

A Semiotic Analysis of the Meaning of Longing in the Lyrics of the Song “*Lagu Untukmu*” by Raisa

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Abstract. Song lyrics can act as a means of expressing one’s emotions, meanings, and particular symbols. This research intends to explore the concept of longing present in the lyrics of the song “*Lagu Untukmu*” through the lens of Ferdinand de Saussure’s semiotic theory. Saussure’s semiotic theory emphasizes two elements: the signifier and the signified. This study employs an interpretative qualitative approach and operationalizes Ferdinand de Saussure’s semiotic framework by analyzing the relationship between signifiers and signified meanings in the song lyrics. Data were collected through document analysis of song lyrics and in-depth interviews with selected listeners, which were used to complement the semiotic analysis. The result indicate that the meaning of longing is constructed through a system of linguistic signs representing emotional distance, memory, and maternal attachment. This longing represents not only physical yearning but also emotional yearning for unconditional acceptance, a sense of security, the warmth of the relationship, and memories of the past that have changed due to life transitions. The conclusion of this study is that song lyrics can serve as a medium for conveying messages or feelings experienced by the singer to the listener.

Keywords: Semiotics, Ferdinand De Saussure, Meaning of Longing, Song Lyrics, *Lagu Untukmu*

1 Introduction

Communication has been an integral part of human life from ancient times to the present day. Communication is the process of conveying a message through language, symbols, signs, or body language to others involved in the exchange, through various stages, so that the message is conveyed clearly, coherently, and in detail, thereby eliciting the desired response or reaction [1]. One of the tools of communication is language, because through language, people can effectively convey their thoughts, feelings, and information to others [2]. According to Keraf in [3] In an artistic context, language can produce beautiful expressions such as in stories, tales, verses, poetry, drawings, paintings, music, and sculptures.

Music has become something that almost everyone needs; without even realizing it, we encounter it almost every day in all kinds of everyday situations. Music can be enjoyed anytime—whether in shopping malls, stores, on the radio, on television, or online [4]. Some people feel that using music as a means of communication is more impactful and evokes stronger emotions; even feelings that are difficult to express directly can be conveyed through music [5]. Music is a universal form of communication that serves not only as entertainment but also as a medium capable of conveying specific meanings and symbols (Suryasuciramdhan, Yusuf, et al., 2024). Music and songs can also serve as a way for an individual or a group to express the deep emotional feelings and experiences they have gone through (Suryasuciramdhan, Azzahra, et al., 2024). Music conveys meanings that can influence a person’s actions and attitudes, and can even change their perspective on life; it can be said that song lyrics are one of the most important elements of music [8].

Lyrics are a sequence of words that make up a song consisting of several verses. According to Aminudin in [9] Song lyrics are the product of someone’s creativity, capable of expressing things as they truly are. Song lyrics have the ability to transform abstract inner experiences into a series of linguistic signs that can be disseminated. Through song lyrics, listeners are invited to interpret the song’s message using their own experiences and knowledge as a foundation for understanding the lyrics; in other words, a well-crafted song can help listeners absorb and appreciate the positive message contained within its lyrics, regardless of the type or genre of music [10]. Therefore, in today’s digital age, popular songs are not only enjoyed through listening but can also be analyzed by listeners to understand how messages and meanings are shaped in society.

One of the Indonesian musicians known for her profound lyrics and powerful emotional depth is Raisa Andriana [11]. Born on June 6, 1990, this singer-songwriter began her career in 2010. The song “*Lagu Untukmu*” is one of her works, released in 2018. This song presents an emotional story about the loving relationship between a mother and her child. The brief period they share ultimately leads to a profound sense of longing [12]. Longing can be conceptualized as an affective and symbolic experience that emerges from emotional distance, absence, and memory. Within the context of communication, longing is not only understood as a personal emotion but also as a socially constructed meaning expressed through language and symbols. Therefore, longing can be analyzed as a semiotic phenomenon, where linguistic elements function as signs that represent deeper emotional and relational meanings.

