THE MEANING OF FREDDIE MERCURY’S “BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY”: A STUDY OF DECONSTRUCTION

A SARJANA PENDIDIKAN RESEARCH PAPER

Presented as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
to Obtain the Sarjana Pendidikan Degree
in English Language Education

By
Alexander Angga Pramudya
Student Number: 111214104

ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM
DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE AND ARTS EDUCATION
FACULTY OF TEACHERS TRAINING AND EDUCATION
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Approved by

Advisor

Dr. Antonius Herujiyanto, M.A.

Date

April 12, 2018
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By
Alexander Angga Pramudya
Student Number. 11214104

Defended before the Board of Examiners
on June 5, 2018
and Declared Acceptable

Board of Examiners

Chairperson : Yohana Veniranda, M.Hum., Ph.D.
Secretary : Christina Lhaksmita Anandari, Ed.M.
Member : Dr. Antonius Herujiyanto, M.A.
Member : Barli Bram, M.Ed., Ph.D.
Member : Patricia Angelina, M.Hum.

Yogyakarta, June 5, 2018
Faculty of Teachers Training Education
Sanata Dharma University

Dean

Dr. Yohanes Harsoyo, S.Pd., M.Si.
DEDICATION PAGE

I dedicate this paper to:
FRANSISKUS XAVERIUS SUWARNA
CHATARINA WERDIYATI
SILVESTRE A. PRAMUDITYA

“It doesn’t matter one tiny bit how unfair you think the world is. It’s only what you do, right here, right now, right this instant that matters. It’s your choice to sink or swim.”
Lamb of God – Delusion Pandemic

“Per aspera ad astra. Through hardships to the stars.”
Latin proverb

“Not all treasure is silver and gold, mate.”
Jack Sparrow (Pirates of The Carribean: The Curse of the Black Pearl)
STATEMENT OF WORK'S ORIGINALITY

I honestly declare that this research paper, which I have written, does not contain the work or part of the work of other people, except those cited in the quotations and the references, as a scientific paper should.

Yogyakarta, June 5, 2018

The Writer

Alexander Angga Pramudya

111214104
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ABSTRACT


This study analyzes “Bohemian Rhapsody” written by Freddie Mercury, a vocalist of British rock band named Queen. The song tells about a man who has intrapersonal problems because of being oppressed. The aim of this study is to seek for the meaning of “Bohemian Rhapsody” song lyrics. There are two formulated problems in this study: (1) “What is the literal or surface meaning of Freddie Mercury’s ‘Bohemian Rhapsody’ song lyric?” (2) “What is the deeper meaning of Freddie Mercury’s ‘Bohemian Rhapsody’ song lyric than can be perceived through deconstruction study?”

There are two sources used in this study. The primary source is a song lyric “Bohemian Rhapsody” written by Freddie Mercury. The secondary sources are books, related texts, and internet. The theories used are theory of literature, namely that of Poetry, theory of deconstruction, and theory of ambiguity. The approach used in this study is post-structuralism approach, which also leads in finding and reversing binary opposition.

Based on the analysis, there are two findings. First, the literal meaning of “Bohemian Rhapsody” is the surrender of a man who has an intrapersonal problem namely, being oppressed. Secondly, the deeper meaning or the true meaning of the song is that the man is trying to reveal his dream of a freedom in his life.

This study also delivers some suggestions for the further researchers and teachers in relation with education. It is recommended that the song be used as one of the materials to teach listening and poetry. It is also suggested that further researchers analyze the song using the psychological approach to obtain different results.

Keywords: Bohemian Rhapsody, deconstruction, literal meaning, deeper meaning
**ABSTRAK**


Penelitian ini menganalisis lirik lagu "Bohemian Rhapsody" yang ditulis oleh Freddie Mercury, seorang vokalis band rock Inggris bernama Queen. Lagu ini menceritakan mengenai seorang pria yang memiliki masalah intrapersonal karena tertekan. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mencari makna lirik lagu "Bohemian Rhapsody". Terdapat dua masalah yang dirumuskan dalam penelitian ini: (1) “Apa makna harfiah dari lirik lagu ‘Bohemian Rhapsody’ Freddie Mercury?” (2) “Apa makna mendalam dari lirik lagu ‘Bohemian Rhapsody’ karya Freddie Mercury yang didapat melalui studi dekonstruksi?”

Terdapat dua sumber yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini. Sumber utamanya adalah lirik lagu "Bohemian Rhapsody" yang ditulis oleh Freddie Mercury. Sumber kedua adalah buku, teks terkait, dan internet. Teori yang digunakan adalah teori sastra, terutama puisi, teori dekonstruksi, dan teori ambiguitas. Pendekatan yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah pendekatan post-strukturalisme, yang juga mengarah pada penemuan dan pembalikan oposisi biner.


Penelitian ini juga memberikan beberapa saran untuk peneliti selanjutnya dan guru dalam kaitannya dengan pendidikan. Disarankan agar lagu tersebut digunakan sebagai salah satu bahan untuk mengajarkan mendengarkan dan puisi. Selain itu juga disarankan kepada peneliti selanjutnya untuk menganalisis lagu tersebut menggunakan pendekatan psikologi untuk memperoleh hasil yang berbeda.

**Kata kunci:** Bohemian Rhapsody, deconstruction, literal meaning, deeper meaning
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Alexander Angga Pramudya
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TITLE PAGE</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPROVAL PAGES</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEDICATION PAGE</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATEMENT OF WORK’S ORIGINALITY</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PENYATAAN PERSETUJUAN PUBLIKASI</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRAK</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF APPENDICES</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE OF CONTENTS</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF APPENDICES</td>
<td>xii</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background                                                          | 1    |
B. Approach of the Study                                              | 7    |

## CHAPTER II. DISCUSSION

A. Review on Related Theories                                          | 11   |

1. Theory of Decorum                                                   | 11   |
2. Post-Structuralism Approach                                         | 12   |
3. Theories of Deconstruction                                          | 13   |
4. Theory of Ambiguity                                                 | 17   |
B. Discussion ........................................................................................................ 19

1. Literal meaning .................................................................................................... 19

2. Deeper meaning .................................................................................................. 30

CHAPTER III. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS ............. 38

A. Conclusions ....................................................................................................... 38

B. Recommendations ............................................................................................ 39

REFERENCES ...................................................................................................... 41

APPENDICES ....................................................................................................... 43

Appendix 1 ............................................................................................................ 43

Appendix 2 ............................................................................................................ 45
LIST OF APPENDICES

| APPENDIX 1 | Freddie Mercury’s “Bohemian Rhapsody” | 43 |
| APPENDIX 2 | Biography of Freddie Mercury | 45 |
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of two parts, namely Background and Approach of the Study. The background describes why the writer chooses the primary data and the topic, the importance, the formulated problems, and also the benefit of the study. The second part of this chapter describes the approach of the study to answer the problems formulated.

A. Background

“Bohemian Rhapsody” is a song from a well-known British rock band namely Queen. It was written by Freddie Mercury for the band's 1975 album “A Night at the Opera”. The song consists of several sections: a ballad segment ending with a guitar solo, an operatic passage, and a hard rock section. At the time, it was the most expensive single ever made. The song is about a man who has such religious and intrapersonal problem.

It cannot be denied that Freddie Mercury put a lot of himself into that song. Just like what Guitarist Brian May said in an interview about the song:

"Freddie was a very complex person: flippant and funny on the surface, but he concealed insecurities and problems in squaring up his life with his childhood. He never explained the lyrics, but I think he put a lot of himself into that song." (Rolling Stone Magazine, September 2008)

His family grew up in Zanzibar, but was forced out by the government’s upheaval in 1964 and they moved to England. Some of the lyrics could be about leaving his homeland behind. Another source explains that it does not have
anything to do with Mercury's childhood, but his sexuality – it was around this
time that he was starting to come to terms with his bisexuality and his relationship
with Mary Austin that was falling apart.

