FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE ANALYSIS IN ALBUM EVOLVE BY IMAGINE DRAGONS

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Abstract

Figurative language is commonly found in literary works, such as a song. The purpose of this research is to analyze the types and meanings of figurative language used in Imagine Dragons' album Evolve. The research used descriptive qualitative. The theory used is from Mezzo (1999) which divided figurative language into three categories; comparison type (Metaphor, Simile, and Personification), substitution type (Metonymy and Synecdoche), and exaggeration type (Hyperbole and Litotes). The result indicated that there are 100 lines of lyrics that contain figurative language in the Evolve album. They are metaphor (23%), simile (8%), personification (15%), metonymy (36%), synecdoche (2%), hyperbole (10%), and litotes (6%). The most dominant type of figurative language in Evolve's album is metonymy with 36 lines and metaphor with 23 lines. Metonymy became most used in the album Evolve which represents explicit content that imagines a character or object in the album Evolve, while metaphor became the second most used figurative language in Evolve album to make the ideas of the lyrics more meaningful, imaginative, and interesting for the listener.

Keywords: Evolve album, figurative language, imagine dragons

INTRODUCTION

When people study literature, they have to understand the form of language, words, and their meaning. It means they want to make the readers or listeners also feel and grasp the meaning in it. However, sometimes the readers or listeners find it difficult to understand its meaning because in creating the meaning of utterances, the author usually expresses the meaning implicitly. They also use certain words and imagery in it and what conventionally says is not always the same as intended to express.

Songs are attractive and arouse the interest of the audience, and are usually composed by composers and professional lyricists. The song conveys a lot of messages. Through songs, people can convey their thoughts and feelings to others through their voices. People can communicate with others through songs. In other words, songs can be used to convey thoughts and feelings and help listeners understand what the composer means.

According to Dryden (in Meuthea, 2018: 1), a song consists of lyrics, verses, rhythm, theme, figurative language, meaning, and message. Song usually contains figurative language to create its meaning; if we can understand it, its meaning will seem deeper. Although the listener knows the meaning of the lyrics, they will also have their own opinions. In consequence, people will interpret it according to their own understanding, without knowing the truth or not in line with the composer's purpose

Beautiful words will have valuable meaning and need to be able to express ideas through the metaphorical language in the lyrics.

Figurative language is a language used to describe words that have the same meaning in different forms. The purpose of figurative language is to make the expression more interesting and give the reader more comfort. According to Peter (2002: 12), figurative language means a way to say something other than its actual meaning. Generally, figurative language is divided into simile, metaphor, allegory, personification, synecdoche, metonymy, litotes, hyperbole, irony, paradox, allusion, and so on. To analyze the types of figurative language in this research, the researcher focused on Mezo (1999), who stated that there are seven common types of figures of speech. He divided them into three groups: the first group is a comparison type (Metaphor, Simile, and Personification); the second is a substitution type (Metonymy and Synecdoche); the last is an exaggeration type (Hyperbole and Litotes). Figurative language can be found in any source, such as in lyrics. To study the implicit meaning of language or words in songs created by composers, so that readers or listeners can feel and reach the meaning of lyrics.

Several studies have been conducted as previous studies. The first one, Ramadhani (2015) studied "An Analysis of Figurative Language Used in Coldplay Songs Lyrics". The function of figurative language found in Coldplay song lyrics is a language or expression used verbally to describe not only love, but also freedom, equality, and other social issues. In another research conducted by Putra and Puspitasari (2020) the authors analyzed "An Analysis of Figurative Language in Jalaluddin Rumi's Quotes in Book the Meaningful Life with Rumi". The use of figurative in Jalaluddin Rumi's Quotes in the Book *the Meaningful Life with Rumi* is to describe the meaning of those quotes about love, faith, hope, soul, virtue, and determination. These studies claimed that figurative language can be found in any type of literary work, including songs and books. In this case, the researcher will also analyze the figurative language used in the songs.

