



## Simile Figurative Language in Passenger Selected Song

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### Abstract

This article discusses about simile figurative language in selected song lyrics of Passenger. The writer analysed five song's lyrics of Passenger which is used as data source. The five song's lyrics are *and I Love Her*, *I Hate*, *The Wrong Direction*, *Things that Stop You Dreaming*, *Beautiful Birds*. The data in this article analysed in a descriptive and qualitative way. The purpose of this article is to identify the language and meaning of the metaphorical similes found in the lyrics of selected passenger songs. The article used theory proposed by Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963) and theory proposed by Leech (1981). The result of this article found fourteen similes in the songs' lyrics which centred around connotative and affective meaning.

**Keywords:** *simile, figurative language, meaning, Passenger*

### Abstrak

Artikel ini membahas tentang bahasa kiasan simile dalam lirik lagu pilihan Passenger. Penulis menganalisis lima lirik lagu Passenger yang dijadikan sebagai sumber data. Lima lirik lagu tersebut adalah *and I Love Her*, *I Hate*, *The Wrong Direction*, *Things that Stop You Dreaming*, *Beautiful Birds*. Data dalam artikel ini dianalisis dengan menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif. Tujuan dari artikel ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi bahasa kiasan simile dan makna yang ditemukan dalam lirik lagu terpilih Passenger. Artikel tersebut menggunakan teori yang dikemukakan oleh Knickerbocker dan Reninger (1963) dan teori yang dikemukakan oleh Leech (1981). Hasil dari artikel ini menunjukkan empat belas kalimat yang terkandung dalam lirik lagu dan dua jenis makna yaitu makna konotatif dan afektif.

**Kata kunci:** *simile, bahasa kiasan, makna, Passenger*

### Introduction

Language is a tool to communicate with people. The study of language is called linguistics. Linguistics has some terms, they are syntax, phonology, sociolinguistics, morphology, pragmatics, and semantics. Semantics is one of the fields of linguistics that studies meaning. John Lyons (1995) states that the phrase 'linguistic semantics' refers to that ambiguity. It can be interpreted to indicate either the study of meaning as it has been expressed in language or the study of meaning in linguistics. In English learning, we know that meaning has a very important role because a listener is able to understand the meaning of what the speaker says or the extent to which the listener receives a certain message. One of the tools to convey a message is a song.

Many people understand the meaning of songs. The lyric of the songs has many meanings. There is a lot of literature that discusses the meaning of words and gives as much information, as they use the meaning of words, not letters. For instance, some texts use figurative language to make them interesting and creative. Figurative language is a language that does not directly deal with meaning, but through describing something, it is combined with the words of the text. In a song, figurative language occurred in some styles, such as in a form of metaphor, simile, symbolism, exaggeration, irony, etc. The message of a song will be deeper if figurative language is used in the lyrics.

In conveying the meaning of the song, all songwriters speak differently. Songwriters of different genres, such as male and female songwriters, or songwriters of different ages, such as children and adults, have different styles and ways of expressing emotions through lyrics. Language plays a very important role in singing. Songwriters can use language to convey the deeper meaning of a song. and depending on how the songwriter uses and creates the language, it can convey a good song. In this article, the writers are interested in discussing figurative language because figurative language is very complex. The writer chooses to analyse figurative language in song lyrics, especially in the *Passenger* selected song. It is because many figurative languages can be found in the song, especially simile figurative language. That is why the writer only focused on simile figurative language.

The significance of this study is to be able to understand the lyrics of the song. It provides various meanings to the readers, particularly for people who like, understand, and appreciate Passenger's song. The article is expected to be useful and can be a reference for English learners or researchers. The data is analyzed by using the theory proposed by Knickerbocker (1963) and the theory proposed by Leech (1981). In collecting the data, there were some steps such as searching YouTube and looking for the Passenger song, then selecting a song from a list of suggestions on the Internet, reading the lyrics, listened to the song carefully and repeatedly. The writer then took notes and classified the types of sentences which contain simile figurative language in song lyrics of *Passenger*

Some previous studies about simile figurative language related to this article. The first is the thesis from Wisnawa (2020) entitled "An Analysis of Figurative Language in the Poetry Entitled a Poem I Wrote for You by Adi K." In his research, he examines the types and meanings of figurative language in poetry. He used the qualitative method to analyze the data. This previous research used the theory proposed by Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963). The difference between previous research used poetry as data, and this current research used song lyrics as a data source.

