



## Semiotic Analysis of The Meaning of Protective Instincts in the Lyrics of the Song "Nina" by Feast

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### ABSTRACT

The meaning of protective instinct in the lyrics of the song "Nina" by Feast is analyzed through this research using Roland Barthes' semiotic approach, which includes the concepts of denotation, connotation, and myth. This article aims to interpret the meaning of the protective instinct and how listeners interpret the song, using a qualitative-descriptive research method. Data was collected through document studies from various print and online media. Based on the results of the semiotic analysis of the lyrics of the song "Nina" by Feast, it is concluded that the denotative meaning is a representation of a father's efforts to protect his child, the connotation meaning is that the songwriter tells the sacrifice of a father to protect his child even though he is not together, the mythical meaning is that the author wants to say that every journey requires struggle and sacrifice like a hero in mythology who wanders to complete the task. While everyone has different perceptions of each individual according to the feelings and conditions experienced.

**Keyword:** Meaning, Semiotics, Song Lyric

### INTRODUCTION

In this of rapid globalization, the development of music is no longer inevitable. Essentially, music is the most frequently used means of communication in everyday life. Listeners can enjoy music that expresses their feelings when they are unable to express those feelings to others. Music is often used as a medium to express various emotions due to its ability to convey messages emotionally. The power of music lies in its potential to convey and evoke a wide spectrum of emotions, both through interpretation and appreciation of the storyline, musical elements, and characteristics of the characters portrayed, as well as serving as an instrument for expressing one's identity (Amelia & Aryaneta, n.d.2022). Everyone needs communication in their daily activities, as communication is the foundation for meeting life's needs; humans who cannot communicate will struggle to survive. (Sihabuddin et al., 2023)

Music is an art form that has a huge impact on life, especially for teenagers. Popular songs often serve as a means of self-expression, self-identification, and understanding their emotional experiences. One song that has attracted a lot of attention, especially among Indonesian teenagers, is "Nina" by the band Feast. The Indonesian rock band Feast has been active in the music industry since 2012, formed by Daniel Baskara Putra, Adnan Satyanugraha Putra, Dicky Renanda Putra, and Fadli Fikriawan Wibowo. The band was formed by students from the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences (FISIP) at the University of Indonesia. The choice of the name Feast was based on their desire to make music together and their belief that their music is a celebration of different moments. The album "Building and Destroying," released in August 2024, brought musical innovation, including the song "Nina," which was

released in July 2024 (Narasi, 2024). Due to its popularity, the song “Nina” has already reached 100 million listeners on the Spotify platform.

The song “Nina” by Feast is not only known for its catchy melody and musical arrangement, but also for its lyrics that touch on themes such as love, loss, and longing, which are also related to communication. Communication is important for building relationships with others. Effective communication methods include using simple and easy-to-understand language, conveying clear objectives, and using appropriate facial expressions and body language. We must also be good listeners (Andriany, 2022). Communication is an important means of conveying messages through various media. The process of disseminating information to the general public heavily relies on communication. Mass communication is one of the most common forms of communication, involving a large number of communicators. Song lyrics can be considered part of mass communication due to their ability to influence listeners through the messages conveyed. From the perspective of media and the public, music with lyrics meets the characteristics that define mass communication. Because it is widely liked, the song “Nina” can be interpreted or perceived differently by each individual due to their background. The existence of differing perceptions and the lack of research on the meaning of the protective instinct in the lyrics of this song present an interesting problem to study. To gain a deeper understanding of the meaning of this song, an analysis can be conducted using Roland Barthes's (1975) semiotic theory. This theory emphasizes the importance of denotative, connotative, and mythical meanings in the communication process. (Sobur, 2013).

Using Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis, this study aims to examine the lyrics of Feast's song “Nina” and identify meanings related to the instinct to protect. This study will reveal the denotative, connotative, and mythical meanings contained in the song's lyrics, as well as differences in perception in understanding the song and its relationship to communication. By understanding this discussion, we can better appreciate the experiences brought by music and how songs like “Nina” can serve as a mirror for the social lives of teenagers. It is hoped that this research will have a positive impact on the development of knowledge in the fields of music and communication. Additionally, we hope that this research will also serve as a useful source of information.

