



## The Meaning of the Lyrics of Gorontalo Regional Songs in Rizky Onefyt's Album: A Semiotic Study by Roland Barthes

Nurhalima Mangilo<sup>1\*</sup>, Ellyana Hinta<sup>2</sup>, Wa Ode Irawati<sup>3</sup>

<sup>123</sup>Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia, Universitas Negeri Gorontalo, Gorontalo, Indonesia

E-mail: [mangilonurhalima@gmail.com](mailto:mangilonurhalima@gmail.com)

### ABSTRACT

This research is motivated by the declining interest of the younger generation in regional songs due to the dominance of popular music in the digital space, which has resulted in a diminished understanding of local cultural values. Gorontalo regional songs serve not only as entertainment but also as a medium for transmitting values, identity, and the community's outlook on life. This study aims to describe the representation of Gorontaloan life in song lyrics and uncover their meanings through a semiotic study. This study uses a descriptive method with a Roland Barthes semiotic approach. The research data consists of song lyrics from Rizky Onefyt's Gorontalo folk song album. The data were collected through reading and note-taking techniques, then analyzed by identifying signifiers and signifieds, and examining meaning at three levels: denotation, connotation, and myth. The research results show that at the denotative level, song lyrics represent the concrete realities of Gorontalo society, such as places, activities, and events. At the connotative level, meaning develops into emotional and cultural representations, such as longing, togetherness, conflict, and social relationships. At the mythical level, song lyrics reproduce naturalized social values, such as identity, loyalty, sacrifice, social roles, and views on life and migration. The lyrics of Gorontalo regional songs in Rizky Onefyt's album serve not only as aesthetic expression but also as a representation of the socio-cultural life and ideology of the community. This research is expected to contribute to literary and cultural studies and support the preservation of regional songs as a form of local cultural identity.

*Keywords: meaning lyrics song, regional, semiotic study*

## Makna Lirik Lagu Daerah Gorontalo dalam Album Rizky Onefyt: Kajian Semiotika Roland Barthes

### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh menurunnya minat generasi muda terhadap lagu daerah akibat dominasi musik populer di ruang digital, sehingga berdampak pada berkurangnya pemahaman terhadap nilai-nilai budaya lokal. Lagu daerah Gorontalo tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai hiburan, tetapi juga sebagai media pewarisan nilai, identitas, dan pandangan hidup masyarakat. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan representasi kehidupan masyarakat Gorontalo dalam lirik lagu serta mengungkap makna yang terkandung di dalamnya melalui kajian semiotika. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif dengan pendekatan semiotika Roland Barthes. Data penelitian berupa lirik lagu dalam album lagu daerah Gorontalo karya Rizky Onefyt. Data dikumpulkan melalui teknik baca dan catat, kemudian dianalisis dengan mengidentifikasi penanda dan petanda, serta mengkaji makna pada tiga tingkatan, yaitu denotasi, konotasi, dan mitos. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pada tingkat denotasi, lirik lagu merepresentasikan realitas konkret kehidupan masyarakat Gorontalo, seperti tempat, aktivitas, dan peristiwa. Pada tingkat konotasi, makna berkembang menjadi representasi emosional dan kultural, seperti kerinduan, kebersamaan, konflik, dan hubungan sosial. Pada tingkat mitos, lirik lagu mereproduksi nilai-nilai sosial yang telah dinaturalisasi, seperti identitas asal-usul, kesetiaan, pengorbanan, peran sosial, serta pandangan tentang kehidupan dan perantauan. Lirik lagu daerah Gorontalo dalam album Rizky Onefyt tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai ekspresi estetis, tetapi juga sebagai representasi kehidupan sosial-budaya dan ideologi masyarakat. Penelitian ini diharapkan dapat berkontribusi dalam kajian sastra dan budaya serta mendukung pelestarian lagu daerah sebagai identitas budaya lokal.

*Kata kunci: makna lirik lagu, daerah, kajian semiotika*

Submitted  
25/04/2026

Accepted  
06/05/2026

Published  
10/05/2026

Citation	Mangilo, N., Hinta, E., & Irawati, W. O. (2026). The Meaning of the Lyrics of Gorontalo Regional Songs in Rizky Onefyt's Album: A Semiotic Study by Roland Barthes. <i>Jurnal Pembelajaran Bahasa dan Sastra, Volume 5, Nomor 3, Mei 2026, 2175-2188</i> . DOI: <a href="https://doi.org/10.55909/jpbs.v4i3.1457">https://doi.org/10.55909/jpbs.v4i3.1457</a>
----------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Publisher  
Raja Zulkarnain Education Foundation

## INTRODUCTION

The development of globalization and digital technology has changed the way people access and enjoy music. Songs are no longer distributed through conventional media, but through digital platforms like YouTube, Spotify, and social media. This change has opened up vast opportunities for the distribution of musical works, but also poses challenges to the existence of regional songs. The dominance of popular music in the digital space has shaped the preferences of the younger generation, who tend to consume more modern music, leading to a decline in interest in regional songs.

This decline in interest has resulted in a diminished understanding by the younger generation of the local cultural values embodied in regional songs. Regional songs serve not only as entertainment but also as a medium for transmitting values, life philosophies, and social experiences. Regional song lyrics contain cultural messages conveyed through symbols, figurative language, and meaningful expressions, thus requiring in-depth understanding.

