# Chapter II
# Literary Review

## 2.1  Previous Study

The research relevant to this study is a study conducted by Arini Hidayah in 2022 titled "Idioms Analysis in The Coldplay Songs Entitled Hymn For The Weekend, Amazing Day, A Head Full Of Dreams, And Birds" a thesis from Language and Latters Faculty, Surakarta University. This research focuses on the analysis of idioms and their meanings in several Coldplay songs, specifically "Hymn For The Weekend," "Amazing Day," "A Head Full Of Dreams," and "Birds." Utilizing F.R. Palmer's theory of idiom types and Geoffrey Leech's theory of idiom meanings, this qualitative descriptive study examines the lyrics of these songs to categorize the various idioms present. The data collection involved a document analysis approach, where all song lyrics were systematically classified into types and meanings of idioms. The study applies New Criticism as a framework for data analysis, and triangulation theory was used to validate the findings. The results revealed a total of 176 instances of idioms across the four songs, which were further categorized into different idiom meanings: Conceptual Meaning (1 instance), Connotative Meaning (22 instances), Stylistic Meaning (24 instances), Affective Meaning (84 instances), Reflective Meaning (15 instances), Collocative Meaning (1 instance), and Thematic Meaning (28 instances). Additionally, the idiom types were identified, including phrasal verbs (11 instances), prepositional verbs (10 instances), and partial idioms (8

instances). The dominance of Affective and Phrasal verb meanings highlights the speaker's inclination to express personal feelings and emotions, often through the use of verbs combined with adverbs.

Another relevant study conducted by Komang Gita Nirmala Dewi in 2023 titled "AN ANALYSIS OF IDIOM FOUND IN KATY PERRY'S SELECTED SONG LYRICS "ROAR AND DARK HORSE" a paper from English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Udayana University. The aim of this study is to identify and analyze the types and meanings of idioms present in song lyrics. Data collection involved searching for song lyrics online, listening to the songs, and transcribing the lyrics for further examination. The analysis process included carefully reading the lyrics multiple times to grasp their meanings and noting any idiomatic expressions encountered. The collected data were then analysed descriptively using a qualitative approach. This study is grounded in the idiom classification proposed by Palmer (1976) and employs Leech's (1981) theory of seven types of meaning to define the meanings of the idioms. The findings reveal the presence of three types of idioms in the song lyrics: phrasal verbs, prepositional verbs, and partial idioms. Additionally, the meanings of these idioms were categorized according to Leech's framework, identifying three specific types of meaning: connotative meaning, social meaning, and affective meaning. These meanings are evident in the song lyrics as they utilize expressions that cannot be understood by merely looking up their literal definitions, often employing references that enhance the dramatic effect or soften the tone of the lyrics.

Another relevant study conducted by Anisa Putri Jurniawan in 2024 titled "AN ANALYSIS OF IDIOMATIC EXPRESSION IN JOJI'S SONG LYRICS" a thesis from Tarbiyah and Teacher Training Faculty Raden Intan State Islamic University Lampung. This research focuses on examining idiomatic expressions found in the lyrics of Joji's songs. The primary objectives are to identify the various types of idiomatic expressions used and to analyze their functions within the lyrics. A descriptive qualitative approach is employed, utilizing song analysis based on the theories of McCarthy and O'Dell. The subjects of this study consist of the lyrics from Joji's songs. The analysis reveals a total of 28 instances of idiomatic expressions classified according to McCarthy and O'Dell's framework. Furthermore, the research identifies which types of idiomatic expressions are most prevalent in Joji's lyrics. Among the seven identified types, proverbs emerged as the most frequently used category. The data indicate varying percentages of usage for each idiomatic expression, with similes at 10.7%, binomials at 7.1%, proverbs at 39.2%, clichés at 14.2%, euphemisms at 10.7%, and fixed phrases at 17.8%. Proverbs, in particular, are prominently featured in Joji's song lyrics, likely due to their ability to convey advice or a sense of warmth.

All the previous studies mentioned above share similarities in both their research objectives and the type of objects studied. These studies aimed to identify different types of idioms and the meanings contained within them. Additionally, song lyrics were the main focus of analysis in all three studies. Two of the studies, conducted by Hidayah and Dewi, also used the same

theories: F.R. Palmer's theory of idiom types and Geoffrey Leech's theory of idiom meanings.