The current study distinguishes itself from prior research by focusing specifically on the protective instinct in Feast's song “Nina” through Roland Barthes' semiotic framework (denotation, connotation, myth), whereas earlier works like Harnia (2021) and Lola Edria et al. (n.d.) analyzed themes of love or self-improvement in other songs. Unlike Siti Yulia Putri Pratiwi's (2023) study on Nadin Amizah's lyrics or Tauhid & Rahma's (2024) examination of Tulus's “Diri,” this research uniquely explores parental sacrifice and mythological parallels (e.g., Daedalus-Icarus) in song lyrics, a theme less addressed in existing literature. Additionally, it incorporates audience perceptions (e.g., interviews with teenagers) to highlight subjective interpretations, a dimension absent in Sobur's (2013a) or Wahjuwibowo's (2018) semiotic analyses. The study also updates the discourse by analyzing a 2024 viral hit, contrasting with older references like Rustandi et al.'s (2020) work on Andmesh Kamaleng's songs.

## RESEARCH METHODS

To gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under study, this research applies a descriptive qualitative research method. Qualitative research, which focuses on an in-depth study of a phenomenon, is combined with a descriptive method that provides a detailed description of the phenomenon. The primary objective of descriptive research is to collect data or information about a specific condition or situation, which is then explained or interpreted. This qualitative research aims to collect data in detail. The song “Nina” by Feast was selected as the research object, which will be analyzed to uncover the meaning of the lyrics, denotation, connotation, and myths contained within it.

This study uses document study techniques to collect data, including searching for written sources in both print and digital formats. Supporting data is obtained through observation and interviews with informants. The informants in this study are adolescents aged 11-24 years, namely university students and high school students, and the texts are obtained from journals, articles, and books. Data analysis techniques were applied using Roland Barthes' theory. To test the validity of the data in this study, triangulation techniques were used. The purpose of this technique is to ensure that the information obtained through interviews is consistent with the results of observations so that the data produced can be trusted. This research uses Roland Barthes' (1957) semiotic theory to uncover the meaning contained in song lyrics. Roland Barthes, with his expertise in semiotics, developed studies that emphasize semiotic text analysis. The concepts of connotation and denotation proposed by Barthes form the most important basis of his analytical approach. (Sobur, 2013b).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the lyrics of the song “Nina” was conducted using Roland Barthes' semiotic approach, in which each sentence in the song's verses was analyzed in detail as follows:

### A. Denotative Meaning

Denotation is what a sign represents in relation to an object (Sobur, 2013a). The method for determining denotation is to refer to the definitions in the Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language), for example, the words tertidur, menghibur, and bersyukur. The word “Tertidur” means (already) asleep; starting to sleep. The word “Bersyukur” means to be grateful and give thanks.

### B. Connotative Meaning

According to Barthes, connotation is the second level of meaning, namely the interaction between the sign and the reader's feelings or emotions as well as the cultural values that influence them. (Wahjuwibowo, 2018). To find the connotative meaning, we can describe the interaction, feelings, and emotions contained in the song “Nina” by Feast.

### C. Mythical Meaning

Myths are cultural products of the dominant social class in a society. Stories of primordial good and evil, humanity and gods, life and death. They concern matters such as family, success, science, masculinity, and gender. According to Barthes, myths refer to the way culture conceptualizes or understands something.

To gain a deeper understanding of the meaning contained in this song, the complete lyrics of the song “Nina” by Feast are presented below as material for analysis and interpretation.

