

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE IN KAMALA HARRIS' VICTORY AS VICE PRESIDENT ELECTION SPEECH ON BBC NEWS

Juanda

Universitas Komputer Indonesia
juanda@email.unikom.ac.id

Mulyaningsih

Universitas Garut

Fara Dela Tasya Amalia

Universitas Komputer Indonesia

Asep Supriadi

Badan Riset Inovasi Nasional (BRIN)

ABSTRACT

Communication is an action using languages to express ideas and feelings with other people from all over the world. Even from language also has the same role of communication where from language, people can express ideas, feelings, and thoughts that exist in each individual. Communication can be through indirect interaction or direct interactions, one of which is through speech. Through speech, people can spread their thoughts, instill their influence, and even provide good and systematic thinking directions. People who make good speeches will be able to persuade their listeners to accept and obey the thoughts, messages and ideas or messages they convey in delivering a speech, usually use language that has more meaning than what the speaker actually said. It refers to figurative language. Thus, this research will analyze the victory speech of the election of Kamala Harris as Vice President of the United States of America which was broadcast on BBC News on November 8, 2020. This research, entitled "Figurative Language in Kamala Harris's Victory as Vice President Election speech on BBC news" is aimed at analyzing the figurative language used in the speech. Retrieving data based on watching a video of the speech from the BBC news YouTube channel. After taking the data and analyzing it using the figurative language theory based on the theory of (Perrine 1974) which has several types of figurative languages. However, in this study, the writer only conducted several types such as Hyperbole, Simile, Personification and Paradox. In conducting this research, a descriptive qualitative method was used. The results of the analysis are described descriptively with their connotative and denotative meanings. In this study, hyperbole is one type of figurative language that is often found in Kamala Harris's speech

Keywords: Figurative language, Language, Connotative, Denotative, Meaning

INTRODUCTION

Language is the most important thing in everyday life. Language is equipment to communicate with each other. Without language, we cannot communicate. Communication is an action to express ideas and feelings with other people from all over the world. Even from language

also has the same role of communication where from language, people can express ideas, feelings and thoughts that exist in each individual. Communication can be through indirect interaction or direct interaction, one of which is through speech. Speech is a form of speaking activity. Through speech, people can spread their thoughts, instill their influence, and even provide good and systematic thinking directions. People who make good speeches will be able to persuade their listeners to accept and obey the thoughts, messages and ideas or messages they convey. Therefore, speech is basically the science and art of speaking that can persuade others. In a speech, someone must have the ability to speak which must be balanced with knowledge and creativity. Someone who is familiar with speech can easily catch the audience to convey his ideas and thus can be accepted by many people. Speaking skills are very important for important people (including politicians and leaders), the aim is to convey information or impressions to achieve interests in an area. Word choice for speech is very important which aims to convince many people. Diction or word choice is a very important thing used to express the words used to express an idea or idea. Diction also includes phraseology which is a matter of grouping words. There is also a style of language that is part of diction because it relates to individual expressions that have high artistic value (Keraf 23).

The importance of word choice in everyday life and also in literary works will affect how more or less variety of language it has. Therefore, the problem of diction is actually much broader than what is reflected in the combination of the words. Because it is not just to choose the words that are chosen to express an idea and ideas, but it involves the problem of phrases, language styles and expressions.

The presence of a word in a sentence cannot be separated from the meaning of the word, the following also applies to speech. The choice of words for speech is influenced by the existence of certain purposes that can represent a feeling or expression. Word choice is a person's ability to accurately distinguish nuances of meaning according to the thoughts he wants to convey, and this ability must be adapted to the situation and values felt by a group of listeners or readers. Diction or word choice always includes the accuracy of meaning and the suitability of the situation and the value of perceptions that exist in the reader or listener (Widyamartaya 45). In social life, speaking is the role of communication, expressing the thoughts that exist in each individual

Kamala spoke in front of supporters after learning of the voting results, which showed that Kamala and Joe had enough electoral votes to win the 2020 presidential election. With this victory, Kamala Harris became the first female vice president in American history. She is also a citizen of Asian descent and the first black person to occupy the second-highest-ranking position in the United States. Kamala Harris said she relied on her mother who came to California as an immigrant. Her mother always believed in possibilities and opportunities. Kamala assured everyone, especially women, that people of any race and color could get a strategic position in the national government like herself. In delivering a speech, usually use language that has more meaning than what the speaker actually said. It refers to figurative language.

