

An Analysis of Personification Found in John Meyer's Selected Song Lyrics

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Abstract— This study is mainly aimed at finding out the personification type in figurative language and the meaning of personification found in John Meyer's selected song lyrics. The data source are John Meyer's selected song lyrics. To answer the first problem, this study used theory proposed by Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963) about figurative language and classified the song lyrics into one type namely personification. Meanwhile to answer the second problem the theory of meaning proposed by Leech (1981) was used. There are six song lyrics by John Meyer analyzed in this study. This study used qualitative descriptive analysis. The analysis was started by continuously listening to the selected songs by John Meyer. Afterward, the researcher read the lyrics of the selected songs, wrote down and categorized it into personification expression. Based on the analysis, the researcher found the 5 total of personification and 5 connotative meaning in John Meyer's selected song lyrics.

Keywords— *personification, connotative meaning, song.*

1. Introduction

Language and literature are increasingly developing lots of variations in human life. According to (*Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 2015:33) Language is the system of communication in speech and writing that is used by people of particular country area. People can express their emotion, feeling, and thought by language. That is why language take important role in our daily life, because without language people will never be able to communicate with the others. According to (Yastanti et al. 2018) stated Literature as the language art has become the media to express people mind, either in imaginative or unimaginative literature. As we know that song is one of the literary works. According to (Rahamani et al. 2020), song is a music with meaningful words from the author. It combines two elements such as; music and lyrics. According to (Permana et al. 2018) stated that the beautiful voice is not the only factor that can be adored by the listeners, absolutely, beautiful words are needed to make the songs become interesting to be heard. Nowadays, song has been a part of people's life and many people convey their feeling and thought by song. Through song people could convey their voice to the other, so other people can know their feelings. People can enjoy the music of the song as entertainment and make the soul relax, while try to know the message behind the song lyrics. Many people like to listen a song because it such a fun activity, however if they do not understand the meaning behind the song lyrics, they will miss interpretation the song's meaning. One important way to understand the utterances meaning of the song lyrics and to avoid miss interpretations can use Figurative languages. Figurative languages refers to words, and group of words, that exaggerate the usual meaning. According to Darmayasa (2015), Figurative language will give more meaning to the words, beautify them, and emphasize their meaning. In addition, figurative languages provide so many variants style of saying something in different styles. Therefore, it is important for us to know the meaning of the figurative language found in a song lyric, so we can imagine what happens in the story, and we can feel and play with the emotion in the story in the song lyrics. One types of figurative language is personification. (Knickerbocker and Reninger, 1963) defined that Personification is

one figures of speech which giving human characteristic to non-human things. It is implied comparison between human being and non-human things. John Meyer's songs has chosen as a data source to be analyzed because his song's lyrics is interesting to read and analyze because consist of figurative language. It makes the song interesting to be sung and accepted in society. There are numbers of researchers have done studies about figurative language used theory of figurative language proposed by (Knickerbocker and Reninger, 1963), they are: (Sinjiardita et al. 2018), her study entitled "Figurative Language In The Song Lyrics 5 Seconds Of Summer And One Direction's Album, and (Sadiasih et al. 2016), in their study entitled "Figurative Language In Song Lyrics By Rihanna And Katy Perry". Previous study that focused to analyze the figurative language and it is meaning was conducted by Sinjiardita (2018), entitled "Figurative Language in The Song Lyrics 5 Seconds of Summer And One Direction's Album." The research found five types of figurative language they are: Personification, simile, iron, hyperbole and metaphor and found two types of meaning they are: connotative meaning and conceptual meaning. John Meyer is an American singer, guitarist, and songwriter. His genres music are pop, blues rock and soft rock. John Meyer famous with his song which is contains the beauty of the world and using his sensitivity to express his imagination feelings. Lot of people like him because of his voice and his lyrics are typically simple but contained deep meaning. Therefore, his song albums has received a lot of positive reviews in society. For this reason, this study is encouraged to examine the songs lyric as a data source in this study. The aim of this study is to find out the personification type and the meaning of personification in John Meyer's selected song lyrics.

2. Literature Review

A. Personification

According to Knickerbocker and Reninger, (1963), defined that Personification is one figures of speech which giving human characteristic to non-human things. It is implied comparison between human being and non-human things. Moreover, personification is important in the song lyrics in order to focus on giving the listeners a thought of weirdness that allows listeners to develop a greater sense of identification with non-human entities which described as if they have human abilities and attributes as well as it can make the thing easier to understand and more vivid in the listeners' imagination. For example: "I see you crying, moon".

In the sentence above shows the use of personification because this sentence is giving human characteristic with nonhuman being. The word "moon" reaches of moon to bright the earth in the night and impossible the "moon" is crying like human since it is something inanimate that cannot crying for everyone. It is only for human, because human has face expression to cry.

B. Connotative Meaning

According to Leech (1981) defined that one types of meaning as communicative value an expression has by virtue of what it refers to over and above its purely conceptual meaning is Connotative meaning. The meaning is beyond from it is literal meaning and have something more than dictionary meaning. Connotative meaning cannot be translated literary and many people will often interpret them in different way. The contrastive features becomes attributes of the referent, including not only physical characteristic, but also psychological and social properties, typical rather than invariable.

