



Exploring Denotative and Connotative Meanings in the Lyrics of “Speechless” By Naomi Scott

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the use of denotative and connotative meanings in the lyrics of the song “Speechless” by Naomi Scott and to explore the messages conveyed through the lyrics. This study employs a qualitative method with a content analysis design. The findings identified 31 lyric excerpts as the data, with each excerpt analyzed in terms of both denotative and connotative meanings. The denotative meanings represent the literal meanings of the selected words, phrases, or lines, while the connotative meanings reveal their emotional, symbolic, and implied meanings in context. Furthermore, 13 of the 31 data were identified as conveying three main messages: rebellion, represented by 5 data; resilience, represented by 5 data; and freedom, represented by 3 data. The findings show that the combination of denotative and connotative meanings helps construct the messages of resistance, strength, and freedom expressed in the song. This study contributes to semantic analysis of song lyrics by demonstrating how the interaction between denotative and connotative meanings can be used to identify and interpret the deeper messages embedded in lyrics, particularly those related to rebellion, resilience, and freedom.

Keywords: *Connotative, Denotative, Song Lyrics, Messages*

INTRODUCTION

Language is a primary means through which people communicate ideas, feelings, and experiences. In literary works, language is used not only to convey information but also to express emotions, perspectives, and messages creatively. Among various forms of literature, song lyrics are an important form of linguistic expression because they combine words and music to communicate emotions, ideas, and experiences. As a form of communication between songwriters and listeners, song lyrics may convey messages explicitly through their literal expressions or implicitly through expressions that carry additional meanings.

Song lyrics can therefore be examined through semantic analysis to understand how meanings are constructed and communicated. Semantic analysis is particularly relevant because lyrics may contain several layers of meaning, including literal, emotional, symbolic, and thematic meanings. Literal meaning refers to the basic meaning expressed by words or phrases, while emotional and symbolic meanings may emerge from the associations attached to particular linguistic expressions. These meanings can contribute to the construction of broader themes and messages in a song. Leech (1981) explains that semantics is

concerned with meaning in communication. Therefore, semantic analysis provides an appropriate approach for examining how linguistic expressions in song lyrics convey meanings beyond their surface forms.

One important distinction in semantic analysis is between denotative and connotative meaning. Denotative meaning refers to the basic, literal, or conceptual meaning of a linguistic expression and its referent (Kreidler, 1998). In contrast, connotative meaning refers to the additional emotional, cultural, or associative meanings connected to a word or expression. For example, the word home denotes a place where someone lives, but it may connote feelings of love, family, safety, or togetherness. In song lyrics, the interaction between denotative and connotative meanings can help reveal how ordinary words and expressions communicate deeper emotional, symbolic, and thematic messages. Thus, examining these two types of meaning allows researchers to move from the literal meaning of lyrics toward the broader meanings constructed through them. Previous studies have demonstrated the usefulness of semantic and semiotic approaches in examining meanings in song lyrics. Rahmawati and Supri (2022) analyzed connotative meanings in One Direction's Four album and identified 49 connotative words categorized as positive, negative, and neutral. Romadhon et al. (2024) examined 54 lyrics from NF's *The Search* album and found that denotative and connotative meanings contributed to themes such as fame, self-identity, mental health, and personal growth. Similarly, Fissilmi et al. (2025) analyzed the song *Beyond* from *Moana 2* using Roland Barthes' semiotic theory and identified denotative, connotative, and mythological meanings related to self-discovery and responsibility. These studies demonstrate that analysis of meaning in song lyrics can reveal emotional, symbolic, and thematic dimensions that are not always apparent from literal interpretations alone.

However, previous studies have generally examined multiple songs within an album or applied broader semiotic frameworks. A more focused semantic analysis of a single song can provide a closer examination of how denotative and connotative Meanings interact to construct particular messages and themes. This is important for songs that express ideas of resistance, personal strength, and self-expression through emotionally meaningful

language. Therefore, this study focuses on the lyrics of "Speechless," performed by Naomi Scott, which was featured in Disney's 2019 live-action film *Aladdin*. The song was written by Alan Menken, Benj Pasek, and Justin Paul. The lyrics present a strong expression of refusing silence, overcoming pressure, and finding the courage to speak out. The novelty of this study lies in its focused application of Leech's (1981) semantic framework to examine both denotative and connotative meanings in a single song and to connect these meanings with the messages constructed through the lyrics. By examining the relationship between literal and associative meanings, this study contributes to the semantic analysis of song lyrics by demonstrating how linguistic expressions can construct broader messages of rebellion, resilience, and freedom. Accordingly, this study aims (1) to identify the denotative and connotative meanings present in the lyrics of the song "Speechless" and (2) to explore the messages conveyed through the lyrics of the song "Speechless."

RELATED STUDIES

Previous studies have shown that analyzing meaning in song lyrics can reveal meanings and themes that extend beyond the literal interpretation of individual words. Rahmawati and Supri (2022), Romadhon et al. (2024), and Fissilmi et al. (2025), for example, examined meaning in song lyrics using different scopes and theoretical approaches. Although these studies share a common focus on uncovering meanings embedded in song lyrics, they differ in their analytical focus, data coverage, and theoretical frameworks. Taken together, their findings demonstrate that semantic and semiotic analyses can reveal emotional, symbolic, and thematic dimensions that may not be apparent from literal interpretations alone. Rahmawati and Supri (2022) focused on connotative meaning in One Direction's Four album using Leech's (1974) and Chaer's (1994) theories. They identified 49 connotative words and categorized them into positive, negative, and neutral meanings, with negative meanings occurring most frequently. Their study demonstrates how connotative analysis can reveal associations and evaluative meanings embedded in song lyrics. However, its focus was limited to connotative meaning; therefore, the relationship between literal and associative meanings was not examined through a combined denotative–connotative analysis. Romadhon et al. (2024) extended this focus by examining both denotative and connotative

meanings in NF's *The Search* album using Geoffrey Leech's theory. Their analysis of 54 lyrics showed that the combination of denotative and connotative meanings contributed to themes such as fame, self-identity, mental health, and personal growth. Compared with Rahmawati and Supri (2022), this study provides a broader account of how literal and associated meanings can work together to construct thematic messages.

However, its analysis covered an entire album rather than focusing on how denotative and connotative meanings are constructed and related to the overall message of a single song. Fissilmi et al. (2025) further demonstrated the value of examining multiple layers of meaning through a semiotic approach. Their study of *Beyond from Moana 2* employed Roland Barthes' semiotic theory to identify denotative, connotative, and mythological meanings. The findings showed that the lyrics expressed themes of self-discovery and responsibility while also reflecting cultural values and broader human experiences. Unlike the studies of Rahmawati and Supri (2022) and Romadhon et al. (2024), Fissilmi et al. (2025) employed a broader semiotic framework that extended beyond denotative and connotative meaning to include mythological meaning. Thus, the three studies collectively establish the usefulness of analyzing different layers of meaning in song lyrics, while also showing differences in analytical scope, data coverage, and theoretical approach. However, the reviewed studies leave a more focused analytical space for examining how denotative and connotative meanings operate within a single song and how these meanings collectively contribute to the construction of broader messages. In particular, the studies reviewed here do not focus specifically on tracing the relationship between individual denotative and connotative meanings and the broader messages constructed within one song.