Language is the most important thing in everyday life. Language is a tool for communicating with other people. Without language, we cannot communicate. There are two types of language, namely literal language and figurative language. Figurative language is a style of language that uses

different meanings from the basic meaning that can express interesting ideas by only using language that is usually used to explain something that doesn't make sense in order to get a more special meaning.

Figurative language is language that uses words to express with different meanings from literal meanings. Language that shows there is a hidden meaning to emphasize the meaning of a word or expression more than what is expressed. (Keraf 112) says that style is a way of expressing ideas through special language that can show the soul and character of the writer. (Perrine 565) also argues that style is another way to add more dimension to language. In other words, figurative language is another way of expressing something from the usual way. By using figurative language, speakers usually want to add some effect to their expressions that have no literal meaning. Many people express their thoughts or feelings in an indirect way. They prefer to use non-literal meanings, which means that these meanings have hidden meanings in them. In songs, there are many styles of language with the aim that listeners get new insights in a literary work. By giving a word or phrase with a certain meaning that has a different meaning from its literal meaning.

Meaning is an area of research that is discussed in semantics. Semantics is a branch of linguistics that studies the meaning of words in language. Meaning is the relationship between language and the outside world, and an agreement is reached between the language and the speaker, so that they can understand each other (Aminuddin 53)

In general, meaning is an aspect that causes a reaction in the minds of readers or listeners, because it is seen from the perspective of the choice of words and the use of certain words, which are adjusted to the meaning contained in the word. According to the definition (Leech 9), meaning is divided into seven types, namely denotative, connotative, affective, reflective, collocative, thematic and stylistic meanings. However, the focus of this research is only the connotative and denotative meanings. Connotative meaning is based on the communicative value that an expression has by virtue of what it refers to over and above its pure conceptual content. The connotative meaning is indeterminate and open-ended. This is because it depends on the knowledge and beliefs of the speaker and may belong to real characteristics or images as identified by the speaker (Leech 12). The meaning of the word also has many aspects based on the feelings or thoughts of the speaker and listener (Kridalaksana 133)

It can be concluded that the connotative meaning is the meaning that is not real. Meaning that contains the value of knowledge and emotional beliefs and contains a characteristic. Also, Denotative meaning is a literal meaning which is an inseparable and essential part of language, so that one can hardly define language without referring to it. It can be demonstrated to be an integral part of the essential function of language in a way that other types of meaning do not have (Leech 9). (Kridalaksana 133) also said that the denotative meaning is an expression related to the use of language related to the discourse and context that is currently being used.

In addition, denotative meaning is a literal meaning that is not shared by other types of meaning. The difference between connotative and denotative meaning is; Connotative meaning has the meaning of getting meaning from words, phrases or sentences that go beyond the actual definition.

Meanwhile, the denotative meaning is based on the meaning based on a general dictionary. Based on what has been explained above, this study will analyze the figurative language with the theory of (Perrine 1974) and explain the connotative and denotative meanings contained in the speech.

DATA SOURCE

The data source for this research is a speech delivered by Kamala Harris in her victory speech being elected as a vice president of the United States of America. The writer uses the speech as a source of data obtained from video broadcasts on the Youtube channel BBC news. In this 5:12 long speech video, we can watch and witness Kamala Harris's victory speech on November 8, 2020.

