



The Meaning of Symbols in the Lyrics of Balinese Songs by Dek Ulik: A Semiotic Study by Roland Barthes

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ABSTRACT

Contemporary Balinese music, particularly the works of Dek Ulik, has experienced rapid development in the digital era, but the younger generation's appreciation of the depth of symbolic meaning contained within it is still very limited. This study aims to describe the symbolic signs in the lyrics of Balinese songs by Dek Ulik that reflect the culture and society of Balinese society, analyze the meaning of each symbol found, and describe its relevance to learning Indonesian. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with Roland Barthes's semiotic analysis method that dissects meaning through three levels, namely denotation, connotation, and myth. The object of the study is the lyrics of five Balinese songs by Dek Ulik, namely *Ratih Kamajaya*, *Sanjiwani*, *Tresna Kanti Pawah*, *Suksma Hyang Widhi*, and *Nyerahang Dewek*. The results show that the lyrics of these songs contain various signs that through the process of cultural convention develop into symbols. Each symbol has layers of meaning, ranging from literal meaning to ideological meaning that reflects the life views of Balinese Hindu society. Furthermore, these symbols have substantive relevance to Indonesian language learning in the Independent Curriculum in Phases D, E, and F. This study concludes that the lyrics of the song Dek Ulik are not merely a product of entertainment art, but rather a semiotic construction rich in cultural, philosophical, and ideological content of the Balinese people. This finding also confirms that regional artworks have great potential as contextual and authentic teaching materials in Indonesian language learning.

Keywords: meaning of symbols, song lyrics, semiotics study

Makna Simbol dalam Lirik Lagu Bali Karya Dek Ulik: Suatu Kajian Semiotika Roland Barthes

ABSTRAK

Musik Bali kontemporer, khususnya karya Dek Ulik, mengalami perkembangan yang pesat di era digital, namun apresiasi generasi muda terhadap kedalaman makna simbolik yang terkandung di dalamnya masih sangat terbatas. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan tanda-tanda simbol dalam lirik lagu Bali karya Dek Ulik yang mencerminkan budaya dan sosial masyarakat Bali, menganalisis makna setiap simbol yang ditemukan, serta mendeskripsikan relevansinya terhadap pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan metode analisis semiotika Roland Barthes yang membedah makna melalui tiga tataran, yaitu denotasi, konotasi, dan mitos. Objek penelitian berupa lirik dari lima lagu Bali karya Dek Ulik, yakni *Ratih Kamajaya*, *Sanjiwani*, *Tresna Kanti Pawah*, *Suksma Hyang Widhi*, dan *Nyerahang Dewek*. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa lirik lagu-lagu tersebut mengandung beragam tanda yang melalui proses konvensi budaya berkembang menjadi simbol. Setiap simbol memiliki lapisan makna yang bertingkat, mulai dari makna literal hingga makna ideologis yang mencerminkan pandangan hidup masyarakat Hindu Bali. Selain itu, simbol-simbol tersebut memiliki relevansi substantif terhadap pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia dalam Kurikulum Merdeka pada Fase D, E, dan F. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa lirik lagu Dek Ulik bukan sekadar produk seni hiburan, melainkan konstruksi semiotik yang kaya akan muatan budaya, filosofis, dan ideologi masyarakat Bali. Temuan ini sekaligus menegaskan bahwa karya seni daerah berpotensi besar sebagai bahan ajar kontekstual dan autentik dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia.

Keywords: makna simbol, lirik lagu, kajian semiotika

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INTRODUCTION

Songs serve as windows into the soul of a culture, capable of encapsulating the history, values, and aspirations of a society. More than mere entertainment, songs often serve as a means of conveying complex messages, stimulating reflection, and inspiring change. Song lyrics, as a key element of music, have the power to evoke emotions, spark the imagination, and instill a deeper understanding of the world around us. In a culturally rich context like Bali, song lyrics often employ symbols rooted in the traditions, beliefs, and philosophies of local life.

