

Uncover the meaning of figurative language in the selected songs

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Abstract – Language is the main medium for communication, and can build relationships with each other that serve to carry meaning. This study concerns to analyze figurative languages found in selected Alec Benjamin song lyrics. There are two problems that are formulated in this study, they are: (1) what are the types of figurative language found in Alec Benjamin song lyrics; (2) what are the meaning of the Figurative language found in Alec Benjamin song lyrics. In this research used two theories. The first theory proposed by Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963) which is used to identify figurative language types and the second theory of meaning is supported by Leech (1981) to analyze the meaning. The method used in gathering the data was done by the method of formal and informal. The researcher obtained the data by listening the songs, reading the scripts of lyrics, underlining, and classifying the lyrics which contains types of figurative languages. The data was analyzed descriptively using qualitative method. It was found four types of figurative language: hyperbole, personification, synecdoche, and paradox. The most widely used is hyperbole and simile, with the rest has equal numbers or rank. There is one type of meaning found in the lyrics in a connotative meaning.

Keywords: figurative language; song lyrics; text meaning

I. INTRODUCTION

Through the literary works people able to convey their feeling and attitude. In applying literary works, definitely needs high imagination to get the best result therefore the meaning and purpose which exist in content may have benefit for the readers. Language is the major factor of human daily life to build communication with each other. Without learning language, we cannot communicate to other people also unable to create relation in social life because language itself is the tools to express something. Altikriti (2016) language is become common medium among society, through language people are able to share their emotions, expression, opinion, experience, and ideas. In implying the language can be used in three ways, which are written, spoken, and gesture or sign language.

According to Knickerbocker (1963), Figurative language can be called metaphor. Figurative language usually found in song lyrics or poetry. Poetry has a style of how the writer to write every stanza to make some feelings, as for the reader understand how the songs written to make the listener amused. Poetry and songs certainly has a meaning and messages in each every title. Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963) stated that figurative language consists of; metaphor, simile, personification, synecdoche, paradox, dead metaphor, allusion, metonymy, hyperbole, and irony.

According as in above, it can be concluded that figurative language serves to deliver the feelings, thoughts, and perception that is unable to be expressed in literal meaning. The researcher is interested in analyzing the figurative language in Alec Benjamin selected song lyrics. Nowadays, Figurative language has an important role in music industries. The usage of Figurative language does make benefits on composer to make their songs slightly entertaining than composer who does not use Figurative language. The purpose of Figurative language are; to beautify song lyrics and to make the song lyrics more emotional.

People nowadays, tend to listen music that contain Figurative language without they realizing it. People may not know what Figurative languages is, all they know is the lyric amusingly enough for them is enough for them to listen. That is why this article made for public to get to know more about Figurative language and its types. In this study, the researcher reviewed three previous study that related to the literature about the figurative language. The review is from an article by Dimu (2018), entitled; "An Analysis of Figurative Language in James Blunt's song lyrics" there are two aims of the study are to identify of figurative language and the meaning used in James Blunt's song lyrics. He used documentation method to collect the data and used the qualitative method to analyze the data. His study using the theory of Knickerbocker and Renninger (1963) to identify the types of figurative language and supported theory of meaning by Leech (1981) the total types of figurative language were two of simile, three of metaphor, eleven of personification, fourteen of hyperbole, three of synecdoche, and six of metonymy. The dominant of figurative language in his study is hyperbole.

The study of figurative language used in the song (Gunawan et al, 2020) using discourse analysis. On the other hand, Candra and Putri (2019) attempted to interpret verbal and visual sign. In order to enrich the present study, to

researchers also compare the use of speech acts in the classroom (Wajdi, 2018), since the discussion of the form and the meaning of the utterances worth reading.

II. METHOD

The data of this research were taken from Alec Benjamin's selected songs and it was chosen eight songs which has Figurative language entitled, Oh My God, Must Have Been the Wind, Death of A Hero, I'm Not A Cynic, Just Like You, The Book of You & I, Mind Is Prison and Match In the Rain.

This research is implying qualitative method to serve the data by description and discussion. There are four steps in collecting and processing the data are: a) listening to the song cautiously and repeatedly to understand the contest of the song, b) downloading the lyrics of the song in internet and then listening again while check the script of song, c) underlining the sentence of the lyrics that have figurative language, d) classifying the data based on types of figurative language.

This research conducted using two theories. The first one is the theory implemented by Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963:367) for classifying the types of Figurative language. The second theory is implemented by Leech (1981) to analyze the meaning behind the lyrics.

This research was done using formal and informal method. Formal method was supported by using table in order to make the data obvious and understandable. Meanwhile, the usage of informal method is to present the description of the analysis.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research consist four types of Figurative language found in eight songs. From those four types of Figurative language writer were analyzed based on theory of figurative language which is proposed by Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963) and supported by Leech (1981).

In the table 1 below, it can be seen that the detailed number of the research finding concerning of total Figurative language found in song lyrics of Alec Benjamin's selected songs.

