

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of research background, problem identification, research limitation, problem statement, research objectives, and research significance.

### 1.1. Research Background

Language is commonly implied as a basic requirement in humans' life. Thao (2020) states that language has a significant role in humans' life in which it is recognized as a basic means influencing people's ability in forming a relationship with others. Wibisono and Widodo (2019) define language as a signal system symbolized by operated vocal sounds used for communicating by people. It is stated that people will have a problem in communicating and interacting with other people if there is no language (Liando & Lumettu, 2017). The problem can appear since language is used to express people's thought, feeling, emotion, and idea in which those entities cannot be shown if there is no language (Harya, 2017). Susanthi et al (2021) state that language is used to deliver a message consisting of idea and meaning for the hearers in verbal or non-verbal communication.

Understanding the language form is not enough for receiving the purpose of using the language itself. Hariyanto (2017) states that people are supposed to

understand the language forms and the contained meaning to understand the language. Rifai (2019) supports this statement by stating that understanding language is not only focused on understanding and identifying its form but also on perceiving the meaning contained in the language. It emerges from a condition where the meaning of language is concerned in linguistics to deepen insight into the language itself. Leech, as cited in Syafitri and Marlinton (2018), states that understanding language by interpreting the meaning contained in the language has been discussed in the linguistic branch called. Semantics deals with analyzing the meaning combined and integrated within the language component. It is also stated that semantics is a way of understanding the meaning of the language which is categorized as a part of linguistics to study the meaning in words or sentences (Lyons, 1986; Nainggolan et al., 2021). It can be seen that the meaning of language is concerned with semantics as a way of understanding the language itself.

Furthermore, people can deliver the meaning of language in many ways, one of them being through a song. Kennedy (2007) states that song is the way used by people in conveying meaning which is hard to be understood by people in which it is presented in the form of lyrics and music. The song is used for conveying people' ideas, feelings, and meaning using music and lyrics in constructing a reality of social life (Wati, 2014). It is relevant to the recent phenomenon where many songs consist of meanings that are difficult to interpret by people (Aryawan et al., 2019). It is difficult to interpret the

meaning conveyed through the song's lyrics due to the use of figurative language in the songs. It makes the listeners not get the meaning contained in the song's lyrics that they listen to, but they are still attracted by the songs because of the acceptable beat or tone (Mandarani & Ardiansyah, 2018). It indicates that the song is used for conveying implicit meaning to the listeners.

The difficulty faced by the listeners in interpreting and understanding the meaning conveyed in the song's lyrics considering that the songs use unfamiliar words or language forms as what has been mostly used in daily communication. Setiawati and Maryani (2018) argue that song lyrics are commonly written by using figurative language to form the meaning in uncommon words differentiated from the usual language forms spoken in people's daily life. Figurative language is a style used for presenting ideas, minds, and meaning through special language forms as the representative of the song writer's characteristics and soul (Keraf, 2009). Perrine, as cited in Swarniti (2022), shows that figurative language is commonly used in literary works particularly songs for transferring meaning because it brings additional imagery, imaginative pleasure, and emotional intensity in a brief compass. Therefore, figurative language can be an obstacle for people to infer the meaning of songs but it brings a great impact on the beauty of the songs.

The use of figurative language in a song has been widely discussed by many researchers. Rambani et al (2019) analyzed the figurative language in Selena Gomez's rare albums by conducting a qualitative study. It found that there are

31 figurative language expressions found in that album. Ismail et al (2020) conduct a study to find out the figurative language used in Maher Zain's song entitled "Awaken". The results show that there are four kinds of figurative language and their contextual meanings. Swarniti (2022) finds the figurative language in the song "Easy on Me" by comparing the gained data from the lyrics. It reveals that the lyric consists of 21 figurative languages categorized into six types of figurative language.

However, further research needs to be conducted considering that the previous studies above are still limited by the aspect of figurative language concerned in the previous studies. Therefore, this study is conducted to analyze the figurative language contained in the song lyrics viewed from the dominant types found and the meaning viewed from the semantic analysis. The songs in Red album by Taylor Swift are selected to be analyzed in this study considering that the songs are still interesting to many people. Muhammad (2022) states that Taylor Swift's Red album was released in 2012 but the songs in that album are still booming for many listeners. The album title is inspired by Swift's experience in having a relationship that shows her emotional feelings. In addition, it is also added that not all listeners can perceive the meaning contained in the songs of Red albums. Setiawati and Maryani (2018) conducted a study that takes two songs from Red albums to be analyzed. The songs are red and 22 in which those songs are analyzed to find the types of figurative language and the contextual meanings. The study does not discuss the functions

of types of figurative language and how the meanings are analyzed based on the semantic study. Further discussion about the album is discussed in this recent study by analyzing the whole Red album and providing an overview from semantic analysis of the songs.

### **1.2. Problem Identification**

Based on the research background that has been elaborated, the identified problem underlines this study is the difficulty faced by listeners in interpreting and understanding the meaning conveyed in the songs' lyrics. The song as one of the mediums for transferring the meaning of language is often written with uncommon words from the words spoken in daily conversation. The uncommon words used in the songs are widely perceived as figurative language that brings a poetic sense that beautifies the songs but it makes people in difficulty to understand the meaning of songs. It occurs in the Red album by Taylor Swift which is popular in society's ears but it cannot be denied that people are struggling to find the hidden meaning in those songs. Therefore, this study is conducted to do a semantic analysis of figurative language in the Red Album (Taylor's Swift Version) by Tylor Swift.

### 1.3. Research Limitation

The research background and problem identification of this study indicate that the study is limited to the semantic analysis of figurative language in Red Album (Taylor's Swift Version) by Tylor Swift. The study is viewed from the types of figurative language, the functions of the type of figurative language used, and the meaning of the figurative language obtained from the semantic concept.

### 1.4. Statement of Problems

From the limitation of the problems, the research questions were formulated as follows.

- 1.1.1. What types of figurative language are used in the Red Album (Taylor's Version) by Taylor Swift?
- 1.1.2. What are the functions of the figurative language found in the Red Album (Taylor's Version) by Taylor Swift?
- 1.1.3. What are the semantic meanings of figurative language found in the Red Album (Taylor's Version) by Taylor Swift?

## 1.5. Research Objectives

The objectives of the study were presented as follows.

- 1.1.4. To identify the types of figurative language used in Red Album (Taylor's Version) by Taylor Swift.
- 1.1.5. To find out the functions of figurative language found in Red Album (Taylor's Version) by Taylor Swift.
- 1.1.6. To reveal the semantic meanings of figurative language found in Red Album (Taylor's Version) by Taylor Swift.

## 1.6. Significances of the Study

The results of the present study gave both theoretical and practical contributions to education as follows.

### 1.1.7. Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, it was used to enrich knowledge for readers who are interested in learning a figurative language since it provides theoretical and empirical information related to figurative language. In addition, it also gives examples of the type of figurative language.

### 1.1.8. Practical Significance

Practically, it gave contributions to some parties, namely: students, lecturers, and other researchers. For students, the result of the study was used as an alternative learning source to enrich their knowledge about figurative language. For lecturers, it

could be used as a learning resource in teaching literature, especially figurative language. For other researchers who were interested in figurative language, it could be used as a reference to conduct a similar study.

