

## Semiotics in the song *Saat Kau Telah Mengerti* by Virgoun

*Semiotika pada lagu “Saat Kau Telah Mengerti” karya Virgoun*

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### Abstract

This research aims to describe the connotation and denotation meanings in the song entitled *Saat Kau Telah Mengerti* (When You Understand) by Virgoun. In this article, the method used descriptive qualitative and analyses using Roland Barthes' semiotic theory, which discusses the concepts of denotation and connotation. According to Barthes' concept, a denotative sign consists of a signifier and a signified, but it also functions as a connotative sign. This means that the connotative sign not only has an additional meaning, but also consists of both parts of the denotative sign on which it is based. The results of this study reveal that there are ten song lyrics that contain denotative meaning and sixteen song lyrics that contain connotative meaning. The song *Saat Kau Telah Mengerti* has a meaning in the form of messages and hopes of parents to children. In its song, the songwriter as a parent wants to give the best for his child. However, action taken by parents for their children's benefit can occasionally cause the child to feel upset or angry.

### Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan makna konotasi dan makna denotasi dalam lagu *Saat Kau Telah Mengerti* karya Virgoun. Dalam artikel ini metode yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kualitatif serta menganalisis menggunakan teori semiotika Roland Barthes yang membahas konsep denotasi dan konotasi. Menurut konsep Barthes, tanda denotatif terdiri dari penanda dan petanda, tetapi juga berfungsi sebagai penanda konotatif. Artinya, tanda konotatif tidak hanya memiliki makna tambahan, tetapi juga terdiri dari kedua bagian tanda denotatif yang menjadi dasarnya. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa terdapat 10 lirik lagu yang mengandung makna denotatif dan 16 lirik lagu yang mengandung makna konotatif. Lagu *Saat Kau Telah Mengerti* mempunyai makna berupa pesan dan harapan orang tua kepada anak, dalam lagu tersebut pencipta lagu sebagai orang tua menginginkan yang terbaik untuk anaknya. Namun, terkadang apa yang dilakukan orang tua demi kebaikan anaknya membuat anak tersebut kesal atau marah.

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## A. Introduction

Indonesia boasts a rich diversity of music, encompassing various genres, each with its dedicated audience. The country has produced numerous talented musicians whose works resonate deeply with listeners. Among these musicians is Virgoun, who has created a significant body of work. He has produced many songs, one of which is *Saat Kau Telah Mengerti* song, released in 2023. In the lyrics, this song contains the voice of a father's heart towards his daughter. In relation to the phenomenon in human life, fathers and children have a unique relationship pattern. There is even an expression that fathers are the first love of children, especially girls (Anjani et al., 2024).

Virgoun's song entitled *Saat Kau Telah Mengerti* has received a good response from listeners since its release. This is also evidenced by many people who have re-sung or cover this song. In addition, on YouTube platform, this song has been watched more than 85 million times. However, many of the song lovers do not realize the meaning of the song they sing or hear. In fact, if song lovers know the meaning of the song, they will enjoy more, animating, and understanding the message that the songwriter wants to convey. Moreover, the song has a deep meaning in the form of a parent's message to his child. The purpose of this study is to describe the meaning in the song entitled *Saat Kau Telah Mengerti* using the point of view of the Indonesian language science. The theory used to analyze this song is Roland Barthes' semiotic theory because this semiotic theory reveals the concept of denotative and connotative meanings that are suitable for dissecting the lyrics of this song. The use of Roland Barthes' semiotic ideas aims to help dissect the denotative and connotative meanings in the song. With this research, it is expected that it can help song lovers or listeners to better understand what message the author wants to convey in the song entitled *Saat Kau Telah Mengerti*.

Semiotic theory refers to a science used to understand the meaning of a sign, and to interpret a sign that has a certain message for many people. According to Sobur (in Azrin, 2019), a sign is defined as "something based on previously established social conventions that can represent something else". In other words, a sign is something that is understood by society as a representation of something else, based on previous social agreements. Roland Barthes' semiotic theory discusses the concepts of denotation and connotation as the key to its analysis. According to Barthes' concept, a denotative sign consists of a signifier and a signified, but it also functions as a connotative sign. That is, the connotative sign has an additional meaning and also consists of both parts of the denotative sign on which it is based (Nasirin & Pithaloka, 2022).

