

## **SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF OLIVIA RODRIGO'S SONG "DRIVERS LICENSE" USING CONTEXTUAL MEANING THEORY**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study analyzes literary works in the form of song lyrics where the data is taken from one of Olivia Rodrigo's songs entitled 'Drive License' which was released on January 8 2021. The song is intended for a lover who betrayed her. This study aims to analyze the meaning of the song. In this song, the man is claimed to only give women false hope and a feeling of disappointment over the betrayal of their lover. This study uses an analysis that examines semantic meaning using the Contextual Meaning theory approach by Pateda (2010) to analyze the meaning of feelings in the song lyrics, namely the context of the speaker's mood, for example sad, disappointed, afraid, irritated. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method which is by making observations using phenomena or facts obtained by conventional data. The results of the analysis illustrate that the lyrics of the song 'Drive License' adopt a sketch aesthetic and describe Olivia Rodrigo's healing in her broken heart which shows her feelings of sadness and disappointment towards the man who hurt her.

**Keywords: Semantic, Contextual meaning, Olivia Rodrigo, Drivers License**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Language is a lexical unit including semantics, this study examines semantic analysis using contextual meaning theory. In semantic analysis it must also be realized, because language is unique, and has a very close relationship with cultural problems, the analysis of a language only applies to that language, but cannot be used to analyze other languages. Semantics is a sub-discipline of linguistics that studies meaning. In 1897 the term semantics was introduced by a French scientist, M. Bréal, in his *Essai de semantique*. In his writings, Bréal asserts that semantics is a science that studies meaning (Djajasudarma, 1999, p. 1-2). Language as a means of communication means that language is a series of systematic sounds, in the form of symbols, arbitrary, meaningful, conventional, unique, universal, productive, varied, dynamic, human, and a means of social interaction that replaces individuals in stating something or expressing to the interlocutor. In language there is also a language function. According to Lamuddin (2003:2), there are five functions of language which have been less aware of by the public, namely: first, as a communication tool or medium; second, as a tool for self-expression; third, as a means of social integration or adaptation; fourth, as a means of social control; and fifth, as a tool for thinking. Language can be contained in various works, such as poetry, rhymes, poems, theater, as well as songs and other works. According to Passaribu in Sumarlam (2004:216), A song is a form of literary work created by an author to be enjoyed by every listener. In song lyrics, there are specificities and characteristics

compared to poetry, because the expression of ideas through song lyrics is strengthened by the presence of certain melodies and types of rhythms to match the songs sung.

The musical element in the song is a reinforcing element to give its own nuance to each lyric in the song. Every utterance made on a particular occasion has a meaning. However, each utterance can have multiple meanings if the context follows the utterance. In certain situations, the resulting language is determined by several moment factors which can be called context. Palmer (1981:43). Contextual meaning is meaning that is based on the relationship between the utterance and the situation in which the utterance is used (Depdiknas, 2008:864). In this study, there is a contextual meaning conveyed by the songwriter who becomes the data or object in this writing. Pateda (2010: 116) says that contextual meaning is a meaning derived from the relationship between speech and context. Which then he classifies each context included in the contextual meaning and divides it into 11 contexts. Namely, (1) the individual context, (2) the context of the situation, (3) the purpose of the context, (4) the speaker's speech style; formal or informal, (5) mood of speaker and listener, (6) context of time, (7) place, (8) object, (9) auxiliary tools of speaker and listener when conveying and listening to utterances, (10) language, and (11) the language used in the utterance. (Pateda, 2010:116). Thus, contextual meaning can be said to be the meaning related to the relationship between the utterance and the situation of the user of the statement, whether it is the person delivering the utterance or the listener of the utterance.

"Drivers License" is singer-songwriter Olivia Rodrigo's debut single. It was released on January 8, 2021, through Geffen and Interscope Records, as the lead single from his debut studio album, *Sour* (2021). Containing deep sad and heartache lyrics, "Drivers License" is an atmospheric power ballad that combines bedroom pop, indie pop, and power pop styles. The song documents the "range" of emotions Rodrigo experienced after his heartbreak. He posted the song on his social media for months in 2020, before finally announcing it on January 4, 2021. "SIM" broke a series of records, including Spotify's record for the most single-day streams of a non-holiday song (achieved on its fourth day of release), The song topped the US Billboard Hot 100 and made Rodrigo the youngest artist ever to debut at the top of the chart. As of August 11, 2021, the song has reached over 1 billion streams on Spotify. The song has been credited with launching Rodrigo's musical career.

