

Metaphors in Queen's Song Lyrics

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Abstract

Penelitian ini berjudul Metaphors in Queen's Song Lyrics. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi metaphors yang terdapat dalam lagu dari band Queen serta menjelaskan makna dari setiap metaphor yang ditemukan dalam lagu tersebut. Sumber data diambil dari delapan lagu yang dipopulerkan rock band asal Inggris, Queen. Teori yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah teori metaphor dari Lakoff dan Johnson (1980) dan teori meaning dari Chaer (1994). Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah metode kualitatif. Diawali dengan mengidentifikasi metaphor yang terdapat didalam lagu serta mengkategorikannya sesuai dengan jenis-jenis metaphor yang dikemukakan oleh Lakoff dan Johnson. Kemudian data yang terkumpul dianalisis untuk menemukan makna dari setiap metaphor. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa terdapat 59metaphor yang terbagi dalam tiga jenis metaphor. Metaphor-metaphor tersebut digunakan untuk memberikan keindahan serta menyampaikan pesan yang ingin disampaikan kependengarnya.

Kata kunci: konseptual metaphor, structural metaphor, orientational metaphor, ontological metaphor, Queen

1. Background of the Study

As social being, human needs to communicate with each other and the language is a primary means of human being to interact and to get information. Communication between the speaker and the hearer or the source person and the target person can be constructed, if there is an understanding and comprehension. In this point, meaning is very important and significant in

communication, if the target person or the hearer cannot understand or comprehend the meaning of the speaker or source person try to express, the meaning will not be delivered.

Meaning can be learned through the scientific study of language called Linguistics, and Semantics is the branch of Linguistics which deals with meaning. Meaning in Semantics can be divided into two parts, literal meaning

and non-literal meaning. Literal meaning is based on the actual word and non-literal meaning is otherwise. If the source person speaks non-literally the target person may be difficult to comprehend what the speaker wants to deliver. There are so many ways in revealing ideas which aberrant from the semantic conventions, some of them are through the use of idioms and figurative language. Figurative language is a language expression, whose meaning is different from its literal one, and metaphor is one part of Figurative language.

Metaphor is concerned with using words, phrases or sentences in abstract rather literal ways. According to Chatman (1968:45), "Metaphor is an expression in which a word or phrase and the concept represented stands figuratively for another word or phrase and its concept". Metaphor is a way of expressing idea, feeling, emotional, even influence someone's mind by comparing it with something else that has similar characteristic. Every day, just a few people are aware of the fact that they actually use metaphorical expressions. People often use metaphors to explain something abstract

and to give style in their works. Metaphors are the best choice of explaining reality when literal words or language cannot. The example of metaphor used by people to express someone who is clever is *his/her brain is like the mouse deer*. It means that he/she has an intelligent brain like mouse deer's brain. Mouse deer is described as one of the most intelligent mammals in the world. The meaning of word becomes more general and related with how people are conceptualizing something in their mind.

Because people have to deal with a very complex world, they use the possibility of conceptualization to structure their experience which is normally not concrete or tangible easily. These conceptualizations go back to metaphorical processes. Metaphorical processes means everything which happens becomes an experience in our mind. Experience is such an abstract concept so we try to make it more understandable by comparing it to something we know exactly and try to draw a relationship between those two concepts. This relationship is then metaphorical.

Metaphor is commonly used in poetry. Klarer (2004:26) states that “poetry is closely related to the term lyric, which derives etymologically from the greek musical instrument lyra, (lyre or harp) and points to an origin the sphere of music”. As how lyric becomes an integral part of poetry, lyric is also regarded so meaningful and decisive that it hardly ever impossible to be separated from an elaboration of a poem with a melodic and musical embellishment called song. The song lyrics can be regarded as work of literature since it is a kind of art form. The word in the lyric does not merely carry its literal meaning alone, but it carries a metaphorical interpretation to the lyric as well. The lyric of song is typically of a poetic, rhyming nature, though it can be free prose or religious verses.

The songs were picked up as the data source since their lyrics contains such typical characteristic of language like poems do, in this respect, the metaphorical expression. Song lyrics from a band called Queen was chosen as the data of this analysis. Queen is British rock band formed in London in 1970. The classic line-up was Brian

May (guitar-vocals), Roger Taylor (drums-vocals), John Deacon (bass, vocals) and Freddie Mercury (lead vocals-piano). Queen’s works were influenced by progressive rock, hard rock, and heavy metal. The band has released a total 15 number of albums. In 1990, British Phonographic Industry gave Queen avowed the outstanding contribution to British Music Award and In 2001 Queen was inaugurated into the Rock n’Roll Hall of Fame. Queen has more emotive and poetic communication within the music, so that their listeners do not only listen to their music but also what they said in their lyrics.

