

BARTHESIAN SEMIOTICS IN JUNGKOOK'S "SOMEBODY": LOVE AND HEARTBREAK

SEMIOTIKA BARTHESIAN DALAM "SOMEBODY" JUNGKOOK: CINTA DAN PATAH HATI

Received: 18/03/2025; Revised: 19/08/2025; Accepted: 06/09/2025; Published: 22/11/2025

^{1,*}Aulia Putri, ²Dian Widya Putri

¹English Language Education Study Program of Faculty of Teacher Training and Education of Universitas Riau Kepulauan, Jl. Pahlawan No.99, Bukit Tempayan, Kec. Batu Aji, Batam, Indonesia

²Communication Science Study Program of Faculty of Communication Science of Universitas Islam Bandung, Jalan Tamansari No. 1 Kec. Bandung Wetan, Bandung, Indonesia

*Corresponding author: aulia@fkip.unrika.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Music has always found its way in delivering emotions, strengthening cultural narratives, or challenging myths in society to the listener. This study analyzed the denotative meaning, connotative meaning, and myth in a song by Jungkook "Somebody" using semiotic theory by Barthes. This study applied qualitative content analysis to see how the song constructs and deconstructs the romantic myths. The romantic myth includes love, heartbreak, and emotional detachment. The main finding of the study is that the song "Somebody" challenges the idea of traditional romantic narratives by exposing that heartbreak is a complex experience, and it is changeable. Through this theory of Barthesian Semiotics, the study explored how the song reshapes the perception of love, loss, and emotional resilience. The findings of the study can contribute to a broader discussion about semiotics not only in a contemporary or traditional context, but also in a way how meaning is delivered through lyrics.

Keywords: Roland Barthes, semiotics, song lyrics

ABSTRAK

Musik selalu menemukan caranya dalam menyampaikan bentuk-bentuk emosi, memperkuat narasi budaya, atau menantang mitos dalam Masyarakat kepada pendengar. Penelitian ini menganalisis makna denotasi, konotasi, dan mitos yang ada dalam lagu Jungkook "Somebody" menggunakan teori semiotik Barthes. Penelitian ini menggunakan analisis isi kualitatif untuk melihat bagaimana lagu ini menyusun dan mendekonstruksi mitos romantis. Mitos romantis termasuk cinta, patah hati dan keterlepasan emosi. Temuan utama dari penelitian ini adalah lagu "Somebody" menantang ide narasi romantis tradisional yang mengungkapkan bahwa patah hati adalah pengalaman yang kompleks dan rasa itu bisa berubah. Melalui teori semiotik Barthesian ini, penelitian ini mengeksplorasi bagaimana lagu ini membentuk pemahaman tentang cinta, kehilangan, dan ketahanan emosi. Temuan penelitian ini dapat berkontribusi pada diskusi yang lebih luas mengenai semiotik, tak hanya secara kontemporer atau tradisional, tapi juga dengan cara bagaimana makna disampaikan melalui lirik.

Kata kunci: Roland Barthes, semiotika, lirik lagu

How to cite: Putri, A & Putri, D. W. (2025). Barthesian Semiotics In Jungkook's "Somebody": Love And Heartbreak. *Jurnal Cahaya Pendidikan*, 11(2), 81–93. <https://doi.org.10.33373/chypen.v11i2.7566>

INTRODUCTION

Dunbar-hall mentioned that popular music builds cultural narratives, especially about love and heartbreak (Rowley and Dunbar-Hall, 2013). In this context, music has a function as a semiotic resource that defines and generates social values. "Somebody" is a song that talks about emotional detachment, yearning, and acceptance. All of these are wrapped up in a semiotic way. Roland Barthes explored meanings and interpretations through three steps of analysis. First, it looks at its denotative meaning, and then how it shapes connotative meaning, and at last seeks whether it relates to myth (Jadou and Al Ghabra, 2021). Denotation refers to the literal meaning of words and symbols, connotation refers to the emotional and cultural associations that may be attached to those words, and myth operates as an overarching ideology that serves to legitimate social beliefs (Chandler, 2017). By examining "Somebody" semantically through Barthes, this paper will show not just how the song upholds but also how it contradicts the dominant cultural myths regarding romantic relationships. The analysis exemplifies that in many ways the song repeats simple yet familiar tropes, such as idealized love or emotional closure - however, it ultimately continues to portray heartbreak as fragmented, cyclical and unresolved. This goes against the linear narrative of healing commonplace in popular culture and emphasizes the emotional entanglements in practical post-breakup experiences.

Like any cultural artifact, music exists as a sign system, and as such it is embedded in social cultures that provide its meaning and interpretation. According to MacDonald (2021), music is a universal social activity and a social phenomenon that can serve, among others, the social functions of communication wellbeing (in so many forms), artistic expression, ritual, identity and social capital within networks. Specifically, myth serves a very important function in music, which is to make specific ideological structures seem self-evident and therefore unquestioned. Myths, as argued by Barthes (as cited in Chandler, 2017), are designed to camouflage some of the truths and make the prevailing myths unquestionable. For example, love songs that are popular often tend to idealize love as a state of perfection to ache for or portray love in a way that it is seen as an unavoidable demise. After all, popular culture tends to portray love in this way and studies support this 'myth.' Some of these songs move beyond straightforward narratives, conveying love and loss through emotionally layered and interpretively open lyrics that resonate differently with each listener (Levy et al., 2024). This can be seen through the song "Somebody" by Jungkook. The context of the song is about showing the listeners that a heartbreak is not an ending, but a new beginning of grieving. The song is poetic, with so many interpretations in the meanings (Muchalif and Alfikri, 2022).

