



CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

A. REVIEW OF THE RELATED THEORY

1. Figurative Language

According to Perrine in Sandy et al. (2021:849) Figurative language refers to a form of expression that conveys meaning through non-literal or unconventional means. In addition Abrams and Harpham (2013:132) define figurative language as a deviation from literal meaning in order to achieve a special effect or to convey a deeper level of meaning. This deviation enables language to become more expressive and meaningful, particularly in literary texts such as poems, novels, and song lyrics. By using figurative language, writers are able to transform ordinary expressions into powerful and artistic forms of communication.

Moreover, Hutauruk (2019:129), figurative language refers to the imaginative use of language in which words deviate from their conventional or literal meanings. The use of figurative often creates ambiguity between literal and figurative interpretations, requiring readers or listeners to engage in deeper thought to understand the intended meaning. This ambiguity arises because figurative expressions are not meant to be interpreted literally, rather they are designed to appeal to the imagination and enrich the overall meaning of the message.

Furthermore Gluckberg (2001:6), figurative language refers to the use of language that employs figures of speech, in which one idea is expressed through



another. In other words, such language should not be interpreted solely in a literal sense, as it is intended to enhance and strengthen meaning by comparing a specific concept with a more general one. Without the use of figurative language, the expressive power of language in communication would be significantly weakened

2. Types of Figurative Language

According to Perrine in Johnson (2016:70), figurative language is divided into twelve types, including simile, metaphor, personification, apostrophe, metonymy, Allusion, symbol, allegory, paradox, hyperbole, understatement, and irony.

a) Simile

Perrine in Johnson (2016:70) defines a simile is a type of figurative language that compares two different things directly through the use of “like or as, to point out a common feature. This technique is used to create strong imagery and to make the description easier for readers to understand. For example “*Her smile was bright as the sun*”. Perrine cited by Christiyanti (2024:12), This sentence is classified as simile because it explicitly compares “her smile” with “the sun” through the use of the word “as”. The comparison aims to describe the quality of the smile, suggesting that it is radiant and warm, just like the brightness of the sun. Therefore, this example clearly illustrates the function of simile to create a vivid image by showing the similarity between two different objects.



b) Metaphor

Perrine cited by Johnson (2016:71), Metaphor and simile share similarities, with their primary difference lying in the presence of connective words. As explained by Perrine cited by Christiyanti (2024:14), metaphor involves an implicit comparison of two unlike objects by stating that one is the other, without using comparative words such as “like” or “as”. This technique serves to stress their similarity and to add depth to the meaning and visual imagery of a literary work. For example: *Time is a thief*. Christiyanti (2024:14), This line using metaphor by stating that “time” is “a thief”, creating a direct comparison without “like” or “as”. The metaphor conveys that time gradually and inevitably robs us of memories, experiences, and opportunities, just as a thief steals goods. Thus, the artist emphasizes time’s fleeting and merciless nature more effectively than a plain description.

c) Personification

Perrine cited by Johnson (2016:72), personification is the practice of ascribing human characteristics to animals, objects, or concepts. It functions as a subtype of metaphor that establishes an implicit comparison by treating the non-human entity as human. Supporting by Kennedy and Gioia cited by Alfiyani (2021:159), personification is a figure of speech in which inanimate objects, animals, or abstract concepts such as truth or nature are described as having human qualities. For example: *“The sun rose and smiled at me”*. Perrine cited by Darajatul (2025:8), in this line the non-human object “the sun” is given the



human action “smiled”. Literally the sun cannot smile because it does not have a face or emotions. The sun use of the verb “smiled” attributes a human quality to the sun .

d) Apostrophe

According to Perrine cited by Johnson (2016:74), Apostrophe is a figure of speech in which a speaker directly addressec an absent person, a dead person, an abstract concept, or an inanimate object as if it were live, present, and capable of replying. This device is used to express strong emotion by creating an imaginary conversation. Abrams cited by Sandy et la. (2021:850), apostrophe occurs when someone speaks directly to a person who is not present or to an abstract or inanimate object, treating it as though it can listen or reply. For example: *“Heart! We will forget him! You and I, tonight.”* Perrine cited by Dorajatul (2025:9), in this line the speaker directly addresses “Heart”, which is a part of the body or an abstract representation of emotion. The heart is not a living person talks to it as if it were a companion by saying “you and I”, in viting the heart to join in the act of forgetting someone.

