



Selected Figurative Language in the Album Native by OneRepublic

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Abstract

This study explores the lyrics of OneRepublic's album *Native* to uncover the deep human emotions and experiences hidden within the songs. The goal is to identify different types of figurative language, explain how they function within the music, and understand why these "hidden messages" are important to the listener. To keep the findings clear and organized, the study uses a quantitative method according to Sudalryalnto (1993) to track and count the data. The analysis is built on two key academic theories: Knickerbocker and Reninger (1974:283): This theory is used to identify and categorize the specific types of figurative language found across the 12 songs. And Leech (1981:9-19): This theory is applied to explain the deeper meanings behind the lyrics, providing a more effective way to interpret what the songwriter is trying to communicate. By combining these two theories, the research offers a structured look at how creative language helps express complex feelings in popular music.

Keywords: *OneRepublic, figurative language, quantitative, meaning, lyric*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini berfokus pada analisis **bahasa kiasan** yang ditemukan dalam lagu-lagu pada album *Native* karya OneRepublic untuk menemukan pengalaman emosional dan nilai kamanusiaan yang tersembunyi di dalam lirik lagu tersebut. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi dan menganalisis jenis bahasa kiasan serta fungsi spesifik yang tersajikan dalam lirik lagu tersebut, serta merupakan alasan untuk menemukan pesan tersembunyi dalam lirik tersebut. Studi ini menggunakan **metode kuantitatif** untuk menyajikan total data yang ditemukan secara jelas dan terorganisir. Teori oleh **Leech (1981:9-19)** diterapkan untuk menganalisis makna bahasa kiasan yang ditemukan dalam album *Native* karya OneRepublic. Data diambil dari 12 lagu dan dianalisis dengan menerapkan teori yang dikemukakan oleh **Knickerbocker dan Renninger (1974:283)** serta didukung oleh teori Leech (1981:9-19), untuk mengemukakan bagaimana cara yang lebih efektif dalam menganalisis temuan data.

Kata kunci: *bahasa kiasan, OneRepublic, lirik, quantitative, pengartian*

Introduction

This research focuses on the 2013 album *Native* by OneRepublic, specifically analyzing twelve tracks: "*Counting Stars*," "*If I Lose Myself*," "*Feel Again*," "*What*

You Wanted," "I Lived," "Light It Up," "Can't Stop," "Au Revoir," "Burning Bridges," "Something I Need," "Preacher," and "Don't Look Down." The album was released through Mosley Music Group and Interscope Records. The author chose this specific work because of its rich use of figurative language and a personal appreciation for the music.

To build a strong foundation, this study references five key academic works that share two main goals: identifying figurative language and explaining its meaning. Related Literature and References : The study is supported by two previous theses and three articles: first thesis Irenius Napa (2022) entitled "An Analysis of Figurative Language Found in The Song Lyrics of Scaled And Icy Album By Twenty One Pilots". The second thesis was written by Lodovikus Barung (2022) entitled "An Analysis of Figurative Language Found in Coldplay Selected Song Lyrics". The Third review taken from an article written by Nova, Verayanti, and Juniarta (2022) entitled "Uncover the meaning of figurative language in the selected songs". The fourth review is taken from an article written by Pualinus, Dian, and Verayanti (2023) entitled "Comparative Figurative Language Found in Maya Angelou Poems". The Fifth review taken from an article written by Sergius Kasma, Verayanti, Agung (2021) entitled "An Analysis of Figurative Language in Cnn International News Headlines Post on Facebook".

Method

The data for this study is sourced from OneRepublic's third studio album, *Native*. Released on March 22, 2013, the album was produced by Mosley Music Group and Interscope Records, with its initial debut occurring in Germany and Ireland.

To gather information, this research utilizes an observation method. The specific steps taken to collect the data are as follows:

1. Browsing on youtube allbum Naltivel
2. Listeln alnd waltch thel song calrelfully relpelalteldly to undelrstalnd
3. Notels alnd clalssify thel word, phralsel alnd selntelncel thalt contalin figuraltivel lalngualge

In alnalyzing thel daltal in this relselalrch wals al descriptivel quallitalivel melthod. Thel melthod useld to describel thel situaltion morel spclificallly alnd delelply. Thel stelps als follow;

1. Idelntify thel typels of figuraltivel lalngualgel found in allbum Naltivel by OnelRelpublic using thelory Knickelrbockelr alnd Relningelr (1974).
2. ALnalyzel thel melalning figuraltivel found by theory of Lelelch (1981) to support thel melalning from thel lyrics.

In line with the methodology proposed by Sudaryanto (1993), the findings of this research are shared using a combination of formal and informal presentation styles: The formal presentation: Quantitative data and visual evidence are organized

using tables and scene captures. These visuals highlight specific instances of resistance to gender performance and critiques regarding body image. Informal Presentation: A descriptive approach is used to provide narrative explanations. This involves a detailed interpretation of the data to address the two core research problems of the study.