The Raisa song “*Lagu Untukmu*” might be considered a fascinating viewed phenomenon since the meaning of “longing” which is conveyed by the lyrics, is understood differently by every listener. These variations in interpretation are brought about by the audience’s diverse life experiences, emotional states, and social circumstances [13]. In this context, a semiotic approach is necessary to systematically examine how meaning is constructed within the lyrics. Through semiotics, the underlying meanings in the song lyrics linguistic indicators may be analyzed more deeply. These signs are not only individual in nature but also capable of capturing the public’s attention and eliciting a positive response from listeners [14]. Ferdinand de Saussure stated that a sign has two main components: the signifier and the signified, both are interconnected and inseparable in the process of meaning construction [15]. For example, in a study titled “Exploring The Signified and Signifier in Song Lyrics through a Saussurean Semiotics Lens” Saussure’s theory was specifically applied to analyze song lyrics in order to identify the signs that create specific meanings [16]. While Roland Barthes’s theory of semiotics highlights the complexity of meaning through the elements of denotative, connotative, and mythical elements, Saussure focuses instead on the internal structure of language particularly the relationship between signifier and signified within the linguistic system of poetry, which serves to create meaning [17]. Therefore, an understanding of the longing expressed in the song “*Lagu Untukmu*” can be analyzed through the relationship between linguistic elements—such as words and phrases—and the ideas concepts that come to the listener’s mind.

This study differs from previous research by integrating Saussure’s semiotic analysis with audience interpretation to understand the construction of longing. To date, there have been relatively few studies that have examined in detail how the concept of “longing” is constructed in modern Indonesian songs using a semiotic approach based on Saussure’s theory, particularly as it relates to Raisa’s works. To address this gap, this study offers a new perspective. The primary data used was obtained from interviews with listeners. In this way, the understanding produced does not only focus on the meaning conveyed in the lyrics but also encompasses the emotional and personal meanings experienced by the listeners. The methodology employed in this study is qualitative; the data collection techniques include document analysis and in-depth interviews. The primary objective of this study is to examine the lyrics of Raisa’s song titled “*Lagu Untukmu*”, which depict and express feelings of longing.

This study is expected to provide additional insights in the field of communication studies, particularly in the analysis of media texts. This study is also expected to enrich the application of Ferdinand de Saussure’s semiotic theory in the field of semiotic communication, as well as expand understanding of how signs and meanings function in the context of emotional expression. This study is also expected to enhance listeners’ media literacy so that they can understand that songs are not merely entertainment, but also a medium for reflection to understand human emotional experiences.

In light of this, the author is interested in examining how the lyrics of Raisa’s song “*Lagu Untukmu*” can be interpreted to uncover the meaning of longing, using Ferdinand de Saussure’s semiotic approach as the basis for a study titled “A Semiotic Analysis of the Lyrics of Raisa’s Song ‘*Lagu Untukmu*’”.

2 Literature Review

The word “semiotics” derives from the Greek word *semeion*, meaning “sign,” or *seme*, meaning “interpreter of signs.” A sign can be understood as a pre-established social convention or norm that is considered capable of representing or describing something else. Technically, semiotics is defined as a branch of science that studies various forms of signs—such as objects, events, or cultural aspects—and how these signs are used to convey meaning in social life. According to Saussure, a sign consists of two essential components: the signifier and the signified, which complement each other within a linguistic unit to form meaning. The signifier is the physical form of the sign—such as a word, sound, image, or symbol—while the signified is the idea or meaning that an individual associates with that form. Though their relationship is arbitrary (unfixed), it produces meaning that is socially recognized [3]. In this study, these components are operationalized by identifying lyrics units (word, phrases, sentences) as signifiers and interpreting their meaning as signified based on context and emotional expression.

