

---

## Connotative Meaning Used in Maroon 5 Selected Songs “Red Pill Blues” Album

**Ihsan Risyard Fadilah Putra**

Faculty of Humanities, English Department, Udayana University, Bali, Indonesia

Email: [ihsanrisyard@gmail.com](mailto:ihsanrisyard@gmail.com)

**I Made Rajeg**

Faculty of Humanities, English Department, Udayana University, Bali, Indonesia

Email: [made\\_rajeg@unud.ac.id](mailto:made_rajeg@unud.ac.id)

**I Nyoman Aryawibawa**

Faculty of Humanities, English Department, Udayana University, Bali, Indonesia

Email: [arya\\_wibawa@unud.ac.id](mailto:arya_wibawa@unud.ac.id)

Address: Jln. Pulau Nias No. 13 Sanglah Denpasar 80114 Bali

Corresponding author: [ihsanrisyard@gmail.com](mailto:ihsanrisyard@gmail.com)

**Abstract.** Every song has an important meaning that the singer intends to communicate to the audience. To have a thorough understanding of the music you wish to express, you might delve into its connotative meaning. The aims of this study were to identify the types of connotative meaning from the lyrics in selected song albums by Maroon 5 “Red Pill Blues”. The data were analyzed uses descriptive qualitative method based on the theory proposed by Leech (1974). This study found 25 data, based on the theory used there are three categorize of connotative meaning from the data above namely; positive connotative, negative connotative and neutral connotative with positive connotation as a highest occurrence. The finding show that connotative meaning is becoming increasingly. Common and maybe as a suitable learning medium. This research will provide learning with deep understanding about the meaning of the word.

**Keywords:** meaning, connotative meaning, song lyrics.

**Abstrak.** Setiap lagu memiliki makna penting yang ingin dikomunikasikan oleh penyanyi kepada penonton. Untuk mendapatkan pemahaman yang menyeluruh tentang musik yang ingin Anda ungkapkan, Anda dapat mempelajari makna konotatifnya. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi jenis-jenis makna konotatif dari lirik lagu yang dipilih dalam album lagu "Red Pill Blues" dari Maroon 5. Data dianalisis dengan menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif berdasarkan teori yang dikemukakan oleh Leech (1974). Penelitian ini menemukan 25 data, berdasarkan teori yang digunakan terdapat tiga kategorisasi makna konotatif dari data di atas yaitu; konotatif positif, konotatif negatif, dan konotatif netral dengan konotatif positif sebagai kemunculan terbanyak. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa makna konotatif menjadi semakin umum dan mungkin sebagai media pembelajaran yang cocok. Penelitian ini akan memberikan pembelajaran dengan pemahaman yang mendalam tentang makna kata.

**Kata kunci:** meaning, connotative meaning, song lyrics.

## INTRODUCTION

In the study of linguistics, semantic can be interpreted as the science of the meaning. Yule (1996:114) defined semantics as a discipline of linguistics concerned with the meaning of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences. According to Leech (1969: 5), semantics aims to explain and define meaning in natural language. To make our starting point in everyday usage more apparent, we may argue that the purpose of semantics is to explain what underpins the

use of the word meaning and similar terms. Meaning is of the utmost importance since it is at the basis of language discussions. Meaning is the author's or speaker's intent conveyed through a word, sentence, or symbol based on the context (Tantyasari et al., 2018).

There are various types of meaning, one of which is connotative. According to Leech (1981), connotative meaning is the communicative value of an expression according to what is referred to over and above its purely conceptual content. Chaer (2013:65) defines a term as having a connotative meaning if it conveys a "sense of values," both positive and negative. If it lacks a feeling of worth, it is said to have no connotation; nevertheless, it may also be referred to as neutral. Connotative meaning differs from other meanings in that it is derived from the correlation of the sensation of language usage with the word heard or read. Connotative meaning is connected to the value of people's senses when they use language, such as whether they are joyful, sad, repulsed, or furious. Thus, positive and negative meanings depend on the phrases.

