



## Social Criticism of Discrimination in the Song *Le Poète Noir* by Kery James

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### Info d'article

*Histoire de l'Article :*

Reçu août 2023

Accepté septembre 2023

Publié octobre 2023

*Keywords :*

*Critics ; Kery James ; Le*

*Poète Noir ; Metaphore ;*

*Racial discrimination*

### Abstract

The issue of social discrimination against minorities is still a sensitive issue that seems difficult to resolve. France is one country with a high level of racial discrimination (RFI, 2023) and Kery James, a rapper, often raises issues of racism in his songs, such as in "Le Poète Noir" that implicitly criticizes racial discrimination against minorities, following the tradition of using music to highlight social issues, including the problem of racial discrimination. This research aims to show the opposition to social discrimination discourse through the selection of diction and the use of language styles as a medium of focalization of discriminated minorities in the lyrics of the song "Le Poète Noir" by Kery James. Through using the qualitative method and a literature study technique, this research uses Schmitt & Viala's structural theory of poetry (1982), Leech's theory of componential analysing of meaning (1982), and Baron & Byrne's theory of discrimination activity (1997). It was found that the existence of social criticism about discrimination is shown through the dominant use of alliteration, assonance, and metaphor to support the description and feeling of suffering and the struggle through criticism of opposing acts of racial discrimination.

### Extrait

La question de la discrimination sociale à l'égard des minorités reste une question délicate et encore difficile à résoudre. Dans cette optique, la France est l'un des pays à haut niveau de discrimination raciale (RFI, 2023) Kery James, rappeur, soulève souvent des questions de racisme dans ses chansons, comme dans « Le Poète Noir » qui critique implicitement la discrimination raciale contre les minorités. Dans ce cas, la musique peut être un moyen de transmettre une critique des problèmes sociaux qui se produisent dans la société, y compris le problème de la discrimination raciale. Cette recherche vise à montrer la résistance du discours sur la discrimination sociale à travers le choix de la diction et l'utilisation de styles linguistiques comme moyen de focalisation des minorités discriminées dans les paroles de la chanson « Le Poète Noir » de Kery James. Grâce à une méthode qualitative avec une technique d'étude de la littérature, cette recherche utilise la théorie structurelle de la poésie de Schmitt & Viala (1982), la théorie de Leech de l'analyse composantielle du sens (1982) et la théorie de l'activité de discrimination de Baron & Byrne (1997). Il a été constaté que l'existence d'une critique sociale de la discrimination est démontrée par l'utilisation dominante de l'allitération, de l'assonance et de la métaphore dans la chanson pour soutenir le sens de la souffrance et de la lutte comme une forme de critique des actes de discrimination raciale.

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ISSN 2252-6730

## INTRODUCTION

Rap music became one of the most popular genres of music in the 1990s. Rap music developed during the heyday of hip-hop culture which was often labeled and criticized as "violent", "sexist", and "noisy". Criticism of rap music intensified in the 1990s. This was triggered by the birth of a new genre, namely "gangster rap" which was considered extremely violent and sexist. Keyes (2002) reveals that the rap music genre is not static, but a genre that has evolved into several other sub-genres. Green (2008) states that rap and metal music became provocations and drivers in showing a concept and style that was introduced as a new musical experience and musical value. Hip-hop rap songs are often chosen as intermediaries in propagating condemnation of social discrimination, such as race, religion, and social status in French society. A song is a series of words capable of conveying a message to listeners and consists of an intro, pre-chorus, chorus/refrain and outro. Not infrequently, there is repetition in the refrain, which is the core of the song, so that it can be more appreciated by listeners.

