CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background of the study

Literature is an artistic and imaginative fact as a manifestation of human life and society through language as a medium (Ensten in Lestari, 2019). As a form of literature, song or particularly song lyrics also has a close relationship with the values of life since the author is also part of a social agent. According to Hornby, song is a brief rhyme or group of poems set to music and meant to be sung (Hornby in Nuriana & Ikrarini, 2022). It is a piece of literature formed in poetic or expressive language called 'lyric', and delivered with musical accompaniment. The reflection of human life, like social issues, is usually reflected in some parts of the song, that are through the textual (lyrics) and/or visual language (music video) of the song.

There are several types of genre in song or music, some of them are folk music, art music, and popular music. As cited in Middleton & Peter (2001), folk music is a genre passed down orally through generations which has differences in each region. Art music refers to classical music traditions, both contemporary and historical, that emphasize formal styles, technical detail, and written notation, requiring focused attention from listeners. Meanwhile, popular music includes musical genres that are widely enjoyed and easily accessible to the public, often disseminated through various forms of mass media.

Social issues, including inequalities, are often reflected in songs and other forms of literature. One of the inequality issues that is majorly conveyed in any literature like song is gender inequality or specifically gender discrimination issue. Many authors consciously deliberately write or voice gender discrimination issues in their works so that literature actually contributes to construct the gender equality movement (Trianton, 2009).

Gender itself is a complex concept that encompasses the roles, behaviors, identities, and expectations that societies and cultures attribute to individuals based on their perceived sex. However, there is a confusion between the term 'gender' and 'sex'. According to Judith Butler, in her book entitled *Gender Trouble* (1999), she denotes that gender is totally different with sex. The difference is that the term sex refers to the biological and physical characteristics that distinguish male and female bodies, whereas gender is 'socially-constructed' and is not determined solely by one's biological sex. Therefore, Butler also suggests that gender is an act of performativity that functions as a repeated action (Butler, 1999). It means that gender is formed through acts and behaviors that an individual does every day. So, gender distinguishes 'men' and 'women' not based on their biological, but based on their roles, behaviors, identities, and expectations from society.

Gender differentiation may lead to discrimination between each gender's identity – usually through stereotypes. Stereotypes refers to a perception of a group of people regarding individual characteristics to define the members of the group (Ismiati in Azis & Sunra, 2022). Thus, gender stereotype is an act of labeling

particular gender through their characteristics and behavior in culture (Azis & Sunra, 2022). It can be implied that gender stereotypes are generalizations about how people of different genders should behave or present themselves, and these stereotypes can lead to discrimination. Discrimination itself is when individuals are treated unfairly due to their membership in a particular group, commonly in age, gender, race, and ethnicity (Herbst in Eliyana et al., 2021). Therefore, it can be inferred that gender discrimination is the unfair or unequal treatment of individuals based on their gender identity.

One of the most prevalent issues in gender discrimination is women's discrimination in patriarchal system (patriarchy). The origin of patriarchy is derived from Greek which means 'father who rules the family' (Pierik, 2018). It refers to a 'male-dominated' family where the male is the dominant over the other (Ramadhan, 2019).Today, the term "patriarchy" refers to a social structure in which men have power over women (Napikoski in Ramadhan, 2019). It signifies that men are dominant or superior while women are the subordinate or inferior. In the home, at work, and in society, subordination also manifests itself in a variety of other ways, such as discrimination, disregard, insult, exploitation, oppression, and violence, as usually happens to women in 'male-domination' society.

The United States of America is one of the countries that has many cases of discrimination or unfair behavior towards minorities. Through several research and testimonies, women in America are frequently discriminated against for their gender, race, and ethnicity. Based on the survey by Kim Parker and Cary Funk in Pew Research Center (2017), about four out of ten working women (42%) in the

U.S.A have experienced gender discrimination at work, mostly in their income. One out of four working women that were surveyed said that although they have the same job as the men, they get less income than the men. Meanwhile, only one out of twenty working men surveyed said the opposite.

Another kind of discrimination received by American women is in terms of sexual harassment. For instance, according to a survey done by ABC News (in Pew Research) or the Washington Post between October 12 and 15, 54% of women have experienced unwanted sexual advances from males. A survey by NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist (in Pew Research) from November 13–15 also found that 35% of women had directly experienced sexual harassment or abuse at work. It means that women are frequently being objectified by men. Hence, due to those kinds of subordination acts that they have experienced since a long time ago, the feminist movement appears.

