

Construction of Inner Conflict Meaning in Song Lyrics “Ego” by Rizky Febian

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to construct the meaning of inner conflict in the lyrics of the song “Ego” by Rizky Febian through Roland Barthes' semiotic approach. The main issue that is the focus of this study refers to how the meaning of inner conflict is constructed through song lyrics as a medium of self-expression in interpersonal relationships. The song “Ego” was chosen because of its strong emotional resonance and its theme, which touches on awareness of egoism and its impact on the dynamics of interpersonal relationships. This study employs a qualitative method using text analysis as the primary research technique. Primary data is obtained from an analysis of the song lyrics based on Roland Barthes' semiotic perspective, which classifies meaning into three levels: denotation, connotation, and myth, while secondary data is obtained from documentation and fan comments on online platforms. The analysis results show that the lyrics of the song “Ego” depict emotional struggles and sacrifices in maintaining relationships, even if it means sacrificing oneself and personal feelings. This reflects the psychological dynamics of individuals and the prevailing ideology in society regarding love and selfishness. In conclusion, the song “Ego” is not merely a form of personal expression by the singer but also reflects a culture that tends to justify sacrifice in imbalanced interpersonal relationships. This study contributes to understanding how Indonesian K-pop music serves as a complex medium for self-expression and social reflection

Keywords: Ego, Internal Conflict, Semiotics, Self-Expression, Interpersonal Relationships

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INTRODUCTION

The development of music, from ancient times to the present, has become a very popular medium for self-expression (Ratunis, 2020). Music is considered to have a significant capacity to evoke emotional responses in people, so it is often positioned as a relevant medium for self-expression (Amelia & Aryaneta, 2022). As a means of self-expression, music does not merely serve as entertainment but also functions as a communication medium rich in meaning and open to various subjective interpretations by each individual (Bakhtiar, 2024). The complex combination of musical elements such as lyrics, melody, rhythm, and the cultural context embedded within it makes music a work rich in symbolism and meaning (Riswandari & Purnomo, 2013). This phenomenon has grown stronger with the development of digital platforms and social media, which make it easier for individuals to share their musical works. In the study of music as a means of self-expression (Analysis of the Lyrics of the Song *Membasuh* by Hindia), it was found that music can serve as an effective medium for conveying self-expression, depicting various aspects of human life (Suryasuciramadhan et al., 2024). Other research indicates that listening to or creating music can enhance an individual's mental and emotional well-being, helping them understand and respond to their emotional complexities (Lutfi et al., 2024).

Discussions about music cannot be separated from song lyrics, which consist of a series of words in the form of verses. Lyrics serve as a means to convey emotions, messages, ideas, and the personal views of a musician or singer (Setiawan et al., 2022). Generally, song lyrics contain specific messages or meanings that the singer or songwriter wishes to convey, and often have a connection to the listener's experiences, causing the listener to feel a connection with the song (Regi Trinanda & Abidin, 2019). The song *Ego* by Rizky Febian, released in 2023, is a real example of this phenomenon. The song *Ego* by Rizky Febian gained widespread attention with over 2.2 million views on YouTube since its release. Not only that, on music streaming platforms such as Spotify, the song *Ego* has garnered 4.9 million listeners to date. This achievement demonstrates how the song successfully reflects the feelings of listeners, particularly regarding the issue of egoism in interpersonal relationships. Interaction in interpersonal relationships is inseparable from the communication process, where interpersonal communication refers to the exchange of messages between two or more parties with a relational connection, namely between the communicator and the recipient (Fathurrohman et al., 2017). In the context of interpersonal relationships, this song also describes the feelings of someone who is too selfish in their relationships with others. Egoism is an individual's tendency to prioritize personal interests and desires, often neglecting the feelings or needs of others. When someone is unable to overcome ego, it can have negative consequences for partners, family, or others, often leading to conflicts and misunderstandings. Additionally, the music and lyrics of the song *Ego* are beautifully crafted, blending an engaging melody with relatable lyrics, creating an addictive impression that makes people want to listen to the song repeatedly.

