



Conceptual Frames of Fatherhood in Indonesian Song Lyrics: A Cognitive Linguistic Analysis of “*Cinta Sejati Takkan Mati*”

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Abstract

Song lyrics represent cultural texts rich in emotional and symbolic meaning. This study employs qualitative content analysis using a frame semantics approach to analyze the lyrics of “*Cinta Sejati Takkan Mati*” by Agus Subianto (2025b), the original soundtrack of the film Believe (released in 2025), as an object of cognitive linguistic inquiry. The data consist of the complete lyrics of a single song, examined to explore the conceptual representation of the father figure of Indonesian culture. Drawing on frame semantics (Fillmore, 1982) and the principles of embodied cognition (Johnson, 2007), the analysis identifies five primary semantic frames: (1) Father as Eternal Love, (2) Father as Silent Sacrifice, (3) Father as Living Memory, (4) Father as Source of Validation, and (5) Father as Eternal Guardian. The findings reveal that the father is represented not merely as a biological figure, but as a multidimensional emotional and spiritual symbol that shapes the child’s identity through embodied affective experience. The song constructs paternal love as transcendent and immeasurable, reinforcing cultural narratives of the father as a moral and emotional anchor within the family. This study expands the application of cognitive linguistics in popular culture analysis and demonstrates how song lyrics function as cultural media that reflect and shape collective understandings of emotion, family relationships, and spirituality.

Keywords: *cognitive linguistics, frame semantics, father, song lyrics,*

Introduction

In Indonesian society, songs function as an important cultural medium for conveying social values and collective emotions, particularly within the sphere of familial relationships. Song lyrics are not merely forms of entertainment, but cultural texts rich in emotional and symbolic meaning that encapsulate narratives of lived

experience, memory, and affect. As part of Indonesia's oral and musical traditions, songs are often understood as reflections of social life, where emotions and values are articulated through poetic language and melody. Consequently, song lyrics may be viewed as representational spaces in which familial figures such as mothers, fathers, and children—are symbolically constructed and emotionally conceptualized.

Among these figures, the representation of the father occupies a distinctive position. In Indonesian cultural contexts, the father is often portrayed implicitly rather than explicitly, associated with responsibility, protection, and silent sacrifice rather than overt emotional expression. This makes the father figure an intriguing subject of linguistic inquiry, particularly in cultural texts where emotional depth is conveyed indirectly. One such text is the song "*Cinta Sejati Takkan Mati*" by Agus Subianto (2025b), which gained public attention as the original soundtrack of the film *Believe*. The song resonates strongly with audiences due to its emotional narrative of loss, devotion, and enduring paternal love, positioning it as a culturally significant artifact for examining how fatherhood is conceptualized in contemporary Indonesian popular culture.

Within cognitive linguistics, language is understood not merely as a system of signs, but as a reflection of human conceptualization shaped by experience, emotion, and culture (Evans & Green, 2006). Linguistic expressions in song lyrics—such as metaphors, evaluative phrases, and affective diction—encode cognitive structures that influence how listeners interpret emotional relationships and social roles. In "*Cinta Sejati Takkan Mati*," the father is not portrayed simply as an individual character, but as a symbolic figure whose presence continues beyond physical absence, sustained through memory, emotion, and spirituality. This representation aligns with Indonesian cultural values that frame the father as a moral anchor, a protector, and a figure whose love is often demonstrated through action rather than speech.

Previous studies have demonstrated that music, literature, and cultural texts are rich sites for examining conceptual meaning. Foundational research in cognitive linguistics—such as Lakoff and Johnson's work on conceptual metaphor, Johnson's theory of embodied meaning, and Talmy's force dynamics—has shown how language encodes experiential and emotional structures. In the Indonesian, studies by Suryani (2021) and Pratama and Lestari (2022) have explored metaphors and religious values in song lyrics, highlighting music's role in transmitting cultural emotions. Research on paternal imagery, such as Mulyani's (2020) study of Indonesian poetry and Baker's (Baker, 2021) analysis of Western folk songs, similarly identifies fathers as symbols of sacrifice, authority, and emotional strength.