Hammou (2020) revealed that French rap music developed as a medium of social criticism since the early 2000s which was used as a medium for racial political debate, such as the growth of Islamophobia and a medium for social criticism. Some of them come from minorities living in the banlieue region as revealed by Horvath (2022), and one of them is Alix Mathurin or Kery James, a French rapper born on December 28, 1977 in Abymes, Guadelupe whose parents are haitiens and who was born and raised in Haiti. When he was 7 years old, Kery James, his mother and younger sister left Guadelupe and settled in the French métropolitaine. Kery James lived a hard life in Orly, the banlieue parisienne. He was introduced to rap music when he was 11 years old, when he wrote his first lyrics about racism. In a radio broadcast by radiofrance titled Signé: le poète noir Kery James (2020), he revealed that his childhood as an immigrant was faced with two choices: imprisonment or death. However, he still holds on to his identity as a Muslim immigrant in the banlieue region. He believes that no one is destined to fail. That moment was the beginning of his work as a critique of racism. One of his songs, *Lettre à la République* (2012), was very successful and was watched 8 million times on Youtube and other media. It even became the background for the song used in the movie entitled "banlieusards". Kery James is the founder of *l'association ACES (Apprendre, comprendre, entreprendre, et servir)* and his song *Le Poète Noir*, first released in 2022, implicitly criticizes racial discrimination against minorities. The song has poetry-like lyrics, as reflected in its title and which can be seen through the use of figurative language in each stanza. Kery James' typical poetic expression becomes a form of conveying his criticism of discrimination.

Nida (1964) states that a song is poetry set to music. Song lyrics are interpreted as poetry in which melody and tone are inserted so that the recitation of the words is accompanied by music. Pradopo (2010) argues that poetry needs to be studied as a meaningful and aesthetically valuable element. In his study, Riffaterre (1971) said that a text must be studied through several elements including poetic metre, sound, grammar, and a system of signs in a group unit. Thus, the structural study of poetry includes four aspects, namely language sound, metrics, syntax, and semantics, as stated by Schmitt & Viala (1982). The study of the poetic song *Le Poète Noir* (2022) by Kery James includes aspects of poetic structure, components of song meaning, use of diction, and language style to see the presence of criticism of discrimination against minorities referring to race and social background.

In respect of the semantic aspect, it is not uncommon for the use of language styles to intersect. Keraf (2010) explains that language style is a way of using language, and according to him, the use of language style is able to reveal the personal value, character, and ability of the language user. Thus, it can be understood that language style is used to express ideas, feelings, and ideas through the use of language to generate a profound effect. Referring to Kalandadze (2018), language style is used in modifying and giving meaning to a word or idea through comparison with other things. On the other hand, the meaning formed can be seen through lexical units with the same domain and is referred to as the meaning field, as explained by Polguère (2001).

These four aspects include sound, metric, syntactic, and semantic aspects. In the sound aspect, Peyrouet (1994) explains that harmony comes from a pleasant meeting of sounds and contains vowels, consonants, syllables, phonetic units that combine one or more phonemes in the language field. He classifies sounds into two types including vowel sounds and consonant sounds in the following table.

**Table 1.** Vowel Sound Effects (*les voyelles*)

Type	Effect
<i>Aigues</i> (sharp): i[i]; u[ɥ]	strength of voice, screams, and sharpness of feeling
<i>Claïres</i> (clear): é[e]; è[ɛ]; eu[ø]; in[ɛ̃]	gentleness, flexibility, dexterity, sincerity, and playfulness
<i>Éclatantes</i> (loud): a[a]; o[ɔ]; eu[œ]; e[ə]; an[ɑ̃]; un[ɔ̃]	loud sound, faint sound when nasal vowels, strong feelings, and sentimentality
<i>Sombres</i> (gloomy): ou[u]; o[o]; on[ɔ̃]	stifled, rumbling, stiff, serious, and sad sounds

**Table 2.** Consonant Sound Effects (*les consonnes momentuées*)

Type	Effect
<i>Sourdes</i> (restrained): p[p]; t[t]; c[k]	sounds like blows in the air, and explosive sounds
<i>Sonores</i> (sound): b[b]; d[d]; g[g]	rigid sounds and movements, such as anger, basic sarcasm

**Table 3.** Consonant Sound Effects (*les consonnes continuées*)

Type	Effect
<i>Nasal</i> (nasal): m[m]; n[n]	soft, softness, close to nasal sound
<i>Liquid</i> (slippery): l[l]	slippery, liquid
<i>Vibrante</i> (vibrate): r[r]	rears and rumbles.
<i>Spirante</i> (sizzle): f[f]; v[v]; s[s]; ch[ʃ]; j[ʒ]; iyod[j]	express soft breaths; spirante dentale [s] and [z] express blowing, swishing, disdain, annoyance, sarcasm; hissing sounds [ʃ] and [ʒ] express annoyance, disdain and anger.

