AN ANALYSIS OF IMAGERY MEANING IN OLIVIA RODRIGO'S SELECTED SONGS

THESIS

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An Analysis of Imagery Meaning in Olivia Rodrigo's Selected Songs

Adalah benar-benar karya saya, kecuali semua kutipan dan referensi yang disebutkan sumbernya. Apabila terdapat kesalahan dan kekeliruan didalamnya, maka akan sepenuhnya menjadi tanggung jawab saya. Demikianlah surat pernyataan ini saya buat dengan sesungguhnya.

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Saya yang membuat pernyataan

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ABSTRACT

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Song lyrics often convey deep emotions and meanings through poetic language, including the use of imagery. Imagery is an important element in understanding the meaning of texts, especially in song lyrics, because imagery helps convey meaning in songs through mental images to the listener or reader. As a singer and writer, Olivia Rodrigo's songs are known for their expressive and emotionally charged lyrics that reflect her personal experiences. However, there is still a limited number of studies focusing specifically on the types of imagery in her lyrics, which makes this research important to explore further. This study uses Perrine's (1977) theory of imagery, which classifies imagery into seven types: visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory, gustatory, organic, and kinesthetic. The purpose of this research is to analyze the types of imagery and the most dominant imagery in song lyrics. The method used is a qualitative method with a content analysis approach. Data was obtained from 8 songs of Olivia Rodrigo, consisting of four songs from the SOUR album and four songs from the GUTS album. The results show that Olivia Rodrigo's song lyrics contain almost all types of imagery, except olfactory imagery. Of all the types, visual imagery is the most dominant, followed by organic and auditory imagery. The findings show how she uses imagery to convey personal experiences and amplify emotions in her songs. This research contributes to literary studies by providing a deeper understanding of the use of imagery in contemporary song lyrics. It can serve as a reference for future research in literature.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will explain in detail the five elements that will help understand the context of the topic to be discussed in this study. The related elements include the background of the study, research questions, significance of the study, and terminologies.

A. Background of the Study

In literature, language is not only used to convey messages but it also functions as a medium of artistic expression that conveys emotions, stories, and values. The language in songs tends to be aesthetic and has a certain rhythm, rhyme, and language style that is used to create an emotional impression and aesthetic experience for the listener (Bradby, 2017). Language in songs is very different from the language we use in everyday life, in songs the language is more poetic and symbolic, using techniques such as imagery, metaphors, and hyperbole to convey messages deeply and create an emotional connection with the listener (Allen, 2016).

According to literary studies, songs are a form of expression full of imagery and symbolism that may deeply depict feelings and events and relate listeners to shared experiences. While in general, songs are a form of expression in music consisting of melodies and lyrics. Songs aim to convey messages, emotions, or stories through a combination of tones and words that are beautifully designed to

be sung (Davies, 2014). At the same time, Song lyrics are often considered as condensed poetry because of their ability to convey big ideas in limited words (Baym, 2017).

Imagery in song lyrics is one of the important elements that enriches the listener's experience. Imagery is part of linguistic studies, especially in the branches of semantics and pragmatics. In linguistics, imagery is the way language creates certain mental images or feelings in the minds of readers or listeners through the use of descriptive or metaphorical words. The use of imagery allows language to be more prosperous and more emotionally powerful, and is important in various communication contexts, especially in literature and music (Yule, 2017). This is in line with DiYanni's (2007) view, which states that imagery is stimuli in various forms that describe sound, taste, smell, appearance, and touch. As stated by Malewitz (2019), Imagery is visual symbolism, or figurative language that evokes mental images or other types of sense impressions. This shows that imagery is not just words, but also creates a deep emotional experience through various senses.

Olivia Rodrigo, as one of the most influential young musicians today, has created works and gained wide recognition. Olivia Rodrigo is a singer-songwriter known for her emotional and meaningful lyrics. Rodrigo's lyrics often have a personal touch, reflecting emotional experiences that are relevant to many of her listeners, especially teenagers. Songs such as "Drivers License" and "Good 4 U" have attracted widespread attention for their use of powerful imagery depicting feelings of heartbreak, loss, and the journey to adulthood (Levine, 2023). This

Makes her work interesting to analyze from a linguistic and literary perspective.

Several studies analyzing Olivia Rodrigo's song lyrics have also been conducted. Such as a study conducted by Pratiwi and Ardiantari (2023), "The Analysis of Figurative Language in Traitor Song Lyrics," this study analyzes the types and meanings of figurative language used in Traitor song lyrics. The results of this study show that there are four types of figurative language used in Traitor song lyrics, namely simile, personification, hyperbole, and paradox.

Another study was conducted by Novsianti and Vendityaningtyas (2024), "Deixis Analysis on The Lyrics of Olivia Rodrigo's Songs." This study identified the types of deixis used in Olivia Rodrigo's song lyrics in the album Sour. The result showed that persona deixis is the most widely used, second is spatial deixis, the third type is temporal deixis, the fourth is social deixis, and the fifth is discourse deixis.