METHODS

The method used in this research is the descriptive qualitative method because this research explains the results of data analysis in descriptive form. According to (Sugiyono 15), qualitative research is naturalistic because research is carried out in natural conditions, and the results of research focus more on meaning than generalization. In this research, a data collection technique was used, namely the note-taking technique because the data used was in the form of text. To collect data related to this research, observations were made in the form of the following steps; first, watch a video speech on the youtube channel BBC news. Second, take notes of speech text. Third, classify data according to figurative language. Fourth, analyze figurative language data with their meanings. The data analysis technique used is the Miles and Huberman model technique (in Sugiyono 337) which divides it into three components, namely as follows:

- **Data Reduction**

In this step, the data obtained is carried out by the data selection process. The data selected is data that only relates to the problem to be analyzed

- **Data Presentation**

In this step, the data that has been selected is then arranged in an orderly and detailed manner and then analyzed so that from the results of the analysis obtained a description of the style of language and diction by obtaining clarity of meaning from the style of language and diction.

- **Conclusion/Verification**

In this step, conclusions are made based on the results of the data that have been obtained and have been analyzed.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

- **Semantics**

In language, understanding the meaning of each word is the most important thing for everyone. In addition to avoiding ambiguity, if we do not know the meaning of each word, it will not be possible to understand the meaning of an expression. To study it is called semantics. Semantics is the science of the meaning of words, phrases and sentences that are part of the structure of language (Yule 320). Another definition according to (Crystal 428) which says that semantics is the main

branch of linguistics dedicated to the study of meaning. Meanwhile, according to (Verhaar 9) defines that semantics is a term used to refer to a branch of linguistics that moves at the level of meaning. To understand the meaning of an expression, one must understand the meaning in communication, because the communication is not confronted by words alone but is also supported by a series of words that contain a purpose (Keraf 25). Diction or word choice is a very important thing used to express the words used to express an idea or idea. Diction also includes phraseology which is a matter of grouping words. There is also a style of language that is part of diction because it relates to individual expressions that have high artistic value (Keraf 23).

The importance of word choice in everyday life and also in literary works will affect how more or less variety of language it has. Therefore, the problem of diction is actually much broader than what is reflected in the combination of the words. Because it is not just to choose the words that are chosen to express an idea and ideas, but it involves the problem of phrases, language styles and expressions.

The presence of a word in a sentence cannot be separated from the meaning of the word, the following also applies to speech. The choice of words for speech is influenced by the existence of certain purposes that can represent a feeling or expression. Word choice is a person's ability to accurately distinguish nuances of meaning according to the thoughts he wants to convey, and this ability must be adapted to the situation and values felt by a group of listeners or readers. Diction or word choice always includes the accuracy of meaning and the suitability of the situation and the value of perceptions that exist in the reader or listener (Widyamartaya 45). According to the definition (Leech 9), meaning is divided into seven types, namely denotative, connotative, affective, reflective, collocative, thematic and stylistic meanings. However, the focus of this research is only the connotative and denotative meanings. Connotative meaning is based on the communicative value that an expression has by virtue of what it refers to over and above its pure conceptual content. The connotative meaning is indeterminate and open-ended. This is because it depends on the knowledge and beliefs of the speaker and may belong to real characteristics or images as identified by the speaker (Leech 12). The meaning of the word also has many aspects based on the feelings or thoughts of the speaker and listener (Kridalaksana 133)

It can be concluded that the connotative meaning is the meaning that is not real. Meaning that contains the value of knowledge and emotional beliefs and contains a characteristic. Also, Denotative meaning is a literal meaning which is an inseparable and essential part of language, so that one can hardly define language without referring to it. It can be demonstrated to be an integral part of the essential function of language in a way that other types of meaning do not have (Leech 9). (Kridalaksana 133) also said that the denotative meaning is an expression related to the use of language related to the discourse and context that is currently being used.

