Chapter I
Introduction

1.1. Research Background

Understanding literature such as the lyrics is like exposing the tapestry of feelings and meanings woven into the fabric of music. The ties of words form a vivid and imaginative image, producing experiences that resonate with the listener on a personal level. Lyrics give depth and complexity to music, especially in songs that use indirect lyrics as a result of the usage of figurative language. To give an instance, the phrase "Your heart was glass I dropped it" in Taylor Swift's song "Champagne Problem" exemplifies the usage of figurative language in metaphor with items that symbolize humans in this area. Lexically, "glass" refers to a substance that is hard and brittle, transparent or translucent; nevertheless, in this lyrics, the songwriter compares her partner's emotions to a glass, which is a material that is intact and hard however, if dropped will cause major harm and can't be recovered to its former state, as if her partner's feelings are being damaged. However, certain listeners might interpret figurative language differently and may also lead to misconceptions, such that listeners sometimes judge the lyrics as nonsense or meaningless.

As stated by Long (2022:65) the underlying aspect of language is to convey human's thoughts through spoken language, actions, pictures, etc. Language innates the ability of human beings and represents the most widespread mode of social communication. The ability to share concepts, intentions, and feelings, and also to respond to what others are feeling is crucial during social interactions (Stefani,

2019:1). It is critical for humans to recognize the variety of alternative interpretations and to incorporate cultural, social, and linguistic context when interpreting a message, mentioned by Toury (2000:1-6), humans tend to use language that reflects the existence of norms as well as culture.

Interpreting meaning in language leads to a major branch of linguistics, Semantic. As stated by Bagha (2011:1411), semantic is the most abstract level of linguistic analysis since semantic cannot see or observe meaning as observe and record sounds at the level of phonology. Besides using literal meaning for what intend, other times the use of language vaguely in a way that needs a sort of clarification named figurative language. The use of figurative appears to be distinct from other statements with the same literal meaning and can be found in poetry, novels, scripts, and also music. Music accompanying lyrics is a universal language linking humanity and has the magical ability to affect practically everyone. It is strongly tied to a human characteristic, which is creativity (Brunner, 2020:2).

Taylor Swift is a singer-songwriter who often uses implicit meaning in her lyrics to convey emotions and stories in a deep and artistic way. This American singer is known as one of the biggest artists in the music industry after starting her career at a young age and releasing her first studio album, "Taylor Swift" in 2006 when she was only sixteen years old. Taylor Swift's career as a singer and songwriter has not always been smooth. The copyright of the six albums she wrote belonged to someone else, requiring Taylor Swift to re-record her music so that she could regain the rights to the recordings and take control of her works. Taylor Swift puts "Taylor's Version" on albums she has re-recorded so she can have full control

over the original or master recordings of the songs and differentiate them from her old albums.

From several albums that have been re-recorded, Taylor Swift displays songs that were not included in the original album, which are entitled "From The Vault" known as "Vault Tracks". Taylor continued that those songs "almost" made it onto the original album, yet were cut for various reasons. Of the six albums, Taylor has re-recorded four albums, "Fearless" with six additional songs, "Red" with nine additional songs, "Speak Now" with six additional songs, and "1989" with five additional songs, bringing the total to 26 "From The Vault" songs.

Various studies have been carried out to analyze song works from a linguistic point of view, especially from the field of figurative language. Santika & Syafryadin (2023) analyze figurative language in Taylor Swift's album with the title "An Analysis of Figurative Language in Song Lyrics of the Album "Midnights" by Taylor Swift" which is analyzed based on Leech's theory which displays 8 types of figurative language are found. Another research entitled "The Figurative Languages in Taylor Swift's Album "Lover" and Students' Opinions on their Contribution in their Learning" is conducted by Muttaqin (2022), the results of the analysis found 116 figurative language expressions: simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole, synecdoche, paradox, and symbol. The figurative language most often used in this album is metaphor.

