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Deciphering the Semiotic Landscape of Love in Lana Del Rey's 'Mariners Apartment Complex' Song Lyrics

Salva de Shauma Andres

Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia

ARTICEL INFO ABSTRACT This research paper presents an analysis of Lana Del Rey's song "Mariners Keywords: Semiotics Apartment Complex" through the lens of semiotics, using Ferdinand de Saussure's Love theory to explore the complex signification and interpretation of love in the song's Mariners Apartment Complex Song Lyrics lyrics. This research uses a qualitative approach, focusing on identifying signifiers and signs, and interpreting each verse of the song. The results of the analysis show that the song is rich in messages that convey the power of love, as History: Received (23 December 2022) experienced by a woman. Themes of heartbreak and lovesickness are interwoven Revised (19 July 2023) throughout the lyrics, showcasing Lana Del Rey's portrayal of a woman deeply Accepted (7 November 2023) invested in deep and unwavering affection. This research highlights the complexity and depth of emotions expressed in the song, highlighting the multifaceted nature of love as a central theme.

INTRODUCTION

Literature is the language-based expression of life as it can visualize how people feel in this world. Literature includes human elements like ethics, reality, human beings, psychology, love, and a variety of other topics (Khoir et al., 2024). Sometimes a person's emotions cannot be expressed in words, but they can be expressed through literature. Realities are portrayed in literature an they are associated. The stories in literature are real-life events that are described or told. The magic of literature. The fantasy realm can be transported to the readers or listeners.

Poetry is one of the literary genres. Poetry is any vocal or written expression of language that is rhythmically structured and intended to tell a tale or communicate any type of emotion, concept, or state of being (Jackson, 2024). There are various ways to accomplish this aesthetic expression through poetry. In the process of writing their poetry, poets adhere to specific forms and patterns. These various forms developed from distinct creative and cultural trends. The majority of these forms fall under the description of poetry as it was previously stated, and the most well-known of these include the elegy, narrative, ode, ballad, sonnet, villanelle, sestina, free verse, and epic. Many poems are presented in the form of songs, claims Perrine (1969). On the other hand, poetry includes song. A song is an artistic blending of tone and voice as it can simultaneously generate a beautiful tune (Blasing, 2009).

Due to its accessibility, listening to music has become one of the most popular activities among people nowadays. Simply stated, music influences every aspect of our daily existence (Sternberg, 2020). Even if we just occasionally notice it, it has become the soundtrack of our existence. Music is frequently played, whether you are doing your grocery shopping, watching a soccer game, or waiting to speak with your cable operator. This does not even touch on the more deliberate uses of music, such as practicing an instrument (or instruments) we love, travelling to work on the subway, or even studying for an exam. Certainly, it is possible that enjoying music is just a habit. It might be something we turn to as our "go-to medication" in times of stress or anxiety. On the other side, we also consciously select music to arouse our excitement or happiness. Some of the most intense emotions we experience throughout the day can be treated with music.

One method of mass communication derived from songs is the interaction of musical elements with poetic or lyrical elements, with the song serving as the vehicle for conveyance of the message from the communicator to the communicant in massive quantities through the media (Sternberg, 2020). The purpose of song lyrics, which take the form of messages, oral statements, and phrases, is to evoke a mood, paint a picture in the listener's mind, and convey a range of meanings (Chotimah & Sabiq, 2021). The song serves as a communication tool by evoking empathy for both real-world situations and fantastical tales .

While the song's purpose can be used to uplift people's spirits in difficult times, bring them together, and play with their emotions and thoughts in order to instill a mindset or value that people will later perceive as reasonable, true, and acceptable (Rutsyamsun & Sakinah 2023). As a result, the words being used in song lyrics are not like those found in daily language and contain ambiguous qualities, making it possible to interpret song lyrics using semiotic methods (Ramdani & Sakinah, 2023) —a branch of study that analyzes the sign system.

Song becomes an intriguing topic to explore, as was already indicated. Since 'Mariners Apartment Complex' by Lana Del Rey contains extremely poetic lyrics, the researcher is interested in examining it. Lana Del Rey wrote the song "Mariners Apartment Complex," which was engineered by Laura Sisk and produced by Jack Antonoff. Her sixth studio album, Norman Fucking Rockwell!, features it as the lead and opening song. The song debuted on BBC Radio 1's "Future Sounds with Annie Mac" program on September 12, 2018, and the music video followed soon after. Based on the description above, the researcher is curious to examine how Lana Del Rey symbolizes and represents love in the song.

