



Figurative Languages in Rita Ora's Selected Song Lyrics

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Abstract

Song lyrics of Rita Ora are the subject of this study. The song lyrics were analyzed using Knickerbocker and Renninger's (1963:367) theory to determine the types of figurative languages, Leech's (1981:9-19) theory of meaning to describe the meaning of each type of figurative language found, and Halliday's (1985:10) theory to analyze the context of the situation in Rita Ora's selected song lyrics. The data for this study was gathered using descriptive qualitative methods. This study looked at ten different types of figurative language in Rita Ora's song lyrics. The most frequent appearance was irony. Connotative meaning, affective meaning, conceptual meaning, collocative meaning, social meaning, reflected meaning, and thematic meaning were discovered. All song lyrics emphasise connotative meaning. Before delving into the meaning of the ten Rita Ora songs, it is necessary to first determine the context of the situation in the song. The data is then analyzed to determine the field, tenor, and mode. Field is used to analyze what happens in the song, tenor is used to determine who participates in the song, and mode is used to determine how the data is conveyed.

Keywords: *figurative languages, rita ora, song lyrics, connotative, context of situation*

Abstrak

Lirik lagu pilihan Rita Ora menjadi bahan investigasi. Lirik lagu dianalisis menggunakan teori Knickerbocker dan Renninger (1963:367) untuk menentukan jenis bahasa kiasan yang ditemukan dalam lirik lagu, teori makna Leech (1981:9-19) untuk mendeskripsikan makna dari setiap jenis bahasa kiasan yang ditemukan, dan teori Halliday (1985:10) untuk menganalisis konteks situasi dalam lirik lagu pilihan Rita Ora. Data untuk penelitian ini dikumpulkan dengan menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif. Penelitian ini melihat sepuluh jenis bahasa kiasan yang berbeda dalam lirik lagu Rita Ora. Penampilan yang paling sering adalah ironi. Ditemukan makna konotatif, makna afektif, makna konseptual, makna kolokatif, makna sosial, makna pantul, dan makna tematik. Semua lirik lagu menekankan makna konotatif. Sebelum mendalami makna dari kesepuluh lagu Rita Ora tersebut, terlebih dahulu perlu ditentukan konteks situasi dalam lagu tersebut. Data tersebut kemudian dianalisis untuk menentukan field, tenor, dan mode. Field digunakan untuk menganalisis apa yang terjadi dalam lagu, tenor digunakan untuk menentukan siapa yang berpartisipasi dalam lagu, dan mode digunakan untuk menentukan bagaimana data disampaikan.

Kata kunci: *bahasa kiasan, rita ora, lirik lagu, konotatif, konteks situasi*

Introduction

Humans, as a social creature, are always in need of other people to fulfil their social lives in society. People must be able to communicate or interact with society in order to meet their social needs as social creatures. To communicate, people require tools that allow them to connect with one another. That important tool is language. According to Hornby (2015: 849) language is a communication system in the form of speech and writing that is used by humans in a certain region of the country. In addition, humans are able to express their emotions, feelings, and thoughts through language. As a result, language is important because without it, humans cannot communicate with one another. Every language used to communicate must have a meaning behind it; in addition to meaning, every language contains figurative language.

According to Kennedy (1983: 479), figurative language refers to words and groups of words that exaggerate or distort the usual meaning. Examining the implied meaning of language in a song so that readers or listeners can feel and understand the message of purpose in song lyrics Perrine (1977:61) defines figurative language as a figure of speech, a way of adding extra dimension to language; it is more narrowly defined as a way of saying one thing while meaning another. As a result, figurative language is used in a wide range of literary works, including poetry, short stories, drama, novels, songs, and films. Figurative language enhances the beauty of literary work.

Spritzer and Walters (2003) stated, song is created, experiences, produced, consumed and preserved to appreciate. Song is one of literary works and listening to a song is a fun activity, but the pleasure can't be got if the listener did not understand the figurative language. Songs are made up of musical notes and words known as lyrics. Lyrics are direct personal expressions for or of singing. Typically, songs use figurative language to help the lyrics write well.

