

Lyrical Expressions of Love and Longing: A Sociocultural Linguistic Analysis of Didi Kempot's Javanese Songs

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Abstract—This study analyzed the sociocultural and linguistic complexity of the expression *kasmaran* (love and longing) in Didi Kempot's Javanese songs, examining how popular music reflects and shapes cultural values. Previous research on Didi Kempot has largely focused on musicological and sociological perspectives, leaving a gap in understanding the linguistic mechanisms through which these emotions are articulated. This study addressed that gap by systematically analyzing the linguistic forms and sociocultural meanings of *kasmaran* in his lyrics using a descriptive qualitative content analysis of selected songs. The findings identified nine linguistic forms of *kasmaran*: love, waiting, longing, seeking, remembering, hoping, reassuring, losing, and loyalty. Direct expressions of "love" (*tresna*) are often not dominant, instead replaced by more nuanced forms. Seven pragmatic meanings were uncovered, portraying the narrator as fragile yet loyal. These meanings include sadness from abandonment, profound longing, hope for return, expectation of a kept promise, pledge of loyalty, resignation, and lasting memory. The sociocultural dimension shows how these expressions embody Javanese values such as *cidra* (broken promise), patience, persistence, and honesty, often portraying men as emotionally vulnerable yet steadfast. The novelty of this research lies in its systematic mapping of the forms and meanings of *kasmaran* linguistically and socioculturally, making it the first to detail how Javanese language constructs emotional resonance in popular music. These findings contribute to cultural linguistics and pragmatics, offering insights into how universal emotions are conceptualized across cultures. Practically, this study underscores the role of popular music in reflecting and negotiating contemporary Javanese identities and values.

Index Terms—cultural values, Didi Kempot, Javanese songs, *kasmaran*, linguistic analysis

I. INTRODUCTION

Popular music serves not only as entertainment but also as a reflection and formation of social and cultural values within society (Barkathunnisha et al., 2019; Jellinek et al., 2019). As Tagg (2015) demonstrates, song lyrics play a crucial role in conveying emotions, framing collective identity, and strengthening cultural affiliations. In this regard, lyrics function as a rich symbolic medium for expressing the complexity of human affect and social dynamics, including romantic relationships, longing, and losing. Likewise, Middleton (1990) asserts that popular music actively shapes ideologies and structures of meaning within society through the symbolic representation embedded in lyrics and sound.

In Indonesia, music has long been integral to the expression of local and regional identities (Wallach, 2008). Within the Javanese cultural context, traditional and contemporary songs serve not only as entertainment but also as vehicles for preserving values, transmitting social norms, and representing the collective inner workings of society (Sutton, 1991). One of the central figures in the contemporary Javanese musical tradition is Didi Kempot, a legendary singer and songwriter from Surakarta, widely known as "*The Godfather of Broken Heart*" or "*Lord of Ambyar*" (Ayu &

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Hariyanto, 2022; Widyawati & Santoso, 2020). Through thousands of Javanese songs addressing themes of love, longing, and heartbreak, Didi Kempot successfully forged emotional bonds across generations and built fan communities with distinct cultural identities, such as “*Sadbois*” and “*Sobat Ambyar*” (Putra et al., 2022; Rachmatdana et al., 2021).

The popularity of Didi Kempot’s works illustrates how the emotional expressions in his lyrics resonate deeply with society, particularly through the use of the Javanese language to convey experiences of love filled with ambiguity, sadness, and hope (Normalita, 2020). His lyrics provide a space for articulating simultaneously personal and cultural emotions, a performative form of identity and affection unique to the contemporary Javanese cultural landscape (Amin, 2012; Hatley, 2015).

Several previous studies have examined the Didi Kempot phenomenon from various perspectives, ranging from musicology and the history of Javanese music to sociological analyses of fan communities and the shifting tastes of young people in popular culture. These studies highlight, among other things, how Didi Kempot frames melancholy within energetic musical compositions and revives appreciation for the Javanese language in the realm of popular music (Achmad et al., 2020; Widyastuti & Fateah, 2024). However, most existing analyses have focused primarily on musical dimensions, performative aspects, or broad thematic narratives, without deeply exploring the linguistic structures underlying the emotional expressions in his lyrics.

A particularly central concept is “*kasmaran*,” a term encompassing a spectrum of emotions such as love, longing, anticipation, and loss, which frequently appears in Didi Kempot’s work. However, this concept has not been extensively examined from a cultural linguistics perspective. Understanding how this emotion is linguistically articulated in Javanese is crucial for uncovering the connection between linguistic form, cultural meaning, and affective experience (Duranti, 1997; Wierzbicka, 2004). As Halliday (1978) points out, language is a means of communication and a socio-semiotic system that reflects and shapes sociocultural structures.

The absence of a comprehensive study on the linguistic forms and sociocultural meanings of “*kasmaran*” in Didi Kempot’s lyrics reveals a significant gap in the literature. This lack of focus on linguistic dimensions limits our understanding of how these lyrics shape, produce, and reflect emotional constructions within a Javanese cultural context. Moreover, language provides a primary window into how a society understands and expresses affection, social relations, and the values that bind them (Botha, 2006; Bueno, 2009; Wallace, 2012).

