

## Exploring Sadness and Hope in the Lyrics of the Pop Song “*Diary Depressiku*” by Last Child: A Semiotic Analysis

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### ABSTRACT

*This research explores the expression of emotion and hope in the lyrics of the pop song “Diary Depressiku” by Last Child through a semiotic analysis approach. The song, inspired by the vocalist's personal experience, reflects deep emotional struggles stemming from family problems, especially parental divorce and longing for affection. Using a qualitative method, this research examines the semantic features of the song's lyrics to reveal how feelings of sadness, despair, envy, and ultimately hope are constructed and conveyed. The analysis revealed that the lyrics use a variety of emotive language and metaphors to depict the protagonist's internal conflicts and her journey towards acceptance and resilience. In addition, the research highlights how the song not only articulates personal pain but also offers a sense of hope and encouragement to listeners facing similar situations. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of how pop music lyrics can serve as a medium for emotional expression and healing, especially for young listeners experiencing family challenges.*

*Keywords : semantic analysis, hope, pop song,*

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## INTRODUCTION

Music has always been an important part of human life and it is inevitable, especially for young people. Music is the sound or impression of something captured by the listener's senses. In daily activities, many people make music as entertainment or a hobby that can improve their mood and mind. Many people use music as a means of expressing their emotions and feelings, both for the songwriter and for the listeners.

According to Saarikallio and Erkkilä (2007), music plays an important role in mood regulation in adolescents, where music serves not only as entertainment but also as a medium of emotional expression for both creators and listeners. Music is a sensory experience that affects a person's psychological and emotional state in everyday life (Thompson, Schellenberg, & Husain, 2001).

Music is a part of human culture, which is interesting among many other human cultures. There are no boundaries in exploring music, everyone can enjoy the genres they like. As with most teenagers, they often use pop songs as a place to express their feelings, whether it's an emotion or a wish. Songs can express the creator's ideas, messages and expressions to the listener through the lyrics, composition, instrument selection and the way he or she performs them. This is because songs are a universal and effective medium.

In this context, Last Child's song “Diary Depressiku” successfully depicts the emotional journey of an individual facing despair, sadness, and hope in the midst of non-ideal family conditions. The song is based on the childhood memories of Virgoun, the vocalist, and addresses the pain caused by parents' divorce and life as a street kid longing for family attention and affection.

According to Dian Nafi's book, "The song Diary Depressiku tells the emotional journey of an individual facing deep sadness and feelings of loneliness due to a non-ideal family situation. The lyrics reflect personal experiences of hurt and despair, as well as feelings of envy towards other people's seemingly happier and more harmonious lives." The lyrics of this song clearly show the feelings of envy, displeasure, and trying to forget the wounds in various ways but ultimately recognizing the value of love and care in life.

Pop song lyrics such as those produced by Last Child not only serve as entertainment, but also serve as a tool to convey inner emotions and feelings. They combine emotional and expressive elements with cultural relevance, reflecting the relevant experiences and conditions of teenagers. Language reflects the social world, according to Gee (2004), and looking at how young people use language in the media reveals insights into their social and cultural realities.

Using a qualitative descriptive approach, this study analyzes linguistic units in song lyrics as primary data. Leech's semantic theoretical framework is applied to identify conceptual and contextual meanings, particularly through the mechanisms of metaphor, hyperbole and symbolism that shape emotional narratives. As argued in similar studies, lexical semantic analysis enables the mapping of literal and connotative meanings contained in selected diction.

One of the main areas of linguistics is semantics, which studies the meaning of words. According to Griffith, One of the two main areas of linguistics is semantics, which studies the meaning of a sentence or phrase. In addition, semantics is part of language structure, which studies how expressions or sentences are organized. This study will focus on the non-musical information conveyed by musical sounds; this is information that goes beyond simply enjoying the notes and rhythms.

Marisya & Nabillah (2024) state that figurative meaning includes conveying a deeper message by using language beyond its literal meaning. By using figures of speech, the person speaking can convey emotions, experiences, or abstract concepts in a more beautiful and complex way. In situations like this,

semantics helps explain the formation and understanding of figurative meaning in language by analyzing word structure, context of use, and the relationship between elements in the text.

Analysis is the process of systematically studying or examining something to gain further understanding, or the specialized study of something. Through semantic analysis, this research will explore how emotion and hope are represented in the lyrics of “Diary Depressiku”, and how these meanings shape the listener's experience of this song.

## METHOD

The lyrics of Last Child's “Diary Depressiku” - which is featured on their YouTube channel - are the subject of a descriptive qualitative approach. The research aims to uncover their lexical (dictionary-based) and contextual meanings by focusing on the terms, phrases and expressions used in the song. The research also shows semantic shifts that are influenced by cultural and epochal developments over time.

