

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the Background of Study, Research Problem, Research Purpose, Research Significance, and the Scope and Limitation of Study.

1.1 Background of Study

Language is a fundamental aspect of human existence; it connects us to each other and to our shared history. It constitutes a powerful communication tool, promotes cultural diversity and facilitates intellectual development. The complexity and richness of language contribute to the complexity of human civilization, facilitating the transmission of knowledge, the preservation of culture, and the expression of individual and collective identities. As we continue to explore the depths of language, we discover its profound influence on our lives and realize its potential to form a connected global community and more enlightened.

Figurative language enhances communication by going beyond literal meanings to create vivid imagery, evoke emotions, and simplify complex ideas. Used widely in literature, poetry, music, and daily speech, it makes language more dynamic and engaging. It serves various purposes, such as intensifying emotional impact, adding aesthetic value, and making abstract concepts more relatable. Writers, poets, and lyricists use figurative expressions to craft compelling narratives, enriching storytelling by deepening character development, themes, and settings. Ultimately, figurative language plays a crucial role in shaping how people perceive and express ideas, making it an essential tool for effective communication.

Figurative language in music and popular culture is one of the most powerful mediums that rely heavily on figurative language. Lyricists use metaphors, similes, and symbolism to convey emotions and narratives in a way that resonates deeply with listeners. Artists like Taylor Swift, Bob Dylan, and Leonard Cohen have been praised for their poetic songwriting, which often incorporates figurative language to create compelling storytelling.

For example, in Taylor Swift's *Folklore*, metaphors such as "I knew you'd linger like a tattoo kiss" from "Cardigan" evoke deep emotional and sensory imagery, helping listeners connect with the themes of love, regret, and nostalgia. The use of personification, as in "The smell of smoke would hang around this long," brings life to abstract concepts, reinforcing the album's introspective and evocative tone.

Taylor Swift is an American singer-songwriter who has achieved an immense success in the music industry. She has won numerous awards in the music industry and received an Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree from New York University in which required to pay tribute to those whose life and work exemplify professional, intellectual, or artistic achievement. As a result, she has become a popular subject for literary research. One area of this research is the analysis of Swift's lyrics in one of her albums, *Folklore*.

Folklore is an album produced by Taylor Swift influenced by an isolation during 2020 pandemic that she also collaborated with her co-writer in several songs of the album such as Aaron Dessner, Jack Antonoff, Bon Iver, and William Bowery. *Folklore* explores themes of escapism, resilience, empathy, nostalgia, and romanticism. And one of them also contains themes of the complexity of love triangle from each character's point of view, and this research will be going to analyze the literary relevance metaphors of love triangle in *Folklore* in linguistic particularly in Figurative Language. Scholars have studied her lyrics to explore how she uses language to convey her messages and how her lyrics reflect her personal experiences. Finally, researchers have studied the impact of Swift's music on the literacy field in scholar.

I chose *Folklore* by Taylor Swift for my thesis, "The Analysis of Figurative Language in Love Triangle Theme Reflected in the 3 Songs of *Folklore* Album by Taylor Swift" is because of its rich storytelling and literary depth. Unlike her previous albums, *Folklore* embraces a more narrative-driven and poetic approach, making it an ideal subject for linguistic analysis. The album explores themes of

nostalgia, regret, and emotional complexity, which are conveyed through intricate figurative language such as metaphors, symbolism, and personification, etc.

Additionally, the love triangle presented in Cardigan, August, and Betty offers a unique opportunity to analyze multiple perspectives on the same story, enhancing the study of figurative language in character development and emotional expression. Swift's songwriting in *Folklore* has been widely praised for its literary quality, making it not only a popular music album but also a valuable text for academic exploration. By examining these songs, this research aims to highlight the role of figurative language in modern songwriting and how it shapes the listener's understanding of complex emotional narratives.

1.2 Research Problems

1. What types of figurative language are found in the song lyrics of the 3 songs "Cardigan," "August," and "Betty" in Taylor Swift's *Folklore*?
2. What types of figurative language are mostly used in the songs of "Cardigan," "August," "Betty"?

1.3 Research Purpose

1. To find the types of figurative language found in the lyrics of "Cardigan," "August," and "Betty" in Taylor Swift's *Folklore* album
2. To find which types of figurative language are most frequently used in the lyrics of "Cardigan," "August," and "Betty,".

1.4 Research Significance

This study is valuable for both academic and general audiences. Academically, it offers insights into how figurative language works within song lyrics, benefiting linguists, literature students, and music scholars. It also sheds light on the importance of figurative language in building characters and stories within songs an area that hasn't been explored much in song analysis. For a fan of Taylor Swift and general listeners, this study offers a deeper look into the emotional details hidden in her lyrics, allowing fans to appreciate how she conveys complex relationships through language. Additionally, by exploring a love triangle a theme

that's both common and complex the study may inspire more songwriters to use similar narrative techniques in their lyrics.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

This study will focus on the analysis of figurative language (such as Simile, Metaphor, Personification, Metonymy, Symbolism etc.) found in the song lyrics of “Cardigan,” “August,” and “Betty” from Taylor Swift’s *Folklore* album. The analysis will identify and categorize the types of figurative language present in the lyrics and investigate which relations are most frequently used across the three songs. The scope will be limited to the lyrical content of these three songs of the album only, focusing on the language used to convey key emotional and relational themes. The study will also be confined to examining figurative language in the lyrics alone and research is limited to only three songs from *Folklore* “Cardigan,” “August,” and “Betty” and will not include an analysis of other tracks on the album. And the analysis will be limited to the linguistic features present in the text and will not explore listener interpretations or perceptions of the songs.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

In this research, there are some key terms as follow:

1. Figurative Language

Language that uses creative expressions, going beyond straightforward meanings to express ideas and emotions more powerfully. Examples include metaphors, similes, personification, exaggeration, and symbolism, all of which add depth and detail to the language.

2. Music

The definition of music is a pattern of melody, rhythm, harmony, tempo/dynamics, and timbre combined to create repetition, variation and contrast. We use these patterns to create music and we respond emotionally and intellectually to our perceptions and interpretations of these patterns of music.

3. Folklore

Folklore (stylized in all lowercase) is the eighth studio album by an American singer-songwriter Taylor Swift. It was a surprise album, release on July 24th, 2020 right after the outbreak of the Covid-19 global pandemic in early 2020. Swift collaborated with producers Aaron Dessner and Jack Antonoff. The album's stripped-down style, introspective lyrics, and richly layered narratives received widespread critical acclaim, solidifying her as a versatile storyteller. For instance, the album includes a trilogy of songs "Cardigan," "August," and "Betty" that narrate a teenage love triangle from different perspectives.