The study of symbols in song lyrics is an important area of research in language and culture studies. Through song lyrics, songwriters often convey messages and outlooks on life that reflect the culture of a particular society. These symbols help listeners reflect on these values in their daily lives. Therefore, Balinese song lyrics are a relevant object of study in language and culture research, particularly through a semiotic approach. According to Barthes, semiotics not only examines signs in their literal meaning (denotation), but also uncovers the cultural and ideological meanings (connotation) hidden behind a sign. Thus, symbols in song lyrics can be understood as representations of cultural values socially transmitted through language.

The development of modern Balinese music demonstrates a significant cultural transformation amidst globalization. Balinese regional music is now not only preserved as a traditional heritage but also packaged in a modern way to appeal to the younger generation. One musician playing a key role in this development is Dek Ulik. Through his works, Dek Ulik successfully blends traditional Balinese elements with popular music nuances, capturing the attention of a wider audience. His songs not only showcase musical aesthetics but are also imbued with cultural symbols and social messages from the Balinese community. The popularity of Dek Ulik's work has increased since the song "Somahe Bobotoh" went viral in 2004 and has continued to grow through digital platforms,

reaching millions of online viewers (Viktriani, 2024). This phenomenon demonstrates that modern Balinese songs have great potential as a medium for preserving local culture amidst the development of technology and popular culture.

A lack of understanding of the meaning of symbols in Balinese song lyrics can lead to a diminished appreciation of local cultural values. In fact, the symbols in Balinese songs serve a crucial role in preserving culture and conveying Balinese values. Therefore, an in-depth study of the meaning of symbols in Balinese song lyrics is necessary to broaden the cultural message they convey. This research is also relevant to Indonesian language learning, as song lyrics can be used as teaching materials to develop literary appreciation, understand figurative language, and instill local cultural values in students.

Based on this description, this research focuses on the meaning of symbols in the lyrics of Balinese songs by Dek Ulik using Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis. The research questions include: (1) how the symbols contained in Dek Ulik's Balinese song lyrics reflect Balinese culture and society; (2) how the symbols in Dek Ulik's Balinese song lyrics are interpreted based on Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis; and (3) how relevant these symbols are to Indonesian language learning. The purpose of this research is to describe the symbols in Dek Ulik's Balinese song lyrics, to describe the meaning of the symbols based on Roland Barthes' semiotic theory, and to describe their relevance to Indonesian language learning.

This research is expected to provide both theoretical and practical benefits. Theoretically, this research can enrich semiotic studies, particularly regarding the meaning of symbols in regional musical literature. Practically, this research is expected to serve as a reference for teachers and students in learning Indonesian language based on local culture, while also serving as an effort to preserve Balinese culture through academic study. Research on the meaning of symbols in song lyrics has previously been conducted by several researchers. Nurwahida (2019) examined the



symbolic meaning of Ridwan Sau's songs using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic theory and identified various cultural symbols in Makassar related to longing, affection, and social life. Another study conducted by Miftakhul Fajar (2020) examined the color symbolism in the lyrics of Big Bang's song "Blue." The study showed that blue symbolizes sadness, loneliness, and emotional depression. Furthermore, Muhammad Alvin Maulana Bahrian (2021) examined the meaning of the lyrics of Hindia's song "Secukupnya" and found that the song conveys messages about mental health and self-awareness.

Unlike previous research, this study utilizes Roland Barthes' semiotic theory, focusing on the concepts of denotation, connotation, and myth in the lyrics of Dek Ulik's Balinese song. Furthermore, this study not only examines the meaning of symbols but also relates them to Indonesian language learning. Thus, this research is novel in its object of study, theoretical approach, and relevance to education and the preservation of local culture.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. The qualitative approach was chosen because the study aimed to deeply understand and describe the meaning of symbols in Dek Ulik's Balinese song lyrics through a study of Roland Barthes's semiotics. According to Fraenkel et al. (2012), Moleong (2018), Razak (2017), qualitative research is a research approach that seeks to understand phenomena holistically through verbal descriptions in a natural context. Meanwhile, Sugiyono (2014), Abubakar (2021) explains that qualitative descriptive research is used to systematically and accurately describe the facts and characteristics of the research object. The subjects of this study were five Balinese song lyrics by Dek Ulik: Ratih Kamajaya, Sanjiwani, Suksma Hyang Widhi, Tresna Kanti Pawah, and Nyerahang Dewek.

