Chapter II
Studies of Semantics,
Figurative Language and Song Lyrics

This chapter discusses theories from various experts related to this research as supporting references. It consists of four sections: Semantics, Figurative Language, *What Do You Really Know?* by Reality Club, and Previous Studies.

2.1 Semantics

Semantics is a branch of linguistics that focuses on the meaning of words or sentences in a language. According to Lyons (1995:12), linguistic semantics is generally concerned with the systematic study of meaning and how it is encoded in the natural languages. He also states that the purpose of semantics is to explain the nature and structure of a language's meaning system. Semantic studies include the description of actual meaning relationships in language and the explanation of the abstract conceptual system behind the language. These two dimensions complement each other in understanding the phenomenon of language meaning.

Leech (1981:9-23), emphasizes the role of context in shaping and understanding the meaning of language. introduces various concepts and methods of semantic analysis that help readers understand how meaning is formed and transferred in language. describes semantics as the study of how meaning is produced, transferred, and understood in the context of language. "Semantics is a part or branch of linguistics that studies the relationship between linguistic signs and the things they signify. What is meant by linguistic signs here are words, phrases, sentences, discourse, or other

language symbols. The things that are marked are referents, concepts, ideas, thoughts, feelings, or others that arise because of these language symbols." (Chaer, 2009:2).

According to the opinions of these experts, semantics is the study of meaning in language, which entails examining the creation, interpretation, and application of meaning. The larger linguistic structure and the context in which a language is used are linked to the meaning and the word itself. Experts also stress how crucial it is to understand language meaning by taking syntactic and contextual factors into account. Additionally, a major area of interest in contemporary semantic studies is the function of human cognitive processes in language production and comprehension.

2.2 Figurative Language

Figurative language refers to the use of words or sentences that have a meaning different from their literal interpretation. According to Perrine (in khairunnisa and iskandar et al., 2022:51) Figurative language adds entertainment, emotional depth, and imagination to literary works, making them more engaging. Figurative language enhances the attractiveness of a literary work, shortens the author's narrative, and creates a specific sensation or atmosphere.

Kennedy (2019:732), explained that Figurative Language is a language that employs figurative speech. A figurative speech expresses something different than the literal meaning of a word. A figure of speech is when a speaker or writer deviates from the norm to add interest or emphasis.

This study relied on X.J. Kennedy's theory of figurative language. According to this, there are eight varieties of figurative language, including metaphor, irony, simile, personification, hyperbole, allusion, metonymy, and symbols.

In summary, Figurative language refers to a language style that expresses, describes, or represents nonliterally by means of metaphor, comparison, or figurative meaning. The intent is to make the reader feel a certain way while also enhancing the language and expressing ideas in a beautiful way. In general, the idea behind figurative language is to use meaning rather than literal meaning for artistic effect or to sway the reader. In semantic and linguistic studies, an understanding of figurative language is crucial, particularly with regard to language style.

2.2.1 Types of Figurative Language

According to Kennedy (2019:732-747), which states that there are eight types of figurative language such as metaphor, simile, personification, hyperbole, Irony, allusion, metonymy, and symbol. Here are the definitions and examples.

1.   Metaphor

Metaphor is a type of figurative language that describes something in a way that differs from reality. In figurative language theory, there are several types of figurative language. According to Kennedy (2019:734), a metaphor is a figure of speech that describes one thing as if it were something else, even though, in a literal sense, it is not. Unlike similes, metaphors do

not use connecting words like "like" or "as." They rely on the clear similarity or recognized relationship between two concepts to make sense. In essence, a metaphor is a direct comparison that highlights shared characteristics between the subject and the object being compared. This allows the writer to create a more vivid or impactful connection between the two. According to Tarigan (2009:15), metaphor is a form of language idiom that compares a certain object or thing directly with another object or thing to emphasize the similarity of characteristics between the two. Metaphors are usually made based on similarities in function, nature, characteristics, or appearance. For example, a sleeping island refers to a person who is difficult to wake up.

According to George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in the book "Metaphors We Live By" (1980:4), metaphors are not just a style of language, but a fundamental principle of human thinking and reasoning. Metaphors allow us to understand one concept in terms of another, different concept. Many abstract concepts that we understand daily are based on metaphors, such as the understanding of time using the terminology of space.

The majority of metaphors come from our everyday physical experience of the body. Thus, metaphor is an important cognitive principle of how the brain understands abstract concepts by relating them to concrete things through analogies

and comparisons. According to Keraf (2009:139), metaphor is the most important type of majas that equates one thing directly with another based on a certain similarity. This metaphor contains a direct comparison between one thing and another.

