



SEMANTICS: MEANING OF THE LYRICS OF "EHLAM MA'AYA" BY HAMZA NAMIRA

M Rafiq Al Muktafa¹, Dayudin², Maman Abdul Djaliel³

^{1,2,3}UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung

E-mail: [1almuktafam@gmail.com](mailto:almuktafam@gmail.com), [2dayudin@uinsgd.ac.id](mailto:dayudin@uinsgd.ac.id), [3mamanabduljalil@uinsgd.ac.id](mailto:mamanabduljalil@uinsgd.ac.id)

Accepted :

5 January 2026

Published :

5 January 2026

Corresponding Author:

M Rafiq Al Muktafa

Email Corresponding :

almuktafam@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study delves into the semantic dimensions of the Arabic song "Ehlam Ma'aya" by Hamza Namira, applying Geoffrey Leech's Semantics Theory to explore how language constructs messages of hope, motivation, and collective awareness for modern Arab audiences. Through a qualitative descriptive approach, the research analyzes the original Arabic lyrics of the song, focusing on Leech's classification of meaning: conceptual, connotative, social, affective, reflected, collocative, and thematic. The analysis highlights the use of diction, imagery, and contextual elements to reveal how these meanings are linguistically conveyed. The findings demonstrate a strong interplay between conceptual and associative meanings that encourage listeners to dream, seek change, and foster optimism about their shared future. The lyrics also evoke significant connotative meanings, where images of dreaming, journey, and awakening create emotional and ideological associations of hope, courage, and liberation from social and psychological constraints within contemporary Arab contexts. This research contributes to the semantic analysis of Arabic song lyrics, offering insights into Arabic linguistics, literary studies, and contextual teaching materials. It also provides a novel framework for examining the intersection of semantics, music, and socio-cultural discourse, enhancing interdisciplinary research in contemporary Arab music.

Keywords: *Geoffrey Leech Semantics Theory, Language, Meaning Analysis, Ehlam Ma'aya, Hama Namira, Arabic Song*

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is a system of signs that reflects human thought, culture, and emotion. In the world of art, particularly music, language functions as more than just a communication tool; it becomes a means of expressing values, feelings, and ideas. Song lyrics as oral literary works possess dimensions of meaning that transcend the denotative level (Vinh, 2025; Adika & Budiarsana, 2023). As explained by Geoffrey Leech, semantics is the study of meaning in language, encompassing literal meaning as well as social, cultural, and emotional aspects in its usage (Anggreni et al., 2022; Yunira et al., 2020). Leech asserts that "Conceptual meaning is the essential and inescapable part of what language expresses; it is the core of communication, while other types of meaning are more peripheral and context-dependent" (Leech, 2016). In other words, beyond conceptual meaning which is fundamental, lan-

guage also carries additional meanings such as connotative meaning formed through experience and culture.

This phenomenon is reflected in the development of modern Arab songs that are laden with social and religious values. One of the most prominent works is the song "Ehlam Ma'aya" by Hamza Namira, an Egyptian musician known for his commitment to humanitarian issues. This song was released around 2008-2009 which is the main track of Hamza Namira's debut album which is also entitled "Ehlam Ma'aya (Dream With Me)". Through lyrics full of symbols and metaphors, Namira invites her listeners to build dreams about a better future. In a semantic context, the meaning of these lyrics is not only denotative, but also connotative and affective, describing collective emotions and the spirit of struggle as explained by Leech in the concept of Connotative meaning, that "the communicative value of an expression has by virtue of what

Vol 9, No 1 (2026): ESTEEM

it refers to, over and above its conceptual content" (Harsetiani, 2022; Rahmadani, 2022; Jaya et al., 2020).

Various previous studies have examined connotative meanings in song lyrics. Zar and Khumairoh found that the songs "*Kursi Goyang*" and "*Kita Pasti Tua*" present messages of life duality through positive and negative connotations (Zar & Khumairoh, 2025). Meanwhile, Umami and Marwan focused their semiotic analysis on uncovering expressions of yearning and acceptance in the song "*Kembali Pulang*" (Umami & Marwan, 2024). Another study by Tiara Wia Ningsih emphasizes the dominance of connotative meaning in forming emotional messages in the song "*Daun Jatuh*" (Tiara Wia Ningsih et al., 2022). Research on the representation of meaning in Hamza Namira's song collection using Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis shows that the lyrics contain denotative, connotative, and mythical relationships that reflect the emotional experiences, injustices, hopes, and collective philosophy of life of Arab society. This study contributes to the understanding of the function of lyrics as formers and maintainers of cultural myths, but it has not examined specific types of meaning within Geoffrey Leech's semantic framework. Your research fills this gap by deliberately focusing the analysis on two types of Leech's meanings, namely conceptual meaning and connotative meaning, in one song, "*Ehlam Ma'aya*," so that the relationship between literal meaning and layers of figurative meaning in Hamza Namira's lyrics can be mapped more sharply and directionally (Amalia et al., 2025). Research on morphemes in Maher Zain's album "One" contributes to the field of morphology by identifying the types of free, bound, inflectional, and derivational morphemes and their frequencies in a number of religious songs. This study enriches our understanding of word structure in song lyrics, but does not discuss how these morphological forms construct conceptual and connotative meaning at the sentence or discourse level, so that the semantic dimension of meaning remains outside the scope of analysis. Your research fills this gap by shifting the focus from form to meaning, namely by analyzing in depth the conceptual and connotative meanings in the lyrics of "*Ehlam Ma'aya*", thereby complementing existing studies with a semantic per-

