THE USE OF METAPHORS AS SOCIAL CRITICISM IN BILLIE EILISH O'CONNELL AND FINNEAS O'CONNELL'S *ALL THE GOOD GIRLS GO TO HELL* AND THE *BAD GUY*

Hagung Yudistira Utomo[a*)], Henny Suharyati[a)], Sari Rejeki[a)]

Universitas Pakuan, Bogor, Indonesia

Email correspondence: hagungyudistirautomo@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study is aimed to identify the use of metaphors as social criticism in the songs *All the good girls go to hell* and *Bad Guy* by Billie Eilish O'Connel and Finneas O'Çonnel. The research approach in this study is descriptive qualitative. All the metaphors in the two songs indicate that the pattern of comparison or similarity is patterns of form and appearance, position in structure, function, and space and time. Furthermore, the classification of social criticism based on social problems are matters related to mental health and environmental issues. Metaphor functions not only as a medium for comparing or equating literal meaning with non-literal meaning, but it also functions as a medium for conveying social criticism in song lyrics.

Keywords: figurative language; metaphor; song; social criticism.

I. BACKGROUND

Language is an important aspect of life, without it, humans would struggle to communicate. This is emphasized by Chair and Kushartanti (2009:3) who state that humans communicate through implicit and explicit messages. The use of parables, idioms, and even language styles are inevitable in communication and are used as a medium to enrich language (Chaer, 2019).

According to Marko (2017:21), communication can take several forms; they may be in words, phrases, and sentences, in letters, magazines, or even in literary work. One of the most interesting and entertaining ways of communicating is through songs. Songs have a good association with the development of human language skills. Humans can convey emotional elements and even hidden messages through songs. This can be used as a form of thinking activity in the form of reasoning or written research to express the message (Damono, 2020:3). Among many others, those with a background as musicians or songwriters, whether famous or not, are very reliable in voicing these concerns. Most of them also frequently use metaphorical language style to convey messages behind the beautiful tone they create. This aims to beautify and convey the song's message implicitly (Subroto, 2011).

Metaphors which are the use of words or phrases with different literal meanings can be found in literary works, one of which is song lyrics. According to Markoem (2017:21), song lyrics can be used to convey messages. Edi Subroto (2011:126) also confirmed that songwriters generally use their language in their songs which aim to express feelings.

Many literary works are created to convey certain messages, one of which is through social criticism (Damono, 2020:3). The criticism functions as something that deviates from social life, such as public mistrust of the government or corrupt organizations, corruption, global warming, bullying, and other concerning issues.

One literary work, which is rich in social criticism is songs written by Billie Eilish and Finneas. Two songs that are particularly worth researching are *All the good girls go to hell* and *Bad Guy*. As explained by the songwriter, the use of metaphors in *All the good girls go to hell*

is a medium for conveying ideas, criticism, and feelings about global warming, particularly in the United States.

The song entitled *Bad Guy* means "a bad person." Billie and Finneas intend to convey feelings and situations that thousands are experiencing; which as mental illness. The lyrics of the songs contain the self-awareness and love yourself campaign.

II.   METHODS OF RESEARCH

A descriptive qualitative approach is used in this study. This approach produces descriptive data in the form of written and spoken words from the people who were observed. The data studied in this study are qualitative because they are based on existing theories and samples in the form of song lyrics.

Data collection techniques involve the following steps:
1. The primary data which are two songs mentioned above are obtained from the website www.azlyrics.com
2. The method used to analyze the data in this study uses the main theory from Knowles and Moon (2006), and Markoem (2017). The tools are used to identify the metaphor and meaning in the song lyrics.
4. The metaphors are then classified through descriptions of aspects of similarity or comparison
5. The last stage is relating the metaphor with social criticism.

III.   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The song *All the good girls go to hell* was released in 2019. This song is about the global phenomenon of climate change, particularly in the United States. People perceive climate change as something that does not exist. Billie and Finneas chose the title *All the good girls go to hell* as a critique of the government as well as the people of the world, particularly Americans, about climate change.

The song *Bad Guy* was also released in 2019. According to billboard.com, this song became the best top hit 1 in 2019. On the Rolling Stones' YouTube channel, Billie and Finneas shared their experiences with the hidden

meaning of the song *Bad Guy*. This song is also a form of criticism.

Data 1

Context: My Lucifer is lonely;
Vehicle: Lucifer;
Tenor: Devil's name, evil creature, something evil and opposite;
Background: 1) The metaphor of similarity lies in the position in the structure of a demon named Lucifer (invisible) compared to a human. 2) The metaphor of the similarity of function is based on Lucifer's evil nature.

The songwriter intends to communicate a message in the form of social criticism in the opening lyrics by using the word "Lucifer" as a metaphor. It is the name of a creature with a wicked disposition who is recorded in the Bible. However, a closer examination utilizing social critique theory reveals that the singer employs the word "Lucifer" as a metaphor for likeness in structure and function towards someone who is opposed by a group of individuals due to conflicting perspectives underlying harmful ideas and ambitions that affect a large number of people. As a result, someone assigned the metaphor "Lucifer" covers this by scapegoating his opponent with acts of verbal discrimination as a form of self-defense or as a type of self-defense with a hierarchical objective. Typically, the nature of this hierarchy manifests itself in the political sphere as a phenomenon or a problem. As a result, the metaphorical word "Lucifer" becomes the concealed meaning option.