Through his work, Freddie Mercury enters the world of poetry by depicting
life experiences in words. Poetry, as one of the genres in literature, also has the
function to reflect human’s life through words. According to Perrine (1969),
"poetry can be used as a gear for stepping up the intensity and increasing the
range of our experiences and as a glass for clarifying it" (p. 554). Perrine (1969)
adds that “as human being, we all have an inner need to live more deeply and fully
and with greater awareness, to know the experience of others and to know better
our own experiences” (p. 554). In other words, poetry can bridge us in digging our
experiences and knowing other people’s experiences in order to seek the deeper
meaning of life.

The reason of choosing “Bohemian Rhapsody” as the primary data of this
study is because the lyric depicts the theme and story which happen in real life,
especially in the life of the youth and their lifestyle in that era. It is mostly about
childhood that is ruined and rejected. However, this study tries to explore and
analyze the lyrics employing Derrida’s theory of deconstruction. Deconstruction
study deals with meaning. Guerin et al. (2011), state that “deconstruction involves
taking any meaning to reveal contradictory structures hidden within” (p. 177).

In other words, this study tries to find the true meaning of the song by
making use of Deconstruction (Post-structuralism). Deconstruction becomes the
reading strategy in finding the meaning of “Bohemian Rhapsody” because
Deconstruction recognizes that any human utterance has a multitude of possibilities for meaning. According to Dobie (Theory into Practice – Deconstruction, p. 143), it contradicts itself as it moves from one meaning to another. Deconstruction is concerned primarily with the overturning of dominating biases in language. The simplest statements may be heard in a wide variety of ways, giving it a tendency to undermine itself by refuting what it appears to be saying.

The objective of this study is to find the true meaning of Queen’s “Bohemian Rhapsody”. It is written by one of the group members, Freddie Mercury. This study tries to reveal the surface meaning and the deeper meaning by analyzing the lyric per line through deconstruction study.

The problem of this study can be formulated into two questions as follows:
1. What is the literal or surface meaning of Freddie Mercury’s “Bohemian Rhapsody” song lyrics?
2. What is the deeper meaning of Freddie Mercury’s “Bohemian Rhapsody” song lyrics that can be perceived through deconstruction study?

The paper which provides the meaning of Freddie Mercury’s “Bohemian Rhapsody” is likely beneficial for the readers who are interested in order to get deeper understanding about one of Queen’s songs. Moreover, this paper uses deconstruction study in analyzing the lyrics. This paper also encourages the readers to find meaning, understanding, and inspiration from lyrics. For the world of teaching literature, this study is useful to enrich the students’ knowledge about
future researchers, this paper is useful as a reference in conducting the deconstruction study for other purposes.

The paper also explains definition of terms which become keywords of this study, namely:

1. **Bohemian**

Bohemian is a man who chooses to live a free or irregular life, not being particular as to the society, and despising conventionalities generally (*Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*). The word “bohemian” was originally a term with pejorative undertone given to Roma gypsies, commonly believed by the French to have originated in Bohemia, Central Europe. By the mid-1800s, however, French authors such as George Sand and Honore de Balzac had already started to use the word bohemian in a very different sense. The *1932 Dictionnaire de l’Academie Francaise* describes this new meaning this way: "One who lives a vagabond, unregimented life without assured resources, who does not worry about tomorrow". (p. 150)

2. **Rhapsody**

Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary states that rhapsody is a speech, piece of writing, or a piece of music that does not have formal structure and expresses powerful feeling and enthusiasm. In that sense rhapsodies can be considered similar to fantasias, as both types of pieces display features of improvised music. Rhapsodies, however, tend to be highly episodic pieces, often making extreme contrasts in terms of tonality and mood.
3. “Bohemian Rhapsody”

“Bohemian Rhapsody” in this study is the title of Queen’s song from their album produced in 1975 entitled “A Night at the Opera”. The lyrics of this song are written by their vocalist, Freddie Mercury. The song consists of several sections: a ballad segment ending with a guitar solo, an operatic passage, and a hard rock section. At the time, according to *Rolling Stone Magazine* (2008), it was the most expensive single ever made. The song tells about a person who has such a religious and intrapersonal problem.

4. Deconstruction

Deconstruction is a concept of reading a text proposed by Jacques Derrida, a French philosopher, whose philosophy is a complex literary critical method. Deconstruction is concerned primarily with the overturning of dominating biases in language. Deconstruction philosophy deals with meaning which is heavily influenced by Marx and Saussere. Guerin, Morgan, Reesman, and Willingham (2011) state that “deconstruction describes the text as always in stage of change, furnishing only provisional meanings” (p. 176). Therefore, deconstruction aims to seek meanings and as what Guerin et al. (2011) states, “to reveal contradictory structures hidden within” (p. 177). Deconstruction identifies textual features but, unlike structuralism, concentrates on the rhetorical rather than the grammatical. In this study, deconstruction is used as a reading strategy to reveal the hidden meaning of Freddie Mercury’s “Bohemian Rhapsody” lyrics.
5. Literal Meaning

Literal meaning is not figurative or metaphorical, or following the original words. Case and Marshall in *Deep and Surface Approaches in Learning* (2009) note that a literal approach in learning is the tacit acceptance of information and memorization and does not promote understanding for long term retention of knowledge (pp. 9-18). The literal meaning means the meaning that can be seen or noticed from the original words, or in another word, it is called as basic meaning.

In this study, the literal meaning is defined as meaning that can be seen and noticed from the surface of “Bohemian Rhapsody” song lyric. Thus, after reading the lyrics, the writer can directly draw the literal meaning of the lyrics.

6. Deeper Meaning

Frederick in *Adventures in Fiction* (1969) notes that “deeper meaning is a meaning which has value for the readers” (p. 75). This idea is supported by Barnet (1994) in his book *An Introduction to the Literature*. He says that deeper or true meaning is “the meaning that told for our sake because it is implicit” (p. 28). According to Case and Marshall (2009), deeper learning involves the critical analysis of the new idea and promotes the application for life (pp. 9-18). From the statements above, it can be concluded that deeper meaning is the meaning that is implicit or hidden in the text and promotes the application for life.

In this study, deeper meaning is the meaning that is hidden in “Bohemian Rhapsody” song lyrics. Since it is implicit or hidden, the deeper meaning in this study is found by employing deconstruction study.
B. Approach of the Study

The approach of this study is post-structuralism. It is a theory which is related to its predecessor, structuralism approach. Mainly, structuralism emerges from the structural linguistics and has a function to bridge the study on textual structure. Guerin et al. (2011) state that structuralism “identifies structures, system of relationships, which endow signs (e.g. words) or items (e.g. trains, house, and waters). It means that structuralism focuses on the textual structure study as what Guerin, et al. add “text is only a system that poses the question of how such a construct of language can contain meaning for us” (p. 169). From this statement, it is clear that structuralism seeks what is visible from the text. Indeed, structuralists tend to find order and meaning in the text.

On the contrary, post-structuralism, which becomes the approach of this study, focuses on the rhetorical rather than the grammatical (Guerin et al. 2011, p. 176). Both structuralism and post-structuralism seek for meaning, but structuralism focuses on how meaning is found out through the structures. However, post-structuralism does not oppose it. According to Culler (1997), post-structuralism only clarifies that meaning is not produced only from structural meaning itself, but also produced from other factors (p. 121). Moreover, post-structuralism is related to philosophy. Barry (2009) states that post-structuralism “derives ultimately from philosophy” (p. 61). It means that post-structuralism always has relation with a discipline which always tends to emphasize the difficulty of achieving secure knowledge about things. In short, post-structuralism seeks meaning or philosophical idea within the text. According to Culler (1997),
one of the procedures in seeking idea within a text is to describe “how texts create meaning by violating any conventions that structural analysis locates” (p. 121). For post-structuralists, it is impossible to describe a complete or coherent stable system since, as Culler notes, “systems are always changing” (p. 121).

