

ANALYSIS OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE IN STEPHEN SANCHEZ'S SONG LYRICS

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ABSTRACT

Figurative language is communication with connotation; it may be in the form of a phrase. This research aims to identify the different kinds of figurative language used in the lyrics of Stephen Sanchez's songs. The theory from Leech (1981) was used to assess the meaning of figurative language, and the theory from Perrine & Arp (1991) was utilized to distinguish the different varieties of figurative language. The findings of this study demonstrated the use of seven figurative languages, including 12.5% of personification, 12.5% of simile, 12.5% of symbol, 25% of metaphor, and 37.5% of hyperbole in Stephen Sanchez's songs. According to the analysis, hyperbolic figurative language is the most prevalent in Stephen Sanchez's song lyrics.

Key Word: *figurative language, song, lyrics*

INTRODUCTION

In living life, humans use language to communicate with each other. Language is a medium of communication to convey messages, either orally or through writing. As humans, communication and interaction are needed. We cannot separate from each other to fulfill our needs to live our lives. People need good communication for good interactions, and good interactions make people live well. Brown (2007) states that language is a systematic instrument to communicate ideas or feelings by using sounds, gestures, or signs. Language is a

means to convey intent and purpose to other people with communication that can be done in oral form.

The message between the speaker and the hearer is conveyed by language (Sabata & Ibrahim, 2018). One of the most important tools used by humans to communicate with one another is language (Hariyanto, 2017). Language is a popular form of communication in communities where communicators and communicants can share ideas, thoughts, and other information (Siregar et al., 2021).

Figurative language is considered to be more effective at conveying the author's meaning due to several reasons. First, it allows readers to enjoy literary works through their imaginations. Second, it is a way to add more imagery to make poetry, to make abstracts concrete, to make literary works more attractive. Third, it is a way to add emotional power to a statement and to add attitude along with information. Fourth, it is a way to emphasize a point (Perrine & Arp, 1991). Perrine (in Kurniawan, 2014) states several types of figurative language: Simile, Metaphor, Metonymy, Apostrophe, Synecdoche, Hyperbole, Symbol, Allegory, Irony, Paradox, Personifications, and understatement.

Several studies related to figurative language have been conducted previously. The first study was conducted by Setiawati & Maryani (2018). The study aims to determine the types of figurative language used in Taylor Swift's song lyrics and to describe the contextual meaning of the

language. The research data was obtained from two songs in Taylor Swift's album. The study uses a qualitative descriptive method. Observation and literature study was applied in collecting the data of the research. The types of figurative language found in the study consist of simile, metaphor, hyperbole, paradox, irony, and personification. The findings show that hyperbole is the most dominant figurative language in Taylor Swift's songs.

The second study was conducted by Ibrahim et al. (2019). This study aims to determine the types and meanings of figurative language in the lyrics of the song "Endless Love". This research applied a descriptive method. The research data was divided into two categories: primary and secondary data. The primary data was taken from the song lyrics, and the secondary data was obtained from articles and books. The data analysis applied a pure structuralism approach, depending on the type and meaning of figurative language.

The third study was conducted by Fitria (2018). This study aimed to determine the types of figurative language and the most dominant figurative language used in the lyrics of One Direction album entitled “Up All Night”. The type of research is descriptive qualitative which describes the analysis in a factual, accurate, and systematic manner. The data in this study include phrases or sentences found in the lyrics of the album “Up All Night” by One Direction. Based on the research findings, there are several figurative languages in the One Direction “Up All Night” album.

The three previous studies are relevant to this study since the analysis focuses on figurative language in song lyrics. The difference is in the data source. Although there are similarities in the structure of this research, the meaning of the language in the song lyrics that the author uses is certainly different. The song that the authors use as the data source has extraordinary figurative

language and is also in accordance with the development of young people nowadays.

The Types of Figurative Language

Language is an arbitrary sound symbol that is useful for human communication. Language has two types: literal language and figurative language. To touch the speaker and unite desires, figurative language can be used since it has meaningful emotions, cause shock, and persuade into action (Lang, 2002).

The most commonly used types of figurative language are metaphor, simile, personification, and hyperbole. In each of those types of figurative language, the author implicitly or explicitly compares something to something else (Rhody, 2012). There are many types of figurative language that are very interesting to learn.

1. Simile

According to Kennedy and Gioia (2005), simile is a figurative language that

states an object, but something that is compared to something that is not similar. Simile is achieved when two things are not compared, only exaggeration is added by stating that one is superior to the other in intensity. The characteristics of similes are the use of the words 'like' and 'as' when comparing them.

2. **Metaphor**

Metaphor is a figurative language that directly compares one thing to another (Lang, 2002). The importance of metaphor is to understand the meaning of one thing which is expressed by another thing. Metaphor is an implied similarity that identifies one thing with another.

3. **Hyperbole**

Hyperbole is figurative language that exaggerates and emphasizes a point more than fact. Hyperbole can be added to fiction to increase the color and power of a character. Dennis (1996) stated that

hyperbole is a figure of speech that has a statement containing exaggeration.