It can be concluded that denotative meaning is a literal meaning that is not shared by other types of meaning. The difference between connotative and denotative meaning is; Connotative meaning has the meaning of getting meaning from words, phrases or sentences that go beyond the

actual definition. Meanwhile, the denotative meaning is based on the meaning based on a general dictionary.

- **Figurative language**

Language is the most important thing in everyday life. Language is a tool for communicating with each other. Without language, we cannot communicate. There are two types of language, namely literal language and figurative language. Figurative language is a style of language that uses different meanings from the basic meaning that can express interesting ideas by only using language that is usually used to explain something that doesn't make sense in order to get a more special meaning. Figurative language is language that uses words or expressions with different meanings from literal meanings. Language that shows there is a hidden meaning to emphasize the meaning of a word or expression more than what is expressed. (Keraf 112) says that style is a way of expressing ideas through special language that can show the soul and character of the writer.

(Perrine 565) also argues that style is another way to add more dimension to language. In other words, figurative language is another way of expressing something from the usual way. By using figurative language, speakers usually want to add some effect to their expressions that have no literal meaning. Many people express their thoughts or feelings in an indirect way. They prefer to use non-literal meanings, which means that these meanings have hidden meanings in them. In songs, there are many styles of language with the aim that listeners get new insights in a literary work. By giving a word or phrase with a certain meaning that has a different meaning from its literal meaning.

By using figurative language, the speaker usually wants to add some effect to their utterance which does not have a literal meaning. Many people express their thoughts or feelings in an indirect way. They prefer to use non-literal meanings, which means that these meanings have hidden meanings in them. According to (Perrine 1974) language styles consist of 10 types, but this study set aside to focus on several types such as Hyperbole, Simile, Personification, and Paradox.

- Hyperbole is figurative language that contains several exaggerations in order to emphasize something without reducing the true meaning of (Perinne 605)
- Paradox is a real contradiction that is somehow true. It could be a situation or a statement (Perrine 604)
- Personification according to (Perrine 568) is figurative language that can give a sign to the nature, behavior of humans to animals, objects, and concepts.
- Simile have identical definitions to metaphor, both of them compare two different things that are indirect. However, simile uses comparative words such as like, as than, similar to, resembles, or seems (Perrine 565).
- Allegory is a narrative description that has hidden meaning through depiction. However, today allegory is less popular in the world of modern literature than in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance (Perrine 593). This allegory is sadly difficult to explain, because the reader must guide a message frankly.
- Symbols are figurative language that has more meaning than the actual meaning. Often in the form of objects, events, people or animals, with notes given more meaning than the word object itself (Perrine 585)

- Metaphor according to (Perrine 565) Metaphor and simile have similarities in comparing two things indirectly. What distinguishes them is that similes express by using comparative words such as like, as than, similar to, resembles, or seems. While in metaphor the difference is that it is used directly and does not use a conjunction like in simile.
- Synecdoche (Perrine 571) says synecdoche is the use of the same words with facts for the purpose of clarifying
- Metonymy is the use of something that states something else is closely related to the thing that has a real meaning (Perrine 571).
- Irony (Perrine 608) says that irony is the opposite of what one means. Often confused with sarcasm and satire.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Kamala Harris's Speech:

And to the woman most responsible for my presence here today, my mother, Shyamala Gopalan Harris, who is always in our hearts. When she came here from India at the age of 19, she maybe didn't quite imagine this moment.

But she believed so deeply in an America where a moment like this is possible, and so I am thinking about her and about the generations of women, Black women, Asian, white, Latina, Native American women, who throughout our nation's history, have paved the way for this moment tonight, women who fought and sacrificed so much for equality and liberty and justice for all. Including the Black women who are often, too often overlooked but so often proved they are the backbone of our democracy.

All the women who have worked to secure and protect the right to vote for over a century 100 years ago with the 19th Amendment, 55 years ago with the Voting Rights Act and now in 2020 with a new generation of women in our country who cast their ballots and continued the fight for their fundamental right to vote and be heard.

