

Chapter II

Studies of Semantics, Figurative Language and Song Lyrics

For the purpose to support current research, this chapter will discuss expert theories linked to the study's problem. It consists of language, semantics, figurative language, song lyrics, and previous study.

2.1 Language

Language is a structured system that serves as a medium of communication between individuals, using spoken language which contains verbal thought in it, this is in line with VilHers's theory which states that language functions as both an intra-individual representational system and an inter-individual communication system. Representation, in this context, is in essence a form of verbal thinking (De VilHers, 2012:6).

The language that we usually speak can be used to tell or convey information that we already believe and the speaker believes that the listener does not know the information, then this information will be told to the listener. This is in line with Clark & Haviland (in De VilHers, 2012:86) theory which stated that “an important aspect of using language is the distinction between given information, which the speaker believes the listener already knows and accepts as true, and new information, which the speaker believes the listener does not yet know”.

Language is useful as a communication medium used by individuals to socialize with other individuals. This statement can be proven by the theory

of Crystal which stated that the main objective of language is definitely to facilitate communication. However, it may also be used for the expressive of emotions, social interaction, the manipulation of sounds, attempt to control the surroundings, record of facts, cognitive processes, and expression of identity (Crystal in Harley, 2014:3). A language certainly has meaning contained in it, therefore the writer will attach statements from experts regarding the study of meaning or semantics.

2.2 Semantics

Language is a medium that helps us to understand every written or spoken word. Written or spoken language definitely contains meaning, and that meaning is tied to the topic and context. The statement above is also in line with Saeed's statement, semantics is the study of meaning where language is used as a medium to express that meaning (Saeed, 2003:5). Meaning is an important aspect of a language, Language without meaning means the language cannot be used because language is a tool for communication which intends to convey a certain meaning to the target speaker. This is in line with the statement made by Riemer (2010:3) in his book “it is easy to agree that meaning is the heart of language. Meaning, we might say, is what language is for: to have a language without meaning would be like having lungs without air”. Sometimes when a writer or speaker includes hidden meanings in their writing or speech, we cannot understand what the speaker or writer is saying, therefore semantics can be used to study the meaning of written or spoken texts.

The word semantics comes from the Greek *sema* which means sign or symbol. "Semantics" was first used by a French philologist named Michel Breal in 1883. The word semantics was then agreed as a term used for the field of linguistics which studies about linguistic signs and the things they signify. According to Kreidler (2013:3) "Semantic is the systematic study of meaning, and linguistic semantics is study of how languages organize and express meaning". It can be concluded that semantics is part of the branch of linguistics that studies encompassing meaning types, division, formation and change of meaning. Semantics is the study of meaning where language is used as a medium to express that meaning (Saeed, 2003:3). The meaning of a word is the primary focus of semantics. In conclusion, semantics is the connection between all relationships and the meaning of language. To put it another way, a single language object may convey a lot of meaning and ideas. Within the study of semantic there is figurative language which the writer will provide the related literature.

2.3 Figurative Language

A collection of linguistic elements known as "figures of speech" are collectively referred to as "figurative language". A word or phrase that is not intended to be understood literally in the context in which it is used is known as a figure of speech (Furniss & Bath, 2007:146). In this way, figurative language is included in the linguistic aspect where a word or sentence is intended not to be understood literally, but to be understood in the context of each word or phrase. Other studies also say that figurative language usually

referred to figure of speech and it is a rhetorical device used to convey a message different from its actual meaning. Figure of speech can be defined as when a writer or speaker deviates from a word's typical meaning for emphasis or uniqueness (Kennedy in Atmaja, 2022:20). Figurative language is a distinct perspective derived from what two speakers of a language typically understand a word to imply, or the typical word structure to produce a certain meaning or effect (Abrams in Shalihah et al., 2023:28). From the statement above, it can be concluded that figurative language is a method for uniting two words or sentences that are different according to their context and combining them so as to create a new meaning and this meaning is not intended to be interpreted literally.

Perrine (in Swarniti, 2022:14) stated that “Figurative language is seen more effective to transfer the meaning of the writer because, the first, figurative language affords readers imaginative pleasure of literary works; the second, it is a way of bringing additional imagery into verse, making the abstract concrete, making literary works more sensuous; the third, figurative is a way of adding emotional intensity to otherwise merely informative statements and conveying attitudes along with information and the last, it is a way of saying much in brief compass”. Based on the statement above it can be concluded that the function of figurative language in a literary work is as a medium for the author to convey the meaning of their writing, as a means for readers to get imaginative elements in a literary work provided through figurative language, and finally as a method to convey a certain meaning

without having to convey it literally and in detail.

Out of all the theories discussed above, the writer will select Kennedy's theory as the grand theory because it is the most relevant theory, fits the writer's goals, and will assist the writer in the process of analyzing the selected Bruno Major's songs.

2.2.1 Types of Figurative Language

According to Kennedy (in Iqbal et al., 2022:5), nine different types of figurative language are known to exist. Below is a description and example of those figurative languages.

