

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains of an introduction containing background of problems, reason for choosing the topic, statement of the problem, the aims of the study, limitation of the study and research method and the organization of the paper.

### 1.1 Background

Language as a spontaneously performing plays an important role in every aspect of our daily activity. The most significant aspect enhanced by language is a social aspect. However, the social aspect itself included our relationship with the non living and living things, especially human being. Through the language, we can express what we are feeling on such as love and hate, happy and sad, like and dislike, and all the feeling that cannot write one by one.

Halliday (1994) defines that there are three functions of language: textual, interpersonal and experiential (ideational). In Halliday's book he explains that those components, also called 'metafunctions', are the manifestations of two very general purposes which underline all uses of language: (i) to understand the environment (ideational), and (ii) to act on the others in it (interpersonal). The textual function itself means that the relevance of the other two (ideational and interpersonal). In addition, according to Fairclough (1995), whereas the ideational function refers to the experience of the speakers of the world and its phenomena, the interpersonal function

embodies the insertion of speakers' own attitudes and evaluations about the phenomena in question, and establishing a relationship between speakers and listeners. Instrumental to these two functions is the textual function. It is through the textual function of language that speakers are able to produce texts that are understood by listeners. It is an enabling function connecting discourse to the co-text and con-text in which it occurs. However, understanding a text is not easy because how the content of the text is presented and the sort of angle or perspective the writer (or speaker) is taking is oftentimes out-of-sight. Language itself, as Hilgard, et. al. (1975) explains, "the system by which patterns of meaning are communicated through patterns of signs or symbols and hence, no wonder if a text usually conveys bias meanings in it" (p.368).

For all the reasons above, this is interesting to study since there are so many singers who write and sing their songs on the basis of their personal experience. Avril Lavigne, one of the most famous female American rock singers writes the songs lyrics by herself mostly and one of her incredible song is "Skater Boy". As far as the writer knows Avril Lavigne's song lyrics influenced by her personal life. Moreover, there are many changes in every album from the first one until the third one that she released. Here, the Transitivity System is applied as the main tool of analysis to analyze the verbal text, and theories of reading images are applied to analyze the visual text. The Fairclough's framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is chosen as the method of analysis.

Even though Critical Discourse Analysis is oftentimes used as an approach to unpack the hidden socio-political ideology lies behind texts in media but it does not mean that it cannot be applied to examine another text beside the texts in media. Song lyrics are of course types of texts which also have some hidden issues and ideology and hence, Critical Discourse Analysis can be used as a tool to describe those implicit issues and ideology. In this study, however, the writer also included a visual text analysis because it is never possible to read meaning directly off the verbal and visual textual signs.

### **1.2 Reason for Choosing the Topic**

Since the process in the Transitivity System associated with it certain functional participant roles, it is expected that we can get an overall comprehension on the area of meanings through the process type occurred in the song lyrics. It is hoped that by using the systematic functional grammar in analyzing Avril Lavigne songs lyrics, it can give better point of view in perceiving and understanding how do the song lyrics construct the identity of Avril Lavigne. Meanwhile, the study would like to reveal the issue searching which is not explicitly stated, if not hidden, in Avril Lavigne's song lyrics using CDA as its analytical framework.

The other point why it is Avril Lavigne's song lyrics instead of the other lyrics that the study investigated is because Avril Lavigne is in fact the world-icons of teenage music. Elliot, A.L. (2008), "in June 2002, Avril Lavigne released *Let Go*. It was a huge success. Eventually selling over 5 million copies on the strength of 3

singles "Complicated," "Sk8terBoi" and "I'm With You". She won Best New Artist in a Video at the 2002 MTV Video Music awards, spotlighting the public's new affinity for skater-girl punk instead of bubblegum pop". Her new found punk-inspired style caught on with her fans as many young girls began to wear her signature dark eye-makeup, undershirt and a neck-tie. And perhaps the highest compliment was her 5 Grammy nominations, including Song of the Year "Complicated." Avril was not only a star but also she was a pop culture icon", *B'girl Magazine*, March Edition, (p. 34-35).

