

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE IN THREE EMINEM'S SONGS

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ABSTRACT

Language cannot be taken as it is, in semantics, there is figurative language that is used as an expression and not by its literal meaning. This research analyzed figurative language in three Eminem's songs entitled Mockingbird, When I'm Gone, and Zeus to find out the figurative language and the meaning behind it. This research uses a qualitative study that aims to obtain information about figurative language with related theories from Perrine (1992). The Data were collected by using a descriptive qualitative method. It has been found that there are figurative languages used to convey meaning in the song, there are simile, metaphor, hyperbole, personification, symbol, and allegory. To conclude the analysis then it can be said that figurative language in the song was used to make the song become more variative and meaningful.

Keywords: semantic, figurative language, Eminem

INTRODUCTION

Language in our society can be used to communicate with other human being. Language contains words and phrases that are put together to make it have meaning on it. Especially in convey meaning to writing and literature, the language used are so variety with a lot of combinations used. Because of the variety of language use, it can be hard to find out one meaning to another meaning. Especially if we do not know the concept behind it. It may not affect the daily conversation because as long as the speaker knows what they are saying, there would be no problem. However, to be able to understand literature work, the skill to understand meaning is important.

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In semantics, variety in language use is called figurative language. According to Abrams, Figurative language is a distortion of language use by speakers of understanding the language used in daily life (normal), variances from the standard language, or distortion sense of the word (1981). Figurative language also deviates from the

terminology used in conventional, literal methods to describe people or things (Reaske, 1996). Because of that, it can be said that figurative language makes one word or phrases different from the original meaning. Similes, metaphors, alliteration, onomatopoeia, idioms, puns, and sensory language are a few examples of figurative language. These figure languages are often use to communicate and convey meaning. Speaker or literary work author, they used figurative language in their work to make the language become more meaningful and have lot of interpretation behind it. To communicate the intention is the important thing.

One of a strong tool for communication is music, even if their spoken languages may not be mutually understandable, it gives them a way to communicate feelings, intentions, and meanings (Sultana, 2018). Because of that, music can communicate meaning with the lyrics as part of the music. In lyric, the songwriter often take a lot of thought to put to make the lyrics more meaningful and varieties. In some cases, there are lot of phrase or word which are different from their original meaning because of the influence of figurative languages. Songwriter want to deliver or hide any intention regarding the lyrics which they do not directly show it but want it to be not literal. Most lyrics employ figurative language to express ideas and to make them more beautiful in order to draw listeners in (Hakim, 2021).

One of the artist that has lot of discographies on their music are Eminem. An American rapper, record producer, composer, and actor by the name of Eminem. Marshal Bruce Mathers III, born on October 17, 1972 in Detroit, Michigan, Eminem is a white rapper with the best selling song in the 2000s in United States of America. He is regarded as among the best and most significant artists. He included many deep lyrics in his songs that helped him connect with his listeners. (Meane, 2006). Therefore, many cases that used Eminem song as their object analysis, including on figurative language analysis.

There are three previous research about figurative language. First A Semantic Analysis of Figurative Language Found in Eminem's Song by Ariawan. is a previous research that mainly discusses figurative language as an important element that is employed in Eminem's songs in order to give the songs significant meaning. The result is 12 different types of figurative language, including simile, metaphor, allusion, hyperbole, imagery, idiom, irony, onomatopoeia, personification, metonymy, symbolism, and oxymorons, were analyzed by the researcher (Aryawan, L. K. F., Suarnajaya, I. W., & Swandana, I. W., 2019). The next research is Figurative Language Use In Song Lyrics In English Textbook Senior High School, based on Perrine's theory by Ketaren. this research mainly discussed the sort of figurative language found in song lyrics in the English textbook "Pathway to English." which found that in the result consists of 4 categories of figurative language (metonymy, metaphor, simile, and hyperbole) (Ketaren, 2021). The last one, also talk about figurative language in Katy Perry song "Firework" by Ratna, not only to found the type of figurative language but it concluded that figurative language enable the artist to convey the messages included in the song effectively but meaningfully, making it more easier for the audience to understand the song's meaning. (Ratna, 2017).

