

A SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF REFERENTIAL AND CONTEXTUAL MEANING IN THE SONG ‘COUNT ON ME’ BY BRUNO MARS

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Abstract

This research discusses semantic analysis in the song lyrics “Count on Me” by Bruno Mars. The study focuses on two types of meaning, namely referential meaning and contextual meaning found in the lyrics of the song. The objectives of this study are to identify the referential meanings and to analyze the contextual meanings contained in the song lyrics. This research applied a descriptive qualitative method because the data were analyzed in the form of words, phrases, and sentences rather than numerical data. The source of the data was the lyrics of the song “Count on Me” by Bruno Mars. The researcher collected the data through documentation technique by listening to the song, reading the lyrics repeatedly, identifying the expressions containing referential and contextual meanings, and classifying the data based on the types of meaning. The data were analyzed using semantic theories proposed by several linguists such as Leech, Lyons, Saeed, and Kreidler. The findings of the study show that the song contains both referential and contextual meanings. Referential meaning was found in words such as “sea,” “light,” “friends,” “song,” “dark,” “world,” and “shoulder,” which directly refer to real objects or concepts in everyday life. Meanwhile, contextual meaning was found to be more dominant because many expressions contain symbolic and emotional meanings related to friendship, loyalty, trust, and emotional support. Expressions such as “You can count on me” and “I’ll be the light to guide you” cannot be interpreted literally because their meanings depend on the context of the song. Based on the findings, the researcher concludes that semantic analysis helps listeners understand both literal and implied meanings in song lyrics and reveals the emotional and moral messages conveyed in the song.

Keywords: Semantics, Referential Meaning, Contextual Meaning, Song Lyrics, Count on Me

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Language is an important tool used by people to communicate ideas, feelings, opinions, and experiences in daily life. Through language, humans can express emotions and build social relationships with others. Language can be delivered in spoken or written form, and one of the most popular forms of language expression is songs. Songs are not only used for

entertainment, but they also contain messages, emotions, and meanings that can influence listeners.

In studying language meaning, semantics becomes one of the important branches of linguistics. Semantics is the study of meaning in language. It focuses on how words, phrases, and sentences convey meaning. According to many linguists, meaning is an essential element in understanding communication because people cannot understand messages without knowing the meaning of the language used.

In semantic studies, meaning can be analyzed in different ways. Two important types of meaning are referential meaning and contextual meaning. Referential meaning refers to the literal meaning of a word that directly points to an object, person, thing, or concept in the real world. Meanwhile, contextual meaning refers to the meaning of words or expressions based on the context or situation in which they are used. Contextual meaning may change depending on the speaker, situation, emotion, and purpose of communication.

Songs often contain both referential and contextual meanings. Songwriters commonly use figurative expressions, emotional language, and symbolic words to deliver deeper messages to listeners. Therefore, semantic analysis of song lyrics becomes interesting because listeners may interpret the meaning differently based on the context of the lyrics.

One of the songs that contains meaningful expressions is *Count on Me* by Bruno Mars. This song tells about friendship, loyalty, support, and caring for others. Several expressions in the song have literal meanings, while others contain contextual meanings that reflect emotional support and true friendship. For example, the expression “I’ll be the light to guide you” does not literally mean becoming a physical light, but it symbolically means giving help, support, and direction to a friend in difficult situations.

The researcher chooses this song because its lyrics are simple, meaningful, and closely related to human relationships in everyday life. In addition, the song contains many expressions that can be analyzed semantically, especially in terms of referential and contextual meaning. Through this research, the researcher hopes to help readers better understand the meanings contained in song lyrics and increase knowledge about semantic studies in linguistics. Therefore, the researcher is interested in conducting a study entitled **“A Semantic Analysis of Referential and Contextual Meaning in the Song ‘Count on Me’ by Bruno Mars.”**

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Semantics

Semantics is one of the branches of linguistics that studies meaning in language. It is concerned with how words, phrases, and sentences convey meaning and how meaning is understood by speakers and listeners in communication. Semantics becomes an essential aspect of language studies because communication cannot function effectively without meaning. Through semantics, people are able to understand messages, emotions, ideas, and information expressed through language. In everyday communication, meaning helps individuals interpret what others say, write, or express in different situations and contexts.