4. **Irony**

Irony is interpreted as the use of figurative language to produce the opposite meaning of the literal meaning or where one thing is stated, but something else is intended. Irony refers to words with an implication opposite to their usual meaning. The irony extends beyond its use as a figure of speech that has meanings. Irony takes place when the opposite of what a person intended to be done, or expected to happen, happened instead.

5. **Personification**

Personification is a type of language style that gives meaning to human characteristics to inanimate objects, animals, or ideas. Kennedy (1983) stated that personification is the attribution of one's behavior or character to inanimate objects or abstract ideas, which are fundamental as rhetorical figures.

6. **Paradox**

Paradox is a statement that appears to contain two contradictory facts but can or may be true. It is an apparent contradiction that is somehow true is called a paradox. However, even though the statement seems contradictory, the paradox usually underscores the possibility that the two may be appropriate.

7. **Repetition**

Repetition is a kind of figurative language that repeats words or groups words in a sentence to emphasize and create a poetic or rhythmic effect.

Song and Lyrics

A song is an artistic composition of tones or sounds that are sequential, combined, and temporally related (often accompanied by musical instruments) to obtain a musical composition that has unity and continuity (contains rhythm). It also consists of a variety of tones or rhythmic

sounds. Song is a very popular literary work.

It is also one that is very liked and very close to the people because they will not only get pleasure but songs are also needed to express point of view, discuss the history of society or someone's life. Songs are also used to inspire people who listen to them or even change their minds.

A song is usually written in simple language to understand at first hearing. Etymologically, song is defined as the verb to sing. A song is a piece of music with an accompaniment of sound, without accompaniment or the act of singing. Songs can be broadly divided into various forms, depending on the criteria used.

Lyrics are a collection of words that make up a song, usually consisting of a stanza and a chorus. The meaning of the lyrics can be expressed or implied. According to Hornby (2000), lyrics describe one's personal feelings and thoughts. Lyrics may be written about many topics, although they very often describe the emotions of love

and grief. In another sense, Popular song lyrics and musical compositions seem to be worded as opposed to music. Perhaps these are not often lyrical in a poetic sense.

The song lyrics by Stephen Sanchez consist of many types of figurative language. Therefore, the researchers are interested in conducting this study to find out the types and the meaning of the figurative language in the song. Hopefully, this study can contribute to the study of figurative language and may serve as a reference for future studies.

METHOD

This study is descriptive qualitative research because the study describes the types of figurative language. Descriptive qualitative research tends to use non numerical data and focuses on meaning-making.

The data of this study were taken from the lyrics of the songs by Stephen Sanchez entitled “Hold Her While You

Can”, “Lady by the Sea”, “Because Of You”, “Love Life”, and “Until I Found You”. The songs by Stephen Sanchez are selected as the data source since his songs have the ability to influence listeners because they combine a distinctive musical tone, lovely language, profound lyrics that may be taken literally or metaphorically, and also figure of speech.

There are several steps in collecting the data, namely, listening to the songs on YouTube, reading the lyrics, and classifying the data based on the types of figurative languages. In analyzing the data, the writer used the theory proposed by Perrine & Arp (1991) and analyzes the meaning by using the theory proposed by Leech (1981).

DISCUSSION

The types of figurative language were analyzed by using the theory proposed by Perrine & Arp (1991), while the meaning of the lyrics are analyzed by the theory of

Leech (1981). The types of figurative language can be seen in table 1.

Types of Figurative Language	Occurrence	Percentage
Personification	1	12.5%
Metaphor	2	25%
Simile	1	12.5%
Hyperbole	3	37.5%
Symbol	1	12.5%
Total	8	100%

1. Personification

Perrine and Arp (1991) suggest that personification is a figure of speech

assigning human characteristics to non-human objects.

Data 1 : *She's a flower among the weeds, more beautiful than any rose*

The lyric in data 1 is classified as personification because human nature is attributed to an object. The concept of personification that can be identified in this lyric is shown in the line “*She's a flower among the weeds*”. The lyric is classified as personification in figurative language. The lyric “*Flower among the weed*” depicts human activities that describe someone as beautiful or elegant. Based on the theory proposed by Leech (1981), the lyrics above are categorized as connotative meaning. According to Leech (1981), connotative meaning is the value of an expression that has the virtue of what it refers to, over and above pure conceptual content. The lyrics “*She is a flower among the weeds more beautiful than any rose*” has to do with what the songwriter meant by connections. The connotative meaning of the lyrics above is

that the songwriter wants to tell people that the woman he likes is the only one he thinks is more beautiful than other women.

2. Metaphor

According to Keraf (in Allo, 2015), metaphor is a variety of analogy that compare two things directly.

Data 2 : *Your voice it blooms the flowers on the beach*

The lyric in data 2 can be classified as a metaphor. In the lyrics of “*your voice it blooms the flowers on the beach*”, the writer compares her lover’s voice to something that can make flowers bloom. The lyrics above are classified as connotative meanings. According to Leech (1981), connotative meaning is the value and communicative expression that is owned based on what it refers to. In this case, the connotative meaning is expressed by “*your voice it blooms the flowers on the beach*”. The writer would like to say that the voice of his lover can comfort him from his loneliness.

