



# Semiotic Analysis of the Saviour in Nadin Amizah's "Bertaut"

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**Abstract.** Through Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis, this article investigates the meaning of savior in the lyrics of Nadin Amizah's song "Bertaut." The definition presented encompasses denotation, connotation, and myth. Roland Barthes' semiotic theory is used in this study to explain the denotation, connotation, and myth of the importance of "savior" in the song's lyrics. The research approach employed is an interpretative qualitative interpretive inductive mode of thinking, thus moving from the specific to the general. The data collecting technique used is document study, which entails tracing and obtaining data from numerous sources. The findings show that the denotative meaning of the song "Bertaut" lyrics is the author's life tale, and his mother acts as his saviour who always loves him, and becomes his guide. The meaning is about the harsh life of the author who has no friends, is given harsh words, and how his life is broken and loses direction. However, his mother protects him from all of these things, forcing him to survive and rely on his mother for his life. The songwriter wishes to express the essence of the belief that the saviour is the one we require to face life's challenges.

**Keywords:** Meaning · denotation · connotation · myth · semiotics

## 1 Introduction

Semiotics studies sign systems, sign processes, and signs. Semiotics as "any message exchange and the underlying signs; Sebeok [1] and Fiske [2] add meaning generation' to this term. Messages are constructed of signs and communicated through coded sign systems; meaning is extracted only if the receiver understands the code [3]. Semiotics researchers come from communication, linguistics, anthropology, marketing, and the natural sciences. The main concern is the communication of nonverbal signs. As a part of communication, people are sociable, communicative creatures that require semiotics throughout their entire lives. Humans need communication to form relationships with other individuals. They are socialists and engage in communication as a means of interacting with one another and as a social activity. Communication is the process of conveying messages to other individuals with the intention of those other persons

comprehending the meaning of the message that was spoken and having the same level of knowledge as the person doing the communication.

Music provides its practitioners with a medium through which they can educate, amuse, and share their experiences with others. Like all art forms, piece is created not only to portray emotions and moods but also in an infinite variety of manifestations, subject matter, and research modes [4]. The words included in the lyrics are a way for the songwriters to communicate what they want to say. The lyrics are an integral aspect of the music and serve as a vehicle for communicating the message. Some spoken words are used in the song's lyrics, just like poetry. Song lyrics written by the artist themselves are often used to illustrate a fundamental aspect of social reality, such as the fact that it is beneficial for humans to monitor their existence and the relationships they maintain in social life. The genre associated with film music and the expressed emotions in the music has a significant impact, whereas whether the music is well-known or unknown to the audience, as predicted, is unimportant [5].

Several previous studies on semiotics and songs have been carried out. Surmont observes metalinguistic and linguistic corpora. His corpora were primarily French and European texts. French song culture has become essential in German (where *chansonnier* and *chanson de geste* emerge) and Italian dictionaries (in which *chansonnier* as a synonym of *cantaautore* appears) [6]. This presentation is diachronic and speculative. It is the first major study of French song vocabulary. Juschka offered the theoretical song vocabulary on history's sacred signs [7]. It concerns the indexical sign function and its ability to 'flesh' the symbol. In Peircean and Saussurean frames, the symbol is an abstraction and concept. Yelle contends that indexical signs flesh out experiential symbols. Reed [8] and Shuwen [9] explored David Bowie's legacy which is self-determination and independence. Bowie's subversive use of pop culture symbols in his music, words, and look best illustrates his legacy. Velvet Goldmine is used to explore Bowie's glam semiotics. This article claims that Bowie's glam semiotics live on in fans' self-defining work by analyzing his songs, Velvet Goldmine, and fan responses to the film.

Previous research has discussed many songs from a semiotic perspective widely known to many people. Still, only a few songs have been studied from music or indie songs, which are not widely known. However, the strength of the language presents in the lyric, which is a symbol of something and has a deep meaning. Nadin Amizah is one of the vocalists that write songs about life. Nadin is an Indonesian singer. "Bertaut" is one of the songs with live music. On May 28, 2020, the song was released. The piece, published to coincide with Nadin's birthday, has received the most streams of any song on Nadin's first album, "Selamat Ulang Tahun." Listeners can understand and interpret the meaning of the Savior through the message delivered in this song. According to Nadin, the song is about the link between mother and child and is written in crisp and beautiful language. Despite her claim that scholars discovered another meaning in the song while listening to and studying the lyrics, it refers to the meaning of savior. As a result, the researchers are eager to dig deeper into the significance of the savior, which the artist did not address in the song "Bertaut." The meaning of savior in this song can be anything that can aid others in their lives, and not many people know what savior means in this song.