This gap provides a basis for examining how literal and associated meanings interact to communicate particular messages through a focused semantic analysis. The present study addresses this analytical gap by examining the denotative and connotative meanings in the lyrics of "Speechless" performed by Naomi Scott using Leech's (1981) framework. The contribution of this study lies not merely in selecting a different song, but in demonstrating

how the application of Leech's framework to a single song can connect word- and phrase-level meanings with broader thematic messages. The analysis shows how denotative and connotative meanings in the lyrics collectively contribute to three central messages identified in the song: rebellion, resilience, and freedom. Thus, this study contributes to semantic analysis of song lyrics by showing how literal and associated meanings can be synthesized to explain the broader messages communicated through a song.

Accordingly, the objectives of this research are: (1) to identify the denotative and connotative meanings present in the lyrics of the song "Speechless"; and (2) to explore the messages conveyed through the lyrics of the song "Speechless."

Semantics

Semantics is a branch of linguistics concerned with the study of meaning in language. It examines how meaning is expressed and interpreted through linguistic units such as words, phrases, and sentences. In contrast to syntax, which focuses on the structure of sentences, semantics focuses on the meanings conveyed by linguistic expressions and the relationships between those expressions and the concepts they represent. Meaning is central to communication because language enables speakers and writers to convey information, thoughts, feelings, and intentions. In the study of song lyrics, semantic analysis is particularly relevant because lyrics may communicate meanings at both literal and associative levels. Therefore, examining the meaning of individual linguistic expressions can help reveal the broader ideas and messages conveyed through a song. Several scholars have discussed semantics as the study of meaning. Palmer (1981) defines semantics as the technical term used to refer to the study of meaning, while Lyons (1995) describes semantics as the study of meaning. Kreidler (1998) similarly defines semantics as the study of meaning expressed through language. Yule (2010) explains that semantics concerns the meaning of words, phrases, and sentences. Kearns (2017) further notes that semantics deals with the literal meaning of words and the meaning resulting from their combination. Although these scholars provide general perspectives on semantics, this study adopts Leech's (1981) theory of meaning as its primary theoretical framework. Other

scholars are used as supporting references to clarify the general concept of meaning and particular semantic distinctions. The use of Leech's framework provides a consistent theoretical basis for analyzing the meanings expressed in the selected lyrics.

Meaning and Kinds of Meaning

Meaning is a central concept in semantics because language is used to convey ideas, information, feelings, and intentions. In semantic analysis, meaning can be examined through different dimensions depending on the theoretical framework employed. For the present study, the classification and analysis of meaning are primarily based on Leech's (1981) theory of meaning. This theory provides the main theoretical framework for identifying and interpreting the meanings expressed in the lyrics of "Speechless." Leech (1981) classifies meaning into seven types, namely conceptual meaning, connotative meaning, social meaning, affective meaning, reflected meaning, collocative meaning, and thematic meaning. These seven types can be grouped into three broader categories: conceptual meaning, associative meaning, and thematic meaning. Conceptual meaning concerns the logical, cognitive, or denotative content of an expression; associative meaning includes connotative, social, affective, reflected, and collocative meanings; while thematic meaning concerns the way a message is organized in terms of order and emphasis.

Table 1. Types of Meaning Based on Leech (1981)

Types of Meaning	Description	
1. Conceptual Meaning or Sense	Logical, Cognitive, or Denotative Content.	
Associative Meaning	2. Connotative Meaning	What is communicated by virtue of what language refers to.
	3. Social Meaning	What is communicated of the social circumstances of language use
	4. Affective Meaning	What is communicated of the feelings and attitudes of the speaker /writer.
	5. Reflected Meaning	What is communicated through association with another sense of the same expression.
	6. Collocative Meaning	What is communicated through association with words which tend to occur in the environment of another word.
7. Thematic Meaning	What is communicated by the way in which the message is organized in terms of order and emphasis.	

Among these seven types, this study specifically focuses on conceptual meaning and connotative meaning. This focus is consistent with the purpose of the study, which is to examine the basic and additional meanings expressed in

the lyrics of "Speechless." The other types of meaning proposed by Leech are acknowledged as part of his broader theory but are not used as separate coding categories in this research. Within Leech's framework, conceptual meaning and denotative meaning are treated as equivalent terms in this study. Leech (1981, p. 23) describes conceptual meaning or sense as the "logical, cognitive, or denotative content" of an expression. Therefore, the term denotative meaning used in this research refers to the conceptual meaning of a linguistic expression. Conceptual meaning and denotative meaning are consequently not treated as two different categories in the coding process. Conceptual or denotative meaning represents the basic, literal, and cognitively identifiable content of an expression. In contrast, connotative meaning refers to the additional communicative value associated with an expression beyond its purely conceptual content. Thus, the theoretical relationship adopted in this study is: Conceptual Meaning = Denotative Meaning and Connotative Meaning = Additional Meaning Beyond Conceptual Meaning. Leech's distinction provides the primary basis for the coding framework used in this research. Each selected lyric expression is first examined in terms of its conceptual or denotative meaning. The researcher then examines whether the expression communicates an additional connotative meaning in the context of the song. This sequence ensures that connotative interpretation is not separated from or confused with the basic conceptual meaning of the expression. The distinction is also supported by other scholars. Yule (2010) explains that conceptual meaning refers to the basic and essential components of meaning conveyed through the literal use of a word. Kreidler (1998) discusses connotation in relation to the personal and emotional associations evoked by linguistic expressions, while Larson (1984) and Rambaud (2012) discuss denotative meaning as the primary or basic meaning of a linguistic expression. These scholars are used in this study as supporting references to clarify Leech's framework, rather than as alternative theoretical frameworks. Accordingly, the analysis in this study follows Leech's (1981) theoretical framework as the primary coding framework. A selected expression is coded as denotative when it expresses its basic conceptual or literal meaning.

It is coded as connotative when it communicates an additional associative, emotional, symbolic, or implied meaning beyond

that conceptual content and the interpretation is supported by the context of the lyrics. This theoretical framework allows the study to establish a clear relationship between individual lyric expressions and the broader messages conveyed by the song. The denotative meaning provides the basic semantic reference, while the connotative meaning reveals additional meanings that emerge from the context. Recurring connotative meanings are subsequently compared and synthesized to identify the broader messages expressed in the lyrics.