The primary data in this study consisted of words, phrases, sentences, and expressions in song

lyrics containing symbols of Balinese culture and social life. This data was analyzed to discover the meaning of the symbols contained within and their relevance to Indonesian language learning through Learning Outcomes data. Secondary data was obtained from books, journals, and credible articles discussing Balinese culture to support the research analysis.

Data collection was conducted using documentation, listening, and note-taking techniques. The documentation technique was used to obtain song lyrics from official sources, such as Dek Ulik's YouTube channel and official digital platforms, as well as to gather supporting references related to semiotics, Balinese culture, and Indonesian language learning. The listening technique involved repeatedly listening to and reading the song lyrics to identify the symbols contained within, while the note-taking technique was used to record and classify data based on the type of symbol and its meaning.

Data analysis was conducted descriptively through several stages: translating song lyrics into Indonesian, reading and understanding the lyrics in depth, identifying symbols within the lyrics, categorizing the data according to Barthes's semiotic categories, interpreting denotative, connotative, and mythical meanings based on the Balinese cultural context, and describing the relevance of the symbols' meanings to Indonesian language learning. The results of the analysis were then presented in descriptive form to systematically answer the research problem formulation and achieve the research objectives.

RESULTS

1. Symbolic Signs in Balinese Song Lyrics by Dek Ulik

Based on the analysis of five Balinese song lyrics by Dek Ulik: Ratih Kamajaya, Sanjiwani, Tresna Kanti Pawah, Suksma Hyang Widhi, and Nyerahang Dewek, 20 signs were identified that function as cultural, spiritual, and social symbols in Balinese life. The research findings are presented as follows.

1.1 Symbols in the Song *Ratih Kamajaya*

a) *Rahina Becik* (Good Day)

The symbol of *Rahina Becik* refers to an auspicious day believed to bring safety and blessings in Balinese Hindu tradition. This symbol is seen in the quote "*Rahina Becik puniki*." In the context of Balinese culture, *Rahina Becik* is not only interpreted as a timepiece, but also as a symbol of harmony between humans, nature, and God.

b) *Pawiwahan* (Wedding)

The *pawiwahan* symbol refers to the sacred bond of marriage in Balinese Hindu tradition. This symbol is seen in the quote "*Pang sida pawiwahan margi*." *Pawiwahan* symbolizes the union of two people and their families into one spiritual and social unity.

c) *Ratih lan Semara* (God and Goddess Couple)

The *Ratih lan Semara* symbol refers to the god-goddess pair of love in Hindu mythology. This symbol is seen in the quote "*Kadi Ratih lan Semara*." *Ratih* and *Semara* symbolize pure, harmonious, and eternal love.

d) *Karma* (Results of Actions)

The *karma* symbol refers to the law of cause and effect in Hindu teachings. This symbol is seen in the quote "*Nemu ring peturun karmane*." *Karma* symbolizes human moral responsibility for every action taken.

e) *Ring* (Jewelry)

The *ring* symbol refers to the marriage bond. This symbol is seen in the quote "*Saling salukin cincin pinaka cihna*." The circular shape of the ring symbolizes loyalty and eternal love.

1.2 Symbols in the *Sanjiwani* Song

a) *Ida Hyang Prama Kawi* (God the Great Creator)

The symbol of *Ida Hyang Prama Kawi* refers to God the Almighty Creator in Balinese Hinduism. This symbol appears in the quote "*Ageng suwecan Idane Hyang Prama Kawi*." This symbol represents the source of life and purity.

b) *Tirta Sanjiwani* (Holy Water)

The symbol of *Tirta Sanjiwani* refers to holy water believed to possess purifying and spiritually

healing powers. This symbol appears in the quote "*Metu tirta sujati sanjiwani*."

c) *Tirta Amerta* (Water of Immortality)

The symbol of *Tirta Amerta* refers to the holy water of immortality in Hinduism. This symbol appears in the quote "*Kesiratin antuk tirta amertha*." *Tirta amerta* symbolizes spiritual perfection and eternal life.

