

IMAGERY AND FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE
IN JIMI HENDRIX'S SONG LYRIC
ENTITLED LITTLE WING

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Abstrak

Jurnal ini berjudul "Imagery and Figurative Language in Jimi Hendrix's Song Lyric entitled Little Wing". Topik ini saya pilih karena menarik minat saya dan lagu-lagu dari sumber data masih sangat menarik untuk didengar di jaman sekarang, walaupun lagu-lagu tersebut ditulis sudah berpuluh tahun yang lalu. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menemukan jenis-jenis citraan and bahasa kias yang ada di lirik lagu Jimi Hendrix dan menjelaskan fungsi dan makna dari bahasa kias dan citraan tersebut.

*Data utama diambil dari lirik lagu Jimi Hendrix sebagai sumber data. Data di kumpulkan melalui metode dokumentasi dengan memakai teknik mencatat. Teori utama yang digunakan berdasarkan pada teori citraan dan bahasa kiasan oleh Knickerbocker dan Reninger di buku mereka yang berjudul *Interpreting Literature* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969). Teori pendukung lainnya juga digunakan untuk melengkapi pemahaman tentang topik yang dibahas.*

Berdasarkan hasil analisis dari lagu Jimi Hendrix yang berjudul Little Wing, citraan yang terkandung sebagian besar adalah citraan penglihatan, tetapi juga terdapat beberapa jenis citraan yang lain yaitu citraan gerak, citraan pendengaran, dan citraan perabaan. Bahasa kiasan yang ditemukan adalah hiperbola.

Kata Kunci: Bahasa Kias, Citraan, Majas

1. Background of the Study

A language has an important role in daily life. It is used for communication or expressing people's feeling and thought. In establishing the social relationship with the other people; language is used as a connector in communication. One of main function of language is to communicate meaning (Spolsky, 1998:3). In spoken

language, the purpose is to make some understanding on what is being said, however, in written language, someone can misunderstand the meaning in some literature such as poem, prose, or song lyrics. Talking about song lyrics, there are a lot of song lyrics taking the forms of many kinds of figurative language that convey the meanings behind them.

Figurative is used in a way that is different from the usual meaning, in order to create a particular mental picture. For example, 'He exploded with rage' shows a figurative use of the verb 'explode' (Hornby, 2005:571). Figurative language is sometimes called metaphorical language or simply metaphor because its Greek ancestor "metaphoric" means to carry meaning beyond its literal meaning (Knickerbocker, 1955:637). Imagery is language that produces pictures in the minds of people reading or listening (Hornby, 2005:774)

The focus of this study is to analyze figures of speech that are used in lyric of songs, because it is one of interesting things that attracts my attention. By knowing the figures of speech in the lyric of song, we will clearly understand what actually the writer wants to show from the use of those figures of speech. One of famous musicians being recognized very much using imagery and figurative is Jimi Hendrix. In almost all of his song lyrics imagery and figurative languages could be found.

Since Jimi Hendrix's song are still very interesting to be heard nowadays, even if the songs are written long time ago, it is considered important to know what actually the meaning hidden within the song. It will be useless if just listening to the song without understanding what actually the song wants to convey to us as the listeners.

2. Problem of the Study

1. What kind of imageries and figurative languages were employed in the song lyric of Jimi Hendrix?

2. What were the function and meaning of imageries and figurative languages in the lyric?

3. Aims of the Study

The aims are, to find out the kinds of imagery and figurative language of song lyrics, and to explain the function and meaning of them.

4. Research Method

There was a song taken from the songs of Jimi Hendrix as the primary data. The song is entitled Little Wing. The reason of choosing this song as the primary data simply because of the music is very interesting to listen, although it was written many years ago. And it contains many imagery and figurative languages.

The method of collecting data was done by documentation method. The documentation method was chosen because in obtaining the data, the figurative languages were noted down on some papers. After being collected the data which were imageries and figurative languages was analyzed by theory of imageries and figurative languages based on Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963) in their book entitled *Interpreting Literature*.

5. Analysis of Imagery and Figurative Language in Jimi Hendrix's Song Lyrics entitled Little Wing

Little Wing is a song written by Jimi Hendrix. It was first recorded by The Jimi Hendrix Experience on their 1967 album *Axis: Bold as Love*. It is ranked #366 on *Rolling Stone* magazine's list of "the 500 Greatest Songs of All Time" (Internet site/http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Little_Wing) It consists of two stanzas, and each stanza consists of four lines.

First Stanza:

Well she's walking, through the clouds (line 1)

With the circus mind, that's running round (line 2)

Butterflies and zebras and moonbeams and fairy tales (line 3)

That's all she ever thinks about, riding with the wind (line 4)

In the first line of first stanza, there was found visual imagery which could stimulate our senses of sight. Namely the word “the clouds”, as we read it, we can imagine a cloud. Beside visual imagery, there was also found another kind of imagery in the first line, it is kinesthesia imagery. Kinesthesia is an imagery that recreates a feeling of physical action or natural bodily function. The word “walking”, really gives us clear imagination about a physical action involving the use of our feet to move our body step by step. Figurative language that is found in the first line is hyperbole, which is found in the sentence “Well she's walking, through the clouds”. We can image the exaggeration meaning, because it is impossible for someone to walking through the clouds, because all we know the cloud is a large mass of something in the air made of very small drops of water that floats in the sky. So, how could someone walk on it, it's an impossible thing to do. The type of meaning found in the first line is connotative meaning. “Walking through the clouds” is contains the connotative meaning, because the real meaning of this sentence is a girl who has a high imagination that she lives in a fairytale world.

