

## **FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE IN NOVEL OF LITTLE WOMEN BY LOUISA MAY ALCOTT (2022)**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This research focuses on the Figurative Language in a novel Little Women by Louisa May Alcott. The purpose of this study is to find the types of figurative language, describe the meaning, and the dominant types of figurative language in the novel Little Women by Louisa May Alcott. This research focuses on the figurative language found in the novel, explaining the words or sentences in the novel, which is a type of figurative language. The research method that will be used is a qualitative descriptive method by identifying, classifying, describing, and explaining the meaning of each figure of speech. From the results that the researchers found, the dominant figurative language in the novel is Simile.

**Keywords: Figurative language, Novel, Semantics**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Language is a form of communication used by humans to convey information and to understand them. Language is divided into two, namely spoken language and written language. Spoken language is spoken language and written language is written sentence. In written language and spoken language, there are striking differences between the situations and conditions of a sentence. People in each region have different languages and pronunciations for something. In language training, sometimes people use figurative language in communication. Figurative language does not only appear in everyday life, but also in novels. In written language, several sentences in the reading section use sentences with the true meaning or according to what is written, but there are sentences that need to be understood first, the types of sentences and the meanings contained in them. Sentences that have implied meaning are figurative words. In addition to learning a language, language also demands the meaning of words or phrases that contain figurative language. That is semantics. Semantics is the study of meaning. According to Lyons (1977 p. 25). "Semantics can be defined, initially and tentatively, as the study of meaning". In this study the writer will explain the meaning or meaning of words in figurative language sentences in this novel by using semantic studies. The author intends to identify the figurative languages in Louisa May Alcott's novel Little Women and the most dominant figurative languages found in Louisa May Alcott's novel Little Women.

Semantics is the branch of linguistics that explains and studies the meanings embodied in language, codes, or other type of representation is semantics. According to Lyons (1977:25), "Semantics can be defined initially and tentatively as the study of meaning". Semantics is a branch of linguistics that studies the meaning contained in language, codes, or other representations. Semantics is divided into two types, namely connotative semantics and denotative semantics. Connotative semantics is when a word shows a set of associations, or imaginative or emotional suggestions related to the words

while the reader can relate to those associations. To be clear, connotative semantics represent figurative meaning. This type of meaning is usually used by poets in their poetry. Denotative semantics is a type of meaning that denotes the literal, explicit, or dictionary meaning of words, without using associated meanings. It also uses symbols in writing that suggest the author's expression, such as exclamation points, quotation marks, apostrophes, colons, or quotation marks.

According to Keraf (2009: p.136) "Figurative language is a word or phrase that departs from every literal language which is very difficult for people and even students to understand because it has differences in context and the reality of its meaning, to know that figurative language is formed based on comparisons and similarities".

From the explanation, it can be concluded that figurative language is a hidden expression in writing that has meaning that is not conveyed directly, that is, it must require a full understanding for people about figurative language when translating the contents in their meaning first, so that the meaning contained in the word can be interpreted. As it should be. The function of figurative language is to add the beauty of language in works, both oral and written communication. Figurative language has various purposes, namely to clarify meaning, provide clear examples, emphasize, stimulate associations and emotions, give life to inanimate objects, entertain or ornament.

Figurative language can also practice speaking, reading and writing skills and can train thinking skills to find out whether a word has an appropriate meaning or there is another hidden meaning. In interpreting a meaning, it is necessary to first read the knowledge and then write down what is in his mind without seeing directly what the meaning is in it.

According to Kennedy (1979:189) said that Figurative language is language that uses figures of speech. A figure of speech is a way of saying something other than the literal meaning of the world. Figure of speech maybe said to occur whenever a speaker or writer, for the sake of freshness or emphasis, departs from the usual denotations of words. According to Keraf (2009 p.138), figurative language also has 16 types of figurative language, there are Personification, Simile, Metaphor, Allegory, Allusion, Eponym, Epithet, Synecdoche, Metonymy, Antonomasia, Hipflask or Hipalase, Irony, Satire, Innuendo, Antiphrasis, Paronomasia.

Ernest Hemingway (1967: 233) stated, "Personification is a figure of speech in which inanimate objects or abstractions are endowed with human qualities or abilities". It can be concluded that personification is a figure of speech that refers to an inanimate object or something abstract that seems to have human intelligence or abilities. Example: The sky was full of **dancing stars**. The example includes Personification because in the sentence "the sky was full of dancing stars" it is impossible for a star to dance, because dancing is an ability that can be used only by living things.