Against this backdrop, the present study strived to bridge this gap through a sociocultural linguistic analysis of Didi Kempot’s lyrics. The main objective was to systematically examine the forms and meanings of “*kasmaran*” within the context of Javanese culture. The novelty of this research lies in mapping nine forms and seven specific meanings of “*kasmaran*,” analyzed in depth from semantic and pragmatic perspectives within a local cultural framework. Through this approach, the study aims to contribute theoretically and empirically to linguistic and popular culture studies while broadening cross-cultural understanding of how emotion and identity are articulated through language.

II. METHOD

A. Research Design

The present study employed a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. This design enables an in-depth investigation of linguistic phenomena in their natural contexts, thereby capturing the complexity and nuances of emotional expression. A qualitative approach was chosen because it could provide methodological flexibility and allow researchers to uncover subjective meanings and interpretations within linguistic representations (Braun & Clarke, 2025; Hastie & Hay, 2012; Kusumaningsih et al., 2024; Petre & Costa, 2024; Pilcher & Cortazzi, 2024). Meanwhile, descriptive methods focused on detailed explanations of the form, meaning, and context of “*kasmaran*” (love) expressions in song lyrics, without testing statistical hypotheses (Denham & Onwuegbuzie, 2013; Kolb, 2012). This design is particularly well-suited to the study’s objectives, which seek to uncover the essence of affective expression in Didi Kempot’s lyrics through a linguistic and cultural lens.

B. Data and Data Sources

The primary data in this study consist of linguistic units in the form of words, phrases, or clauses found in Didi Kempot’s song lyrics that reflect expressions of *kasmaran*. Both explicit (directly stated) and implicit (implied) expressions were considered, with attention to the linguistic and social contexts underlying their use (Krippendorff, 2013; McLuckie et al., 2013). Accordingly, the analysis did not rely solely on the literal content of the lyrics but also incorporated interpretations of meaning based on sociocultural dimensions. In this regard, purposive sampling aligns with the qualitative research paradigm, as it prioritizes depth of data over broad generalization (Robinson, 2023). Accordingly, the data were drawn from four of Didi Kempot’s MP3 albums, which represent his most popular and comprehensive collections: *Didi Kempot’s Most Popular Full Album* (2020), *Didi Kempot The Best Campursari* (2020), *Didi Kempot: Cidro, Banyu Langit, Pamer Bojo* (2019), and *Didi Kempot’s 17 Best Collection Nonstop* (2017) (Iswatiningsih et al., 2021). From these albums, seven songs were purposively selected because of their consistent richness of emotional expression: *Terminal Tirtanadi* (TT), *Stasiun Balapan* (SB), *Tanjung Mas Ninggal Janji* (TMNJ), *Sewu Kuto* (SK), *Kangen Nickerie* (KN), *Banyu Langit* (BL), and *Tatu* (T).

C. Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected using documentation techniques, which involved intensive listening to song recordings and transcribing the lyrics from album sources. This listening process was complemented by note-taking, a common technique in linguistic studies for systematically identifying relevant linguistic elements (Obrzut & Mahoney, 2011). To ensure data validity, cross-verification was conducted by comparing the lyrics with multiple credible online sources, thereby minimizing transcription errors and ensuring textual accuracy (Antonis, 2014; Bamgbose, 2019). This step also reflects the principle of data triangulation, a key validation strategy in qualitative research (Jentoft & Olsen, 2019). Thus, the documentation process in this study went beyond mere transcription; it involved constructing a reliable database for linguistic and cultural analysis.

D. Data Analysis Technique

The data were analyzed using a content analysis approach, a systematic method for examining texts regarding meaning and symbolism (Krippendorff, 2013). The analytical framework was based on Lasswell's communication model: "Who says what, in which channel, to whom, and with what effect?" (Babaei et al., 2020; Ouiridi et al., 2014; Saliu, 2020; Sapienza et al., 2018; Wei et al., 2022). This approach was applied to explore how emotional messages are constructed in lyrics and how they embody sociocultural values. Furthermore, the analysis employed symbol coding, a technique for identifying, recording, and classifying affectively meaningful linguistic units (Kunnan, 2024). The procedure followed five stages: (1) data source exploration, (2) lyric listening and comprehension, (3) transcription and translation, (4) identification and categorization, and (5) interpretation of meaning. This combined use of linguistic and sociocultural perspectives demonstrates a multidisciplinary strategy for understanding language as a reflection of cultural identity and emotion (Panicacci, 2021).

III. RESULTS

An in-depth analysis of the speech data in Didi Kempot's song lyrics yielded significant findings in two main aspects: (1) the specific forms of expressions of infatuation and (2) the meanings and contexts in which these expressions are used. These results provide insight into how love and longing emotions are expressed linguistically and socioculturally in Didi Kempot's legendary works.

A. Forms of Expression of Infatuation in Didi Kempot's Lyrics

Based on the linguistic analysis of Didi Kempot's song lyrics, nine primary forms of expression of infatuation were identified. Collectively, these forms illustrate the broad spectrum of emotions experienced in romantic relationships, particularly those characterized by longing and anticipation. The nine forms are: (1) love, (2) waiting, (3) longing, (4) seeking, (5) remembering, (6) hoping, (7) reassuring, (8) losing, and (9) loyalty.

Interestingly, although "love" (*tresna* in Javanese) is the essence of *kasmaran*, it is often not directly or explicitly articulated in the lyrics. Instead, the songwriter (or narrator) tends to employ more nuanced and contextual forms of expressing *kasmaran*. For instance, intense waiting for a lover is depicted in the following excerpt.

