

**A PSYCHOLINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF AFFECTIVE LEXICON
PROCESSING AND EMOTIONAL RESONANCE IN KHLOE ROSE'S
'FICTIONAL' AMONG ENGLISH EDUCATION STUDENTS**

SKRIPSI



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The Researcher,

Dyah Arum Centhini T. R.

MOTTO

“Frequently crocheting a bag, soon gonna crochet your LOVE.”

“I hope this never ends.”

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

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PROCESSING AND EMOTIONAL RESONANCE IN KHLOE ROSE'S
"FICTIONAL" AMONG ENGLISH EDUCATION STUDENTS"**

Is the result of my own original work, and all sources of information used have been clearly cited in the reference list according to the scientific and academic code of ethics. I am aware that if any violations of scholarly ethics regarding to the authenticity of this work are found, I personally accept the consequences in accordance with the applicable regulations and am prepared to bear legal sanctions.

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ABSTRACT

This study conducts a psycholinguistic analysis of affective lexicon processing and emotional resonance in Khloe Rose's song "Fictional" among students of an English Language Education program in Indonesia. Employing a mixed-methods design, the study identifies types of affective lexicons in the song lyrics through qualitative content analysis using the SentiSense framework (Albornoz et al., 2012) combined with grammatical categorization (Zhang et al., 2014), while quantitative descriptive analysis of questionnaire responses from sixteen respondents across semesters 4 to 8 examines how students process these lexicons and how the lexicons trigger emotional resonance. The findings reveal seven key lexical categories underlying the song's narrative, ranging from core sadness and despair and metaphorical or escapist language to parasocial or love lexicons and idealized romantic tropes. Students process concrete affective terms more directly than metaphorical ones, and interpretations of ambiguous lexicons are shaped by listeners' current emotional states, consistent with the "feelings as information" theory. Emotional resonance is achieved through the activation of affective memories, the use of ego defense strategies, and regulated escapism as a form of emotional management. The study concludes that authentic materials with high affective resonance deepen second-language processing, offering pedagogical implications for using emotionally rich song lyrics to promote both linguistic awareness and meaningful engagement in EFL classroom.

Keywords: affective lexicon, psycholinguistics, emotional resonance, SentiSense, EFL student.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini melakukan analisis psikolinguistik terhadap pemrosesan leksikon afektif dan resonansi emosional dalam lagu "Fictional" karya Khloe Rose di kalangan mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di Indonesia. Dengan menggunakan desain mixed-methods, penelitian ini mengidentifikasi jenis-jenis leksikon afektif dalam lirik lagu melalui analisis isi kualitatif menggunakan kerangka kerja SentiSense (Albornoz et al., 2012) yang dipadukan dengan kategorisasi gramatikal (Zhang et al., 2014), sementara analisis deskriptif kuantitatif terhadap respons kuesioner dari enam belas responden pada semester 4 hingga 8 mengkaji bagaimana mahasiswa memproses leksikon tersebut serta bagaimana leksikon tersebut memicu resonansi emosional. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan tujuh kategori leksikal utama yang membangun narasi lagu, mulai dari kesedihan dan keputusasaan inti serta bahasa metaforis atau pelarian, hingga leksikon parasosial atau cinta dan trope romantis yang diidealkan. Mahasiswa memproses istilah afektif konkret secara lebih langsung dibandingkan istilah metaforis, dan interpretasi terhadap leksikon yang ambigu dipengaruhi oleh kondisi emosional pendengar saat itu, sejalan dengan teori "feelings as information". Resonansi emosional tercapai melalui aktivasi memori afektif, penggunaan strategi pertahanan ego, dan pelarian yang teregulasi sebagai bentuk manajemen emosi. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa materi otentik dengan resonansi afektif tinggi memperdalam pemrosesan bahasa kedua, serta

menawarkan implikasi pedagogis bagi penggunaan lirik lagu yang kaya emosi untuk meningkatkan kesadaran linguistik dan keterlibatan bermakna di kelas EFL.