This approach is chosen since it is highly related to the topic of this study, named deconstruction. Guerin et al. (2011) state that “post-structuralism and deconstruction are virtually synonymous” (p. 176). While Bertens (2003) states deconstruction as “applied post-structuralism” (p. 70). Deconstruction is a theory which views texts, in this case is Freddie Mercury’s “Bohemian Rhapsody”, as subversively undermining an apparent of surface meaning, and it denies any final explication or statement of meaning. Guerin, et al adds that in deconstruction, “texts are found to deconstruct themselves rather than to prove a stable identifiable meaning” (p. 176). From this statement, it is clear that meaning is not constant; it may change since there is no final meaning. Bertens (2003) adds that “before deconstructionist arrive at that point, it has first uncovered the structure that operate in a text and shown us how these structures can be dismantled by making use of elements of text itself” (p. 133).

By understanding the meaning of post-structuralism approach and the meaning of deconstructive reading, it is obvious that post-structuralism can be applied in this study since it is a way to observe a text from different perspective and reveal the hidden meaning within the texts.

In conducting the study, the writer chose library research. The primary data were “Bohemian Rhapsody” song lyrics written by Freddie Mecury, the vocalist-
guitarist of British rock band, Queen. The song lyrics were taken from Queen’s album entitled “A Night at The Opera”. The secondary data were theories about post-structuralism, deconstruction, and some data related to the song. They were collected from printed books and online articles.

There were several steps taken by the writer in conducting this study. The first step, that the writer took was listening to the song and reading its lyrics. Then, the writer re-read the lyrics again in order to get better understanding about the lyrics. Having understood about the lyrics, the writer began the second step which was searching and collecting related theories in order to support the writer in answering the questions in problem formulation. The theories were post-structuralism approach and deconstruction proposed by Jacques Derrida. In addition, the writer also searched for some information and video clip of “Bohemian Rhapsody” from online source.

Having clear understanding of the song and the related theories, the writer started the third step which was making an analysis on the lyrics. In this step, at first the writer looked for the literal or surface meaning of “Bohemian Rhapsody”. After obtaining the literal or surface meaning of the song, the writer started to employ the deconstruction theory in answering the problem formulation which was finding the meaning of the song’s lyrics through deconstruction study. The writer mostly used the techniques of deconstructive reading activity in this step as suggested by Barry (2009) in Beginning Theory, and Bressler (1997) in Critical Practice. The writer employed the steps in conducting the deconstruction process on the lyrics as proposed by those two experts. Besides, in order to support the
findings, the writer used the theory of ambiguities as proposed by Empson (1955) in his book Seven Types of Ambiguity. After several steps taken, the writer came to the last step which was making conclusion based on the result of analysis. In order to validate the result, the writer shared the findings and result with his colleagues who had also done the paper about deconstruction.
CHAPTER II
DISCUSSIONS

This chapter discusses the two major parts of discussion as mentioned in the framework. Firstly, it discusses the literal meaning of Freddie Mercury’s “Bohemian Rhapsody” song lyrics. Secondly, it discusses the deeper meaning of “Bohemian Rhapsody” song lyrics through deconstruction study.

A. Review of Related Theories

Review of related theories presents the approach and theories used in this study. They are Decorum, Post-Structuralism Approach, and Deconstruction Theories. The theory of Decorum is used to clarify the lyric and its relation to poetry. Post-Structuralism Approach and Deconstruction Theories are related to each other as an underlying approach and theory to this study. These theories are important to be used and applied because the theories are related to the main discussion of this study that is finding the meaning of Freddie Mercury’s lyrics of the song “Bohemian Rhapsody” through deconstruction study.

1. Theory of Decorum

In poetry, decorum is important to be used by poets. Myers and Simpson state that decorum is “the principle of suiting the style to the subject” (p. 76). Decorum is a word derived from Latin which means “that which is proper or fitting”. Simpson (1967) clarifies that it is important for the poets to consider decorum, or “suiting the style to the subject” (p. 10). Based on this sentence, the
poet must modify his style and tone to fit the subject matter and mood in his/her poems. Thus, the poet’s style fits his/her purpose in writing the poem. Simpson and Myers also add that “the style is also determined by the necessity to make the reader see and feel” (p. 10). It means that the style should be appropriate to the speaker, the occasion, and the subject matter. In this study, this principle is used to clarify Freddie Mercury’s decorum in suiting his “Bohemian Rhapsody” lyrics.

2. Post-Structuralism Approach

Post-structuralism is an approach that existed after structuralism. For introduction, structuralism emerges from the structural linguistics and has a function to bridge the study on textual structure. Structuralism identifies structures, system of relationships, which provide signs (e.g. words) or items (e.g. trains, house, and waters) (Guerin et al. 2011). It is concluded that structuralism focuses on the textual structure study as what Guerin, et al. add “text is only a system that poses the question of how such a construct of language can contain meaning for us” (p. 169). From the statement above, structuralism only seeks what is visible from the text, regarding other factors. Indeed, structuralists tend to find order and meaning in the text, usually by close reading.

On the contrary, post-structuralism which becomes the approach of this study, focuses on the rhetorical rather than the grammatical (Guerin et al. 2011, p. 176). Both structuralism and post-structuralism seek for meaning, but structuralism focuses on how meaning is found out through the structures. However, post-structuralism does not oppose it. According to Culler (1997), post-structuralism only clarifies that meaning is not produced only from structural
meaning itself, but also produced from other factors (p. 121). As what Culler (1997) said, factors like authors’ life, their social background, what is happening when they write, and also their philosophical view affected the meaning. Moreover, post-structuralism is derived ultimately from philosophy (Barry, 2009, p. 61). It means that post-structuralism always has relation with a discipline which always tends to emphasize the difficulty of achieving secure knowledge about things. In short, post-structuralism seeks meaning or philosophical idea within the text. According to Culler (1997), one of the procedures in seeking idea within a text is to describe “how texts create meaning by violating any conventions that structural analysis locates” (p. 121). For post-structuralists, it is impossible to describe a complete or coherent stable system since, as Culler notes, “systems are always changing” (p. 121).

3. Theories of Deconstruction

Jacques Derrida’s deconstruction is concerned primarily with the overturning of dominating biases in language. Heavily influenced by Marx and Saussere, Derrida wished to use deconstruction to battle inequality. His first line of reasoning the need of deconstruction emerged from the assumption that all concepts come in binaries that are opposed to one another. Language privileges one concept over another. This assumption is that words such as “male” and “female” or “good” and “evil”, are in binary opposition where one term, usually the first, is in dominance over the second term.

According to Derrida, this shows a great inequality in Western/Modernist thinking. Derrida’s second line of reasoning is followed from the assumption that
the identity or meanings of words could not be understood except in relation to what they are not. For example, I cannot understand “dog” unless I think of all the things that “dog” is not. “Dog” is not “horse” nor “bog” nor “fog” nor “human”, *ad infinitum*. Because we cannot ever discover all the words in *différence* to the identity of “dog”, we must constantly use violence to impose our subjective meaning or identity on the word “dog”. To overcome this inequality, Derrida suggested that texts, and thereby language, must be deconstructed. The method of deconstruction begins with toppling the inherent power structures found within the binary oppositions. This is done by equalizing the “inferior” and “superior” terms in opposition, then placing the “superior” term as merely an expression of the “inferior” term. “Male” is really an expression of “female” and “good” is really an expression of “evil”. Once the terms are interpreted as such, Derrida’s second line of reasoning concerning *différence* kicks in. The newly equalized terms are revealed to be themselves meaningless and subjectively imposed by violence as identity of words are overturned by *différence*.

Barry (2009), in his book *Beginning Theory*, notes that “the post-structuralist literacy critic is engaged in the task of deconstructing the text” (p. 68). Therefore, post-structuralism in this analysis of “Bohemian Rhapsody” song lyrics focuses on deconstruction theory proposed by Jacques Derrida. Its background, as stated by Guerin et al. (2011) that “deconstruction arises out of the structuralism of Roland Barthes as a reaction against the certainties of structuralism” (p. 176). According to Derrida, deconstruction cannot be easily
defined, whether as a “set of rules transposable procedures”, whether analysis, act or operation (as cited in Coyle et al. 1990, 781). However, Barry notes that deconstruction, which can be called “applied post-structuralism”, is a process of “deconstructing the text” (p. 68). Later, he also concludes that deconstruction is “a process of deconstructing the text by reading the text against itself, with the purpose of knowing the text as it cannot know itself” (p. 68).

