

Denotation and Connotation of Male Emotional Devotion in Sam Smith's *In The Lonely Hour* Album

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Abstract: The representation of male emotional devotion in popular song lyrics has received limited scholarly attention, particularly from a semiotic perspective that examines how emotional meanings are constructed through interconnected songs within a single album. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the denotative and connotative meanings that construct the representation of male emotional devotion in Sam Smith's *In the Lonely Hour* album. This study employed a qualitative descriptive method using Roland Barthes' semiotic theory. The data consisted of six lyric excerpts selected from three songs in Sam Smith's *In the Lonely Hour* album, namely *Stay With Me*, *Lay Me Down*, and *I'm Not the Only One*. The data were collected from the official lyrics available on Spotify and analyzed through Barthes' concepts of denotation and connotation. The findings reveal that the denotative meanings portray emotional experiences commonly found in romantic relationships, while the connotative meanings construct male emotional devotion through emotional vulnerability, longing, loyalty, and perseverance despite emotional hardship. Collectively, the selected lyrics represent male emotional devotion as a progressive emotional journey rather than a single emotional condition. This study contributes to semiotic studies by demonstrating how interconnected songs within one album collectively construct a coherent representation of male emotional devotion.

Keywords: Denotation, Connotation, Semiotic, Song Lyrics, Spotify.

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Introduction

Song have become an important object of literary and linguistic studies because they communicate emotions, experiences, and cultural meanings through language (Simbolon et al., 2025). Through the combination of lexical choices, figurative language, rhythm, and imagery, song lyrics convey meanings that often extend beyond their literal wording, allowing listeners to interpret emotions and experiences from different perspectives. As literary texts, song lyrics not only entertain but also reflect how language represents human experiences and emotional realities. This characteristic has led scholars to examine song lyrics not only as artistic expressions but also as meaningful texts that can be systematically interpreted.

To examine these meanings systematically, semiotics provides an analytical framework for understanding how signs generate meaning beyond their literal level (Barthes & Heath, 1977). Every lexical choice, metaphor, and emotional expression functions as a sign that conveys meanings shaped by cultural and emotional contexts. Consequently, interpreting song lyrics requires an analytical approach capable of revealing both explicit and implicit meanings.

Among the various themes explored in popular music, romantic relationships remain one of the most dominant subjects. Feelings of love, longing, separation, disappointment, and commitment are commonly expressed through lyrical narratives that reflect human emotional experiences. However,

these emotions are rarely communicated in a straightforward manner. Instead, songwriters often rely on symbolic expressions that encourage listeners to interpret deeper meanings behind the words. Such representations become especially significant when examining how male emotions are portrayed in contemporary music. Traditional views of masculinity have frequently associated men with emotional restraint, independence, and rationality, resulting in the assumption that emotional vulnerability is incompatible with masculine identity. Nevertheless, many contemporary male artists openly express loneliness, dependence, heartbreak, and devotion through their music, indicating that emotional vulnerability has become an important aspect of modern representations of masculinity (Berke et al., 2018).

One artist whose work consistently portrays these emotional experiences is Sam Smith. Their debut album, *In the Lonely Hour* (2014), presents a coherent emotional narrative centered on love, loneliness, separation, betrayal, and self-reflection. Rather than presenting unrelated stories, several songs within the album are thematically interconnected and collectively portray different stages of romantic relationships. Accordingly, this study focuses on three selected songs, namely *Stay With Me*, *Lay Me Down*, and *I'm Not the Only One*, Because they provide interconnected representations of male emotional devotion across different stages of romantic relationships. This thematic coherence makes the selected songs appropriate for semiotic analysis.

Previous studies applying Roland Barthes' semiotic theory have primarily examined how meanings are represented in song lyrics, demonstrating that song lyrics communicate meanings beyond their literal expressions. (Ishar & Irawan, 2023) demonstrated that Barthes' semiotic framework effectively reveals multiple layers of meaning represented in song lyrics. Similarly, (Anjelika, 2025) found that semiotic analysis provides a systematic interpretation of emotional meanings expressed through contemporary song lyrics. Furthermore, (Mukminin et al., 2024) showed that Barthes' semiotic approach effectively uncovers symbolic meanings embedded in song lyrics. Likewise, (Sasikirana & Basit, 2026) demonstrated that semiotic analysis explains how emotional meanings are constructed through lyrical expressions. Collectively, these studies confirm the applicability of Barthes' semiotic framework for interpreting song lyrics while indicating that previous research has mainly focused on individual songs rather than examining interconnected songs within a single album.