Metaphors are creative and imaginative ways to compare one thing directly to another. Metaphors are typically created by making comparisons between two objects that are being compared in terms of their nature, functions, qualities, or looks. Metaphors are comparisons between two objects that are clear and straightforward. Some examples of metaphors are "sleeping island" for someone hard to wake up, "tongues of fire" to describe a burning fire, and "lion of the field" for someone brave in the field. To creatively compare an object or idea to another based on similar features, metaphor is a crucial comparative device in language and literature.

2. **Simile**

A simile is a comparison between two things that are very different from each other. According to Kennedy (2019:734), a simile is a comparison of two things using a connective, such as "like," "as," or "resembles." A simile is a type of figurative language used to explain the parallels between two things. Objects (in terms of shape, color, and other characteristics). Example of a simile:

1. Her eyes shone like stars in the clear night sky. The girl's eyes sparkled like stars in the clear night sky. (The girl's eyes are compared directly to stars using the word like)

2. The howling wind screams like a frightened child. The howling wind screams like a frightened child. (The wind is compared to a child using the word like)

3. His love for me flows as constantly as river currents winding their way to the sea. His love for me flows as constantly as river currents winding their way to the sea. (The man's love is compared to river currents using the word as)

   With the examples of similes above, it can be seen that similes make a direct comparison between two things by using certain comparative words to achieve certain effects, such as clarifying the picture, strengthening the impression, and enriching the reader's imagination.

3. **Personification**

   Personification is a type of figurative language that gives human qualities to non-human things. Kennedy (2019:741), defined Personification as a figure of speech that humanizes a thing, animal, or abstract phrase, such as truth or nature. The writers employ personification to create vivid descriptions of conditions or events. Personification allows readers to better

understand what the writer is saying because it reflects the human perspective more vividly. Proper use of personification can enhance the appeal of written works, particularly novels. Some examples of personification:

1. The trees danced gracefully with the wind. (Trees are described as being able to dance like humans)

2. The sun smiled at me this morning. (The sun is described as being able to smile like a human)

3. The rain knocked violently on the tin roof all night. (The rain is described as knocking like a human)

From these examples of personification, it can be seen that this style of language describes natural and inanimate objects have human behaviour or traits. Personification aims to dramatize, give life to descriptions, and enhance the reader's imagination.

4. Hyperbole

Hyperbole is a type of figurative language used to exaggerate something. Kennedy (2019:742), defined hyperbole as the use of exaggerated statements to emphasize a point. It can be either ridiculous or entertaining. Hyperbole can be utilized in fiction to bring a character to life and convey meaning. Hyperbole is an exaggerated figure of speech used to emphasize a point or provide a vivid description. Some examples of hyperbole:

1. I was so tired that I almost slept for a year. (Obviously, it's impossible to sleep for a year, this statement exaggerates the fatigue tremendously)

2. She cried an ocean when her cat died. (Crying as much as an ocean is of course impossible, this is hyperbole to exaggerate her grief)

3. I've told you a million times to clean your room. (Of course, it's unrealistic to say it a million times, but this is hyperbole to emphasize the message to always clean)

In conclusion, hyperbole is a figurative language style that deliberately exaggerates a statement or description to make it sound bombastic and exaggerated. Its purpose is to dramatize, emphasize meaning, and strengthen the impression on the reader.

5. **Irony**

Irony is a type of figurative language used to describe something in a way that contrasts with reality. According to Kennedy and Gioia (2019:743), Irony is when someone says something one way but means something quite another, or when insults are whispered beneath the surface of the language. Irony can be employed to contradict, disguise, or state a contradiction about the facts. Declare, for instance, the genuine meaning's opposite meaning and the difference between the context that is

being showed and the reality that underlies it. Some examples of Irony:

1. Oh I forgot to bring my umbrella on this sunny day! (It rained heavily a little while later). This is ironic because there was heavy rain contrary to the expectation of a sunny day.

2. Congratulations! I heard you got fired from your job! (The congratulations are ironic and contradictory because the person was fired).

3. Your presentation was so clear I couldn't understand a word you said. (Complimenting the clarity of the presentation is ironic because the speaker didn't understand it at all. The meaning is contradictory).

This leads to the conclusion that irony is a figure-speaking technique that skillfully creates contradictions, tensions, and a lack of agreement between objective reality and reader or viewer perspectives.

6. Allusion

Allusion is a type of figurative language that refers to something well-known or popular. Kennedy (2019:743) Allusion is a kind of metaphorical language in which a well-known person, place, or historical event is alluded to, either directly or indirectly. Kennedy defined allusion as metaphorical language that subtly

conveys information about a person or even something that people have shared knowledge of. For an example:

1. "She's got a Mona Lisa smile." This allusion alludes to the well-known Leonardo da Vinci artwork that is renowned for its mysterious subject's look. It implies that a person is secretive, understated, or captivating when they grin.

