

The Connotative Meaning of Expression Found in Adele's Song Lyrics 21 "Japanese Edition" Album

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Abstract: *This study is entitled "The Connotative Meaning of Expression Found in Adele's Song Lyrics 21 "Japanese Edition" Album". It focuses on describing the types of connotative meaning and connotative expression found in the song lyrics. This study mainly uses the theory proposed by Leech and Cruse. Methods applied in this study were qualitative methods and descriptive analysis. The data here was taken from the internet through the Genius website. The data was collected by downloading the song lyrics and then printing them out. Then, closed reading was implied to identify the expression containing connotation. Furthermore, the data were analyzed based on a semantic theory proposed by Leech (1981) and Cruse (1997). Four songs were analyzed based on the theory proposed by selecting the expression which contains connotative meaning. The result of this study shows that the expression found in Adele's song lyrics contains three types of connotative meaning, such as Positive, Negative, and Neutral. However, the negative connotations are mostly used in the expression. The use of the expression in Adele's song lyrics is to express her feelings towards someone in her past relationship.*

Keywords: *Connotative meaning, Adele, song lyrics, Expression*

I. INTRODUCTION

As an empirical study of word meaning in an existing language, semantics is a branch of linguistics. According to Leech (1981), Semantics is the study of meaning and as the center of communication in the language. It is concerned with the relation between words or other symbols and objects or concepts to which they refer. Meaning plays a very important role in any situation of speech. Without meaning, all the utterances of language are useless, or; there will be no language.

Connotative meaning is the meaning that does not go directly to the intent or something, in other words, this meaning exceeds the conceptual meaning itself. Connotation can be found in several things such as in a movie, novel and sometimes can be found in song lyrics.

However, the lyrics of the song contain many meanings that are not, as we found in some of the songs from "21 (Japanese Edition) Album by Adele, listeners must be wondering about the contents of the lyrics. The reason why the study was conducted is to help those who are curious about the message conveyed in her songs.

This study will analyze further and identify the meaning and types of expression found in her song lyrics. The results of this study are expected to be useful both in theory and practice and are expected to provide insight and knowledge about the connotative meaning.

Regarding the background of the study above, two aims have been divided, namely general aim and specific aims. Those are as follows; Generally, this study is limitedly aimed at describing and analyzing the connotative meaning of the expression used in Adele's song lyrics "21 (Japanese Edition) album". In which the expressions are selected from four songs in the 21 albums, namely: Rolling in the Deep, Turning Tables, Don't You Remember, and Someone like you.

The specific aim of this study based on the formulated problem are as the followings : To identify the types of connotative meaning found in Adele's song lyrics "21(Japanese Edition) album". To analyze the connotative meanings of " Expression" implied in Adele's song lyrics.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

A. Data Source

The data source of this study was taken from the internet as it was only provided on the internet. It was taken from Adele's 21 albums released in January 2011, four songs were chosen in the study: The first one is Rolling in the Deep, the second one is Turning Table, the third song is Don't You Remember and the last one is Someone Like You. Those songs are chosen as the data source not only because the song is unique and has many connotative meanings, however, it is also because the song is very interesting and can attract listeners.

B. Method and Technique of Collecting Data

A Documentation method was used to collect the data by using note-taking techniques. This study is categorized as qualitative research in which the instrument can be formed of document and text or an observation. This study used documents that were in the form of song lyrics. Here are the steps of data collecting: first, was to find the song lyrics from the internet. Then later on the lyrics are printed out to make it easier to be identified. Furthermore, closed reading was implied. The last step was to select the song lyrics that have connotative expressions.

C. Method and Technique of Analyzing Data

A descriptive qualitative method was applied in this study, in which the data used was in the form of a document or text. The data in this study was analyzed based on the character of the framework used in this study.

First, the data were classified using the standard component and finding the types of the connotative meaning of the expression in the song lyrics by using the theory proposed by Cruse (1997).