Semiotics is essentially the study of signs. Through signs, humans are able to communicate with one another. Meaningful communication is not merely the transmission of information; it also involves the formation of an

organized and structured system of signs [3]. In other words, through semiotics we can interpret how messages are constructed and interpreted through a system of signs in various forms of communication. One effective form of communication is art, such as music.

Music is a form of communication that uses language in the form of fragments of sentences accompanied by melody or instrumental music. According to the Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia [18] music is the science or art of arranging tones or sounds in such a way that they form rhythm, melody, and harmony. The elements of music—harmony, melody, rhythm, and other forms of expression—are woven together into a cohesive whole that has a profound impact on society at large. In music, there are messages or ideas conveyed by the songwriter through the lyrics contained within the song [19].

Song lyrics can be described as a person's expression of something they have experienced. Songwriters or composers arrange words and language to create uniqueness and appeal in their work. Vocal expression, word choice, or expanded meanings—enhanced by the use of melodies and musical notation tailored to the lyrics—can draw listeners deeper into the thoughts or perceptions the songwriter intends to convey [20].

According to Van Zoest in [3] It is argued that contemporary pop music has become a significant phenomenon rich in meaning, capable of exploring fundamental emotional realms such as sadness, romance, the allure of love, loneliness, elusive feelings, and other similar emotions. Much of today's pop music conveys emotional values, particularly longing. One such example is the song "*Lagu Untukmu*," which serves as the focus of this study. An effort to understand how the meaning of longing is constructed in the song's lyrics is undertaken by the author. Previous studies, such as those conducted by [21] Titled "A Semiotic Analysis of the Meaning of Longing in the Lyrics of the Song 'Hanya Rindu' by Andmesh Kamaleng," this study also explores the meaning of longing. The result of the study indicate that, on a denotative level, the message conveyed by the songwriter is a longing for a mother who has passed away. Meanwhile, on a connotative level, the meaning of the message goes beyond mere longing and reflects a deep sense of regret over the loss of any opportunity to see the mother again or relive the beautiful moments they shared in the past. On the other hand, the mythic meaning in the song conveys the idea that longing for a deceased mother can be somewhat alleviated through various means, such as looking at photos, watching videos, or recalling moments of togetherness when she was still alive. In analyzing these three layers of meaning denotative, connotative, and mythic, this study employs Roland Barthes's semiotic approach serves as the main distinction from previous studies.

Previous research conducted by [10] titled "Semua Aku Dirayakan" on the lyrics of a song by Nadin Amizah, reveals a deeply meaningful interpretation. This meaning is related to the process of self-acceptance and self-appreciation. This is constructed through the use of metaphorical symbols in the lyrics, which function as signifiers in shaping and conveying the overall meaning. This previous study utilized Ferdinand de Saussure's semiotic theory, which encompasses the signifier and the signified. The difference from this study lies in the meaning contained within the song, where the focus of this research is directed toward interpreting the meaning of longing.

Another research conducted by [22] which entitled "Semiotic Analysis of the Meaning of Protective Instincts in the Lyrics of the Song 'Nina' by Feast," this study examines the meaning of protective instincts using Roland Barthes's semiotic theory, which demonstrates that the song "Nina" contains a denotative meaning—a representation of a father's efforts to protect his child—a connotative meaning that tells of a father's sacrifice to protect his child even when they are apart, and a mythical meaning that every journey requires struggle and sacrifice, much like a hero in mythology. The distinction of this study lies in the theoretical framework examined, as well as the focus of previous research on protective instincts that are paternal and masculine in nature.

Previous research that were also conducted by [23] which titled The Construction of Symbolic Meaning in the Lyrics of "Bingung" by Iksan Skuter: A Semiotic Analysis, this study examines the social criticism embedded in the lyrics, which depict how individuals are subjected to labeling, social pressure, and inequality in various aspects of life. The difference in this study lies in how the message of meaning is constructed within the song lyrics, while the similarity is the use of the same semiotic theory, namely that of Ferdinand de Saussure.