Result and Discussion

This study identifies figurative language across all 12 songs in OneRepublic's album, *Native*. Based on the framework by **Knickerbocker and Reninger (1974:283)**, ten distinct types of figurative devices were discovered: Simile, Metaphor, Personification, Synecdoche, Metonymy, Hyperbole, Irony, Paradox, Dead Metaphor, Allusion. Additionally, the specific meanings behind these linguistic devices were analyzed using the theory of meaning established by **Leech (1981:9-19)**.

Table types of figurative language found in the album *Native* by OneRepublic

No	Figurative Language Type	Count	Percentage
1	Metaphor	49	40.16%
2	Hyperbole	24	19.67%
3	Metonymy	12	9.84%
4	Simile	11	9.02%
5	Dead Metaphor	8	6.56%
6	Paradox	5	4.10%
7	Synecdoche	5	4.10%
8	Personification	4	3.28%
9	Allusion	3	2.46%
10	Irony	1	0.82%
	Total	122	100.00%

Based of the table, there are 122 data total types of figurative language found in the album Native by OneRepublic by the research, there are 49 of metaphor (40,16%), 24 of hyperbole (19,67%), 12 of Metonymy (9,84%), 11 of simile (9,02%), 8 dead metaphors (6,56%), 5 of paradox (4.10%), 5 of synecdoche (4.10%), 4 of Personification (3,28%), 3 of allusion (2,46%), 1 of Irony (0,82%). Based on the finding, Metaphor is the first rank with a total data found is 49 which is 40,16% of 100% of the data found.

Simile

Data 1

I see this life like a swinging vine (counting star)

Swing my helalrt alcross thel linel

ALnd in my falcel is flalshing signs

Selelk it out alnd yel shalll find

According to Knickerbocker and Reninger (1974) Song lyric above is a simile, In this part, the comparison is established using the connective word "as." By comparing life to a "swinging vine," the lyric suggests a realization that human existence is unpredictable and filled with surprises. This imagery portrays life as a series of difficult choices and risks, where every daily decision can feel life-changing or significant.

According to Leech (1981) this part categorizes conceptual meaning, which logically, a vine is a climbing plant, while swinging refers to a rhythmic motion that moves back and forth unpredictably through the air. By using the phrase "swinging vine" to describe life (the duration of human life span), the lyric suggests that life itself is like a moving plant, constantly shifting, unstable, and flow unexpectedly.

Metaphor

Data 2

I, I did it all

I, I did it all

I owned every second that this world could give

I saw so many places, the things that I did

With every broken bone, I swear I lived (I Lived)

According to Knickerbocker and Reninger (1974) the lyric above suggesting “broken bone” is the part of the metaphor, This comparison serves as evidence of living life to its absolute Experience. Much like an athlete or an adventurer accumulating physical injuries as a direct result of their exertion and bravery, the songwriter equates "emotional and life setbacks" to physical fractures. These "breaks" are not signs of failure, but rather scars that prove the individual has fully engaged with the world and taken significant risks.

According to Leech (1981), these lyrics carry a connotative meaning that redefines physical trauma as a symbol of authenticity. By shifting the interpretation of a "broken bone" from a medical misfortune to a moral victory, the writer suggests that the "necessity of taking risky decisions" is exactly what gives life its true value.

Personification

Data 3

You can feel the light start to tremble (If I Lose Myself)

Washing what you know out to sea, yeah

You can see your life out of the window tonight

"Light" (unliving things) is given the human action of "trembling" (shaking with fear or emotion). According to Knickerbocker and Reninger (1974), personification gives human characteristics to an object, animal or an abstract idea. Which in the main Idea of “the light start to tremble” fear, cold, exhaustion, or overwhelming emotion.

According to Leech (1981) The lyric use affective meaning, by attributing the human physiological response of trembling to a universal constant of light, projects an intense atmosphere of fragility and helplessness.

Synecdoche

Data 4

Lately, I've been, I've been losing sleep

Dreaming about the things that we could be

But, baby, I've been, I've been praying hard

Said no more counting dollars, we'll be, we'll be counting stars (Counting Stars)

According to Knickerbocker and Reninger (1974) "no more counting dollars" the functions by using the smallest unit of currency as a representative. the songwriter communicate a total rejection of capitalist values, effectively positioning the dollar as a symbol of limitation to achieve the spiritual freedom represented by the "stars." According to Leech (1981) this sentence contains social meaning, "no more counting dollars" which the speaker in universal is in "a struggle" that represent the cycle of modern working class that should "non-stop" in other way wealth is a happiness.

Metonymy

Data 5

I stared up at the sun

Thought of all of the people, places and things I've loved

I stared up just to see

With all of the faces, you were the one next to me (If I Lose Myself)

According to Knickerbocker and Reninger (1974) "Faces" is used for people or the surrounding crowd. "With all of the faces" utilizes the most recognizable human attribute to represent the anonymous masses, the lyric creates a visual of a blurred, unrecognizable crowd, and heighten the significance of the "one" person standing next to the speaker.

