

Denotative and connotative analysis on Elia Pettie's short story

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Abstract - This study was conducted to analyze several words which have denotative and connotative meaning and find the relation of those words with the context of a love relationship in real life. In analyzing the denotative and connotative meaning of four words that were already chosen, this study uses Palmer's theory of denotation and connotation as a theoretical basis. The data was collected from the text of the short story "A Child of the Rain", which is categorized as a ghost story. Particularly, this study focuses on analyzing four specific words namely invisible, glad, expert, and coldness. This study uses descriptive qualitative as the design of this study. Therefore, after analyzing the meaning of words, this study found that (1) the words invisible, glad, expert, and coldness have denotative and connotative meaning, (2) connotative meaning of these words have a relation with the context of love relationship in real life, (3) these words can portray someone's feeling in specific situation like in love relationship. These findings can be utilized by second-language learners in the process of understanding the denotative and connotative meaning of the English language.

Keywords: denotative and connotative, short story, semantics

1. Introduction

An understanding of the denotative and connotative meaning of a word is highly significant as a basic to conceive the definition and concept of word in communication. However, in some cases, people cannot deliver a message perfectly due to the fact that a receiver fails to interpret the meaning of the message (Omar, 2012). In this case, interpreting the message could be incorrect because the receiver only focuses on the denotative meaning and overlooks the connotative meaning of a word. Kreidler (1998) explains that denotative is a knowledge that a sender and a receiver have in expressing language, while connotative is a word that has a relation to the experience of a sender in expressing the language. It means that in analyzing the meaning, denotative refers to the dictionary meaning, while connotative refers to a value that emerges in communication and it depends on the context of the word.

Denotative and connotative meaning could be found in many literary works, such as short stories, poetry, and novel. In fact, denotative and connotative play a significant role in understanding an explicit and implicit meaning in a literary work. Specifically, this study attempts to examine denotative and connotative meaning in Ellia Peattie's story, namely "A Child of the Rain." This story portrays the main character's fear of a little figure's existence and has a horror story as the genre. Todorov (1975) in Prohazkova (2012) states that the genre of horror in literary works can be categorized into 3 kinds, namely uncanny, marvelous, and fantastic. The uncanny describes an irrational event that relates to an extra-terrestrial creature, while the marvelous describes an irrational phenomenon that relates to the demons. In addition, the fantastic has a little bit of differences characteristics, because in fantastic, the readers can assume an irrational event that occurs in the story as a paranormal activity or only a main character's delusion. Therefore, "A Child of The Rain" can be categorized into the fantastic one, due to the fact that the author doesn't explicitly show the child as a ghost or a human being in the story and it is salient to analyze denotative and connotative meaning of words in the story.

Subsequently, there are numbers of studies that discuss denotative and connotative meaning as the main topic. The studies may have similarities and differences in terms of the object, subject, theory, or method used in research. To illustrate, Sari (2016), Hartina (2017), Ariyadi (2014), Sutikno (2019), and Limesa (2018), have similarity in the aspect of the object and method used. In this case, all of these studies focus on denotative and connotative meaning as the object and determine descriptive qualitative as the method used of research. In contrast, these previous studies also have several differences. Sari (2016) in her study, investigates denotative and connotative meaning by using Withers and Keami's theory, Ariyadi (2014) explores the meaning of words by using Barthes' semiotic theory, and Limesa (2018) uses Chandlers' theory. Meanwhile, in terms of the subject, Hartina (2017) in her study, selects Makassar's poem as the subject, whilst Sutikno (2019) analyzes denotation and connotation in a song lyric.

Furthermore, this paper mainly focuses on analyzing specific word in several sentences which contain denotative and connotative meaning with love relationship as the context. This paper will use Palmer's theory in analyzing the denotative and connotative meaning of the story. Palmer's theory is used because in "A Child of The Rain", Peattie often uses implicit meaning in delivering the message of the story and Palmer's theory is really suitable for that because it relates to what happens in real life

specifically in a relationship context. Therefore, despite the difference in Palmer's theory, this paper is also different from the previous studies because the subject of this study is a ghost story. In the ghost stories, the main consideration of the author in writing stories is to shape a fear of the readers. The ghost story usually applies a simple language, but still has a varied vocabulary in delivering a terrifying situation in the story (Fleischhack, 2016). Choosing a ghost story as an object of the study is quite challenging due to the fact that there are many implicit meanings that are used by the writer in providing the true meaning of the story. Hence, this paper will attempt to answer the research question consists of what are the denotative meaning that found in some sentences and what are the connotative meaning contained in those sentences of the short story "A Child of The Rain" based on Palmer's theory, particularly in a love relationship context.

