

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an introduction to the background of the study, which highlights the importance of studying conceptual metaphors in song lyrics as a way to understand how language conveys complex human experiences. It also provides the research questions, objectives of the study, and significance of the study, as well as a brief explanation of the scope and limitation, also the operational definitions of the study. This chapter aims to develop a clear framework for analyzing the use of conceptual metaphors in selected song lyrics from ONEWE.

A. Background of the Study

Music, as an auditory art form, often employs lyrics to communicate emotions and cultural narratives. Song lyrics in particular, function as expressive linguistic devices that reflect personal and societal experiences. Among various figurative tools, metaphor stands out as a powerful means to convey abstract feelings, as stated by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). According to Sinaga et al. (2024), songs are usually associated with vocals musical instruments, or a combination of both, used to convey a message, expression, or emotion. They can also have various forms and styles depending on the environment and surroundings. Songs can also appear in different languages, allowing messages and emotions to be transmitted across cultural and linguistic boundaries. A fair amount of

song lyrics uses figurative words, especially using metaphors. Usually, songwriters use metaphors to show the emotions that the songwriters want to deliver but not explicitly, this can be done so that listeners can interpret song lyrics with many meanings and perspectives. Metaphors are not only used to show emotions through song lyrics, it also used to embellish songs through figurative language with words that are not the actual meaning.

Song lyrics often use metaphors to deliver meaning and feelings to the listener. Usually, song lyrics use light and simple metaphors, or they can use poetic metaphors and beautiful language. Studying the metaphors used in song lyrics can make listeners understand the meaning of the song, the feelings, and the mood that the researcher wants to deliver can reach the listeners. Charoenpong (2023) states that songs serve as a popular medium for delivering ideas, emotions, and personal expressions. Within song lyrics, there is a platform for creators to imbue their ideas and emotions into their compositions. In addition, Zahria & Wibowo (2024) stated that, in Niki Zefanya's lyric sample, metaphors and hyperbole show the profound aspects of meaning creation while evoking the listener's emotional engagement. This supports the finding that many song lyrics use figurative language, especially metaphors, as a way to convey emotions indirectly, giving listeners space to interpret the lyrics from various perspectives. Yusri and Taqdir (2024) also state that in YOASOBI's songs also show that metaphors consistently create strong visual imagery, connecting abstract concepts with concrete objects and enhancing the

emotional power of the lyrics. Therefore, the purpose of the metaphors used in the song lyrics to make the listeners feel the situation portrayed can be fulfilled. Although many previous studies have analyzed metaphors used in literature as well as speech, but there are still few that focus on the use of metaphors in contemporary song lyrics.

ONEWE's songs *Aurora* and *Regulus* have lyrics that use a lot of metaphors which is the main focus of this study. First, the song titled *Aurora* is a song that has a title that comes from the natural phenomenon of Aurora Borealis. The song *Aurora* uses many metaphors with celestial objects that express feelings about love, belonging, and hope. Secondly, *Regulus* is a song named after one of the constellations where Regulus itself is the brightest star in the Leo constellation. In addition, *Regulus* is also taken from the Latin version of a novel entitled *Le Petit Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry which inspired the songwriter in writing the song *Regulus*. In the lyrics of the song *Regulus* uses a lot of metaphors that tells about losing the other half. On ONEWE's profile on one of popular music streaming application, Spotify, until December 2024, *Regulus* is the most listened song by more than 8 million listeners and *Regulus* with more than 4 million listeners. And based on the number of views of the music video on ONEWE's YouTube channel, until December 2024, *Regulus* has 5.1 million views and *Aurora* with 2.8 million views. In addition to its popularity, the song also has lyrics that contain many metaphors, especially metaphors using celestial objects.

To study the metaphors in ONEWE's songs, the researcher uses Lakoff and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory (1980). Lakoff and Johnson define the conceptual metaphor as understanding one domain of experience that is typically abstract in terms of another that is typically concrete, and the definition makes metaphor a conceptual framework. The concept of metaphor explains that metaphors can be understood by relating it to the experience that has been faced by the songwriter. In ONEWE's songs, the concept is applied to analyze how metaphors can lead to understanding and knowledge about love, belonging, hope, loss, and other meanings that the songwriters deliver in the songs' lyrics. Thus, it is possible to analyze how metaphors play a role in delivering the emotions and feelings of the songs.

The research gap is in the exploration of conceptual metaphors in the lyrics of *Aurora* and *Regulus* and revealing the meaning that the songwriter wants to convey through these metaphors. While many people listen to music simply for entertainment or to uplift the mood, people often overlook the figurative language found in the lyrics. This study aims to address this gap by examining how metaphorical expressions serve as a tool to convey deep emotional and conceptual meanings in the lyrics of *Aurora* and *Regulus*.