In their findings, the three previous studies all identified the most dominant types of idioms used in their respective research objects. They also concluded the effects of these dominant idioms on the objects studied. For example, Jurniawan's study found that the dominance of proverb idioms in Joji's song lyrics reflects meanings related to advice or a sense of warmth.

The three previous studies mentioned above were very helpful as references for this research. This is because this study also aims to identify the types of idioms and their meanings in several Kendrick Lamar songs. Additionally, this research uses the same theories: Palmer's theory of idiom types and Leech's theory of idiom meanings. By studying the previous research, the researcher could better understand how to apply these theories in this study.

## 2.2    Definition of Idioms

Before focusing on the types of idioms, which are the main focus of this study, it is important to first understand what idioms are. McCarthy and O'Dell (2010:6), stated that "idioms are fixed combinations of words whose meaning is often difficult to guess from the meaning of each individual words". In other words, it means that idioms cannot be understood by defining separate words of the whole phrase. Furthermore, Kumar (2023:1) in his publications explains that idioms and phrases are an important part of English and are often used to make sentences more interesting. He describes idioms

as groups of words that have a completely different meaning from the individual words. For example, the idiom "kill two birds with one stone" means achieving two goals with the same effort. Alwasilah (in Shehata et al, 2021:37) also explain that "idiom adalah grup kata-kata yang mempunyai makna tersendiri yang berbeda dari makna tiap kata dalam grup itu". This shows that idioms are unique in how their meanings and sentences are formed. Similar to Shehata explanation, Miller (2020) defines that idiomatic expressions are a way for speakers to express themselves using figurative, unclear, and sometimes ambiguous language. In other words, Idioms are used by speakers to express something with a figurative meaning.

From the explanations above, it can be concluded that idioms are phrases with meanings different from the literal meanings of their words. Idioms can be hard to understand or interpret if the reader or listener is not familiar with them. This is also evident from some idiom examples shared by Saparkhojayeva (2023:1-2), such as "be on your toes," which means to be ready or prepared, "butterflies in your stomach," meaning to feel nervous, and "feeling blue," which means feeling sad or depressed, among others.

Idioms are also very commonly found in song lyrics. It is important to remember that analyzing songs provides a unique way to express emotions through a medium. Idioms in songs are fascinating to analyze, as listeners may sometimes be confused by their meanings when listening to music. In songs, we hear words and phrases that convey specific messages, making it

intriguing to uncover the song's meaning by examining the artist's choice of word combinations.

This research aims to identify the types and meanings of idioms in selected songs by Kendrick Lamar. Idioms in Kendrick Lamar's lyrics are used to help him convey ideas through diverse expressions. The theory proposed by Palmer (1976) is used to identify the idioms, while Leech's (1981) theory helps to interpret their meanings. From various perspectives, it can be concluded that an idiom is a group of words forming a phrase with a meaning that is independent of the individual meanings of its components. While the overall meaning of the idiom is connected to its parts, it cannot be directly derived from them. Idioms are commonly used in both formal and informal communication, typically appearing as phrases rather than single words. The interpretation of idiomatic expressions may vary depending on the context, but their meanings are generally fixed and established within specific expressions.

### 2.2.1 Types of idioms

To identify the meanings of idioms in Kendrick Lamar's songs, it is first necessary to determine the types of idioms used in his lyrics. Identifying the types of idioms makes it easier to understand their meanings. Many experts have proposed classifications of idioms, including Shojaei (2012:4), who categorizes idioms based on Fernando theory into three types: pure idioms, semi-idioms, and literal idioms. Luca stated that pure idioms is "a type of conventionalized, non-literal

multiword expression". Furthermore, he emphasized that "Pure idioms are always non literal, however they may be either invariable or may have little variation. In addition, idioms are said to be opaque". Pure idioms always have meanings that are not literal, making them sometimes unclear. For example, "to spill the beans" means to accidentally reveal a secret and has nothing to do with actual beans. Another example is "speak of the devil," which means the person you were talking about has unexpectedly shown up, and it has nothing to do with the devil.