In semiotic studies, meaning in texts can be analyzed at several levels: denotation, connotation, and myth. Denotation refers to literal meaning, connotation to meaning formed through experience and culture, while myth represents a more advanced meaning that has become naturalized into ideology within society. Through this approach, song lyrics are understood not simply as a series of words, but as a system of signs that represent social and cultural realities.

One form of this cultural expression is found in Gorontaloan folk songs. These songs convey life values, moral teachings, and the community's outlook on life, passed down from generation to generation. However, in the context of modernization, their existence has received increasingly less attention. Amidst this situation, efforts have emerged from local musicians, one of whom is Rizky Onefyt, to revive folk songs through

digital media, making them more accessible to the public.

Despite their modern packaging, these folk song lyrics retain meanings that reflect the socio-cultural life of the Gorontalo people. However, these meanings are not always immediately apparent and require more in-depth analysis. To date, research on folk songs has tended to focus on aspects of preservation or moral values, while studies specifically examining the meaning of lyrics through a semiotic approach, particularly on Gorontaloan folk songs in the context of digital media, are still limited.

Based on this, this study aims to describe the denotative, connotative, and mythical meanings in the lyrics of Gorontaloan folk songs on Rizky Onefyt's album. This research is expected to provide a deeper understanding of regional songs as cultural texts that not only represent reality, but also shape and reproduce social values in society.

## METHOD

This research uses a qualitative descriptive. Penelitian kualitatif lazim digunakan dalam penelitian bidang sosial (Balaka, 2012, Razak, 2017; Afifudin & Saebani, 2002). Penelitian kualitatif ini menggunakan a Roland Barthes semiotic approach. This approach is used to examine the meaning of song lyrics through three levels of significance: denotation, connotation, and myth (Elmustian & Jalilm, 2015).

The research data consists of lyrics from Gorontalo regional songs from Rizky Onefyt's album, namely Hulondalo Lipu'u, Nga'ami Matolimou, Torabua, and Burungi Moputio. The data were obtained from official sources, including digital platforms like YouTube and the singer's official social media accounts. The lyrics were selected because they contain linguistic elements that represent the social and cultural values of the Gorontalo people. Data collection was conducted through reading and note-taking.

The note-taking technique was carried out as follows:



- a. This process begins with preparing the necessary tools and materials. A laptop is used as a recording medium and source for the song lyrics to be analyzed. Next, the lyrics are read and listened to repeatedly to understand the context and nuances contained within. Afterward, the lyrics are recorded completely and accurately, paying attention to language usage, writing style, and lyrical structure.
- b. The next step is translating the song lyrics into Indonesian. This translation process aims not only to understand the literal meaning of each word, but also to capture the nuances and messages the songwriter intended to convey, resulting in a more comprehensive and in-depth interpretation.
- c. Lyrics identified as containing symbolic meaning, as well as sections of lyrics depicting aspects of community life such as culture, traditions, values, or social issues, are also analyzed and recorded to understand whether the lyrics reflect or comment on existing social conditions. Meaning of Song Lyrics (MSL), Rizky Onefyt Album (ROA), First Song (S1), Second Song (S2), Third Song (S3), Fourth Song (S4).
- d. Finally, verify and validate the notes to ensure data accuracy and completeness, comparing them with the original data sources to avoid misinterpretation. By following these steps, note-taking techniques can be an effective tool for collecting and analyzing song lyric data in depth.

Song lyrics were read repeatedly to understand the context and meaning, then transliterated and translated into Indonesian. Next, sections of the lyrics containing potential symbolic meaning were identified and recorded as research data.

Data analysis was conducted in several stages. First, transliteration and translation of the lyrics to gain a basic understanding. Second,

identification of signifiers and signifieds in the lyrics. Third, analysis of meaning at the denotative, connotative, and mythical levels, taking into account the social and cultural context of the Gorontalo community. Fourth, presentation of the analysis results in an interpretive descriptive format to explain the relationship between symbols, meanings, and social realities represented in the song lyrics.

## RESULT

This study analyzed four songs from Rizky Onefyt's album of Gorontalo regional songs, which was broadcast on his YouTube channel. The four songs are Hulondalo Lipu'u, Nga'ami Matolimou, Torabua, and Burungi Moputio. Rizky Onefyt interprets (sings/covers), not the original composer. The analysis was conducted using Roland Barthes' semiotic approach, which encompasses three levels of meaning: denotation, connotation, and myth.

The songs analyzed in this study were selected because their lyrics are rich in cultural and social symbols that reflect the lives of the Gorontalo people. This selection was not random, but based on the consideration that the lyrics contain diverse representations of regional identity, social values, aspirations, and emotional expressions of the Gorontalo people. Thus, these songs can serve as comprehensive data to provide a picture of traditional regional music, serving to illustrate both its role as a medium of cultural expression and as a means of transmitting cultural values.

### 1. Denotative Meaning in Gorontalo Regional Song Lyrics

Based on the collected and classified data, the first stage of this analysis focused on revealing the denotative meaning contained in the lyrics of Gorontalo regional songs on Rizky Onefyt's album. Referring to Roland Barthes's concept of semiotics, denotative meaning is the first level of meaning, literal and directly referring to the object or reality depicted in the text. Therefore, in this section, each lyric can be analyzed based on its basic meaning

without involving emotional or cultural interpretation, thus obtaining an initial picture of the meaning structure that constructs the entire song text.

