

**AN ANALYSIS OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE  
IN SELECTED SONGS ABOUT LONELINESS**

**THESIS**



**UIN SUNAN AMPEL  
S U R A B A Y A**

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## ABSTRACT

Dhurika, W. S. (2023). *An Analysis of Figurative Language in Selected Songs about Loneliness*. English Literature Department, Faculty of Adab and Humanities, UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya. Advisors: (I) Dr. Mohammad Kurjum, M.Ag., (II) Tristy Kartika Fi'aunillah, M.A.

This study aims to analyze the figurative language found in songs about loneliness. The researcher is interested in investigating the songs about loneliness because many people felt lonely during the COVID-19 pandemic. In this study, there are two research questions 1). what are the types of figurative language found in the selected songs about loneliness? 2). what are meanings of the figurative language that appears in the selected songs about loneliness? This study used the theory from Kennedy (1979), figurative language consists of comparative it is divided into personification, metaphor, and simile. Contradictive consists of hyperbole, litotes, paradox, and irony. Moreover, correlatives consist of metonymy, synecdoche, symbol, allusion, and ellipsis. .

The data of this study were taken from song recommendations by the followers of @englishfess base on Twitter. The song lyrics were then analyzed by identifying the types of figurative language, and the analysis continued by identifying the meaning of the song lyric. The researcher found 62 data, and the most frequent figurative language in the data analysis is a metaphor with 32 data, hyperbole with 19 data, and personification with 7 data. The least found is simile with 3 data and symbol only found 1 data.

The meaning of each type of figurative language is divided into three types. Comparative consists of personification that compares things to another by giving a human quality to a thing or non-human being, a metaphor that compares something to another thing with the same characteristics, and a simile that compares things using a conjunction such as like or as. Contradictive only found hyperbole in this research, and hyperbole is exaggerated something. The last is the contradictive, only symbol of the type of figurative language found in this research. Symbol can symbolize something, thoughts or things.

**Keywords:** figurative language, song lyrics, loneliness, song about loneliness

## ABSTRAK

Dhurika, W. S. (2023). *Analisis Bahasa Kiasan dalam Lagu Pilihan tentang Kesepian*. Program Studi Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Adab dan Humaniora, UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya. Pembimbing: (I) Dr. Mohammad Kurjum, M.Ag., (II) Tristy Kartika Fi'aunillah, M.A.

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis bahasa kiasan yang ditemukan dalam lagu tentang kesepian. Peneliti tertarik untuk menganalisis lagu-lagu tentang kesepian karena selama pandemi COVID-19 banyak orang yang merasakan kesepian. Dalam penelitian ini terdapat dua pertanyaan penelitian 1). jenis bahasa kiasan apa yang ditemukan dalam lagu-lagu pilihan tentang kesepian? 2). apa makna yang diungkapkan melalui bahasa kiasan dalam lagu-lagu pilihan tentang kesepian? Penelitian ini menggunakan teori dari Kennedy (1979), bahasa kiasan terdiri dari komparatif yang terbagi menjadi personifikasi, metafora, dan simile. Kontradiktif terdiri dari hiperbola, litotes, paradoks, dan ironi. Dan correlatives terdiri dari metonimia, sinekdoke, simbolik, alusio, dan elipsis.

Data penelitian ini diambil dari rekomendasi lagu oleh para followers base twitter bernama @englishfess. Lirik lagu kemudian dianalisis dengan mengidentifikasi jenis bahasa kiasan dan analisis dilanjutkan dengan mengidentifikasi makna lirik lagu. Peneliti menemukan 62 data dan bahasa kiasan yang paling sering digunakan dalam analisis data adalah metafora sebanyak 32 data, hiperbola sebanyak 19 data, dan personifikasi sebanyak 7 data. Yang paling sedikit ditemukan adalah simile dengan 3 data dan simbol hanya ditemukan 1 data.

Arti dari masing-masing jenis bahasa kiasan dibagi menjadi tiga jenis. Komparatif terdiri dari personifikasi yang membandingkan sesuatu dengan yang lain dengan memberikan kualitas manusia pada sesuatu atau bukan manusia, metafora yang membandingkan sesuatu dengan hal lain dengan karakteristik yang sama, dan simile yang membandingkan sesuatu menggunakan konjungsi seperti seperti atau sebagai. Kontradiktif hanya ditemukan hiperbola dalam penelitian ini, dan hiperbola adalah melebih-lebihkan sesuatu. Yang terakhir adalah kontradiktif, satu-satunya simbol dari jenis bahasa kiasan yang ditemukan dalam penelitian ini. Simbol dapat melambangkan sesuatu, pikiran atau benda.