In the second line of first stanza, imagery was not found. Figurative language found is a metaphor in the phrase “circus mind”. Metaphor is an implicit comparison, with “like” or “as” omitted. In the phrase above, the writer wanted to explain the similarity of two things. However, it is compared implicitly. “Circus” is an entertaining thing that attracts a lot of attention, and so with this girl's mind. It is supported by sentences in the second stanza that the girl is coming when the songwriter feel sad and make him feel alright.

In the third line of first stanza, visual imagery was found in the words “Butterflies, and zebras, and moonbeams”. Butterflies gives imagination about a flying insect with a long thin body and four large, usually brightly colored, wings. The word ‘zebras’ can stimulate our sense of sight about an African wild animal like a horse with black and white lines or stripes on its body. While the word “moonbeams” also stimulates our visual imagination that we can imagine a stream of light from the moon. Figurative language was not found in this line.

In the fourth line of first stanza, imagery was not found. Figurative language found is hyperbole in the sentence “Riding with the wind”. Logically thinking, wind is the air that moves quickly as a result of natural force, we even can’t see it. I have a question; can we ride the wind? Of course, the answer is, not, therefore, it is hyperbolic expression. It only happens in a fairy tale, which is explained in the previous line.

Second Stanza:

When I'm sad, she comes to me (line 1)

With a thousand smiles, she gives to me free (line 2)

It's alright; she said it's alright (line 3)

Take anything you want from me, anything (line 4)

In the first line of second stanza, there was found kinesthesia imagery. In this line the word “sad” can stimulate sense of feeling. The word gives clear imagination about feeling of the songwriter that he feels sad. Sadness can be caused by many things, such as broken heart or losing someone. Figurative language was not found in this line. The type of meaning found is conceptual meaning or the sense that the listeners have in their mind for the first time is also the song writer expected. “When I’m sad, she comes to me”, it’s clear about a girl who is loyal and always accompanies him when he is sad. In this line, affective meaning was also found. Words that have emotive values fall into two categories: appreciative meaning or pejorative meaning. The word “Sad” has a negative overtones or pejorative meaning.

Sad is an unhappy feeling, showing unhappiness, or in poor condition. Thematic meaning was also found in the first line. The song writer wanted to convey “one of those beautiful girls that come around sometimes”. These beautiful girls come around and really entertain you. You do actually fall in love with them. They actually tell you something. They release different things inside themselves, and then you feel to yourself. The most supportive sentences are: “When I’m sad, she comes to me, with a thousand smiles, she gives to me free” in first and second line of second stanza.

In the second line of second stanza, there is found visual imagery. We can find the word “smiles” which can stimulate our visual sense. In this word we can imagine people who feel happy about something. A smile is a facial expression formed by flexing the muscles near both ends of the mouth. Among people, it is an expression denoting pleasure, happiness, or amusement. The figurative language found was hyperbole, it was found in the sentence “with a thousand smiles”. If we read the sentence above, it seems that the sentence exaggerated, it is an impossible thing to do by somebody. It is just the songwriter’s imagination to convey something about the girl in the song lyric who always makes him feel alright when he is on sadness. The phrase “thousand smiles” also contains connotative meaning, the meaning of “thousand smiles” here is a strong positive energy and happiness that the girl has, and it makes him feel the sense of peace and freedom around her. Affective meaning was also found in this line. The word “smile” has appreciative meaning. Smile is the expression that you have on your face when you are happy or amused. Thematic meaning was also found in this line as explained in the previous line.

In the third line of second stanza, there was found auditory imagery which stimulates our sense to hear something. The sentence “it’s alright, She said, it’s alright, take anything you want from me, anything” in the third and fourth line, stimulates our sense of hearing. We feel as if we heard what she said in that sentence directly. Figurative language is not found in this line. The conceptual meaning found in the sentence “It’s alright, She said it’s alright”, is clearly about a girl who cheers him up and tell him that everything is alright.

In the fourth line of second stanza, there was found auditory imagery as explained in previous line. Figurative language was not found in this line. The type of meaning found is stylistic meaning. This type of meaning is in accordance with the situation in which the utterance takes place. It is related to the situation in which an utterance is used. "It's alright she said it's alright, take anything you want from me, anything", this sentence is said by a girl to a man that she loves so much. If it is in different situation and a girl talk to other person who is not close to her, this sentence can change, she wouldn't say sentence like that.

6. Conclusion

After all the discussion and analysis in chapter 5, there are several conclusion can be taken as follows:

First, in Jimi Hendrix's song lyric entitled Little Wing, there are several types of imageries used, those imageries really help us imagine something and that imagination really can support the idea being conveyed through the song. The imageries which were employed in the song are mostly visual imagery, but there are also other types of imagery such as, kinesthesia imagery and auditory imagery.

Second, this lyric has employed one type of figurative language, which is hyperbole. The figurative employed in this lyric, has several significant functions, which are giving special effects to the listeners of the song. The effects make the lyric dramatic, emotional, and expressive. It also gives the lyric deeper, stronger, and more interesting senses. The use of figurative language often enables the listeners to feel and imagine the events in the lyric at a higher level.

On the other hand, the use of imagery and figurative language has also made the lyric sound more beautiful, and the use of such figures also makes the lyric memorable to the listeners. For the song writer, the use of imagery and figurative language helps him convey his ideas and thoughts in an artistic way. It also brought special effects, both plain senses and deeper senses, which gives a great enjoyment to the listeners of the song, and help them feel what the writer wishes them to feel about the song, although with different varieties of point views.

7. Bibliography

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