

Figurative Meanings Found in Coldplay's Song Lyric

A.A. Istri Manik Warmadewi¹, A.A. Istri Listyawati Oka²
{manik.warmadewi@gmail.com}

¹²Universitas Warmadewa Denpasar-Bali, Indonesia

Abstract— A media as written communication is used to communicate the meaning. The meaning that nonliterary which is called as figurative language in the media can be seen in newspaper, novel, poetry and certainly in lyric. Therefore, this research aims to find the types of figurative meanings and the functions of the meaning. The theories applied are taken from Larson as a main theory, and supported by theories proposed by Perrine and Leech. Another supporting sources that are relevant to this topic, are taken from the internet. The data of this paper are taken from the song lyrics of the band Coldplay. The collected data is analyzed based on the theoretical concepts and the data is analyzed using the descriptive method. Then, the data is presented in a narrative-descriptive way by providing information in non-formal technique. Based on the results of the analysis, it is found that there are eight types of figurative meanings that are used in fourteen songs from Coldplay. The figurative meanings that are used are Metonymy, Synecdoche, Personification, Hyperbole, Simile, Metaphor, Allegory, and Symbol. The functions also carried by each figurative. In conclusion, types of figurative language of Hyperbole, Personification, Metaphor, and Symbols are the dominant types that appeared most with each number 5, following by Simile as the second most with the number 4, following by Synecdoche and Allegory and Metonymy with each number 3.

Keywords— Figurative meaning, song lyric, types of figurative language

1 Introduction

Meaning has a wide definition. Studying of meaning is studying of how to produce the sentence that can be understood. Meaning is the idea that represented by word, phrase, or sentence. It can be expressed in spoken or written communication. A written communication is used to communicate the meaning by using media, such as magazine, newspaper, novel, lyric, poetry, etc. One word in such those media may have more than one meaning, the meaning of words depend on the context. Meaning divide into seven types, they are conceptual meaning, connotative meaning, social meaning, affective meaning, reflected meaning, collocative meaning, and thematic meaning ^[1]. Figurative language is a part of semantics. Figurative language is a symbolic or metaphorical and not meant to be taken literary ^[2]. The term “figurative” language has traditionally referred to language which differs from every day “nonliterary” usage. Figurative language is language which employs various figures of speech.

Figures were seen as stylistic ornament with which writers dressed up their language to make it more entertaining, and to clarify the meanings they wanted to convey. There are many kinds of figurative language. They are metonymy, metaphor, simile, personification, synecdoche, idioms, euphemism, and hyperbole [3]. Figurative meaning consist of metaphor, simile, personification, hyperbole, allegory, synecdoche, metonymy, symbol, apostrophe, paradox, understatement and irony [4]. Coldplay song's lyrics contain several interesting figurative meanings to be examined. When we discuss about figurative meaning in song lyric, it sounds interesting to do. It is very wide if we discuss it from every sides, therefore the scope of discussion is limited on the kinds of figurative meaning are found in Coldplay's song lyric and functions of meaning they carry. Some latest related studies have been conducted that distinguish this present study with the studies has been conducted, one of them was study about the figurative language used in movie script Frozen. The study found there are simile, metaphor, hyperbole, personification, metonymy, alliteration, idiom, rhetoric, onomatopoeia, and repetition. Besides that, moral messages also have been embedded to the movie [5]. Another study was about figurative languages used in paulo coelho's novel entitled the alchemist, the types that dominant used in that novel is simile since it used to express character emotion [6], [7] the types of figurative meaning were found in Speech of Obama's Presidential. Based on the description above, therefore specific aims of this research that can be achieve are to find out how many types of figurative meaning found in Coldplay song lyric and also to analyze the function of those figurative meaning.

