



SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF THE SONG 'BINGUNG' BY IKSAN SKUTER: UNRAVELLING THE LAYER OF MEANING

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze and reveal the meaning contained in the song "Bingung" by Iksan Skuter. Using a descriptive qualitative method and content analysis, the study highlights that understanding the full meaning of this song requires awareness of Indonesia's social context. The song reflects the social, cultural, and political realities that profoundly influence Indonesian society. It employs sarcasm to critique stereotypes pervasive among the public, offering a critical perspective on the flaws in Indonesia's economic and educational systems. By uncovering the stereotypes presented in the lyrics, listeners gain deeper insight into the societal challenges faced and their impact on everyday life.

Keywords: semantic analysis, word meaning, song lyrics

INTRODUCTION

In the introduction section, you provide an overview of the research topic and its significance. You introduce the problem or research question that your study aims to address and provide the necessary background information. This section sets the context for your research and outlines the motivation behind it. It should also include a clear statement of the objectives or purpose of your study. Your introduction is to about 500-750 words. [Segoe Fluent Icons, 12pt, normal, justify]

Lyrics in music serve as a powerful medium of expression, often encapsulating a wide range of emotions and delivering poignant social commentary. Particularly, lyrics that employ sarcasm present a rich site for semantic analysis, offering layers of meaning that extend beyond their literal interpretations. Sarcasm, as a linguistic device, is marked by irony used to convey criticism or mockery, frequently resulting in meanings that diverge from the surface-level language. This complexity makes song lyrics an ideal subject for semantic study, as they reflect the nuances of human experience and the dynamics of society.

The song "*Bingung*" by Iksan Skuter exemplifies this intricate interplay of meaning. Through the use of language that expresses both personal sentiment and social critique, the artist crafts a lyrical narrative that relies on more than mere literal interpretation. A closer examination of the lyrics reveals how sarcasm functions not merely as a stylistic choice but as a rhetorical tool to challenge social norms and articulate internal conflicts. The relationship between literal (denotative) and implied (connotative) meanings in the

lyrics invites listeners to engage in deeper analysis, uncovering the multifaceted messages embedded in the song.

Previous research has explored the use of sarcasm in song lyrics as a vehicle for social criticism and cultural reflection. For instance, Suryaningsih (2021) analyzed Mbojo song lyrics to demonstrate how sarcasm critiques specific cultural practices. Similarly, Putri et al. (2023) examined Iwan Fals' song "*Bongkar*", identifying sarcastic elements used to criticize governmental indifference.

In a digital context, Kusyani and Siregar (2017) studied sarcasm in TikTok song lyrics, highlighting its diverse expressions and meanings. Syaira and Hermandra (2024) analyzed satire in "*Kami Belum Tentu*" by .Feast, showing how it functions as social commentary, while Yanti Lase et al. (2021) explored the song "*Negara Lucu*" to unpack the semantic implications of sarcasm and its role in reflecting societal concerns. These studies form a solid foundation for understanding sarcasm as a critical and expressive tool in musical texts.

Building on these insights, the present study approaches the analysis of "*Bingung*" from a structural-semantic perspective. This methodological framework enables the examination of both the denotative and connotative meanings found in the lyrics. Structural-semantic analysis is concerned with the relationships among signs and symbols within a text, positioning the song as a system of interconnected meanings (Saidova, 2023). By focusing on the interplay between literal definitions and culturally or emotionally charged associations, this approach reveals deeper thematic and ideological currents in the song (Omar, 2012).

The integration of sarcasm further complicates the semantic landscape, as it relies heavily on contrast between literal and intended meanings. Without sufficient context or tonal cues, sarcasm can be misunderstood, especially by non-native speakers (Lunando & Purwarianti, 2013). In "*Bingung*," identifying sarcastic expressions and their context contributes significantly to understanding the artist's critique and commentary. This analysis enriches interpretation by emphasizing how linguistic subtleties influence audience perception.

This article examines the song "Bingung" by Iksan Skuter, exploring how the artist uses language to convey complex sentiments and societal observations. Focusing on the semantic analysis and layers of meaning that contribute to its overall impact. By examining the use of sarcasm, we aim to unravel the complexities of the song's message. By situating "Bingung" within this framework of semantic analysis, the author aims to unravel the complexities of the song's message, exploring how this song delivered multiple meanings such as literal and connotative.

METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach to conduct a semantic analysis of the song "Bingung" by Iksan Skuter. Descriptive qualitative research is suitable for exploring the meanings and experiences conveyed through the lyrics, allowing for a rich and nuanced understanding of the text (Kim, Sefcik, & Bradway, 2017). In this study, the researcher acts as the primary instrument, ensuring that interpretations of the lyrics are grounded in a deep engagement with the text and its contextual nuances. The analysis will focus on identifying key themes and patterns within the song's lyrics, drawing on the author's interpretations and the context in which

the song was created. To categorize and interpret the data, content analysis will be utilized as a methodological framework. Content analysis, guided by the researcher's active role, enables the reduction of textual data into defined categories, facilitating a structured and systematic examination of the song's semantic elements (Harwood & Garry, 2003). This dual-method approach, combining the researcher's insights and content analysis, will provide a comprehensive understanding of the song's depth of meaning and its emotional impact on listeners.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The title used in this song 'Bingung' means feeling of not knowing what to do. While the connotative meaning Describes the uncertainty one feels in dealing with life, both personally and socially in Indonesia. The word 'bingung' also assert the reality of living on a country with low-indecisive law where the elite determine the fate of the lives of people in the lower class.

Table 1. The First Verse of the Song

Lyrics	English translation
<i>Kiri dikira komunis</i>	Lean left, you're called a communist
<i>Kanan dicap kapitalis</i>	Lean right, you're labeled a capitalist
<i>Keras dikatai fasis</i>	Speak firmly, you're branded a fascist
<i>Tengah dinilai tak ideologis</i>	Stay neutral, you're judged as lacking ideology

In this verse, The singer critiques the stereotypes placed on individuals based on their political views. In the first and second lines, it is mentioned that those who support social equality, collective interests, and progressive policies are often labelled as communists, while those who advocate for individual freedoms, uphold traditional values, and support private ownership are often labelled as capitalists. In the third and fourth lines, it is noted that individuals with more rigid views are frequently considered fascists, while those who choose a centrist or neutral stance are seen as lacking principles or ideology. The connotative meaning the singer wants to convey is a critique of how easily society labels people with specific ideologies simply because their views differ from the majority. Even for those who choose to remain neutral are not spared from societal stereotypes, being accused of lacking an ideology.

Table 2. The Second Verse of The Song

Lyrics	English translation
<i>Muka klimis katanya necis</i>	A clean-shaven face, they call stylish
<i>jenggotan dikatai teroris</i>	Grow a beard, they say you're a terrorist
<i>Bersurban dibilang kearab-araban</i>	Wear a turban, you're accused of being too Arab
<i>bercelana lepis dibully kebarat-baratan</i>	Wear jeans, you're mocked as too Westernized

In this verse, The singer once again critiques the stereotypes related to people's appearances that are ingrained in Indonesian society. In the first line, it is mentioned that individuals who dress neatly are often seen as overly concerned with their appearance. The second line addresses the stereotype that people who grow beards are labelled as terrorists. The third and fourth lines highlight perceptions about how people from outside Indonesia dress: wearing jeans is seen as imitating Western culture, while wearing a *surban* is seen as overly adopting Arab culture. The connotative meaning the singer wants to convey is a critique of the physical appearance stereotypes that lead to prejudice and the irony that people are criticized regardless of what they wear

Table 3. The Third Verse of The Song

Lyrics	English translation
<i>Diam dianggap pasif</i>	Stay silent, you're seen as passive
<i>lantang katanya subversive</i>	Speak out loud, they call you subversive
<i>Bertani dianggap kuno</i>	Be a farmer, they say you're outdated
<i>jadi pegawai distempel mental londo</i>	Work an office job, you're branded a colonial-minded puppet

In this verse, The singer critiques society's views on the actions and occupations of others. In the first and second lines, it is mentioned that those who choose to remain silent are seen as passive or ignorance, while those who speak out loudly are regarded as subversive or attempting to break the existing system. In the third and fourth lines, farming is belittled as outdated or traditional, while being an employee is seen as adopting a Western mindset or having a colonial mentality. The connotative meaning of these lines highlights how every action is judged negatively by society, and how stereotypes are applied to any occupation that someone pursues.

Table 4. The Fourth Verse of The Song

Lyrics	English translation
<i>Memilih jadi kere salah</i>	Choose to stay poor, they say you're wrong
<i>ingin kaya sangatlah susah</i>	Try to get rich, the path is far too long
<i>belum berhasil dihina</i>	If you struggle, you're mocked and dismissed
<i>sukses jadi omongan tetangga</i>	If you succeed, the neighbors can't resist gossip

In this verse, The singer critiques society's views on social status and individual struggle. In the first and second lines, it is mentioned that being poor or in the lower class is considered a failure, and when one aspires to become rich or join the upper class, the chain of poverty that must be overcome is immense. In the third and fourth lines, it highlights how individuals who have not yet shown signs of success are often ridiculed, and once they succeed, they become the subject of gossip among neighbours.

The connotative meaning of these lines summarizes the difficulty of changing one's social status once trapped in it, and how struggles that have not yet yielded results are

met with ridicule. On the other hand, success only brings about envy from those around them.