Here are the complete lyrics to Feast's song Nina:

*Saat Engkau Tertidur  
Aku pergi menghibur  
Beda kota, pisah raga, bukan masalahku  
Lihat wajahmu di layar, ku tetap bersyukur*

*Saat engkau terjaga  
Aku 'kan ada di sana  
Sempatkan bermain  
dan bawakan  
cendera mata  
Satu sampai lima  
tahun, cepat tak  
terasa*

*Segala hal kuupayakan untuk melindungi  
Tunggu aku kembali lagi esok pagi.*

*Tumbuh lebih baik, cari  
panggilanmu  
Jadi lebih baik dibanding diriku  
'Tuk sementara ini aku mengembara jauh  
Saat dewasa kau 'kan mengerti*

*Saat engkau dewasa  
Dan aku kian menua  
Jika ku berpulang  
lebih awal, tidak apa  
Berjumpa lagi di  
sana, aku tetap sama*

*Saat engkau teringat  
Tengkar kita, manakala  
Maaf atas perjalanan yang tidak sempurna  
Namun percayalah, untukmu kujual dunia*

*Segala hal kuupayakan untuk melindungi (untuk melindungi)  
Tunggu aku kembali lagi esok pagi (selalu janjiku pada dirimu)  
Tumbuh lebih baik, cari panggilanmu*

*Jadi lebih baik dibanding diriku  
 Dan tertawalah saat ini selepas-lepasnya  
 Kar'na kelak kau 'kan tersakiti*

*Aku tahu kamu hebat  
 Namun, s'lamanya diriku pasti berkulat  
 'Tuk s'lalu jauhkanmu dari dunia yang jahat  
 Ini sumpahku padamu 'tuk biarkanmu  
 Tumbuh lebih baik, cari panggilanmu  
 Jadi lebih baik dibanding  
 diriku*

*'Tuk sementara kita  
 tertawakan berbagai hal  
 Yang lucu dan lara selepas-  
 lepasnya*

*Saat dewasa kau 'kan mengerti  
 Kar'na kelak kau 'kan tersakiti  
 Saat dewasa kau 'kan mengerti  
 Kar'na kelak kau 'kan tersakiti*

The results of the overall analysis of the meaning in the lyrics of the song “Nina” by Feast are presented in table form (Table 1)

**Table 1. Meaning In Song Lyrics**

<b>Lyrics</b>	<b>Denotative Meaning</b>	<b>Connotative Meaning</b>	<b>Mythical Meaning</b>
<b>Verse 1:</b> <i>Saat Engkau Tertidur            Aku pergi menghibur            Beda kota, pisah raga,            bukan masalahku            Lihat wajahmu di            layar, ku tetap            bersyukur.</i>	In the first stanza, directly conveys the feelings of a father who is far from his child because of work, but remains grateful (according to KBBI Syukur: grateful to God) for having the opportunity to communicate.	The song writer describes the longing and sacrifice of a person's love with gratitude, reflecting that the father appreciates every moment even if it is only through video calls (technology).	The instinct to protect is passed by someone who has a loved one. The instinct to protect can foster a desire to always protect and do