More recent scholarship has applied cognitive linguistic approaches directly to music and cultural identity. Firdaus et al. (2023) examined embodied emotional responses to Javanese songs, while Anwar and Supriyono (2025) demonstrated how semantic frames shape cultural identity in song lyrics. Despite these advances, research focusing specifically on the conceptualization of paternal love in Indonesian

popular songs remains limited. Existing studies tend to emphasize stylistic, semiotic, or general metaphor analysis (Danesi, 2004; Nørgaard, 2010), often overlooking how fatherhood is constructed through interconnected semantic frames grounded in affective and cultural experience.

This gap is particularly striking given the prominence of the father figure in Indonesian familial ideology, where paternal love is frequently expressed through silent sacrifice, moral guidance, and emotional validation rather than explicit verbal affection. The lack of linguistic research addressing these affective and symbolic dimensions indicates the need for an approach that can systematically uncover how such meanings are structured in language. Therefore, "*Cinta Sejati Takkan Mati*" provides a compelling case for examining how paternal love is framed linguistically and culturally within a popular musical text. Specifically, this study aims to identify the semantic frames that construct the meaning of the father figure in the lyrics of "*Cinta Sejati Takkan Mati*."

Additionally, it seeks to explore how emotions such as love, loss, and spirituality are represented through the conceptual structure embedded in the song's language. The third objective is to illustrate how cultural values concerning the father as a protector (Hilmi et al., 2023), spiritual role model, and emotional anchor are linguistically reflected in the choice of metaphors, diction, and narrative structure of the song. This research not only aims to understand meaning at the denotative level but also to uncover the conceptual layers that shape the social and emotional construction of the father figure in the context of modern Indonesian culture.

The main theoretical framework employed in this study is Frame Semantics by Charles Fillmore (1982), which posits that every word or linguistic expression triggers the activation of a particular conceptual frame reflecting collective or cultural experience. In the song's lyrics, expressions such as "your proud smile will never fade" not only depict a literal image but also activate frames of emotional validation, appreciation, and spiritual attachment between father and child. This theory is combined with the Embodied Cognition approach (Johnson, 2007), which explains that bodily experiences and feelings co-construct the structures of human meaning and perception. The integration of these two theories enables a comprehensive analysis, both linguistically and affectively, in understanding the depth and complexity of meaning encoded in song lyrics as a form of culturally embedded emotional expression.

This study holds significant urgency, as it addresses aspects of emotional representation that are not only essential within the cultural context of Indonesian society but also universally relevant in understanding the dynamics of familial relationships and emotions. Theoretically, this research contributes to the advancement of cognitive linguistics within the field of popular culture studies in Indonesia, which has thus far been dominated by textual (Rahmah & Nurfithri, 2024) and formalist approaches. Practically, its findings may be used to enrich linguistic

curricula in higher education, support expressive therapies involving music in psychology or education, and offer new perspectives in the interpretation of musical texts used in film and social media. Thus, this research offers not only scholarly contributions but also tangible applications in cultivating deeper understandings of emotion, culture, and language.

Method

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach to examine the conceptual and emotional meanings in the lyrics of "Cinta Sejati Takkan Mati" by Agus Subianto (2025). This approach is suitable for analyzing language that reflects cultural values, emotional experience, and symbolic meaning. The focus of the study is the representation of the father figure as a cognitive, emotional, and cultural construct in Indonesian song lyrics.

The data consist of the complete lyrics of one song, which serves as the original soundtrack of the film *Believe* (2025). The lyrics were obtained from the official release on digital music platforms and verified using the official lyric video to ensure accuracy. The analysis includes the entire song to maintain the coherence of meaning across the narrative.