After the types of connotative Meaning used are found, the last step was to identify meaning implied by using the connotative meaning theory proposed by Leech (1981).

D. Method and Technique of Presenting Data Analysis

An informal method and descriptive technique were applied to present the analysis in this study, in which the data is in the form of words and sentences. Moreover, the result of the discussion was analyzed descriptively in the form of sentences, which then formed into small paragraphs. The result of data analysis of the first problem which is about the types of connotative meaning was explained descriptively based on the theory proposed by Cruse (1997). The second problem, which is the connotative meaning

found in Adele's song lyrics, was explained descriptively based on the theory proposed by Leech (1981).

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the analysis of Connotative Meaning found in song lyrics which focus on the Meaning of Expression. The connotative meaning is the main subject discussed in this study. Four songs from the 21 (Japanese Edition) Album by Adele were used as the data in this study; they are; Rolling in the Deep, Turning Table, Don't You Remember, and Someone Like You

A. Types of Connotative Meaning

Based on the concept and theoretical framework in which connotative meaning was the communicative value an expression has by the feature of what it refers to, over and above its purely conceptual content. The connotation can be divided into three parts that are positive connotation, negative connotation, and neutral connotation.

1. Positive connotation

Positive connotation meaning is the type of word or an expression that can make people feel good, or a type of word that can make them happy. In this case, the words are giving a positive impact on the person. Positive means creating confidence and good thinking in someone. For instance, instead of saying 'difficult', we can just use the word 'challenging'. The expressions containing positive connotations are as follows :

(1) Finally I Can See You Crystal Clear

The expression *Crystal Clear* according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary means something is easily seen through, however, in this context it means someone's true color or someone's character. Therefore, in this case, based on the theory proposed by Cruse (1997) the expression is considered to have a positive connotation as it is describing someone's feeling. The word used can also build confidence in someone's life as it is considered to be a non-offensive word.

(2) Rolling in the Deep

The expression *Rolling in the Deep*, according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary means knobbling or falling into a deep zone. However, in this context, it means drowning in the deepest sadness and tears. Therefore, in this case, based on the theory proposed by Cruse (1997) the expression is considered to have a positive connotation as it is describing someone's feeling. The word used can also build confidence in someone's life as it is considered to be a non-offensive word.

(3) Think of me in the Depth of your Despair

The expression *Depth of Your Despair* according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary means the endless loss of hope. However, this context is describing someone's biggest sadness. Therefore, in this case, based on the theory proposed by Cruse (1997) the expression is considered to have a positive connotation as it is describing someone's feeling. The word used can also build confidence in someone's life as it is considered to be a non-offensive word.

(4) You're Settled Down

The expression *You're Settled Down* according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary means becoming still and orderly. However, in this context means a feeling of being sure or ready to proceed the relationship to the next level (marriage). Therefore, in this case, based on the theory proposed by Cruse (1997) the expression is considered to have a positive connotation as it is describing someone's feeling. The word used can also build confidence in someone's life as it is considered to be a non-offensive word.

(5) Never Mind I'll Find Someone like you

The expression *I'll Find Someone Like You* according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary means finding a person who looks like. However, in this context, the meaning is almost the same, which is an act of going to find someone new who looks like an ex-partner. Therefore, in this case, based on the theory proposed by Cruse (1997) the expression is considered to have a positive connotation as it is describing someone's feeling. The word used can also build confidence in someone's life as it is considered to be a non-offensive word.

2. Negative Connotation

Negative connotation meaning is the term of words that is unfavorable for some person. In this case, those terms are considered negative as they describe negative qualities or disrespect to a person. For example, using the word 'skinny' instead of saying the person 'slim'. The expression containing negative connotations are as follows :

(6) Sell Me out and I'll Lay your ship bare

The expression *Sell Me Out* according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary means to deliver in a direction away from the inside/center. However, in this context, it means someone's betrayal in a relationship. Moreover, the word *Ship* according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary means a large seagoing vessel. However, in this context is the other word to say shit or commonly known as a swear word. Therefore, in this case, based on the theory proposed by Cruse (1997) the expression is

considered to have a negative connotation as they describe negative qualities or disrespect to a person though it is used politely.