## 2 Literature Review

Barthes expands communication science's understanding of meaning, mainly meaning created in and through media [10]. Semiotics is the science or analytical approach for examining signs; in Barthes' terms, semiology seeks to investigate how humans (humanity) mean things (things). In this scenario, interpretation (insinuate) cannot be confused with communicating (to communicate) [10]. The name semiotics derives from the Greek words "semeion," which means sign, or "seme," which means interpretation of the sign. For example, the presence of smoke indicates the presence of a fire. At the time, a sign was defined as something that pointed to something else in communication [11]. Interpreting means understanding things that carry information and a hierarchical system of signs.

Mythologies, a series of essays by Roland Barthes, was first published individually from 1954 to 1956, then as a collection in 1957 [12]. Each essay examines a different component of French culture, from wine to wrestling, which Barthes regards as mythological that "myth is an unusual system in that it is built from a semiological chain that existed before it: it is a second-order semiological system" [13]. He is not simply depicting France in the manner of a tourist brochure. While Saussure recognized a structure (signifier, signified) that is inherent to semiotic signals, he is suggesting that in myths, signs move on to perform the role of the signifier in further, more complicated systems, what stories are built of and where reality is produced. Myths present themselves through communications and social actions. Barthes makes it evident that they cannot be reduced to a single notion or idea; instead, they weave together various concepts and meanings to create a distinct interpretation of reality. When Barthes comes across a wrestling bout or a bottle of wine, he treats it semiotically because he sees it as made up of semiotic signs and immersed in a context of additional signs.

Barthes is a structuralist philosopher who employs Saussurean linguistic and semiological theories [11]. His theory is the concept of two orders of signification, denotation, connotation, and myth [14]. Denotation is the initial order of importance and is the foundation of Saussure's work. This order represents the link in the sign between the signifier and the signified, as well as the sign and its referent in external reality. It is what Barthes referred to as denotation. It relates to the usual assumption that the sign's meaning is obvious. The denotative intent will be the same, but the connotation will differ [14].

Connotation is the second order. Connotation defines the interaction between the sign and the user's feelings or emotions and cultural values. It is a system comprised of signifiers, signified, and a process that connects the former with the latter [15]. The second-order meaning of Barthes' signifier is a myth. A myth is a story that employs a culture to explain or comprehend some aspect of reality or nature. Myth is a product of an already dominant social class. For example, primeval stories about life and death, people and gods, and so on [11]. Myth, according to Roland Barthes, is a way of thinking about culture and conceptualizing or understanding anything. Myths are also known as common beliefs. In this case, meaning is the relationship between the symbol and the reference or referent. The relationship between symbols and references is indirect, while the relationship between symbols and references is direct [16].

### 3 Method

This research aimed to identify the meaning of saviour in Nadin Amizah's song "Bertaut." A qualitative interpretative research method was adopted for this objective. The qualitative research method is a research method that thinks inductively, from the specific to the general [17]. In qualitative research, it concerns description and uses words or images instead of numbers [18]. The study's conclusions are presented using quotes from documents, field notes, interviews, videotapes, audiotapes, and electronic communications.

The interpretive paradigm views truth as subjective and participant-created. In this instance, the researchers serve as the participant. There is less emphasis on objectivity in interpretative paradigm research since total detachment is highly implausible [19]. However, this research does not rely on the participants' opinions because there are outside opinions. The signs and meanings contained in the lyrics of the "Bertaut" song can be analysed using a semiotic method to create a full explanation of the purposes underlying the current symbols.

The data collecting technique utilized documents to investigate, which were collected by searching multiple sources expected to have the necessary data for this investigation. The researcher did not conduct interviews with relevant parties since, in semiotics, the document in the form of song lyrics was investigated in depth based on the researcher's interpretation utilizing Roland Barthes' technique for semiotic analysis. The researchers also explored the meaning of saviour in the lyrics of the song "Bertaut" by Nadin Amizah using secondary data from other sources such as documentation, books, and the internet.