Figurative language is interesting to discuss because many people struggle to understand the meaning of song lyrics as well as the purpose of the song. Listening to music is one of the interesting hobbies to analyse. As a result of this research, the writer hopes that by using figurative language, the writer and others will be able to clarify the meaning or goal behind the song's lyrics.

The data of this study were taken from a selected song by British singer named Rita Ora because the songs are meaningful and the music is pleasant to hear. Beside her meaningful songs, Rita Ora is one of popular female singers in the world, because Rita Ora has won various well-known awards like, Glamour Awards, Global Awards, Billboard Music Awards, and so on. Ten songs from Rita Ora will be used for this analysis entitled: "Carry On", "Let You Love Me", "You for Me", "Grateful", "Lonely Together", "Follow Me", "For You", "Ritual", "Big", and "Poison" because these song titles consist of simple lyrics, beautiful diction, taste and figurative language in some song lyrics.

There are three previous studies used as references in this study. The first thesis written by Astuti (2022) is entitled "Figurative Language in Movie Script *Raya and the Last Dragon*." The study has two goals: to learn about the different types of figurative language used in the movie script *Raya and the Last Dragon*, and to analyze

the connotative meaning. This study uses the movie script *Raya* and the *Last Dragon* movie as a data source. Using Kennedy's theory of figurative language and Leech's theory of meaning to determine the types of figurative language. There are 24 data collected from the analysis which only consists of 5 out of a total of 8 types of figurative language based on the adapted theory, namely metaphor (12%), simile (17%), personification (21%), hyperbole (29%), metonymy (21%), synecdoche, apostrophe, and paradox. Furthermore, there are five types of meaning out of seven: social meaning, connotative meaning, thematic meaning, collocative meaning, and affective meaning. His research and this research are similar in that they both look at figurative language as a subject. The theories of figurative language are different, Astuti's used theory from Kennedy meanwhile this study will be used theory from Knickerbocker and Renninger. And from the data source is different Astuti's used the movie script and in this study used a song from Rita Ora. The above research used the theory proposed by Kennedy about the types of figurative language, while the theory proposed by Knickerbocker and Renninger (1963:367) about the types of figurative language will be used in this study.

The second study is based on Permana's (2018) journal article titled "Figurative Language in the Song Lyrics of Passanger's Album "All the Little Lights." The first goal of this study is to identify the different types of figurative language, and the second is to reveal the meaning of figurative language within the song. This study used a qualitative method. Knickerbocker and H Williard Renninger (1963) theory were used to find solutions to the problem and using Leech's (1974) theory to support understanding of the linguistic context of song lyrics. The similarities of this research are using figurative language and using song lyrics as the data source, and also using KL. Knickerbocker and H Williard Renninger to find the figurative language and Leech's theory to find the meaning. The difference is only in the data source, the research above uses song lyrics from Passanger while this study will use Rita Ora's song lyrics as the data source.

Puspa (2021) is the third thesis entitled "Analysis of Figurative Language in John Meyer's Song Lyrics." The data was analyzed using a qualitative description method in the study. Knickerbocker and Renninger's (1963:367) theory of figurative language and Leech's theory of meaning were used in his research (1981:9-19). Based on the adapted theory, the author discovered a total of ten types of figurative language in the lyrics of John Meyer's chosen song, namely simile, metaphor, personification, metonymy, synecdoche, hyperbole, irony, paradox, dead metaphor, and allusions. This study and his research are similar in that they both examine figurative language as a subject and song lyrics as an object. The theories used to determine the various types of figurative language and their meanings are also similar. The distinction stems from the data source. His study used song lyrics from John Meyer, whereas this study will use Rita Ora's song lyrics.

The purpose of this research is to examine the figurative languages and their meanings in Rita Ora's chosen song lyrics. This study is focused on the analysis of types of Figurative languages in Rita Ora's song lyrics based on the theory proposed by Knickerbocker and Renninger (1963:367), and it is also limited to the analysis of its proposed meaning in the song lyrics based on the theory proposed by Leech

(1963:367). (1981:9-19). And Halliday (1985: 9–10) theory about situation context to support the meaning analysis.