2 Methods

The source of this research were taken from the fourteen songs of Coldplay's from different album that were chosen randomly. They are Don't panic, Spies, Sparks, yellow, Trouble, High Speed, Paradise, Sky full of stars, Fix you, Miracle, Aliens, All I think is about you, Hypnotized, and The Scientist. The data were collected by qualitative method, by searching the data source from Coldplay official website. The songs were listened repeatedly and intensively in order to know and to understand the contents of the songs. The next step is write down the data sources by using the note taking method to find the figurative meanings in each song. And then, the data were classified according to type of figurative. The classified data were analyzed descriptively based on the theory applied. The result of the analysis were presented informally in order to make the analysis to be understood easily.

3 Result and Discussion

3.1 Metonymy

These following lyrics are considered as metonymy because they replaces one thing with another thing that is associated

Table 1 Metonymy in Coldplay's Song Lyrics

Lyrics	Song entitle	Line
I lost my head	Trouble	3
I was just guessing at numbers and figures	The Scientist	14
You're always in my head	Always in my head	12

The word “head” in the third line of song entitle trouble contains figurative sense metonymy because “head” replace another thing which is related. In this case “head” is the place where the brain is. Brain is closely related to mind. It is being used in a figurative way to refer to the mind. In this lyric, the word “head” is used as an association of the thing. The literal interpretation of this figurative is I lost my mind. In the fourteenth lyric line, the words "numbers and figures" are metonymy of science, based on the context of the song, refers to science of love. The “head” in the twelfth line lyrics considered as metonymy, because it can replaces one thing with another thing that is associated. In general, “head” is identically used for thinking. Based on the context of the song, the word “head” refers to the “mind” of the singer. The true meaning of this song is to explain that the singer always thinks of someone he loves. Even though he tried to forget it, he couldn't.

3.2 Synecdoche

This lyrics considered as a synecdoche because of the use of a part for the whole. The part of the lyrics represent the whole part of something that is described.

Table 2 Synecdoche in Coldplay’s Song Lyrics

Lyrics	Song entitle	Line
I awake to find a piece of mind	Spies	1
I’m gonna give you my heart	A sky full of stars	2
I wanna die in your arms	A sky full of stars	10

The word “mind” in the first line lyric of song entitle Spies indicate the figurative meaning of synecdoche. Based on the theory of Larson, synecdoche is a figurative sense based on part-whole relationship are also quite common in some languages [3]. Based on the context of the song, it is clear that the words "peace of mind" not only about the mind but also about ourselves and soul. In the lyric "I will give you my heart", the word "heart" refers to the “whole body” which includes the body and soul. Therefore, the real meaning of this lyric is the singer will give everything, his whole soul and body, to the woman he loved. In this context, the word “arms” also refers to the whole body. Based on the context of the song, the singer described that he want to die in front of her woman that he loved, and also want to die in her embrace.

3.3 Hyperbole

These song lyrics are considered as hyperbole/overstatement because they have exaggeration which is out of the reality.

Table 3 Hyperbole in Coldplay’s Song Lyrics

Lyrics	Song entitle	Line
For you, I’d bleed myself dry	Yellow	27
Before my head explodes	High Speed	2
Cause you light up the path	A sky full of stars	4
Feel my heart races	Miracles	38
We were moving at the speed of flight	Aliens	6

In this lyric, the sentence “I’d bleed myself dry” contains of figurative sense of hyperbole. It is clear, that the word "bleed myself dry" to emphasize his feel especially love, thus he was willing to sacrifice himself for the person he loved. In the lyrics of High Speed song, the word explodes in the second line emphasizes the word "head". The word “explodes” is mean burst or shatter violently and noisily as a result of rapid combustion, decomposition, excessive internal

pressure, or other process, typically scattering fragments widely. In the fourth line, the meaning being carried will be like an exaggeration on the word “you”. Simply, the singer intends to express his feeling about someone he is in love with as if she is the light which lights up his path. The real meaning of the words "my heart races" is feeling nervous, so that the heart beats fast. Furthermore, the words “speed of flight” in the sixth line is an abnormal thing that can do by humans. It refers to the word “we” which explain that human can move really fast.

