

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Research Background

Song lyrics are more than just a combination of words; they are also a means of expressing feelings, sharing personal experiences, and conveying personal opinions. In this research, lyrics are considered a reflection of emotional and interpersonal dynamics, particularly in the context of the breakup and loss of a romantic relationship.

By using a pragmatic approach, specifically illocutionary act theory, the meaning in song lyrics can be analyzed more deeply. Searle (1979) refers to illocutionary acts as actions performed by the speaker when uttering something, such as making a promise, asking a question, affirming, or expressing feelings, which are important points to interpret. Illocutionary acts give a deeper understanding than the literal meaning of words, thereby revealing what the speaker wants to convey in a specific context.

The study of song lyrics applying the theory of illocutionary act has been widely conducted. Nasim and Mariana (2024) analyzed five types of illocutionary acts in Sia Furler's album *This is Acting*, concluding that representative acts are dominant and used to describe emotions. Meanwhile, Sari and Emelia (2022) studied illocutionary acts in Bruno Mars' album *Doo-Woops & Hooligans* and found that they emotionally engage listeners. Finally, Fatika Andhini's thesis (2020) on illocutionary acts in the *Middle Ground* series on the Jubilee YouTube channel describes how participants use assertive statements along with commands and expressive acts to form opinions and maintain relationships in conversations. However, there is no specific research analyzing illocutionary acts in song lyrics with the theme of relationship closure. Moreover, these studies primarily focus on classification, without linking these acts to specific

emotional outcomes such as relationship closure. Therefore, this gap is the main focus and objective of this research.

The lyrics selected for this study are *Anaheim* by NIKI, *You're Losin' Me* by Taylor Swift, and *Someone Like You* by Adele. These three songs were chosen for their deeply emotional expressions of the end of a relationship by the songwriters.

Therefore, this research aims to explore how illocutionary acts are used in song lyrics that depict relationship closure, focusing on identifying the types (Searle, 1979) and analyzing the functions of illocutionary acts (Leech, 1983) in song lyrics with the theme of relationship closure. The main focus is not only to classify utterances, but also to explore how these acts play a role in conveying emotions and meanings related to the end of a relationship.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

The complex relationship between language and emotion is reflected in song lyrics, where songwriters often employ various communicative methods to convey deep feelings and build emotional connections with listeners. This study aims to explore the illocutionary acts contained in the lyrics of the songs *Anaheim* by NIKI, *You're Losin' Me* by Taylor Swift, and *Someone Like You* by Adele. These songs were chosen because their lyrics directly provide relevant data for the questions below in the theme of relationship closure:

1. What are the types of illocutionary acts in the three-song lyrics?
2. What are the functions of illocutionary acts in the three-song lyrics?