Previous studies that examined the meaning of songs using Roland Barthes' semiotic theory include Nurdiansyah (2018), who examined the meaning of work motivation in the lyrics of the song entitled *Zona Nyaman* by Fourtenty using Roland Barthes semiotic theory. The results of his research reveal that Fourtenty's *Zona Nyaman* song carries a meaning that provides motivation in life through each verse. Cahya & Sukendro (2022) examined *Hindia's rumah ke rumah* song using Roland Barthes' semiotic theory. The results showed that songs can be used as a medium of communication to express love. Through this song, the poet managed to express his heart and convey his love to the people around him from time to time. The next research was conducted by Damayanti (2022) who examined the meaning in the lyrics of the song *Takut* by Idgitaf using Roland Barthes semiotics study. The results of her research state that the denotation meaning in the lyrics of the song *Takut* by Idgitaf refers to the unrest or worry experienced by the figure *ku* or *aku*. While the connotation meaning is about the worries experienced by humans of early adulthood (20 years old).

Based on the results of previous research, no one has analyzed a song with the theme of parental advice to children, such as the song *Saat Kau Telah Mengerti* by Virgoun. This song is interesting because if people can understand its meaning, it can become advice for the listener. Songs can also influence people who hear them (Jumaris, 2021; Masyitoh, 2022). The purpose of describing the connotation and denotation meanings in the song entitled *Saat Kau Telah Mengerti* by Virgoun so that listeners and readers can better understand the meaning contained in the song as well as the message in it.

## B. Method

This research is qualitative research using descriptive analysis method. This method describes the connotation and denotation meanings contained in the song entitled *Saat Kau Telah Mengerti* by Virgoun. The data of this research is the lyrics of this song. The data collection technique in this research consists of two stages: downloading data sources and transcribing data. In the downloading data process, the researcher downloaded its song in YouTube. In the data transcription stage, the researcher then listened and transcribed the song in writing script.

Data analysis techniques in this study were carried out in three stages, namely data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification (Miles et al., 2018). The first stage is the data condensation stage, where the researcher selected relevant data and discard unnecessary data. Relevant data are data that song lyrics containing both denotation and connotation meanings. The second stage is data display. At this stage, the researcher classified the data based on its type; this aims to facilitate the researcher in drawing conclusions/verification. The third stage is conclusion drawing/verification. At this stage, the researcher draws conclusions about the meaning of the song contained in this song based on Roland Barthes' semiotic theory.

### C. Results and Discussion

The song entitled *Saat Kau Telah Mengerti* by Virgoun tells about an expression or message that he wants to convey to his daughter. In the song lyrics, there are nine data collected to be analyzed using Roland Barthes' semiotic theory of denotation and connotation meanings.

#### *Saat Kau Telah Mengerti*

*"Nak, bila suatu saat kaudengarkan lagu ini (Kids, if one day you listen to this song)  
Dan aku sudah tak ada lagi di sampingmu (And I'm no longer by your side)  
Kau akan mengerti (You will understand)  
Mengapa begitu menyebalkannya ku di matamu (Why am I so annoying in your eyes)*

*Nak, jika saat nanti kau telah hidup sendiri (Kids, if you have to live on your own in the future)  
Dan dunia ternyata tak seperti harapanmu (And the world wasn't what you expected)  
Ku ada di sini (I'm here)  
Menjadi rumah yang s'lalu menanti kepulanganmu (Being the home that s'then awaited your return)*

*Kelak kau 'kan jadi orang tua seperti aku (One day you'll be a parent like me)  
Yang ingin anakmu bahagia dengan hidupnya (Who wants your kids to be happy with his life)*

*Bila bentakan kecilku patahkan hatimu (When my little snaps break your heart)  
Lebih keras dari itu dunia 'kan menghakimimu (Harder than that the world will judge you)  
Kubentuk dirimu menjadi engkau hari ini (I moulded you into who you are today)  
Kau harus kuat, kau harus hebat (You must be strong, you must be great)  
Permata hatiku (The jewel of my heart)*