Rowley and Dunbar-Hall (2013) emphasize that knowledge about music is the basis of cultural inclusivity. It shapes the distinctiveness of music from the cross-cultural interactions and experiences. Barthes (as cited in Chandler, 2017) argues further that this semiotic process enables hidden meanings to come to the forefront, exposing how cultural narratives are embedded in texts. Therefore, "Somebody" may be read as both a reproduction and a polemic on romantic myths. Although it fits squarely in the realm of conventional themes of broken hearts and longing, it departs, encroaching on the territory of counter-narration by asserting that "the broken heart is not tragic" and "moving on does not require finding a new partner."

Previous studies of Barthesian semiotics in music have uncovered methods for examining lyrics in unlocked multilayered opportunities epistemologically, culturally, psychologically, and ideologically. For example, Smith and Budianto's (2024) analyzed how Lana Del Rey's A&W lyrics construct and deconstruct societal myths about women and sexuality, victim blaming, and beauty myths presented in a musical format. Similarly, Amara and Kusuma (2022) studied BTS's Magic Shop to uncover many issues related to mental health, self-love, and emotional resiliency through lyrics. Despite these two studies differing in focus of issue, the songs reflect how song lyrics engage with societal myths as they relate to gender and power relations and mental health concepts. Viewing lyrics through this lens and semiotic process provides the reader with the idea that music-making goes beyond an art form; it is an understanding that individuals as meaning-makers are part of a culture shaped by social constructions that engage, misrepresent, or transform their lived experiences in identity, relational connection, and mental health.

Given the intricate relationship of music and meaning, the semiotic analysis of "Somebody" provides insight into how the music invokes emotion and cultural. This study used Barthesian Semiotic theory to analyze meanings in the lyrics "Somebody". The objectives of the study are given below:

1. To scrutinize how the denotation, connotation, and myth are found in "Somebody".
2. To categorize the romantic myths in "Somebody" that are constructed and deconstructed.
3. To analyze how the semiotic theory by Barthes exposes hidden meaning and cultural narratives that are contained in the song.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

To analyze the song, the researchers used qualitative content analysis. It is to answer the three objectives of the study. This way of analysis is used to categorize patterns, themes, and symbolic that may be found in the song's lyrics (Schreier et al., 2019). Along with this, a semiotic theory by Barthes uses three steps in interpreting the meanings of a word. They are denotation, connotation, and myth which Barthes' semiotic approach provides opportunities for interpretations at three levels: denotation, connotation, and myths. These three are used and learned culturally as a set of signs and codes. (Chandler, 2017).

The lyrics from "Somebody" were taken from the official launch by BigHit Music. In analyzing the lyrics, three steps were done in the process. At first, the lyrics were divided line by line to categorize the meaning denotatively. This is how meanings are read literally (Jadou and Al Ghabra, 2021). Next, the connotative meanings were revealed by scrutinizing the lyrics psychologically, culturally, and symbolically (Chandler, 2017). The last step was to use mythic analysis to interpret how the lyrics told larger cultural myths, such as pressure of careers, social class, and the shadow self (Nabila et al., 2022).

During the process, themes were identified inductively through open coding and the categories were refined after many readings of the data set. No software was utilized for qualitative analysis, and the researcher relied entirely on manual annotation to make sense of and group patterns surrounding emotional detachment, missing, recovery, and relationship ideals. The intention was to interpret how the song constructs meaning through the individual lines of lyrics and through larger thematic arcs in the construct of lyrics.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

1. The lyrics of "Somebody" reflect Roland Barthes' concept of denotation, connotation, and myth

Verse 1 Analysis

Table 1. Semiotic Analysis of "Somebody" – Jungkook (Verse 1)

No.	Lyrics - Denotation	Connotation	Myth
1	("Same back roads, switching lanes"). When driving on familiar roads, but you are changing lanes.	Emotionally unstable; grappling with the idea of moving forward versus lingering in the past.	Love is a journey, and the process of change creates a place for emotional dissonance.
2	("My mind is racing, I can drive myself insane"). Rapid thoughts and the mental strain on one's mind	Overanalyzing everything and self-sabotaging after a heartbreak.	Many people believe that examining their past will yield closure, but doing so can sometimes create more pain than resolution.

3	("Winter's cold and summer's strange"). Literal description of the season.	Emotional dissension; gloom in winter, discomfort in summer happiness.	Love does change through time and can 'cool', challenging the myth that love remains a constant flame throughout.
4	("Don't turn around and act like you don't feel the same"). Direct appeal to the other person.	Frustration and hope; yearning for brutal honesty in feelings.	The idea that love in truth requires honesty and cannot exist with deception.

