



Discovering the Meaning of Figurative Language in Jamie Miller's Song Lyrics

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to identify the meaning of figurative language in the song lyrics. Two theories have been used in this study. The first theory is presented by Kennedy (1987) as used to identify the types of figures of speech used in Jamie Miller's song lyrics. A second theory is presented by Leech (1974) to learn the meaning of the figures of speech used in Jamie Miller's song. The method used in data collection is the method of observation. The writers collect data of song lyrics by browsing and downloading song lyrics from the Internet, reading, listening, and understanding song lyrics, taking note and classifying data based on the types of figurative language. The writer analysed the data in a descriptive way using a qualitative method. After analyzing the data, the writer found that there are six types of figurative of language used in Jamie Miller's song lyrics which consist of 2 metaphors (16,6%), 2 similes (16,6%), 2 personifications (16,6%), 1 paradox (8,3%), 2 apostrophe (16,6%), and 3 hyperbole (24,9%). All of figurative language have a connotation that implicitly conveys hidden messages and values of life.

Keywords: *figurative language, song lyrics, and meaning*

Abstrak

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui makna bahasa kiasan pada lirik lagu. Ada dua teori yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini. Teori pertama dikemukakan oleh Kennedy (1987) yang digunakan untuk mengetahui jenis-jenis bahasa kiasan yang digunakan dalam lirik lagu Jamie Miller. Teori kedua dikemukakan oleh Leech (1974) yang digunakan untuk mengetahui makna bahasa kiasan yang digunakan dalam lagu Jamie Miller. Metode yang digunakan dalam pengumpulan data adalah metode observasi. Penulis mengumpulkan data lirik lagu dengan browsing dan mendownload lirik lagu dari internet, membaca, mendengarkan, dan memahami lirik lagu, mencatat kemudian mengklasifikasi data, berdasarkan jenis bahasa kiasan. Penulis menganalisis data secara deskriptif dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif. Setelah menganalisis data, penulis menemukan bahwa ada enam jenis bahasa kiasan yang digunakan dalam lirik lagu Jamie Miller yang terdiri dari 2 metafora (16,6%), 2 simile (16,6%), 2 personifikasi (16,6%), 1 paradox (8,3%), 2 apostrophe (16,6%), dan 3 hyperbole (24,9%). Semua bahasa kiasan memiliki makna konotatif yang secara implisit menyampaikan pesan-pesan tersembunyi dan nilai-nilai kehidupan.

Kata kunci: *bahasa kiasan, lirik lagu, dan arti*

Introduction

Language is a communication tool that humans have in order to communicate with other humans and become the most important thing in life. Language is often viewed as a vehicle of thought, a system of expression that mediates the transfer of thought from one person to another. Utterances report news, greet relatives, invite friends to lunch, request the time of day from strangers; with language, we make wisecracks, poke fun, argue for a course of action, express admiration, propose marriage, create fictional worlds and so on, Finegan (1989:6). As far as we know that language is a part of literature. Literature is a personal human expression primarily of thought, feeling enthusiasm, concepts and description that can appear enchantments and it also uses language as media communication. Literature expresses phenomenon of human life and their environment, Reiss (1992:70). Literature as one of the aspects of culture is used to express a human thoughts and ideas. Literature usually appears in novels, plays, poems, song lyrics, etc. The song lyrics are also examples of writing art. Sometimes it is written to express the writer's feelings and emotions and usually uses a figure of speech.

According to Kennedy (1987:492), figurative language is language that uses figures of speech. Some authors use figurative language to produce images in readers' minds and to express ideas in fresh, vivid, and imaginative ways. Figurative language can be found in songs. Song is one example of literature.

Song is the art of singing which contains pleasant or even pathetic. According to Hornby (1995:1113), song is a piece of music with words that is sung. A song is a composition made up of lyrics and music, with the intent of the lyrics being sung, for the purpose of producing a proportionate feeling or emotion in relation to a particular matter. Song and music are one unity, they cannot separate each other. The lyrics were originally in Greek poetry: the kind of poem which was to be set to the lyre: hence the word lyric. The lyrics are an important part of song, because lyrics can make a song beautiful.