3.4 Personification

The personification found in the Coldplay songs lyric because the lyrics giving the attribute of human being to animal, an object or a concept as in these following.

Table 4 Personification in Coldplay’s Song Lyrics

Lyrics	Song entitle	Line
We live in a beautiful world	Don’t panic	5
Light will guide you home and ignite your bones	Fix you	9
Diamond ate the radio	Aliens	2
And spies came out of the water	Spies	6
You've got bright in your brains and lightning in your veins	Miracles	20

In this case the "world" is an inanimate object. In the lyrics of this song, the word "beautiful" in the song entitle Don’t panic is used to describe the inanimate object "the world" so as to create a personified impression. In this ninth line, the use of personification is in the word "light" as if it were have characteristics like humans. The words "guide and ignite" emphasizes the meaning carried by the word "light" like living things. The lyric actually describes about someone sacrifice, who is willing to do the best for the person he loves. The word "ate" found in Coldplay song entitled Aliens makes inanimate objects become living things. The word "diamond" and "the radio" are a things that cannot do anything and "eat" is the only word for living things such as human and animal. That lyric tells about the great time is passing without waiting for anything.

3.5 Metaphor

These following lyrics of Coldplay’s song have an implied meaning which considered as metaphor.

Table 5 Metaphor in Coldplay’s Song Lyrics

Lyrics	Song entitle	Line
And everything you do , Yeah, they were all yellow	Yellow	3, 4
Then what a lone poor shoe	All I think is about You	13
You such a heavenly view	Sky full of stars	23
Cause you’re sky full of stars	Sky full of stars	2
Every tear a waterfall	Paradise	15

The lyric song of “And everything you do, Yeah, they were all yellow” considered as metaphor that found in line 3, this line compares two things “everything you do” and “they were all yellow”. The word “Yellow” refers to something that shines and can give happiness. Based on the context of the song “Yellow”, the point of similarity of the topic and images is “something that good and bring happiness”. The lyric “everything you do, yeah they were all yellow” means here that everything that you do is something good and bring happiness. In line thirteen, the song lyric entitled All I can think is about you, the metaphor are used to compares

some likeness, “lone poor shoes” as a images. the topic are implisit, the point of similarity of this Based on the context of the song, the composer positions himself as the only poor shoe. He wanted to say that he needed someone who always accompanied him and faced every problem together. In the song lyric “You such a heavenly view” used metaphor to compare the word “you” with “such a heavenly view”. The word “You” in this lyric as a topic, and the words “heavenly view” as an images. Both of them has some likeness. This lyric brings the meaning that, the woman (you) is an amazing and wonderful view. The real meaning of this lyric is the man is amazed by the woman’s charm that are amazing and wonderful. This "Cause you're sky full of stars" lyric found in line 2. The first idea of this lyric is “you” as a topic, and the second idea “sky full of stars” as an images. The words “sky full of stars” refers to “beautiful and wonderful”. The point of similarity of the topic and images is “something that beautiful”. The lyric “cause you’re sky full of stars” has the real meaning, a woman who has a very charming beauty. “Every tear a waterfall”, is the song lyric of couldplay entitled Paradise, this lyric found in line 15 of the song. The first idea of this lyric is “tear” as a topic, and the second idea “waterfall” as an images. The words “waterfall” refers to the water that falls from a height and in large quantities. Based on the context of the song “paradise”, the point of similarity of the topic and images is “a heavy flowing water”. So the real meaning of this lyric is someone who feels so sad and her tears flow profusely. It can be conclude that, based on the explanation above, the functions of metaphor are to praise and to affirm.

3.6 Simile

These following lyrics are comparing of two things and using the word as, and like, thus it considered as simile. All of those lyrics show the comparison of different kind between one thing with another thing to make description clearly.