Kata kunci: leksikon afektif, psikolinguistik, resonansi emosional, SentiSense, mahasiswa EFL

PREFACE

First and foremost, the researcher would like to express the greatest gratitude to Allah SWT, the Almighty, for His blessings, grace, and guidance, which enabled the completion of this research proposal titled: “A Psycholinguistic Analysis of Affective Lexicon Processing and Emotional Resonance in Khloe Rose's 'Fictional' among English Education Students.” This work is submitted as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Education in the English Education Department. This research explores the intricate relationship between language and emotion through a psycholinguistic lens. By focusing on the processing of affective lexicons and the resulting emotional resonance, this study aims to provide deeper insights into how English Education students cognitively and affectively engage with contemporary musical poetry, specifically Khloe Rose’s "Fictional." The researcher realizes that the completion of this proposal would not have been possible without the support, guidance, and encouragement of many parties. Therefore, the researcher would like to extend sincere appreciation to:

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TABLE OF CONTENT

APPROVAL SHEETS	ii
LEGITIMATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
MOTTO.....	vii
STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP	viii
ABSTRACT.....	ix
ABSTRAK	x
PREFACE	xi
TABLE OF CONTENT	xiii
LIST OF TABLE	xvi
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xvii
LIST OF APPENDICES	xviii
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION	1
A. Background of The Study.....	1
B. Formulation of the Problems	3
C. Objectives of the Study.....	3
D. Significances of the Study	3
1. Theoretical Significance	3
2. Practical Significance	5
E. Definition of Terminologies.....	7
1. Psycholinguistics	7
2. Affective Lexicon	7
3. Grammatical Categories	8
4. Emotional Resonance	8
5. Parasocial Attachment	9
6. "Fictional" (Song)	9

7. English Education program as EFL Students (English as a Foreign Language Students).....	9
CHAPTER II REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	11
A. Review of Relevant Research.....	11
B. Theoretical Review	14
1. Psycholinguistics	14
2. Affective Lexicon	17
3. Emotional Resonance	23
4. Escapism and Fictional Narratives in Song Lyrics	24
5. "FICTIONAL" By Khloe Rose.....	25
C. Theoretical Framework.....	27
CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	29
A. Research Design	29
B. Research Setting	30
C. Data and Data Sources.....	32
D. Data Collection Technique	33
E. Data Analysis Technique	34
1. Qualitative Data Analysis	34
2. Quantitative Data Analysis	36
F. Data Validation Technique.....	37
1. Quantitative Data Validation	37
2. Qualitative Data Validation	38
CHAPTER IV FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION	40
A. Findings	40
1. The Types of Affective Lexicons Found in The Lyrics of Khloe Rose's Song "Fictional"	40

2. Analysis of Affective Lexicon Processing per Lyrical Snippet.....	44
3. How English Education Students Process Affective Lexicon	50
4. How Affective Lexicons Trigger Emotional Resonance	54
B. Discussion.....	61
1. Affective Lexicon Types in “Fictional”: SentiSense Framework and Grammatical Categorization	61
2. How English Education Students Process Affective Lexicons: Psycholinguistic Mechanisms.....	64
3. Emotional Resonance Mechanisms: Theoretical Grounding.....	68
CHAPTER V CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS.....	78
A. Conclusions	78
B. Suggestions	79
1. Suggestions for English Language Educators	79
2. Suggestions for Future Researchers.....	80
3. Suggestions for Songwriters and Content Creators	81
REFERENCES.....	82
APPENDIX	87

LIST OF TABLE

Table 3.1 Participant Profiles	32
Table 4.1 Affective Lexicon Types in Khloe Rose's "Fictional" (SentiSense Analysis)	40
Table 4.2 Frequency of Responses for Snippet A.....	44
Table 4.3 Frequency of Sentisense shift for Snippet A.....	45
Table 4.4 Students Interpretation of Snippet B “But it hurts a lot less to me	46
Table 4.5 Interpretation for each Affective Lexicon from Snippet B through E ..	47
Table 4.6 Student Processing of Affective Lexicons in "Fictional"	51

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 limbic system. Cross-section of the human brain	19
Figure 2.2 Theoretical Framework of the research	28

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Questionnaire Form	87
Appendix 2. Interview Script	91
Appendix 3. Interview Transcript Participant 1	94
Appendix 4. Interview Transcript Participant 2	105
Appendix 5. Kartu Bimbingan Dosen Pembimbing 1	108
Appendix 6. Kartu Bimbingan Dosen Pembimbing 2	110

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of The Study

.The phenomenon of escapism through fictional media and music is increasingly prevalent among the younger generation. Many adolescents and young adults tend to retreat into fantasy worlds as a coping mechanism for the disappointment and complexities of real-world relationships (Stenseng et al., 2012; Irimiás et al., 2021; Zhou, 2022). A work that profoundly encapsulates this phenomenon is the song “Fictional” by Khloe Rose, an American singer-songwriter born on May 15, 2007. Released in April 2023 as part of her debut EP, *The In Between*, the song was inspired by Rose’s personal experiences with recurring disappointments in romantic relationships (Khloe Rose, 2023). In various interviews, she stated that the song illustrates a preference for falling in love with fictional characters, who are perceived as ideal beings that will never disappoint (Rose, cited in Billboard, 2023). The song quickly went viral on TikTok and YouTube due to its highly relatable themes of heartbreak and escapism, particularly for Gen Z, who are avid consumers of romance novels and fictional media (Genius Lyrics, 2023).

