

The Analysis of Associative Meaning on the Poems Written by Maya Angelou

Analisis Makna Asosiatif pada Puisi Karya Maya Angelou

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Keywords:	Abstract
Semantics, Associative Meaning, Maya Angelou.	<i>This study is entitled “The Analysis of Associative Meaning on the Poems Written by Maya Angelou”. The aims of this study are to identify and explain the types of associative meaning and also describe the function of associative meaning that found on the Maya Angelou’s poem. This study used descriptive qualitative method to analyze the data and used theory purposed by Leech (1981) for the types of associative meaning and Searle (1979) as well for the functions of associative meaning. This study are used three collection poem by Maya Angelou’s poem, there are: Caged Bird, Phenomenal Woman, and Still I Rise poem. The result of the study showed that found on the Maya Angelou’s poem, there are: five types of associative meaning that found in the poems, there are 14 data of connotative meaning, 5 data of social meaning, 8 data of affective meaning, 3 data of reflected meaning and 3 data of collocative meaning and 2) four of five functions of associative meaning that found in this study, there are 18 data of assertive, 2 data of commissive, 9 data of expressive, and 1 data of declaratives but also no directives functions data that found in the poems.</i>
Kata kunci:	Abstrak
Semantik, Makna Asosiatif, Maya Angelou.	Penelitian ini berjudul “Analisis Makna Asosiatif pada puisi ditulis oleh Maya Angelou”. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi dan menjelaskan jenis-jenis makna asosiatif serta mendeskripsikan fungsi makna asosiatif yang terdapat dalam puisi karya Maya Angelou. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif untuk menganalisis data dan menggunakan teori yang dikemukakan oleh Leech (1981) untuk jenis-jenis makna asosiatif dan Searle (1979) untuk fungsi makna asosiatif. Penelitian ini menggunakan tiga kumpulan puisi karya Maya Angelou, yaitu: puisi Caged Bird, Phenomenal Woman, dan Still I Rise. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pada puisi Maya Angelou terdapat: lima jenis makna asosiatif yang ditemukan pada puisi-puisi tersebut, yaitu makna konotatif sebanyak 14 data, makna sosial sebanyak 5 data, makna afektif sebanyak 8 data, makna reflektif sebanyak 3 data, dan makna kolokatif sebanyak 3 data, serta 2) empat dari lima fungsi makna asosiatif yang ditemukan pada penelitian ini, yaitu fungsi asertif

sebanyak 18 data, fungsi direktif sebanyak 2 data, fungsi ekspresif sebanyak 9 data, dan fungsi komisif sebanyak 1 data, namun tidak ada fungsi deklaratif yang ditemukan pada puisi-puisi tersebut.

INTRODUCTION

Leech (1981: 9) expressed that “Semantics is central to the study of communication as it becomes crucial factor in social organization; the need to understand it becomes more and more pressing”. Semantic can learn the meaning of the word used in communicating either written or spoken; any communication spoken by the speaker will have a good impact on each listener. Every people are studying meaning which can be understood about how to produce the sentence. The sentence in language can be expressed in written or spoken which has functions deliver the meaning about what the speaker meant.

Currently, semantics have been used to explain the meaning of sentences, facilitating and improving the understanding of phrases in diagnostic language. Semantics has many meanings, one of which is associative meaning, which involves expressions related to the individual’s psychological understanding of the speaker. There are seven types of associative meaning proposed by Leech (1981) which are denotative meaning, associative meaning (connotative meanings, social meaning, affective meaning, reflected meaning, collocative meaning), and thematic meaning. Associative meanings are the meanings of words and sentences that are related to the relationships between words and sentences that have linguistic conditions. For example, the word “*white*” associated with the meaning “*holy*” or the word “*rose*” associated with the meaning “*brave or true love*.”

One of the most interesting to identify the types of meaning especially the associative meaning is through poem/poetry. Poem is the direct of man’s need to communicate both inner and outer experience. Poem is known as a kind of literature work that rather difficult to be understand than others because the poem is a possessed creative, not using language in the way that normal human being do (Kennedy, 1983). As the reason, in this study is used the first poem and two collection poems by Maya Angelou as a data source.