Semiotics, a multidisciplinary field, studies signs and symbols and their role in communication. It explores how various forms of expression, including verbal and nonverbal means such as symbols, gestures, music, and paralinguistic techniques, convey meaning. Central to semiotics is the concept that meaning is constructed through the relationship between signs, which consist of a signifier (the physical form) and a



signified (the concept or idea being represented). The discipline also investigates how signs are organized into systems, such as meronymy (parts of a whole), co-meronymy (related parts), antonymy (opposites), and superordination/subordination (hierarchical relationships). These relationships, when used in a text, help convey meaning in time and space, contributing to the overall understanding and interpretation of the intended message (Yuzar et al., 2023).

Ferdinand de Saussure (1857–1913) describes semiotics as a field of study that examines how signs function in social interaction (Lagopoulos & Boklund-Lagopoulou, 2020). The roots of structuralism can be traced back to Saussure's ideas, which also gave rise to structuralism. tructuralism can be utilized as an analytical tool to examine and disclose the deep structure behind the appearance of occurrences. Typically, the phenomenon is interpreted as a language or in terms of language models. Roland Barthes (1915–1980) was the first to apply semiotic ideas as they emerged from etymology to visual images; examples include advertisements, photography, and motion pictures. The semiotics discussed above is summarized in Barthes' work in a useful manner (Cobley & Machin, 2019).

Ferdinand de Saussure defined semiotics as "the study of the role of signs as part of social life." This concept includes a relationship that assumes the sign is a legitimate element of social life. A social system and a sign system both have connections to one another. In this instance, Saussure discusses social norms that determine how signals are used in society, specifically how signs are combined and used in order to have social significance and value (Sobur, 2016). The idea that language is a system of signs and that each sign is made up of two components, the signifier and the signified, is the main topic of debate in Saussure's most significant theory. The sign is the combination of a marker's form (signifer) and an idea or sign (signified). Alternatively, the signifier can be described as a "meaningful sound" or "meaningful touch." Signifiers are hence the tangible components of language, such as what is said or heard as well as what is written or read. In contrast, signifieds are mental pictures, ideas, or concepts (Bertens, 2001, in Sobur, 2013). Someone will use a sign to convey information about an object while speaking, and other people will interpret the sign. Two sign elements make up the sign (signifier and signified). The sign's physical component, the signifier, might take the form of a sign, word, image, or sound. While the signified is displaying an absolute idea that is comparable to the physical indicators that are already in place. The signification process is visible between the sign and the referent, which is an external reality.

A song is a lyrical poetry that is sung while a musical instrument is being played. It is an extremely ancient kind of literature that is passed down from one generation to the next. Songs were initially handed orally from person to person when people could not read or write. Folk songs are those that were widely popular among the populace. When people could read and write, they started to write down their songs, which is how they came to be printed in books. The songs are broken down into a variety of categories, including folk tunes, love songs, classical songs, and evergreen songs. Songs are an unique type that share



elements with speech and poetry. Songs and speech both contain melody, are vocally generated, and lack linguistic meaning. Poems and songs both utilize words to express meaning, are often written down before being published, can be set to music, and can both be heard. Last but not least, it demonstrates that a song is a piece of musical composition made up of words, verse, or poetry that is sung or recited while modulating the voice to convey thinking and emotion.

The words that make up a song's lyrics often include verses and choruses. Lyrics can have an explicit or an implicit meaning. When lyrics are obscure or nearly incomprehensible, form, articulation, meter, and harmony of expression are highlighted in their explanation. A lyric is a piece of writing created by a person who has the creative flair to craft lovely words with significant meaning. If lyrics and music were merged, the result would be a magnificent song. A lyricist or lyrist is the person who writes lyrics. Lyrics are the words of a song that are composed for a lyric poetry and represent a person's unique feelings and emotions. The language of a song and the language of poetry are quite similar. It is a brief lyric poetry that conveys feeling. Poems are spoken through song lyrics. Sounds and words can portray emotions in various ways.

Lana Del Rey wrote the song "Mariners Apartment Complex," which Jack Antonoff and Laura Sisk produced. Her sixth studio album, Norman Fucking Rockwell!, features it as the lead and opening song. To end the summer, Lana revealed on her Instagram and Twitter accounts on September 7, 2018, that she will be releasing two new songs, "Mariners Apartment Complex" and "Venice Bitch." The song debuted on BBC Radio 1's "Future Sounds with Annie Mac" program on September 12, 2018, and the music video followed soon after. A gentle rock ballad with surf undertones, "Mariners Apartment Complex" has an average tempo of 76 beats per minute and lasts for 4 minutes, 6 seconds in the key of E. Lyrically, Del Rey challenges the notion that she is a tragic, frail person and encourages her partner to view her as a faithful, complicated, and trustworthy lover as well as to be more appreciative of the beauty in their surroundings. The instrumentation is relatively stripped back, featuring organic and laid back drum beats, accentuated by electric guitar, strings and piano.