e) Metonymy

Perrine in Johnson (2016:76), Metonymy is a figure of speech in which the name of one thing is substitud for that of another to which it is closly related. I other words, it is a way of refferring to an object by mentioning something associated with it, not the object itself. closely related to represent the actual thing meant. For example: *“ Dony is washing his jazz”*. Perrine cited by Dorajatul (2025:10), is metonymy because “ jazz” means his car. He says the



brand name instead of saying “car”. This shows how metonymy works by using a related word to replace the real object.

f) Synecdoche

According to Perrine cited by Johnson (20216:76), Synecdoche is a type of figurative language in which a part is used to represent the whole or the whole is used to represent a part. Perrine cited by Dorajatul (2025:9), Synecdoche is divided into two types: Pars pro toto and totum pro parte. Pars pro toto occurs when a part of something is used to refer to the entire entity. For example: “*This room has some glasses*”, the word “glasses” represents a collection of items made of glass. Totum pro parte occurs when the whole is used to refer to only a segment of it. For example: “*Malaysia beat Singapore 4-2 in the first leg of the AFF Cup final*”, the names of the countries actually refer to their national football teams, not the entire nations.

g) Symbol

According to Perrine cited by Johnson (2016:89), a symbol is an object, word, or expression that represents something beyond its literal meaning. Symbol use common elements that are widely understood in society but contain deeper, often abstract, significance. The meaning of a symbol is not stated directly but is suggested through association. For example: “*Some dirty dogs stole my wallet on the bus*”. Perrine cited by Dorajatul (2025: 10), the phrase “dirty dogs” does not literally refer to animals. Instead it functions as a symbol that represents immoral people or thieves. Symbolism occurs when a writer uses specific objects or terms to convey a deeper meaning within a text. An author



may use the same symbol repeatedly to emphasize a particular message, or use variations of that symbol to build atmosphere and develop the overall theme of the work.

h) Allegory

Perrine cited by Johnson (2016:97), defines allegory as a narrative or description that presents a secondary, implied meaning beneath its literal expression. It is a form of representation whose significance extends beyond its explicit content to convey a deeper, different interpretation. Similarly, Reaske, cited by Dorajatul (2025:10), asserts that an allegory expresses meaning in an indirect or implicit manner. In allegorical works, all elements including actions, characters, and setting carry an underlying truth or message. In essence, an allegory can be understood as a prolonged and sustained metaphor, delivered subtly and indirectly, in which the entire story functions as an extensive comparison. For example: *"Beauty has her own lover, the beast, to love."* Perrine cited by Dorajatul (2025:10) The line "Beauty has her own lover, the beast, to love" functions as an allegory. In this case, "The Beautiful" represents an attractive woman, while "The Beast" represents an unattractive man. However, the narrative does more than contrast physical looks; it conveys the idea that true love transcends outward appearance.

i) Paradox

Perrine cited by Johnson (2016:110), describes paradox as a type of figurative language where a statement looks self-contradictory or nonsensical, but actually contains a hidden truth after deeper interpretation. Paradox are



commonly used to make readers think and to show how complex an idea or situation can be. For example: "*Less is more*". the statement "Less is more" seems illogical because it combines two opposing terms, it functions as a paradox that exposes a deeper meaning. It suggests that simplicity and limitation often result in greater power or significance. Thus, in contexts such as design or lifestyle, the paradox indicates that reducing elements can strengthen beauty and functionality.