### **1.3 Statement of the Problems**

The writer is very much interested in exploring how the Avril Lavigne's song lyric texts represent her identity construction. In the present study, the research problems are formulated in the following questions:

1. How do the song lyrics construct the identity of Avril Lavigne?
2. What types of process are predominantly used in the Avril Lavigne song lyrics?

#### **1.4 Aims of the Study**

The study aims at finding the answers to the questions in exploring how the Avril Lavigne's song lyric texts represent the positions of Indonesian women, especially in the teenage group those are:

1. To find out the identity construction of Avril Lavigne in the song lyrics.
2. To analyze the types of process which is predominantly used in the Avril Lavigne's song lyrics.

#### **1.5 Limitation of the Study**

So far, Avril Lavigne has released 3 albums (Let Go, Under My Skin, and The Best Damn Thing) or about 56 her own songs and sings several other people songs in her music career. Each song has different background stories. Most of Avril Lavigne songs tell about her experience personal life. Limitation in time, fund and analytical ability makes the study simply focuses on the issue of the identity construction that is hidden in Avril Lavigne songs lyrics.

The lyrics that were analyzed are 6 songs in Avril Lavigne albums that written by herself. From each album, the writer will analyze 2 song lyrics. Those Avril Lavigne songs which were written by somebody else are out of discussion.

## 1.6 Research Method

The Transitivity System is applied as the main tool of analysis to analyze the verbal text, and theories of reading images are applied to analyze the visual text. The Transitivity System has the significant roles in relation to the dimension of Field where the process occurrences and the role of the participant consider as realizing interactants' encoding of their experiential reality: the world of action, relations, participants and circumstances.

Meanwhile, CDA has its own method to develop a framework. CDA offers a practical and theoretical frame work designed to address the question and analysis. It is relevant to the particular data and context that can be used to develop wider theoretical insight. This study is a qualitative study using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as its analytical framework. Wray says, "A qualitative study involves description and analysis rather than the counting features" (1998: 95), and hence, the study uses descriptive method to describe the data-collected. CDA is then used as the framework of the study in examining characters develop as depicted in Avril Lavigne's songs lyrics.

In conducting the research, the writer will follow several steps, those are:

1. Data Collection

It is important to collect all song lyrics written by Avril Lavigne from the first album until the third album. Then, the next step is choosing six lyrics needed for study; each album was taken two song lyrics. The questionnaire is also given to the



10 respondents who are Avril Lavigne biggest fans to get more information about Avril Lavigne. The writer gives the questionnaire in order to get comparison between the texts results and the answers given by the respondents.

## 2. Data Analysis

To figure out the characters develop in Avril Lavigne's song lyrics, the Systemic Functional Linguistic (Transitivity System) is applied as the basic tool of analysis to analyze the verbal text, and theories of reading images are applied to analyze the visual text. And then, Fairclough's framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is chosen as the method of analytical framework. The research methodology is presented in detail in Chapter III.

### **1.7 The Organization of the Paper**

The paper is organized into five chapters. Each chapter has its own capacity to explain the contents in details. The Chapter I is background; this chapter presents the background, the reason for choosing the topic, limitation of the study, the research questions, the aims of the study, the significant of the study, research method, and the organization of the paper.

The Chapter II is theoretical foundation; this chapter presents review of theories relevant to the topic of the study. The chapter discusses the concepts of text, Discourse Analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis, Systemic Functional Linguistic, and the visual system of Transitivity.

The Chapter III describes the procedures of the research used by the writer to conduct the whole study. It includes the research method, the data source, the procedure of the research, and the techniques of collecting and analyzing the data.

The Chapter IV is Finding and Discussions; it consists of a presentation of the data obtained from the study, followed by interpretation and explanation of the data.

The Chapter V consists of the conclusions of the result of the study and the discussions in the previous chapter. The chapter also presents the writer's suggestions for readers for further studies about related issues.