McArthur (1992: 936) stated, Simile is "figuratively speaking in which more or less fantastic or unrealistic comparisons are constructed using the words like or as." It can be concluded that similes are constructed from unrealistic or imaginary comparisons. Example: "He is **as busy as a bee**". The example includes Simile because the word "as busy as a bee" refers to a bee which is known to be a hard-working animal.

Stern (2000:118-20) stated that Metaphor is "The lengthy spelling out of what metaphorical use of The single word firestorms could convey illustrates, again, the "compression" made possible by figures of speech, especially metaphors". It can be concluded that a metaphor is a figurative word that can convey an image, and in a metaphor there is an emphasis on words that come from a figure of speech. Example:

“Her eyes are **the stars** in the night sky.” The example includes a metaphor because the word "the stars" here means that his eyes sparkle and are beautiful like stars in a dark night.

Keraf (2009:p.140) stated, "Allegory is a short story that contains figurative language". It can be concluded that Allegory is a figurative language that expresses meaning by comparing something with other objects usually contained in short stories that have morals in it". Example: The **human tongue is like a very sharp word**, so it is wise to use it. The example includes Allegory because the word "the human tongue is like a very sharp word" means that the tongue can also produce words that can hurt other people's feelings because we have to be careful in using them.

According to Keraf (2009:p.141) “Allusion is a figurative language that refers to the similarities between people, places, and events. Basically it is an explicit and implicit reference to events, characters, or places in real life”. Example: Chocolate was her **Achilles' heel**. The example includes Allusion because the word "Achilles' heel" refers to Achilles a hero in Greek mythology whose mother dipped his body into the River Styx to prevent his death, which made him invulnerable. However, he held it on his heel, leaving part of his body still vulnerable and eventually caused his death after he suffered a wound on his heel. The connection from the above example is the allusion used to refer to events that refer to heroes in Greek mythology.

Keraf (2010, page 141) also stated, “Eponym is a style of language in which a person whose name is often associated with certain characteristics is used to express the same trait”. Example: Thanks to his **Machiavellian** antics, Joe got a promotion that he did not earn. The example includes the eponym because the word “Machiavellian” here refers to the Italian writer, namely Machiavellian.

Keraf (2010, page 141) stated, “Epithet is a kind of reference that states the special nature or characteristics of a person or thing that provides information in the form of descriptive phrases that explain or replace the name of a person or thing”. Example: **Putri malam** welcome when I open the window curtains at night. The example includes Epithet. The word "Putri malam" refers to the moon that always appears at night.

Keraf (2010, page 142) stated, “synecdoche is a figurative language that uses part of something to express the whole (part pro toto) or on the contrary uses the whole to state a part (totum pro parte)”. Example: The amount of aid for the pandemic was two hundred and five thousand recovered for one **head**. The example includes Synecdoche because the word “Head” is used to represent people.

According to Keraf (2009:p.142) “Metonymy is a figurative language which uses a word to declare other things because it has a relationship with closely”. The metonymy gives a parable by using a word to represent the intended meaning; usually the word has the same meaning as the original meaning. Example: **The pen** is mightier than **the sword**. The example is a metonymy. The word the pen refers to the words the pen can write and the word the sword represents physical strength.

Keraf (2007: 140) stated, “Antonomasia is a special form of metonymy in the form of the use of an epithet to use a nickname, official title, or position to replace one's name. In essence, this figure of speech is specifically to cover the use of epithets which only use epithets as a substitute for the actual meaning”. Example: Finally, we arrived at **Kota Kembang**, a city full of memories of him. The example includes Antonomasia, because the word kota kembang refers to another name from Bandung.

According to Keraf (2010, page. 142),” Hipflask or Hiplase is a kind of language style that uses a certain word to explain a word that should be applied to another word”. Example: On weekends I usually **lie in bed all day** snoring. The example includes Hipflask or Hiplase figure of speech. It can be seen that the sentence explains the speaker's fact that every weekend he usually sleeps in his bed.