Lyrics	Denotative Meaning	Connotative Meaning	Mythical Meaning
<b>Verse 2:</b> <i>Saat engkau terjaga            Aku 'kan ada di sana            Sempatkan bermain            dan bawakan cendera mata            Satu sampai lima            tahun, cepat tak            terasa.</i>	The lyrics “Sempatkan bermain dan bawakan cendera mata / Take the time to play and bring back souvenirs” explains that a father always makes the time to play with his children and brings them gifts as a symbol of parental love.	The father takes the time to play with his children even though he is tired from work. He still makes time to play with his children and gives them gifts or souvenirs as a token of his love. he always remembers his children because he feels that time will pass and imperceptibly, therefore the father always wants to be with his children in every moment.	everything for a loved one. The message that a father has an instinct to protect his child is expressed in the lyrics, “I will do everything to protect you.” It can also be interpreted as someone who feels they must face problems
<b>Verse 3:</b> <i>Segala hal            kuupayakan untuk            melindungi            Tunggu aku kembali            lagi esok pagi.</i>	Describes a father who does everything to protect his child.	Explaining that there is an instinct to protect loved ones even if it means sacrificing many things and trying anything for their loved ones.	
Lyrics	The Meaning of Denotation	Meaning of Connotations	Myth Meaning
<b>Verse 4:</b> <i>Tumbuh lebih baik,            cari panggilanmu            Jadi lebih baik            dibanding diriku            'Tuk sementara ini            aku mengembara            jauh            Saat dewasa kau            'kan mengerti.</i>	Explaining that a father always wants the best for his child and hopes that the child become a better person than he is now, in every way compared to his father and be able to determine his life goals.	Expressing that we always want the people we love to grow and become better. Explaining about cycle of life, sacrifice and hope so that they can organized their lives and have a purpose in life.	alone, like the hero in mythology who wanders alone to complete a task.
<b>Verse 5:</b> <i>Saat engkau dewasa            Dan aku kian menua            Jika ku berpulang            lebih awal, tidak apa            Berjumpa lagi di sana,            aku tetap sama.</i>	Explaining his message to his son, if the father hopes to meet again someday in a different world and assures his son that he will remain the same unchanged.	Describing a father's hope and message to his son who is growing up, that as the father grows older when the time comes for the father to pass away first, the father always ensure that everything will be fine and hopes to meet again someday in a different world, the father assures him that he will remain the same and will never change.	

<p><b>Verse 6:</b></p> <p><i>Saat engkau teringat Tengkar kita, manakala Maaf atas perjalanan yang tidak sempurna Namun percayalah, untukmu kujual dunia.</i></p>	<p>Describes the parent's reflections on their relationship with their children, including past conflict, apologies for past mistakes, and a commitment to sacrifice for the sake of the children. These lyrics convey a message about love and responsibility in family relationships.</p>	<p>Explaining that although there are sometimes differences of opinion between father and child, the father realizes his mistakes and shortcomings in guiding his child and apologizes for them, conveying a message of sacrifice in the line "<i>Namun percayalah, untukmu kujual dunia.</i>" because a father will do anything for his child.</p>
<p><b>Verse 7:</b></p> <p><i>Tumbuh lebih baik, cari panggilanmu Jadi lebih baik disbanding diriku Dan tertawalah saat ini selepas-lepasnya Karena kelak kau kan tersakiti.</i></p>	<p>Explaining a father's hope for his child will to grow up to be a better person and determine his life goals, the word "selepas-lepasnya" emphasizes the intensity and freedom of laughter. This verse is an invitation to enjoy happiness in the present because the future is unpredictable and there</p>	<p>Expressing that we always want the people we love to grow and become better than we are. Describing is not only an invitation to laugh, but also an expression to enjoy moments of happiness and that life is not always easy and happiness is not permanent. It reflects the challenging realities of life</p>

Lyrics	The Meaning of Denotation	Meaning of Connotations	Myth Meaning
	will likely be sadness or difficulties to be face.	not only as a statement about happiness and suffering, but also contains a deeper meaning about life, uncertainty, and the importance of appreciation.	
<b>Verse 8:</b> <i>Aku tahu kamu hebat Namun, s'lamanya diriku pasti berlutut 'Tuk s'lalu jauhkanmu dari dunia yang jahat Ini sumpahku padamu 'tuk biarkanmu.s</i>	The word “ <i>struggle</i> ” emphasizes the continuous and intensive efforts, explaining that the father will fight tirelessly for the sake of their children. An “ <i>evil world</i> ” is defined as an environment with potential danger or evil.	It shows how proud, admiration for his child and appreciates the potential that the child has. Fathers will continue to sacrifice and go through various challenges for the sake of their children. Describing the worry, so that fathers always want to protect his kid from getting hurt or lost in life.	