For Example: woman [capable of speech] [experienced in cookery]
[frail] [prone to tears]
[non-trouser-wearing]

3. Method

This study focused on analyzing the personification as one type of figurative language. Besides, this study also focused on analyzing the meaning of each personification in six John Meyer's selected song lyrics. This study analyzed every lyrics in John Meyer's song, which contained personification and how the way personification are used in six selected songs by John Meyer entitled, "Your Body is A Wonderland" from his album entitled "Room for Squares" released in 2001, "Daughters" from his album entitled "Heavier Things" released in 2003, "Something's Missing" from his album entitled "Any Given Thursday" released in 2003, "Gravity" from his album entitled "Try!" Released in 2005, "The Heart of Life" from his album entitled "Continuum" in 2006, and "You're Gonna Live Forever in Me" from his album entitled "The Search for Everything released" in 2017. Observation method was applied in collecting the data for this study. The method was implemented by observing the use

of personification in the John Meyer's selected song lyrics. This study used some steps or technique, for analyzing the data, they are, first started by listening the songs repeatedly in the YouTube, JOOX, and Spotify music application in order to understand the contents of the song. Then, searching and read all the song lyrics carefully in the website <https://genius.com/>. Next, attempting to find the word, phrase, and sentence which contained personification and also comprehending the meaning of each personification. Noted taking technique by writing which is one the used of personification. After that, classifying the data of personification that found in the song lyrics. The last step are rechecking the data to analyze, then identifying the personification used and the meaning of the personification contained in the song lyrics. This study used descriptive qualitative in analyzing the data. The analysis concerns to the description about the data and finding. To find out the meaning of personification found in the selected song lyrics by John Meyer's, the step of analyzing the data techniques in this research are firstly categorized the personification and afterward, there are analyzed and described by applying the theory by Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963) and also supported theory of meaning proposed by Leech (1981). The finding will be presented by using two method such as: formal and informal methods. Formal method will use table to present the data of the song lyrics by using data and determine the data based on types of figurative language in order to manage the structure and easier to be understood. Meanwhile, the informal method will use descriptive paragraph to describe and analyze the data found in the John Meyer's song lyrics.

4. Result and Discussion

The findings of the data were taken from six selected song lyrics by John Meyer they are: "Your Body is A Wonderland", "Daughters", "Something's Missing", "Gravity", "The Heart of Life", and "You're Gonna Live Forever in Me". Based on the personification, there were six song lyrics found from John Meyer, serves in the table. The data below present the song lyrics which is contained personification from six song lyrics. It is demonstrated the total findings of personification found in John Meyer's selected song lyrics. The total data found for personification in the table are served in percentage in order to make it easy understanding. The song lyrics was analyzed by used the theory of personification which is proposed by Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963) and theory of connotative meaning proposed by Leech (1981). The personification that used in the John Meyer's selected song lyrics can be seen in the table below.

TABLE 1
DATA FINDING OF PERSONIFICATION IN JOHN MEYER'S SELECTED SONG LYRICS

Data of Personification	Percentage
Something 'bout the way the hair falls in your face	20%
Gravity is working against me	20%
Pain throws your heart to the ground	20%
When autumn comes, it doesn't ask	20%
The moon's got a grip on the sea	20%
Total	100%

By looking on the table data of personification above and the percentages of each, there are 5 data of personification displayed on the table. The total of personification found in six selected song lyrics of John Meyer are in 5 data. According to the percentages table, the following sequence of personification shows the 20% percentages for each data. Thus, this research can conclude that the song lyrics found in John Meyer's selected song is very imaginative because he can interpret his feeling expression into the song which contained the personification inside.

Discussion

This section discussed the meaning of personification used in the song lyrics and it answered the second problem of this research. There were 5 sentences that contained personification and the meaning of personification were analyzed by exploring the meaning of personification based on the theory proposed by Leech (1981). The analysis was presented by using 5 data comprising of the personification and after the sentence there is the title of the song where the data was taken. After that is followed by the explanation of



the personification meaning based on the theory meaning of personification which is proposed by Knickerbocker and Reninger, (1963) and theory of connotative meaning which is proposed by Leech (1981).

According to Knickerbocker and Reninger, (1963) defined that Personification is one figures of speech which giving human characteristic to non-human things, It is implied comparison between human being and non-human things. The data of personification were analyzed as follow:

1. The Analysis of Data 1 in John Meyer's Selected Song Lyrics

Data 1: Whoa, gravity is working against me ("Gravity" - line 5)

The sentence above categorized as personification because this sentence is giving human characteristic to non-human thing. The word "Gravity" means the force that makes things fall ground when they are dropped. The word "against" means opposing or disagreeing something in order to prevent and reduce the damage cause. It is impossible for gravity to against human because it is non-human things and cannot act like human. In this sentence, the song writer used gravity as represent to human in order to against another human in order to protect himself.

The sentence above has connotative meaning because the meaning is beyond the literal meaning and cannot translate literary. There is no inanimate object able to against human. The word "gravity" in this song lyrics is implied the human being who can against like a human. The gravity means human who can against another human.

