
A SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF THE SONG LYRICS IN LIZZO'S ALBUM

CUZ' I LOVE YOU (SUPER DELUXE) (2019)

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Abstrak

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi makna secara denotasi dan konotasi dari cara Lizzo membuat lirik yang menarik untuk albumnya yang berjudul "Cuz' I Love You (Super Deluxe)". Selain itu, berdasarkan lirik dari setiap lagu dalam album tersebut, penelitian ini akan menyelidiki tema yang terkandung dalam album tersebut. Data yang dianalisis dikumpulkan langsung dari subjek utama penelitian, sehingga metode kualitatif digunakan. Hasil studi menunjukkan bahwa ada 35 denotasi, 35 konotasi, dan 0 mitos. Dilanjutkan dengan penemuan 35 data yang mengandung jenis hubungan percintaan wanita kulit hitam. Ini termasuk 6 data yang berkaitan dengan cinta pria kulit hitam, wanita kulit hitam dan masalah tradisi, 14 data yang berkaitan dengan kesendirian wanita kulit hitam, 10 data yang berkaitan dengan wanita kulit hitam dan otonomi erotis, dan 5 data yang berkaitan dengan cinta dan keberdayaan. Studi ini menemukan bahwa para pendengar lebih mudah memahami isi lagu karena tidak semua lirik yang diberikan Lizzo mengandung denotasi dan konotasi. Setelah penyelidikan lebih lanjut, ditemukan bahwa lirik album ini sering digunakan untuk mengangkat tema hubungan cinta bagi orang African-American.

Kata Kunci: *Album Lizzo, Lirik Lagu, Semiotika*

Abstract

Discovering the denotation and connotation meanings that Lizzo produced to make an intriguing lyric for her album "Cuz' I Love You (Super Deluxe)" is the goal of this study. This study employs a qualitative approach by describing the data that was examined; all of the data that was examined came directly from the study's primary focus. This study's findings revealed 0 myths, 35 denotations, and 35 connotations. Subsequently, 35 data points comprising different kinds of black women's love relationship were found. Details include 6 data points about the black man, black women's love and trouble tradition, 14 data points about the types of black women alone, 10 data points about the types

of black women and erotic autonomy, and 5 data points about the types of love and empowerment. According to this study, not all of Lizzo's lyrics included denotations and connotations that would have made it simpler for listeners to comprehend the song's meaning. A more thorough examination also revealed that the lyrics on this album frequently address the topic of romantic relationships for African Americans.

Keywords: Lizzo's Album, Semiotic, Song lyrics

INTRODUCTION

Language has always been an element of human society as a means of conveying messages, expressing emotions, opinions, and other things. The main goal of any language system is to bridge the gap between meaning and expression by offering linguistic expression for ideas and feelings. It is seen as a means of communication between people, a system of expression, and a channel of ideas. One socially significant and emotional function of language is the way it is used to express someone's thoughts or feelings (Pinker, 1994, p. 19).

Semiotics can certainly analyze music and is a helpful tool for understanding how meaning is constructed and communicated through musical elements, as music, like language, which is a system of signs and symbols that can be interpreted within a cultural or social context (Barthes, 1977, p. 149-150). Due to their extensive use of intriguing symbols, African American songs, also referred to as black music, are among the most significant topics to explore additionally, Black women's music is full of songs about sexualized love.

The Greek term "Semeion," which means sign, is where the name semiotics comes from. Semiotics is one paradigm of inquiry that takes signs into account. The symbol represents a representative object. It is common to use the terms semiology and semiotics interchangeably. The first phrase alludes to a field, while the second term is related to science (Saussure, 1959, p. 16). According to Barthes, semiotics is basically the study of human understanding (Barthes, 1972, p. 113). Because the meaning of signals is not necessarily fixed and instead depends on individual interpretation, cultural background, feelings, and personal experiences, semiotics can be subjective (Chandler, 2017, p. 148). As a result, different people may have different interpretations of the same sign. Roland Barthes created semiotics using three meaning concepts which are:

Denotation Meaning

The distinct meaning that a sign carries is denotation, which has a simple meaning. In essence, it is a sign's description. This denotation usually refers to the use of words whose meaning matches what is said (Barthes, 1964, p. 89).

e.g., “Fire”

When the word "fire" is spoken, for instance, it refers to a hot substance that has bluish-red flame and has the ability to burn objects.