The second type of idiom is semi-idioms. "semi-idioms are said to have one or more literal constituents and one with non-literal sub sense… this type of idioms is considered partially opaque" (Shojaei 2012:4). For example, "foot the bill" means to pay, and the word "bill" literally refers to an amount of money owed for goods or services. The third type of idiom, is literal idioms. "literal idioms are considered to be transparent as they can be interpreted on the basis of their parts" (Shojaei 2012:4). For example, "in any event" means whatever happens or has happened, and "for certain" means definitely or without a doubt. The researcher did not use Shojaei's idiom classification based on Fernando theories to study the types of idioms in Kendrick Lamar's songs. This is because the classification is considered too general and not practical enough. The researcher believes this limitation could affect

the research results, as Kendrick Lamar's songs are complex literary works that require a more detailed and practical theory.

Unlike Shojaei's idiom classification based on Fernando theory, Sam Glucksberg categorizes idioms into four types: "transparent, semi-transparent, semi-opaque, and opaque" (Cited in Luca, 2023:1). These four types are the same as those three types proposed by Moon (1998:22-23). Moon explains that transparent idioms are:

"…those which are institutionalized but the image or vehicle of the metaphor is such that the hearer/reader can be expected to be able to decode it successfully by means of his/her real-world knowledge. Commoner examples include alarm bells ring, behind someone's back, breathe life into something, on (some)one's doorstep, and pack one's bags." (Moon 1998:22)

From this explanation, it can be concluded that transparent idioms are easy to interpret because their meaning is based on the literal understanding or real-world knowledge of the reader or listener. These idioms connect closely to the literal or basic meaning of the phrase. The second type of idiom is semi-transparent, which is an idiom that have a metaphorical meaning that can't be fully understood from the usual meanings of the words. Moon (1998:22) explains that "Semi-transparent metaphors require some specialist knowledge in order to be decoded successfully. Not all speakers of a language may understand the reference or be able to make the present in the conventionalized

idiomatic meaning." Moon gave examples on semi-transparency idiom as explained:

"To expand on semi-transparency: grasp the nettle means something like 'tackle something difficult with determination and without delay' and with hindsight the metaphor in the string is relatively straightforward, but someone not knowing the expression might as easily interpret the metaphor as 'do something foolish which will have unpleasant consequences'" (Moon 1998:22)

Lastly, Moon explains the definition of opaque idioms as explained:

"…are those where compositional decoding and interpretation of the image are practically or completely impossible without knowledge of the historical origins of the expression. Examples include bite the bullet, kick the bucket, over the moon, red herring, and shoot the breeze." (Moon 1998:2)

In summary, opaque idioms are a complex type of idiom because understanding their meaning requires knowledge of their historical origins. Similar to Shojaei's idiom classification, the writer feels that Moon's classifications are still too general and not practical enough to analyze Kendrick Lamar's song lyrics. This is because, according to the writer, both classifications are still based on assumptions about the words in the idioms, rather than a practical formula that can be applied.

Logan explains that many English idioms are adverbial phrases made by combining a preposition with a noun or adjective. Examples include "at hand," "at length," "at leisure," "by fits," and "of course" (Cited in Luca, 2023:1). Logan theory is similar to F.R Palmer theory in his classification of idioms types. Each language has its unique idiomatic expressions used to convey meaning through words and phrases. While idioms exist in all languages, they are particularly prevalent in English due to its vast and diverse vocabulary. According to F.R. Palmer in his book Semantics: A New Outline (1976), idioms are classified into three main types.

1. **Phrasal verb**

The phrasal verb is the source of the verb phrasal. The term "phrasal verb" is frequently used to refer to idioms in English, and they are typically referred to as such. It is made up of both verbal and adverbial expressions (Palmer,1976:99). Certain combinations of nouns, verbs, and adverbs have meanings that cannot be derived from their individual components.

- A phrasal verb in idioms is a type of expression formed by combining a verb with one or more particles, such as adverbs (up, down, off, out) or prepositions (on, in, at, for). The meaning of the resulting phrase is often not directly related to the literal meanings of the verb or the particle but instead has a figurative or idiomatic meaning.

- For example: "Give up": The literal meaning might suggest physically handing something over, but idiomatically, it means to surrender or stop trying. "Break down": Literally, it might mean to disassemble something, but idiomatically, it means to stop working or to become emotionally overwhelmed.