Although there have been many studies on metaphors in literature, movies, or music, but studies on metaphors in K-pop songs, especially K-pop band, is still very little because K-pop band songs use Korean that

causes not everyone to understand. While ONEWE's songs *Aurora* and *Regulus* are K-pop band songs that use English lyrics so it is interesting to study. Studying ONEWE's songs can improve the understanding and knowledge of the metaphors used and how the metaphors work as a tool to deliver the meaning and emotions contained in the songs. This study will also contribute to the understanding of the lyrics of K-pop songs, especially K-pop band songs. In addition, this study contributes to the field of music and linguistic studies.

The purpose of this study is to study the metaphors in the lyrics of ONEWE's songs *Aurora* and *Regulus*. This study is useful for understanding the content of songs that often songwriters prefer to use poetic words that mean something other than what they actually mean as metaphor. Moreover, this study is also useful as a way to appreciate songwriters in pouring ideas into beautiful lyrics in the form of metaphors that can deliver the feelings and emotions that want to be delivered to the listeners.

B. Statements of the Problems

1. What conceptual metaphors are used in the lyrics of ONEWE's songs *Aurora* and *Regulus*?
2. How can these conceptual metaphors be classified based on Lakoff and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT)?

C. Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the conceptual metaphors used in the lyrics of ONEWE's songs *Aurora* and *Regulus*.
2. To classify these conceptual metaphors based on Lakoff and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT).

D. Significances of the Study

This study is expected to provide meaningful contributions in three aspects: teaching, learning, and future research.

1. For Teaching

This study can help teachers by providing insights into how conceptual metaphors function in song lyrics. Teachers can use this study as a reference for introducing metaphor analysis in English, linguistics, or literary studies courses, particularly when explaining figurative language and conceptual metaphor theory.

2. For Learning

This study can help learners understand metaphors more effectively by showing real examples from song lyrics. It can improve their ability to recognize and classify metaphors in texts, enhancing their critical thinking and language comprehension skills in both academic and everyday contexts.

3. For Future Researchers

This study can serve as a reference for future research on conceptual metaphors in song lyrics or other literary works. Future researchers may expand this study by exploring more songs, applying different metaphor theories, or exploring how metaphors in lyrics relate to cultural and emotional aspects.

E. Scope and Limitations

This section explains the scope and limitations of the study to clear up the focus of the study. This description is important so that the study remains focused and the results achieved can be understood in line with its scope. The scope shows the main field of focus, while the limitations recognize certain restrictions that may affect the results of the study. Thus, interpretation of the findings can be done properly and optimistically.

Scope

This study focuses on analyzing conceptual metaphors in the lyrics of two selected songs by ONEWE: *Aurora* and *Regulus*. The analysis is based on Lakoff and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) (1980), which categorizes metaphors into structural, ontological, and orientational metaphors. The research will identify and classify these metaphors in relation to the themes of the songs.

The study is qualitative in nature, employing textual analysis as the primary research method. The lyrics will be analyzed in their original

English version without considering musical elements such as melody, rhythm, or instrumentation.

Limitations

1. Limited Song Selection

The study only examines two songs, *Aurora* and *Regulus*, so the findings may not be generalizable to all songs by ONEWE or other K-pop bands. Therefore, the findings of this study may not be generalized to all K-pop songs or metaphorical analyses beyond English Lyrics.

2. Focus on Lyrics Only

The analysis is restricted to the song lyrics and does not consider the music, performance, or audiovisual aspects that might influence meaning.

3. Linguistic Approach Only

The study applies Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) and does not incorporate other literary or stylistic analysis frameworks.

3. Objective Interpretation

Different researchers might analyze the same metaphors differently. However, the study will aim for objectivity by relying on established metaphor classifications.

F. Operational Definition

In order to avoid ambiguity in the understanding of the terms used in this study, this section provides operational definitions that specifically explain the meaning of these terms based on the context of the study. Operational definitions function to clarify the key concepts being studied in a way that is appropriate and consistent with the objectives of the study.

1. Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Conceptual Metaphor Theory is a framework developed by Lakoff and Johnson in their book *We Live By* (1980). Lakoff and Johnson define the conceptual metaphor is not just a figurative language, but also reflect how human understand the world.

2. Song Lyrics

Song lyrics is the words in the song that are used to deliver feelings, emotions, and themes written by the songwriter. In this study, the song lyrics are from ONEWE's songs *Aurora* and *Regulus* that use English in the song lyrics to identify and categorize the metaphors used in the lyrics of those songs using Conceptual Metaphor Theory.

3. *Aurora* and *Regulus*

Aurora and *Regulus* are selected as the primary data of this study. Those songs choose because it contains various metaphors such as emotional depth, poetic language, and thematic content that are related to be identified and analyzed with Conceptual Metaphor Theory.

4. ONEWE

ONEWE is a K-pop band under RBW Entertainment. The band has an interesting musical style that combines rock, ballads, and pop in its songs. ONEWE also always writes song lyrics with deep meanings and often uses lyrics and song titles using celestial objects.