According to Geoffrey Leech (1981), semantics is the study of meaning as communicated through language. He explains that semantics focuses on how language is used to express meaning and how listeners or readers interpret those meanings. This theory shows that meaning is not only related to words themselves, but also to the way people understand language in communication. Based on this explanation, the researcher understands that semantic analysis is important because language expressions may contain different meanings depending on how they are used. Similarly, John I. Saeed (2003) states that semantics is the study of meaning communicated through language. He emphasizes that semantics examines the relationship between linguistic expressions and the meanings they represent. From this opinion, the researcher concludes that semantics helps people identify how words, phrases, and sentences function in delivering messages.

In addition, F. R. Palmer (1981) explains that semantics is the technical term used to refer to the study of meaning. He argues that meaning is an essential part of language because language without meaning cannot become a communication tool. The researcher agrees with this opinion because understanding meaning is necessary for people to communicate clearly and effectively.

Furthermore, Charles W. Kreidler (1998) states that semantics systematically studies how meaning is represented in language. This explanation indicates that semantics not only studies dictionary meanings but also examines how meanings are interpreted in various contexts and situations. Based on this explanation, the researcher believes that semantic studies are highly relevant in analyzing literary works such as songs because song lyrics often contain hidden and emotional meanings.

Songs are one of the literary works that can be analyzed semantically because

songwriters frequently use figurative and symbolic expressions to convey messages. In song lyrics, listeners may find literal meanings as well as implied meanings depending on the context of the lyrics. Therefore, semantics becomes an important approach in understanding the messages contained in songs.

Based on the explanations above, it can be concluded that semantics is the branch of linguistics that studies meaning in language, including how meaning is expressed, interpreted, and understood in communication. Semantics also helps people analyze both literal and contextual meanings found in language expressions.

Meaning

Meaning is the central aspect of semantic studies because every language expression contains meaning that can be interpreted by language users. Meaning allows people to exchange ideas, feelings, information, and experiences through communication. Without meaning, language would only consist of sounds or symbols without communicative function. Therefore, understanding meaning is very important in both spoken and written communication.

According to Geoffrey Leech (1981), meaning is a complex concept because one expression may have different interpretations depending on the context in which it is used. He explains that meaning is not only related to dictionary definitions but also to emotional and situational aspects influencing interpretation. Based on this opinion, the researcher understands that meaning cannot always be interpreted literally because context and speaker intention also affect interpretation. Similarly, John Lyons (1977) states that meaning is the relationship between language and the outside world agreed upon by language users. This explanation shows that language expressions represent objects, concepts, or ideas recognized by society. From this theory, the researcher concludes that meaning is formed through shared understanding among language users.

Furthermore, Ferdinand de Saussure (1983) explains that meaning is formed through the relationship between the signifier and the signified. The signifier refers to the sound or written form of language, while the signified refers to the concept or idea represented by the language expression. The researcher believes that this theory explains how language symbols represent ideas and meanings in human communication.

Meaning can be classified into several types, such as lexical meaning, grammatical

meaning, denotative meaning, connotative meaning, referential meaning, and contextual meaning. Each type of meaning has different characteristics and functions in communication. Referential meaning generally refers to literal meaning, while contextual meaning depends on the situation and context in which the language is used. In songs and literary works, meaning often becomes more complex because songwriters usually use symbolic and emotional language to express messages indirectly. As a result, listeners may interpret lyrics differently depending on their experiences and understanding. Therefore, semantic analysis becomes important because it helps reveal both literal and implied meanings contained in language expressions.

Based on the explanations above, meaning can be understood as the message, idea, or concept conveyed through language expressions that can be interpreted literally or contextually depending on the situation and use of language.

Referential Meaning

Referential meaning is one of the important types of meaning in semantics that directly refers to objects, people, places, animals, or concepts existing in the real world. Referential meaning is often called literal meaning because it can be understood directly without requiring special interpretation. This type of meaning focuses on the relationship between language expressions and the actual entities they refer to.

According to Geoffrey Leech (1981), referential meaning is the meaning that connects language to something outside the language itself. It concerns the relationship between words and the objects or concepts represented by those words. From this explanation, the researcher understands that referential meaning helps listeners identify the literal reference of a word in communication. Similarly, Ogden C. K. and I. A. Richards (1923) explain that referential meaning relates symbols or words to the actual things they refer to in reality. This opinion indicates that language expressions have direct references to real-world entities. Based on this theory, the researcher concludes that referential meaning is closely related to dictionary meaning and actual objects. In addition, John Lyons (1977) states that referential meaning refers to the connection between linguistic expressions and real-world entities. The researcher agrees with this explanation because words generally function to represent people, objects, places, or concepts recognized in society.

