Affective Meaning Found in 'Nothing's Gonna Change My Love for You'

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ARTICLE INFO

A B S T R A C T

This study examines the affective semantic meaning of the lyrics of the song "Nothing's Gonna Change My Love For You". This study uses a qualitative approach to analyze the affective meaning in the lyrics of the song. In this study, G. Leech's theory of affective meaning is used to identify and analyze the emotional responses conveyed through certain words and phrases in the song. Data collection involved downloading the song, reading the lyrics, and identifying the emotional tone in the text. This study refers to the emotional impact of words and their important role in song lyrics, as songs often aim to evoke emotions such as love, happiness, or sadness. The results of the Analysis of the lyrics of "Nothing's Gonna Change My Love For You" are that the song contains twelve different emotional meanings—ten positive and two negative. Positive emotions focus on themes of love, commitment, and certainty, while negative emotions reflect dependence and longing. These findings demonstrate the power of carefully chosen words in shaping the emotional experience of the listener and the relationship between the singer and the audience. This study highlights the influence of affective meaning in songs and how it shapes emotional engagement, highlighting the important role of language in evoking strong feelings and creating emotional resonance.
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1. Introduction

Musical instruments have been found since 2000 BC in Ancient Egyptian civilization, in the form of monuments and inscriptions depicting harps, lyres, guitars, and flutes, both single and double. Thus, it can be concluded that music existed before modern civilization. Music is inseparable from the culture of a nation. In the Middle Ages, music began to develop in England and was often used in religious activities, such as in church. As time went by, music began to change its function into entertainment, such as opera and orchestra. [1] stated music can be understood as "a system of sounds, silences, and rhythms that express human emotions and thoughts." Music is an inseparable part of everyday life. Music is enjoyed by various groups of people and is used as a universal medium to express emotions. [2] music includes all sounds produced by humans that are deliberately presented as musical works.

[3] Music is an art form that reflects human emotional experiences, thoughts, and imagination through the consistency or set of musical sounds. Music consists of several main elements, such as harmony, rhythm, melody, and lyrics. Each element has an important role in creating a complete song or musical work. In addition, there are various genres of music, such as classical, pop, rock, jazz, and traditional music, each of which has its own characteristics and fans. Music allows listeners to connect with the lyrics and melody in a deep and emotional way. Therefore, it is important for a song to have the right lyrics so that the creator's ideas or feelings can be conveyed well.

Song lyrics, as an element of music, are closely related to linguistic studies because they use language as their medium. [4] song lyrics contain words and language that expose the author's thoughts and feelings, often related to a person's feelings or expression. The selection of word

structures and language styles is needed to create a work that has deep meaning and can arouse the listener's emotions. [5] Linguistics is the science that studies human language, both in terms of grammar, phonology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. Linguistics regulates the understanding of basic principles in using language.

[6] Linguistics is the scientific study of language and structure. It involves analyzing language sounds (phonetics), words (morphology), sentence structure (syntax), meaning (semantics), and the use of language in context (pragmatics). Linguistics seeks to understand how languages evolve, how they are used in communication, and how they function across different cultures and societies. The study of linguistics is essential to understanding the cognitive processes involved in language production and comprehension, as well as how language interacts with social, psychological, and cultural factors.

One major branch of linguistics is semantics, which deals with meaning in language. Semantics explores how words, phrases, and sentences convey meaning, and how speakers understand and interpret these meanings in different contexts. [7] semantics is the field of linguistics that studies the relationship between linguistic signs and the objects they signify, investigating what language means and means. It also investigates how meanings can change based on factors like syntax, context, and word usage. Within semantics, [8] languages evolve, leading to shifts in word meanings, it emphasize the importance of understanding these changes for improving computational linguistics algorithms. There are different types of meanings, such as lexical meaning (the meaning of individual words), compositional meaning (how meanings combine in phrases or sentences), and pragmatic meaning (how context influences interpretation). Understanding semantics is crucial for studying how people communicate to each other, how language reflects thought, and how does meaning affect in everyday interactions.