Feminism can be viewed as a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression in order to achieve complete gender equity in both the law and society (Hooks in Biana, 2020). Additionally, Weedon, cited in Kusuma (2021), argues that feminism is a perspective, study, and a social movement with the goal of challenging and altering the marginalized position of women in a society that prioritizes a male viewpoint. Therefore, feminism can be seen as an understanding as well as a movement to fight for gender equity and challenge the subordinate status of women in patriarchal society.

In the feminist movement, a concept called empowerment was formed. Jo Rowlands (1997) points empowerment as a process of "bringing people who are

outside the decision-making process into it." As feminist movement focus on women, there is a term called women's empowerment. In accordance with Rowlands' point about empowerment, it can be inferred that women's empowerment emphasizes the importance of women in decision-making roles. Similar withNaila Kabeer (1999) who defines women's empowerment as the process where historically marginalized women gain control over their lives through decision-making.

Women's empowerment is deeply connected to the development of self-confidence, which is a key component that supports and enhances the empowerment process. Building self-confidence is essential for women to assert their autonomy and participate fully in decision-making. Self-confidence, according to Lauster (2012) is a belief in abilities that an individual has (Lauster in Puspaningrum, 2022). Those abilities involve potential, achievement, or realistic interactions with oneself and those around them. It can be concluded that self-confidence is how an individual believes that they are able in some things. Thus, women's self-confidence refers to how women believe in their abilities – challenging the dependence stereotype of women constructed by patriarchal society.

The concept of confident women is commonly conveyed in any literary works or discourse, as well as in the song. Through the lyrics or even the scene in the music video, the author usually conveys their ideas, emotion, or opinion towards some issues that happen in their surroundings. Moreover, song also could be used as a form of propaganda in order to obtain support (Martiwi et al., 2017).

The propaganda for instance is to voice some inequality treatment towards particular groups such as for women inequality.

Lyric is part of the song as a 'connector' between the author and the audience. It is a printed form of the song which functions as a communication between the songwriter and the audience (Dallin in Andina, 2023). Moreover, the song lyrics also could be defined as poetic language that reflects the songwriter's own journey or cultural insight (Andina, 2023). The lyrics particularly convey meanings to be delivered to the audience.

There are two kinds of meaning conveyed in the lyrics which are literal and figurative meaning. Literal meaning is the explicit or the direct meaning which describes what is truly happening. On the other hand, figurative meaning is more complex and describes the meaning implicitly. It is commonly represented through figurative language. Figurative language according to Peter (2012) is a form of language that carries symbolic or metaphorical meaning – used by authors to evoke emotions, invites a strong reaction, or persuade the audience to take particular action (response) (Peter in Sutrisno & Lestari, 2021). There are many types of figurative language as suggested by Perrine & Thomas R.A.P.P. (1992) including *simile*, *symbol*, *metaphor*, *personification*, *apostrophe*, *synecdoche*, *metonymy*, *paradox*, *hyperbole*, *understatement*, *irony*, *allegory*, and *allusion*.

Figurative language also can be used to convey several issues in the song lyrics as well as feminism issues. These days, there are a lot of singers (mainly female) with feminist-themed songs. Beyoncè is one of those singers who has many feminist-themed songs. Beyoncè Knowles-Carter or Beyoncè is one of the

legendary female singers. She was born in Texas and was in a group named "Destiny's Child" before she started a solo career. She almost broke every record for being the most wins in Grammy Awards 2010, being for most No. 1 hits on Billboard's Pop Songs chart, and many more (Biography.com, 15/3/2021).

Beyond her job as a pop star, Beyoncè is also a wife and a mother of three kids. She married Jay Z, an American rapper, in 2008. From their marriage, they are blessed with three kids that are Blue Ivy, Rumi, and Sir Carter. Both Beyoncè and Jay Z are still active in music until today.

The latest, Beyoncè released her new studio album entitled "Renaissance", that is on July 29th, 2022. The album consists of 16 track songs and succeeded being on No. 1 Billboard 200 chart and Beyoncè being the first female singer in that year to achieve the record (Caulfield in Billboard.com, 7/8/2022). The prior albums of hers are also no less a hit such as on "4" album (2011) and "Lemonade" (2016). Beyoncè is not only known for her mesmerizing voice and appearance, but also her 'deep and powerful' lyrics in her songs. Most of her songs express the ideas of female empowerment and female sexuality, so that's why she is often considered as a feminist singer.