(7) See How I'll Leave With Every Piece of You

The expression *Leave With Every Piece of You* according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary means to walk away with every bit of someone. However, in this context means leaving someone behind by draining every satisfaction. Therefore, in this case, based on the theory proposed by Cruse (1997) the expression is considered to have a negative connotation as they describe negative qualities or disrespect to a person though it is used politely.

(8) The Scar of Your Love, They Leave Me Breathless

The expression *Scar of Your Love* according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary means the mark of cherishing. However, in this context means the memories of scars or pain in their love relationship. Moreover, *Breathless* according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary means lacking fresh air. Meanwhile, in this context, it means emotional feeling. Therefore, in this case, based on the theory proposed by Cruse (1997) the expression is considered to have a negative connotation as they describe negative qualities or action and disrespect to a person though it is used politely.

(9) You Had My Heart Inside of Your Hand but You Played it to the Beat

The expression *Heart Inside of Your Hand* according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary means the position of the heart is within the hand. However, in this context means having someone under control. Therefore, in this case, based on the theory proposed by Cruse (1997) the expression is considered to have a negative connotation as they describe negative qualities or action and disrespect to a person though it is used politely.

(10) I'm Gonna Make Your Head Burn

The expression *Make Your Head Burn* according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary means forming someone's head into a fire especially brightly. However, in this context, it means to make someone remember their flaws and deception. Therefore, in this case, based on the theory proposed by Cruse (1997) the expression is considered to have a negative connotation as they describe negative qualities or action and disrespect to a person though it is used politely.

3. Neutral Connotation

Neutral connotative meaning is a word that causes no emotional reaction. It does not mean either good or bad, and it is usually used when the author does not want to show strong emotions either way. The

expression containing neutral connotations are as follows :

(11) Throw Your Soul Through Every Open Door

The expression *Throw Your Soul Through Every Open Door* according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary means to send through life to every door that opens. However, in this context, it means the person is allowed to be with anyone after the breakup. *Every open door* means anyone that can open their heart to him. Therefore, in this case, based on the theory proposed by Cruse (1997) the expression is considered to have a neutral connotation as it causes no emotional reaction and does not show strong emotions either way.

(12) God Only Knows What We're Fighting For

The expression *God Only Knows What We're Fighting For* according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary means the only lord knows the fight. However, in this context means the fact that they have been arguing for a long time and not knowing what the argument was all about. Therefore, in this case, based on the theory proposed by Cruse (1997) the expression is considered to have a neutral connotation as it causes no emotional reaction and does not show strong emotions either way.

(13) Where Love is Lost, Your Ghost is Found

The expression *Where Love is Lost, Your Ghost is Found* according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary means when admiration is lost, the body of a dead person is discovered. However, in this context means knowing the reason why her love started to fade each time, and can finally discover who her partner is. Therefore, in this case, based on the theory proposed by Cruse (1997) the expression is considered to have a neutral connotation as it causes no emotional reaction and does not show strong emotions either way.

B. The Connotative Meaning Implied

According to Leech (1981-12), connotative meaning is the communicative value an expression has by features of what it mentions, ended and overhead its purely conceptual content. The connotative meaning was peripheral when compared with the conceptual meaning. It was also relatively unstable as it varies according to culture, historical periods, and experience of the individual.

(1) Finally I Can See You Crystal Clear

The expression *Finally I Can See You Crystal Clear* in this context means she can finally see who he truly is, his true color, and his flaws. She became tired of him, who has always been manipulating her

and cheating on her with other people. Adele used the word 'crystal' because with crystal we can see right through it. Commonly, normally crystal-clear is often used to describe things like clear water. However, in this context, it represents the human true color that can be seen clearly. Therefore, the real meaning conveyed through this long lyric is that Adele can finally see her partner's true color and flaws.