In this research, the semantic study on the same poems are analyzed in more depth and detail to its types of associative meaning and then to describe the function of each meaning. The first focus of this research is to find out the types of associative meaning on the poems written by Maya Angelou. The second focus of this research is to find out the functions of associative meaning. The functions of associative meaning in this study use the theory of utterance conducted by Searle (1979). They are function of assertive, directives, commissive, expressive, and declaratives on the three collection poems by Maya Angelou, there are *Caged Bird*, *Phenomenal Woman*, *Still I Rise*.

METHOD

The data was analyzed by descriptive qualitative approach in this study. The data of this study was taken from poetry foundation official website <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/> and the data has accessed on February 19, 2022. The data has published on 1969 for *Caged Bird* poem, although *Phenomenal Woman* and *Still I Rise* poems has published by Random House on 1978.

The documentation method leads the researcher to observe the written objects, such as books, magazines, laws, roles, diary, and other kinds of documents (Arikunto,

2006: 158). However, this study used the documentation and observation method to collect data which is the form of the data source is the documentation such as *Caged Bird*, *Phenomenal Woman*, and *Still I Rise* poems. In collecting the data, there were 4 steps in this study. The first step was visited Poetry Foundation Official Website and reading three collection poems by Maya Angelou, Second, found out that poem by note taking method. Third, identify words, phrases and sentences which contained with types of associative meaning (Leech, 1981) and functions of associative meaning (Searle, 1979). The last step was making a table for any data that found on Maya Angelou's poem.

After collecting data, the techniques of analyzing the data are used theories that proposed by Leech (1981) and Searle (1979). In analyzing the data, there were 3 several steps. Those were: data reduction and classification, display the data and data conclusion. First, reducing data of this study. After collecting the data are used documentation method and note taking technique would be reduced by types of associative meaning (meaning of connotative, social, affective, reflected, and collocative) and functions of associative meaning (function of assertive, directives, commissive, expressive, and declaratives). In displaying the data, the data would be display in the form of table data analysis. After displaying the data, the conclusion was drawn.

RESULT & DISCUSSION

The results of this study shows that three collection poem (*Caged Bird*, *Phenomenal Woman*, and *Still I Rise*) by Maya Angelou's used all types of associative meaning that proposed by Leech (1981).

Table 1. Types of Associative Meaning found on Maya Angelou's Poem

No	Types of Associative Meaning	Total
1	Connotative Meaning	14 data
2	Social Meaning	5 data
3	Affective Meaning	8 data
4	Reflected Meaning	3 data
5	Collocative Meaning	3 data

Table 2. Functions of Associative Meaning found on Maya Angelou's Poem

No	Function of Associative Meaning	Total
1	Assertive Function	18 data
2	Directive Function	2 data
3	Commissive Function	0 data
4	Expressive Function	9 data

Based on results above, the discussion of the types of associative meaning are described below:

1. Connotative Meaning

According to Leech (1981) in this meaning the communicative value of a meaning-based expression.

(Data 1)

“and dares to claim the sky”

The denotative meaning of *sky* according to Merriam Webster Dictionary is *the upper atmosphere or expanse of space that constitutes an apparent great vault or arch over the earth*. The word *claim* is said something is true/you have done something. The phrase *claim the sky* is a positive connotation because it is containing about freedom, courage, and assertion. The phrase ‘*claim the sky*’ represented a willingness to take risks, the right to exist and express oneself freely, and also an act of rebellion against oppressive forces or conditions. There are also words and sentences used by the writer to insist on the writer’s point of view; about which activities are marked as positive because *claim the sky* highlights the writer's perspective that every individual, like the free bird, should have the audacity to assert their identity, challenge limitations, and strive for self-fulfillment without being confined or oppressed.