**Kata kunci:** bahasa kiasan, lirik lagi, kesepian, lagu tentang kesepian

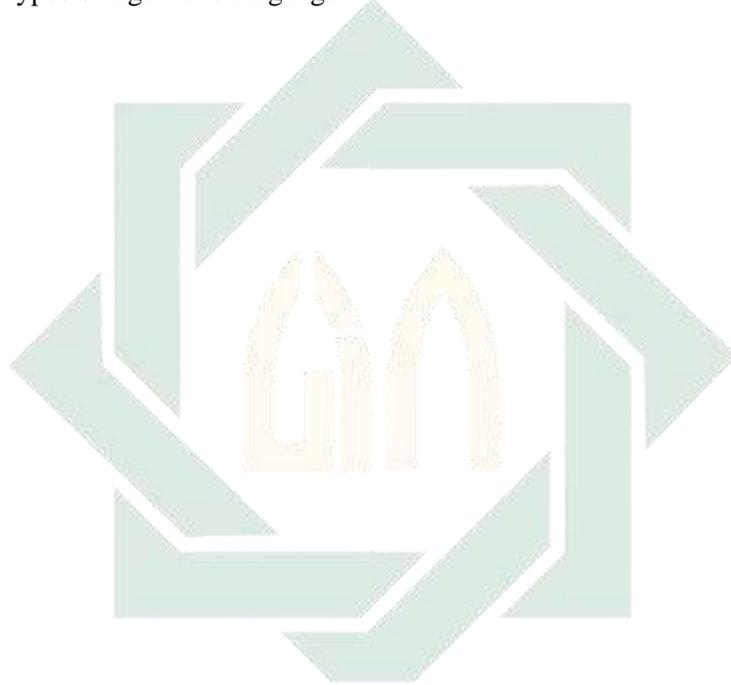
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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains an introduction. This part consists of the background of the study, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, scope limitation, and definition of key terms.

### 1.1 Background of The Study

Humans are social beings and need social interaction in their life. They need to communicate or interact with other people. The primary function of language is a communication tool for humans, either verbal or nonverbal Twenge et al., (2019). Language is a system used to communicate with people in society, and it is fundamental to human interaction Li and Jeong (2020). People use language to express their thoughts and feelings and build relationships in human interaction.

The Indonesian government enforces limitations on human interaction to decrease the spread of the Corona Virus during a global pandemic. Most of the population do their daily activities at the house, even vital activities such as school and work. When some people are out of home, they avoid meeting or talking and maintain a distance of several meters. Radyani et al. (2022) shows that in Indonesia, the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on mental health, especially for college students. Recent research has found that stress levels increased during the pandemic, and it is caused by loneliness. The affection of limitations on human interaction makes people feel socially isolated. In an undetermined period, social isolation can cause loneliness Hartt (2020).

Research by McQuaid et al., (2021) shows that the most people who feel lonely are between the ages of 18-24 during the COVID-19 pandemic. Teenagers usually share feelings with their friends, so limited human interaction distracts their lives and makes them feel lonely. The loneliness feeling of a teenager can decrease mental and emotional health Williams and Braun (2019). Many people are bored and choose to play on social media such as twitter, instagram, facebook, etc. Based on research by Koh and Liew (2022) stated that it is about more than four thousand twitter feed about loneliness. It shows that many twitter users feel lonely, which is directly proportional to physical health. When a teenager feels lonely, it decreases their immune system and increases their risk of being attacked by Corona Virus. Loneliness feeling makes people have no place to tell. Understanding the figurative language in songs about loneliness can provide a sense of calm because the songs heard can help understand the feeling of someone who has lonely feelings.

Music has become essential in people's lives nowadays, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Fortunately, music can easily access many platforms, such as Spotify, Youtube, Apple Music, Joox, Etc. A song can be "commonly listened to" if it has easy-to-understand lyrics and can visualize and memorize the listener's thoughts. The listeners can interpret the lyrics and feel the same as the singer. The listeners can feel happy, angry, motivated, and even shed a tear. People usually listen to songs about their love life, relationships, social life, random thoughts, Etc.