The researcher is interested in analyzing Evolve album by Imagine Dragons because first, the lyrics are enjoyable and meaningful but generally the listeners including the researcher herself sometimes have difficulties to understand the lyrics. Second, the researcher chooses this album because the songs in this album contain a lot of beautiful diction, sense, and figurative language from the lyrics. That is why the researcher chooses this album as a subject of study. The focus of this study is to find out the figurative language in the album *Evolve* and to interpret it into real meaning.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher will take research entitled "Figurative Language Analysis in Album *Evolve* by Imagine Dragons". Therefore, the present study attempted to address the research question; what are the types and meanings of figurative language used in Imagine Dragons' album *Evolve*?

METHOD

This research conducted a qualitative method because the researcher analyzed and collected the data from the album "Evolve" by Imagine Dragons to find out the type and to explain the meaning of each figurative language found in the album in descriptive form. A descriptive qualitative method is used to describe a situation or to collect basic data (Hazazi, 2018: 28). One of the qualitative methods is content analysis (Schreier, 2012:2).

This research used a content analysis technique. In this research, the researcher examined the existence of the meaning and the relationship of the words and then drew conclusions about the message in the text. The researcher collected the data from the album "Evolve" by Imagine Dragons. The theory used is from Mezzo (1999) which divided figurative language into three categories; comparison type (Metaphor, Simile, and Personification), substitution type (Metonymy and Synecdoche), and exaggeration type (Hyperbole and Litotes).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

After identifying the selected lyrics in Evolve album by Imagine Dragons, the researcher found 100 data of the lyrics that contain figurative language referring to seven types of figurative language based on Mezzo's theory (1999). The overall result of the analysis of the types of figurative language in the album Evolve is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Recapitulation of Data Findings Source

No	Figurative Language	Sub Total	Percentage
1	Metaphor	24	24%
2	Simile	8	8%
3	Personification	14	14%
4	Metonymy	36	36%
5	Synecdoche	2	2%
6	Hyperbole	10	10%
7	Litotes	6	6%
	Total	**100**	**100%**

After analyzing all the data, the table 1 and the chart 1 above show the result which was metaphor (24%), simile (8%), personification (14%), metonymy (36%), synecdoche (2%), hyperbole (10%), litotes (6%) that found in Evolve album.

In this research, the researcher discussed the types of figurative language contained in the song lyrics of Evolve album by Imagine Dragons which consists of 12 songs. The researcher described and classified the types of figurative language based on Mezzo's theory (1999), which is type of figurative language based on figurative meanings. Here are the types of figurative language used in Evolve's album:

Metaphor

Metaphor is used to compare two different things and make them sound related to each other. According to Blackmur (in Arifah, 2016: 30), all metaphors consist of two parts: the tenor is the idea or the subject of comparison, and the carrier is the image conveying the idea of the subject conveyed. There are 23 lines of lyrics that contain metaphor in Evolve album, here is a few examples:

> "*I'm an apostrophe, I'm just a symbol to remind you that there's more to see, I'm just a product of the system, a catastrophe, and yet a masterpiece, and yet I'm half-diseased*".
> *(Whatever it takes: verse 3/line 4)*

The lyrics above are in the song Whatever It Takes, in the third verse, line four. All phrases contained metaphors. The first metaphor is "***I am an apostrophe***", the songwriter compared himself with an apostrophe. In literary device an apostrophe is referred to a subject that is not literally present, the subject might be dead, an inanimate object, absent, or an abstract idea. In this case, the songwriter indicates apostrophe as an ordinary person. It is mean the songwriter represented himself as an ordinary human being. The second metaphor is "***I am** just a **symbol** to remind you that there is more to see*", the songwriter compared himself to a symbol. In a literary device, the symbol represents an abstract object; idea, belief, etc. In this case, the songwriter indicates the symbol as a dream. The message in this lyric is the songwriter motivated the listener to achieve dreams. The third metaphor is "***I'm** just **a product of the system, a catastrophe***", the songwriter compared himself to the product of the system in catastrophe. The product of the system, a catastrophe indicated an ordinary person in society with all its flaws. In this lyric, the songwriter emphasizes that he is only an ordinary human with flaws to attract the listener's attention to its significance. The fourth metaphor is "*and yet **a masterpiece***", the songwriter compared himself to a masterpiece. In literary devices, a masterpiece refers to a very good work of art. In this case, the songwriter indicated himself as a successful artist.

