

JURNAL PEMBELAJARAN SASTRA

Vol. 3 No. 1 (2021)

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Nilai Kepahlawanan, Sastra Sejarah, dan Pembelajaran Sastra

Sudibyo

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Himpunan Sarjana
Kesusastran Indonesia
Komisariat Malang

E-ISSN: 2722-998X

JURNAL PEMBELAJARAN SASTRA

Vol. 3 No. 1 (2021)
DOI: 10.51543/hiskimalang.v3i1

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FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE USED IN THE CHARACTERIZATION OF KATHERINE APPLIGATE'S *HOME OF THE BRAVE*

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Abstract: This paper depicts the types and uses of figurative expressions in the characterization of verse-novel *Home of the Brave* by Katherine Applegate. The objectives of this study are, first, to identify what kinds of figurative language the author uses in the story and second, to identify the use of figurative language in the characterization. As a descriptive qualitative study, the writers applied various literary theories such as figurative language (metaphor, simile, and personification), direct characterization, and stylistics. After analyzing the data, the writer found that there are 292 figurative languages found in the verse-novel *Home of the Brave*, which include: 89 metaphors, 98 similes and 105 personifications. Based on the findings, personification is mostly found throughout the story and the author mostly uses natural elements as comparison. The writer found that the use of personification is suitable for delivering story from narrator's perspective because he is an immigrant from Sudan who can hardly understand the concept of many unfamiliar things in America. By linking human nature, he describes the world he sees and personifies it. Besides, it also proves that the use of figurative language is successfully employed by the novel's author in the portrayal of characters physically and mentally as narrated by Kek as the main character of the story, in the view of the first person.

Key words: characterization, figurative language, verse-novel

INTRODUCTION

Words and phrases can have both literal and figurative meanings. Literal one is taking words in their usual or most basic senses, there is no hidden meaning behind it. It is just like when you read a dictionary to find the meaning of a word, you will get exactly the original meaning from it. In contrast, figurative language takes the words beyond the dictionary definition.

According to Oxford Learner's Dictionary, the term "figurative" refers to words or phrases used in a way that is different from the usual meaning, in order to create a particular mental picture. It is just like when you see a painting or a photograph at the exhibition. The artist or the photographer capture his/her ideas or feelings into the picture to convey ideas more effectively because a picture can describe a thousand words and tell stories. Similar with figurative which can help conveying an idea faster and more concretely rather than literal language.

Figurative language is commonly found either in written or spoken language. In writing, it is commonly used in poetry in which the author's feelings or ideas can be expressed using metaphorical expressions. Figurative language is like paintbrush or camera that can help create word pictures for the reader. According to Abrams and Harpham (2012: 130), figurative language is a conspicuous departure from what competent users of a language apprehend as the standard meaning of words, or else the standard order of words, in order to achieve some special meaning or effect. In other words, figurative language shape reader's mental picture in compelling way. Furthermore, they divide figurative language into two classes, i.e. figures of thought and figures of speech. Figures of thought refer to words or phrases used in a way that affects a conspicuous change in what we take to be their standard meaning. Meanwhile, figures of speech are in which the departure from standard usage is not primarily in the meaning of the words, but in the order or syntactical pattern of the words. Both are rhetoric tools in for conveying information, but figure of speech is the concept that we are most familiar with.

Figurative language is characterized by figures of speech. Figures of speech use words for more than their literal meaning. There are various kinds of figures, as stated by Painter (2015). The figures based upon resemblance are simile, metaphor, personification and allegory. The figures of contrast are antithesis, climax, epigram, and irony. All these figures of speech come under the heading of figurative language.

Figure of speech is stylistic device which authors use to dress up their language to make it more entertaining, interesting, aesthetic, and to convey an idea faster and more concrete than literal language. Abrams and Harpham (2012) said that "the purpose of using figurative language is to achieve special meaning or effect". In other words, figurative language shapes reader's mental picture in a compelling way.

The use of figurative language makes a work become more poetic, aesthetic and colorful. It makes the work become a high artistic value-work. Another purpose is to draw out emotion, develop linguistic competence because figurative language force the readers to work harder at making meaning, help the readers to form mental picture and draw readers into the work. Furthermore, Painter (2015) stated that "The use of figures is natural, and at present they are used to embellish discourse and to give it greater vividness and force".

The use of figures makes the complex or abstract idea become easier to understand and more relatable. They make us find the meaning and see it from different angle. In writing, figurative language help the authors explain difficult concepts. It shapes reader's mental image in a compelling way because figurative language reflects both artistic function and communication. Either in fictional world or daily life, figurative language gives us great thrilling way to see or say something.

The use of figurative language is also a part of author's style. According to Rozakis (2003), style is a series of choices—words, sentence length and structure, figures of speech, tone, voice, diction, and overall structure. The use

of figurative language in this story is associated with another method, and this method known as stylistics. The use of stylistics may cover author's choice of figurative language, the meaning of figurative language, and the author's specific meaning or purpose of using particular words in figurative language. According to Simpson (2004), to do stylistics is to explore language, and more specifically, to explore creativity in language use. The author delivers the story figuratively, she uses lots of figurative languages to tell the story and to characterize the characters in the story. The author tells what character is like, and she uses narrator to deliver it. The entire story is told in Kek's voice and perspective in which the story told in first person point of view. Kek is the main character and also the narrator of the story. This method is called direct characterization. Both, stylistics and direct characterization help the writer to do the analysis.