People choose the song based on their feelings, and when they are sad and lonely, they choose a song about loneliness. Listening to music is a way to entertain someone with a lonely feeling, making them feel good. When the lyrics relate to and express their feelings, someone who listens to the music will feel emotionally supported, understood, and less lonely. Songs about loneliness can portray and validate their feeling. It makes them know that

they are not the one who feels lonely and changes theirs into positivity. Listening to music sensations has an equal sense to share with their friend. That offers understanding and entertainment when they feel alone Schäfer et al., (2020). To be able to touch the listener's heart, the song's writers create a song with lyrics that follow common conditions.

To be able to feel and understand the sense of the song, a listener must interpret the lyrics, which sometimes have hidden meanings using figurative language. According to Kennedy and Gioia (1979), Figurative language uses figures of speech. A figure of speech is a way of saying something other than the literal meaning of the word. The figure of speech may occur whenever a speaker or writer departs from the usual denotations of words for the sake of freshness or emphasis. Figurative language has several types based on Kennedy and Gioia (1983), which consist of comparative, contradictive, and correlative. Comparative language is divided into three types. There are personification, metaphor, and simile. Contradictive consists of hyperbole, litotes, paradox, and irony. Furthermore, the last is correlative language, consisting of metonymy, synecdoche, allusion, and ellipsis. Figurative has several types, which the particular characteristic.

There have been several studies that have analyzed figurative language. One previous study used a short story as the source of data. Wibisono and Widodo (2019) Which analyzed an online short story in Jakarta Post using Perrine's theory. The result of the study found that the most frequent type used in a short story is Personification.

Some researchers used a movie as a data source, using Peirines's theory. Anindita (2019), using the theory of Peirines, discovered the figurative language in *Mulan II* Movie. The research found the types of figurative language and success in translating the source language into a target language. Kennedy developed another theory to analyze figurative language. Faruk (2017) it focused on the function of figurative language in the *Great Gatsby*

movie. He is focused on the types and functions of figurative language. The research shows the function of figurative language is to make a good sentence in literary work—the other research from Setyasih (2019) in the script of Frozen Movie. The research recognizes that the most dominant type of figurative language used in the movie's conversation is Repetition, with a 29% percentage.

A few of the previous researchers are using songs as the data source. Suryatini (2016) presents the figurative language by using Haris Jung's album entitled Salam. The research conducted two research problems. Those are the types of figurative language and the meaning of figurative language found in song. The theory used by the researcher is the theory by X.J Kennedy (1979). Fahrezy (2018) analyzed the formalism of figurative language in the lyric of Alan Walker's song. The researcher employs a descriptive qualitative method to analyze the data. The research shows that formalism is applied in figurative language. Fitria (2018) aims to know the types, and most frequent figurative language used in One Direction's Up All Night album. The research data consist of phrases or sentences in a song lyric that analyze using the qualitative descriptive method. It uses 13 songs in the album. The result found six types of figurative language: repetition, parallelism, metaphor, simile, and hyperbole. Moreover, the most frequently used is repetition with 50 lyrics.

Milana and Ardi (2021) It also investigated the types and the most dominant types of figurative language used in Saif Adam's songs. To explain the result of this research uses, the descriptive qualitative method. The result found 14 hyperbole, 3 ironies, 20 metaphors, 11 personifications, 10 similes, 5 litotes, 10 metonymies, and 7 paradoxes. And the most dominant type used is a metaphor. Another research from Rusdiyanto and Astutik (2018) conducted the research using Adele and Taylor Swift's selected song. The result found 23 figurative languages in Adele's song and 22 figurative language in Taylor Swift's song. From



research expects to inform the readers about the song's hidden meaning behind the figurative language.

## **1.2 Statement of The Problem**

From the background of the study, this study would like to answer the following question:

1. What are types of figurative language are found in the selected songs about loneliness?
2. What are meaning of the figurative language that appears in the selected songs about loneliness?

## **1.3 Objective of The Study**

1. To find out the types of figurative language in selected songs about loneliness
2. To find out the meaning of figurative language in the selected songs about loneliness.

## **1.4 Significance of The Study**

The significance of this research is to contribute to the study of linguistics, especially in figurative language, which is part of semantics. This research aims to recognize several types of figurative language in songs about loneliness and their meaning. Hopefully, this research benefits all the students, mainly those majoring in English Department, who analyze the same problems with this study. The researcher expects it can help the readers deepen and understand the song's hidden meaning.

