

Figurative Language Analysis on *Bohemian Rhapsody* Song by Queen: Semantics Study

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Abstract

This research purposes to analyze and examine the type's figurative language that consists in the song, especially in the Bohemian Rhapsody by Queen. Figurative language in Queen song lyrics used to analyze the deeper meaning of words; and it is also used to make the lyrics sound more beautiful. The analysis used a descriptive qualitative research method. This study used descriptive qualitative method. Researched object in this study is figurative language and its meaning with a stylistic review and its implementation. The data used were taken Bohemian Rhapsody song by Queen. Sources of data obtained from song lyrics on the album A Night at the Opera which was the fourth studio album of Queen. Data collection techniques implemented library technique, listening technique and note-taking technique. The data analysis used is a semantics model, especially in the area of figurative language. The result demonstrates that there are three of four types of figurative language occur; 39% of comparison type, 23% of contradiction type, and 38% of repetition type figurative language while correlations type was not found in the analysis. According to the findings of this analysis, figurative language occurs frequently in the type of comparison for percentage of 39% occurrence. It could be concluded that the song commonly contained figurative language, and specifically the song had type of comparison figurative language.

Keywords

semantics; figurative language;
comparison type



I. Introduction

Literary work is as the result of human creation that expresses thoughts, ideas, understanding, and responses to the feelings of the creator about the nature of life by using imaginative language and emotional. Stylistics is used by the author as a rhetorical means by exploiting, manipulating and exploiting language potential. There are various means of rhetoric and every writer has specificity in using his work; the meaning of literary works inseparable from the use of language in it (Al-Ma'ruf, 2010). In the development of language, humans also use songs as a medium to convey messages, feelings, social criticism and so on to the audience of listeners and connoisseurs of the song. Until now, songs are widely used as a tool to express feelings and are written with different themes referring to who the message is about to be conveyed, so it is not uncommon for a song to be considered as propaganda for certain political purposes (Wijayanti, 2018). A song is also part of a literary work. Figurative language is divided into several categories, namely; simile, metaphor, hyperbole, personification, and so on. Similes are used to compare one thing with another by using connecting words, such as, like, like, like, like, and so on. Metaphor is defined as the use of words or groups of words not with the true meaning, but as a painting based on similarities or comparisons. Personification is a figure of speech that compares something from an inanimate object to a living object (Hatch, 1995). In creating

the song, a melodious sound like music in poetry, words are composed so much so that what stood out is a series of melodious sounds like music. The definition of a song is a form of music in the shape of a framework including from melodies and rhythms composed of norms, tempo, and dynamics. In terms of narrow song has the same meaning as the melody. The song is a result of culture; songs (lyrics) use language to convey the meaning of a song the purpose of the poet to the listener. There are many things that can be carried out to enjoy literary works. One of them through stylistic studies; stylistics as a sub-science of literature, plays a large role in literary studies because stylistics is the way of writers utilize elements of linguistic rules by understanding the effects caused by language users. Figurative language is rhetoric very dominant literature, used to obtain an aesthetic effect by figurative expression of ideas suggesting a literal meaning (Pradopo, 2001). The songs 'Bohemian Rhapsody' is still often listened by music lovers across the ages. Of the many works of this four-member band, 'Bohemian Rhapsody' is indeed one of the most phenomenal songs. With duration of about six minutes, Freddie Mercury's composition is one of the songs that have a unique character. Mercury created the song that not only makes the tempo up and down, but also the emotions of the audience. From the style of pop music, rock and roll to classical opera successfully combined harmoniously in this one work. Freddie Mercury's use of unusual words made this song more and more curious. Song lyrics as a literary work in the form of poetry containing outpouring of the heart, as the composition of a song. To use a lyric a poet must be good at processing words. The word song has meaning all kinds of rhythmic sounds (Moeliono, 2007).

II. Review of Literature

Language is one of the most important things in the life of every human being (Purba, N. et al. (2020). Language style or figure of speech is figurative language which is used to create a certain impression for the listener or reader. Another understanding of language style is a way of expressing thoughts through language characteristically that shows the soul and personality of the writer/language user (Kosasih, 2004). In other words, language style or figure of speech is a typical way to express thoughts and feelings in written or spoken form. Besides, the peculiarity of this style of language lies in the choice of words that do not express the original meaning or actually but stated indirectly (Keraf, 2004). Language is like a way of communication either in verbal or written or signed that used by human in order to express their expression, purpose, ideas, or opinions. Language used itself can be varied of how it represents in the communication, such as Figurative Language. It refers to a part of semantic. Semantic is a lens to see the true meaning of the utterance or statement. In other words, Figurative Language itself is a language used to express a feeling or ideas in unstrict way. Statements that use this variation of language cannot be interpreter literally. The indirect meaning of the reference is referred to as figure of speech, which is an evaluative language deviation or emotionally from ordinary language, either in: (1) spelling, (2) formation of words, (3) constructions (sentences, clauses, phrases) or (4) application of a terms, to obtain the effect (Supriyono, 2014). Thus, in order to know the true meaning it is necessary to dig the words used in the statement. The purpose of using figurative language is to add creative flourish to the written or spoken language or to explain complicated ideas. It is essential to put a unique statement in literary works, so that the works will be interesting to read and understand. In this case, the research can say that writers are allowed to express their feeling or thoughts abstractly. Figurative language can be divided into four types (Tarigan, 1986):

