## Lexical, Contextual, and Associative Meanings in Adele's Songs

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**ABSTRACT**

*This study aims to explain the lexical, contextual, and associative meanings in Adele's songs from various albums. This study uses descriptive qualitative analysis to obtain data from Adele's songs, they are One and Only, Don't You Remember, All I Ask, Hello, and Easy on Me. The data are collected with the theory of Huberman and Miles (2014). The result showed that there are 7 lexical, 7 contextual, and 5 associative meanings in One and Only. There are 6 lexical, 6 contextual, and 4 associative meanings in Don't You Remember. There are 5 lexical, 5 contextual, and 5 associative meanings in All I Ask. There are 5 lexical, 5 contextual, and 2 associative meanings in Hello. There are 11 lexical, 11 contextual, and 11 associative meanings in Easy on Me. Based on this analysis, it can be concluded that the song that explains the most lexical, contextual, and associative meaning is the song Easy on Me. Moreover, she uses many figurative words to express her feelings.*

**Keywords**: *Adele's Song, Associative, Contextual, Lexical Meaning.*

## A. Introduction

Misunderstanding between speaker and speech partner might be happen when they were talking. This is due to the fact that the language used by the speaker to communicate with the audience has a lot of implications for each listener. A word or a statement with various distinct meanings causes the listener to react differently. As a result, comprehend the meanings of words and sentences to avoid misunderstandings when speaking or receiving information is very important.

In communicating, each word and sentence has a different meaning. There are two forms of meaning, linguistic and social meaning. Linguistics is the scientific study of the meaning including word structure (Birner, 2012). Therefore, social meaning is the meaning that relates to where and how the situation in which the utterance occurs. In linguistics, there are two forms of meaning; lexical and grammatical. According to Rifardi (2017), lexical meaning is the smallest unit of meaning in the language meaning system. A word's lexical meaning is connected to it. The term "lexical" is based on the Latin "lexicon," which means "dictionary." Many people take it as the interpretation of a word contained in a dictionary. Moreover, it turns out that dictionary definitions contain more than just lexical meanings.

Meaning is the relationship between language and the world outside the language that has been mutually agreed upon by language users so that they can understand each other's intentions. Humans can understand the meaning moreover, there is a mutual agreement about the meaning so that people can understand each other. According to Stroud (2002), if someone hears a word, he will think about something, and if someone thinks about something, he will think about saying a word. This reciprocal relationship is used to describe the meaning of the word. That meaning is called lexical meaning. Lexical meaning is the smallest unit of meaning in the language meaning system. However, meaning could have different meaning depend on

the situation, and that meaning is called contextual meaning. Meaning is also connected with social culture, and that meaning is called associative meaning.

Many studies have been conducted previously, which are also used as references in writing this research. In this section, the writer cites three studies that have been conducted and used as reference material from the following writers from one online journal and two theses that have been published.

The first study is from Hasanah & Habibullah (2020) with the title, "Analysis of Lexical and Contextual Meaning in Raef's Song Lyric of the Path Album as the Holy Qur'an Values" which was published on the Panyonara: *Journal of English Education*. This study aims to analyze how is the lexical meaning, how are the contextual meanings, and what are the Holy Qur'an values consist of Raef's song lyrics in The Path album. This study used the qualitative approach. The result showed that the lexical analysis found that the meaning of a word is different and varied. The similarity with the writer's study is that the focus of our study is the same, but the object is different. This study uses The Path album, but the writer uses Adele's song from various albums.

The second study is with the title, "*A Semantic Analysis On Ed Sheeran Songs*" by Ika *Trinantasari* (2017) from the University of Gresik. This study focuses on the lexical and contextual meanings in the lyrics of Ed Sheeran's song in her study. This study used a qualitative descriptive method in her study. This study studied the lexical and contextual meanings of words. This study mentions the word in the lyrics to examine the facts and describes it in words. This study used a word in her analysis to describe the term's meaning in Ed Sheeran's song lyrics. A term is a word or a sentence used in a song's lyrics. To express feelings or the affection expressed in Ed Sheeran's songs, in that songs have many terms that have different meanings lexically and contextually.

