

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE USED IN ED SHEERAN'S SELECTED SONGS

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ABSTRACT

This study concern with the descriptive analysis of figurative language found in Ed Sheeran's selected songs. The study's objective is to describe the types of figurative language and to analyze the meaning of figurative language. This study is expected to obtain the result that will be useful for the reader especially in knowing what figurative language is and what types of figurative language are. The researcher used a descriptive qualitative method to classify and analyze based on the theory of Figurative Language Proposed by Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963) and also the theory of Meaning proposed by Leech (1974). The result found that there are 14 sentences of six kinds of figurative language used in Ed Sheeran's Selected songs, such as simile with 2 or 14%, a metaphor with 1 or 8%, personification with 3 or 21%, metonymy with 1 or 8%, hyperbole with 5 or 35%, irony with 2 or 14%,. It can be indicated that the dominant type of figurative language in the song lyrics is hyperbole. The meaning of figurative language is also stated clearly. It can be concluded that figurative language has important roles in created the song lyric. Using figurative language makes the song more interesting. That is why the author used sentences that have figurative language in the song.

Keywords: Figurative language, song lyrics and meaning

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini membahas tentang analisis deskriptif bahasa kiasan yang ditemukan dalam lagu-lagu pilihan Ed Sheeran. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mendeskripsikan jenis-jenis bahasa kiasan dan menganalisis makna dari bahasa kiasan. Penelitian ini diharapkan memperoleh hasil yang bermanfaat bagi pembaca khususnya dalam mengetahui apa itu bahasa kiasan dan apa saja jenis-jenis bahasa kiasan. Peneliti menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif untuk mengklasifikasi dan menganalisis berdasarkan teori Bahasa Figuratif yang dikemukakan oleh Knickerbocker dan Reninger (1963) dan juga teori Arti yang dikemukakan oleh Leech (1974). Hasil penelitian menemukan bahwa terdapat 14 kalimat dari enam jenis bahasa kiasan yang digunakan dalam lagu-lagu Ed Sheeran Selected, seperti simile dengan 2 atau 14%, metafora dengan 1 atau 8%, personifikasi dengan 3 atau 21%, metonimi dengan 1 atau 8%, hiperbola dengan 5 atau 35%, ironi dengan 2 atau 14%. Dapat diindikasikan bahwa jenis majas yang dominan dalam lirik lagu adalah hiperbola. Makna bahasa kiasan juga dapat dinyatakan dengan jelas. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa bahasa kiasan memiliki peran penting dalam menciptakan lirik lagu. Menggunakan bahasa kiasan membuat lagu lebih menarik. Itulah sebabnya penulis menggunakan kalimat-kalimat yang memiliki bahasa kiasan dalam lagu tersebut.

Kata Kunci: Bahasa kiasan, lirik lagu dan maknanya

I. INTRODUCTION

Semantics is a subfield micro linguistics which is committed to the study of meaning. It can be also though the philosophical of meaning in language that focuses on the relationship between words, phrase, sign, and symbols and their and for, their denotation. As the main study in semantics term, meaning according to Lyons (1984: 126) has long been accepted widely as ideas or concept that can be transferred from the main of the speaker to the main of the hearer by embodying them, as it were, in the form of one language or another.

Figurative language uses words or expressions which a meaning that is different from literal interpretation. Figurative language is usually used in literary work such as prose, poetry, song, and drama which has the aim of stating the intention when the literal language cannot communicate. Perinne (1982) states that figurative language affords the reader's imaginative pleasure. So it requires them to use their imagination in figuring out the author's meaning. It makes figurative meaning difficult to understand because we cannot find the meaning of the figurative language in the dictionary and must use our imagination to interpret those meanings. According to Knickerbockers and Reninger (1963:367), figurative language is sometimes called metaphorical language or simply metaphor because it is Greek ancestor "Metepherein" means to carry meaning beyond its literal meaning (Meta= beyond + pherein to bring -i.e., to bring beyond). They propose some kinds of figures, namely; simile, metaphor, personification, synecdoche, metonymy, hyperbole, irony, dead metaphor, allusion, paradox, and symbol.

Meaning in semantics can be divided generally into two, namely

literal meaning and non-literal meaning. The literal meaning is the proper or natural meaning from the speaker which contains a precise definition. Meanwhile, the non-literal meaning is the opposite of it which has a different or hidden meaning of an utterance. Non-literal meaning has been famous used in the literary world and becomes the characteristics of language style in this field. One subject of study that explains broadly non-literal meaning is called figurative language.

This study interested in analyzing types of figurative language used in Ed Sheeran's song lyrics. Ed Sheeran's is a singer which has rich of logical thing and high imagination in writing the song. There are many singers in the world use the figurative language in their song lyrics to make the feeling of song is more intense and one of them is Ed Sheeran. In this study the writer would like to analyze types of figurative language that found in Ed Sheeran's selected songs in the album "X". X (Pronounced "multiply") is the second studio album by English singer and songwriter Ed Sheeran. It was released worldwide on June 23rd, 2014. In this album, there are 10 songs but writer only choose four songs because it is the most popular songs and many figurative language are found on the lyrics.