Theoretical Basis

Denotative

Denotative is the original meaning or a true meaning possessed by a lexeme. It means that in denotative, the meaning in accordance with the way it is. Palmer (1976) uses the term *sense* in talking about the denotation of the words and explains that denotative doesn't have any physical existence. The sense is the one that deals with semantic structures or intra-linguistic relationship. In some cases, several words may have the same sense (Palmer, 1976). To illustrate, the word *almost* and *nearly*, both of them are different, but it has the same sense. In addition, several expressions or sentences also can have the same sense. For instance, the sentence "*Rega fell off the ladder*", also can be written, "*Rega fell the ladder off.*" Meanwhile, in some cases, the sense of a word may consist of more than one sense. One of the examples is the word *bank* which has riverside and financial institutions as the sense. So, the sense of an expression is an abstraction and it can be entertained in the mind of the language user.

Furthermore, Cruse (2006) defines denotation as a meaning aspect in a linguistic form which potentially uses as a basis to make a true statement about the world. According to Cruse (2006), denotation covers matters of extension and intention. The extension means a linguistic form that includes all entities that can be denoted by the form, such as the word *animal* can denote *a tiger, lion, cat*, and others that are included in the animal category. Meanwhile, the intention is a form of linguistics that refers to the characteristic shared by its existence, such as examples of inherent characteristics between tiger, lion, and cat. The term of denotative is actually used in different concepts in semantics. Further, denotation is the meaning aspect that connects a word to the objective referent which it states. It means the aspect of meaning is the thing that connects the linguistic form with the reference of intended objective. In addition, Djajasudarma (1999) states that denotative meaning is the meaning that indicates the relationship between the concept and the world of reality. In this term, the denotative meaning has real meaning and is based on what is seen, and it doesn't contain a concealed meaning.

Furthermore, denotative may also be called a conceptual meaning. To illustrate, the word *drinking* in the conceptual's view is defined as an action to put something into the mouth or gulp. This interpretation is categorized as denotative meaning. Chaer (1994) also explains that denotative meaning is basically the same as referential meaning because denotative meaning is commonly explained as a meaning that has a relation with the results of observations according to sight, smell, hearing, feeling, or

other experiences. Denotative meaning also can be interpreted as the objective (dictionary) relationship between a word and the reality to which it refers (Crystal, 1987). Based on all of the explanations about denotative, it can be concluded that denotative is closely related to the natural meaning, and it doesn't contain any hidden words. Denotative meaning in semantic is classified as a base meaning that may also relate between linguistic forms with the objective references.

Connotative

Connotative is the meaning of a word that linked to thoughts, feelings, etc. that create a certain sense of value. In other words, connotative meaning refers to a specific thing and it contains implicit things. Palmer (1976) uses the term *reference* in talking about the connotation of a word. In this case, the reference refers to something that has a physical existence, and it contrasts with a sense that doesn't have any physical existence. In reference, the main focus is the relationship between linguistics and non-linguistics element or between language and world. The reference here means the idea to relate the composition of a sentence with what happens in the real-world (Palmer, 1976). For instance, in the sentence "*My nephew is in the cherry tree*", analyzing connotative meaning may focus on the phrase "*my nephew*" which refers to a person and the phrase "*the cherry tree*" which refers to things. Due to this fact, it can be concluded that reference is the relationship between language, including the part of the language itself with something outside the language.

As it was previously mentioned, a part of a language may consist of a thing or person. Moreover, the part of language can also be divided into two categories, the first is an expression that having variable references, for example, the word "left". The word "left" can be interpreted as the left-hand of the human body or the left-side of a thing, so it has more than one expression. The second is an expression that never refers to different references, such as "the moon". The word "the moon" here has no variable expression, and it only has one meaning that is the natural satellite of the earth. Further, Kridalaksana (2008) in Suwandi (2008) explains that connotative meaning is an aspect of meaning in a group of words based on the feelings or thoughts that are generated by speech (writer) and listener (reader). It means, the aspect that conceived by connotative is actually based on the feelings, so connotative meaning is not based on reality as denotative and the meaning is dissimilar from time to time.