In a theoretical study of internal conflict (Haitami & Seruni, 2018), referring to Kurt Lewin's theory, it is explained that internal conflict occurs when a person experiences a struggle within themselves when faced with opposing forces. According to Kurt Lewin, this conflict occurs when an individual is exposed to two or more forces that have different directions but are nearly equally strong (Mayangsari, 2018). Lewin's theory of internal conflict emphasizes the importance of an individual's struggle in making decisions and choices in their life. Additionally, the construction of meaning in literary works, such as song lyrics, requires a deep understanding of the aspects contained within the lyrics, such as diction, imagery, language style, theme, tone, and the message it conveys (Hasibuan et al., 2023). The theme as the main idea inspires the poet to convey a deep meaning, while inner conflict as part of the inner elements reflects the conflict of values, desires, or feelings within a person (Almajid, 2021). Simply put, inner conflict refers to a situation often experienced by humans where they are faced with two or more different choices. Therefore, a person cannot choose all available options, and often they are forced to choose only one of their options (Tara et al., 2019). In line with this study, egoism and inner conflict go hand in hand, where inner conflict can occur if there is an ego that triggers it, causing a person to experience difficulty in choosing which path to take when in that situation.

From a semiotic theory perspective, communication problems often arise due to differences in meaning influenced by the characteristics of semiotic codes and the way these signs are used. In some cases, especially when interpreting song lyrics, there are often differences in opinion regarding the message the singer wants to convey and the message that is actually conveyed to the audience. This is quite natural, as music is fundamentally a product of the mind, formed from elements of vibration in terms of form, frequency, amplitude, and

duration, which are then neurologically transformed and interpreted by the brain (Hidayat, 2014). In the process of creating song lyrics, it is not uncommon for the writer to emphasize a specific meaning about what they want to convey in the song. For example, in the song *Rumah ke Rumah* by Hindia, using Barthes' semiotic approach, it reveals how the expression of love in the lyrics has denotative meaning (literal meaning), connotative meaning (personal emotions), and mythical meaning (cultural values) (Cahya & Sukendro, 2022).

Semiotics, in Barthes' view, is a discipline that studies signs and their implied meanings. Barthes developed the concept of semiotics into two levels of signification: denotation and connotation. Denotation refers to the literal or direct meaning, while connotation encompasses meanings that arise from social, cultural, and individual experiences. In the sign map proposed by Roland Barthes, it is evident that denotative signs (3) are composed of signified elements (1) and signifiers (2). However, denotative signs also function as signifiers at the connotative level (6). Denotation, according to Barthes, is the first level in a closed meaning system, meaning that the meaning is literal and can be directly referenced, for example through definitions in the *KBBI*. Meanwhile, connotation refers to signs whose signifiers have implicit meanings, are open-ended and uncertain, thereby allowing for various new interpretations. The relationship between signifier and signified is not fixed or natural but is formed through cultural agreements and social norms that develop within society. Therefore, the meaning of a sign can vary depending on the context of its use (Roland Barthes, 2017) & (Ratunis, 2020).

In the semiological concept proposed by Roland Barthes, denotative meaning is the system of meaning at the first level, while connotation is at the second level. Denotative meaning is objective and relative, while connotation is subjective and its meaning can vary depending on the context or the interpreter's perspective. For example, the sentence *Mawar sebagai Kembang Desa* is denotatively interpreted as a rose that grows in a rural area. However, connotatively, the meaning changes to symbolize a girl named Mawar who is considered beautiful and attractive, hence the nickname “village flower.” Initially, there is no direct connection between the village flower and the girl, but they can be associated because they share similar qualities, namely beauty and elegance (Nawiroh Vera, 2014).

Within Barthes' framework, connotation is linked to ideological practices, referred to as myths, which serve to represent certain dominant values within society (Amrullah, 2021). Barthes views myths as language, meaning that myths are a system of communication that contains messages or a person's style of speech (type of speech). For example, Barthes explains that wine has two layers of meaning. At the first layer, wine can be understood as an alcoholic beverage made from grapes. However, at the second layer, wine can be interpreted as a symbol of French culture, a representation of French culture known throughout the world. Many people consider wine to be part of French culture. Through this example, Barthes demonstrates that cultural phenomena can acquire certain connotations depending on the perspective of society (Nawiroh Vera, 2014).

