

A Study of Meaning and Message with Reference to the Novel *Rage of Angels*

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Abstract

This study was aimed to identify and analyze the meaning and message in several sentences found in the novel *Rage of Angels* by Sidney Sheldon published in 1980. The selected sentences in the novel, which are the data of this study, were collected by applying the documentation method and note-taking technique which then were analyzed using the descriptive qualitative method. The data were presented informally in descriptive form. This study analyzes the types of meaning based on the theory proposed by Leech (1974) and the messages of the novel based on the biographical approach theory by Wellek and Warren (1962). As a result, all the seven types of meaning, namely connotative meaning, conceptual meaning, affective meaning, stylistic meaning, reflected meaning, collocative meaning, and thematic meaning, were found in the novel. In relation to the message of the novel, based on the biographical approach, there were five messages that the author delivered.

INTRODUCTION

The language used by people on daily basis always contains meaning. It is the message people deliver and try to understand successfully. As Leech (1974) stated that there are seven types of meaning namely conceptual meaning, connotative meaning, stylistic meaning, affective meaning, reflected meaning, collocative meaning, and thematic meaning, an understanding of meaning is importantly needed in order to avoid misunderstanding which is the failure of communication.

On a certain occasion, people interpret differently the message of someone else which contributes to a

different understanding. This is an unfortunate condition because the intended message is not properly delivered. This condition may happen both in conversational and textual forms of communication and is caused either because people do not comprehend the meaning of the sentences or the sentences contain meaning that cannot be interpreted lexically. Customarily, this condition occurs in literary works as the words within sentences often have different meanings from dictionaries. One of the literary works that such a condition may occur is *Rage of Angels*, a novel written by Sidney Sheldon in 1980. The sentences in the novel hint at

meanings that cannot be interpreted purely from dictionaries, therefore a study about meaning in the novel is essential according to the foregoing explanation.

Furthermore, the meanings of the sentences found in the novel form a message as a whole of the novel. Meaning and message have a function as a moral value to the reader. The author displays messages directly or indirectly in the depiction of a story.

This study focuses on identifying the meanings found in the sentences based on Leech's theory of meaning (1974) as well as the message in the novel using the biographical approach proposed by Wellek and Warren (1962). A similar topic has been researched previously, however, what differs current study to previous studies is the range of meaning that is analyzed which is broader as many past researches only discuss certain meaning.

METHOD AND THEORY

The data of this study are the sentences in the novel *Rage of Angels* written by Sidney Sheldon published in 1980. The novel was chosen as the data source because it has the data relating to the aims of the study that is to find out the types of the meanings and the messages.

The method used in collecting the data related to the subject of this research is library research by using documentation and note-taking technique. The data was collected by marking, selecting, and identifying the types of meanings to be processed in the next step. The collected data were then analyzed using the descriptive qualitative research method. The data were analyzed using the theory from Leech (1974), to find out the types of meanings in the novel. Second, the messages are explained using the theory of the

biographical approach proposed by Wellek and Warren (1962). This study specifically was presented in the descriptive qualitative method. It means that the analysis is presented in the form of sentences. The result of the analysis was explained descriptively in order to make it clear and easy for the reader to understand.

There are three theories applied in this study. The first is the theory of meaning by Leech (1974) that divides meaning into seven types namely conceptual meaning, connotative meaning, stylistic meaning, affective meaning, reflected meaning, collocative meaning, and thematic meaning. Connotative meaning is the communicative value an expression has by virtue of what it refers to, over and above its purely conceptual content; (2) Conceptual meaning, is the rational sense of the utterance and is identified as a basic component of grammatical competence, (3) Stylistic Meaning, a meaning in which a piece of language conveys about the social circumstances in which the utterance takes place, (4) Affective Meaning, a meaning that can reflect the personal feeling of the speakers, including the attitude of the speaker to the listener, (5) Reflected Meaning, a meaning which occurs in cases of multiple meaning when a sense of a word forms part of our response to another sense, (6) Collocative Meaning, the association of a word that acquires the account of the meaning of a word which tends to occur in its environment, (7) Thematic Meaning, which is communicated by how the speaker or the writer organizes the message, in terms of the order, focus and emphasis. This theory was used to identify the meanings found in the data.

