

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter interprete background of study, problem statement, problem of study, objective of study, scope and limitation, and definition of key terms. The aim is for explain the study.

Background of the Study

A song was an art form shaped by text that could be sung and accompanied by music. A song was an artistic creation that had melodies related to a person's vocal type (Moeliono, 2003). A song usually consisted of choruses, verses, and sometimes an additional bridge. Songs were built from lyrics (words) and melodies (musical notes) that were used to express emotions, experiences, tell stories, convey hidden messages, or deliver particular meanings. These elements created special coherence and persuaded listeners to feel the vibe of the music. Songs could be part of various genres such as pop, rock, classical, or folk, each with its own style and form.

An English song was a song written and performed in the English language. English songs were popular around the world because people could access them globally, and they entertained listeners with a large variety of music genres. Due to English being a global language, English songs became widely popular across different countries. Their culture spread widely, transcending linguistic and cultural barriers. Songs contained figurative language, which was commonly used in literary works. In linguistic structure, figurative language fell

under the category of semantics. It served as a way to convey meaning beyond the literal interpretation of words.

Taylor Swift is an American singer song writer who started her career at a young age and is known for her emotional lyrics and strong connection with fans. She has released many successful albums such as Fearless, Red, 1989, and Folklore, which show her musical progression from country to pop to indie folk. She also rerecorded some of her albums to get the rights to her music. Her 11th album, The Tortured Poets Department (TTPD), The album was released in 2024 it acclaimed and commercially successful. The total of her song in the TTPD album are 16 songs that represent of her experiences and her emotional.

Semantics was a branch of linguistics that explained the meaning of words, phrases, sentences, and texts. It focused on how meaning was constructed, interpreted, and understood in different contexts. Semantics played a crucial role in communication, as it helped individuals convey thoughts, emotions, and information effectively. The study of semantics consisted of analyzing word meanings, sentence structures, and how meanings could shift based on context (Department TTPD).

According to Carston (2000), semantics was concerned with judgments of validity, which relied on more than just the lexical content and syntactic structure of sentences. In other words, meaning was not solely derived from the linguistic system itself. Additionally, meaning was understood not only through linguistic

input alone but also through other processes that considered extralinguistic context.

Figurative language was a literary and linguistic tool that enhanced communication by expressing ideas in a creative and non literal way. Nisa (2020) explained that figurative language did not express meaning directly or literally instead, it contained deeper meanings, especially in song lyrics. Figurative language was divided into several types, such as simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole, innuendo, paradox, irony, and others (Hatch and Brown, 1995). One of the crucial functions of figurative language was to express emotions and create imagery. In order to evoke feelings in music, many singers used figurative language in their song lyrics.

Figurative language played a crucial role in strengthening communication by adding implicit expression, creativity, and emotion. Santika and Syafryadin (2023) defined that Song lyrics are short literary works created by a writer to convey a simple message to listeners or readers. Many songwriters use figurative language in their lyrics to make them sound more interesting, distinctive, and aesthetically pleasing.

However, there were many issues that posed challenges in interpretation, especially for native speakers, language learners, and song listeners. Unlike literal language, which conveyed direct meaning, figurative language required contextual understanding and cultural awareness. Misinterpretation was a common problem in understanding metaphors, similes, idioms, and other figures

of speech, which could lead to confusion, miscommunication, or unintended meanings. Santika and Syafriyadin (2023) explained that Song lyrics often contain a variety of meanings that are not always singular or direct. Interpretations of these meanings can vary depending on the way of thinking, background, experience, and perspective of each listener. Therefore, the same lyrics can be understood in different ways according to individual interpretations. This issue was particularly important in translation, literary analysis, and automatic language processing, where word for word interpretation often failed to capture the intended meaning.

Several previous studies observed figurative language in song lyrics. First, Yunanda., et al. (2020), in their study entitled *An Analysis of Song Lyrics Focusing on Figurative Language in “Idina Menzel” Songs*, found that hyperbole was the dominant type. Milani, et al. (2020), in their study entitled *Figurative Language in Saif Adam Songs*, found that metaphor was the most dominant type. Nurchitrawati., et al. (2019), in their study entitled *Figurative Language in Disney Songs*, found five types of figurative language implemented in Disney songs, namely idioms, hyperbole, personification, simile, and alliteration.

Analyzing the figurative meaning in Taylor Swift's songs was important because her lyrics were rich in idioms, expressions, and narrative structures. She often used figurative language to elaborate emotions and stories in her songs. This is in line with Siallagan, et al. (2017) research, researchers defined that figurative language and imagery play an important role in this album. Both embellish the songs and help listeners imagine the storyline and characters through the images

presented by the lyricist in each song. By understanding these linguistic elements, deeper meanings could be explored, and it could be seen how literary techniques were used to create emotional appeal. In addition to literary aspects, linguistic analysis also helped to understand how song lyrics reflected culture and social issues. Taylor Swift often wrote about personal experiences, feminism, and relationship dynamics, which made her lyrics relevant to many listeners. Through linguistic analysis, it could be concluded how these messages were conveyed in an artistic and persuasive way. It was also an effective way to improve language skills, especially in understanding the nuances and styles of writing in English.