Explaining metric aspects, Nayrolles (1996) says that free verse rejects all the traditional rules of poetry. The rules that include them are a definite number of syllables, no coupe (short pause) and embodiment rules. Nayrolles (1996) describes that free poetry is built from various rules, including rhythm (*le rythme*), music (*la musique*), force of the words (*une force des mots*), and the verse (*le verset*). The syntactic aspect, Le Querler (1994) explains, depends on sentence functions that are divided into two categories, primary and secondary. The primary function is directly related to the main verb as the pivot, while the secondary function is the function of the phrase that is not directly related to the pivot and only is a complement. With respect to the semantic aspect, Peyroutet (1994) reveals 17 types of language styles, including alliteration, assonance, paronomasia, synecdoche, metonymy, metaphor, euphemism, hyperbole, paradox, personification, inversion, simile, repetition, acetone, antithesis, hypothesis, and sarcasm. A more in-depth description of the use and function of each language style will be explained in detail in the next section.

Baron & Byrne (1997), experts in social psychology explain that reversing or avoiding discrimination can be achieved through the following four features: 1) breaking the cycle of prejudice; 2) intergroup contact; 3) recategorization or decategorization; 4) affirmative action programs. In relation to activities opposing discrimination, social criticism generally appears in the form of art, literature, and music media with the meaning of criticism contained in it.

There have been many studies on language styles, including metaphors in poetry: Perdana & Laksman-Huntley (2018), Madrakhimova (2022), and Telaumbanua (2020) who found that metaphors are used as clichés of social conditions. Meanwhile, there is also research on language styles in songs: Triaselini & Laksman-Huntley (2018), Muhammad et al. (2021), Fardanira & Laksman-Huntley (2021), and Octavius & Laksman-Huntley (2022) who all studied metaphors in popular songs. Meanwhile, John (2018) and Kholilullah (2021) studied it in rap music. Through these studies, it was found that metaphors are used as representations and reflections of singers' lives.

Additionally, a study of social conditions in rap songs has been conducted by Dunbar (2019) who found that rap is a form of song creativity that is built from a background of racial, criminal and social class experiences. Studies on social conditions in hiphop songs have been conducted by White

(2019), Campo (2020), Kareem (2020), and Sherba (2022). The last researcher found a form of reflection of social phenomena in the use of *franglais* among immigrant communities.

Furthermore, studies on the issue of discrimination and racism related to forms of opposition were conducted by Miše (2020), Akingbe & Onanuga (2020), Buscatto (2021), and Vicente (2021). All of the above studies found a form of public opposition created through the presence of discrimination in society. This also supports the study conducted by Rees (2020) which categorizes discrimination as a form of abuse of human rights through quotations from the UN Human Rights Council.

The description above shows that there is no study of language style that involves the structural analysis of poetry in rap song lyrics as a focalization of discriminated voices. This research aims to show the role of *Le Poète Noir* as a medium for focalizing discriminated minorities through the use of language style.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study examines the song *Le Poète Noir* by Kery James through the genius.com website. This qualitative study was conducted based on Hammarberg et al. (2016) with a literature study for data collection followed by classification and analysis based on Schmitt & Viala's (1982) structural theory of poetry which identifies through four aspects, namely language sound, metrics, syntax, and semantics. Then, the data sources were analyzed based on these four aspects based on other supporting theories: aspects of language sound and its effects and semantic aspects, in this case language style, based on Peyrouet (1994); metric aspects based on Nayrolles' theory of poetic rules (1996); and syntactic aspects analyzed based on Le Querler's theory of sentence function (1994). Furthermore, Leech's (1982) theory of meaning components was used to dissect and sort out the meaning components of the markers of discrimination forms carried out with the online dictionaries *le Petit Robert en ligne* and *Larousse*, then associated with Baron & Byrne's (1997) theory of discrimination.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Focalization of racial discrimination in the song *Le Poète Noir*

The lyrics of *Le Poète Noir* consist of eight stanzas with 61 lines. Through the analysis of the four aspects of poetry structure, it is found that the language sounds are loud and sharp which gives the impression of anger on one hand and a sentimental side on the other hand, of the author. This is in line with Nayrolles' (1996) statement that this song is characterized by free poetry. Meanwhile, *Le Poète Noir* has a grammatical structure that brings out a lot of pronominal *Je* as a subject to reflect the author's self. In the meaning of the words and diction used, there are words that contain metaphors of sadness and struggle.