Beyond semiotic interpretation, emotional expression has also become an important topic in masculinity studies. (Berke et al., 2018) argue that traditional masculine norms frequently encourage men to suppress vulnerability and regulate emotional expression in accordance with social expectations. Similarly, (McAllister et al., 2019) explain that emotional regulation among men is often influenced by cultural constructions of masculinity. Consequently, the emotional openness represented in contemporary song lyrics provides an important context for understanding alternative representations of masculinity through artistic expression.

Despite these contributions, relatively little attention has been given to how denotative and connotative meanings represent male emotional devotion across interconnected songs within a single album. Most previous studies have treated songs as independent texts and have rarely examined how emotional meanings develop across different relationship experiences, such as emotional dependence, separation, and betrayal, while maintaining a coherent emotional narrative. Consequently, further research is needed to explain how denotative and connotative meanings function together in constructing the progression of male emotional devotion throughout an album.

Recent semiotic studies have demonstrated that song lyrics function as meaningful texts in which literal meanings interact with symbolic meanings, making them appropriate objects for semiotic analysis. (Ishar & Irawan, 2023) showed that Barthes' semiotic framework effectively reveals denotative and connotative meanings embedded in song lyrics. (Harnia, 2021) likewise argued that denotative and connotative meanings enable researchers to uncover emotional messages beyond literal

expressions. Similarly, (Anjelika, 2025) explained that Barthes' concepts of denotation and connotation provide a systematic approach for interpreting symbolic meanings in literary texts. (Salam & Sakinah, 2024) found that connotative meanings uncover emotional values beyond literal expressions in popular music. Likewise, (Anjelika, 2025) highlighted that song lyrics communicate emotional experiences extending beyond their literal expressions. Collectively, these studies demonstrate that Barthes' semiotic framework remains effective for interpreting symbolic meanings in contemporary song lyrics while also indicating the need for broader analyses that examine how interconnected songs construct a unified emotional narrative.

Based on this gap, the present study aims to analyze the denotative and connotative meanings of selected lyrics from *Stay With Me*, *Lay Me Down*, and *I'm Not the Only One* using Roland Barthes' semiotic theory. Specifically, this study seeks to identify the denotative meanings expressed in the lyrics and interpret their connotative meanings in order to explain how they represent male emotional devotion. By examining three interconnected songs rather than a single song, this study also explores how emotional devotion is represented across different stages of romantic relationships within *In the Lonely Hour* album.

This study is expected to contribute both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, it extends the application of Barthes' semiotic theory in literary studies by demonstrating how denotative and connotative meanings collectively construct the representation of male emotional devotion in contemporary song lyrics. Practically, the findings may provide useful references for students, researchers, and readers interested in literary criticism, semiotics, and popular music studies, particularly those examining emotional representation in song lyrics. In addition, this study contributes to the growing discussion of contemporary popular music by highlighting the importance of analyzing interconnected songs within an album to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of emotional representation.

Method

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to examine the denotative and connotative meanings represented in selected lyrics. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the objective of the study was to interpret symbolic meanings embedded in textual data rather than to measure numerical relationships. According to (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), qualitative research enables researchers to explore social phenomena by interpreting participants' experiences and textual evidence within their natural contexts. Since this study focuses on interpreting emotional meanings constructed through language and signs, a qualitative descriptive design provides an appropriate methodological foundation. Roland Barthes' theory of denotation and connotation was employed as the analytical framework to interpret how male emotional devotion is represented through the selected song lyrics.

Since this study employed document analysis, it did not involve human participants. Instead, the primary data consisted of six selected lyric excerpts taken from three songs in Sam Smith's *In the Lonely Hour* album, namely *Stay With Me*, *Lay Me Down*, and *I'm Not the Only One*. Two lyric excerpts were purposively selected from each song because they consistently portray emotional experiences associated with romantic relationships, including emotional dependence, separation, and betrayal. Together, the selected lyric excerpts provide a coherent representation of male emotional devotion, which aligns with the objective of this study.

The song lyrics were obtained from the official Spotify platform (<https://open.spotify.com>), which provides licensed and synchronized lyrics. Spotify was selected as the primary data source because it offers authentic and legally distributed lyrical content, ensuring the reliability of the textual data used in this research.