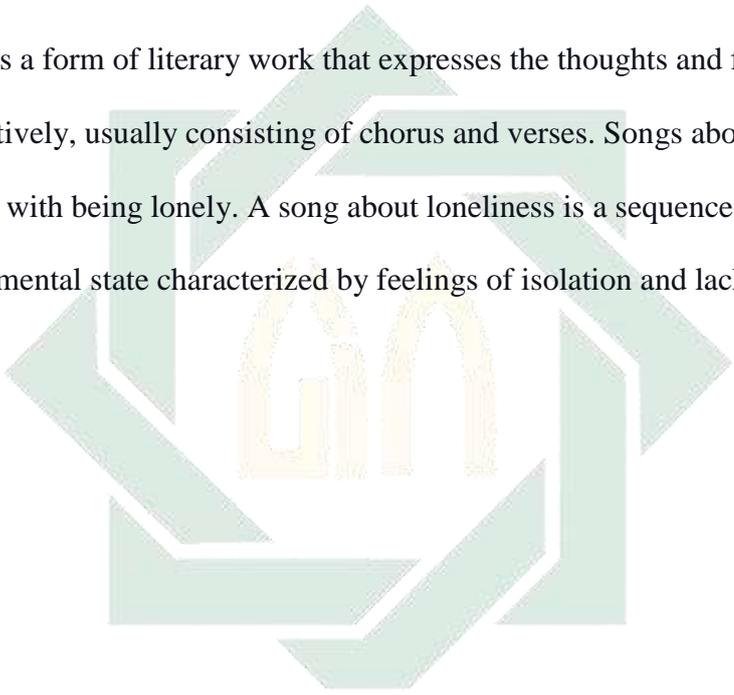
## **1.5 Scope and The Limitation**

This research's scope is the researcher analyzing the figurative language in the selected Song about loneliness. The researcher used the theory of figurative language by Kennedy (1979). The limitation of this research is that the researcher only takes data from selected songs. Moreover, the researcher found out the types of figurative language and the meaning of the songs.

## 1.6 Definition of Key Terms

**Figurative language** is a word or phrases meaningfully, but not convey the real meaning. A figure of speech is a way of saying something other than the literal meaning of the world. The figure of speech may occur whenever a speaker or writer departs from the usual denotations of words for the sake of freshness or emphasis. Kennedy and Gioia (1979).

**The song lyric** is a form of literary work that expresses the thoughts and feelings of the song writer imaginatively, usually consisting of chorus and verses. Songs about loneliness is a song closely related with being lonely. A song about loneliness is a sequence of words related to an emotional mental state characterized by feelings of isolation and lack of social relationships.



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## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter explains the theoretical basis of matters relating to research. Chapter II describes figurative language based on Kennedy's (1979) perspective, loneliness feeling, and songs related to loneliness feeling.

#### 2.1 Figurative Language

Figurative language becomes part of diction or word choice, which questions whether or not the use of certain words, phrases, or clauses is appropriate to deal with the linguistic hierarchy, both at the level of individual word choice, phrases, clauses, sentences, and discourse as a whole. Figurative language can be limited as a way of expressing thoughts through language specifically that shows the soul and personality of the language user Gorys Keraf (2009). Figurative language has a limitation in expressing thoughts through language. Every writer has their perspective to describe the meaning of the word, and it can be different for every person.

According to Abrams (1999), figurative language style is the words or phrases used to create a specific effect that is different from what we usually take as its literal meaning. Figurative language has a meaning hidden beautifully behind writing that usually only understands the literal meaning. By using figurative language, it can create a different effect from a literary work.

Every literary work has several types of figurative language. Based on Kennedy's theory, figurative language is comparative, contradictory, and correlative. From those figurative languages elaborate as:

##### 2.1.1 Comparative

Comparative figurative language consists of personification, metaphor and simile.