spective on religious and social song lyrics in modern Arabic music (Ibrahim & Rahayu, 2023). Nevertheless, these studies generally stop at connotative analysis without linking it to conceptual meaning as defined by Geoffrey Leech. This theoretical gap forms the foundation of this research namely, to systematically connect these two types of meaning within an Arab cultural context.

To fill this gap, this study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with referential analysis methods. This approach traces the conceptual and connotative meanings of each word or phrase in the lyrics of "*Ehlam Ma'aya*," referring to Geoffrey Leech's theory of meaning which distinguishes seven types of linguistic meaning: conceptual, connotative, social, affective, reflective, collocative, and thematic. Analysis is conducted by recording, categorizing, and interpreting meaning based on the social and cultural context of post-revolutionary Egypt.

The purpose of this research is to describe the types of meanings contained in the lyrics of "*Ehlam Ma'aya*" and to explain how these meanings contribute to forming the main message about hope and social struggle. Theoretically, this research is expected to enrich the body of knowledge in semantics, as explained by Chaer and Lyons (Chaer, 2014; Kolin & Wijana, 2025), who emphasize the importance of social context in understanding meaning in language. Practically, the results of this research are expected to serve as academic references for students, researchers, and enthusiasts of Arab language arts to understand the relationship between linguistic meaning and humanitarian messages in modern Arab music works.

2. METHODS

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach to analyze the lyrics of the song "*Ehlam Ma'aya*" by Hamza Namira based on Geoffrey Leech's semantic theory. This approach aims to produce in-depth descriptions of conceptual and connotative meanings without prioritizing numbers or statistical calculations. According to Moleong qualitative research is conducted to understand social phenomena through language data in the form of words, sentences, and expressions (Fadilla & Wulandari, 2023; Tisdell et al., 2025). Similar views are ex-

Vol 9, No 1 (2026): ESTEEM

pressed by Ratna, who states that the descriptive method aims to depict research objects systematically and factually (Julius, 2022; Neuman, 2019). Therefore, this approach is chosen because it aligns with the main objective of semantic research to explore implicit meanings behind song lyrics.

The object of this research is the lyrics of the song "Ehlam Ma'aya" by Hamza Namira, an Egyptian musician known for socially and humanistically themed works. The primary data source is an Arabic language text consisting of 24 lines, where each line becomes material for semantic analysis. The type of data used is qualitative data in the form of linguistic units words, phrases, and sentences that contain conceptual and connotative meanings.

Data was collected through the listening and recording technique, as explained by Susanto et al. (2023). The listening technique was performed by reading and examining the text deeply to identify language elements containing connotative meanings (Cristina & Afriana, 2021; Sari, 2020). Each relevant linguistic unit was recorded and then classified according to meaning categories in Geoffrey Leech's (1981) theory.

This research was conducted through four main stages. First, the data collection stage, which involves examining the text and identifying words or phrases with symbolic meaning. Second, the data classification stage, where data are grouped into conceptual and connotative meaning types according to Leech's theory. Third, the analysis stage, which interprets each linguistic unit based on social, emotional, and cultural contexts underlying the lyrics. Fourth, the conclusion-drawing stage, which aims to present the meaning interpretation results in narrative form. This procedure follows the principles of linguistic descriptive analysis as presented by Thornbury (2023), which emphasizes accuracy in the relationship between linguistic form and its meaning in context of use (Ovalili et al., 2024).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Meaning in The Lyrics of "Ehlam Ma'aya"

1. Conceptual Meaning

Conceptual meaning is the basic meaning that is logical, objective, and corresponds to word referents in the real world. According to Leech (1981), conceptual meaning is the core of language communication and serves as the foundation for other types of meaning (Yunira et al., 2020).

Data 1 : Opening Line

احلم معايا بيكرة جى

"*Ehlam Ma'aya Bi Bukra Jāy*"

The opening line of this song contains the main message that will develop throughout the lyrics. The following is an analysis of conceptual meaning from key lexemes:

The Lexeme "احلم" (Dream)

Conceptually, this word derives from the root "م ل ح" with the basic meaning "something seen by someone who is sleeping in their sleep". However, in the imperative form "احلم" the conceptual meaning is a command to dream or imagine something.