The data were collected using the documentation technique. First, the researcher accessed the official lyrics through Spotify and read them repeatedly to gain a comprehensive understanding of their narrative and emotional contexts. Subsequently, lyric excerpts containing signs related to male emotional devotion were identified and selected. To maintain a focused analysis, two lyric excerpts were selected from each song based on their relevance to the research objectives. The selected excerpts were then organized into analytical tables to facilitate the identification of their denotative and connotative meanings.

The data were analyzed using Roland Barthes' theory of denotation and connotation. The analysis was conducted through four stages. First, each selected lyric excerpt was identified as a sign relevant to the research focus. Second, the denotative meaning was analyzed by explaining the literal meaning conveyed by the lyrics. Third, the connotative meaning was interpreted by examining the emotional and contextual associations represented through the linguistic expressions. Finally, the findings from the three songs were synthesized to explain how the denotative and connotative meanings collectively construct the representation of male emotional devotion throughout *In the Lonely Hour* album.

To ensure the credibility of the analysis, every interpretation was grounded in the textual evidence presented in the selected lyrics and analyzed systematically using Barthes' semiotic framework. Credibility was strengthened through theoretical triangulation by consistently interpreting the data using the concepts of denotation and connotation and by comparing the findings with relevant previous studies. In addition, peer debriefing with the research supervisor was conducted to evaluate the consistency and appropriateness of the interpretations throughout the analysis process. These procedures helped maintain analytical consistency while minimizing subjective interpretation.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the findings concerning the representation of male emotional devotion in selected lyric excerpts from Sam Smith's *In the Lonely Hour* album. The findings are organized according to Roland Barthes' concepts of denotation and connotation, through which the literal and symbolic meanings embedded in the selected lyrics are systematically interpreted. The discussion further synthesizes these findings to demonstrate how the representation of male emotional devotion develops across different stages of romantic relationships portrayed in the three selected songs.

Stay With Me

Stay With Me portrays a speaker who expresses a strong desire to preserve emotional closeness despite recognizing the uncertainty of the relationship. The selected lyric excerpts illustrate different emotional situations that contribute to the representation of male emotional devotion.

Table 1. Denotative and Connotative Meanings in Stay With Me

Data	Lyrics Excerpt	Denotation	Connotation
1	"Oh. Won't you stay with me?" "Cause you're all I need."	The speaker asks someone to stay because that person's presence is important to him.	The request symbolizes emotional reliance in which the loved one's presence becomes a source of emotional security and comfort.
2	"This ain't love, it's clear to see" But darling, stay with me."	The speaker realizes that the relationship is not based on genuine love but still asks the person to stay.	The contradiction symbolizes devotion that persists despite emotional disappointment, suggesting that affection continues even when love is recognized as uncertain.

Data 1. Lyrics Excerpt: *“Oh. Won’t you stay with me? Cause you’re all I need.”*

Denotative Meaning: This finding shows that, at the denotative level, the lyric explicitly portrays the speaker asking another person to remain with him because that person’s presence is considered essential. The expressions *“stay with me”* and *“you’re all I need”* literally function as a request for companionship and indicate the speaker’s dependence on another person’s presence. At this level, the lyric communicates its direct meaning without involving broader emotional or cultural associations.

Connotative Meaning: This finding further indicates that, at the connotative level, the repeated request *“stay with me”* symbolizes emotional dependence rather than merely expressing the desire for physical companionship. Likewise, the expression *“you’re all I need”* positions the loved one as the speaker’s primary source of emotional security and stability. Through Barthes’ second-order signification, the literal request develops into a symbolic representation of vulnerability, illustrating that male emotional devotion is expressed through emotional reliance on another person.

Data 2. Lyrics Except: *“This ain’t love, it’s clear to see. But darling, stay with me.”*

Denotative Meaning: This finding shows that, at the denotative level, the lyric presents the speaker’s recognition that the relationship is not based on genuine love while simultaneously asking the other person to remain with him. Literally, the expressions indicate a contradiction between acknowledging the reality of the relationship and expressing the desire to maintain togetherness. These literal meanings constitute the first level of signification before deeper interpretation is developed.

Connotative Meaning: This finding further indicates that, at the connotative level, the contradiction between recognizing the absence of genuine love and continuing to ask the partner to stay represents emotional sacrifice and persistent devotion. Rather than reflecting rational decision-making, the lyric portrays the speaker’s willingness to maintain emotional attachment despite understanding the relationship’s limitations. Within Barthes’ second-order signification, this contradiction becomes a symbolic representation of vulnerability and unconditional emotional commitment.