Affective meaning refers to the emotional response that arises in the listener or reader due to the specific choice of words orphrases used in a piece of language. [9] affective meaning is the interplay of three meaning dimensions: evaluation, potency, and activity, which can be learnt through stimulus pairing and exposure.. This type of meaning is influenced by the emotional state or mood the language evokes in the audience, rather than just its literal meaning. [10] emotives are words associated with one of the emotions and are used in public and private settings by different genders and ages. For instance, in the context of sad songs, the songwriter may intentionally select words with negative connotations, such as "separation," "loss," and "longing." These words are often associated with emotional pain, sadness, and heartache, and their use aims to evoke similar emotions in the listener. The emotional atmosphere of the song is shaped by the underlying affective meaning that these words bring to the forefront. On the other hand, in happy songs, the songwriter typically uses positive, uplifting words like "love," "hope," and "victory." These words are linked to emotions such as joy, optimism, and fulfillment, and their presence helps create a more cheerful and encouraging emotional tone in the song. Thus, affective meaning plays a critical role in how language can convey emotions and how the choice of specific words can directly influence the emotional experience of the listener or reader. This phenomenon emphasizes the connection between language and emotional expression, showing how words are not only tools for conveying information but also for invoking emotional responses.

Affective meaning plays a pivotal role in shaping the emotional tone of language, influencing how listeners or readers perceive and respond to different forms of communication. This emotional response can be categorized into positive and negative affective meanings, each of which elicits distinct emotional reactions based on the words or phrases used. While positive affective meaning aims to evoke feelings of happiness, hope, and satisfaction, negative affective meaning typically elicits emotions such as sadness, anger, or regret. Both of these types of affective meaning are deeply connected to the specific word choices made by the speaker or writer, and they can greatly impact the overall emotional experience of the audience.

Positive affective meaning refers to the emotional reactions that are associated with words or phrases that convey pleasant, uplifting, or encouraging emotions. [11] positive affective meaning encompasses the speaker's personal emotions and attitudes toward specific topics, and how these are expressed through language.. Words like "love," "joy," "hope," and "victory" are commonly associated with positive affective meaning. These words tend to foster feelings of optimism, happiness, and well-being in the listener or reader. For example, in songs or speeches that

emphasize love and togetherness, the emotional atmosphere created is one of warmth, trust, and positive expectation.

On the other hand, negative affective meaning involves words or expressions that invoke negative emotions. [12] negative affective meaning refers to the emotional connotations that words or phrases carry, which can evoke negative feelings or reactions. Words like "loss," "separation," "grief," and "failure" are examples of terms that carry negative affective meaning. The use of such words often brings about feelings of sorrow, disappointment, or discomfort. In contexts such as sad songs or lamentations, these words help to reflect the struggles or emotional pain experienced by the speaker or character, and they prompt similar emotional responses from the audience. Thus, understanding both positive and negative affective meanings allows us to appreciate how language functions not just to convey information, but to evoke and communicate complex emotional experiences.

After exploring the concept of affective meaning, which refers to the emotional responses by specific words or phrases, it becomes evident how language can convey powerful emotions, such as happiness, love, or sadness, through carefully chosen vocabulary. This connection between language and emotion is particularly significant when analyzing song lyrics, as songs often use words and phrases to evoke strong feelings in listeners. A prime example of a song that effectively utilizes affective meaning is *"Nothing Gonna Change My Love for You."* In this song, the lyrics are carefully crafted to express deep emotions of love, commitment, and reassurance, showcasing the power of affective meaning in creating an emotional bond between the singer and the listener.

Affective meaning highlights how specific words and phrases in song lyrics evoke a range of emotional responses in listeners. Music, as a universal form of expression, creates emotional connections through language, with "Nothing's Gonna Change My Love for You" offering a clear example of how lyrics communicate powerful emotions like love and commitment. The song uses carefully chosen words to resonate with listeners, triggering emotional reactions tied to themes of reassurance and devotion. By examining how the lyrics invoke positive and negative emotional responses, the study of affective meaning reveals the emotional dynamics within the song. This analysis demonstrates how language in lyrics conveys feelings of love, joy, sadness, or despair, and shapes the emotional experience of the audience through its simple yet impactful expressions.

This research aligns with previous studies by multiple researchers, as both studies examine how language, whether in a political address or a song, can provoke emotional reactions from the audience. While Hoshan's [13] study explores public speech and Safiuddin [14] focus more on a movie script, this research emphasizes how lyrics convey personal emotions like love and commitment. In both cases, understanding affective meaning provides insight into how language can influence emotional responses, offering a deeper understanding of communication's power to evoke feelings in diverse contexts.

2. Research Method

2.1. Research Theory

The researcher employs a qualitative research approach in conducting this research.. [15] qualitative research is an approach used to explore and understand the meaning derived from individuals or groups based on social issues. In this study, the researcher uses the theory of [16] to analyze the lyrics of the song "Nothing's Gonna Change My Love For You." The data collection technique involves downloading the song, reading the lyrics, and identifying the lyrics. These steps are used to identify and analyze how much affective meaning is contained within the lyrics of the song "Nothing's Gonna Change My Love For You."

