

Figurative Language In *Bangtan Sonyeondan* (BTS)'s And Michael Jackson's Songs

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Abstract This article entitled “Figurative Language In *Bangtan Sonyeondan* (BTS)'s And Michael Jackson's Songs”. This study aims to find out the types of figurative language in the song lyrics. “Dynamite” song was popularized by the South Korean boyband BTS and “Loving You” song was popularized by Michael Jackson. In this study, the data was taken from the song lyrics in each line, then looking for words that belong to the types of figurative language and to analyse using a qualitative method. The theory for the analysis used the figurative language theory by Knickerbocker and Renninger (1974) and is supported by the theory of meaning by Leech (1974). The results of the study shows, the types of figurative language used are hyperbole, personification, allusion, simile, metaphor, synecdoche, metonymy, irony, and symbol.

Keywords: *Figurative language, meaning, article.*

I. INTRODUCTION

There are many definitions of language, but overall, the meaning of language is always associated with communication. People speaking in languages, reading in multiple languages also singing in languages. It can be said that the language is like intermediary between people. Language can also express our feelings through the interaction between words .

Language is an important element in song. The song may be the same as the music,

but the song is part of the music, usually an entertaining performance and the singer who sings the song at the stage. A song is composed of lyrics, pitch, and rhythm. It become a kinds of composition of sound and melody. Song also can be brought to everyone's entertainment without restrictions. There are many types of songs, and people can choose the types of songs they like.

The lyrics in the song will help people that may not be able to describe their feelings and they will need lyrics to express it. Lyrics play an important role in the song, and the

language in the lyrics will be beautiful as possible as written. It is an important element in the song.

Figurative language often appears in the lyrics of song. Figurative language refers to the uses of words or phrases to become new phrases with complex meaning. It has unique words choices and is difficult to understand because it uses more connotation than direct meaning. Many songs with figurative language can be heard, and the listener may not understand the meaning in the lyrics, or why the lyrics sometimes uses meaningless words combination. Songs have multiple meanings, and figurative language often exists to express them. When someone is enjoying the song but still curious about the figurative language in the lyrics, they will be interested in learning it.

Commonly, the song will have many types of figurative language. Mostly the types are personification, simile, metaphor, hyperbole, and other types of figurative language in a little. In this study, the analysis is for spesific types of figurative language in the song lyrics.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

Data Souce

The data source are two songs, first song entitled “Dynamite” by a boyband group from South Korea *Bangtan Sonyeondan* (BTS) and second “Loving You” by Michael Jackson. “Dynamite” song was released on August, 21 2020. “Dynamite” is the type of song, brings a vigour with disco pop rhythms, and has a retro atmosphere of the 1970’s. This song has successfully brought several awards. “Dynamite” successfully ranked first on the Billboard 100 list and topped the list first for

several consecutive weeks, 7.778 million streaming media on spotify. It ranks in the top ten in some countries. This song brings joy and has a message to the listener for appreciating some things, and making life more valuable. “Loving You” was released on May, 9 2014 in the Xcape album. This song originally recorded in 1985. Then, a reworked version was included in Xcape album in 2014.

Data Collection

In this study, the method of collecting data using the documetation method. This method was used to obtain the data in a text form. Tecnique of collecting data was done by several process such as, read the lyrics repeatedly, take note the words that are belong to figurative language and classify them into the types of figurative language, and meaning

Data Analysis and the Presentation

The collected data was analyzed using the descriptive qualitative method. The technique of analyzing the data used reduction technique to obtain important data. The data in this study was analyzed through the following steps. First, figurative language is classified using the theory proposed by Knickerbocker and Renninger (1974) and second identify the meaning using the theory of meaning by Leech (1974). In presenting the data, informal method is used to present the data descriptively in form of sentences, phrases, and word. The data was classified into the types of figurative language in a sentence form. The meaning of lyrics was presented in a description.