1. Simile

Kennedy (in Iqbal et al., 2022:5) stated that “simile is a comparison of two things, indicated by some connective, usually like, as, than, or a verb such as resembles”. For example:

“As cold as ice”

The sentence above can be interpreted as someone who is very mysterious and doesn't have feeling so that this characteristic is compared to "ice". The term can be used to characterize someone who lacks feeling.

2. Metaphor

Kennedy (in Iqbal et al., 2022:5) stated that “metaphor is a statement that one thing is something else, which, in a literal sense it is not”. It does not employ conjunctions “like” or “as”. Only when the analogies between the two objects become clear or when

someone recognizes the relationship does metaphor make sense.

For example:

“My heart is a bottomless ocean of love”

The deepness of someone’s love is compared to the depth of the ocean in this line. It conjures up images of a deep ocean in the reader's mind in addition to demonstrating to them just how deep someone’s love truly is.

3. Personification

Personification is a figure of speech that humanizes an object, an animal, or an abstract concept (like truth or nature) (Kennedy in Iqbal et al., 2022:6). It means that personification is a depiction of an abstract things in human form, or the attribution of a personal essence or human attributes to something inhuman.

For example:

“I felt like the food kept calling me”.

The sentence above means that the speaker feels hungry. As we know that food is not a person, the sentence above explains that the food continues to call the speaker. It can be concluded that the word "food" here is used as an object of personification which is considered as if the "food" is calling the speaker.

4. Apostrophe

Kennedy (in Iqbal et al., 2022:6) defines apostrophe as “a way of addressing someone or something invisible”. For example:

“I’m sorry, Wilson. Wilson, I’m sorry!”

“Don’t worry Wilson, I’ll do all the padding. You just hold on”

The movie "Cast Away" is the source of the lines above. The actor Tom Hanks says these things to his volleyball, which he refers to as Wilson, his imaginary friend. These sentences use an apostrophe as he is speaking to the volleyball, an inanimate thing.

5. Metonymy

The usage of anything nearly comparable to what is truly intended is known as metonymy. In metonymy, one thing's name is used in place of another that is closely related to it. This is a figure of speech in which the name of one thing is substituted with the name of something that is closely related to it (Kennedy in Iqbal et al., 2022:7). For example:

“I’m going for a meeting with the suits from head office”

The word “suits” refers to a businesspeople because suits is closely related to those who works as a business worker, or works in a business environment.

6. Synecdoche

A rhetorical method known as synecdoche substitutes a name for one part of something for the entire thing (Kennedy in Iqbal et al., 2022:8). For example:

“The boss is planning to hire some more hands”

The word “hands” refers to an employee, because hands is a part of human body but it refers to the employee as an entire thing.

7. Paradox

Kennedy (in Iqbal et al., 2022:8) explained that “paradox occurs in a statement that at first strikes us as self-contradictory but that on reflection that makes some sense”. For example:

“It was the beginning of the end”

Although this sounds incomprehensible at first, it makes sense for there to be a beginning when considering the end as something that occurs over a longer period of time.

8. Overstatement or Hyperbole

Hyperbole is a figure of speech to exaggerate a point or a statement (Kennedy in Iqbal et al., 2022:6). Sometimes we use this to draw attention, emphasize a point, or add humor. When we exaggerate, we frequently say things that are clearly untrue. For example:

“The teacher asked us to be quiet a million times.”

In the sentence above the words "a million times" is a part of hyperbole, because it is impossible to ask the students to be quiet a million times and that word is an exaggeration of how often the teacher asked the student to be quiet.

9. Understatement

Understatement is the opposite of Hyperbole (Kennedy in Iqbal et al., 2022:7). It can be concluded that understatement or is a figurative language that is used to make something seem smaller, less important than it really is. For example:

"This is no ordinary love"

The statement above means that the person's love is more special than anyone else's love.

2.4 Song Lyrics

Based on how they are performed, musical compositions may be divided into two different categories: instrumental music and music with lyrics, also known as songs. If only the melody portion of a musical composition is finished with song words (lyrics), then the piece is referred to as a song (Suharto, 2004:1). It can be concluded, music that contains lyrics in it can be classified as a song.

One significant aspect of the music is the lyrics of the song. A good song should include music that complements the lyrics to put the listener satisfied by the way of the lyrics convey. Conversely, a song that lacks great lyrics and fails to fit well with the subject matter will be hard to understand

the meaning of it. Lyrics using figurative language in a song play a big role in adding hidden meaning which makes the song more beautiful. Regarding the relationship between figurative language and the song lyrics, the use of figurative language such as metaphor is often used to make a beautiful lyric writing, even for the most expert writing (Pattison, 2009:32). Metaphor is one kind of figurative language that is frequently used to create song lyrics. Figurative language may improve the qualities of a song lyric. This lets us know that excellent song lyrics require the songwriter's creativity.