(Data 2)

“I’m not build to suit a fashion model’s size”

The denotative meaning of *fashion model* according to Merriam Webster Dictionary is *a model who wears clothes to display them to prospective buyers, a mannequin*. In the connotative meaning, *fashion model* is associated with glamour, beauty, and elegance. It also often represents an idealized image of perfection, seen as epitomizing physical attractiveness and often serve as role models or sources of inspiration for individuals aspiring to achieve certain beauty standards. Furthermore, related to the size, *fashion models* have been associated with a slender and tall physique. It can turn out to be a negative meaning when the association focuses on the thinness as an ideal body shape in the fashion industry, which has led to criticisms regarding body image and unrealistic beauty standards. In the poem, it embodies the physical appearance of the phenomenal woman which she believed was not glamour, beautiful, and elegant.

2. Social Meaning

According to Leech (1981) in this meaning conveys the social and cultural circumstances of the speaker used in communication is style or social consciousness.

(Data 3)

“Phenomenal woman”

This phrase *phenomenal woman*, Maya Angelou the poets or the speaker describes the allure she has and celebrates her identity as a woman. Angelou is one of the most celebrated poets and memoirists in American literature. Her first memoir, *I Know*

Why the Caged Bird Sings, was the first U.S bestseller ever written by an African American woman. It catapulted Angelou into instant fame in the literary world. This Phenomenal Woman appeared in her third volume of poetry. Through this poem she celebrates her body and positive characteristics of all women.

(Data 4)

*"I am the dream and hope of the **slave**"*

In this sentence, African American has a complex history in the United States that includes a significant period of slavery. Slavery in America lasted for several centuries, beginning in the early 17th century and officially ending with the ratification of the 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution in 1865. Throughout this period, African Americans endured unimaginable hardships, violence, and dehumanization as they were subjected to forced labor, family separation, and other forms of oppression. Related to the poem, Angelou as the poets was one of the most famous African Americans who wrote several poems that address the theme of racism and the struggle for racial equality. Her poems are powerful and empowering; they speak to the resilience and strength of African Americans in the face of adversity.

3. Affective Meaning

According to Leech (1981) in this meaning that reflects the personal feelings of the speaker or writer, including their attitude toward the listener or their attitude toward something being said and to speak.

(Data 5)

*"With a **fearful** trill"*

In this sentence, the affective is shown by the word fearful, an adjective which denotes a sense of apprehension, anxiety, or unease. It suggests the presence of fear or a feeling of being afraid. It can describe a response to a perceived threat, danger, or the unknown; also imply a lack of confidence or a feeling of being overwhelmed by fear. When applied to the context of a trill, it implies that there is something unsettling or alarming about the trill itself. A trill itself is a musical often used to add embellishment, energy, or a sense of movement in music. When combine fearful with trill, it has an affective meaning of evoking a sense of fear an unease, it suggests that the trill carries a quality that instills a feeling of apprehension or tension in the listener.

(Data 6)

*"The **joy** in my feet"*

The emotion in this sentence is shown by the word joy which means a deep sense of happiness, pleasure, and delight. The feeling of joy does not always relate to the real aspects of life but also can be a transcendent experience where one feels a sense of being uplifted or connected to something greater than oneself or connection with the universe. When combined the joy with in my feet, the phrase may suggest a deeper emotional connection to the body and its ability to experience joy through movement. It also may reflect the idea of being grounded and connected to the present moment.

4. Reflected Meaning

According to Leech (1981) in this meaning is communicated by association with another meaning of the same expression, or that the meaning arises in the case of several conceptual senses.

(Data 7)

“A hive of honey bees”

In literal a hive of honey bees refers to the home or dwelling place of a honeybee colony. There they live, store food, raise brood, and carry out their various activities. In the colony, there is a queen bee which has a distinct physical appearance that sets her apart from the worker bees. She is large in size, with a longer abdomen and a different coloration. However, it has different meaning in the context of the poem Phenomenal Women. Based on the explanation on the social meaning, the poet or Angelou describes the allure she has and celebrates her identity as a woman. In relation to the sentence a hive of honey bees, it is herself is the queen bee and other people who adores her are the colony of the bee. Also, as queen bee, she is able to produce honey, a sweet produce of the nectar flower. Where in the society, sweetness is something that people are looking for.

5. Collocative Meaning

According to Leech (1981) in this meaning conveyed through the association with one word often occurs in the context of another word.