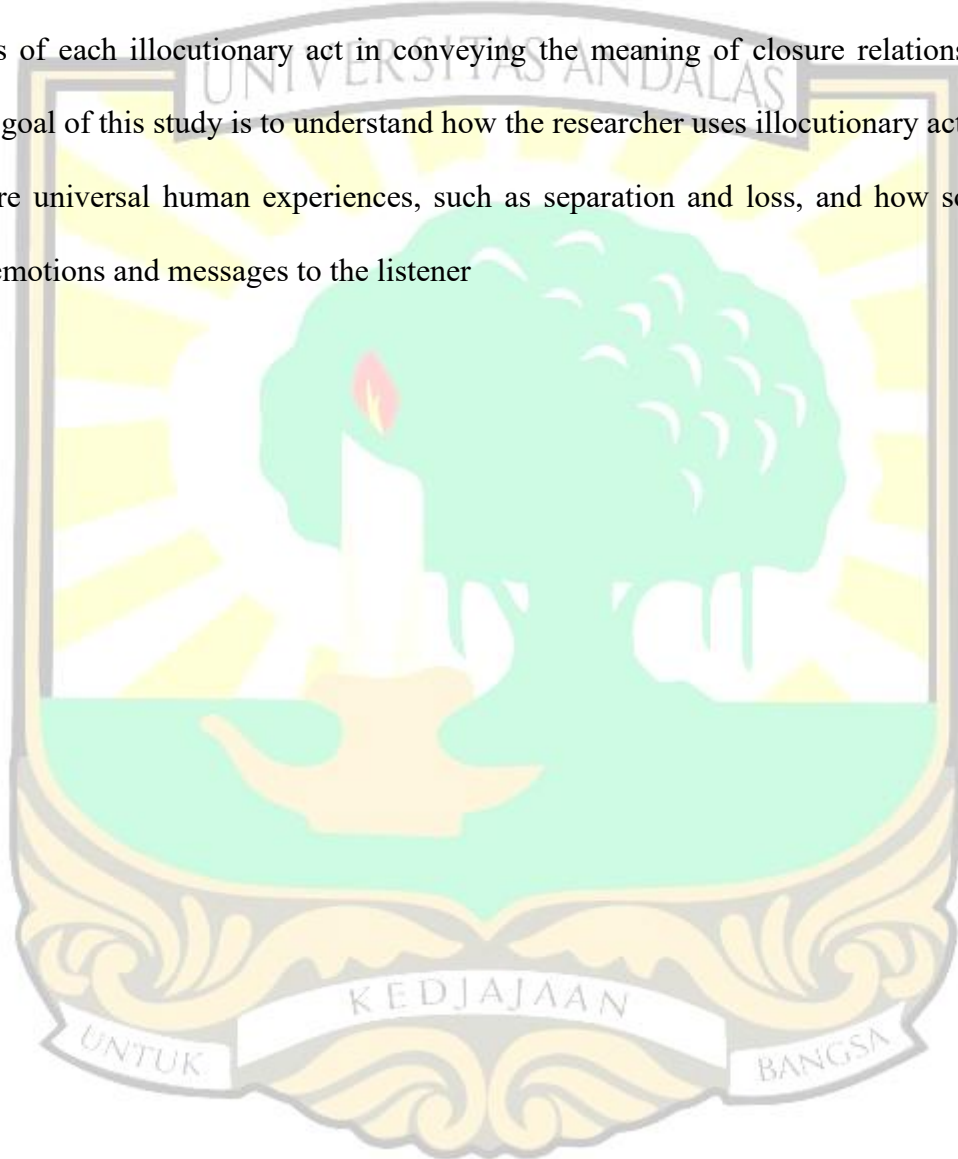
## **1.3 Objectives of the Research**

This research will explore the deep meaning conveyed by songwriters by applying illocutionary acts. Based on this, the objectives of this research are :

1. To identify the types of illocutionary acts in the three song lyrics.
2. To analyze the functions of illocutionary acts in the three song lyrics.

#### 1.4 Focus of the Research

In this research, Searle's (1979) and Leech's (1983) theories serve as the theoretical framework to identify the types of illocutionary acts that convey the meaning of relationship closure in the lyrics of NIKI's *Anaheim*, Taylor Swift's *You're Losing Me* and Adele's *Someone Like You*. Besides identifying the types of illocutionary acts, this research will also analyze the functions of each illocutionary act in conveying the meaning of closure relationships. The ultimate goal of this study is to understand how the researcher uses illocutionary acts as a tool to explore universal human experiences, such as separation and loss, and how songwriters convey emotions and messages to the listener



## 1.5 Methods of the Research

This research uses qualitative methods as described by Denzin and Lincoln (2005). Qualitative methods are those that explore in-depth the experiences and daily life in a real context, aiming to understand the meaning behind the phenomenon. This research delves deeply into the meanings conveyed through the illocutionary acts in the lyrics of the songs *Anaheim*, *You're Losing Me*, and *Someone Like You*. Using the theoretical frameworks of Searle (1979) and Leech (1983), this study identifies and analyzes the types and functions of illocutionary acts in the lyrics of the three songs. The results of this study are expected to explain how the implied meaning of the closure relationship as expressed in the lyrics of the three songs is expressed and how writers convey their emotions to listeners through the song lyrics, which focus on separation and loss.

### 1.5.1 Data Collection

The sources of the data in this research are the song lyrics of *Anaheim* by NIKI, *You're Losing Me* by Taylor Swift, and *Someone Like You* by Adele, collected from <https://genius.com>. Genius is the world's biggest collection of song lyrics and musical knowledge. The lyrics of these songs were selected for their profound meaning, emotional complexity, and explicit focus on relationship closure, making them ideal for an in-depth analysis of illocutionary acts. Additionally, these three songs have been featured in numerous Billboard song lists and have become top songs on *Spotify*. Purposive sampling is used to select the data, aligning with the criteria set to select data sources, as follows.

1. The first step is to find some songs that have a theme of relationship closure.
2. Next, the researcher selected songs *Anaheim* by NIKI, *You're Losing Me* by Taylor Swift, and *Someone Like You* by Adele. These songs were chosen because their lyrics relate to the emotional process of moving on after a breakup, focusing on closure and

depicting elements of emotional resolution, acceptance, or healing from the end of a relationship.

3. After that, copy the transcripts of the three song lyrics from Genius and paste the lyrics into the document that will be used for the analysis.

The selection of the three songs in this study was based on their shared exploration of relationship closure, which became the core theme of the study. Each song captures the emotional complexity of the end of a relationship, making them particularly relevant to young audiences who often seek music to process such experiences. Based on popularity, *Anaheim*, *You're Losin' Me* hit the top artists in 2023, and *Someone Like You* hit the Billboard Top 100 in 2011. However, as the year progressed, the popularity of these songs shifted. To keep the analysis focused and relevant, the researcher selected individual songs about relationship closure rather than a full album, which may have included songs with different topics.

### 1.5.2 Data Analysis

The data serve as the units of analysis in this research; they're utterances containing illocutionary acts that convey meanings related to closure, which were identified in the three selected songs: NIKI's *Anaheim*, Taylor Swift's *You're Losing Me*, and Adele's *Someone Like You*. After that, the researcher read the song lyrics transcript closely several times to become familiar with the data and its contexts. Next, the researcher identified utterances that contained the parameters of the closure relationship. Then, the researcher categorized the utterances containing closure relationship into the types and functions of Illocutionary acts based on Searle's and Leech's theory and analyzed how the singers use the utterances to express their feelings or thoughts when writing songs. The aim is to find the hidden meaning behind the lyrics. The next step was to validate the findings through the review of experts who understand the study made based on the

analysis of functions and types of illocutionary acts. This process is done to ensure that the research results are accurate and can be validated.

### 1.6. Definition of Key Terms

1. **Illocutionary Acts:** A type of speech act that relates to the aims and purposes that the speaker wants to achieve through speech, not only conveying information, but also doing something (Searle, 1979).

2. **Closure Relationship:** The emotional resolution process following a breakup.

3. **Pragmatics:** A branch of linguistics focused on how context influences meaning.