The second theory was applied to support the analysis of meaning. It is theory of context of the situation by

Halliday and Hasan (1985). In order to construct the meaning from the sentences, context from the story is very much needed. Using the theory, the meaning can be more precise to be interpreted as the situation is known.

The third theory to analyze the message in the novel is the biographical approach by Wellek and Warren (1962). This approach is used in order to understand the message of the novel and understand the reason and intention of the writer. It is believed that an artist in general always gets most of their inspiration from their own life's situation. Sidney Sheldon is always known for his bold move and his strong image as a novel writer.

The topic of meaning like this study has been done previously. Asril (2013) did a research entitled *Imagery and Figurative Language in Jimi Hendrix's Song Lyrics*. The similarity between these studies is the method used. The difference to the current study is the previous study focused on imageries while current study focuses on the meaning. Another research related to this study is entitled *Connotative and Denotative Meanings of Lyrics by Tina Arena's Songs written by Zulaichah* (2008). The difference between her study to current study is her study applied one theory by George Yule, whereas this study used three theories by Leech, J.N Hook, and Nordquist R. Pramedio's research entitled *The Figurative Language Function, Meaning, and Rhyme in the Poem When I Was One and Twenty* (2009). The relevance of her thesis to this current study is the usage of Leech's theory and also Warren and Wellek's theory (1962) to find the meaning in their corresponding literature piece.

There are also two articles from international journal that had done research on the similar topic. The article

is written by Abdallah (2015) entitled *Going beyond the Conventions: The connotations of Setting in Thomas Hardy's the Return of the Native*. The theory applied in this article was proposed by Leech (1980). The relevance to this study is the similarity of focusing on the messages in the literature piece. Another article is written by Saifuddin (2018) entitled *Denotative and Connotative Meaning of Signs in Lombok Musical Instrument (Gendang Beleg)* published in *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences*. The main theory applied in this article was proposed by Roland Barthes theory about relation between signifier and signified. The relevance to this study is the focus on connotative meaning as one of the meaning identified on this study.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section consists of three parts: (1) the synopsis of the novel, (2) the biography of the writer of the novel, and (3) the analysis of data found in the novel *Rage of Angels*.

Synopsis of *Rage of Angels*

Jennifer Parker is a brilliant woman who graduated from the law school, the daughter of a great former lawyer Abner Parker. Jennifer had promised her father that if she graduated from law school she would work with him, but he passed away before it could happen. Jennifer's finally graduated from law school and then worked for Robert Di Silva's company as a lawyer junior, but her first day in a career she had been accused of collaborating with Michael Morroiti, who was not only a mafia but a cold blooded killer. At that time Robert Di Silva abused and slandered Jennifer Parker in the courthouse, but she then said that she did not do anything as alleged by Di Silva. The mass media portrayed Jennifer

Parker as the junior lawyer who betrayed the famous lawyer Robert Di Silva. Jennifer withdraws from her surroundings. She had to find work to fulfill her life, but no company wants to accept her.

Then she saw the advertisement listed on a rented building at a low price. She began her work as a lawyer. Day after day, she was frustrated because no client came to ask for help to her, until a man named Adam Warner believed her and even Jennifer fell in love with Adam Warner because he often helped her. She handled serious cases such as the case of Abraham Wilson and she won the case. She regained her glory after the trials and also her patience now yielded the results of many clients who came to ask her to win the case in the courtroom.

Biography of Sidney Sheldon

Sidney Sheldon was an American writer and producer. After turning 50, he began writing best-selling romantic suspense novels, and one of them is *Rage of Angels* (1980). Sheldon is consistently cited as one of the top ten bestselling fiction writers of all time

During the Great Depression in 1929, he had various jobs. Then, he was enrolled at Northwestern University with a scholarship. At college, he contributed short plays. Due to the Depression era, he had to leave the university after six months studying. Sheldon dies at the age of 90 on January 30th in 2007 in Palm Springs, California.

The Meaning found in the Novel *Rage of Angels*

The data were analyzed using the theory from Leech (1974) and context of situation theory by Halliday and Hasan (1985) to determine the meaning in the novel. All of the analysis was constructed based on the story of the novel. The analysis are as follows:

(3-1) Two thousand years ago in Rome, the contest would have been staged at ... (Sheldon, 1980:3).