1.3 Symbols in the Song *Tresna Kanti Pawah*

a) *Tirta Sanjiwani* (Holy Water)

The symbol of *Tirta Sanjiwani* is seen in the quote "*Kadi kesiramin tirta sanjiwani*." In the context of a love song, this symbol represents love that gives life, healing, and inner peace.

b) *Telung Warsa* (Three Years)

The symbol of *Telung Warsa* is seen in the quote "*Telung Warsa suba tusing je merasa*." This symbol represents the process of maturing and maturity of a relationship.

c) *Gigine Be Sudah Pawah* (Toothless Teeth)

The symbol of *Gigine Be Sudah Pawah* is seen in the quote "*Beli tresna kanti gigine be telah pawah*." This symbol represents faithful love until old age.

1.4 Symbols in *Suksma Hyang Widhi's* Songs

a) *Ida Sang Hyang Surya* (Sun God)

The symbol of *Ida Sang Hyang Surya* appears in the quote "*Ida Sang Hyang Surya sueca nyunarin jagate sadina-dina*". This symbol represents a source of light, life, and spiritual enlightenment.

b) *Ida Sang Hyang Bayu* (God of Wind/Air)

The symbol of *Ida Sang Hyang Bayu* appears in the quote "*Ida Sang Hyang Bayu ngampehang angine nguripin sekancan sane meurip*". This symbol represents the breath of life and the power that animates nature.

c) *Sembah Bhakti* (Prayer)

The symbol of devotional service appears in the quote "*Ring sane sampun kepicayang for devotional worship*". This symbol symbolizes the sincerity of human devotion to God.



d) Ida Sang Hyang Widhi (God Almighty)

The symbol of Ida Sang Hyang Widhi is seen in the quote "Ring Ida Hyang Widhi." This symbol represents the supreme power that governs life and the universe.

e) Sekala (Real World)

The symbol of Sekala is seen in the quote "Ring sekala taler ring niskala." This symbol refers to the tangible world that can be physically observed.

f) Niskala (Unreal World)

The symbol of niskala is seen in the quote "Ring sekala taler ring niskala." This symbol refers to the spiritual dimension that cannot be reached by the human five senses.

1.5 Symbols in the Song Nyerahang Dewek

a) Sanggah (Sacred Place in the Home)

The symbol of Sanggah is seen in the quote "Yen amone kanti tiang bani ngutang sanggah." This symbol represents the spiritual center of the family in Balinese Hindu tradition.

b) Rerama (Parents)

The symbol of rerama is seen in the quote "Yen amone kanti tiang bani ngalahin rerama." This symbol represents affection, sacrifice, and respect for parents.

c) Batun Buluane (Rambutan Seed)

The symbol of batun buluane is seen in the quote "Tuah memesik kadi batun buluane." This symbol represents something rare, unique, and valuable in a love relationship.

2. The Meaning of Symbols in Dek Ulik's Balinese Song Lyrics

Based on the results of the analysis using Roland Barthes' semiotic theory, the meaning of symbols in Dek Ulik's Balinese song lyrics is analyzed through three levels of meaning: denotation, connotation, and myth.

2.1 The Meaning of Symbols in the Song Ratih Kamajaya

Kamajaya

a) Rahina Becik (Good Day)

Denotatively, rahina becik means a good day. Connotatively, this symbol represents human

harmony with spiritual time. On a mythical level, the rahina becik is related to Balinese beliefs about the quality of time within the pawukon calendar system.

b) Pawiwahan (Wedding)

Denotatively, pawiwahan means a wedding ceremony. Connotatively, this symbol represents spiritual union and the responsibility of living together. On a mythical level, pawiwahan is understood as the implementation of dharma in human life.

c) Ratih lan Semara (God and Goddess Couple)

Denotatively, Ratih and Semara are figures from Hindu mythology. Connotatively, this symbol represents ideal love and loyalty. On a mythical level, this symbol is related to the belief in true love endowed with divine power.

d) Karma (Results of Actions)

Denotatively, karma means the results of actions. Connotatively, this symbol represents human moral responsibility for one's actions. On a mythical level, karma is related to Hindu beliefs regarding the law of cause and effect and reincarnation.

e) Ring (Jewelry)

Denotatively, a ring is a circular piece of jewelry. Connotatively, this symbol represents an eternal bond of love. On a mythical level, a ring is understood as a sign of the sanctity and integrity of marriage.

