

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the reason for choosing the topic of the study. In detail in this part the researcher also presents the background of the study, formulation of the problem, research aims, scope and limitation of the study, and definition of key terms.

A. Background of the Research

A song is an art formed from a collection of words so that it becomes a beautiful sentence and can be sung with musical accompaniment. A song is a language because the lyrics written by the songwriter certainly contain an emotion, feeling, and message that want to be conveyed to the listeners either directly or indirectly. Songs have become a rapidly growing and viral language on social media because they do not only contain expressions of feelings from songwriters but also contain the experiences of the songwriters themselves. So, the listeners feel related to the song lyrics that match their experience.

Everyone must easily understand the direct meaning of song lyrics. If the songwriter provides sentences that are easily understood by listeners, they will easily accept the message of the song. But, the lyrics will become difficult to understand if there is an indirect meaning that the songwriter wants to convey. One great way to understand how artists convey complex feelings and ideas is to analyze the figurative language present in song lyrics. Song lyrics usually contain figurative language. These are indirect song lyrics written by songwriters to convey a message in a different way. Each lyric cannot be interpreted literally but contains a deep meaning. Figurative language enhances lyrical expression through

the use of various literary devices such as metaphor, simile, personification, and hyperbole. According to Sharndharma and Suleiman.(2013), figurative language serves as a means of articulating one's thoughts and ideas¹. Figurative language is a captivating form of expression that allows us to communicate with depth and artistry. It goes beyond the literal meaning of words, offering a rich tapestry of imagery and emotions.

Defisyani, Hamzah, and Fitrawati (2018) stated that figurative language could be found not only in written but also in spoken languages. Figurative language can be found in written languages such as in books, novels, short stories, and advertisements. Moreover, it can be found in oral languages in songs, speeches, and TV programs.²

Learning figurative language is important because learners can improve two skills at once, namely reading and writing. First, they can try to analyze and search figurative language in all media, not only in the song lyrics. Such as poetry, novels, books, newspapers, articles. Learners are encouraged to read carefully so that they can understand the context and find the real meaning. This can improve critical thinking skills when reading. Secondly, analyzing and learning figurative language can also improve writing skills because the use of figurative language can enrich vocabulary and increase creativity in writing.

¹ Sharndama, E. C., & Suleiman, J. B. (2013). An analysis of figurative languages in two selected traditional funeral songs of the Kilba people of Adamawa State. *Academic Journal, Volume 4 No 4*, 239-250. doi:10.5897/IJEL12.156

² Defisyani, W., Hamzah, & Fitrawati. (2018). THE USE OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGES FOUND IN PRODUCT ADVERTISEMENTS FOR DIFFERENT GENDERS. *E-Journal of English Language and Literature, Volume 7 No 1*, 254-265.

There are characteristics in writing language styles that make writing more imaginative so that it gives an interesting impression.

Based on the explanation, other than that analyzing to understand a figurative language. As song listeners, especially among English language learners, it is necessary to know other factors that cause difficulties when understanding figurative language. Of course, it is important to know these difficulties in order to get the right solution in overcoming them and making it easier to learn to use figurative language to get significant benefits in improving language skills. As is the case in understanding the difficulties and mitigating the difficulties in SZA's song lyrics. SZA is a singer and songwriter from America. She has a distinct musical style that combines elements of R&B/Soul, Rap and the recently trendy "wave" genre. Besides combining different music genres. SZA is also known as a singer who has a unique and expressive language style because she uses several types of figurative language such as metaphors and hyperbole. So that her intense emotions can be conveyed deeply to the listeners of the song. SZA also collaborated with several other genre superstars, such as Rihanna, Nicki Minaj, and Kendrick Lamar, and this certainly added to SZA's fame. SZA received three Grammy Awards in 2024, including Best R&B Song for "Snooze" and Best Progressive R&B Album for "SOS." She was the most nominated artist.

B. The Research Problems

The research must find the problem of the study so that the researcher can focus on the problem point in question. The research problem that wants to be discussed in more detail in this study are:

1. What difficulties do students face in understanding figurative language in SZA's song lyrics?
2. What strategies do students use to mitigate their difficulties in understanding figurative language in SZA's song lyrics?

C. The Research Objective

Based on the research problems, the purposes of this research are to find out what difficulties are experienced when understanding the meaning of SZA's song lyrics and how to overcome these difficulties. This research uses five popular songs by SZA with the title "Open arms", "Saturn", "Nobody Gets Me", "Good Days", "Kill Bill" as material for conducting interviews. This research conducted interview with *English language learners* to get in depth qualitative data about their knowledge, understanding, and the difficulties they experience in understand figurative language in song lyrics.

D. The Research Aims

The research aims to find out what difficulties may occur when learning figurative language in song lyrics, and to find out what ways English learners can do to mitigate these difficulties.

E. Scope and Limitation of the Research

This research takes the topic of figurative language especially in song lyrics that are viral or popular, and this research also focuses on interviews with formal English learners. This research makes the discussion more specific, therefore the researcher wants to limit the problem to find the difficulties and ways to mitigate the difficulties in understanding figurative language in song lyrics. This research will probably cover a small number of specific difficulties and the mitigating strategies in understanding figurative language and include a small number of interviewees. This happens because information about difficulties and mitigate in understanding figurative language adjusts to the object under study. The limitations in this research may still be far from perfect. There are so many mistakes that researchers have made, maybe readers can provide suggestions for researchers

F. The Defining of Key Terms

To make the readers can easily understand the content of the research, the researcher also provides an explanation and definition of terms used, they are as follows:

1. Figurative Language

Figurative language is a language in which words or ideas have meanings other than their true meaning. It helps to write sentences effectively and aesthetically, and it can convey concrete ideas to the reader.

2. Song

A set of words or short poems that are meant to be sung and arranged to a certain kind of music is called a song.

3. Lyrics

Lyrics are works that consist of a collection of words into beautiful sentences divided into several stanzas.

4. Difficulties

Difficulties are obstacle that makes something confusing so that it becomes difficult to do.

5. Mitigating

Mitigating is the process of reducing the impact of a hardship or problems.