- The meanings of these combinations cannot be predicted from the individual meanings of the verbs and other words.

2.  **Prepositional Verb**

Prepositional Verb is a phrase consisting of a main verb combined with a preposition where the meaning is not literal but idiomatic.

- This includes combinations of verbs with nouns or pronouns. For example: "look after," "go for," "put up with."

- A prepositional verb idiom is a fixed expression consisting of a verb followed by a preposition where the meaning is idiomatic rather than derived from the individual words, and the preposition cannot be omitted without altering the meaning.

- These combinations of words often cannot be understood simply by analyzing the literal meanings of the individual

words they contain. Instead, their true meaning is derived from the context in which they are used.

3. **Partial Idiom**

Partial idiom is an idiom in which one of the words has a typical meaning and the other has a special meaning to the sequence. In other words, partial idioms combine both figurative and literal components, making their overall meaning partially predictable.

- For example: "Run a business" (the word 'run' in this context is figurative and the word 'a business' is literal. Together the sentence meaning is to manage or operate a business), "Save face" (the word 'save' is literal sense of preserving something, but 'face' is used figuratively to mean reputation or dignity')

Palmer also adds that idioms often have a unique collocation and meanings that cannot be predicted from the individual words. A classic example is "kick the bucket," which means 'to die,' although its literal meaning is 'to hit the bucket.' Thus, F.R. Palmer emphasizes the importance of understanding that idioms carry meanings beyond the sum of individual words, relying instead on context and the specific word order within the phrase. Although Palmer's theory also has some ambiguity in analyzing idiom types, especially partial idioms that use figurative words, the writer believes it is more practical compared to

the classifications by Shojaei, Glucksberg, and Moon. Thus, the writer implements Palmer theory to find idioms in selected Kendrick Lamar's songs.

### 2.2.2 Idioms Meaning

After identifying the types of idioms used in selected songs by Kendrick Lamar, the next step is to classify and determine the meanings of those idioms. In the study of linguistics the subject that is focuses on meaning in language is called semantics.

"Semantics is the study of meaning in language… In linguistics, semantics is the subfield that studies meaning. Semantics can address meaning at the levels of words, phrases, sentences, or larger units of discourse." (Betti et al, 2021:1)

From the explanation above, semantics can be defined as a branch of linguistics that focuses on analyzing words or sentences in a language to uncover their meaning. Meaning plays a key role in this research since one of its goals is to interpret the meaning of the identified idioms. To uncover meaning, it is essential first to classify the types of meanings that can be found.

Betti (2021:2) explains that meaning is linked to connotation. It refers to the associations a word creates, shaped by the images or ideas its users connect to it. For example, "winter" might evoke thoughts of "snow." However, for someone living in the Amazon, "winter" could mean a season that is still wet and hot, losing its original sense of snow

and cold. Meaning can also be shaped by cultural associations linked to a word or sentence. This aligns with Leech's theory of the seven types of meaning, used in this study, particularly in the classification of connotative meaning explained below.

Many linguists classify meaning in the study of semantics. One of them, Jaszczolt (2016:101-108), discusses a concept called "default semantics." This theory suggests that meaning in language interactions is highly influenced by context. It argues that meaning in discourse goes beyond just "what is said" and "what is implied." The theory highlights how meaning is dynamic and depends on factors like importance and mental plausibility, combining information from different sources, such as practical use and grammar.

Jaszczolt's explanation of default meaning aligns with some of Leech's meaning classifications. This is because Leech's theory also categorizes meaning not just based on what is said, but also on what is implied. For example, connotative meaning explores emotional and cultural implications, while social meaning looks at the social hierarchy involved in the meaning of a sentence. Leech's types of meaning are explained in more detail below.

