

Diction Based on Meaning in Indonesian Pop Religious Songs by Ungu Band

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Abstract. This study aims to determine the use of diction or word choice in religious-themed songs from the popular Indonesian band, Ungu Band. The form of this research is descriptive qualitative research using the method of listening and recording. The theory used as a reference for this research is Geoffrey Leech's diction (7 Types of Meaning). The objects taken are 5 religious songs belonging to the Ungu Band which are included in the mini album entitled "Aku dan Tuhanku". The results of this study show that the song lyrics contained in the album "Aku dan Tuhanku" use diction that contains conceptual or denotative meaning, connotative meaning, associative meaning, reflection meaning and collocative meaning, stylistic and affective meaning, and thematic meaning. The diction that contains conceptual or denotative meaning aims to explain the story contained in the song lyrics. The diction that contains connotative meaning aims to provide beauty or aesthetics through the choice of words in song lyrics. The diction that contains reflection meaning and collocative meaning as well as diction that contains associative meaning is used to describe the situation and conditions that occur in the story contained in the song more intensely. The diction that contains stylistic and affective meanings aims to show the background of the song lyricist. The use of diction containing thematic meaning is a form of clarifying the message or mandate that the author will convey through song lyrics. Some diction or words that often appear in the song lyrics in the album "Aku dan Tuhanku" are "Tuhanku", "kita", "hidup", "taubat", "nafas", "doa", and "dosaku".

Keywords: diction, song, meaning, religion

1 Introduction

Song is a form of artistic expression that not only serves as entertainment, but also as a means of conveying messages, values, and emotions. The choice of words or diction in song lyrics plays an important role in shaping the meaning and nuance of the message being conveyed. Geoffrey Leech (1981) states that meaning in language can be analyzed through seven types of meaning, namely "conceptual meaning, connotative meaning, social meaning, affective meaning, reflected meaning, collocative meaning, and thematic meaning." This approach provides a comprehensive analytical framework for understanding the meaning behind the choice of words in song lyrics. Sugono (2009) also adds that diction is "the selection of appropriate words so that the message to be conveyed can be effectively received and evoke the desired emotional response." This suggests that analyzing diction in religious song lyrics is highly relevant for uncovering the depth of meaning and communicative function in music. Tarigan (1986)

emphasizes that semantic analysis is crucial for uncovering the implied message in a text, including song lyrics because meaning is not limited to the literal meaning of words but also how those words are chosen and arranged within a specific context. Thus, the selection of diction in religious songs serves a strategic function in conveying spiritual and emotional values to the audience. This study will focus on the use of diction based on meaning in religious-themed songs by the band Ungu, which are included in their mini-album titled *Aku dan Tuhanku*. This study is relevant to a previous study titled "The Da'wah Message in the Lyrics of the Song 'Syukur (Alhamdulillah)' by Band Ungu: A Discourse Analysis by Teun A. Van Dijk" by Muhammad Alfa Rizky Heriansyah (2023). That study employed discourse analysis to uncover the da'wah message in the song "Syukur (*Alhamdulillah*)" by Ungu Band. The results showed that the lyrics of this song contain messages related to ethics, sharia, and creed. By employing a discourse analysis approach, the study revealed how the structure and word choices in the song lyrics can form complex meanings and touch on the spiritual aspects of the listeners. Unlike that study, this research will focus on the use of diction based on meaning in religious-themed songs from the mini-album *Aku dan Tuhanku* by the Ungu Band.

2 Methods

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach to analyze the meanings embedded in the selection of diction within the lyrics of the mini album *Aku dan Tuhanku* by the band Ungu. The data source for this study consists of five song lyrics from the mini album *Aku dan Tuhanku*; *Dengan NafasMu*, *Hanya Sementara*, *Syukur (Alhamdulillah)*, *CahayaMu*, and *Doa yang Terlupakan*. Data collection was carried out using the listening and note-taking method, where the lyrics of each song were carefully listened to and key diction containing specific meanings based on semantic theory was noted. The analysis steps began by identifying the key diction appearing in each song. These diction selections were then categorized into meaning types according to Geoffrey Leech's (1997) theory of meaning. The analysis results were presented in a descriptive narrative that reveals how these meanings contribute to enhancing the atmosphere, spiritual values, and moral messages of the songs. By using this approach, it is expected that the study will uncover the depth of meaning in the language used by the band Ungu to express spiritual experiences and religiosity aesthetically through their songs.