2. "He's carrying the weight of the world on his shoulders." This is a reference to the Greek Titan Atlas, who was given the task of supporting the sky (often represented as the globe). It is employed to characterize someone who is under a lot of stress or pressure.

3. "This place is like a Garden of Eden." The biblical paradise mentioned in the Book of Genesis is the subject of this metaphor. It frequently evokes feelings of serenity and purity and portrays the image of an ideal, lovely, or pristine location.

7. Metonym

Metonymy is a type of figurative language that replaces something with another related or similar thing. Kennedy (2019:742), one type of figurative language known as metonymy involves replacing one thing's name with another that is closely connected to it. Some examples of metonym:

1. "The White House announced new policies today." In this context, "The White House" refers to the administration or the President.

2. "The crown will decide the country's fate." The monarchy or the governing authority is referred to as "the crown".

3. "Wall Street is reacting negatively to the news." "Wall Street" is a symbol for the financial sector or markets.

Metonymy is a great linguistic tool that lets writers and speaker express ideas more effectively and vividly by replacing one term with another that is closely related to it. Metonymy frequently depends on widely understood cultural and contextual links, as demonstrated by the examples given, allowing the substitution to have a deeper or more expansive meaning.

Metonymy makes language more than just a tool for communication; it becomes an instrument that may reshape perceptions, evoke feelings, and make difficult concepts understandable and powerful. In addition to improving communication effectiveness, this use of figurative language also raises the artistic and persuasive aspects of writing and speaking.

8. Symbol

A symbol is a type of figurative language used to represent something with a deeper meaning. Wolosky (in Samira and Daud et al., 2022:70) says that something beyond and beyond words is

also supposed to be represented by the symbol. Some examples of symbol:

1. The Rose as a Love Symbol: A rose represents love, passion, and romance, especially a red one. Emotional intensity is frequently correlated with the beauty and scent of a thing. Because of its thorns, a rose can also represent complexity or dualism, implying that although love is lovely, it can also inflict suffering.

2. The Light as a Symbol of Knowledge and Truth: Light is frequently associated with enlightenment, knowledge, purity, and truth. It is commonly used in opposition to darkness, which stands for depravity, ignorance, or confusion. Phrases such as "seeing the light" or "bringing something to light," for instance, allude to knowing or disclosing the truth.

3. The Tree as a Growth and Life Symbol: Trees stand for vitality, development, sturdiness, and strength. They frequently serve as symbols for the passing of time, the resilience in the face of hardship, and the interconnection of all living things in literature and art. Ancestry and heritage, for instance, are represented via a "family tree."

In conclusion symbolism in figurative language, writers and speakers can make abstract and difficult concepts more

approachable and relevant. Symbols, as opposed to literal phrases, have the power to arouse feelings, stimulate cognition, and establish a strong subconscious connection with the viewer. Every symbol has a multitude of connotations that might vary depending on the cultural setting, the individual's experiences, and the subtleties of the story.

2.3   *What Do You Really Know?* by Reality Club

Reality Club is an indie-rock band from Jakarta, Indonesia. The band consists of four members: Faiz Novascotia Saripudin (vocals and guitar), Fathia Izzati (vocals and keyboard), Nugi Wicaksono (bass), and Era Patigo (drums). They began their journey in 2016 with their debut song "Never Get Better". A year later, in 2017, they released their first album, named after their debut song (lazone.id, 2023:1).

Throughout their career, they have received numerous prestigious awards. Their most recent achievements came in 2023, when they won Best Alternative Album and Best Alternative Group at the AMI (Anugerah Musik Indonesia) Awards (Kristianti, 2023:1). Besides receiving many awards, Reality Club has gained international recognition as an indie band from Indonesia. In 2019, they began their international career with performances in Tokyo and Singapore (Agne, 2024:1). In 2023, they embarked on an Asia tour, performing in countries such as Singapore, Thailand, Taiwan, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines. In 2024, they toured North America, visiting

cities including San Francisco, Los Angeles, Dallas, Austin, Chicago, Toronto, and concluding in Brooklyn (Kristianti, 2023:1).

Reality Club's lyrics stand out for their beautiful language, vivid imagery, and fascinating themes. They often incorporate poetic lyrics rich in figurative language. In an interview, Faiz (the band's guitarist and vocalist) shared their unique approach to songwriting, explaining that they use what they call a "moodboard" to create their lyrics. He mentioned:

"Kami memasukkan keywords, foto, cuplikan film hingga warna tertentu ke dalamnya setelah kami memilih tema dan mood lagunya," (Zulmi, 2024:1)

Based on Faiz's statement, Reality Club uses a detailed and creative process to write their song lyrics. They draw inspiration from photos, movie scenes, and specific colors, giving their lyrics a rich visual quality influenced by different types of visual art. Their lyrics also contain deep storytelling elements. This makes analyzing and interpreting their lyrics essential for helping listeners and readers better understand the messages in their songs.