a. Figurative of Comparison

First is simile is an indirect comparison between two different things but using sign of word. The sign of words is “like”, “such”, “as”, or another equivalent terms. The second is metaphor which refers to a comparison created between two things that are unlike. As in simile, the comparison uses signs, while metaphor does not. This type of figurative language will only make sense if the similarities of the two things become apparent or the connection is able to be understood. The third is personification; it is a language that characterizes things or animals into human acts. Personification use a human being character from emotional, physical, and event human actions. The forth is allegory which agents and actions are contrived to make a coherent sense on the literal, level of signification and at the same time to signify a second, correlated order of signification. The last is antithesis which is a language created two ideas that contrast each other but written in parallel grammar structure.

b. Figurative of Contradiction

This style of language is consisted in to several types; hyperbole, litotes, oxymoron, paronomasia and irony. Hyperbole leads to exaggeration in service of truth. While litotes refers contradictory language; oxymoron tends to a paradoxical utterance that conjoins two terms in ordinary usage. In addition, there is paronomasia leads to a language that the words used has similar sounds yet they have different meanings. The last is irony, which refers to the basic meaning of disguising or hiding the truth.

c. Figurative of Correlations

In the category of correlation, there are seven classes; gradation which is commonly used in compound sentence. Inversion refers to a type of figurative language that use incorrect grammatical to make more colorful statement. The next is ellipsis which is a figurative language that used by removing or deleting an element of a sentence. Euphemism is a way to avoid offensive meaning in conversation by using polite words. Synecdoche is a language that sates one explanation that has potential to explain another or all over the statements. This language also tends to make an effective but essential in a speech or writing. Allusion is an indirect or passing reference to some event, person, place, or artist work, the nature and the relevance of which is not explained by the writer but relies on the reader’s familiarity with is thus mentioned. Metonymy is a language that replacing a name of things into a phrase that has similar meanings.

By this analysis of the lyrics, the research gets insight that figurative language is used appropriately. Derived from the statements above, analyzing the used of figurative language in literature works is one of significant needs to do. Hence, the research needs to analyze the figurative language in this song deeply.

III. Research Method

The research method that research used is descriptive qualitative research method. The research analyzes that after solicitating the found-figurative-language; gaining for the details. In addition, the reference that used here underlies the experts’ references and reliable sources. Analysis is defined as the decomposition of a subject on the basis of its various parts and a study of the parts themselves, as well as the relationships between the parts to gain a proper understanding and comprehensive understanding of the overall meaning. As for other meanings analysis is an activity that contains a number of activities such as parsing, distinguishing, sorting something to be classified and regrouped according

to certain criteria then look for the relationship and interprets its meaning (Wiradi, 2006). This study is intended to explain the function of the beauty of the use of certain linguistic forms starting from the aspects of sound, lexical, structure, figurative language, and rhetorical means to graphology. In addition, the study Stylistics also aims to determine how far and in what way and how the author uses linguistic signs to get special effects (Nurgiyantoro, 2014). The most important parts of a qualitative approach are as follows:

1. Giving the main attention to the meaning and message, according to the nature of the object, as a cultural study.
2. Prioritizing the process compared to the results of research so that meaning is always changing.
3. Reducing distance between the research subject and the research object.
4. Focusing on subject that is the main instrument, so that there is a direct interaction between them.
5. Designing research and creating framework which are temporarily used because the research is open-ended.
6. Putting the research in the place within the context of their respective socio-cultural contexts (Ratna, 2009).

IV. Results and Discussion

Based on the data above, the research found that figurative language is used in this song. Therefore, the figurative language is used by the writer for giving a more tasteful and deeper meaning of the lyrics.

4.1 Figurative Language of Comparisons (Metaphor)

Data 1

“Caught in a landslide”

In the lyric clearly stated as a metaphor which has the meaning of a figure of speech that a term or phrase is utilized to something which is not clearly adjustable to express a similarity. The writer does not mean literally he caught in a landslide; when actually it compares two different things, *“caught in a landslide”* to *“many things or events that happened”*.

Data 2

Gotta leave you all behind and face the truth

The lyric above has no other imprecise of figurative language unless declaring as metaphor. The person literally cannot face the truth face to face while enunciating that line. Thus, upon the word and as saying to be asserted, the point reflects to how someone handles or deals with problems inside of life.