## **METHOD**

In conducting an analysis related to the issue of scientific articles, the author uses the literature method. The author uses a variety of library sources and internet census data to obtain data/issues. The author processes data from various sources of internet issues. A wide variety of variations and available reference sources make writing this scientific article run well. Descriptive research is one method that can be chosen when conducting research. Descriptive research is a research method that seeks to describe the object or subject that is studied in depth, broadly, and in detail. Descriptive research method is used to solve or answer the problems being faced by collecting data, classification, analysis, conclusions, and reports. This method is done by describing or describing the data that has been collected.

Descriptive research is a quantitative study with the aim of describing the main variables of the study subject, such as age, gender, education, occupation, marital status, socioeconomic, and so on according to the research objectives. Pure descriptive research

does not require a control group as a comparison because what is sought is to obtain an overview of matters relating to the selected problem. The causal relationship is only an estimate based on the cross table presented. The results of the study are presented in accordance with the data obtained without in-depth analysis. Descriptive research is a preliminary study and is used together with other types of research. Data collection is done in one time or a certain period. Each study subject during the study was only observed once. Data was collected using a cross-sectional approach in the form of survey sampling or secondary data.

## RESULTS

In this study, the author uses music, and uses Olivia Rodrigo's song as the object of his research. As an international singer who recently made her debut in this field, Olivia Rodrigo brings her stories that she has felt in her creation. Just like most singers who create songs from their own stories so that the audience can feel the emotional atmosphere felt by the creators or the songwriter, as well as showing stories that may be related to the life of romantics today. She tells her story through her song, therefore in this study using the theory of contextual meaning from Pateda (2010) is as follows:

**Table 1.** Translation of the song “Drivers License” by Olivia Rodrigo

Part of lyrics	Lyrics	Translation
<b>Introduction (Intro)</b>	I got my driver's license last week	<i>Aku mendapatkan SIMku minggu lalu</i>
	Just like we always talked about	<i>Seperti yang biasa kita bicarakan</i>
	'Cause you were so excited for me To finally drive up to your house	<i>Karena kau aku jadi sangat bersemangat untuk akhirnya berkendara kerumahmu</i>
	But today I drove through the suburbs, Cryin' 'cause you weren't around	<i>Tetapi hari ini aku melewati pinggiran kota, menangis karena kau tidak ada.</i>
<b>Verse</b>	And you're probably with that blonde girl Who always made me doubt	<i>Dan mungkin kau Bersama gadis pirang itu Yang selalu membuatku ragu</i>
	She's so much older than me She's everything I'm insecure about	<i>Dia jauh lebih tua dariku Dialah segalanya yang membuatku tak nyaman</i>
	Yeah, today I drove through the suburbs 'Cause how could I ever love someone else?	<i>Ya, hari ini aku melewati pinggiran kota Karena bagaimana bisa aku mencintai orang lain?</i>
<b>Reffrain (Reff)</b>	And I know we weren't perfect but I've never felt this way for no one	<i>Dan aku tahu kita tidak sempurna, namun aku tidak pernah merasakan ini dengan siapapun</i>
	And I just can't imagine how you could	<i>Dan aku tidak bisa membayangkan</i>

	be so okay now that I'm gone	<i>bagaimana bisa kau baik saja setelah aku pergi</i>
	Guess you didn't mean what you wrote in that song about me	<i>Aku rasa kau tidak sungguh-sungguh menulis lagu tentangku</i>
	'Cause you said forever, now I drive alone past your street	<i>Karena kau mengatakan selamanya, sekarang aku mengemudi sendirian melewati jalanmu</i>
<b>Bridge</b>	And all my friends are tired Of hearing how much I miss you, but	<i>Dan semua temanku Lelah mendengar betapa aku merindukanmu, tetapi</i>
	I kinda feel sorry for them 'Cause they'll never know you the way that I do, yeah	<i>Aku agak kasian kepada mereka Karena mereka tidak pernah mengenalmu seperti yang aku lakukan, yeah</i>
	Today I drove through the suburbs And pictured I was driving home to you	<i>Hari ini aku melewati pinggiran kota dan membayangkan aku sedang menyetir pulang lagi bersamamu</i>
<b>Modulation</b>	Red lights, stop signs I still see your face in the white cars, front yards	<i>Lampu merah, tanda berhenti Aku masih melihat wajahmu pada mobil putih, dihalaman depan</i>
	Can't drive past the places we used to go to	<i>Tidak bisa melewati ketempat tempat yang bias akita kunjungi</i>
	'Cause I still fuckin' love you, babe (ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh)	<i>Karena aku masih sangat mencintaimu, saying (ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh)</i>
	Sidewalks we crossed I still hear your voice in the traffic, we're laughing Over all the noise	<i>Trotoar yang kita lintasi Aku masih mendengar suaramu di jalan, kita tertawa diatas semua kebisingan</i>
	God, I'm so blue, know we're through But I still fuckin' love you, babe (ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh)	<i>Tuhan, aku sangat sedih, menyadari kita sudah berpisah Namun aku masih sangat mencintaimu, saying (ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh)</i>