This study was conducted by reading and reviewing some reference that related to figurative language. The first writing is taken from an article written by Aman (2022) entitled "Discover the Intended Meaning of Figurative Language in Damian Marley's Song Lyrics". The second writing is taken from a thesis written by Cindy entitled *The Analysis of Figurative Language Used In Three of Lady Gaga's Songs From A Star Is Born Album*. The third writing is taken from an article written by Fitria (2018) entitled *Figurative Language Used In One Direction's Album Entitled Up All Night*. The fourth writing is taken from a thesis written by Wahyuningtyas (2019) entitled *Language Style Seen From Figurative Language Perspective In Taylor Swift's Red Album*. The fifth writing is taken from an article written by Krisnawati (2021) entitled *Types of Figurative Language in Miley Cyrus's Songs*. Based on the previous related literature above, the similarities is discussed about figurative language in the song lyrics. The differences is data source, this data takes the data source from Jamie Miller' song lyrics.

Jamie Miller is a Welsh singer who appeared on The Voice UK in 2017, where he was in third place. He had made his career in the international music industry. Since the introduction of the world with its phenomenal vocal talent, he has had remarkable success, including over 460 million global streams and over 210 official YouTube displays to this day. One of the most monumental victories so far lies in making a single "Here's Your Perfect" breakthrough: an April 2021 release that spent 13 surprising weeks on Global Excl. U.S. chart, surpassing 380 million global streams, gaining 90 million YouTube views.

Method

The data of this study were taken from Jamie Miller song lyrics, consist of 8 songs, such as: *Last Call*, *It is what it is*, *I Lost Myself In Loving You*, *wishes*, *Running Out Of Roses*, *Longer*, *Home By Midnight*, *Over You*. The writers used observation method in collecting the data by conducting several steps: (a) browsing and downloading the song lyrics; (b) reading repeatedly and understanding the song lyrics; (c) taking note and classifying the data based on types of figurative language. This research used descriptive qualitative method in analysing the data. It was done in the following steps: (a) analysing the types of figurative language using theory of figurative language by Kennedy (1987) and (b) analysing the meaning of figurative language using theory of meaning by Leech (1974).

Result and Discussion

This part showed the finding of figurative language used in Jamie Miller song lyrics. In this sub chapter the writer found two meaning of figurative language such as connotative meaning and affective meaning. The table below presents two meaning of figurative language found in Jamie Miller's song lyrics.

Meaning of Figurative Language	Occurrence	Percentage
Connotative Meaning	10	83,3%
Affective Meaning	2	16,6%
Total	12	100%

This part discussed the types and meaning of figurative language used in Jamie Miller song lyrics. The analysis of the figurative language consist of Metaphor, Simile, Personification, Hyperbole, Paradox, Apostrophe. The discussion can be seen as follows.

1. Connotative Meaning

Connotative meaning is the communicative value an expression has by virtue of what it refers to, over and above its purely conceptual content, (Leech 1974:14). The connotative meaning inescapable overlap with certain aspect of the conceptual meaning. While, the “reference” overlaps with the element of conceptual meaning, as in when the contrast features of conceptual meaning become proper of the “real world” referent. But additional attributes expected from the referent depend on various other factor, such as age or society, and they can also depend on the individual, as claimed by Leech (1974:12).

