

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE ANALYSIS IN TAYLOR SWIFT 'EXILE' SONG LYRIC

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Abstract : Figurative language is a system of sound symbols produced from human speech that gives a text a special aesthetic value. It is found in literary works such as novels, short stories, books, poetry, films, and songs. The poets who use figurative language as part of their literary works as a means of media to say and express a meaning or the meaning of their literary creations. The role of figurative language is to play a role in the construction of a wider message. The study was used an objective theory using qualitative descriptive research method in theory proposed by Knickerbocker. This study wants to learn about the meaning of figurative language, analyze figurative language in song lyrics, and understand the types and meanings of figures of speech in the lyrics of the song 'Exile' by Taylor Swift and Bon Iver. The result of figurative language that mainly found as dominant in the lyrics was Irony.

Keyword : *Figurative Language, Taylor Swift, Song Lyric*

INTRODUCTION

Language is a tool of social communication in the form of a system of sound symbols produced from human speech. Figurative language is figurative language which is considered one of the aspects that gives a text, especially a poetic text and a special aesthetic value. It also involves communicating something other than the proposition literally expressed by the uttered sentence. Figurative language can be seen as pragmatic devices in language. Without language, humans will never be able to communicate with others. According to (Defisyani et al., 2018) Figurative language is usually found in writing and also spoken. To make it easier to find figurative language, figurative language is usually found in various literary works such as novels, short stories, books, poetry, films, and songs. Poetic prose or a dramatic poetry may be as an instance of literature (Gardner, 2006) When viewed from the form and type of poetry, song lyrics are included in the type of lyric poetry. Lyrical type poetry usually

expresses deep feelings. The poets who use figurative language as part of their literary works as a means of media to say and express a meaning or the meaning of their literary creations. The role of figurative language is to play a role in the construction of a wider message.

Figurative language that is usually found in literary works is used to provide beauty in order to attract attention and explain situations. It also can be use to create creativity and critical thinking skills (Lazar, 2007). However, some connoisseurs of literary works find it difficult to understand the meaning of the literary works created by poets. (Miller, 2018) says figurative language is one of the lessons of literature. In studying and understanding literature, song lyrics are a literary work that is easy to understand in terms of figurative language. Figurative language is also a semantic aspect that is usually used in various language characters. In figurative language, it is often found in literary works of song lyrics such as metaphor, simile, personification, hyperbole, alliteration, allusion and rhyme.

Relevant cognitive structures are important and pervasive in thinking - and as a result, figurative meaning is part of the foundation of linguistic structure. And this applies not only to special literary language, but to everyday language - and it applies to all human languages. (Kalandadze et al., 2018) argued that figurative language would enhance the social communication ability so that a figurative language master may alter listeners' or readers' understanding of a word or a concept by contrasting it to something else. Because figurative language has many types and its own meaning, the use of figurative language in song media is widely used to express the poet's feelings. (Griffie, 2001) says that song is part of music that is formed through words that aim to be sung. A song can attract interest to the listener by the professional lyric of the composers.

Accordingly, Taylor Alison Swift or popularly known as Taylor swift is an American singer/songwriter. He was born on December 13, 1989. In 2010 at the age of 20 Taylor swift became the youngest artist in history to win the Grammy Award for Album of the Year. In 2020, together with the vocalist of Bon Iver (Justin Vernon), an American indie folk band, they released a new work in a single entitled 'Exile'. The song shows a harmony that looks more and more beautiful with the exchange of lyrics which are sung in response which makes the song feel united. The song 'Exile' itself is the main single from the Folklore Album which consists of 16 songs in it. Album Folklore itself is the eighth studio album released along with its lead single "Exile" on July 24 2020, which is only eleven months after her seventh studio album, *Lover*. The lyrics of this song tell a confused expression of a pair of ex-lovers who meet each other after breaking up. In the lyrics sung by Justin Vernon, it is more described as a phrase that represents the man with his confused feelings about how to see his ex in living his life to move on.