Connotative meanings are often found in poetry, short stories, novels, and songs. The song is a poetry that is pronounced using a certain tone, rhythm, time, and melody to create harmony. Griffe (1992) defines songs as vocally generated, linguistically meaningful, and melodic. A song consists of music and lyrics. According to Dallin (1994) lyrics are composed as a kind of interaction between the writer and the audience. Most of the time, they carry a message with the intention of inspiring the listeners to think about it. Such a goal and mode of contact are entrenched in these people's cultural milieu, depending on their musical preferences and the time.

One of the bands who always convey a deep messages to the listener is Maroon 5. Maroon 5 is a famous pop-rock band, made an interesting album called "Red Pill Blues" in 2017. This album is like a musical journey that tells stories through its songs. We want to look deeper into the feelings and meanings hidden in the songs of this album. It is not just about catchy tunes; Maroon 5 often puts deeper thoughts and emotions into their music. In this study, we will explore what these deeper meanings are in some of the songs from "Red Pill Blues". On this album they mixed pop, R&B, and electronic sounds, making their music different from before. Maroon 5 is a big band that many people listen to all over the world. The things they talk about in their songs, like love, relationships, and who we are, are things many people think about too. So, by studying the meanings in this album, we can learn more not only about Maroon 5's music but also about the things that matter to people everywhere.

Their songs can dig into the emotions and stories they are telling. This study cover different subjects like music, culture, and how we live in society and this is not just an academic thing it is about exploring what the songs say about love, relationships, and what is happening in the world. The aims of this study is to analyses the types of connotative meaning. This topic is highly interesting because by analyzing connotative meaning we can understand a word that includes personal feelings. Apart from that, connotative meaning is usually used to emphasize expressions, refine expressions, show a person's attitude and emotions. These connotatively meaningful words can enrich your mastery of English. In Maroon 5's songs, there are numerous implied meanings that necessitate understanding the intended message of the singer. This can be achieved through the analysis of connotative meaning.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This section divided into two parts : (1) theoretical framework and (2) review of related literature.

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### **1. Semantic Concept**

According to Griffiths (2006) semantics is one of the main branches of the linguistic study of meaning". Griffiths defines semantics as the study of the "toolkit" for meaning; it is information contained in the language's lexicon and patterns for generating increasingly complicated meanings, all the way up to sentence meanings (2006, p.15). According to Yule (2006, p.100), linguistic semantics is concerned with the customary meaning transmitted by the usage of a language's words, phrases, and sentences, rather than what an individual speaker may choose them to imply on a given occasion. Semantics is a field of linguistics that investigates the meaning of words.

#### **2. Connotative Meaning**

The connotative meaning of a word encompasses the emotions and concepts that someone may associate with that term. Connotative is the opposite of denotative. According to Leech (1974:14) connotative meaning is the communicative value an expression has by virtue of what it refers to, over and above its purely conceptual content." It can vary from age to age, from society to society, and from individual to individual. The connotative meaning of a term encompasses not just its fundamental conceptual

characteristics, but also the extra non-essential traits that we have acquired knowledge about and expect a referent to possess. It is evident that connotative meaning is not exclusive to language, but is also present in other forms of communication, such as visual art and music. The intersection of verbal and visual connotations is prominently observed in advertising, where words typically play a subordinate role to images in bestowing a product with a positive aura of associations. Connotative meaning may be categorized into three types: positive, negative, and neutral. The many categories will be elucidated in the subsequent sections:

**a) Positive**

A positive connotation refers to a connotation that is associated with anything favorable or beneficial. Consider the term generous as an illustration: the term generous conveys the idea that someone is altruistic, philanthropic, and amiable; all of which are attributes that we perceive as positive. For example, when relating someone ambitious as a "go-getter" or someone who is lively and curious as "youthful."

**b) Negative**

Negative connotation refers to the unfavorable emotional response that individuals have when encountering a certain term or phrase. For example, a symbol of a "red X" is commonly seen negatively due to its association with failure. Writers employ negative connotations to manipulate the tone and choice of words in their work.

**c) Neutral**

Neutral connotation refers to the absence of any positive or negative emotional associations with a term.

The statement, "He is ambitious" suggests a person works hard and strives to achieve. without judgment on whether ambition is a good or a bad thing.