The unit of analysis includes words, phrases, and clauses that directly or indirectly refer to the father figure. These linguistic units were selected based on their relevance to paternal roles, such as love, sacrifice, protection, memory, and emotional validation.

Data analysis was conducted using frame semantics (Fillmore, 1982). First, the lyrics were read carefully to identify key expressions related to the father figure. Second, these expressions were grouped into semantic frames based on shared meanings and emotional functions. Third, the identified frames were interpreted in relation to Indonesian cultural values surrounding fatherhood. To deepen the analysis, principles of embodied cognition (Johnson, 2007) were applied to explain how emotional and bodily experiences shape the meanings expressed in the lyrics.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the analysis, interpretations were grounded in direct lyric excerpts and supported by established cognitive linguistic theories. This study does not involve human participants; therefore, no ethical approval was required. The analysis was conducted manually without specialized software. Since the lyrics are originally written in Indonesian, all interpretations were based on the original language, while English translations were provided only when necessary to clarify meaning.

Results

This section presents the descriptive findings of the analysis, focusing on the semantic frames that construct the representation of the father figure in the lyrics of "Cinta Sejati Takkan Mati" by Agus Subianto. Using frame semantics, the analysis identifies linguistic expressions that activate conceptual frames related to paternal

love and emotional relationships. The results are presented in the form of frame identification, key linguistic markers, and their distribution within the song lyrics.

The analysis of the complete song lyrics reveals five primary semantic frames through which the father figure is conceptualized. These frames are activated by recurring lexical choices, metaphors, and evaluative expressions related to paternal roles and emotions. Table 1 summarizes the identified frames, their key linguistic markers, and their frequency of occurrence in the lyrics.

Table 1. Semantic Frames of Fatherhood in "*Cinta Sejati Takkan Mati*"

No.	Semantic Frame	Key Linguistic Markers	Frequent
1	Father as Eternal Love	<i>cinta sejati, takkan mati</i>	3
2	Father as Silent Sacrifice	<i>pengorbanan, mengerti arti</i>	2
3	Father as Living Memory	<i>telah pergi, di sana ayah</i>	2
4	Father as Source of Pride	<i>senyum banggamu</i>	1
5	Father as Eternal Guardian	<i>menjaga, melindungi</i>	2

The distribution shows that the Eternal Love frame appears most frequently, followed by frames related to sacrifice, memory, and protection. This distribution indicates that paternal love is foregrounded as the central conceptual theme of the song.

Each semantic frame is supported by specific lyric excerpts that function as linguistic triggers. Examples of these excerpts are presented below to illustrate how the frames are activated:

Father as Eternal Love

"Ku yakini cinta sejati takkan mati"

Father as Silent Sacrifice

"Kau buatku mengerti arti pengorbanan yang sesungguhnya"

Father as Living Memory

"Kini kau telah pergi, bahagia di sana ayah"

Father as Source of Pride

"Senyum banggamu takkan pernah pudar"

Father as Eternal Guardian

"Segenap hatiku menjagamu... meski tak mampu menyamai cintamu"

These excerpts demonstrate that the father figure is consistently constructed through emotionally charged language that emphasizes endurance, memory, protection, and validation.

The identified frames do not function independently but form an interconnected semantic network. Together, they depict the father as a multidimensional figure whose presence extends beyond physical life through love, memory, and moral guidance. While this section focuses on the identification and distribution of frames, the cultural meanings and theoretical implications of these patterns are discussed in the following section.

The complete lyrics of the song used as the data source are provided in the Appendix to ensure transparency and allow for further reference.