Tonight, I reflect on their struggle, their determination and the strength of their vision to see what can be unburdened by what has been. And I stand on their shoulders. And what a testament it is to Joe's character that he had the audacity to break one of the most substantial barriers that exists in our country and select a woman as his vice president.

But while I may be the first woman in this office, I will not be the last. Because every little girl watching tonight sees that this is a country of possibilities and to the children of our country regardless of your gender, our country has sent you a clear message: Dream with ambition, lead with conviction and see yourselves in a way that others may not simply because they've never seen it before.

But know that we will applaud you every step of the way. And to the American people, no matter who you voted for, I will strive to be a vice president like Joe was to President Obama: loyal, honest, and prepared; waking up every day thinking of you and your family, because now is when

the real work begins, the hard work, the necessary work, the good work, the essential work to save lives and beat this epidemic.

To rebuild our economy so it works for working people, to root out systemic racism in our justice system and society. To combat the climate crisis, to unite our country and heal the soul of our nation. And the road ahead will not be easy. But America is ready. And so are Joe and I.

We have elected a president who represents the best in us, a leader the world will respect and our children will look up to. A commander in chief who will respect our troops and keep our country safe and a president for all Americans.

The results of the analysis are described descriptively with their connotative and denotative meanings.

Hyperbole

Hyperbole is figurative language that contains several exaggerations in order to emphasize something without reducing the true meaning of (Perinne 605)

1. But she believed so deeply in an America where a moment like this is possible. (Minute 0:22)

It can be seen from the word **so deeply**. This utterance exaggerated because of the word **so**.

- Denotative meaning: extending far from the surface or area, based on the denotation meaning, **deeply** related to water.
- Connotative meaning: On that sentence deeply means feeling too believe.

2. Including the black women who are often, too often overlooked but so often proved they are the backbone of our democracy. (Minute 1:04)

In this sentence, it could be seen the word **often** mention twice and adding by word **too**.

- Denotative meaning: many times, frequently. **Often** means repeatedly so that on above sentence, it is enough to say one time
- Connotative meaning: based on the context of the sentence, often has the same meaning with denotative meaning which is frequently or many times.

3. We have elected a president who represents the best in US, a leader the world will respect and our children will look up to (Minute 4:34)

The words **the best** belong to hyperbole because that is based on Kamala's perspective, no one good except the President.

- Denotative meaning: the best person or thing.
- Connotative meaning: on this sentence, **the best** means no one good except the President.

Paradox

Paradox is a real contradiction that is somehow true. It could be a situation or a statement (Perrine 604).

And I stand on their shoulder (Minute 2:04)

Stand on in this utterance means getting benefit from someone.

- Denotative meaning: to support oneself on the feet in an erect position
- Connotative meaning: based on the context of the sentence, **stand** means support someone.

Personification

Personification according to (Perrine 568) is figurative language that can give a sign to the nature, behavior of humans to animals, objects, and concepts.

Because now is when the real work begins, the hard work, the necessary work, the good work, the essential work to save lives and beat this epidemic (Minute 3:54)

Epidemic in this sentence refers to the work begins which is a non-living object. Meanwhile epidemic here likened to a living objects by using the word **beat**.

- Denotative meaning: to strike repeatedly
- Connotative meaning: on this sentence, beat means to eliminate the epidemic.

Simile

Simile have identical definitions to metaphor, both of them compare two different things that are indirect. However, simile uses comparative words such as like, as than, similar to, resembles, or seems (Perrine 565).

I will strive to be a vice president like Joe was to President Obama. (Minute 3:29)

It can be seen from the word **like** which is one of the characteristics of the simile.

- Denotative meaning: to feel attraction or take pleasure in.
- Connotative meaning: on this sentence, the word **like** refers to the desire to become Joe.