According to Derrida, deconstruction has an aim to create new ideas out of the first one. It seeks the hidden meaning in the text, but not to make the result as the final meaning. In other words, it concerns about seeking the unseen meaning rather than the obvious one. Meanwhile, Culler (1997) states deconstruction as “a critique of the hierarchical oppositions that have structured western thought: inside/outside, mind/body, literal/metaphorical, speech/writing, presence/absence, nature/culture, form/meaning” (p. 122).

Texts in deconstruction are “open-ended constructs” that always change. It means that the meaning found in the text can only lead to other meanings (Guerin et al. 2011, p. 176), as described below:

Deconstruction views texts as a subversively undermining an apparent or surface meaning, and it denies any final explication or statement of meaning. It questions the presence of any objective structure or content in a text. Instead of alarm or dismay at their discoveries, the practitioners of deconstruction celebrate the text’s self-destruction, that inevitable seed of its own internal contradiction, as a never ending free play of language (p. 176).

Therefore, the object of deconstruction is not like the object of formalism which is seeking one final meaning in the text. As stated above that deconstruction texts are “open-ended constructs”, the meaning possibilities are
much wider than surface meaning because it seeks the unseen meaning or deeper meaning of the text.

In deconstruction analysis, there are some important things that need to be focused. Barry (2009) states that “the deconstructionist looks for evidence of gaps, breaks, fissures, and discontinuities of all kinds” (p. 70). In detail, he adds that deconstructionist seeks “contradictions/paradoxes, shifts/breaks in tone, viewpoint, tense, time, person, and attitude; conflicts, absence/omissions, linguistic quirks, and aporia” in order to show “textual disunity” (p. 70). Furthermore, Barry (2009) states that deconstructionist focuses on several things as follows:

a. Reading the text against itself so as to expose what might be thought as the ‘textual subconscious’, where meanings are expressed, which may be directly contrary to the surface meaning (p. 70).

b. Fixing upon the surface features of the words – similarities in sound, the root meanings of words, a ‘dead’ (or dying) metaphor – and bringing these to the foreground, so that they become crucial to the overall meaning (p. 70).

c. Seeking to show that the text is characterized by disunity rather than unity (p. 70).

d. Concentrating on a single passage and analyze it so intensively that it becomes impossible to sustain a ‘univocal’ reading and the language explodes into ‘multiplicities of meaning’ (p. 70).

e. Looking for shifts and breaks of various kinds in the text and seeing these as evidence of what repressed or glossed over or passed over in silence by the
text. These discontinuities are sometimes called ‘fault lines’, a geological metaphor referring to the breaks in rock formations which give evidence of previous activity and movement (p. 71).

Deconstruction in this study employs the steps proposed by Barry (2009) as mentioned above in several points. This is done in order to take the meanings to the next level of understanding the lyrics since the interpretation of meaning in literary work can be found in the mind of the readers or as Guerin et al. underlines that “deconstruction leaves meaning open for the reader” (p. 178).

4. Theory of Ambiguity

Empson (1955) in Seven Types of Ambiguity states that “an ambiguity, in ordinary speech, means something very pronounced, and as a rule witty or deceitful” (p. 3). Ambiguity can be found in the text, thus it can be analyzed. For instance, as Empson mentions, “the statement ‘the brown cat sat on the red mat’ may be split up into some series” (p. 3) Empson also adds that in a text, “a simple statement may be translated into a complicated statement which employs other terms” (p. 3).

In the practice of analyzing ambiguity in the text, Empson (1955) provides seven types of ambiguity which can be taken into consideration. In this study, these types are used to analyze the contradiction found in the “Bohemian Rhapsody” song lyric. These seven types are described as follows:
a. First Type
The first type of ambiguity arises when a detail is effective in several ways at once. The first type of ambiguity is the metaphor, that is, when two things are said to be alike and have different properties. This concept is similar to that of metaphysical conceit (p. 4).

b. Second Type
The second type occurs when two or more meanings are resolved into one. Empson characterizes this as using two different metaphors at once (p. 57).

c. Third Type
The third type of ambiguity is considered as a verbal matter, occurs when two ideas, which are connected only by being both relevant in the context, can be given in one word simultaneously (p. 117).

d. Fourth Type
An ambiguity of the fourth type occurs when two or more meanings of a statement do not agree among themselves, but combine to make clear a more complicated state of mind in the author (p. 151).

e. Fifth Type
An ambiguity on the fifth type occurs when the author is discovering his idea in the act of writing, or not holding it all in his mind at once. Empson describes a simile that lies halfway between two statements made by the author (p. 175).
f. Sixth Type

An ambiguity of the sixth type occurs when a statement says nothing, by tautology, by contradiction, or by irrelevant statements; so that the reader is forced to invent statements of his own and they are liable to conflict with one another. It occurs when a statement says nothing and the readers are forced to invent a statement of their own, most likely in conflict with that of the author (p. 199).

g. Seventh Type

An ambiguity of the seventh type occurs when the two meanings of the word, the two values of ambiguity, are the two opposite meanings defined by the context, so that total effect is to show a fundamental division in the writer’s mind (p. 217).

B. Discussion

1. The Literal Meaning of “Bohemian Rhapsody”

The song “Bohemian Rhapsody” is a well-known progressive rock legend from Britain, Queen. The song is written and arranged by the vocalist-pianist of the band, Freddie Mercury. The song consists of several sections: a ballad section, an operatic passage, a hard rock section, and a ballad ending with piano. Regarding the structure of the song, Freddie Mercury wrote 7 stanzas inside “Bohemian Rhapsody”. Freddie Mercury used decorum in writing the lyrics, or Simpsons (1967) declared as “suiting the style to the subject” (p. 10). He has put his style and tone to fit the subject matters, including his mood and knowledge, in his poems. The subject matter of the poem is the theme itself which is about a man who has such intrapersonal problems because of some factors in his
childhood. According to Simpson and Myers, “the style is also determined by the necessity to make the reader see and feel” (p. 10). It means that as a musician, Freddie Mercury needs to make the reader see and feel what he has been writing in his lyrics through singing “Bohemian Rhapsody” lyrics.

As mentioned in the Introduction chapter, “Bohemian Rhapsody” is a song about a man who has intrapersonal problems. On the surface, the song tells about his traumas about childhood that makes him have such religion and intrapersonal problems. The writer of the song puts a lot of himself in the song, as mentioned in the Introduction part. For the title, he uses the phrase “Bohemian Rhapsody” to portray what the song is about.

According to Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, “bohemian” is a person who is interested in art, music, and/or literature, and lives in a very informal way, ignoring the usually accepted ways of behaving. Bohemian is somebody who leads an alternative lifestyle. They are different from hippies because they have wide range of different tastes in music, art, and literature. Meanwhile, Rhapsody is a piece of music that has no formal structure and expresses powerful feelings (Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary). On the other words, it is a musical composition of irregular form having an improvisatory character. The title of the song of Freddie Mercury simply wants to emphasize that the subject is expressing his feeling in such highly emotional utterances, regarding that rhapsody always contains powerful feelings and enthusiasm. One of the things that make "Bohemian Rhapsody" so great is that no one is completely sure what it means.
For the purpose of getting clearer understanding of the lyrics and to find the literal meaning of the lyrics, the writer provides stanza-by-stanza analysis on the lyrics as follows:

**The First Stanza**

Is this the real life? Is this just fantasy
Caught in a landslide, no escape from reality
Open your eyes, look up to the skies and see
I’m just a poor boy, I need no sympathy
Because I’m easy come, easy go, little high, little low
Any way the wind blows doesn’t really matter to me, to me

The first stanza, or can be assumed as the intro, tells about someone who feels cold, confused, and depressed. It is clear that Freddie Mercury, as the song writer, uses the first person as the point of view as shown in the line “I’m just a poor boy, I need no sympathy”. In the first stanza, Freddie Mercury puts another point of view which is “you” that can be found on the fourth line. The first stanza is basically similar to a rhapsody with a dreamlike tune. It is like Freddie Mercury wants the listeners to imagine that the rhapsody occurs all within his head.

