

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of rationale, research questions, research objectives, scope of the research, and significant of the research.

1.1 Rationale

Music has become a part of human life, serving not only as a source of entertainment but also as a medium for expression and communication. Trzcinski in Jati (2020) as cited in Andriana (2024), highlighted that music plays a significant role in youth culture, with most teenagers engaging with it for diverse purposes. In the world of music, song lyrics play a crucial role in conveying emotions and meaning to listeners. However, not all lyrics can be understood directly, as they often contain figurative language or a form of figurative expression that requires deeper interpretation. In songwriting, figurative language enhances storytelling and emotional resonance, allowing artists to convey complex themes and experiences in a more evocative manner. As a part of the study of semantics, figurative language plays a significant role in expressing emotions, messages, and meaning more profoundly in song lyrics. Many listeners enjoy music without fully grasping the hidden meanings behind the lyrics, often unaware of the metaphors, symbolism, and other forms of figurative language embedded within them (Taufik & Cahyati, 2022). A lack of understanding of these elements may cause listeners to miss the emotional and narrative messages conveyed in a song. Therefore, studying figurative language in song lyrics is essential, not only for gaining a deeper understanding of their meaning but also as a valuable part of language and cultural learning.

Figurative language is part of language and communication that allows people to express emotions and ideas in creative and deeper ways. Figurative language goes beyond the literal meaning of words to convey richer and more nuanced concepts. According to Johnson, Arp, & Perrine (2016) figurative language is a linguistic tool used to convey meanings that differ from the literal interpretation of words. Figurative language allows speakers and writers to communicate ideas, emotions, and concepts more creatively, by adding depth and

layers of meaning to their expressions. By providing alternative ways to interpret ideas, figurative language enhances communication through its clarity and emotional impact. This makes it a powerful tool for expressing creativity, fostering deeper understanding, and creating memorable and impactful expressions. According to Perrine's theory in Johnson et al. (2016), there are twelve types of figurative language. They are simile, metaphor, personification, apostrophe, synecdoche, metonymy, symbol, allegory, paradox, overstatement, understatement, and irony. This expressive power is the reason why figurative language is commonly found in works of art, including songs. By using figurative language, song lyrics can evoke vivid images and connect with listeners on a deeper level. Through its combination of personal connection and artistic depth, song becomes a powerful form of communication. As a result, the meaning in song lyrics often requires thoughtful interpretation, as it goes beyond literal understanding and relies on a semantic understanding of figurative expressions.

Song lyrics convey diverse layers of meaning, often interpreted differently by listeners. The use of figurative language adds complexity, requiring deeper analysis to uncover the hidden message. To fully grasp the meaning within a text, listeners need semantics to interpret its figurative expression accurately. According to Manullang & Harahap (2025) semantics is a branch of linguistics that studies the meaning of language. Semantics is a branch of linguistics that studies meaning in language, including how words and phrases are used to convey specific messages. In the context of figurative language, semantics plays a crucial role in uncovering hidden meanings behind metaphors, symbolism, and other literary devices in song lyrics, allowing for a deeper understanding of the messages and emotions embedded within them. Through its combination of personal connection and artistic depth, song becomes a powerful form of communication. Figurative language allows artists to move beyond literal meaning to create lyrics that are rich, meaningful, and memorable. One artist who excels at this is Taylor Swift, whose ability to weave figurative language into her songs has made her one of the most admired and influential musicians in this era. Taylor Swift's influence goes far beyond music, her work has made its way into university curricula, with courses at places like

Stanford University and Northeastern State University incorporating her songs as part of the educational content (Attridge, 2024).

This study is inspired by previous research on figurative language, which has highlighted the importance of figurative language and provided valuable insights that motivate further exploration of this topic. Research on figurative language in songs has been conducted by several researchers, such as by Rahmawati, Purti, & Siregar (2025), Hulu (2024), Hasanah, Nur'Aini, & Setyorini (2022), Sinaga, Ambarita, & Simarmata (2024), and Bawemenewi & Swartini (2024). Other researchers also examined figurative language but focused on movies as the object of research, namely Purnama, Muthalib, & Burhansyah (2024), Wardani (2022), and Damayanti, Hartono, & Rukmini (2024). Research on figurative language has also been conducted by other researchers but focuses on poetry as the object of research, namely Purwandhi & Hendar (2024), Ichsan & Riyadi (2024), and Rezeki (2021).

While previous research has provided valuable insights into figurative language in music, poems, and movies, limited studies have specifically examined its use in Taylor Swift's latest album, "The Tortured Poets Department: The Anthology". This study contributes to the field by focusing on the 15 additional tracks from the album, offering a fresh perspective on the evolving role of figurative language in contemporary songwriting. Therefore, this study, titled "Decoding Figurative Language: A Linguistic Analysis of the Additional Tracks in Taylor Swift's *The Tortured Poets Department: The Anthology* Album," aims to identify the types of figurative language used in these songs and explore their meanings, contributing to the broader discourse on language, literature, and music.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the rationale, the research questions are as follows:

1. What types of figurative language are found in the additional tracks of Taylor Swift's "The Tortured Poets Department: The Anthology" album?
2. What are the meanings of each figurative language found in the additional tracks of Taylor Swift's "The Tortured Poets Department: The Anthology" album?

1.3 Research Objectives

Based on the research questions, the researcher has outlined several research objectives.

1. To identify the types of figurative language found in the Additional Tracks of Taylor Swift's "The Tortured Poets Department: The Anthology" album.
2. To explore the meanings of each figurative language used in the Additional Tracks of Taylor Swift's "The Tortured Poets Department: The Anthology" album.

1.4 Scope of The Research

This research analyzes the figurative language in additional tracks of Taylor Swift's "The Tortured Poets Department: The Anthology" album, focusing on the types of figurative language based on Perrine's theory. The meaning of these figurative expressions will be examined in the realm of semantics.

1.5 Significant of The Research

This study aims to provide a detailed and in-depth understanding of figurative language, focusing specifically on additional songs from Taylor Swift's *The Tortured Poets Department: The Anthology*. Theoretically, this study enhances the understanding of figurative language by examining types and meanings of figurative language by applying Perrine's theory supported by contextual information from sources like Vogue and Genius. The goal is to analyze how figurative language functions in modern music lyrics and to contribute to the study of literary devices in popular culture.

Practically, this study is expected to benefit listeners, students, researchers, and scholars who are interested in figurative language, especially in music. By analyzing additional songs from *The Tortured Poets Department: The Anthology*, this research offers insight into how figurative language is used in song lyrics. For students, this research can improve their understanding of figurative language and enhance their skills in literary and linguistic analysis. For listeners and fans of Taylor Swift, this study provides deeper insight into the meaning behind her lyrics. Additionally, this research can be used as teaching material in language, literature,

or media studies classes to demonstrate how figurative language creates emotional effects and enhances storytelling in songs.