2. Problems of the Study

This research is focused on the analysis of metaphor found in Queen’s song lyrics and also its meaning. There are two research questions related to this analysis, they are:

1. What types of metaphor are found in the song lyrics of Queen?
2. What meanings are implied by the metaphorical expressions in the song lyrics?

3. Aims of the Study

Related with the problems of study above, the aims of the study are:

1. To find out as well as to identify the types of metaphors found in the song lyrics of Queen
2. To reveal the meaning of the metaphorical expressions buried within the songs.

4. Research Method

All data in this study were directly taken from the primary source, in this case the song lyrics of Queen was taken as the data to be analyzed in research. Queen is British rock band formed in London in 1970. The classic line up was Freddie Mercury (lead vocals-piano), Roger Taylor (drums-vocals), Brian May (guitar-vocals), John Deacon (bass, vocals). There are eight song lyrics selected from the Queen's released album as the data source of the analysis. Those song lyrics were selected because they had a lot of metaphor, including metaphors which are the emphasis of this study. Moreover, there is no one having used these Queen songs yet as the data to be

analyzed in a research. The following are the respective chosen songs:

- A. From the album entitled *Queen*, which was released in 1973
 1. "Keep Your Self Alive"
- B. From the album entitled *A Night at the Opera*, which was released in early 1975
 2. "Bohemian Rhapsody"
- C. From the album entitled *Day at The Races*, which was released in 1976
 3. "You Take My Breath Away"
 4. "Somebody to Love"
- D. From the album entitled *Hot Space*, which was released in early 1982
 5. "Under Pressure"
- E. From the album entitled *The Work*, which was released in 1984
 6. "It's A Hard Life"
- F. From the album entitled *The Miracle*, which was released in 1989
 7. "Breakthru"
- G. From the album entitled *Made in Heaven*, which was released in 1995

8. “Too Much Love Will Kill You”

The data in this study were collected through observation. The collection of Queen’s Song Lyrics was done through the following steps. First, the lyrics of the selected song were downloaded from <http://www.azlyrics.com/q/queen.html>.

The lyrics printed out to read as well as to observe the lyrics of the chosen songs with the focus on identifying the metaphor inside each song. Next, after finding the occurrences of metaphors in the data source and jotting them down, the data were classified into the more specific categories based on the Theory of metaphor proposed by Lakoff & Johnson’s (1980). Afterwards, the analysis of the types of metaphor was fused with uncovering the meaning of the metaphor expressions. Finally, after all those steps being fulfilled, the result of the analysis then was presented through informal method, meaning that it is through words and sentences rather than symbols.

5. Result and Discussion

There are 59 metaphors found in this research. The data were collected from eight chosen songs from band

called Queen. The data are grouped based on the types of metaphor.

| No | Types of Metaphor | Data |
|----|----------------------|-----------|
| 1 | Structural Metaphor | 29 |
| 2 | Oriental metaphor | 10 |
| 3 | Ontological metaphor | 20 |
| | Total | 59 |

Based on the table above, from 59 data of metaphors, Structural metaphor is the type that was mostly used, totaling more or less 29 data. After that ontological metaphor is the second type of metaphor that was mostly used, totaling 20 data, then, followed by the orientational metaphor, totaling 10 data.

1. Structural metaphor

Structural metaphor is a metaphor that allows the reader to comprehend one aspect of a concept in terms of another. In this type of conceptual metaphor, one concept is understood and expressed in terms of another structured, sharply defined concept. It changes one concept into another concept systematically.

Sample 1: *Honey* you’ll survive
(Keep Yourself Alive)

In this sentence, the metaphorical expression is *honey*. This metaphor is a metaphor in which the object of love is represented as food looking or tasting good. This metaphor is a structural metaphor because it changes the concept of *honey* (appetizing food) into the concept of beloved or the people that you love or like very much. *Honey* is a sweet food or a sugary food made by social hymenopteran insects (bees) foraging nectar from flower. Honey used and production has long and varied history. In many countries, honey has gone beyond its association with its use as a food. Frequently, honey is used as a talisman and symbol of sweetness. This metaphor highlights the main meaning focus of conceptions of love as a need and the beloved as pleasant. One of the aspects of food used in this metaphor is that the positive effects of being well nourished by the food or being well loved by the object for love.