The third study is from Khulala Sundusiyah with the title, "*A Semantic Analysis on the English Translation of Surah Al-muzammil* " (2014), thesis English Letters And Language Department, Faculty of Humaniora, Maulana Malik Ibrahim State Islamic University. The study's goal is to answer the meaning and message used in Yusuf Ali's English translation of Surah Al-muzammil. The data in this study is in the form of sentences or words from Yusuf Ali's surah Al-muzammil. This study used a descriptive qualitative method.

The writer attempts to improve the study on the lexical, contextual, and the associative meanings based on the findings of previous studies. The writer examines a variety of objects. This thesis aims to explain the lexical, contextual, and associative meanings of Adele's songs. Those previous studies provide valuable insight into the study moreover, they are on the same issue and help the writer to enhance the study on enjoying songs by comprehending the deep meanings of the lyrics.

## B. Method

The writer used a study method to obtain a complete result. The study approach was necessary in order to achieve the study's goals. The writer presented the approach, data source, data collection, and data analysis.

## 1 Approach of Study

In this study, the writer used descriptive qualitative. The qualitative method consisted of a previous examination that resulted in descriptive data, including written and oral words from the study objectives, whether from society or books. According to Sugiyono (2016), the descriptive qualitative approach is a study method that examines the situation of objects in nature and is based on postpositivism (as opposed to experiments). The writer is the most potent

instrument in combining the data gathering approaches, data analysis is qualitative, and qualitative study outcomes prioritize meaning rather than generalizations.

The aim of qualitative descriptive study is to describe, explain, and answer the problems more completely by examining an individual, a group, or an event as completely as possible. Wahyunianto, Djatmika, & Purnanto (2020) says that qualitative descriptive analysis has flexibility in its application. Using qualitative analysis methods, the writer can analyze each lexical meaning, contextual meaning, and associative meaning by listening carefully to Adele's songs, then identifying each word containing several meanings and implementing it into a table to facilitate the analysis..

## 3 Data Collection

The writer followed the steps of Huberman and Miles's (2014) qualitative data analysis to collected the necessary data. The writer began by reading all of the data sources. Second, the writer chose the most relevant songs from Adele's albums. The writer then selected five from Adele's albums. To rearrange the data, the writer assigned the lexical meaning, contextual meaning, and associative meaning and displayed them in a table.

## 4 Data Analysis

The data analyzed in this study were based on Leech's semantic theory, especially on lexical meaning, contextual meaning, and associative meaning. These types are analyzed for which purposes are most often used in the data using the idea of Miles and Huberman (2014).
1. The writer assembled the selected data to analyze one by one in the discussion of lexical, contextual, and associative meaning in Adele's song lyrics data to address the issue.
2. The writer analyzed each data in the selected table to determine each Adele song's lexical, contextual, and associative meanings.
3. The writer described the results of the writer's analysis of each word in Adele's song lyrics based on lexical, contextual, and associative meanings.
4. The writer cross-checked each data that has been analyzed.

## C. Findings and Discussion

From the tables above, the writer found the lexical meaning, contextual meaning, and associative meaning in Adele's songs from the various albums. There are seven words in *One and Only* song, which have the following meanings analyzed as shown in Data Analysis 4.2.1.

### 4.2.1 Data Analysis of the Lexical, Contextual, and Associative Meaning in *One and Only* Song

**Datum 1**
Title's song     : *One and Only*
Lyrics          : *Lose* myself in time

Based on the online oxford dictionaries, the word "lost" has a meaning lose something/somebody to be unable to find something/somebody (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, n.d). However, Adele's lyrics above it have a different meaning from the actual meaning. The contextual meaning of the word "lose" in this song has the meaning of forgetting, which means failing to remember. Therefore, in this lyric, this word tends to have a contextual meaning which means Adele wrote lyrics that say that she lives with a love that continues to grow so that she forgets herself. Adele The word "lose" in the lyrics of this song also has a collocative meaning. Moreover, the word "lose" has a connection with "Time."

**Datum 2**
Title's song     : *One and Only*
Lyrics          : Just *thinking* of your face

Based on the online oxford dictionaries, the word "thinking" has a meaning the process of thinking about something (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, n.d). However, Adele's song lyrics above it have a different meaning from the actual meaning. Moreover, in the context, Adele wrote the song's lyrics, which said that in this song, Adele forgot herself, and her mind was only filled with the images of her lover. The word "thinking" in the lyrics of this song has a contextual meaning of imagining, which means forming a mental image or concept for that this word tends to have contextual meaning. The word "thinking" has an affective meaning moreover, the word "thinking" is used to express his feelings in the song.