Connotation Meaning

All of the emotions, feelings, and visuals that arise when our senses engage with signals are combined with the meaning of denotation to form connotation. There will be an engagement where the marker fulfills the reader's feelings or emotions in accordance with cultural standards (Barthes, 1964, p. 90).

e.g., “Fire”

when someone says the word "fire", what is meant by the utterance of the word "fire" is not only about a material that can burn things, but sometimes it refers to the concept of an awesome person or high-spirited condition.

Myth

Myth is an additional layer of meaning that is attached to a sign, making it seem "natural" or "common sense," but it is actually the product of ideology and society. Therefore, myth in semiotics does not refer to folklore or fairy tales, but rather to the cultural messages that are hidden in signs (Barther, 1972, p. 109).

e.g., “Fire”

In Indonesia, the term "fire" refers to more than just a substance that has the ability to burn. According to Indonesian mythology, the word "fire" may actually refer to "banaspati," a fire creature thought to haunt forests. It emits a red light that has the potential to be either good or negative.

Semiotic can be used for many kind of signs including the african-american women’s love song. To discover the message of sign in african-american women’s love song black women love relationship is used to this research. African-American women's experiences with rape, prostitution, and pornography not only show how social institutions commodify and exploit erotic power, but they also show how black women hold onto this source of personal empowerment and use it to build fully human romantic relationships (Collins, 2000,

p. 150). These kinds of relationships fall into a range of categories, such as asexual but loving partnerships, sexualized partnerships in which strong feelings are expressed through sexual activity, and partnerships that resemble the "just sex" commodity exchanges of the capitalist market. This concept examines love relationships between black women that arouse intense feelings, whether or not they lead to sexual expression (Collins, 2000, p. 150-151). According to Patricia Hill Collins' paradigm, black women's love relationships can be divided into four categories:

Black Men, Black Women Love, and Trouble Tradition.

Black men and women are in love, but their relationships are often complicated. These problems are not caused by the people themselves, but rather by the racist and sexist culture in which they live (Collins, 2000, p.151-160).

Black Women Alone.

She asserts that when black women are by themselves, they can find their voice, reflect, and grow independent. Collins makes a distinction between being alone and feeling lonely. To develop and become stronger, one may decide to stay by themselves. Loneliness stems from being isolated from support, love, and community (Collins, 2000, p.160-166).

Black Women and Erotic Autonomy.

Known as "erotic autonomy," Black women have the freedom to define their own sexuality, desires, and bodies on their own terms, free from white supremacy or patriarchy. It's about being entire and fully human, not just about having sex, and it's about empowerment, self-awareness, and freedom (Collins, 2000, p.166-170).

Love and Empowerment.

Love as power implies that rather than being feeble or inert, love may be transformative and strong. When love is founded on respect, trust, and compassion, it promotes people's development, healing, and resistance to injustice. There is a reason why many black women disregard themselves: they were brought up to take care of others (Collin, 2000, p. 171-172).

RESEARCH METHOD

By identifying the analysis, this study used a qualitative approach to examine the data. Qualitative research is defined broadly as research that produces descriptive data from people's own written or spoken words and observable behavior (Taylor, Bogdan, & DeVault, 2015, p.7). A qualitative study is one that examines human experiences, behaviors, meanings, and social events using non-numerical data. Rather than concentrating on "how many" or "how much," it looks at a subject's "how" and "why" (Creswell, 2018, p. 6-9).

Data collection is the methodical process of gathering information from various sources to produce a thorough and accurate picture of a topic of interest. It is a crucial stage in research, analysis, and decision-making (Creswell, 2018, p. 301). Purposive sampling, sometimes referred to as judgmental sampling, is a technique where the data are explicitly selected with particular considerations. The author used this method when gathering the data (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016, p. 2).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Throughout the album which consist of sixteen songs, there are 35 data which contain denotation, connotation and black women's love relationship. Specifically, 35 denotation, 35 connotation, 6 black men, black women's love and trouble tradition, 14 black women alone, 10 black women and erotic autonomy, 5 love and empowerment. Unfortunately, there is no myth occurred in this album.

