

Figurative Language depicted in John Legend's Song

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Abstract

The comprehension of song lyrics is crucial as they unveil the content and intentions of the composer. John Legend, known for infusing profound meaning into his songs, was the subject of qualitative research in this study, focusing on the analysis of his lyrics. The researcher identifies various language styles in four of Legend's songs. For "You and I," four styles were found: paradox, personification, hyperbole, and symbolism. In "All of Me," the analysis revealed personification, hyperbole, antithesis, and paradox. "Ordinary People" showcased hyperbole and paradox, while "Glory" exhibited simile, antithesis, and metaphor. From these analyses, the researcher identifies seven categories of figurative language prevalent in Legend's songs: paradox, personification, hyperbole, antithesis, simile, symbolism, and metaphor. Notably, hyperbole emerged as the most dominant figurative language. The researcher's ability to dissect and comprehend the figurative expressions in Legend's work underscores their analytical acumen. The writer hopes for further research on figurative language in music, recognizing its depth and significance in understanding artistic expression.

Keyword : figurative, hyperbole, personification

A.INTRODUCTION

Language is the vehicle through which human experiences, ideas, and thoughts are expressed through literature. According to Meyer (1997:1), in his book about literature based on prototypes. The term "literature" refers to written works that are artistically tailored for reading and have a careful use of language, including elements like inventive metaphors, cleverly twisted phrases, graceful syntax, rhyme, and alliteration. Every person has a unique method of enjoying literature. It is well-admired in song form by many people. Songs are brief poems or collections of musical phrases intended to be sung by musicians. A song may deliver several messages. Through music, people may reach a large audience and share their voices, allowing others to understand their thoughts and feelings.

There are several types of songs, such as traditional, pop, metal, country, hip-hop or rap, ballads song, and gospel. Songs usually have figurative language that is well-written by the songwriter. To understand the author's meaning, one must utilize imagination. According to Peter (2002), figurative language is a form of language where the speaker intends to arouse

feelings and persuade the audience to act. Abrams (1999:96), stated that figurative language is a marked deviation from what language users understand as the standard meaning of words, or a standard arrangement of words, to achieve some special meaning or effect. And with knowing the figurative language in song lyrics, people will enjoy, it because the song has lyrics that contain hidden figurative language. Song lyrics will be able to express what is felt. Kennedy (1979:487) adds that allusion can be considered to take place whenever a speaker or writer departs from the customary connotation of words for originality or emphasis.

Semantics is the study of word and phrase meaning, claims Griffiths (2006:6). Semantics, or the study of meaning, is vital to the study of communication, and Leech (1977: 19) contends that as communication plays a larger part in social structure, so does the necessity for understanding semantics. Semantics is critical to understanding communication processes as well as thinking, cognition, and conceptualization in the human mind, all of which are closely related to how language is used to categorize and convey our experiences of the world. Semantic meaning has a contextual meaning which is interpreted as something related to context or denotative.

While context (still from the same source) is defined as part of a sentence that can support clarity of meaning. From this description, it can also be said that context is the information that surrounds the use of the language and can clarify the meaning of the sentence. Based on this brief description, contextual meaning can be interpreted as meaning that appears based on the context. Contextual meaning is the meaning that results from the interaction between a word's meaning and its context. It is concluded that contextual meaning is strongly influenced by the situation of the language user. In its use, contextual meaning is widely used in figure-of-speech analysis. The term "semantics" itself covers a broad variety of concepts, from the widely accepted to the more specialist. It is frequently used in common language to indicate potential issues with word choice or meaning.

The researcher is intrigued by the examination of John Legend's songs through the lens of figurative language. They chose to focus on figurative language in song lyrics for several compelling reasons. Firstly, songs often employ various figures of speech, adding depth and poetic flair to the lyrics, making them enjoyable to sing and culturally relevant. Secondly, the widespread popularity of John Legend's music on a global scale offers a rich and accessible pool of material for analysis. By delving into the figurative language present in Legend's songs, the authors aim to uncover deeper layers of meaning and artistic expression within his

music, contributing to a broader understanding of his work and its impact on listeners worldwide.

B.RESEARCH METHOD

This researcher employs a qualitative research approach. The source of data is taken from four song lyrics written by John Legend (e.g., All of Me, You and I, Ordinary People, and Glory). Those song lyrics were collected purposively by making codes and categories to unravel the figurative language used.