Discussion

The analysis reveals that the father figure in "Cinta Sejati Takkan Mati" is constructed through five interrelated semantic frames: (1) Father as Eternal Love, (2) Father as Silent Sacrifice, (3) Father as Living Memory, (4) Father as Source of Pride, and (5) Father as Eternal Guardian. These frames collectively portray fatherhood not as a single role, but as a multidimensional emotional, moral, and spiritual presence that continues beyond physical life. Rather than functioning independently, the frames form a coherent conceptual network that reflects how paternal love is experienced, remembered, and internalized within Indonesian cultural

1. Father as Eternal Love

"Ku yakini cinta sejati takkan mati" (Subianto, 2025b)

This lyric affirms a deep belief in eternal love, interpreted here as a father's unconditional love for his child. The phrase "*cinta sejati takkan mati*" suggests an emotional bond that transcends time, space, and even death. This love is not romantic but deeply rooted in a parental relationship, grounded in the child's emotional experience. The father's love is constructed as unwavering and permanent—untouched by death or the absence of verbal expression.

In terms of frame semantics, this phrase activates the eternal parental love frame, a conceptual structure of love that is spiritual, enduring, and unconditional. This frame is reinforced by the words "*sejati*" or true and "*takkan mati*" or will never die, which indicate a non-transient, foundational emotional connection. The verb "*yakini*" or believe adds an internal, spiritual conviction, showing that the father's love has been internalized within the child's cognitive system.

From the embodied cognition perspective, this love is experienced not only cognitively but physically—through warm embraces, acts of sacrifice, or the sense of security offered by the father's presence. The child's body holds emotional traces of the father's actions, forming a lived experience of being loved and protected. Thus, the notion of "true love" is not merely symbolic, but somatically felt and psychologically empowering even after the father's death.

A force dynamics perspective in this lyric portrays love as a resisting force that withstands the counterforce of death. Death, which usually exerts an overpowering influence that ends human relationships, is depicted here as ultimately ineffective. The phrase "*takkan mati*" establishes love as the stronger force, persisting despite death's pressure. This configuration illustrates a force-dynamic schema in which love (agonist) continues to prevail against death (antagonist), framing the father's affection as indestructible and eternally dominant.

2. Father as Silent Sacrifice (Subianto, 2025b)

"Kau buatku mengerti arti pengorbanan yang sesungguhnya"

This lyric expresses the child's emotional transformation through an understanding of the father's sacrifice. The phrase *"mengerti"* (understand) implies that this realization is retrospective—emerging from reflection or life experience. It illustrates an emotional learning process in which the father's silent and unspoken sacrifices become clear over time. The father is represented as someone who does not seek praise, but who gives everything sincerely.

According to frame semantics, the phrase *"pengorbanan yang sesungguhnya"* activates the sacrifice frame, composed of elements such as labor, invisibility, and quiet devotion. The father appears as an agent who does not dramatize suffering but fulfills his responsibilities silently and dutifully. This reinforces Indonesian cultural values that associate fatherhood with quiet dedication and the moral virtue of selflessness.

From the embodied standpoint, the father's sacrifices are physically and affectively experienced by the child: the availability of food, clothing, or the father's absence due to work. These are lived realities through which the child experiences love. The child's body remembers sacrifice as a sensation of comfort produced by the father's labor, making it a deeply embedded, affective memory of nurturing through silence.

Sacrifice is conceptualized as the agonist (the father's will to provide) that persists despite multiple antagonistic counterforces such as fatigue, economic hardship, or personal desire. The lyric shows how the father's agency overcomes these pressures without visible complaint, framing sacrifice as an invisible but powerful force that silently shapes the child's life. The absence of dramatization does not weaken the force but rather highlights its enduring strength and resilience (Rahmah, 2025). The lyric positions paternal sacrifice as a quiet but resilient force that triumphs over hardship, thereby framing fatherhood as an embodied, cultural, and force-dynamic expression of selfless love.

3. Father as Living Memory

"Kini kau telah pergi... Bahagia di sana ayah" (Subianto, 2025b)

This lyric conveys a sense of loss expressed with gentle spiritual undertones. The phrase *"bahagia di sana"* does not merely refer to a physical place but signifies the father's continued spiritual existence. It constructs a narrative in which death is not the end of the relationship, but a transition into another form of emotional connection. The father remains present through memories and prayers, enabling communication across realms.

