

## CHAPTER 2

### THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 2.1 Definition of Semantics

Semantics is mainly concerned with a speaker's competence to use the language system in producing meaningful utterances and processing utterances produced by others. According to Nikelas (as cited by Dwiocta, 2023:6), the language contains these three characteristics. First of all, language has sound. Second, language follows a system. Third, there is meaning in language. Language and meaning are closely related. People need a study on meaning that provides a precise explanation of meaning.

Semantics is the technical term used to refer to the study of meaning. Unfortunately, "meaning" covers a variety of aspects of language, and there is no very general agreement either about what meaning is or about the way in which it should be described (Palmer 1981:1). Semantics is the study of meaning in language, words, phrases, and sentences. Semantics also know of the study of how language organizes and conveys meaning.

According to Griffiths (2006:1), semantics is one of the two main branches of linguistics, and it is basically the study of meaning. Semantics is a study of word meaning and sentence meaning. Semantics is the study of how meaning is conveyed through signs and language. Semantics can be referred to the literal or intended meaning of speakers and writers. Semantics is studied in many branches of science, and consequently, how meaning is studied may vary. Understanding how facial expressions, body language, and tone affect meaning and how words, phrases, sentences, and punctuation relate to meaning are examples of what Semanticists study.

Based on the explanation above, semantics is the study that discusses the meaning and real meaning. And from all of the theories, all agree that semantics is the study that examines meaning. In some cases, semantics is used to detect the meaning of beautifully written song lyrics using figures of speech. Besides that,

semantics is also a study of how a language is composed and how language can convey meaning.

## **2.2 Definition of Figurative Language**

Language is the most important thing to communicate for humans. There are two kinds of language: literal language and figurative language. Figurative language is a way of saying something other than the literal meaning of the word. The figure of speech may be said to occur whenever a speaker or writer, for the sake of freshness or emphasis, departs from the usual denotations of words. According to Perrine (as cited by Qurrotul 'Ain, 2013:26), figures of speech are defined as a way of saying one thing and meaning another.

According to Safira (2020:2), figurative language is essentially a component of semantics since semantics allows us to figure out a song's true meaning. Those who are listening to music might not pay attention to the lyrics, especially if the song has a figurative element. Most of the time, their only reasons for liking it are the excellent music or perhaps the singers. Understanding a lyric's meaning is important since it conveys the song's meaning and purpose.

Figurative language is language that comprises of images. It is deviation from the usage of language ordinary. The meaning of words or series of word are used to reach and produce a certain effect. Figurative language or language style is an attractive language which is used to increase the effect by introducing and comparing an object or certain matter or more general soothing else. According to Qurrotul 'Ain (2013:26). Figurative language refers to words or phrases that do not have the same meaning as their literal meaning.

The use of the ordinary way will surely result in an ordinary response as well. Communicators can always give a different sense of nuance by advancing the use of figures of speech. As long as the proposed sense essence is receivable by the communicant, that additional sense essence will reinforce the meaning and present a fresh message. The advantages have been widely known that everybody uses it all the time in an attempt to give freshness and spice to what they say (Yorselina, 2017:9)

According to Yorselina (2017:9), a figure of speech is a rhetorical device that achieves a special effect by using words in distinctive ways. We use the figure of speech in figurative language to add color and interest and to awaken the imagination. Figurative or figures of speech are not only used in the language of literature, such as drama, poetry, or prose, but they are also alive in linguistics studies or commonly used in writing lyrics for songs and daily speech. According to Yusnitasari (as cited by Dwiocta, 2023:7), figurative language is beyond literal understanding to convey meaning. The beauty of language is conveyed by the figurative language used in the song's lyrics. Without figurative language, the song's language might feel bland since it will leave the listener with an interesting impression. The message of the song will be received by listeners who are engaged with it.

Based on the theory and explanation above, it can be concluded that figurative language is a language that not everyone can easily understand. Literary writers commonly use figurative language to beautify their works, but unfortunately, not everyone understands the meaning behind figurative language.

### **2.3 Types of Figurative Language**

There are many types of figurative language. They are:

#### **2.3.1 Simile**

The equation or simile is an explicit comparison. Explicit comparisons are those that directly state something similar to something else. For that, it requires an effort that explicitly denotes the similarity, the words like the same, as, like, and so on. According to Shaw (as cited by Safira, 2020:12), the common heritage of similes in everyday speech usually reflects simple comparisons based on the natural world or familiar domestic objects. This characteristic is intended to express a similar thing to another directly.

For example:

*She's tough as a rock.*

The meaning of the first example is refers to a person is exceptionally strong, resilient, or unyielding, much like the hardness and durability of a rock. It emphasizes the individual's ability to withstand challenges and difficulties.

*Her smile widened like the morning sun.*

The second example compares the widening of her smile to the brightness of the morning sun. It suggests that her smile became broader, radiant, warm and bright like the sun during the morning.

### **2.3.2 Metaphor**

Metaphor is used to explain emotions, feelings, relationships, and other elements that could not be described in ordinary language. Metaphor is the process of comparing two unlike things as if they are one. According to Peter (as cited by Safira 2020:16), metaphor is a figurative speech that directly compares one thing to another. They may express A is B, which differs from the simile only in that the comparison is implied rather than explicit. It is to be read in the same way as a simile, but it is often more difficult to recognize since the comparison may be reduced to a phrase or a single word. When the poet uses metaphor, he transfers the qualities and associations of one subject to another in order to make it more vivid in our minds.