#### *Sound aspect*

Looking at the title of the song, it can be seen that *Le Poète Noir* is a depiction of neutral and balanced emotional sounds. However, in the title of this song there are sounds that represent the content of the song in the following lines, namely [p] and [ʁ]. Both sounds represent a sense of assertiveness that explains the other series of expressions in the whole song. The refrain of *Le Poète Noir*, in the 2nd, 5th, and 7th stanzas, is dominated by [a] and [ɑ] which give the impression of strong feelings represented with a clear and loud voice. On the other hand, there are nasal vowel sounds as a variation of sentimental feelings. There is a dominance of alliteration of [ʁ] and [d] which gives the impression of anger and sarcasm towards something that combines with a “rumbling” feeling. This combination of alliteration and assonance depicts feelings of sadness, gloom, and sentimentality. Moreover, it shows a form of strong rejection through clear, loud, and explosive sounds by generating an atmosphere of anger and strong sarcasm condemning discriminatory actions. Then, the impression of tenderness is present to provide a paradox to the anger that is trying to be covered up. Overall, in *Le Poète Noir*, the alliteration of consonant sounds [ʁ] and [d] and the assonance of [a], [ɑ], [e], [ə], and [i] dominate. Through the combination of these, it can be seen that there is an orchestration of sentimental sounds that are interrelated. The sound orchestration includes loud sounds that display the strength of feeling and sentimentality in [a], [ɑ], and [ə] that combine with sharp sounds and leads to screams in [i] and [e], which displays sincerity. The strong feeling is combined with repetitive

alliteration on the [ʁ] and [d] sounds that vibrate and explode. This supports the feeling of a satirical cry of anger at the social phenomenon experienced. Overall, the combination contained in *Le Poète Noir* depicts the screams and anger of the focalization of the minority community that Kery James aims to represent.

**Metrics aspect**

The song *Le Poète Noir* by Kery James shows the characteristics of free poetry from the irregularity of the number of syllables and arrays in each stanza. This irregularity looks unpatterned and reflects Kery James' changing emotions. Of the 8 stanzas, there are 4 arrays in the first stanza with 10-25 syllables, 8 arrays in the second stanza with 7-14 syllables, 6 arrays in the third stanza with 11-16 syllables, 6 arrays in the fourth stanza with 11-14 syllables, 12 arrays in the sixth stanza with 8-18 syllables, and 9 arrays in the eighth stanza with 3-7 syllables. Through the number of syllables that tend to be long in each array and not patterned, it becomes the author's intention to show the cause and effect of his actions so that it is not misinterpreted by the audience. This is because racial issues are sensitive. As a founder of a social educational institution, Kery James avoids misinterpretation by the audience. In addition to sound repetition, there is also repetition of the word *noir* three times in the same array. On the other hand, the author freely expresses his feelings towards the association of the word 'black' without certain restrictions. Through metric analysis, *Le Poète Noir* does not have the same characteristics as poetry in general which is bound by the rules of syllables, rhyme and rhythm. Thus, *Le Poète Noir* belongs to free poetry or *la poésie libre* based on Nayrolles' (1996) description. Nevertheless, there is a dominance of A-A-B-B rhyme pattern but with different patterns in each stanza of the song. Through this, Kery James shows his desire to declare that his song is a poem by bringing out regularity in the form of rhymes.

**Syntactic aspect**

A heuristic syntactic analysis of *Le Poète Noir* was conducted and it was found that there are 61 arrays that form 67 sentences in it. In the repeated refrain, namely « *Poète noir, je chante ma solitude* » as a focalization that represents the content of the poem, as follows.