The second is an article from Cindy (2019) "Analysis of Metaphorical Language Used in Three of Lady Gaga's Songs from A Star Is Born Album." Her data were analyzed by using the theory of Kennedy (1983: 687). The content of this study is consistent with the subject of the study and the purpose of the discussion, such as the types of metaphorical words found in Lady Gaga's songs and the importance of metaphorical words. The difference between this previous article and this current article is the way to present the data in data analysis. The study of Cindy used the theory of Kennedy (1983), meanwhile the current research used the theory of Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963).

The third study is an article from Krisnawati et al (2021). It explores the types of figurative language in Miley Cyrus' selected songs. The study uses qualitative method based on the theory of Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963). The writer found two types of figurative language in the data source. Hyperboles were found in five data, and metaphor in one data. The difference of Krisnawati et al study and the writers' study are Krisnawati et al analyze several types of figurative language, meanwhile the writer's study focuses on the simile.

The fourth study is an article from El Sawati et al (2022) entitled "Analysis of Figurative Language in Taylor Swift's Song "Fearless" Album". The study is purposed to discover the types of figurative language and their meaning. It applies the qualitative method with the theory of Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963:367) and the theory of meaning by Leech (1974) to analyze the meaning of figurative language as its theoretical framework. The study found seven types of figurative language, namely simile in three data, metaphor in two data, hyperbole in five data, while synecdoche, paradox, metonymy and allusion each found in one data. The figurative languages were found carrying three types of meaning: connotative, conceptual and affective meaning. The difference of El Sawati et al study and the writers' study are El Sawati et al analyze several types of figurative language, meanwhile the writer's study focuses on the simile.

The last study is an article from Dewi et al (2022) entitled "Figurative Languages in Rita Ora's Selected Song Lyrics". The study is purposed to discover the types of figurative language and their meaning together with the context of situation. It applies the qualitative method with the theory of Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963:367) and the theory of meaning by Leech (1974) to analyze the meaning of figurative language, and supplemented by the theory of Halliday (1985) for the context of situation as its theoretical framework. The study found irony as the most frequent figurative language. Connotative meaning, affective meaning, conceptual meaning, collocative meaning, social meaning, reflected meaning, and thematic meaning were discovered. All song lyrics emphasise connotative meaning. The difference of Dewi et al study and the writers' study are Dewi et al analyze several types of figurative language, meanwhile the writer's study focuses on the simile.

## **Method**

In this article the data were taken from *Passenger* selected song lyrics. The songs are *And I Love Her*, *I Hate*, *The Wrong Direction*, *Things that Stop You Dreaming*, *Beautiful Birds*. To collect the data, the writers took two data gathering techniques of observation and note-taking while conducting this research. First, the writers searched on YouTube and looked for the *Passenger* songs, then selected a song from the list of suggestions on the internet. Second, the writers read the lyrics and listen carefully and repeatedly. The writer then looked for figurative language in words, phrases, sentences, especially focusing on the nature of simile that centred on the words of "like" or "as" which usually rich in simile. Third, the writers explored meaning of all simile figurative languages. Last, the note taking technique was used to record the simile figurative languages found for further analysis.

The writer then classified the types of the sentences which contain simile figurative languages in song lyrics of Passenger. The simile was analysed based on the model of Knickerbocker (1963). In addition, formal and informal methods were used in presenting the data. To analyze the meaning, the writer used the theory of Leech (1981) as the theoretical framework.

## Result and Discussion

This article is presented simile figurative language found in Passenger selected song's lyrics. This finding based on the theory propose by Knickerbocker (1963) and the theory propose by Leech (1981). The result can be showed in the following table.