## **Review Relate Literature**

Several studies were found that related to this article and they focus on the same topic with this study which is about connotative meaning. Frist Jayanti et al., (2019) analyses the connotative meaning in journalistic language on Tribunews online.com (Politics Issues). They used qualitative method and the theory from Leech's (1981) and Parera's (2004). Secondly, Purnamasari (2018) examined the types of connotative meaning in Justin Bieber's song lyrics.using Chaer's (2013) theory and sense a values of American people using theory by Khols (1984).She used descriptive qualitative method to analyses the data. Thirdly Putri et al., (2022) analyses the types of connotative meaning in in a song lyric. Fiersa Besari has an album

entitled *Konspirasi Alam Semesta*. Descriptive qualitative method was used to analyses the data based on the theory of meaning by Leech's (1981). The fourth study with a similar object was conducted by Rahmawati & Supri (2022) that study aims to analyses the types of connotative meaning in the "Four" album by One Direction. This study uses the theory from Leech's (1981) and analyses use the descriptive qualitative method. The last study examined by Alfiani & Hakim (2023) to analyze the connotative meaning in Sour album song lyrics by Olivia Rodrigo. This research uses descriptive method based on theory of J. N. Hook (in Widarso 1989). In general, the significant differences between the current study and the previous study are due the data source. All of the study used different data source and theory, but some of the study use the same theory from Leech (1981).

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

The data in this study were taken from the lyrics in selected song albums by Maroon 5 "Red Pill Blues" that were downloaded from the internet. The data were collected by documentation technic which is download selected song, listening carefully while reading the song lyrics. And make a note taking the lyrics that indicate connotative meaning. The lyric was analyzed by using the descriptive qualitative method based on connotative meaning theory proposed by Leech (1981, 12). The presentation of the analysis was presented in formal and informal way, as stated by Sudaryanto (2015).

## **FINDINGS AND DUSCUSSION**

This section discussed finding and discussions regarding the connotative meaning found in Maroon 5 songs album "Red Pill Blues". Several songs are being analyzed and the data were collected from the internet. The discussion that is presented in this chapter was the results of solving the problems as the purpose of the research which is, the types of connotative meaning found in the Maroon 5 album "Red Pill Blues" and their meaning and also the messages conveyed by the songwriter. The process of analysis in this chapter started by collecting the data that have connotative meaning based on Leech's (1981) theory.

### **1. Finding of Connotative Meaning**

This section presents the finding of connotative meaning uses in Maroon 5 songs album "Red Pill Blues". There are three types of connotative meaning according to Leech (1981)

**Table 1.** Types of Connotative Meaning

| Types of Connotative Meaning | Frequency |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| Positive Connotative         | 10        |
| Negative Connotative         | 9         |
| Neutral Connotative          | 6         |
| <b>Total</b>                 | <b>25</b> |

Table 1. show the occurrences of connotative meaning found in Maroon 5 songs album "Red Pill Blues". From the 25 data found, positive connotative is the most frequent with 10 data.

## 2. The Analyze of Connotative Meaning Found in Maroon 5 songs album "Red Pill Blues".

This part covers the analyses of connotative meaning found in Maroon 5 song album "Red Pill Blues". From all the data found, each category found was explained with several example. Here is the explanation:

### a) Positive Connotative

A positive connotation refers to an implied meaning that elicits favorable feelings in the reader or, in this context, the listener of music. This connotation type is utilized to provide an implicit message that is linked to benevolence, affection, esteem, and other manifestations of good influential behavior (Leech, 1981).

#### Data 1.

Song : Visions

Lyric : Never hit me quite like that though

'Cause now **I'm under your spell**

Data 1 show the uses of **positive connotative meaning**, this is because the expression **I'm under your spell** in data 1 according to Merriam-Webster dictionary means a spoken word or form of words held to have magic power. However, in this context **I'm under your spell** in data 1 means that someone is deeply attracted or infatuated with another person to the point where they feel captivated and controlled by their emotions. It's a metaphorical expression suggesting that the person's feelings for the other individual are so powerful that they feel like they are under the influence of a magical spell, unable to resist or escape the allure of the person they are drawn to.

