

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Problem

Linguistics is the scientific study of language, paying attention to its structure, meaning, and use in different contexts. A core branch of the field, semantics, investigates how words and phrases express meaning literally and metaphorically. Metaphorical language, including devices that involve metaphors, metonymy, and shift of meaning, is ubiquitous in everyday conversation, especially in creative media such as music. Hip-hop and rap are among the most word-filled genres of music, born from the African American societies of America and evolving to a global society. Wordplay, narratives through stories, and describing their people society are typical with these genres employing slang language, double meanings words, and idioms very often as a way of portraying one's own suffering, social injustice, and people culture. In the UK, rap music has developed its own distinct identity, with grime, Afrobeats, and dancehall influences, artists employing their own linguistic styles to tell their stories, such as J Hus.

Figurative language is a critical component of hip-hop and rap because it allows artists to communicate complicated messages in sophisticated and powerful ways. By using metaphors, rappers can make comparisons that introduce depth to their stories, which allows listeners to discover several layers of meaning in their lyrics. Metonymy is also prevalent, whereby words or phrases are replaced with related ideas to establish stronger connections (e.g., referring to "the streets" to signify urban life or conflict). Furthermore, devices such as symbolism, personification, hyperbole, and wordplay add to the complexity and richness of rap lyrics. Figurative language is not only aesthetically motivated but also echoes the socio-political realities of the artist's existence, grappling with issues such as poverty, discrimination, and resistance. UK rap music fuses multicultural sources and linguistic structures, including slang and figurative language that is intelligible to its listeners.

Afroswing, sometimes referred to as Afro-bashment, is a UK-born fusion that combines the rhythmic flow and street attitude of UK rap and grime with the rhythm and uplifting groove of afrobeats and dancehall. The vocals typically combine light Auto-Tune with melodic rap, including West African pidgin/vernacular, patois, a Jamaican slang language, and British slang into conversational, captivating lyrics about identity, romance, nightlife, and hustle.

Originating from East London in the early 2000s, grime is a British electronic music genre marked by its fast tempo, rough lyrics, and untamed urban energy. The focus is on the lyrics, which often employ sophisticated wordplay and vivid narrative to represent metropolitan life, social disparity, individual struggles, and resiliency. Often delivered via deft wordplay and vivid storytelling, the lyrics center on city life, social inequality, personal difficulties, and resilience. Grime and Afroswing are related expressions of Black British music that share roots but differ in speed, tone, and lyrical content. Reflecting East London streets, grime keeps its speed, raw, and aggressive attitude whereas Afroswing blends Afrobeat and dancehall for a melodic, hybrid style that creates music that is well-known, festive, and dance-oriented. Both have contributed to the vivid and always evolving fabric of British urban music.

J Hus, a prominent figure in UK rap and Afroswing, used figurative language adeptly in *Big Conspiracy*, and thus his lyrics provided a worthwhile topic for linguistic examination. The Gambian-born British rapper, singer, and songwriter, Momodou Lamin Jallow is better known by his stage name, J Hus. He rose to fame in the middle of the decade and played a key role in fusing dancehall, grime, Afrobeats, and UK rap, which paved the way for the rise of Afroswing. His songs represent both individual experiences and broader social themes using metaphorical language, street jargon, and cultural allusions in his lyrics. With songs that delve into themes of trust, hardship, structural issues, and introspection, *Big Conspiracy*, which was released in 2020, solidifies his reputation as a lyrical innovator.

This study aimed to describe the use of figurative language by J Hus in his lyrics to bridge the gap between linguistic analysis and music studies. Through an analysis of *Big Conspiracy*, this study aimed to shed light on the linguistic complexities of J Hus's work, highlighting the functions of metonymy, metaphors,

and semantic shifts in UK rap. Conversations concerning linguistic variance, identity, and urban expression can also be enhanced by comprehending the figurative language in his lyrics, which can provide insights into the cultural and social narratives found in modern British music.

## **1.2 Identification of the Problem**

Based on the background of the problem, it has been identified that as the primary songwriter of his album *Big Conspiracy*, J Hus have used language in his song lyrics that may contain hidden meaning. The listeners themselves might have some difficulties to understand the meaning behind the song lyrics since they are sometimes ignored or misunderstood since they frequently use slang and coded language.

## **1.3 Limitation of the Problem**

Based on the problem identification, this research focused to analyze the figurative language contained in 14 song lyrics from J Hus's album *Big Conspiracy*.

## **1.4 Formulation of the Problem**

Based on the limitation of the problem, the formulated this research problem as follows:

1. What are the types of figurative language used in song lyrics in *Big Conspiracy* album?
2. How can J Hus' *Big Conspiracy* album be interpreted in context with his social and personal experiences? What were the messages he wanted to convey?

## **1.5 Objectives of the Research**

Based on the formulation of the problem, the objectives of this research are:

1. To classify and explain the types of figurative language used in song lyrics in *Big Conspiracy* album.

2. To interpret J Hus' *Big Conspiracy* album in context of his social and personal experiences, and identify its key messages.

## **1.6 Benefit of the Research**

Hopefully that this research will be beneficial to people who wishes to learn more about figurative language to discover meaning behind a song lyric as a music listener or a researcher. Also, this research can be used as reference for students who want to conduct similar research as this, or for teachers, this research can used as teaching material.

## **1.7 Systematic Organization of the Research**

The framework of this term paper, which titled “Semantic Analysis of the Figurative Language Found in *Big Conspiracy* Album by J Hus (2020)”. This research is organized into five chapters, as followed:

### **CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION**

This chapter consisted of seven parts of the research layout, explaining about the background of the problem, identification of the problem, limitation of the problem, formulation of the problem, objectives of the research, benefits of the research, and systematic organization of the research.

### **CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This chapter contained theories that are related to this research, such as: definition of semantics, definition of figurative language, and types of figurative language.

### **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHOD**

This chapter covers the research's time and place, methodology, object and data, data gathering strategy, and data analysis strategy. It offers comprehensive details on the

strategy and techniques the researcher used to write this term paper.

**CHAPTER 4: SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF THE FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE FOUND IN *BIG CONSPIRACY* ALBUM BY J HUS (2020)**

In this chapter, this study examined the data based on the research objectives by finding out types of figurative languages used in J Hus album *Big Conspiracy*, and analyzed the meanings of figurative expression used in the song lyrics.

**CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION**

This chapter contained the concluded the results of this research, and suggestions were provided for future researchers.