In the first line, Mercury begins the song with questions “Is this a real life? Is this just fantasy?” The questions are like a sort of feeling when someone wants to wake up from a dream. On the second line, Freddie Mercury portrays the feeling which is undeniable as written on “caught in a landslide”. The subject of the lyrics tries to ensure what he feels by asking “you” to open his eyes and look up the skies. This line tells that the subject wants to find approval from others, asking someone to believe what he felt. Such as a Bohemian, the subject tries to express his expressions and attitudes toward the feeling as depicted in the rest of
the lines of the stanza. Freddie Mercury answers the title of the song with some acts and thoughts of a Bohemian; they are controlled by their imagination like in “no escape from reality”, look upon the society which is strange and different as in “I’m just a poor boy, I need no sympathy”, and also live for the moment such in two last lines of the stanza.

The Second Stanza
Mama, just killed a man
Put a gun against his head
Pulled my trigger, now he’s dead
Mama, life had just begun
But now I’ve gone and thrown it all away
Mama, ooh, didn’t mean to make you cry
If I’m not back again this time tomorrow
Carry on, carry on as if nothing really matters

The second stanza tries to tell about the confession that is being made by the subject of the lyric. In this stanza, Freddie Mercury explains why the subject has a kind of stress and depression. His confession is about his regret of doing something bad, assumed as “killed a man”. The subject confesses his regret to his mother, or anyone that he calls “Mama”. As cited from the first stanza, the subject views himself as a “boy”. It cannot be denied that Freddie Mercury tries to portray what the subject is feeling towards his mother, or any woman that is so personally close to him. Freddie Mercury himself does not explain further about the man. The stanza only explains his remorse and confession. As a result, the writer comes up with a question; who or what the man is. The second stanza depict that the subject has woken up from his dreams or fantasies. He realizes that he has made...
such a big mistake by killing “a man”. Filled with guilty and remorse, the subject tells “mama” that he is just too young and messes his own life.

From the line “Mama, life has just begun” and “but now I’ve gone and thrown it all away”, the writer tries to relate those lines with the first stanza. It seems that Freddie Mercury explains the first dream-like stanza in these lines. The subject is just too young and enjoying his exiting youth when suddenly he got a shocking problem that made him really down. He tries to manage his feeling but he is in a kind of “landslide”, no turning back. This “landslide” also pushes him to tell someone because he cannot handle it by himself. He thinks that it would be such a relief by telling the problem. Therefore, by his confession, he makes his mother really sad and disappointed.

On the last few lines, the subject tries to entertain and toughen both “mama” and him. The subject of the lyrics does not want “mama” to suffer from those feeling any longer. Freddie Mercury puts an exclamation “ooh” so the listeners can conceive how deep the pain of the depression feeling. It also portrays how the subject feels sorry for making “mama” cry. However, he tries to face the problem all by himself. “If I’m not back again this time tomorrow” clearly explains that the subject wants to say goodbye. Either die or run away, the subject defines that he will not bother “mama” anymore. The last line tries to tell how he wants to carry along what he has made or achieve before the problem occurred, despite of what he would face in the future. Nonetheless, the subject realizes that the show must go on. He has to accept what has happened as lays in “Carry on,
carry on as if nothing really matters”. The line closes the second stanza with a sort of let go to the problem which makes the subject confused and depressed.

The Third Stanza

Too late, my time has come
Sends shivers down my spine
Body’s aching all the time
Goodbye, everybody, I’ve got to go
Gotta leave you all behind and face the truth
Mama, ooh, I don’t want to die
I sometimes wish I’d never been born at all

In the third stanza, Freddie Mercury continues to explain what the subject feels. The subject is shown to be a bit frustrated by the problem. But on the other hand, he wants to accept for all that have been happened. On the first line, Freddie Mercury writes down “too late, my time has come” to explain that the punishment has come. The subject receives his punishment. He seems to be very afraid for what will come, as shown in “send shivers down my spine, body’s aching all the time”. He is trembling and anxious but he has to take the responsibility.

“Goodbye, everybody” on the fourth line clarifies that the subject wants to leave all his relatives and acquaintances. “I’ve got to go” declares that he wants to go away or either is taken away. Freddie Mercury tries to declare that the subject takes his consequences of what he has done before. From the previous stanzas, the subject still hides his problem. He admits his mistake and has to deal with the consequences. “The truth” in the line “gotta leave you all behind and face the truth” is the consequences that he should take.
The Fourth Stanza

I see a little silhouetto of a man
Scaramouche, Scaramouche, will you do the Fandango
Thunderbolt and lightning, very, very fright’ning me
(Galileo). Galileo. (Galileo). Galileo. Galileo Figaro magnifico
I’m just a poor boy, nobody loves me
(He just a poor boy from a poor family)
Spare him his life from this monstrosity

The fourth stanza begins with his sight of a stalker, or may be someone who stands and intercepts him on the way. “Little man” on the first line describes that this man is either short or still in a long distance which makes him look small. Both reasons make the subject of the song very afraid. Freddie Mercury tries to add some language in this stanza. According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, Scaramouche is a character in the Italian commedia dell’arte that burlesques the Spanish don. It is characterized as a boastful and coward person. On the second line, it seems that the little man mocks him, telling that he is a coward and boastful. The little man is more superior to him, despite of his “little” body. The mocking goes clearer as the little man asks him to do the “Fandango”, a Spanish-American dance usually performed by a man and woman. In this line, Freddie Mercury wants to show that the little man tries to make an offer as forgiveness to the subject of the song. It can also be assumed that the little man wants to test his submission. In the line “Thunderbolt and lightning very, very fright’ning me”, the subject of the song looks really scared. Freddie uses the word “very” twice to emphasize that the subject is very frightened. The line tries to reveal his real feeling at that time. It is a frightened feeling like just being in the middle of a
thunderstorm. He feels he is helpless and can do nothing to handle it. He is also frightened of being struck by the lightning, by what follows his bad action.

Freddie Mercury forms the fourth line into an operatic passage, using Italian language. “Galileo” refers to Galileo Galilei, an Italian physicist, engineer, philosopher, astronomer, and mathematician who played a major role in the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century. He has been called as ‘The Father of Science’. Figaro is a lead character in the Barber of Seville, an opera made famous by Alfalfa. In this line, Freddie Mercury tries to explain that the subject of the song is admiring Galileo and Figaro, as stated in “Galileo Figaro Magnifico”. “Magnifico” means great in Italian language.

The next two lines are telling about the same idea. Those lines explain “Figaro” in the Barber of Seville opera. Figaro is a poor boy from a poor family, but he too was a bit of an innovation of the world stage, just like Galileo Galilei. Figaro’s character is the first servant in an opera to stand as intellectual character and equals his master. Like many people who are accustomed today, Figaro plays the servant who outsmarts not only his master’s enemy, but also his master himself. It is something that Freddie wants to tell to the listeners.

The last line explains that both “Galileo”, “Figaro”, and the subject of the song want to escape the “monstrosity”. The similar wills to pass the conditions is well written explicitly by Freddie Mercury. Freddie Mercury wants the subject to realize that he is tangled in his own thought.
The Fifth Stanza

Easy come, easy go, will you let me go?
Bismillah! No, we will not let you go (Let him go!)
Bismillah! We will not let you go (Let him go!)
Bismillah! We will not let you go (Let me go!)
Will not let you go (Let me go!)
Will not let you go (Never, never, never, never, never let me go!) Ah!
No, no, no, no, no, no, no.
Oh, mama mia, mama mia (Mama mia, let me go)
Beelzebub has a devil put aside for me, for me, for me

The fifth stanza stands as the continuity from the previous stanza. Freddie Mercury makes this stanza as the climax of anxiety that occurs inside the subject’s thought. The subject of the song seems to beg for mercy in the first line. Again, bohemian’s characteristic is shown in the line “Easy come, easy go, will you let me go?” Bohemian is known for their will of freedom and calmness. He tries to calm himself and asks for forgiveness for what he has done. It is explained that he wants his freedom back as shown in “will you let me go?”