**Tabel 4.** Function of the sentence « *Au soleil levant s'éteindront mes jour* »

<i>Au</i>	<i>soleil</i>	<i>levant</i>	<i>s'éteindront</i>	<i>mes jours</i>
When	the sun	rises	my days will fade	
<i>Synagme nominal</i>		<i>Synagme verbal</i>	<i>Synagme verbal</i>	
<i>Synagme nominal prépositionnel</i>		<i>Synagme verbal</i>	<i>Synagme verbal pronominal</i>	
<i>CC: Le temps</i>			<i>Pivot</i>	<i>Sujet</i>

James represents himself as an initiator of the movement against racial issues. This is evidenced by *Je* as the subject in the sentence. On the other hand, it also shows the situation of his feelings as a creator, but filled with sadness and gloom. This is evidenced by the possessive form of *ma solitude* in the sentence.

**Tabel 5.** Function of the sentence « *Poète noir, je chante ma solitude* »

<i>Poète noir</i>	Je	chante	ma solitude
Black poet	I	sing of	my loneliness
<i>Syntagme nominal</i>		<i>Syntagme verbal</i>	
<i>Syntagme nominal adjectival</i>	<i>Syntagme nominal</i>	<i>Syntagme verbal</i>	<i>Syntagme adjectival</i>
<b>Expansion du nom</b>	<b>Sujet</b>	<b>Pivot</b>	<b>Expansion de l'adjectif</b>

There are also various sentence forms about *noir*, such as *le poète noir, j'noircis, noir*, as well as adlibs in the phrase "*noire*" which is repeated in the 8th stanza. This diversity and repetition reinforces the theme of racial issues against black people. The phrase "*Ma poésie est (noire)*" at the end of the song, precisely in the 8th stanza of the 61st line, gives the impression that the author summarizes his entire story in the song as a poem of 'black' sadness, as follows.

**Tabel 6.** Function of the sentence « *Ma poésie est (noire)* »

<i>Ma</i>	<i>poésie</i>	<i>est</i>	<i>(noire)</i>
My	poetry	is	black
<i>Syntagme nominal pronominal</i>		<i>Syntagme verbal</i>	<i>Syntagme adjectival</i>
<b>Sujet</b>		<b>Pivot</b>	<b>COD</b>

There are 27 times the pronominal form is used in the song. Among them is a form of repetition of the song's chorus. The form of pronominal usage in the song is shown in the following table.

**Tabel 7.** Pronominal usage in *Le Poète Noir*

Pronominal Expressions	Location within the song
<i>notre langue</i>	the 1 <sup>st</sup> stanza of the first line
<i>de mes peines</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> , and 7 <sup>th</sup> stanzas in the second line
<i>m'époumone</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> , and 7 <sup>th</sup> stanzas in the third line
<i>mes mots</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> , and 7 <sup>th</sup> stanzas in the fourth line
<i>me tue</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> , and 7 <sup>th</sup> stanzas in the fifth line
<i>ma solitude</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> , and 7 <sup>th</sup> stanzas in the seventh line
<i>m'inspire</i>	the 3 <sup>rd</sup> stanza of the first line
<i>ma poésie</i>	the 3 <sup>rd</sup> stanza of the second line
<i>te sembler</i>	the 4 <sup>th</sup> stanza of the second line
<i>ma tête</i>	the 4 <sup>th</sup> stanza of the sixth line
<i>mon teint</i>	the 6 <sup>th</sup> stanza of the first line
<i>m'étreint</i>	the 6 <sup>th</sup> stanza of the seventh line
<i>m'émancipe</i>	the 6 <sup>th</sup> stanza of the tenth line
<i>m'aime</i>	the 6 <sup>th</sup> stanza of the tenth line
<i>me respecte</i>	the 6 <sup>th</sup> stanza of the eleventh line
<i>ma poésie</i>	the 8 <sup>th</sup> stanza of the fifth and ninth line

The table above shows specifically that the author is deeply attached to the feelings expressed, and the threat of discrimination that is directed toward minority communities, the impact of which directly affects the feelings, physical and psychological health of minority communities, which he reflects in the phrases *mes peines*, *ma solitude*, and *m'inspire*.