While Taylor Swift represents the feelings of women who are confused as to why they broke up in the first place, her ex did not give any warning signs that their relationship had not gone smoothly. In the end, it was hoped that this meeting would improve their relationship, but in fact it could not, because they actually blamed each other. Instead of trying to solve their problem, Taylor finally chose to leave their relationship because she had tried enough but failed. According to (Ibrahim, I., Akib, M., & Hasyim, 2019) figurative language is often found in song lyrics that tell about love. Compared to the explanation above, the researcher feels that Taylor Swift's songs have a lot of figurative and hidden meanings so that the researcher wants to examine more deeply about the meaning of this song.

Therefore, a lot of people still can't find the hidden meanings of the figurative language that has been used in the song lyrics and yet people find it hard to understand the whole song as the lyrics used many of figurative language. This study wants to learn about the meaning of figurative language, analyze figurative language in song lyrics, and understand the types and meanings of figurative language in lyrics, and understanding the types and meanings of figures of speech in the lyrics of the song 'Exile' by Taylor Swift and Bon Iver. The study conducted in research is a qualitative and descriptive study as well as in analyzing using pure structuralism. This research will also discuss the theories and methods that will be used in analyzing figurative language in literary works, especially song lyrics. This research is also expected to contribute more to the academic field in knowing more about figurative language and analyzing song lyrics as literary works.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study used qualitative research methods. According to (Moleong, 2010) the qualitative method is used as a research technique that obtains a description of the

words that can be observed. The data to be examined is the lyrics of Taylor Swift's song entitled 'Exile' which contains figurative language. The method used is a descriptive qualitative method. (Borg, W. R., & Gall, 1996) says that descriptive studies focus on the discovery of observations and descriptive data. The data collection technique is observation of library research in 'Exile' song lyrics by collecting from journals and any other internet sources. Instruments that will be used are mobile phone, laptop, Spotify, Google, and Wi-Fi. According to (Rasmuson, 2017) library research is a process used to gather information for writing articles. The first process that must be started is to read the lyrics of the song. Second, the researchers will try to find or find words, phrases, and sentences that contain figurative language and the meaning of figurative language that will be studied by researchers. Third, the researchers will make a note of the figurative language used in the lyrics. Lastly, the researchers will classify and recheck the data and analyze it.

Observation List

The theory used in analyzing this paper is a theory proposed by (Knickerbocker, 1957) which proposes such types of figurative languages as simile, metaphor, personification, synecdoche, metonymy, hyperbole, irony, paradox, and dead metaphor.

TI	Lyrics	Types								
		Simile	Metaphor	Personification	Synecdoche	Metonymy	Hyperbole	Irony	Paradox	Dead Metaphor
00:18	Laughin', but the jokes not funny at all							x		
00:31	To pack us up and leave me with it			x						

00:34	Holdin' all this love out here in the hall	x								
00:41	I think I've seen this film before	x								
00:45	And I didn't like the ending								x	
00:48	You're not my homel and anym ore	x								
00:52	So what am I defen ding now?								x	
00:54	You were my town						x			
00:57	Now I'm in exile, seein' you out								x	
01:24	Like he's just your under stand								x	
01:27	Like you'd get your knuckl es bloody for me	x								
01:34	Second, third, and hundr edth chanc es								x	

01. 40	Those eyes add insult to injury			x																
02. 01	You were my crown			x																
02. 11	So I'm leavin' out the side door	x																		

	add insult to injury																			
02. 01	You were my crown			x																
02. 11	So I'm leavin' out the side door	x																		
02. 15	So step right out, there is no amou nt of crying																			x
02. 27	We always s walke d a very thin line			x																
02. 33	You never gave a warnin g sign																			x
02. 34	I gave so many signs																			x
02. 59	You didn't even see the signs																			x
Total		0	6	4	0	0	1	9	0	0										
		20																		

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In our result, figurative language that have been found in song lyric were analyzed which consist of metaphor, personification, hyperbole, and irony. From stanza 1, 2, 3, and 4 we can conclude from figure of speech that we found in the lyrics are mainly irony from out of all types.