Denotation

The line "Same back roads, switching lanes" illustrates the idea that the singer is driving down roads he is already familiar with, while changing lanes. The lyrics "I can drive myself insane" relate to "My mind is racing", as both phrases describe to mental functioning. "My mind is racing" literally refers to the idea that hyperactive functioning is occurring in sequence. Conversely, "drive myself insane" denotes something devastating occurring psychologically. The phrase "Winter's cold and summer's strange" describes the distinct nature of each season. "Winter's cold" indicates that there is a lower temperature related to the winter season. On the other hand, "summer's strange" conveys that summer feels different from what is normally expected. Finally, the lyric "Don't turn around and act like you don't feel the same" provides a direct claim to the listener from the singer. "Don't turn around" simply refers to not returning. Also, "act like you don't feel the same" describes reacting as if the former lover's feelings had changed.

Connotation

The phrases "same back roads" and "switching lanes" are about the ambiguity of the singer about moving on. He hesitates to continue his love journey by still thinking about his past. He seems to be moving by driving, but is still on the same road by only switching lanes. This describes his emotional condition, which is a more stagnant stage in his current life.

In the line "My mind is racing, I can drive myself insane", it was found the connotative meaning from a psychological aspect. It demonstrates how the singer struggles with his overthinking self, and it can lead him to self-destruction. This stage describes how the singer always comes back and forth in his memory about his past feeling which he cannot hold.

The next lyric, "Winter's cold and summer's strange" shows how a condition is not like what it is supposed to be. It is normal to feel cold during winter and usually summer is defined as warm. Here, it is stated that the singer feels odd. It relates to the feeling that winter is usually sad and empty. And summer is supposed to be full of joy and energy. It shows how the feelings have not changed. The feeling of loss and emptiness is still there.

In another part of the song: "Don't turn around and act like you don't feel the same" states the fact that someone should be honest about one's feelings. When the singer says this, it describes how he feels frustrated and still has hope that his ex-lover still has the same feelings about him. It is more like a strong request showing how the singer has not moved on.

Myth

One of the myths that the song addresses is that love is made by memories. When memories remain, society likes to romanticize that love is never gone. This psychoanalyst explains why it is hard to let go because people will cling to the past as evidence that their love was real and meaningful. The song explores how memories are sometimes more devastating than they are forgiving.

Generally, love assumes the shape of a consistent and stable energy or force, and that becomes problematic. Commonly, love changes over time. What used to be constant warmth can change to something distant and strange or painful. Love is always talked about as a potential means of happiness and stability; however, here, with all complexity, love is revealed.

After this point, the song will have some banter on the idea that there are not-so-closed chapters between ex-girlfriend and ex-boyfriend. "Don't turn around and act like you don't feel the

same," noisy, expresses that dominant mentality of love never really being gone, and simply resting. This of course may not be true for all love, but some of the message rings true for the common fantasy that alleviates emotional bonds long after a romantic chapter has ended. This is also what makes it so much harder to let go, when someone fears that he or she could be the only one who is still holding on.

Verse 2 Analysis

Table 2. Semiotic Analysis of "Somebody" – Jungkook (Verse 2)

No.	Lyrics - Denotation	Connotation	Myth
1	("Came to terms", "Things have changed"). Accept change.	("My heart can tell"). Intuitive awareness of a shift in emotional state.	Emotional self-reliance—self-justifying trust in one's feelings.
2	("Pull the cord, split the chain"). Lift your bindings.	Bondage imagery implies a restrictive and onerous relationship.	Love is not always permanent; sometimes liberation is needed.
3	("Damage going through the motions makes"). There is a psychological toll for continuing unchanged.	("Going through the motions") Dead, lifeless routine; disconnection from emotion.	Self-care before resilience—don't be harmful stubbornness following a breakup.

Denotation

Denotation is used to express the most plain and direct meaning of the lyric words. "Came to terms," indicates the singer has accepted something, most likely a turning point or conclusion. "Things have changed" would also indicate change-unlike in a relationship state. It is said, "My heart can tell and I don't need you to explain," in obvious proclamations, it leads toward a sensed change regardless of verbally agreed upon. Further, "Pull the cord, split the chain" would relay what it means to break away from something like severing ties. Finally, "There's so much damage going through the motions makes," tells that over time continuing unchanged would lead to more or just about another inevitable damage. These lyrics at this denotative level indicate a withdrawal process from realization and separation.

Connotation

The connotation refers to any possible meanings that words might carry in addition to their literal denotation-the deeper, symbolic, or emotional meanings beyond the literal. The imagery presented by chains and cords suggests bondage or attachment and indicates that the relationship, whether romantic or otherwise, felt restrictive or burdensome. The lyrics "My heart can sense it" give the vibe that the singer has realized how things have changed. It shows how the singer tries to settle with his thoughts. The phrase: "going through the motions makes" describes how the singer process the distancing. The word "damage" strongly depicts that there is a deep pain in the singer's heart and it is difficult to let go.