3 Result and Discussion

3.1 Use of Diction that Contains Conceptual Meaning

Conceptual meaning refers to the basic or literal meaning of a word, which is a general meaning that does not depend on emotional context, figurative language, or additional

connotations. Conceptual meaning is closely related to denotative meaning, which can be found in dictionaries. The diction found is an abstraction of religious-themed songs. The selection of words or diction containing conceptual meaning is found in the five songs included in the mini-album *Aku dan Tuhanku*. Some of these words include “taubat”, “memanggilkku”, “nafas”, and “nyawa” in the song *Dengan NafasMu*. The use of the diction “taubat” in the lyrics “ijinkan ku ucap kata taubat” means regret for sinful deeds and the intention not to repeat them, as well as returning to the right path according to teachings. This diction shows that the songwriter has regretted all his sinful deeds and wants to return to God. The use of the term “hidup” in the lyrics “mungkinkah kita hidup untuk selamanya” refers to the condition of the body still being alive or in a biologically active state. This diction shows the songwriter's anxiety about life, which may not be eternal. The diction “terlahir”, “langkah”, “berjanji”, “kembali” in the song *CahayaMu*. The use of the diction “terlahir” in the lyrics “atas izinmu ku terlahir” means to be born into the world. This diction shows the songwriter's awareness that he was born into the world with God's permission. The diction “khilaf”, “nafas”, “kebaikan”, “kekurangan” in the song *Syukur (Alhamdulillah)*. The diction “khilaf” in the lyrics “selalu kutinggalkan Engkau dengan khilafku” means mistakes due to forgetfulness or negligence. This diction shows that the songwriter sometimes forgets his obligations to God due to intentional or unintentional mistakes. The diction “dosa”, “jalan”, “ampuni”, “hidup” and “hidup” in the song *Doa yang Terlupakan*. Diction “dosa” in the lyrics “Ya Tuhanku ampuni segala dosaku” refers to violations of religious and divine rules. This term indicates that the songwriter seeks forgiveness for all the mistakes they have made toward God.

3.2 Use of Diction that Contains Connotative Meaning

Connotative meaning is the additional or emotional meaning of a word that arises from personal, cultural, or experiential associations. Unlike conceptual meaning, connotative meaning is more subjective and can vary depending on the context, so it can be either positive or negative. Examples of diction with connotative meanings are including “memanggilkku”, “menutup waktuku”, “nafas” in the song *Dengan NafasMu*. The use of the term “nafas” in the lyric “demi nafas yang telah Kau hembuskan” does not merely mean the air we inhale (conceptual meaning), but carries a connotative meaning of the gift of life or the blessing of life from God. The diction “selamanya”, “mati membawa harta”, “menghadap kepadaNya” in the lyrics of the song *Hidup Hanya Sementara*. The phrase “menghadap kepadaNya” in the lyric “siapkah kita menghadap kepadaNya” can be interpreted literally as meeting God, yet connotatively, it signifies judgment and accountability for every deed committed by humans throughout their lives. The diction “cahaya” and “jiwaku tiada” in the song *CahayaMu* also carries connotative meanings. The word “cahaya” in the lyric “Kau bawa cahaya di dalam hidupku” does not refer to physical light, but symbolizes guidance, hope, or the divine presence that illuminates a

person's inner life. Similarly, the diction "kemurahanMu" and "kusakiti Engkau" in the song *Syukur (Alhamdulillah)* implies a deeper meaning; "kemurahanMu" refers not to worldly generosity (conceptual meaning), but to God's infinite mercy and compassion. The use of the word "memilikiMu" in the lyric "akhirnya ku hanya memilikiMu" from the song *Doa yang Terlupakan* does not denote physical ownership, but expresses a spiritual closeness and total dependence on God.

3.3 Use of Diction that Contains Stylistic and Affective Meaning

The use of diction that contains stylistic and affective meanings can make a song more beautiful compared to ordinary word choices. This effect occurs because both meanings serve to evoke emotional responses in the listener. Examples of such diction include "ku berjanji", "tempatku mengadu", "izinkan ku ucap kata taubat", and "menutup waktuku" in the song *Dengan NafasMu*, which demonstrate the use of emotionally charged phrases that convey humility, repentance, and hope. The diction "bergegaslah", "bertaubatlah hey manusia", "mati membawa harta", and "waktu kita tinggal sebentar" in the song *Hidup Hanya Sementara* reflects a persuasive religious style that resonates with human emotions, particularly fear of death and the afterlife. Word choices in lyrics such as "kau bawa cahaya dalam hidupku", "hatiku bertanya", "kau beri cinta terindah", and "saat hatiku terluka" from the song *CahayaMu* exemplify metaphorical and emotional language that effectively communicates love and hope toward God. Similarly, the diction "kusakiti Engkau", "indahnyanya hidup", "atas rahmat dalam hidupku", "terima kasihku", and "khilafku" in the song *Syukur (Alhamdulillah)* conveys emotional expressions of guilt, regret, gratitude, and human fallibility. The diction and word choices in the lyrics "tunjukan ku jalan kembali", "memilikiMu", "cinta sejatiku", and "ku temukan indahnyanya cintaMu" in the song *Doa yang Terlupakan* reflect themes of remorse, hope, love, and a servant's longing for divine presence.