The Lexeme "معايا" (With me)

This word comes from the preposition "مع" which means "a locative adverb indicating togetherness and companionship". The addition of the first-person singular pronoun transforms its meaning to "with me," which conceptually indicates a collective invitation.

The Lexeme "بيكرة" (Tomorrow)

From the root [ب ك ر], its conceptual meaning is "al-bukrah: the beginning of day... and is used to mean tomorrow" (Ibn Manzur & Muḥammad ibn Mukarram, 2005), meaning "morning" and also used to refer to "tomorrow" or "the future."

The Lexeme "جى" (Coming)

From the root [ج ا ي], its conceptual meaning is "came: arrived, appeared" (Ibn Manzur & Muḥammad ibn Mukarram). In Egyptian dialect, the form "jāy" indicates something that will come.

Formation of Main Message:

Vol 9, No 1 (2026): ESTEEM

Conceptually, the line "Ehlam Ma'aya Bukra Jāy" forms the message: "A command to imagine together about the future that will come." This structure shows that the main message of the song is a collective invitation to have a vision about the future.

Data 2 : Key Line

و لو مجاش احنا نجيبه بنفسنا

"*Wa Law Mā Jāsh, Ihnā Najībuh Binafsinā*"

The Lexeme "لو" (If)

Its conceptual meaning is "لو: a conditional particle that enters the verb" (Ibn Manzur & Muḥammad ibn Mukarram, 2005), indicating a hypothetical condition.

The Phrase "مجاش" (Did not come)

The word "ما" is a negation particle and "جاش" is an Egyptian dialect form of "came" with the suffix "-ش" as a negation emphasis. Conceptually it means "did not come."

The Lexeme "احنا" (We/Us)

An Egyptian dialect form of the first-person plural pronoun, conceptually meaning "we" or "us," indicating a collective subject.

The Lexeme "نجيبه" (We bring it)

From the root [ج-ي-ب] derived from "brought it: carried it" (Ibn Manzur & Muḥammad ibn Mukarram, 2005), meaning "to bring something." With the addition of the pronoun "hu," its meaning becomes "we bring it (what is meant)."

The Lexeme "بنفسنا" (By ourselves)

The word "نفس" means "self, soul, person" (Ibn Manzur & Muḥammad ibn Mukarram, 2005). With the preposition "bi" and the pronoun "na," the conceptual meaning is "by ourselves," indicating independence and active effort.

Formation of Main Message:

Conceptually, this line forms the message: "If the future does not come by it-

self, then we must actively bring it through our own effort." This shows that the song's main message is proactive attitude and collective independence in realizing the future.

Data 3 :Supporting Lines for Main Message

نبدأ نحاول في الطريق

كثر الخطاوي تدلنا على حلمنا

"*Nabda' Nuḥāwil Fi Al-Ṭarīq / Kattir Al-Khuṭāwī Tadulnā 'Alā Hulminā*"

The Lexeme "نبدأ" (we start)

From the root [ب-د-أ], means "to begin; beginning is opposite of ending" (Ibn Manzur & Muḥammad ibn Mukarram, 2005), meaning "to begin." Conceptually indicates an initial action.

The Lexeme "نحاول" (we try)

From the root [ح-و-ل], means "tried something: wanted it and strived for it" (Ibn Manzur & Muḥammad ibn Mukarram, 2005), meaning "to desire and strive to achieve it." Conceptually indicates continuous effort.

The Lexeme "الطريق" (the road)

Means "the road: an extended path" (Ibn Manzur & Muḥammad ibn Mukarram, 2005), meaning "an extended path." Conceptually indicates a journey or process.

The Lexeme "الخطاوي" (steps)

From the root [خ-ط-و], means "the step: the distance between two feet when walking" (Ibn Manzur & Muḥammad ibn Mukarram, 2005), meaning "the distance between two feet in walking." Conceptually indicates concrete actions.

Formation of Main Message:

Conceptually, these lines form the message: "The process of realizing the future begins with an initial action, continuous effort, and concrete steps in the journey toward the goal." This reinforces the main message that the future is achieved through process and active action.

Line: "مهما نقع نقدر نقوم" (No matter how far we fall, we can get up)

Vol 9, No 1 (2026): ESTEEM

- "Naqa" (we fall): From the root [وق-ع], means "fell: dropped" (Ibn Manzur & Muḥammad ibn Mukarram, 2005), meaning "to fall." Conceptually indicates falling or failure.
- "Naqdir" (we can): From the root [ث-د-ر], means "ability: power to do something, meaning "ability to do something." Conceptually indicates capacity to act.
- "Naqūm" (we rise): From the root [ث-و-م], means "got up: rose from sitting or sleeping or falling", meaning "to rise from sitting, sleeping, or falling." Conceptually indicates recovery or rising.

Formation of Main Message:

Conceptually, this line forms the message: "In any condition, including when experiencing falling, there remains the ability to rise again." This shows that the song's main message contains a dimension of resilience and endurance.

