JESPi
JOURNAL OF ESP IN INDONESIA

An Analysis of Figurative Language and Meaning in "Drive You Home" Song Lyrics by Jackson Wang

Sureena Sa-ae[1], Ira Maisarah [2]
[1]Postgraduate Program of English Education, Faculty of Education and Teacher Training, University of Bengkulu, Bengkulu, Indonesia; Fatoni University, Thailand
[2]Postgraduate Program of English Education, Faculty of Education and Teacher Training, University of Bengkulu, Bengkulu, Indonesia

Article Info	ABSTRACT
Article history: Received: June 2023 Revised: September 2023 Accepted: December 2023 **Keywords:** Figurative Language, Literature, Song Lyric, Contextual Meaning, Connotative Meaning	*Figurative language is language that uses figures of speech rather than literal meaning and is frequently used in literature to give vitality and interest to the author's writing. The purpose of this study is to identify the type of figurative language used in the lyric 'Drive You Home' and to analyze the connotative and contextual meaning of figurative language in that song lyric. The descriptive qualitative method is used in this study. The result of this study found that there is some figurative language used in Jackson Wang's song entitled 'Drive You Home', such as simile, metaphor, allegory, hyperbole, and symbol. The connotative and contextual meaning of each figurative language is also clarified.*

Corresponding Author:
Sureena Sa-ae,
Email: *s.sureena@gmail.com*

1. INTRODUCTION

Communication is essential for human connection, and language is a powerful tool for this purpose. It allows individuals to share thoughts, emotions, and information with others, fostering relationships and participation in society. Language is also helps individuals acquire knowledge and understanding. In literature, authors use spoken and written language in diverse ways to create their works. Meyer (1997) described that literature refers to written works that go beyond everyday communication. Authors employ creative language, including metaphors, beautiful phrases, and rhythmic structures, to create an aesthetic experience. These works are meant to be savored and interpreted, often leaving room for reader's own perspective.

Moving beyond structural comprehension, language understanding in literary work involves understanding the meaning behind the words. Semantics, within linguistics, takes center stage in exploring core aspects of meaning and how human use language to convey it. Al-Khalidi (2020) noted that, semantics aims to uncovered the meaning behind various linguistic elements, while Hidayati (2020) emphasize its role in describing meanings at the level of words, phrases, and sentences, including the evolution of how word meanings develop and change over time.

Figurative language is used frequently in literature to add vitality and interest to the author writing. Figurative language is used by author as a technique to express imaginative ideas in a way that can inspire the reader's or listener's creativity, help them generate thoughts and feelings, and raise their own sensations. According to Pradopo (2007), cited in (Pribadi, V. D., 2019), figurative language is the use of figure or similarity to compare one thing to another in order to make it more clear, interesting, and living. It is language that uses words or expressions in an imaginative way with a deeper meaning than their literal interpretation (Anderson, 2005 cited in Ladika, A. R., 2018). However, figurative language is a common technique used in many forms of literature, and one of them is song. Song is one of the literary works that uses figurative language as an important part of its lyrics. Griffey (2001), as cited in Setiawati & Maryann, (2018), states that

song refers to a part of music where the words are intended to be sung. The majority of authors who compose literary works use it to convey their thoughts, feelings, emotions, and imagination. Therefore, the use of figurative language in song lyrics by the songwriters makes the meaning of the lyrics more colorful and more interesting to the audience.

Poetry is another type of literature that uses language to express ideas, emotions, and experiences in a way that is often rhythmic, musical, and imaginative. In poetry, the picture or image evokes a sense for the writer's feelings or the words they use. An image may represent more than simply the senses of sight, sound, touch, smell, and taste (Grover, 1994). Imagery, as clarify in Abrams' book *A Glossary of Literary Terms seventh edition*, is used to represent all the things and aspects of sensory perception that are mentioned in a poem or other literary work (Abram, 1999). Therefore, as the aforementioned reason indicates, it is essential to analyze how figurative language is used in song lyrics.