In addition, Leech (1981) states that connotative meaning is subjective. Due to this reason, the degree of connotative value will be different for every person from the point of view of one to another in perceiving something and their individual experience of language is different. The connotative meaning here depends on the culture, geographical area and historical period. In another case, Chaer (1994) explains that connotative meaning can be divided into two kinds, those are positive connotative (purr word) and negative connotative (snarl word). Beside positive and negative connotative meaning, there is also neutral connotative that mostly refers to a special word called jargon language. To sum up, connotative is quietly complicated than denotative because it is based on a different feeling, experience, perspective, or situation. In connotative meaning, there is no permanently meaning in each word that conceived.

There are numbers of studies that discuss denotative and connotative meanings. One of the examples of the study is Hartina (2017) with her thesis "Connotative and Denotative Meaning in Doang-Doangang of Makassar". To analyze the connotative meaning of doang-doangang, she used Wardhaugh's theory for connotative and

Geoffrey Leech's theory for denotative. She used a qualitative descriptive method to analyze her research. After she researched and observed the script of Doang-doangang, she finds several conclusions, they are; 1). Doangang text contains 24 words that have connotative meaning and 25 words denotative meaning, it also uses metaphor or poetic to convey the meaning. 2). The users of doangang recite doangang in Makassar language because they want to maintain their own language and to communicate with the creator. Last, doang-doangang also used as a culture maintenance of great grandfather.

The second study comes from Sari, A., & Kusumawardhani, P. (2016) with their study "Denotative and Connotative Meaning in One direction's Songs Lyric: A Semantic Perspective". They used descriptive qualitative method to analyze the denotative and connotative meaning in the three different songs lyric: "Hey Angel", "Long Way Down", and "Drag Me Down" by One Direction in the album "Make in the A.M", it based on Withers and Keami (2003) as the activity in semantic class. Then, they find one denotative meaning and fourteen connotative meanings in the three songs. To sum up, connotative meaning in the thesis is more dominant compared to denotative meaning.

The third study comes from Ariyadi, H. (2014) with his thesis "Denotative and Connotative Analysis on the Advertisement of New Axe Provoke Even Goddesses Will Fall Version". He used a qualitative method to analyze the meaning of messages from a picture of New Axe Provoke perfume advertisement, he also takes 9 samples to analyze based on the theory of Roland Barthes, denotative and connotative. Then, he found denotative and connotative meaning, and ideology in 23 scenes of advertisement of new axe provoke perfume version even goddesses will fall. Moreover, every scene of the advertisement is containing connotative meaning more than denotative meaning. In addition, the next study is by Sutikno, E. (2019) with his study "Denotation and Connotation On 'Pathetic Fairy Tale by Saptarasa". He takes the Pathetic Fairy Tale from the Anti-Sceptic compilation album in 2017. To analyze the denotation and connotation of Pathetic Fairy, he used literature studies. In this study, he found that the denotative meaning is not only focused on the surface meaning but rather leads to the connotation meaning that 'I' lyrics cannot reach 'angel' and only see it. So, the denotation and connotation in this study are quite complicated.

Last, the study comes from Limesa, J. (2018) with her study "Denotative and Connotative Meanings in Wonderfilled Advertisement of Oreo". She used Chandler's denotative and connotative theory in analyzing the data, she focuses on the verbal and visual expression in the video commercial. She analyses four video advertisements of Oreo with titled "Oreo Wonderfilled ft Kacey Musgraves", "Oreo Wonderfilled ft Chiddy Bangs", "Oreo Wonderfilled – Big Bad Wolf" and "Oreo wonder-filled ft Lols Muhlenfeld". Actually, she used a descriptive qualitative approach in this study. Last, the writer found that the video commercial of Oreo uses denotation and connotation to associate the wonderful feeling with sharing.