Data 1

*On a night like this, all I know is what I should've said
In the life I've lived, all the things I wanna do again
When the silence sings, swear I'll never let a day go by
Day go by, day go by
(*Running Out Of Roses*, L. 19)*

Song lyrics above classified as a personification because the song writer gives human characteristic to something abstract feeling. Literally, sing means producing words that fit a tune, make a whining, ringing, or whistling sound, whereas silence is complete absence of noise or sound. So it doesn't make sense if silence can singing because silence is an abstract thing that means quiet situation and without noise or sound. In the song lyrics above, the song writer tries to convey that silence had human characteristic to sing. The meaning is anything can happen because nothing is impossible. The sentence above has connotative meaning because the meaning is beyond the literal or dictionary meaning. Actually silence is the absence of sound, so there is no immaterial object able to sing or produce the sound. The lyrics of this song represent a vivid fantasy. Connotatively, the sentence means that the song writer tries to convey something that couldn't happened could have happened. What is the category of meaning for this data? You need to elaborate the meaning based on Leech theory. Add more explanation about the type of meaning.

Data 2

*It's another silent night
And the fire's not as bright
I don't love the cold as much
When it's not the both of us
Choir's knockin' on my door
Only makes me miss you more
(*Home by midnight*, L. 5)*

Song lyrics above showed personification because this sentence gives human characteristic to something abstract thing. Literally, choir is a chorus that sing as part of a religious ceremony or a group of people who sing together and usually accompanied by music, for example in a church or school, while knock is deliver a

sharp blow or push. So it doesn't make sense if the choir knock the door because choir is something inanimate object that cannot knock the door. As we know, knocking can only be done by human by having hands. In this song lyrics, the word choir represents the hand because knocking is usually by hand. The sentence has connotative meaning because the meaning is beyond the literal or dictionary meaning. Actually the choir can only produce the voice. The song lyrics is illogical since describes there is choir knocking the door. The meaning is the song writer describes that he had a feeling his girlfriend was coming over because he miss his girlfriend so much. So the song lyrics "Choir's knockin' on my door" means there was a variety of voices calling out. What is the category of meaning for this data? You need to elaborate the meaning based on Leech theory. Add more explanation about the type of meaning.

Data 3

I'm tryna find the heart I lost

I'm tryna be who I once was

Missing parts of me

All because, all because

(I lost myself in loving you, L.10)

The song lyrics above showed hyperbole because this sentence exaggerate that missing part of the song writer's body. Actually human is a living things made whole. Human are vulnerable to weakness, but never part of them is lost. So no human being is part of it because human is alive, if he loses his part, he's dead. The song lyrics has connotative meaning because the meaning is beyond the literal or dictionary meaning. Actually humans can't live with half of it gone because it's a living things. Song lyrics above describes the song writer who lost his half soul in love with his girlfriend. Connotatively, the word "part" represents the soul. The meaning is the song writer convey that he wants to go back to his past because he's not now whole. So the song lyrics "missing parts of me" means the part of a soul that goes missing because of a lover.

Data 4

It's too obvious there's a connection here the writing's on the wall, girl (yeah yeah)

*And trust me it's not only you that still thinks their **hometown is a small world** (yeah yeah)*

So let them go outside

I'm tryna win you outright

Even though I don't know you this feels right (this feels right, yeah)

(Onto something. L. 17)

Song lyrics above categorized metaphor because this sentence compare two things which are totally different. The song writer compares directly without used word "like" and "as" to compare them. In the sentence above, compare two things such as word "hometown" and "small world". The word hometown means the city where people live or the town that they come from, while world is a planet that we live. Actually the hometown refers to the town or cities you grew up or where you

have your principal residence meanwhile the world refers to everyone who live on the planet, and our societies, institutions, and the ways of live. The song lyrics is illogical since describes hometown is small world because small world is just an illusion while hometown is something that fact. The word small world represents an imaginary place. The meaning is the song writer describes that hometown is could be considered a place of fantasy.