In this study, the research question focuses on the construction of the meaning of inner conflict, using Roland Barthes' semiotic approach to analyze the meaning and symbols in song lyrics through layers of meaning (denotative, connotative, mythical). This study aims to explore the meaning of inner conflict found in the lyrics of the song *Ego* by Rizky Febian, and to interpret the meaning in the song through Barthes' semiotic approach. It is hoped that the findings of this study will enrich our understanding of the role of Indonesian pop music as a

means of deep self-expression. This study will explore various layers of meaning in song lyrics, including denotative, connotative, and mythical meanings, thereby enriching insights into the dynamics of emotions and experiences expressed in musical works [A1].

RESEARCH METHOD

In the analysis of the lyrics of Rizky Febian’s song *Ego*, a qualitative approach with text analysis methods was used to explore how the meaning of inner conflict is formed through the lyrics of Rizky Febian’s song *Ego*. According to Sugiyono (2024), the qualitative approach is a method that is sourced. This method is also inductive and applied to the research object in its natural state, with the aim of understanding social reality from the perspective of the participants.

This study uses primary data that focuses on the construction of meaning in the lyrics of the song *Ego* by Rizky Febian, which is included in the album *Berona* released in 2023. The lyrics will be divided into five verses using *signifiers* and signs (Nuraini & Fitriah, 2024). The analysis is conducted by applying Roland Barthes’ semiotic theory, covering three main aspects (*order of signification*), namely denotation, connotation, and myth. Additionally, the analysis utilizes secondary data to support the analysis, such as documentation and online sources, including comments from fans on Rizky Febian’s YouTube channel regarding the interpretation in the study. Data collection techniques include documenting song lyrics and transcribing related podcasts featuring Rizky Febian discussing the song *Ego* as supporting documents. The data analysis process involves systematically organizing the information obtained using qualitative methods.

In this study, researchers will examine various signs found in song lyrics, including *signifiers* and *signifieds*. Researchers will then analyze the denotative (literal) and connotative (cultural or emotional) meanings of these signs. Next, the researcher will interpret the mythical meanings that may be contained in the song lyrics, which refer to the ideologies or values underlying the representation of inner conflict. Roland Barthes’ semiotics was chosen as the analytical framework because it provides comprehensive tools for uncovering the complex layers of meaning in a text. This approach allows researchers to go beyond superficial understanding and explore hidden meanings that may not be apparent to listeners. By dissecting song lyrics into semiotic elements, researchers can identify how certain cultural values and ideologies are articulated and reproduced through pop music. Furthermore, Barthes emphasizes how signs can function to naturalize ideology, making it relevant to critique representations of internal conflict within a broader social context.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The object of analysis in this study is the lyrics of the song “Ego” by Rizky Febian, which is included in the album *Berona* released in 2023. The study of the lyrics of “Ego” aims to explore their meaning by applying Roland Barthes’ semiotic approach, focusing on the signs found in the lyrics. This analysis aims to prove the connection between egoism and the inner conflict experienced by individuals.

The following are the lyrics of the song “Ego” by Rizky Febian from the album *Berona*:

<i>Takkan cukup sekali</i>	<i>/ It won't be enough</i>
<i>Tuk menahanmu pergi</i>	<i>/ To stop you from leaving</i>
<i>Beribu alasan</i>	<i>/ Countless of excuses</i>
<i>Akan ku pertahankan</i>	<i>/ I will try to reason</i>
<i>Tak cukupkah bagimu</i>	<i>/ Isn't that enough for you?</i>
<i>Dengan semua mohonku</i>	<i>/ With all my pleas?</i>
<i>Kau perlu tau</i>	<i>/ You need to know</i>
<i>Ku tak bisa tanpamu</i>	<i>/ That I cannot go on without you</i>
<i>Apa kau tak merasa</i>	<i>/ Do you not feel</i>
<i>Semua perjuanganku</i>	<i>/ All my efforts</i>
<i>Seakan pudar dan tak tersisa</i>	<i>/ As if faded and left behind</i>
<i>Ooohh coba kau jadi diriku</i>	<i>/ Ooohh, try to be me</i>
<i>Rasakan apa yang kurasakan</i>	<i>/ To feel how I feel</i>
<i>Dihiraukan anggap ku tak ada</i>	<i>/ To be ignored, as if I don't exist</i>
<i>Ooohh coba kau jadi diriku</i>	<i>/ Ooohh, try to be me</i>
<i>Rasakan apa yang kurasakan</i>	<i>/ To feel how I feel</i>
<i>Dihiraukan anggap ku tak ada</i>	<i>/ To be ignored, as if I don't exist</i>
<i>Ku dihadapanmu</i>	<i>/ I am before you</i>
<i>Ku rendahkan diri</i>	<i>/ I humbled myself</i>
<i>Ku relakan hati</i>	<i>/ I let go of my heart</i>
<i>Meski kau tega</i>	<i>/ Even though you are cruel</i>
<i>Ooohh coba kau jadi diriku</i>	<i>/ Ooohh, try to be me</i>
<i>Rasakan apa yang kurasakan</i>	<i>/ To feel how I feel</i>
<i>Dihiraukan anggap ku tak ada</i>	<i>/ To be ignored, as if I don't exist</i>
<i>Ooohh coba kau jadi diriku</i>	<i>/ Ooohh, try to be me</i>
<i>Rasakan apa yang kurasakan</i>	<i>/ To feel how I feel</i>
<i>Dihiraukan anggap ku tak ada</i>	<i>/ To be ignored, as if I don't exist</i>