2. The Analysis of Data 2 in John Meyer's Selected Song Lyrics

Data 2: Pain throws your heart to the ground. ("Something's Missing-line 6)

This data above categorized as personification because this sentence is giving human characteristic to non-human thing. The word "pain" is kind of feeling when you have been hurt or you are ill and feel by the human. The word "throw" is an action send something from your hand through the air. It is impossible for pains to throw heart because it is non-living thing and cannot act like human. In this sentence, the song writer used pain as represent to human throw his feeling.

The sentence above has connotative meaning because the meaning is beyond the literal meaning and cannot translate literally. There is no inanimate object able to throw something. The word "pain" in this song lyrics is implied the human being. The meaning is if the "pain" is a human who is being hurt and throw his feeling.

3. The Analysis of Data 3 in John Meyer's Selected Song Lyrics

Data 3: When autumn comes, it doesn't ask ("Something's Missing" - Line 15)

The sentence above categorized as personification because this sentence is giving human characteristic to non-human thing. The word "autumn" is part of season in a year when the leaves change the color and the weather become colder. And "ask" is an action to say or write something in the question form, in order to get information or purpose. It is impossible for autumn to ask because it is non-living things and cannot act like human. In this sentence, the song writer used autumn as represent to human who is not asking to someone.

The song lyric above has connotative meaning because the meaning is beyond the literal meaning and cannot translate literally. There is no inanimate object able to ask something. The word "autumn" in this song lyrics is implied the human being. The meaning is if the "autumn" is a human whom is not asking.

4. The Analysis of Data 4 in John Meyer's Selected Song Lyrics

Data 4: Something 'bout the way the hair falls in your face_ ("Your Body is Wonderland"- Line20)

The sentence above categorized as personification because this sentence is giving human characteristic to non-human thing. The word "hair" means parts of human body which growing especially on the head. The word "falls" means an action to dropdown from higher level to lower level. It is impossible for hair to fall in to the face human because it is non-human things and cannot act like human. In this sentence, the song writer used hair as can act like human to fall.

The song lyric above has connotative meaning because the meaning is beyond the literal meaning and cannot translate literally. There is no inanimate object able to fall in action. The word "hair" in this song lyrics is implied the human being. The meaning is if the "hair" is can act like human to falling.

5. The Analysis of Data 5 in John Meyer's Selected Song Lyrics

Data 5: The moon's got a grip on the sea ("You're Gonna Live Forever in Me"-Line 8)

The sentence above categorized as personification because this sentence is giving human characteristic to non-human thing. The word "moon" means the round object that moves around the earth and shines at night by light reflected from the sun. The word "grip" means an action to holding something tightly. It is impossible for moon to grip on to the sea because it is non-human things and cannot act like human. In this sentence, the song writer used moon as can act like human to grip something.

The song lyric above has connotative meaning because the meaning is beyond the literal meaning and cannot translate literally. There is no inanimate object able to grip in action. The word "moon" in this song lyrics is implied the human being. The meaning is if the "moon" is a human is holding something tightly.

5. Conclusion

Figurative languages is a type of language used to enhance the effect of what is being said, and its meaning cannot be taken literally. The purpose of Figurative languages is to express someone's thoughts, to emphasize personal situation, and to say something with using different ways. In addition, figurative language will give more meaning to the words, beautify them, and emphasize their meaning. Therefore, it is important for us to know the meaning of the figurative language found in a song lyric, so we can imagine what happens in the story, and we can feel and play with the emotion in the story in the song lyrics. After the analysis has been done, the researcher concludes that six selected song lyrics by John Meyer consist of five lyrics that used personification. The analysis has two objectives; the first is to find out the total of personification that occurs in the song lyrics, and the last is to explain the meaning of personification that occurs in the song lyrics. There are 5 data found with 20% percentages of each sentence contained personification in the John Meyer's selected song lyrics. It can be indicated that Personification appears in the song lyrics because of the singers himself put his focus on giving the listeners a thought of weirdness that allows listeners to develop a greater sense of identification with non-human entities which described as if they have human abilities and attributes as well as it can make the thing easier to understand and more vivid in the listeners' imagination. The meanings that those figurative language expressions contain found in the present study is 5 of connotative meanings.

The song lyrics has connotative meaning because the meaning beyond it is literal meaning and cannot translate literally. In Addition, everyone will have their own interpretation depending on many factors in order understand the meaning behind the song lyrics. The contrastive features becomes attributes of the referent, including not only physical characteristic, but also psychological and social properties, typical rather than invariable. From the analysis, it can be concluded that figurative language especially personification has important roles in the six selected song lyrics by John Meyer. It makes the song lyrics more interesting to be sung and read and, also to helps the listener to imagine what happen in the story, and can feel the emotion of the story in the song lyrics. That is why the author used sentences that have personification inside the song lyrics. Furthermore, by listening to the song and understanding the meaning behind the song lyrics, we can also get knowledge the languages in the song lyrics while we use listening and exploring the deepest meaning of those song lyrics.

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