2. Connotative Meaning

Connotative meaning is an additional meaning that is subjective, relating to emotional, social, and cultural values attached to a word. According to Leech (1981), connotative meaning emerges from associations a word possesses based on experience, culture, and emotion (Benny et al., 2022; Grendiseng & Agung, 2023)

- 1) Connotative Meanings Depicting Hope
 - a) The Word "احلم" (Dream)

Conceptually meaning "to see in sleep," but connotatively in this song context means hope and aspirations for a better future. The use of this word in imperative form shows a call to have hope. In the context of post-revolutionary Egypt, "dreaming" becomes a symbol of collective hope for change.

The use of the imperative form ("dream," "dream on") can be understood as the realization of affective and social meanings that encourage the emotional participation of listeners, namely an invitation to continue to maintain hope amid unstable socio-political situations (Yunira et al., 2020). In the post-revolutionary Egyptian social context, "dream" functions as a connotative marker of the people's collective hope for change, so

that one lexeme combines conceptual (mental activity), connotative (hopes and ideals), and social (solidarity and post-revolutionary collective identity), as confirmed in recent studies that revise and apply Leech's seven meanings theory (Hadiqa Warraich, 2024; Saputri et al., 2023; Yunira et al., 2020).

- b) The Phrase "بكر جاي" (Tomorrow Coming)

Conceptually meaning "tomorrow/future," but connotatively means hope for a brighter future. The word "جاي" (coming) shows confidence that a good future will certainly arrive, reflecting hope with certainty.

Then, this word not only marks time, but also carries psychological dimensions of optimism, confidence, and progressive orientation towards change, as emphasized in the latest study that re-domesticates Leech's concept of meaning in the context of contemporary discourse (Oghiator & Ohen, 2024).

The element "جي" (come) reinforces the dynamic aspect that the expected future is not static, but is described as if it is moving closer, thus presenting the image of the future as something that is believed to definitely arrive, not just an abstract possibility. From a connotative perspective, this construction describes a certainty-filled hope: a good future is not only imagined, but positioned as a certainty that will come, so that the lexeme combines temporal (future), emotive (hope and optimism), and epistemic attitude (strong belief in the realization of change) in accordance with the conceptual-connotative-affective meaning classification in Leech's framework (Yunira et al., 2020).

- c) The Phrase "حلمنا" (Our Dream)

Conceptually meaning "our dream," but connotatively means shared aspirations, collective goals, and shared hope. The use of the plural pronoun "نا" (our) shows this hope is not individual but belongs to all society.

The use of the plural pronoun "نا" (our) also realizes social or stylistic meaning in Leech's framework, because it marks group identity, solidarity, and inclusiveness instead of individual possession of hope. Re-

Vol 9, No 1 (2026): ESTEEM

cent applications of Leech's seven types of meaning in lyrical analysis demonstrate that such person markers can simultaneously express conceptual meaning (reference to a group) and social meaning (indexing a shared stance and collective identity), which aligns with the idea of "our dream" as belonging to the whole community or society, not to a single speaker (Waeyusoh & Yaakub, 2023)

- d) The Phrase "حلم البرئ" (My Pure Dream)

Conceptually, the expression means "my clean/pure dream," highlighting an individual dream that is characterized as clean or uncontaminated. Connotatively, it signifies sincere hope and aspirations unclouded by worldly interests, so that the "dream" here functions as an idealized desire oriented toward moral goodness rather than material gain, which is in line with how connotative meaning in song lyrics often carries evaluative and affective dimensions beyond the basic lexical sense (Pratiwi et al., 2020).

The adjective "البرئ" (pure/innocent) intensifies this connotative layer by indicating the purity and sincerity of the hope, reflecting an ideal and morally high hope. Recent semantic studies applying Leech's seven types of meaning to song lyrics show that such evaluative adjectives typically realize connotative, affective, and reflective meaning simultaneously, because they bring in moral judgment, emotional tone, and implied contrast with "impure" or self-interested hopes (Pratiwi et al., 2020; Waeyusoh & Yaakub, 2023).

2) Connotative Meanings Depicting Optimism

- a) The Phrase "نجيبه بنفسنا" (We Achieve It Ourselves)

Conceptually meaning "we bring it ourselves," but connotatively means optimism that the future can be realized through one's own effort. This phrase reflects an active optimism, not mere passive hope. It shows confidence in self and collective capacity.

This phrase reflects an active optimism, not mere passive hope, because the first-person plural subject combined with an action verb foregrounds initiative, responsi-

bility, and control over the outcome. In terms of Leech's framework as applied indirectly in recent studies of contextual and pragmatic meaning in lyrics, such structures intertwine conceptual meaning (an action performed by "we"), connotative meaning (optimism, resilience, and determination), and social meaning (collective identity and shared stance), thereby projecting confidence in both self and collective capacity to shape the desired future (Pratiwi et al., 2020; Pristianingrum & Damayanti, 2022)

- b) The Phrase "نقدر نقوم" (We Can Rise)

Conceptually, the expression means "we are able to rise," indicating that the subject ("we") possesses the ability or capacity to get back up. Connotatively, it conveys optimism about the ability to recover from failure, in line with recent semantic studies of song lyrics which show that connotative meaning often encodes positive values such as resilience, persistence, and determination beyond the literal meaning of the words (Gee et al., 2023).