CONCLUSION

As the result after analyzing and explaining the figurative language data found in the victory speech of the election of Kamala Harris as Vice President of the United States of America It can be concluded that the results of the analysis found three hyperboles, one paradox, one personification and one simile. In this case, the hyperbole type figurative language is often used in Kamala Harris's speech. This shows that speech is very important to use figurative language. In addition to aesthetic elements, it can also make a speech sound strong and have real meaning that can change the views of many people. Speech is a form of speaking activity. Through speech, people can spread their thoughts, instill their influence, and even provide good and systematic thinking directions. People who make good speeches will be able to persuade their listeners to accept and obey the thoughts, messages and ideas or messages they convey. Therefore, speech is basically the science and art of speaking that can persuade others. In social life, speaking is the role of communication, expressing the thoughts that exist in each individual. in a speech, someone must have the ability to speak which must be balanced with knowledge and creativity. Someone who is familiar with speech can easily catch the audience to convey his ideas and thus can be accepted by many people. Speaking skills are very important for important people (including politicians and leaders), the aim is to convey information or impressions to achieve interests in an area. Word choice for speech is very important which aims to convince

many people. Diction or word choice is a very important thing used to express the words used to express an idea or idea. Diction also includes phraseology which is a matter of grouping words. There is also a style of language that is part of diction because it relates to individual expressions that have high artistic value (Keraf 23). The importance of word choice in everyday life and also in literary works will affect how more or less variety of language it has. Therefore, the problem of diction is actually much broader than what is reflected in the combination of the words. Because it is not just to choose the words that are chosen to express an idea and ideas, but it involves the problem of phrases, language styles and expressions.

The presence of a word in a sentence cannot be separated from the meaning of the word, the following also applies to speech. The choice of words for speech is influenced by the existence of certain purposes that can represent a feeling or expression. Word choice is a person's ability to accurately distinguish nuances of meaning according to the thoughts he wants to convey, and this ability must be adapted to the situation and values felt by a group of listeners or readers. Diction or word choice always includes the accuracy of meaning and the suitability of the situation and the value of perceptions that exist in the reader or listener (Widyamartaya 45).

REFERENCES

- Bauer, Laurie. (1996). *English Word-Formation*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Chindyani, M. G., (2017). "Homonymi bahasa Dayak Muara", *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran*, Vol.6, no.3.
- Crystal, David. (1987). *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of language*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Crystal, David. (2009). *A dictionary of linguistics and phonetics*. Vol. 30
- Febriana, T. (2014). "Relasi Makna Homonymi dalam Bahasa Sasak", *Skripsi Unram*.
- Hariyanto, H. (2017). "The analysis of figurative language used in the lyric of firework by Katy Perry (a study of semantic)." *English Education: Jurnal Tadris Bahasa Inggris 10*, no. 1: p. 46-60.
- Jakautama, K. D., & Bustam, M. R. (2022). DENOTATIVE AND CONNOTATIVE MEANING IN THE SENTENCE OF "YOU GOT ME FEELING LIKE A PSYCHO" AS THE LINE OF RED VELVET SONG LYRIC. *MAHADAYA Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, dan Budaya*, 2(2), 207-212.
- Keraf, G. (2009). *Diksi dan gaya bahasa*. Bandung: Gramedia Pustaka Utama.
- Kridalaksana, Harimurti. (1983). *Kamus Linguistik*. Gramedia Pustaka Utama.
- Leech, Geoffrey. (1974). "Semantics, Harmondworth.". England: Penguin Books Ltd.
- Lyons, John. (1995). *Linguistics Semantics*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Malmkjaer, Kirsten (editor). 1991. *The Linguistics Encyclopedia*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Palmer, F.R. (1977). *Semantics: a new aoutline*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Slametmulyana, (1964). *Semantik*. Jakarta: Jambatan.
- Yule, George. (1996). *The Study of Language*. London: Canbridge University Press.