*Nak, 'kan tiba waktu kau harus tentukan jalanmu (Kids, there will come a time when you have to make your own way)  
Yang mungkin tak searah dan indah di mataku (Which may not be unidirectional and beautiful in my eyes)  
'Pabila terjadi (If it happens)  
Berjanjilah kau akan s'lalu menjadi dirimu sendiri (Promise me you'll s'then be yourself)*

*Kelak kau 'kan jadi orang tua seperti aku (One day you'll be a parent like me)  
Yang ingin anakmu berkuasa atas hidupnya (Who wants your kids to be in charge of his life)*

*Bila bentakan kecilku patahkan hatimu (When my little snaps break your heart)  
Lebih keras dari itu dunia 'kan menghakimimu (Harder than that the world will judge you)  
Kubentuk dirimu menjadi engkau hari ini (I moulded you into who you are today)  
Kau harus kuat, kau harus hebat (You must be strong, you must be great)  
Permata hatiku (The jewel of my heart)*

*Bila bentakan kecilku patahkan hatimu (When my little snaps break your heart)  
Lebih keras dari itu dunia 'kan menghakimimu (Harder than that the world will judge you)  
Kubentuk dirimu menjadi engkau hari ini (I moulded you into who you are today)  
Kau harus kuat, kau harus hebat (You must be strong, you must be great)*

*Aku adalah jemari dan ibumu pena-nya (I am the finger, and your mum is the pen)  
Dan kaulah puisi terindah yang pernah tercipta (And you are the most beautiful poem ever created)  
Semoga belaian kasihku lembutkan hatimu (May my loving caresses soften your heart)  
Kau harus megah, kau harus indah (You must be majestic, you must be beautiful)*

*Kau harus kuat, kau harus hebat (You must be strong, you must be great)  
Permata hatiku" (The jewel of my heart")*

(Virgoun, 2023)

### Data 1

*Nak, bila suatu saat kaudengarkan lagu ini* (Kids, if one day you listen to this song)  
*Dan aku sudah tak ada lagi di sampingmu* (And I'm no longer by your side)  
*Kau akan mengerti* (You will understand)  
*Mengapa begitu menyebalkannya ku di matamu* (Why am I so annoying in your eyes)  
(Virgoun, 2023)

There is a denotation meaning from the Data 1 in the lyrics *Nak, bila suatu saat kaudengarkan lagu ini* (kids, if one day you listen to this song) and *Kau akan mengerti* (you will understand) because it explains it directly, not using figurative words. Denotation is a meaning that is conveyed explicitly whose meaning is immediately visible on the surface (Amalia et al., 2022; Lantowa et al., 2017). In this song, the words *kau* and *mu* refer to the child character of the parent character who uses the word *aku*. In the lyrics, the *aku* character gives a message that when *aku* character listens to this song, *kau* character will understand in the *aku*'s position.

The connotative meaning in the lyrics *Dan aku sudah tak ada lagi di sampingmu* (and I'm no longer by your side) and *Mengapa begitu menyebalkannya ku di matamu* (why am I so annoying in your eyes) suggests that the *aku* character is no longer present in the world. The subsequent lyrics imply that, in the *kau* character's perception and memory, the *aku* character's behavior was annoying and caused distress. However, the *aku* character had underlying reasons for this behavior, which the *kau* character will only understand once *aku* is no longer there. In the first data point, the *aku* character represents the parent or the parent's perspective, while the *kau* character represents the child. From the child's viewpoint, the actions taken by the parents often feel restrictive, leading to feelings of frustration and upset. According to Diana (dalam Sari et al., 2020), every child is smart and creative so that it will cause the child to think that the things his parents do are excessive and annoying. In fact, what parents do is for the good of their children. Because basically every parent, always wants their children to be the best.