Denotative Meaning

Within the theoretical framework adopted in this study, denotative meaning refers to Leech's (1981) conceptual meaning or sense. Leech (1981, p. 23) describes conceptual meaning as the "logical, cognitive, or denotative content" of a linguistic expression. Therefore, conceptual meaning and denotative meaning are treated as equivalent terms in this study and are not considered two separate categories of analysis. Denotative meaning represents the basic, literal, or conceptual content of a word, phrase, or expression. Leech (1981) illustrates conceptual meaning through semantic features. For example, the word boy can be represented as +HUMAN, +MALE, -ADULT, indicating a human who is male and not an adult. Similarly, woman can be represented as +HUMAN, -MALE, +ADULT, indicating a human who is female and an adult. These semantic features demonstrate that conceptual or denotative meaning concerns the essential semantic properties of an expression rather than additional emotional, cultural, symbolic, or metaphorical associations. The conceptual nature of denotative meaning is also supported by Yule (2010), who explains that conceptual meaning consists of the basic and essential components of meaning conveyed through the literal use of a word and is the type of meaning commonly described in dictionaries. Larson (1984) similarly refers to denotative meaning as primary meaning, while Rambaud (2012, p. 28) associates denotative meaning with the basic meaning of a linguistic expression and its reference. Cann (1993) also discusses denotative meaning in relation to conceptual meaning. These scholars are used as supporting references, while Leech (1981) remains the primary theoretical basis for the conceptualization and coding of denotative meaning in this study. In the analysis of the lyrics of "Speechless," denotative meaning is

understood as the literal, basic, or conceptual meaning of a selected linguistic expression. The interpretation is made at the semantic level before any additional metaphorical, symbolic, emotional, cultural, or associative meaning is considered. Thus, the identification of denotative meaning answers the question: "What does this expression literally or conceptually mean?" To ensure consistency in the coding process, a lyric expression is categorized as denotative when it meets the following criteria: (1) its meaning represents the basic or literal meaning of the expression; (2) its meaning corresponds to its general conceptual or dictionary-level meaning; (3) its interpretation does not require an additional metaphorical or figurative interpretation; (4) it does not function as a symbol of an abstract idea, emotion, or situation beyond its basic meaning; and (5) its interpretation does not depend primarily on personal, emotional, cultural, or associative responses. Although the surrounding context of the lyrics is considered, the meaning remains at the basic conceptual level rather than being extended to an additional interpretation. For example, in the lyric "Here comes a wave," the denotative meaning of wave is a moving body of water on the surface of the sea.

This interpretation represents the basic conceptual meaning of the word wave and does not require a metaphorical or symbolic interpretation. If, however, the wave is interpreted in the context of the song as representing an approaching challenge, pressure, or overwhelming situation, that interpretation goes beyond the conceptual meaning and is therefore analyzed as connotative meaning rather than denotative meaning. Similarly, in the expression "wash me away," the denotative meaning refers to the literal action of carrying or removing something by the force of water. If the expression is interpreted as representing the speaker's experience of being overwhelmed, defeated, or emotionally destroyed by adversity, such an interpretation constitutes connotative meaning because it adds meaning beyond the basic conceptual content. Thus, in this study, denotative meaning functions as the semantic baseline for the analysis, while any additional meaning that goes beyond this basic conceptual content is examined at the connotative level. This distinction provides a consistent basis for coding the selected lyrics and prevents literal meaning from being conflated with metaphorical,

symbolic, or associative interpretation.

Connotative Meaning

Within the theoretical framework adopted in this study, connotative meaning refers to the additional communicative value that an expression has beyond its purely conceptual or denotative content. Leech (1981, p. 12) states that "connotative meaning is the communicative value an expression has by virtue of what it refers to, over and above its purely conceptual content." Thus, connotative meaning is distinguished from conceptual or denotative meaning because it involves an additional layer of meaning associated with what an expression refers to rather than its basic conceptual content. Connotative meaning may involve associative, emotional, symbolic, cultural, or implied meanings that arise beyond the literal or conceptual meaning of a linguistic expression.

In this sense, conceptual or denotative meaning provides the basic semantic reference, while connotative meaning represents additional meanings associated with that reference. Kreidler (1998, p. 42) supports this view by explaining that connotation concerns the personal and emotional associations evoked by a word. Such associations may vary according to experience, culture, social background, and context. However, this variation does not mean that connotative interpretation can be determined arbitrarily. In the present study, connotative meaning is operationally defined as an additional associative, emotional, symbol cultural, or implied meaning that goes beyond the conceptual or denotative meaning of a lyric expression. Therefore, a selected expression is classified as connotative only when its interpretation extends beyond its basic conceptual meaning and can be supported by the linguistic and contextual evidence provided by the surrounding lyrics. The researcher does not classify an expression as connotative solely because it evokes a particular personal feeling or association. For example, the expression "Here comes a wave" has a denotative meaning referring to a moving body of water on the surface of the sea. This represents the basic conceptual meaning of the word wave. However, when the surrounding lyrics indicate that the speaker is facing pressure, difficulty, or an overwhelming situation, wave may be understood connotatively as an approaching challenge or pressure. This interpretation is considered connotative because it goes beyond

the literal meaning of wave and is supported by the context of the lyrics. Similarly, the expression "wash me away" may have a denotative meaning referring to the literal action of carrying or removing something through the force of water. In the context of the song, however, it may convey the additional meaning of being overwhelmed, defeated, or emotionally affected by adversity.

This interpretation is classified as connotative because it extends beyond the basic conceptual meaning and is derived from the context in which the expression occurs. To ensure consistency and reduce unrestricted interpretation, the identification of connotative meaning in this study follows the following operational criteria: Additional meaning beyond conceptual meaning is the interpretation must go beyond the basic literal or conceptual meaning of the expression. Associative, emotional, symbolic, cultural, or implied meaning is the additional interpretation must represent an association, emotion, symbol, cultural value, or implied idea that is not part of the basic conceptual meaning. Contextual support is the interpretation must be supported by the surrounding words, lines, or overall context of the lyrics. Semantic connection is the additional meaning must maintain a clear relationship with the original conceptual meaning of the expression. Non-arbitrary interpretation is the interpretation must not be based solely on the researcher's personal feelings or assumptions but must be supported by textual evidence from the song. Accordingly, the analytical question used to identify connotative meaning is: "What additional meaning does this expression communicate beyond its basic conceptual or denotative meaning in the context of the lyrics?" Thus, in this study, denotative meaning functions as the semantic baseline, whereas connotative meaning represents the additional meaning that emerges beyond that baseline through contextual interpretation.

In analyzing "Speechless," connotative meanings are identified from the relationship between individual expressions and the surrounding lyrics. Recurring connotative meanings are subsequently compared and synthesized to identify the broader messages communicated by the song.

Song Lyrics

A song is one of the most widely known forms of artistic expression, with many genres



and styles present around the world. In artistic works like stories, songs or poetry, and drama or film, expressive language is often used to express a message, emotions, and experiences such as love, sorrow, strength, or conflict in a creative and unique way (Banaruee et al., 2019). In various cultures, songs serve as a way to communicate message, emotion, and story, whether for entertainment purposes or cultural rituals (Burgos, 2024). To sum up, songs are a form of art that allow the songwriter to share message and feelings with the listener in meaningful and imaginative way. Song lyrics are the written elements that form the content of a song. They serve as a form of communication between the songwriter and the listener. This is supported by Norton et al. (1957), who explains that a lyric is a relatively brief poem spoken by one voice, expressing a mental state or a flow of thoughts, emotions, and perceptions. In many cases, song lyrics carry a message intended to prompt the listener to reflect (Dallin, 1994). Moreover, to fully understand the meaning within a song's lyrics and to identify the message being conveyed, it is important to study how meaning is constructed in the language of the lyrics. This involves looking at both the literal and deeper emotional or symbolic meanings behind the words. By examining the meaning in the lyrics, we can better understand the songwriter's intentions, emotions, and the messages shared with the listener.