2.2 Symbolic Meanings in the Sanjiwani Song

a) Ida Hyang Prama Kawi (God the Great Creator)

Denotatively, this symbol refers to God the Almighty Creator. Connotatively, this symbol represents the source of all life and gifts. On a mythical level, this symbol relates to the concept of God as the creator and sustainer of the universe.

b) Tirta Sanjiwani (Holy Water)

Denotatively, Tirta Sanjiwani means holy healing water. Connotatively, this symbol represents purification and spiritual restoration. On a mythical level, Tirta Sanjiwani is related to the Ramayana story about the water of life.

c) Tirta Amerta (Water of Immortality)

Denotatively, Tirta Amerta means water of immortality. Connotatively, this symbol represents spiritual perfection and liberation of the soul. On a mythical level, this symbol is related to the story of Samudramantana in Hinduism.

2.3 The Meaning of Symbols in the Song *Tresna Kanti Pawah*

a) Tirta Sanjiwani (Holy Water)

Denotatively, this symbol means holy healing water. Connotatively, this symbol represents love that can heal inner wounds. On a mythical level, this symbol is related to the story of Hanoman searching for the sanjiwani plant in the Ramayana epic.

b) Telung Warsa (Three Years)

Denotatively, telung warsa means three years. Connotatively, this symbol represents the maturity of a relationship and the process of maturing love. On a mythical level, the number three is related to the concept of Tri Murti and cosmic balance in Balinese Hindu culture.

c) Gigine Be Sudah Pawah (Toothless Teeth)

Denotatively, this symbol represents the condition of having no teeth in old age. Connotatively, this symbol symbolizes the loyalty of love until old age. On a mythical level, this symbol is related to the belief in true love that transcends physical changes and time.

2.4 The Meaning of Symbols in the Song *Suksma Hyang Widhi*

a) Ida Sang Hyang Surya (Sun God)

Denotatively, this symbol means the sun. Connotatively, this symbol represents the source of life and enlightenment. At the mythical level, Surya is understood as a manifestation of God in the universe.

b) Ida Sang Hyang Bayu (Wind/Air God)

Denotatively, this symbol means wind or air. Connotatively, this symbol represents the breath of life and spiritual energy. At the mythical level, Bayu is understood as the force that animates the universe.

c) Sembah Bhakti (Prayer)

Denotatively, sembah bhakti means the act of worship. Connotatively, this symbol represents the sincerity of human devotion to God. At the mythical level, sembah bhakti is believed to bring humans closer to divine power.

d) Ida Sang Hyang Widhi (God Almighty)

Denotatively, this symbol refers to the One God. Connotatively, this symbol symbolizes the source of truth and balance in life. At the mythical level, this symbol is related to the concept of a single divinity in Balinese Hinduism.

e) Sekala (Real World)

Denotatively, sekala means the real world. Connotatively, this symbol symbolizes the transitory nature of worldly life. At the mythical level, sekala is understood as a testing ground for human life.

f) Niskala (Unreal World)

Denotatively, niskala means the supernatural or spiritual world. Connotatively, this symbol represents the spiritual dimension of human life. At the mythical level, niskala is understood as an eternal spiritual reality that influences human life.

2.5 The Meaning of Symbols in the *Nyerahang Dewek Song*

a) Sanggah (Holy Place in the Home)

Denotatively, sanggah means a place of family worship. Connotatively, this symbol represents a spiritual connection with ancestors. On a mythical level, sanggah is believed to be a link between humans and ancestral spirits.

b) Rerama (Parents)

Denotatively, rerama means father and mother. Connotatively, this symbol represents the love, sacrifice, and obligations of children to their parents. On a mythical level, rerama is related to the concept of Pitra Rna in Balinese Hinduism.

c) Batun Buluane (Rambutan Seed)

Denotatively, batun buluane means rambutan seed. Connotatively, this symbol represents something rare and special. On a mythical level, this symbol represents true love that is unique and irreplaceable.



3. The Relevance of Symbolic Meanings in Dek Ulik's Balinese Song Lyrics to Indonesian Language Learning

Based on the analysis of the symbolic meanings in Dek Ulik's Balinese song lyrics, several symbols are found to be relevant to Indonesian language learning, particularly in the Independent Curriculum Learning Outcomes for writing, listening, reading, and viewing. Balinese song lyrics can be used as a learning medium because they contain denotative, connotative, and mythical meanings related to cultural values and community life.