The purpose of this study was to analyze the types of figurative language found in Jackson Wang's selected song lyrics. Jackson Wang was born in Hong Kong on 28 March 1994 with his Chinese name Wang Jia'er. He is not only known as a rapper and singer, but he is also a dancer, record producer, host, fashion designer, and music video director. He initially gained widespread recognition after joining JYP Entertainment's K-pop boy group, Got 7, before he left the company and in 2017, he founded TEAM WANG and began releasing solo music in China and internationally thereafter. 'Drive You Home 'is one of his famous songs, follows the global success of his hit single, 'LMLY '(Leave Me Loving You. This song is collaboration between TEAM WANG and Internet Money. 'Drive You Home 'is inspired by and interpolates the iconic 1984 single 'Drive 'from the legendary new wave band The Car. The writer chooses this song because there are many figurative languages found in the song lyrics. The objective of the study is mentioned as follows:
1. To identify the types of figurative language used in Jackson Wang's song.
2. To analyze the connotative meaning and meaning of each types of figurative language found in the song lyrics.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Figurative Language
Kennedy & Gioia (2007) states that figurative language is a figure of speech in language that is used to express the meaning that its literal meaning cannot convey. While, Arp (2011), indicates that figurative language defies literal interpretation (or should not be taken literally only). It tends to use words or expressions with meanings other than the literal understanding. According to Kenedy & Gioia (2005), there are several types of figurative language were suggested:
1. **Simile** defines as an indirect comparison between two different things the used the word "like" or "as" or an equivalent term such as, his eyes were shining like stars, Dawi's skin white as cloud in the sky.
2. **Metaphor** contrasts two unlike things by stating that one thing is similar to another even though they are not alike in the literal sense. The difference between a metaphor and a simile is that a metaphor does not contain the terms "like" or "as." The examples of metaphor are "Sea of sadness", "Your fingers are sausages," and "Shownu is a bear when he's eating."
3. **Personification** is a figure of speech that gives human characteristics to a thing, animal, or abstract terms like truth or nature. The examples are "The grasses dance with the wind." "The sky cried with me today."
4. **Irony** refers to someone say one thing but means something kind of opposite, or when insults are subtly implied beneath the language's surface. The irony is used to declare the opposite meaning with the true meaning and the mismatch between the atmosphere presented and the reality that underlies it. For example of the irony is "How great your idea." This sentence shows that the person who says it does not want to hear or does not want to use that idea.
5. **Synecdoche** is a figurative language that used a significant part of a whole to describe the whole or vice versa. For example, "She showed off her new wheels." The term "wheels", which is a part of an automobile, can be used to refer to her new car or automobile.
6. **Apostrophe** is a figure of speech that makes an absent, dead, or non-human person or thing sound as though it were present. For example, "Haven, help us.", "Chocolate, why must you be so delicious?", "O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree, how lovely are thy branches", or "Hello darkness, my old friend. I've come to talk to you again."
7. **Allegory** is a figure of speech that describes abstract ideas and principles in terms of characters, figures, and events. The purpose of its use is to preach some kind of a moral lesson. For example, "Like a spinning wheel, life is sometimes above, sometimes below."

8. **Paradox** is a figure of speech in which a statement appears to contradict itself. The statement may appear to be silly but in reality, contains a truth which seems unreasonable. For example, "She feel alone in the center of town.", "Your silence is my favorite sound.", or "The people's representative heard, but pretended to be deaf."

9. **Repetition** is a figure of speech that uses repeating to repeat single words or short phrases two or more times; however, some can involve the repetition of sounds while others may require the repetition of entire sentences. The repetition was used when the songwriter and poet needed to emphasize a certain part to convey its proper meaning. For example, "He will try to study, study, and study to achieve his dreams."

10. **Hyperbole** is a figure of speech that uses exaggeration to express a strong emotion, make a point, or elicit laughter. An exaggerated statement or figure of speech that is not meant to be taken literally. For example, "I could sleep for a year.", or "This book weighs a ton."

11. **Symbol** is the use of symbols to represent ideas and qualities by combining them with symbolic meanings that differ from their literal meaning. It is only applied to a word or phrase that represent an object or event that in turn relate to other things or have a variety of references beyond itself (Abrams, 1999)

Song and Song Lyrics

Songs are one of the literary forms that are familiar to listeners. The songs that are written by talented people, such as composers or poets, who know how to write word well. They use songs to express their thoughts and feelings, from happiness to sadness, and from love to hatred. Songwriters and composers use song to communicate their feelings and share their life experiences. While Cox (2000), cited in Sopiansyah. I & Inayah, R. (2021), states that songs are composed of lyrics and music that are timed and rhythmically structured to represent the feelings, dreams, intentions or actions of particular individual or individuals.