Messages

Communication aims to help speakers and listeners understand each other's messages. It fails when listeners cannot grasp the ideas being conveyed. Hornby (1982) defines a message as news or a request sent to someone. A message may take the form of important information, an update, or an instruction. It serves as a means of conveying something meaningful from one person to another. Wales (2014) also states "a message or piece of information is encoded by a speaker/writer as addresser into a linguistic form or code and transmitted via the medium of speech or writing along a channel to an addressee who decodes it." A speaker or writer changes their idea into words or symbols so it can be understood by others. The message is then sent through speech or writing to the person who should receive it. That person then reads or hears the message and understands

what the sender wanted to say. Messages are central to human social experience, and pose key conceptual and methodological challenges in the study of communication (Slater et al., 2015). They help people share ideas, show feelings, and connect with one another. In music, song lyrics can be a way for the songwriter to communicate with the listener and share the message they want to deliver

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative method with a content analysis design. Creswell (2012) categorizes research methods into qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods, while Creswell (2014) explains that qualitative research is used to develop an in-depth understanding of meanings and interpretations. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate for this study because the research focuses on interpreting denotative and connotative meanings in the lyrics of "Speechless" by Naomi Scott. Content analysis was used to systematically examine the textual content of the lyrics. According to Krippendorff (2019), content analysis is a methodological approach for analyzing textual, visual, and audio information. The primary theoretical framework for the analysis was Leech's (1981) theory of meaning. In this study, conceptual meaning and denotative meaning are treated as equivalent terms, following Leech's description of conceptual meaning as the "logical, cognitive, or denotative content" of an expression. Thus, denotative meaning refers to the basic, literal, or conceptual meaning of a linguistic expression, whereas connotative meaning refers to the additional associative, emotional, symbolic, cultural, or implied meaning that goes beyond its conceptual content. The distinction between these two meanings was applied consistently throughout the data selection and analysis. Other references were used only as supporting sources for clarification and were not treated as alternative analytical frameworks. This approach ensures theoretical consistency between the literature review, data analysis, and discussion. The research focused on the song "Speechless," performed by Naomi Scott and featured in Disney's 2019 live-action film *Aladdin*. The song was written by Alan Menken, Benj Pasek, and Justin Paul. The song was selected because its lyrics contain repeated expressions

concerning silence, resistance, pressure, strength, and self-expression, making it relevant to the research objectives of identifying denotative and connotative meanings and examining the messages conveyed through the lyrics

Techniques of Collecting Data

The primary data consisted of the lyrics of "Speechless" performed by Naomi Scott. The lyrics were obtained from an online lyrics source and checked against the song recording to ensure that the textual data corresponded to the performed lyrics. The researcher also listened to the song on Spotify to become familiar with its overall context, expression, and emotional progression. Secondary data consisted of books, journal articles, and other relevant academic references used to support the theoretical interpretation of denotative and connotative meanings. The selection of lyric data followed explicit inclusion criteria to ensure consistency and reproducibility. A lyric expression was included as research data when it met the following criteria: (1) it had an identifiable basic or literal meaning that could be interpreted as conceptual/denotative meaning; (2) it contained or supported an additional contextual meaning beyond its basic conceptual meaning; (3) the additional meaning was relevant to one or both research questions; and (4) the meaning could be interpreted and justified using Leech's (1981) theoretical framework and the linguistic context of the lyrics. Expressions that only conveyed a literal meaning without an identifiable additional contextual meaning were not selected as data for the denotative-connotative analysis.

Using these criteria, the researcher identified 31 lyric lines as the final data set. Each selected line was treated as one data item because it contained a linguistic expression whose denotative meaning could be established as a semantic baseline and whose connotative meaning could be interpreted from the surrounding lyrical context. Therefore, the number of 31 data was not determined arbitrarily but resulted from applying the stated inclusion criteria to the lyrics of the song.

Unit of Analysis

The line was established as the primary unit of analysis. This decision was made because the analysis requires sufficient linguistic and contextual information to determine both the conceptual/denotative meaning and the additional connotative meaning of an expression. Words and phrases

occurring within each line function as the linguistic expressions being analyzed, rather than as separate primary units of analysis.

For consistency, each selected lyric line was assigned a code using the format L1, L2, L3, and so forth, where "L" refers to the lyric line. For example, "Here comes a wave" was coded as L1. When a particular word or phrase within a line carried the relevant meaning, that expression was analyzed within the context of the complete line and its surrounding lyrics. Consequently, the terms word, phrase, and line are not used interchangeably as units of analysis: the line is the primary unit, while the word or phrase represents the linguistic expression examined within that line.

Techniques of Analyzing Data

The data analysis was conducted systematically through several stages. First, listening and familiarization. The researcher listened to "Speechless" to become familiar with the song's lyrical progression, context, and overall expression. This stage helped establish an initial understanding of the context in which the selected expressions occurred. Second, reading and textual examination. The lyrics were read repeatedly without relying solely on the musical performance. The researcher examined each line to identify expressions that potentially contained both a basic conceptual/denotative meaning and an additional connotative meaning. Third, data identification and selection. Each lyric line was examined using the predetermined inclusion criteria. A line was selected when it contained an identifiable literal/conceptual meaning and an additional contextual meaning relevant to the research questions and interpretable within Leech's (1981) framework. Through this process, 31 lyric lines were selected as the final data. Fourth, coding. Each selected line was assigned a line code, such as L1, L2, L3, and so forth. The codes were used to maintain consistency and facilitate the tracing of each interpretation from the findings table back to the original lyric. Fifth, denotative meaning identification. Each selected line was first analyzed for its conceptual or denotative meaning. In accordance with Leech (1981), denotative meaning represents the basic, logical, cognitive, or literal content of the expression.

At this stage, the researcher established the semantic baseline before considering any additional interpretation. Sixth, connotative meaning identification. After establishing the



denotative meaning, the researcher examined whether the expression conveyed an additional associative, emotional, symbolic, cultural, or implied meaning. A connotative interpretation was accepted only when it went beyond the basic conceptual meaning and was supported by the linguistic and contextual evidence of the surrounding lyrics. This procedure prevented connotative interpretation from being based solely on the researcher's personal assumptions. Seventh, categorization. After the denotative and connotative meanings had been identified, the 31 data were compared according to their recurring connotative meanings and semantic patterns. Data expressing similar ideas, attitudes, or contextual meanings were grouped into broader categories. For example, expressions concerning refusing silence, rejecting control, and speaking against oppression were considered related because they share a common semantic pattern of resistance. Eighth, interpretation. Each category was interpreted in relation to the overall context of "Speechless."