For example, words such as “friend,” “sea,” “light,” and “shoulder” have referential

meanings because they directly refer to recognizable concepts or physical objects in real life. The word “friend” refers to a person who has a close relationship with another person, while the word “sea” refers to a large area of salt water. These meanings are generally stable and can easily be found in dictionaries.

Referential meaning has several characteristics. First, it directly refers to objects or concepts in reality. Second, it has literal meaning. Third, its meaning is relatively stable and does not change significantly depending on context. Because of these characteristics, referential meaning is easier to identify compared to contextual meaning.

In the song *Count on Me* by Bruno Mars, several words contain referential meaning because they literally refer to real objects or concepts. Words such as “friends,” “sea,” “light,” and “shoulder” can first be understood literally before being interpreted contextually. Therefore, referential meaning becomes the foundation for understanding the lyrics of the song.

Based on the explanations above, it can be concluded that referential meaning is the literal meaning of words or expressions that directly refer to actual objects, people, places, or concepts existing in the real world.

Contextual Meaning

Contextual meaning is the meaning of a word, phrase, or sentence based on the context or situation in which the language is used. Unlike referential meaning, contextual meaning depends on factors such as speaker intention, emotional condition, social relationship, culture, and communicative situation. Because of this, one expression may have different meanings in different contexts. According to Charles W. Kreidler (1998), contextual meaning is the meaning interpreted according to the situation and circumstances where language is used. This theory shows that understanding meaning requires knowledge of context, not only dictionary definitions. Based on this explanation, the researcher believes that context plays an important role in interpreting language expressions correctly. Similarly, John I. Saeed (2003) states that context strongly influences meaning because words may carry different meanings in different situations. The researcher understands from this opinion that meaning can change depending on the speaker’s purpose and the listener’s interpretation.

Furthermore, Geoffrey Leech (1981) explains that contextual meaning is closely related to speaker intention and listener interpretation. This means that listeners must

understand emotional and situational background in order to interpret meaning correctly. The researcher agrees with this explanation because many expressions in songs cannot be interpreted literally.

Contextual meaning is commonly found in literary works, conversations, poetry, advertisements, and songs because writers often use symbolic and figurative language to express ideas indirectly. For example, in the lyric “I’ll be the light to guide you,” the word “light” does not literally mean physical illumination. Contextually, it means guidance, hope, support, or help for someone experiencing difficulties. Similarly, the expression “You can count on me” does not literally mean counting numbers, but contextually means trusting or depending on someone.

Contextual meaning has several characteristics. First, it depends heavily on the context or situation. Second, it may contain figurative, emotional, or symbolic meaning. Third, its interpretation may vary among listeners or readers. Fourth, it often conveys implied messages instead of direct meanings. These characteristics make contextual meaning deeper and more complex than referential meaning.

In the song “Count on Me,” many lyrics contain contextual meaning related to friendship, loyalty, emotional support, and caring relationships. Several expressions symbolically describe helping and supporting friends during difficult situations. Therefore, contextual meaning helps listeners understand the emotional and moral messages delivered by the songwriter. Based on the explanations above, contextual meaning can be defined as the meaning of language expressions interpreted according to context, situation, emotional condition, and communicative purpose.

Song

A song is one of the forms of literary and artistic expression used to communicate feelings, ideas, experiences, and messages through lyrics combined with music. Songs are closely related to human life because people often use songs to express emotions such as happiness, sadness, love, friendship, hope, and disappointment. Besides functioning as entertainment, songs can also deliver moral, social, and emotional messages to listeners. Through lyrics, listeners are able to understand the thoughts and feelings intended by the songwriter.