Sample 2: ...I'm two steps nearer to my *grave* (Keep Yourself Alive)

In this sentence, the metaphorical expression is *nearer to my grave*. This metaphor is structural metaphor because it changes the

concept of *grave*. It is common that the grave is related with the death because the grave is the final residence of the body. People conceive of death as something to which they are all subject. Being dead is a final state, and hence, metaphorically, a final location. This final location is the final destination toward which one departs, e.g. God the father's house, final rest, etc. The appliance of the Death is Going to Final Destination metaphor is to understand and to present death in term of a departure from this life and the beginning of a journey toward the final destination. This is the main focus of the metaphor. Sentence (2) specifies one of the various specific final locations, that is, the place of one's origin, conceptualized in the sentence as the grave. Thus (2) means the person (as "I") was close to their final home or the person (as "I") was close to death.

2. Orientational metaphor

Orientational metaphor gives a concept of spatial orientation. A characteristic aspect of orientational metaphors featuring the Up/ Down concept is that Up metaphors tend to be positive and the opposite Down concept on the other hand tends to be

negative. Unlike structural metaphor and ontological metaphor, orientational metaphors provide even less conceptual structure for target concept.

Sample 1: But everybody want put me *down* (Somebody To Love)

As can be seen in the example put me *down* respectively is the orientational metaphor featuring the characteristic Sad is Down concept. The physical basis for this metaphor is dropping posture which typically goes along with depressions and sadness, erect posture with a positive emotional state. The aspect being most highlighted is the negative character of being sad. Upward orientation tends to go together with the positive evaluation, while downward with a negative one. Moreover, when someone is joyful or happy, he or she tends to be up, move around, be active, jump up and down, rather than down, inactive, and static. Sentence (1) means that everyone doesn't want "me" being happy and wants to see "me" in the dumps.

Sample 2: Pray tomorrow takes me *higher* (Under Pressure)

As can be seen in the example takes me *higher* respectively is orientational metaphor featuring the

characteristic Being Good is Up concept. For instance, Up metaphors are often associated with More / Happiness / Consciousness / Power is Up. The manifestation of Good is Up can be seen and is stated quite explicitly in sentence (2), saying that "pray tomorrow takes me higher". Sentence (2) means that the person hopes to be in a better state (takes me higher) and tomorrow is seen as the time in the future since now he is under pressure.

3. Ontological metaphor

Ontological metaphor is a metaphor that gives a status as an entity or substance for something that does not have status inherently (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Ontological metaphor is quite common in our daily life. This type of metaphor is usually found when someone gives a status as an entity for abstract things (e.g. love, mind, feeling, experience, etc).

Sample 1: You *destroy my mind* (You Take My Breath)

The metaphorical expression found in this sentence is *you destroy my mind*. The metaphor is focusing on the concept of mind. *Mind* is something that cannot be seen or touched and *destroy* is

to cause the destruction of something. Mind is not an object with bounding surface. However, the collocation between *mind* and *destroy* makes the word *mind* something that has no physical form that can be viewed as something that can be destroyed or damaged. In this case, the metaphor changes the concept of mind into mind as an entity because of the word *destroy*. So, when someone's mind is destroyed it means that he or she can't think clearly and feels like he/she has lost any sense of intelligence, lost the ability to talk or has normal conversation with anyone.

Sample 2: Under Pressure that
burns a building down (Under
Pressure)

In this metaphorical expression, the focus is the word *burns*. Because it makes the word *pressure* looks like something that has a form. It is obvious that under pressure is something that is not bounded by surface. In this context, pressure is an event. Being "Under Pressure" in the example is being in a state. It can be implied that the source domain has its scope any intense situation, in this case, the state of being

under pressure. The main focus of this source domain appears to be the intensity of situation. In this metaphorical expression, the intense state of being under pressure is considered dangerous (fire is one of dangerous things) resulting in high degree of mental depression to a society ("building" might be interpreted a society or a person)

6. Conclusion

Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that all types of metaphors that are Structural metaphor, Orientational metaphor, and Ontological metaphor were discovered from the eight chosen songs. The types of metaphor which are 29 structural metaphors, 10 ontological metaphors and 20 ontological metaphors are found in these eight chosen songs. Through song lyrics as the object of analysis, it can be concluded that those song lyrics generally contain metaphorical expressions. They are used to beautify the songs and convey deeper meaning than the literal one. Those metaphorical expressions show how it can influence the lyrics. Because they are more expensive and evoke a particular sense which can help the hearer to conceive

what the songwriter means. It is expressing emotions of the author, developing chronologically of the content, making cause and effect or making movement from one attitude to a different attitude of the lyrics

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