Keraf (2010, page 143) also stated,” irony is a reference that wants to say something through something different from what it actually wants to say”. Irony has three types. **Verbal irony** involves what one it means. Verbal Irony Example: "It's so soft, I may **float away**." In the example, it shows the mattress that she bought is so soft that he could float because of the softness of the mattress but in fact, if he lies on the mattress it will hurt because his back automatically touches the floor because the mattress material is very thin. **Dramatic irony** is frequently employed by writers in their works. Dramatic example of irony, “Girl in a horror film hides in a closet where the killer just went”. The example shows that in fact, horror movie audiences know the killer is there, but not with the cast playing the role. **Situational irony** occurs when, for instance, a man is chuckling at the misfortune of another. Example of Situational Irony, ‘A person who claims to be a vegan and avoids meat but will eat a slice of pepperoni pizza because they are hungry’. The Example shows the situation that people who do not eat meat will eat meat if they are in a situation where there is absolutely no vegetable menu. In addition, Irony Example is ‘**Your report card looks very beautiful**, the color red is scattered everywhere’. The example includes Irony, because the example sentence is not in accordance with what the speaker conveys. The speaker says that the report card is beautiful but he says the sentence the color red is scattered everywhere, more describing that he does not say good things to the interlocutor.

According Keraf (2009:p.142) “Satire contains a critic about the weakness of human being. It main purpose is there will be improvement esthetically”. Satire is argument or essay containing social criticism with obviously and implied meanings”. Example: “It’s useless I cry blood for you, if it turns out you don’t care about my feelings at all!” The example includes satire because the word it is useless I cry blood for you explains the criticism of the speaker who is disappointed with the attitude of the other person because he doesn't really care about the speaker crying.

Keraf (2010, page 144) also states, “Innuendo is a satire language style that minimizes the actual reality. That is, this style of language creates expressions that minimize the reality of what is actually meant. Example: **Don't think too much about it, tomorrow morning this disaster will only be a nightmare from last night**. The example includes innuendo because the sentence above explains that if a problem comes to you there will be a solution that will come.

According to Keraf (2009:145) “Antiphrasis is a kind of irony in the form of the use of a word with the opposite meaning, which can be considered irony itself or words used to ward off evil, evil spirits and so on.” Example: Look, **the giant** has arrived. The example includes antiphrasis because from this example sentence it is clear that this figure of speech has a negative meaning in its use. This figure of speech also has the impression of mocking, and condescending.

Regarding paronomasia Ducrot and Tadorov (1981: 278) stated, “Paronomasia is a figure of speech that contains the juxtaposition of words that sound the same but have different meanings; words that sound the same but have different meanings.” Example: The flower that I planted before has now grown.

The example includes Paronomasia, which is the sentence the flower is experiencing a difference from before that it had not yet grown, and now the flower has grown.

## **METHODS**

The object that will be examined by the author in this research is the Figurative language in the novel *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott. *Little Women* is a novel by Louisa May Alcott first published by the Roberts Brothers in 1868 and 1869. The researcher chose this work as the object to be studied because the use of figurative language in this novel is very much, besides that this novel is quite popular among teenagers. So that research on figurative language in this novel is considered interesting, because it can increase knowledge in the field of linguistics. In this study, the author uses the novel *Little Women* which was published by Planet EBook in 2008.

The research method that will be used by the author is descriptive qualitative method. According Kothari (2004: page 3), "Qualitative research is related to qualitative phenomena, namely phenomena that are also related to quality or type". Qualitative research is research that contains descriptive and usually analyzes in certain studies that require theory as a reference. The data collection technique that will be used by the author is that the author will first read the entire contents of the novel then classify words or sentences that are included in one of the 16 types of figurative language by underlining or giving small notes on each page of the novel and so on, the author will write figurative language that have been found and analyzed to divide into types.

The data analysis technique that the author uses in this paper is, the author uses Keraf theory for the main theory in classifying figurative language then makes a figurative language table that is found and then the author will make conclusions from the figurative language results that have been found in the novel. The data source that the author uses in this paper is a novel entitled *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott published by the Roberts Brothers in 1868 and 1869. To increase knowledge about Figurative language, the author also takes research journals as references that can be used to complete this research.

## **RESULTS**

The author explains the results of the research and explain the data that has been found in Louisa May Alcott's novel *Little Women*. Before analyzing more deeply, the writer mentions a few selected figurative languages from the many figurative languages that have been found and explains in advance the type of figurative language that is more dominantly found in the novel.

From the results the writer found the personification figure of speech is more common in this novel than any other figure of speech.

**Table 1.** Figurative Language Types and Amount

<b>No</b>	<b>Figurative Language type</b>	<b>Amount</b>
1.	Personification	2
2.	Simile	6
3.	Irony	1
4.	Antonomasia	4
5.	Allusion	1
6.	Innuendo	1

## **DISCUSSION**

### 1. Personification

the fire crackled **cheerfully** (Chapter 1 page 7)

The sentence above includes Personification because wood is an inanimate object that it is impossible for it to creak when it is burned, it will feel cheerful. The word cheerfully is only given to the nature of animate creatures such as animals and humans.