(1) Connotative Meaning: The sentence in connotative sense means an arena which is terrorizing, frightening and dangerous. (2) Conceptual Meaning: The word hunter means a person whose method of survival is by hunting. (3) Stylistic Meaning: The lions will wait to stalk their victims, usually a challenger who is guilty and will be used as bait. (4) Affective Meaning: The hunters have feelings of fear and anxiety if they fail to face the lion, since it is very tough. (5) Reflective Meaning: The lion is considered the king of the jungle. (6) Collocative Meaning: Hunters has the ability to hunt, while the lion is a beast to test the toughness of a person. (7) Thematic Meaning: The aristocrats held the contest aimed at seeing the strong fighters face the ferocious lion as well as to punish the guilty people by making it bait for the lion's food.

(3-2) He was tall and lean, with a face formed of converging planes that gave him ... (Sheldon, 1980:3)

(1) Connotative Meaning: His eyes looks like olives; large, round and black. (2) Conceptual Meaning: Someone who pays attention to their appearance. (+ Human, + adult, + male). (3) Stylistic Meaning: He is tall and also has a unique facial shape, making him look different from the average person. (4) Affective Meaning: His black hair that make everyone fascinated with his style. (5) Reflective Meaning: He looks like a wild beast, yet he still looks professional at work and when handling cases. (6) Collocative Meaning: This clause collaborates with the physical forms and attitudes generally possessed by manly men. (7) Thematic Meaning: He dressed himself well so that he is dignified by others.

(3-3) He was in constant motion, shadowboxing with invisible opponents. (Sheldon, 1980:4)

(1) Connotative Meaning: A person fights with themselves as over-ambition. (2) Stylistic Meaning: It is difficult for her to forget the bad memories. (3) Affective Meaning: Someone who is going to do boxing will feel the tension until the event is over. (4) Reflective Meaning: Jennifer has to live with the memory of her bitter past. (5) Collocative Meaning: One could fight invisible opponents like thoughts and feelings if they are not immediately addressed. (6) Thematic Meanings: Mistakes that have been made can still be corrected.

(3-4) It was the most beautiful music Di Silva had ever heard, a song that was going to ... (Sheldon, 1980:5)

(1) Connotative Meaning: Di Silva made the mafia family in the east surrender unconditionally. (2) Conceptual Meaning: The word Mafia implies that mafia is a type of organized crime syndicate (+ human, + adult, + male). (3) Stylistic Meaning: Di Silva thinks the surrender of the enemy is a beautiful music. (4) Reflective Meaning: In this sentence the word music and song also means the good news that Di Silva heard in the courtroom. (5) Thematic Meaning: Di Silva has won the trial.

(3-5) She sat ramrod straight, as though bracing herself against unseen ghosts of the past. (Sheldon, 1980:7)

(1) Connotative Meaning: A ghost like a shadow that always follows him wherever she goes. She tries to forget the shadow of her past bitter experiences that always haunted her. (2) Conceptual Meaning: Jennifer is trying to face the fact that she keeps herself from being sad for a long time. (3) Stylistic Meaning: Social condition of Jennifer in the community which makes her traumatized. (4) Reflective Meaning: Past events she experienced will make her

remember the incident (5) Thematic Meaning: Bracing herself against in this sentence is that Jennifer has tried to forget her past.

(3-6) You'll stick around long enough to pick my brains and learn a few courtroom (Sheldon, 1980:8)

(1) Connotative Meaning: Robert Di Silva wants his juniors to use the same way of thinking as him. (2) Conceptual Meaning: Di Silva was the city's greatest lawyer. (3) Affective Meaning: Di Silva's juniors have a lot to learn to do. (4) Reflective Meaning: Studying the courtroom requires experience that is continuously sharpened like a knife. (5) Thematic Meaning: If they are able to equalize his ability, then they will be able to control the proceedings no matter what.

(3-7) If Stela had been an animal, she would have been a weasel (Sheldon, 1980:10)

(1) Connotative Meaning: Weasels are the symbol of ingenuity. (2) Conceptual Meaning: Stella's clever behavior like a weasel, by relying on her ingenuity.