"Rembulan sing ngilo ono segoro / Padhangono ati kulo / Pujaan hatiku ra teko-teko / Neng Nickerie lali kulo"
(KN/2/Puj/Waiting)

("The moon that reflects in the sea / Illuminates my heart / My beloved never comes / In Nickerie, she forgot me.")

Similarly, longing is vividly portrayed, often accompanied by imagery of sadness:

"Aku nangis, aku kangen / Janjine biyen kowe seneng." (KN/3/Ems/Longing)

("I cry, I miss / The promise was that you were happy.")

Each of these expressions is descriptive and resonates strongly with listeners. A complete overview of the nine expressions of love, along with supporting lyrical excerpts and corresponding linguistic units, is presented in **Table 1**.

TABLE 1
EXPRESSIONS OF LOVE IN DIDI KEMPOT'S JAVANESE SONG LYRICS

No	Forms of Expression	Song Lyrics	Language Units
1	Love	<i>Wis tak coba / Nglaliake / Jenengmu soko atiku / Sak tenane aku ora ngapusi / Isih tresno sliramu (SK/2/Ex/Honest/Loving)</i>	<i>Isih tresno (still love)</i>
2	Waiting	- <i>Rembulan sing ngilo ono segoro / Padhangono ati kulo / Pujaan hatiku ra teko-teko / Neng Nickerie lali kulo (KN/2/Puj/Waiting)</i> - <i>Sepine wengi iki / Neng kene aku ngenteni / Kesuwen-suwene wis pirang sasi (KN/1/Time/Waiting)</i> - <i>Neng Nickerie tak enteni / Gek mulihi neng kene aku ngenteni (KN/4/Tmt/Waiting)</i> - <i>Ning Pelabuhan Tanjung Mas kene / Biyen aku ngaterke kowe / Ning Pelabuhan Semarang kene / Aku tansah ngenteni kowe (TMNJ/3/Place/Waiting)</i>	- <i>Ra teka-teka (never came)</i> - <i>Neng kene aku ngenteni (I've been waiting here)</i> - <i>Neng Nickerie tak enteni (I've been waiting at Nickerie)</i> - <i>Tansah ngenteni (always waiting)</i>
3	Longing	- <i>Aku nangis, aku kangen (KN/3/Ems/Longing)</i> - <i>Semana uga rasane atiku / Mung tansah nunggu tekamu / Ra krasa setaun kowe ninggal aku / Kangen, kangene atiku (TMNJ/2/Time/Longing)</i> - <i>Wis suwe, wis suwe, wis suwe / Kangen sing tak rasakke / Rasane, rasane, rasane / Rasane koyo ngene (TT/2/Longing)</i>	- <i>Aku kangen (I miss)</i> - <i>Kangen, kangen atiku (Longing, my heart longs for you)</i> - <i>Kangen sing tak rasakke (This longing I've been feeling)</i>
4	Seeking	<i>Lungamu neng endi / Pirang tahun anggonku nggoleki / Seprene durung biso nemoni (SK/1/Seeking)</i>	<i>Pirang tahun anggonku ngoleki (For years I've been searching for you)</i>
5	Remembering	<i>Senajan kowe ngilang, ra biso tak sawang / Nanging neng ati tansah kelingan (T/1/Ex/Remembering)</i>	<i>Neng ati tansah kelingan (Still, in my heart, I always remember you)</i>
6	Hoping	- <i>Senajan mung sedela ora dadi ngapa / Penting iso ngademke ati (TMNJ/1/Hoping)</i> - <i>Jare lungo mung sedelo / Malah tanpo kirim warto / Lali opo pancen nglali / Yen eling mbok enggal bali (SB/2/Hoping)</i> - <i>Yo mung siji dadi panyuwunku / Aku pengin ketemu / Senajan waktumu mung sedhela / Kanggo tomo kangen jroning dodo (SK/3/Hoping/Time/Longing)</i>	- <i>Mung sedela ora dadi ngapa (even a moment is fine)</i> - <i>Mbok enggal bali (come back soon)</i> - <i>Siji panyuwunku, pingin ketemu (There's only one wish of mine, I want to meet you)</i>
7	Reassuring	<i>Neng kene, neng kene, neng kene / Aku ngenteni kowe / Aku kangen / Kangenku mung kanggo kowe (TT/3/Reassuring)</i>	<i>Kangen mung kanggo kowe (My longing is only for you)</i>
8	Losing	<i>Ning stasiun balapan / Rasane koyo wong kelangan / Kowe ninggal aku / Ra kroso netes eluh ning pipiku (SB/1/Losing/Crying)</i>	<i>Rasane koyo wong kelangan (It feels like someone who lost everything)</i>
9	Loyalty	<i>Rasane ngitung nganti lali / Wis pirang taun anggonku ngenteni / Ngenteni sliramu (TT/4/Loyalty)</i>	<i>Pirang tahun anggonku ngenteni (For years I've been waiting for you)</i>

B. The Pragmatic Meaning of Love Expressions

The love expressions articulated in the lyrics reflect complex psychological states, often portraying a fragile, tender, yet deeply romantic persona. At the same time, the narrator emphasizes loyalty, trust, and steadfastness toward their beloved, illustrating that they are not easily swayed or broken by unfulfilled promises. An analysis of the pragmatic meanings revealed that the love expressions in Didi Kempot's lyrics predominantly convey loneliness, longing, sadness, anticipation, hope, and resignation in the context of romantic relationships marked by separation.