**Semantics aspect**

The semantic aspects of the poem include the connotations, denotations, meaning fields, and the language styles contained therein. The song uses, for example, the meaning field that relates to nature (*merveilleusement*, *attentivement*, and *beau*), season (*l'automne*, *l'été*, and *l'hiver*), and time (*les lendemains*, *le jour*, *la nuit*, *longtemps*, and *ce soir*). Kery James, brings out too the conditions and feelings of minority communities by using metaphorical dominance twelve times to convey expressions of sadness through the beauty of a series of metaphors. This repetition creates a sense of emphasis about the feelings of discrimination experienced by French minority communities in the song. The metaphors used by Kery James are in harmony with the meaning components that reveal the condition of the discriminated minority community and the form of opposition in it is explained in the next section.

**Critique of discrimination in *Le Poète Noir***

*Le Poète Noir* provides a dark background to Kery James through his social contacts in French society as a member of a minority group. The meaning formed in *Le Poète Noir* is not an objective meaning, but a form of poetic convention in the use of figurative language. Byrne's (2007) form of discriminatory activity is conveyed through metaphor which is dominantly used in comparing social circumstances in it.

**Intergroup contact**

The form of contact that occurs is in the racial aspect, namely between the white community and the black community. There are 34 arrays that have a connection to the significance of the presence of intergroup contact. The emergence of intergroup contact is seen in the metaphorical expressions in the following description.

*J'noircis des feuilles blanches à l'encre d'ébène*

**Table 8.** Component of meaning *noircir*

	<i>noircir</i>
<i>devenir noir</i>	+
<i>colorer</i>	+
<i>décrire d'une manière pessimiste</i>	+
<i>dire du mal de qqn</i>	+
<i>calomnier</i>	+

Based on the table of meaning components above, *noircir* fulfills all five fields of meaning in relation to the author's social condition. The transfer of meaning from the word *noircir* to *calomnier* is Kery James' way of conveying his social position in society being tied to the notion that minorities are seen as threatening the reputation of white society. Then, the metaphors in the phrases "*des feuilles blanches*" and "*à l'encre d'ébène*" are interrelated. Both represent the white community as the majority and the black community as a minority, having a form of intergroup contact. The word ebony is associated with a dark color that is in line with the characteristics of black ebony wood. This can be proven through the table of meaning components performed on the words *ébène* and *noir* below:

**Table 9.** Component of meaning *ébène*

	<i>ébène</i>	<i>noir</i>
<i>matière colorante noire</i>	+	+
<i>ne réfléchissant aucune lumière</i>	+	+
<i>sali</i>	±	+

Based on the meaning component table above, the word *ébène* 'ebony' is able to replace the word *noir* 'black' with the related elements of comparison in the song. Both meet two of the three elements of comparison, namely *matière colorante noire* 'black coloring material' and *ne réfléchissant aucune lumière* 'does not reflect light'. The metaphors in the words *ébène* and *noir* imply that the dark color 'black' gives a poetic impression in the song. The word *ébène*, which refers to ebony wood, is also closely related to the black community, originating from the African continent.

*On me tue chaque jour dans la langue de Molière*

**Table 10.** Component of meaning *tue*

	<i>tue</i>
<i>se donner beaucoup de mal</i>	+
<i>compromettre sa santé</i>	+
<i>causer la disparition de</i>	+
<i>souffrance</i>	+

Based on the meaning component table above, the word *tue* fulfills all five fields of meaning. This is a form of unrest over his social situation as a member of a minority group. The transfer of meaning from the word *tue* to *souffrance* is a way for the author to convey the suffering of himself and other minorities who seem to be dying. The metaphorical association lies in the expression "*la langue de Molière*" which is a French romantic character from the 17th century whose real name is Jean-Baptiste Poquelin. The social conditions of a large part of the 17th Century were under the absolute rule of Louis XIV. Nevertheless, this century was a revolutionary time in terms of intellect, so it was known as the *siècles des lumières*. This is shown by the author to demonstrate the behavior of white people and the government who do easy and stupid things arbitrarily, even consciously as an act of discrimination. On the other hand, Molière's language represents the stupidity of the upper-class aristocrats who kill the identity of minorities.