There are several studies that analyzed figurative language and self-confidence, such as in Sutrisno and Lestari (2021) entitled "*An Analysis of Figurative Language and Moral Value in Roar Song by Katy Perry*", which examines the figurative language and moral value planted in Katy Perry's "Roar." It focuses on the analysis of figurative language use and the moral value of the song, while this study, specifically, analyzes the portrayal of women's self.

confidence in the use of figurative expressions that were found in the song lyrics.

Furthermore, there are also many studies that discuss or analyze song lyrics with feminist criticism, as well as a study has been done by Soegondo (2023) entitled "*Representation of Egalitarian-Liberal Feminist Values in Dua Lipa and Billie Eilish's Selected Song Lyrics*." It focuses on the examination of the egalitarian-liberal feminist that is planted in the selected song lyrics. The other study that also discusses feminism in song lyrics is from a thesis by Islamia (2017) entitled "*Female Empowerment in Selected Beyoncé's Song Lyrics*." Although this study also uses Beyoncè's song lyrics as a corpus, the selected song lyrics are mostly different and this study specifically discusses the attitude of female empowerment that is women's self-confidence.

Feminism, especially liberal feminist, despite its goal to voice equality, it also empowers women to be more confident in the public sphere. Self-confidence also has been examined in some studies as well as in a study by Divanca (2022) which analyzed student's confidence in answering questions by taking reference on Lauster's Self-Confidence aspect. There are more studies which examine self-confidence of people, but it rarely applied in analyzing feminism. Hence, this study analyzes the form of women's self-confidence by examining the figurative language that was found in the selected song lyrics.

As already explained, this study aims to find out the types of figurative language that are used in the song lyrics to portray women's self-confidence and to analyze how these figurative expressions convey women's self-confidence messages. Selected lyrics of Beyoncè's songs were chosen as a corpus of this study.

Eight song lyrics from four legend albums of Beyoncè that were determined to be analyzed are *I'm That Girl*, *Move*, *Heated*, *Cozy*, *Alien Superstar* in the "Renaissance" Album (2022); *My Power* in the "The Lion King: The Gift" Album (2019); *Formation* in "Lemonade" Album (2013); and *Run The World* in "4" Album (2011). Beyoncé herself is a highly recognized and accomplished female singer. What makes her interesting is that she is one of the most famous female artists of African-American descent, and many of her songs convey strong confidence, especially in her identity. Her songs often contain rich figurative expressions that portray themes of independence, strength, and resilience of women. The writer used the figurative language framework by Perrine & Thomas R.A.P.P. (1992) as an approach to analyze the types of figurative language of the selected expressions. The writer also took a reference on Lauster's Self-Confidence aspects that is cited in Puspaningrum (2022) to analyze the forms of women's self-confidence in the lyrics.

1.2   Research Questions

The research question of this study is these three following questions:

1. What types of figurative language are used in the song lyrics to portray women's self-confidence.

2. How do the figurative expressions in the song lyrics convey women's self-confidence?

1.3   Purpose of the Study

This research aims to answer the research question:

1. To find out the types of figurative language in the song lyrics to portray women's self-confidence

2. To analyze how the figurative expressions in the song lyrics convey women's self-confidence

1.4   Scope of the Study

This study focuses on analyzing and discussing the types of figurative language in the song lyrics and how it portrays women's self-confidence by combining Perrine & Thomas' figurative language approaches with the self-confidence aspect suggested by Lauster (2012). As a medium of expression, the writer believes that the singer (who also take a part as the author of the lyrics) wants to influence how to be a confident woman to support the empowerment of women through the lyrics.

1.5   Significance of the Study

This study is expected to be useful for:

1. Theoretically

This study is expected to introduce and enrich the reader's understanding with the branch study of Psychology – that is Self-Confidence, along with the concept of Figurative Language. In addition, this study also hopes to enrich the reader with the reflection of those studies in literature.

2. Practically

- This study was written in hopes to increase public literacy interest by inviting the reader to read literature – considering the declining literacy interest of the society, especially students.

- This study aims to explain the reflection of liberal feminism in literature (song lyrics) and its correlation with Psychology that could enrich the reader's knowledge.

- This study is intended to suggest ideas for the reader who comes from a Humanities and Literature background in analyzing literature by choosing popular media as a corpus.

- This study is intended to give an insight that song also contains educational meanings and invite the reader to analyze the meaning behind the song lyrics critically.