### Data Collection

The phrases, and sentences used in Last Child's Diary Depresiku are the primary data for this research. The data source was obtained from the YouTube channel Dapur Musik, precisely from the video uploaded on May 17, 2010. The video can be accessed through the page: [https://youtu.be/1Z1wrx-G0-0?si=MHnALQBFDFNF14\\_p8](https://youtu.be/1Z1wrx-G0-0?si=MHnALQBFDFNF14_p8)

In collecting structured data, several steps need to be considered as follows;

1. **Watching and Listening:** The researcher watches and listens to the song to systematically collect data carefully several times to understand all the related terms.
2. **Selecting Songs:** Songs were selected based on the use of clear language and words that represented sadness or hope.
3. **Exploring Playlists:** Additional videos in the Music Kitchen YouTube playlist were reviewed to ensure that the terms found in the selected song were relevant and consistent.
4. **Classifying Terms:** Terms, phrases or sentences representing hope and sadness were selected and categorized for additional analysis.

### Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis process involves various structured steps to ensure depth and accuracy of interpretation :

1. **Categorization:** Terms are categorized by type, such as phrases or expressions about hope or sadness.
2. **Lexical Analysis:** Each term is studied to find its basic or standard meaning by using dictionary definitions or commonly accepted meanings.
3. **Contextual Analysis:** Each term is examined for its meaning within the context of the lyrics and the wider cultural or environmental context. This step concentrates on how the story, tone, and visuals shape the meaning of the terms.
4. **Synthesis and Conclusion:** Results are compiled to make conclusions about the contained meaning and cultural significance of the terms or phrases used in the song.

### Tools and Instruments

To ensure proper analysis, researchers use AI-based software such as Sonix that aims to document lyrics accurately and from both audio and official video sources. Also, to interpret the meanings of words or phrases in the lyrics, this research refers to various dictionary sources, both physical and online.

These references were used to identify the lexical meanings of important terms, as well as explore possible connotative or symbolic meanings that arise in the context of the song. These sources also helped in distinguishing denotative and implicative meanings according to Barthe's semiotic approach.

In addition to analyzing the written lyrics, this research also made observation notes on the delivery of the lyrics in the official music video. Observations include aspects of tone, rhythm, vocal intonation, as well as visual cues such as facial expressions, gestures, and cinematic elements that reinforce the meaning of the lyrics.

The main instrument in the analysis stage is Roland Barthes' semiotic framework, which includes identifying denotation, connotation, and mythical meanings in song lyrics. The lyric data that has been transcribed and classified is then analyzed by identifying the sign (signifier) and the signified meaning (signified), as well as the symbolic and narrative patterns that emerge. This process is carried out in stages: data reduction (filtering and coding lyrics), data presentation (grouping findings), and conclusion drawing.

### **Expected Contributions**

This research is expected to make a significant contribution, both theoretically and practically, in the study of semiotics and the analysis of Indonesian pop song lyrics, especially in the song "Diary Depressiku" by Last Child. Theoretically, this research enriches the literature on the application of semiotic analysis to Indonesian popular music, which is still relatively limited. By using Roland Barthes' approach, this research can serve as a reference for similar studies in the future. In addition, this research also offers a deeper understanding of the themes of sadness and hope expressed in song lyrics, so that it can help listeners and other researchers to understand the emotional dynamics contained therein. From a practical perspective, the findings of this research can be utilized as a source of inspiration and reference by musicians, songwriters, and teachers who want to learn or teach meaningful and emotionally impactful lyric writing techniques.

### **Analytical Framework**

The difference between lexical meaning and contextual meaning drives this research. According to Lyons (1995), lexical meaning refers to the general or dictionary definition of a term, while contextual meaning analyzes how a term is used in a particular context or cultural context.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Result**

After analyzing the data from Last Child's song "Diary Depresiku" on the Dapur Musik YouTube channel, researchers identified 10 sentences or phrases that have contextual meanings that are different from their lexical meanings used in the lyrics of the song. These terms represent a meaning of sadness and or hope that represents the overall meaning of this song.