Each piece of data in this study uses a specific code to facilitate the identification and analysis process. The code MSL stands for "Meaning of Song Lyrics," while ROA refers to Rizky Onefyt's album. The codes S1, S2, S3, and S4 indicate the order of the songs within the album. S1 represents the first song (Hulondalo lipu'u), S2 the second song (Nga'ami Matolimou), S3 the third song (Torabua), and S4 the fourth song (Burungi Moputio). The use of these codes aims to simplify data classification and maintain consistency in the discussion.

#### Data 1

MSL/ROA/S1: Hulondalo lipu'u (Gorontalo is My Region)

Based on the data table above, S1 represents the first song, Hulondalo lipu'u. Denotatively, these lyrics refer to the name of a region, namely Gorontalo. At the first level of meaning, the word "Gorontalo" functions as a marker that directly refers to a real, recognizable geographic area in everyday life. The meaning generated at this level is literal, as it simply indicates the identity of a place without any additional connotations. The lyrics do not contain emotional, symbolic, or cultural elements, but rather serve solely as a direct location indicator. Therefore, the meaning of these lyrics does not require in-depth interpretation, as the meaning conveyed is clear and consistent with the reality referred to.

Furthermore, the mention of regional names in these lyrics demonstrates that language is used as a tool to concretely identify spaces or places. The word "Gorontalo" in this context does not change its meaning, but rather still refers to an administrative region with clear boundaries and existence. This demonstrates that the lyrics are based on objective and verifiable reality. The use of words that directly refer to regional names also

demonstrates that the song's lyrics have a representative function, depicting something that actually exists in real life.

The lyrics do not attempt to conceal meaning or convey implicit messages, but rather present information as it is. Therefore, the meaning that emerges remains at a surface level. Therefore, it can be understood that at this stage the lyrics function only as a simple representation of a place without involving more complex layers of meaning. The resulting meaning remains at a basic level, as an introduction to the object being referred to, thus serving as a starting point before developing into broader forms of meaning in the next stage.

#### Data 2

MSL/ROA/S2: Mona'o de'u tonu debo sama-sama (Going anywhere, always together)

The data above refers to the activity of going together by several individuals. This expression indicates the act of collectively moving from one place to another as part of an activity observable in everyday life. At the first level of meaning, the activity of "going together" is understood as a physical act involving more than one person on a journey or change of location. The resulting meaning is literal because it simply describes an activity without any additional meaning. These lyrics contain no symbolic or emotional elements, but rather function as a description of a concrete action.

The use of the word "together" is not entirely neutral. Although at this stage it is understood only as a collective activity, the presence of the element of togetherness implicitly indicates social interaction between individuals. This indicates that the lyrics not only describe the act of moving from one place to another but also represent forms of social relationships in everyday life. Furthermore, these lyrics demonstrate that language in songs can be used to convey social experiences simply and directly. The activities shown remain at the surface level as common



events that occur and are easily understood by the listener without requiring further interpretation.

The meaning in these lyrics remains at the denotative level because it only refers to a concrete activity that can be directly observed. However, as in the previous data, this meaning has the potential to develop to the next level of meaning, thus indicating that denotation forms the basis for a more complex meaning-making process.

#### Data 3

MSL/ROA/S3: Torabua milango hulondalo (Gorontalo milango pier)

Based on the classification of data 3 in the table above, code S3 indicates that this lyric originates from the third song, "Torabua." This lyric refers to a place, namely the Milango pier in the Gorontalo region. This phrase indicates a real and recognizable geographical location in everyday life. At the first level of meaning, the word "pier" functions as a signifier that directly refers to a physical object with a concrete existence. The resulting meaning is literal because it simply indicates a place without any additional meaning. In this case, the pier is understood as part of the infrastructure or physical space used in certain activities, such as transportation or the activities of coastal communities.

The mention of place names like "Milango" is not entirely neutral. Although at this stage it only serves as a location indicator, the use of this specific name implicitly indicates the lyrics' connection to a specific local space. This indicates that the lyrics not only describe a place but also represent the environmental realities that are part of the community's lives.

Furthermore, the mention of "pier" as an object in the lyrics demonstrates that the language in the song can be used to concretely capture spatial conditions. The place mentioned remains at the surface level as a recognizable location, without involving emotional or symbolic interpretation at this stage. Thus, the meaning in these lyrics remains at the denotative level because it only

refers to a real, directly observable geographical location. However, as in the previous data, this meaning has the potential to develop to the next level of meaning, thus indicating that denotation forms the basis for a broader meaning-making process.

#### Data 4

MSL/ROA/S4: Tilolamu bolo tanggulo (You leave only the name)

Turning to the next data, code L4 indicates that these lyrics originate from the fourth song, Burungi Moputi'o, on the analyzed album. Denotatively, data 4 in this lyric refers to the condition of someone who has departed, leaving behind a specific state for the individual left behind. This expression indicates a situation of absence that can be recognized in real life.

At the first level of meaning, "abandoned" is understood as a factual condition in which someone is no longer present in a place or with another individual. The resulting meaning is literal because it simply describes the situation without any additional connotations. This lyric serves as a direct representation of a situation observable in everyday life. However, upon further analysis, the phrase "only the name remains" begins to show a tendency toward a less concrete meaning. Although denotatively understood as a state of loss, the phrase has the potential for broader meaning because it does not solely refer to an observable physical object.