Another study titled "The Meaning of the Lyrics in the Songs 'Pilu Membiru,' 'Rehat,' and 'Sulung' by Kunto Aji (A Semiotic Analysis Based on Ferdinand de Saussure)" by [24] found that the lyrics in these three songs by Kunto Aji convey messages of self-healing, motivation, and self-acceptance. Although it employed the same theory, the study focused on the positive and inspirational aspects of the messages rather than on interpersonal emotions or affective feelings such as longing.

Building on previous research, this study will further explore the meaning of longing contained in the song "*Lagu Untukmu*" by the musician Raisa using Ferdinand de Saussure's semiotic theory. This approach is considered relevant in this study to uncover the relationship between the sign and the signifier that shape meaning in the song's lyrics. Thus, this study not only interprets meaning textually but also analyzes how linguistic and symbolic components in the lyrics interact to represent the emotional and universal feeling of longing.

Below are the lyrics to Raisa's song "*Lagu Untukmu*":

*Setiap 'ku mendengar kalimat / Every time I hear the phrase
"Sayang apa kabarmu?" / "Honey how are you?"*

Sungguh remuk rasa hatiku / My heart is truly shattered
Membuatmu harus bertanya / It makes you have to ask

Tak akan lama / It won't be long
Takkan kuingkari lagi / I won't deny it anymore
Ku segera berlari / I ran right away
Tak perlu menunggu / No need to wait
Ku 'kan datang hari ini / I'll be there today

Pulang ke pelukanmu / Back into your arms
Tenramnya telinga yang mendengar / A soothing sound to the ears
Tanpa menghakimi / Without judging
Secangkir kopi hangat / A cup of hot coffee
Yang kita hirup berdua / What we both breathe
Gurauan dalam petuahmu / The jokes in your advice
Ibu, Ibu, Ibu, aku rindu / Mom, Mom, Mom, I miss you

Sungguh sulit buatmu percaya / It's really hard for you to believe
Tiada yang berubah / Nothing has changed
Bulan yang terus silih berganti / The months come and go
Belum juga kucium tanganmu / I haven't even kissed your hand yet

Hanya kau tempat / You are the only one
Dimana aku menjadi / Where do I belong
Diriku sendiri / Myself [25].

3 Research Method

The research method employed in this study is interpretive qualitative research. Qualitative research is conducted under natural conditions and is therefore often referred to as naturalistic research (natural settings). Consequently, this study focuses on subjects that develop naturally as they are, without any manipulation. Qualitative methods are used to obtain in-depth data that carries meaning—or the underlying reality behind the surface data [26]. An interpretive approach is employed to describe and explain the phenomena under study, focusing on interpretations while taking into account the relationship between the meaning in the text and its context [27].

Data collection in this study was conducted through two main sources: primary data (song lyrics and interviews) and secondary data (literature and related studies), in order to strengthen the analysis process and obtain a deeper understanding of the meaning of longing in Raisa's song "*Lagu Untukmu*." The primary data was collected through a comprehensive analysis of song lyrics obtained from Raisa's official music platform for identifying signifiers and signified meanings. In addition, in-depth interviews were conducted with listeners. The study involved 5 informants were selected using purposive sampling based on their familiarity with the song and their ability to interpret its meaning. This selection aims to ensure relevance and depth of interpretation. In these interviews, their emotional experiences, understanding of meaning, and personal perspective were further explored. The analysis integrates semiotic text analysis with audience interpretation, where interview data is used to support and enrich the findings. On the other hand, supplementary data was obtained from sources such as literature, articles, interviews relevant to the song, and music reviews. All of these sources served to reinforce and clarify the analysis result. The data analysis was conducted through several stages:

- a. identifying words, phrases, and sentences as signifiers;
- b. interpreting the signified meanings based on context;
- c. categorizing meanings related to longing;
- d. comparing findings with interview data;
- e. drawing conclusions on the construction of meaning.