Based on the explanation above, the songwriter referred himself as an ordinary human being despite being a successful artist with all the flaws yet he can achieve his dreams. The songwriter gives the message to the listener that even in the lowest states of life, do not ever give up on dreams.

*"Don't you tell me what you think that I can be. I'm the one at the sail, **I'm the master of my sea**"*
(Believer: verse 1/line 5)

The lyrics above are in the song Believer, in the first verse, line five. The phrases contained metaphors. The metaphor is "***I am** the **master of may sea***", the songwriter compares himself with the master of the sea. The sea in this lyric is referred to life, while the master indicated the one who controls it. It means the songwriter said that he is the one who can control his own life.

Based on the explanation above, the songwriter gives a message to the listener to not listen to society, and be yourself.

Simile

Simile and metaphors are very similar. They both compare two different things, but the simile has additional use. The comparison in a simile is expressed indirectly because it uses conjunctions. According to Arifah (2016: 34), simile is an explicit comparison of one thing with another, usually connected by like or as. Generally, simile always uses words such as like, as, than, similar to, resembles, or seems to compare two different things into one idea. There are 8 lines of lyrics that contain simile in Evolve album, here is a few examples:

*"**Like** a prayer that only needs a reason."*
*"**Like** a hunter waiting for the season."*
(Rise up: verse 4/line 1)

The lyrics above are in the song Rise Up, in the verse four, line one. The phrases contained simile. The simile in the lyrics "***like** a prayer that only needs a reason*" and "***like** a hunter waiting for the season*" the songwriter tries to compare his life with a prayer and a hunter used conjunction "like". The reason is clear that a prayer need reason to pray and a hunter always wait for hunter season, it means the songwriter biding his time for rise up to be something great.

Personification

Personification is represented as non-human things or objects, as far as humans or other living things are concerned. personification can be seen through figurative features, which can be an analogy behavior, which does not live and speak like humans. According to Ramakers and Melion (2016: 43), personification is a literary device which human attributes and qualities are given to non-human or inanimate objects. There are 15 lines of lyrics that contain personification in Evolve album, here is a few examples:

> *"In our darkest hour.*
> *In **the dead of the night**"*
> *(I'll make it up to you: verse 3/line 4)*

The lyrics above are in the song I'll Make It Up to You, in the verse three, line four. The phrases contained personification. The personification is in the lyric "*in **the dead of the night**", the word "night" here is an object or non-human thing that doing a human thing which is "dead". It means, the songwriter compares the hardest time in the relationship with the dead of the night.

Metonymy

Metonymy is a figurative of speech that uses words closely related to another word (Keraf, 2009: 142). It is usually related to using the names of things, people, or characteristics as substitutes or things themselves. Metonymy is used to describe a word with another meaning closely related to the original word. There are 36 lines of lyrics that contain metonymy in Evolve album, here is a few examples:

> *"We're walking **the wire**, love"*
> *(Walking the wire: verse 3/line 1)*

The lyric above is in the song Walking the Wire, in the third verse, line one. The phrases contained metonymy. The metonymy is in the lyric "*We are walking **the wire**, love*". The wire in literal meaning is a thin piece of electronic device string, but in this lyric phrase walking the wire means a dangerous situation. Therefore, the songwriter describes "we are walking the wire" as the risk they are going through in their relationship.

Synecdoche

Synecdoche is used when we want to refer to a part of something that describes the whole thing. According to Knickerbocker and Reninger (in Ramadhani, 2015: 11), the use of a concrete noun, which is usually a part of a larger whole, to substitute for the larger whole is known as synecdoche. There are 2 lines of lyrics that contain synecdoche in Evolve album, here is the examples:

"If you're afraid of falling, then don't look down
*But we took **the step**, oh, we took **the leap**"*
(Walking the wire: verse 2/line 3)

The lyric above is in the song Walking the Wire, in second verse, line three. The phrases contained synecdoche. The synecdoche is in the lyric "*we took **the step**, oh, we took **the leap***". The words step and leap are not the real step and leap, but the step and the leap refer to moving forward and trying to survive in the relationship. Therefore, the lyrics above are about 2 people fully committed to moving forward from their problems and will continue trying to survive together in their relationship.