These lyrics demonstrate that not all first-level meanings are entirely simple. The state of loss described remains factual, but begins to lead to experiences that can develop deeper meanings when linked to a broader context. The meaning in these lyrics remains at the denotative level because it still refers to the concrete condition of a person's absence. However, as in the previous data, this meaning has the potential to develop to the next level of meaning, thus demonstrating that denotation can be the starting point for a more complex meaning-making process.

## 2. Connotative Meaning in Gorontalo Regional Song Lyrics

Based on the analyzed data, the connotative meaning in the Gorontalo regional song lyrics on Rizky Onefyt's album demonstrates the second-level meaning proposed by Barthers, namely meaning that emerges through the involvement of an individual's feelings, experiences, and emotional values. At this stage, the sign is no longer literal but instead contains additional meanings related to human inner relationships.

### Data 1

MSL/ROA/S1: Lipu'u iloponu'u (A place full of memories)

Based on the classification of data 1 in the table above, the L1 code indicates that this lyric comes from the first song on the analyzed album. Data 1 shows that the lyrics of "Lipu'u iloponu'u" not only refer to hometown as a physical place, but also present a depiction of a space with deep meaning for the individual experiencing it.

The word "hometown" is understood as a place that holds various life experiences, from childhood, social relationships, to events that shape one's journey. These lyrics suggest that the place is not merely a setting, but also part of the process of self-formation. Therefore, the meaning that emerges does not stop at "place," but rather develops into a space full of memories and personal value.

Furthermore, this expression demonstrates a strong emotional attachment between an individual and their hometown. Hometown is not only remembered as a location, but also as a source of feelings, whether happiness, warmth, or longing. This demonstrates that experiences in a place can linger in the memory and continue to influence how a person views themselves.

Furthermore, these lyrics illustrate the ongoing connection between an individual and their hometown. Although a person may physically move to another place, the memories and experiences embedded in them are not easily lost.

In other words, the hometown remains "present" in memory and feelings, forming a bond that is unbreakable by distance or time.

Thus, these lyrics not only describe a place but also convey a complex inner experience. The hometown symbolizes the journey of life, memory, and identity that remain embedded in the individual, thus transcending mere geographical space and developing into a profound emotional space.

### Data 2

MSL/ROA/S2: Ela'u mayi, to'u donggo sama-sama (I remember back when we were together)

Based on data table 2 above, the song lyrics in the above data not only refer to the activity of remembering the past, but also describe shared experiences that hold deep meaning for the individual. The lyrics "I remember back when we were together" demonstrate that the memories presented are not mere recollections, but rather relate to relationships that were once forged in a shared atmosphere. These experiences reflect harmonious conditions, where interactions between individuals took place with closeness. Therefore, the memories that emerge have strong emotional value. Memories not only function as a record of past events but also as a source of feelings that continue to influence individuals. Memories of togetherness can elicit various emotional responses, such as longing or nostalgia, indicating that these experiences still have an influence on current life.

These lyrics demonstrate that the past is not completely lost but remains present in the form of vivid memories in the individual's consciousness. The shared experiences become something that continues to be remembered and holds its own meaning, even though the events have passed.

The meaning in these lyrics demonstrates that memories can develop into something more than just events, namely as a form of emotional attachment that persists within a person. Thus, these lyrics not only describe the process of remembering but also demonstrate how past experiences con-



tinue to play a role in shaping an individual's inner state.

#### Data 3

MSL/ROA/S3: Mo ela mayi donggo sama-sama (Remembering when we were still together)

Based on data table 12 above, the lyrics of the song "Remembering when we were still together" describe the process of remembering past experiences related to togetherness between individuals. This expression indicates that these memories still hold a place in the individual's consciousness. Through these lyrics, it is clear that past togetherness is not merely a bygone event, but remains alive in the memory. These memories reflect a once-strong relationship that holds significance for the individual.

Memories of the past can evoke various feelings, such as longing or emotional warmth. This demonstrates that past experiences continue to influence current emotional states. This situation demonstrates that the past is not entirely separate from the present. Memories are part of life experiences that continue to shape how individuals perceive and understand past relationships.

The meaning of these lyrics suggests that past togetherness still holds value in an individual's life. These lyrics not only describe the act of remembering, but also emphasize that past experiences are crucial in shaping one's emotional state.

#### Data 4

MSL/ROA/S4: Wanu ma'u mamo e'la ito donggo to'u boyito (If I remember us in those days)

Based on data table 18 above, the lyrics of the song "If I remember us in those days" describe the process of recalling past experiences shared together. This expression indicates that past events remain embedded in the individual's memory. These lyrics demonstrate that the memories in question are not simply part of the past but continue to influence current emotional states. Recalling shared experiences brings back the same feelings. Upon closer examination, the memories that

emerge reflect a strong connection. This demonstrates that these experiences are significant and therefore not easily forgotten and remain present in consciousness.

This situation demonstrates that the past is not entirely separate from the present. Past experiences can continue to influence how individuals perceive and interpret past relationships. The meaning of these lyrics emphasizes that memories are a part of an individual's emotional life that endures with time. These lyrics not only describe the act of remembering, but also demonstrate how the past remains alive in memories and feelings.