Meanwhile, this research mainly focusing on three selected songs from Eminem which then find out the kind of Figurative on each song which then the research question

will be 1) What kind of figurative language used in the selected three Eminem's song? 2) What is the meaning of the figurative language used by Eminem in his three selected song? Therefore, the purpose of this analysis with the title *Figurative Language In Three Eminem's Song* are to find out the figurative used in the song lyrics and describe the behind meaning of it.

According to Bradshaw figurative language is a collection of words that the meaning could not be inferred from the individual words that make up the phrase. In other words, figurative language employs a number of words to depict a single thing, person, or idea (2002). That is why there is a lot of consideration to know the whole meaning of figurative language and could not just interpreted as it is. As stated by Gluckberg, it cannot be taken literally (or should not be taken literally) because the purpose of the introduction and increased comparison of one thing to another is to intensify and improve the effect (2001). Keraf added that figurative language means communicating ideas, emotions, and impressions that are insufficient for literal language, it helps to expressing thought (2009). There are 12 different categories of figurative language, according to Perrine, including simile, metaphor, personification, apostrophe, synecdoche, metonymy, symbol, allegory, paradox, hyperbole or overstatement, understatement, and irony.

Simile is a comparison using like, as, or resembles. It usually compares two dissimilar objects "his feet were as big as boats. "Comparing the size of feet to boats. Metaphor is a comparison between two dissimilar ideas or phrases that occasionally uses the verb "to be" rather than like or as (as in a simile), "All the world's a stage, and we are merely players." comparing world and stage. Personification is the process whereby artificial objects or abstractions acquire human characteristics or are depicted as having a human form. (e.g Bird singing in front of the windows.) Synecdoche is a form of speech that substitutes one portion for the total (as fifty sails for fifty ships). Metonymy used the name of one object to describe another that is an attribute of or related to it; it is some kind of metaphor. Symbol is a representational device for something with additional meaning to its literal meaning. An allegory is a retelling or depiction that conceals profound message. A paradox is a genuine contrast that is unavoidably real; it could be a circumstance or a claim. Hyperbole is an exaggeration; the use of exaggerated terms for the purpose of emphasis or higher effect. Meanwhile Understatement is the total opposite of Hyperbole, and last Irony is even more contrast from the original word (1992).

METHODS

This analysis used a qualitative method, namely a qualitative descriptive method. Siswantoro stated that "the descriptive method can be intended as a problem solving procedure with the object of research (a person, institution, etc.) at the present time based on the facts as they are." (2005). In collecting the data, the first step was to decide three song of Eminem as the object analysis such as *Mockingbird*, *When I'm Gone*, and *Zeus*. Then, find out the lyrics which are are deprived from Genius website then writing out also understanding the whole lyric. After that, the last step was to collect the lyric that has figurative language and classified it into their type.

In conducting the analysis, the writer performs data reduction and classification. First, understand the lyric of three Eminem song then classified it into their type. After that, analysis begin by identifying each of figurative language using Perrine theory, and then interpreting the meaning of all the figurative languages used. Then the conclusion, this step is carried out to make a conclusion of the data that has been analyzed.

RESULTS

The results of this research are as in following tables:

Table 1. Mockingbird Figurative Language

Lyric	Figurative Language
Cause Daddy felt like a bum—see, Daddy had a job but his job Was to keep the food on the table for you and Mom.	Simile
Papa was a rolling stone, Momma developed a habit	Metaphor
I'ma give you the world, I'ma buy a diamond ring	Hyperbole

Table 2. When I'm Gone Figurative Language

Lyric	Figurative Language
But what happens when karma Turns right around and bites you	Personification
I give you one underdog, and you gotta swing by yourself	Symbol and Personification
Sixty-thousand people all jumpin' out their seat The curtain closes, they're throwin' roses at my feet I take a bow and "Thank you all for comin' out"	Allegory

Table 3. Zeus Figurative Language

Lyric	Figurative Language
But I got my head in the clouds like Zeus	Simile
I could see the game from a bird's-eye view	Personification

DISCUSSION

Mockingbird

The first song is Mockingbird, produced by Luis Resto and Eminem and released on November 12, 2004 as the track 16 in the Encore album. The song tells about his family life that was less harmonious. It all started when their family celebrated Christmas together, all the gifts that were available at that time were bought and wrapped by his wife and also the song talks about the personal life of Eminem and as an apology to his daughter. There are the result of Figurative languages in Mockingbird

**Cause Daddy felt like a bum—see, Daddy had a job but his job
Was to keep the food on the table for you and Mom.
(Eminem – Mockingbird.)**

In this passage, he tries to compare himself with the keywords “daddy” and “bum”, bum means someone who keeps begging, according to Cambridge dictionary. In fact, he said that if he had a job but it seemed like he was not earning anything, he stated that his hard work was not paid back and could not provide food for his daughter.