The next three stanzas describe the answer to his question. At this time Freddie Mercury uses a word of Arabic taken from Koran, a Holy Bible of Islam; “Bismillah”. “Bismillah” refers to in the Name of Allah, said before doing something, to bless what we are doing, or for God to help us. The holy word is said three times and followed by a phrase “we will not let you go”. In this stanza, Freddie Mercury adds a group who opposes to judge the subject. It seems that the opposition group wants him to suffer. Even if in each line he and his supporters ask for his freedom portrayed in “let him go” and “let me go”, they always stand still with their judgment.
The second last line of the stanza is portraying his depression because of being pressed and opposed by the group. He asks for his mother’s help by saying “oh, Mama mia, Mama, mia”. “Mama mia” means “my mother” in Italian. He wants her mother to save him and defend him. He feels like he has no power anymore so he begs his mother.

The last line includes a religious matter which is about Satan as said as “Beelzebub”. “Beelzebub” is the name given to Satan as in the New Testament in Christian. It is probably the same as Baalzebub or Baal, the god of Ekron, meaning “the lord of flies”. Freddie Mercury wants to add biblical demonic being to show that he is guilty, at least in the religion he believes in. Furthermore, the line is being said by the subject of the song, not the opposing religious group. It is shown in “Beelzebub has the devil put aside for me”. Freddie Mercury prefers to choose “me” instead of “him”. The writer of the song tries to reveal the feeling of fear and remorse. Again, the subject of the song is in a indecision, between guilt and fortitude.

The Sixth Stanza

So you think you can stone me and spit in my eye?
So you think you can love me and leave me to die?
Oh, baby, can’t do this to me, baby!
Just gotta get out, just gotta get right outta here!

The sixth stanza is sung with hard rock music as the background. Hard rock music is full of spirit and power. It brings a power to fight, to rise. If being listened, this stanza would be some kind of resurrection and realization. The subject of the song rises and realizes that he should fight back. The two first lines are about question or inquiry; both are about what they have done that make him
insulted. Both line tell about how inferior he is as shown in “so you think you can stone me and spit in my eyes?” and also in “so you think you can love me and leave my to die?” In social community, spitting in someone’s eye means he shows extreme contempt or ingratitude to someone else. On the next line, he questions how he is betrayed by someone he loves. He feels neglected, insulted, and betrayed.

The third and fourth lines of this stanza show that he wants to end his judgment. He thinks that it should be stopped by now. He feels that it is enough. He has suffered enough and it is time to rise again. It seems that he wants to face the truth and deals with it. Those are explained by the ending of the sixth stanza which says “Just gotta get out, just gotta get right outta here!”. Here, the subject of the song uses words “gotta” and “outta” to portray his rebellion against the judgment. It at least makes him unleash his anger toward them. Overall, the sixth stanza is about how he feels enough of the judgment and pressure he has from many factors.

The Seventh Stanza

Nothing really matters
Anyone can see
Nothing really matters
Nothing really matters to me
Anyway the wind blows

The seventh stanza is the last stanza which leads to the closure of his intrapersonal problems. Freddie Mercury ends the song with a mellow music but has strong meaning. The subject takes action toward his problem. As in “nothing really matters”, he shows that he does not care anymore about what people think
of him. He wants to find peace, and it is started when he has let all go. After all, it seems to be too late to fix the problem. He has made peace with the consequences, as in “anyone can see, nothing really matters, nothing really matters to me”. This is the time to surrender and change. They hear the openness to change and to go with the wind. This can be seen in the last line of the stanza which says “anyway the wind blows”. It is not the weak version of him who wanted to be open about accepting what the world laid out for him, but could not. It is the strong version of him, who really is going to go to any way the wind blows. He has found peace with his guilt and his past.

In conclusion, the surface meaning of “Bohemian Rhapsody” is that it tells about the struggle and surrender of a man who has intrapersonal problem because he has done something bad. The subject of the song has to deal with his mother’s acceptance and his religion’s rule and judgment. At the end, he has to accept the consequences for what he has done and has to live with it until the rest of his life. Therefore, the literal meaning of “Bohemian Rhapsody” is about a man who gives up and surrenders to his problems, and has to live with it until the rest of his life.

2. The Deeper Meaning of Freddie Mercury’s “Bohemian Rhapsody” through Deconstruction Study

After analyzing the literal meaning of Freddie Mercury’s “Bohemian Rhapsody”, the writer draws conclusion that the song is about a man who gives up and surrenders to his problems, and has to live with it until the rest of his life. After the previous analysis about the literal meaning of the song, the writer analyzes the deeper understanding of the song by deconstructing the text lyric as
suggested by Bressler (1997) in *Critical Practice* and Barry (2009) in *Beginning Theory*. Deconstruction reading is a process of deconstructing the text against itself, with the purpose to know the text beyond the text itself (Barry, 2009). By doing so, the writer aims to get different structure and function of the text as said by Culler (1997).

In order to analyze the deeper meaning, the writer firstly applies the steps conducted by Bressler (1997) which is finding the binary opposition and reversing it. According to Bressler (1997), “by identifying the binary operations that exist in the text, the deconstructionist then can show preconceived assumptions on which most us base our interpretations” (p.130). Therefore, the writer will show some binary oppositions found in the “Bohemian Rhapsody” text based on the literal meaning analysis.

The first binary opposition which appears is oppression and freedom. According to Cudd (2006), oppression is a harm through which groups of persons are systematically and unfairly or unjustly constrained, burdened or reduced by any of several forces. “Oppression” is the feeling of being heavily burdened, mentally or physically, by troubles, an adverse conditions, anxiety, etc. Meanwhile, freedom is “the power or act right to act, speak, or think as one wants without hindrance or restraint” (McKean, 2005). In the lyric, oppression is represented by the judgment made by a religion group, and also his own thought. The example of the first opposition can be seen his self-regret and his judgment by a religion group that always oppress him. The lyric depict that he feels oppressed and stressed by the thought of being guilty. The oppression can be seen
in the second, third, and fifth stanza. As explained in the second and third stanza, he is stressed and oppressed by the thought of doing something bad. In the second stanza, the subject of the study says:

Mama, just killed a man
Put a gun against his head
Pulled my trigger, now he's dead
Mama, life had just begun
But now I’ve gone and thrown it all away
Mama, ooh, didn’t mean to make you cry
If I’m not back again this time tomorrow
Carry on, carry on as if nothing really matters

The stanza above depicts his depression that is led by oppression of his self-guilt. His thought starts to oppress him by bringing out some regrets. The oppression seems so hard until he wishes he had never been born at all. This stanza shows that the subject does not have any courage to face the oppression, nothing but fear and guilt. The stanza only shows pessimist statements from the subject.

Too late, my time has come
Sends shivers down my spine
Body’s aching all the time
Goodbye, everybody, I’ve got to go
Gotta leave you all behind and face the truth
Mama, ooh, I don’t want to die
I sometimes wish I’d never been born at all

On the other hand, freedom as the binary opposition of oppression that figures prominently in the lyrics can be seen in the sixth stanza as described above. The lines in the stanza do not only show that the subject is in the oppression, but also show that freedom is something expected by the subject, as in “I don’t want to die” and “I sometimes wish I’d never been born at all”. The line
“Gotta leave you all behind and face the truth” then depicts an expectation to be free which could be something good that has been taken and chosen by the subject. Here, the expectation makes sense that freedom is implicitly depicted in the lyrics although it is more inferior than oppression, as in the first line in fifth stanza said “Easy come easy go, will you let me go?”