Lastly, a study conducted by Alfiani and Hakim (2023), entitled "A Connotative Meaning Analysis on Olivia Rodrigo's Song Lyrics in Sour Album," identified the connotative meaning in the song lyrics, to classify the types of connotative and to analyze the connotative meaning in the song lyrics of the Sour album by Olivia Rodrigo. The results showed that there are positive connotative, neutral connotative, and negative connotative in the song lyrics, and based on the author's research, negative connotative meaning is more dominant in this album.

Although research on Olivia Rodrigo's song lyrics is growing, in-depth studies on the use of imagery in Olivia Rodrigo's songs are still very limited. Therefore, the researcher wanted to take an in-depth look at imagery because

many previous analyses have focused on theme, structure, or language style in general. The main objective of this study is to conduct a thorough analysis of the imagery present in Olivia Rodrigo's selected songs. This includes identifying and interpreting different types of imagery, such as visual, auditory, and emotional elements, and examining how these contribute to the overall meaning of the lyrics.

This study has both theoretical and practical benefits. Theoretically, this study enriches the literature on the use of language and literary elements, particularly imagery, in popular media such as music. Practically, the results of this study can help listeners understand the hidden messages behind Olivia Rodrigo's song lyrics and increase their appreciation of music as a work of art.

This study used a qualitative approach with content analysis. The data were in the form of Olivia Rodrigo's song lyrics, which were purposively selected based on popularity and relevance. This method was chosen because it is effective in exploring the deep meaning in a song lyric. This study is also limited to analyzing the meaning of imagery in song lyrics, without considering other factors such as music production or visual influence in music videos.

B. Research Question

This study analyzed the imagery meaning in selected Olivia Rodrigo songs. This gave readers greater insight into the definition of imagery as well as the types of imagery and meaning contained in songs. This investigation was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the types of imagery in Olivia Rodrigo's songs?

2. What is the dominant imagery in Olivia Rodrigo's songs?

C. Aims of the Study

Based on the research questions mentioned above, the purpose of this research is to focus on the following :

1. To identify the types of imagery contained in Olivia Rodrigo's song lyrics.

2. To determine the most dominant type of imagery in Olivia Rodrigo's songs.

D. Significance of the Study

Basically, the importance of this research is that it is hoped that it will be useful and contribute to academic aspects and also for:

1. Teacher

The results provided information about the use of English songs as a medium for teaching English in the process of learning imagery in language. Apart from that, teachers can increase knowledge.

2. Subsequent researchers

it can be used as a reference that needs to conduct a study to study the same study of English. This study also gave them a new experience related to the people discussed. However, This study is still far from perfect, therefore, The researcher hopes that the next researchers can further fill the vacancy of this study.

E. Terminology

In order to avoid the readers' misunderstanding, it is important to explain the specific terms according to the valuable references:

1. **Imagery**

Perrine (1977) defines imagery as the representation through language of sense experience. Imagery is often used in literature, art, and communication to engage the five senses such as sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. In general, imagery is a way of using descriptive and rich language to help the reader or listener imagine something clearly in their mind. In other words, imagery is the ability to imagine or describe an experience through the five senses, even though what is imagined is not actually in front of us at that time.

In a literary context , imagery refers to a writing technique that uses words to create a strong visual or sensory representation while In visual arts , imagery means pictures or symbols used to convey a particular message, idea, or concept. In other words, imagery is a way to strengthen experience and meaning through descriptions that utilize the five senses.

2. **Song Lyrics**

Basundoro and Afdholy (2023) define song lyrics as a form of literary work similar to poetry, reflecting social reality and capable of expressing the emotions and messages of the songwriter. Meanwhile, song lyrics are also a series of words that form a song, usually consisting of several verses and a refrain or chorus. Lyrics serve as a medium to convey the writer's messages, emotions, and personal experiences to the audience. Songs is a musical work consisting of melodic, harmonious and rhythmic elements which are usually accompanied by lyrics. Songs are often used as a medium for expressing emotions, culture, or stories, both vocally and instrumentally. According to the *Cambridge Advanced Learner's*

Dictionary (2008), song is defined as "the words of a song, especially a pop song," Based on the above explanation, these two terms are essentially interrelated. The use of song lyrics rather than lyrics in general is necessary because song lyrics combine words with musical elements such as melody, rhythm, and vocal expression, which enhance the emotional and visual imagery. Analyzing song lyrics allows researchers to explore how imagery is not only represented in words but also experienced by listeners in conjunction with music, providing a richer understanding of the expressive and aesthetic aspects of the songs.

3. Olivia Rodrigo

Olivia Rodrigo is an American singer, songwriter, and actress known for her emotional pop music style and evocative lyrics. Born on February 20, 2003, Rodrigo rose to fame through her roles in Disney Channel series *High School Musical: The Musical: The Series*. Her music career skyrocketed after the release of her debut single, "Drivers License," in January 2021, which became a global phenomenon. The song blends a pop ballad melody with deep lyrics about broken love, making her an icon for the younger generation.

In her work, Olivia Rodrigo often uses themes such as relationships, teenage emotions, and identity, conveyed through straightforward and soulful lyrics. Her debut album, *SOUR* (2021), received critical and commercial acclaim, featuring hits such as "Good 4 U" and "Deja Vu." Rodrigo is considered one of the major influences in modern pop music, creating songs that draw on personal experiences yet resonate with listeners around the world.