According to Brewster Ghiselin (1952), songs are literary expressions that

communicate human emotions and experiences through rhythmic and meaningful language. This opinion shows that songs are not merely collections of words accompanied by music, but they also contain meaningful expressions representing human experiences and emotions. Based on this theory, the researcher understands that song lyrics can be analyzed linguistically because they contain messages and meanings expressed through language. Similarly, Plato (2008) states that music and songs have strong influences on human emotions, character, and behavior. Songs can emotionally affect listeners because music and lyrics work together to create emotional responses. From this explanation, the researcher believes that songs are effective media for delivering messages because listeners often connect emotionally with the meanings contained in lyrics. In addition, Reimer Bennett (1989) explains that songs are artistic forms combining language, rhythm, and emotion to communicate meaning. This means that songs are not only musical products but also forms of communication containing meaningful language expressions. Based on this opinion, the researcher concludes that semantic analysis can be applied to songs because lyrics contain meanings that can be interpreted literally and contextually.

Songs often contain figurative language, symbolic expressions, and emotional messages that make them interesting objects for semantic analysis. Many songwriters intentionally use words with deeper meanings to make listeners interpret lyrics emotionally and personally. Therefore, listeners may have different interpretations of the same song depending on their experiences and understanding. The song analyzed in this study is Count on Me by Bruno Mars. This song mainly discusses friendship, trust, loyalty, and mutual support between friends. The lyrics contain many meaningful expressions that can be analyzed semantically, especially through referential and contextual meaning. Several expressions in the song are expressed symbolically to describe emotional support and caring relationships among friends.

Based on the explanations above, the researcher concludes that songs are artistic and linguistic expressions combining music and lyrics to communicate feelings, experiences, and messages. Because songs contain meaningful language expressions, they are suitable objects for semantic analysis.

Biography of Bruno Mars

Bruno Mars is an American singer, songwriter, musician, and music producer whose

real name is Peter Gene Hernandez. He was born on October 8, 1985, in Honolulu, Hawaii, United States. Bruno Mars is widely known as one of the most successful international musicians because of his unique musical style combining pop, R&B, funk, reggae, soul, and hip-hop influences. His musical talent and meaningful songs have made him popular worldwide.

According to information from various music publications and interviews, Bruno Mars began his music career at a young age because he grew up in a musical family environment. He was inspired by many famous artists and developed strong abilities in singing, songwriting, and performing. Before becoming a solo singer, he worked as a songwriter and producer for other musicians. His popularity increased significantly after releasing several successful songs such as “Just the Way You Are,” “Grenade,” “Talking to the Moon,” and “Count on Me.” The researcher considers Bruno Mars an influential musician because many of his songs contain meaningful messages about love, friendship, life, and human relationships. His lyrics are generally simple and easy to understand, but they also contain deep emotional meanings. This characteristic makes his songs suitable for linguistic and semantic analysis.

The song *Count on Me* was released in 2010 as part of the album *Doo-Wops & Hooligans*. The song became popular because of its positive message about friendship and loyalty. Through simple but meaningful lyrics, Bruno Mars expresses the importance of helping, supporting, and trusting friends during difficult situations.

In this study, the researcher chooses the song “Count on Me” because its lyrics contain many expressions related to referential and contextual meaning. Several lyrics use literal expressions, while others contain symbolic meanings representing emotional support and true friendship. Therefore, the song becomes an appropriate object for semantic analysis. Based on the explanation above, the researcher concludes that Bruno Mars is a talented musician whose songs contain emotional and meaningful messages that can be analyzed from a semantic perspective.

Previous Study

Several previous studies related to semantic analysis have been conducted by other researchers. These studies become important references because they provide theories, methods, and findings related to meaning analysis in language, especially in song lyrics. The first study was conducted by Rika Astuti (2021) entitled *A Semantic Analysis of Figurative*

Language in Song Lyrics. The study focused on analyzing figurative meanings found in English song lyrics using descriptive qualitative methods. The result showed that song lyrics contain many contextual meanings influenced by emotional and situational factors. The researcher believes that this study is relevant because it explains how meanings in songs are not always interpreted literally. However, the difference is that the previous study mainly focused on figurative language, while the present study specifically discusses referential and contextual meaning.

The second study was conducted by Dian Novita (2020) entitled *Referential Meaning in Selected English Songs*. The research aimed to identify literal meanings found in English song lyrics. The findings revealed that referential meaning helps listeners understand the direct and basic message conveyed by songwriters. Based on this explanation, the researcher understands that referential meaning becomes important because it provides the foundation for understanding song lyrics before interpreting deeper meanings. The similarity between the previous study and the current research lies in the discussion of referential meaning, but the current study also analyzes contextual meaning.