Source: Researcher's Processed Data, 2025

The discussion of the research results explain the results of the analysis that have been found previously. In this section, the researcher will describe the connotative and denotative meanings contained in the lyrics of the song "Nina" by Feast. Based on the interpretation obtained, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Analysis of Verse 1

*Saat engkau tertidur, Aku pergi menghibur  
Beda kota, pisah raga, bukan masalahku  
Lihat wajahmu di layar, ku tetap bersyukur*

The first stanza conveys a sense of detachment, directly expressing the feelings of a father who is sometimes far from his child due to work, yet remains grateful. According to the KBBI, Syukur means being thankful to God for the opportunity to communicate using technology to ease feelings of longing.

2. Analysis of Verse 2

*Saat engkau terjaga  
Aku 'kan ada di sana  
Sempatkan bermain dan bawakan cendera mata  
Satu sampai lima tahun, cepat tak terasa*

The second stanza describes a father who always makes time to play with his child, and usually a father will bring "souvenirs", which according to the KBBI (Big Indonesian Dictionary) means a gift; as a memento..

3. Analysis of Verse 3

*Segala hal kuupayakan untuk melindungi  
Tunggu aku kembali lagi esok pagi*

In stanza 3, there is one meaning contained within, the word "protect", the meaning contained in KBBI is to save (provide help) to avoid danger. However, in the context

of the lyrics of the song Nina, the meaning of protecting is interpreted as a father who will always protect his child. In the lyrics "Wait for me to come back again in the morning" it explains that there will always be hope to reunite with loved ones after enduring efforts and long days.

#### 4. Analysis of Verse 4

*Tumbuh lebih baik, cari panggilanmu, Jadi lebih baik dibanding diriku, 'Tuk sementara ini aku mengembara jauh*

*Saat dewasa kau 'kan mengerti*

If you look at the meaning of denotation, stanza 4 tells of a father's hopes for his child. In the KBBI (Big Indonesian Dictionary), the word tumbuh means to grow (to grow up, perfect related to the lyrics in stanza 4 means that the father wants his child to grow up to be better than him

#### 5. Analysis of Verse 5

*Saat engkau dewasa, Dan aku kian menua, Jika ku berpulang lebih awal, tidak apa*

*Berjumpa lagi di sana, aku tetap sama*

In stanza 5, the father conveys a message to his son, if the father dies/dies were to pass away before his son, he hopes to meet again someday in another world and he assures his son that he will remain unchanged, This is evident by the third and fourth lines.

everything will be okay and hopes to meet again someday in a different world, the father assures that he is still the same and will never change, Even until his death, the father always wanted to protect his son.

#### 6. Analysis of Verse 6

*Saat engkau teringat*

*Tengkar kita manakala*

*Maaf atas perjalanan yang tidak sempurna*

*Namun percayalah untukmu kujual dunia*

When viewed from its denotative meaning, it describes the relationship between parents and their children, including conflicts that have occurred, apologies for past mistakes, and a commitment to sacrifice for the sake of the children and convey a message of love and responsibility in family relationships. The connotative meaning explains that although sometimes be differences of opinion between father and child, the father acknowledges his mistakes and shortcomings in guiding his child and apologizes for it.

#### 7. Analysis of Verse 7

*Tumbuh lebih baik cari panggilanmu*

*Jadi lebih baik dibanding diriku*

*Dan tertawalah saat ini selepas-lepasnya*

*Kar'na kelak kau 'kan tersakiti*

In stanza 7 the denotative meaning explains a father hope that his child will grow up to be a better version of himself in every way and determine his life purpose, and the father encourages his child to laugh freely and without restraint. The phrase "without restraint" emphasizes the intensity and freedom of laughter in the future the

child will eventually experience pain.

#### 8. Analysis of Verse 8

*Aku tahu kamu hebat  
Namun, s'lamanya diriku pasti berkulat  
'Tuk s'lalu jauhkanmu dari dunia yang jahat  
Ini sumpahku padamu 'tuk biarkanmu*

In stanza 8, the denotative meaning is that the father believes and directly states that his child has extraordinary abilities or potential. The word "*struggle*" emphasizes continuous and intensive efforts, explaining that fathers will fight tirelessly for his child. "*the evil world*" is interpreted as an environment with potential dangers or bad influence, so the father always wants to protect his child from the bad influences in the world.