The word "نقدر" (we can) signals self-confidence and optimism toward the future despite facing difficulties, because the modal of ability here also functions evaluatively, suggesting that obstacles are surmountable and that effort will not be in vain. In terms of Leech's typology as reflected in recent analyses of denotative and connotative meaning in motivational songs, such expressions intertwine conceptual meaning (ability to rise), connotative meaning (an unwavering spirit and refusal to give up), and affective meaning (emotional encouragement addressed to self and others), thereby strengthening the reading of this phrase as a marker of unshakeable optimism (Gee et al., 2023; Pratiwi et al., 2020).

- c) The Phrase "بس إحنا نحلم" (But We Dream)

Conceptually meaning "but we dream," But Connotatively, the phrase expresses optimism that persists amid difficulty, positioning hope as something that continues to live even when circumstances are adverse. The word "بس" (but) functions as a contrastive discourse marker that sets up a tension between hardship and hope, and then re-

Vol 9, No 1 (2026): ESTEEM

solves it in favor of hope; studies on hope symbolism in song lyrics show that such contrast often serves to highlight the endurance of hope against negative conditions (Rumambi, 2021).

By introducing a negative or difficult situation and then countering it with “بس” followed by a hopeful clause, the lyric foregrounds the power of optimism to combat despair. Recent work in discourse analysis of song lyrics indicates that contrastive conjunctions like “but” frequently carry connotative and affective meaning, not only linking propositions but also shaping an ideological stance that refuses to be defeated, which reinforces the reading of this phrase as a marker of resilient, unwavering hope.

- d) The Phrase "تحدى الغيوم" (We Challenge the Clouds)

Conceptually, the expression means "we challenge the clouds," with "clouds" functioning as a concrete object of confrontation. Connotatively, however, it encodes optimism and courage to face difficulties, because natural phenomena especially clouds, darkness, and storms have long served in poetic traditions as symbols for adversity, uncertainty, or oppressive forces, as demonstrated in metaphor detection studies showing how poets systematically map abstract difficulties onto concrete atmospheric imagery.

The word "الغيوم" (clouds) in classical Arabic poetry traditionally symbolizes difficulty, obscurity, or dark times, so that "challenging the clouds" connotatively projects an optimistic attitude characterized by bravery and willingness to confront great challenges rather than retreat. Recent work on metaphor in poetry emphasizes that such conceptual mappings where weather or natural elements stand for emotional or social states allow poets to compress complex affective and ideological content into vivid, memorable images, thereby reinforcing the reading of this phrase as a call to courageous, hopeful action in the face of adversity

- 3) Connotative Meanings Depicting Calls for Social Change

- a) The Phrase "احلم معايا" (Dream with Me)

Conceptually, the expression means “dream with me,” inviting the addressee to share in an act of dreaming initiated by the speaker. Connotatively, it functions as a collective call for social change, since the dream being shared is not merely personal but directed toward a transformed social reality; recent critical discourse analyses of protest and humanity songs show that invitations framed in the first person plus “with me/us” often operate as calls to join a broader struggle or vision for social justice (Jaelani et al., 2023).

The word “معايا” (with me) signals social solidarity and collective movement, constructing the speaker and audience as a “we” engaged together in the same project or cause. In a post-revolutionary Egypt context, such inclusive phrasing mirrors patterns found in contemporary songs that build unity and belonging around shared political or social experiences, so this expression can be read as a symbol of a call to unite in social change rather than a purely intimate or individual appeal (Jaelani et al., 2023; Jerome et al., 2022).

- b) The Phrase "نجيبه بنفسنا" (We Achieve It Ourselves)

Conceptually, the expression means “we bring it ourselves,” with the first-person plural marking the group as the grammatical subject and agent of change. From a sociolinguistic perspective, this “we” does not only identify who acts, but also constructs a collective identity and stance; recent work on political and public discourse shows that inclusive first person plural forms are used strategically to build solidarity, unity, and a sense of shared responsibility among audience members (Maharsi, 2024).