Lyrics are printed as a way to communicate between the author and the audience or reader, in which the author expresses personal thoughts and emotions. According to Jackson, V. and Prins, Y. (2014), they stated that a lyric was always associated with erlebins, or a person's or the author's actual experience; this is similar to the nineteenth-century idea that a lyric is composed by replicating the feeling. Although the lyrics are composed in relation to personal matters, readers or listeners are made aware of them so they can understand their significance.

2. METHOD

Research Design

In this study, the writer used the qualitative descriptive method to analyze the figurative language used in the song lyrics of the selected song by Hong Kong singer Jackson Wang.

Data Collection

The data of this study was collected from a popular song "Drive You Home". There are steps that the writer takes to analyze the data:

1. Collecting references and theories about the type of figurative language and the other information to support its paper.
2. Relating the data into the type of figurative language that found in the chosen song.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of identifying and analyzing the data. As mentioned previously, the objective of this study is to analyze the figurative language used in the selected song lyrics "Drive You Home" using a framework based on Kennedy & Gioia (2007) and Arp (2011).

For these reasons, several steps are taken in analyzing the data. The first is reading the chosen song lyrics several times to gain a better understanding of the song and the figurative language used. The second is identifying and analyzing sentences for the song lyrics. The last step is listing the figurative language that conduct in the song lyrics.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The study focuses on finding the type of figurative language and analyzing the meaning in Jackson Wang's song lyrics. Prior to display the discussion of each meaning, the lyric and figurative language types in the lyrics of the song "Drive You Home" by Jackson Wang would be presented in the table 1.

Table 1. The Types of Figurative Language and The Lyrics

No.	Types of Figurative Language	Lyrics
1	Metaphor	And every roadmap leads straight to your heart So I can't leave you tonight No, not tonight Cause who's gonna drive you home When you've had a crazy day? I think we live in a homemade video But it's like you and I rewind to the lowest low I always thought, always thought we could reverse it I always thought, always thought we could be perfect
2	Simile	Felt something like, something like an 80s movie Felt something like, something like you never lose me Who's gonna dry your eyes When your tears fall like the rain
3	Allegory	May be one more cruise will make it alright While you hold my hand from the passenger's side
4	Hyperbole	And I'm eighty miles from going insane I've been missing, missing those days We fell in love on Geary Boulevard We fell in deep, we fell so hard
5	Symbol	We fell in love on Geary Boulevard With the sun coming down on the front of my car So why we gotta check into the heartbreak hotel? Oh hell, you know me better than myself I don't wanna go home, no way without you Ain't gonna be good for my health

The Analysis of Figurative Language and Contextual Meaning in Song Lyrics

a. **Metaphor**

And every roadmap leads straight to your hearth	*9*
So I can't leave you tonight	*10*
No, not tonight	*11*

From the above line, it is clear that 'every roadmap leads straight to your heart' in line 9 uses a figurative language metaphor. 'Roadmap' is used metaphorically in the line, where 'heart' is metaphorically depicted as a destination. So, in this line, the author of this song tries to say that no matter where he goes, he ultimately finds his way back to the person he loves. It emphasizes that this person is his true home, a place of comfort, warmth, and security. This goes beyond a physical location and represents an emotional connection.

Cause who s gonna drive you home	*12*
*When you ve had a **crazy day**?*	*13*

'Crazy day' in line 13 is considered as metaphor. The author compares it to the disorganized situation, or full of unexpected events happen in his girlfriend's life.

*I think we live in **a homemade video***   *17*
*But it s like you and I **rewind to the lowest low***   *18*

The writer considers lines 17 and 18 as metaphors. According to '*a homemade video,* the writer believes that the author of the song perceives their relationship as unnatural, staged, and lacking authenticity. It might feel controlled, unlike a 'real' life experience. Furthermore, referring to the phrase '*rewind to the lowest low,'* it implies that the author's relationship with his girlfriend is gradually deteriorating instead of developing to the happy ending.