3.1 Relevance to Phase D (Junior High School): Writing Skills

The Learning Outcome for writing skills in Phase D reads:

"Students write ideas, views, directions, messages, experiences, and/or imaginations in various types of texts logically, critically, creatively, engagingly, and/or beautifully; write expressions of concern and/or pro/contra opinions in various types of texts in multimodal texts; and use new vocabulary with denotative, connotative, and figurative meanings in writing."

The meaning of the Tirta Sanjiwani symbol in the song "Sanjiwani" is relevant to writing skills because it contains denotative and connotative meanings that students can use in writing poetry and narratives.

3.2 Relevance to Phase E (Senior High School Grade X): Listening Skills

The Learning Outcome for listening skills in Phase E states:

"Students are able to evaluate ideas, views, directions, and/or messages from non-literary texts in the form of aural texts; and evaluate the intrinsic and extrinsic elements of literary texts in the form of aural texts."

The meaning of the symbols "sanggah" and "rerama" in the song "Nyerahang Dewek" is relevant to listening skills because they contain

cultural and moral values that can be understood through aural literary texts in the form of songs.

3.3 Relevance to Phase F (Senior High School Grades XI–XII): Reading and Viewing Skills

The Learning Outcomes for reading and viewing skills in Phase F read:

"Students evaluate information in the form of ideas, feelings, views, directions, and/or messages from various types of visual and/or audiovisual texts to discover explicit and implicit meanings based on logical thinking principles; reflect on ideas and views based on logical thinking principles from various types of visual and/or audiovisual texts; and appreciate various types of visual and/or audiovisual texts."

The meaning of the karma and Ratih-Semara symbols in the song Ratih Kamajaya is relevant to reading and viewing skills because it helps students understand the implicit and symbolic meanings in audiovisual literary texts.

DISCUSSION

The lyrics of Dek Ulik's songs contain various cultural, spiritual, and social symbols of the Balinese Hindu community. In the song "Ratih Kamajaya," the symbol "rahina becik" signifies an auspicious day, while its signifier represents the community's belief in a sacred and harmonious time for carrying out important activities. The relationship between the two forms a symbol of balance between humans, nature, and divine power. Titib (2003) states that religious symbols can convey realities that cannot be directly experienced by human experience. Therefore, rahina becik is interpreted not only as a determination of time but also as a symbol of cosmic order and harmony between the physical and spiritual realms.

The symbol "pawiwahan" signifies marriage, while its signifier is the sacred union of a man and a woman in the bond of dharma. This relationship has evolved into a symbol of spiritual, social, and religious responsibility within the Balinese Hindu household. This meaning is reinforced in Manawa

Dharma Sastra Sloka III-37, which explains that marriage is a sacred obligation related to respect for ancestors and the continuation of the lineage. Furthermore, the symbols of Ratih and Semara convey the meaning of ideal love, harmony, and marital fidelity. In classical Balinese literature, these two figures are seen as representations of perfect and complementary love.

The symbol of karma illustrates the law of cause and effect in human life. In the song's lyrics, marriage is understood as the result of pre-existing karma, so that human life is perceived as influenced by past actions. Meanwhile, the symbol of the ring signifies eternal commitment and fidelity. The circular shape, with its beginning and end, reinforces the meaning of an unbroken, lifelong relationship.

The Tirta Sanjiwani symbol is again used to depict love that can give new life and rekindle the spirit. This demonstrates that love in Balinese culture is understood not only emotionally but also spiritually. The symbol of *telung warsa*, or three years, represents the process of maturation and the journey of human life. Titib (2003) explains that the concept of time in Balinese Hindu cosmology is cyclical and related to human spiritual development. The number three is also related to the concepts of *Tri Murti* and *Tri Guna*. Furthermore, the symbol of *gigine telah pawah*, or toothless teeth, represents loyalty into old age and love that is not faded by physical changes.