Method

The data for this study is drawn from ten selected song lyrics by Rita Ora. The songs were chosen because they provide enough data for research and contain a variety of figurative language used in song lyrics. This research does not concentrate on a single album because not every song on the album has a figurative meaning. As a result, this study will examine ten of Rita Ora's most well-known songs. The song lyrics were obtained from the Genius.com website as a source of data for this study. In addition, the author listens to music on the JOOX music application. In collecting the data, observation methods supported by note taking techniques are used to describe the various types of figurative language and the meaning of figurative language. The descriptive qualitative method was used in this study to describe Figurative languages and the meaning found in five of Rita Ora's song lyrics. The steps in analysing the data were classified as Figurative languages, then analyzed and described using the theory proposed by Knickerbocker and Renninger (1963:367) and supported by Leech's (1981:9-19) theory of meaning and Halliday's theory of situation context (1985: 9-10). This research is presented using two methods: formal and informal. In order to manage the structure and make it easier to understand, the formal method used a table to present the data of the song lyrics by using data and determining the data based on types of Figurative languages. Meanwhile, the informal method described and analysed the data found in Rita Ora's song lyrics using descriptive paragraphs.

Result and Discussion

Result

Table 1 Types of Figurative Languages Found in the Rita Ora's Selected Song Lyrics

No	Types of Figurative Language	Total	Percentage
1	Simile	3	14,3%
2	Hyperbole	3	14,3%
3	Metaphor	1	4,8%
4	Metonymy	2	9,6%
5	Personification	2	9,6%
6	Synecdoche	2	9,6%
7	Irony	4	19,1%
8	Paradox	1	4,8%
9	Dead Metaphor	1	4,8%
10	Allusion	2	9,6%
Total		21	100%

Table 2 Types of Meaning Found in the Rita Ora's Selected Song Lyrics

No.	Types of Meaning	Found in The Data	Total	Percentages
1	Conceptual Meaning	Data 12, 13, 17	3	13,1%

2	Connotative Meaning	Data 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 19	10	43,5%
3	Social Meaning	Data 21	1	4,4%
4	Affective Meaning	Data 3, 6, 8, 14, 18	5	21,8%
5	Reflected Meaning	Data 1, 2	2	8,7%
6	Collocative Meaning	Data 20	1	4,4%
7	Thematic Meaning	Data 18	1	4,4%
Total			23	100%

From the tabulation data 1 and data 2 above, there are 21 data of figurative languages found in Rita Ora's selected song lyrics. Based on the table above, the following sequence of figurative languages shows that Irony sits in the first rank with a total of 4 data of figurative languages. There are 23 data of meanings found in the 21 data of figurative language. Based on the table above shows that connotative meaning sits in the first rank which totals 10 data.

Discussion

To support the meaning analysis, the data found were classified into types using Knickerbocker and Renninger (1963:367) theory of figurative languages, Leech's (1981:9-19) theory of meaning, and Halliday's (1985) theory of context of situation. There are 10 types of figurative languages in the theory proposed by Knickerbocker and Renninger, and 7 types of meaning in Leech's theory of meaning, and the analysis of types of figurative languages, meaning, and situation context is provided below.

1. *Simile*

Knickerbocker and Renninger (1963: 367) describe that simile is one of those figures of speech that involves comparison, its resemblance with the help of the words "like" or "as".

Data:

Sure as the waves on the sands are washing

(Carry on by Rita Ora, line 4)

The bolded sentence in the data 1 categorised as simile because it compares two things using the word "as". In this sentence the word "sure" is compared with the word "waves" by attaching the word "as" to have a comparison. The word "sure" is an adjective related with attitudes and actions in humans, meanwhile the word "waves" is a wave of water from the sea to the shore. The sentence "sure as the waves on the sands are washing" apparently means someone who has a definite attitude and decision that cannot be denied like sand on a beach that has been pounded by the waves. The song writer uses a simile in order to create an interesting connection in the reader's mind.

The sentence above has reflected meaning because the meaning that is reflected is the meaning that arises when one meaning forms a new response. The word "sure" means having no doubt or uncertainty, but when it's added an affix behind it "as the waves on the sands are washing" in this sentence is no longer talked about only "sure" but it is already talked about really sure because the data contains of a sentence that has a proven meaning.

2. *Hyperbole*

Hyperbole is one kind of figure of an exaggeration used for special effects that was proposed by Knickerbocker and Renninger (1963:367).