In this context, Billie and Finneas used the term "my" in the first lyrics of the song to criticize their country's government (US), specifically when President Donald Trump served the country. Billie and Finneas voiced this harsh critique, and he was dubbed "Lucifer" because the government he lead was not serious about dealing with climate change. The wildfires in California are proof.   BBC News and Nytime.com highlighted:

"President Trump has sought to highlight forest management rather than climate change as the key factor explaining the wildfires burning

across California, Oregon, and Washington states."

Regarding the role of climate change, Mr. Trump said: *"I think this is more of a [forest] management situation".* The fact that climate change is the cause of wildfires in California is stated by Mr. Harvey on Nytime.com: *"If you are in denial about climate change, come to California,"* Gov. Gavin Newsom criticized; *"The government does a very, very bad job looking at cascading scenarios,"*

Former President Donald Trump stated in the quote above, that he is using "a forest management scenario" as a sort of self-defense, based on a bureaucratic system with the notion of hierarchy. The comment was issued so that people would not blame themselves or their government for the current situation.

Data 2

Context: All the good girls go to hell;
Vehicle: Good girls;
Tenor: Good child, innocent child, good little kid. (according to parent's orders);
Background: 1) The metaphor of good girls has meaning based on functional similarity. 2) This metaphor also has something in common position in a structure.

The metaphor of *good girls* is believed to serve the same purpose as people who follow government orders without questioning. It's as if the government is at the top of the chain, while these citizens are at the bottom. The metaphor in this verse has a connotation of good girls or young children (women), someone (regardless of gender) who is obedient to something binding, such as regulations and orders respecting the law. These are all the hidden meanings in the phrase, *good girls.* Billie criticizes former President Donald Trump in the chorus of *All the good girls go to hell* or *Everyone who submits (to commands) will go to hell*. She also criticized Americans who consciously or unknowingly re-elect Donald Trump for a second term as President. On the Guardian News YouTube channel, Billie Eilish sent a statement:

"You don't need me to tell you things are a mess. Donald Trump is destroying our country and everything we care about. We need leaders who will solve problems like climate change and COVID19, not deny them. Leaders who will fight against systemic racism and inequality and start by voting for someone who understands how much is at stake, someone who is building a team that shares our values, it starts with voting against Donald Trump and for Joe Biden. Silence is not an option and we cannot sit this one out…".

In this message, Billie reveals several points that are happening to her country which is on the verge of collapse due to former President Trump. The sentences are clear enough to describe the situation in the US.

Social critique can be defined as human interactions in society that demonstrate the existence of social activities. This aims to examine a variety of issues that society is dealing with, particularly in the area of welfare. As a result, Billie utilizes the word *good girls* throughout the entire verse of *All the good girls go to hell* to criticize the social situation in which she finds herself.

Data 3

Context: White shirt now red, my bloody Nose;
Vehicle: White'
Tenor: White, color, clean, innocence, innocent;
Background: 1) The metaphor of similarity lies in function. White's metaphor has similarities to the function of the color white, which is clean, innocent like children who are innocent and don't understand many things yet.

In the first lyrics of the song *Bad Guy,* the word *white* means the color white. It also refers to the adjectives clean, pure, and innocent. In the context of this song, Billie and Finneas try to describe the behavior of an innocent child who doesn't understand much about this world. Thus, the word *white* refers to a child who is still innocent, and it is used as a social critique by people around the world, especially in the US. This criticism was made concerning mental health issues surrounding children and

teenagers. A source from mhnational.org regards this issue as follows:

"States with rankings 1-13 have a lower prevalence of mental illness and higher rates of access to care for youth. States with rankings 39-51 indicate that youth have a higher prevalence of mental illness and lower rates of access to care."

It has been proven that environmental factors have an impact on the symptoms and development of depression.

Data 4

Context: I'm the bad guy, duh;
Vehicle: Bad Guy;
Tenor: a bad person, someone who has evil nature;
Background: 1) The metaphor of similarity lies in function. The Bad Guy metaphor has similarities in function, such as a bad person or someone who has an evil nature.

The metaphor *bad guy* criticizes the lack of empathy people portray toward each other today. On the Ad council YouTube channel, Billie said:

"I think when people hear "remember to take care of your mental health". They think that everyone else is and that's not at all accurate. You know for me, I'm trying to learn, still, to make sure that I stay ok."

One of the many sources of depression is the lack of human connection and bullying. As a sort of affection for fellow Americans, Billie and Finneas attempted to carry out this criticism using the Bad Guy metaphor. The song becomes a space for Billie and Finneas to express themselves as well as a means of transmitting messages to raise societal criticism.

IV. CONCLUSION

Metaphor is the use of words or phrases that have different literal meanings. It is used to compare two things implicitly and can is found in literary works such as songs. Metaphors in

song lyrics can be used to convey indirect messages such as social critique.

In this research, the metaphors are classified as descriptions of aspects of similarity or comparison, such as similarity in form and appearance, position in the structure, function, connecting space and time or even space and quantity, connecting the domain of the five senses, and the relationship between bodily needs and cognition.

There is also a classification of several forms of social problems that are then referenced in this study as well as from the songwriter (Billie Eilish and Finneas), including poverty, crime, family disorganization, problems of the young generation in modern society, violations of norms society, population problems, environmental problems, and bureaucracy. These social problems will be supported by several news sites that present facts from the field related to the phenomenon and information needed in this research.

Overall, it can be concluded that a metaphor serves a dual purpose: it serves as a channel for transmitting societal criticism in song lyrics as well as a method for comparing or equating the real meaning to simplify and beautify.

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