Connotatively, therefore, the phrase functions as a call for collective, community-driven action rather than reliance on external actors, and this resonates with findings that “we” is a key resource for signaling group cohesion, common goals, and joint commitment in institutional and political speech. In Leech’s terms, this enriches the conceptual meaning (“we bring”) with social meaning (indexing a united, empowered community) and connotative meaning (the value of independence and empowerment

Vol 9, No 1 (2026): ESTEEM

attached to the group), matching sociolinguistic observations that first person plural usage correlates with constructing collective agency and mutual obligation (Maharsi, 2024)

- c) The Phrase "نبدأ نحاول في الطريق" (We Start Trying on the Road)

Conceptually, the phrase means "we start trying on the road," where "we" represents the collective subject initiating the action, and "الطريق" (the road) serves as the site of that action. Connotatively, it functions as a call to initiate the process of social change through tangible action, not just rhetoric, in line with the critical discourse analysis of Indonesian song lyrics, which shows how action verbs and journey metaphors are used to encourage listeners to begin steps toward change, rather than merely contemplating social conditions.

The word "نبدأ" (we start) conveys urgency and temporal immediacy there is a need to "start now" while "الطريق" (the road) symbolizes a long, gradual journey, full of challenges, toward the goal of change. Recent research on song lyrics as social criticism and discourse on crisis confirms that such constructions position the collective subject as an agent who is both time-conscious and process-aware: they are interpellated to step into the "road" of change immediately, not wait for ideal conditions (Fadlan, 2024; Mita, 2023).

- d) The Phrase "كثير الخطاوي تدلنا على حلمنا" (Many Steps Lead Us to Our Dream)

The phrase conceptually translates to "many steps show us our dream," implying that each step brings us closer to the desired goal. Connotatively, it serves as an invitation to engage in small yet consistent actions for social change, aligning with the findings of a study on Indonesian song lyrics, which reveal that social change is often represented as a gradual process achieved through repeated small actions, rather than a single, sudden moment of transformation (Mita, 2023).

This expression suggests that social change stems from accumulated collective efforts, as "many steps" reflects the recurring

contributions of numerous individuals who strengthen each other over time. Recent research on the representation of social messages in song lyrics affirms that the narrative of gradual progress is commonly used to instill awareness that every small action holds value in fostering larger, collective change (Mita, 2023).

- e) The Phrase "نتحدى الغيوم" (We Challenge the Clouds)

Conceptually, the phrase means "we challenge the clouds," where "we" refers to the collective subject that confronts something vast and ominous. Connotatively, it serves as a call to fight oppressive social or political systems; studies on metaphors and social critique in Indonesian song lyrics reveal that elements of nature, such as the sky, clouds, or walls, are often used as symbols for oppressive power structures, such as authoritarian governments, corruption, or injustice (Hidayat, 2021; Lestari, 2019).

In the Arab socio-political context, "clouds" can thus be interpreted as a metaphor for authoritarianism, corruption, or systemic injustice, making "challenging the clouds" a rallying cry for social change against oppression. Recent studies on figurative language and metaphors in song lyrics highlight that metaphors of conflict with natural elements ("fighting the clouds," "crashing into walls," "angry earth") serve to build imagery of collective resistance and invite listeners to engage in a movement of defiance, not merely complain about the situation (Hidayat, 2021; Putri & Ananda, 2024).

4. CONCLUSION

A detailed semantic analysis of "Ehlam Ma'aya" by Hamza Namira, using Geoffrey Leech's Semantics Theory, demonstrates how both conceptual and connotative meanings converge to convey themes of collective agency, enduring hope, and social change within the post-revolutionary Egyptian context.

From a conceptual perspective, the lyrics communicate a unified message of

Vol 9, No 1 (2026): ESTEEM

active collective engagement. Phrases such as "معايا احلم" (dream with me), "نجد به" (we bring it ourselves), "نبدأ" (we start trying on the road), and "حلمنا على تدلنا الخطاوي كتر" (many steps lead us to our dream) frame the collective subject as an aware and accountable actor. The persistent use of action verbs like "نجد به", "نبدأ", "نحاول", and "نقوم", along with first-person plural pronouns, articulates a worldview where social change is the result of continuous, deliberate collective effort rather than passive waiting.

On a connotative level, the lyrics project meanings of hopeful certainty, unshakable optimism in the face of hardship, and resistance to injustice. The term "احلم" (dream) extends beyond individual desires to symbolize shared aspirations, while "بكرة" (tomorrow is coming) conveys faith in an inevitable, positive shift. "نقوم نقدر" (we can rise) emphasizes resilience, and "نتحدي" (we challenge the clouds) metaphorically depicts the confrontation with oppressive systems. These layers of meaning collectively promote an ideological stance of rejecting despair and galvanizing collective resolve.

Sociolinguistically, the frequent use of plural pronouns like "احنا" (we) and "نا" (us) builds a sense of collective identity, signaling mutual responsibility, solidarity, and community empowerment. These linguistic choices highlight a shared commitment and reinforce the idea that agency should remain within the group, rather than being delegated to external forces.

Through its semantic depth, "Ehlam Ma'aya" exemplifies how lyrical language works across conceptual, emotional, and social levels serving not just as artistic expression but as a potent tool for fostering social awareness and inspiring collective action towards enduring transformation. This analysis enriches the field of semantic studies on contemporary Arabic music, while advancing interdisciplinary research that connects language, music, and sociocultural discourse within the Arab world.