Taylor Swift's album *The Tortured Poets Department* reflected a strong desire for physical and collectible items (Urbana, 2024). Researchers argued that Swift's marketing strategy deliberately responded to her fans' desire for material goods by offering limited editions, exclusive vinyl records, and expanded deluxe editions. These practices created what could be called “manufactured nostalgia,” that is, a sense of nostalgia deliberately produced to reconnect with the past. Using Simon Reynolds’ (2010) idea that “the past is always competing with the present,” it was proposed that Swift's career could be interpreted as an exploration of nostalgia and longing for the tangible aspects of music history. This was most evident in her rerecorded albums, which attempted to reclaim control over her first six albums, but it was also present in her new projects. Through these efforts, Swift constructed a form of nostalgia that connected physical music formats with young listeners who primarily accessed music digitally.

All of these studies have similarities in the approach used, which is qualitative, and both emphasize the importance of the role of figurative language in strengthening the emotional and aesthetic appeal of song lyrics. This study differs from previous studies in that it focuses specifically on Taylor Swift's album *The Tortured Poets Department*. Unlike previous studies that analyzed individual songs or collections of lyrics in general, this study examines the figurative language throughout the album, treating it as a complete poetic work.

Figurative language varied greatly across cultures, which made it difficult and complex to translate. Many idioms, hyperboles, and symbolic expressions had implicit meanings that had no direct equivalent in other languages. Without in depth research and understanding, translators found it difficult to identify appropriate equivalents for these expressions. This could lead to miscommunication or loss of meaning. Studying figurative language allowed linguists and translators to develop strategies to accurately convey the intended message.

Problem Statements of the Study

The problems that found in this study are:

1. What is the most dominant figurative language types on *The Tortured Poets Department* album by Taylor Swift?
2. What is the meaning of figurative language types on *The Tortured Poets Department* album by Taylor Swift?

The Objectives of the Study

The objectives that determine in this study are:

1. To determine the most dominant figurative language on The Tortured Poets Department album by Taylor Swift.
2. To analyze the meaning of figurative language on The Tortured Poets Department album by Taylor Swift.

Significant of the Study

In this study there are various benefits including:

1. For Readers

For readers, an understanding of figurative language significantly enriches the reading process. It helps them capture the hidden meanings in the text, making reading more interesting and comprehensible. In addition to clarifying images in the reader's imagination, figurative expressions can also evoke a deeper emotional response, making the connection with the characters and themes of the story stronger. In addition, the interpretation of figurative language encourages the development of critical thinking skills because readers are invited to interpret the meaning behind the words and reflect on the broader meaning of the language choices used.

2. For the Further Researchers

The study of figurative language also provides valuable opportunities for further research. In the context of language learning, for example, scholars can examine the extent to which the use of figurative expressions impacts language

acquisition, particularly for students learning English as a second or foreign language. Understanding the cognitive mechanisms in interpreting figurative meaning can also contribute to other fields such as psychology and artificial intelligence, which seek to replicate the way humans process language. In addition, studies in comparative literature and translation also benefit from analyzing how figurative language forms are transferred between languages and cultures, as well as the challenges and creative approaches used to preserve the original meaning and style.

Scope and Limitation

This study aims to examine the use of figurative language in selected songs from Taylor Swift's latest album, *The Tortured Poets Department* (TTPD). The main focus of this study is to identify and analyze the types of figurative language such as metaphor, simile, personification, hyperbole, and symbolism contained in the song lyrics. The purpose of this study is to understand the role of these literary devices in conveying emotions, shaping tone, and expressing themes in songs. This study is a literary analysis and is limited to the linguistic aspects of the lyrics, without including musical elements or cultural influences as a whole. Through this approach, this study aims to show how figurative language enriches the meaning and artistic value of contemporary popular music.

This research is deliberately limited from *The Tortured Poets Department* (TTPD) album with 16 songs that analyzed to enable a more in depth and focused study. The selection of these songs is based on the richness of the figurative language elements contained in them as well as their connection to typical themes

that often appear in Taylor Swift's lyrics. This study does not aim to review the entire contents of the album or Taylor Swift's entire musical work. In addition, other aspects such as rhyme patterns, musical arrangements, instruments, and narrative flow are not included in the scope of analysis. Therefore, the results of this study only apply to the songs analyzed and cannot be generalized to the entire album or other works of the singer concerned.

Definition of the Key Term

1. Figurative Language

Figurative language is the use of words or phrases whose meaning is different from their literal meaning. It involves a variety of language styles such as metaphor, simile, personification, hyperbole, and symbolism to create strong images, evoke feelings, and accentuate certain parts of the message.

2. Taylor Swift

Taylor Swift is an American singer songwriter best known for her narrative lyrics and her ability to combine various genres of music such as country, pop, and indie. She is widely recognized for her ability to express personal experiences and universal emotions through her songs, which often contain strong storytelling elements and the use of figurative language.

3. The Tortured Poets Department Album

The Tortured Poets Department is a studio album by Taylor Swift, released in 2024. This album features a more introspective, poetic, and emotional tone compared to some of her previous pop works, with lyrics that explore themes of

heartbreak, self reflection, disappointment, and the complexity of relationships.

Musically, the album blends elements of alternative pop and indie with a more minimalist and atmospheric production, highlighting the power of its lyrics as a form of modern literary expression in popular music.