CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

Language is a complex communication system that is used by humans to interact with each other. Language has an important role in human life because it allows humans to communicate, acquire knowledge, build social relationships, and convey ideas. According to Ababa, language makes it possible to convey ideas and complete activities (tell a story, provide information, complain, or ask for help).[1] The researcher states that language is not only a means of communication, but also a continuous reflection of human culture, identity and knowledge. In addition, language is the main object of study in linguistics disciplines. According to Akmajian et al, linguistics is the scientific study of human natural language.[2] Through the study of linguistics, we can understand how the structure of language affects the way we understand the messages conveyed in that language.

One branch of linguistics is semantics. According to Sunubi, semantics is a branch of linguistics that focuses on investigation of meaning. Semantics seeks to comprehend what meaning is as a component

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[1] Addis Ababa, *Introduction to Language and Linguistics* (Ethiopia: USAID, 2016), 7–8.
[2] Adrian Akmajian et al., *An Introduction to Language and Communication* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2010), 5.

language, how it is created by language, as well as how speakers and listeners of language perceive, conceal, and negotiate meaning.[3] The researcher states that semantics seeks to understand how meaning is formed and understood in language, and how language influences human thought and behavior. In language, words and sentences often have ambiguous or unclear meanings. Without a correct understanding of the meaning of words and sentences, communication will be ineffective, misunderstandings will arise and can cause problems in everyday life. Therefore, semantics helps clarify language and how meaning is used in communication so as to minimize misunderstandings in communication.

Many concepts are learned in semantic, one of them is modality. Modality is the use of modal verbs in sentences. According to John, modality is a significant semantic category that acts at the sentence level. A device that enables speakers to express varied degrees of commitment to or believe in notion.[4] Palmer divided modality into 3 types, including epistemic modality, deontic modality and dynamic modality. Where epistemic modality discusses possibility, necessity, and probability. While deontic modality discusses about permission, obligation, and commissive. and the last one is dynamic modality, discusses about ability and volition.[5] The researcher states that modality and semantic are two related concepts

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[3] Abdul Haris Sunubi, *Introduction to Linguistics* (Parepare: Dirah, 2016), 73.

[4] John I. Saeed, *Semantics Second Edition* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 135.

[5] F.R. Palmer, *Mood and Modality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

because modality can influence the meaning of words or sentences and can be considered as a semantic aspect that reinforces the meaning of language in certain contexts. In modality, semantic helps in determining the meaning of the words used in the sentence and in interpreting the modality used.

Modality can be found in several ways, one of ways is song. Song is one example of literature. A song is a composition of music intended for vocal performance, either alone or in combination with musical instruments.[6] The researcher states that songs are form of artistic expression that has great appeal to listeners and can be a means of entertainment. Songs can play an important role in a person's daily life in different way, everyone has a different purpose in listening to songs because one's personality cannot be equated.

In this study, the researcher chose Taylor Swift's selected song lyrics as the data source. Taylor Swift's songs are one of the potential modality songs, especially on Folklore album. Folklore is Taylor Swift's eighth studio album. On July 24, 2020, Republic Records released Folklore, a surprise album. Swift engaged electronically with producers Aaron Dessner and Jack Antonoff while she wrote the music and stories for the album Folklore while she was in quarantine during the Covid-19 Epidemic.

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[6] Laila Alviana Dewi, "Figurative Language in Maher Zain's Song Lyrics" (IAIN Ponorogo, 2020), 31.

Upon its release, Folklore broke several sales records and was awarded Album of the Year at the 2021 Grammy Awards.[7]

The use of modality play an important role in creating strong and meaningful song lyrics. Through the use of modality, singers or songwriters can express emotions, and communicate messages and stories to listeners. Modality help create a deep atmosphere and enrich the listener's experience in understanding and experiencing the song. Therefore, an understanding of the role of modality in music can help songwriters and singers convey their messages more effectively.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher is interested in analyzing semantic meaning of modality in song because almost all people likes to listen to songs. However, sometimes people listen to a song without understanding semantic meaning of modality. Whereas, every song has messages to convey to the listeners. Furthermore, modality in songs can have a subjective meaning and interpreted differently by each listener. The challenge in this study is to understand and classify the modality meaning more objectively and systematically. The lyrics of Taylor Swift's songs will be analyzed by the researcher. The researcher conduct a study entitled *"A Semantic Analysis of Modality in the Lyrics of Taylor Swift's Songs"*.