This study analyzed figurative language employed by Katherine Applegate in characterizing all existing characters in her verse-novel entitled *Home of the Brave*. Thus, the problems of the study can be formulated as follows: (1) What kind of figurative language does the author use in the verse-novel *Home of the Brave*?, (2) What is the use of figurative languages in the characterization?

The verse-novel under discussion is an aesthetically pleasing work that gives the readers a sense of courage and hope as a refugee to face each new day. It also gives a sense of emotional feeling. Many ordinary things the main character sees unexpectedly fill him with longing, a piece memory of his past. Dealing with loss, new life in a strange land, all that happens is very different for him now. *Home of the Brave* considered as verse-novel because the characteristics are suitable with the house-style characteristic of verse-novel in common. The story told in the form of non-rhyming free verse, without using long narration.

Verse-novel is a popular phenomenon in the world of children's literature within the last twenty years. Verse-novel can be considered as a new format of storytelling, since the definition and genre are continuing to evolve. Generally speaking, it is a hybrid form that employs characteristics of both prose and poetry. Although, the characteristic of verse-novel can be identified. In contrast with epic poems, verse-novel is a distinct modern form. According to Painter (2015), the epic is a long poem celebrating in stately verse some important and heroic event of the past. It may be based either on history or tradition.

Furthermore, Alexander (2005) states that the definitions of the verse-novel are necessarily elastic, since as a genre it is still evolving. However an emergent typical verse-novel 'house-style' can be identified. The entire story is told in the form of non-rhyming free verse. Very often each section is less than a page in length and only rarely more than two or three pages. Usually each of these sections is given a title to orientate the reader, which may indicate the speaker, or contextualise the content, or point to the core theme. The form lends itself to building each section around a single perspective or thought or voice or incident. From Alexander statement, we can know that in verse-novel there is a blurring of genres. It is not like a long epic poem which

is told some important and heroic event of the past or is a collection of poems or a normal novel, because verse-novel has unique mixture form that combines some elements. It might be appropriate to consider verse-novel as a new format of storytelling rather than focusing on the genre. Despite the genre is still evolving and controversial, the characteristic of verse-novel can be identified. Thus, it is an opportunity for the writer and for young adult readers to learn more about the relation between each other instead of seeing them as separate forms.

Hypothetically, the most frequently applied figures of speech in the work under discussion are metaphor, simile, and personification. According to Wren and Martin (1995:334), metaphor does not like the simile which state that one thing is like another or acts as another but takes that for granted and proceeds as if the two things were one. Metaphor belongs to figure of resemblance, in which the two things, i.e. object, activity, or idea are shown to have a type of resemblance. In metaphor's particular case, this type of resemblance or better known as ground is not clear. If there is obscurity in the resemblance or even there is no existence of resemblance, as a result the metaphor will create a new image. Metaphor is an abridged simile. The metaphor is briefer and more striking than the simile; it springs from greater emotion of mental energy, and often imparts great force or beauty to a passage (Painter, 2015:26). According to Leech (1969), metaphor is associated with a particular rule of transference, which we may simply call the 'Metaphoric Rule' which we may formulate: F= 'like L'. It means, the figurative meaning (F) is derived from the literal meaning (L) in having the sense 'like L', or perhaps 'it is as if L'. In other words, the rules of transference is particular mechanisms for deriving one meaning of a word from another. In addition, Leech also states that the simplest kind of metaphor to use an illustration is that based on a clause structure with the verb to be (am, is, are, was, were, be, being, and been).

Moreover, Rozakis (2003) stated, "Metaphor is a comparison without the words like or as". In other words, metaphor is the comparison between two things straightforwardly without the word of comparison. Thus, the concept of metaphor can be formulated into simple formulation: X (to be) Y.

Leech also mentions about tenor and vehicle. The tenor is the literal part of the expression with its reconstructed literal context, and the vehicle is the figurative part of the expression, together with its reconstructed context (Leech, 1969:154). To put it simply, tenor is the subject or idea, that being discussed, while the vehicle is the image or idea that represents the subject or idea.

Furthermore, according to Wren and Martin (1995:334), in simile a comparison is made between two objects of different kinds which have however at least one point in common. It is obvious that the things compared in simile should have some sort of resemblance (Painter, 2015:26). Then, the two objects are reinforced with connective words which indicate that object being discussed and object being compared have something in common. In addition, Leech (1969:153) stated that, "in simile the two things to be compared and (sometimes) the ground of the comparison are spelt out in

succession: the comparison itself, too, is made explicit by means of such constructional elements as like, as...as, more...than”.