Therefore, based on the aforementioned background, we found that Saussure's theory is the most appropriate to apply as a foundational analysis in this research in order to discover the signification and interpretation of love in the song Mariners Apartment Complex by Lana Del Rey.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach to interpret the complex meanings conveyed in Lana Del Rey's song "Mariners Apartment Complex." As stated by Alawiyyah (2021), qualitative methodology involves categorizing and interpreting linguistic or visual data to see the implicit and explicit dimensions of meaning-making in the data. In this study, the document analysis method was chosen to achieve this goal. Song lyrics served as the primary data source, which was carefully examined and processed by the researcher to extract



nuanced interpretations. The researcher used descriptive data analysis techniques to systematically analyze the song verses, and the resulting insights were carefully documented for further analysis and interpretation.

The data for this study was collected from Lana Del Rey's song "Mariners Apartment Complex". The lyrics of this song were carefully analyzed and deconstructed using Saussure's semiotics lens to understand the underlying messages and themes. The researcher used the document analysis method to carefully examine each stanza, identifying the main signifiers and signs as well as the corresponding signifiers. Through this process, the researcher aimed to uncover the complex layers of meaning embedded in the lyrical content of the song. The analysis was conducted systematically, with each stanza scrutinized for its semantic, syntactic and pragmatic features. The researcher paid particular attention to the use of language, imagery and metaphor, as well as the overall structure and narrative of the song. The findings were documented and categorized to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of the song's depiction of love and its associated emotions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The song that lyrics are being studied is "Mariners Apartment Complex", written and performed by Lana Del Rey herself. The author discovers a number of signifiers and signifieds in the song's lyrics. According to studies that apply Ferdinand De Saussure's semiotic methodology, a sentence's meaning may differ from that of the lyrics. The author breaks down various words in the lyrics to Lana Del Rey's song Mariners Apartment Complex into signifiers and signifieds, which will be evaluated using Ferdinand De Saussure's semiotic approach.

Signifier	Signified
You took my sadness out of context At the Mariners Apartment Complex I ain't no candle in the wind	Lana explains that her partner took her sadness 'out of context' that her partner is misunderstood her being so weak, which followed by the phrase 'I aint no candle in the wind', that means she is no longer as weak as she once was. She likens her old self to something weak, like a candle's flame striving to endure the harsh winds of life.

Table 2.	Stanza 2
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Signifier	Signified
I'm the board, the lightning, the	Lana explained that she is now a strong woman, like
thunder	board, lightning and thunder. She is now so powerful



Kind of girl who's gonna make you that makes him wonder who he is and who he has *wonder* been.

Who you are and who you've been

Table 3. Stanza 3

Signifier	Signified
And who I've been is with you on these beaches	In this verse, Lana showed that she has been on some beaches with her partner, beaches here could
Your Venice bitch, your die-hard, your weakness	symbolize the place that they used to go to, the safe place for them to escape from the world. And by she
Maybe I could save you from your sins	means 'venice bitch' is that she is his lover, his weakness. Lana refers to herself in many of her songs as that name.

Table 4. Stanza 4

ky' here could means smoking,
er to smoke with her and whisper peaceful relationship between

Table 5. Stanza 5

Signifier	Signified
You lose your way, just take my hand	Lana is now her lover's leader. She is prepared to lead him and show him the way, watching over him like a
You're lost at sea, then I'll command your boat to me again	wise, watchful God who is quick to lend a hand when things get tough as she has previously referred to the
Don't look too far, right where you are, that's where I am	sea as a symbol of wilderness and freedom. The line "I'm your man" is not literal, it could means that she
I'm your man, I'm your man	is powerful, like a man.

Table 6. Stanza 6

Signifier	Signified
They mistook my kindness for	The lyrics continue the theme of being misled by her
weakness	acts by using the pronoun "they" to refer to not just her
I fucked up, I know that, but Jesus	partner but to everyone who had attempted to disprove
Can't a girl just do the best she can?	Lana that she was who she claimed to be. She tries to
Can't a girt just do the best she can.	convey her honest feelings while acknowledging the



highs and lows of herself. She sings about why she should feel persecuted and judged for her past when she is merely attempting to be and improve herself in a frustrated tone, which conveys her frustration.

Table 7. Stanza 7

Signifier	Signified
Catch a wave and take in the sweetness	When Lana asks her lover to "capture the sweetness of the wave," she is actually asking him to take in the
Think about it, the darkness, the deepness	freedom as well as feel her darkness and depth.
All the things that make me who I am	

Table 8. Stanza 8

Signifier	Signified
And who I am is a big-time believer	From personal experience, Lana is aware that anything
That people can change, that you don't have to leave her When everyone's talking, you could make a stand	is possible. She keeps moving forward with the idea of trust and her assurance in her ability to change, so the partner does not have to leave her for the things that are changeable.