(Rizky Febian “Ego”)

Source: Official Youtube Music Video Ego by RzkyFebian
<https://youtu.be/XJLHnImpj7Y?si=YaAxEPUIBqP21aKd>

The song “Ego” by Rizky Febian is featured in the album *Berona*, released in 2023. In his own podcast, Rizky Febian revealed that the song “Ego” depicts the emotional struggles within a relationship, where one must strive to maintain love despite facing various challenges. In an interview on the podcast “PWK-Rizky Febian Menemukan Cinta Sejati di Hari Pemakaman MAMA!” which was uploaded on August 23, 2023, on Has Creative's YouTube channel.

To support research on the lyrics of Rizky Febian's song “Ego,” Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis approach is highly relevant. Barthes argues that every sign has two stages of signification: first signification (denotation) and second signification (connotation and myth). In the context of the lyrics of “Ego,” denotative analysis will identify the literal meaning of the words used, while connotative analysis will explore deeper meanings, including the emotions and experiences contained within the lyrics. By understanding both layers, we can see how egoism plays a role in the internal conflicts experienced by individuals, as well as how the

lyrics reflect complex emotional dynamics. Furthermore, Barthes also emphasizes the importance of myths in semiotic analysis, where myths function as cultural constructs that shape how we understand signs. In the lyrics of “Ego,” myths can include social norms and expectations related to love and sacrifice. By applying this approach, research can reveal how song lyrics not only convey Rizky Febian's personal message but also reflect broader values and beliefs in society. This allows listeners to feel a connection to the emotional experiences expressed and understand how egoism can influence interpersonal relationships. For a deeper understanding of interpretation from Roland Barthes' perspective (denotative, connotative, and mythical), the following will be discussed further:

Denotative Meaning: Inner Conflict Revealed Literally

According to Roland Barthes, the true meaning or denotation of a word can be understood by referring to the KBBI. Thus, to understand the denotative meaning of a word in the lyrics of the song “Ego,” we can refer to the Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI). The KBBI was chosen as the primary source because some of the words used in the song lyrics are part of the Indonesian vocabulary, making it possible to obtain accurate explanations of the meaning of each word (Ratunis, 2020) .

By using KBBI, we can find clear and precise definitions of words in lyrics, which can help us identify their explicit meanings. This process is important because an understanding of denotative meaning forms the basis for exploring deeper connotative meanings, which often reflect the emotional nuances and social context behind the use of words in the song. Thus, this analysis not only enriches understanding but also provides insight into how language functions in conveying messages and emotions.

At the denotative level, we focus on the literal meaning of the lyrics of the song “Ego.” This is the most obvious and direct meaning, which can be found in dictionaries or general understanding of language. Songs as works of art are also signs that contain meaning. The lyrics, melody, and arrangement are signifiers (first-level signifiers) that refer to a signified, which is the concept or idea that the songwriter wants to convey. For example, if we read a sentence like “the criminal was brought to the green table,” if interpreted denotatively, people would interpret it as the criminal being someone who committed a crime, and the green table being a table that is green in color. The two sentences have no connection when viewed through denotative interpretation.