j) Hyperbole

According to Perrine cited by Johnson (2016:111), hyperbole also called overstatement, is a type of figurative language that exaggerates parts of statement to highlight a point or trigger strong emotions. It should not be understood literally, as its purpose is to create a dramatic impression. For example: "*I am so hungry I could eat a horse*" is an example of hyperbole because the speaker exaggerates their hunger to an unrealistic extent by saying they could eat an entire horse. This overstatement is not meant literally but is used to emphasize how extremely hungry the speaker is. The hyperbole makes the idea of hunger more humorous and striking, so it is easier to remember.

k) Understatement

Understatement is the opposite of hyperbole. According to Perrine cited by Christiyanti (2018:112), understatement is a rhetorical device in which speaker intentionally presents a situation as less significant or severe than it actually is. This strategy often produces a subtle or ironic impression, enabling the real importance of the event to be expressed in a controlled, understated way.



For example: “ *It’s just a scratch,* “ *said about a large dent in a car.* This statement is an understatement because it labels a large dent as “ just scratch.”

By minimizing the actual damage, the speaker creates a gap between what really happened and how it is described. The understatement is used to make the damage seem less severe, possibly to avoid causing worry or to add irony and humor to the comment.

L) Irony

Perrine cited by cristiyanty (2016:113) defines irony as a figure of speech in which there is an incongruity between what is expected and what happens in reality. This device takes several forms, all of which generate a contrast that enhances the depth and complexity of literature. For example: “*A pilot with a fear of heights.* The situation represents situational irony due to the contrast between what is anticipated and what occurs. The expectation is that a pilot, whose job involves flying, would be at ease with heights. Conversely, the pilot has a fear of heights, opposing rational expectation. Consequently, this irony emphasizes how unpredictable and absurd real-life circumstances can be, indicating that human life frequently involves paradoxes.

3. Song

Ariyani (2019:22), explains that a song is a brief musical composition that includes vocal elements performed by the human voice, usually accompanied by lyrics and supported by musical instruments, which are arranged to express ideas, emotions, and meanings. According to Griffiee (2015:3), a song is a short musical composition that consists of lyrics and



melody and is designed to express feelings or ideas in an engaging way. The lyrics of a song play a crucial role because they contain linguistic elements that deliver meaning, emotions, and personal experiences. In this sense, song lyrics can be analyzed similarly to literary texts, as they often reflect human emotions and social realities.

Furthermore, song lyrics are closely related to language use, particularly figurative language. Songs frequently use non-literal expressions to make the message more expressive and emotionally appealing. Murphey cited by ariyani (2019:22), songs are powerful language tools because they present language in a memorable, emotional, and meaningful context. Through figurative expressions, songwriters are able to transform ordinary language into artistic and symbolic language. This characteristic makes songs an effective medium for studying figurative language, as listeners are exposed to metaphors, hyperboles, and personifications that enrich the meaning of the lyrics.

Adele's songs in the album 21 represent a strong example of how song lyrics function as literary texts. The album expresses deep emotional experiences such as heartbreak, loss, and personal struggle, which are delivered through figurative language rather than literal expressions. According to Schön et al. (2016:12), song lyrics often use figurative language to intensify emotional expression and create stronger connections with listeners.



4. Adeles's Album 21

21 is the second studio album by British singer Adele. The album was released on January 24, 2011 in Europe by XL Recordings and on February 22, 2011 in North America by Columbia Records. The album title was taken from the singer's age at the time she wrote the album. 21 carries Motown and soul influences from her debut album, 19 (2008), and is also inspired by American country music and Southern blues. Written after the singer's breakup with her lover, 21 explores themes of heartbreak, introspection, and forgiveness.

Adele began writing 21 in April 2009, while still involved in the relationship that subsequently inspired the record. Looking to deviate from the brooding sound of her first album, she had intended to compose a more upbeat and contemporary follow-up. However, studio sessions ended prematurely due to a lack of inspiration. She resumed production immediately after the breakdown of her relationship, channelling her heartbreak and depression into her songs. Adele collaborated with various songwriters and producers, including Columbia Records co-president at the time Rick Rubin, Paul Epworth, Ryan Tedder, Jim Abbiss, and Dan Wilson.