The third study was conducted by Siti Rahmah (2022) entitled *Contextual Meaning in English Song Lyrics*. This study discussed how contextual meaning changes according to situations and listener interpretations. The researcher found that contextual meaning is dominant in emotional and motivational songs because songwriters often use symbolic expressions to convey deeper messages. The researcher considers this study important because it shows that understanding context is necessary to interpret song lyrics correctly. However, the difference is that the present research specifically analyzes one song, namely "Count on Me" by Bruno Mars.

Another study was conducted by Andi Saputra (2021) entitled *Semantic Meaning Found in Popular Song Lyrics*. This study analyzed several types of meaning in English songs, including denotative and connotative meaning. The findings showed that emotional songs often contain contextual interpretations that cannot be understood literally. From this explanation, the researcher concludes that semantic studies are very useful in understanding hidden messages in songs.

Based on the previous studies above, the researcher finds similarities and differences with the present study. The similarities lie in the discussion of semantics and song lyrics, while the differences lie in the focus of analysis. This research specifically focuses on referential and

contextual meaning found in the song “Count on Me” by Bruno Mars. Therefore, this study is expected to provide a more specific understanding of literal and contextual meanings in song lyrics.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research applied a descriptive qualitative method. Qualitative research was used because the data of this study were in the form of words, phrases, and sentences taken from the lyrics of the song rather than numerical data. The study focused on analyzing referential and contextual meanings found in the song lyrics. According to Creswell John W. (2014), qualitative research is an approach used to explore and understand the meaning of individuals or groups related to social problems. In addition, Sugiyono (2017) states that qualitative research is used to examine natural objects and analyze data descriptively. Based on those theories, descriptive qualitative research was considered appropriate because this study aimed to describe and interpret the meanings contained in the lyrics of the song Count on Me by Bruno Mars.

Source of Data

The source of data in this research was the lyrics of the song Count on Me by Bruno Mars. The data were in the form of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences containing referential and contextual meanings. The researcher chose this song because the lyrics contain meaningful expressions related to friendship, loyalty, and emotional support. In addition, the song uses both literal and contextual expressions which are suitable for semantic analysis.

Technique of Data Collection

In collecting the data, the researcher used documentation technique. According to Moleong Lexy J. (2018), documentation is a technique of collecting data from written documents related to the research.

The procedures of collecting the data were as follows:

1. Listening to the song “Count on Me.”
2. Reading the lyrics repeatedly.
3. Identifying words, phrases, clauses, and sentences containing referential and

contextual meanings.

4. Underlining and noting the relevant data.
5. Classifying the data into referential meaning and contextual meaning.

Technique of Data Analysis

The data were analyzed descriptively by using semantic theory. According to Miles Matthew B. and Huberman A. Michael (1994), qualitative data analysis consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

The researcher analyzed the data through the following steps:

1. Reading and understanding the lyrics.
2. Identifying the data containing referential and contextual meanings.
3. Classifying the data based on the types of meaning.
4. Analyzing the meanings based on semantic theories.
5. Interpreting the meanings according to the context of the song.
6. Drawing conclusions from the findings.

The results of the analysis were presented descriptively in order to explain the referential and contextual meanings found in the song lyrics clearly.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

This chapter presents the findings and discussion of referential and contextual meanings found in the lyrics of the song Count on Me by Bruno Mars. The researcher analyzed the lyrics by identifying words, phrases, and sentences containing referential and contextual meanings based on semantic theories proposed by several linguists. After analyzing the lyrics, the researcher found that the song contains both referential and contextual meanings. Referential meaning appears in words that literally refer to real objects, people, or concepts, while contextual meaning appears in expressions interpreted according to the context of friendship, loyalty, emotional support, and caring relationships. However, contextual meaning was found to be more dominant because many expressions in the song contain implied and symbolic meanings rather than literal meanings. To make the findings clearer and more systematic, the researcher presents the data in the following tables.

Referential Meaning

Referential meaning refers to the literal meaning of words or expressions that directly refer to actual objects, people, places, or concepts in the real world. In the song “Count on Me,” several words can first be understood literally before they are interpreted contextually.