The validity of the data in this research was evaluated through triangulation techniques. This technique is defined as a data collection that integrates multiple sources and available methods [26]. In its implementation, source triangulation was applied by comparing information obtained from several different sources, thereby making the resulting data more reliable. In addition, a triangulation method approach was employed by combing the results of interviews, text analysis, and a literature review. To ensure trustworthiness, this study applies triangulation of sources, member checking where interpretations are confirmed with informants, and thick description by providing detailed contextual analysis of the lyrics. This combination of methods aims to ensure that the data obtained is more valid and reliable.

This study applies a semiotic approach, a field of study focuses on signs, to explore the relationship between signifier and signified in the lyrics of Raisa’s song titled “*Lagu Untukmu*”. This analysis draws on the theory proposed by Ferdinand de Saussure. Within this theoretical framework, the signifier is defined as any form of a sign that can be perceived by the senses, such as sounds heard, spoken words, or texts read or written. Meanwhile, the signified refers to the concept, idea, or meaning represented by the signifier [3]. Saussure’s framework is selected to maintain analytical focus on the internal structure of linguistic signs, rather than extending the analysis to broader cultural or ideological interpretations as proposed by Barthes. This ensures that the analysis remains consistent with the objective of examining how meaning is constructed through language.

4 Results And Discussion

Raisa Andriana is known as an Indonesian female musician who frequently presents songs with a melancholic tone, portraying various emotions and dynamics in human relationships. Most of her works revolve around themes of love, affection, and even heartbreak in romantic relationships. However, in 2018, a single was released that showcased a different side of her work. In the song titled “*Lagu Untukmu*”, deep feelings toward her mother are expressed in a more personal and emotional manner.

An in-depth analysis of the song “*Lagu Untukmu*” is necessary in order to fully understand the meaning intended by its creator. Based on Raisa’s statement in one episode of a podcast on the Noice platform, the song was created as an expression of a daughter’s feelings toward her mother. The song also represents the emotional outpouring experienced by Raisa as she entered a new phase in her life after marriage. This transition brought significant changes, particularly in her relationship with her family, especially her mother. In this process, there is a reflection on the promises she once made to visit home frequently, which could not be fully fulfilled due to the demands of her new life. Thus, the song can be understood as an expression of Raisa’s longing for the warmth of the mother and child relationship [28]. This interpretation then serves as the foundation for the analysis, which is further developed by taking into account the various interpretations of the listeners.

The semiotic approach developed by Ferdinand de Saussure is used to explore the meaning of longing in the lyrics of Raisa’s song titled “*Lagu Untukmu*” in this study. Saussure’s argues that language is viewed as a system of signs consisting of two main elements: the signifier and the signified. Each stanza is analyzed by identifying its signifiers and interpreting the corresponding signified meanings to reveal how longing is represented and experienced. Using this framework, the results of the analysis of the song’s lyrics will be presented with reference to the previously collected data:

Table 1. Stanza I – Verse 1

Signifier	Signified
Setiap ‘ku mendengar kalimat “Sayang apa kabarmu?” Sungguh remuk rasa hatiku Membuatmu harus bertanya	In this verse, the songwriter seeks to convey emotional feelings of distance and inner alienation within a relationship that should be intimate. This shift in the relationship leaves him feeling shattered when the person who should be closest to him asks how he is doing, creating an inner conflict between his belief in the relationship’s integrity and the reality of the changes taking place.