More specifically, these love expressions could be grouped into seven main meanings: (1) sadness at being abandoned by a lover, (2) longing for a lover, (3) hoping to hear from the lover and for her return, (4) hoping the lover will remain true to their promises, (5) pledging loyalty and affection exclusively to the lover, (6) expressing resignation, and (7) remembering past memories with the lover. The sense of sadness over abandonment is depicted in lyrics that describe loneliness and loss in particular places.

"Ning Stasiun Balapan / Rasane koyo wong kelangan / Kowe ninggal aku / Ra kroso netes eluh ning pipiku."
(SB/1/Losing/Crying)

("At the Balapan train station / It feels like someone who lost everything / You left me / Without realizing it, tears fell down my cheeks.")

Meanwhile, the hope that a lover will keep their promise is conveyed through disappointment at broken commitments.

"Jare lungo mung sedelo / Malah tanpo kirim warto / Lali opo pancen nglali / Yen eling mbok enggal bali."
(SB/2/Hoping)

("You said you were only gone for a short while / Yet you sent no news / Did you forget, or have you truly forgotten? / If you still remember, please come back soon.")

The use of metaphor further intensifies these meanings. For example: *"Sewu kuto uwis tak liwati / Sewu ati tak takoni."* ("I've passed through a thousand cities / I've asked a thousand hearts."). This figurative expression illustrates the exhaustive search for a lost lover, underscoring both the hardship and the emotional desperation of the narrator, while simultaneously engaging the listener's empathy. Comprehensive details of these seven pragmatic meanings, together with the context of the utterances and their interpretations, are presented in **Table 2**.