2.2. Source of the Data

The song "Nothing's Gonna Change My Love for You" is a classic love ballad performed by George Benson, originally released in 1985. The song's lyrics express themes of unwavering love, commitment, and emotional depth, making it a popular choice for exploring affective meaning in music. The lyrical content focuses on the idea of enduring love, emphasizing trust, devotion, and the belief that nothing will alter the depth of one's affection. As a powerful emotional expression, the song resonates with listeners, especially those reflecting on romantic relationships. The data for this research were collected from https://lyrics.lyricfind.com official website, a reputable platform that

provides accurate and legally sourced lyrics for a wide range of songs. LyricFind is known for its extensive database of lyrics, ensuring the authenticity and copyright compliance of the content. The lyrics were retrieved directly from LyricFind, ensuring that they are accurate and free from any unauthorized modifications.

2.3. Data Collection

The data collection process for this research focuses on the song as the primary source, with the lyrics obtained from lyricfind.com, a reliable platform for accurate and copyright-compliant song lyrics. These lyrics serve as the foundation for analyzing affective meaning and emotional resonance in the song. Additionally, the researcher conducted a literature review of similar studies published from [11], and [17] to provide theoretical support and context. This dual approach, combining primary data from the song and insights from related studies.

2.4. Data Analysis

The data analysis in this research focuses on uncovering the affective meaning conveyed in the song by analyzing its lyrics. The analysis begins with an in-depth reading of the lyrics to familiarize the researcher with their content and context. Supporting this process, a review of previous research helps validate the findings and provide comparative insights into how affective meaning is communicated through lyrics. Following is an example of the data analysis:

Data Table Analysis

Data	Lyrics	Positive/Negative Meaning	Explanation
1	*The days would all be empty The nights would seem so long*	Negative	These lyrics carry an affective meaning, relating to feelings and emotions. The phrase "The days would all be empty" reflects a sense of loneliness or emptiness, while "The nights would seem so long" captures the feeling of solitude and the endless, hollow nights. Therefore, these lyrics convey a mostly negative meaning, referring to feelings of loneliness, isolation, and the absence of meaning in life. The emotions present include loneliness, solitude, and perhaps a sense of despair or disappointment, which evoke a melancholic and introspective mood, creating a dark atmosphere and stirring feelings of loneliness within a person.

3. Results and Discussion.

The findings of this study reveal 12 distinct affective meanings derived from the analysis of song lyrics, consisting of 10 positive and 2 negative meanings. These positive meanings predominantly encompass themes of love, hope, and unwavering commitment, whereas the negative meanings reflect sentiments of dependence and longing. This duality underscores the nuanced emotional engagement fostered by the lyrics. The results align with [18] theory of affective meaning, which highlights the emotional resonance of language. Furthermore, these findings resonate with prior studies by [11] and [17], which emphasized the influence of linguistic affect on emotional experience and audience reception. By discussing these results in light of existing theories and empirical evidence, this section aims to deepen the understanding of how language in song lyrics shapes and communicates complex emotional dynamics.

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2	*The nights would seem so long With you I see forever, oh, so clearly*	Positive	These lines convey strong emotional elements, reflecting deep love and connection. They highlight feelings of longing or emptiness during moments of separation through "nights seem so long." The words "with you I see forever, oh, so clearly" express a sense of clarity and purpose that comes from being together. The emotional tone stays positive, emphasizing love, companionship, and hope. While hints of longing or separation appear, the dominant focus remains on unity and the joy of shared moments. These words evoke emotions of love, peace, and hope in an uplifting and heartfelt way.
3	*I might have been in love before But it never felt this strong*	Positive	This phrase delves into the affective meaning of deep and intense love. They express the experience of a connection that surpasses all previous relationships, emphasizing the joy and fulfillment that come with such profound emotions. The sentiment stays positive, focusing on the strength of love and the sense of completeness it brings. However, this intensity also carries a vulnerability, as unreciprocated feelings or complications could lead to disappointment or heartbreak. The emotions at play include love, intensity, and a longing for deeper connection, capturing both the joy of newfound depth and the risks tied to emotional openness.
4	*Our dreams are young, and we both know They'll take us where we want to go*	Positive	These lines express emotions of optimism, hope, and enthusiasm tied to dreams and future aspirations. They emphasize a shared confidence in the power of dreams to guide individuals toward their desired outcomes. This message inspires a sense of positivity and self-assurance, encouraging a belief in the possibility of happiness, success, and fulfillment. The imagery reflects hope and motivation, urging listeners to embrace their aspirations with conviction. By focusing on the promise of achieving life goals, these words evoke an uplifting emotional tone and a strong drive to move forward with purpose.
5	*Hold me now, touch me now I don't want to live without you*	Negative	These lines highlight affective elements rooted in emotional dependency on a loved one. "Hold me now, touch me now" expresses a longing for closeness and the comfort of physical connection, while "I don't want to live without you" reveals a profound fear of loss and separation. The overall tone leans toward negativity, as the strong sense of dependency introduces anxiety and vulnerability. Emotions such as fear, sadness, and deep attachment emerge, creating a mood of worry and unease. Although the connection described feels intense and meaningful, the underlying dependency and fear of separation give the sentiment a negative emotional weight.
6	*Nothing's gonna change my love for you You oughta know by now how much I love you*	Positive	"Nothing's gonna change my love for you. You oughta know by noe how much I love you" expresses deep feelings of love, commitment, and unwavering dedication. It highlights a positive affective meaning by focusing on steadfast devotion and certainty within a relationship. This sense of loyalty and commitment fosters security, stability, and happiness. Emotions tied to these words include affection, trust, and reassurance. By conveying unchanging love regardless of external circumstances, the statement