(3-8) What other business was Michael Moretti involved in besides loan-sharking? (Sheldon, 1980:12)

(1) Connotative Meaning: Michael Morretti also opened an illegal business by lending money with high interest. (2) Conceptual Meaning: The mafia has made borrowing money a prohibited business if someone who borrows money does not immediately return it, the assets will be forcibly taken away. (3) Stylistic Meaning: What Michael Morretti did is against the law, by conducting illegal loan transactions and taking large interest gains. (4) Affective Meaning: Michael Morretti is not at all afraid of the consequences.

(3-9) You witnessed the defendant, Michael Moretti, cold-bloodedly shot two men ... (Sheldon, 1980:13)

(1) Connotative Meaning: Michael Morretti is a cold-blooded human. (2) Conceptual Meaning: A person who committed a crime and received a criminal law for his mistake. (3) Stylistic Meaning: He shot two men mercilessly. (4) Thematic Meaning: Michael Morretti shot this person for money, like a cold-blooded killer.

(3-10) Thomas Colfax rose to his feet. Michael Moretti's attorney was a tall ... (Sheldon, 1980:11)

(1) Connotative Meaning: Silver refers to his hair, it defines the physical image of the person with respect and courtesy. (2) Conceptual Meaning: Michael Morretti used a lawyer to defend his case, whether it was murder or his illegal business. (3) Affective Meaning: When given the opportunity to the judge, Michael Morretti's lawyer rose and defended Michael Morretti. Thomas Holfax felt very confident and got up from his chair while giving a defense in the courtroom. (4) Collocative Meaning: A 50-year-old man has the characteristics of his hair growing gray and his tall body will bend over.

(3-11) Jennifer wore a green-and-blue-plaid lumber jacket that caught the raindrops ... (Sheldon, 1980:25)

(1) Connotative Meaning: Jennifer's eyes shine like an emerald when the clothes. (2) Conceptual Meaning: The emerald symbolizes beauty. (3) Affective Meaning: The jacket she uses protects her from the rain and the wind. It is beautiful to look at and also makes Jennifer look more elegant.

(3-12) I have nothing more to say to you or your damned disciplinary committee (Sheldon, 1980:51)

(1) Connotative Meaning: The lawyer and the witness will definitely be disappointed with the decision taken. (2) Conceptual Meaning: The attorney of Michael Morretti considers that his client should not be prosecuted for a harsh

sentence. (3) Affective Meaning: Attorney of Michael Morretti was very angry and disappointed at the unsuccessful trial results. (4) Collocative Meaning: This committee is unaffected and fair in making legal decisions to assist judges in handling the trial. (5) Thematic Meaning: The outrage of disappointment that the lawyers and defendants felt at the committee's decision, even though the defendant is guilty but they want legal relief for this defendant.

(3-13) She took a deep, shaky breath and said, "All right." (Sheldon, 1980:53)

(1) Connotative Meaning: Jennifer tried to take a deep breath in order to make her mind and heart calmer. (2) Affective Meaning: She feels better after controlling the situation inside herself. (3) Reflective Meaning: When Jennifer felt angry her whole body trembled and she was also out of breath, until she managed to control her anger. (4) Thematic Meaning: She is controlling her emotions so as not to make people around her anxious and worried.

(3-14) It had taken almost two weeks to select the jury, and the District Attorney ... (Sheldon, 1980:58)

(1) Connotative Meaning: A reserve jury is needed if there is a main jury who is unable to attend. (2) Conceptual Meaning: The public prosecutor's office is the one who leads, controls the implementation of the duties and powers of the prosecutor in its jurisdiction. (+ human, + adult + educated). (3) Stylistic Meaning: The prosecutor prepared the best possible reserve jury. (4) Affective Meaning: The district attorney tried and insisted to find an additional or reserve jury to prevent the cancellation of Michael Morretti's trial.

(3-15) But she needed more in her bed than a warm body that talked; she needed ... (Sheldon, 1980:63)

(1) Connotative Meaning: Jennifer is alone and gives up trying to get up from his hopelessness and loneliness. (2) Affective Meaning: She feels alone in her life, not only the physical fatigue but also the inner fatigue Jennifer feels, as a result she needs someone who can accompany and fill her empty days. (3) Thematic Meaning: She needs someone who can accompany her life, who can share her sadness, and someone who cares for her.