Data 3 : *In the black and white, you paint the world*

This sentence is classified in the figurative language type of metaphor. In the lyrics above, the author compares his lover with colors. According to Leech (1981), connotative meaning is the value and communicative expression that is owned based on what it refers to. The connotative meaning of the lyrics “*In the black and white, you paint the world*” the author wants to say that his lover has changed his world to be more pleasant.

3. Simile

Simile comparison is expressed by the use of some word or phrase, such as like, as, then, similar to, resembles, or seems (Perrine & Arp, 1991).

Data 4 : *I put the creases in her shoes, she put the crinkle in my nose*

The expression in data 4 consists of simile because in the lyric above there is the

lyric “*I put the creases in her shoes*” to compare with “*she put the crinkle in my nose*” in the sense that he did not accept the act. The lyrics above are classified as connotative meanings. According to Leech (1981), connotative meaning is a communicative value and expression that has the virtue of what is meant. In this case, the connotative meaning is expressed by “*I put the creases in her shoes, she put the crinkle in my nose*”.

4. Hyperbole

Data 5 : *I can see that your heartbeat's shaking*

These lyrics belong to the figurative language type of hyperbole. The meaning and significance of this lyric are exaggerated. The author said he could see his lover's heartbeat, but in reality, that heartbeat could not be seen but could only be heard and felt. In this lyric, the writer wants to say that his lover's trembling heartbeat shows fear.

Data 6 : *And I'll hold your heart forever*

The song lyrics in data 6 can also be classified as hyperbole. This lyric emphasizes a certain topic by asserting something that is implausible. *I'll keep your heart forever*, the singer promises in this line, but in reality, no one can accomplish that. Because humans cannot hold the heart of other people, the expression *hold your heart* has a figurative meaning. The lines mentioned above may be the author's method of promising a sweetheart that he will always be loyal to her for all time. The lyrics are connected to the connotative meaning, according to the justification given above. The connotative meaning goes beyond the lexical definition. This is an expression's expressive value as opposed to its purely intellectual substance.

Data 7 : *Cause this life will all be over, but my love for you won't end*

The song lyrics in data 7 use exaggeration. This lyric emphasizes a

certain topic by asserting something that is implausible. Since it is hard for someone who has already passed away to realize that love still exists, the singer additionally promises the listeners in this stanza that “*my love for you won’t expire.*” The lyrics are connected to the connotative meaning, according to the justification given above. The connotative meaning goes beyond the lexical definition. This is the expression’s communication advantage over just intellectual information. Because we cannot know whether our love will still exist after death, the phrase “*my love for you won’t end*” has a deeper meaning than just a notion. It is possible to interpret the lines as someone’s expression to convince his lover that he really loves her.

5. Symbol

Data 8 : *I was lost within the darkness, but then I found her*

The writer of the lyrics in data 8 felt like he was trapped in a difficult situation that

made him think that he was lost and could not escape from it. The lyrics are classified as connotative meanings. In this case, the connotative meaning is expressed in the lyric “*I was lost within the darkness*”. The author wants to describe his life which is so gloomy and unpleasant before finding his lover.

From the table of findings above, the researcher found 7 data. The table above shows three types of figurative language: personification, simile, and hyperbole with exaggerated statements. The number of figurative language learned in the songs from Stephen Sanchez’s album “Hold Her While You Can” is 7 sentences. According to the comparison table, the order of figurative language is written as follows:

Personification is 1 data or 12.5%, metaphor is 2 data or 25%, simile is 1 or 12.5%, hyperbole is 3 data or 37.5% and symbol with the amount of data taken is 1 or 12.5%. The most dominant figurative language used in the lyrics of the songs by Stephen Sanchez is hyperbole with 3 data or

37.5%. His songs most often use hyperbole in the story of the songs to exaggerate certain objects to make a strong impression. The author also wants to make it easier to convey messages to the reader or listener. Every lyric from Stephen Sanchez has its own meaning about life experiences or relationships.

CONCLUSION

Figurative language turns out to be very important and very interesting when used in a song. Figurative language is used in songs to keep listeners interested in the music and attract music fans' attention. The research concludes that several types of figurative language are found in Stephen Sanchez's songs. There are 7 data with figurative language consisting 12.5% of personification, 12.5% of simile, 12.5% of symbol, 25% of metaphor, and 37.5% of hyperbole. This shows that the use of hyperbole is dominant in Stephen Sanchez's song lyrics.

Researchers looked into the figurative language used in Stephen Sanchez's song, which has several instances of lines or lyrics that accomplish this. Figurative language in a piece of art enhances its sense and beauty. However, because figurative language is used in a variety of different ways, often listeners or readers have trouble deciphering the meaning. Based on the results of a study conducted, the researcher advises that readers and listeners read attentively, evaluate each use of figurative language, and be able to recognize each one so that they do not have any difficulty understanding the song..

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