Data:

Let me through the deepest water

(Carry On by Rita Ora, line 7)

The song lyrics above are categorised as hyperbole because the song writer exaggerates that dive into the deepest water. As we know, the deepest water in the world is the Mariana Trench; its depth reaches 11,000 metres. It is impossible for humans to dive into the deepest water, due to the fact that humans can only dive as deep as 300 metres. Humans should use a submarine if they want to dive deeper than the maximum limit they have.

The sentence above has connotative meaning because the meaning is beyond the literal or dictionary meaning. The deepest water is in the ocean, and the deepest place in the ocean reaches 11,000 metres, with such a depth the water pressure can destroy humans. Connotatively, this sentence means that the author wants to state that the deepest water is a tough challenge that may be met, "led me through the deepest water" means that the woman wants the man to accompany her through any difficult challenges in their relationship.

3. *Metaphor*

Metaphor is one kind of figure of speech which concisely compares two things, and without the words "like" or "as" (Knickerbocker and Renninger, 1963:367).

Data:

Oh, you'll always be my ritual

(Ritual by Rita Ora, line 15)

The phrase above is using metaphor to create a comparison between the things which are totally different. In the sentence above, compare two unlike things implicitly, such as the word "you" and "ritual". The word "you" indicates that it means a human. Meanwhile, the word "ritual" means a religious ceremony or reverence to God which consists of a series of actions performed according to a prescribed command that become the routine of religious people. The song writer describes that her man is her routine according to the rules in their relationship. Metaphor is used to create an effect for the reader to build their imagination in this situation.

This sentence has connotative meaning because the song writer tends to add phrases that cannot be understood in literal meaning. In this sentence the song writer

describes her boyfriend's status in her life. Ritual has a ceremony to God which is a routine for the people. This lyrics means that her man is her routine because she is sincere and loves him so much.

4. *Metonymy*

Metonymy is a figure of speech that refers to one thing by using the term for another thing that is closely related to it (Knickerbocker and Renninger, 1963:367).

Data:

Oh, **heaven** knows I've tried

(Let You Love Me by Rita Ora, line 10)

The data above is categorized as metonymy because using the term for another thing which is closely associated with it. In this sentence, the word "heaven" is closely associated with good people because according to religious teachings only good people can go to heaven.

The song lyric above has affective meaning because the meaning in this sentence conveys song writer feeling expression. The sentences describe the happiness of the song writer. The word "heaven" in the song lyric above means kind people around her. Effectively, the song writer tries to convey her feeling that she has a lot of good people around her who know her struggle.

5. *Personification*

Personification can be defined as one figure of speech which gives human characteristics to nonhuman things (Knickerbocker and Renninger, 1963:367).

Data:

When the **days stop hurting** and the rain has dried

(Follow Me by Rita Ora, line 1)

The sentence above is classified as personification because it attributes human characteristics to nonhuman things. The term "days" refers to a 24-hour period of time measured from one midnight to the next. The term "hurting" refers to a person's or their feelings' mental pain or distress. In this sentence, the song writer used days to represent the people she encounters on a daily basis.

Because the meaning goes beyond the literal meaning, the sentence above has connotative meaning. There is nothing intangible that can cause harm to humans. In the song lyrics, the word "days" implies a human being who can hurt like a human. Every day, she encounters someone who hurts her.

6. *Synecdoche*

It is one kind of figure using part of the whole (Knickerbocker and Renninger 1963:367).

Data:

I miss your **footprints** next to mine

(Carry On by rita Ora, line 2)

The bolded sentence above is categorized as synecdoche because it uses part of something to stand for the whole thing. In this sentence, the word “footprints” is the impression left by foot on the ground. The song writer used “footprints” to explain the person itself.

The data above is categorized as conceptual meaning because it refers to the logical sense of the utterance. Conceptually, the word “footprints” could be defined as foot, sole, mark.

7. Irony

Irony is defined as one figure of speech in which the real meaning completely contrasts the surface meaning (Knickerbocker and Renninger, 1963:367).