In the lyrics of the song “Ego,” the song denotatively tells the story of someone who is trying to maintain a relationship with their partner. The character in the song feels that their efforts in the relationship are not appreciated and that they are being taken advantage of by their partner. The following is a denotative analysis of the song's lyrics:

Verse 1

(Lyric) (Signifier)

Takkan Cukup sekali, Tuk Menahanmu Pergi
Beribu alasan, akanku pertahankan

(Signified)

“Takkan cukup sekali, Tuk menahanmu pergi” / “It won’t be enough, to stop you from leaving” declaring repeated efforts to prevent (you) the person in question from leaving

"Beribu alasan, kan ku pertahankan" / "Countless of excuses, I will try to reason" describes repeated attempts to keep their partner from leaving them. This indicates that the character in the song is emotionally dependent on their partner and tries various ways to keep the relationship intact.

Literally, the first verse describes the effort that is not only once, but several times to keep the said partner from leaving. There are many reasons given to keep the relationship going.

Verse 2

Lyric (Signifier)

Tak cukupkah bagimu
Dengan semua mohonku
Kau perlu tahu
Ku tak bisa tanpamu

(Signified)

"Tak Cukupkah bagimu, dengan semua mohonku" / "Isn't that enough for you? With all my pleas?" A rhetorical question that shows doubt as to whether the efforts made are sufficient, implying that the singer has made various requests to keep the relationship intact.

"kau perlu tahu, ku tak bisa tanpamu" / "You need to know, I cannot go on without you" indicating the importance of information or feelings of mutual understanding, "I cannot go on without you" emphasizing emotional dependence on one's partner"

In this verse, the singer feels that all the efforts and pleas to maintain the relationship have been ignored, but still insists that the songwriter cannot live without (you). The singer asks (you), the person in question, who may be his lover, if he cannot live without his lover, and asks the rhetorical question of whether that person realizes everything that has been done.

Verse 3

Lyric (Signifier):

Apa kau tak merasa
Semua perjuanganku
Seakan pudar dan tak tersisa?

(Signified)

"Apa kau tak merasa" / "Do you not feel": A question expressing the hope that the partner will understand the singer's feelings.

"Semua perjuanganku" / "All my efforts": Referring to the efforts that have been made in maintaining relationships.

"Seakan pudar dan tak tersisa?" / "As if faded and left behind": Describes the feeling that all efforts are meaningless or wasted. This verse expresses the feeling that all efforts and sacrifices are not appreciated or recognized by one's partner.

Verse 4

Lyric (Signifier)

Ooohh coba kau jadi diriku
Rasakan apa yang kurasakan
Dihiraukan anggap ku tak ada

(Signified)

"Oh, coba kau jadi diriku" / "Ooohh, try to be me": An invitation to couples to experience the feelings of a singer

"Rasakan apa yang kurasakan" / "To feel how I feel": Expecting empathy from your partner for the suffering you experience.

"Dihiraukan anggap ku tak ada" / "To be ignored, as if I don't exist": Describing feelings of being ignored and not valued by one's partner.

The singer asks the person in question to feel what they feels, namely the feeling of being ignored and not considered important.

Verse 5

Lyric (Signifier):

Ku di hadapanmu
Ku rendahkan diri
Ku relakan hati
Meski kau tega

(Signified)

"Ku di hadapanmu" / "I am before you": Demonstrating the singer's physical and emotional presence in front of his partner.

"Ku rendahkan diri" / "I humbled myself": Indicates a self-deprecating attitude in order to maintain relationships.

"Ku relakan hati" / "I let go of my heart": Implies emotional sacrifice made despite pain.

"Meski kau tega" / "Even though you are cruel": Expressing pain caused by unfair or hurtful treatment from a partner.

““I am before you, I humble myself” directly implies the act of humbling oneself in order to maintain a relationship. If analyzed denotatively, the phrase “humbling oneself” in the KBBI means placing oneself in a lower position or yielding for a particular interest. In the context of the song, this shows that the character in the song is willing to sacrifice their self-respect to maintain the relationship with their partner, even if their partner is cruel or indifferent.



Figure 1 Screenshot of Rizky Febian's interview

Source: Youtube channel: Has Creative (PWK)

This is supported by Rizky Febian's statement about the song “Ego,” which describes the emotional struggle in a relationship where someone must strive to maintain love despite facing

various challenges. In an interview on the podcast “PWK-Rizky Febian Finds True Love on the Day of His Mother's Funeral!”, uploaded on August 23, 2023, on the YouTube channel HAS CREATIVE.