The full list of terms and their meanings is presented in Table 1, and the full text is attached in the Appendix. The Meanings of Term Used in Lyrics

**Table 1 the meanings of sadness and hope terms**

No	Sentences or Phrases	Meanings
1	Bersama kenangan yang ungkit luka di hati	Rain here is not only a natural phenomenon, but also a symbol of a sad mood and full of bitter memories that the songwriter keeps repeating and the feeling of sadness is felt and remembered frequently.
2	Ku ingat saat ayah pergi, dan kami mulai kelaparan	It's not just the hunger, but also the sadness that depicts the loss of a father figure and the suffering of poverty, which causes deep inner wounds.
3	Hal yang biasa buat aku, hidup di jalanan	The meaning of living on the streets here is not necessarily to be like a vagrant, but the wounds felt and the disappointments experienced make him seem to lose his way.
4	Yang hancurkan semua hal indah, yang dulu pernah aku miliki	The happiness that was originally felt turned into an agony that took away the precious things that were once in life.
5	ku iri pada kalian, Yang hidup bahagia berkat suasana indah dalam rumah	Envy shows the sadness of wishing for what others have. In this case, the songwriter compares fates that are inversely proportional. He feels that the happiness that others feel should also be felt by himself.
6	Tiada harga diri agar hidupku terus bertahan	Here it not only shows sadness but also a desperation experienced, as if the world has stopped turning.
7	Dengan minuman keras yang saat ini ku genggam, atau menggoreskan kaca di lenganku	This is a true representation of how sadness and depression affect the brain and actions. Although it's just a way to vent sadness, the meaning is much broader than that.
8	Perihnya luka ini semakin dalam ku rasakan	The actual meaning confirms the broader context that the inner pain and feelings of sadness or disappointment that he feels are getting heavier and not easy to forget or heal.
9	Luka yang harusnya dapat terobati, Yang ku harap tiada pernah terjadi	A hidden hope, when the self gets a great wound as well as the hope that wants to heal and accept all the events that happen to him and his family with sincerity.
10	Hal yang tak pernah ku dapatkan, sejak aku hidup di jalanan	the meaning of hope is hidden and very deep. This sentence reflects a strong longing for something that has been lost or never felt, Life on the streets describes conditions full of struggle, uncertainty, and loneliness, so that hope is not just

		an ordinary wish, but a big dream to achieve a better life, full of love, and happiness.
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## Discussion

Based on the analysis of the lyrics of Diary Depressiku, the songwriter reveals the depth of contextual meaning that reflects the emotional experience of a child traumatized by the divorce of his parents and living on the streets. The lyrics consistently display two main themes, namely deep sadness and implied hope, which are reflected through the choice of phrases, and sentences used.

### 1. Representasi Kesedihan dan Luka Batin

First, the theme of sadness is overwhelmingly dominant and vividly portrayed throughout the lyrics, particularly through poignant phrases such as “luka di hati” (wounds in the heart), “kelaparan” (hunger), and “hidup di jalanan” (living on the streets). These expressions collectively convey not only the physical hardships but also the profound psychological suffering experienced by the protagonist. The abandonment by a father figure and the ensuing broken home situation serve as the root causes of this deep emotional turmoil. The phrase “luka di hati” metaphorically encapsulates the internal emotional wounds that are invisible yet deeply felt, highlighting how the trauma extends beyond material deprivation to affect the core of the individual’s emotional well-being.

This pervasive sadness is further intensified by the line “tiada harga diri agar hidupku terus bertahan” (no self-esteem to keep my life going), which reveals a state of hopelessness and diminished self-worth. The phrase reflects how the protagonist’s living conditions—marked by instability, neglect, and social marginalization—have eroded their confidence and sense of identity. This loss of dignity is not merely a consequence of external circumstances but also a psychological burden that threatens their will to survive and persist.

Moreover, the lyrics incorporate vivid descriptions of self-destructive coping mechanisms, as seen in the phrases “minuman keras yang saat ini kugenggam” (the hard liquor I am holding right now) and “menggoreskan kaca di lenganku” (scratching glass on my arm). These lines contextually depict the protagonist’s desperate attempts to numb or escape the overwhelming inner pain. The use of alcohol and self-harm are emblematic of deep depression and despair, illustrating how the individual resorts to harmful behaviors as a means of temporary relief from emotional suffering. Such imagery powerfully communicates the severity of the mental health struggles faced by those living in such adverse conditions, emphasizing the urgent need for empathy and support.

### 2. Hope and Self-Awareness

Secondly, despite the pervasive atmosphere of sadness that envelops the lyrics, there is a subtle yet powerful undercurrent of hope woven throughout the song. This hope is most clearly expressed in the line “hal yang tak pernah kudapatkan sejak aku hidup di jalanan” (something I have never received since I lived on the streets), which encapsulates a deep yearning for love, acceptance, and a better life. This phrase conveys not only a sense of loss but also an enduring desire for emotional fulfillment and stability that the protagonist has long been deprived of. It highlights the human capacity to aspire for something greater, even in the midst of adversity.