**Table 1. Simile Figurative Language in Passenger Selected Song**

<b>Song</b>	<b>Simile</b>
<i>And I Love Her</i>	3
<i>I Hate</i>	1
<i>The Wrong Direction</i>	2
<i>Things that Stop You Dreaming</i>	4
<i>Beautiful Birds</i>	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>

Based on the table 1, the total data found of simile figurative language were 14 data. From those fourteen similes, there were five songs contained in this article. 3 data of *And I Love Her*, 1 data of *I Hate*, 2 data of *The Wrong Direction*, 4 data of *Things that Stop You Dreaming* and 4 data of *Beautiful Birds*. The most dominant song are *Things that Stop You Dreaming*, *Beautiful Birds* and the least song is *I Hate*.

## Discussion

As shown on the table 1, this discussion analysed simile figurative language and the meaning that were found in songs chosen by passengers based on the proposed theory Knickerbocker (1963) and theory proposed by Leech (1981). The data were analysed using descriptive qualitative methods. The analysis can be seen as follow:

### Data 1:

*She is, stubborn as a stone*

*She's a hardheaded woman*

*And the best one that I know (And I Lover Her, stanza 2, line 4)*

Data 1 is classified as a simile because there is a clear comparison of two things that are basically different between humans and objects (a thing). The songwriter

compared the person *She* to a stone. The word *She* refers to the woman who is the songwriter loved. On the other hand, the word *stone* based on *Merriam-webster* online dictionary, is a piece of rock for a specified function such as a building block, paving block, gem, etc. Rock itself has the character of solid, hard, and strong material on the surface of the earth.

Data 1 has a connotative meaning. By saying a person is stubborn as a stone does not mean the person is as hard as a rock but more likely to express the personality of that person. Therefore, the songwriter wants to say that the woman he loves has strong-minded and determined, and the personality of his lover is as strong as a stone. The data above also has affective meaning. The song expressed an opinion towards somebody who has characteristics as stubborn as a stone. The songwriter admires the subject in the song, as a stone is persistent, solid, and strong.

**Data 2:**

*She's as new as the springtime*

*Strong as autumn blows*

*Warm as the summer and*

*Soft as the snow*

*She's a thousand miles from here*

*But she's everywhere I go (And I Lover Her, stanza 3, line 1-4)*

Data 2 is categorized as simile because it compared, *She* to the seasons; spring, autumn, summer, and winter (snow). *She* referred to the woman whom the songwriter loves. Meanwhile, spring, autumn, summer, and winter, are seasons of the year with different weather and day lengths. The songwriter compared the personalities of the woman he loved.

Data 2 has connotative meaning. The songwriter compared his lover to new like spring, strong like autumn, warm like summer, and soft like snow which is identic with winter. It is used to describe various characters of the woman he loves that are similar to the seasons. The data above also has affective meaning because the songwriter expressed his personal feeling. The songwriter wants to express his love towards the woman by using the comparison above. Even though she is far away, to the songwriter, she is near and there through each season.

**Data 3:**

*She loves me like a woman*

*She looks like a lady*

*But she laughs like a child*

*Cries like a baby*

*I think that maybe*

*She's the one that's gonna save me (And I Lover Her, stanza 4, line 1-4)*

Data 3 is categorized as a simile because it compared, *her* with a person; woman, lady, child, and baby. The term like used to compare the data. *She* is the data above referring to the woman or girl whom the songwriter loves. Meanwhile, women,

ladies, children, and babies, are people of different ages. By using the comparison above, the songwriter describes the personalities of the woman he loved.

Data 3 contained connotative meaning. The songwriter compared his lover She looks like a woman, laughs like a child, and cries like a baby which is referred to by the personalities. It is compared various personalities of the lover that the songwriter is similar to the person of different ages. The data above also has affective meaning because the songwriter also expressed his personal feeling. He wants to express that he will be saved by his woman or girl. Even though she is like a baby, to the songwriter, she is the one that loves and save him.

**Data 4:**

***Cough, like your lungs are his (I Hate, stanza 3, line 4)***

The writer classified the data 4 as a simile. This comparison uses the term 'like'. The songwriter compares how someone's a cough with the possession of organs (lungs). This is purposed to give a picture of how somebody his cough.

Data 4 has an affective meaning. The songwriter expressed his hate towards somebody that did the cough. Cough is known as an agent of spreading health problems. Cough like your lungs are his interprets how easily someone can do such a thing despite others can also inhale the cough. Thus, the songwriter is expressed affective meaning.

