CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Language is a tool of communication used by people as a spoken or written symbol to communicate, to interact, to build connection, and to get information from others. Furthermore, language has several functions that are not only for social interactions but as well for conveying people's thoughts, ideas, feelings, opinions, emotions, or something else to express themselves.[1] The study of language is included within the field of linguistics. Linguistics is the scientific study of language structure through the combination of words, sentences, and sounds to create meanings. In particular, the linguistic rule system that is used to produce and understand sentences is called grammar. The grammar of language has several components such as phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics. Those components are related to each other, but it can be studied independently.[2]

Semantics is the study of rules for organizing and comprehending the meanings of words, sentences, clauses, and so on. Semantics is the subfield of linguistics that focuses on the discussion of what is meant when something is said, implying that meaning is more than just an aspect of expression represented through language..[3] For example, if I tell you that exactly half of my friends like eating pizza, and I have 30 friends, then I conclude that 15 of my friends like eating pizza. This argument applies regardless of the language used to express the sentence. On the other hand, semantics are allowed to explore meaning because if a word is dismissed or changed from a sentence it can change the whole meaning or it will become ambiguous. The rules of semantics can be formed in spoken or written; in written people can apply semantics in the form of literature, nonfiction work, and journalism. Furthermore, spoken language could be formed as

---

[1] Maureen.C Lanongbuka, "A Semantic Study of Figurative Language in Bangtan Sonyeonda's English Song Lyrics A Semantic Study of Figurative Language in Bangtan Soenyeondan's English Song Lyrics" (2022).

[2] Charles F Meyer, *Introducing English Linguistics* (United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York, 2009).

[3] Kristin Denham and Anne Lobeck, *Linguistics for Everyone : An Introduction*, *Language in Society*, vol. 40, 2013.

movies, radio, conversation, or song.[4] There are many ways for people to deliver their ideas and transfer the meaning to others. At this time, one of the ways that could be used is a song. Currently, there are many songs with several themes can express personal thoughts and feelings.

Moreover, the song is one of the greatest literatures. A song is a work of art that is performed by a performer to deliver many messages by musical instrument. Song is composed into two things, that is lyrics and the instrument or music itself,[5] Thus people can represent their word through the nonliteral meaning with lyrics. Definition of lyric as " any pretty brief poetry, generated by one individual, conveying an idea of consciousness or an action of perception, cognition, and feeling." [6] Listening to music is a joyful recreational activity. However, Sometimes the figurative language employed in song lyrics is difficult for listeners to understand. There are certain common things between poem and song, both have to be rhythmic. Rhythm is an important element in between songs and poetry. Whereas, the poetry form that is given an instrument named a lyrical poem. People are commonly exploiting songs to convey their ideas or feelings.

The use of figurative language in delivering ideas through lyrics is very interesting. Figurative language is symbolic lyrics to tell something without using standard meaning of words in order to make certain effect and special meaning. By definition, the figurative language is a nonliteral language, or the language in which the main meaning of a word is changed. The descriptions of figurative language contain meanings despite the direct meanings, and the words transmit exact meaning, so that it could add philosophical messages. With that reason, researchers are interested in carrying out the analysis.[7]

Language in education can be recognized in literature as well as in spoken language. Since in Indonesia, Students also learn about the various kinds and meanings of figurative language in

---

[4] Maureen.C Lanongbuka, "A Semantic Study of Figurative Language in Bangtan Sonyeonda's English Song Lyrics A Semantic Study of Figurative Language in Bangtan Soenyeondan's English Song Lyrics" (2022).

[5] J Kennedy, X et al., *An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, and Drama.*, *College Composition and Communication*, 2007, https://doi.org/10.2307/356271.

[6] D.S Norton, P Rushton, and M.H Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms (Tenth)*, 2012, https://doi.org/10.2307/354930.

[7] Denham and Lobeck, *Linguistics for Everyone : An Introduction*.

2

their classes, it is crucial for them to learn it as well.[8] Furthermore, the relation between semantic and English language teaching is semantic can be utilize to improve learners English language skills. According to Beyersdofer and Schauer as cited in Fatimah Sayid Alsayed, the implementation of Semantic Analysis of Writing Approach enable to expand and increase the students' knowledge through analyzing English lexical variable. One of the benefits of Semantic Analysis of Writing approach is to facilitate the assimilation of new vocabulary into an established background at a deep level of processing.[9] Semantics can improve the student's ability to learn vocabulary effectively and then employ this knowledge in the social/interactional context properly.

This study is aim to serve teaching variables such as methods, techniques, and materials to learn vocabulary so that teacher can make the learning vocabulary activities to be more interactive, interesting, and motivating to students. The use of semantic features as the strategies on teaching vocabulary to make students easily memorize the vocabulary and enjoy the lesson has been great concern from some previous studies. The study by Won, H., Cynthia, A., Grover, I., Park, H. W., & Breazeal, C, concerning vocabulary, using semantic based motivation, children's vocabulary knowledge and semantic understanding of words.[10] Another study carried out by Duan, J., & Da, H., found that learning the appearance of different semantic theories has helped people learn words better than ever before and thus they are put forward for word acquisition and learning.[11] Semantics analysis is also useful by the student for selecting words that are constantly changing and evolving. Over time, the language shows the development of a large number of new vocabularies. Each word has a different meaning from other words. With semantic ability, we can choose vocabulary according to the era. Therefore, semantic knowledge will make it easier for them to choose and use

---

[8] Laila Alviana Dewi, "Figurative Language in Maher Zein Lyrics" (2020).