2. Method

All of the methods that the researcher uses in the process of a research study are defined as a research method. In this case, determining the research method is salient due to the fact that the researcher needs to design the research method for solving the problem of

the study. Particularly, this paper is conducted by using descriptive qualitative research as the research design because the purpose of this study is to comprehensively describe denotative and connotative meaning in Peattie's short story with a love relationship as the context. Sandelowski (2000) explains that descriptive qualitative research endeavors to elaborate a profound understanding with mainly focus on literal description, then analyze and interpret the true meaning based on the phenomena which happen in real life. In qualitative research, the study takes place in a natural setting so the researcher as the collector of data instrument cannot manipulate the data. This research focuses on investigating the research question and expands a specific understanding of the investigated phenomena (Creswell, 1994). In this case, this study will analyze the short story "A Child of The Rain" by reading, understanding, describing, and identifying denotative and connotative meaning which contained in the story, then delivering the study in descriptive form.

Further, this paper uses the text of the short story "A Child of The Rain" as the primer data source and gets the data source from <https://americanliterature.com>. Specifically, the researcher decides to analyze the denotative and connotative meaning of 4 specific words in sentences. Firstly, this study will analyze the denotative and connotative meaning of the word "invisible" in the sentence "*She looked at the apples as if they were invisible and she could not see them*". Second, this paper focuses on analyzing the denotative and connotative meaning of the word "glad" in the sentence "*He was glad the rain was bitter cold and drove in his face fiercely*". Next, this paper analyzes the denotative and connotative meaning of the word "expert" in the sentence "*he seemed to be getting expert in finding nothing where there ought to be something*". Last, this study focuses on the denotative and connotative meaning of the word "coldness" in the sentence "*John Billings felt a coldness beyond the coldness of the night run through his blood*".

As was previously stated, the researcher positions the text of the short story "A Child of The Rain" as the data source. Then, in the process of collecting the data, this research uses a documentation technique. It means that the data were collected by selecting some proper words in the short story that are compatible with Palmer's theory in the context of a love relationship. In the first way of collecting the data, the researcher tried to read the whole story repeatedly and then found the denotative and connotative meaning in the story. The researcher determined the dominant words which contain denotative and connotative meaning in the story.

The words were chosen based on the context of a love relationship as the main focus of this study. Furthermore, in the process of analyzing the data, the researcher analyzes it in several steps. First, the researcher selected the words which have denotative and connotative meaning based on Palmer's theory with a love relationship as the context. Then, the researcher delivered a descriptive form of the analysis denotative and connotative meaning in the short story "A Child of The Rain" based on the theory used by the researcher. Lastly, the researcher appealed a conclusion of the study based on the analysis which is provided in the discussion that purposed to explain the most significant points in the study.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Datum 1: "*She looked at the apples as if they were invisible and she could not see them*"

In Palmer's view (1976), denotative and connotative meaning could be discovered by relating the language composition in a sentence with an experience of the real world. It indicates that denotative meaning explicates a literal meaning of the word and it contains a revealed meaning of the sentence structure, whereas connotative meaning has concealed the meaning of the word. Specifically, in the sentence, the word invisible has a denotative meaning based on the Oxford Dictionary and the composition of the sentence itself. In a dictionary, the word invisible means not visible by the eye. It may also refer to something like money that cannot be seen or check on the financial statement. Further, in this sentence, the apples are the theme of the sentence and the word invisible is a description of the theme. It means that the word invisible is used to describe the apple as a thing that cannot be seen. Additionally, the structure of the sentence also shows that the word invisible is preceded by the word as which refers to a clause comparison. It means that she as the subject compares the apples with an invisible thing.

Meanwhile, the connotative meaning is defined as a meaning of a word that linked to human feeling and it has a certain sense of value, whether it is a positive, neutral, or negative value. Connotation of a word also can be found by considering a presupposition of a sentence. Therefore, in the presupposition's aspect, the sentence itself could be interpreted that the subject (she) has just been given something by someone else. In this context, the word she in the sentence refers to Mona Meeks as John's girlfriend and Mona is given an apple by John. Further, relating to Palmer's theory, the word invisible in the sentence could have a connotative meaning by relating to the context of what happened in the real world. In this case, invisible may be interpreted as an expression used in portraying someone's feelings in a relationship.

At the beginning of the story, it is explained that Mona Meeks is the one who wants to end her relationship with John. In this case, the word invisible is used to describe the situation which happens between John and Mona Meeks. It means that in this context, the word invisible in the sentence has connotative meaning and it could be interpreted that Mona Meeks does not want to continue the relationship that she has with John.