The song *Nyerahang Dewek* contains the symbols of *sanggah*, *rerama*, and *batun buluane*. The *sanggah* symbolizes a spiritual connection with ancestors and family identity. Barthes (2017) refers to this process as second-order signification, the development of signs into broader cultural symbols. The *rerama* symbol represents parental love and sacrifice. Pierce, in Nazaruddin (2015), explains that symbols are formed through cultural agreements and collective community experiences. The *batun buluane*, or rambutan seed, symbolizes true love and a faithful life partner. Barthes, in Hoed (2014), explains that symbols operate through analogical relationships between concrete objects

and abstract meanings. The use of these local symbols demonstrates the closeness of Balinese songs to everyday life, conveying strong emotional meaning.

Dek Ulik's songs demonstrate that symbols in lyrics function not only as aesthetic elements but also as representations of the spiritual and cultural values of Balinese Hinduism. In the song *Ratih Kamajaya*, the symbol *rahina becik* denotatively means a good day according to the Balinese *pawukon* system. At the connotative level, this symbol embodies society's belief in the harmony between humans and cosmic forces. Titib (2003) explains that religious symbols can reveal spiritual realities that humans cannot directly access. At the mythical level, this symbol fosters the belief that human life must be in harmony with the order of the universe.

The symbol of the spiritual realm, at the connotative level, depicts the implementation of dharma and spiritual responsibility in Balinese Hindu households. Barthes, in Nurhadi and Millah (2006), states that myths function as a system of cultural meaning that shapes society's perspective on social reality. The symbol of *Ratih* and *Semara* represents ideal love and domestic harmony. Astari et al. (2025) explain that mythological figures in cultural texts are used to represent universal values such as love and devotion. Furthermore, the symbol of karma illustrates the law of cause and effect in human life. Dasniari and Putra (2021) explain that the concept of *karma phala* relates to the results of human actions that determine one's life. At the mythical level, this symbol fosters the belief that soul mates and marriage are part of cosmic law. Meanwhile, the ring symbol represents eternal commitment and loyalty.

In the song *Sanjiwani*, the symbol of *Ida Hyang Prama Kawi* depicts God as the creator of the universe. Hoed (2014) explains that connotation arises when a sign is understood within a specific cultural context, thus transcending its literal meaning. The song's primary symbol is *Tirta Sanjiwani*, which symbolizes the purification of the soul and human spiritual restoration. Piliang (2012)



explains that ritual symbols function as a link between the profane and sacred worlds. The symbol of Tirta Amertha symbolizes spiritual perfection and the liberation of the human soul. Puspitasari & Andriyanto (2023) explain that Tirta Amerta is understood as a symbol of eternal life in Hindu teachings.

In the song Tresna Kanti Pawah, the Tirta Sanjiwani symbol is used to depict love as a spiritual force that heals inner wounds. Putri & Arsana (2025) explain that tirta in Balinese Hinduism has high spiritual value and is used as a means of purification. The telung warsa symbol represents the maturation of a relationship, while the gigin telah pawah symbol represents faithful love until old age.

In the song Suksma Hyang Widhi, the Ida Sang Hyang Surya symbol represents God as the source of light and life. Nurhayati (2019) explains that natural symbols in Balinese Hinduism have spiritual meanings related to divine teachings. The Ida Sang Hyang Bayu symbol depicts God as the source of life energy. Sudiarta (2022) explains that the Bayu concept is related to prana, the life energy that connects the human body and soul. The sekala and niskala symbols indicate the balance between the physical and spiritual worlds. Wardhani & Franzia (2020) explain that the sekala-niskala concept is an important part of Balinese life. Through these symbols, this song demonstrates that human life in Balinese culture is always understood as a harmonious relationship between humans, nature, and God, so that spiritual balance is the primary foundation for daily life.

In the song Nyerahang Dewek, the sanggah symbol represents humans' spiritual relationship with their ancestors and God. Sukariawan et al. (2025) explain that sanggah is a form of devotion to ancestors in Balinese life. The rerama symbol represents the affection and sacrifice of parents, while the batun buluane symbol represents sincerity and faithful love. Wardhani & Franzia (2020) explain that Balinese people often interpret simple objects philosophically and spiritually, developing them into symbols of life. The use of these symbols

demonstrates that the values of love, family, and respect for ancestors are essential parts of Balinese life.

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