The affective meaning of this lyric according to Leech (1981) Through this line, the speaker projects an attitude of relief and exclusivity, the speaker signaling the rest of the world is blur and anonymous, the speaker's emotional state shifts from the overwhelming anxiety of the crowd to a calm, resolute commitment to the person beside the speaker.

Hyperbole

Data 6

Take that money, watch it burn (Counting Stars)

Sink in the river the lessons I've learned

Take that money, watch it burn

Sink in the river the lessons I've learned

According to Knickerbocker and Reninger (1974) in this lyric utilizes the extreme and destructive image of incinerating currency to represent a total psychological liberation from materialism. the lyric dramatically overstates the speaker's disregard for wealth to emphasize the absolute priority of spiritual and emotional fulfillment.

According to Leech (1981) The reflected meaning of "watch it burn" centers on the word "burn," which mirrors the concept of "burning" destructive. The destruction of the money is not a tragedy, but a necessary heat to jumpstart the speaker's stagnant "liberate."

Irony

Data 7

I feel something so right doing the wrong thing (Counting Stars)

And I feel something so wrong doing the right thing

I couldn't lie, couldn't lie, couldn't lie

Everything that kills me makes me feel alive

According to Knickerbocker and Reninger (1974) in these two contrasting lines "I feel something so right doing the wrong thing" and "And I feel something so wrong doing the right thing" exposes the profound disconnection between social morality and personal authenticity. the irony of the "wrong" thing feeling "right" validates the speaker's pursuit of passion over profit, suggesting that true fulfillment often requires defying the conventional boundaries of "correct" behavior. positioning the speaker's rebellion not as a mistake, but as a necessary survival tactic.

According to Leech (1981) this part contains reflected meaning. These lines hinge on the nature of "right" and "wrong," where the primary moral definitions are haunted by the reflected sense of "Correct" and "Incorrect". Beyond the ethical dilemma, "right" reflects a sense of precision, the idea that a life can be "correctly" assembled according to a social environment that remains internally "broken" or "malfunctioning."

Paradox

Data 8

And I feel something so wrong doing the right thing

I couldn't lie, couldn't lie, couldn't lie

Everything that drowns me makes me wanna fly (Counting Stars)

According to Knickerbocker and Reninger (1974) Being "drowned" (overwhelmed/destroyed) is the opposite of "flying" (freedom/escape), expressing a contradictory reaction to the speaker's desperation. The paradox in this lyric establishes a contradictory relationship where "Drowns" serves as the primary catalyst for liberation.

The affective meaning of this part according to Leech (1981) is the project's attitude of relentless, gritty optimism. The speaker isn't pretending that life is easy; they are acknowledging the "drowning" as a terrifying, heavy reality. However, the emotional tone is one of defiant transformation, where the fear of the water is overridden by the thrilling urge to reach the sky

Dead Metaphor

Data 9

I took a shot and missed the mark, well every single day I multiply (I Lived)

A million drums of kerosene, baby, like a hotel in the sky

I just want to see all the sparks you're trying to hide

Let's take a trip to wonderland, we can just tune this fire tonight

According to Knickerbocker and Reninger (1974) The dead metaphor in this part of lyric utilizes derived marksmanship to describe the common things nature of human acts of failure. The speaker's failures feel accessible and unpretentious, suggesting that "missing the mark" is not a catastrophic event but a standard, the lyric avoids dramatic flair to focus on the honest reality.

According to Leech (1981) this part contains affective meaning. "I took a shot and missed the mark" projects an attitude of unflinching, humble transparency, where the speaker's admission of failure.

Allusion

Data 10

I see this life like a swinging vine

Swing my heart across the line

And in my face is flashing signs

Seek it out and ye shall find (Counting Stars)

According to Knickerbocker and Reninger (1974) The lyric elevates the pursuit of personal ambition and meaning to the status of a promise. This reference functions as a moral validation for the listener, suggesting that the search for authenticity is a sacred that transcends, implying that the act of seeking is never in vain, but is instead a fundamental law of human and spiritual experience.

According to Leech (1981) The connotative meaning of this allusion carries a sense of unshakeable promise reliability. This creates a feeling of a piece of wisdom being passed down. It suggests that the “seek” the speaker is seeking aren't just dreams or fantasies, but are part of a larger reality that is waiting to be uncovered by anyone brave enough to "seek" it.

Conclusion

Based of the explanation and analyzed data above, from 10 type figurative language by Knickerbocker and Reninger (1974:283) in the album Native by OneRepublic mostly contain about Metaphor which the count is 49 from 122 data the research found and the less data found is Irony which only 1 data from 122 data gathered by the research. The data found analyzed and the research found that the lyric in album Native by OneRepublic songs it mirror to this current life situation that everything changing and also anyone who want to survive should able to navigate their own path not only for a better life also for make sure everything path we chose we should be able to follow the flow of situation not to rebel it but work in it, in the album Native the author of the lyric put a lot important hidden message, that by hearing the intonation, the beat, and the situation occur in the author's song wants the listener realized that hidden message through the unique intonation and the beat of music.

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