Myth

Barthes' myth means the cultural beliefs woven in the signs' meanings, which are then represented through the lyrics as narratives propagated by society regarding relationships, self-esteem, and emotional development. On the one hand, love being imagined as a force that binds are often given the attribute of permanence and near-immortality. On the other hand, these lyrics distance themselves from such notions by proposing an occasional need for liberation. "I don't need you to explain," which implies that one is entitled to feel without needing any justifications, supports the myth of emotional self-reliance: modern thinking concerning emotional independence values personal intuition and judgment. Additionally, it criticizes the myth of resilience by claiming that tolerating the pain becomes a liability ("so much damage going through the motions makes") and thus aligns with current cultural story about self-care-the need to preserve oneself over being tied to toxic attachment.

Pre-Chorus Analysis

Table 3. Semiotic Analysis of "Somebody" – Jungkook (Pre-Chorus)

No	Lyrics - Denotation	Connotation	Myth
1	("Oh, oh, we both know") Both participants have knowledge of something.	Conveys a tacit shared understanding of possibly heartbreak or a feeling of being unresolved; the silence itself displays an emotional component.	Contests the notion that love must be verbally expressed to be real, stating that real love can encompass deep emotions without words.
2	("Say it again, say it again") A request for repetition of what is already said.	Marks an effort to linger on a moment of solace or delay in confronting an inevitable truth, and nothing can change.	Disputes that words can make things better; words can be comforting if reiterated but cannot change and mend profound wounds and emotional pain.
3	("Like oh, oh, it's time to let go") It is time to move on from something.	Shows a kind of psychological battle; acceptance and hesitation; letting go is true to feeling, not purely rational.	Contradicts the oversimplified notion that moving on is as easy as forgetting and requiring little time; recognizes that not only are there emotional struggles but there are also moments when the person is attached to someone.

Denotation

The saying "Oh, oh, we both know" states that the lovers acknowledge something. The next lyric: "Say it again, say it again" is a request toward something. The next phrase "Like oh, oh, it's time to let go" indicates that it is indeed time to just move on from something.

Connotation

The phrase, "We both know," implicates more than acknowledgment of their shared knowledge. It contains a layer of emotional depth signifying the fact that both happen to carry an unspoken reality—probably of heartbreak, loss, severed, or some incomplete emotional experience. The silence expresses enough pain to articulate. They, too, have emotional weight twisted into it, and it is too painful for either to articulate and, thus, they would not speak to their shared knowledge. In every way, "Say it again," anticipates the spoken word: the desire to have possessed the earlier moment, to bear the moment "just a little longer," to wait before the inescapable fact comes. Words are transient. They articulate this and continue to say they are transient; that regardless of how many times something is told, it may not alter the reality of the moment.

The part "It's time to let go" conveys a sense of closure, but has an ambivalent tone of relief. It gets the senses that the singer is fighting with the acceptance that they should move on, yet they are struggling to fully embrace what will likely be their decision. The part suggests more of an acceptance with the sense that moving on is not an action readily rooted in a rational choice, but filled with emotional inconsistency. The "oh, oh" reinforces the sense of doubt, that almost as if the singer tries to persuade themselves that it is a correct decision but is not yet emotionally prepared to do so.

Myth

The most common fallacy about love is that if it is not said, it cannot be sure that it is real. But there is more than this to such a song, people cannot be frank with each other just through words, the fact is love often brims into silence and there are these lines "we both know" which show that deep feelings can exist when nothing is said. This goes against the notion that love must be stated to be real and legitimate.

Yet another prevalent myth of language is that it heals heartbreaks. The statement, "Say it again," tends to somewhat reinforce the utopian belief that listening to something repeatedly can provide solace or even change the reality of a situation. Yet, the song negates this idea in such a delicate way that it suggests words have the ability to provide brief relief but will not erase the pain.

However, how many times something is said, the feeling towards the quote is quite complicated and often unresolved.

It is also in this song that the oversimplified idea of moving on is deconstructed. The phrase might sound very affirmative at first sight; however, the melancholy in the voice contradicts that, which proves that letting go is never just all about saying that something has to come to an end. It is emotional doubt, an inner conflict, and some attachments take time to be left behind. This, therefore, goes a great deal against the popularized oversimplified notion that emotional detachment comes easily with people, well, apart from pain and slowness and a touch of personal touch.

Chorus Analysis

Table 4. Semiotic Analysis of "Somebody" – Jungkook (Chorus)

No.	Lyrics - Denotation	Connotation	Myth
1	("You're under the lights"). Standing or moving beneath streetlights at night	Being in the spotlight, nightlife atmosphere, or seeking temporary escape from emotions	The notion that outside brightness or attention can substitute for emotional fulfillment
2	("Oh, I hoped you'd find somebody Hoped you'd find somebody to ride,"). Wishing the ex finds someone to share life's journey	Desire for the other person's happiness despite personal loss	Love is unselfish and can withstand non-ownership
3	("Somebody to die"). Hoping they find someone deeply loyal	Idealization of unconditional devotion	The idea that absolute loyalty exists and is the best form of love
4	(Hope you know that somebody ain't me). Stating he is not that person	Acceptance mixed with regret; self-awareness of limitations	Recognizing outside factors that may contribute to someone inability to love could restore a sense of closure

Denotation

"When you go out in the night, you're under the lights" talks about the darkness of the evening is cast away by street lights, and so standing out in the night means one is under lights. The next line, "Oh, I hoped you'd find somebody, hoped you'd find," means that the former lover should find someone else; another sad sentiment built on the foundation of "hoped you'd find" being repeated. The next phrase, "somebody to ride, somebody to die," refers to finding someone to accompany the singer in different circumstances, with "ride" referring to being there while "die" means standing as a commitment. "Hope you know that somebody ain't me" signifies that whoever this someone is, that former lover should know it is not the singer.