Further into the lyrics, the stanza “namun bila ku mulai sadar, dari sisa mabuk semalam / disaat ku telah mengerti, betapa indah dicintai” (but when I begin to realize, from the remnants of last night’s drunkenness / when I finally understand how beautiful it is to be loved) marks a significant turning point in the emotional



narrative. This moment of awakening signifies the protagonist’s growing self-awareness and recognition of the value of love and affection—elements that have been absent in their life. The contrast between the haze of intoxication and the clarity of this realization underscores the complexity of the healing process, where moments of vulnerability lead to profound insight.

This emerging hope reflects a process of self-reflection and emotional maturation. It suggests that, despite the pain and hardship, the protagonist is beginning to internalize positive values and recognize the possibility of change. This newfound awareness serves as a catalyst for emotional recovery, signaling the start of a journey towards healing and self-acceptance. The hope embedded in these lines acts as a beacon, illuminating a path away from despair and towards a future where love and belonging are attainable.

### **3. Social and Moral Implications**

Furthermore, the repetition of the refrain expressing envy towards others’ happiness serves as a powerful rhetorical device that intensifies the inner psychological conflict experienced by the singer. By repeatedly contrasting his own dark and painful reality with the harmonious and joyful lives of others, the lyrics highlight a deep sense of alienation and emotional turmoil. This recurring motif of envy is not merely a superficial feeling but reflects a profound struggle within the singer’s psyche—a yearning for normalcy, love, and belonging that remains out of reach due to his broken home background.

This repetition functions to emphasize the cyclical nature of the singer’s emotional pain, where the constant comparison exacerbates feelings of inadequacy and isolation. It reveals how children from broken homes often grapple with complex emotions, including resentment, longing, and self-doubt, as they witness the seemingly effortless happiness of their peers. The refrain thus adds a layered psychological dimension to the song, making it not only a personal lament but also a broader social commentary on the emotional and social trauma faced by children affected by family breakdowns.

Moreover, this lyrical technique invites listeners to empathize with the singer’s plight by repeatedly drawing attention to the contrast between what is desired and what is experienced. It underscores the persistent impact of broken home experiences on a child’s emotional development, illustrating how such trauma can shape their worldview and self-perception over time. By doing so, the song becomes a realistic and poignant representation of the struggles faced by many children in similar situations, giving voice to their often unspoken pain and resilience.

### **4. Aesthetic and Communicative Functions**

From a linguistic point of view, the use of phrases and sentences in the lyrics of *Diary Depresiku* is highly effective in conveying complex and multifaceted emotional messages. The song employs simple yet semantically rich phrases such as “luka di hati” (wounds in the heart), “hidup di jalanan” (living on the streets), and “minuman keras” (hard liquor), which function as symbolic markers that encapsulate broader themes of grief, hardship, and emotional pain. These phrases are carefully chosen to evoke vivid imagery and emotional resonance with the listener, despite their linguistic simplicity.

The phrase “luka di hati” metaphorically represents inner emotional trauma, allowing listeners to grasp the depth of the protagonist’s suffering beyond physical or visible wounds. Similarly, “hidup di jalanan” conveys not just a literal description of homelessness but also symbolizes marginalization, vulnerability, and social exclusion. The mention of “minuman keras” serves as a linguistic signifier of coping mechanisms that are self-destructive yet understandable within the context of deep despair.

Beyond individual phrases, the reflective and narrative sentences in the lyrics play a crucial role in constructing a coherent and emotionally engaging storyline. These sentences provide insight into the protagonist’s internal state, memories, and evolving awareness, thus inviting listeners to engage

empathetically with the narrative. The use of first-person perspective and introspective language fosters a sense of intimacy and authenticity, making the emotional experience more relatable.

Moreover, the linguistic structure of the lyrics allows for polysemy and interpretative openness, enabling multiple layers of meaning to emerge depending on the listener's background and context. This openness enriches the song's communicative power, as it does not merely state emotions but also evokes reflection and personal connection. The interplay between concrete imagery and abstract emotional states exemplifies how language can bridge the gap between individual experience and collective understanding.

## CONCLUSION

After analyzing the phrases and sentences containing contextual meanings of sadness and hope used in Last Child's "Diary Depresiku" on the Dapur Musik YouTube channel, it can be concluded that a total of 7 terms of phrases or sentences containing the meaning of sadness, and 3 terms containing the meaning of hope were identified.

The lyrics of this song contain more sadness. However, behind the sadness, there is hope implied, especially the desire for love and a better life. The realization of the importance of love and care is the first step to recovery.

The repetition of envying other people's happiness adds to the picture of the inner conflict experienced. Overall, the song not only conveys personal sadness, but also illustrates the impact of divorce on children's psychology and invites listeners to better understand and give hope to those who experience something similar.

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