

## Figurative Language in Bullet For My Valentine Album “Scream Aim Fire”

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### Abstract

The study entitled “Figurative Language in Bullet For My Valentine’s Album Scream Aim Fire” is aimed at finding out and identifying the types of figurative language, especially personification and hyperbole, in Bullet For My Valentine’s Album, Scream Aim Fire, and analyzing the meaning. The documentation method was used to collect the data, and to analyze the data, the qualitative method was applied. This research applied the theory of Types of Figurative Language proposed by Knickerbocker and Renninger (1963) to find and identify personification and hyperbolic expressions from the album, and Types of Meaning according to Leech (1974) to classify and analyze the meaning of personification and hyperbolic expressions. The study indeed focuses on personification and hyperbole only because both are the most common expressions/figurative languages used by the songwriters to personate particular objects or stress and exaggerate their words on the song they write to make it more beautiful, dramatic, and meaningful. 14 out of 15 songs of the Scream Aim Fire album used both personification and hyperbole in their lyrics. 12 of them used both personification and hyperbole, one of them used only personification, one of them used only hyperbole, and the last one used neither of them. As for the types of meaning, there were connotative meaning, affective meaning, thematic meaning, and reflective meaning.

**Keywords:** *figurative language, personification, hyperbole*

### Abstrak

Penelitian yang berjudul “Figurative Language in Bullet For My Valentine’s Album Scream Aim Fire” ini bertujuan untuk menemukan dan mengidentifikasi jenis-jenis bahasa kiasan, khususnya personifikasi dan hiperbola, di album milik grup musik Bullet For My Valentine, Scream Aim Fire dan menganalisis masing-masing maknanya. Metode dokumentasi digunakan untuk pengumpulan data, dan untuk menganalisisnya, diterapkan metode kualitatif. Penelitian ini mengaplikasikan teori Jenis Bahasa Kiasan yang digagas Knickerbocker dan Renninger (1963) untuk menemukan dan mengidentifikasi ekspresi personifikasi dan hiperbola dari album tersebut, dan teori Jenis Makna menurut Leech (1974) untuk mengklasifikasi dan menganalisis makna dari masing-masing personifikasi dan hiperbola sebelumnya. Penelitian ini memang berfokus hanya pada personifikasi dan hiperbola karena keduanya merupakan ekspresi/bahasa kiasan paling umum yang digunakan oleh para penulis lagu dalam rangka memanusiaikan objek-objek tertentu atau menekankan dan melebih-lebihkan makna kata pada lagu yang mereka tulis untuk membuatnya lebih indah, dramatis, dan penuh makna. 14 dari 15 lagu di album

Scream Aim Fire menggunakan personifikasi dan hiperbola dalam lirik-liriknnya. 12 di antaranya menggunakan sekaligus personifikasi dan hiperbola, satu lagu hanya menggunakan personifikasi, satu lagu hanya menggunakan hiperbola, dan yang terakhir tidak menggunakan keduanya. Sementara untuk jenis makna, ditemukan makna konotatif, afektif, tematik, dan reflektif.

**Kata kunci:** *bahasa kiasan, personifikasi, hiperbola*

## 1. Background of the Study

A song can be considered a combination of two branches of the art, music and literature. Music is the melody that accompanies and literature itself can be seen in the lyrics of the song. Song lyrics can be categorized as literature because it has some similar elements to poetry, even though not all of song lyrics look like poetry. One of the similarities between poetry and song besides expressing feeling in a beautiful aesthetic way is the use of figurative language. According to Knickerbocker and Renninger (1963), figurative language is sometimes called metaphorical language, or simply metaphor. There are 10 (ten) types of figurative language according to them, and two of them are personification and hyperbole.

Personification is a figurative language that personates animals, ideas, abstractions, and intimate objects with human form, character, or sensibilities (Holman, 1986). And hyperbole is a figure of speech of bold exaggeration (Preminger, 1975). Both personification and hyperbole are very common expressions/figurative languages the song-writers use in songs. In this paper, an album from Welsh metalcore band, Bullet For My Valentine, was chosen. The album is entitled "Scream Aim Fire" (Deluxe Edition) and it consists of 15 (fifteen) songs. The paper itself focuses on finding personification and hyperbolic expressions used in the album.

## 2. Problems of the Study

Based on the background above, the problems can be stated as follows:

- a. What kinds of personification and hyperbolic expressions are found in Bullet For My Valentine's album "Scream Aim Fire"?
- b. What kinds of meanings are expressed by the personification and hyperbolic expression used in Bullet For My Valentine's album "Scream Aim Fire"?

## 3. Aims of the Study

Based on the problem mentioned before, the aims of the study can be stated as follows:

- a. To identify what kinds of personification and hyperbolic expressions are used in Bullet For My Valentine's album "Scream Aim Fire".
- b. To analyze what kinds of meanings are expressed by the personification and hyperbolic expressions used in Bullet For My Valentine's album "Scream Aim Fire".