TABLE 2
PRAGMATIC MEANING AND CONTEXT OF EXPRESSIONS OF LOVE IN DIDI KEMPOT'S JAVANESE SONG LYRICS

No	Meaning of Speech Acts	Song Lyrics	Description
1.	Sadness at being abandoned by a lover	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Angin sing ngreridu ati / Pengen nangis / Ngetokke eluh neng pipi (MEks/PSdh/1/Banyu Langit)</i> - <i>Ning stasiun balapan / Rasane koyo wong kelangan / Kowe ninggal aku / Ra kroso netes eluh ning pipiku (MEks/PSdh/2/Stasiun Balapan)</i> - <i>Semana uga rasane atiku / Mung tansah nunggu tekamu / Ra krasa setaun kowe ninggal aku / Kangen, kangene atiku (MEks/PSdh/3/Tanjung Mas Ninggal Janji)</i> - <i>Rembulan sing ngilo ono segoro / Padhangono ati kulo / Pujaan hatiku ra teko-teko / Neng Nickerie lali kulo (MEks/PSdh/4/Ning Nickerie)</i> - <i>Sewo kuto uwis tak liwati / Sewu ati tak takoni / Nanging kabeh / Podo rangerteni / Lungamu neng endi (MEks/PSdh/5/Sewu Kuto)</i> - <i>Mongso rendeng wis ganti ketigo / Opo kowe ra kroso? (MEks/PSdh/6/Stasiun Tirtonadi)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The narrator feels sad and wants to cry at night when the gentle breeze reminds him of his beloved. - At Balapan Train Station, the narrator sheds tears because he feels lost when his lover leaves him - The narrator feels sorrow because he can only wait for his lover, who has left him for years. - The narrator hopes the moon reflecting on the ocean will illuminate his heart as he waits for his lover, who never returns. - The narrator searches for his lover across many places and asks many hearts, but no one knows where his lover has gone. - He waits for his lover, who has been gone until the third dry season passes.
2.	Longing for a lover	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Aku nangis, aku kangen / Janjine biyen kowe seneng (MEks/PRind/1/Ning Nickerie)</i> - <i>Sepine wengi iki / Neng kene aku ngenteni / Kesuwen-suwene wis pirang sasi / Neng Nickerie kowe ra bali (MEks/PRind/2/Ning Nickerie)</i> - <i>Neng Nickerie tak enteni / Gek muliho neng kene aku ngenteni (MEks/PRind/3/Ning Nickerie)</i> - <i>Pirang tahun anggonku nggoleki / Seprene durung biso nemoni (MEks/PRind/4/Sewu Kuto)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The narrator cries, longing for his lover. - In his loneliness, the narrator longs for his lover and hopes for her return. - The narrator waits for his lover to return to Nickerie. - The narrator has tried to find his lover but has been unable to meet her.
3.	Hoping to hear from the lover and for her return	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Ngalem neng dadaku / Tambanono roso kangen neng atiku (MEks/BPlg/1/Banyu Langit)</i> - <i>Banyu langit / Sing ono nduwur kayangan / Watu gedhe / Kalingan mendunge udan / Telesono / Atine wong sing kasmaran (MEks/BPlg/2/Banyu Langit)</i> - <i>Jare lungu mung sedelo / Malah tanpo kirim warto (MEks/BPlg/3/Stasiun Balapan)</i> - <i>Lali opo pancen nglali / Yen eling mbok enggal bali (MEks/BPlg/4/Stasiun Balapan)</i> - <i>Opo kowe ra kroso? / Yen kowe iseh seneng lan tresno / Kudune kowe kroso (MEks/BPlg/4/Stasiun Tirtonadi)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The narrator hopes his lover will embrace him to soothe his longing. - The narrator hopes the rain will wet and cool his heart, which is filled with love. - The narrator hopes his lover will send news of his whereabouts, even if only briefly. - The narrator hopes his lover will return soon if she still remembers him. - The narrator wonders if his lover still loves him and hopes she will remember him.
4.	Hoping the lover will keep their promises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Tanganmu tak kanthi / Kowe ngucap janji / Lungo mesti bali (MEks/TJanji/1/Stasiun Tirtonadi)</i> - <i>Janji lungu mung sedelo / Jare sewulan ra ono / Pamitmu naliko semono / Ning Stasiun Balapan Solo (MEks/TJanji/2/Stasiun Balapan)</i> - <i>Janjine lungane ra nganti suwe suwe / Pamit esuk lungane ra nganti sore / Janjine lungu ra nganti semene suwene (MEks/TJanji/3/Banyu Langit/)</i> - <i>Aku sih kelingan nalika ing pelabuhan / Kowe janji lunga ra ana sewulan / Nanging saiki wes luwih ing janji / Nyatane kowe ora bali-bali (MEks/TJanji/4/Tanjung Mas Ninggal Janji)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The narrator reminds his lover of the promise she made before leaving. - At the Solo Balapan Train Station, the narrator's lover promised she would not be gone for more than a month. - The narrator's lover promised him not to be away for too long when she left. - At Tanjung Mas Harbor, the narrator's lover promised to be away for less than a month, but now she has not returned.
5.	Promising loyalty and love	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Ora lamis / Gedhene nggonku nresnani (MEks/JSet/1/Banyu Langit)</i> - <i>Telesono / Atine wong sing kasmaran / Setyo janji / Seprene tansah kelingan (MEks/JSet/2/Banyu Langit)</i> - <i>Gedhene nggonku nresnani / Nganti kapan / Aku ora biso lali (MEks/JSet/3/Banyu Langit)</i> - <i>Rasane ngitung nganti lali / Wis pirang taun anggonku ngenteni (MEks/JSet/4/Stasiun Tirtonadi)</i> - <i>Ning Pelabuhan Tanjung Mas kene / Biyen aku ngaterke kowe / Ning Pelabuhan Semarang kene / Aku tansah ngenteni kowe (MEks/JSet/5/Tanjung Mas Ninggal Janji)</i> - <i>Wis tak coba / Nglaliake / Jenengmu soko atiku / Sak tenane aku ora ngapusi / Isih tresno sliramu (MEks/JSet/6/Sewu Kuto)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The narrator assures his lover that his love is sincere and deep. - The narrator assures his lover of his loyalty and constant remembrance. - The narrator declares that his love and longing are only for her. - The narrator loses track of time while waiting for his lover for many years. - At Tanjung Mas Harbor, the narrator once saw his lover off, and he continues to wait there for her. - The narrator has tried to forget his lover, but his heart still longs for her.
6.	Expressing an attitude of resignation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Ngenteni sliramu / Neng kene tak tunggu / Nganti sak elingmu (MEks/SPsrh/1/Stasiun Tirtonadi)</i> - <i>Nganti kapan tak enteni sak tekane (MEks/SPsrh/2/Banyu Langit)</i> - <i>Umpamane kowe uwis mulyo / Lilo aku lilo / Yo mung siji dadi panyuwunku / Aku pengin ketemu / Senajan waktumu mung sedhela / Kanggo tomo kangen jroning dodo (MEks/SPsrh/3/Sewu Kuto)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The narrator will continue to wait for his lover until she remembers him. - The narrator will wait for his lover no matter how long it takes. - The narrator accepts his lover's absence but still hopes to see her, even if only for a moment, to ease his longing.
7.	Always remember the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Nalikane ing Tirtonadi / Ngenteni tekane bis wayah wengi / Tanganmu tak kanthi / Kowe ngucap janji / Lungo mesti bali</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The narrator recalls waiting for the bus on the night of his lover's departure, when she

memories with your lover.	(MEks/Kengn/1/Stasiun Tirtonadi) - Ning stasiun Balapan / Kuto Solo sing dadi kenangan / Kowe karo aku / Naliko ngeterke lungamu (MEks/Kengn/2/Stasiun Balapan)	promised to return. - At the Solo Balapan Train Station, the narrator recalls seeing his lover off.
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C. Sociocultural Dimensions in Expressions of Love

Didi Kempot's song lyrics not only articulate individual emotions but also embody profound sociocultural dimensions, particularly in their representation of *cidra* (Javanese for "broken promises") within romantic relationships. The sociocultural findings can be broadly categorized into three aspects: (1) gender (predominantly male narrators), (2) setting (notably *Stasiun Balapan*, *Stasiun Tirtonadi*, and *Pelabuhan Tanjung Mas*), and (3) attitudes of the characters represented in the songs. Male characters in Didi Kempot's lyrics are often portrayed as fragile and emotionally vulnerable, "crybabies" (easily moved to tears), yet simultaneously steadfast, empathetic, loyal, and deeply committed to keeping their promises. This representation reflects traditional Javanese values such as patience (*sabar*), protection (*ngayomi*), universal love (*nresnani marang sapodo-podo*), honesty, devotion, and responsibility.