**Data 5:**

*When I was a kid, the things I did were hidden under the grid*

*Young and naive, I never believed that love could be so well hid*

*With regret I'm willing to bet, and say the older you get*

*It gets harder to forgive and harder to forget*

***It gets under your shirt like a dagger at work (The Wrong Direction, stanza 2, line 2)***

Data 5 were categorized as similes because they compared two different things by using the term like. In this case, the songwriter in the data above compared "It" with "a dagger". It is the data above based on the lyrics before that refers to love. According to Merriam-webster online dictionary, love is a strong affection felt by the heart, meanwhile, a dagger is a sharp pointed knife for stabbing. These two different things were compared to express how the songwriter thinks about love.

Data 5 contained connotative meaning. The word *It* which is love expressed a hurtful feeling caused by love. That the feeling of hurt caused by love is like being stabbed by *a dagger at work*. The data above also has an affective meaning. The songwriter expressed his feeling about the love he experienced for the first time and did not work out as he expected. Love that he naively believes when he was a kid, now becomes something harder and hurtful like a dagger stabbed at him.

**Data 6:**

***You call her in the morning When you're coming down and falling Like an old man on the side of the road (The Wrong Direction, stanza 3, line 5-7)***

Data 6 is categorized as a simile because it compared, “you” with a person; “an old man” by using the term like. you in the data above referred to the songwriter mentioning himself. Meanwhile, an old man is a person of different age. The songwriter described how his weakness, which makes him fall on the side of the road like an old man by using this comparison.

Data 6 contained connotative meaning. The songwriter compared his weakness to an old man. The songwriter feels very weak if meets or remembers his girl. It expressed his weakness that is similar to the person of different age, which is the old man.

**Data 7:**

***And a heart that beats like a tap that leaks (Things that Stop You Dreaming, stanza 1, line 5-6)***

Data 7 is categorized as a simile because this comparison used the term like. The songwriter compares “the heart” and “the tap” which refers to his love and dreams. These data are compared to reveal how the songwriter views love and dreaming.

Data 7 has a connotative meaning. The songwriter does not mean that the human heart can leak like a leaky faucet. He simply expresses how he cannot calm down and relax in certain situations. In addition, the above data also has an affective meaning, because it contains the songwriter's personal feelings towards himself. He cannot calm down when he has no money, and he shows that things could be worse and revel a bit in the good stuff.

**Data 8:**

***And my word is true  
like the sky is blue***

***In the summer time when everybody gets on it (Things that Stop You Dreaming, line 4, stanza 3)***

Data 8 is categorized as a simile. It compares “my word is true” with “the sky is blue”. The songwriter expressed that what he said was as real as the blue sky. Generally, the color of the sky can be used as a sign of truth. Therefore, in the data above the sky is blue can express the songwriter’s honesty and truth.

Data 8 has a connotative meaning. The songwriter does not mean that human words can come out blue like the sky, but he reveals how we can express honesty and truth in our words.

**Data 9:**

***And our eyes shine bright like a sky full of comets*** (oh, oh) (*Things that Stop You Dreaming*, stanza 3, line 8)

Data 9 is categorized as a simile because it compared our “eyes” with “a sky full of comets”. The eyes refer to a part of the human’s body, meanwhile according to Merriam-webster online dictionary sky is the upper atmosphere of space over the earth. When there is a comet in the night sky, it becomes bright and beautiful to be seen. Therefore, our eyes shine bright like a sky full of comets expressing positivity and hope in every situation.

Data 9 has connotative meaning because it expressed how we could be grateful and make the most in life. Even in all the darkness, and the difficulties in life, we still have hope in us that life is pretty good to live when we always are grateful and ignite hope within us. In addition, the songwriter felt that the things that stopped him from dreaming referred to alcohol, because he fainted from not producing dreams, but also remained in the position that he could not fulfill his dreams to improve his life.