Simile belongs to figures of resemblance, like metaphor and personification. Thus, the concept of simile can be formulated into simple formulation: ‘X (connective words) Y in respect of Z’. X is the tenor, Y is the vehicle and Z is the ground. Leech gives example of simile, “*His face was as white as a sheet*”. This expression is simile because it considers someone’s face is the same with sheet. As we know, the face and sheet are different things in form and utility.

Applying Leech’s theory into the simile expression “*His face was as white as a sheet*”, it is necessary to analyze the tenor, vehicle and ground. The *someone’s face* is the tenor (object being discussed) and *sheet* refers to the vehicle (object that represents topic) while *white* is the ground (a point of similarity) and the connective word used is *as*.

According to Wren and Martin (1995:335), in personification inanimate objects and abstract notions are spoken of as having life and intelligence. Personification as figure of resemblance has special features like metaphor and simile which in personification compare human and nonhuman attributes. The idea, object, or inanimate things are described as having human characteristics. The non human objects are portrayed in such way to make the readers feel they have ability to act like human beings or simply, the author personify it. It is not merely a decorative device, but personification add vividness to expressions and give deeper meaning in literary texts. It brings inanimate things to live, so that their nature and actions are understood in better way. In addition, according to Abrams (2012), another figure related to metaphor is personification, or in the Greek term, *prosopopoeia*, in which either an inanimate object or an abstract concept is spoken of as though it were endowed with life or with human attributes or feelings. Leech (1969), mentioned that, “The familiar poetic device, personification, whereby an abstraction is figuratively represented as human actually is the combination of three categories of metaphor”. This theory provides us with new perspective, in which personification is built from metaphor (Concrete, Animistic and Humanizing metaphor). In addition, Painter (2015) stated that, “personification is the attribution of life to inanimate things. Personification is a bold species of metaphor, it is the offspring of vivid feeling or conception.” Both make vivid and concrete imagination in mind.

Another theory that is worth elaborating is character. Characters are the representation of a person or thing that make up story. Characters are essential literary elements that the author uses to move the story along the plot line, perform actions and deliver the dialogue. According to Abrams and Harpham (2012), characters are the persons represented in a dramatic or narrative work, who are interpreted by the reader as possessing particular moral, intellectual, and emotional qualities by inferences from what the persons say and their distinctive ways of saying it—the dialogue—and from what they do—the action.

In order to attract readers to follow the storyline, the character should be vivid or real. To achieve this, authors tell the readers what character is like

by providing description of a character such as character's way of speaking, thoughts, appearance, behavior, interest and other details about personalities and complexities. The way authors describe information about their character is called characterization. In this story the author uses lots of figurative languages to characterize the characters in the story. The author tells what character is like, and she uses narrator to deliver it. The entire story is told in first person point of view. This method is called direct characterization. Kek the main character, tells the readers directly about himself and the other characters. According to Hallett (n.d.), expository or direct presentation in which characters is described and or explained by the narrator.

According to Martin and Hill (1996:20), we can evaluate the way author presents the character through some following indicators:

- a) Appearance and possession: Physical appearance, i.e. eyes, face, hair, body, movements, etc. Possessions, i.e. clothes, where character lives, and any persona objects he/she has.
- b) Action: Certain big actions, everyday actions and moments that tells us more about the character, i.e. falling in love, suicide, marrying and etc.
- c) Conversation: What character says reveals a great deal.
- d) Thought: What character thinks may reveal more than what is said.

In prose, the author has more freedom to describe, narrate, and present complex characters without any limitation of space. On the other hand, in poetry the author has limited space to describe characters. The language has to be strong, and each word is chosen for purpose. Thus, the characterization in poetry is focused on a few lines or the imaginative use of figurative language. In literary terms, the narrator or the storyteller is well known as speaker of persona. It is not the author, it is the fictional character of the story. Speaker of persona delivers voice in which author speaks. Abrams and Harpham (2012) stated that, "In recent literary discussion "persona" is often applied to the first-person speaker who tells the story in a narrative poem or novel, or whose voice we hear in a lyric poem.

METHOD

The study material is an original copy of verse-novel entitled *Home of the Brave* by Katherine Applegate. Printed in U.S.A. in 2007 and published by Scholastic Inc, it consists of 69 poems in non-rhyming free verse, with 5 sections, printed in 247 pages. This study focused on the lines which contain figurative language such as metaphor, simile and personification. The *Home of the Brave* received the SCBWI 2008 Golden Kite Award for Best Fiction and the Bank Street 2008 Josette Frank Award.

The type of this study is descriptive qualitative study. The term descriptive research refers to the type of research question, design, and data analysis that will be applied to a given topic.

The writers read verse-novel *Home of the Brave*. After reading process, the writers listed figurative language (metaphor, simile and personification) using theories already explained in the theoretical framework. After all the data were gathered, the writers decided the closest literal meaning of each

figurative language. Next, the writers analyzed the use of figurative language in the characterization of the story using theories of stylistics and direct characterization. Finally, the writer presented the findings and conclusion.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

a. The Use of Figurative Language in the Characterization

The writers found that the three mostly employed figures of speech, i.e. metaphor, simile, personification, are worth analyzing in terms of their use in the characterization. From the viewpoint of Kek as both the main character and narrator of the story, readers can figure out how the author characterizes all the existing characters, such as Kek himself, and other characters, i.e. Ganwar, Hannah, Dave Lou, Nyatal, Mama, Dak and Lual. Out of those characters, there are five characters that become the focus of this study because the five of them are frequently mentioned by the narrator of the story.