Literature Review

Furthermore, several studies that are similar are needed for having the comparisons with this current study. A study entitled “Figurative Language Used In Taylor Swift’s Song Lyrics” was written by

Iriyanti (2020).in her study, she focused on identifying several types of figurative language and discussing the types of meaning of figurative language

Another study entitled “Figurative Language In Sam Smith’s Song Lyrics” was done by Rupini (2019). This study used the theory of figurative language by Knickerbocker and Renninger (1963). Several types of figurative language found in the research done by Rupini are simile, metaphor, personification, metonymy, synecdoche, hyperbole, paradox, irony, allusion, dead metaphor and symbol. She also used the theory of meaning proposed by Leech (1981) to analyze the meaning.

An article was published in an international journal entitled “A Critical Discourse Analysis of Figurative Language in Pakistani English Newspaper” and it was written by Mahmood (2014). The research aimed to find out how figurative language helps in describing ideas, to explore if figurative language is used for the particular agenda, to examine how figurative language manipulates the opinion of the reader, and to identify which figure of speech contributes maximum in manipulation of reader’s opinion. The data source of his study was four english newspapers in Pakistan, those are Dawn, The News, The Nation, and The Express Tribune on the basis of best readership across the country.

Theory

The main theory of this study was a theory of interpreting literature proposed by Knickerbocker and Renninger (1974). According to Knickerbocker and Renninger (1974:283), figurative language is sometimes called metaphorical language, or simply metaphor. It is because Greek ancestor *metapherein* means to carry meaning beyond its literal meaning (*meta* = beyond + *pherein* = to bring– that is, to bring beyond). Then,

the meaning of figurative language used the theory of meaning proposed by Leech (1974). Each language in a sentence sometimes delivered the different meaning.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents data analysis of figurative language and meaning applied in both song’s lyrics. The data analysis divided into three types there are two analyses about types of figurative language in BTS and Michael Jackson and one analysis of meaning in both of song.

1. Types of Figurative Language in BTS’s Song

Figurative Language in BTS’s is presented below used the theory of Interpreting Literature proposed by Knickerbocker and Renninger (1974).

Data 1

Hyperbole is an exaggeration statement used for special effect in a sentence. This is presented in the examples below.

“ Can you hear the bass boom i’m ready”

The singer asked such a question to the listener even tough it is not a direct conversation. The singer seemed to invite the listener to enjoy the song together by asking whether this song, can be enjoyed them through the bass boom that sound in the song.

“Day or night, the sky’s alight”

The singer explained, day or night, the sky’s alight because of the feeling he felt. He wanted to see everything in a good way, spesifically when the night is usually described as dark, he did not think in the same way.

Data 2

Personification giving a human characteristic to something not human such as abstract idea, an object, or animals. This is presented in the example below.

“Shoes on, get up in the morn”

In the lyrics, the words shoes on are classified as personification because shoes are inanimate object. Shoes can not move without human. It means that the singer is ready to do the day’s activities, because the singer also emphasizes this with a sentence get up in the morn.

Data 3

Allusion is a reference to some well-known person, event, or place, usually implies more than its narrow meaning. This is presented in the example below.

“King Kong, kick the drum, rolling on like a rolling stone”

In the type of allusion, king kong is a band from America. The singer used this band as an inspiration for writing the lyrics and describing with this band played the drum, and sounded suitable for the lyrics.

Data 4

Simile used the word ‘like’ or ‘as’ to stated comparison. This is presented in the example below.

“King Kong, kick the drum, rolling on like a rolling stone”

They included rolling stone as the word to be matched with the word before that is “rolling”. Rolling Stone is a name of Band, but in this case, the singer only made a suitable sound for the lyrics by the word rolling and matched it with rolling stone.

Data 5

Metaphor omitting the word ‘like’ or ‘as’. It is like an implied comparison. This is presented in the example below.

“I’m diamond, you know i glow up”

Diamond is precious jewelery that also explains they are proud of themselves in a positive way. The singer wants everyone to realize that they are also valuable and the message indeed is love yourself and also convince everyone to glow like diamond.

Data 6

Synechdoche using a part for the whole in a sentence. This ‘part’ usually contain the meaning for the sentence. This is presented in the example below.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, I got the medicine, so you should keep your eyes on the ball”

Eyes in one part of the human body organs. The function of eyes as a sense of sight is to see objects from a short or long. Keep your eyes means focus on something.