Table 4.1 Referential Meanings Found in the Song “Count on Me”

No	Lyrics	Referential Meaning
1	“sea”	A large area of salt water
2	“light”	Something that produces brightness
3	“friends”	People who have close relationships
4	“song”	A musical composition with lyrics
5	“shoulder”	A part of the human body
6	“dark”	A condition with little or no light
7	“world”	The earth and all people on it

Table 4.1 shows several words in the song lyrics that contain referential meaning. These words directly refer to real objects, concepts, or conditions recognized in everyday life. The words “sea,” “light,” “friends,” “song,” “shoulder,” “dark,” and “world” have literal meanings that can easily be understood without depending heavily on context. The researcher found that these referential meanings help listeners understand the basic and literal meaning of the lyrics before interpreting deeper contextual meanings.

Discussion of Referential Meaning

The word “*sea*” in the lyric “*If you ever find yourself stuck in the middle of the sea*” literally refers to a large area of salt water. According to John Lyons (1977), referential meaning is the relationship between language expressions and actual entities in the real world. Based on this theory, the researcher categorizes the word “sea” as referential meaning because it directly refers to a real object that exists physically in reality.

The word “*light*” in the lyric “*I’ll be the light to guide you*” literally refers to brightness or something producing illumination. In its literal sense, the word has referential meaning because it refers directly to physical light. However, within the context of the song,

the expression later develops contextual meaning related to guidance and support. The researcher understands that one expression may contain both referential and contextual meanings depending on interpretation.

The word “*friends*” in the lyric “*When we are called to help our friends in need*” literally refers to people who have close social relationships with others. According to Geoffrey Leech (1981), referential meaning directly relates language to the objects or concepts represented by language. Therefore, the researcher identifies “friends” as referential meaning because it directly refers to a social relationship recognized in real life.

The word “*shoulder*” in the lyric “*You’ll always have my shoulder when you cry*” literally refers to a part of the human body located between the neck and the arm. The researcher categorizes this word as referential meaning because it directly refers to a physical body part. Nevertheless, in the context of the song, the expression also symbolizes emotional support and comfort.

Based on the analysis above, the researcher found that referential meaning in the song functions as the literal foundation of the lyrics. These literal meanings help listeners understand the basic meaning of the song before interpreting the emotional and symbolic messages contained in the lyrics.

Contextual Meaning

Contextual meaning refers to the meaning of words, phrases, or sentences interpreted according to the context or situation in which they are used. In the song “Count on Me,” many expressions contain contextual meanings related to friendship, trust, emotional support, loyalty, and caring relationships.

Table 4.2 Contextual Meanings Found in the Song “Count on Me”

No	Lyrics	Contextual Meaning
1	“You can count on me”	You can trust and depend on me
2	“I’ll be the light to guide you”	I will help and support you
3	“I’ll sail the world to find you”	I will do everything to help you
4	“I’ll be there”	I will always support you

5	“You’ll always have my shoulder when you cry”	I will comfort you when you are sad
6	“We find out what we’re made of”	We discover our true character
7	“Friends in need”	Friends who need help and support

Table 4.2 presents several expressions in the song lyrics containing contextual meaning. Unlike referential meaning, these expressions cannot be interpreted literally because their meanings depend on the context of the song. Most expressions symbolically represent emotional support, trust, loyalty, and friendship. The researcher found that contextual meaning is dominant in the song because the songwriter uses symbolic and emotional language to convey deeper messages about friendship and caring relationships.

Discussion of Contextual Meaning

The expression “*You can count on me*” does not literally mean counting numbers. Contextually, it means trusting, relying on, or depending on someone. According to Charles W. Kreidler (1998), contextual meaning is interpreted according to the situation in which language is used. Based on this theory, the researcher concludes that the expression symbolizes loyalty and trust between friends.

The lyric “*I’ll be the light to guide you*” contextually means giving help, support, hope, or direction to someone facing difficulties. The word “light” symbolically represents guidance rather than physical illumination. The researcher interprets this expression as a representation of emotional support because the songwriter promises to help a friend during difficult situations.

The expression “*I’ll sail the world to find you*” does not literally mean traveling around the world by sea. Contextually, it means making great efforts and sacrifices to help a friend in need. According to John I. Saeed (2003), context strongly influences meaning because expressions may carry different interpretations in different situations. Based on this explanation, the researcher understands that the lyric emphasizes sincerity and strong friendship.

The lyric “*I’ll be there*” contextually means giving emotional presence and support rather than

simply being physically present. The researcher interprets this expression as a promise of loyalty and companionship during both happy and difficult situations.