Table 6 Simile in Coldplay’s Song Lyrics

Lyrics	Song entitle	Line
Bones sinking like stones	Don’t Panic	1
How do you live as a fugitive	Spies	2
Saying float like an eagle	Hypnotized	7
Fall like the rain	Hypnotized	8

Bones sinking like stones is a part of lyrics from Coldplay’s song entitled Don’t Panic. Stones is part of nature, sometimes its usefull and sometimes not. This song tells about an environment that has been largely damaged by human activity. Where it can invite disasters that will damage the environment even worse, and of course humans will also become victims of their own actions. In this song, we find the lyric *bones sinking like stones*. The literal interpretation of this figurative is life is meaningless if we cannot use it properly. In the second line is the song lyric from Coldplay’s song entitled Spies. Based on the context of the song, spies refers to feeling a fear. This song tells about someone who is always haunted by feel a fear. Therefore, he felt his life was uncomfortable and unsafe, because he was always haunted by fear. In this song, the lyric “How do you live as a fugitive” was found. The real meaning of this sentence is to reveal how can you live by feels the fear. In line seventh, “Saying float like an eagle”, is a part of coldplay song lyric entitled hypnotized. This lyric considered as a simile, because it used the word “like”. The word “float” is compared with the word “an eagle”. Float is staying on the surface, trying to survive his life like an eagle likes to high-flying with strong winds and not avoids the hurricane. That means we have to be friends with the problems that can be allocated with storms that must be conquered by eagles, not just being calm in handling

problems, but also exploring the positive potential behind the problem. In line eighth, “Fall like the rain”, is a part of coldplay song lyric entitled Hypnotized. This part found in line 8 of the song. Based on the explanation in the previous chapter, the use of the word "like" in this lyrics is categorized into the simile. In this lyric, the word “Fall” are compared with the word “rain”. Both of them are different kind. Rain fell and continued to fall, indicating that despite falling many times, but never gave up. So, it means that to achieve something must be strong and steadfast.

3.7 Symbol

The lyric below are considered as symbol because they are defined as something that means more than what it is and also the part of the lyrics represent of something else.

Table 7 Symbol in Coldplay’s Song Lyrics

Lyrics	Song entitle	Line
The bullets catch in her teeth	Paradise	11
The wheel breaks the butterfly	Paradise	16
I saw sparks	Sparks	17
Get a degree, good job, 401k , but I’m trying to turn K’s to M’s	Miracles	30
I felt like I’m in prison	Miracles	27

In line eleventh, "The bullets catch in her teeth", is a part of coldplay song lyric, entitled Paradise. The lyrics of this song considered as a symbols because this lyric define something that means more than what it is and also part of the lyrics represent something else. In this lyrics, Bullet is symbolized as a bad thing that happens to a little girl and her teeth represent the little girl itself. This lyrics describes all the bad things that the little girl experienced. In line 16, “the wheel breaks the butterfly”, in this lyrics, the wheel is a symbol of the sadness and suffering of a little girl and butterfly is a symbol of little girl itself who has a tender heart. This lyrics describes about a tender hearted little girl whose life is full of sadness and suffering. In line 17, "I saw sparks", is a part of the coldplay song entitled Spark, this part of the lyric was found in line 17 of the song. This song tell about the beginning of the singer to meet the woman he likes. This lyric can be considered as symbol because they representing an idea, object or relationship. This lyric, Get a degree, good job, 401k, but I’m trying to turn **K’s** to **M’s**, contains of symbol because the use of the words “401K, K’s, and M’s”. It defined as something that means more than what it is. The word “401K” and “K’s to M’s” in the sentence symbolized about money or salary. “K” refer to chilioi or khilioi taken from Greek which means Thousand and “M” refer to Millions. So, in the lyrics of this song, the composer wants to describe someone who wants a better life. Line 27, “I felt like I’m in prison”, is a part of coldplay song lyric entitled Miracles. These lyrics are considered a symbol because they use the word "prison" to symbolize a place. The word “prison” in the sentence represents the place is a bleak place and all side are surrounded by barbed wire Based on the context of the song, the composer want to show, what he feels. He can't do anything anymore because he does not have enough anything anymore. He felt like he was pent up and cannot do anything else. He also felt like he was at the lowest point in his life. He begins to lose hope for the future and find it difficult to enjoy any aspect of life. He tries to find the solution of a terrible position of his life, he feels he can't do anything anymore because he does not have enough anything anymore.

