. Songwriters consider music to represent their personality (Moon et al., 2006). A song is a lyrical composition that conveys the emotional sentiments of the composer (Pratiwi et al., 2020). The dynamic content presented in a song is crucial for aiding listeners in comprehending the song and the message communicated by the artist (Sujarwati et al., 2021). Songs are compositions of words that may be performed with musical accompaniment (Assyidiqi., 2021). It is crucial for listeners to comprehend and grasp the meaning of a song by analysing its lyrics to prevent any uncertainties that may develop when listening to music (Sujarwati et al., 2021).

Many artists channel their ideas and feelings into a song. This is also done by one of the boy groups from South Korea, namely BTS. BTS or Bangtan Sonyeondan is one of the boy groups that debuted in 2013 from an agency called Bighit Entertainment. BTS consists of seven members, namely, RM, Jin, Yoongi, J-Hope, Jimin, Taehyung and Jungkook. BTS is one of the most famous boy groups in the international music market that has a very wide fan coverage both teenagers, children and middle-aged. BTS uses songs as one of the mediums to communicate with the outside world. Unlike most other singers, BTS's songs are not only about romance, but also discuss political and social issues, mental health, invitations to love yourself, passion to achieve dreams, struggle to rise from suffering and many others. This is one of the differentiators and attractions of BTS because, the songs provide many touching messages that arouse the enthusiasm of listeners.

Therefore, in this study, the authors choose one of BTS's songs entitled Life Goes On which was released during the COVID-19 pandemic, namely in 2020. This study aims to analyze the denotative and connotative meanings as well as the overall meaning contained in the song BTS- Life Goes On. This research will be examined using Leech's (1981) semantic analysis theory, which emphasizes denotative and connotative meanings. Geoffrey Leech's theory categorizes semantics into seven types: connotative meaning, denotative meaning, affective and social meaning, reflected and collocative meaning, associative meaning, thematic meaning, and intended and interpreted meaning. Denotative meaning is the literal interpretation that aligns with the actual events observed and heard. Denotative meanings are literal meanings derived from dictionaries. Palmer, F.R. (2010) Denotative refers to the literal definition of a word. This is atype of meaning whose nature can be identified based on the actual

meaning of the word (Harisma et al., 2022). Leech (1981: 12) defined connotative meaning as a type of meaning conveyed through expressions that carry a significance beyond their literal content. This implies that connotative meaning can evoke various interpretations beyond its literal meaning (Pratiwi et al., 2020). Connotative meaning is categorised into three types: positive connotative, negative connotative, and neutral connotative. Positivity is a term that conveys a sense of enjoyment. Negative connotative refers to a word with a connotation that elicits a negative emotional response. Neutral connotative refers to a phrase that does not evoke any emotional response, whether negative or positive (Sujarwati et al., 2021).

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The authors employed a qualitative descriptive method in this study. Qualitative research is a methodology used to investigate, elucidate, comprehend, and attribute significance to natural occurrences. Descriptive research is utilized to create a methodical and precise representation based on factual information gathered in the field (Rizkiyah 2017). This research is centered on investigating a phenomenon's causes, mechanisms, or reasons. Research data can be categorized into two types: primary and secondary data. Primary data is data that is directly collected from its source. The data is sourced from primary sources. Secondary data is non-original data. The data is derived from earlier studies, not the primary source (Gee et al., 2022). This study utilized secondary data. The words of the BTS song "Life Goes On" being examined were not acquired directly from the songwriter but from other individuals or sources.

Source of Data

The study utilized a song lyrics script from BTS-Life Goes On, accessible at https://www.bangtansubs.com/life-goes-on.

Technique of Collecting Data

The authors conducts data collecting using multiple approaches.

1. The author retrieved the script of BTS's "Life Goes On" song lyrics from https://www.bangtansubs.com/life-goes-on.
2. The writer listened to the song "BTS - Life Goes On" via the link: https://open.spotify.com/track/5FVbvttjEvQ8r2BgUcJgNg?si=wXrTROpRTZyJP29hrbU9WQ
3. The author examines the denotative and connotative meanings found in the lyrics of BTS's "Life Goes On."
4. The author categorizes each denotative and connotative meaning contained in song lyrics as data into a table.