3.4 Use of Reflective and Colloquial Diction

The use of diction containing reflective and collocative meanings in the mini-album *Aku dan Tuhanku* appears strongly in portraying the inner relationship between human beings and God. For instance, diction choices such as "taubat", "ampuni", "rahmati", "jalan kembali", and "langkahku" in the song *Doa yang Terlupakan* are semantically interconnected within a religious domain, forming a semantic field that reflects a process of awareness, confession of sin, and the plea for divine guidance. Similarly, the diction "ajal", "mati", "taubat", and "amal ibadah" in the song *Hanya Sementara* reinforces the awareness of life's impermanence and the importance of spiritual preparation before the end of one's earthly existence. The collocation of words such as "nafas", "hembuskan", "kehidupan", and "doa" in the song *Dengan NafasMu* also illustrates a profound semantic relationship, life is depicted as a divine breath that calls

for gratitude and obedience. In addition, the semantic association among words like "kuasaMu", "izinMu", "berdiri", and "langkahku" in the song *CahayaMu* presents a field of meaning centered on complete human submission to the will of God. These collocative connections not only clarify the spiritual context of each song, but also strengthen the thematic unity of the lyrics. Reflective meaning also emerges when these word choices imply personal introspection, recognition of one's shortcomings, and the need for inner transformation.

3.5 Use of Diction that Contains Associative Meaning

The associative meaning present in the lyrics of this mini album demonstrates how certain words evoke additional meanings beyond their literal references. Diction such as "hembuskan nafas" in the song *Dengan NafasMu* evokes associations with life as a gentle and sacred gift from God, rather than merely a biological process. Another example, in the song *Hanya Sementara*, phrases like "perjalanan abadi", "ajal menjemput", and "takkan ada lagi kesempatan" generate associations with death as a transcendental phase that is non-negotiable. Meanwhile, phrases such as "rahmat-Mu", "indahnyanya cinta-Mu", and "cinta sejati" in the song *Doa yang Terlupakan* associate love with something divine, surpassing interpersonal relationships. Furthermore, the song *CahayaMu* employs words like "cahaya", "terang", "harapan", and "langkahku" to instill associations between God and spiritual enlightenment amidst life's darkness. Such associations reinforce the emotional effect of the lyrics while also illustrating how religious language in songs can shape a symbolic and profound spiritual experience, rather than merely conveying information.

3.6 Use of Diction that Contains Thematic Meaning

The use of diction that carries thematic meaning in the mini album *Aku dan Tuhanku* serves to emphasize the core spiritual and religious messages conveyed by the lyricist. The overarching themes include repentance, existential awareness, and submission to divine will. Songs such as *Dengan NafasMu* and *Doa yang Terlupakan* employ words like "taubat", "ampuni", "rahmati", "kembali pada-Mu", and "berjanji menjalankan perintah-Mu" to reinforce the themes of repentance and spiritual commitment. Meanwhile, *Hanya Sementara* explicitly presents themes of mortality and the impermanence of life through diction such as "ajal menjemput", "mati membawa harta", and "hidup di dunia hanyalah sementara", inviting listeners to reflect on the nature of worldly existence. *CahayaMu* expressing the theme of human dependence on divine guidance, as seen in the use of "cahaya", "izin-Mu", "kuasa-Mu", "berdiri", and "iringilah langkahku", which portray total surrender to God's will. On the other hand, *Syukur (Alhamdulillah)* centers on the theme of gratitude and the awareness of human weakness in facing divine mercy, marked by diction such as "kusakiti Engkau",

"rahmat-Mu", and "Alhamdulillah ku syukuri semua". Collectively, the lyrics in this album illustrate how thematic diction is used to abstract profound moral and religious messages, positioning music as a gentle and reflective medium of spiritual preaching.

4 Conclusion

The mini album *Aku dan Tuhanku* by the band Ungu consistently employs a rich selection of diction to convey spiritual and religious messages. These messages are articulated through word choices that carry various semantic layers, including conceptual meaning, connotative meaning, stylistic and affective meaning, as well as reflective, collocative, associative, and thematic meaning. Conceptual meaning emphasizes the basic understanding of words to describe the narrative within the songs, while connotative meaning adds aesthetic value through figurative or symbolic language. Reflective and collocative diction helps build a semantic field that illustrates the close relationship between humans and God, along with a process of self-reflection and spiritual awareness. Diction with stylistic and affective meaning enhances the emotional resonance and beauty of the lyrics, offering a more profound listener experience. Meanwhile, associative and thematic meanings reinforce the delivery of moral values, repentance, gratitude, and dependence on divine will. Common words that frequently appear in the lyrics of mini album *Aku dan Tuhanku* include "Tuhanku", "kita", "hidup", "taubat", "nafas", "doa", and "dosaku".

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