Through Roland Barthes' semiotic approach, a denotative analysis of the lyrics of the song Ego reveals the explicit meaning of a person's struggle to maintain a fragile relationship. The lyrics directly represent emotional instability and the constant effort to maintain the relationship, despite being colored by emotional imbalance. By understanding this denotative meaning, we can see how the language in the lyrics is used to depict the reality of a relationship filled with challenges and sacrifices.

Connotative Meaning: Emotions and Subjective Experiences

The connotative layer takes us beyond mere literal meaning. Here, we consider the emotions, cultural associations, and subjective experiences associated with the words in the lyrics. In the context of Rizky Febian's song “Ego,” the connotative meaning of each word and phrase not only reflects the literal meaning but also reveals deeper emotional layers. Through the careful selection of words and powerful expressions, the singer successfully conveys the complexity of emotions related to love, loss, and the struggle to maintain a relationship. This connotative meaning is particularly important as it provides insight into how individuals perceive and respond to emotionally challenging situations. Simply put, connotation can be understood as a type of meaning that carries additional, imaginative, or emotional value (Mayun Susabdhika, 2022).

Using Roland Barthes' semiotic approach, we can delve deeper into the connotative meaning of the lyrics of “Ego.” This approach allows us to see how the words in the lyrics function not only as signifiers but also as connectors between the singer's personal experiences and those of the listener. In this analysis, we will focus on how emotions such as sadness, longing, and uncertainty are expressed through the lyrics, as well as how these subjective experiences can resonate with the listener. Thus, understanding the connotative meaning not only enriches our interpretation of the song but also helps us comprehend the emotional dynamics underlying human relationships.

In human relationships, balanced communication is the main foundation for building mutual understanding. Healthy communication also involves the courage to express one's feelings openly, as well as the willingness to listen without judgment. Healthy relationships are born from trust, empathy, and equality, where each individual feels seen and heard as a whole person. When communication is balanced, relationships become a safe space for mutual growth. Conversely, unhealthy communication reflects an imbalance in the relationship. One form of this is when someone demands their partner to “feel what they feel,” without allowing space for dialogue. The phrase “try to be me” is not an invitation to understand, but rather a form of emotional pressure rooted in one-sided expectations. This not only closes the possibility of mutual understanding but also triggers feelings of guilt, corners the other person, and ultimately distances someone from emotional intimacy in their interpersonal relationships. This leads to new conflicts that make communication in the relationship unhealthy. For a deeper understanding of the meaning, as follows:

Verse 1

Lyric (Signifier)

Takkan cukup sekali
Tuk menahanmu pergi
Beribu alasan
Akan ku pertahankan

(Signified)

This verse conveys feelings of despair and helplessness in the face of separation. There is a strenuous effort to maintain the relationship, which may also reflect selfishness in clinging to what one desires.

Verse 2:

Lyric (Signifier)

Tak cukupkah bagimu
Dengan semua mohonku
Kau perlu tau
Ku tak bisa tanpamu

Signified:

"Isn't it enough for you, with all my pleas?" This sentence contains emotions of despair and unfulfilled hopes. The word "pleas" is not just a simple request, but rather describes a sacrifice-filled effort and hope that the other person will understand and accept the request. This shows an inability to achieve the desired understanding or result, and a feeling that the efforts made may be in vain. There is a sense of disappointment and feeling unappreciated, along with the hope that the partner will realize how great the sacrifices made have been. This also reflects selfishness in demanding attention and validation from the partner.

Verse 3:

Lyric (Signifier)

Apa kau tak merasa
Semua perjuanganku
Seakan pudar dan tak tersisa

Signified:

There is frustration, inner conflict, and deep disappointment, as well as a feeling that one is meaningless or unimportant to one's partner. This also shows selfishness in expecting recognition and appreciation for the efforts that have been made.