Table 9. Stanza 9

Signifier	Signified
<i>'Cause even in the dark, I feel your resistance</i>	Lana's relationship is so dear to her that she could sense his resistance even through their difficult times.
You can see my heart burning in the distance	Despite the distance between them, she can still sense his presence in her heart.
Baby, baby, baby, I'm your man, yeah	

Table 10. Stanza 10

Signifier	Signified
You lose your way, just take my hand	Lana is now her lover's leader. She is prepared to lead him and show him the way, watching over him like a
You're lost at sea, then I'll command your boat to me again	wise, watchful god who is quick to lend a hand when things get tough as she has previously referred to the
Don't look too far, right where you are, that's where I am	sea as a symbol of wilderness and freedom. The line



I'm your man, I'm your man	"I'm your man" is not literal, it could means that she
is powerful, like a man.	

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Signifier	Signified
Catch a wave and take in the	When Lana asks her lover to "capture the sweetness of
sweetness	the wave," she is actually asking him to take in the
Take in the sweetness	freedom as well as feel her darkness and depth.
You want this, you need this	

Table 11. Stanza 11

Table	12.	Stanza	12

Signifier	Signified	
Are you ready for it?	If she repeatedly asks her partner, "Are you ready for	
Are you ready for it?	it?," it may be a sign that she wants to take the lead in	
Are you ready for it?	their relationship and change his perception of her from the weak girl he knows to a strong woman.	
(Damn)		

In the song *Mariners Apartment Complex*, Lana has talked about upcoming changes in her life and the choices she made to find happiness and become stronger. In the song, she talks of "getting lost" at sea, which she has previously referred to as her "escaping spot," as well as being the guide for someone who is going through something with which she has previously dealt. Lana says her partner misinterpreted her weakness and took her emotions "out of context." In the song, she emphasized ro her partner that she is no longer a 'weak girl' he knows, she also can lead in their relationship. *'I aint no candle in the wind'*.

The main theme of this song is about love, specifically romantic sad love. Lana Del Rey in all of her songs has always been a melancholy person who wants the world to be as perfect as it appears on screen. Unfortunately, life pushes her in the direction it desires, for him and for all of us. Despite all the difficulties, Lana Del Rey is courageous enough to speak to her significant other and express her gratitude for his ability to temporarily alleviate her misery at the *Mariners Apartment Complex*.

"And who I am is a big-time believer

That people can change, but you don't have to leave her

When everyone's talking, you can make a stand"



It is impossible to ignore the poetic undertone of her song in the second pre-chorus. Despite the varying standards of those around her, Lana has always been able to speak her mind. She does not worry about being analyzed due of her appearance.

"'Cause even in the dark, I feel your resistance You can see my heart burning in the distance Baby, baby, baby, I'm your man, yeah"

On the second pre-chorus, Lana Del Rey senses the resistance of her boyfriend, who does not want her to leave. We are all aware of how difficult separation is. With the two of them deciding to keep their distance, Lana claims she is not pleased either. She, too, is suffering, though. He can feel how much her heart is burning right along with his.

Heartbreak and lovesickness are mixed together in the lyrics. The song lengthens to show Lana as the person her partner fancy being with who is fixated on love. There are themes of letting go but keeping together as well as forgiveness. Yet, the meaning was not able to be identified, the precise plot of this song's tale with any degree of clarity.

CONCLUSION

Together, poetry and music can inspire the listener by evoking wonderful memories and feelings. They accomplish this by combining specific sounds from poetry as well as musical instruments. As a result of how similar the two are, music has become to resemble poetry. One of the song that has many poetic aspect is Mariners Apartment Complex by Lana Del Rey. There are many reasons to reflect and enjoy these works of literature, including the connection between music and poetry, the various sounds they produce, and how they impact lives. As many people knows, Lana Del Rey has so much impact for the music industry, especially about love. And many people also thinks that her songs are all so meaningful and are so many hidden meanings. To give an example, allow oneself a little more time to settle down and listen to the song's lyrics. Examine each word as in poem to uncover its hidden meanings.

All song especially Lana Del Rey's Mariners Apartment Complex and poetry does have a distinctive quality, and no two have the same meaning. The song Mariners Apartment Complex and poem contains several kinds of expression. They both let individuals enter and get immersed in a dimensional world which is in this case is the world made up by Lana Del Rey. The universe is made up of various settings and emotions, along with reality to be tidied up. The actual worth that ought to be given to literature is



appreciation. The relationship between poetry and music, the various tones they create, and how they impact lives are just a few of the many reasons to be grateful for these literary works.

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