Technique of Data Analysis

The present research employs Geoffrey Leech's approach, emphasizing denotative and connotative meanings. The data were analyzed using qualitative descriptive methods. An analysis was conducted on the lyrics of BTS's song "Life Goes On." Subsequently, the data is connected to denotative and connotative theories.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The table below shows the denotative and connotative meanings contained in the lyrics of BTS- Life Goes On as data:

Table 1: Denotative Meaning in BTS Song Lyrics- Life Goes On

No	Lyrics	Say	Denotative
1.	The world came to stop one day	*Stop(v)*	Stop
2.	The streets that have been cleared of footprints	*Cleared(v)*	Cleaning, Tidying Up
3.	I'm here, fallen to the ground	*Ground(n)*	Ground
4.	It seems like it'll rain again today	*Rain(n)*	Groups of water that fall to earth
5.	I'm completely drenched	*Drenched(adj)*	Wet
6.	This cold that this damned world has given me	*Cold(adj)*	Shows low temperature
7.	Thanks to it I press the rewind button where the dust has collected	*Button(n)*	A small round object attached to something
8.	When winter comes, let's exhale and a warmer breath	*Warmer(n)*	Warm
9.	Let's run away to the future	*Future(n)*	Something that hasn't happened yet
10.	Like an echo in the forest	*Echo(noun)*	Sound effects that occur due to reflections
11.	Like an arrow in the blue sky	*Arrow(n)*	Long iron that has sharp edges
12.	Thankfully, things between us still haven't changed yet	*Things(n)*	Words that indicate an object
13.	Even though we've paused for now	*Paused(v)*	Paused
14.	Don't hide in the darkness	*Darkness(n)*	Dark circumstances or situations in the absence of light
15.	Because the light will shine	*Light(n)*	Bright

Source: adapted from the secondary data

Table 2: Connotative Meaning in BTS Song Lyrics- Life Goes On

No	Connotative Meaning	Kind od Connotative		
		Negative	**Positive**	**Neutral**
1.	The world came to **stop** one day			✓
2.	The streets that have been **cleared** of footprints		✓	
3.	I'm here, fallen to the **ground**		✓	
4.	It seems like it'll **rain** again today			✓
5.	I'm completely **drenched**			✓
6.	This **cold** that this damned world has given me			✓

7.	Thanks to it I press the rewind **button** where the dust has collected			✓
8.	When winter comes, let's exhale and a **warmer** breath		✓	
9.	Let's run away to the **future**		✓	
10.	Like an **echo** in the forest			✓
11.	Like an **arrow** in the blue sky			✓
12.	Thankfully, **things** between us still haven't changed yet			✓
13.	Even though we've **paused** for now	✓		
14.	Don't hide in the **darkness**	✓		
15.	Because the **light** will shine		✓	
	Amount	**2**	**5**	**8**

Source: adapted from the secondary data

From table 2 above, the authors explains:

Data 1: The world came to **stop** one day

The word **"Stop"** connotes the concept of time. The song "The world came to stop one day" lyrics allude to the period when time appeared to halt because of the Covid-19 outbreak. During that time, all outdoor or indoor activities were limited.

Data 2: The streets that have been **cleared** of footprints.

The phrase **"Cleared"** connotatively means desolate or unoccupied. The lyrics of "The streets that have been cleared of footprints" depict desolate and deserted streets devoid of any foot traffic.

Data 3: I'm here, fallen to the **ground**

In a connotative sense, the word **"Ground"** signifies failure. The song "I'm here, fallen to the ground" lyrics depict a person experiencing failure and pain like to falling to the actual earth.

Data 4: It seems like it'll **rain** again today

Connotatively, **"Rain"** signifies a difficulty. The lines "It seems like it'll rain again today" suggest that someone is encountering adversity or misfortune.

Data 5: I'm completely **drenched**

The word **"Drenched"** connotes a state of being overwhelmed or deeply affected by a circumstance. The phrases "I'm completely drenched" depict someone who is extremely agitated with their circumstances.

Data 6: This **cold** that this damned world has given me

The term **"cold"** connotatively signifies a tense and oppressive scenario. The phrase "This cold that this damned world has given me" refer to a highly uncomfortable and suffocating circumstance.