The expression *“You’ll always have my shoulder when you cry”* symbolically means giving comfort and emotional support to someone who feels sad or hurt. The word “shoulder” contextually represents care, protection, and empathy. The researcher concludes that this expression reflects the songwriter’s message about true friendship and emotional closeness.

The lyric *“We find out what we’re made of”* contextually means discovering a person’s true character, sincerity, and strength when facing difficult situations. The researcher believes that this expression emphasizes how friendship reveals people’s true personalities and loyalty. Based on the discussion above, the researcher found that contextual meaning is more dominant than referential meaning in the song because many expressions contain symbolic and emotional interpretations related to friendship, support, and loyalty.

Discussion

Based on the findings above, the researcher found that the song “Count on Me” contains both referential and contextual meanings. Referential meaning appears in words directly referring to actual objects or concepts such as “sea,” “light,” “friends,” and “shoulder.” These literal meanings help listeners understand the basic meaning of the lyrics.

However, contextual meaning was found to be more dominant because many expressions contain implied and symbolic meanings related to friendship and emotional support. Expressions such as *“You can count on me”* and *“I’ll be the light to guide you”* cannot be interpreted literally because they contain deeper meanings depending on the context of the song.

According to Geoffrey Leech (1981), meaning is influenced not only by literal reference but also by context and interpretation. This theory is reflected in the song because several expressions first have literal meanings before developing symbolic and emotional meanings in the context of friendship. The researcher also found that the song delivers positive moral messages about helping others, supporting friends during difficult situations,

maintaining loyalty, and showing empathy in relationships. Through simple but meaningful lyrics, Bruno Mars successfully conveys emotional messages that can easily be understood and felt by listeners. Therefore, semantic analysis helps reveal both literal and implied meanings contained in the song lyrics and provides deeper understanding of the emotional and moral messages conveyed in the song.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

Based on the analysis conducted in the previous chapter, the researcher concludes that the song *Count on Me* by Bruno Mars contains both referential and contextual meanings. These meanings are expressed through words, phrases, and sentences that represent friendship, loyalty, emotional support, caring relationships, and trust between friends.

Referential meaning was found in several words that directly refer to real objects, people, or concepts in everyday life, such as “sea,” “light,” “friends,” “song,” “dark,” “world,” and “shoulder.” These words contain literal meanings that can be understood directly without depending heavily on context. Referential meaning helps listeners understand the basic and literal meaning of the song lyrics. Meanwhile, contextual meaning was found to be more dominant in the song because many expressions contain implied, symbolic, and emotional meanings. Expressions such as “*You can count on me,*” “*I’ll be the light to guide you,*” and “*You’ll always have my shoulder when you cry*” cannot be interpreted literally because their meanings depend on the context of friendship and emotional support. Through these expressions, the songwriter conveys messages about helping others, supporting friends in difficult situations, and maintaining loyalty in relationships.

Based on the findings, the researcher concludes that semantic analysis is important in understanding song lyrics because meanings in songs are not always expressed directly. Some meanings can only be understood through contextual interpretation and emotional understanding of the lyrics. The researcher also found that the song “*Count on Me*” delivers positive moral values related to friendship, empathy, trust, and sincerity. Therefore, the researcher concludes that the use of referential and contextual meaning in the song successfully helps Bruno Mars convey emotional and meaningful messages to listeners in a simple but powerful way.

Suggestion

After conducting this research, the researcher would like to provide several suggestions related to semantic studies and song lyric analysis. First, the researcher suggests that students, especially those studying linguistics and semantics, improve their understanding of meaning in language because semantic analysis helps readers and listeners interpret both literal and implied meanings in communication. Through semantic studies, students can better understand how language is used to express emotions, ideas, and messages.

Second, the researcher suggests that readers pay more attention to the meanings contained in song lyrics because songs are not only forms of entertainment but also media for delivering emotional, social, and moral messages. By understanding semantic meaning, listeners can appreciate songs more deeply.

Third, the researcher suggests that future researchers conduct further studies related to semantic analysis by using different theories, objects, or types of meaning. Future researchers may analyze figurative meaning, connotative meaning, denotative meaning, or other semantic aspects found in songs, poems, movies, or literary works.

Finally, the researcher hopes that this research can provide useful information and become a reference for future studies related to semantics, especially referential and contextual meaning in song lyrics.

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