Connotation

"Under the lights" means something in particular. The singer thinks that she may want something else, a type of fun that comes from enjoying the nightlife like this stranger. She might just be out mingling or just getting out again. The artificial light distinguishes itself from sunlight, yet tends to feel somewhat temporary or shallow. Maybe she is just going through the motions for fun; or feels that being genuine brings no real joy.

The line "I hoped you'd find somebody" is bittersweet: it covers selflessness in tandem with pain. The singer sincerely hopes she is happy but finds the wish hard to bear. It captures the contention between maturity, of wanting the best for someone even after he is no longer your person, and your heart still needing time to heal from the vicarious pain of watching from afar as she moves on. The repetition of "hoped you'd find" in the next line gives the effect that this hope is something that the singer has been trying to convince himself to feel, perhaps to mitigate his own pain.

"Somebody to ride, somebody to die" conveys the extent of the singer's commitment to his idea of love. "To ride" signifies sharing mundane things together elevating the fun and adventure in

the relationship. "Die," refers to an undying love and commitment even in the hardest of times. This excerpt points to the romanticized view of love as being attached and eternal. This expression of yearning for this type of love, even though he is addressing the person, suggests that he is wanting it from afar. "Hope you know that somebody ain't me," shows acceptance, but a hint of sadness, as well. The declarative statement portrays acceptance of the end of the relationship. However, his need to express it shows some lingering attachment to that feeling of being together. It encompasses an ambiguous message in that he admits he has not been the one, but there can be some lingering feelings or emptiness associated with life without the person. The language sounds like a bit of a trigger or umbrella statement; the singer will make the declaration regarding his absence while reflecting on the loss.

Myth

People moving on quickly in life is a common phenomenon, but is it something one should be doing happily? Society seems to think so, as they believe that if someone is out partying, then enjoying themselves, they have successfully moved on from what was holding them back. However, being "under the lights" suggests that this euphoria could just be smoke and mirrors. This indicates that someone being out and socializing does not mean that they are psychologically alright.

Another societal notion is that love should be selfless in a way that, if the person you love is happy with someone else, then that should be acceptable. While many view this as a sign of personal growth, the song tries to articulate an opposite reality. In the song, the singer wishes his former lover happiness; but does so while carrying mental anguish. This emotional turmoil of wanting the best for someone that is out of the picture shows how complex letting go of someone can really be.

The lyrics also reprimand the myths that true love is both unconditional and everlasting. The phrases, "somebody to ride, somebody to die" means the desire for a love that doesn't age. Yet, the sober conclusion, "somebody ain't me" once again calls into question that ideal. The song recognizes that even if love is strong, and desire is intense, relationships can still end and people are not always supposed to stay together. Not quite the romantic idea that once you find love, it remains the same forever.

The song finally denies such concepts about how the end of a relationship implies that two lovers do not care anymore. The admission that "somebody ain't me" is an admission of reality, but it does not show emotional detachment. Instead, they will insist that the feeling may still end after accepting the breakup. Most would think that moving on means a clean break, but the song proves thoroughly that moving on is just the other way around, that feelings last much longer under conditions when one accepts that the relationship is over.

2. The Romantic Myths that are Constructed and Deconstructed in the Song's Lyrics

a. Myth of Eternal Love (Constructed and Deconstructed)

1) Eternal Love as Everlasting Connection – Constructed

The song first establishes the myth of eternal love with lingering feelings and an unbreakable connection between the singer and his former lover. The quote "Don't turn around and act like you don't feel the same", means that there is an emotional connection despite being separated from each other. This strengthens the overly idealized perspective that true love can be felt even after a breakup. The singer's unresolved feelings combined with the nostalgic elements within the lyrics suggest that once a deeply felt love is experienced, it has a lasting imprint that does not go away.

2) Love as a Battle or Struggle - Constructed

By describing love as a cause of suffering and endurance, the song depicts it as a battle or struggle between two opponents. "Pull the cord, split the chain" and "So much damage going through the motions makes" articulate that love can at times feel like a force that constrains and needs to be broken; however, the breaking of such a love would cause damage of equal or greater magnitude. Hence, this strengthens the idea that love somehow is entwined with

pain, and if the relationship will be worth the work, then indeed, there will be much endurance and perseverance that will be needed despite hardship. The images emerge linking damage and restraint, for culturally, one perceives that true love is worth fighting for, even if fighting entails suffering.