Within frame semantics, this lyric activates the spiritual continuity frame, referring to the persistence of emotional ties beyond death through spiritual and affective practices. The father's presence is reimagined as internal and spiritual, rather than physical. The phrase also implies that the child accepts the father's death as a religious destiny while maintaining the bond through symbolic acts such as

remembrance and prayer.

In terms of embodied cognition, the memory of the father lives not only in thought but also in bodily experience—through smells, sounds, or routines that evoke his presence. Even simple actions such as praying or listening to this song can become embodied affective experiences that extend the emotional relationship. Thus, the father becomes a spiritual presence that invisibly continues to accompany the child's everyday life.

Death is portrayed as an antagonistic force attempting to impose separation between father and child. However, the counterforce of memory, prayer, and faith resists this rupture, allowing the relationship to persist. The phrase "*bahagia di sana*" reinterprets death not as annihilation but as transformation, in which the father's existence shifts into a spiritual domain. These dynamic reveals that emotional and spiritual forces can prevail against the separation imposed by death, sustaining the continuity of the father-child bond. The lyric "*Kini kau telah pergi... Bahagia di sana ayah*" frames death as a transformative rather than destructive force, where memory, prayer, and faith dynamically counter separation, sustaining the father-child bond across spiritual realms.

4. Father as Source of Pride

"Senyum banggamu takkan pernah pudar" (Subianto, 2025b)

This lyric implies that the father's pride is a foundational source of the child's self-esteem. The father's smile is not just a facial expression but a symbol of validation for the child's existence and accomplishments. It conveys that the father's emotional approval plays a profound role in shaping the child's self-concept. The memory of that smile becomes a motivational force throughout the child's life.

Using frame semantics, this phrase activates the validation frame, a meaning structure associated with acceptance, recognition, and affirmation. In this context, the father is not merely an authority figure, but the ultimate judge of the child's worth. His validation has deep psychological and cultural significance, especially in societies that regard the father as a moral and symbolic leader of the family.

Embodiedly, the father's smile becomes a powerful emotional source felt by the child as an affective impulse. Every achievement or life milestone feels as if it is done to "bring back" that smile. The child's body responds through confidence, drive, and motivation rooted in the memory of paternal approval. Thus, the father's validation shapes not only cognition but also how the child moves, strives, and interprets life.

The father's smile operates as a sustaining force (agonist) that endures against potential antagonistic pressures such as failure, doubt, or external criticism. The phrase "*takkan pernah pudar*" emphasizes its resilience: even when life presents obstacles, the memory of paternal pride continues to empower and stabilize the child's identity. Here, validation is not a fleeting gesture but a persistent energy that overcomes destabilizing forces and frames self-esteem as an enduring inheritance. The lyric constructs paternal pride as an enduring motivational force that

dynamically resists doubt and failure, establishing fatherly validation as a lasting foundation for the child's identity and resilience.

5. Father as Eternal Guardian

"Segenap hatiku menjagamu... meski tak mampu menyamai cintamu" (Subianto, 2025b)

This lyric portrays the child's emotional effort to reciprocate the father's protection, coupled with an acknowledgment of the unmatched greatness of paternal love. It reflects both humility and deep reverence. The lyric reveals an emotional awareness that, no matter how hard the child tries, the father's love remains superior and inimitable. This highlights an internalized emotional hierarchy of paternal devotion.

In frame semantics, the lyric activates the guardian frame, where the father is the primary protector, whose influence remains imprinted on the child's life. The desire to "guard" reflects the internalization of paternal protective values and represents a tribute to the moral and emotional legacy the father left behind.

From the perspective of embodied cognition, this protection is remembered and relived through the child's actions, caring for family, being strong, or being present for others, just as the father once did. The father's love is experienced through the body, feelings of safety, peace, and comfort—which the child now wishes to replicate, albeit knowing it will never be the same. In this way, the father's love not only shaped the child's past but becomes a lived, embodied guide in how they live and love others.