*À l'encre des mes peines*

**Table 11.** Component of meaning *peine*

	<i>peine</i>	<i>tue</i>
<i>sancition prévue par la loi et applicable aux personnes en infraction</i>	+	-
<i>souffrance</i>	+	+
<i>sentiment de tristesse et de dépression</i>	+	+

Based on the component table above, there are two similar meaning fields for both words. However, only the *souffrance* meaning field is the transposed meaning component. The writer complains about the impact of discrimination, but alternately the author expresses that intergroup contact can have a positive impact on those who are suffering. This sentiment is reinforced by the author in the next analysis.

*Je m'époumone sous la fureur du vent*

**Table 12.** Component of meaning *fureur*

	<i>fureur</i>	<i>époumone</i>
<i>crier très fort</i>	+	+
<i>parler</i>	-	+
<i>passion irrésistible</i>	+	-
<i>colère</i>	+	+

Based on the meaning component table above, there are two similar meaning fields for both words. However, only the meaning field of *colère* is the transposed meaning component. The existence of the transferred meaning from the words *fureur* and *époumone* to *colère* is a form whereby the author conveys a form of emotion towards the unbearable sadness of the suffering of the author and minorities. The form of sadness is represented through the use of metaphors in the three words in the refrain of the song using words that mean sadness and misery to support his social criticism of discrimination against minorities, especially foreign immigrants from the African continent and Maghrebian region.

**Breaking the cycle of prejudice**

Another form of discriminatory activity is the attempt to break the cycle of prejudice that is located in nine arrays in the song. The appearance of the effort to break the cycle of prejudice is located in the metaphorical expression in the following description.

*Je rends chaque coup dans la langue de Césaire*

**Table 13.** Component of meaning *coup*

	<i>coup</i>	<i>défendre</i>
<i>action qui attaque</i>	+	-
<i>contre accusation</i>	+	+
<i>resister à une attaque</i>	-	-
<i>protéger</i>	+	+

Based on the meaning component table above, the two messages in this array have the message that both *coup* and *défendre* are a form of idealistic minority opposition to the colonialism that historically occurred. It can also be seen that there are two similar meaning fields for both words. The two fields of meaning associated with this song are *contre accusation* and *protéger* as a form of effort to break the cycle of prejudice. One of them is the rejection of discriminatory actions that became the culture of colonialism like Aimée Césaire's ideology towards the anticolonial movement. In contrast to Molière who presents criticism in a sarcastic form, Césaire expresses her criticism openly and firmly. The form of criticism is found in several of Césaire's works, including *essai poésie et connaissance* which means awareness of freedom, the play *et les chiens se taisaient* which shows a form of commentary on the politics of racism, colonialism, and decolonialization.

*J'mène une vie de bohème, je m'émancipe en lettre*

**Table 14.** Component of meaning *bohème*

	<i>bohème</i>	<i>émancipe</i>
<i>antibourgeois</i>	+	+
<i>s'affranchi de l'autorité parentale</i>	-	+
<i>qui a pris des libertés</i>	+	+
<i>liberté</i>	+	+

Based on the meaning component table above, it can be seen that the three meaning fields are the same for both words. On the other hand, the meaning field of *liberté* is the transposed meaning component. This is the author's way of conveying the wishes and hopes of the author, who represents the minority group, regarding freedom with the assumption that freedom is the right of every individual. However, Kery James also shows his opposition to the bourgeoisie and aristocrats in achieving his right to freedom.

Moreover, it can be seen that the words *coup* and *émancipe* in the two lines above can replace the word *combattre* or 'resistance'. This is as stated by Kery James who said that *Le Poète Noir* are minority voices that have been fought for. This is proven in the following table.

**Table 15.** Component of meaning *combattre*

	<i>coup</i>	<i>émancipe</i>
<i>qui a pris des libertés</i>	-	+
<i>lutter contre</i>	+	+
<i>combattre</i>	+	+

Based on the analysis of the meaning component table above, it can be seen that there are three similar meaning components out of four meaning components, all of which have interrelated meanings. The metaphorical words presented by Kery James indirectly show that there is a struggle and a movement created by discriminated minority groups. Therefore, the author also shows the purpose of the struggle, which is to gain freedom in the form of justice that should be the right of every individual.