### Data 2

*Nak, jika saat nanti kau telah hidup sendiri* (Kids, if you have to live on your own in the future)  
*Dan dunia ternyata tak seperti harapanmu* (And the world wasn't what you expected)  
*Ku ada di sini* (I'm here)  
*Menjadi rumah yang s'lalu menanti kepulanganmu* (Being the home that then awaited your return)  
(Virgoun, 2023)

From Data 2 in the lyrics of the first line to the third line has a denotative meaning, the lyrics explain straightforwardly. The meaning is that when *kau* character has run her own life and it turns out that *kau* character's expectations are not what she wants, *aku* character will always be in his place. Meanwhile, the lyric *Menjadi rumah yang s'lalu menanti kepulanganmu* (being the home that then awaited your return) is a connotative meaning that has a hidden content of signs (Lantowa et al., 2017). In its lyrics, *kau* character will always have a place to go home, rest, complain, and other feelings from the life of the world itself that turned out not to be what *kau* character expected. *Rumah* or *home* literally means a place to live, but connotatively in this song, the *rumah* in question is the connotation of someone to lean on, complain to, and be who they are with all their flaws and strengths. While *rumah* denotatively has the meaning of returning to the place of origin, but in this song the meaning of *rumah* has a connotation that is the breadth of one's condition to be oneself, free to pour out one's heart and there is no fear of being judged for one's shortcomings. So, it can be seen that this song gives a message to listeners that parents are a figure who is always there.

Nowadays, the correlation between parents and children is not always good. In this song, *aku* character, who is a parent, conveys a message to his daughter to make *aku* character a refuge and resting place from his world that is not as in the child's expectations. Parenting by parents is very important in children's openness with parents so that children will trust their parents (Sari et al., 2018).

### Data 3

*Kelak kau 'kan jadi orang tua seperti aku* (One day you'll be a parent like me)  
*Yang ingin anakmu bahagia dengan hidupnya* (Who wants your kids to be happy with his life)  
*Bila bentakan kecilku patahkan hatimu* (When my little snaps break your heart)  
*Lebih keras dari itu dunia 'kan menghakimimu* (Harder than that the world will judge you)  
(Virgoun, 2023)

From Data 3, there are lyrics stated *Kelak kau kan jadi orang tua seperti aku* (one day you'll be a parent like me) and *Yang ingin anakmu bahagia dalam hidupnya* (who wants your kids to be happy with his life) the lyrics have denotative meaning because these directly describe or do not contain the allusions contained in them. The use of the word *aku* refers to a parent figure who in this context is the singer, the word *kau* refers to the child of *aku*. In the lyrics *Kelak kau kan jadi orang tua seperti aku* (one day you'll be a parent like me) has a direct message that someday his daughter will also be a parent like him, followed by the lyrics *Yang ingin anakmu bahagia dalam hidupnya* (who wants your kids to be happy with his life), in the lyrics, the word *anakmu* refers to the child of the child of the figure *aku*, the message in the lyrics of this part is that *aku* character tells his daughter that one day *kau* character will also have a child and wants her flesh and blood to be happy.

Meanwhile, the lyrics *Bila bentakan kecilku patahkan hatimu* (when my little snaps break your heart) and *Lebih keras dari itu dunia 'kan menghakimimu* (harder than that the world will judge you) have connotative meanings in their sentence structure. Connotative meaning contains psychological aspects, such as feelings that contribute to the emergence of a second meaning or implied meaning (Fatimah, 2020). The phrase *patahkan hatimu* (break your heart) creates a meaning that refers to feelings of sadness or disappointment. This lyric is then followed by the lyric *Lebih keras dari itu dunia 'kan menghakimimu* (harder than that the world will judge you), here the word *kan menghakimimu* (will judge you) refers to the meaning that the world gives a hard life. From these two lyrics, it can be seen that *aku* character wants to explain to his daughter that his anger at her in the sense of being angry because of love is nothing compared to the harshness of life in this world.

#### Data 4

*Kubentuk dirimu menjadi engkau hari ini* (I moulded you into who you are today)  
*Kau harus kuat, kau harus hebat* (You must be strong, you must be great)  
*Permata hatiku* (The jewel of my heart)  
 (Virgoun, 2023)

From Data 4 there are lyrics *Kau harus kuat, kau harus hebat* (You must be strong, you must be great) the lyrics are denotative meaning because they explain directly. This is in line with the definition of denotation, which is meaning that has a relationship or reference to reality so that the meaning generated is direct and explicit (Fatimah, 2020; Sinaga et al., 2021). The lyrics have a meaning that is in accordance with its reference in the real world so that it does not cause a figurative meaning. In these lyrics, *kau* character must become a strong and great human being in the future.