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<b>Coda</b>	<p>I know we weren't perfect but I've never felt this way for no one</p> <p>And I just can't imagine how you could be so okay now that I'm gone</p> <p>'Cause you didn't mean what you wrote in that song about me</p> <p>'Cause you said forever, now I drive alone past your street</p> <p>Yeah, you said forever, now I drive alone past your street</p>	<p><i>Dan aku tahu kita tidak sempurna, namun aku tidak pernah merasakan ini dengan siapapun</i></p> <p><i>Dan aku tidak bisa membayangkan bagaimana bisa kau baik saja setelah aku pergi</i></p> <p><i>Aku rasa kau tidak sungguh-sungguh menulis lagu tentangku</i></p> <p><i>Karena kau mengatakan selamanya, sekarang aku mengemudi sendirian melewati jalanmu</i></p> <p><i>Ya, kau mengatakan selamanya, sekarang aku mengemudi sendirian melewati jalanmu</i></p>
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**DISCUSSION**

After translating the song “Drivers License” by Olivia Rodrigo, it was found that there is context in the lyrics of the song. Therefore, in this study will explain the Contextual Meaning of the song "Drivers License" in the form of a table as follows:

**Table 2.** The Contextual Meaning in the song “Drivers License” by Olivia Rodrigo

<b>Part or Stanza</b>	<b>Lyrics</b>	<b>Contextual Meaning</b>	<b>Context</b>
<b>Introduction (Intro)</b>	<p>I got my driver's license last week</p> <p>Just like we always talked about</p> <p>'Cause you were so excited for me</p> <p>To finally drive up to your house</p> <p>But today I drove through the suburbs,</p> <p>Cryin' 'cause you weren't around</p>	<p>In part Intro there is <i>Context of Time and Place.</i></p>	<p>The opening lyrics start with the story of Olivia Rodrigo who just got her first driver's license last week, but she remembers something that makes her sad marked on line 6 she cries because she got her license and remembers that her ex-boyfriend once told her, he can go to his girlfriend's house without anyone nobody's problem on Lines 3 and 4. But after Olivia Rodrigo gets her driver's license, her boyfriend leaves her, causing Olivia Rodrigo to cry while driving her car because she's reminded of something her ex-boyfriend once said in line 2.</p>

<b>Verse</b>	And you're probably with that blonde girl  Who always made me <b>doubt</b>  She's so much older than me  She's everything I'm <b>insecure</b> about  Yeah, today I drove through the suburbs  'Cause how could I ever love someone else?	In this stanza explaining the <i>Context of Mood</i> , as a whole describes feelings such as worry, fear, and confusion.	In line 1 of this stanza, Olivia realizes that the cause of the end of her love is because of a third person who has blonde hair, in line 2 of this stanza Olivia tells her feelings which feel disappointed with the woman and feel uncomfortable when she finds out that the woman is more mature from it is explained in Line 3&4. With feelings of sadness and grief, Olivia Rodrigo finally drove her car to the edge of town crying thinking about the man she loved who loved her.
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<b>Refrain</b>	And I know we weren't perfect but I've never felt this way for no one  And I just can't imagine how you could be so okay now that I'm gone  Guess you didn't mean what you wrote in that song about me  'Cause you said forever,  now I drive alone past your street	In this stanza explaining the <i>context of situation</i> .	In line 1, Olivia Rodrigo knows that her romantic relationship with her ex is not perfect and has never felt the same love as love before, but the man described in the song seems heartless, because the man looks fine after betrayed Olivia as stated in line 3. From this incident, Olivia Rodrigo seemed to know that the man had never composed a song for her, the man pretended to love her. The man once made a promise but broke it (line 5), now Olivia is driving alone through the road towards her ex-lover's house (line 6).
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<b>Bridge</b>	And all my friends are tired  Of hearing how much I miss you, but  I kinda feel sorry for them  'Cause they'll never know you the way that I do, yeah  Today I drove through the suburbs  And pictured I was driving home to you	In this stanza there is a Context of purpose, because asking or expecting something.	In the Bridge section, the saddest fact of the lyrics is that Olivia Rodrigo still misses the man she once loved (line 2) and still imagines that they were once on a trip together (line 6), until her friends get tired of hearing stories about him (line 1). even though his idol had betrayed and hurt him. even though her boyfriend promised to last forever, but he broke it, Olivia still loves him and hopes to meet again with his ex-girlfriend. (To finally drive up to your house, But today I drove through the suburbs, Cryin' 'cause you weren't around)
<b>Modulation</b>	Red lights, stop signs  I still see your face in the white cars, front yards  Can't drive past the places we used to go to  'Cause I still fuckin' love you, babe (ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh)  Sidewalks we crossed I still hear your voice in the traffic, we're laughing Over all the noise  God, I'm so blue, know we're through But I still fuckin' love you, babe (ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh)	In this stanza there is a context of time and place.	In this part she explains that everything she sees on the street (traffic signs and white cars) reminds everything of her ex. Even when she saw a white car in the driveway, Olivia imagined her ex-boyfriend's face in it. Since they were driving a white car and Olivia couldn't drive to where they used to be together, it made her sad and miss her ex-boyfriend.  He also still hears the voice of his ex-girlfriend in the noise of traffic, they used to laugh together. All of this happened when Olivia was traveling by car and made her sad because the places on the road the two of them had been through reminded her of a time when they had gone for a drive together.

