

The Figurative Language Uttered by Donald Trump and Joe Biden in the U.S Final Presidential Debate 2020

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Abstract

This study investigated the figurative language used by Donald Trump and Joe Biden in U.S Presidential Debate 2020. This study applied descriptive qualitative design where the qualitative research method was taken to obtain the data such as sentences, words, clauses in the U.S final presidential debate 2020. The result showed the figurative language such as metaphor, hyperbole, irony, metonymy, personification, and simile were found in the debate. It could be concluded that some types of figurative language were produced by both debaters consciously or unconsciously.

Keywords: *Figurative Language; Debate; U.S Presidential Debate.*

A. Introduction

Language is the critical instrument of communication in human life this cannot be divided from the human being. It expresses tens of thousands of signs as the combinations of form and meaning (Eifring and Theil, 2005). According to Eifring and Theil statement, it means that language also has several functions such as to get interaction and communication with other human life, for example: to express their feeling or emotion in something or somebody, showing their existence, conveying their ideas or thought in express opinions or criticize. (Keraf, 1997:1) says that language is a means of communication between

community members in the form of sound. Some might say that there is another tool of communication besides language, for example, the use of tools and symbols but these have weaknesses. Due to these facts, people realize that language is taking the most important role in their life because the human being is a social creature that needs somebody else in their life. That is why language can be used in every aspect.

According to Kreidler (1998:19) language is a system of symbols through which people communicate. The examples of symbols are spoken, written, or sign with the hands. The human being is a social creature that is why they will

always need language to communicate with each other. Harmer (2007) says that language is used widely for communication between people who do not share the same first (or even second) language. It means that language becomes a critical need in human life in making a good relationship with others.

According to Posner and Meggle in their book *Status and Function of Languages and Language Varieties* states that: "The function of a language is what people actually do with it. The status of a language depends on what people can do with it. Status therefore is the sum total of what you can do with a language – legally, culturally, economically, politically and, of course, demographically". (Posner and Meggle, 1989:4)

Based on the quotation above, the thesis writer concludes that language is communicating media to each other that can be easier way to understanding and accepting what are people trying to say and to avoid miscommunication and misinterpretation in communicating and language is taking an important

role in human being in every aspect of life, such as technology, education, sciences, politics, economics and art, it means that language can be used and expressed in every aspect. There are two ways to deliver the meaning of language itself. Those are through pragmatics and figurative language.

1. According to (Leech, 1999:7) says that pragmatics can be usefully defined as the study of how utterance has meaning in situations, it means that the message that we get is directly and does not need any more supposition.
2. According to (Reaske, 1996:33) says that using figurative language is making imaginative description in fresh ways, it means using figurative language is totally needs an imaginative description due to the message that we get. Otherwise use suppositions, we cannot get the real meaning of that's the message.

The use of language in the field of politics can be seen in many

patterns one of them is through debate. According to the book of Chilton entitled *Analyzing Political Discourse: Theory and Practice* (2004:17) says that: "While the debate remains very much open, two clear lines of thought have been established, and both have implication for thinking about the relationship between language and politics."

Another example of how important debate is in the field of politics, we can see in the book from Hinck entitled *Televised Presidential Debate in Changing Media Environment* [2 volumes] (2019:1) says that: "Debates are important events in presidential campaign"

Based on the two quotations above the thesis writer concludes that debate is an example of the use of language from a political perspective and the status of the debate itself is very important to be implemented for presidential candidates who become the next president in a country.

The study investigated the figurative language uttered by Donald Trump and Joe Biden in debate of U.S presidential election 2020.

B. Research Method

The thesis writer will apply a qualitative research method in his study. The use of qualitative research method is taken to obtain the data such as sentences, words, clauses in the U.S final presidential debate 2020: Donald Trump VS Joe Biden which are classified as figurative language. The source of data is the text script of the presidential election debate.

C. Results and Discussion

The thesis writer will put the answer of the statements of the problem that has been decided, those are: (1) What kinds of figurative language are used by Donald Trump in the U.S final presidential debate 2020? (2) What kinds of figurative language are used by Joe Biden in the U.S final presidential debate 2020? The answer to the first question is Donald Trump used 6 types of figurative language in the U.S final presidential debate 2020, those are Metaphor, Hyperbole, Metonymy, Personification, and Simile. The answer to the second question is Joe

Biden used 3 kinds of figurative language in the U.S final presidential debate 2020, those are Irony,

Personification, and Simile.

The use of the figurative language for both sides is not only the same as a theory but they use the figurative

language to make resistance to his opponent, to give a counter-attack, to motivate the people and some examples obtained by the thesis writer only follow the definition of figurative language.

Table 1. Figurative Language Produced by Donald Trump

Numb	Figurative Language	Number of Using
1.	Metaphore	6
2.	Hyperbole	9
3.	Irony	-
4.	Litotes	-
5.	Metonymy	2
6.	Personification	12
7.	Oxymoron	-
8.	Simile	1

Table 1. Figurative Language Produced by Joe Biden

Numb	Figurative Language	Number of Using
1.	Metaphore	-
2.	Hyperbole	-
3.	Irony	5
4.	Litotes	-
5.	Metonymy	-
6.	Personification	1
7.	Oxymoron	-
8.	Simile	2

D. Conclusion

The first one is not only aimed at the readers but also at the thesis writer himself and other researchers who will take the same field as this thesis in learning the figurative language we must be learned from

many sources, one of the sources is learning the figurative language from a theoretical background which discusses figurative language that has been published and approved by the experts in their field by doing that way could make

us easier in understanding the type, the definition of figurative language itself, and minimizing misinterpreting so the point that we get is correct with the speaker intention.

The second one is the event of the presidential debate is an important thing in our life from that debate we can decide our fate for the next few years toward a better direction or not, so the point in learning the figurative language is a critical point in our life and it is important too for us to understand what are the candidates talk about and the thesis put a big wish if the result of this thesis can be adapted by the teacher if the figurative language can be found anywhere even in the presidential debate because in general term the example of figurative language is only taken from some sources for example song, novel, poetry or even in the short story due that thing the thesis writer could make an expand the range of field in the teaching and the thesis writer hopefully could give a fresh inovation in teaching figurative language..

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