The researcher examined how the connotative meanings represented particular attitudes, experiences, or responses expressed by the speaker in the lyrics. Ninth, pattern identification. The categories were then compared to identify recurring patterns across the 31 data. This stage moved the analysis from individual lyric lines to recurring semantic tendencies. The researcher looked for repeated patterns involving resistance to silence and control, persistence in facing pressure, and the expression of personal voice and independence. Tenth, thematic synthesis. The recurring patterns were synthesized into broader themes. Data with similar connotative patterns were grouped into themes that represented the central ideas communicated by the lyrics. Through this process, three overarching themes emerged: rebellion, resilience, and freedom. Eleventh, message formulation. The themes were subsequently formulated as the three main messages conveyed through the song. The formulation was based on the semantic patterns identified across the selected data rather than on isolated lyric expressions. Specifically, expressions associated with refusing to be silenced or controlled were grouped under rebellion; expressions emphasizing persistence, strength, and refusal to give up were grouped under resilience; and expressions concerning

speaking freely, breaking restrictions, and expressing oneself were grouped under freedom. Of the 31 analyzed data, 13 data showed particularly direct and representative connections to these three messages and were therefore presented in Table 4.2: five data for rebellion, five for resilience, and three for freedom.

The remaining data contributed to the interpretation of denotative and connotative meanings but were not separately listed in Table 4.2 because their meanings overlapped with or supported the broader thematic patterns. Finally, drawing conclusions. The final stage involved synthesizing the findings to answer the two research questions. The researcher summarized the denotative and connotative meanings identified in the 31 selected lines and explained how recurring connotative patterns were synthesized into the three main messages of the song: rebellion, resilience, and freedom.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Table 4.1 The Denotative and Connotative Meanings Found in the Song "Speechless"

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Exploring Denotative and Connotative Meanings in the Lyrics of "Speechless" By Naomi Scott

No.	Song Lyrics	Denotation Meaning	Connotati on Meaning	Code
1.	Here comes a wave	A moving body of water on the sea's surface.	A big challenge or problem is coming.	L1
2.	Meant to wash me away	To carry someone off by the force of water.	To destroy or completely defeat someone.	L2
3.	A tide that is taking me under	Pulling someone beneath the surface of water.	Causing someone to fail, lose, or be overwhelmed.	L3
4.	Swallowin g sand	To take in grains of sand through the mouth.	Being forced to endure something harsh and overwhelmin g that silences you.	L4
5.	Left with nothing to say	Having no words to speak.	Feeling defeated or overwhelmed, causing a loss of voice.	L5
6.	My voice drowned out in the thunder	One's sound made impossible to hear by a louder sound. The loud sound after lightning in a storm.	One's ideas or words being completely ignored or made powerless. A very big, strong, or scary power.	L6
7.	But I won't cry	To shed tears.	To show weakness or give in to sadness.	L7
8.	And I won't start to crumble	To break or fall apart into small pieces.	To lose strength or to fall apart emotionally.	L8

9.	Whenever they try	To make an effort to do something.	To make a forceful or hostile effort to harm or control.	L9
10.	To shut me or cut me down	To make someone quiet or unable to speak. To cause someone to fall by cutting.	To severely reduce someone's confidence, worth, or power.	L10
11.	I won't be silenced	To stop someone from speaking or making noise.	Made unable to express one's thoughts or feelings freely.	L11
12.	You can't keep me quiet	To make someone remain silent or make no noise.	Powerless or without a voice to speak up.	L12
12.	You can't keep me quiet	To make someone remain silent or make no noise.	Powerless or without a voice to speak up.	L12
13.	Won't tremble when you try it	To shake because of fear, cold, or weakness.	To show fear or weakness in the face of a threat.	L13
14.	All I know is I won't go speechles s	Unable to speak.	Shows determination to speak out and stand up for oneself, no matter the challenges.	L14
15.	Cause Ill breathe	To take air into the lungs and then let it out.	Staying alive, calm, and in control.	L15
16.	When they try to suffocate me	To stop someone from breathing.	To suppress or greatly limit someone's freedom or ability to act.	L16
17.	Don't you underesti mate me	To think that someone has less skill or worth than they truly do.	The idea of being judged unfairly or not being recognized for one's full strength or abilities.	L17
18.	Written in stone	Something is written on stone	Something considered permanent, unchangeable , or a very old rule.	L19
19	Every rule, every word	All the rules and all the words without exception.	A feeling of being controlled or restricted by rules and expectations.	L20

20.	Centuries -old and unbending	Existing for many hundreds of years. Not able to be bent or changed.	Something very old and deeply rooted, often implying outdatedness or deep tradition.	L21
21.	Stay in your place	To remain in one's assigned position or location.	A command to remain humble, submissive, or within a limited social role.	L22
22.	Better seen and not heard	It is preferable for someone to be visible but not to speak.	An expectation that one should be present but remain silent and obedient, especially regarding opinions.	L23
23.	Well, now that story is ending	The account of past events or a fictional tale is coming to a close.	An old way of life, an oppressive situation, or a set of restrictive beliefs is coming to an end.	L24
24.	Let the storm in	A strong disturbance of the atmosphere with heavy rain, wind, or thunder.	A difficult or chaotic period that one chooses to face directly.	L34
25.	I cannot be broken	Separated into pieces, or not working.	Unable to be made to give up or lose hope.	L35
26.	No, I won't live unspoken	Not said out loud; silent.	Not having one's thoughts, feelings, or existence expressed or recognized.	L36
27.	Try to lock me in this cage	To shut someone inside a place, preventing them from leaving. A structure of bars or wires for keeping animals.	To trap or restrict someone's freedom or movement.	L38
28.	I won't just lay me down and die	To stop living; to cease to exist	To give up completely or lose one's spirit to fight.	L39

29.	I will take these broken wings	Wings that are damaged and unable to fly.	Past struggles, pain, or setbacks that have made someone feel weak or limited.	L40
30.	And watch me burn across the sky	To move quickly and brightly through the air, giving off light and heat.	Power, passion, and an unstoppable rise.	L41
31.	Hear the echo saying	A sound or sounds caused by the reflection of sound waves from a surface.	Lasting impact, reinforcement, or a powerful message that continues to be heard.	L42

Messages Conveyed Through the Lyrics of the Song "Speechless"

No.	Song Lyrics	Messages
1.	I won't be silenced (L11)	Rebellion
2.	You can't keep me quiet (L12)	
3.	All I know is I won't go speechless (L14)	
4.	When they try to suffocate me (L16)	
5.	No, I won't live unspoken (L36)	
6.	But I won't cry (L7)	Resilience
7.	And I won't start to crumble (L8)	
8.	Won't tremble when you try it (L13)	
9.	I cannot be broken (L35)	
10.	I won't just lay me down and die (L39)	Freedom
11.	Well, now that story is ending (L24)	
12.	And watch me burn across the sky (L41)	
13.	Hear the echo saying (L42)	

Table 4.2 The

Discussion

The Denotative and Connotative Meanings Found in the Song Lyrics of "Speechless" by Naomi Scott

The data is discussed as part of the ongoing research process. This analysis focuses on exploring the denotative and connotative meanings found in the lyrics of Naomi Scott's song "Speechless." The researcher identifies specific words, phrases, or lines that carry deeper meaning beyond their literal definitions. In addition, the researcher interprets the messages conveyed through the lyrics of the song.