To analyze the meanings in the idioms found in the 5 chosen songs by Kendrick Lamar, this study uses Leech's 7 types of meaning theory. This is because the author believes the theory is comprehensive and has broad classifications, allowing for a thorough interpretation of

the meanings in the songs. In his book "Semantics: The Study of Meaning" (1981:9-19), Leech provides one of the most detailed classifications of "meaning" from a semantic perspective. His theory can also help in understanding the meaning of idioms in Kendrick Lamar's songs. Leech divides meaning into seven types: conceptual meaning, connotative meaning, social meaning, affective meaning, reflected meaning, collocative meaning, and thematic meaning. Here is a more detailed explanation of each classification according to Leech (1981:9-19):

1. **Conceptual Meaning**

   "Conceptual meaning sometimes called denotative or cognitive meaning is widely assumed to be the central factor in linguistic communication…the meaning of the word woman could be specified as +HUMAN, -MALE, +ADULT, as distinct from, say, boy, which could be defined +HUMAN, +MALE, -ADULT." (Leech, 1981:10)

   According to that explanation, it can be concluded that conceptual meaning refers to the basic dictionary definition of a word and the ideas it represents. It is usually stable and consistent across different situations. However, idioms often go beyond their literal meanings, though they are still somewhat related to the literal interpretation. For example, the idiom "hit the nail on the head" literally means hitting a nail perfectly with a hammer,

which requires precision. Figuratively, it means saying or doing something exactly right. The literal meaning helps explain the idea of precision in the figurative sense.

2. **Connotative Meaning**

"Connotative meaning is the communicative value an expression has by virtue of what it refers to, over and above its purely conceptual content…connotative meaning can embrace the 'putative properties' of the referent, due to the viewpoint adopted by an individual, or a group of people or a whole society." (Leech, 1981:12)

From the above explanation, it can be concluded that connotative meaning is the extra emotion, idea, cultural, or social association a word carries beyond its basic meaning. These feelings can change depending on the person or culture and can be good, bad, or neutral. For example, the idiom "feeling blue" is connected to feeling sad or depressed.

3. **Social Meaning**

"Social meaning is that which a piece of language conveys about the social circumstances of its use…we recognize some words or pronunciations as being dialectal, as telling us something of the geographical or social origin of the speaker; other features of language tell us something of the social relationship…" (Leech 1981:14)

It can be concluded that social meaning involves how language shows social relationships, roles, and power dynamics. It reflects the norms, attitudes, and hierarchies in society. In simple terms, this aspect of meaning explains how an idiom reveals the speaker's social setting, including formality, dialect, or cultural background. For example, the idiom "what's up?" has social meaning because it's used in certain social situations. It's an informal greeting typically said between friends or people of the same age.

4. **Affective Meaning**

"…it is only a small step to the consideration of how language reflects the personal feelings of the speaker…affective meaning as this sort of meaning can be called, is often explicitly conveyed through the conceptual or connotative content of the word used." (Leech, 1981:15)

It can be concluded that affective meaning is about the emotions or attitudes that words and phrases express. It includes the feelings or emotional tone that words can carry. This meaning focuses on the emotional reaction an idiom can create. For example, the idiom "break a leg" is used to wish someone good luck or success, even though its literal meaning suggests something harmful.

## 5. Reflected Meaning

"Reflected meaning is the meaning which arises in case of multiple conceptual meaning, when one sense of word forms part of our response to another sense. On hearing, in a church service, the synonymous expressions the comforter and the holy ghost, both referring to the third person of the trinity, I find my reactions to these terms conditioned by everyday non-religious meanings of comfort and ghost." (Leech, 1981:16)

It can be concluded that reflected meaning is the type of meaning that comes from how a word or phrase is used in a specific context, showing the speaker's personal feelings, attitudes, or beliefs. It is the implied meaning based on the situation. This meaning often includes extra associations or secondary meanings that the words in an idiom bring out. The idiom "She's a real angel" has reflected meaning because it goes beyond the literal idea of an angel. Depending on the situation, it shows the speaker's personal feelings or views. When used about someone, it suggests the speaker thinks the person is kind, caring, or helpful, reflecting their positive emotions. In this case, "angel" doesn't refer to a real angel, but is used to express admiration for the person.

6. **Collocative Meaning**

"Collocative meaning consists of the associations a word acquires on account of the meanings of words which tend to occurs in its environment." (Leech, 1981:17)

Collocative meaning is about how certain words often appear together in specific patterns, giving extra meaning beyond their individual definitions. In other words, it comes from common word pairings in idioms. For example, "a piece of cake" means something is easy to do, and the combination of these words suggests simplicity or ease.