### 3. Myths in Gorontalo Regional Song Lyrics

Based on the analyzed data, the meaning of myths in the lyrics of Gorontalo regional songs on Rizky Onefyt's album demonstrates the construction of social values that have been naturalized and considered truths in community life. In Roland Barthes's semiotic study, myth is a third-level meaning formed from the combination of denotative and connotative meanings, then developing into an ideology that is generally accepted without question.

#### Data 1

MSL/ROA/S1: Lipu'u iloponu'u (A place full of memories)

Based on data table 1 above, the lyrics of the song "tempat aku lahir" at the myth level not only refer to one's location of origin but also establish the belief that an individual's identity cannot be separated from their place of birth. This expression reflects the view that origins are an inherent part of a person throughout their life.

At this level, place of birth is no longer understood as a mere geographical space, but as a determinant of identity. Society tends to associate a person's character, values, and way of thinking with their place of origin. Thus, place of birth is positioned as a factor that shapes personal identity as a whole.

This interpretation demonstrates a collective mindset that has viewed the relationship between individuals and their origins as something natural. Individuals are not seen as completely independent entities, but as part of the social and cultural environment that shapes them from the beginning. This condition indicates that meaning has evolved into a myth, namely when a social construct is accepted as a general truth. The assumption that identity is determined by place of birth is no longer questioned but rather considered something natural in social life. Thus, these lyrics not only convey information about origins but also reproduce social values that place of origin as the basis for the formation of individual identity. This demonstrates how meaning at the mythical level works by making a view into a widely accepted truth.

#### Data 2

MSL/ROA/S2: Masatiya, mayi lolombuliya hula (Now the situation has changed)

Based on data table 2 above, the lyrics of the song "Now the situation has changed" at the mythical level not only describe changing situations, but also build the belief that human relationships are fundamentally dynamic and will change over time. Change is understood as a natural part of the journey of a relationship.

Change is no longer viewed as a singular event, but rather as an inseparable part of human life. Previously harmonious relationships can experience shifts, and this is accepted as natural. Furthermore, this interpretation demonstrates a collective view that life is not fixed or static. Changes in relationships can be caused by various factors such as time, distance, or differences in understanding between individuals, so they are not always seen as failures.

This condition indicates that individual experiences have evolved into myths, namely when an understanding is accepted as a general truth. The assumption that relationships will inevitably change becomes something that is no longer questioned in community life.

These lyrics not only describe changing circumstances but also reproduce social values ??that view relationship dynamics as part of the life process. This demonstrates how meaning at the mythical level works by transforming experiences into widely accepted beliefs.

#### Data 3

MSL/ROA/SL3: Mobite delipu lotawu (Sailing in a foreign land)

Based on data 3, the lyrics "sailing in a foreign land" at the mythical level not only describe the activity of going to another place, but also demonstrate the view that migration is a path to improving one's life. Traveling to a foreign land is understood as an effort to seek better opportunities than those in one's home country.

This meaning demonstrates that migration is not simply understood as a move, but as an important step in achieving life change. Individuals who migrate are seen as having the courage to step out of their comfort zone and face greater challenges. This demonstrates the value that life change requires real effort.

This view is also related to the notion that success is often achieved through struggle. Someone who chooses to migrate is seen as someone with strong determination and a desire to improve their situation. Therefore, migration is often associated with the hope of a better future. Furthermore, in society, migration is often seen as a normal, even encouraged, choice. Many believe that remaining in one's hometown has limitations, making moving elsewhere a solution to improve one's standard of living. This view makes migration seem like a necessary step to achieving success.

Upon closer examination, this assumption is not always consistent with reality. Not everyone who migrates achieves a better life. Some face difficulties or even fail. This suggests that the belief that migration is a path to success is actually a view shaped by social experiences within a community.



This condition is called a myth, which occurs when a view is accepted as a universal truth without question. Thus, these lyrics not only describe the activity of traveling abroad but also demonstrate how society views traveling abroad as a symbol of effort, courage, and hope for a better life

Data 4

MSL/ROA/S4: To janjiya yilalu ma'o (Promising in the past)

Referring to data 14, the lyrics "promising in the past" not only describe the act of making a promise but also demonstrate the belief that promises have significant meaning in human life. This expression demonstrates that promises are not understood as mere words, but as something binding and must be kept.

This view demonstrates that in society, promises are considered the foundation of trust. When someone makes a promise, they indirectly build hope in others. Therefore, keeping promises is highly valued, as it relates to the trust that has been given.

Someone who is able to keep their promises is often considered an individual with integrity and responsibility. Conversely, someone who breaks promises tends to be viewed negatively because they are considered untrustworthy. This demonstrates that promises have a strong moral value in social relationships.

The notion that promises must be kept has become part of societal customs. Many people accept this view without questioning whether all promises can always be kept. Promises then become not only a form of communication but also a standard for judging someone. However, when viewed from another perspective, the reality is that not all promises can be kept. There are various circumstances that prevent someone from fulfilling what they have promised. This demonstrates that the notion that "promises must always be kept" is not absolute, but rather the result of a way of thinking shaped by social values.

This condition is called a myth, namely when a value is considered a general truth without question. Promises are seen as something that must always be kept, when in fact, this is the result of a widely accepted social construct. Thus, these lyrics not only describe the act of making a promise but also demonstrate how society interprets promises as symbols of trust, responsibility, and moral values. These lyrics demonstrate that promises play a crucial role in shaping interpersonal relationships and serve as a measure of one's social behavior.