The lyrics *Kubentuk dirimu menjadi engkau hari ini* (I moulded you into who you are today) and *Permata hatiku* (the jewel of my heart) have connotative meanings because they are figures of speech sung by the singer. The phrase *Kubentuk dirimu* (I moulded you) refers to the character building for *kau* character done by *aku* character. While the phrase *permata hatiku* (the jewel of my heart) means that something is very valuable to *aku* character. From these two arrays, it can be seen that *kau* character or she is something very valuable to *aku* character, *aku* character wants to shape *kau* character to be great.

#### Data 5

*Nak, 'kan tiba waktu kau harus tentukan jalanmu* (Kids, there will come a time when you have to make your own way)  
*Yang mungkin tak searah dan indah di mataku* (Which may not be unidirectional and beautiful in my eyes)  
*'Pabila terjadi* (If it happens)  
*Berjanjilah kau akan s'lalu menjadi dirimu sendiri* (Promise me you'll then be yourself)  
 (Virgoun, 2023)

From the data above there are lyrics *Nak, 'kan tiba waktu kau harus tentukan jalanmu* (kids, there will come a time when you have to make your own way) the lyrics have connotative meaning. The word *jalanmu* literally means a place of passing or crossing. Connotative refers to a meaning that arises implicitly in a hidden and uncertain way (Fatimah, 2020). In this lyric *jalanmu* refers to the direction of life, the purpose of life, and what kind of life the child character will choose later. From this connotative meaning, it is found that one day, the child character will have a purpose, direction, and choice for her own life.

Then in the lyrics *Yang mungkin tak searah dan indah di mataku* (which may not be unidirectional and beautiful in my eyes) has a connotative meaning. The phrase *tak searah* refers to the meaning of not the same, and the word *indah* refers to things that are liked. Thus, when connected to the previous lyric is that someday

the child character will choose a life path that may not be the same and is not expected or less favored by *aku* character.

Continued in the lyrics '*Pabila terjadi, berjanjilah kau akan s'lalu menjadi dirimu sendiri* (if it happens, promise me you'll then be yourself), this lyric has a connotative meaning. When connected to the previous two lyrics, this lyric refers to the meaning that if one day this child character chooses a direction of life that is not the same as *aku* character, he hopes that whatever happens, this child character must remain herself. Being yourself means understanding life as it is and living life regardless of other people's opinions, not taking what other people say about their lives as long as it is good.

#### Data 6

*Kelak kau 'kan jadi orang tua seperti aku* (One day you'll be a parent like me)

*Yang ingin anakmu berkuasa atas hidupnya* (Who wants your kids to be in charge of his life)  
(Virgoun, 2023)

From the data above, there are lyrics *Kelak kau 'kan jadi orang tua seperti aku* (one day you'll be a parent like me) and *Yang ingin anakmu berkuasa atas hidupnya* (who wants your kids to be in charge of his life). These have denotative meaning because the lyrics directly describe the meaning contained in them. The use of the word *aku* refers to a parent figure who in this context is the singer, the word *kau* refers to the child of *aku*. In the lyrics *Kelak kau 'kan jadi orang tua seperti aku* (one day you'll be a parent like me) has a direct message that someday his daughter will become a parent like him, followed by the lyrics *Yang ingin anakmu berkuasa atas hidupnya* (who wants your kids to be in charge of his life) which in the lyrics part of the word *anakmu* refers to the child of the character *kau*. The message in this part of the lyrics is that the character *aku* tells his child that one day the character *kau* will also have a child and wants his flesh and blood to have *berkuasa atas hidupnya sendiri*, meaning that one day, when this child character also becomes a parent, she must want her child to have the right to his own life not to be controlled by others.