3) Love is Not Forever – Deconstructed

Unlike the parts explained previously, the song later deconstructs this myth by accepting the harsh reality of moving on. The chorus, precisely the quote “Hope you know that somebody ain’t me” signals a completely different perspective to the song. The singer comes into the realization that his former lover has been seeing someone else, which directly goes against the statement love is eternal and unchangeable. Instead of believing in the notion that love is meant to last forever, the lyrics appear to suggest that there is a conclusion to the relationship and the lost love is exchanged for a new one.

4) The Transition from Longing to Acceptance - Deconstructed

The emotional shift in the song from discontent or reluctant acceptance in the verses and real acceptance in the chorus lays waste to the notion that “love lasts always.” Repetition of “somebody ain’t me,” doubly emphasizes a continuousness of change and advancement to show further love is not permanence. The singer’s acceptance gaps their own unwillingness to release a what once seemed reliable connection to ultimately show that love does indeed fade away, and life progresses as a result.

b. Soulmate Myth (Deconstructed)

1) Challenging the Idea of One True Soulmate

The Soulmate myth speculates that people are destined to meet a specific person, and love means making these exclusive commitments. The song starts with lyrics that describe how the singer sticks with one person. However, in the last part of the song, it questions how love is not always about craving for one person.

2) Letting Go Instead of Holding On

The lyrics “It’s time to let go” expresses about how the singer accept the love that he has. It is not always meant for the two lovers to be together as it is stated by the myth.

3) Acceptance of New Love

The deepest level of deconstruction takes place in the song with the repeated phrase, “Hope you know that somebody ain’t me.” This line means to express a hope that his ex will find someone that is not him as he cannot be for her any longer, leading to an examination of the ownership of love.

c. Love as a Source of Identity (Constructed and Deconstructed)

1) Love as Central to Identity – Constructed

In suggesting that love is one of the key constructs of identity, the song depicts the singer’s heartbreak after the relationship and attempts to make sense of the events. The lines “My mind is racing, I can drive myself insane” highlight serious discomfort, indicating that the singer’s emotions are captured by love and the state of being forlorn. This further supports the assertion that love is not merely an experience but a primary component of one’s identity. In addition, feelings of mournfulness and wistfulness proposed in the lyrics truly support that the singer’s self-concept was incidentally associated with the relationship, strengthening the argument that love is one of the factors that contribute to defining one’s identity.

2) Love as Not Defining One’s Entire Existence – Deconstructed

The repetition of the line “Hope you know that somebody ain’t me” serves as the singer’s realization that he exists outside this relationship, and is a very telling cue in the song. The speaker highlights a distance that is being felt, a step back from the notion that love or relationships fully enclose one, and is crucial to a person’s identity. On top of that, the phrase “It’s time to let go” strengthen the notion that a person’s self-esteem and identity is not nuanced to one’s romantic partner. Rather than looking for help desperately, the song

changes this self-destructive theory, the chorus is focused around constructive acceptance.

d. Romantic Suffering as Noble (Constructed and Deconstructed)

1) Romantic Suffering as Noble – Constructed

"Somebody" describes the idea of romantic pain being noble in the realm of love but specifically selfless pain. The line "My mind is racing, I can drive myself insane" exemplifies motivational loss while evoking hope, while expressing sadness. These statements express how love can be mournful-love that is mourned and love that is lost. This demonstrates the idea that there is always a price to love, which is some semblance of pain as an eternal price. The lyric "Oh, I hoped you'd find somebody" exemplifies selfless love where the aim is to make the other happy, regardless of desire-selfless love. This situation says that suffering is noble.

2) Romantic Suffering as Noble – Deconstructed

Besides describing that it is okay to suffer for love, it also shows the other situation of how a person can let go of love. It is a state where someone has already overcome the heartbreak feelings which lead to acceptance. As can be seen from the lyrics: "Hope you know that somebody ain't me". Similarly, "It's time to let go" goes so far as to suggest that love is not simply about enduring pain, but rather when the time is right to let go of someone. Within these lines, it can be seen that the song moves from pain to acceptance and challenges the romantic notion of love by suggesting that letting go is the next form and even an ideal form of love.

3. Barthes' Semiotic Theory Reveals Hidden Meanings and Cultural Narratives in the Song

a. Signifier and Signified: The Language of Loss and Letting Go

Connecting the concepts of the signifier and the signified, as put forward by Barthes-the former indicating the words and the latter the deeper implications-it can be understood how the song expresses emotions indirectly. "Winter's cold and summer's strange"-on the surface it means following the cycle of the seasons, but it refers to a very unstable emotional situation, where a relationship changes with time. "Somebody to ride, somebody to die"-the word "ride" is indicative of having a companion while riding through life, whereas 'die' suggests an emotional and deep investment in a relationship. There lay the extremes of love: the joy and the pain.

b. Myth as a Second-Order Sign System: The Illusion of Love and Heartbreak

Barthes posits that myths frame a certain cultural perception. In "Somebody", there is an all-consuming love myth, but it ends in ruin. A song first adheres to the natural story of love ever after, but then refutes it when the singer says it's all right to move on. The former lover should "know" that she is not the one: by repeating the expression, heartbreak turns into a universal predicament.

c. Emotional Codes in Popular Culture: The Power of Repetition

Repetition in a song shows how something or a statement is strengthened. In "Somebody", the statement "Somebody ain't me: is repeated several times. This proves the acceptance of a condition in a relationship that the two lovers are not meant for each other. It is in line with a belief that love can be valued or sometimes is not.