Using the theory of direct characterization, the writers started analyzing each of them, since the so-called narrator directly describes who those characters are, what they are doing, what belongings they have, what they think, and so on. In other words, Kek himself as the narrator is used by the author of the verse-novel to characterize other characters.

1. Kek

In *Home of the Brave*, the author tells Kek's story in the first person. Kek is the narrator and round character of the story. Kek is a 10 or 11-years-old Sudanese boy who was rescued from refugee camp and staying at Minnesota as an immigrant. Kek lost his father and brother in a war, while his mother is still missing. America is a world full of challenges because things are very different there. For Kek, being an immigrant is not easy, it takes time and effort to get used to the surroundings, language, different civilization, culture and new things that he has never faced before.

I want to say
No, *this cold is like claws on my skin!*
I look around me. (Applegate, 2007:3)

From the quotation above, we need to pay our closer attention to the sentence in italics, i.e. *this cold is like claws on my skin!*. The author uses the word *claws* to describe the cold weather can causes a sharp tingling sensation on skin. Kek finds himself struggling with the cold because he has not been in winter before. The purpose of this simile expression is to show Kek's first impression about winter. It feels super cold and he dislikes it.

How can you live
in this place called America?
It burns your eyes! (Applegate, 2007:4)

These lines are found in "SNOW" poem which is a continuation of Kek's impression about winter. The author uses the word *burns* to refer a feeling of

burning and irritation in the eyes. In fact, the extreme cold and windy weather can affect eyes and also vision. These personification expression shows that Kek's eyes may feel irritated by cold weather.

I shake my head.
I say, *This America is hard work.* (Applegate, 2007:5)

This metaphor expression shows Kek's first opinion about America. Moving to America is a huge culture shock for him. Kek realizes that America is different from his old home, especially the weather. It is not easy to make such a big change. He came up with a conclusion that living in America is not easy.

I try some English,
*but my mouth just wants to chew the words
and spit them on the ground.* (Applegate, 2007:7)

As can be seen in this metaphor expression, the author uses the words *chew* and *spit*. *Chew* means to crush, grind, or gnaw (something, such as food) with or as if with the teeth, while *spit* is using to express (unpleasant or malicious feelings) by or as if by spitting. These lines describe the difficulties in speaking different languages. Besides the weather, Kek also finds himself struggling with English. When speaking English, Kek finds it difficult and may not enjoy it.

Everywhere dead trees.
Who killed all the trees? I ask. (Applegate, 2007:8)

From the quotation above, we need to pay our closer attention to the sentence in italics, i.e. *Who killed all the trees?* The author uses *who* with a purpose instead of using *why*. *Who* is used as the subject to ask about name or identity, while *why* is used for asking about the cause, reason or purpose. The author uses expression *Who killed all the trees* to show Kek's innocent feelings about the world. He possibly does not know the reason why the trees seem to be dead. 'Dead trees' means that during the winter, the trees become leafless and bare.

and yet to see her here
in this strange land
makes my eyes glad. (Applegate, 2007:13)

The important word in these lines is *glad* and it means pleasure or happiness. This personification expression shows Kek's pleasure feeling about cattle. On the way home, he sees a cattle in the middle of snow. To be able to see cattle again make him happy. It makes him remember about his past as a cattle herder.

the night of men in the sky with guns,
the night the earth opened up like a black pit
and *swallowed my old life whole*. (Applegate, 2007:21)

From the quotation above, we need to pay our closer attention to the sentence in italics, i.e. *swallowed my old life whole*. *Swallowed* means to take in and cause to disappear or engulf. Kek imagines there is a black large hole in the ground and his old life dragged or disappeared into the hole. These lines use the figurative language personification. *A black pit* is the inhuman object and the human quality is *swallowed*. The purpose of these lines is to show Kek's feeling about the war in Sudan that has taken his family and old life.

we were a family,
and *our laughter kept us warm*.
We didn't need a magic switch
on a wall. (Applegate, 2007:24)

The main concern in these lines is the sentence italics, i.e. *our laughter kept us warm*. *Laughter* means the action or sound of laughing. Meanwhile, *warm* means having or showing enthusiasm, affection, or kindness. The common causes for laughter are the feeling of joy and humor. Laughter may represent affection and comfort feeling. The magic switch in these lines is refer to thermostat. Thermostat is an automatic device for regulating temperature. The purpose of this metaphor expression is to show Kek's happiness and comfort feeling being with people he loved. In his old home, he does not need a thermostat to keep him warm.