Data 1: "Here comes a wave" (L1)

The line "Here comes a wave" (L1) shows denotative meaning as explained by Yule (2010), which is the literal meaning of a word. "a wave" means a moving mass of water. According to Leech (1981), connotative meaning includes emotional or personal associations. In this lyric, "a wave" suggests a big challenge or emotional burden coming toward the speaker. It shows the speaker's feeling of being overwhelmed and anxious, just like someone facing a strong, sudden wave.

Data 2: "Meant to wash me away" (L2)

The phrase "wash me away" (L2) denotes being carried away by water, which aligns with Larson (1984) idea that denotation is the basic or surface meaning of a word. This helps the listener imagine someone being physically swept away by a strong wave. According to Kreidler (1998), connotation refers to the emotional or personal meanings a word may carry. The phrase suggests that the speaker feels completely defeated or broken by something. This reflects the speaker's sense of being overwhelmed and powerless in a difficult situation.

Data 3: "A tide that is taking me under" (L3)

The line "A tide that is taking me under" (L3) shows both denotative and connotative meanings. Denotatively, "a tide" is the natural movement of the sea. "Taking me" under means pulling someone below the water's surface. Yule (2010) states that denotation is the basic meaning. Connotatively, the line shows the speaker's feeling of being overwhelmed by emotions or problems that are too strong to handle. This follows Kreidler (1998) view that connotation includes emotional or personal meanings. It reflects the speaker's struggle and sense of helplessness.

Data 4: "Swallowing sand" (L4)

The phrase "swallowing sand" (L4) denotes taking in grains of sand through the mouth, which fits Yule's (2010) idea that denotation is the basic, literal meaning. This shows a harsh and uncomfortable image. According to Wardhaugh (1977), connotation adds emotional or personal meaning. The phrase expresses the feeling of being forced into something painful, overwhelming, and silencing. It shows the speaker's powerlessness and emotional struggle.

Data 5 "Left with nothing to say" (L5)

The phrase "Left with nothing to say" (L5) denotatively means having no words to speak, which fits Larson's (1984) idea that denotation is the basic meaning of a phrase. It shows the speaker is silent or unable to respond. Connotatively, it reflects a deep emotional state where the speaker feels defeated, shocked, or overwhelmed. This follows Leech's (1981) view that connotation includes emotional or personal value. The phrase shows both literal meaning and the speaker's emotional struggle.

Data 6: "My voice drowned out in the thunder"

(L6) The phrase "My voice drowned out in the thunder" (L6) shows both literal and emotional meaning. Denotatively, "drowned out" means a voice or sound that cannot be heard because something louder covers it. The word "thunder" refers to the loud sound that comes after lightning. This matches Cann's (1993) idea that denotation is the basic meaning understood in communication. Connotatively, the phrase suggests that the speaker feels powerless and ignored, as if silenced by a stronger force. This aligns with Wardhaugh's (1977) view that connotation adds emotional meaning. The word "thunder" may represent authority, fear, or pressure that causes the speaker's voice to disappear.

Data 7: "But I won't cry" (L7)

The word "cry" in the line "but I won't cry" (L7) denotes the act of shedding tears, which fits Rambaud's (2012) view that denotation is the objective meaning commonly understood. This shows that the speaker chooses not to shed tears. According to Leech (1981), connotation

refers to emotional or symbolic meanings. Connotatively, “cry” may suggest emotional weakness or giving in to sadness. The speaker’s refusal to cry reflects strength and emotional control. It highlights the speaker’s courage to remain strong in the face of difficulty.

Data 8: “*And I won’t start to crumble*” (L8)

The line “*And I won’t start to crumble*” (L8) shows both a clear and emotional meaning. Denotatively, the word “*crumble*” means to break into small pieces. This fits Yule’s (2010) idea that denotation is the basic meaning of a word from the dictionary. It helps the listener imagine something falling apart. Connotatively, the word “*crumble*” shows the speaker is trying not to lose strength or give up. This follows Kreidler’s (1998) idea that connotation is the emotional or personal meaning a word can have. The line shows the speaker’s strong will to stay calm and not let problems defeat them.

Data 9: “*Whenever they try*” (L9)

The phrase “*Whenever they try*” (L9) shows both clear and emotional meanings. Denotatively, the word “*try*” means to make an effort to do something. This follows Larson’s (1984) idea that denotative meaning is the basic meaning most people understand. The word “*whenever*” shows that the action happens again and again. Connotatively, the phrase suggests that others are trying to stop or hurt the speaker. This supports Leech’s (1981) view that connotative meaning adds emotional or symbolic meaning beyond the basic one. The phrase gives a strong feeling of pressure and repeated challenge.

Data 10: “*To shut me or cut me down*” (L10)

The line “*To shut me or cut me down*” (L10) shows both clear and emotional meanings. Denotatively, the phrase “*shut me*” means to stop someone from speaking. The phrase “*cut me down*” means to make someone fall. This follows Yule’s (2010) idea that denotative meaning is the basic meaning found in the dictionary. Connotatively, the phrase “*shut me*” can mean taking away someone’s voice or freedom. The phrase “*cut me down*” can mean hurting someone’s confidence or making them

feel unimportant. This matches Kreidler’s (1998) view that connotative meaning includes emotional or personal meaning beyond the basic one. The whole line shows that the speaker feels attacked and pushed down, not only physically but also emotionally.

Data 11: “*I won’t be silenced*” (L11)

The line “*I won’t be silenced*” (L11) uses the word “*silenced*”, which denotes stopping someone from speaking or making noise. This fits Leech’s (1981) idea that denotation is the basic or surface meaning of a word. It helps the listener understand that the speaker refuses to be made quiet. According to Leech’s (1981) Le, connotation refers to emotional or symbolic meanings beyond the literal one. The word “*silenced*” suggests being controlled, ignored, or denied the right to speak. This reflects the speaker’s courage and determination to defend their voice.

Data 12: “*You can’t keep me quiet*” (L12)

The line “*You can’t keep me quiet*” (L12) uses the word “*quiet*” to show both literal and emotional meanings. Denotatively, the word “*quiet*” means not making noise or being silent. This matches Cann’s (1993) idea that denotative meaning is the real-world meaning shared by most people. Connotatively, the word “*quiet*” can suggest being powerless or unable to express oneself. This reflects Wardhaugh’s (1977) view that connotative meaning includes emotional or social meanings beyond the basic meaning. The line shows the speaker’s strength and refusal to be silenced or ignored.

Data 13: “*Won’t tremble when you try it*” (L13)

The word “*tremble*” denotes shaking from fear or weakness, which matches Rambaud’s (2012) idea that denotation is the direct meaning based on real situations. This shows that the speaker chooses not to physically shake or show fear. According to Kreidler (1998), connotation includes emotional or symbolic meanings beyond the literal one. In this line, the word “*tremble*” reflects emotional fear or lack of courage. The speaker’s refusal to tremble shows inner strength and confidence, revealing that they are not afraid or easily controlled.