Datum 12

Song : *"Jerome"*

Lyrics :

*"Jerome, Jerome
Take your ass home
And come back when you're grown"*

The denotation of the word "Ass" is refers to the area of the body on which you sit. Comprised of two massive muscles known as the gluteus maximus (the gluteus medius & minimus), it is located in the rear of the body beneath the lower back. The connotation of the word "Ass" was used to describe a quality of a people, but according to the lyrics, it refers to a man named Jerome who is particularly obnoxious and immature in his relationship with

Lizzo. Because of the issues in their relationship, the word "ass" is associated with black men, black women, and trouble traditions. Lizzo wants to kick Jerome because of his complexity, but she will accept him again if he grows up enough to be her partner.

Datum 21

Song : “*Exactly How I Feel (ft. Gucci Mane)*”

Lyrics :

“Love me or hate me

Ooh, I ain't changing

*And I don't give a **fuck**, no”*

Once used to refer to sexual contact, the word "fuck" is now regarded as offensive or illegal. The word "fuck" has a negative connotation, yet it can also refer to the feeling of caring for someone. She expresses her complete disregard for other people's opinions by using the extremely direct and forceful word "fuck.". Based on the lyric, the word “Fuck” is included to black women alone due to her confidence about herself and does not need other validation to make herself is loveable to other people.

Datum 1

Song : “*Cuz' I Love You*”

Lyrics :

*“Got me standing in the **rain***

Gotta get my hair pressed again

I would do it for you all, my friend

Ready, baby? Will you be my man?”

The word "rain" in the song "...got me standing in the rain..." denotes the natural occurrence of water falling to the ground after evaporating due to the sun's heat and forming clouds. When a woman or a man reaches the climax during sexual activity, the word "rain" is used to describe that state. Collins's framework about the black women's love relationship includes the term "Rain" to black women and erotic autonomy because of her desire for sex with her black men, which she expresses by stating, "...ready, baby? Are you going to be

my man?” indicates that although the sex has not yet begun, Lizzo's passion has already caused her to stand in the rain.

Datum 23

Song : “*Better in Color*”

Lyrics :

“You can be my lover

'Cause love looks better in color

(Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, tell ‘em)”

The ability of an object to provide different visual experiences because of its light-emitting or reflecting qualities is referred to as "color". The quality of everything that can be described by its saturation, color, and brightness. The term "color" can apply to a variety of races, including white and black, and it can also refer to the color yellow, which is associated with Asians. Because of her belief that love will be better in color not just one color that represents the race surrounding her and that love will be built around the race community, regardless of which race Lizzo is from, the word "color" is included in relation to love and empowerment.

CONCLUSION

Several important conclusions that demonstrate the artistic depth of Lizzo's music and the theoretical frameworks used particularly Roland Barthes's semiotic theory and Patricia Hill Collins's Black women's love relationship theory can be drawn from a thorough semiotic analysis of the song lyrics in Lizzo's *Cuz' I Love You (Super Deluxe)* (2019) album. Across several tracks on the album, this study was able to identify 35 denotative meanings and 35 connotative meanings. The lyrics' literal, superficial readings based on dictionary definitions or widely recognized meanings are reflected in the denotative meanings. The deeper, more symbolic, and cultural interpretations of the connotative meanings, however, frequently mirror the identity, challenges, and empowerment of black women in contemporary culture. This demonstrates how Lizzo uses sensuality as a means of expressing her independence and self-assurance. Lizzo's public image as a body-positive, self-loving black woman in the entertainment industry is consistent with the lyrical content's central themes of self-determination, confidence, and emotional autonomy, as demonstrated by its

distribution. Through the creation of new symbols of beauty, strength, and complexity in her songs, Lizzo subverts prevailing cultural narratives that frequently reduce Black women to stereotypes.

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