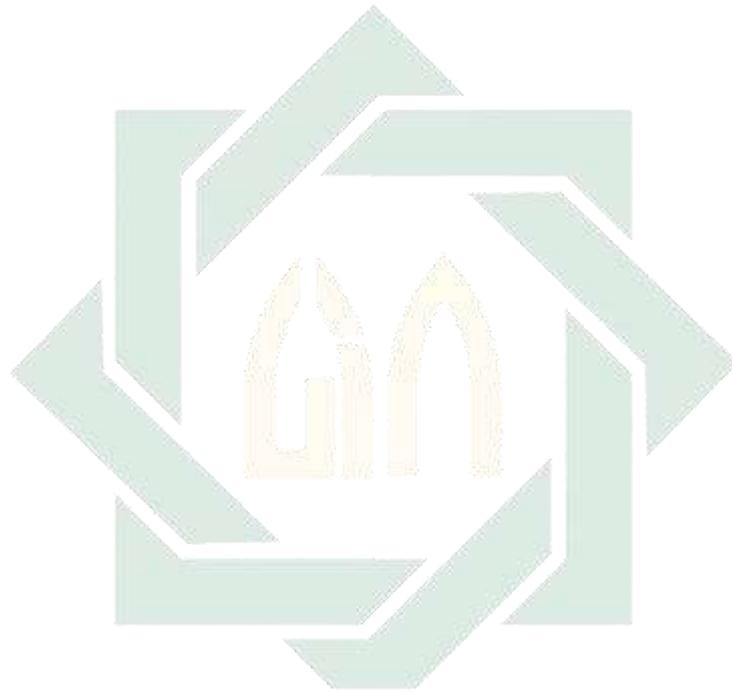








song's lyrics can identify loneliness. The song lyrics about loneliness usually represent the uncomfortable feelings related to solitude conditions Farmaki and Stergio (2019). Loneliness aspects in a song convey pent-up sadness, society's toxic standards, societal pressure, abandonment anxiety, overthinking wrong thoughts, and feeling hopeless, unloved, and disappointed Makiling et al., (2022).



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## CHAPTER III

### RESEARCH METHOD

#### 3.1 Research Design

This study is about figurative language, which takes the data from recommendation loneliness song lyrics and becomes an essential aspect of answering the research problem. The researcher will find out the types of figurative language and the message revealed through the figurative language in the recommendation loneliness song. The researcher uses the descriptive qualitative method to analyze the data. The descriptive qualitative method is a procedure that was applied to describe the data. To analyze the data researcher used the theory from Kennedy (1979). The data of this research is descriptive and explanation the loneliness song was recommended by the followers of @englishfess\_ on twitter. According to Kennedy's theory, there are comparative, contradictive, and correlative. This study is non-numeric data, but uses description to analyze the data.

#### 3.2 Data Collection

The data collection contains of data and data source, instrument, technique of data collection, and technique of data analysis.

##### 3.2.1 Data and Data Source

Based on recommendations by the @englishfess\_'s followers on twitter, this research took fifteen data of songs. That are *Loneliness Knows by My Name-Westlife*, *Oblivion by Indians*, *As It Was by Harry Styles*, *House of Memories by Panic! At The Disco*, *Liability by Lorde*, *More Than This by One Direction*, *Modern Loneliness by Lauv*, *Sweet Disposition by The Temper Trap*, *Safe and Sound by Different Heaven*, *Carry Me Away by John Mayer*, *Broken by Anson Seabre*, *Need You Now by Lady Antabellum*, *Lonely by Justin Bieber*, *Empty by Olivia O'Brien*, and *Exile by Taylor Swift ft Bon Iver*. This research uses song

lyrics as data, formed as a text. The researcher asked recommendation loneliness songs to the followers of the @englishfess\_. After that, the researcher search and copied the song lyric from <https://www.lyricsify.com/>.

### 3.2.2 Instrument

The instrument of this research was the researcher herself to collect the data by ask songs recommendation, searching the lyric from the internet, and understanding the related theory that she used in this research. The researcher was the main instrument for analyzing the data. This research has no interview, questioning, or observation to collect the data. Additionally, the researcher also uses support tools such as laptops, flash drives, internet connections, smartphones, papers, and ballpoints to support the research.

### 3.2.3 Technique of Data Collection

The researcher uses several techniques to get any data to make accurate, and there are some steps that the researcher does in collecting the data:

#### 1. Asking for Recommendation

The researcher sent the question to the twitter base's followers named @englishfess\_ to recommend some loneliness songs.

#### 2. Searching and Matching The Lyric of The Songs

The researcher search on the web that provides song lyrics <https://www.lyricsify.com/>.

To match the lyric and song researcher listen to the song and reads the lyric carefully.

#### 3. Copy and Printed The Song Lyrics

After finding the song lyrics on the web, the researcher copying to Microsoft word and then printed them out to the hard file.

































































feeling by adding an emphasis to the lyric so the listener can get the emotions throughout the song.

## 4.2 Discussion

After the fifteen data had been analyzed, the researcher found various types of figurative in the song lyrics. The researcher found that the most frequent figurative languages in analyzing the data above are metaphor, hyperbole, and personification. Those types of figurative language are often found in literary work because they add more colours to the writings. The figurative language adds the writer's intensity in conveying the meaning and the attitude. In music itself, figurative language is used to make the writing comes more dramatic and profound so that it can give an aesthetic purpose to the listener, especially in the song about loneliness.