A tower **rose to the ceiling**, (Chapter 2 page 27)

The sentence above includes Personification, this is indicated by the word rose to the ceiling which refers to A tower which is so high that it can touch the ceiling of the room. This can only be done by humans or animals because the tower is an inanimate object.

### 2. Simile

Jo shook the blue army sock till **the needles rattled like castanets** (Chapter 1 page 6)

The sentence above includes Simile because the sound of the knitting needles being moved by Jo colliding so loudly as if he was moving a musical instrument that is usually used to accompany dances in Spain.

A quick, bright smile went round **like a streak of sunshine**. (Chapter 1 page 12)

The sentence above includes Simile because of the smiles of the four girls (Meg, Jo, Beth, Amy) burst into tears hearing the good news from their mother because they got a letter from her father who was on the battlefield.

Meg had a **voice like a flute**, and she and her mother led the little choir.(Chapter 1 page 17)

The sentence above Meg's voice is likened to the sound of a flute because her voice is very sweet among her younger siblings

Amy chirped **like a cricket**, (Chapter 1 page 17)

The sentence above Amy's voice sounded like a cricket because her voice could be a little out of tune but she was still trying to get into the beat.

The first sound in the morning was her voice as she went about the house **singing like a lark**. (Chapter 1 page 17)

The sentence above shows that Mrs. March is the one who is good at singing and as destiny has a voice like a singer.

The girls meantime spread the table, set the children round the fire, and fed them **like so many hungry birds**, (Chapter 2 page 23)

The sentence above shows Simile. This was shown to the hungry children and the four girls gave them food, clothes and firewood to keep the little ones warm in the extreme winter. The four girls were very generous they gave food to underprivileged families even though they also lived a difficult life.

### 3. Irony

“Christmas won’t be **Christmas without any presents**” grumbled Jo, lying on the rug. (Chapter 1, page 4)

The sentence above includes Situational Irony because in the setting where the sentence was said by Jo it was entering winter but because her family was poor, the atmosphere on Christmas Eve became gloomy without any gifts lined up under the Christmas tree.

### 4. Antonomasia

Her father called her ‘**Little Miss Tranquility**’, (Chapter 1 page 8)

The sentence above refers to the figure of Elizabeth or Bet who is famous as a calm person so that his father gave him another name as a nickname for his son.

“I’ll try and be what he loves to call me, ‘**a little woman**’ and not be rough and wild, but do my duty here instead of wanting to be somewhere else,” said Jo, (Chapter 1 page 14)

The sentence above includes Antonomasia because their father calls his four little daughters as little women who will continue to grow into charming and authoritative women who are bestowed by the love and affection of their parents.

Meg hugged her on the spot, and **Jo pronounced her ‘a trump’**, (Chapter 2 page 21)

The sentence above shows another word for Amy's nature, which is known to be selfish and stingy, but Amy fought her selfishness to buy her mother a perfume in a big and beautiful bottle even though she ran out of money for buying one bottle.

The girls had never been called angel children before, and thought it very agreeable, **especially Jo, who had been considered a ‘Sancho’ ever since she was born.** (Chapter 2 page 23)

The sentence above includes Antonomasia. This is indicated by the word "Sancho" which comes from Spanish which means male. Jo, who is a tomboy, feels strange when someone else calls her a little angel.

### 5. Allusion

“I don’t see how you can write and act such splendid things, Jo. **You’re a regular Shakespeare!**” exclaimed Beth, who firmly believed that her sisters were gifted with wonderful genius in all things.(Chapter 1 page 11)

The sentence above is included in Allusion because it refers to the character Jo who is good at writing and acting like a Shakespeare who is a famous English playwright and actor who has made many works on stage shows.

### 6. Innuendo

“We never are too old for this, my dear, because it is a play we are playing all the time in one way or another. **Out burdens are here, our road is before us, and the longing for goodness and happiness is the guide that leads us through many troubles and mistakes to the peace which is a true Celestial City.** Now, my little pilgrims suppose you begin again, not in play, but in earnest, and see how far on you can get before Father comes home.”(Chapter 1, page 15)

The sentence above includes Innuendo because in the previous sentence Amy thought that it was time to stop playing games. But Mrs. March disagrees with Amy's opinion because she thinks that a teenage year is a time to discover new things and learn about the true meaning of life.

## **CONCLUSION**

From the results and research in this study, it can be concluded that the author only finds six types of figurative language, namely Personification, Simile, Irony, Antonomasia, Allusion, and Innuendo with Simile as the dominant figure of speech found in the novel and every word or sentence found has meaning in semantic studies.

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