5. REFERENCES

Adika, D., & Budiarsana, P. A. (2023). Exploring Semantics and the Utilization of Figurative Language in the Song

Lyrics of "21 Guns" by Green Day. *Pulchra Lingua: A Journal of Language Study, Literature & Linguistics*, 2(1), 17–31. <https://doi.org/10.58989/plj.v2i1.22>

Amalia, Y. R., Ridwan, M., & Nur, M. (2025). Representasi makna dalam lirik kumpulan lagu yang dipopulerkan oleh Hamza Namira (analisis semiotika Roland Barthes). *Jurnal Sarjana Ilmu Budaya*, 5(02).

Anggreni, I. G. A. R. C., Sudipa, I. N., & Asty Senja Pratiwi, P. A. (2022). Figurative language in Barack Obama's speech at the United Nations General Assembly. *Stilistika: Journal of Indonesian Language and Literature*, 2(1). <https://doi.org/10.24843/stil.2022.v02.i01.p10>

Benny, B., Maharani, P. D., & Nugraha Putra, I. G. B. W. (2022). The analysis of abstraction personification in Skillet's selected song. *Jurnal Impresi Indonesia*, 1(3). <https://doi.org/10.36418/jii.v1i3.25>

Cristina, V., & Afriana, A. (2021). Functions of conversational implicature in TV show "f.r.i.e.n.d.s": Pragmatics approach. *Jurnal Basis*, 8(1). <https://doi.org/10.33884/basisupb.v8i1.2935>

Fadlan, Z. (2024). Analisis wacana kritis model Teun A. Van Dijk dalam lirik lagu "para pencari mu" karya Enda Ungu. *Dialektika Komunika: Jurnal Kajian Komunikasi Dan Pembangunan Daerah*, 11(2). <https://doi.org/10.33592/dk.v11i2.4466>

Gee, R., Laiya, R. E., & Telaumbanua, T. (2023). An analysis of denotative and connotative meaning selected Justin ft Kid Laroi songs lyric. *Research on English Language Education*, 4(2). <https://doi.org/10.57094/relation.v4i2.682>

Grensiding, W., & Agung, I. G. A. M. (2023). Analysis of figurative language

Vol 9, No 1 (2026): ESTEEM

- in Stephen Sanchez's song lyrics. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Literature (JELTL)*, 6(1). <https://doi.org/10.47080/jeltl.v6i1.2468>
- Hadiqa Warraich. (2024). A semantic analysis of language of tv commercial slogans. *Sjesr*, 7(3). [https://doi.org/10.36902/sjesr-vol7-iss3-2024\(9-15\)](https://doi.org/10.36902/sjesr-vol7-iss3-2024(9-15))
- Harsetiani, K. M. (2022). The connotative meaning of expression found in Adele's song lyrics 21 "Japanese Edition" Album. *Udayana Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (UJoSSH)*, 6(1). <https://doi.org/10.24843/ujossh.2022.v06.i01.p04>
- Ibrahim, L. F., & Rahayu, O. A. (2023). An analysis of morphemes on Maher Zain's Song ("One") Album. *Malewa: Journal of Multidisciplinary Educational Research*, 1(02). <https://doi.org/10.61683/jome.v1i02.36>
- Jaelani, A., Nuraeni, N., Perdana Prasetya, E., Juraboev, S., Ayu Fadhilah, A., Dwi Rizky, I., & Monalisa, M. (2023). Unravelling the vision of peace and unity a critical discourse analysis of john lennon's imagine. *English Journal*, 17(2). <https://doi.org/10.32832/english.v17i2.15150>
- Jaya, A., Hermansyah, & Rosmiyati, E. (2020). *Communicative English for effective communication*. Noer Fikri Offset.
- Jerome, C., Su-Hie, T., & Perry, E. J. (2022). Rethinking visions of "unity" and "belonging": insights into audience responses towards popular music of Malaysia's indigenous ethnic communities – a case of Iban pop song. *Kajian Malaysia*, 40(1). <https://doi.org/10.21315/km2022.40.1.6>
- Julius, R. S. &. (2022). Analysis of Hero's Journey in Jack London's "The Call of The Wild." *ELS Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*, 5(4).
- Kolin, R. R., & Wijana, I. P. D. (2025). Polisemi leksem heart: Kajian semantik. *Jurnal Pendidikan Indonesia*, 6(4). <https://doi.org/10.59141/japendi.v6i4.7695>
- Maharsi, E. (2024). Features of language in president Jokowi's political speech on covid-19 pandemic handling in Indonesia. *Sasdaya: Gadjah Mada Journal of Humanities*, 8(2). <https://doi.org/10.22146/sasdaya.13160>
- Mita, M. (2023). Kritik sosial yang terdapat pada lirik lagu album gulali karya Iksan Skuter. *Diksatrasia: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia*, 7(1). <https://doi.org/10.25157/diksatrasia.v7i1.8204>
- Leech, G. N. (2016). *Principles of Pragmatics*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315835976>
- Neuman, W. L. (2019). Social research methods: Qualitative and Quantitative approaches. In *Pearson* (Seventh Ed). Pearson New International Edition. https://www.amazon.co.uk/Social-Research-Methods-Quantitative/dp/0205786839/ref=sr_1_5?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1461496914&sr=1-5&keywords=social+research+methods+qualitative+and+quantitative+approaches
- Oghiator, F. E., & Ohen, C. C. (2024). The domestication of meaning. *European Journal of English Language and Literature Studies*, 12(4). <https://doi.org/10.37745/ejells.2013/vol12n41319>
- Ovalili, D. M. S., Sulatra, I. K., & Hikmaharyanti, P. D. A. (2024). An analysis of slang words found in Anne Marie's song lyrics. *Journal of Language and Applied Linguistics*, 5(1). <https://doi.org/10.22334/traverse.v5i1.232>