Verse 4:

Lyric (Signifier)

Ooohh coba kau jadi diriku
Rasakan apa yang kurasakan
Dihiraukan anggap ku tak ada

Signified:

"Dihiraukan anggap ku tak ada" / "To be ignored, as if I don't exist" In this sentence, the connotation is much more emotional. When someone feels "as if not exist," it can describe feelings of deep hurt and loneliness. In the context of relationships, the word "as if not exist" can refer to a deeper sense of being unappreciated or ignored, even more than just being physically overlooked. This is a feeling of loss or abandonment in an emotional form, which

includes sadness, despair, and a sense of meaninglessness in a relationship or social interaction. There is a strong desire for the partner to understand the suffering and difficulties experienced, as well as the feeling that one's own existence is not acknowledged. This reflects a sense of self-centeredness in expecting empathy and attention from the partner.

Verse 5:

Lyric (Signifier)

Ku di hadapanmu
Ku rendahkan diri
Ku relakan hati
Meski kau tega

Signified:

There is a sense of resignation and willingness to sacrifice for love, even though it is painful. This also shows selfishness in the form of a desire to stay with a partner, even if it means sacrificing one's self-esteem.

From this analysis, it can be concluded that the lyrics reflect a complicated romantic relationship, in which the songwriter feels trapped in feelings of loneliness and despair that create inner conflict and selfishness. The writer describes how he has struggled to maintain the relationship, but feels neglected by his partner.

A. 3. Myth: Egoism Ideology in Relationships

At the mythical level, we reach the deepest level of analysis. Myths, according to Roland Barthes, are social constructs that shape the way we understand and interpret the signs around us. In this song, the lyrics not only describe individual emotional experiences, but also create a narrative about how selfishness can affect the dynamics of relationships. Through expressions that convey dependence and the struggle to maintain love, the song suggests that selfishness often serves as a driving force in human interactions, where individuals tend to prioritize their own needs and desires over the interests of others.

Furthermore, an analysis of the myths in the lyrics of “Ego” reveals how the ideology of egoism can shape our perceptions of love and sacrifice in relationships. Lyrics that describe emotional sacrifice and vulnerability show that even though individuals struggle to maintain love, they are also trapped in a cycle of egoism that can destroy the relationship itself. By understanding this myth, we can be more critical of the social norms that shape our views on love and relationships, as well as how egoism can act as a barrier to intimacy and deeper understanding between partners. Through this approach, the analysis of the lyrics of “Ego” is not only a reflection of the singer's personal experience but also a social commentary on the complexity of human relationships in the modern era.

This song indirectly criticizes a culture where ego is often placed above the common good, which can lead to conflict and destruction in relationships. Through its lyrics, “Ego” challenges listeners to reflect on the role of ego in their own lives and consider the importance of empathy, understanding, and sacrifice in building healthy and meaningful relationships. Using Roland Barthes' theory, the lyrics of this song that contain mythical meaning are found in the parts that imply deep feelings that are beyond ordinary logic, such as:

Verse 1

Lyric (Signifier):

Takkan cukup sekali

Tuk menahanmu pergi
Beribu alasan
Akan ku pertahankan

(Signified)

The myth that arises from this connotative meaning is the idea that true love must be fought for relentlessly, even if it means sacrificing oneself. In a social context, this creates a narrative that sacrifice in love is normal and expected, even though it can cause suffering. However, such sacrifice sometimes only involves one party, who may sacrifice more and fight harder. In some myths prevalent in society, such as the sacrifice made by Dewi Sinta by taking the oath of Pati Obong to prove her purity to Rama, this demonstrates Sinta's sincerity and sacrifice to uphold her true love (Prijiyanto, 2015). However, it is important to remember that in a healthy interpersonal relationship, this should not be necessary, as a healthy relationship is one based on understanding, cooperation, mutual care, and does not allow one partner or another to make excessive sacrifices for the other. To achieve this, balanced interpersonal communication is necessary to avoid issues of selfishness, which could lead to internal conflicts if one party continues to prioritize their ego and may eventually become a time bomb ready to explode at any moment.

Verse 2:

Lyric (Signifier)

Tak cukupkah bagimu
Dengan semua mohonku
Kau perlu tau
Ku tak bisa tanpamu

Signified:

The myth that has formed is that love is often measured by how much someone tries to maintain it. This creates the perception that emotional dependence is a normal part of a relationship, even though it can lead to unhealthy dynamics. But is maintaining a relationship a good choice? Of course, it can be a good thing when the communication within the relationship is healthy and open, where both parties express gratitude and love for one another (Putri, 2024). In such cases, it is appropriate to pursue the relationship. However, it can be a bad choice when the relationship is dominated by selfishness, creating a tense atmosphere where each individual withdraws, refusing to understand one another and clinging to their own egos. Over time, the relationship will become toxic and no longer worth maintaining. In some real-life cases, one person may leave their partner, ignore them, and inflict constant emotional wounds, whether verbal or non-verbal, leading to prolonged internal conflict. Such a relationship, despite any remaining dependence on the partner, is not worth maintaining. Example: Domestic Violence (DV) cases.

