CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Research

Semantics is the study of meaning that is used in linguistic study as the total theory of how language works. This means that language is understood primarily as something that is known rather than something that is done. In semantics, it is understood that meaning covers many aspects of the language, and there is no general consent on the nature of meaning.

Related to the meaning, words are easier to spread from one to another. As it goes, some people do not feel the need to utter what they want to say directly. Here we are talking about hidden meanings that are often used in some utterances. The hidden meaning is a concept of hiding the meaning of a word, phrase, or sentence through twisted words or word playing while still intending to give what the message is. In addition, people must understand the context because not everyone understands the hidden meanings so that the messages can be conveyed clearly.

Nevertheless, the use of semantics and hidden meaning is reflected in Taylor Swift's songs. Taylor Alison Swift or best-known as Taylor Swift is a singer and songwriter from West Reading, Pennsylvania, USA. She was born on December 13, 1989. The search for context behind her songs is needed to analyze the matter that caused the making of her songs and the message that is intended to be said but hidden. Taylor Swift is known for her singing and songwriting skills as she has been making a lot of great records throughout her life. She is also great at hiding "Easter eggs" or hidden meanings behind the lyrics.

Swift's songs are compiled into several albums. One of which is *folklore*. *folklore* is Taylor Swift's eighth album, which was released on July 24, 2020. It was made in early 2020 when quarantine happened as a result of the pandemic and was announced on July 23, 2019. Just like her previous discographies, *folklore* has a lot of stories within but is not necessarily related to Taylor's life.

folklore itself explores stories both real and fictional. While making the album, Swift, as usual, created an album with great lyrics and meanings behind them. Her songwriting skill is never to be doubted. Slipping tremendous amounts of hidden meanings through the use of figurative language in the lyrics of each song.

Figurative can be found and used in most linguistics or literature aspect, such as poetries, movie scripts, and song lyrics. It is a way of making a word, phrase, or sentence in a language become beautiful or pleasant to be heard and read. It's a way to level up simple, everyday English and make it idiomatic and fun. This allows speakers and writers to add their interpretations to the commonly used languages.

Based on the description above, I am interested in analyzing the figurative language expressions found in the 16 songs on the *folklore* album. From what I find, through figurative language, Swift was able to write the lyrics with hidden meanings behind them, without having to blatantly write what it means. Figurative language is normally used in poetry, song, movie, or novel. In this analysis, I use song lyrics as the data source. This is very interesting to analyze because it uses different kinds of figurative language with hidden meanings. Furthermore, she can represent her feelings through figurative language in the lyrics of the song she writes to make people think more about it and feel earned once they understand it. In each of the lyrics in her songs, messages are put, and most of them are indirect.

1.2. Identification of the Problem

The problems of this research are related to the background and can be analyzed through the semantics approach as understanding its context thoroughly is essential. In addition, several problems will be analyzed in this study. The hidden meanings behind the lyrics, the historical background of the album, and the use of figurative language in this album.

1.3. Limitation of the Problem

   The limitation of the problem is necessary for it will help me to focus on certain problems without having to worry about others. Due to the limitations of the researcher's knowledge of the discussed matters, I limit the problems to several certain matters. First, the number of songs is only 16 songs. This is due to the limited time required to conduct this research. Second, I limit the problem by focusing only on the discussion of hidden meanings and figurative language. I will not analyze all the expressions or utterances contained in the lyrics because not all the phrases or sentences inside contain hidden meanings. Third, I limit the theory that is used in this research. The semantic theory that I apply is the Semantics Theory as the Study of Meaning by Charles W. Kreidler. This theory is considered to have the most complete and suitable component in analyzing this problem. How the hidden meanings in the album are analyzed by Kreidlers' theory of meaning.

1.4. Formulation of the Problem

   Based on the limitation of the problem, I formulate the problems as follows.

1. What are the figurative languages and hidden meanings that lie in the songs in the *folklore* album?

2. What are the hidden meanings that lie underneath *cardigan*, *august*, and *betty* songs in the *folklore* album?

1.5. Objectives of the Research

The objectives of the research are to find out:

1. What the figurative languages and hidden meanings that lie in the songs in the *folklore* are.

2. What the hidden meanings that lie underneath *cardigan*, *august*, and *betty* songs in the *folklore* album are.

1.6. Benefit of the Research

There are two benefits of the research, namely theoretical and practical.

1. Theoretical Benefits

Theoretically, this research is expected to be beneficial as a reference to other or next studies that would use the same case or the same theories as this one, such as theories of semantics, context, and figurative language. Thus, the relevance of this research is still relevant to further use to provide knowledge and insight.

2. Practical Benefits

Practically, this research is expected to be beneficial to:

1. The Writer

The result of this research will hopefully improve the knowledge and develop an overview of learning outcomes about semantics, context, and figurative language for the writer.

2. Students

The result of this research will hopefully enlighten university students majoring in English Language and Culture, especially those who take linguistics as their focus to expand their scope and understand more about semantics and context.

3. Teachers and Lecturers

This research allows teachers and lecturers to use the research as a module and/or reference for their teaching to enrich their insight about semantics and provide them with such knowledge.

1.7. Systematic Organization of the Research

      The framework of the term paper that titled "Hidden Meanings Behind Taylor Swift's Figurative Language Expression in '*folklore* (2020)'" is as follows:

CHAPTER I: **INTRODUCTION**

        This chapter consists of the phases of the research layout, such as the background, problem identification, problem limitation, problem formulation, research objectives, research benefits, and systematic presentation of the research.

CHAPTER II: **THEORY**

        This chapter consists of experts' theories which the researcher uses in accordance with the title of the research and to analyze the research data.

CHAPTER III: **RESEARCH METHOD**

        This chapter consists of the research approach and methods, research time, research object and data, the data collection techniques, and the analysis technique.

CHAPTER IV: **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

        This chapter consists of data analysis and the result, elaboration, and discussion of Taylor Swift's *folklore* album.

CHAPTER V: **CONCLUSIONS**

        This chapter consists of all the conclusions gathered by the researcher.