Data 14: "*All I know is I won't go speechless*" (L14)

The word "speechless" in the line "*All I know is I won't go speechless*" (L14) denotatively means being unable to speak. According to Larson (1984), denotative meaning refers to the core or dictionary meaning of a word when it stands alone. The word "*speechless*" helps the listener understand that the speaker refuses to lose the ability to speak. Connotatively, "*speechless*" can also mean being silenced, powerless, or unable to express thoughts. This fits Leech's (1981) idea that connotative meaning includes emotional and personal meaning beyond the basic one. In this line, the speaker shows strength and determination to keep speaking. The word carries a deeper message about not giving in to silence or pressure.

Data 15: "*Cause I'll breathe*" (L15)

The word "*breathe*" in the line "*Cause I'll breathe*" (L15) denotes the act of taking in and releasing air. This matches Yule's (2010) idea that denotation is the direct, dictionary meaning of a word that most people understand. It helps the listener imagine the speaker simply continuing to breathe. According to Kreidler (1998), connotation refers to the emotional or symbolic meanings a word can have in context. In this line, "*breathe*" also suggests staying alive, calm, and strong during hard times. It shows the speaker's quiet strength and her refusal to give in to fear or pressure.

Data 16: "*When they try to suffocate me*" (L16)

The line "*When they try to suffocate me*" (L16) shows both the basic and deeper meanings of the word "*suffocate*". Denotatively, "*suffocate*" means to stop someone from breathing. This matches Cann's (1993) explanation that denotative meaning refers to the direct or literal meaning of a word that is commonly understood. Connotatively, "*suffocate*" can also mean trying to control, limit, or silence someone. This supports Wardhaugh's (1977) view that connotative meaning includes emotional, social, or symbolic meanings that go beyond the dictionary definition. In this context, the speaker feels that others are trying to take away her freedom, but she resists and refuses to be controlled.

Data 17: "*Don't you underestimate me*" (L17)

The line "*Don't you underestimate me*" (L17) includes both basic and deeper meanings.

Denotatively, the word "*underestimate*" means to think someone is less skilled or capable than they truly are, which aligns with Rambaud's (2012) idea that denotation refers to the direct and understood meaning of a word. In this line, the speaker is warning others not to judge her abilities wrongly. Connotatively, "*underestimate*" also reflects the feeling of being overlooked, ignored, or not valued. According to Leech (1981), connotation adds emotional or personal meaning based on how a word is used. Here, the speaker expresses her strength and confidence, refusing to be seen as weak or unimportant.

Data 18: "*Written in stone*" (L19)

The phrase "*Written in stone*" (L19) shows both literal and deeper meanings. Denotatively, it means something is carved into stone, which aligns with Yule's (2010) idea that denotation is the basic meaning shared by most people. Connotatively, it suggests something unchangeable or treated like a strict rule. According to Kreidler (1998), connotation includes emotional or symbolic meanings. The speaker may be referring to rules that feel fixed and hard to break.

Data 19: "*Every rule, every word*" (L20)

The phrase "*Every rule, every word*" (L20) carries both literal and deeper meanings. Denotatively, "*rule*" means a guideline to follow, and "*word*" means a unit of language. This aligns with Leech's (1981) idea that denotation is the basic dictionary meaning. Connotatively, the phrase reflects the speaker's feeling of being controlled by strict expectations. According to Leech (1981), connotation adds emotional or symbolic meaning. Here, the speaker may feel trapped and wants to break free.

Data 20: "*Centuries-old and unbending*" (L21)

The phrase "*centuries-old and unbending*" (L21) shows both basic and deeper meanings. Denotatively, "*centuries-old*" means existing for hundreds of years, and "*unbending*" means not able to change. This follows Cann's (1993) idea that denotative meaning is the clear and direct meaning. Connotatively, the phrase suggests strict, old traditions that cannot be changed. According to Kreidler (1998), connotative meaning reflects emotions and attitudes. The speaker feels held back by unchanging rules.

Data 21: "*Stay in your place*" (L22)

The line “*Stay in your place*” (L22) denotes staying in one’s position or location. This supports Rambaud’s (2012) idea that denotation is the basic, real-world meaning. Connotatively, it may suggest that someone is being held back or not allowed to speak freely. According to Wardhaugh (1977), connotation adds emotional or deeper meaning. Here, the phrase shows the speaker is expected to accept limits and remain silent.

Data 22: “*Better seen and not heard*” (L23)

The line “*Better seen and not heard*” (L23) shows both basic and deeper meanings. Denotatively, it means a person should be seen but stay silent. This follows Yule’s (2010) idea that denotative meaning is the direct meaning. Connotatively, it suggests the speaker is expected to stay quiet and obey. This supports Leech’s (1981) view that connotative meaning adds emotional or social messages. It shows the speaker’s struggle against being silenced.

Data 23: “*Well, now that story is ending*” (L24)

The line “*Well, now that story is ending*” (L24) carries both literal and deeper meanings. Denotatively, “*story*” means a series of events, and “*ending*” means it is finishing. This follows Larson’s (1984) idea that denotative meaning is the basic, factual meaning. Connotatively, “*story*” can represent a painful past or a life controlled by others, and “*ending*” shows the speaker’s choice to break free. According to Kreidler (1998), connotative meaning includes emotional or symbolic meanings. This line reflects the speaker’s move toward change and self-empowerment.

Data 24: “*Let the storm in*” (L34)

The line “*Let the storm in*” (L34) shows both literal and deeper meanings. Denotatively, “*storm*” means a strong weather event with wind and rain. This fits Leech’s (1981) idea that denotative meaning is the basic, shared meaning. Connotatively, “*storm*” can symbolize emotional struggle or chaos. According

to Leech (1981), connotative meaning shows the feelings or values connected to a word. In this line, the speaker welcomes the storm, showing strength and courage to face life’s challenges.

Data 25: “*I cannot be broken*” (L35)

The line “*I cannot be broken*” (L35) shows both literal and deeper meanings. Denotatively, “*broken*” means something damaged or in pieces. This matches Cann’s (1993) idea that denotative meaning is the direct meaning most people understand. Connotatively, “*broken*” can mean emotionally defeated or hopeless. According to Leech (1981), connotative meaning adds emotional or symbolic value to a word. In this line, the speaker shows strong will and refuses to give up.

Data 26: “*No, I won’t live unspoken*” (L36)

The line “*No, I won’t live unspoken*” (L36) shows both basic and deeper meanings. Denotatively, “*unspoken*” means not said out loud or left in silence. This follows Rambaud’s (2012) idea that denotative meaning is the clear, real-world meaning. Connotatively, it suggests being ignored or not heard. According to Wardhaugh (1977), connotative meaning adds emotional or symbolic meaning. In this line, the speaker refuses to stay silent and wants their voice and identity to be recognized.

Data 27: “*Try to lock me in this cage*” (L38)

The line “*Try to lock me in this cage*” (L38) shows both clear and deeper meanings. Denotatively, “*lock*” means to close someone in a place, and “*cage*” is a space with bars for keeping animals. This fits Yule’s (2010) idea that denotative meaning is the basic meaning people usually understand. Connotatively, the phrase means trying to control or limit someone’s freedom. This follows Kreidler’s (1998) view that connotative meaning adds emotional or symbolic ideas. Here, the speaker feels trapped and not free to express herself.