Table 1 Types of Figurative Language Found in the Selected Songs

Num	Types	Title of Songs	Numbers of Data
1	Hyperbole	Oh My God, Must Have Been The Wind, Death of A Hero	3
2	Simile	I'm Not A Cynic, Just Like You, Oh My God	3
3	Synecdoche	The Book of You & I	1
4	Personification	Mind Is Prison	1
5	Paradox	Match In The Rain	1
TOTAL			9

Based on the table of data 1 above of Figurative language, there are eight data which contain of Figurative Language served on the table. Nine data were taken from eight tittle of songs in Alec Benjamin's selected songs which are; Oh My God, Must Have Been the Wind, Death of A Hero, I'm Not A Cynic, Just Like You, The

Book of You & I, Mind Is Prison and Match In the Rain, with the total one term in each song.

3.1 Hyperbole

According to Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963), hyperbole is an exaggeration used for special effect. Hyperbole is one of figure of speech that full of entity politics to create imagination which has the function to carry the meaning based on the condition that might has happened.

Data 1

I'm running out of oxygen

Can't help but wish I'd stayed
I'm lost just like Will Robinson
Or rocket man in space
(Alec Benjamin "Oh My God" line 28)

The data above is categorized as hyperbole because in reality humans are unable to run out from the oxygen unless if humans live on space. It is obvious that oxygen is plenty enough for everyone on the planet and there is no indication that the songwriter is trapped in some sort of room. It is clearly an overstatement.

The sentence above is contained connotative meaning because the meaning is beyond literal meaning. As in dictionary, running out means a supply of something be used up, which in reality is nearly impossible for oxygen to run out if it used by a single person and there is no indication or explanation that the songwriter is on asphyxia. Therefore by running out of oxygen, the songwriter means that he is running out of time instead of oxygen.

Data 2

So I was layin' on the floor of my room

Cold concrete on my back

No, I just couldn't shake the feeling
I didn't want to intrude 'cause I knew that I didn't have all the facts
But I couldn't bear the thought of leavin' her
(Alec Benjamin "Must Have Been the Wind" line 20)

The data above is categorized as hyperbole because in the dictionary the word "concrete" means a heavy, rough building material made from mixture of broken stone. Which is obviously not a part of human body especially in human spine. Therefore, it is impossible that the songwriter tells that he has cold concrete on his back.

Regarding to Leech (1981), this sentence defined as connotative meaning because the meaning is beyond the literal meaning. In reality, the songwriter did not means he has concrete on his back. What he meant by having cold concrete on his back is the way to show his feeling to his partner. Which means that the songwriter expresses his feeling through varieties ways. He wants to have a good relationship. In this case, the songwriter describes his care and attention to others or his partner.

Data 3

That night I put my youth in a casket
And buried it inside of me

That night I saw through all the magic
Now I'm a witness to the death of a hero
(Alec Benjamin "Death of A Hero" line 8)

Types of figurative language that found is hyperbole because there is exaggeration in this data. In the reality, buried is the placed or hidden underground that is done by humans or a place to bury a dead body. While phrase "inside of me" is a statement that refers to the organs of the body in the human's body. In fact, in dictionary youth means the period between childhood and adult age and is not solid thing. Therefore, it is not possible that you can bury it inside person's body. Even if it is possible, it is most unlikely to happen.

The data above is defined as connotative meaning because in fact, humans are unable to implant anything inside of their body without their consent as the only thing they could bury is their own body. What the songwriter meant by burying youth inside of him means that he was burying his past. Therefore, the sentence is not to be taken literally.

3.2 Simile

According to Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963) simile is a comparison between the same two things that use the like or as.

Data 4
So like a boat on the ocean, I'll rock with the waves
God, I'm so sick of this notion that I have to fake
Fake my emotions and pretend I'm okay
So like a boat on the ocean, I'll just rock with the waves
(Alec Benjamin "I'm Not A Cynic" line 18)

This sentence classified as simile because there is a comparison within the sentence. The sentence in the lyric above is indicating that the songwriter is comparing himself with a boat as he rocking with the waves. This indicates a comparison between a people with non-living beings. With a comparison within the sentence, the song lyric above is categorized as Simile.

The data above is categorized as connotative meaning because the meaning is conveying the beyond literal meaning. The sentence stated that the songwriter tells that he is comparing himself with a boat, from here we are aware that boat in dictionary means a small vessel propelled on water by oars, sails, or an engine which making this sentence is not supposed to be taken literally. What the songwriter meant by himself as a boat means that he is going along with any situation he felt. He is telling that he is adaptable to any circumstances he is facing which in reality, he is not okay with it.

Data 5
Now that I'm older, realized my father
Was doing the best he could do
Told him one day I'll have a son or a daughter
And when I'm a father too
I hope that I am just like you
(Alec Benjamin "Just Like You" line 12)

This sentence classified as simile because there is a comparison within the sentence. The songwriter is comparing himself to his father. The sentence tells us that in the future, the songwriter will be like his father and will have children. The

song lyric above also tells that the songwriter wants to be his father because the songwriter wants to be his best. With comparison consisted in the sentence, this sentence is categorized as a Simile.