#### Data 2

Song : What Lovers Do (feat. SZA)

Lyric : Say say say, hey hey now, baby

You gon' make me **hit you with that laydown**, baby (Oh)

According to Merriam-Webster the word **laydown** found in data 2 means to give up or to surrender. But in this context, the phrase found in data 2 “You gon' make me **hit you with that laydown**”to suggests someone is getting close to provoking a strong or aggressive reaction from the speaker. The phrase hit you with that laydown implies that the speaker is going to respond with some form of force or action to address the situation. Based on that explanation data above can be categorize as **a positive connotative meaning**.

Song : Who I Am

Lyric : Look into your eyes and I see the **ocean**

I ain't got no wings

Data 3 can be categorize as **a positive connotative meaning**. The expression **ocean** found in data 3, according to Merriam-Webster dictionary ocean means a very large or unlimited quantity or expanse. However, in this context the use of word **ocean** in data 3] means the act of gazing into the eyes of the person the speaker is addressing, which is often seen as a meaningful and intimate moment. The eyes are often considered a window to the soul, and looking into someone's eyes can be a way of connecting on a profound level.

#### **Data 4**

Song : Help Me Out

Lyric : I'm getting kind over this

I need a **metamorphosis**

The data above can be classified as having a **positive connotative meaning** type because the expression **metamorphosis** found in data 4 according to Merriam-Webster dictionary means a change of physical form, structure, or substance, especially by supernatural means, or a striking alteration in appearance, character, or circumstances. However, in this context, the usage of the term **metamorphosis** in data 4 indicates that it would be advantageous to build something new that is capable of changing in order to avoid being caught in a situation like this.

#### **b) Negative Connotative**

Negative connotative, contrary to positive connotative, suggest a wide range of bad feelings aimed toward someone or even themselves. This kind is mostly used to communicate anger, tension, despair, disappointment, and other unpleasant emotions.

The words used in different genres of music may differ since each artist has a unique way of expressing their feelings in their creation.

#### **Data 5**

Song : Girls Like You (feat. Cardi B)

Lyric : Maybe I'm barely alive

Maybe you've **taken my shit** for the last time, yeah

Data 5 can be classified as a **negative connotative meaning**. The word **taken my shit** in data 5 means for the last time is a warning that the person speaking has reached a breaking point in a relationship or situation. It suggests that they believe the other person has endured or put up with their negative behavior, mistreatment, or shortcomings for a long time, but now they are fed up and unwilling to tolerate it any further. However, in this context **taken my shit** in data 5 refers to the other person enduring or tolerating the protagonist's problematic

#### **Data 6**

Song : Plastic Rose

Lyric : Baby, all you gave me was

Baby, all you gave me was a **plastic**, plastic

Data 6 can be classified as a **negative connotative meaning**. The word **plastic** in data 6 according to the Cambridge dictionary means an artificial substance that can be shaped when soft into many different forms and has many different uses. The phrase Baby, all you gave me was a **plastic**, **plastic** in data 6 means that the speaker received something of low value or quality from their romantic partner or someone they had a relationship with. **Plastic** is often repeated as a symbol of insincerity or a lack of authenticity in what has been given to them. In this context, **plastic** is used to symbolize something artificial, fake, or superficial. The song implies that the gesture or gift that the main protagonist of the song received was something that was very cheap or for a superficial display of affection rather than a genuine expression of love. The phrase in data 6 could be used to express disappointment, hurt, or a feeling of being deceived in a relationship.

#### **Data 7**

Song : Whiskey

Lyric : **All of that tequila's a killer**

Little vodka break or somethin' proper

Data above can be categorized as a **negative connotative meaning**. The word **tequila** found in data 7 according to the Cambridge dictionary means a strong alcoholic drink



originally from Mexico, made from the agave plant. And according to the Cambridge dictionary, the word killer found in data 7 means a killer is a person who intentionally intends or plans an action to kill someone. In the phrase **All of that tequila's a killer** in data 7 the protagonist is warning or expressing concern about the potential negative consequences of drinking a large amount of tequila, such as intoxication, health risks, or other adverse effects associated with excessive alcohol consumption.

### c) **Neutral Connotation**

Neutral connotative, this type of connotation does not contain any negative or positive motive behind their implied meaning, as the name implies it is neutral. Though lacking in emotions doesn't necessarily mean that this type of connotation is forsaken, they helped the musician to spice up their song as well as add artistic values.