Then, from the context of the lyric, and the way Eminem uses the word “like ”to make a comparasion, it can be said that the lyric above used a simile device as figurative language. Because according to Perrine, similes is a comparison that uses the words like, as, or resemble. Typically, it contrasts two disparate objects (1992). Eminem made an inappropriate comparison between him who works with someone who begs.

**Papa was a rolling stone, Momma developed a habit
(Eminem – Mockingbird.)**

In the lyrics above, Eminem uses the verb “was' ' to describe himself as a Rolling Stone. He described himself as if the two were related. The word Rolling Stone and the word Papa. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, rolling stone means someone who often travels a lot or even changes jobs frequently. At that time, Eminem was a superstar and he needed to go back and forth because he had to perform from place to place.

The comparisons of two things that do not match and by using verbs can be categorized as metaphor (Perrine, 1992). It was the way Eminem wanted to emphasize himself as a father but also a rockstar, the metaphor here not only to make the comparison but to emphasize the meaning even more.

I'ma give you the world, I'ma buy a diamond ring (Eminem – Mockingbird.)

In this lyric, there are two phrases that has unique combination. Eminem states that he is willing to give his daughter the world and even buy a diamond ring. Even Though in literal meaning, giving the world is an impossible way to do, since the world is not a stuff or even more it can not be grabbed easily. Then, the meaning of world here is not the literal meaning of a place that has a living being on it, but it has another meaning.

The other meaning here can be found using figurative language and the kind of it. Because the way Eminem wanted to emphasize it more than hyperbole is one of the devices that can be used. The word that giving the world is an exaggerating expression, an expression where he is willing to give anything for his daughter. That is one of figurative language called hyperbole. Keraf mentioned that hyperbole have the purpose of emphasis or heightened effect (2009). Hyperbole as an expression then used to convey deep feelings for her daughter by exaggerating and mentioning something impossible such as giving the world and that he is willing to give his daughter everything. Kennedy in Robianto even stated that hyperbole taking stuff appear bigger or greater than it actually is (2018). Therefore, the word “world” here were used by Eminem to enhance the large amount of meaning from its literal meaning.

When I’m Gone

The second song is When I’m Gone, produced by Eminem himself and released on December 6, 2005 as the track 16 in *Curtain Call: The Hit* album. In this song, Eminem informs his fans that he will ultimately have to leave, expresses his dread of losing his daughter Hailie, and expresses his desire to live a normal life with his wife and child. He told us not to be sad about his death and that he was always mindful of his friends and family.

But what happens when karma

Turns right around and bites you (*Eminem – when I’m gone.*)

In the lyrics above, Eminem mentions karma and karma bite. The meaning of the lyric was mentioned by Eminem that karma has activity and can move and bite. Whereas in essence, according to Cambridge Dictionary, karma is not a living being and is only an expression, a reference to a retribution for those who do bad things.

In this lyric there are two figurative languages, namely personification and symbol. Personification here is used to describe karma as an element that has human characteristics that can move and also bite. This is in line from Perrine theory, where it said that personification used human form to a stuff that has completely no sense and no human characteristic. Karma could not move as it was not a living being. But Eminem decided to put *moe* and karma together. He wants to elaborate the word karma to have the characteristic of human sense and make karma have more of a scary nuance behind it.

While the next figurative language used by Eminem was symbol. The symbol here is used as a reference of karma to revenge, since symbol function to find out the additional meaning that lay between the surface or ordinary meaning. As a representational tool for something that means more than just what it says on the surface. Then it can be said that karma was not merely an act of judgment as its literal meaning but also has the additional meaning which is revenge.

Eminem deliberately uses these two expressions in his lyrics to make it more meaningful and conveyed clearly.