(3-16) The most interesting men who propositioned Jennifer were all married ... (Sheldon, 1980:63)

(1) Connotative Meaning: A woman should avoid affairs with married men. (2) Stylistic Meaning: Jennifer is still single should not date and also start a relationship with a man who already has a wife and family. (3) Affective Meaning: Jennifer felt that there was an inner conflict between her feelings and also the opinion of society about her relationship with someone else's husband. (4) Thematic Meaning: Almost all men who approach her are men who already have wives and children.

(3-17) The maxim was that when x married couple saw red, lawyers saw green (Sheldon, 1980:65)

(1) Connotative Meaning: Jennifer works as a lawyer, green is a symbol that she is a great lawyer and has the experience in problem solving. (2) Stylistic Meaning: The older he is, the more work experience and life experience make him an expert as a lawyer, and while the younger he is, the more time he can use to hone his skills. (3) Affective Meaning: She has continued her father's dream by establishing a lawyer consulting firm independently. (4) Thematic Meaning: Married couples are associated with the color red which means love, union and also eternal, while lawyers are associated with the color green because they carry

out their duties and profession in the courtroom.

(3-18) A few of the clients who came into Jennifer's office were different in a way ... (Sheldon, 1980:67)

(1) Connotative Meaning: The clients who come to Jennifer's office to ask for advice and consult on legal issues have different problems that makes her confused. (2) Conceptual Meaning: A client is a person who has legal problems and uses a legal assistant to solve legal problems. (+ Human, + adult, + educated) (3) Affective Meaning: The problems faced by her clients also make her confused because she has to collect evidence.

(3-19) Needham had been disappointed, but philosophical. The District ... (Sheldon, 1980:67)

(1) Connotative Meaning: Needham was so disappointed that he turned angry like a bull, he could not control his emotions. (2) Conceptual Meaning: Needham cannot just walk without being supported by strong evidence and witnesses. (3) Affective Meaning: Adam Warner is controlling his feelings of anger, he is sad and also angry at the decision he received. (4) Thematic Meanings: Justice in trial is determined by the strength of witnesses and supporting evidence, not only the ability of the lawyers to speak alone.

(3-20) He had been wonderful to put up with her childish behavior when she had taken ... (Sheldon, 1980:67)

(1) Connotative Meaning: Jennifer should be wiser in dealing with problems. (2) Stylistic meaning: He endured her childish attitude and when he can hold back his anger. (3) Affective Meaning: Jennifer's bad past traumatized her so her anger was difficult to control. (4) Thematic Meaning: In this sentence, there is a thematic meaning, namely the emphasis on the word anger, explaining her childish nature.

The Message in the Novel *Rage of Angels*

In the novel *Rage of Angels*, there are five messages that can be determined using the biographical approach theory. The messages are:

(1) Never give up and be in despair even in difficult condition because being sad over something is not a solution. (2) Do not be arrogant and hate someone because hatred brings awful situation. (3) Do not accuse people carelessly and learn to trust someone better. Slander can damage one's reputation and also one's dignity just like how Jennifer was ostracized by society for crimes she never made at all. Trusting someone is the key to a good cooperative relationship. (4) Help your fellow humans without strings attached because helping fellow human beings is an obligation as social beings regardless of the degree of human beings to each other. (5) Rise from failure and move on without looking at the past: It is the best way to forgive past events and continue our lives better.

CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing analysis in this study, there are some points to conclude. Related to the meanings found in data, there were 21 connotative meanings, 13 conceptual meanings, 16 stylistic meanings, 16 affective meanings, 13 reflective meaning, 4 collocative meanings, and 18 thematic meanings. The most occurring meaning is connotative. The reason behind this finding is because the object of the study itself is a literary work in which the language has some stylistic features. One of the features is connotative meaning. Whereas, the least occurring meaning is collocative. This happens because the choice of words within the novel explores more about meaning beyond the

dictionary, thus collocative meaning, which is closely related to association of words based on dictionary, is limited.

Relating to the message of the novel, there are five messages that the author of the novel delivered to the reader. Two of the messages are about motivation to always be strong. The other three are about guidance in social life, thus peace is always around those who are kind and helpful.

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