Based on the analysis of the binary opposition in the Bohemian Rhapsody song’s lyrics above, it can be drawn that there is a binary opposition operating in the lyric: there is oppression and freedom. Oppression is more superior than Freedom as what has been said above. In this paper, this binary opposition is used in order to show the basic concept of the interpretation on the lyrics. Bressler (1997) argues that “by identifying the binary operations that exist in the text, deconstructionist can then show the preconceived assumptions on which most of us base our interpretations” (p. 130). Thus, Bressler proposes to reverse the binary oppositions to make the inferior one emerges in the surface. Thus, “Freedom” as the inferior center to the superior center, which is “Oppression” then emerges as the basic concept of the interpretation despite of the superior center. The new interpretation of the text then can be drawn from the concept of “Oppression” and “Freedom”.

Besides drawing the meaning from the inversion of the binary opposition, Barry also proposes the steps in a deconstruction process. Barry (2009) provides the steps in deconstructing the text which aimed to “show the disunity which underlies its apparent unity” (p. 69). Those things can be found by looking for “contradictions/paradoxes, shifts/breaks in tone, viewpoint, tense, time, person,
and attitude; conflicts, absences/omissions, linguistic quirks, and aporia” in order to show “textual disunity” (p. 70). In Guerin et al. (2011) term, this practice is mentioned as “taking apart any meaning to reveal contradictory structures hidden within” (p.177). Thus, in this paper, the steps are taken to look “for evidence of gaps, breaks, fissures and discontinuities of all kinds” (p. 70). The writer will deconstruct “Bohemian Rhapsody” song lyrics by finding those mentioned things to prove that the text has hidden contradictory structures.

1. **Paradoxes/Contradiction**

   In “Bohemian Rhapsody”, the oppressors seem so superior in oppressing the subject but there is a contradiction in the text. In fifth stanza, they taunt: We will not let you go, continued by another phrase saying: Let him go. This contradicts the general idea about total oppression done by the oppressors. In the story, it is obvious that they have fully judgment and oppression to the subject. Logically, the oppressors would be consistent in their judgment to the subject, but they apparently still give him the chance to be free. The second example also occurs in the first stanza when there is no further explanation about the killed man. This would enable the readers to invent statements to conflict with Freddie Mercury. Based on the seven types of ambiguity, this contradiction belongs to ambiguity of the sixth type. In the sixth type, Empson (1955) states that this type “occurs when a statement says nothing, by tautology, by contradiction, or by irrelevant statements, so that the reader is forced to invent statements of his own and they are liable to conflict with one another” (p. 199).
Another contradiction can also be found in some words which end up with no clear explanation and conclusion. The first example is the word Mama in the second and third stanza, and also Mama mia in the fifth stanza. There is no clear explanation about it. It would make the reader question ‘who is mama?’ or ‘is it her mother or Mother Mary?’ There is no clear conclusion about it. This ambiguity is included in the second-type ambiguity. Empson (1955), states that it “occurs when two or more meanings are resolved into one” (p. 57). This ambiguity clearly contradicts the reader to interpret the meaning of the lyrics far beyond what is expected.

2. Shifts/Breaks in Tone

As what Barry (2009) proposes the deconstructionists seek “shifts/breaks in tone” (p.70). Several shifts/breaks in tone can be found in “Bohemian Rhapsody”, since it is rhapsody which does not have any formal structure. The first shift/break in tone occurs in the second stanza. After the first stanza started with smooth dream-like tone, it is turning into depression tone when entering the second stanza. It seems like a guilty feeling occupying the subject who has woken up from the dream-like first stanza.

The second shift/break in tone is found in the sixth stanza. The stanza comes in tone of rage and will of freedom while two previous stanzas show that the subject is being judged by the oppressors. The subject is begging for freedom while the oppressors tend to hold him in their hands. Suddenly, the subject gains courage to fight back and face the oppressors.
Another shift/break can be seen in the seventh stanza with smooth and peaceful tone after rage in the previous one. It stated that he has a peaceful state of mind and get his freedom. In those parts, there are inconsistencies in using tone despite the story tells about the oppression to the subject.

3. **Shifts/Breaks in Viewpoint and Person**

In conducting deconstruction, the deconstructionist seeks the shifts and breaks in viewpoint and person (Barry, 2009). Shifts/Breaks in point of view and person can be seen in the fourth and fifth stanza when there are arguments between the oppressors and the subject. This indicates that the point of view suddenly changes from the subject’s point of view to the oppressors’ point of view or from the first point of view to the second point of view. Although in the song this change is in a smooth chronological progression, once again there is an inconsistency in using a viewpoint and person here. In spite of focusing on the oppression and freedom, Mercury tries to include the existence of the oppressors’ side.

Based on the findings on the gaps, fissures, and discontinuities above, it is clear that in “Bohemian Rhapsody” song lyrics there is a textual disunity. The fifth and sixth stanzas contribute a great number of contradictions and shift/breaks in the text. Thus, it captivates the writer since the subject in the sixth stanza, which is freedom, can be the focus of the lyrics rather than the general subject, which is oppression. The fifth and sixth stanzas show a contradiction that this song could be interpreted as freedom sought by the subject. It contradicts the surface meaning of this song which is giving up his problems. This song then can
be a good example for people to seek freedom in oppressed situation since freedom is a right for them. In the text, although the subject is oppressed and controlled by the oppressors, he can fight for his freedom and not to give up. This also has a relation then to the new inversion of the binary opposition discussed above. The new inversion is that Freedom is more privileged rather than Oppression. It matches with the findings on the gaps, fissures, and discontinuities above.
CHAPTER III

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section is conclusion. The conclusion presents the summary of the results from the problems that have been analysed and discussed in the previous chapter. The second section provides some recommendations from the writer related to the research.

A. Conclusions

Having analyzed the meaning of Freddie Mercury “Bohemian Rhapsody” song lyrics in chapter II, the writer has come to the conclusion of this study. This study deals with meaning and it has two formulated problems. Those are “What is the literal or surface meaning of Freddie Mercury’s “Bohemian Rhapsody” song lyrics?” and “What is the deeper meaning of Freddie Mercury’s “Bohemian Rhapsody” song lyrics that can be perceived through deconstruction study?” The answers to those two formulated problems are the conclusion of this study.

The first answer deals with the literal meaning of Freddie Mercury “Bohemian Rhapsody” song lyrics. As described in chapter II, the literal meaning of the lyrics is about the struggle and surrender of a man who has intrapersonal problem because he has done something bad. The subject of the song has to deal with his mother’s acceptance and his religion’s rule and judgment. At the end, he has to accept the consequences for what he has done and has to live with it until the rest of his life. Therefore, the literal meaning of “Bohemian Rhapsody” is
about a man who gives up and surrenders to his problems, and has to live with it until the rest of his life. In the song, the subject is depicted as the powerless man who cannot defend himself from the oppression.

The second answer deals with the deeper meaning of Freddie Mercury “Bohemian Rhapsody” song lyrics. It involves the deconstruction process in order to get the deeper meaning of the lyrics. The deconstruction process on the lyrics results on a finding that the lyrics can be interpreted as a freedom sought by the subject during the oppression and judgment. This can be seen from some gaps, fissures, breaks, and discontinuities found in the lyrics. The change of view point, person, tenses, time, tone, and person in the fifth and sixth stanza make it clear that this lyric has a meaning to make the reader grasp the idea of fighting for freedom done by the subject though he is dominantly oppressed and judged by the oppressors. The changes and contradictions found in the lyrics also depict the disunity in the text, which is the aim of deconstruction study. Moreover, the inversion on the binary opposition found in the lyrics also shows that oppression and freedom are two hidden things that should be more privileged in the binary operation on the lyrics. Thus, the meaning obviously contradicts and breaches beyond the text since the surface meaning of “Bohemian Rhapsody” song lyrics are generally interpreted as a man who gives up on powerful oppression and surrenders to his problems.