2.5 Biography of Bruno Major

Bruno Major is a British singer-songwriter whose songs have won over listeners all over the world. Bruno Major, who was born in Northampton, England, adores music since his young age. His distinct voice was influenced by the wide variety of music he grew up listening to, including jazz and classical. Before being signed by Virgin Records, Major collaborated with producer Ethan Johns on the four-song EP *Live*, which was released on January 21, 2014. The 12-song R&B album *A Song for Every Moon*, which was published on November 3, 2017, is the outcome of Major's August 2016 announcement that he will write, record, and release one song every month for a year. He started on *The Trio Tour* in November 2017, playing in six US and European locations. He started a North American tour in 2018, then went on to open for Sam Smith on an arena tour in the UK, go on a headline tour of Europe and the UK, then go on a headline tour of the US. On February 22, 2018, he made his television debut on *The Late Late Show*, where he sang the

song "Easily". He made his festival debut in the United States in June 2018 at the Bonnaroo Music Festival. He made his first trip to Asia in September and October.

2.6 Previous Study

Numerous earlier studies on figurative language exist. The writer will complete this study with the assistance of earlier research. The writer will go over a number of earlier studies in this section to provide direction for writing the proposal.

The first is research that related to this study is a thesis by Arifah (2016) entitled "Figurative Language Analysis in Five John Legend's Songs" from English Letters and Language Department, Faculty of Humanities Maulana Malik Ibrahim State Islamic University of Malang. The purpose of her research were to find the types of figurative language in John Legend's songs. After the researcher analyzed and discussed the lyrics of John Legend's song, the researcher concluded that there are many types of figurative language found. The most often found figurative language are personification, hyperbole, metaphor, and paradox. Hyperbole is the most dominant type of figurative language that appeared on her research.

The second research related to this study is a journal that was made by Yastanti, Suhendar, Pratama (2018) entitled "Figurative Language in Song Lyrics of Linkin Park" from Universitas Bina Sarana Informatika. The purpose of their research is to identify what kind of figurative language appears in song lyrics of Linkin Park's album entitled "*One More Light*". The

result of their study indicated that there are 7 types of figurative language Linkin Park's song's Lyrics; they are personification, hyperbole, allegory, repetition, simile, metaphor, and synecdoche. In Nobody Can Save Me song, there are 3 figurative language types; personification, hyperbole, and allegory. In Talking To Myself song there are 2 figurative language types, such as repetition and simile. In One More Light songs there are 4 figurative language types; personification, hyperbole, repetition, and parallelism. In Heavy song there are 3 figurative language types, such as personification, metaphor, and hyperbole. In Sorry For Now song there are 3 figurative language types; hyperbole, repetition, and synecdoche. Furthermore, the dominant figurative language in song lyrics of linkin park is hyperbole.

The third related study is a journal that was made by Setiawati and Maryani (2018) entitled "An Analysis of Figurative Language in Taylor Swift's Song Lyrics" from IKIP Siliwangi, Cimahi. The purpose of their research is to identify the types of figurative language that are used in Taylor Swift's lyrics and analyze the meaning of those figurative language. Two Taylor Swift songs from a single album provided their research data. Three tracks from the Red album, including Red and 22. Simile, metaphor, exaggeration, paradox, irony, and personification are found on those songs. The results of their study indicate that hyperbole dominates in Taylor Swift's songs, and the overall contextual meaning of her lyrics conveys themes of struggle, heartbreak, and deep treachery.

The fourth related study is a journal made by Fitria (2018) entitled

“Figurative Language Used in One Direction’s Album Entitled *Up All Night*” from STIE AAS Surakarta. The purpose of her study is to identify the types of figurative language and to identify what type figurative language is the most dominant in the lyrics of One Direction’s album song entitled *Up All Night*. Based on their result of the research, they found six types of figurative language in One Direction’s album entitled “Up All Night”, they are repetition, parallelism, personification, metaphor, simile also hyperbole. The most dominant type of figurative language found in her research is repetition.

The fifth related study is a journal made by Fajrin and Parmawati (2021) entitled “An Analysis of Figurative Language Found in Song of Bruno Mars Entitled “Grenade”.” from IKIP Siliwangi. The purpose of their research is to examine a song entitled “Grenade” by Bruno Mars. They found three figurative languages on their research, metaphor, hyperbole, and repetition. The most dominant type of figurative language on their research is hyperbole.

AUTHOR’S NAME	RESEARCH TITLE	RESULT
Arifah	Figurative Language Analysis in Five John Legend’s Song (2016)	It is found that the most dominant type of figurative language is hyperbole.
Yastanti, Suhendar, and Pratama	Figurative Language in Song Lyrics of Linkin Park (2018)	Hyperbole is the most used kind of figurative language in this

		research.
Setiawati and Maryani	An Analysis of Figurative Language in Taylor Swift's Song Lyrics (2018)	The result of this study indicates that hyperbole is the most frequently used type of figurative language.
Fitria	Figurative Language Used in One Direction's Album Entitled Up All Night (2018)	The most dominant type of figurative language found in this research is repetition.
Fajrin and Parmawati	An Analysis of Figurative Language Found in Song of Bruno Mars Entitled "Grenade"	Hyperbole is the most dominant type of figurative language in this research.
Wibisana (The Writer)	An Analysis of Figurative Language on Selected Songs Lyrics of Bruno Major (2024)	Metaphor is the most dominant type of figurative language in this study.