Data 5

I wish seconds felt like hours

Wish time wouldn't fly by quite as fast

If I could get some kind of superpower

It'd be making every minute, every moment last

(Longer, L. 17)

Song lyrics above categorized simile because this song lyrics is compare two things which apparently different. In the sentence above, compare two things such as word “seconds” and “hours”. The connection word that used as comparing in this sentence is word “like”. Seconds is one of the sixty parts that a minute is divided into meanwhile, hour is a period of sixty minutes. The song lyrics above has connotative meaning because the meaning is beyond the literal or dictionary meaning. The song lyrics describes that the time is running slow. Connotatively, the word “hour” represents a very long stretch of time it if compares with the second. The meaning is the song writer tries to convey that time moves slowly so that he can enjoy his life and make up for his shortcomings. What is the category of meaning for this data? You need to elaborate the meaning based on Leech theory. Add more explanation about the type of meaning.

Data 6

Kiss me like the first time (the first time)

Even at the worst times (the worst times)

Even when it hurts, I swear you keep me up

I'll hold you 'til we're

(Hold you til' we older, L. 15)

Song lyrics above showed simile this song lyrics is compare two things such as “kiss” and “first time”. The connection word that used as comparing in this sentence is word “like”. Kiss is touch with the lips as an expression of love, greeting, etc. and first time means the one that happens or comes before all the other of the same kind. The song lyrics above has connotative meaning because the meaning is beyond the literal or dictionary meaning. The song lyrics describe how great it was to get kissed the first time. As we know, at the first kiss must have a different tasted. The word “first time” represents the different sensation are occurring. The meaning is the song writer tries to convey he wants to go back in time and feel the first kiss again. What is the category of meaning for this data? You need to elaborate the meaning based on Leech theory. Add more explanation about the type of meaning.

Data 7

Darkness falls under all of the lights

Got that Empire State playin' tricks on my mind

You and your ghost follow me through the night

It haunts me inside

(City that never sleeps, L. 34)

The song lyrics above categorized paradox because this sentence is contradiction each other. This sentence seems to not make any sense. The paradox appears when two things should not be able to exist together. The word “darkness” and “lights” are showing paradox because the statement showing the contradiction. Darkness conceptually means absence of light or illumination and it usually happens at night, whereas light is the brightness that let the people see things. Light comes from sources such as the sun, moon, lamps, and fire. The song lyrics above has connotative meaning because the meaning is beyond the literal or dictionary meaning. The song lyrics is illogical since describes there is darkness falls under all of the lights. As we know if there is light then there is no darkness. Instead, there is darkness when there is no light. Connotatively, the word darkness represents the fraudulent. The meaning is the song writer describes that the fraudulent dock down to the truth. Because the darkness will never be in the light. What is the category of meaning for this data? You need to elaborate the meaning based on Leech theory. Add more explanation about the type of meaning.

Data 8

Did we waste it all like we're running out of roses

Plastic cups, did we laugh enough?

Looking back on us now that everything is over

Oh my god, did we go too far?

(Running out of roses, L. 11)

Song lyrics above showed apostrophe because speak to a dead or absent person and not get a response, but to express emotion. Plastic cup means a place where a bottle is kept and usually used to drink meanwhile, laugh is a facial expression characteristic of a person laughing. In the song lyrics above, plastic cups as dead or absent person and laugh as express emotion. The song lyrics above has connotative meaning because the meaning is beyond the literal or dictionary meaning. The song lyrics describe that greet an object even though it is not responding back. Connotatively, the word “laugh” represents the cute little situation. The meaning is the song writer tries to convey that he has no one to talk to expect plastic cups. What is the category of meaning for this data? You need to elaborate the meaning based on Leech theory. Add more explanation about the type of meaning.

Data 9

I don't care if it's true or false, no

Don't tell me your excuses

Was the love we had honest

Was it ever true?

(Wishes, L. 39)

Song lyrics above showed apostrophe because speak to an inanimate object or abstract idea with not get a response, but to express emotion. Love is a very strong feeling of affection toward someone meanwhile honest means not disposed to cheat or defraud. In the song lyrics above, love as an inanimate object or abstract idea and honest as express emotion. The song lyrics above has connotative meaning because the meaning is beyond the literal or dictionary meaning. The song lyrics describe that greet an object even though it is not responding back. Connotatively, the word “honest” represents the feelings of human. The meaning is the song writer tries to convey that it is not a problems if talk each other although for an inanimate object or abstract idea because it seem like humans speak for themselves. What is the category of meaning for this data? You need to elaborate the meaning based on Leech theory. Add more explanation about the type of meaning.

