

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter contains background of the study, research problems, aims of study, and significance of study.

1.1 Background

Music and songs have become one of the most universal mediums to express human emotions. Since ancient times, songs have been created as a channel to pour out feelings that are difficult to convey through ordinary words. In line with Hidayat's statement (2014), music is an activity of communication through sound to deliver messages using a different method. Furthermore, music or songs are a form of expression to convey feelings and thoughts that contain the values and norms of a culture, thus reflecting the culture of the society that supports it (Iswari, 2015). Song lyrics, which are the heart of a song, play a crucial role in conveying emotional messages, as the words used in lyrics are often poetic, metaphorical, and symbolic. This allows listeners to feel and reflect on the emotions experienced by the songwriter.

Each lyric is usually carefully chosen to depict the feelings the songwriter wishes to convey, whether it is happiness, sadness, longing, anger, or love. Through the use of meaningful words, song lyrics can evoke the same emotions in the listener. Words drawn from the songwriter's personal experiences often create a strong emotional connection between the songwriter and the listener. Even for those who have not experienced similar events, the power of beautiful lyrics can evoke sympathy and empathy. According to Nugraha (2016), song lyrics are a

verbal communication tool with meaning embedded within them. Through lyrics, one can express something they have seen, heard, or experienced (Nurdiansyah, 2018). A song lyric contains thousands of meanings about an event, carefully crafted by the writer to captivate the audience's attention. Therefore, song lyrics are meaningful arrangements of words derived from a person's thoughts, and as Trinanda (2019) suggests, a songwriter must pay attention to language usage in lyrics. In addition to the lyrics, music as a medium of expression also functions by complementing and amplifying the feelings conveyed. The tone, melody, rhythm, and harmony in a song can add depth to the emotions being expressed through the lyrics. For example, a song with soft and melancholic tones can help convey feelings of sadness or loss, while a song with an upbeat tempo and cheerful tones can evoke a sense of happiness or excitement. Hence, the way of singing, intonation, and vocal expression also greatly influence how strongly an emotion can be conveyed through a song.

In this study, the researcher examines the album 'Folklore' by American singer Taylor Swift. Taylor Swift, born on December 13, 1989, in Reading, Pennsylvania, United States, is a singer, songwriter, and music producer. Her career began in the country music world before transitioning to pop and later exploring alternative and folk styles. Known for her poetic and personal lyrics, Swift is celebrated for her ability to express deep emotions through her music. 'Folklore', released in 2020, marks a notable shift in Swift's musical style, embracing a more alternative and folk-driven sound. The album is acclaimed for its intricate storytelling, rich in themes of love, heartbreak, nostalgia, and self-reflection. This research focuses on three specific songs from the 'Folklore' album:

All Too Well, Exile, and Illicit Affairs, rather than the entire album. These songs were chosen because of their deep exploration of heartbreak and emotional complexity

The meaning of heartbreak in the lyrics of Taylor Swift's 'Folklore' album, particularly the three selected songs, be the main focus of this research. Heartbreak is an intense emotional feeling, often associated with profound sadness resulting from loss or disappointment, particularly in the context of love or romantic relationships. When someone experiences heartbreak, they endure emotional pain that often mimics physical pain, caused by separation, betrayal, or the end of a relationship filled with hope and affection. This research is related to linguistics, particularly in the fields of discourse analysis and semantics. The researcher analyze the emotional meanings and themes of heartbreak conveyed through the lyrics of All Too Wall, Exile, and Illicit Affairs, focusing on the use of language, metaphors, and emotional expressions.

This study examines how certain meanings and messages are conveyed through word choice and lyrical structure, which are essential parts of linguistic study. Meaning is the interpretation or understanding given to a word, phrase, sentence, or text. Meaning can be literal or figurative (connotative) and is greatly influenced by the context in which the word or expression is used.

Barthes and Kurniawan (in Sobur, 2008) argue that understanding and interpreting objects in communication not only conveys information but also involves signs that refer to a meaning. Thus, meaning is an inherent part of semantics and cannot be separated from what it expresses. One definition of semantics proposed by Sobur (2009) suggests that meaning is the word and terms

that can be confusing, leading to varied interpretations within society.

This study focus on understanding how the themes of heartbreak in ‘Folklore’, specifically in All too well, Exile, and Illicit Affairs, are interpreted through their lyrics and how listeners connect emotionally to these themes, revealing the complex nature of meaning and interpretation in language.

From the summary of the discussion above, the main conclusion is that the researcher focuses on analyzing each lyric in the song that contains the meaning of heartbreak. Therefore, the title “*A SEMANTICS ANALYSIS ON TAYLOR SWIFT’S “SONGS RELEASED IN 2021 ”*” is formulated by the researcher as a preliminary step to conduct the research. The stages of the research be discussed in detail by the researcher in the following sections of this proposal.

1.2 Research Question

How do the lyrics of Taylor Swift's songs in the Folklore album depict the meaning of heartbreak and deep emotional feelings?

1.3 Aims of Study

Based on the research problem above, the researcher has formulated two research objectives for this study, namely to find out how the lyrics of Taylor Swift's songs in the album Folklore depict deep emotional feelings to convey the experience of heartbreak,

1.4 Significance of Study

This section contains the theories that support this research and the benefits it produces.

1.4.1. Implication

This research is based on Geoffrey Leech's theory of meaning in *Semantics: The Study of Meaning* (1981). According to Leech, meaning is an important aspect in the study of semantics that can be analyzed through seven types of meaning, namely conceptual, connotative, social, affective, reflective, collocative, and thematic meanings. This theory is used to examine the meanings contained in song lyrics so that the message the songwriter wants to convey can be understood more deeply..

1.4.2. Application

This research is expected to serve as a reference for similar studies that examine song lyrics as a medium for conveying feelings and emotional experiences.

For Students : Songs help enrich students' vocabulary, practice pronunciation, and improve their language skills; they serve not only as entertainment but also as an educational tool that supports the development of students' knowledge, skills, and character.

For the general public: This research can help music listeners better understand the deeper meaning in the lyrics of their favorite songs and how these songs interact with personal emotions, especially those related to heartbreak.