Stanza 1

Line 1 “Laughin', but the jokes not funny at all”

Line 2 “To pack us up and leave me with it”

Line 3 “Holdin' all this love out here in the hall”

In the first stanza, the lyrics belong to irony, personification, and metaphor. Irony can be found in line 1, since the lyrics are “Laughin', but the jokes not funny at all” seems that Justin who sang this part forced himself to be happy when he saw Taylor with another man. In the second line we found personification, the sentence “To pack us up and leave me with it” Taylor left Justin with all of the memories. In the third line, we found metaphor as the figurative language. “Holdin' all this love out here in the hall” means Justin still have feeling but Taylor already left.

Stanza 2

Line 1 “I think I've seen this film before.”

Line 2 “And I didn't like the ending.”

Line 3 “You're not my homeland anymore.”

Line 4 “So what am I defending now?”

Line 5 “You were my town.”

Line 6 “Now I'm in exile, seein' you out”

In the second stanza, we found metaphor, irony, and personification. The first line is a metaphor and it said “I think I've seen this film before.” Tell us that Justin has already seen or experienced something from the past. The second line is an irony, “And I didn't like the ending.”

After experiencing something, it didn't end up with a good result so Justin did not feel happy with it. The third line is a metaphor "You're not my homeland anymore." Homeland is somewhere where you feel proud and want to take care of it. The fourth line is an irony "So what am I defending now?" Since it's not his homeland anymore, he doesn't have something to take care of. The fifth line is a personification "You were my town." In homeland, there's a town. The sixth line is an irony "Now I'm in exile, seein' you out" exile is being sent or kept away from homeland. While Taylor is in his hometown, Justin is in exile seeing her out. If Taylor is going somewhere else, Justin is just watching her from far away.

Stanza 3

Line 1 "Like he's just your understudy."

Line 2 "Like you'd get your knuckles bloody for me."

Line 3 "Second, third, and hundredth chances"

Line 4 "Those eyes add insult to injury."

Line 5 "You were my crown."

Line 6 "So I'm leavin' out the side door."

In the first line is an irony "Like he's just your understudy" like in a movie, the guy that Taylor be with in the present is just the side character of the life they live now. Second line is a metaphor "Like you'd get your knuckles bloody for me." Justin used to do everything for Taylor, even fight for her. Third line is a hyperbole: "Second, third, and hundredth chances" Taylor always gives Justin every chance she could have but Justin always makes the same mistakes. Fourth line is a personification "Those eyes add insult to injury." The stare that Justin gives to Taylor always hurts her. Fifth line is a personification "You were my crown." Like a crown, Justin is something precious to Taylor. Sixth line is a metaphor "So I'm

leavin' out the side door." Instead of trying to fix their issues, Taylor chooses to leave their relationship behind.

Stanza 4

Line 1 "So step right out, there is no amount of crying."

Line 2 "We always walked a very thin line."

Line 3 "You never gave a warning sign."

Line 4 "I gave so many sign"

Line 5 "You didn't even see the signs."

In the first line of stanza 4 we found irony, "So step right out, there is no amount of crying." No matter how many times crying will never fix the relationship. The second line we found the metaphor, "We always walked a very thin line." Walked a very thin line means always trying to balance their relationship. The third line, the fourth line, and the fifth line said "You never gave a warning sign.", "I gave so many sign", "You didn't even see the signs." and it is an irony. Sign means all of the bad things that might ruin their relationship. Justin keeps asking Taylor about his mistakes but Taylor said she already did, but Justin never realized.

In this result we found 4 types of figurative language: irony, personification, hyperbole, and metaphor at each lyric that we found has figurative language meaning.

This time we collect the lyrics and make it into one part based on each component that we found.

Irony

"Laughin', but the jokes not funny at all"

"And I didn't like the ending."

"So what am I defending now?"

"Now I'm in exile, seein' you out"

"Like he's just your understudy."

"So step right out, there is no amount of crying."

"You never gave a warning sign."

"I gave so many sign"

“You didn't even see the signs.”