The sentence above is classified as connotative meaning because the meaning which appeared is beyond from the literal interpretation. As we know, the meaning behind the songwriter wanted to be same as his father is that the songwriter wants to be his best to handle his children. It is not that the songwriter wanted to become the form of his father literally, but the songwriter wants to change his personality and change his behavior and also change the way his idea of thinking to be like his father.

Data 6

I'm running out of oxygen
Can't help but wish I'd stayed
I'm lost just like Will Robinson
Or rocket man in space
(Alec Benjamin "Oh My God" line 30)

The data classified as simile because there is a comparison within the sentence. The songwriter did compared himself as Will Robinson. It is obvious that the songwriter tried to make a comparison with someone. This indicates enough as a Simile.

The sentence above is classified as connotative meaning because the meaning which appeared is beyond from the literal interpretation. What the songwriter tells about he's lost like Will Robinson is not supposed to be taken by literally but what he meant is that he is desperate because he was naïve as Will Robinson and was easily fooled by his lover. Therefore, the sentence is using a connotative meaning.

3.3 Synecdoche

According to Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963) that synecdoche is using the part of the whole.

Data 7

Well, it all began in the back of her car
I was just 16, but I fell so hard
Well, the years went by, and she held my heart
But her love ran dry, and we fell apart
(Alec Benjamin "The Book of You & I" line 3)

The data above evidently categorized as Synecdoche because the sentence is using the part of the whole. The sentence indicates that the songwriter's tells that his lover held his heart for years. The word heart in the sentence represent not just the songwriter's heart but also his whole body and soul. Therefore, the sentence is labeled as Synecdoche.

The sentence above used connotative meaning because the meaning which has appeared in the sentence is beyond from literal meaning. The sentence above does not mean that the songwriter's lover is holding his whole heart literally because if so, the songwriter will definitely die. What the songwriter meant by holding his heart is that the songwriter's lover is holding his feeling and not his

heart for literally. Therefore, the meaning behind the lyric is that the songwriter is afraid that his lover is hurting his heart.

3.4 Personification

According to Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963) stated that personification is giving human characteristics to an object, animal, or abstract idea. Personification is a metaphor, there is an implied comparison between no human thing and a human being.

Data 8

I don't live in California
I'll inform you, that's not where I reside
I'm just a tenant payin' rent inside this body and I...

Got two windows

And those windows, well, I call them my eyes
(Alec Benjamin "Mind Is Prison" line 4)

The sentence above is categorized as Personification because the sentence is giving human characteristics to an object, animal, or abstract idea. It is obvious that window can't be someone's eyes. In the sentence, the songwriter tells us that his eyes are like windows, which is impossible since window's mechanism doesn't work as eyes do. Therefore, figuratively the sentence is categorized as Personification.

The meaning of the sentence above defined as connotative meaning because the meaning is out of literal meaning. As we know, windows are not eyes, as the mechanism is also different, the songwriter means that the songwriter means that he is a mentally disturbed person that has went into an asylum and therefore, the sentence is not to be taken literally.

3.5 Paradox

According to Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963) says paradox is a statement whose surface, obvious meaning seems to be illogical even absurd, but which makes good sense upon closer examination.

Data 9

The clouds are rolling in, I feel you drifting away
And though my intuition tells me that it's too late
That in these conditions, tryna bring back the flame is like

Tryna light a match in the rain

(Alec Benjamin "Match In the Rain" line 12)

The data above is categorized as paradox is a statement whose surface, obvious meaning seems to be illogical even absurd, but which makes good sense upon closer examination. It can be seen that the sentence is contradicting itself. It is obvious that lighting a match means creating a fire which is most likely to be possible in rain condition. This indicates an opposite contradiction. Therefore, figuratively, the sentence is categorized as Paradox.

The meaning of the data above is defined as connotative meaning because the beyond is beyond from the literal meaning. The sentence is illogical since we know that lighting a fire is nearly impossible in rainy or wet condition. What the songwriter means by lighting matches in a rain is that the songwriter is having a one sided relationship. He is loving his lover so much while on the other hand, his

lover doesn't love him anymore. Therefore, the meaning behind the lyric is that he is unable to maintain a relationship if his lover does not love him any more.

IV. CONCLUSION

As for the final, the writer has analyzed eight song lyrics in Alec Benjamin's selected songs which contains Figurative language they are; Oh My God, Ruin, Must Have Been the Wind, Death of A Hero, I'm Not A Cynic, Just Like You, Mind is Prison and Match in the Rain. Those songs containing four types of Figurative language.

Throughout the process of identifying the data, the researcher found mesmerizing aspect. The writer had concluded that the song writer's creative imagination is to convey his feeling to all the listener. In this research, the researchers found nine data which consist of; hyperbole, personification, synecdoche, and paradox. Those four types of figurative language found in eight songs from Alec Benjamin's selected songs. The most song widely used is hyperbole and simile, with the rest has equal numbers or rank. There is one type of meaning found in the lyrics in a connotative meaning.

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