C.FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The researcher identifies paradox, personification, hyperbole, and symbolism as 4 figurative expression types in John Legend song *You and I*. Personification, hyperbole, antithesis, and paradox were identified as four different forms of figurative expression in the lyrics of the song *All of Me*. Hyperbole and paradox were identified as 2 different types of figurative language in the lyrics of the song *Ordinary People*. The researcher discovers 4 different forms of figurative language in the song *Glory*: simile, antithesis, Hyperbole, and metaphor. There are only 7 categories of figurative language recognized by the author of this thesis in the usage of four songs by John Legend, including paradox, personification, hyperbole, antithesis, simile, symbol, and metaphor. based on research results the most dominant figurative language used in John Legend's song lyrics is hyperbole.

1. Figurative expression in the song by John Legend "You And I" lyrics. To make jobs easier, the researchers assigned codes to each set of data: Y1 = data from You and I.

Data	Data code	Lyrics	Figurative language
1	Y ₁	You fix your make-up, just so, Guess you don't know, that you're beautiful Try on every dress that you own, You were fine in my eyes a half hour ago	Paradox

2	Y ₂	And if your mirror won't make it any clearer. I'll be the one to let you know.	Personification
3	Y ₃	Ain't nobody in the world tonight All of the stars	Hyperbole
4	Y ₄	You stop the room when we walk in, the spotlight's on, everybody's staring, tell all of these boys they're wasting their time Stop standing in line, 'cause you're all mine.	Symbol
5	Y ₅	feeling die	Hyperbole

2. Figurative expression of the song by John Legend "All Of Me" lyrics. To make jobs easier, the researchers assigned codes to each set of data: A₁ = data from All Of Me.

Data	Data code	Lyrics	Figurative language
1	A ₁	smart mouth	Personification
2	A ₂	head spinning	Hyperbole
3	A ₃	beautiful mind	Personification
4	A ₄	My head's under water, but I'm breathing fine	Hyperbole

5	A ₅	Cause all of me, loves all of you, love your curves and all your edges, all your perfect imperfections, give your all to me, i'll give my all to you, you're my end and my beginning, even when i lose, i'm winning, 'cause i give you all of me, and you give me all of you	Antithesis
6	A ₆	The world is beating you down	Personification
7	A ₇	Cards on the table, we're both showing hearts, risking it all, though it's hard, 'cause all of me, loves all of you, love your curves and all your edges, all your perfect imperfections, give your all to me, i'll give my all to you	Paradox

3. Figurative expression in the song by John Legend "Ordinary People" lyrics. To make jobs easier, the researchers assigned codes to each set of data: O₁ = data from Ordinary People.

Data	Data code	Lyrics	Figurative language
1	O ₁	Girl I'm in love with you, This ain't the honeymoon, We're passed the infatuation phase We're right in the thick of love	Paradox
2	O ₂	And we both still got room left to grow, And though love sometimes hurts	Hyperbole

4. Figurative expression in the song by John Legend "Glory" lyrics. To make jobs easier, the researchers assigned codes to each set of data: G₁ = data from Glory.

Data	Data code	Lyrics	Figurative language
1	G ₁	Freedom is like religion	Simile

2	G ₂	Resistance	Metaphor
3	G ₃	The king pointed to the top of the mountain and we ran	Hyperbole
4	G ₄	Now the war has not ended, the victory has not been won, And we'll fight to the end, then when it's over	Antithesis
5	G ₅	Even Jesus got his crown in front of a crowd	Metaphor

D.CONCLUSION

The analysis of figurative expressions in song lyrics by John Legend reveals a total of 19 instances across his songs. These include 3 paradoxes, 4 personifications, 6 hyperboles, 1 symbol, 2 antitheses, 1 simile, and 2 metaphors. Notably, hyperbole emerges as the most prevalent form of figurative language, appearing consistently across four of Legend's songs: "You And I," "All of Me," "Ordinary People," and "Glory." Hyperbole, a commonly used literary device, serves to emphasize statements or situations by employing exaggerated claims regarding quantity, size, or nature. Its frequent utilization in ordinary speech underscores its effectiveness in accentuating and enhancing the impact of a statement or circumstance.

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