In addition, the word invisible does not clearly describe that she is unable to see the apples. Further, the word invisible in the sentence may indicate any gift that is given like an apple or other things are valueless for the subject (she). The fact that the author uses the word invisible in the sentence shows that there is the intended meaning of the subject (she) to ignore the apples. Therefore, if the word invisible is related to the context of what happened in the real world, especially in love relationships, someone will express something like an invisible to show his/her attitude to others. In real life, a concrete thing will be compared as an abstract thing or something that cannot be seen to show ignorance, rejection, anger, and disappointment. Due to this reason, the word invisible in the sentence has a negative connotation. This conclusion comes from relating the word invisible with what happens in real life and it corresponds to Palmer's theory.

3.2. Datum 2: "He was glad the rain was bitter cold and drove in his face fiercely"

Denotative meaning which usually called literal meaning could be categorized as a dictionary meaning (Crystal, 1987). Hence, based on the Oxford dictionary, the word glad denotes an expression, such as pleased, happy, and grateful for something. This word is frequently used for showing joy and pleasure feeling. Further, in semantic roles,

the word glad can be classified as an associate that describes the theme of the word he in the sentence itself. It means that in denotative's view, the word glad in the sentence means that the subject (he) feels happy that the rain comes. Moreover, the connotative meaning is quite different from denotation. In connotation, the meaning isn't based on a dictionary meaning, and it will be more focus on what feelings which appears in a word. In Palmer's theory(1976), the connotative meaning of a word can be found by focusing on the language used in the sentence and relating to what happens in real life. In this case, the word glad has an implicit meaning which portrays someone's feeling about something that happens.

Subsequently, connotative meaning also can be drawn by focusing on the presupposition of a sentence. In the presupposition's view, it can be concluded that there is no rain before, and it makes the subject (he) feels happy due to the fact that it finally rains. The presupposition is also reinforced by the context of the story itself, which in this case, the word glad in the sentence is used when rain suddenly comes after John's character is abandoned by his girlfriend. Therefore, it indicates that in connotative meaning, the word glad refers to John's feeling after his love relationship failed. In this case, the word glad in the sentence doesn't imply a happy feeling, but a relief feeling which in this context, the relief feeling arises because John could cover up his feeling when the rain comes. Regarding this matter, it can be concluded that the word glad in the sentence is quite different from the actual meaning of the word glad in the dictionary.

Furthermore, relating to the context of what happened in real life, the word glad mostly uses to express a joy feeling. It also can be used to show relief when someone feels a burden in their heart because of their problems and something that can hide, minimize or neutralize those feelings has an impact on his/her feeling. Therefore, relating to the John's situation in the story and the context of real life, the word glad has positive connotation because the word glad in this context is used to emphasize the relief feeling of someone which has been going through a hardship in some points of his/her life, and something, such as rain, can be the medium to somehow reduce the hardship or to cover up the sadness and disappointment feeling because of the hardship from the world. This conclusion comes from relating the word glad about what happen in real life which corresponds to Palmer's theory.

3.3. Datum 3: *"He seemed to be getting expert in finding nothing where there ought to be something"*

In analyzing the meaning of a word, denotative and connotative meanings have a relation with the language composition of a sentence and the context of what happened in the real world (Palmer, 1976). In this case, the denotative meaning of a word refers to an explicit meaning, while connotative meaning mostly has an implicit meaning of the word. Particularly, the word expert in the sentence has a denotative meaning based on the Oxford Dictionary. In a dictionary, the word expert means having a lot of knowledge or someone with a high level of skills and knowledge. It refers to someone's ability in mastering something. In addition, in a semantic role's aspect, the word expert in the sentence plays the role of an associate. It means that the word expert has a role to describe the theme (he) in the sentence.

Moreover, in connotative meaning, the analysis of a word is more focus on the feelings or thoughts that are generated by the writer and the reader. In this case, presupposition has a contribution to the process of analyzing the connotative meaning

of a word. In the presupposition's view, it can be concluded that in the previous event, the subject (he) failed to find or do something perfectly. Then, relating to the context of what happened in the story, the word expert clearly contains an implicit meaning. In this case, the word expert is a description that refers to the ability of the character in the story. In specific, the description of the word expert here contains a feeling in the context of what happened in the story. The feeling which the author portrays in the story is the angry feeling that the character has toward himself. This interpretation is based on the context of what happened to the character in the story that has been explained in the previous sentence of the story.