Data:

You're the poison in the wine

(Lonely Together by Rita Ora, line 15)

The bolded sentence in the song lyric above is categorized as irony because the song lyrics contradict the surface meaning “you're the poison in the wine”. Poison is substances that cause death, injury or harm to organs, then wine is an alcoholic drink typically made from fermented grapes. While the fermented content in wine can slightly reduce the levels of toxins. The lyrics above said that the poison is in the wine, even though wine could reduce the level of poison that is drunk by humans. That is why the bold sentence above is categorized as irony.

The lyric above has connotative meaning because the meaning is beyond the literal meaning. Wine could reduce the level of poison in human's body. Connotatively, the word “poison” represents danger and the word “wine” represents savior. What the song writer meant was “you're the poison in the wine” means “you are dangerous even though you look like a savior”.

8. Paradox

Paradox defined as one figure of speech whose statement whose surface obvious meaning seems to be illogical even absurd.

Data:

**I caught the edge of the knife
And it hurts just a little**

(Lonely Together by Rita Ora, line 3)

The bolded lyrics above are categorized as paradox because the sentence above has a statement that doesn't make sense. The paradox appears when two things should not be able to exist together. The sentences “I caught the edge of the knife” and “and it hurts just a little” are paradox because they show an unreasonable statement. The edge of the knife is the sharpest part of the knife, the smaller object has the greater pressure. People who are stabbed by a knife would suffer deeper wounds than just being scratched by a knife.

The lyrics above have thematic meaning because the song writer communicates by giving focus and emphasis, then the cause and effect can be felt. The lyrics above explains what and how to the character in the lyrics.

1. I caught the edge of the knife (what)
2. And it hurts just a little (how)

It has two different communicative values to indicate different context, sentence 1 seems to answer the implicit “what” whereas sentence 2 seems to answer the “how”.

9. Dead Metaphor

Dead metaphor can be defined as one figure of speech which has lost its figurative meaning through endless use (Knickerbocker and Renniner, 1963:367).

Data:

At the **bottom** of the **bottle**

(Lonely Together by Rita Ora, line 14)

The bolded sentence above is categorized as a dead metaphor because it has lost its imaginative figure because of the endless use. It can be categorized as a dead metaphor because it shows the specific part of the bottle, “at the bottom of the bottle” which means the basis or the beginning of a thing.

The lyric above has connotative meaning because the meaning is beyond the literal meaning. In this lyric the songwriter wants to convey that a bottle must have a bottom that causes the bottle to stand. Likewise, for every problem there must be a cause.

10. Allusion

Allusion can be defined as a figure of speech which references a well-known place, people, place, or event. It is a figure that implies more than it has a narrow meaning.

Data:

You're the **high** that I can't give up
Oh **Lord** here we go

(Lonely Together by Rita Ora, line 10)

The sentence above is categorized as allusion because it implied that the woman explained about a man who seems to have the same status as a king. Which in this case the king is a leader who is a role model for his people. The song writer talked about the man that had the same status as a king who is worth fighting for to be her lover.

The sentence above is categorized as a collocative meaning because the words “lord” and “high” are in the same collocation. The word “lord” has the meaning of king, while the word “high” generally means height but in this sentence, this word has the meaning of noble. Then it can be ascertained that these two words belong to the same collocation, namely leadership.

Conclusion

In this research, 10 types of figurative languages were found, they are; simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole, metonymy, synecdoche, irony, paradox, dead metaphor, and allusion in Rita Ora's selected song lyrics. There was one type of figurative language which occurred dominantly, the most frequently occurring called irony which found 4 occurrences throughout the analyzed songs. Irony is found to be the most dominant in the 10 Rita Ora's songs analyzed, because the song writer gives an idea to readers and listeners that beautiful words that sound do not necessarily have the same beautiful meaning. For the types of meaning performed on Rita Ora's chosen song lyrics there are 6 out of 7 types of meaning were discovered, namely conceptual meaning, connotative meaning, social meaning, affective meaning, collocative meaning, and thematic meaning. However, there is one of them occurred most frequently which is called connotative meaning with 10 data found, it is because 10 of the Rita Ora's selected song lyrics have some of figurative languages inserted in them, since figurative languages is a language which is not supposed to be taken literally, that is why the most of meaning found is connotative meaning. Whereas, there are 1 out of 7 types of meaning that were not found called reflected meaning in Rita Ora's selected song lyrics. The contexts of situation are important to be noticed to discover the meaning of the figurative language used.

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