My aunt glances at Ganwar.
You'll see, Dave.
Kek finds sun
when the sky is dark. (Applegate, 2007:27)

This metaphor expression describes Kek's personality trait. *Sun* may represent light which is the opposite of dark. Usually, light is used to convey positive thing, while dark is used to convey negative thing. The author uses two contradictory word to explain that Kek always has a way to see positive side in any difficulties. In other words, Kek is an optimist.

It's been a long time
since I've known that feeling,
like a soft blanket
on a night when the wind howls. (Applegate, 2007:28)

From the quotation above, we need to pay our closer attention to the sentence in italics, i.e. *a soft blanket on a night when the wind howls*. *Blanket* means rectangular piece of thick cloth, especially one which you put on a bed to keep you warm. Meanwhile, *the wind howls* refers to the strong wind that

making noises. A blanket can make people feel warm on a cold windy night. The purpose of this simile expression is to show Kek's longing for his father affection and protection. He feels the similar form of affection and protection of his father through Dave.

My ears look like *they want
to fly me away*, (Applegate, 2007:34)

In this personification expression, the author uses the word *fly* to characterizes Kek. *Fly* means move through the air using wings. Generally, the shape of the wings is wide. The purpose of these lines is to show Kek's physical characteristic which is he has wide ears.

and we talk with the words and sounds I know
sweet in my mouth. (Applegate, 2007:39)

As can be seen in this metaphor expression, the word *sweet* means pleasing in general. The author uses the word *sweet* to describe the pleasure, satisfaction or enjoyment feeling. When speaking in his native language, Kek finds the enjoyment feeling. Kek feels comfortable using his native language when talking to his aunt and cousin

Sometimes, it seems to me,
*a hole can be
as real and solid
as a boulder or a tree*. (Applegate, 2007:39)

The important words in these lines are *hole*, *as real as a boulder* and *as solid as a tree*. The author uses the word *hole* to represent there is something missing in Kek life. *Real as a boulder* to represent concrete or actual, while *solid as tree* to represent firm and stable. This simile expression describes Kek's mental suffering caused by loss. He has lost his family because of war. His sorrow feels concrete and firm.

Found her. Good news. Coming here.
Those are the words Diane must say.
Those are the stars that will guide my path home. (Applegate, 2007:57)

The main concern in these lines is the sentence in italics, i.e. *stars that will guide my path home*. The expression *the star* is usually used for finding direction. Meanwhile, *guide* means give information to someone in order to go in the right direction. The author uses the words *the star* and *guide* to explain Kek's expectation feeling about his missing mother. Kek is expecting an answer about his mother that will help him escape from all his sadness.

I am still hoping, I say at last.
I want to sound fierce and certain

as a great lion.
But I sound *like a lost cub*,
even to my own ears. **(Applegate, 2007:58)**

As can be seen in this simile expression, the author uses the words *a great lion* and *a lost cub*. The lion can make the roaring sounds and the cub can make cooing sounds. Each sound has different meaning, the roaring may represent a strong or brave lion. Meanwhile. The cooing may represent a fearful cub. The purpose of these lines is to show Kek's physical characteristic. Kek wants to say that he still has hope about his mother in a bold voice, but he failed. Even though he tries hard to sounds bold, he always ended up with cooing voice. Probably, cooing voice is Kek's natural voice.

Jeans, he says. T-shirt.
I put them on and parade
through the TV room
like a great ruler. **(Applegate, 2007:61)**

As can be seen in this simile expression, the author uses the words *parade* and *great ruler*. *Parade* means to show something in public to be admired. *Ruler* as means a person who rules or commands. Kek puts his school uniform on and walking with pride through the TV room. The purpose of these lines is to show Kek's excited feeling about school.

A chair of my own
and a table, too?
I smother the thought
like an ember near dry grass. **(Applegate, 2007:69)**

From the quotation above, we need to pay our closer attention to the sentence in italics, i.e. *like an ember near dry grass*. *Ember* means the smoldering remains of a fire. Meanwhile *dry grass* refers to hay that means grass that has been mown and dried. Embers can start fires and can cause a wildfire when it near to dry grass or savanna. The purpose of this simile expression is to show that Kek keeps his overabundance mind and joy out because he has his own school equipment for free. Be able to learn in proper school for free it is such a fine honor.

I pause,
as a memory pokes at me
like a knife in my back. **(Applegate, 2007:83)**

The important word in these lines is the word *knife*. *Knife* is a cutting instrument consisting of a sharp blade fastened to a handle. Knife can increase chance of several kinds of injury and pain. The author uses figurative language simile to show Kek's felling about his past. Kek feels hurt when he remembers sad memories of his past.

I will not go to that
black place today. (Applegate, 2007:84)

The main concern of these lines is the word *black place*. *Black* may represent dark and usually its used to convey negative thing. This metaphor expression shows that sometimes Kek does not want to remember horrible memories of his past. The time when he lost his family.

I try to say it gently so that
my words will not sting like an insect. (Applegate, 2007:118)

As can be seen in the simile expression above, the important word is the word *sting*. *Sting* means a sharp tingling sensation on skin. These lines show Kek's personality trait. He does not want his words to hurt Lou's feeling, so he has to say it politely and chooses the words carefully. In other words, Kek is mindful of his manners.