Further, relating to the theory of Palmer, it can be concluded that in connotative meaning, the word expert in the sentence is like an allusion because the intended meaning contrasts with the word itself. In addition, the word expert in the story has a negative connotation. It has a negative connotation because the word expert in the story clearly refers to John and the word expert doesn't explicitly refer to John's ability, but it has an implicit meaning. The word expert in the sentence may also be interpreted as John's disappointment to himself because he cannot find anything, including the reason why he faces the problem in a love relationship. In addition, to relate the word expert to the context of what happened in real-life, especially in a love relationship, the word expert in this context can be used as an expression of allusion. It means that the true meaning is highly different from the meaning in a dictionary. It means that the word expert in the sentence is used by the author as an implicit meaning that relates to the context of what happened to the character in the story and connects to the context of what happened in the real world, especially in the love life context.

3.4. Datum 4: "John Billings felt a coldness beyond the coldness of the night run through his blood"

According to Palmer (1976), denotative and connotative meanings could be found by connecting the language structure in a sentence with the context of this present reality. It means that denotative will be more focus on the literal meaning, while connotative meaning has an implicit meaning. Specifically, in the sentence, the word coldness has a denotative meaning based on the Oxford Dictionary and the composition of the sentence itself. In a dictionary, the word coldness means the quality of lacking affection or warmth of feeling or can be described as a condition with low temperature. Further, in semantic roles, the word coldness is classified as affecting. It means that in the sentence, the word coldness has a role in affecting another entity, which in the sentence, coldness affects the argument John Billings, which has a role as the affected one.

Furthermore, the connotative meaning is defined as a meaning of a word that has a relation toward human feeling and it has a certain sense of value, whether it is a positive, neutral, or negative value. Based on Palmer's view (1976), the word coldness of the sentence could have a connotative meaning by relating to the context of what happened in real life. In this case, coldness portrays an implicit meaning and not only explains about the temperature. The word coldness is used to describe someone's feelings when facing hardship. This interpretation based on the context of the story. Particularly, it is mentioned that in the story, the word coldness refers to the situation which happens to John Billing. In the story, it is explained that John sees a little figure of the child who looked down and turned blue with carrying a mysterious box. The

appearance of the child who John thought as a ghost creates a terrifying situation in the story which makes John's situation is colder than the temperature itself.

Moreover, beside as a condition of low temperature in late of midnight, the word coldness in the sentence may also refer to a feeling of nervous, unstable, worry, fearful and hesitant about something like a ghost. In addition, the word coldness in the story also refers to the empty feeling that John felt after treated badly by his girlfriend. Therefore, relating the word invisible to the context of what happened in the real world, especially in love relationships, it can be concluded that this word is used in describing a vicious situation in a relationship if one side acts cold to the others. Due to this explanation, the word coldness is described as the word who has explicit and implicit meaning in various cases. The word coldness may be used to illustrate the temperature, the terrifying situation, and also the empty feeling after facing hardship.

4. Conclusion

After analyzing the denotative and connotative meaning of some specific words based on Palmer's theory and relating to the context of what happens in real life, especially in a love relationship, the conclusion can be seen as follows. First, invisible in denotative meaning can be meant as not visible by the eye, but in connotative meaning, the word invisible shows a rejection. Second, glad in denotative means delighted, or grateful for something, but in connotative meaning, it is described as an expression which shows a relief when someone feels pain in their heart because of their problems and then something can neutralize those feelings. Third, the word expert in denotative meaning is defined as someone with a high level of skills and knowledge, but in the connotative meaning of the story context, it can be meant as a disappointment or allusion because the intended meaning contrasts with the word itself. Next, the word coldness in denotative meaning means a condition with low temperature, but in connotative meaning, it is described as a feeling of nervous, unstable, worry, fearful and hesitant.

To sum up, four words which already chosen by the researcher can be concluded as the words who have denotative and connotative meanings. These words are chosen as the main focus of the study because these words play a significant role in building the plot of the story and also reflecting the context of what happened in real life. In this case, these words have a relation with the context of love relationship in real life and these words can portray someone's feelings in a specific situation like in love relationships.

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