#### **Data 8**

Song : Bet My Heart

Lyrics : No, this ain't the way that I usually **play this**, no no

Data 8 can be categorized as a **neutral connotative meaning**. The word **play this** in data 8 according to the Cambridge dictionary means to take part in a game or other organized activity. The phrase No, this ain't the way that I usually **play this**, no no in data 8 refers to how a person usually handles or manages a particular situation or game, be it social interaction, problem-solving, decision making, or any other activity. However, in this context, the word play this means that the protagonist does not want to follow the way used by the girl. The protagonist has his way of solving problems and running his relationship.

#### **Data 9**

Song : Plastic Rose

Lyric : All I gave to you

Was my time, **my green**, my favorite jeans

The word **green** in data 9 according to the Cambridge dictionary means a color between blue and yellow or the color of the grass. The word **my green** in the phrase Was my time, **my green**, my favorite jeans in data 9 represents something valuable or important to the protagonist, whether it's financial prosperity or personal growth. However, in this context the word my green is implied as money which in the protagonist's past with his ex-girlfriend he had given all his money to his ex-girlfriend. Based on the explanation, data 9 can be categorized as a **neutral connotative meaning**.

## CONCLUSION

In the Maroon 5 song lyrics analyzed, there are three main types of connotative meanings: positive, negative, and neutral. These connotations contribute to the emotional depth and storytelling within their songs. The messages conveyed in Maroon 5's song lyrics are diverse, ranging from expressions of love and attraction to reflections on challenges in relationships. The connotative meanings in their lyrics add depth and emotional resonance, allowing listeners to connect with various aspects of the human experience.. Exploring these meanings allows academics to get insights into the complex emotional landscape of popular music, helping to a better understanding of how music communicates and connects with individuals on a deep emotional level. Understanding these meanings also reveals language's plasticity and ability to provoke a wide range of emotions in the context of songwriting.

## REFERENCES

- Alfiani, H. N., & Hakim, M. I. (2023). *A Connotative Meaning Analysis On Olivia Rodrigo 'S Song Lyrics In Sour Album A . Introduction. 11(2)*, 140–148.
- Chaer, Abdul. (2013). *Pengantar Semantik Bahasa Indonesia*. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta.
- Dallin, R. (1994). *Approaches to Communication through Music*. David Foulton Publishers. Available online at: <http://www.southdowns.nhs.uk/index.cfm?request=c2007985>.
- Griffe, Dale T. 1992. *Songs in Action*. New York: Prentice Hall
- Hornby, A S and Parnwell, E. C. (1972) *Learner's Dictionary*, Oxford University Press.
- Jayanti, D., Asridayani, & Afrilesa, R. J. (2019). *A Connotative Meaning Analysis of Journalistic Language on Tribunnews online.com(Politic Issues)*. 4(1), 1–11. <http://ojs.umb-bungo.ac.id/index.php/Krinok/index>
- Leech, Geoffrey. 1974. *Semantics*. Great Britain: Penguin books.
- Leech, Geoffrey. 1981. *Semantics the Study of Meaning*. Second ed. Great Britain Pelican Books.
- Purnamasari, I. (2018). An Analysis of Connotative Meaning on Justin Bieber's Song Lyrics. *PIONEER: Journal of Language and Literature*, 10(2), 156. <https://doi.org/10.36841/pioneer.v10i2.247>
- Putri, A. P., Azhaar, S. F., & Astriani, A. S. (2022). Analysis of Connotative Meanings in the Songs on the Konspirasi Alam Semesta Album By Fiersa Besari. *Journal of Language and Literature*, 10(2), 181–195. <https://doi.org/10.35760/jll.2022.v10i2.7461>
- Rahmawati, R., & Supri, I. Z. (2022). *Connotative Meaning in The "Four" Album by One Direction Corresponding Email Article's History Connotative Meaning in The "Four" Album by One Direction. 9(2)*, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.30605/25409190.475>

Sudaryanto. 2015.. Metode dan Aneka Teknik Analisis Bahasa. Yogyakarta: Duta Wacana University.

Tantyasari, M. I., Aini, S. N., & Affini, L. N. (2018). *Connotative Meaning Found In Selected Ben Pedary ' S Poem and Its Contribution To Poetry Teaching*. 4(4), 43–54.

Yule, George. 1996. Pragmatik. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar Offset