In 2019, Reality Club went on a tour to Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia after releasing their second album, "What Do You Really Know?". The album consists of 11 tracks: Prologue, S.S.R, All Along Things Were Wrong, Caught in a Trap, The Rush, Vita o Morte, Telenovia, On My Own Again, Alexandra, A Sorrowful Reunion, and 2112.

This album reveals a darker side of Reality Club, moving away from their previous cheerful tone. It explores themes of growing up, the

experiences that shape us, and the light and dark sides of life. It reflects not just feelings of loss, anger, and frustration but also acceptance, comfort, and wisdom (Nabila, 2019:1). One of the lyrics from "2112" captures this sentiment:

"We were young and we were old

Life was warm then life was cold

It gets harder, yes you'll see

But were we ever meant to be?"

These lines talk about the journey of life, from youth to old age, highlighting the duality of life's warmth and coldness and its increasing challenges. According to ultimagz.com, the band explained in an official statement that this album challenges listeners' perceptions and perspectives on how life unfolds (Pinandita, 2019:1).

2.4 Previous Study

Some past studies of figurative language are relevant to song and music. A review of past research should be conducted to prevent using the same corpus and explanation. Other similar studies that the writer has read are listed below:

No	Researcher Name	Title	Findings
1	Eka Nur Latifah (2017)	Metaphor in Eisblume's Unter Dem Eis Song Album	The purpose of this study is to (1) identify the different kinds of metaphors found in Eisblume's song album Unter dem Eis and (2) explain the significance of metaphorical expressions found in the song album. Descriptive qualitative research is what this study is. The songs

			on Eisblume's Unter dem Eis album serve as the research's primary source. In the song album Unter dem Eis by Eisblume, the research findings revealed that: (1) there are four different types of metaphors: anthropomorphic metaphors (24 data), synesthetic metaphors (6 data), abstracting metaphors 22 (45 data), and animal metaphors (3 data); and (2) each of the four types of metaphors has a different meaning in metaphorical expressions (78 data).
2	Yosie Andrean (2019)	Metaphor Analysis in Claris Song Lyrics Semantic Review	The purpose of this study is to perform a semantic analysis of the metaphors found in Claris's song lyrics. Descriptive qualitative research is what this study is. The listening method, combined with notetaking and free-listening methods, is the approach utilized to collect data. According to the findings of the research on metaphors in ClariS songs, there were only three different kinds of metaphors: (1) eleven data that were abstract to concrete, (2) six data that were synesthesia, and (3) three data that were anthropomorphic.
3	Febiantika Nirmala (2022)	Metaphors in Nadin Amizah's Song Lyrics on the "Selamat Ulang Tahun" Album and its Relevance to Grade X Poetry Writing Learning	This research aims to describe the types and functions of metaphors in Nadin Amizah's song lyrics in the album "Selamat Ulang Tahun" and its relevance to the learning of poetry in class X SMA / equivalent. Descriptive research is the kind that is being used. Based on the analysis of metaphors found in the lyrics of Nadin Amizah's album Selamat Ulang Tahun, the writer discovered 51 different types of metaphor data. 23 Twelve anthropomorphic metaphor types, one animal metaphor type, thirtythree abstracting metaphor types, and five synesthetic metaphor types make up the data. Furthermore, twenty metaphor function data were discovered, comprising seven emotive metaphor function data, four referential function data, three poetic function data, and six phatic function data.

4	Sriwahyuni S.Mane (2016)	Metaphor in The Song Lyrics by Johnny Cash (A Semantic Analysis)	The study attempt to identify kinds of metaphor and to analyze the meaning of metaphors in the song lyrics. The descriptive method was employed in this study. The author employs the metaphor conceptual theory proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) to categorize the various types of metaphors while gathering data. The author then used Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) theory to analyze the meaning to identify the source and target. The study's findings indicate that there are a total of 17 ontological metaphors, 12 orientational metaphors, and 15 structural metaphors in the sample.
5	Zunaik Oktavia (2015)	Metaphors in Selected Lyrics of Maher Zain Songs	The writer chooses the thesis about metaphors in selected lyrics of Maher Zain's song. The thesis's problem statement identifies two issues. The meaning of each metaphor used 24 in the chosen lyrics songs is stated in the second statement, which follows the first one about the types of metaphors used in the songs. The descriptive qualitative method is being used by the writer. The author discovered three different kinds of metaphors: ontological, conceptual, and orientational metaphors, all of which are present in Maher Zain's song. These kinds of metaphors convey the idea that the speaker genuinely wishes to make his mother happy. Orientational metaphor: after reading the Quran, he will always remember Allah in his heart.