B. Recommendations

In this part, the writer would like to give some recommendations. Having analyzed the “Bohemian Rhapsody” song lyrics, the writer believes that this study
can still be developed. The writer would like to give some recommendations to the English Language Education Study Program (ELESP) students, teachers, and future writers. A song is a good medium to learn English. It can be used as a material or source in learning activity. The songs can help students develop critical thinking and understand how to interpret them appropriately. Second, the writer suggests the use of deconstruction study in analyzing literal works, since the deconstruction study looks for contradiction to find the hidden meaning. In addition, the steps in conducting deconstruction study as proposed by Barry (2009) are perfect references for the study since Barry also gives examples on employing the steps. The last, for other writers, they may use the song or another song from the similar band for their study. The writer expects that future writers can analyze more about the songs from Queen in different topics.
REFERENCES


APPENDICES

Appendix 1

**Bohemian Rhapsody**
*By Freddie Mercury of Queen*
*Source: Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC*

Is this the real life? Is this just fantasy
Caught in a landslide, no escape from reality
Open your eyes, look up to the skies and see
I’m just a poor boy, I need no sympathy
Because I’m easy come, easy go, little high, little low
Any way the wind blows doesn’t really matter to me, to me

Mama, just killed a man
Put a gun against his head
Pulled my trigger, now he’s dead
Mama, life had just begun
But now I’ve gone and thrown it all away
Mama, ooh, didn’t mean to make you cry
If I’m not back again this time tomorrow
Carry on, carry on as if nothing really matters

Too late, my time has come
Sends shivers down my spine
Body’s aching all the time
Goodbye, everybody, I’ve got to go
Gotta leave you all behind and face the truth
Mama, ooh, I don’t want to die
I sometimes wish I’d never been born at all

I see a little silhouetto of a man
Scaramouche, Scaramouche, will you do the Fandango
Thunderbolt and lightning, very, very fright’ning me
(Galileo). Galileo. (Galileo). Galileo, Galileo Figaro magnifico
I’m just a poor boy, nobody loves me
(He just a poor boy from a poor family)
Spare him his life from this monstrosity

Easy come, easy go, will you let me go?
Bismillah! No, we will not let you go (Let him go!)
Bismillah! We will not let you go (Let him go!)
Bismillah! We will not let you go (Let me go!)
Will not let you go (Let me go!)
Will not let you go (Never, never, never, never, never let me go!) Ah!
No, no, no, no, no, no, no,
Oh, mama mía, mama mía (Mama mía, let me go)
Beelzebub has a devil put aside for me, for me, for me

So you think you can stone me and spit in my eye?
So you think you can love me and leave me to die?
Oh, baby, can’t do this to me, baby!
Just gotta get out, just gotta get right outta here!

Nothing really matters
Anyone can see
Nothing really matters
Nothing really matters to me
Anyway the wind blows
Appendix 2

Biography of Freddie Mercury

Source: http://www.queenonline.com/freddie_mercury
retrieved on 27 November 2017

The life of Farrokh Bulsara began on the East African island of Zanzibar on September 5, 1946. 25 years later in London under the name of Freddie Mercury he was fronting the now legendary rock group named Queen.

The son of Bomi and Jer Bulsara, Freddie spent the bulk of his childhood in India where he attended St. Peter's boarding school. He began taking piano lessons at the age of seven. No one could foresee where a love of music would take him. The Bulsara family moved to Middlesex in 1964 and from there Freddie joined up with a blues band called Wreckage while studying graphic design courses at Ealing College of Art. While singing for Wreckage, a fellow student introduced Freddie to Roger Taylor and Brian May, founder members of a band called Smile. Smile metamorphosed into Queen when Freddie joined Roger and Brian as the lead vocalist. The final member of the band, which was to stay together for the next 20 years, was bassist John Deacon, who joined the band on 1st of March 1971.

The rest is rock history. EMI Records and Elektra Records signed the band and in 1973 their debut album Queen was released and hailed as one of the most exciting developments ever in rock music. The immortal operatically styled single Bohemian Rhapsody was released in 1975 and preceded to the top of the UK charts for 9 weeks. A song that was nearly never released due to its length and unusual style but which Freddie insisted would be played became the instantly recognizable hit. By this time Freddie’s unique talents were becoming clear, a voice with a remarkable range and a stage presence that gave Queen its colorful, unpredictable and flamboyant personality. Very soon Queen’s popularity extended beyond the shores of the UK as they charted and triumphed around Europe, Japan and the USA where in 1979 they topped the charts with Freddie’s song Crazy Little thing Called Love.

Queen was always indisputably run as a democratic organization. All four members are each responsible for having penned number one singles for the band. This massive writing strength combined with spectacular lights, the faultless sound, a sprinkling of theatricality and Freddie’s balletic movements made up Queen on stage and on film.

Through Freddie’s ability to project himself and the band’s music and image to the four corners of 70,000 seated venues they became known as the prime developers of stadium rock, a reputation perpetuated by their pioneering tactics in
South America where in 1981 they performed to 231,000 fans in Sao Paulo, a world record at the time. They also became known as the key innovators of pop videos as their catalogue of 3-minute clips became more and more adventurous in style, size and content. Their phenomenal success continued around the globe throughout the 80’s highlighted in 1985 by their show-stealing and unforgettable performance on stage at Live Aid.

In the mid 80’s, Freddie started concentrating on his solo career, which was to run in tandem with Queen (“the mothership”) for several albums commencing with the 1985 release of Mr. Bad Guy. Freddie’s much loved sense of self-parody reached a zenith with his cover version of The Platter’s song The Great Pretender in 1987, the video of which recorded him descending a sweeping staircase among acres of identical cardboard cutouts of himself. His first major collaboration outside of Queen was with Dave Clark for the recording of London’s West End musical Time, in 1986. This was followed in 1987 with the realization of one of Freddie’s long-term dreams; to record with the world revered opera diva Montserrat Caballé. The LP’s title song, Barcelona went on to become an anthem for Senora Caballé’s home city and the theme for the Olympics in 1992.

While most publicly recognized as the front man to one of the most progressive rock bands of the 70’s, Freddie defied the stereotype. A taste for venturing into new territories – a trait that was to have a marked influence on the direction Queen would take – took Freddie to explore his interests in a wide spectrum of the arts, particularly in the areas of ballet, opera and theatre, even taking a participating role: in October 1977 the sell-out audience of a charity gala at the London Coliseum organized by Royal Ballet Principal dance Wayne Eagling received the surprise of an unannounced appearance by a silver-sequined leotard-clad Freddie performing an intricate routine choreographed for him by Eagling. In 1987 he made a one-night appearance in Dave Clarke’s Time at the Dominion Theatre, although legend has it Freddie occasionally turned up at the theatre to support friend Clarke’s musical, one night selling ice-creams in the stalls! Freddie would have loved the fact that The Dominion played host to the band’s phenomenally successful musical We Will Rock You which ran for 12 years.

On November 24th, 1991, Freddie’s struggle against AIDS ended when he passed away just over 24 hours after he had publicly announced he had the disease. Musicians and fans from all over the world paid their highest respects as the passing of rock’s most innovative, flamboyant ambassador signified the end of an era at the Freddie Mercury Tribute Concert at Wembley Stadium on April 20, 1992 which gave birth to the Mercury Phoenix Trust, the AIDS charity set up in Freddie’s memory by the remaining members of Queen and Freddie’s Executor, Jim Beach.
Freddie Mercury, who majored in stardom while giving new meaning to the word showmanship, left a legacy of songs, which will never lose their stature as classics to live on forever. Some of the most poignant of these were immortalized on the Queen album Made In Heaven released in November 1995. The sleeve of the album shows a view from Freddie’s Montreux home. Despite twenty years having passed since Freddie lost his life to HIV complications, he remains in the minds of millions throughout the world as one of the greatest artists we will ever see. In September 2010 (coincidentally, around Freddie’s 64th birthday) a poll carried out among rock fans saw him named the Greatest Rock Legend Of All Time, beating Elvis Presley to claim the title, and ahead of David Bowie, Jon Bon Jovi, Jimi Hendrix and Ozzy Osbourne.