Related to the description above, the writer studies figurative language used in selected songs lyrics of Ed Sheeran's songs. He is one popular singer with his touching songs that have been spread through the world. His songs are chosen because there are many figurative expressions exist in the songs that are interested to be analyzed.

II. METHOD

The research data was taken from Ed Sheeran's album and four songs with hyperbole were selected, entitled Give

Me Love, Photograph, Thinking Out Loud and All of The Stars which were released in 2014. This study used a qualitative method to present the data by providing tables and explanations.

The study was presented through formal and informal methods. The formal method was supported by using a table. There are four steps in collecting and processing data, namely: a) listening to the song carefully and repeatedly to understand the content of the song, b) downloading the song lyrics on the internet and then listening again while checking the song script songs, c) underlining sentences in the lyrics that have types of figurative language, d) classifying data based on the type of figurative language. At this step, the method used to analyze the data is quantitative and qualitative methods which are analyzed by providing tables and explaining the overall results of the study. The first step in this analysis is to identify the types of figurative language found using the theory of figurative language by Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963:367).

The finding is used to present the data that was found in the lyrics of Ed Sheeran's selected songs. The writer found six types of figurative language, namely; Simile, Metaphor, Personification, Metonymy, Hyperbole, and Irony in accordance with the theoretical framework proposed by Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963).

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

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In this study, in calculating the data found in the lyrics of Ed Sheeran's selected songs, the writer used the formal that can be described as follows.

Table 1. The Accumulation of Figurative Language Found in the Lyrics of Ed Sheeran's Selected Songs

No	Types of Figurative Language	Number of Cases	Percentage
1	Hyperbola	5	35%

2	Personification	3	21%
3	Irony	2	14%
4	Simile	2	14%
5	Metonymy	1	8%
6	Metaphor	1	8%
	Total	14	100%

3.1 Hyperbola

Hyperbole is an exaggeration used for special effect

Data 1:

I can hear your heart on the radio beat

The hyperbole idea that can be identified in this lyric is shown by the phrase “*hear your heart*” which is impossible to be done in real life since “*heart*” is a part of human body that does not have mouth. In this case, the songwriter emphasizes the intention of the song by stating that he (songwriter) can hear the girl's heart. The term “*heart*” may refer to the “heartbeat of the songwriter's girl”. However, even the girl's heart beat strongly, it is impossible to be heard by normal ears. It can be said the songwriter exaggerates the real condition in this case. Therefore, related to the theoretical framework stated by Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963), the lyric above can be classified as a hyperbole since the songwriter using an exaggeration used for special effect.

The sentence above shows comparison. The writer compares someone's love and dove. In this case, it represents Edward's love for Bella which is as gentle as a dove. Literally, dove refers to any bird of the family Columbidae, especially the smaller species with pointed tails. However, in this sentence it has extended meaning. Dove is used as a symbol of innocence, gentleness, tenderness, love and peace.

This sentence particularly represents that Edward loves Bella sincerely and unconditionally. It shows the true love between two people which is very touching and inspiring.

Data 2:

You're on the other side, as the skyline splits in two

The lyric can be classified as a hyperbole. Hyperbole is a type of figurative language mentioned by Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963) in their theory in which can be defined as an exaggeration used for special effect. The hyperbole idea in this lyric is shown by the phrase “*skyline split in two*”. It is a special effect from the real meaning of the different place that faced by a couple. In the other words, they are separated too far away so it is supposed as the skyline splits into two. It is quite impossible to see the skyline splits, since the skyline is linear in real life. It means, the songwriter exaggerates such condition that faced by a couple in long distance relationship. So the initial message the songwriter expresses in this sentence is “you are on the other place and we don't together at the moment”.

3.2 Personification

Personification is giving human characteristic to an object, animal, or an abstract idea.

Data 3

Hear the song my heart is beating to

Related to the theoretical framework stated by Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963), the lyric above can be classified as a personification since human characteristic is attributed to an object. The personification concept that can be identified in this lyric or sentence is shown by the phrases “the song my heart is beating to”. Indirectly, the author analyzes the form of the phrase can be changed into “my heart is beating a song”. Song is composition made up of lyric and music, with the intent of the lyrics being “sung” (Momer and Rauch, 1991). In this case, the term “sung” or “sing” is a verb that is usually acted by human. However, the act of “singing” here is attributed into the term “hear”, specifically the songwriter’s heart. According to Oxford dictionary, heart means a hollow muscular organ that pumps the blood through the circulatory system by rhythmic contraction and dilation. Based on the definition, it can be said that “heart” is impossible to singing.

Data 4:

All of these stars will guide us home.

According to the theoretical framework stated by Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963), the lyric which is a figurative language can be classified as a personification. The personification idea that can be gained in this case is shown by the phrase “will guide”. That phrase is kind of human characteristic or attitude that is attributed into the term “stars. It is strange that the stars which are huge objects in the space can guide someone back to their home. Therefore, the lyric is classified as a personification.