21 defied the modest commercial expectations of her independent record label, XL. It topped record charts in more than 30 countries and became the world's best-selling album of the year for both 2011 and 2012, helping to revitalise the lagging sales of the global music industry. In the United Kingdom, 21 is the best-selling album by a solo artist, best-selling album of the 21st century, and the third best-selling album overall, while its 23-week tenure atop



the UK Albums Chart is the longest by a female solo artist. In the United States, it is the best-performing Billboard 200 album of all time, holding the top position for 24 weeks, longer than any other album since 1985 and the longest by a female solo artist in Billboard 200 history. It was certified Diamond by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA), denoting sales of over 10 million copies in the US. In addition, three of the five singles released in its promotion – "Rolling in the Deep", "Someone like You", and "Set Fire to the Rain" – became international number-one songs, while "Rumour Has It" charted in the top 20 in countries across Europe and North America. With sales of over 31 million pure copies worldwide, 21 is the best-selling album of the 21st century and one of the best-selling albums of all time.

The album consists of eleven songs, namely: Adkins (2011) Rolling in the Deep, Rumour Has It, Turning Tables, Don't You Remember, Set Fire to the Rain, He Won't Go, Take It All, I'll Be Waiting, One and Only, Lovesong, and Someone Like You. The title 21 represents Adele's age during the process of writing the album, which reflects her personal experiences and emotional journey at that time.

In July 2012, the album was certified decuple platinum by the IFPI, denoting sales of ten million copies across Europe, making it the highest-certified album in Europe since the IFPI Platinum Europe award was launched in 1996.[134] The album lodged 35 weeks atop the Irish Albums Chart,[135] the longest in the chart's history,[136] and sold over 270,000 copies.[135] Charting 124 weeks in Finland from early 2011 to summer of 2013 (with 11



weeks atop) and re-entering in early 2014, 21 became the second-longest-charting album of all time in the country.

The album primarily explores themes of love, heartbreak, disappointment, emotional turmoil, and self-reflection. Certain tracks, including *Rolling in the Deep* and *Set fire to the Rain*, depict feelings of anger and emotional distress following a fractured relationship, whereas *Turning Tables* conveys a sense of acceptance coupled with enduring sadness. These songs are particularly recognized for their emotional depth and poignant lyrics.

5. Song Lyrics of “Set Fire to the Rain”

*“I let it fall, my heart,
And as it fell you rose to claim it
It was dark and I was over
Until you kissed my lips and you saved me*

*My hands, they're strong
But my knees were far too weak,
To stand in your arms Without falling to your feet*

*But there's a side to you
That I never knew,
never knew.*

*All the things you'd say
They were never true,
never true,
And the games you play
You would always win,
always win.*

*But I set fire to the rain,
Watched it pour as I
touched your face,
Well, it burned while I cried
'Cause I heard it screaming out your name,
your name!*



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When I lay with you
I could stay there Close my eyes
Feel you here forever
You and me together Nothing gets better

'Cause there's a side to you
That I never knew,
never knew,
All the things you'd say,
They were never true,
never true,
And the games you'd play
You would always win,
always win.

But I set fire to the rain,
Watched it pour as I touched your face,
Well, it burned
while I cried
'Cause I heard it screaming out your name,
your name!

I set fire to the rain
And I threw us into the flames
When it fell, something died

'Cause I knew that that was the last time,
the last time!

Sometimes I wake up by the door,
That heart you caught must be waiting for you
Even now when we're already over
I can't help myself from looking for you.

I set fire to the rain,
Watched it pour as I touched your face,
Well, it burned while I cried
'Cause I heard it screaming out your name, your name

I set fire to the rain,
And I threw us into the flames
When it fell, something died

'Cause I knew that that was the last time,
the last time, ohhhh!
Oh noooo Let it burn, oh

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Let it burn Let it burn”

Adele (2011). *Set Fire to the Rain*. Di album 21. XL Recordings.