Vol 9, No 1 (2026): ESTEEM

- Pratiwi, D. R., Indrayani, L. M., & Soemantri, Y. S. (2020). The analysis of Denotative and Connotative Meaning in Ariana Grande's Song Lyrics: A Semantic Study. *ELS Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*, 3(2). <https://doi.org/10.34050/els-jish.v3i2.9994>
- Pristianingrum, S., & Damayanti, R. (2022). Pragmatic dimension of semiotics in song lyrics. *Journal of Pragmatics and Discourse Research*, 2(2). <https://doi.org/10.51817/jpdr.v2i2.215>
- Rahmadani, N. L. (2022). Jenis makna pada lirik lagu "new kids repackage: The new kids" (2019) karya Ikon (Teori Makna Geoffrey Leech 1981). *Unas Repository*, 1981.
- Rizky Fadilla, A., & Ayu Wulandari, P. (2023). Literature review analisis data kualitatif: Tahap pengumpulan data. *Mitita Jurnal Penelitian*, 1(No 3).
- Rumambi, T. R. (2021). The symbolism of hope in the lyrics of a new day has come and i'm alive in Celine Dion's album a new day has come. *Journal of English Language and Literature Teaching*, 5(2). <https://doi.org/10.36412/jellt.v5i2.2455>
- Saputri, W., Muntaqim Al Anshory, A., & Ilham, M. (2023). Associative meaning in the film "painting the skyline" by giri prasetyo based on geoffrey leech's perspective. *Paramasastra*, 10(2). <https://doi.org/10.26740/paramasastra.v10n2.p175-189>
- Sari, Y. P. (2020). An analysis of types of taboo words in parker movie. *Humanis*, 24(3). <https://doi.org/10.24843/jh.2020.v24.i03.p01>
- Susanto, D., Risnita, & Jailani, M. S. (2023). Teknik pemeriksaan keabsahan data dalam penelitian ilmiah. *Jurnal QOSIM Jurnal Pendidikan Sosial & Humaniora*, 1(1), 53–61. <https://doi.org/10.61104/jq.v1i1.60>
- Thornbury, S. (2023). Language teaching and methodology. In D. Nunan (Ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Applied Linguistics*. Mc Graw Hill. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003082644-5>
- Tiara Wia Ningsih, D., Hasanah, N.-K., Dwi Salsabil, R., & Alva Olina S. Yesika. (2022). Analisis makna konotatif pada kumpulan lagu album daun jatuh. *J-LELC*, 2(2).
- Tisdell, E. J., Merriam, S. B., & Struckey-Peyrot, H. L. (2025). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Umami, M., & Marwan, I. (2024). *Makna denotatif dan konotatif pada lirik lagu kembali pulang karya suara kayu feat. Feby putri:kajian semiotik*.
- Vinh, V. H. (2025). An analysis of the conceptual metaphors in the song lyrics "Yesterday" by Paul McCartney. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, 15(1), 13–17. <https://doi.org/10.29322/IJSRP.15.01.2025.p15704>
- Waeyusoh, W., & Yaakub, Y. (2023). Konotatif, afektif dan reflektif memantifestasi kebijakan akal budi Melayu Patani. *RENTAS: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra Dan Budaya*, 2(1). <https://doi.org/10.32890/rentas2023.2.7>
- Yunira, S., Fradina, S., Sumbayak, M., Putri, N. S., & Derin, T. (2020). Re-Visits the Grand Theory of Geoffrey Leech: Seven Types of Meaning. *REiLA: Journal of Research and Innovation in Language*, 1(3). <https://doi.org/10.31849/reila.v1i3.3768>
- Zar, Z. I., & Khumairoh, V. (2025). Analisis makna konotasi pada lirik lagu "kursi goyang" dan "kita pasti tua" karya Fourtwny. In *Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia serta Pengajarannya* (Vol. 3, Issue 2).