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<b>Coda</b>	I know we weren't perfect but I've never felt this way for no one  And I just can't imagine how you could be so okay now that I'm gone  'Cause you didn't mean what you wrote in that song about me  'Cause you said forever, now I drive alone past your street  Yeah, you said forever, now I drive alone past your street	In this stanza same as Reffrain part, explaining the <i>context</i> of <i>situation</i> .	Just like the part on the Refrain in this stanza there is the same context as the stanza reff namely in line 1, Olivia Rodrigo knows that her romantic relationship with her ex is not perfect and has never felt the same love as love before, but the man described in the song seems heartless, because the man looks fine after betrayed Olivia as stated in line 3. From this incident, Olivia Rodrigo seemed to know that the man had never composed a song for her, the man pretended to love her. The man once made a promise but broke it (line 5), now Olivia is driving alone through the road towards her ex-lover's house (line 6).
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Song is a literary work that has been developed to become a modern literary work which as a communication, tells a past story, and conveys a feeling. Therefore, Olivia Rodrigo communicates that her story is a work that contains meaningful contextual meaning as seen by Pateda (2010: 116), namely about the meaning of contextual meaning which is a meaning obtained from the existence of a relationship between speech and context. Contextual meaning can arise as a result of the relationship between speech and context. The forms of contextual meaning include personal context, situational context, goal context, formal context (whether or not the conversation is held), mood context, time context, place context, object context, context of speech completeness, and linguistic context. According to Aminuddin (1988:92), "Contextual meaning is the meaning that arises as a result of the relationship between the social and situational context and the form of speech." In interpreting speech and context as well as the relationship between the two, one must have knowledge and experience with respect to the referents referred to by the speech and the harmony of the relationship between the speech and the context that underlies it. In the lyrics of the SIM song there is a contextual meaning, where the lyrics tell about the broken heart of Olivia Rodrigo (singer-songwriter) who is cheated on by her ex-boyfriend. Even before they separated, the man said that Olivia Rodrigo had to be old enough to get a driver's license, so she could drive to the man's house and the man said he would wait for Olivia until she was old enough and Olivia was the man's forever love. But all these hopes had to be dashed, because the man she adored was already with another woman.

It can be seen that the contextual meaning is found in every stanza in the lyrics of the song which conveys the meaning that the speaker wants to convey. In the first stanza it is explained that there is a context of place and time which in the lyrics confirms that there is a flashback of a story that the speaker has experienced both from place and time. The second stanza explains the context of mood where to explain what the speaker is feeling, in that stanza Olivia says that she feels uncomfortable because she feels that her surrogate has something that she doesn't have and has ever felt suspicious of a blonde

woman. The third stanza, namely the refrain in the lyrics of the song, it says that there is a Context of Situations which explains what situation actually happened and the lack of ambiguity in the stanza. The next stanza, namely the bridge, tells the context of purpose, namely the context that has the intention or purpose of expecting something. The modulation verse, it tells the context of time and place because Olivia feels flashbacks of the place, time and atmosphere while driving. The last stanza is no different from the first stanza, it's just that it repeats the sentence "you said forever, now I drive alone past your street" which emphasizes her disappointment at being betrayed by her ex-boyfriend.

## **CONCLUSION**

The form and meaning of lingual units in song lyrics are presented in each stanza. The lyrics of Olivia Rodrigo's Drive License adopt a sketch aesthetic and describe Olivia Rodrigo's recovery from a broken heart. He receives his driver's license in the lyrics, but instead of reminding him to go to his old lover's house like he dreamed of, he finds himself aimlessly wandering the suburban streets reminiscing about their trip together. Olivia Rodrigo reminisces about moments from her brief relationship. At the beginning of the song, she is only filled with happy memories, but in the end, getting "SIM" makes her remember Olivia's disappointment with the man who made her euphoric. the lyrics of the song contain a contextual meaning in which each of the lyrics succeeds in getting empathy from the listening public, and receives positive comments from social media users because Olivia has managed to build the meaning of the lyrics of the song and the public is also very deep into the meaning of the lyrics of the song.

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