It was found that there are two main meaning components used by Kery James. The first meaning component, which is a sentimental feeling for the act of discrimination, through the use of the words *peines*, *fureur*, and *tuer*. Meanwhile, the second meaning component is a form of opposition to acts of discrimination through the meaning components of the words *coup*, *émancipe*, and *combattre*. Based on the analysis, the dominant form of discriminatory activity in *Le Poète Noir* is intergroup contact. The representation appears through 34 lines out of 61 lines in the song. Kery James displays intergroup contact in the first five lines, followed by an effort to break the cycle of prejudice, and then returns to the author's condition in a form of self-reflection. Thus, Kery James as the author of *Le Poète Noir* focuses on the form of discrimination that emerges through intergroup contact, namely the minority group and the majority of white French society. This is also reflected in the choice of diction that represents the skin color of the minority community as well as the author, such as *as ébène*, *noir*, *noircis*. On the other hand, a call for opposition to eliminate prejudice and stereotypes of minorities in France is raised through the words *émancipe* and *coup* in the song.

## CONCLUSION

This study found that *Le Poète Noir* uses a medium to convey criticism of discrimination against minorities. The songwriter's form of expression becomes a focalization of minorities conveyed through the power of diction and poetic language in 61 lines in eight stanzas of this song. The expression of feelings of sadness, anger, dissatisfaction, and a call for the spirit of struggle are shown through the assonance and alliteration of sharp, loud, and vibrating sounds. Kery James tries to bring out feelings of disappointment through metaphors that are dominant in the song about feeling hurt and the struggle of minorities. Kery James conveys it through the meaning field of sadness, through the words *peines*, *fureur*, and *tue* so as to project the impact of discrimination experienced by minorities. On the other hand, Kery James encourages minorities to not remain silent, but try to fight for their rights as human beings. This step is conveyed through the meaning field of struggle, through the words *coup*, *émancipe*, and *combattre* so that it indirectly shows the great desire of minorities to achieve the rights they should have. In addition, the resistance of racial discrimination discourse is found based on Kery James' point of view. To show the presence of racial discrimination in the song, James uses repetition of diction that has a connection with dark colors, including *ébène*, *noir*, and *noircis* which have a close perception in society to black skin. In order for the contrast of the message of the presence of racial discrimination to be well conveyed, Kery James uses metaphorical opposition to the word *blanches - ébène* in the same sentence. This can be seen through the repetition of the phrase "*J'noircis des feuilles blanches à l'encre d'ébène*" as the chorus of the song. Kery James shows social criticism of discrimination that is not only reflected in the choice of words that are veiled in the form of metaphors, but also in various other aspects of the poem's structure, including: fluctuations in language sounds, irregular rhyme patterns, and syntactic aspects. Although *Le Poète Noir* is a free poem, there is a regularity in how he organizes social criticism activities, which can be attributed to him being the initiator of the formation of an association that focuses on children's education. On the other hand, this proves Nida's (1964) statement that a song can be a reflection of a poem.

The findings in this article support the previous research by Perdana and Laksman-Huntley (2019) that the innovation of free verse poetry that is not bound by the rule that each stanza does not consist of four lines does not eliminate the form of meaning in *Le Poète Noir*. Rather, this type of poetry writing gives more freedom to Kery James to emphasize and show the presence of criticism of racial discrimination. The other findings of this article support previous research by Triaselini and Laksman-Huntley (2018), Madrakhimova (2022), and Telaumbanua (2020) that there is a connection between the author's life and social issues, especially Kery James' views and his sentimental feelings towards acts of racial discrimination. Based on the four previous studies, the use of metaphor is dominantly used in conveying implied messages by maintaining the beauty of the language. In

accordance with this, *Le Poète Noir* is a representation of Kery James' background that has a relative, cohesive, and objective nature towards what he experiences and supports Ricoeur's (2006) statement using the medium of song.

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