*I always thought, always thought **we could reverse it***   *19*
I always thought, always thought we could be perfect   *20*

If we refer to lines 17 and 18, the author wrote in line 19 that he wished he could reverse it, as in the reversing of the video, to fix the situation in the past. This line is clearly a metaphor because, literary, we cannot reverse our lives as we reverse the video tape in the video player to move back to the beginning. The author uses a metaphor in this line to imply that if he could turn back time, he would because he needs to fix the mistake that happened in the past.

b. Simile
> *Felt something like, something **like an 80s movie***   *3*
> *Felt something like, something like you never lose me*   *4*

In line 3, it is clearly stated that the lyric uses a figurative language simile. The author uses the word '*like*' in the lyrics above to compare his love to a 80s love movie. Back to that era, 80s movies featured a wonderful and dreamy love couple. That's why the author uses a simile in this line. He wants to imply that his love right now is romantic, as in a 80s movie. However, these two lines are related to the first two lines, which are lines 1 and 2. According to these four lines, the author intends to imply that he is satisfied with his love. Everything is going well, and it seems like nothing could tear them apart.

Who s gonna dry your eyes   *14*
*When your **tears fall like the rain***   *15*

Line 15 is considered as a simile because it contains the word *'like'* in the lyric. Literary tears cannot fall as freely as rain. Tears are a phenomenon of droplets that flow from the eye when it is hurt or as a result of emotion. This condition is compared to a person who is crying so hard, whether in pain or happiness. But in this line, the author refers to tears as the crying of sadness or pain. The author uses the simile 'tears fall like the rain' to imply that if he's not there, who will take care of her and provide comfort and support during times of need.

c. Allegory
> *May be one more cruise will make it alright*   *40*
> *While you hold my hand from the passenger s side*   *41*

In line 40 and 41, the author wrote that maybe one more cruise will make it alright when she holds his hand from the passenger's side. This line is clearly allegory because the lines imply the author's desire for a new chance to rekindle their relationship after he lost her. He can go through his tough life easily when she is there for him.

d. Hyperbole
> *And I m **eighty miles from going insane***   *35*
> *I ve been missing, missing those days*   *36*
> *So baby, let me love you, ooh woah*   *38*

The writer considers line 35 as hyperbole. In this line, *'eighty miles from going insane,'* refers to an exaggeration, emphasizing the speaker's emotional state. They are feeling close to the edge due to something

related to the relationship. Through this hyperbole, the author implies regret and depression, suggesting that the situation he faces, missing his love deeply, might drive him to madness.

We fell in love on Geary Boulevard   38
We fell in deep, we fell so hard   39

The lyric contains a figurative language hyperbole. In line 39, the author expresses his feeling that he truly loves his girlfriend deep down in his heart. He uses exaggeration words like '*fell in deep*' and '*fell so hard*' to convey strong emotion and emphasize how deeply he loves his girlfriend.

e. Symbol

*We fell in love on **Geary Boulevard***   *1*
*With the **sun coming down** on the front of **my car***   *2*

In lines 1 and 2, the lyrics employ a figurative language metaphor. The lines open by describing a specific location, Geary Boulevard, which likely holds strong emotional significance for the author, perhaps marking the beginning of their love story. This significance is further emphasized by the vivid detail in line 2, 'the sun coming down on the front of my car.' This detail not only sets the time of day but also introduces the use of a car, which could symbolize freedom. These lines describe how the author's relationship began, expressing his feelings for his lover, the beauty of their love, and the happiness they share.

*So why we gotta check into the **heartbreak hotel**?*   *5*
Oh hell, you know me better than myself   *6*
I don t wanna go home, no way without you   *7*
*Ain t gonna be good for my **health***   *8*

'*Heartbreak hotel* 'in line 5 is symbolic of a place where people go when they have been jilted by their lovers. This phrase was inspired by a true story about a heartbroken man who committed suicide in a hotel. In some versions, it is reported that a heartbroken man shoots himself; in others, he leaps to his death from a hotel window. Therefore, in this line, the author implies his confusion over the unexpected loss of his love. Referring to line 1-4 in the previous section, the author describes his love as a perfect couple. Then in line 5, the lyric implies that he suddenly loses his lover forever.