Stars mean a fixed luminous point in the night sky which is a large, remote incandescent body like the sun. In the sentence, the singer would like to tell the something big such as a star

would make him and his girlfriend meet. “*Guide us home*” also express the originally the singer and his girlfriend are come from the similar place, but now they are separated away due to something. In this case, the singer could express a bright hope since the stars are related also with the things that can share some lights.

3.3 Irony

Irony is a statement whose real meaning is completely opposed to its professed or surface meaning.

Data 5

Maybe God made us from an accident

The sentence above is categorized as irony because this sentence is opposed from surface meaning *God made us from an accident*. As we know, God is the being perfect in power, wisdom, and goodness who is worshipped as a creator and ruler of impossible from an accident. The type of figurative language is irony. Irony is a statement whose real meaning is completely opposed to its professed or surface meaning.

Data 6:

Cause life is so hard but life is alright

According to theoretical framework stated by Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963), this lyric can be seen as an irony because this sentence is contradict each other. This sentence seems to not make any sense. The word *hard* and *alright* are showing the contradiction. A *hard* means something not easily give in to pressure and very firm but *alright* an adjective to show of happiness and agreeable

3.4 Simile

According to Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963:367) Simile is a stated comparison introduced by like or as.

Data 7.

And baby, my heart could still fall as hard at twenty-three.

Related to theoretical framework stated by Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963), the lyric above can be classified as a simile since two unlike things are compared, they are *my heart* and *hard at twenty-three*. In this case, the simile idea can be identified by the word “as” between those two things that are compared. The term “heart” which refers to the feeling of the songwriter in analogized as the way of loving someone passionately. Therefore, the songwriter used the term “twenty three” to imply the intention of “youth”. On the other hand, the message that can be gained in this lyric is that the songwriter’s feeling which is analogized “heart” compared to “as hard at twenty three years old”. Since, the “heart” that symbolizes the love which is strong as when the songwriter is still young. The songwriter would express his love to her girlfriend as strong as before, and it will be last forever.

Data 8

You’re on the other side, as the skyline splits in two

The lyric can be classified as a simile. Simile is a type of figurative language mentioned by Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963) in their theory in which can be defined as a comparison that is introduced by “like” or “as”. Meanwhile, the simile characteristic in this lyric is shown by the word “as” between the phrases “*on the other side*” and “*skyline splits in two*”. Those two

phrases actually are different conditions that are compared in order to state the tension of the song. In the case, the phrase “on the other side” refer to the condition where a couple (the songwriter and his girl) is in a long distance relationship or in the different place when the lyric was made. However, in the song lyric, that condition is supposed as they are separated by the skylines although they are actually still in one skyline (planet). In other words, they are separated too far away so it is supposed as the skylines splits into two.

3.5 Metonymy

Metonymy is the figure of speech which describes one thing by using term for another thing which is closely associated with it

Data 9: And its nice to know how I miss home.

Metonymy is the figure of speech which describes one thing by using term for another thing which is closely associated with it (Knickerbocker and Reninger, 1963). In this lyric or sentence above is categorized as metonymy because the word *home* is associated or related to the people who stay at the home. As we know home is the greatest place virtues that created strengthen, take care of each other, sharing the story and the peach place for human being memory

3.6 Metaphor

According to Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963:367) metaphor is a figure of speech in which implied comparison or an expression that is used in a new sense, on the basis of similarity between its literal sense and new thing or situation to which it is applied without “like” or “as” omitted.

Data 10 : Love, oh yeah, you are the best book, I’ve read for a while.

In the sentence above is categorized as metaphor because in this sentence compares two things implicitly such as word *you are* and *the best book*. The songwriter compares two different words presented by word *you are* with *the best book*, the songwriter compares directly without *like* or *as* to compares them. According to the Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963), the lyric above can be seen as the characteristic of metaphor. This lyric is classified into metaphor. The lyric is classified into metaphor since two unlike things are compared in this case. The things which are compared in this lyrics are “*you are*” and “*the best book*”. In the song lyrics, the word “*you are*” describes his girlfriend, and the word “*the best book*” the songwriter describes the sincerity of his love like a white paper.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

After analyzing the figurative language on the song lyric of Ed

Sheeran’s selected songs, it can be concluded that they are 14 figurative language found in four Ed Sheeran’s Songs (Thinking Out Loud, Photograph, and All of the Stars, Give Me Love). The figurative language separated into six different types, which is hyperbole with 5 figurative language found, personification with 3 figurative language found, irony with 2 figurative language found, simile with 2 figurative language found, metonymy with 1 figurative language found, metaphor with 1 figurative language found. The most dominant type of figurative language occurs in the songs is a hyperbole by 5 data found (or 35 %).

The dominant of hyperbole found in the data source may be caused by the existence of many sentences which are made as an expression of the personal preference. Meanwhile, based on the investigation of the meaning, it is found that most of the figurative language found in Ed Sheeran’s songs are identified has connotative meaning.

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