Table 5. The Fifth Verse of The Song

Lyrics	English translation
<i>Menjadi bintang ketinggian</i>	To be a star — too far above
<i>Menjadi tanah kerendahan</i>	To be the earth — not high enough
<i>Jadi matahari tak sanggup</i>	To be the sun — beyond my might
<i>Menjadi bulan terlalu redup</i>	To be the moon — too dim to shine bright

In this verse, The singer expresses a desire to reach for something higher. In the first and second lines, it is mentioned that becoming a star requires reaching great heights, while being the earth is considered something low. In the third and fourth lines, it is stated that humans cannot become the sun, and becoming the moon is seen as something dim or unremarkable.

The connotative meaning of these lines represents the ambition to become powerful or famous, symbolized by shining like a star, while reality often that ambition may shatters as many people are trapped in poverty and helplessness, symbolized by the earth. On the other hand, the sun is portrayed as something that is the center of attention, yet unattainable, while the moon is interpreted as the result of hard work that feels dim or insignificant.

Table 6. The Sixth Verse of The Song

Lyrics	English translation
<i>Gedung gedung ditinggikan</i>	Buildings rise higher and higher
<i>Akal sehat dihancurkan</i>	While common sense is torn asunder
<i>Sekolah dimahalkan</i>	School becomes a costly affair
<i>Ilmu dibuang ke selokan</i>	And knowledge is tossed into the gutter

In this verse, The singer critiques the education and economic systems in Indonesia. In the first and second lines, it is mentioned that buildings are constructed taller while common sense is neglected. In the third and fourth lines, it is noted that schools are becoming increasingly expensive, and knowledge is undervalued.

The connotative meaning of this verse satirizes how grand and towering buildings and facilities are prioritized while concern for the well-being of the people seems forgotten or even destroyed. On the other hand, adequate schools with complete facilities are made unaffordable for the lower class, excluding them from access to quality education. The deteriorating quality of education, such as due to a lack of competent teachers, gives the impression that the knowledge being taught is discarded as worthless

Table 7. The Seventh Verse of The Song

Lyrics	English translation
<i>Kurusetra sudah digelar, dalangnya akan berkoar</i>	The battlefield of Kurusetra has been set, the puppeteer will soon proclaim
<i>Lakon sudah disiapkan, korban-korban pasti dibungkam</i>	The script is ready to play out, and the victims are sure to be silenced

In the first line, it is stated that *Kurukshetra* or the battlefield has been set, and the puppet master or leader will loudly proclaim their agenda. In the second line, it is mentioned that the storyline has already been determined, and the victims will be silenced or rendered voiceless.

The connotative meaning of this verse criticizes how societal conditions are reduced to a mere battlefield for leaders and elites, where they hold the power to decide the fate of the people. It also highlights how the lower classes are unable to fight back within the system designed by those in power, leaving them voiceless and oppressed.

Table 8. The Eighth Verse of The Song

Lyrics	English translation
<i>Maling sandal dibakar</i>	A sandal thief is burned alive
<i>koruptor berkelakar</i>	While the corrupt laugh and thrive

In the final verse, the singer delivers a sharp critique of Indonesia's law system. It is stated that petty thieves, such as those who steal sandals, are burned alive, while corrupt officials who steal billions merely laugh and joke around.

The connotative meaning of this verse strongly criticizes the disparity in how justice is served. It highlights how petty thieves often face brutal, immediate punishment from the public, sometimes resulting in death, while corrupt individuals who commit large-scale theft appear to escape severe consequences and continue to enjoy their lives without guilt. This stark contrast underlie the big flaws and injustices in the system

Table 9. The Chorus of The Song

Lyrics	English translation
<i>Makin hari makin susah saja, menjadi manusia yang manusia</i>	With each passing day, it gets harder still — to be a truly human
<i>Sepertinya menjadi manusia adalah masalah buat manusia</i>	It seems that being human has become a problem for humanity itself

In this verse, which serves as the chorus of the song, the singer expresses how difficult it is to be seen as a "good" person in the eyes of others, as if merely existing as a human is a problem for others. The connotative meaning of this verse highlights the futility of living according to others' judgments, as it leads to no resolution or satisfaction. It also reflects on how societal views can create immense pressure, ultimately eroding one's sense of humanity.

CONCLUSION

Songs are not only a medium for expressing personal emotions but also a platform for conveying aspirations and critiques. In the song "Bingung" by Iksan Skuter, we find a critique of Indonesian society and government, delivered through rhythmic melodies. The connotative meanings interpreted by the author highlight phenomena such as stereotypes and stigmas prevalent within Indonesian society. Criticism of the government's neglect of its people is also emphasized, shedding light on worsening conditions in education and the economy. The word "Bingung," used as the song's title, symbolizes the confusion of an individual trying to navigate life amidst societal stereotypes imposed on them. This confusion reflects a deeper identity crisis experienced by many in the face of social expectations. Ultimately, the song urges listeners to reflect critically on the state of society and the roles they play within it.

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