The findings from both lyric excerpts demonstrate that *Stay With Me* represents the initial stage of male emotional devotion through emotional dependence and vulnerability. At the denotative level, the selected lyrics explicitly portray the speaker’s request for companionship and his awareness that the relationship lacks genuine love. However, the connotative analysis reveals that these literal expressions extend beyond simple requests for physical presence and symbolize emotional reliance, vulnerability, and the willingness to preserve emotional attachment despite uncertainty. Rather than portraying weakness, the lyrics construct emotional openness as a form of sincere devotion toward the loved one.

This process reflects Barthes’ concept of second-order signification, in which literal linguistic signs become the foundation for broader emotional meanings. The denotative expressions, such as requesting someone to stay and acknowledging the absence of genuine love, function as primary signs that subsequently develop into symbolic representations of emotional dependence and sacrifice. The transition from denotation to connotation occurs because the literal statements are interpreted within the emotional context of the relationship, allowing ordinary expressions of companionship to represent male emotional devotion through vulnerability and emotional attachment.

These findings support (Salam & Sakinah, 2024), who argue that Barthes’ semiotic framework reveals emotional meanings beyond literal expressions in song lyrics. Likewise, (Harnia, 2021) demonstrates that connotative meanings in song lyrics symbolize deeper emotional experiences beyond their literal wording. While previous studies have primarily focused on identifying symbolic

meanings in individual songs, the present study demonstrates that *Stay With Me* represents the initial phase of male emotional devotion characterized by emotional dependence and vulnerability.

Lay Me Down

Unlike *Stay With Me*, which portrays emotional dependence within an uncertain relationship, *Lay Me Down* depicts the emotional experience of separation. The speaker expresses a desire to remain emotionally connected with the loved one despite physical distance. Through the selected lyric excerpts, the song reveals how literal expressions of presence and care gradually develop into deeper representations of emotional devotion.

Table 2. Denotative and Connotative Meanings in Lay Me Down

Data	Lyrics Excerpt	Denotation	Connotation
1	<i>"Can I lay by your side, next to you?" "And make sure you're alright."</i>	The speaker asks whether he can stay beside the other person and ensure that they are safe.	The request symbolizes a desire to maintain emotional closeness by expressing care and responsibility for the loved one's well-being, even when the relationship is uncertain.
2	<i>"This hurt that I've been through." "I don't want to be here if I can't be with you tonight."</i>	The speaker describes the pain he has experienced and states that he doesn't want to remain where he is without the loved one.	The emotional pain symbolizes that separation has affected the speaker's emotional state, suggesting that the loved one's absence has become inseparable from his sense of comfort and belonging.

Data 1. Lyrics Excerpt: *"Can I lay by your side, next to you? And make sure you're alright."*

Denotative Meaning: This finding shows that, at the denotative level, the lyric presents the speaker's request to remain beside another person while expressing concern for that person's well-being. The expressions *"lay by your side"* and *"make sure you're alright"* literally indicate the speaker's desire to stay physically close and ensure the loved one's safety. At this level, the lyric conveys a direct meaning of companionship and care without involving broader symbolic associations.

Connotative Meaning: This finding further indicates that, at the connotative level, the speaker's desire to remain beside the loved one symbolizes emotional commitment and devotion rather than merely physical proximity. The act of ensuring the partner's well-being reflects a willingness to provide continuous emotional support and protection. Through Barthes' second-order signification, physical closeness develops into a symbolic representation of emotional intimacy, demonstrating that male emotional devotion is expressed through responsibility, care, and selfless commitment.

Data 2. Lyrics Except: *"This hurt that I've been through. I don't want to be here if I can't be with you tonight."*

Denotative Meaning: This finding shows that, at the denotative level, the lyric expresses the speaker's desire to lie beside the loved one during the night. Literally, the expressions indicate a request for physical closeness and togetherness. These literal meanings represent the first-order signification, describing the speaker's wish to remain near the other person without implying symbolic meanings.

Connotative Meaning: This finding further indicates that, at the connotative level, the repeated request to remain beside the loved one symbolizes the speaker's longing for emotional reassurance and enduring intimacy. Rather than emphasizing physical proximity alone, the lyric constructs closeness as a source of emotional comfort and security. Within Barthes' second-order signification, the literal act

of lying beside another person becomes a symbolic representation of sustained emotional commitment, illustrating that intimacy functions as an expression of male emotional devotion.