Data 7: Thanks to it I press the rewind **button** where the dust has collected

The word **"Button"** carries a connotation of being alive. The lyrics "Thanks to it I press the rewind button where the dust has collected" express a person's wish to go back to a time before the Covid-19 pandemic.

Data 8: When winter comes, let's exhale and a **warmer** breath

The term **"Warmer"** carries a more casual connotation. The lines "When winter comes, let's exhale and a warmer breath" suggest taking a moment to unwind

during a challenging period. "Relaxed" describes a state in which an individual lets go of all their responsibilities and anxieties.

Data 9: Let's run away to the **future**

The word **"Future"** connotes a sense of ascent. The song "Let's run away to the future" lyrics depict a scenario where an individual must overcome a period of low spirits and work towards realizing long-forgotten aspirations.

Data 10: Like an **echo** in the forest

Connotatively, the word **"Echo"** has the meaning of struggling.. The phrase "Like an echo in the forest" suggests that our efforts will inevitably return to us. Sound echoes in the forest will reverberate and reach our ears. This lyric suggests that our current efforts will provide improved outcomes in the future.

Data 11: Like an **arrow** in the blue sky

The word **"Arrow"** carries a specific and purposeful connotation. The phrase "Like an arrow in the blue sky" symbolizes persistently chasing our aspirations till reaching our desired goal, no matter how lofty it may seem.

Data 12: Thankfully, **things** between us still haven't changed yet

The term **"Things"** connotes a close relationship with loved ones. The phrase "Thankfully, things between us still haven't changed yet" describes a relationship where two or more individuals continue to love each other regardless of the circumstances, without anyone departing.

Data 13: Even though we've **paused** for now

The word **"Paused"** connotes an obstruction or hindrance. The phrase "Even though we've paused for now" alludes to a scenario where an individual encounters challenges or hindrances in life but nevertheless remains resilient and determined.

Data 14: Don't hide in the **darkness**

The term **"darkness"** connotes difficulties. The phrase "Don't hide in the darkness" advises against avoiding a challenging circumstance. The lyrics also depict courage and commitment in confronting current challenges.

Data 15: Because the **light** will shine

The word **"Light"** connotes happiness. The phrase "Because the light will shine" suggests that despite facing great hardships or issues, happiness will eventually come to us. Despite life's challenges, happiness is sure to follow.

Fifteen phrases of the song BTS- Life Goes On were found to have both denotative and connotative interpretations in the research results. This analysis includes three categories of connotative meanings: two negative, five positive, and eight neutral connotative.

IV. CONCLUSION

Semantics is the examination of meaning in words, phrases, and language. Semantics is a discipline of linguistics that examines the actual meaning of words, phrases, or language as they change speech. Meaning in semantics is categorized into seven categories. Two of them are literal meaning and implied meaning. Denotative meaning aligns with the dictionary definition. Denotative meaning refers to a concept with a theoretical definition. Connotative meaning can be categorized into three types: positive, negative, and neutral.The author examined the lyrics of the song BTS- Life Goes On, analyzing fifteen song lyrics as data. The terms in the lyrics were found to have both denotative and connotative interpretations. The following words are (1) stop, (2) cleared, (3) ground, (4) rain, (5) drenched, (6) cold, (7) button, (8) warmer, (9) future, (10) echo, (11) arrow, (12) things, (13) paused, (14) darkness, (15) light. There are two words with negative connotations: (13) paused, (14) darkness. Five with positive connotations: (2) cleared, (3) ground, 8) warmer, (9) future, (15) light. Eight with neutral connotations: (1) stop, (4) rain, (5) drenched, (6) cold, (7) button, 10) echo, (11) arrow, (12) things.

The authors also examined the broader significance of BTS' "Life Goes On." This song addresses the challenges and hardships experienced by individuals amid the Covid-19 pandemic. During that period, the global community experienced economic and social setbacks. The numerous repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic have led to a widespread struggle in people's ability to live their lives. The song was designed to motivate and inspire individuals to overcome adversity or setbacks. This song also teaches perseverance and striving to recover what has been lost. In every crisis or difficulty, happiness will inevitably follow. The authors aims for readers to comprehend both the denotative and connotative meanings conveyed in this research. Comprehending the distinct meanings of denotative and connotative helps facilitate readers in analyzing the meanings present in words, sentences, and other languages.

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