(Data 8)

*“I am not **cute**”*

In the sentence, it is especially shown by the word cute which commonly used to describe something or someone that is attractive or endearing in an appealing and pleasant way. It often suggests a sense of charm, innocence, and sweetness. Some collocations related to the word cute are cute baby refers to an adorable and charming infant or young child. Cute animal describes an endearing or lovable creature, such as a cute puppy or a cute kitten. Cute couple refers to visually appealing or charming pair of individuals in a romantic relationship. Cute little uses to emphasize the small or diminutive size of something, such as cute little Barbie's house or cute little puppy's paws. Also, cute nickname refers to an affectionate and charming name given to someone as a term of endearment.

Based on results above, there are discussion of analysis the functions of associative meaning below:

1. Assertive Functions

According to Leech (1981) in this function performs an assertive function, they are aiming to express a belief, present facts, or provide descriptions of reality; the world as the speaker sees it.

(Data 9)

“And the flash of my teeth”

This sentence that expressed self-belief. It asserts a vivid and impactful image of self-expression that suggests speaker's smile as a potent tool for conveying confidence, attitude, and a sense of control. This assertion emphasizes the speaker's ability to use

nonverbal communication to make a statement and leave an impression. The act of showing one's teeth in a smile becomes a provocative and attention-grabbing action.

2. Commissive Functions

According to Leech (1981) in this function expressing their intention to do something in the future.

(Data 10)

"You may kill me with your hatefulness"

This function of associative meaning demonstrates indicating the speaker's willingness to accept a potential future action. In this case, the speaker is suggesting that the intensity of the other person's hatefulness could lead to their own emotional demise. This use of language aligns with the commissive function, as it involves committing to a possible outcome based on the other person's behavior or emotions. This highlights the power of language not only to describe actions but also to express the speaker's emotional readiness to face a future outcome. The commissive function here lies in the speaker's implicit commitment to enduring the potential effects of the hatefulness mentioned.

3. Expressive Functions

According to Leech (1981) in this function involve the expressions of speaker's feeling, emotions, attitudes, or psychological states about a particular situation or topic.

(Data 11)

"Does my sassiness upset you?"

By using the word upset in the does my sassiness upset you, the speaker is expressing a sense of emotional disturbance, discomfort, or agitation. It indicates the feelings of unease, annoyance, or even anger. In the context of the expression, the word upset suggests that the speaker is addressing any negative or adverse emotional reactions that their assertive behavior (sassiness) might be causing in others. It implies a certain level of emotional turmoil or disruption in response to the speaker's attitude. Furthermore, speaker's actions might be challenging conventional expectations or norms, leading to potentially strong emotional responses from those who are observing or interacting with them.

4. Declarative Functions

According to Leech (1981) in this function describing or reporting a state of affairs, instead, their speech itself creates a new reality or changes the existing state of affairs.

(Data 12)

"I am the dream and the hope of the slave"

The sentence has declarative functions because it creates a new reality to the world around the sentence occurred. In the poem Still I Rise, the speaker is not merely describing something that already exists but actively bringing about a new reality through their words, in the sentence, it is through the dream and hope. Declarative functions rely on social conventions and agreements for their efficacy. The social conventions and agreement of this sentence are between the black American people, the subject who Maya Angelou represents on her poem. It has a powerful declaration that embodies the idea of

overcoming adversity and realizing one's potential. It suggests a sense of empowerment and determination to rise above challenges.

CONCLUSION

From the result of this study showed that there 33 data for types of associative meaning that have been analyzed by using Leech's theory (1981) and 30 data used Searle's theory (1979) to analyzed the functions of associative meaning that found on the Maya Angelou's poem. The first was types of associative meaning, there are 5 sub-types of associative meaning that are used by Maya Angelou in her poems, they are: 14 data of connotative meaning, 5 data of social meaning, 8 data of affective meaning, 3 data of reflected meaning, and the last collocative meaning with 3 data in the poems. The second was function of associative meaning, there are 5 sub-functions that used by Maya Angelou in her poems, from 5 functions only 4 functions of associative meaning that found in this study such as: assertive functions 18 data, directive functions 2 data, expressive functions 9 data, and the last is declarative function with 1 data, found in the associative meaning data.

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