In terms of language, culture has a big role in how language works, especially in the meaning, how people use language in different situations, and how conversations flow together (Fauziyah et al., 2024). From a psycholinguistic perspective, “Fictional” is rich in affective lexicons.

There is a sharp contrast between negative affective words reflecting reality such as broken heart, hurts, let down, tired, alone and ideal, positive words representing the fictional world, such as perfect as they can be, dreaming, imagining, and kissing in the rain (Bradley & Lang, 1999; Warriner et al., 2013; Citron, 2012). The use of metaphors like “down the rabbit hole” and classic romantic imagery possesses the potential to trigger profound mental imagery, narrative transportation, and emotional resonance in listeners (Green & Brock, 2000; Appel et al., 2015; Sammler et al., 2010; Fiveash & Luck, 2016).

English Education students represent a compelling research population due to their higher literary competence and linguistic awareness compared to students of other disciplines (Carter, 2010). This heightened sensitivity to language, literature, and word choice likely influences how they process affective lexicons and the intensity of their emotional resonance toward the song (Mawaddah, 2025; Mori, 2022). While studies on emotional responses to music are extensive, research integrating psycholinguistics, affective lexicon processing, and emotional resonance in contemporary pop songs among English Education students remains limited, particularly within the Indonesian context. Therefore, this study is essential to uncover the types of affective lexicons within the song, the cognitive processes involved in their comprehension, and their subsequent impact on emotional resonance among English Education students.

Based on the background outlined above the researcher proposes a study entitled "A Psycholinguistic Analysis of Affective Lexicon

Processing and Emotional Resonance in Khloe Rose's 'Fictional' Among English Education Students."

B. Formulation of the Problems

There are three formulation of the problems in this research :

1. What are the types of affective lexicons found in the lyrics of Khloe Rose's song, "Fictional"?
2. How do English Education students process these affective lexicons when listening to the song "Fictional"?
3. How does the affective lexicon within the song "Fictional" trigger emotional resonance among English Education students?

C. Objectives of the Study

This research aims to:

1. Analyze the processing of the affective lexicon in the song "Fictional" among English Language Education students.
2. Knowing the level of emotional resonance that arises from the song.
3. Identify factors that influence emotional resonance and escapism tendencies.

D. Significances of the Study

1. Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, the findings of this study are expected to contribute scientifically in the following aspects:

a. Advancement of Psycholinguistic Studies in Popular Literary Texts

This study strengthens the theoretical foundation regarding how linguistic elements in song lyrics interact with the listener's cognitive processes. By integrating the findings of Mawaddah and Djauhari (2025), this research provides additional theoretical evidence that diction and sentence structure are not merely aesthetic elements but psycholinguistic stimuli capable of triggering emotional memory and creating emotional closeness between the text and the audience.

b. Reinforcement of Grammatical Categorization Theory in Emotion Processing

This study contributes to language categorization theory by applying the concepts proposed by Zhang et al. (2014) in the context of emotional analysis. Theoretically, it demonstrates that classifying lexicons into word classes such as nouns, verbs, and adjectives constitutes a fundamental step in understanding how the human brain organizes and interprets emotional intensity embedded in authentic English works.

c. *Validation of Concept Based Affective Lexicons*

Through the application of the framework proposed by Albornoz et al. (2012), namely SentiSense, this study

contributes to sentiment analysis methodology in linguistics. Theoretically, it demonstrates that a concept based approach, rather than a single word based approach, is highly effective in addressing semantic ambiguity and improving the accuracy of identifying emotional categories in poetic and metaphorical texts such as song lyrics.

d. Expansion of Affective Involvement Theory in EFL Learning

This study enriches the literature on affective involvement in the context of students of English Language Education. In line with the theory proposed by Putriani and Hamzah (2026), the findings provide a theoretical basis that emotional resonance emerging from authentic materials can deepen second language processing. This reinforces the notion that listeners' emotional engagement with song lyrics, such as the parasocial theme in "Fictional", constitutes a crucial component in the successful internalization of language meaning.