			promotes a calming and uplifting emotional tone, encouraging feelings of comfort and enduring connection.
7	*One thing you can be sure of I'll never ask for more than your love*	Positive	This line focuses on emotions of love and simplicity within a relationship. It expresses a desire for genuine love and connection, with no expectations for material things or anything beyond what is essential—authentic affection and acceptance. The overall meaning is positive, highlighting commitment, trust, and contentment. It conveys emotions such as deep love, acceptance, and trust, emphasizing a strong, honest connection. The sentiment centers on love without unnecessary demands, creating a sense of fulfillment and positivity.
8	*The world may change my whole life through But nothing's gonna change my love for you*	Positive	These lines explore the emotional significance of deep, unwavering love that remains unaffected by external changes or circumstances. They convey strong emotional attachment and commitment that endure over time. The central emotion in these lyrics is love and devotion, reflecting optimism and resilience. The lines carry a positive meaning, emphasizing the enduring nature of love, which evokes warmth and deep emotional connection.
9	*If the road ahead is not so easy Our love will lead the way for us*	Positive	This lyric conveys a sense of hope and optimism, suggesting that love will provide guidance even when the journey is difficult. The tone is predominantly positive, emphasizing resilience, hope, and the belief that love can offer strength and support during challenging times. It evokes emotions such as optimism, perseverance, and a sense of stability, reflecting the idea that love can help overcome obstacles and foster courage. Overall, the affective meaning is uplifting, highlighting hope and the potential for enduring connection despite adversity
10	*Like a guiding star I'll be there for you if you should need me*	Positive	These lines express emotions of support, presence, and reassurance, creating a sense of safety and care. They reflect a commitment to stand by someone when needed, fostering feelings of comfort, trust, and mutual concern. The emotions within include love and empathy, highlighting a desire to support and understand others. Additionally, there is a sense of security and reassurance, reinforcing confidence and trust in relationships. Overall, the affective meaning of these lyrics is positive, emphasizing care, connection, and support.
11	*You don't have to change a thing I love you just the way you are*	Positive	These lines convey a message of acceptance, love, and appreciation for someone as they are, with no expectation for change. The overall sentiment is positive, emphasizing unconditional love and acceptance, which evoke emotions of compassion, peace, and emotional security. They promote a sense of comfort and safety, strengthening relationships through non-judgmental love and respect. The dominant emotional tone is one of positivity, emphasizing connection and emotional well-being.
12	*So come with me and share the view I'll help you see forever too*	Positive	These lines evoke emotions of positivity, emphasizing optimism, warmth, and intimacy. The phrase "share the view" conveys moments of joy and connection, encouraging a sense of togetherness and the beauty of shared experiences. The emotions tied to these lyrics are happiness, excitement, and unity. Overall, they inspire feelings of optimism and a shared vision of life's beauty, creating a positive emotional response.

4. Conclusion

This study demonstrates the significant role of affective meaning in shaping emotional resonance within song lyrics. Through the analysis of "Nothing's Gonna Change My Love for You," 12 affective meanings were identified—10 positive and 2 negative—highlighting the duality of emotional engagement conveyed through language. Positive meanings, emphasizing love, commitment, and hope, dominate the song's lyrical content, while negative meanings reflect dependency and longing. These findings align with G. Leech's theory of affective meaning and underscore the power of linguistic choices in evoking emotional responses. The results not only validate previous research on linguistic affect but also contribute to understanding how songs foster deep connections between artists and their audiences through emotional expression. This study affirms the intricate interplay between language, emotion, and music as a universal form of communication.

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