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[7] Good Morning America, "*Taylor Swift Announces New Surprise Album, 'Folklore,' Debuts Tonight*," 2020 Accessed on https://t.ly/ZC4gJ 2 January 2023.

B. Identification of the Problem.

Based on the background of study above, the researcher formulates the identification of problem of the research as follows:

1. There are still many people who listen to songs without knowing the modality and semantic meaning of modality in the song lyrics.

2. The listener's interpretation of the modality of the song is different from the actual meaning conveyed in the song.

C. Focus of Study

Based on background of study above, the focus in this study are 5 songs in album Folklore by Taylor Swift; August, Cardigan, Mad Woman, Peace, and Seven.

D. Research Questions

Based on the background of study above, the researcher formulates the research questions as follows:

1. What types of modality are found in the lyrics of Taylor Swift's songs?

2. What the semantic meaning of modality found in the lyrics of Taylor swift's songs?

E. Objectives of the Research

Based on the research questions that has been described above, the purpose of conducting this research is as follows:

1. To find out the types of modality found in the lyrics of Taylor Swift's songs.

2. To find out the semantic meaning of modality found in the lyrics of Taylor Swift's songs.

F. Significances of Study

The researcher of this study, *"A Semantic Analysis of Modality in the Lyrics of Taylor Swift's Songs"* hopes that everyone will get benefit from it. The significances are as follows:

1. Theoretical Significance

This study will provide information and insight about the types of modality and explanation of the semantic meaning of modality especially found in Taylor Swift's song lyrics.

2. Practical Significance

   a. For researcher

   This study can provide many benefits for the researcher herself, because conducting study on semantic and modality can

help researcher to understand more deeply about the concepts related to modality, so that she can improve her analytical and critical abilities in understanding the topic. This study can also add to the feeling of being immersed when listening to the strains of the songs researcher listening to.

b. For other researchers

This study can be an inspiration for other researchers. This study is also a useful source of information or reference for other researchers who are researching the same topic or related to semantic analysis and modality. The results of this study can provide new insights and ideas for other researchers, so that they can assist them in developing their study.

c. For teachers

This study provides benefits to help teachers better understand and master the use of modality in English. This will help teachers teach modality to their students better and more effectively. In addition, this study can also provide information about how modality are used in the right sentences and in the right context, which can be useful for teachers in giving the right examples to their students.

d. For students

The study on modality can benefit students by helping them understand the meaning or function of modality. This study can help them improve their speaking and writing skills in English, as well as in understanding texts that use modality. By understanding the correct use of modality, students can improve the grammar in the sentences they make, so that these sentences are easier to understand and can improve their overall English skills.

G. Previous Study

In this Study, there are three previous studies that are similar and have been carried out by several researchers :

The first study entitled *"Mood and Modality Used by the Main Characters in Onward Movie"* by Syafni Nadia Istiqhfarin (2021). This study tries to examine the film "Onward's" interpersonal meaning. It examines the MOOD types and modal responsibility exhibited by the central figures in the film "Onward." The descriptive qualitative method is the research design that was used. Additionally, in terms of interpersonal meaning, the researcher used the Systemic Functional Linguistics theory advanced by Halliday and Matthiessen, The outcome demonstrates that the movie uses all MOOD kinds, including declarative, interrogative, and

imperative. The primary characters tend to perform by proclaiming and declaring rather than by demanding and providing, which dominates the declarative MOOD and is commonly used by them. Therefore, the researcher concludes that there are 2 modal responsibilities found in the movie. The main characters most frequently use the implicit subjective as the speaker takes the responsibility to the judgment by showing his/her personal opinion.[8] The similarities between these both studies are the research object, namely modality. Moreover, both studies used descriptive qualitative method. However, the differences of both these studies study are that the object of this study focuses on the interpersonal meaning of mood and modality, while the object of researcher study focuses on the semantic analysis of modality. Next, in the research subject, where in this study the research subject is movie, while the subject in researcher study is song. And the last in the theory used, which in this study used the theory of Halliday and Matthiessen, while in researcher study used Palmer's theory.