2. Practical Significance

Practically, the findings of this study are expected to provide benefits for several stakeholders as follows:

a. For Students of English Language Education (EFL Learners)

This study is expected to enhance students' critical awareness of the role of emotion in language processing. By understanding how affective lexicons in the song "Fictional" function, students can become more sensitive in recognizing emotional nuances in English vocabulary. Furthermore, an understanding of emotional resonance can help students manage their emotional engagement with language materials in a more positive and reflective manner.

b. For English Educators

The findings of this study can serve as a reference for educators in selecting authentic teaching materials with high affective engagement. In line with the findings of Putriani and Hamzah (2026), educators can utilize song lyrics with strong emotional resonance to increase students' motivation and active participation in the classroom. This strategy enables educators to focus not only on grammatical aspects but also on psychological dimensions that make language learning more meaningful.

c. For Researchers in Psycholinguistics

This study can serve as a reference or secondary data source for future researchers who aim to explore the relationship between parts of speech and sentiment intensity. By employing a classification model inspired by Albornoz et al. (2012) and Zhang et al. (2014), other

researchers may develop more refined analytical instruments to examine other popular literary works or parasocial phenomena in different linguistic contexts.

d. For Songwriters and Content Creators

This study provides practical insights into how the selection of diction and sentence structure, as discussed by Mawaddah and Djauhari (2025), can create emotional closeness with the audience. Songwriters can better understand which grammatical categories, whether emotionally expressive adjectives or dynamic verbs, are most effective in eliciting emotional resonance among listeners, particularly among young adults.

E. Definition of Terminologies

To avoid ambiguity and to clarify the scope of this study, several key terms are defined as follows:

1. Psycholinguistics

In this study, psycholinguistics is defined as a scientific approach used to examine the interaction between language, in this case song lyrics, and the human mind, particularly emotional responses. In line with the perspective of Mawaddah and Djauhari (2025), psycholinguistics here focuses on how linguistic elements such as diction in songs function as cognitive stimuli that trigger listeners' personal memories and emotions.

2. Affective Lexicon

Affective lexicon refers to a set of vocabulary in the song "Fictional" that carries emotional content or specific sentiment labels. This definition is based on the framework proposed by Albornoz et al. (2012) through SentiSense, in which affective lexicons are not merely individual words but language concepts associated with specific emotional categories in order to minimize semantic ambiguity in text analysis.

3. Grammatical Categories

Grammatical categories in this study refer to the classification of affective lexicons based on their parts of speech, namely nouns, verbs, and adjectives. This definition is grounded in the theory of Zhang et al. (2014), which states that grammatical categorization is a fundamental cognitive function that enables humans to organize linguistic information so that it can be processed systematically by the listener's mind.

4. Emotional Resonance

Emotional resonance is defined as a psychological condition in which listeners feel an emotional closeness or a sense of connection with the message conveyed in song lyrics. In the context of EFL students, this term refers to affective involvement which, according to Putriani and Hamzah (2026), emerges from the connection between students' personal perceptions and authentic language materials, thereby influencing how they internalize the meaning of the song.

5. Parasocial Attachment

In this study, parasocial attachment is defined as a psychological phenomenon represented in the song "Fictional", in which individuals experience a deep one sided emotional relationship with fictional characters. This term is used to explain the primary emotional context that triggers the use of particular affective lexicons by the songwriter as well as the emotional responses of listeners.

6. "Fictional" (Song)

In this study, "Fictional" refers to a musical work in the form of a song written and popularized by the singer Khloe Rose. Operationally, this song is treated as the primary data source containing a series of affective linguistic units. In line with the argument of Mar'us and Aditya (2025), the song is analyzed not merely as a musical composition but as a narrative text representing the psychological theme of emotional escapism, with a focus on the relationship between word choice and the listener's mental response.

7. English Education program as EFL Students (English as a Foreign Language Students)

EFL students in this study refer to undergraduate students in an English Language Education program who learn English in an environment where it is not the primary language. This definition pertains to the research participants who, according to Putriani and

Hamzah (2026), possess distinctive psycholinguistic characteristics in processing authentic materials such as the song "Fictional". The emotional resonance they experience serves as an indicator of the extent to which affective vocabulary in a second language can influence their cognitive and emotional engagement.