Looking at the study that had been done before this study, many researchers used song lyrics as the data and the Kennedy theory to analyze the data as in the study Suryatini (2016), Fahrezy (2018), Milana & Ardi (2021). Those studies have the highest similarity with this current study. Despite the same types of data and the theory to analyze the data, this study stands out is how the researcher gained the data. Many researchers gained the data by selecting themselves, and it makes that study less natural and seems too manufactured, but this study is different.

To gain the data, the researcher of this study asked for song recommendations to twitter users in @englishfess\_s' followers. By asking for a recommendation, the researcher got the data from twitter users, making the data come out naturally because the researcher did not choose it herself. In this study, Kennedy's theory of figurative language is used to analyze the data. Figurative language theory by Kennedy is divided into comparative, contradictive, and correlative.



## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

In this chapter of the study, the researcher provides a conclusion of the study to summarize the analysis and the suggestion for future researchers.

#### 5.1 Conclusion

This study concludes that all of the findings answer the research problem by using descriptive qualitative to explain the findings and the discussion of this research. Based on the theory discussed, this study focuses on the types of figurative language and the meaning revealed in songs about loneliness. The findings show that figurative language makes the songs more beautiful and meaningful. After analyzing all the data, the researcher found the figurative language in the song lyrics from the song that recommended by twitter users. The researcher found 62 data. The most frequent figurative language came from metaphor with 32 data, followed by hyperbole with 19 data, and personification with 7 data. The least found is simile with 3 data and symbol only found 1. The researcher did not find any litotes, paradox, irony, metonymy, synecdoche, allusion, or ellipsis in this study.

The result of the second research problem shows that all of the lyrics contain loneliness in the songs. The figurative language has a significant impact in gaining the listener's attention. Usually, the more dramatic and complicated the lyric, the more people want to listen to the song and the meaning. The meaning of each type of figurative language is divided into three types. Comparative consists of personification that compares things to another by giving a human quality to a thing or non-human being, a metaphor that compares something to another thing with the same characteristics, and a simile that compares items using a conjunction such as like or as. Contradictive only found hyperbole in this research. Hyperbole is exaggerated something. The last is the contradictive, only symbol of the type of

figurative language found in this research. Symbols can symbolize something, thoughts or things. Any figurative language makes the listener get the anger and the feeling without having to figure out first what the lyric's meaning is.

## 5. 2 Suggestion

The present study intends to seek the figurative language in the lyrics of the song that has been recommended by the twitter users from a base called @englishfess\_s' on twitter. This study is dedicated to contributing in analyzing figurative language and its meaning not only in famous literary works like novels, poetry, short story, movie script, or comics but in the underrated work of human; song lyric.

The researcher of this study suggests that future researchers place an interest in the figurative language scope and to take advanced research about song lyrics using different theories. There is so much to discover in the song about loneliness, not just song about loneliness that can be analyzed using figurative language, and there are so many genres of song that can be considered to analyze.

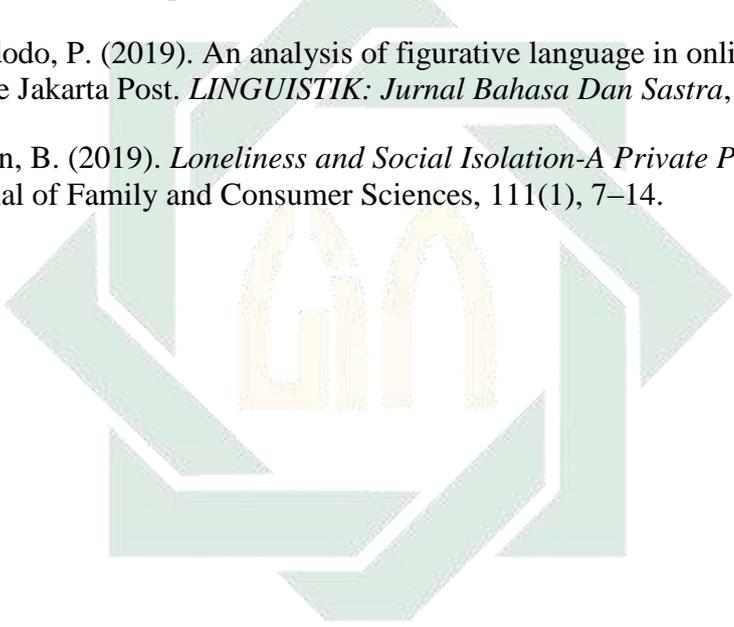
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