6. Song Lyrics “Rolling in the Deep”

*“There's a fire starting in my heart
Reaching a fever pitch, it's bringing me out the dark
Finally I can see you crystal clear
Go 'head and sell me out and I'll lay your ship bare
See how I leave with every piece of you
Don't underestimate the things that I will do*

*There's a fire starting in my heart
Reaching a fever pitch
And it's bringing me out the dark
The scars of your love remind me of us
They keep me thinking that we almost had it all
The scars of your love, they leave me breathless
I can't help feeling
We could have had it all
(You're gonna wish you never had met me)
Rolling in the deep
(Tears are gonna fall, rolling in the deep)
You had my heart inside of your hand
(You're gonna wish you never had met me)
And you played it, to the beat
(Tears are gon
Baby, I have no story to be told
But I've heard one on you
And I'm gonna make your head burn
Think of me in the depths of your despair
Make a home down there
As mine sure won't be shared*

*(You're gonna wish you never had met me)
The scars of your love remind me of us*

*(Tears are gonna fall, rolling in the deep)
They keep me thinking that we almost had it all
(You're gonna wish you never had met me)
The scars of your love, they leave me breathless
(Tears are gonna fall, rolling in the deep)
I can't help feeling
We could have had it all
(You're gonna wish you never had met me)*



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Rolling in the deep

(Tears are gonna fall, rolling in the deep)

You had my heart inside of your hand

(You're gonna wish you never had met me)

And you played it, to the beat

(Tears are gonna fall, rolling in the deep)

We could have had it all

Rolling in the deep

You had my heart inside of your hand

But you played it, with a beating

Throw your soul through every open door (woah)

Count your blessings to find what you look for (woah)

Turn my sorrow into treasured gold (woah)

You'll pay me back in kind and reap just what you sow (woah)

(You're gonna wish you never had met me)

We could have had it all

(Tears are gonna fall, rolling in the deep)

We could have had it all

(You're gonna wish you never had met me)

It all, it all, it all

(Tears are gonna fall, rolling in the deep)

We could have had it all

(You're gonna wish you never had met me)

Rolling in the deep

(Tears are gonna fall, rolling in the deep)

You had my heart inside of your hand

(You're gonna wish you never had met me)

And you played it to the beat

(Tears are gonna fall, rolling in the deep)

We could have had it all

(You're gonna wish you never had met me)

Rolling in the deep

(Tears are gonna fall, rolling in the deep)

You had my heart inside of your hand

(You're gonna wish you never had met me)

But you played it

You played it

You played it

played it to the beat”.

Adele (2011). *Rolling in the Deep*. Di album 21. XL Recordings.



7. Song Lyrics “Turning Tables”

*“Close enough to start a war
All that I have is on the floor
God only knows what we're fighting for
All that I say, you always say more*

*I can't keep up with your turning tables
Under your thumb I can't breathe*

*So, I won't let you close enough to hurt me
No, I won't rescue you to just desert me
I can't give you the heart you think you gave me
It's time to say goodbye to turning tables
To turning tables*

*Under haunted skies I see you (ooh)
Where love is lost your ghost is found
I braved a hundred storms to leave you
As hard as you try, no, I will never be knocked down, whoa*

*I can't keep up with your turning tables
Under your thumb I can't breathe*

*So, I won't let you close enough to hurt me,
No, I won't rescue you to just desert me
I can't give you the heart you think you gave me
It's time to say goodbye to turning tables
Turning tables*

*Next time I'll be braver
I'll be my own savior
When the thunder calls for me
Next time I'll be braver
I'll be my own savior
Standing on my own two feet*

*I won't let you close enough to hurt me,
No, I won't rescue you to just desert
I can't give you the heart you think you gave me
It's time to say goodbye to turning tables
To turning tables
Turning tables, yeah
Turning, oh”*

Adele (2011). *Turning Tables*. Di album 21. XL Recordings.



B. Review Related Findings

Essentially, research does not begin in isolation; it is typically built upon existing references and related studies. Thus is crucial to acknowledge prior research and its relevance to the upcoming study.