(2) Sell Me Out and I'll Lay Your Ship Bare

The expression *Sell Me Out and I'll Lay Your Ship Bare* in this context means she wants him to be honest and stop betraying her. The word *sell me out* means he is betraying her trust by keeping on hurting her. Meanwhile, the *ship* here is chosen as a polite way to say *shit*, because she was expecting him to continue the game he was playing and just wait for her revenge. Therefore, the real meaning of the expression that Adele is trying to convey is that she has put a hope to not get any more pain and betrayal from her partner and she will have her revenge for what he has done to her.

(3) See How I'll Leave With Every Piece of You

The expression *See How I'll Leave With Every Piece of You* in this context means she is leaving him forever and will not let him get the best of her. *Leaving with every piece of you* means she is leaving him behind by draining every satisfaction he took out of her. Therefore, what Adele is trying to convey through this lyric is that she wants to tell the world she is leaving forever but in her mind, she knows that in the future he will regret his mistakes.

(4) The Scar of Your Love, They Leave Me Breathless

The expression *The Scar of Your Love, They Leave Me Breathless* in this context means her regret because of the breakup. Whenever she looks back in time Adele gets emotional by all the memories and time when they are together. However, there were too many scars that he gave her which sometimes can be so upsetting. Therefore, the real meaning conveyed through this song lyric is although she is leaving him, she is still carrying the memories or the scars of their love with her.

(5) Rolling in the Deep

The expression *Rolling in the Deep* in this context means drowning into the deepest sadness, sorrow and tears. What Adele is trying to say is that she knows that they could have had it all and could be great if they can work it out, however, it turns out to be a failure. Therefore, the real meaning conveyed through this lyric is that everything that was going to be good about the relationship went down the drain into all the bad stuff he did to her.

(6) You Had My Heart Inside of Your Hand but You Played it to the Beat

The expression *You Had My Heart Inside of Your Hand* in this context means she has opened her heart for him and given him trust but it turns out he was manipulating her. *Heart in hand* means he has her under his control and would not care about her. Meanwhile, *but You Played it to the Beat* means just like a game he has only been playing with her heart as she was in his sociopathic game. Therefore, what Adele wants to explain through this song lyric is how she was betrayed and played by her partner. Like he was holding her heart in his hand, felt the beat, even so, he just treated her like a music background in his little game.

(7) I'm Gonna Make Your Head Burn

The expression *I'm Gonna Make Your Head Burn* in this context means exposing someone's flaws and deception. *Making your head burn* means she is going to make sure he remembers that he was the one that caused the heartbreak and did the wrong thing in the relationship. Therefore, the real meaning Adele wants to explain through this song lyric is that she was not the main person to cause the breakup and was not the one who did wrong, it was him who did the dirt and she will expose all his deception and flaws for all that as revenge.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing analysis and discussion, the following points can be drawn as a conclusion :

First, According to the types of connotative meaning expressed in this study, there are three types of connotative meaning consisting of: Positive, Negative, and Neutral. Positive connotations are used to express someone's feelings which do not affect anything and bring a positive impact to someone. Meanwhile, a negative connotation is used to express a cruel manner, describing negative qualities or disrespect to a person. Out of the four songs being discussed mostly the type used were positive and negative. However, the negative connotations used were seen from its real meaning, not its utterances.

Second, The connotative meaning of expression found in Adele's song conveyed a very deep meaning in a love relationship, especially after the breakup. After analyzing four of her songs, consisting of: Rolling in the Deep, Turning Table, Don't You Remember, and Someone Like You, it can be concluded that she was the victim in the relationship. She uses quite a several expressions that have connotative meaning in them as a way for her to express her feelings towards the breakup, however in

a proper way. The song lyrics chosen in this study were very interesting with a purpose to attract the reader's attention.

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