4.2 Figurative Language of Comparisons (Simile)

Data 3

Carry on, carry on as if nothing really matters.

The data above literally use “as” as a sign to comparisons, which according to the data it is simile. The point in the data above is comparing *“them moving on still carry the matters”* with *“them moving on as if nothing matters”*.

4.3 Figurative Language of Comparisons (Personification)

Data 4

Sends shivers down my spine,

Clearly the data above aims to personification. Hereafter, the data use human features to something non-human or delegation of an abstract quality in human forms. In fact, it has nothing sent shivers down his spine, but it is about the feeling he felt which thought how his time had come.

4.4 Figurative Language of Contradiction (Hyperbole)

Data 5

So, you think you can love me and leave me to die?

Above, it definitely is hyperbole. The lyric use exaggeration statement and moreover this lyric cannot be taken literally. Logically, leaving someone does not capable to kill someone, isn't it? Thence, in fact, he will not die, but will feel empty or lonely that he thought he would not able to stand it.

4.5 Figurative Language of Contradiction (Irony)

Data 6

*Mama, just killed a man,
Put a gun against his head,
Pulled my trigger, now he's dead.*

This is irony, because it called that the utterance of one's meaning using language that ordinarily indicates the opposite, typically for giving humorous or emphatic effects. Which its actual meaning is that he just ended another man's life and by doing that, he ended his own life, not yet in physical state.

4.6 Figurative Language of Repetition (Alliteration)

Data 7

*(Galileo) Galileo
(Galileo) Galileo
Galileo Figaro
Magnifico-o-o-o*

In these data, it is literally used head rhyme of "o" sound. Here predominantly, it is about the phenomenon of the same letter or sound at the last words.

4.7 Figurative Language of Repetition (Antanacsis)

Data 8

Little high, little low

In the data above, can be seen it used two identical words, which is "little" in the phrase. It used the same word but has different usage in meaning. First little is referred to high which means the distance a bit higher, while the second little refers to low with the meaning is a bit lower.

4.8 Figurative Language of Repetition (Anaphora)

Data 9

Carry on, carry on as if nothing really matters.

The data above repeats the words of "carry on" to emphasis it actually purpose is. The line shows that he wanted to just focus on moving on, just keep moving one like nothing ever happened, like the do not matter to him.

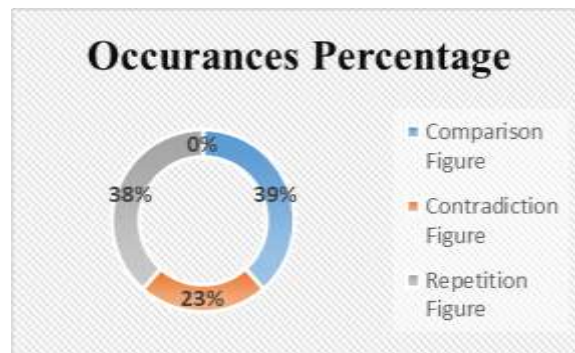
Data 10

Thunderbolt and lightning very, very frighten me.

Again, in the data it uses repetition word to show emphasis. The data above is not only about frightening, but very frightening. That is what he wanted to point out, that he was not just afraid but heavily afraid.

V. Conclusion

The analysis of figure of speech and its meaning is the most important element used in analyzing song lyrics. In this study the authors used four Queen's song lyrics which include the song Bohemian Rhapsody which contains figurative language and meaning deep, so that is the main attraction in the lyrics of the song. Figurative language is a way to concentrate the meaning to be conveyed using short language. Based on the analysis above, the research found that there are four types of figurative language found in the data. The comparison figurative language occurs 39%, the contradiction figurative language occurs 23%, the correlations figurative language occurs 0%, and 38% occurs on the repetition figurative language. 'Bohemian' literally means Bohemia; it is an area that is now included in the Czech Republic (Czech, a former Czechoslovakia). In 19th century, the adjective 'Bohemian' meant an unconventional lifestyle. This includes quirky dress styles, behavior that goes against established norms, such as casual sex and abusive and dirty speech. It leads to the poor lifestyle and work of begging, stealing, robbing or criminals of the lower classes. Live without a permanent home, nomadic or homeless life.



In this research can be concluded that in the type of comparison figurative language occurs frequently in literal percentage of 39% followed by metaphor, simile, and personification. The lyrics use a lot of inanimate objects or abstract ideas as if has a human-like nature, so it gives the impression of the lyrics of the song become more poetic and create an atmosphere that is in harmony with the content of the song. Then based on the results of the analysis of meaning, it can be concluded that every figure of speech that is in the lyrics of the song by Freddy Mercury (Queen) is a lot contains connotative meanings related to life, happiness and sadness.

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