The second study entitled *"Interpesonal Meanings of Mood and Modality in Jacinda Arden's Speeches on Covid-19"* Eveina Ayu Kristianti (2021). The first concern is the various mood and modalities employed in the speeches, and the second is the interpersonal meanings derived from those mood and modalities. Purposive sampling is used in this study's

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[8] Syafni Nadia Istiqhfarin, "*Mood and Modality Used By the Main Characters in 'Onward' Movie*" (UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, 2021).

qualitative data collection strategy. According to the study, it appears that Jacinda Arden's commitment to and confidence in addressing the virus dominates both addresses. Arden only used probability, obligation, declarative, and imperative on April 20 but on July 15, she utilized every mood and modality. Since the researcher applies Halliday's theory to the context during a pandemic, some modalities also reflect varying degrees from that theory. The speeches often transmit the similar interpersonal messages, which include Jacinda Arden's commitment, confidence, empathy, prompt response to COVID-19, and the gravity of the situation. Therefore, the researcher concludes that the different situation affects the use of mood and modality, but not necessarily express different interpersonal meaning.[9] The similarities between these both studies are the research object, namely modality. However, the differences of both these studies study are that the object of this research focuses on the interpersonal meaning of mood and modality, while the object of the researcher study focuses on the semantic analysis of modality. Next, in the research subject, in this study the research subject is speeches, while the subject in my research is song. And the last in the method and theory used, in this study used qualitative, while in the researcher study used descriptive qualitative method. Moreover in this study used Halliday's theory, while in the researcher study used Palmer's theory.

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[9] Evelina Ayu Kristianti, "*Interpersonal Meanings of Modality in Jacinda Ardern's Speeches on Covid-19*" (Universitas Sanata Dharma, 2020).

The last study entitled "Modality in President Joko Widodo's Speeches on Independence Day 2018: Syntactic and semantic studies" by Nugraha Deden Novan Setiawan and Reyta Fitriani (2019). The goal of the current study was to analysis basically concerns with the Modality in President Joko Widodo's Speeches on Independence Day 2018. The descriptive qualitative research method was used in this study. The researcher applies Huddleston's theory to this study. The analysis's findings demonstrate that President Joko Widodo used epistemic and deontic modality in his speeches on August 17, 2018, the nation's independence day. Therefore, the researcher concludes that there is the use of modality in President Joko Widodo's Speeches on Independence Day 2018.[10] The similarities between these both studies are the research object, namely modality. Moreover, both studies used descriptive qualitative method. However, the differences of both these studies are in the research subject is speeches, while the subject in the researcher study is song. And in the theory used, in this study used Huddleston's theory, while in the researcher study used Palmer's theory.

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[10] Nugraha Deden Novan Setiawan and Reyta Fitriani, "*Modality in President Joko Widodo's Speeches on Independence Day 2018: Syntactic and Semantic Studies,*" no. 1st International Conference on Administration Science (2019): 355–357.

H. The Organization of Writing

Organization of writing will be made with the aim of facilitating problems and discussion, to get results that are structured and in accordance with predetermined writing rules, the organization of writing of this study is structured as follows:

The first chapter is an introduction. The researcher includes various points in this chapter, including background of study, identification of the problem, focus of study, research questions, objectives of the problem, significances of the research, previous study and the organization of writing.

The second chapter is theoretical framework. This chapter contains various theories put out by professionals who have undertaken research associated with this study.

The third chapter is research methodology. This chapter including methodology of the research, unit of analysis, instrument, techniques of data collection, techniques of data analysis and trustworthiness of data analysis.

The fourth chapter are the result and discussion. This chapter discusses the types of modality found in the lyrics of Taylor Swift's songs and the semantic meaning of modality found in the lyrics of Taylor Swift's songs.

The fifth chapter is closing. This chapter is closing, including conclusion and suggestion.