I think about the trees, the flowers,
the brown grass in the fields.
*They can all be patient,
certain that spring will return. (Applegate, 2007:246)*

These lines use the figurative language personification. *They* refer to the trees, the flowers, the brown grass in the fields and these plants are the inhuman object. While *patience* is human quality. *Patient* means able to accept or tolerate delays, problems, or suffering without becoming annoyed or anxious. These lines show Kek's opinion about his surroundings. He learns something from plants and weather and relates them with his life. During winter, the temperature drops low and causes trees to lose their leaves. Then spring comes, trees are no longer bare and begin to grow leaves. He may relate winter to all his problems, sorrows, sufferings, pain that make him has courage to face it all in his customary optimism and undying hope. Meanwhile, he relates spring as an answer from his long hope, belief, hard work and patience. If it is meant to be, something will certainly find its own way as plants waiting patiently for spring to come.

Hope is a thing made only for people,
*a scrap to hold onto
in darkness and in light. (Applegate, 2007:246)*

The important words in these lines are *scrap*, *darkness* and *light*. *Scrap* is a very steep bank or slope. *Darkness* is the partial or total absence of light. Meanwhile, *light* is the opposite of dark. These lines show Kek's opinion about hope. Although Kek has terrible memories about his past, he also has treasure memories of his old life that keep alive his hope. Besides, these lines show Kek's personality trait which is strong or steadfast. It is because he keeps hold

on into hope is in any difficult situations. For some people like Kek hope are reminder and motivation to stay alive, keep moving on and be an optimist in every situation.

Now my wishes are bigger,
the hopes of a man,
and they take much tending,
like seedlings in rough sun. (Applegate, 2007:247)

In this simile expression, the author uses the words *seedling* and *rough sun*. *Seedling* is a young plant grown from seed. *Rough sun* refers to the intense heat of the sun. These lines show that Kek has a bigger hope for his future. He is very young but he chooses to be brave and strong to face every problems. He has faith about his mother and hopes to reunite with her. His customary optimism keeps him going and treasure memories of his old life keep alive his hope. It is not easy to keep alive the hope in any difficulties, it needs effort and time to make it happen.

Now I hope to make my new life work,
to root to this good, hard land
forever. (Applegate, 2007:247)

The main concern of these lines is the words *root*, *good hard land* and *forever*. *Root* is the part of a plant that grows down into the earth to get water and food and holds the plant firm in the ground. *Good hard land* refers to America, a good place full of challenges. Meanwhile, *forever* means for a limitless time. The purpose of these lines is to show Kek's future goals. Finally, after reunited with his mother he hopes a bigger hope. Kek feels more confident to start his new life and ready to belong to America for the rest of his life. We can see there is a character development in Kek. When he first came to America he was an innocent child who has many questions about things, but in the middle to the end of the story we could see the process of how Kek became more optimistic and confident. Kek is a strong and brave immigrant boy and he may find American dream within reach.

2. Ganwar

Ganwar is Kek's cousin. He is a 16 or 17-year-old Sudanese boy who was rescued from refugee camp. Ganwar lost his father and sisters in a war. Unlike his cousin, Ganwar has been staying with her mother in Minnesota for a year and a half.

His eyes are wary and smart, (Applegate, 2007:20)

As can be seen in this metaphor, the important words are *wary* and *smart*. *Wary* means feeling or showing caution about possible dangers or problems. *Smart* means having or showing a quick-witted intelligence. These lines show Ganwar's physical characteristics that he is a sharp-eyed person. In addition, the other purpose of these lines is to show Ganwar's personality trait

because eyes may represent personality. He is an observant person which means he good at noticing and observing particular thing or quality.

the place where Ganwar's left hand
should be,
round and bare and waiting
like an ugly question
no one can answer. (Applegate, 2007:21)

The purpose of these lines is to show Ganwar's physical characteristics. He lost his left hand at the war. There is no answer why men with guns make Ganwar lose his hand. The wound may heal but will always leaves marks.

This is a good land, he says.
There's great freedom here.
But even when you travel far,
the ghosts don't stay behind.
They follow you. (Applegate, 2007:44)

In these lines the author uses figurative language metaphor. The important word is *Ghost*. *Ghost* refers to something bad that has happened, or the memory of it. These lines show Ganwar's personal feeling as an immigrant. America may give him new hopes and promise for freedom but the past will intrude him. The past will always follow the present and the future, because the past is part of life.

You can't make yourself a bird, Kek.
Some things will never be. **(Applegate, 2007:46)**

The purpose of this metaphor expression is to show Ganwar's personality trait. He is a realistic person who tries to see things as they really are.

I have many skills, Ganwar says.
Even with one hand.
His words spark like lightning. (Applegate, 2007:110)

The main concern of these lines is the word *lightning*. Lightning describes things that happen very quickly or last for only a short time. The purpose of these lines is to show Ganwar's emotion. He says the bold striking words to show that he is annoyed. He does not want to be underestimated because of his physical condition.