In its connotative meaning, the father also expresses that even though the child is great, parents will always try to protect them from the evils of the world and give them a certain freedom implied in the oath. Another connotative meaning is that it describes a father's pride and admiration for his child and appreciation of the child's potential, and that the father will continue to make sacrifices through various challenges for the sake of his child. There is a sense of worry, a desire to always protect the child from being hurt or lost in navigating life in the world. Although parents want to protect their children, they also recognize the importance of giving them freedom to grow, learn, and find their own path in life. This oath is a promise to balance protection and independence, giving children the space to develop into strong and independent individuals. The phrase "Let you go" is a form of trust and hope that the child can face the world with the tools that have been provided.

This song is the songwriter's expression of life and a father's instinct to protect his child. However, despite a father's work often keeping him away from his child, he still strives to protect his child and wants to always be there for his child during important moments, teaching the lesson that a father always wants the best for his child. The lyrics are highly symbolic of the feeling of protection, as they clearly depict someone who protects the person they love, wanting that person to be shielded from harm. As Alpin noted, the lyrics of "Nina" feel relevant because they convey a sense of 'support' or hope for a loved one's life to improve (Ashary, 2025). As Andika also mentioned, from an emotional and psychological perspective, there is a part that can be interpreted as a protective instinct, especially in the context of someone feeling responsible or wanting to safeguard Nina's well-being, (Andika, 2025)

As expressed by Ariez as a listener of the song, overall, the melody and tone in the song "Nina" help bring the lyrics to life, making them more expressive and touching. The combination works together with the lyrics to create a deep and emotional listening experience (Fathurrahman, 2025). According to Agnes, this song has a tone that makes listeners feel more connected to the song, has a melody that is easy to listen to, and some of the lyrics have a meaning of friendship, (Aprillia, 2025)

In the perception of teenagers, this song has many different meanings depending on each individual. As expressed by Marchielo a listener of the song "Nina", the lyrics about the instinct to protect found in the 3rd verse imply that a father will definitely strive to meet all the needs of his child, even willing to work until morning. But some also

interpret this song differently according to the feelings felt. ( Refanza , 2025) However, some interpret the song differently based on their own feelings. The song illustrates how important human relationships are and how loss can deeply affect someone. As Maura, a listener of the song “Nina,” mentioned, the lyrics about a father's struggle for his child ultimately depend on each person's perception—whether it's a father toward his child, a mother toward her child, even an older sibling toward a younger sibling, or even for oneself, (Sandra, 2025).

Feast's song “Nina” is now available on various digital music platforms. Listeners can play this song on Spotify, Apple Music, YouTube, SoundCloud, and Shazam. With its availability on many streaming services, “Nina” can be listened to anytime and anywhere at the convenience of each listener.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this study, the semiotic analysis of the lyrics of the song “Nina” by Feast using Roland Barthes' theory, the researcher concluded that:

### 1. Denotative Meaning,

About how a father sacrifices himself for his child, where parents will always try to protect and give the best for their children, it also tells about the sincere relationship between parents and children.

2. Connotative Meaning, The connotative meaning of the song Nina is a love letter from parents to their child, full of hope and deep affection for their child. However, on the other hand, there is also the parents' concern that makes them want to always protect their child, as well as their sacrifice and boundless love.

### 3. Mythical Meaning

The mythical meaning of the song Nina is that it depicts protection, freedom, and the reality of life, like the character Daedalus who always reminds Icarus when doing something, which is one of the legends in Greek mythology.

After understanding its denotative, connotative, and mythical meanings, the lyrics of Nina contain many moral messages, especially the instinct to protect, as they describe struggle, sacrifice, independence, and hope. The song “Nina” by Feast has different interpretations depending on the individual. Some interpret it as a song for a couple, some as an expression from an older sibling to a younger sibling, and some teenagers interpret it as a source of motivation and a reminder for themselves.

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