This lyric highlights an asymmetrical dynamic: the father's love is represented as the dominant force (agonist), while the child's effort to "guard" is positioned as a weaker counterforce (antagonist) that never fully matches the strength of paternal devotion. Yet, rather than being a failure, this imbalance is embraced with humility. The child's protective force persists within the gravitational pull of paternal love, signifying that even an unequal dynamic can generate continuity, resilience, and reverence. The lyric constructs paternal love as an unsurpassable force that frames the child's protective effort as humble but enduring, demonstrating how emotional hierarchies of love shape identity, devotion, and lived experience.

Across the five frames, a clear pattern emerges: fatherhood is conceptualized as enduring, morally grounded, and spiritually sustained. Love, sacrifice, memory, validation, and protection operate as interconnected dimensions rather than isolated meanings. Silent sacrifice supports eternal love; memory sustains guardianship; validation reinforces emotional continuity. Together, these frames form a holistic representation of fatherhood rooted in Indonesian familial values, where emotional expression is often indirect yet deeply internalized.

Compared to representations of fathers in other Indonesian songs—which often emphasize authority or distance—"Cinta Sejati Takkan Mati" foregrounds emotional intimacy and spiritual continuity. In contrast to many Western conceptualizations that frame fatherhood through independence or emotional

restraint, this song highlights devotion, humility, and moral presence. These differences point to culturally specific models of fatherhood shaped by religious belief, family structure, and collective emotional norms.

The findings also align with previous cognitive linguistic studies on emotion in music, supporting the view that song lyrics function as powerful cultural tools for shaping collective understanding of family relationships. By activating embodied and force-dynamic schemas, the song reinforces social values related to responsibility, gratitude, and emotional resilience.

The conceptualization of paternal love identified in this study has potential implications for music therapy, counseling, and education, particularly in contexts addressing grief, loss, and emotional development. Songs such as "Cinta Sejati Takkan Mati" may serve as expressive resources for articulating emotions that are culturally difficult to verbalize.

While the dominant interpretation emphasizes reverence and continuity, alternative readings may view the song as reinforcing idealized or normative models of fatherhood that may not reflect all lived experiences. This highlights the need for future research examining audience reception and diverse family structures to explore possible tensions or contradictions within such representations.

Conclusion

The lyrics of "Cinta Sejati Takkan Mati" by Agus Subianto function not merely as a personal expression of grief and loss, but also as a cultural text that shapes the conceptual representation of the father figure within emotional and spiritual frames. The analysis grounded in frame semantics reveals that the lyrics construct a complex and interrelated network of meanings, activating multiple semantic frames that portray the father as a multidimensional entity. This affirms that songs are not merely forms of entertainment, but also serve as powerful instruments for the social construction of paternal roles and meanings in society.

The five principal meaning frames identified—father as eternal love, silent sacrifice, spiritual memory, source of validation, and eternal guardian—demonstrate that the representation of the father in this song is holistic. The father is not portrayed merely as a biological figure or familial authority, but rather as a symbol of unconditional love that transcends the boundaries of life and death. These frames reflect deeply embedded cognitive and affective structures within Indonesian culture, wherein paternal love is often not articulated verbally but experienced through meaningful actions, silent devotion, and the transmission of values from father to child.

Overall, this song contributes to a collective understanding that a father's love represents the highest form of love—sacrificial, validating, spiritual, and eternal. The relationship between father and child depicted in the lyrics is not linear or temporal, but transcendent and continuously sustained through the child's memories and actions. As such, the song does not merely convey personal sorrow, but reinforces

cultural narratives surrounding the essential role of fathers in shaping a child's emotional and moral identity. This study illustrates that cognitive linguistic analysis of musical texts can reveal underlying cultural values that shape our understanding of human relationships within both social and spiritual contexts.

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