## 4. Research Method

Research method is a systematic plan for conducting research in order to obtain and collect data for the certain functions and objectives. It has 4 (four) important elements; they are data source, method and technique of collecting data, method and technique of analyzing data, and method and technique of presenting data.

### 4.1 Data Source

In this study, the data were taken from the entire songs of Bullet For My Valentine's album, "Scream Aim Fire". It consists of 15 (fifteen) songs. Those songs are "Scream Aim Fire", "Eye of

the Storm", "Hearts Burst into Fire", "Waking the Demon", "Disappear", "Deliver Us on Evil", "Take It Out on Me", "Say Goodnight", "End of Days", "Last to Know", "Forever and Always", "Road to Nowhere", "Watching Us Die Tonight", "One Good Reason Why", and "Ashes of the Innocent".

This album was chosen as the data source not only because it is their best album all the time, but also because the songs have various metaphors and carry deep meanings. Those songs are about war, love, hate, humanity, mental problem, and others.

#### 4.2 Method and Technique of Collecting Data

This research applied the documentation method to collect the data. The data were collected through the following steps:

- a. Downloading the entire songs of the album Scream Aim Fire from Youtube.
- b. Downloading the entire lyrics of each song from [www.azlyrics.com](http://www.azlyrics.com).
- c. Note-taking every personification and hyperbolic expression found in each song lyrics.

#### 4.3 Method and Technique of Analyzing Data

This research applied the qualitative method and the data were analyzed through the following steps:

- a. Listening to the songs while reading the lyrics many times in order to understand them completely.
- b. Searching for the personification and hyperbolic expressions from each song lyrics and identifying the factors why the lyrics are considered personification or hyperbole.
- c. Analyzing every meaning of personification and hyperbolic expressions found from each song using the Types of Meaning proposed by Leech (1947).

- d. Interpreting the meaning of each personification and hyperbolic expression found.

#### 4.4 Method and Technique of Presenting Data

The analysis was presented in an informal method, meaning that the data were described through words, without any table, graphic nor statistic presented to support the research.

### 5. Analysis

#### 5.1 Figurative Language Used in "Scream Aim Fire"

##### 5.2.1 Scream Aim Fire

Scream Aim Fire is the first song of the album Scream Aim Fire. This song is about World War I in the perspective of a soldier. He killed his enemies and also found his friends die because of the war. He also felt how death could come to him anytime.

- a. Lyrics

*Kill your enemies, (1)*

*My brothers dead around me! (2)*

*Wounds are hurting (3)*

*Death is creeping for me! (4)*

...

- b. Figurative Language

- 1) Personification

*God has spoken through his conscience!*

The sentence above is in the 14th line of the song. God is a concept of a being which is believed as the creator and the ruler of the universe and commonly worshipped by the believers as having power over nature and human fortunes. Speaking is an act of saying something in order to convey information, opinion, or feeling. And conscience is described as an inner feeling or voice viewed as a guide to the rightness or wrongness of one's behavior. Both 'god' and 'conscience' are abstract things, not

human beings nor living things. However, in the lyrics, 'god' is being humanized by stating it 'has spoken' or speaks. And an act of speaking requires a human mouth to proceed. Yet, conscience is an inner feeling so one can't literally speak through it. 'God' that 'speak' through its 'conscience' makes the expression considered as a personification because it humanizes non-living and abstract things.

## 2) Hyperbole

*The only way out is to die!*

The sentence above is in the 13th line of the song. It expresses how difficult the situation that one experiences, that makes 'die' seems to be like the only one way to leave the problem. Thus, the expression is considered hyperbole.

### 5.2.2 Ashes of the Innocent

Ashes of the Innocent is the fifteenth and the last song of the album. This song is about Holocaust or the genocide towards European Jews in the World War II done by German Nazi commanded by Adolf Hitler.

#### a. Lyrics

*(One, two, three, four...)* (1)

*Ashes of the innocent* (2)

*The end for you and me* (3)

*Darkness, screams of agony are begging set me free* (4)

...

#### b. Figurative Language

##### 1) Personification

*Darkness, screams of agony are begging set me free*

This sentence is in the 4th line of the song. Begging is an act of asking someone earnestly or humbly for something. Darkness and screams of agony are not human beings, which makes the expression classified as personification.

### 5.2.3 Watching Us Die Tonight

Watching Us Die Tonight is the thirteenth song of the album. The song is about an unhealthy relationship between a man and a woman that finally ends up with break up. They could be hurt, cheated on, or abused each other, and had been through break up several times before finally made up again.

#### a. Lyrics

*Back against the wall* (1)

*What the fuck just happened?* (2)

*(Don't you cry)* (3)

*We've been here before* (4)

...

#### b. Figurative Language

##### 1) Hyperbole

*But honestly, you're killing me*

This sentence is in the 11th line of the song. It's not about someone who literally got killed by his partner. It is actually an expression about a great disappointment he feels towards his partner because of one particular thing his partner has done. However, because it is an exaggeration, this is considered a hyperbole.