3.8 Allegory

All of lyric below are considered as an allegory because the use a figure of speech in which abstract ideas and principles are described in terms of characters, figures, and events and has a second meaning

Table 8 Allegory in Coldplay's Song Lyrics

Lyrics	Song entitle	Line
My heart is yours	Sparks	9
Here am I in my little bubble	Trouble	16
A spider web is tangled up with me	Trouble	2

In line ninth "My heart is yours", is a part of lyric in Coldplay song entitled spark. The phrase "heart" is closely related with feeling. That's why, the word considered as an allegory, because it has a second meaning. It is being used in a figurative way to refers to the feeling. So, the literal interpretation of this figurative is his feeling just for the women who he loves. In line sixteenth "Here am I in my little bubble", is a part of lyric in Coldplay song entitled trouble. This songs tells about a man who got a complicated trouble. He can't do anything, he only give up with the situations. The phrase "little bubble" is narrative or description that has a second meaning, this phrase describe something which is small, limited and moved according the situation. As well as limitations. This limitation made his life surrender to the situation. The word "little bubble" has a second meaning as a limitations. This lyric, a spider web is tangled up with me song, considered as an allegory, because these lyrics describe abstract ideas and principles into terms of characters, figures, and events. The objective of its use is to teach some kind of a moral lesson. ^[4] Allegory is narrative or description that has a second meaning beneath the surface one. In this lyric the words "spider web" has a second meaning that can describe as an events. Based on the context of the song, "spider web" are described as a complicated problem that ensnare humans. So, the real meaning of the lyric is the problem are very complicated and ensnare the singer.

The functions of metonymy based on the explanations above is to quipped. Synecdoche are to seduce and to admit something. Hyperbole are used to praise, to express pride, and to affirm something. The functions of personification are to praise, to support and influence something. The functions of metaphor are to praise and to affirm. The functions of simile are to admire, to imitate and compare. The functions of synecdoche based on the explanations above are to show interest, to insinuate, and to admire whilst the functions of allegory are to seduce, to affirm something, and teach a moral lesson.

4 Conclusion

There are many types and meaning of figurative found in those song lyric. Those lyric go far beyond the literal meaning. The type were Metonymy, Synecdoche, Hyperbole, Personification, Metaphor, Simile, Symbol, and Allegory. Based on the analysis, Hyperbole, Personification, Metaphor, and Symbols are the dominant types that appeared most with each number 5, following by Simile as the second most with the number 4, following by Synecdoche and Allegory and Metonymy with each number 3. Thus, the total of all is 33 of the figurative meaning found in the data source. There are several meaning of the lyrics found in every type of figurative meanings. The first is metonymy, the meaning contained in metonymy is to

quipped. The second is synecdoche, the meaning indicates in synecdoche are to seduce and to admitted something. Third is Hyperbole, the meanings contained in hyperbole are to praise, to express pride, and to affirm something. Fourth is Personification, the meanings that contained in personification are praise, to support and influence something. Fifth is Metaphor, the meanings contained in this type are to praise and to affirm. Six is simile, the meaning contained in simile are to admire, to imitate and compare. Seven is Symbol, the meaning contained in symbol are to show interest, to insinuate, and to admire and the last is allegory, the meaning indicated in allegory are to affirm something, and teach a moral lesson.

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