**Data 10:**

***And our eyes shine bright like a sky full of Comets  
That shoot like silver trains*** (oh, oh) (*Things that Stop You Dreaming*, line 7, stanza 3)

Data 10 is classified as a simile because it compares two different things. “comets” with “silver trains”. The songwriter used the term like to compare the data. The comet refers to a celestial object depicted by an object or can be called a stone, this space object is moving towards the earth in layers. The songwriter expresses how his eyes glow like they are filled with comets moving fast like silver trains.

Data 10 has a connotative meaning. It does not that silver trains can shoot like comets, but it does express how from our perspective we can be grateful to see the situation outside and make the most of life. Despite all the darkness, and difficulties in life, the songwriter still has a lot of hope that he has not achieved, that life is good enough to be lived when we are always grateful and kindle hope in us. In addition, the songwriter expresses his song is hope in situations black, like some of his other songs. Each verse begins with things he does not have such as money, rockets, words, promises.

**Data 11:**

***You were orange and red like the sun when it sets*** (*Beautiful Birds*, stanza 1, line 2)

Data 11 is categorized as a simile because it compared “You” with “the sun” which are two different things. The songwriter used the term like to compare the data. You refer to the woman, who is described as orange and red, and it was like the sun when it sets. The songwriter made this comparison to describe how his lover to him, that you were someone beautiful, and gorgeous just like the sunset.

Data 11 has connotative because the human cannot be orange and red just like the sunset. The comparison of You with the sunset expresses the beautifulness and



gorgeousness of the lover. In addition, the data above also has an affective meaning, because it contained the songwriter's personal feelings toward his lover. He reminisced how they used to be in the past, about two people who loved each other a lot and were very happy together.

**Data 12:**

***I was green as an apple's eye (Beautiful Birds, stanza 1, line 4)***

Data 12 is categorized as a simile because it compared the songwriter "himself" with the color of "an apple". The songwriter compared it used the term "as". The green refers to the songwriter's heart which is described as being happy. The songwriter made this comparison to describe how his lover is to him, about two people who love each other and are very happy together.

Data 12 has a connotative meaning. The songwriter does not mean that humans can be green like green apples, but he reveals how he feels the coolness of heart and freshness of mind towards his partner. Despite all even though he tried to do what he asked for, but eventually failed. Regarding her failure, she ignored all efforts, love, and how much they shared and basically chose to end it.

**Data 13:**

***You were silver and blue like the moon when it's new (Beautiful Birds, stanza 3, line 3)***

Data 13 is categorized as a simile. The songwriter compared "you" with "Moon" and used the term like. you in refers to a woman who is described as a moon-like color. The songwriter made this comparison to describe how the woman was to him, that she was someone who was beautiful, and beautiful like the moon in the night.

Data 13 has a connotative meaning. The songwriter compared his lover to the spring new moon, silver and blue like the moon, and the songwriter as warm as summer and soft as the sun, synonymous with spring. This comparison is used to describe the various characters of the songwriter's lover who are similar to the seasons. The data above is also categorized into affective meanings. It expresses the songwriter's personal feelings. He wanted to express his love for women. Although he is far away, for the songwriter, he is near and exists in every season.

**Data 14:**

***I was gold as a summer sun (Beautiful Birds, stanza 3, line 4)***

Data 14 is categorized as a simile because it compares "I am golden" with "the summer sun". "I'm golden" refers to the color of the sun, while the sun in summer refers to a season. Therefore, shines brightly like the summer sky, expressing positivity and hope in every situation.

Data 14 has a connotative meaning. The songwriter does not mean that humans can be golden like the color of the sun but rather expresses how the songwriter feels

the brightness of the heart and the warmth of the mind towards his partner. Despite all Even though he tried to do what his partner asked but in the end it failed. Regarding his failure, the songwriter ignored all the trouble, love, and how much they shared.

## Conclusion

In this article, the writer found fourteen simile figurative language in Passenger selected songs. Based on the analysis the writer concluded there are five songs contained in this article. The five songs are and I Love Her, I Hate, The Wrong Direction, Things that Stop You Dreaming, Beautiful Birds. This article dealing with simile figurative language proposed by Knickerbocker (1963). The writer also found three types of meaning from seven types of meaning that proposed by Leech (1981). The two meanings contained in the song chosen by the passenger are semantic and emotional. Semantic meaning is the most dominant meaning.

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