Data 7

Symbol is used to represent a thing, to stand for another thing. Everything has a symbolic meaning if it used as a practice of art. This is presented in the example below.

“Life is dynamite”

The singer used the word “Dynamite” as a symbol of life. The singer explained that he wanted the listener to look at their life and imagine it as a dynamite and he said that everyhting happened in life is just like a dynamite therefore, this song helped the listener to enjoy their life and still in a positive mind.

2. Types of Figurative Language in Michael Jackson’s Song

Figurative Language in Michael Jackson's song is presented below used the theory of Interpreting Literature proposed by Knickerbocker and Renninger (1974).

Data 8

Metonymy used the associative word to describe one thing. This presented in the example below.

"And the weatherman said, if you're not well stay in bed"

Weatherman is associated with a person (man) who broadcasts forecasts and describes weather conditions. This person will convey the current weather, usually on the television.

Data 9

Irony is a opposite statement when the real meaning is not in surface meaning. This is presented in the example below.

"You promised me too soon, 'cause it's been cloudy all night"

It is unnatural when the singer expected something from the moon. However, the singer just hoped with the moon that he would have a good day, he just wanted to see the stars. The irony, what he hoped for was incompatible with reality.

3. Types of meaning

Meanings that are found in the figurative language consisting of:

a. Conceptual meaning

"King Kong, kick the drum, rolling on like a rolling stone"

King kong is a kind of giant gorilla that usually appeared in the film. This lyrics means that king kong is used as an image for the singer who played the drum.

Conceptual meaning is the central factor in linguistic communication. It is the essential functioning of language than other types of meaning because it based on two structure principles in linguistics pattern that are contrastiveness and structure.

b. Connotative meaning

"Hello August moon where are the stars of the night"

August is the month of birth of Michael Jackson, and this song represents him that he only would rather stay at home and be with his love in a dream. That's what they have been meeting. Until she no longer remember him. Because they should not be together.

Connotative meaning depends on the speaker. It is the variations of the speaker in communication that can belong to any characteristics of the referent, imagery or real, beliefs and knowledge as identifies by the speaker.

c. Affective meaning

"Can u hear the bass boom i'm ready"

The singer wanted the listener to be involved in this song by asking something. It makes the listener is influenced to listen more on the next lyrics, tone, rhythm and everything that contain in the song and he wanted the listener to enjoy the song as he does.

Affective meaning is often conveyed explicitly through the words, included personal feelings of the speaker which also express the emotions.

d. Reflected meaning

"Life is dynamite"

Dynamite as a reflected that the singer used for this song. In the lyrics, the life reflected as a dynamite. Sometimes, people felt the happiness and also sadness. Dynamite showed people's perspective, when people felt good they will see a dynamite like a firework in utopia world and otherwise, when the bad things happen, dynamite looks like something terrible.

Reflected meaning is the reaction or response to another sense by the word which also has multiple conceptual meaning

e. Social meaning

“Instead of going out to some restaurant, i’ll stay here with you”

The singer explains a little about the habits of many spouses who usually go to restaurant for dinner. Usually, a spouses or couple visited a restaurant is to celebrate a special moment day such as wedding anniversary, or a birthday.

Social meaning may differ from its conceptual meaning when it is used in a certain environment because the information conveys social circumstances.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis, this study focused on finding out the types of figurative language by applying the theory from Knickerbocker and Renninger (1974) and analyzing the meaning using the theory by Leech (1974).

There are hyperbole, personification, allusion, simile, metaphor, synechdoche, symbol, metonymy, and irony. It means that

the song almost used all types of figurative language.

Furthermore, there are five types of meaning found in the songs's lyrics. They are conceptual meaning, connotative meaning, affective meaning, reflected meaning, and social meaning.

Figurative language is used to write song lyrics with the purpose to increase the aesthetic impression of the lyrics, make it unique and convey hidden meanings. The listener could understand the meaning of the song through song lyrics.

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