The findings from both lyric excerpts demonstrate that *Lay Me Down* represents the development of male emotional devotion through emotional commitment and intimacy. At the denotative level, the selected lyrics explicitly portray the speaker's desire to remain physically close to the loved one while expressing concern for that person's well-being. However, the connotative analysis reveals that these literal expressions extend beyond physical proximity and symbolize responsibility, emotional reassurance, and enduring commitment. Together, the findings indicate that emotional devotion is represented not only through dependence but also through the willingness to provide care and maintain emotional closeness within a romantic relationship.

This process reflects Barthes' concept of second-order signification, in which literal meanings become the basis for broader emotional interpretations. The denotative expressions describing physical closeness and concern for the loved one's well-being function as primary signs that subsequently develop into symbolic representations of emotional intimacy and commitment. The transition from denotation to connotation occurs because these literal expressions are interpreted within the emotional context of the relationship, allowing acts of companionship and care to represent deeper emotional devotion rather than merely physical presence.

These findings support (Salam & Sakinah, 2024), who argue that Barthes' semiotic framework reveals emotional meanings beyond literal expressions. Likewise, (Rohmani et al., 2025) explain that symbolic expressions in song lyrics often represent emotional experiences that extend beyond their literal meanings. While previous studies have generally examined symbolic meanings in individual songs, the present study demonstrates that *Lay Me Down* represents the second stage of male emotional devotion through emotional commitment and intimacy.

I'm Not the Only One

Unlike the previous two songs, *I'm Not the Only One* portrays male emotional devotion in the context of betrayal. Although the speaker realizes that the relationship has been damaged by infidelity, he continues to express emotional attachment toward his partner. The selected lyric excerpts illustrate how the speaker's awareness of betrayal coexists with his inability to completely detach himself emotionally, revealing another dimension of male emotional devotion.

Table 3. Denotative and Connotative Meanings in I'm Not the Only One

Data	Lyrics Excerpt	Denotation	Connotation
1	"You say I'm crazy, 'cause you don't think I know what you've done." "But when you call me baby, I know I'm not the only one."	The speaker says that his partner denies the accusation, but he realizes that the partner is involved with someone else.	The lyric symbolizes the conflict between emotional attachment, as the speaker recognizes the betrayal but remains emotionally invested in the relationship.
2	"I have loved you for many years." "Maybe I am just not enough."	The speaker states that he has loved his partner for a long time and begins to question his own worth.	The lyric symbolizes enduring devotion that leads the speaker to internalize the failure of the relationship, reflecting vulnerability and self-blame rather than resentment alone.

Data 1. Lyrics Excerpt: "You say I'm crazy, 'cause you don't think I know what you've done. But when you call me baby, I know I'm not the only one."

Denotative Meaning: This finding shows that, at the denotative level, the speaker recognizes that his partner denies his suspicions even though he is already aware of the partner's infidelity. The expressions "You say I'm crazy" and "I know what you've done" literally indicate a disagreement in which the speaker rejects the accusation and acknowledges the partner's dishonesty. Likewise, the statement "I know I'm not the only one" explicitly conveys the speaker's realization that the relationship is no longer exclusive. At this level, the lyrics communicate the literal conflict between denial and recognition without involving broader symbolic meanings.

Connotative Meaning: This finding further indicates that, at the connotative level, the lyrics symbolize the conflict between emotional attachment and betrayal. Although the speaker realizes that the relationship has been damaged by infidelity, he remains emotionally invested when the partner continues to express affection. Through Barthes' second-order signification, the contradiction between betrayal and affection becomes a symbolic representation of emotional vulnerability, demonstrating that male emotional devotion persists despite broken trust and emotional disappointment.

Data 2. Lyrics Excerpt: "*I have loved you for many years. Maybe I am just not enough.*"

Denotative Meaning: This finding shows that, at the denotative level, the speaker states that he has loved his partner for many years while questioning whether he is sufficient for the relationship. Literally, the expressions "*I have loved you for many years*" and "*Maybe I am just not enough*" indicate long-term affection accompanied by feelings of insecurity and self-doubt. At this level, the lyrics directly communicate the speaker's enduring love and uncertainty without involving broader symbolic meanings.