### 5.2.4 Last to Know

Last to Know is the tenth song of the album. The song is about a rage someone feels because some people are talking and hating him behind his back, yet have no courage to utter it directly. Instead, they keep gossiping about him, laughing at him, being envied, and looking for his mistakes.

#### a. Lyrics

*Here come broken bones!* (1)

*Where's your sticks and stones!?* (2)

*What'd you use to hurt me?* (3)

*Something you should know!* (4)

...

#### b. Figurative Language

There is likely no personification nor hyperbolic expression found in the "Last to Know".

## 5.2 The Meaning of Figurative Language Used in "Scream Aim Fire"

### 5.2.1 Scream Aim Fire

Scream Aim Fire is the first song of the album Scream Aim Fire. This song is about World War I in the perspective of a soldier. He killed his enemies and also found his friends dead because of the war. He also felt how death could come to him anytime in the situation. The title, Scream Aim Fire, refers to the act of the soldier using his weapon. He screams, aims the weapon, and fires it to the enemy. The phrase "Over the top!" in the 10th line of the song is used to describe when the soldiers went up and over the trenches to the battle.

There are several personification and hyperbolic expressions found in the song, they are:

- a. *God has spoken through his conscience!*

The expression above contains a connotative meaning since it has a communicative value more than its conceptual content or what it says literally. It personates god as if it can speak through its conscience. "God spoken through his conscience" could mean the God's will, the fate. So the said war is God's will or fate that, the person thought, has been decided from the start. It actually expresses either sincerity or despair, since it already happens, whether he wants it or not, he must accept and go with it.

- b. *The only way out is to die*

The expression above contains an affective meaning since it reflects personal feelings of the speaker. It expresses about how war is about between life and death. There is only a little chance someone can be alive after the happening. There is no escape in a war, and only little chance to come back alive, as if the only way to escape this is to die. However, the sentence tells more

about the feeling of persistence rather than desperation. It is the soldiers' pride of doing either life or death mission like war.

### 5.2.2 Ashes of the Innocent

Ashes of the Innocent is the fifteenth and the last song of the album. This song is about Holocaust or the genocide towards European Jews in World War II which was done by German Nazi commanded by Adolf Hitler. It express an anger, sorrow, fear, and desperation. The title, Ashes of the Innocent, is clearly referring to the innocent victims that got killed during the Holocaust. Since Holocaust is identical with fire, their dead bodies are symbolized by ashes.

There is only one personification expression found from the song:

- a. *Darkness, screams of agony, are begging set me free*

The expression above contains a connotative meaning since it has a communicative value more than its conceptual content or what it says literally. Darkness and screams of agony refer to the Nazi's extermination camp and poor people who got caught and caged in there. It is told that they were all begging to be set free, even though, finally, they got killed by poison gas that was purposely sprayed in order to genocide them.

### 5.2.3 Watching Us Die Tonight

Watching Us Die Tonight is the thirteenth song of the album. The song is about an unhealthy relationship between a man and a woman that finally ends up with break up. They could be hurt, cheated on, or abused each other, and had been through break up several times before finally made up again. But in this situation, they are truly going to separate ways because they realize they were just "wasting their time". The title, Watching Us Die Tonight, means that the

relationship between them is dying or ended.

There is only one hyperbolic expression found in the song, it is:

a. *But honestly, you're killing me*

The expression above is considered having affective meaning since it reflects personal feelings of the speaker. It is simply about a man who got hurt very bad by his woman. The man may usually act though in front of his woman but when he couldn't take it anymore; he is "being honest" on how she made him suffer a lot. But it is also possible that the man used the word "honestly" to emphasize his feeling that he got hurt more than she could see and think.

#### 5.2.4 Last to Know

Last to Know is the tenth song of the album. The song is about a rage someone feels because some people are talking and hating him behind his back, yet have no courage to utter it directly. Instead they keep gossiping about him, laughing at him, being envied, and looking for his mistakes. But, these people are still "stooping so low" in front of him because they aren't in his level, and stay in their "hypocrisy from jealousy".

However, there is no personification nor hyperbolic expression can be found in this song.

### 6. Conclusion

Based on the findings, it is concluded that both personification and hyperbole are used almost entirely in the album. 14 (fourteen) out of 15 (fifteen) songs of the album, *Scream Aim Fire*, used these types of figurative language in their lyrics. 12 (twelve) of them used both types, 1 (one) of them only used personification, 1 (one) used only hyperbole, and 1 (one) used neither of them. From the entire album that consists of 15 (fifteen) songs, totally there were 21 (twenty one) personifications and 19 (nineteen) hyperbole identified.

Based on the analysis, it is concluded that there are 4 (four) types of meaning found in the entire personification and hyperbole; they are connotative meaning, affective meaning, reflective meaning, and thematic meaning. As a result, there are 19 (nineteen) connotative meanings, 17 (seventeen) affective meanings, 2 (two) thematic meanings, and 1 (one) reflective meaning managed to be analyzed.

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