Previous research that was first used by the author was “*The Figurative Language in Niki Zefanya Songs Lyrics*” by Intan A, Bouti S, & Saud J. (2025) This study examines the use of figurative language in five songs by Niki Zefanya: La La Lost You, Lowkey, Every Summertime, High School in Jakarta, and I Like U. These five songs were selected because their lyrics richly express themes of love, loss, and nostalgia. The method used is qualitative descriptive with a library research approach. Data were collected through intensive reading of the song lyrics and a review of relevant literature. For the analysis, this study related to the theory of figurative language proposed by Kennedy and Gioia (2007). The analysis reveals four dominant types of figurative language in the lyrics: metaphor, personification, hyperbole, and symbolism. Hyperbole frequently appears to emphasize the intensity of the emotions being conveyed. Meanwhile, metaphor and symbolism deepen the thematic meaning, so the lyrics are not understood only at a literal level. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that figurative language in Niki Zefanya’s songs has a dual function. Beyond serving as an aesthetic element that enhances the lyrics, figurative language also acts as a means to convey emotional nuance to listeners more effectively.

The second previous research was “*An Analysis of Figurative Language in James Arthur’s Song Lyrics*” by Andikha Prabu Wirayuda, A. W. & colleagues



(2025) This research examines at figurative language in several songs by James Arthur. The method used is a descriptive qualitative approach, the study collected data through observation and analyzed it with content analysis. This study refer to the theory of Geoffrey Leech from (1981), was applied to classify the figurative expressions found in the lyrics. The analysis uncovered 31 instances of figurative language. These consisted of 15 hyperboles, 6 similes, 4 metaphors, 2 metonymies, 2 personifications, 1 litotes, and 1 irony. Among them, hyperbole appeared most frequently. This design shows how figurative language adds emotional weight and thematic depth to contemporary pop songs. The authors also point out that studying these devices can help listeners grasp the underlying emotions and messages more clearly, highlighting the value of lyric analysis for learning how language works in real-world contexts..

The third study, *The Use of Song Lyrics to Analyze Figurative Language Style* by Kurniawan (2024), looked at Adele's album 30 to see what types of figurative language appear and how often each one shows up. The researcher used a qualitative descriptive method combined with a literature review to break down the lyrics and identify different figurative devices. The findings showed several types of figurative language, with symbolism making up 36%, followed by allegory at 28%, simile 18%, personification 9%, and both metaphor and hyperbole at 4.5% each. Symbolism came out on top, which suggests the album relies heavily on symbolic imagery to express deeper meanings and emotions. What this highlights is that figurative language in songs isn't just varied in type, but also in how much each



type is used. It implies that artists might lean on certain styles to create specific rhetorical or emotional effects.