DISCUSSION

The song "Somebody" by Jungkook challenges conservative myths about love, relationships, and breakups. It shows how social beliefs and emotional realism are opposites. Among the myths

seriously deconstructed by the song is that of eternal love, implying that love cannot change. While "Somebody" presents the view that love can be changed and may actually go through cycles and states of emotion, a song "Tak Sekedar Cinta" postulates that love is potentially unchanging and eternal if built on loyalty and commitment while undergoing challenges (Harnia, 2021). Likewise, "Ruang Sendiri" views solitude as something necessary within relationships, in that it works to bring balance into one's emotion space, and not as a sign of losing or neglecting self (Kuntanto, 2024). Detachment is revealed here as layered and painful, not something that can be done in an instant. Mukminin (2024) studies complex experiences of love and Rustam et al. (2024) studies the perfection of love and relational myths, respectively. Hence, neither of these deals directly with emotional detachment. Nevertheless, the two researchers highlight the usefulness of Barthes' semiotic theory in unmasking cultural meaning in the realm of music.

The study of semiotics in music has, in the past, examined how creators of the art form utilize a range of symbols and semiotic processes to stand against the hegemonic discourses of cultural narratives. Blackburn (2024) examines how drag artists renegotiate meaning in musical pieces through lip-syncing, queering traditional interpretations and renegotiating socio-cultural norms. Nink and Heesch (2023) examine how sentiments of love and heartbreak in hard rock/metal ballads, while sentimental and gendered, can offer different kinds of experiences that both build upon and resist conventions of the genre. Likewise, Katyal (2012) poses the idea of semiotic democracy, which goes one step further by giving the audience the power to push back cultural signs and interpretations, including music, and to strip claims to meaning or intentions from any cultural production and assert themselves. Giacosa (2023) discusses this similarly through the cognitive-semiotic angle, which emphasizes how listeners create meaning and the role of the listener. To sum up, all these studies exposed that meanings in music are dynamic. It depends on how the songwriters use words and how the listeners interpret them.

Researches about sentimental love show different situations of how people overcome heartbreaks. Some may heal quickly; others may find it hard to move on. (DeWall et al., 2011). In contrast to songs that portray swift resolution, "Somebody" navigates the experience of being part of the struggle with paradoxes, drawing close to the dual process model of bereavement coping aspirations, which acknowledges that coping hesitates between confronting (Stroebe and Schut, 1999). These relationships indicate a connection of "Somebody" to the broader discussion of emotional expression in music and what letting go could mean in a more complicated way. Additionally, research indicates that music may aid in regulating emotions and stress in a positive way, which aids in resilience (Thoma et al., 2013).

CONCLUSION

This study applies Roland Barthes' semiotic theory in order to decenter Jungkook's lyrics in "Somebody" to explore how the music is present in its constructive and deconstructive forms of romantic myths with references to denotations, connotations, and myths. The song opens with a positive yet predictable story of love that love will, in fact, never die, in the end, there is a moment of surprise for the listener as the lyrics place the feeling of heartache in a complicated yet chaotic experience. Furthermore, the song reinstates the image of a fallout as a lover's resolved, fine, and simple transition of moving beyond it, promoting forgiveness as an innate mark of love, for this incident. The song explores the disingenuousness of establishing uniform cultural expectations and a rough sharing of pain which is an aspect of life, as captured in the lyrics. A wealth of meaning is always hidden through the Barthesian lens of semiotics, as love is always in thought yet fleeting or quickly passing within reality, and the good-bye is unfortunately one of the hardest moments rather than the final good-bye. This study broadly examines the extent to which pop songs can be read as cultural texts that re-inscribe and rearticulate dominant ideologies about relationships. The study also demonstrates the value of Barthesian semiotics for revealing layers of meaning in music. One of the strengths of the study, as demonstrated in the analysis, was the depth of the textual analysis and the effective use of theory and detail in lyrics that allowed for a deepened narrative of emotion to exist, beyond a lucid consideration of emotion. A limitation, however, of this study was the singular song

considered, and the absence of attention to the listener's or reader's perspective and agency, which may minimize the transferability of the project. Further research could employ this method on a broader scale, replicating the method with a varied selection of contemporary songs to position pop songs in a shifting value system, and demonstrate how pop songs are able to continue to exist as both popular and significant.