## DISCUSSION

In data 1, the phrase "Gorontalo is my region" directly refers to the name of a region that indicates a person's origin or geographic identity. The meaning that emerges at this stage is still simple because it simply mentions a place without any additional interpretation or meaning beyond that. Within Barthes's (2017:129) framework, denotative meaning is the initial stage in a sign system, where language is used to convey information as it is. At this stage, signs do not yet contain additional emotional or cultural meanings. Therefore, the phrase "Gorontalo is my region" at the denotative level functions only as a marker of regional identity without carrying any deeper symbolic meaning.

Furthermore, in data 2, "go wherever we go, stay together" describes the collective activity of moving from one place to another. This phrase demonstrates a consistent sense of togetherness across various situations and conditions, thus demonstrating a pattern of social relations that persists despite changes in space or location. The resulting meaning remains at the denotative level because it only describes concrete actions without any dominant figurative interpretation. This aligns with Sobur's (2016:70) opinion, which states that denotative meaning refers to the true meaning of a sign, without involving additional interpretation or connotative meaning.

In data 3, the phrase "Milango Gorontalo pier" refers to a real place found in everyday life. The

word "pier" refers to the location where ships dock, while "Milango Gorontalo" functions as a descriptor of the intended area. Overall, the phrase directly refers to a real geographic location in Gorontalo. When viewed using Saussure's theory (in Wulansari, 2020:49), this phrase can be understood as a sign consisting of a signifier and a signified. The signifier is the linguistic form "Milango Gorontalo pier," while the signified is the concept of the pier's location in the Gorontalo region. The relationship between signifier and signified occurs directly without requiring additional interpretation, so the resulting meaning remains at the denotative or basic level.

In data 4, the phrase "you leave only a name" indicates a state when someone is no longer present in another person's life. The word "leave" refers to the act of leaving or separating, while "you" indicates the person who does the action. Thus, this phrase directly describes the event of separation that can be found in everyday life. According to Barthes (2017:129), denotative meaning is the first stage of meaning-making when a sign is used to directly depict reality. In this phrase, "you leave" is understood as a sign that refers to the concrete act of someone leaving or separating without any additional meaning.

In data 1, the lyrics "a place full of memories" not only refer to a geographical space but also represent an emotional space that stores an individual's life experiences. Place, in this context, functions as a symbol of identity formed through the process of experience and memory. This aligns with the view of Cahyastri et al. (2024:50), who state that meaning in cultural representations is not fixed but rather is formed through a system of meanings born from social and cultural experiences. Thus, "place" is not simply understood as a location, but as a construct of meaning that binds individuals to their life histories.

The phrase "I remember back when we were together" in data 2 not only indicates the cognitive process of remembering past events, but also contains an emotional dimension in the form of

longing and attachment to past relationships. These memories do not stand as mere individual experiences, but emerge as a result of past interactions and shared experiences, thus reviving the emotional atmosphere that formed in the past.

In data 3, the phrase "mengingat kembali saat masih bersama" not only signifies the process of remembering past events but also illustrates the emergence of nostalgia that remains embedded in one's emotional memory. These memories are not simply recalled events, but also the feelings that accompany them. Human memory is always intertwined with emotional experiences and the surrounding social context, so the past is not merely stored as facts but also as meaningful experiences. Thus, this phrase demonstrates that past shared experiences still have an emotional influence on a person's life.

In data 4, "if I remember us in those days" not only implies the process of remembering, but also indicates that the past still has a strong influence on a person's current emotional state. These memories trigger unresolved feelings, so the past is never completely lost in an individual's consciousness. Memories are always tied to emotional experiences, so they can continue to influence how a person perceives and interprets the present.

In data 1, the lyrics "where I was born" denotatively indicate the location of a person's birth. This meaning is straightforward because it only refers to a person's place of origin. However, in social life, this expression has evolved into the view that place of birth can also reflect a person's identity. A person is often associated with certain traits or habits based on their place of origin. According to Husnusyifa and Mujianto (in Utami et al., 2025:15), mythical meanings arise from cultural customs and beliefs that are inherited and accepted by society from generation to generation. In this context, the assumption that place of birth determines a person's identity is a form of myth because this view has been considered normal by society, even though it is actually formed through social construction.



In data 2, the lyrics "now the situation has changed" denotatively indicate that the current situation is different from before. This meaning is still straightforward because it only describes a change in situation. However, when understood through Barthes's concept of myth, the phrase also reflects how society views life as something that is always changing. In the concept of myth, change, which initially was merely a life experience, then developed into a general belief that every life inevitably undergoes change. This view is continually repeated in social experience, so it is considered normal and no longer questioned. However, this assumption is formed from how humans understand and interpret their social life.

In data 3, the lyrics "sailing in a foreign land" denotatively describe someone leaving or wandering to another place. This meaning indicates a move from one region to another, which can be understood directly. However, in social life, this meaning develops into a broader perspective. Migration is often seen as a symbol of courage, independence, and the pursuit of a better life. In Barthes's concept of myth, this view is born from social experiences that are continually repeated and believed in by society. Migration is no longer understood simply as a journey, but is seen as a path to success. As a result, the belief arises that one must leave one's hometown to achieve success. However, this belief is not always in line with reality, as success is not solely determined by moving away from home, and not everyone who stays in their hometown experiences failure.