Data 10

I'm not a person that believe

About the things that people talk

But the things you said, they made my world

I never doubted you were wrong, ooh-ooh

(Wishes, L. 19)

The song lyrics above showed hyperbole because this sentence exaggerate that made the song writer’s world. The word made means change and world means life. The sentence “made my world” means make the song writer’s life becomes happy. So, the song lyrics above contain exaggerate because just using words can change a life and makes it happy. The song lyrics above has connotative meaning because the meaning is beyond the literal or dictionary meaning. As we know, humans feel happy if the dreams come true or have a lot of money, not by words. The song lyrics describe the word can make song writer’s life being happy. Sometime words can change everything, especially feelings. Connotatively, the word “made” represents change the song writer’s life belongs to happy. The meaning is the song writer tries to convey that the words can change everything or words can be used as tools for motivation. What is the category of meaning for this data? You need to elaborate the meaning based on Leech theory. Add more explanation about the type of meaning.

2. Affective Meaning

Affective meaning has to do with the speaker's personal feelings or attitudes. In a way comparable to social meaning, the affective meaning is only indirectly related to conceptual representation. Leech (1974:16) stated that affective meaning is often explicitly conveyed through the conceptual or connotative content of the words used.

Data 11

I'm tryna find the heart I lost

I'm tryna be who I once was

Missing parts of me

All because, all because

(I lost myself in loving you, L.9)

The song lyrics above showed hyperbole because this sentence exaggerate that the song writer try to find his lost heart. Heart is the internal organ of the chest that pumps blood in the body, it never goes away. Lost usually brings sadness or give rise to regret because losing something worthwhile. Actually heart never lost, if there is a problem it means heartache. So it's impossible if a heart can be lost because the heart is an organ in the human body. The song lyrics has affective meaning because the meaning conveys song writer feeling expression. Affectively, the song lyrics "I'm tryna find the heart I lost" is a way to express the song writer's feelings. The message is the song writer conveys his feeling that he really love his girlfriend and he's lucky to have that girlfriend. What is the category of meaning for this data? You need to elaborate the meaning based on Leech theory. Add more explanation about the type of meaning.

Data 12

Those night time white lies

Stuck on your lips--synecdoche

You were my heaven sent

Now if I never see you again

(It is what it is, L. 14)

Song lyrics above categorized metaphor because the song writer compares two things without using word "like" and "as". In the sentence above, the song writer compare two things such as word "you" and "heaven". Those two things are totally different. In this song lyrics, the word *you* means the song writer's girlfriend, while *heaven* is an object which is compare to human. The sentence above has affective meaning because the meaning conveys song writer feeling expression. Affectively, the song lyrics "you were my heaven sent" represents the song writer's feeling expression. The message is the song writer conveys his feeling that he really love his girlfriend and he's lucky to have that girlfriend.

Conclusion

After analyzing the data, the writer concluded that Jamie Miller song lyrics consists of two types of meaning of figurative languages which is connotative meaning and affective meaning and six types of figurative language such as Metaphor, Simile, Personification, Paradox, Apostrophe, Hyperbole. The writer found twelve data of figurative language. There are two sentences identified as metaphor, two sentences identified as simile, two sentences identified as personification, one sentences

identified as paradox, two sentence identified as apostrophe, and three sentences identified as hyperbole. The dominant figurative language are used in the song lyrics is hyperbole (25%) which showing exaggerate sentence. In explaining the meaning of figurative language, the writer used the theory from Leech (1974). From the seven types of meaning the writer analyzed two types of meaning which are conceptual meaning and connotative meaning. Based on the data above, the writer concluded that Jamie Miller's song lyrics mostly about romantically love story.

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