7. **Thematic Meaning**

"…thematic meaning, or what is communicated by the way in which a speaker or writer organizes the message, in terms of ordering, focus, and emphasis." (Leech, 1981:19)

It can be concluded that thematic meaning is about how words and parts of a sentence are organized to highlight the main idea. It focuses on how the structure and word choices in an idiom draw attention to specific parts of its meaning. The idiom "Time is money" has thematic meaning because its structure highlights the idea that time is as valuable as money. The arrangement of words centres on the main idea: using time wisely. By linking "time" and "money," the idiom emphasizes how both are equally valuable.

In conclusion, Leech's theory on the 7 types of meaning, as outlined in his book "Semantics: The Study of Meaning", offers a comprehensive and broad classification of meaning types. This characteristic makes the theory highly suitable for analyzing meanings within idioms, as its categorization is objective and thorough. In his theory, Leech divides meaning into seven types: conceptual meaning, connotative meaning, social meaning, affective meaning, reflected meaning, collocative meaning, and thematic meaning. In short, all the types of meaning proposed by Leech cover a wide range of aspects, including social, cultural, emotional, word patterns, and basic sentence definitions/meanings.

## 2.3   Five Chosen Kendrick Lamar Songs

"Like That" released on march 26, 2024, by Future and Metro Boomin featuring Kendrick Lamar, serves as a catalyst for Kendrick's ongoing feud with Drake. In this track, Kendrick contributes just one verse, yet it carries significant weight as he emphasizes his preparedness for conflict and cautions listeners against underestimating his skills. Showcasing his lyrical brilliance, Kendrick employs intricate wordplay and makes references to other rap artists, further solidifying his position in the competitive landscape of hip-hop.

"Euphoria," released on April 30, 2024, is characterized by its rich use of idiom phrases and layered meanings. The song has a total duration of 6 minutes and 24 seconds. In these 6 minutes, there are over 1300 words, and

rarely is any lyric repeated. "Euphoria" serves as a direct commentary on Lamar's dispute with Drake, using clever wordplay to critique his rival. The song's intricate lyricism and emotional depth make it a key piece in understanding the broader context of Lamar's artistic narrative during this period.

"6:16 in LA," released on May 3, 2024, is a multi-faceted critique designed to undermine Drake's public persona and suggest the downfall of his career. By contrasting their lifestyles, accusing Drake of inauthenticity, and planting seeds of paranoia, Kendrick presents himself as the more morally upright artist in a struggle for survival in the rap industry.

Kendrick starts by subtly highlighting the differences between his own success and Drake's focus on materialism and flashy displays. He emphasizes his own spiritual grounding and introspection, positioning himself as the more morally balanced artist while hinting at Drake's possible hypocrisy. These themes are threaded throughout Kendrick's verses as he intensifies his critique by questioning Drake's credibility within the hip-hop music genre, dependence on internet manipulation, and the potential for betrayal within Drake's inner circle.

"Meet the Graham" released on May 3, 2024, adds a new layer to his ongoing lyrical feud with Drake. In this song, Lamar doesn't just take aim at Drake; he extends his focus to the rapper's entire family. He addresses Drake's son, Adonis, with a blend of empathy and critique, lamenting the lack of paternal guidance and positioning himself as a potential mentor. Lamar then

turns his attention to Drake's parents, Sandra and Dennis, delivering pointed criticisms. He accuses Dennis of neglecting his parental responsibilities and suggests that Sandra has enabled Drake's harmful behaviors. Throughout the song, Lamar confronts what he perceives as Drake's hypocrisy and deceit, alleging that the rapper has fabricated parts of his identity and lied about his personal life. Lamar asserts that Drake's relentless pursuit of fame and validation has led him to compromise his morals and authenticity, ultimately encouraging him to face his inner struggles and work towards self-improvement.

"Not Like Us," released on May 4, 2024, ends the thread of Lamar's lyrical confrontation with Drake. The song is complex and intense. On one level, it's an extension of his fierce lyrical feud with Drake, intensifying with startling allegations of pedophilia and taking aim at Drake's close associates. But the track also functions as a broader criticism of Drake's perceived cultural appropriation of West Coast and Atlanta hip-hop tradition. Lamar casts himself as the guardian of hip-hop's legacy, challenging what he views as Drake's inauthenticity and exploitation of Black music and culture for commercial profit.