#### Data 7

*Aku adalah jemari dan ibumu penanya* (I am the finger, and your mum is the pen)

*Dan kaulah puisi terindah yang pernah tercipta* (And you are the most beautiful poem ever created)  
(Virgoun, 2023)

From the data above, there are fragments of lyrics that have connotative meanings. The lyrics *Aku adalah jemari dan ibumu penanya* (I am the finger, and your mum is the pen) refer to something that is paired. This lyric contains connotative meaning, which there is an operation of meaning that is not explicit and open to various possibilities (Nurdin, 2023; Wahid, 2024). Regarding the relationship between the words *jemari* and *pena* creates the meaning that the pen will be paired with the finger, where this pen needs the finger to make it move and put ink to write and so on. Likewise, the fingers need a pen to be able to write. Therefore, it can be interpreted that this lyric analogizes *jemari* and *pena* as a pair of husband and wife where both need each other and complement each other. When connected with the next lyric, *Dan kau lah puisi terindah yang pernah tercipta* (and you are the most beautiful poem ever created), this lyric refers to the beautiful poem created by the fingers and the pen. This means that the child character is the most beautiful gift present in the life of *aku* character and his wife (mother) because basically children are a very precious gift for a family.

#### Data 8

*Semoga belaian kasihku lembutkan hatimu* (May my loving caresses soften your heart)  
(Virgoun, 2023)

The lyrics have a connotative meaning, in the phrase *belaian kasihku* (my loving caresses), this word refers to the meaning of the affection given by *aku* character to his child, then the phrase *lembutkan hatimu* (soften your heart) refers to the meaning of having a good heart, melting the heart, not making the heart hard. When interpreted as a whole, the lyrics have a connotative meaning that refers to the meaning of the hope of my character that the affection he gives to the child character will make the child to be someone who has a good heart, melts, or is not hard-hearted, meaning not to be a person who does not have empathy or compassion.

**Data 9**

*Kau harus megah, kau harus indah* (You must be majestic, you must be beautiful)

*Kau harus kuat, kau harus hebat* (You must be strong, you must be great)

*Permata hatiku* (The jewel of my heart)

(Virgoun, 2023)

In the lyrics *Kau harus megah, kau harus indah* (you must be majestic, you must be beautiful) has a connotative meaning, where the words *megah* and *indah* refer to the noble things, so it means that *aku* character in these lyrics has hopes that his daughter will become a noble figure in his life. The lyrics *Kau harus kuat, kau harus hebat* (you must be strong, you must be great) is a denotative meaning because it explains directly. In the lyrics, the character *kau* or the child must become a strong and great human being in the future. Furthermore, the lyrics *Permata hatiku* (the jewel of my heart) have a connotation meaning because the meaning of the lyrics is a figure of speech sung by the singer. This phrase means that something is very precious to *aku* character. From this array, it can be seen that *kau* character or child is something very valuable to *aku* character. In the song lyrics, it can also be interpreted that children are a gift given by God that cannot be valued with anything.

The results indicated that songs are not only to be enjoyed but can also be advice from parents to their children. The results of this study complement the results of previous studies including Cevania & Merrita (2023), which states that songs can provide messages of confidence to listeners. Cahya & Sukendro (2022) also defined that songs can be used as a medium of communication for expressions of love. Pristianingrum & Damayanti (2022) and Suhartono & Aestetika (2023) mentioned that songs can provide motivational messages and a message of struggle to the listeners.

**D. Conclusion**

Indonesia is a productive country that produces great musicians who enrich Indonesian music. One musician who is productive in creating songs is Virgoun with his song entitled *Saat Kau Telah Mengerti*. The song contains messages from parents addressed to their children. The song was analyzed in terms of connotative and denotative meanings by Roland Barthers' semiotic theory. The song entitled *Saat Kau Telah Mengerti* contains numerous denotative and connotative meanings in its lyrics. In this song, there are ten denotative meanings and sixteen connotative meanings. This song describes the message and hopes of parents for their child. Parents always want the best for the children. However, what parents do for the good of their children is sometimes not liked by children. This is common because at the age of children, they cannot yet understand what is best for them. However, one day, they will realize that what people did in the past that sometimes made them angry is the best for them.

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