In data 4, the phrase "promised in the past" indicates a previous commitment. This meaning is still direct because it only describes the act of promising in the past. However, in Barthes's study of myth, the phrase also reflects society's view of the importance of promises in social relationships. Through the concept of myth, keeping promises is seen as a sign of honesty and responsibility. This view is continuously passed down and accepted as normal in society. Therefore, someone who keeps a promise is usually seen as a good and trustworthy person.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research and discussion of the meaning of the lyrics of Gorontalo folk songs in Rizky Oneyt's album using Roland Barthes's semiotics, it can be concluded that the song lyrics contain three levels of meaning: denotation, connotation, and myth, which are interrelated in forming the overall meaning.

At the denotative level, song lyrics convey literal meanings that directly refer to concrete realities, such as the mention of place names (Gorontalo, Tilongkabila, Bone, Limboto), daily activities (eating together, sitting together, going together), and life events (going, waiting, apologizing). These meanings serve as a basis for understanding because they present a concrete representation of community life without involving emotional or cultural interpretations. Thus, denotative meanings form the initial foundation for interpreting song lyrics.

At the connotative level, the meanings in the lyrics develop into more complex emotional and cultural meanings. Lyrics that literally describe places and activities, at this stage, represent feelings of longing for one's hometown, love for local identity, joy in togetherness, and conflict and disappointment in interpersonal relationships. Connotative meanings are formed through the interaction between the text and the listener's experiences, emotions, and cultural background, making them dynamic and open to varied interpretations.

Furthermore, at the mythical level, song lyrics construct and reproduce social values that have become naturalized in community life. The myths that emerged included beliefs about the importance of ancestral identity, attachment to one's hometown, the value of loyalty in relationships, social roles within the family, and views on migration, education, and sacrifice as part of life. These meanings were no longer understood as cultural constructs, but rather as truths that were considered natural and collectively accepted.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My deepest gratitude goes to my parents, whose continuous support, both moral and material, enabled me to successfully complete this scientific article. Their prayers, attention, and encouragement were a source of motivation and strength throughout all stages of the research.

Furthermore, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to my Supervisor I and Supervisor II, who diligently provided guidance, direction, and encouragement throughout the writing process. Their suggestions, criticisms, and knowledge were invaluable and contributed significantly to the perfection of this scientific work.

## REFERENCES

- Akrom., M. (2024). Analisis Ketampanan Nabi Yusuf dalam Presfektif Semiotika Al-Qur'an. *Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab dan Kebahasaaraban*. Arabiyat: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab dan Kebahasaaraban, 1(2), 223-236. <https://doi.org/10.15408/a.v1i2.1141>
- Aulia R. I., Akbar, F., & Allifiansyah, S. (2025). Analisis Semiotika Roland Barthes Dalam Lagu Rex Orange County Yang Berjudul "Happiness". *Jurnal Multidisiplin Ilmu*. 3(10), 8-17
- Afifuddin, A. & Saebani, B. A. (2002). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. Bandung: Pustaka Setia.
- Aziz, F. (2020). Mitologi dan Konstruksi Budaya Masyarakat Bubakan Mijen Semarang dalam Tinjauan Roland Barthes. *Fikrah*, 8(1), 115. <https://doi.org/10.21043/fikrah.v8i1.7064>
- Balaka, M. Y. (2012). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif*. Editor: Iskandar Akhmaddien. Bandung: Widina Bhakti Persada.
- Barthes, R. (2017). *Elemen-Elemen Semiologi*. Yogyakarta: Basabasi.
- Baqi, S.A. (2015). *Ekspresi Emosi Marah*. Buletin Psikologi. Yogyakarta: Universitas Gadjah Mada.
- Cahyastrri, A., Nurhasanah, E., Pratiwi W.D. (2024). Makna Denotatif dan Konotatif Antologi Puisi Kopi Kehidupan Karya MR. Sae. *Jurnal Pembelajaran Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia* 6(1), 44-51. <https://ojs.unm.ac.id/indonesia>
- Didipu, Herman. (2021). *Kritik Sastra Tinjauan Teori dan Contoh Implementasi*. Kata Gorontalo: Zahir Publishing.
- Elmustian, E., & Jalil, A. (2015). *Teori Sastra: Bahan Ajar*. Pekanbaru: Laboratorium Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia, FKIP Universitas Riau.
- Elviana, A. B. (2018). *Makna Simbolik pada Syair Kinopatoyan dan Penggunaan Kain Aluang pada Prosesi Kedukaan Adat Bolaang Mongondow Desa Ibolian Kecamatan Dumoga Tengah*. Skripsi, Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia, Universitas Negeri Gorontalo.
- Halima, S, Daeng., K, Rahim., A. (2024). Interpretasi Makna Teks Kelong Karyakembong Daeng dalam Postingan Media Sosial Facebook (Kajian Semantik). *Language and Literature*. 1(2), 135-143.
- Hanifah, H. (2023). Pentingnya Memahami Makna, Jenis-Jenis Makna dan Perubahannya. *Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab*, 6(1), 157-171.
- Katara, B. (2024). *Makna Simbol Perangkat Adat pada Upacara Adat Pohutu Lo Me'eraji di Kecamatan Tilongkabila Kabupaten Bone Bolango*. Skripsi, Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia, Universitas Negeri Gorontalo.
- Khairunnisa., N, Sihombing., M.S, Mawarni., C, Sinaga., C. (2025). Analisis Sistem Tanda di Ramayana Teladan Medan: Kajian Semiotik Charles Sanders Peirce. *Jurnal Ilmuan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris*. 3(2), 184-195.
- Muawanah, S. B., Ansoriyah, S., & Attas, S. G. (2023). The Citra Perempuan Ningrat