## 4 Result and Discussion

### 4.1 The Meaning of the Saviour in the Lyrics of the Song "Linked"

The lyrics to the song "Bertaut," which can be found on Nadin's first album named "Selamat Ulang Tahun," are the ones that have been chosen to serve as the object. Barthes' semiotic theory, which includes denotation, connotation, and myth meaning, is applied to examine the song's lyrics to determine what the concept of the savior means in the context of the composition. The findings of the overall meaning of the song lyrics' general purpose.

*Bun, hidup berjalan seperti bajingan [mom, life goes like a bastard]  
Seperti landak yang tak punya teman [like a hedgehog who has no friends]  
Ia menggonggong bak suara hujan [it barks like the sound of rain]  
Dan kau pangeranku, mengambil peran [And you are my prince, take the role]  
(part1)*

The denotation meaning of part 1 is explaining the writer's story about her assessment of the life she lived, whose mother then acted as her savior. This part also refers to the connotation that explains a writer's story about how hard his life was and how it didn't turn out the way he expected and pissed him off like an "asshole." The child has no friends because no one wants to be friends with him, and many harsh and harmful words appear like "rain" then, his mother comes to save him like a prince who saves a princess at that time.

*Bun, kalau saat hancur ku disayang [Mom, when I'M broken, I'M loved]  
Apalagi saat ku jadi juara [Especially when I become a champion] (part 2)*

Part 2 above refers to the denotation on the expression of a child about her who is always loved no matter the circumstances. The connotation in this part Explains how a child is always loved by her mother no matter what the situation is, whether she is broken and sad or when she is happy.

*Saat tak tahu arah kau di sana [when you don't know your direction there]  
Menjadi gagah saat ku tak bisa [Be brave when I can't] (part 3)*

In part 3, the denotation explains the mother's role as a guide in the right direction and consistently strong no matter the circumstances. The connotation in this part refers to how the author explains how a mother acts as a guide to the right path when her child is lost or does not know the right direction and is always a strong person.

*Seperti detak jantung yang bertaut [like a beating heart]  
Nyawaku nyala karena denganmu [My life is shining because of you] (part 4)*

Part 4 concerns the denotation that the author explains how the heartbeats of the writer and his mother are related and the writer lives because of his mother. Moreover, it also connotes to the meaning to explain how close the author's relationship with her mother makes her able to live and depend on her mother.

*Bun, aku masih tak mengerti banyak hal [Mom, I still Don't understand a lot of things]*

*Semuanya berenang di kepala [Everything is scattered in the head]*

*Dan kau dan semua yang kau tahu tentangnya [and you and everything you know about it]*

*Menjadi jawab saat ku bertanya [Become the answer when I ask] (part5)*

In this final part, the lyric describes the author who does not understand much and wonders about many things, and his mother answers all of her questions. Besides, it also shows the connotation meaning that at first, the author did not understand many things and always wondered about them; his mother answered all his questions and made him know.

In all parts of the lyric, the myth reflects that a saviour is a person who can help and save us from all kinds of suffering that we experience in life. The harshness of life that we sometimes experience makes us unable to stand alone. Therefore, we need help from others to help us live and save us from all our suffering.

The meaning of "saviour" can be derived from the words of the song "Bertaut" using the semiotic analysis performed in the song. The author's mother has been a true saviour for her son, rescuing him from various hardships and difficult situations throughout his life that might have otherwise prevented him from living to see this day. It teaches us that we cannot exist by ourselves and that we require a saviour who can aid us, comfort us when we are unhappy, and guide us to becoming our saviour when we are enduring something causing us to suffer. The saviour can be anybody or anything. In the lyrics of this song, the author refers to his mother as his salvation. Nevertheless, for each of us, the saviour of our lives may be God, our father, brother, friend, or idol. The saviour may also save us from ourselves.

## 5 Conclusion

The author's story about her life is the denotative meaning of the lyrics of the song "Bertaut," and then there is her mother, who acts as her savior and constantly loves her and becomes her guide. The connotative meaning of the lyrics is the song itself. The connotation refers to the hard life of the author who does not have any friends, is subjected to harsh remarks, and how his life is broken and has lost direction. Still, the author's mother saves her from all of these things, which causes her to depend on her mother for survival. The songwriter's goal is to communicate the significance of the legend, which states that the saviour is the individual who can help us face the challenges of everyday life. The term "rescuer" in the context of these song lyrics refers to a saviour who has the power to deliver us from the anguish that we endure and enable us to carry on regardless of the challenges that life throws at us.

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