**Datum 3**

Title's song      : *One and Only*
Lyrics            : Why it's *taking* me so long
        Based on the online oxford dictionaries, the word "taking" has a meaning to carry or move something from one place to another (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, n.d). However, Adele's song lyrics above it have a different meaning from the actual meaning. Moreover, in context, Adele wrote the song's lyrics saying that only God knows why it took her so long to realize her doubts for that this word tends to have contextual meaning. Therefore, the word "taking" in the lyrics of this song has a contextual meaning which means a thing that is wanted or required. Meanwhile there is no associative meaning contained in this word.

**Datum 4**

Title's song      : *One and Only*
Lyrics            : I've imagined it *all*,
        Based on the online oxford dictionaries, the word "all" has a meaning the whole number of (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, n.d). However, Adele's song lyrics above it have a different meaning from the actual meaning. Moreover, in context, Adele wrote the song's lyrics, which said that she had been in the same position and remembered every word and feeling. The word "all" has a contextual meaning of everything, which refers vaguely to other things associated with what has been mentioned for that this word tends to have contextual meaning. Meanwhile there is no associative meaning contained in this word.

**Datum 5**

Title's song      : *One and Only*
Lyrics            : I've been *here* before
        Based on the online oxford dictionaries, the word "here" has a meaning used after a verb or preposition to mean in, at or to this position or place (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, n.d). However, in this song, "here" means having experienced. Moreover, of the context, Adele describes her experience of losing her lover. In the previous song's lyrics, Adele wrote, "I don't know why I'm scared," and then continued with, "I've been here before," which explains that Adele was afraid moreover, she had experienced such an unfortunate incident. This word tends to have associative meaning because the word "here" means "ever experienced." Because the word "here" and "ever experienced" have an affective meaning where Adele describes her feelings in the song's lyrics about what she has been through.

**D. Conclusion**

        Conclusions are made based on the formulation that has been determined in the statement of the problem section. Then, suggestions are made to provide information to other writers who will conduct the same study in the semantic field.

This study is conducted to find the lexical, the contextual, and the associative meaning based on Adele's songs from various albums with the title songs, "*One and Only*," "*Don't You Remember*," "*All I Ask*," "*Hello*. ", and "*Easy on Me*." After analyzing each of the lyrics in Adele's songs, it can be concluded that the song "*Easy on Me*" has more dominant lexical, contextual, and associative meanings than the other song titles; there are 11 data. From the five-song titles, it can be concluded that the lyrics written by Adele each have different meanings like what is written in a dictionary moreover, each word has its context that makes the meaning different. That is the context significantly affects a meaning. In addition, the most widely used associative meanings in the song "*One and Only*," "*Don't You Remember*," "*All I Ask*," "*Hello*," and "*Easy on Me*" are connotative meanings. It means that in Adele's songs, she uses more connotative meanings moreover, she uses many figurative words to express her feelings.

Therefore, it also can be concluded that the song "*Hello*" has less lexical, contextual, and associative meaning than the other songs. From the five data obtained from the analysis of the meaning of the song *Hello*, there is only one connotative meaning and social meaning. That is, the meaning of the lyrics of each word that Adele wrote in the song *Hello*, has a meaning that is not much different from the actual meaning in the dictionary. In writing her songs, Adele adapts her lyrics to her mood. The conclusion from these songs is the lyrics made by Adele are variative and sound beautiful. It can also be concluded that Adele is a melancholic singer and songwriter moreover, she uses a lot of words related to her feelings, with the choice of the connotative associative meaning.

After completing this study, the writer advises other writers with the same interest in the semantic field, especially the lexical, contextual, and associative meaning of a song. It will be better for them to analyze the purpose of associative meaning in a song lyric. The writer also wants to suggest choosing another object besides a song moreover, studying lexical, contextual, and associative meaning can also be done in an advertisement, poetry, verse, or broadcast. Of course, the results of the analysis obtained will also be different so that these studies can add reading sources for writers, especially for English Literature students at Universitas Pamulang. The writer hopes this study can be one of their reference materials in carrying out their final project with the same interest in the semantic field.

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