- dalam Novel Panggil Aku Kartini Saja Karya Pramoedya Ananta Toer: Kajian Simbolik Roland Barthes. *Diglosia: Jurnal Kajian Bahasa, Sastra, dan Pengajarannya*, 6(3), 723-738. <https://doi.org/10.30872/diglosia.v6i3.715>
- Haris, A. dan Amalia, A. (2018). Makna dan Simbol dalam Proses Interaksi Sosial (Sebuah Tinjauan Komunikasi). *Jurnal Risalah*, 29(1). 16-19.
- Harnia, Neng Tika. (2021). Analisis Semiotika Makna Cintapada Lirik Lagu “Tak Sekedar Cinta” Karya Dnanda. *Jurnal Metamorfosa*, 9(2), 224-238
- Hedo., D.J. Simarmata., N. (2023). *Harapan Sebagai Kekuatan Psikologis Remaja dalam Surviving The Adversity*. Universitas Udayana, 9(7),57-66
- Hermintoyo, M. H. (2017). Simbol Natural dalam Lirik Lagu “Di Manakah Matahariku” Karya Ebid G Ade sebagai Sarana Kreatif Penciptaan Kosakata Baru. *Nusa: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa dan Sastra*, 12(3), 145-153. <https://doi.org/10.14710/nusa.12.3.145-153>
- Hinta, E. (2017). *Dikili Tradisi Lisan Gorontalo dalam Kajian Semiotika*. Kota Gorontalo: Ideas Publishing.
- Irawati., L. (2021). Struktur Kesadaran Tragis dalam Novel Pukul Setengah Lima Karya Rintik Sedu: Kajian Sosiologi Sastra Lucien Goldmann. *Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra*. 12(2), 111-119.
- Irawan, R. (2022). Lagu-Lagu Daerah Indonesia pada Panggung Musik Nasional 1950-1960an. *Jurnal Kajian Seni*, 9(1), 19-32. <https://doi.org/10.22146/jksks.77104>
- Moleong, L.J (2016). *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif*. Bandung.
- Mukminin, M. S., & Iryani, E. (2024). *Representasi Kota Yogyakarta dalam Lirik Lagu: Kajian Semiotika Roland Barthes*, 4(2), 134-148.
- Ngangi, C. R. (2011). Konstruksi Sosial dalam Realitas Sosial. *Agrisosioekonomi*, 7(2), 1-4. <https://doi.org/10.35791/agrsosek.7.2.2011.85>
- Najah, F., & Silalahi, W. W. B. (2015). Penggunaan Lagu sebagai Media Pembelajaran Kontekstual di Sekolah Dasar. *Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan*, 21(3), 145-153.
- Narwahidah (2019). *Makna Smbolik Lagu-Lagu Rdwan Sau (Suatu Tinjauan Analisis Semiotik)*. Skripsi, Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia, Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar.
- Putri, S Novianti & Febrian. (2025). Analisis Semiotika Dalam Lirik Lagu Berjudul “One Last Breath” Oleh Creed. *Jurnal Ilmuan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris* 2(3), 381-391.
- Rahayu, I. K. I (2020). Makna Simbolik Umat Hindu Dalam. *Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra*, 5(1), 145-157.
- Razak, A. (2017). *Metode Riset: Menggapai Mixed Methods Bidang Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia*. Pekanbaru: Ababil Press.
- Siregar, N,S,S. (2011). *Kajian Tentang Interaksionisme Simbolik*. *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial*. 4(2), 100-110.
- Supriadi, S. (2016). Perubahan Pola Hubungan Sosial (Keluarga, Komunitas dan Perkumpulan) pada Masyarakat Kampung Godegan RT 10 Tamantirta Kasihan Bantul. *Jurnal Pendidikan Pancasila dan Kewarganegaraan*. 7(2), 37-38. Universitas Ahmad Dahlan
- Tamnge, M. N., Putra, T. Y., & Jumroh, S. F. A. (2021). Analisis Makna Lagu dalam Album Sarjana Muda Karya Iwan Fals. *Jurnal Frasa; Jurnal Keilmuan Bahasa, Sastra, dan Pengajarannya Universitas Pendidikan Muhammadiyah Sorong*, 2(1), 37-46.

- Wajdi., F. Syawal., S. Ishak., S. (2025). Analisis Komparatif Cinta Menurut Teori Triangular Robert Sternberg dalam The Great Gatsby dan Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijck. *Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia*. 11(2), 19-30
- Warouw, M., Monoarfa, S., & Loho, J. J. (2024). *Analisis Gaya Bahasa pada Lagu Daerah Implikasinya dalam Pembelajaran Sastra Gorontalo*. 04(08), 551–559.
- Wulansari, R., Setiana, R.A., Aziza, S.H. (2020). *Pemikiran Tokoh Semiotika Modern*. *Textura Journal*. 1(1), 48-62.
- Yusti., F, Prihandini., A. (2025). Makna Denotasi dan Konotasi dalam Film The Hundred-Foot Journey (Kajian Semantik). *Mahadaya*. 5(1), 78-92