For example, expressions of crying in public spaces such as train stations, which frequently occur in the lyrics, demonstrate the openness of male characters in expressing sadness. While this may contrast with Western stereotypes of masculinity, it is culturally acceptable and resonates strongly within the Javanese context.

"Ning Stasiun Balapan / Rasane koyo wong kelangan / Kowe ninggal aku / Ra kroso netes eluh ning pipiku."
(MEks/PSdh/2/Stasiun Balapan)

("At the Balapan train station / It feels like someone who lost everything / You left me / Without realizing it, tears fell down my cheeks.")

This excerpt illustrates how specific settings evoke bitter memories, while also showing the courage of men who openly express sorrow. Similarly, waiting for years or traveling through *sewu kuto* (a thousand cities) in search of a lover reflects persistence, resilience, and patience, which are highly valued virtues in Javanese society.

"Sewu kuto uwis tak liwati / Sewu ati tak takoni / Nanging kabeh / Podo rangerteni / Lungamu neng endi."
(MEks/PSdh/5/Sewu Kuto)

("I've passed through a thousand cities / I've asked a thousand hearts / But all of them / Do not know / Where you have gone.")

Geographical references such as "Nglanggeran," "Gunung Kidul," and "Yogyakarta" in *Banyu Langit*, or repeated mentions of stations and ports, further emphasize local nuances and ground the songs in authentic lived experiences. These cultural markers make the narratives feel deeply relatable to Javanese audiences. Thus, Didi Kempot's lyrics can be understood as both emotional expressions and cultural texts, rich in references that reinforce the meaning of "being in love" from a distinctly Javanese sociocultural perspective. More detailed contextual evidence and interpretations are presented in **Table 3**.

TABLE 3
SOCIOCULTURAL CONTEXT IN DIDDI KEMPOT'S JAVANESE SONG LYRICS

Song Lyrics	Sociocultural Context	Interpretation
<i>Angin sing ngreridu ati / Penge nanging / Ngetokke eluh neng pipi</i> (MEks/PSdh/1/Banyu Langit)	A man expresses the urge to cry.	The narrator feels sadness at night; the gentle breeze reminds him of his beloved and brings him to tears.
<i>Ning stasiun balapan / Rasane koyo wong kelangan / Kowe ninggal aku / Ra kroso netes eluh ning pipiku</i> (MEks/PSdh/2/Stasiun Balapan)	A man sheds tears.	At Balapan Train Station, the narrator feels abandoned, like someone who has lost everything, and sheds tears.
<i>Semana uga rasane atiku / Mung tansah nunggu tekamu / Ra krasa setaun kowe ninggal aku / Kangen, kangene atiku</i> (MEks/PSdh/3/Tanjung Mas Ninggal Janji)	A loyal man waiting for his lover for years.	The sadness of waiting endlessly; it does not feel like years have passed since the lover left.
<i>Sewo kuto uwis tak liwati / Sewu ati tak takoni / Nanging kabeh / Podo rangerteni / Lungamu neng endi</i> (MEks/PSdh/5/Sewu Kuto)	Life attitude: persistence; never giving up.	The narrator searches for his lover in many places, but the lover cannot be found.
<i>Mongso rendeng wis ganti ketigo / Opo kowe ra kroso?</i> (MEks/PSdh/6/Stasiun Tirtonadi)	A man patiently waits for his lover to come back through three seasons.	The narrator expresses endurance, waiting loyally even as the seasons change.
<i>Neng kene, neng kene, neng kene / Aku ngenteni kowe / Aku kangen</i> (MEks/PSdh/7/Stasiun Tirtonadi)	A man loyally waiting at his place of origin.	The narrator continues to wait despite being abandoned for a long time, expressing homesickness and loyalty.
<i>Sepine wengi iki / Neng kene aku ngenteni / Kesuwen-suwene wis pirang sasi / Neng Nickerie kowe ra bali</i> (MEks/PRind/2/Ning Nickerie)	A man continues waiting, though months have passed without his lover returning.	In loneliness, the narrator longs for his lover and hopes she will return soon.
<i>Pirang tahun anggonku nggoleki / Seprene durung biso nemoni</i> (MEks/PRind/4/Sewu Kuto)	Life attitude: caring.	The narrator has searched for years but still cannot meet his lover.
<i>Ngalem neng dadaku / Tambanono roso kangen neng atiku</i> (MEks/BPlg/1/Banyu Langit)	Setting: Banyu Langit, Nglanggeran Village, Gunung Kidul, Yogyakarta	The narrator hopes his lover will embrace him to cure his longing.
<i>Banyu langit / Sing ono nduwur kayangan / Watu gedhe / Kalingan mendunge udan / Telesono / Atine wong sing kasmaran</i> (MEks/BPlg/2/Banyu Langit)	Hope for rain to cool a heart filled with love.	These lyrics express a deep wish or prayer.