The writer considers line 8 as a symbol because '*health* 'refers to the author's mental health. After he loses his lover, he cannot go back to the place they have ever been together because it would remind him of her, and that is not good for his mental health.

4. CONCLUSION

Figurative language is a figure of speech in which words or expressions have meanings other than their literal meaning to make the author's imaginative ideas clear, interesting, and alive. This study was conducted to identify the types of figurative language employed in 'Drive You Home 'song lyrics by Jackson Wang. In this study, the writer aims to find out the types of figurative language based on the expert's analysis, and connotative meaning was also identified in Jackson Wang's song lyric.

Based on the discussion and analytical data, the writer found several types of figurative language in the lyrics. There are five types of figurative language were found that are simile, metaphor, allegory, hyperbole, and symbol. The most dominant figurative language in this lyric is metaphor, simile, hyperbole, and symbol. The author used this type of figurative language because most of the lyrical context of the song is about his deep emotions of love and heartbreak, so the word used in the lyric compared his feelings with things that have implicit meaning. Following that is allegory. The author uses this figurative language to express different layers of meaning in his feelings and context at the same time.

REFERENCES

Abrams, M. H. (1999). A glossary of literary term seventh edition. Retrieved from: http://www.Ohio.edu/people/Hartley/ref/abrams_mh.pdf.

Al-Khalid's, I. S. I. (2020). Theory and Evidence in Semantics. *International Journal of Development in Social Sciences and Humanities,* (10), 23-29. http://www.ijdssh.com/admin1/upload/03Issa Safaa49067.pdf

Arp, Thomas R. and Greg Johnson. (2011). Perrine's sound and sense: An introduction to poetry.13th Ed.USA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Griffey, D. (2001). Songs in Action. Hertfordshire: Prentice Hall International.

Grover, Julie. (1994). English literature. UK: Longman Group Uk Limited.

Hidayati, N. (2020). The Correlation Between Semantic and Phonology. *Linguamedia Journal, 1*(1), 34-47. http://journal.untagsmg.ac.id/index/php/linguamedia/article/view/1401/1110

Jackson, V. & Prins, Y. (2014). The Lyric Theory Reader A Critical Anthology. Baltimore. Johns Hopkins University Press

Kennedy, X.J., & Gioia, D. (2007). An Introduction to Poetry (12th ed.). NY: Pearson.

Ladika, A. R. (2018). The Analysis of Figurative Language Used by Dr. Zakinthos Naik. [Online]. Available: https://repository.unja.ac.id/3251/1/[Article] The Analysis Of Figurative Language Used by Dr.Zakir Naik_ Arl.pdf [Access from the internet on December 20, 2022

Meyer, Jim. (1997). "What is literature? A definition based on prototypes," *Work Papers of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, University of North Dakota Session:* Vol. 41, Article 3. DOI:10.31356/silwp.vol41.03. https://commons.und.edu/sil-work-papers/vol41/iss1/3

Milana, H. & Ardi, H. (2020). An Analysis of Figurative Language in the Song Lyrics by Saif Adam. *E-Journal of English Language and Literature, 9*(3), 325-335. http://ejournal.unp.ac.id/index.php/jell

Pardopo, R. D. (2007). Pengajian Puisi. Yogyakarta: University Press.

Pridbadi, V. D. (2019). An Analysis of Figurative Language in the Selected Songs Album of Jessie J. *Repository STKIP PGRI Sidoarjo*. https://repository.stkippgri-sidoarjo.ac.id/770/

Setiawati, W. & Maryani, M. (2018). An Analysis of Figurative Language in Taylor Swift's Song Lyrics. *PROJECT (Professional Journal of English Education), 1*(3), 261-268. DOI:10.22460/project.v1i3.p261-268.

Sopiansyah, I. & Inayah, R. (2021). The Analysis of Figurative Language in "Girl on Fire" Song Lyrics By Alicia Keys. *PROJECT: Professional Journal of English Education, 4(*2), 208-215. DOI:10.22460/project.v4i2.p208-215.