Meanwhile, the writer focused on 12 kinds of figurative language that might appear in Taylor Swift selected "From The Vault" tracks, and only take 3 songs each from 4 re-recorded albums, which are speak now (Taylor's Version), Fearless

(Taylor's Version), Red (Taylor's Version), 1989 (Taylor's Version). Bring a total 12 songs "From The Vault" to be analyzed.

In this research, the writer uses a descriptive qualitative approach, because the data are analyzed in the form of descriptive materialization, such as words and phrases. The writer used Laurence Perrine's (1983) theory of figurative language. Perrine divided figurative language into 12 kinds based on his book "Literature: Structure, Sound, and Sense"; metaphor, simile, personification, apostrophe, synecdoche, metonymy, symbol, allegory, paradox, overstatement (hyperbole), understatement, and irony. This theory of figurative language will help the writer to classify the figurative language that existed in Taylor Swift's selected "From The Vault" tracks.

Based on what is already explained above, the writer's main goal is to analyze the figurative language that existed in Taylor Swift's selected "From The Vault" tracks. Start by organizing and preparing all of the data, coding, and representing and interpreting the findings. Therefore the research will be entitled **"An Analysis of Taylor Swift Selected Tracks: From The Vault (A Semantic Perspective of Figurative Language)"**.

1.2. Identification of the Problems

Based on the explanation of the research background above, it can be identified that the problem was there are still many people who misunderstand the use of figurative language in song lyrics as meaningless and confusing. In fact, the use of figurative language in lyrics is used by songwriters which allows them to

express emotions or concepts in a more expressive and artistic way, therefore that the song lyrics provoke listeners to interpret the lyrics based on their views. Analyzing songs from Taylor Swift's re-recorded album "Taylor's Version" is interesting because it includes not only old songs, but also previously unreleased songs known as "From The Vault" tracks. These songs offer new material to analyze, providing a new dimension to analyze how the figurative language and the interpretation of the lyrics.

1.3. Limitation of the Problems

"From The Vault" songs by Taylor Swift were chosen by the writer as the subject of this study. Several limited problems exist in this research to make this study more focused and manageable, the writer limited the focus to 12 figurative languages which are metaphor, simile, personification, apostrophe, synecdoche, metonymy, symbol, allegory, paradox, overstatement, understatement, and irony. The writer chooses 3 songs from each re-recording album of Taylor Swift which are; *You All Over Me, Don't You, and Bye Bye Baby* from "Fearless Taylor's Version", *Nothing New, Message in A Bottle, and I Bet You Think About Me* from "Red Taylor's Version", *Castle Crumbling, Foolish One, and Timeless* from "Speak Now Taylor's Version", and *Say Don't Go, Suburban Legends, and Is It Over Now,* from "1989 Taylor's Version".

1.4. Research Questions

From the following identification of the problems, this research focuses on three main problems, which are:

1. What types of figurative language used in the song lyrics of Taylor Swift's selected "From The Vault" tracks?

2. What is the contextual meaning of figurative language that existed on Taylor Swift's selected "From The Vault" tracks?

1.5. Research Objectives

Based on the following research questions, this research focuses on three main objectives, which are:

1. To identify the types of figurative language used in the song lyrics of Taylor Swift's selected "From The Vault" tracks.

2. To analyze the contextual meaning of figurative language found in Taylor Swift's selected "From The Vault" tracks.

1.6. Significances of the Study

The result of this research was expected to give contributions and benefits in the future in the form of theoretical and practical.

1.6.1. Theoretically

The results of the study are theoretically supposed to enhance understanding of semantics, especially of the use of figurative language and its meaning in the song lyrics and the readers are able to identify the figurative language used in Taylor Swift's selected "From The Vault" tracks.

1.6.2. Practically

This research is expected to be helpful for the readers and future researchers, especially for students of English and Literature in doing research related to figurative language in semantic perspective. This research is also expected to be useful as teaching material to add variation of teaching english through song lyrics.