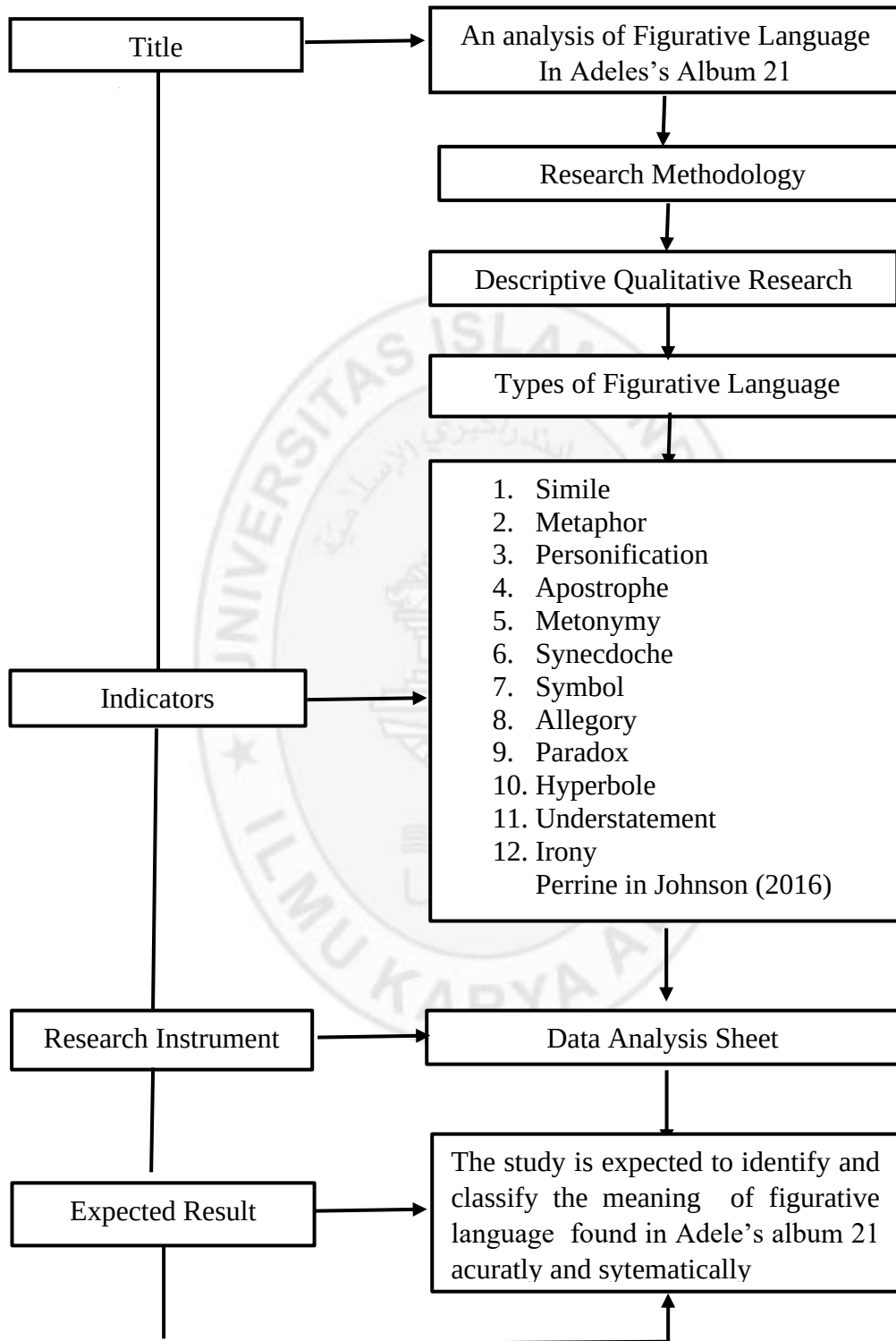
Based on previous studies, there are both similarities and differences with this research. The studies by Intan A. et al. (2025), Andikha Prabu Wirayuda et al. (2025), and Kurniawan (2024) all use a qualitative descriptive approach to examine figurative language in popular song lyrics. This shows that songs are a rich source of figurative expressions for conveying emotion and thematic meaning. The three studies also agree that figurative language is more than just a stylistic ornament. Its function goes beyond that it serves as a tool for expressing emotional intensity and artistic depth in lyrics.

That said, the focus and object of this study differ from earlier research. While previous studies typically examine multiple types of figurative language across various artists and albums such as selected songs by Niki Zefanya, James Arthur's lyrics, and Adele's album 30 this study narrows it down. It focuses specifically on three songs from Adele's album 21. And using Perrine theory. In addition, unlike Kurniawan (2024) who emphasizes the proportion and dominance of each type of figurative language, this research uses Perrin's theory to provide an in-depth interpretation. The goal is to explore how the chosen figurative expressions in those three songs convey emotional meaning and contribute to the overall significance of the lyrics



C. Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework can be seen below.





Based on the conceptual framework above This study is entitled An Analysis of Figurative Language in Adele's Album 21. The research employs a descriptive qualitative method to analyze the use of figurative language found in t song lyrics of Adele's album 21. The focus of the study is limited to three songs of adele namely Set fire to the Rain, Rolling in the Deep, Turning Table. The primary research instrument used in this study is the researcher herself, which to identify record, classify, and interpret the figurative expressions identified in the lyrics. The expected result of this research is to identify and classify the types of figurative language, found in Adele's album 21 in a systematic and accurate manner.