Verse 3:

Lyric (Signifier)

Apa kau tak merasa
Semua perjuanganku
Seakan pudar dan tak tersisa

Signified:

The myth that arises is that sacrifice in love is often not recognized or appreciated. This reinforces the idea that true love must be faced with great sacrifice, even though the outcome is not always satisfying. Sacrifice is often associated with the sacrifice of love between partners, but in reality, sacrifice can be made by anyone, such as a parent for a child, a teacher for a student, a grandparent for a grandchild, and so on. Someone who has made sacrifices should receive appreciation or recognition, but often as humans, we forget the services or sacrifices that have been made. A small example we can see is when a child grows up, they may forget the services of their parents. In some cases, children refuse to take care of their parents, and unfortunately, some even abandon and neglect their parents on the streets. It seems as though the struggles that parents go through for their children fade away and leave no trace.

Verse 4:

Lyric (Signifier)

Ooohh coba kau jadi diriku
Rasakan apa yang kurasakan
Dihiraukan anggap ku tak ada

Signified:

The myth here reflects the view that emotional understanding in relationships is the key to intimacy. When one party is unable to feel what the other party is feeling, the relationship is considered fragile. “Oh, try to be me, feel what I feel, ignore me as if I don't exist.” In this section, there are elements that can be seen as myths or symbolism, where someone wants others to feel their emotions by “being me,” a request that goes beyond ordinary reality and is more about the desire to emotionally merge to the point where it's hard to tell what's real and what's just a feeling. This illustrates the difficulty of understanding others' feelings, as if there were some magical or mythical power that could make people feel the same way.

Verse 5:

Lyric (Signifier)

Ku di hadapanmu
Ku rendahkan diri
Ku relakan hati
Meski kau tega

Signified :

The myth that has been created is that true love requires unlimited sacrifice. This creates a narrative that humbling oneself for the sake of a loved one is a noble act, even though it can cause emotional harm to the individual. Such views often normalize unbalanced relationships, where one party continues to give without receiving an equal return. As a result, many individuals feel trapped in unhealthy relationships in order to maintain the illusion of true love.

Myths, in general, are understandings and interpretations of stories, symbols, or beliefs related to the values and norms believed by society (Agustina & Wijaya, 2024). In the analysis conducted on the lyrics of the song “Ego” by Rizky Febian, it can be concluded that this song develops a myth about sacrifice in love and egoism that occurs continuously, leading to inner conflict. The song depicts the emotional experiences that occur in every individual while also

critiquing aspects of society that are often overlooked, such as viewing sacrifice as a normal part of interpersonal relationships. Indirectly, the song touches on many aspects of common issues in interpersonal relationships, such as selfishness, lack of communication, manipulation, etc., which, if left unaddressed, can lead to internal conflict. Self-reflection and evaluation are necessary to reduce ego, understand one another, and make sacrifices without burdening either party, so that conflicts do not arise in the relationship.

CONCLUSION

The song *Ego* by Rizky Febian, released in 2023 on the album *Berona*, depicts the dynamics of inner conflict that arise from selfishness in interpersonal relationships. Using Barthes' semiotic analysis, which encompasses denotative, connotative, and mythical layers of meaning, the song portrays the emotional sacrifices an individual makes to maintain their interpersonal relationships. Additionally, *Ego* critiques societal norms where sacrificing one party is deemed acceptable in relationships—whether romantic, familial, or platonic. Through Roland Barthes' semiotic approach, the lyrics of Rizky Febian's song *Ego* not only serve as an expression of the singer's self, but also as a form of self-expression that can be undertaken by everyone, particularly as a medium for broader cultural reflection on the values of love, sacrifice, and empathy. Moreover, the song encourages listeners to reflect on the role of the *ego* in relationships—if not properly controlled, it can damage relationships—while also reminding them to maintain healthy communication with their partners to create balanced and meaningful relationships.

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