<i>Jare lungo mung sedelo / Malah tanpo kirim warto (MEks/BPlg/3/Stasiun Balapan)</i>	Life attitude: maintaining connection and loyalty.	The narrator hopes his lover will send news of her whereabouts, even briefly.
<i>Lali opo pancen nglali / Yen eling mbok enggal bali (MEks/BPlg/4/Stasiun Balapan)</i>	Life attitude: keeping promises, waiting.	The narrator hopes his lover will return soon if she still remembers him.
<i>Opo kowe ra kroso? / Yen kowe iseh seneng lan tresno / Kudune kowe kroso (MEks/BPlg/4/Stasiun Tirtonadi)</i>	Life attitude: sense of empathy.	The narrator reassures himself that his lover still loves him and hopes she remembers him.
<i>Tanganmu tak kanthi / Kowe ngucap janji / Lungo mesti bali (MEks/TJanji/1/Stasiun Tirtonadi)</i>	Life attitude: keeping promises.	The narrator reminds his lover of the promise made before leaving.
<i>Janji lungo mung sedelo / Jare sewulan ra ono / Pamitmu naliko semono / Ning Stasiun Balapan Solo (MEks/TJanji/2/Stasiun Balapan)</i>	Setting: Balapan Train Station.	At Solo Balapan Train Station, the lover promised that her departure would not last more than a month.
<i>Janjine lungane ra nganti suwe suwe / Pamit esuk lungane ra nganti sore / Janjine lungo ra nganti semene suwene (MEks/TJanji/3/Banyu Langit)</i>	Life attitude: keeping promises.	The lover promised not to be away for too long.
<i>Aku sih kelingan nalika ing pelabuhan / Kowe janji lunga ra ana sewulan / Nanging saiki wes luwih ing janji / Nyatane kowe ora bali-bali (MEks/TJanji/4/Tanjung Mas Ninggal Janji)</i>	Setting: Harbor	At Tanjung Mas Harbor, the lover promised not to be gone for long (less than a month).
<i>Gedhene nggonku nresnani / Nganti kapan / Aku ora biso lali (MEks/JSet/3/Banyu Langit)</i>	Life attitude: loyalty.	The narrator's great love makes him unable to forget his lover.
<i>Aku kangen / Kangenku mung kanggo kowe (MEks/JSet/3/Stasiun Tirtonadi)</i>	Life attitude: loyalty.	The narrator's longing is only for his lover.
<i>Ning Pelabuhan Tanjung Mas kene / Biyen aku ngaterke kowe / Ning Pelabuhan Semarang kene / Aku tansah ngenteni kowe (MEks/JSet/5/Tanjung Mas Ninggal Janji)</i>	Setting: Tanjung Mas Harbor	At Tanjung Mas Harbor, the narrator once sent his lover off, and in the same place, he still waits.
<i>Wis tak coba / Nglaliake / Jenengmu soko atiku / Sak tenane aku ora ngapusi / Isih tresno sliramu (MEks/JSet/6/Sewu Kut)</i>	Life attitude: honesty.	The narrator has tried to forget his lover, but still truly loves her.
<i>Ngenteni sliramu / Neng kene tak tunggu / Nganti sak elingmu (MEks/SPsrh/1/Stasiun Tirtonadi)</i>	Life attitude: loyalty.	The narrator will keep waiting indefinitely until the lover chooses to return.
<i>Umpamane kowe uwis mulyo / Lilo aku lilo / Yo mung siji dadi panyuwunku / Aku pengin ketemu / Senajan waktumu mung sedhela / Kanggo tomo kangen jroning dodo (MEks/SPsrh/3/Sewu Kuto)</i>	Attitude to life: resignation.	The narrator accepts that his lover may not return but hopes to meet even briefly to ease his longing.
<i>Nalikane ing Tirtonadi / Ngenteni tekane bis wayah wengi / Tanganmu tak kanthi / Kowe ngucap janji / Lungo mesti bali (MEks/Kengn/1/Stasiun Tirtonadi)</i>	Setting: Tirtonadi Bus Station	The narrator recalls memories of waiting for the bus on the night of departure and the promise of return.
<i>Ning stasiun Balapan / Kuto Solo sing dadi kenangan / Kowe karo aku / Naliko ngeterke lungamu (MEks/Kengn/2/Stasiun Balapan)</i>	Setting: Balapan Train Station	At Solo Balapan Train Station, the narrator recalls the memory of accompanying his lover's departure.

IV. DISCUSSION

Through sociocultural linguistic analysis, this study investigated the lyrical expressions of love and longing (*kasmaran*) in Didi Kempot's Javanese songs. The findings revealed nine specific forms of *kasmaran* expressions and seven pragmatic meanings, all closely intertwined with the Javanese sociocultural context. This discussion interprets these findings by connecting them to previous literature, outlining implications, highlighting novelties, and proposing future research directions.

One key finding is the diversity of *kasmaran* expressions that extend beyond explicit declarations of love. The rarity of direct expressions such as *tresna* and their substitution with symbolic acts such as waiting, longing, and loyalty reflect Javanese cultural values emphasizing feeling, politeness (*unggah-ungguh*), and indirect communication. This finding aligns with Wierzbicka's (1999) argument that culture and language strongly shape emotional expressions, which are not always conveyed directly. In collectivist cultural contexts such as Java, avoiding explicit verbal expressions often serves to maintain social harmony and interpersonal relations (Arndt & Janney, 1985; Mongrain & Vettese, 2003; Morris & Keltner, 2000; Ting-Toomey, 1994).

Furthermore, these findings confirm that language is not neutral but embodies cultural values inherent in the communities where it is used (Halliday, 1978). As Kecskes (2014, 2021, 2023) notes, lexical choices reflect cultural perspectives on the affective world. In this case, the concept of *kasmaran* is subtly mediated through pragmatic structures embodying Javanese politeness and spirituality norms. Lyrics such as "*Kanggo tomo kangen jroning dodo*" ("To be a cure for the longing inside my heart") convey deep affection through empathetic and melancholic aesthetics, consistent with the characteristics of poetic pragmatics in song lyrics (Sternberg, 1991; Warner, 2023).