REFERENCES

- Amara, V. R., & Kusuma, R. S. (2022). *Semiotic Analysis of Mental Disorders in BTS Magic Shop Lyrics*. 661, 187–197. <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.220501.021>
- Blackburn, A. L. (2024). Dragging Music: Towards a Queer Socio-Cultural Semiotics. *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 149(1), 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1017/rma.2024.14>
- Chandler, D. (2017). *Semiotics: The Basics* (3rd ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315311050>
- DeWall, C., Pond, J., Richard, Campbell, W. K., & Twenge, J. (2011). Tuning in to Psychological Change: Linguistic Markers of Psychological Traits and Emotions Over Time in Popular U.S. Song Lyrics. *Psychology of Aesthetics Creativity and the Arts*, 5(3), 200–207. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0023195>
- Giacosa, G. (2023). Musical Meaning and the Semiotic Hierarchy: Towards a Cognitive Semiotics of Music. *Public Journal of Semiotics*, 10(2), 16–39. <https://doi.org/10.37693/pjos.2023.10.25325>
- Harnia, N. T. (2021). Analisis Semiotika Makna Cinta pada Lirik Lagu “Tak Sekedar Cinta” Karya Dnanda. *Metamorfosa*, 9(2), 224–238. <https://ejournal.bbg.ac.id/metamorfosa/article/view/1405>
- Jadou, S. H., & Al Ghabra, I. M. M. M. (2021). Barthes' Semiotic Theory and Interpretation of Signs. *International Journal of Research in Social Sciences and Humanities*, 11(3), 470–482. <https://doi.org/10.37648/ijrssh.v11i03.027>
- Katyal, S. K. (2012). Between Semiotic Democracy and Disobedience: Two Views of Branding, Culture and Intellectual Property. 4 *Wipo J. Intell. Prop.*, 50(1), 50–62. https://ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/faculty_scholarship/618
- Kuntanto, K. (2024). Makna Kesendirian: Analisis Semiotika Roland Barthes pada Lirik Lagu Ruang Sendiri Karya Tulus. *Journal of Language Literature and Arts*, 4(7), Article 7. <https://doi.org/10.17977/um064v4i72024p757-762>
- Levy, A., Granot, R., & Peres, R. (2024). Lyrics Do Matter: How “Coping Songs” Relate to Well-being Goals. The COVID Pandemic Case. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 15, 01–13. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1431741>
- MacDonald, R. (2021). The Social Functions of Music: Communication, Wellbeing, Art, Ritual, Identity and Social Networks (C- WARIS). In *Routledge International Handbook of Music Psychology in Education and the Community* (pp. 5–21). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429295362>
- Muchalif, M., & Alfikri, M. (2022). Semiotics Analysis of the Meaning of Power in the Song “2+2=5” By Radiohead. *LEGAL BRIEF*, 11(4), Article 4. <https://doi.org/10.35335/legal.v11i4.431>
- Mukminin, M. S. (2024). Love's Representation in Kalam Eineh Lyrics: A Semiotic Perspective by Roland Barthes. *Muaddib: Journal of Arabic Language and Literature*, 1(01), Article 01. <https://doi.org/10.51190/muaddib.v01i01.12>

- Nabila, I., Thamrin, H., Supian, S., & Rusmana, E. (2022). An Analysis of BTS's Selected Song Lyrics: A Study of Denotative, Connotative and Myth Meaning. *English Education and Applied Linguistics Journal (EEAL Journal)*, 5(3), 135–146. <https://doi.org/10.31980/eeal.v5i3.45>
- Nink, T., & Heesch, F. (2023). Metal Ballads as Low Pop? An Approach to Sentimentality and Gendered Performances in Popular Hard Rock and Metal Songs. *Arts*, 12(38), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.3390/arts12010038>
- Rowley, J., & Dunbar-Hall, P. (2013). Cultural Diversity in Music Learning: Developing Identity as Music Teacher and Learner. *Pacific-Asian Education Journal*, 25(2), 41–50.
- Rustam, R., Ahmad, M., & Pallawagau, B. (2024). Roland Barthes' Semiotic Analysis of the Lyrics of the Song Hājah Mistakhiyah by Muḥammad Ḥamāki (Denotation, Connotation and Myth). *AURELIA: Jurnal Penelitian Dan Pengabdian Masyarakat Indonesia*, 4(1), Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.57235/aurelia.v4i1.4651>
- Schreier, M., Stamann, C., Janssen, M., Dahl, T., & Whittal, A. (2019). Qualitative Content Analysis: Conceptualizations and Challenges in Research Practice - Introduction to the FQS Special Issue "Qualitative Content Analysis I." *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 20(3), 1–26. <https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-20.3.3393>
- Smith, M., & Budianto, S. (2024). *Semiotics of Roland Barthes on Lana Del Rey Song Lyrics | Journal of English on Language and Literature*. 2(4), 375–381. https://ejournal.unitomo.ac.id/index.php/jell/article/view/7929?utm_source=chatgpt.com
- Stroebe, M., & Schut. (1999). The Dual Process Model of Coping with Bereavement: Rationale and Description. *Death Studies*, 23(3), 197–224. <https://doi.org/10.1080/074811899201046>
- Thoma, M. V., La Marca, R., Brönnimann, R., Finkel, L., Ehlert, U., & Nater, U. M. (2013). The Effect of Music on the Human Stress Response. *PLoS ONE*, 8(8), e70156. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0070156>