Connotative Meaning: This finding further indicates that, at the connotative level, the lyrics symbolize the speaker's tendency to internalize the emotional consequences of betrayal rather than placing all the blame on his partner. His long-term affection becomes intertwined with self-doubt, suggesting that enduring devotion shapes the way he interprets the relationship's failure. Through Barthes' second-order signification, the expression "*Maybe I am just not enough*" functions as a symbolic representation of emotional vulnerability, illustrating that enduring love leads the speaker to question his own value. This finding demonstrates that male emotional devotion persists despite disappointment and emotional pain.

The findings from both lyric excerpts demonstrate that *I'm Not the Only One* represents the final stage of male emotional devotion through emotional vulnerability following betrayal. The first data reveals that the speaker remains emotionally attached despite recognizing the partner's infidelity, whereas the second datum demonstrates that the speaker internalizes the emotional consequences of the relationship by questioning his own worth after years of enduring love. Together, these findings indicate that male emotional devotion is represented not only through the recognition of betrayal but also through persistent emotional attachment, self-doubt, and emotional vulnerability.

This process reflects Barthes' concept of second-order signification, in which literal linguistic signs become the foundation for broader emotional meanings. The denotative expressions describing the speaker's awareness of infidelity, long-term affection, and self-doubt function as primary signs that subsequently develop into symbolic representations of emotional vulnerability and enduring devotion. The transition from denotation to connotation occurs because these literal expressions are interpreted within the emotional context of a deteriorating romantic relationship, transforming personal experiences into representations of male emotional devotion despite betrayal.

These findings support (Salam & Sakinah, 2024), who argue that Barthes' semiotic framework reveals emotional meanings beyond literal expressions in song lyrics. Likewise, (Harnia, 2021) demonstrates that connotative meanings in song lyrics often represent complex emotional experiences that cannot be understood solely through literal interpretation. The present study extends these

findings by showing that *I'm Not the Only One* represents emotional devotion that persists despite betrayal through self-doubt and emotional vulnerability.

Across the six analyzed lyric excerpts, the findings demonstrate that male emotional devotion is represented as a progressive emotional process that develops through different stages of romantic relationships. At the denotative level, the lyric excerpts describe ordinary emotional experiences, including the desire for companionship, enduring commitment, separation, awareness of betrayal, and self-doubt. At the connotative level, however, these literal expressions evolve into symbolic representations of emotional dependence, vulnerability, perseverance, and enduring devotion. This pattern reflects Barthes' concept of second-order signification, in which denotative meanings function as the foundation for broader connotative meanings shaped by emotional and cultural contexts. The transition from denotation to connotation enables the selected lyric excerpts to construct a coherent representation of male emotional devotion that extends beyond the literal meanings of the lyrics.

These findings support (Salam & Sakinah, 2024), who argue that Barthes' semiotic framework effectively reveals emotional meanings beyond literal expressions in song lyrics. Likewise, (Harnia, 2021) demonstrates that denotative and connotative analyses enable deeper interpretations of emotional experiences represented in song lyrics. While previous studies have mainly examined individual songs, the present study demonstrates how six interconnected lyric excerpts from a single album collectively construct a coherent representation of male emotional devotion across different stages of romantic relationships.

Conclusion

The findings demonstrate that male emotional devotion is represented through interconnected stages of romantic relationships, encompassing emotional dependence, commitment, separation, and betrayal. At the denotative level, the selected lyric excerpts portray literal emotional experiences commonly found in romantic relationships, whereas the connotative meanings reveal deeper representations of vulnerability, perseverance, and enduring emotional devotion.

The findings further indicate that the six analyzed lyric excerpts form a coherent emotional narrative rather than functioning as isolated texts. By examining interconnected lyric excerpts from a single album, this study provides a more comprehensive understanding of how emotional meanings are constructed across multiple songs.

Theoretically, this study demonstrates that Barthes' concepts of denotation and connotation provide an effective framework for interpreting symbolic meanings embedded in song lyrics. It also contributes to semiotic studies by extending the analysis from individual songs to interconnected lyric excerpts within a single album, thereby offering a broader perspective on the representation of male emotional devotion in contemporary popular music.

This study is limited to six lyric excerpts selected from three songs in a single album and employs one theoretical perspective. Future studies may expand the scope by examining additional songs, comparing different albums or artists, or applying other theoretical approaches to investigate emotional representation in contemporary popular music from broader literary and cultural perspectives.

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