Ganwar doesn't talk on the way to the farm.
His face looks frozen,
but his eyes are hot.

He keeps rubbing the place
where his hand once was. **(Applegate, 2007:138)**

The purpose of these lines is to show Ganwar's emotion at that moment. His face shows no emotion, but his eyes glare and it indicates negative mood. He does not like Dave's suggestion about working at fast food restaurant. He thinks he does not come to America only to sweep the floor or give out ketchup packet. In his old home he was a herder. For him maybe it is not easy to make such a big change.

3. Hannah

Hannah is Kek's best friend in Minnesota and they are neighbors. She lives with foster family because she has no parents to look after her. Her mother is in rehabilitation while her father left since she was a baby.

She says, *Don't eat the mystery meat*
if you value your life. **(Applegate, 2007:77)**

The main concern of this metaphor expression is the word *mystery*. *Mystery* is something that is difficult to understand or explain. This line shows Hannah's personality trait. She is friendly and caring person. Even though Hannah does not know Kek well because at that moment he is a new student, as a kind and caring person she warns the innocence Kek to not eat the super awful meat.

Hannah laughs,
a sound *like bells*
on a windy day. **(Applegate, 2007:80)**

From the quotation above, we need to pay our closer attention to the sentence in italics, i.e. *bells on windy day*. *Bells on windy day* can creating a slightly soothing sound like jingle. The purpose of these lines is to show Hannah's personality trait through the way she laughs because individual's laughter may represent their own personality. She laughs in a soothing voice may means the laugh of a sweet and friendly little girl.

Waiting is hard, too,
Hannah says,
and I can see that she
also knows *sad places*. **(Applegate, 2007:84)**

The word *sad places* represent Hannah's feeling about her mother. Probably Hannah misses her a lot and waiting to get together again is hard and make her hurt.

I know, Hannah says.

It's the same for me, too.
The words steal her smile away,
like clouds over sun. (Applegate, 2007:192)

In this simile expression, the author uses the words *clouds* and *sun*. *Sun* may represent light and it is used to convey positive thing, while *cloud* is used to convey negative thing. *Clouds* refers to a state or cause of gloom, suspicion, trouble, or worry. These lines show Hannah's feeling at that moment. At first Hannah is happy then suddenly becomes sad because she remembers her mother.

4. Dave

Dave is Refugee Resettlement Center staff who helps Kek to settle in Minnesota. He helps Kek complete the immigration documents, finds information about Kek's missing mother and helps other immigrant matters such as school and work.

He isn't tall
like my father was,
and *there is hair on his face*
the color of clouds before rain. (Applegate, 2007:6)

The main concern of these lines is the longer expression *the color of clouds before rain*. Rain clouds are gray instead of white because of their thickness. These lines show Dave's physical characteristic. There is gray hair on his mustache or beard. It shows that Dave is a middle-aged man.

His car is red
and coughs and burps
when he tries to make it go. **(Applegate, 2007:6)**

The important words in this personification expression are *coughs* and *burps*. *Cough* is to make a noise like coughing. *Burp* is a belch, or the loud release of trapped air loudly through your mouth. These lines describe Dave's possession. His car is no longer new and making funny noises, probably because the machine is outdated. It shows that he is not someone who can afford a new car or maybe he does not care about maintaining his belongings.

And sometimes he
uses my words.
He's like a song always out of tune,
missing notes. (Applegate, 2007:7)

In this simile expression, the author uses the phrase *out of tune*. *Out of tune* means incorrect pitch or intonation. The purpose of these lines is to show the difficulties in speaking different languages. When Dave talks using Kek's native language it does not sound right and strange.

*His eyes are wise and calm,
the eyes of a village elder. (Applegate, 2007:8)*

The author uses figurative language personification, and the main concern are the words *wise* and *calm*. *Wise* means possessing, showing, or prompted by wisdom or discernment. *Calm* means the absence of strong emotion, calm feelings. These lines show Dave's physical characteristics. In addition, the other purpose of these lines is to show Dave's personality trait because eyes may represent personality. Dave who has eyes like the oldest member of the tribe that usually has a wise character, who is able to give advice and trusted by his people.

You know, Kek, he says,
we aren't sure where your mother is.
His voice has the soft sting of pity in it. (Applegate, 2007:10)

As can be seen in this metaphor expression, the important words are *sting* and *pity*. *Sting* means to cause sharp but usually temporary pain. *Pity* is a feeling of sadness or sympathy for someone else's unhappiness or difficult situation. The purpose of these lines is to show Dave's manner when speaking. He speaks in a slightly compassionate tone to show sympathy for Kek.

5. Lou

Lou is an old woman and the farm owner where Kek and Ganwar work. She has a cow, three goats, chickens and a pig. Her husband died last year and she has sister in Los Angeles.

Her hair is short and silver
like a fresh moon. (Applegate, 2007:118)

The purpose of these lines is to show Lou's physical characteristic. She has short gray shining hair. It also shows that she is an old woman, not middle-aged person like Dave. The evidence is when Kek describes Dave by saying "there is hair on his face". It means Dave's hair has only one, or a few of gray hair not the whole hair is gray. In contrast, Kek describes Lou by saying "Her hair is short and silver like a fresh moon". It means Lou's whole hair is gray, and she is quite old.