[9] Fatimah Alsayed, "The Effects of Semantics in the Language Development of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Learners," *International Journal of Learning and Development* 9, no. 4 (2020): 138, https://doi.org/10.5296/ijld.v9i4.15735.

[10] Ishaan Grover, Hae Won Park, and Cynthia Breazeal, "A Semantics-Based Model for Predicting Children's Vocabulary," *IJCAI International Joint Conference on Artificial Intelligence* 2019-August, no. August (2019): 1358–65, https://doi.org/10.24963/ijcai.2019/188.

[11] Duan, Jing and Hongqi Da. "Semantics and Vocabulary Acquisition and Teaching." *Studies in Literature and Language* 10 (2015): 67-71.

words with the correct meaning to convey information to the public. People who have semantic abilities will be good at choosing words such as polysemy, homophones, denotations, and connotations.

Figurative meaning and vocabulary have a strong connection, which is a relationship in which both elements provide mutual benefits. It is possible to say that studying figurative language will help us grow our vocabulary, or that learning vocabulary will also involve learning figurative language. As a result, figurative language becomes essential in vocabulary learning. While learning vocabulary assists in learning semantics.[12] Figurative language has proven to be challenging to understand for beginners as well as junior and senior high school students. Students have trouble conceptualizing the meanings of expressions that are written in figurative language. They frequently interpret meanings literally rather than exploring deeper into the true meanings suggested by the terms. Therefore, to motivate students to understand and master the lesson, innovative learning tools are required, such as the use of picture cards, photographs, word games, songs, digital story-telling, and many more.

In this study, the writer looked into figurative language in Harry Styles's English song lyrics. A song lyric is a short poem with multiple verses that is set to music and intended to be sung.[13] Composers usually improve the language they use in their writing with figurative language, so that listeners are more entertained to listen to the song. The first thing that usually people listen to a song is the melody and the lyrics afterward. When people start to listen to the lyrics and it contains figurative language, it's hard to understand the meaning of the song. Therefore, it's important to learn about figurative language in order to know the meaning of a lyric and the purpose of the song.

The object of this research is a well-known artist from the UK, Harry Edward Styles a.k.a. Harry Styles. He is a singer, songwriter and actor from England. He was born on February 1, 1994 in Redditch, England.[14] He began his musical career as a

---

[12] Tri Rohani, Safnil Arsyad, and Irma Diani, "Semantic Analysis of Figurative Language Expressions ,11³)($785(´´2))the Jakarta Post" 785 (n.d.): 1–18.

[13] A Rambi et al., "A Semantic Analysis of Figurative Language in Selena Gomez'S Album Rare," *Ejurnal-Mapalus-Unima.Ac.Id*, 2019, http://ejurnal-mapalus-unima.ac.id/index.php/kompetensi/article/view/1866.

[14] "Harry Styles - Wikipedia," accessed November 16, 2022, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harry_Styles.

contestant on the British singing competition series, *The X Factor* in 2010. Right after his elimination, he was brought together with four other eliminated contestants to form a band and compete in the "Groups" category. The boy band called One Direction, consisting of Harry styles, Niall Horan, Liam Payne, Louis Tomlinson, and Zayn Malik. The band reached the final of *The X Factor* and came out in third place. As they gained their popularity in the UK and had their first debut single "What Makes You Beautiful" attained number one in the United States, which ended up being one of the highest-selling boy groups of all time before their hiatus in 2016.[15]

Harry Styles began his solo career with his debut solo album under his own name in 2017. The album with the primary single "Sign of the Times" debuted as the top ten world best-selling albums of the year. Styles' released his second album with the title *Fine Line* in October 2019.[16] It received mostly positive reviews, ruining the record for the highest sales debut by a british male artist in the US charts. With this album Styles won the Favorite Pop/Rock Album award at the American Music Awards, the Best International Artist award at the ARIA Music Awards, and the Chart Achievement Award at the Billboard Music Awards. In 2021 he even received a *Variety's* Hitmaker of the Year 63rd Annual Grammy Awards and got three nominations for Best Pop Vocal Album, Best Pop Solo Performance, and Best Music Video, winning for Best Pop Solo Performance. These achievements of this second album are obtained from his sincere effort to write a song that contains several positive messages about mental health related to listeners, especially young people.[17][18]

After successfully establishing himself as a versatile singer and musician, Styles dropped his third album entitled "Harry's House". The album received the Grammy Award for

[15] *One Direction Claim the World's Biggest Selling Album of 2013* (The British Recorded Music Industry), accessed November 16, 2022, https://www.bpi.co.uk/home/one-direction-claim-the-worlds-biggest-selling-album-of-2013.aspx.