I give you one underdog, and you gotta swing by yourself
(*Eminem – when I'm gone.*)

The next figurative language used in an Eminem song when i'm gone. Take a look at the word underdog in the lyrics.

Likewise, in the next lyric above, the word underdog is an expression of encouragement from parents for their children. Also, in the lyrics above, Eminem tries to use Symbol as a form of expressing his hard work. Symbol can be used as a representational device for something with additional meaning that was apart from the actual or literal meaning. Therefore, in this lyric, can be said that he wants his daughter to work hard but only once by mentioning one. He then mentioned that his daughter needed to try even harder and form a business of her own. Eminem is trying to tell his daughter the thing about life and by using figurative language symbol, hopefully could reach what he actually want to coney both to the audience and to his daughter.

Sixty-thousand people all jumpin' out their seat
The curtain closes, they're throwin' roses at my feet
I take a bow and "Thank you all for comin' out"
(*Eminem – when I'm gone.*)

The lyrics above mention roses that were thrown at Eminem's feet during his concert. In the context of the lyrics, eminem is having a performance toward his audience, then in the end of the concert, the audience there threw flowers at him. The act of flower tossing makes eminem feel thankful and also being appreciated by his audience and not only by his fans. It was like having a beautiful concert.

This expression of mentioning a rose here also can be interpreted using figurative language, one of the expressions that fit and can be described as Allegory. Allegory which has meaning in the surface and it is like building meaning on the other meaning. This figurative language of throwing roses means that it is an appreciation to the artist for his appreciation and gratitude for the amazing performance (stuff, t.2022). Eminem wanted to appreciate his fans and show gratitude toward the use of this expression. Moreover, roses not only represent the flower and not every single flower there were thrown roses. Roses represent gratitude as a whole.

Zeus

The last song is Zeus featuring White God, produced by Eminem, Luca Mautiand and released on December 18, 2020 as the track 14 in Music to Be Murdered By: Side B album. The song talks about the back of his rap era and that the title Rap God still relies on him.

But I got my head in the clouds like Zeus (*Eminem (ft. white gold) – Zeus.*)

In this lyric, Eminem compare himself with Zeus, Zeus is a god of the sky according to Cambridge Dictionary. The correlation between this comparison can be elaborated with the figurative language Simile.

Simile in the lyric above, compare himself with Zeus. Mentioning "like" as the keyword and add an element of comparison. Simile has a meaning that connects two things alike or compares them.

Therefore, in these lyrics, he tries to portray himself with a god who rules the sky, namely Zeus. With this expression, he also wants to reveal that he is in power and can be able to witness everything from the sky or it can be said without anyone noticing. As much as Zeus as the comparison, means he wants to adapt Zeus behavior to rule and see everything from afar. Figurative language here functions not only as an expression but also to make the phrases having more vocabulary use and can be interpreted the way Eminem wants it.

I could see the game from a bird's-eye view (*Eminem (ft. white gold) – Zeus.*)

Next, in the lyrics where it explains that Eminem can see the game from a bird's eye view. In this lyric not only mention bird eye but also iew.

This phrase does not really mean a bird is an animal. Just as the personification. Personification is describing a stuff that has correlation with human characteristics but is not actually a human and can be said as impossible. In the lyrics aboe Eminem makes animals have human features, the figurative use is to make a deep expression and not only want to mention birds. He seemed to want to say that he could see from afar and pay attention to all directions like how birds can fly and see their surroundings freely.

CONCLUSION

Figuratvie languae used as a representation tool to make the word and phrases to hae een more meaningful interpretation behind of the word. In music, and Eminem song lyrics, figuratie languae were found and used with a lot of interpretation meaning. As a result, the analysis with the title "Figurative Language In Three Eminem's Song" has come to this conclusion.

It can be concluded that the study in knowing the types of figurative language in the three songs of Eminem include: Mockingbird raises simile, metaphor, hyperbole and personification. The second song When I'm Gone also contains figurative language types of personification, symbol and allegory, then finally in Zeus there are simile and personification. The use of figurative language in these songs serves to add a deep impression to the words and phrases in the lyrics. By bringing up the type of figurative language, the meaning of the lyrics becomes more prominent and is very valuable if the real meaning is known. So not only to decorate writing with varied words but also to communicate messages from Eminem's feeling to the listeners, either explicitly or implicitly.

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