For example:

*Life is a stage, and we are all performers.*

The meaning of the first example refers to life as a stage while we play our roles. In other words, we are responsible for ourselves.

*Her heart was frozen after the heartbreak.*

For the second example, after receiving heartbreak, pain and disappointment, she chooses not to accept new people and chooses to numb her emotions.

### 2.3.3 Personification

According to Kennedy (as cited by Safira, 2020:11), personification is the attribution of a personal nature or character to inanimate objects or abstract notions, especially as a rhetorical figure. Personification is a figure of speech that describes something that is not human as though it could feel, think, act, live or die in the same way as people.

For example:

*The wind shyly ruffles the soft curtains in the morning.*

The meaning of the first example refers to the wind as shyly ruffling the curtains, giving it a human characteristic and suggesting a gentle and subtle touch.

*Time whispers softly as dusk falls.*

For the second example, time is whispering softly, depicting time like a human being and showing a quiet and reflective moment at dusk, emphasizing the passage of time and the serenity that is often equated with dusk.

### 2.3.4 Metonymy

According to Safira (2020:13), Metonymy is a change of name, the use of one word for another and the use of an idea by means of terms involving the association. It is also about part-whole relationship, the kind which allows the same word to be used in many languages for “hand” and “arm” or “foot” and “leg”.

For example:

*The White House issued a statement.*

The meaning of the first example is refers to the White House is used as a substitute for the President or the U.S. government. The mention of the White House is a way of referring to the people or entities within it

who are responsible for issuing official statements on behalf of the government.

*The pen is mightier than the sword.*

The second example emphasizes the impact of persuasive writing, rhetoric, and peaceful communication in shaping opinions, inspiring change, and achieving goals compared to the forceful approach of warfare.

### **2.3.5 Synecdoche**

Synecdoche is taken from Greek and means to take up with something else. It is a figure of speech in which a part represents the whole, as in the expression hired hands for workmen, or, less commonly, the whole represents a part, as in the use of the word society to mean high society. It is closely related to metonymy, the replacement of a word by one closely associated with the original. The use of synecdoche can simplify what is being talked about by stating significant detail only (Safira, 2020:17)

For example:

*The whole village came to witness the village head election.*

The meaning of the first example refers to the whole village and is used to represent the people of the village. Emphasizing the community's engagement in the electoral process.

*A bunch of eyes looked up at him as he spoke.*

For the second example, a bunch of eyes represents a group of people who are listening or paying attention. It is a way of highlighting the visual attention and focus of the individuals in the group without explicitly naming them.

### **2.3.6 Hyperbole**

Hyperbole is the term used for overstatement. This figure is used by someone who has desire and expectation for the thing that happens to

make the object more significant than the real object. According to Shaw (as cited by Safira 2020:13) emphasized that there is a danger of deception in the hyperbole of sensational reporting. The poet exaggerates things that will be compared in order to get accurate attention from the reader.

For example:

*The bag is heavy, like a pile of rocks.*

The meaning of the first example refers to how heavy the bag is by likening it to a pile of rocks. The purpose is to reinforce the impression that the bag is hefty, even though it is not actually as heavy as rocks.

*I've called him a hundred times, but he never answers.*

The second example states the person has called another person a hundred times. The number one hundred here is not an actual number but is used to emphasize the frequency and unresponsiveness of the person.

### **2.3.7 Litotes**

Litotes, derived from a Greek word meaning “simple”, is a figure speech that employs an understatement by using double negatives or, in other words, a positive statement. According to Hornby (as cited by Safira 2020:16), litotes are an expression of one's meaning by saying something that is the direct opposite of one's thought, it is to make someone's remarks forceful. Litotes is a form of understatement it is always deliberated with the intention of subtle emphasis. However, the interpretation of litotes depends on context, including cultural context.

For example:

*He is not a stupid person.*

The meaning of the first example is referred to imply that he is an intelligent person. Litotes use a derogatory expression to convey a more positive or strong meaning.

*It was not an easy job.*

For the second example, while it directly states that it was not an easy job, it actually implies that the job was challenging.

## 2.4 Previous Related Studies

In supporting this research, several previous studies have similarities and differences with this research. Hereby proves the existence of research that uses the same theory and approach with different materials.

The first research by Qurrotul'ain (2013) with the title "An Analysis of Figurative Language in the Song Lyrics by Maher Zain". In her research, she used at least 13 figurative language and several songs from Maher Zain as her research materials. The most dominant figurative language used in some songs is hyperbole.

The second research by Safira (2020) with the title "Figurative Language in Selected Shawn Mendes Song Lyrics". In her research, she used only selected songs as her research material. She also added the significant of the study which is theoretically and practically. To enrich her research, she is explained at least 18 types of figurative language. Besides that, the research also added the definition of Song and Lyrics.

The third research by Dwiocta (2023) with the title "Figurative Language used in Ed Sheeran Album's "Divide" (2017)". In his research, he used the album *Divide* by Ed Sheeran as his primary material. From 16 song lyrics as his research material, the research found 6 out of 7 figurative language on the album *Divide* by Ed Sheeran. As a conclusion, figurative language metaphor data is the most he found.

The similarity between the previous research and my research is that our objective is to find and explain the true meaning of song lyrics. The difference between the previous research and my research is that I used the album *Planet Her* by Doja Cat as my research material. In this research, I will analyze figurative language. After grouping them based on the types of figurative language, I would analyze the true meaning behind the figurative language found in the album *Planet Her* by Doja Cat.