The analysis of pragmatic meaning also uncovers a distinctive narrative persona in Didi Kempot's lyrics; one that is loyal, emotionally vulnerable, and reflective. This challenges universalistic notions of hegemonic masculinity (Jefferson, 2008; Messerschmidt, 2019; Morrell et al., 2012) and supports the view that masculinity is contextual and negotiable through cultural practices. In this context, the portrayal of the "whiny but loyal" Javanese man has emerged as an accepted masculine ideal, as reflected in subcultures such as "*Sadbois*" and "*Sobat Ambyar*" (Mantara, 2022). This supports Foucault's (2025) claim that identity is not fixed but discursively constructed in cultural spaces such as popular music.

Lyrics like “*Sewu kuto uwis tak liwati*” (“I’ve passed through a thousand cities”) highlight the aesthetic value of hyperbole and metaphor, deepening their affective resonance. These metaphors bridge personal experiences and collective meaning, as explained in conceptual metaphor theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 2020), where emotions are constructed through spatial, temporal, and movement-based imagery.

The theme of *cidra* (broken promise) also holds profound sociocultural significance. In Javanese culture, *cidra* is both an emotional betrayal and a violation of ethical and spiritual norms in social relations. Didi Kempot’s lyrics consistently depict *cidra* as an emotional and moral wound, underscoring the importance of honesty and loyalty in traditional Javanese society (Andriyanto et al., 2022). This illustrates how popular music reflects cultural values and functions as a discursive arena where social norms are renegotiated (Gross & Vostroknutov, 2022).

The novelty of this study lies in the systematic identification and mapping of nine forms and seven meanings of *kasmaran* through a holistic sociocultural linguistic approach. While previous research has largely focused on musical or sociological aspects (Putro et al., 2025; Sutopo, 2022), this study contributes conceptually by demonstrating how lexical choices, syntactic structures, and pragmatic strategies concurrently construct cultural emotions. It further enriches cultural linguistics theory (Sharifian, 2017), emphasizing that language is inseparable from its speaking communities’ belief systems and values.

Theoretically, these findings reinforce the view that emotional expression in language is a form of cultural representation codified through linguistic and pragmatic structures (Travis & Cacoullos, 2020; Verschuere, 2009). Methodologically, the sociocultural linguistic analysis model developed in the present study can be replicated in cross-cultural research to examine how affect is linguistically constructed across diverse cultural contexts.

From a practical and sociocultural perspective, this study highlights music as a medium for transmitting social values and cultural identity. Didi Kempot’s “*Sadbois*” persona reflects shifting emotional and gender norms, opening new opportunities for research on contemporary masculinity in Southeast Asia. This is relevant not only for scholars but also for artists, educators, and policymakers seeking to understand the role of popular culture in shaping values and social reflection (Fiske, 2010).

Nonetheless, this study has several limitations. *First*, its corpus is limited to seven representative songs, which may not capture the full spectrum of *kasmaran* in Didi Kempot’s oeuvre. *Second*, the exclusive focus on lyrics as written texts overlooks performative elements such as melody, prosody, and visual expression in live performances (Frith & Kitzinger, 1998). *Third*, the absence of audience reception analysis excludes emic perspectives on meaning-making (Vase et al., 2012). Future research should therefore incorporate multimodal approaches, broaden the corpus, and employ reception studies to capture listeners’ lived experiences, including cross-cultural comparisons of emotional articulations in music.

V. CONCLUSION

This research has demonstrated how Didi Kempot’s songs uniquely articulate and reflect lyrical expressions of love and longing (*kasmaran*) within a Javanese cultural context. Through a sociocultural linguistic analysis, the researchers identified nine distinct forms of *kasmaran* expression, ranging from love, waiting, and longing, to loyalty, which are frequently conveyed indirectly rather than explicitly. This pattern underscores the Javanese cultural preference for nuanced and implicit emotional expression. Furthermore, a pragmatic analysis revealed seven primary meanings of these expressions, spanning an emotional spectrum from profound sadness to resignation. These findings highlight the complex persona of the narrator: a man who, despite his vulnerability and melancholy, remains steadfast in loyalty and commitment. This representation, which contrasts with certain stereotypes of masculinity widely associated with the “*Sadbois*” and “*Sobat Ambyar*” phenomena, illustrates how Didi Kempot’s lyrics negotiate and reflect contemporary social norms and emotional identities. From a sociocultural perspective, the lyrics are imbued with cultural meanings, particularly the concept of *cidra* (broken promises) and the use of specific settings as emotional markers. The novelty of this research lies in its systematic mapping of the forms and meanings of *kasmaran* expressions linguistically and socioculturally, thereby filling a gap in the literature, which has tended to focus more on musical aspects or general sociological impacts. In short, this study affirms that Didi Kempot’s songs constitute a rich medium that extends beyond entertainment, serving to reflect and construct Javanese cultural values in the expression of affection. The implications include theoretical contributions to cultural linguistics and practical relevance for understanding popular culture as a vehicle for transmitting values. Despite its limited corpus and textual focus, this study opens pathways for future multimodal and audience reception research to further enrich our understanding of the complex interplay between language, emotion, and identity in art.

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