[16] "Harry Styles - Wikipedia."

[17] Lilly Pace, "Harry Styles Just Announced His Sophomore Album 'Fine Line' and Nothing Else Matters," *Billboard*, November 4, 2019, https://www.billboard.com/articles/columns/pop/8542507/harry-styles-announces-new-album-fine-line.

[18] Ben Beaumont-Thomas, "Full List of Winners at the 2018 Brit Awards," *The Guardian*, February 22, 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/music/2018/feb/22/full-list-of-winners-at-the-2018-brit-awards.

album of the year at the 2023 GRAMMYs.[19] In this album Styles really opens a figurative door into himself through songs that tend to be simpler.[20] The lead song of this album "As It Was" made it to number one of the Billboard Hot 100 chart seven weeks after its release. Following that, there three songs from "Harry's House" also debuted on the Top 10 Hot 100 namely Late Night Talking" (No. 4), "Music for a Sushi Restaurant" (No. 8) and "Matilda" (No. 9). This album consists of 13 songs written with beautiful lyrics and contains some figures of speech so it is interesting to analyze. The reasons for why the researcher chooses to start analyzing the figurative language from the lyrics of song are to learn every figurative speech in the lyrics so the listeners can understand the meaning and the message of the song or even get inspired to make works with particular writing styles.[21]

The researcher uses Reaske's theory to support this research in determining figurative language and meaning used in song lyrics of Harry's House album. According to Reaske as cited in Khadijah Arifah, states that figurative language is a style of language that deviates from the standard direct means of explaining people or objects by employing various figures of speech.[22] There are various types of figurative language that are divided into four groups such as comparison, contradiction, attachment, and repetition. Several instances of figurative language that will be examined throughout this research are including allusion, allegory, simile, metaphor, personification, eponym, hyperbole, synecdoche, irony, satire, paradox, metonymy, hip flask, repetition, and paronomasia.

B. Focus of the Research

This research focuses on the types of figurative language that is used in the album "Harry's House" by Harry Styles. Furthermore, the researcher concentrates in determining the

[19] "Watch Harry Styles Win Album Of The Year For 'Harry's House' | 2023 GRAMMYs," accessed February 13, 2023, https://www.grammy.com/news/harry-styles-album-of-the-year-harrys-house-2023-grammys-winner-acceptance-speech-video.

[20] "Harry Styles: Harry's House Album Review | Pitchfork," accessed November 15, 2022, https://pitchfork.com/reviews/albums/harry-styles-harrys-house/.

[21] "Harry Styles' 'Harry's House' Debuts at No. 1 on Billboard 200 – Billboard," accessed November 16, 2022, https://www.billboard.com/music/chart-beat/harry-styles-harrys-house-number-one-billboard-200-chart-1235078807/.

[22] Khadijah Arifah, "Figurative Language Analysis in Five John Legend's Songs" (2016).

meaning of every figurative language in Harry Styles's songs. The limitation of this research is to analyze the word, sentence, and phrase from the lyrics of the song. Moreover, the researcher will be analyzing the contextual meaning of the figurative language used in Harry Styles's song lyrics.

C. Research Question

Based on the background and focus of the study, the researcher has defined the problem by proposing the research question below:

1. What types of figurative language are used in the Harry Styles's songs of the album "Harry's House"?
2. What are the meanings of the figurative language used in the Harry Styles's songs of the album "Harry's House"?

D. Objective of the Research

Based on the research question, there are two research objectives to fulfill. The first is to identify all figurative language used in Harry Styles song lyrics and identify the type of it such as allusion, metaphor, hyperbole, simile, and symbol. The second is to analyze and describe the meaning of the figurative language that has been found.

E. Significance of the Research

1. Theoretically

This research attempts to provide more information about semantics, especially the kind of figurative language and the meaning found there. This research could be used by another researcher to conduct a similar field of study.

2. Practically

This research expected the readers to comprehend the figurative language found in the lyrics of the song, so when the readers listen to the song they understand the meaning of the song. Readers can use this research to expand their understanding of semantics, which is concerned with determining the correct meaning of a word, phrase, or sentence. Furthermore, it also gives advantages to entertainment especially the music industry as they can get inspired by the particular writing styles and lyrics by Harry Styles.

F. Organization of Thesis

In a systematic thesis, this thesis organization is important for providing a clear and consistent image of the topic matter. The first section is the complementary pages; this section includes cover/title, approval page, table of contents, list of tables, and list of appendices. The second section is the body, this section consisting five chapters as follows;

Chapter I is Introduction. This chapter provides an overview of Research background, Research questions, Research objectives, Research significance, and Organization of thesis.

Chapter II is a Review of Related Literature. This chapter includes Theoretical Description, Previous Study Review, and Theoretical Framework.

Chapter III is Research Methodology. This chapter includes Types and approaches, Research setting, Research participants/subject, Data source, Instruments and data collection technique, Research data validity, and Data analysis technique.