*"Flipping through my life **turning pages**"*
(Rise up: verse 2/line 6)

The lyric above is in the song Rise Up, in the second verse, line six. The phrases contained synecdoche. The synecdoche is in the lyric "*flipping through my life **turning pages***". The phrase turning pages is not literally turning the pages, but it refers to the future. Therefore, the lyric above is about moving forward in life to find out what would happen in the future.

Hyperbole

Hyperbole is used to express something exaggeratedly. According to Keraf (2009: 135), hyperbole means that the figure contains redundant, exaggerated, or discussed styles that include exaggerated similarities. Usually, it is used for emphasis or descriptive description. There are 10 lines of lyrics that contain hyperbole in Evolve album, here is a few examples:

"*Hoping my feelings, they would drown*
But they never did, ever lived, ebbing and flowing
Inhibited, limited 'till it broke open and rained down, *like Pain!"*
(Believer: verse 6/line 3)

The lyric above is in the song Believer, in the verse six, line three. The phrases contained hyperbole. The hyperbole is in the lyric "*Hoping my feelings, they would drown **but they never did, ever lived, ebbing and flowing Inhibited, limited 'till it broke open and rained down***". The songwriter described the intensity of pain in many words in one phrase. Therefore, the lyric above is about the songwriter going through so much pain.

Litotes

Litotes is a positive statement that already changes may appear as a negative statement but actually, it is not (Zahir, 2020: 13). An affirmative sentence that has changed it may appear to become a negative sentence, however, it is the opposite of it. There are 6 lines of lyrics that contain litotes in Evolve album, here is a few examples:

"Go astray, fade away"
(Yesterday: verse 4/line 7)

The lyric above is in the song Yesterday, in the fourth verse, line seven. The phrase contained litotes. The litotes is in the lyric "***go astray, fade away***". Go astray and fade away in literal meaning is a negative connotation it means to be lost, but in fact, the lyric

is actually a positive statement about to not following other people's opinions. The songwriter conveys the message to the listener to follow your heart and choose your own path.

Based on data description and data interpretation, it concluded the most dominant type of figurative language in Evolve album is metonymy with 36 lines and metaphor with 24 lines. The least used figurative language in Evolve album is synecdoche with only two lines. Metonymy most used in the album Evolve represents explicit content that imagines a character or object in the album Evolve. While metaphor becomes the second most used figurative language in Evolve album to make the ideas of the lyrics more meaningful, it also makes the lyrics more imaginative and interesting for the listener. Synecdoche is the least figurative language found in Evolve album, it is because it is less significant for the lyrics in Evolve album.

In addition, this is a different result with the most used of figurative language in modern song which is hyperbole. For example; in analysis of figurative language in Lana Del Rey's selected song (Hazazi, 2018), the most dominant type of figurative language in Lana Del Rey's selected songs is hyperbole. The songwriter used hyperbole because it will make the lyrics more alive and more imaginative to get experiences in listening to her songs.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussions that have been described in the previous chapters regarding the types of figurative language found in Imagine Dragons' third album "Evolve", the researcher draws conclusion that Evolve album is a song album with full of various figurative language. The total lyrics of figurative language found in Evolve album is 100 lines; metaphor (24%), simile (8%), personification (14%), metonymy (36%), synecdoche (2%), hyperbole (10%), litotes (6%). The most dominant type of figurative language in Evolve album is metonymy with 36 lines, followed by metaphor with 24 lines. Metonymy is the most figurative language used in the album Evolve which represents explicit content that imagines a character or object in the album Evolve, while metaphor became the second most used figurative language in Evolve album to make the ideas of the lyrics more meaningful, imaginative and interesting for the listener.

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