Based on the analysis of the first verse, the opening song’s reveals a sense of longing mixed with sadness, arising from the emotional distance that has developed between them in their relationship. The phrase “How are you?” is, in fact, a familiar greeting typically spoken by a mother to her child’s. However, within the narrative of this song, the phrase takes on a different meaning—it serves as an indication of a shift in their relationship. A greeting that once felt intimate and spontaneous is now perceived as a more formal and distant way of communication. This interpretation is reinforced by Raisa’s statement in one of her podcast episodes, in which she expressed that a simple phrase such as “how are you?” can actually create emotional distance. This situation immediately led her to question how close her relationship with her is now, compared to the past [28]. Furthermore, the use of the word “shattered” in the song’s lyrics can be interpreted as a description of a deeply turbulent emotional state. This feeling emerged when a mother—who is ideally expected to have a close bond with her child—communicates in a way that feels unfamiliar. This situation indirectly reveals a shift in the dynamics of the mother and child relationship. Thus, this verse not only illustrates emotional longing but also indicates a shift in the meaning within interpersonal communication between mother and child. A relationship that was once filled with warmth and intimacy now tends to become more formal. These findings emphasize that the longing expressed

in the lyrics is merely related to physical distance, but also to changes in the system of signs within interpersonal communication.

Table 2. Stanza II – Pre-Chorus

Signifier	Signified
Tak akan lama Takkan kuingkari lagi Ku segera berlari Tak perlu menunggu Ku ‘kan datang hari ini	In this verse, the songwriter expresses his sincere desire and promises that he will soon come to see the one he longs for. He assures the person he longs for that there is no need to wait any longer, because he will arrive very soon and bridge the distance between them.

Based on the analysis of the second verse, the lyrics reveal a strong emotion as well as a firm determination to reunite with the mother or a loved one, while overcoming the distance that separates them. The phrase “It won’t be long” can be understood as a signifier that the long period of a waiting will soon come to an end in a relatively short time. This interpretation is also in line with the view of one of the informants, who interprets the phrase as an affirmation of a promise as well as a hope to return home soon and reunited with the mother [29]. This strong desire is further emphasized through the expression “I will never go back on my word,” which reflects an emotional commitment to fulfil promises that may not have been kept in the past. Meanwhile, the term “run” here goes beyond mere physical movement; rather, it represents integrity, a burning passion, and a sincere commitment to striving to restore the relationship with the mother. This drive arises from the deepest recesses from the heart, entirely of own volition without any outside influence. The essence of the phrase “I will come today” is the affirmation of a definitive decision. This signifies that the return is no longer merely a concept but has shifted into concrete action. This expression reflects love, regret, and honesty in returning to the figure who has always provided a sense of security and longing. Thus, the structure of this stanza shape a perfection of the transition of longing from a passive sensation to a proactive movement, which ultimately represents authentic longing, complete with the desire to bridge the distance and restore emotional intimacy with a loved one—the Mother.

Table 3. Stanza III – Chorus

Signifier	Signified
Pulang ke pelukanmu Tentramnya telinga yang mendengar Tanpa menghakimi Secangkir kopi hangat Yang kita hirup berdua Gurauan dalam petuahmu Ibu, Ibu, Ibu, aku rindu	In this verse, the songwriter conveys that when he finally returns to the arms of the one he has longed for, he finds peace in someone who can truly hear and understand him. The warmth of their relationship is represented by “a cup of hot coffee,” which also depicts the simple moments they usually shared together and highlights the wisdom of the longed-for figure in the way they offer advice without causing harm. It is eventually revealed that the person longed for is the mother, and the repeated use of the word “Mother” serves as the climax of a deeply emotional longing.

Based on an analysis of the third stanza, these lyrics depict the peak of the emotional longing a child feels for their mother. The phrase “Returning to your embrace” is not merely interpreted as a physical act of returning or homecoming, but rather serves as a symbolic signifying a desire to return to an emotional safe space—a place where all fatigue and anxiety can be released, where a child feels protected, accepted, and loved unconditionally by their mother. This interpretation is reinforced by informants who explain that the idea of “returning” here is not about refer to a specific place, but rather an expression of deep longing and a hope to be reunited with one’s mother, a desire to be in her embrace [30]. On the other hand, the word “hug” can be interpreted as a symbol of emotional bond and the close relationship between a mother and child, which radiates a sense of safety and protection. In this context, the mother is also depicted as a supportive listener, who provides space for expressing feelings and thoughts without worry. This situation creates a sense of complete self-acceptance for the individual. Therefore, this section illustrates a desire for sincere dialogue, free from prejudice, and enveloped in peace.