Data 28: “*I won’t just lay me down and die*” (L39)

The line “*I won’t just lay me down and die*” (L39) has both a clear and a deeper meaning. Denotatively, “*lay down and die*” means to stop living. It matches to Leech’s (1981) idea of denotative meaning as the basic, direct meaning

that people commonly understand. Connotatively, it expresses a refusal to give up or stop fighting, even in hard times. This fits Leech's (1981) view that connotative meaning adds emotional or symbolic value. In this case, the speaker shows strength and determination not to surrender.

Data 29: "*I will take these broken wings*" (L40)

The line "*I will take these broken wings*" (L40) expresses both a clear and deeper meaning. Denotatively, "*broken wings*" denotes wings that are damaged and cannot fly. This follows Larson's (1984) idea that denotative meaning is the direct, surface meaning based on real-world references. Connotatively, "*broken wings*" can symbolize past pain or emotional struggles. According to Wardhaugh (1977), connotative meaning adds emotional or symbolic meaning beyond the literal. Here, the speaker shows strength by embracing past wounds and using them as a source of power and growth.

Data 30: "*And watch me burn across the sky*" (L41)

The line "*And watch me burn across the sky*" (L41) carries both a literal and deeper meaning. Denotatively, "*burn across the sky*" means moving brightly through the air while giving off light and heat. This fits Cann's (1993) idea that denotative meaning is the basic, commonly understood meaning. Connotatively, it suggests unstoppable power, passion, and success. According to Kreidler (1998), connotative meaning adds emotional or symbolic ideas. Here, the speaker shows strength and determination to rise and shine, despite challenges.

The Messages Conveyed Through the Lyrics of The Song "Speechless"

Songs can be a way to share stories, feelings, and life experiences. They often carry messages that touch the heart and inspire the listener. Norton et al. (1957) state lyrics reflect the inner emotions of the speaker, while Dallin (1994) adds that they often carry messages that invite reflection. The song "Speechless" conveys messages of rebellion, resilience, and freedom. These messages are delivered through expressive language that highlights the speaker's refusal to stay silent and the determination to stand strong. The song "Speechless" strongly expresses a message of rebellion, where the speaker firmly refuses to be silenced or controlled by anyone. This message appears clearly in the line "*I won't be silenced*"

(L11), where the speaker shows a brave decision to speak up even when others try to shut her down. It reflects deep inner strength and a strong belief that staying silent in the face of injustice is not an option. The rebellion continues in "*You can't keep me quiet*" (L12), where the speaker directly pushes back against outside forces trying to take away her voice. This shows the belief that every person has the right to express themselves and be heard. In "*All I know is I won't go speechless*" (L14), the speaker makes it clear that silence is not just staying quiet, it is losing power and losing identity. The speaker fights against that by refusing to give in. Even when things become painful or heavy, as shown in "*When they try to suffocate me*" (L16), the speaker still chooses to fight back with her voice. The rebellion is not about violence. It is about standing strong through words and truth. In "*No, I won't live unspoken*" (L36), the speaker demands to be seen, heard, and valued. This is more than personal, it becomes a message to everyone who feels ignored, controlled, or unseen.

Furthermore, the song "Speechless" clearly shows a strong message of resilience. It tells how the speaker has great strength inside and does not give up, even when facing difficult or painful situations. This resilience is not only about staying alive, but about choosing to stay brave, calm, and hopeful when things go wrong. When the speaker says, "*But I won't cry*" (L7), it means the speaker chooses not to let sadness take over. It shows the speaker's control over emotions and a brave choice to stay strong. The next line, "*And I won't start to crumble*" (L8), shows that the speaker will not fall apart or break down. The speaker wants to stay steady even under pressure. In the line "*Won't tremble when you try it*" (L13), the speaker is not afraid. The speaker shows confidence and refuses to let fear win. Later, in "*I cannot be broken*" (L35), the speaker says that no matter how hard the situation is, they will not lose hope or be defeated. Finally, the line "*I won't just lay me down and die*" (L39) shows that the speaker refuses to give up completely. Instead, the speaker chooses to fight back, stay standing, and keep trying no matter how hard life becomes. The speaker is someone who shows that real strength is not about never feeling pain, but about not giving up when pain comes.

This message reminds listeners that they are not alone in their struggles. We all go through difficult moments, but we must believe that we have the power inside to keep going. The speaker shows us that it is okay to feel hurt, but we should not let the hurt stop us. We can move forward with strength. We can rise again after falling. And just

like the speaker, we can choose to be brave, to keep our voice, and to never give up.

Moreover, the song "Speechless" clearly shares a strong message of freedom. It shows the speaker's journey from being controlled to finally living in an open and true way. This freedom can be seen in some important lines that show how the speaker breaks away from the past and starts to live freely. When the speaker says, "*Well, now that story is ending*" (L24), it means more than just finishing a story. It means the speaker has made a choice to leave behind a life where others had control. This line shows a big change. The speaker is ready to start a new life with strength and hope. In the next line, "*And watch me burn across the sky*" (L41), the speaker compares themselves to something powerful and bright. It shows that the speaker is rising high with energy and passion. No one can stop the speaker now. They are free to move forward and shine in their own way. Another line, "*Hear the echo saying*" (L42), shows that the speaker's voice does not disappear. It continues to be heard again and again. This tells us that the freedom the speaker has found will not be forgotten. All these lines show a big change in the speaker. The speaker goes from being silent and controlled to speaking out and living freely. This message of freedom reminds us that we can break free from fear, pain, or silence. We have the right to be heard and to live as our true selves. Even if we have been hurt or quiet before, we can still find our voice and our strength. Like the speaker, we can rise up, move forward with courage, and never let anyone take away our freedom. In conclusion, the song "Speechless" delivers a powerful message about self-expression. It shows how our silence can lead to being controlled or overlooked. By speaking up, we take back our voice and prove our worth. We must refuse to stay quiet and demand to be heard and respected. Overall, the song inspires us to stand strong and speak with confidence.

CONCLUSION

This chapter summarizes the results and discussions presented in this research. The study focused on analyzing the denotative and connotative meanings found in the lyrics of the song "Speechless" by Naomi Scott. The aim was to understand how certain words and phrases in the song carry deeper emotional meanings and how these meanings support the message of the song. The researcher used expert theories to help identify and explain both the literal and emotional

meanings in the lyrics. From the analysis, the researcher found 31 data in the lyrics that contain connotative meanings. These meanings go beyond the basic definitions and show deeper feelings such as fear, strength, and control. Furthermore, the researcher discovered three key messages within the song "Speechless." First, the song reflects rebellion, showing how someone refuses to stay quiet when treated unfairly. Second, it expresses resilience by highlighting the strength to keep going and not give up, even when facing pressure. Third, it describes freedom through the courage to speak out and be true to oneself without fear. In conclusion, this research highlights how examining denotative and connotative meanings can reveal the emotional depth and intended messages in song lyrics. The findings show that songs are not only artistic works, but also carry meaningful messages that can resonate with listeners and reflect real-life experiences.

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