Based on the lyrics above, these lyrics include Irony that has reverse meaning by what happened in reality. (Lievouis, 2017) argue that irony is a form of sentence that expresses subtle allusions. Figurative language, in terms of Irony, usually states something by reversing the meaning of the intention that happened (Green, 2018 ;Lievouis, 2017; Van Hee et al., 2018)

Personification

“To pack us up and leave me with it”

“You were my town.”

“Those eyes add insult to injury.”

“You were my crown.”

Based on the lyrics above, these lyrics include personification that give individual properties to a living object. (Ko, 2018) asserts that personification is a language style in literary works that give individual properties to inanimate objects or living things that are not human, such as plants and animals. Thus, they look like a human (Ko, 2018; Padillah et al., 2016)

Hyperbole

“Second, third, and hundredth chances”

Based on the lyrics above, this lyric includes hyperbole that exaggerates something. Hyperbole means a multitude of analogies that directly compare two things, but in a short schema (Keraf, 1994)

Metaphor

“Holdin' all this love out here in the hall”

“I think I've seen this film before.”

“You're not my homeland anymore.”

“Like you'd get your knuckles bloody for me.”

“So I'm leavin' out the side door.”

“We always walked a very thin line.”

Based on the lyrics above, these lyrics include metaphor that describes an object or action in a way that isn't literally true, but helps to explain an idea. Metaphor means figurative language that contains an

element of exaggeration about something (James Lain Potter, 1967), it means that there is something bigger than the fact.

In our research of ‘Exile’ song lyrics, we have found that Irony as the most dominant figurative language out of four types that we found including personification, metaphor, and hyperbole. There are 10 lines of irony that have been found in the lyrics. Taylor Swift expresses her heart's content through a series of words made by her into song lyrics that can be enjoyed for everyone. Therefore, Taylor Swift used figurative language to beautify the songs she made.

“AN ANALYSIS OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE IN TAYLOR SWIFT'S SONG LYRICS” a journal by Wilya Setiawati, Maryani. (Setiawati & Maryani, 2018) The researcher of this paper has conducted study of figurative language. They found hyperbole and simile became the most dominant because of the lyrical context of the song. It's really different from what we found in our research of ‘Exile’ song lyrics that Irony was the most dominant.

“Investigating Figurative Language in “Lose You to Love Me” Song Lyric” a journal by Erniyanti Nur Fatahhela Dewi, Didin Nuruddin Hidayat, Alek. (Dewi et al., 2020) The researcher of this paper has conducted study of figurative language. They found hyperbole as the most dominant. It's really different from what we found in our research of ‘Exile’ song lyrics that Irony was the most dominant.

CONCLUSION

The study has analyzed song lyrics “Exile” by Taylor Swift. Based on the findings and discussion above, the researchers concluded that several kinds of figurative languages were found in the song lyrics. Four kinds of figurative languages which are irony, personification, hyperbole, and metaphor. Irony is the dominant of figurative languages found in the song lyrics. The words used in the songs are allusions to something. The

exact words since the lyricist wants to describe an allusion of original meaning with the exact words.

In this song Taylor Swift wants to convey an expression of confusion of a pair of former lovers who meet each other after breaking up. The expression is raised from 2 sides between men and women. In the lyrics sung by Justin Venom, it describes more as an expression that represents the man with his confused feelings, how to see his ex in living his life to move on. Meanwhile, Taylor Swift represents the feelings of a woman who is also confused about why when they broke up, her ex did not give warning signs that their relationship was not going smoothly. Suddenly, they just broke up.

On the other hand, in the breakup of the previous relationship, Justin Venom had given many signs, but Taylor Swift denied that Justin Venom never gave any warning or signs. The expression appears in the Bridge section sung alternately by the two. In the end, the meeting was supposed to fix their relationship, but it didn't, as they blamed each other and likened their toxic behavior to the predictable ending of a movie. Instead of trying to solve their problems, Taylor eventually chose to leave their relationship behind her because she had tried enough to make him try.

At the very end, we have found the meaning of figurative language, we have analyzed the 'Exile' lyrics, and made it more likely to be understood by meaning based on each type of figurative language that can be found.

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