Memories of simple moments with mother come to mind through images like “a cup of hot coffee” and “the jokes in your advice”. These experiences, although seemingly trivial, hold deep meaning. “Hot coffee” can be interpreted as a symbol of closeness and warmth in the relationship, while jokes wrapped in advice reflect a blend

of care and guidance in the mother-child relationship. Mother is depicted as a source of sincere guidance through her wisdom. Her advice does not feel preachy; instead, it is delivered with a touch of humor that makes the child feel comfortable without being hurt. Furthermore, this stanza reaches its emotional peak in the lyrics “Mother, Mother, Mother, I miss you”. The repetition of the word “Mother” here acts as an intensifier within the overall structure, giving a strong expressive emotional weight at the sign level, and clearly implies that the longing felt is directed towards the figure of a mother. From Saussure’s perspective, this repetition further strengthens the interconnection between signs in the arrangement of the lyrics, while also building an emotional climax that resonates with the previous parts of the song. This interpretation is further reinforced by the visual presentation in the music video, which presents glimpses of childhood with the mother. These visuals not only deepen the emotional meaning but also strengthen memory, emotional bonds, and the sense of connection between child and mother as the core of the longing depicted. Therefore, the third verse can be seen as a semiotic nuance of the entire string of song lyrics. In this part, longing is expressed more straightforwardly as a desire to return to the mother, a figure who is the source of love, acceptance, and the most fundamental meaning in human relationships.

Table 4. Stanza IV – Verse 2

Signifier	Signified
Sungguh sulit buatmu percaya Tiada yang berubah Bulan yang terus silih berganti Belum juga kucium tanganmu	The sentence describes how difficult it is to convince a mother that their bond is still strong despite being far apart. However, that belief does not fully materialize over time, day by day, month after month, without any opportunity to meet. This situation indicates that the child has not been able to return to the mother’s embrace or kiss her hand. That action is not merely a physical gesture, but also a symbol of longing for her presence, touch, and the inner warmth that has yet to be reached.

Based on the analysis of the fourth verse, this part reveals the longing caused by being separated by distance and time, while also presenting a child’s regret toward their mother. The expression “It’s truly hard for you to believe” indicates the mother’s doubt about the child’s promise or desire to come home. This doubt is not without reason, but rather grows from observations that often signify waiting. On the other hand, the phrase “Nothing has changed” is used as an affirmation by the child that their love and emotional bond with the mother remain intact despite the distance. However, this sentence essentially describes the existence of a deep inner conflict. Feelings of guilt begin to emerge when the confession clashes with the present reality. This is represented in the expression “The months keep passing by,” which implies the ceaseless passage of time, often unnoticed. Day after day, month after month passes, yet a physical union is never achieved. This situation reflects gradual but inevitable changes in their relationship, as time continues to move forward uncontrollably.

The closing line “I haven’t even kissed your hand yet” refers to the act of kissing one’s mother’s hand—something the child has not yet been able to do—and thus, at this stage, the act carries symbolic meaning regarding a longing for both physical and emotional closeness. Another informant also noted that this act is not merely a physical gesture but can also reflect cultural values, such as a symbol of respect [31]. Kissing the hand is a long-standing tradition in Indonesia and stems from the fusion of religion and traditional culture as a form of respect for someone considered to be older [32]. Thus, this meaning is also shaped by cultural conventions. This unfulfilled action reinforces the meaning of longing through cultural symbols imbued with a child’s respect, love, and devotion toward their mother. Therefore, the meaning contained in this stanza represents longing as a feeling that arises from the delay in being able to be in the mother’s presence. This feeling of longing that emerges in this part does not stand alone, but is intertwined with regret and an awareness that time continues to pass without pause. On the other hand, the promise to meet the mother has not yet been fulfilled. Through the analysis of this verse, it becomes evident that the longing is not only caused by distance, but also implies a deeper sense of regret. This regret is formed through the interplay of conflicting signs, such as the passage of time, unfulfilled promises, and physical absence within the mother-child relationship.