It's just a *tired flock*
of scrawny chickens
and a cow with ribs trying to hide.
behind her muddy coat. (Applegate, 2007:145)

As can be seen in this personification expression, the important words are the words *tired*, *flock* and *scrawny*. *Tired* means weary. *Flock* is a number

of domestic animals that are kept together. Meanwhile, *scrawny* means unpleasantly thin, often with bones showing. The author uses these words to describe the group of weary and unattractive-looking animals with bones protruding behind their skin. The purpose of these lines is to describe Lou's possession. The animals are not well maintained maybe because she is old and lives alone. She has many hospital bills to pay and has problem with her bones. That's why he feels overwhelmed to take care of herself and the farm at once.

*I spot a tiny seed of something fine sprouting
in Lou's eyes. (Applegate, 2007:222)*

The main concern of these lines is the words *sprouting*. *Sprouting* means begin to grow; suddenly appear or begin to exist. These lines show something nice appears in Lou's mind. Probably after she moves to Los Angeles, she will be happy. For almost one year she lives alone, she may be suffering. Soon she will be accompanied, not by a group of weary-looking animals and an old sagging barn but by her sister and new life.

b. Discussion

After analyzing the data, the writer found that there are 292 figurative languages depicted in the verse-novel *Home of the Brave*, namely, 84 metaphors, 98 similes and 110 personifications. Personification is mostly found in the entire story. It is because personification is more suitable for delivering story from narrator's perspective. The narrator, Kek, is an immigrant from Sudan who can hardly understand the concept of many unfamiliar things in America. To explain what is going on around him he uses perspective of the human mind. He uses human psychological characteristics, feelings, and behavioral traits as his fundamental process of thinking. By linking human nature, he describes the world he sees and personifies it. For an innocent immigrant like him, personification is the best tool among others to understand the difficult concepts of unfamiliar things.

In the metaphor, simile and personification the author mostly uses natural elements as comparison. The use of natural elements has purpose. The main character is from Sudan, he belongs to a particular tribe in Sudan in which natural elements like animals and weather are very relatable for him. In addition, the use of natural elements is also relatable for the young readers to create mental picture about what actually happens to the main character, or the moment the author wants to convey.

In the end it proves that figurative language has both artistic function and communication. It means that the figurative language is able to deliver author's messages and ideas in a compelling way. Either in fictional world or daily life, figurative language does give us great thrilling way to see or say something.

This story is told in verse, the similar mode in writing poetry. In prose, the author can narrate and present a complex character without any limitation of space, but in poetry the author has limited space to describe characters. The language has to be strong, and each word is chosen for a purpose. Even though

the author has limited space to deliver the story and characters, it proves that the use of figurative language is successfully employed to portray the characters physically and mentally. Within those limitations, the author can describe the characters completely, as the author does to the round character. The author characterizes almost all the characters in the story, even for characters that live in Kek's memory. The number of author's descriptions of the characters depends on the relation, the number of interactions and the importance of the supporting character's position for the main character.

From these findings, it is proven that through some indicators, i.e. appearance and possession, action, conversation and thought, characterization using figurative expressions can reveal characters more deeply. Even though the difference of character's intended thought and speech is not explicit, but it still reveals many hidden things. In addition, it also proves that each chosen word has its own purpose for presenting character in the story. Even the common word like "sun" or "lion" can represent character physically and mentally.

CONCLUSION

In relation to the answers of the problem statements, the writers of this article can prove that both have been successfully answered. There are three figures of speech that exist in most chapters of the verse-novel. The most used figurative language is personification and the author mostly uses natural elements as comparison. The narrator of the story is an immigrant from Sudan who can hardly understand the concept of many unfamiliar things in America. He uses human psychological characteristics, feelings, and behavioral traits as his fundamental process of thinking. By linking human nature, he describes the world he sees and personifies it. In addition, the use of natural elements as comparison, i.e. animals, weather, sky etc. are very relatable both for him as the Sudanese boy and for the young readers. By using natural elements, difficult concepts are more easily understood and more relatable because the presence of nature and human beings are inseparable. Besides, the authors also bring aspects of Sudanese culture and factual events in Sudan. It helps readers gain insight to understand, feel, think about different cultures and factual events that happens in other parts of the world.

As for the second problem, Applegate evidently makes use of those three figures of speech to characterize the characters, such as Kek himself, Ganwar, Hannah, Dave, Lou, Nyatal, Mama, Dak, and Lual. She tends to emphasize important moments using figurative language narrated by Kek as the "I" as well as the main character. The more Kek expresses his feeling figuratively, the more significant the moment will be for him. Similarly, when Kek describes other characters, the more he describes character figuratively, the more opportunities are open to reveal the use of it in the characterization. Even though the author has limited space to deliver the story and characters because this story is told in the form of free verse, it proves that the use of figurative language is successfully employed in the portrayal of characters physically and mentally.

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