Table 5. Stanza V – Verse 3

Signifier	Signified
Hanya kau tempat Dimana aku menjadi Diriku sendiri	This verse shows that the mother figure is perceived as the only place that provides a sense of security for a child. In her presence,

the safe child does not need to hide or pretend,
allowing them to be accepted as they truly are
with complete honesty.

The analysis of the fifth verse shows a very strong emotional closeness between the child and the mother, which is understood as a space for complete self-acceptance. The expression “Only you are the place” functions as a signifier that points to a specific figure. At the level of the signifier, this expression can be interpreted as positioning the mother’s role in a unique and exclusive way, as the only place where the main subject can truly be themselves. Within this space, there is no need pretend, no pressure, and no obligation to fulfil any particular social role. This meaning arises from social conventions as well as personal experiences within the deeply fundamental and most intimate relationship between mother and child. Then the expression “Being myself” describes a signifier that not only refers to personal identity but is also reflexively created by the presence of the mother. At the level of the signifier, this expression is interpreted by one informant as a symbol of complete self-acceptance, without any demands to conform to the expectations or judgments of others [33]. Meanwhile, another informant explains that within the mother-child relationship, the mother figure perceived as a source of emotional security. This condition allows the child to express vulnerability, anxiety, and even failure without fear of judgment [30]. Thus, the analysis of this verse shows that the mother serves as a center of meaning that helps an individual discover and undertake their true identity. Therefore, longing expressed is not only related to emotional aspects, but also a reflects a desire to return to a relationship that enables an individual to be their authentic self, free from pressure and pretense imposed by their surrounding environment.

Overall, the song “*Lagu Untukmu*” can be understood as a series of interconnected sign system that form a unified meaning. Various elements such as greetings, time, hugs, warm coffee, and the repetition of the word “Ibu” are structured in a way that presents longing as the primary signifier. However, this sense of longing is not interpreted in a singular way. Its meaning is constructed through the relationship between Raisa’s personal experiences and the listeners’ interpretations. It means that the longing in this song is not about an eternal separation, but rather a sense of absence in physical presence. In fact, through the span of distance, the intensity and meaning of love for the beloved become deeper. By understanding the relationship between the signifier and the signified, the meaning of longing in this song is not merely interpreted plainly, but is also shaped by how the audience perceives the language and outpouring of emotion; as a result, the feeling of longing that arises feels both personal and universal.

5 Conclusion

The study demonstrates that the meaning of longing is constructed through the relationship between signifiers and signified meanings within the lyrics of “*Lagu Untukmu*,” using Ferdinand de Saussure’s semiotic theory. This connection symbolically forms the meaning of longing. The meaning of longing is not presented explicitly, but gradually unfolds through the arrangement of symbols in the song’s lyrics. The longing depicted in this song points to the figure of the mother as a safe and most comforting place, where one can feel whole without being criticized. Furthermore, this sense of longing is rooted in the warmth of the mother-child relationship that changes over time. This interpretation aligns with the message intended to be conveyed by the songwriter, which is created from the relationship between the signifier and the signified, as explained in this study. This indicates a correspondence between the content of the lyrics and the semiotic framework used as the basis of the study.

This research shows that composers have the potential to use their creations as a medium to convey feelings to the audience. Meanwhile, the reception from listeners reinforces this finding, as evidenced by songs that successfully evoke and deliver a deep sense of longing. More than just depicting longing, “*Lagu Untukmu*” also inspires its listeners to cherish every moment with their beloved mother before they are separated by distance. This study contributes to communication studies by showing how semiotic analysis can be combined with audience interpretation to produce a more comprehensive understanding of meaning.

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