

Figurative Language Found In Olivia Rodrigo's Album "Guts"

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Abstract: This study aimed to identify the type and analyze the meaning of figurative language in the "Guts" album song lyrics. The data were obtained from 12 songs entitled: "All-American Bitch", "Bad Idea Right?", "Vampire", "Lacy", "Ballad of a Homeschooled Girl", "Making the Bed", "Logical", "Get Him Back!", "Love is Embarrassing", "The Grudge", "Pretty isn't Pretty", and "Teenage Dream". This study used a descriptive qualitative method. This study used the theory of types of figurative language from Abrams and Harpham (2015) and the theory from Leech (1981) to analyze the meaning of figurative language. Out of the 14 types of figurative language, the writer only found seven types of figurative language, namely, simile, metaphor, hyperbole, kenning, paradox, irony, and aporia. They were followed by some meanings, which were connotative and affective.

1. INTRODUCTION

Humans are known to be social beings, meaning they tend to communicate, interact, and socialize with others (Sari and Pasaribu, 2023). One essential tool for communication is language. People usually learn how to express themselves correctly in order to use a language efficiently. Language is studied from several perspectives in linguistics, one of which is semantics. Semantics is the study of sentence meaning and word meaning (Griffiths, 2006:6). Semantics is the study of meaning interpretation and negotiation. Understanding word meanings is essential to comprehending the context.

Understanding meaning can be achieved through conversation and various forms of literature, including songs. Songwriters use songs to convey a wide range of emotions. They frequently use non-literal or figurative language to deepen the meaning of the lyrics. However, listeners frequently need help to grasp the meaning of lyrics that use such language. This is why the writer conducted this study.

In this study, the author focused on finding various types of figurative language and their meanings within song lyrics, using the theories of Abrams and Harpham (2015) and Leech (1981). According to Abrams and Harpham (2015), figurative language is the use of words in a way that's different from their usual word meaning or order, all to create a unique effect or meaning. It is classified into 14 types: simile, metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, personification, kenning, aporia, conceit, hyperbole, understatement, irony, paradox, periphrasis, and pun. Meanwhile, Leech (1981) classifies meaning into seven types: conceptual, connotative, social, affective, reflected, collocative, and thematic. A songwriter uses figurative language in a song not only to enhance the lyrics but also to communicate a deeper meaning and make the lyrics more captivating and memorable.

Some related studies were selected to support this study. The first is entitled: "Figurative Language in Selected Shawn Mendes Album Song Lyrics." This research aims to identify the types of figurative language and analyze their meanings in selected songs from Shawn Mendes' albums. This research used the qualitative method and Reaske's (1996) theory of figurative language. The study found five types of figurative language: metaphors, hyperboles, personifications, similes, and repetitions, with hyperboles being the most common, with 11 findings. The difference between this



previous study and this study is in figurative language theory, while it used Reaske's (1996) and Abrams and Harpham's (2015). The next study is entitled: "An Analysis of Figurative Language in the Song Lyrics of Map of the Soul: 7 Album". This research aimed to identify the types and meanings of figurative language used in the lyrics of BTS songs from the *Map of the Soul: 7* album. The study used the descriptive qualitative analysis method, using Abrams's (1999) theory to guide the analysis. The findings revealed 53 data sets of figurative language, with personification being the most dominant (12 data) in total.

For these reasons, the writer was interested in finding and analyzing figurative language in song lyrics since the listener frequently needs help understanding the meaning of the figurative language. The writer chose Olivia Rodrigo's songs in her latest album, "Guts" because she is known for using unique words in delivering her feelings through her lyrics and achieved many awards and achievement through this album. Olivia Rodrigo uses metaphorical language in her songs to convey a deeper meaning and make the lyrics more interesting and memorable. There were two questions in this study: to find out the types of figurative language in the "Guts" album and the meanings of figurative language that occurred in the song lyrics of the "Guts" album.

2. METHOD

The data was collected from Olivia Rodrigo's "Guts" album, her second and most recent release, which came out in 2023. The album became a huge success after its release, reaching the top of the album charts in 15 countries. The album consists of 12 songs. The songs are All-American Bitch, Bad Idea Right?, Vampire, Lacy, Ballad of a Homeschooled Girl, Making the Bed, Logical, Get Him Back!, Love is Embarrassing, The Grudge, Pretty isn't Pretty, and Teenage Dream.

The study focused on analyzing figurative language within the lyrics of the songs from the "Guts" album. To achieve this, the study used theory one from Abrams and Harpham (2015) which categorized it into 14 types, which are simile, metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, personification, kenning, aporia, conceit, hyperbole, understatement, irony, paradox, periphrasis, and pun; and Leech's (1981) which are connotative, affective, conceptual, social, reflected, collocative, and thematic. The main aim of this study was to find out the types of figurative language Abrams and Harpham (2015) and the meaning of figurative language in these song lyrics Leech (1981). In this study, the writer used a descriptive qualitative method. Creswell (2014:4) stated that it is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups attach to a social or human problem. It involves collecting and analyzing data in words, images, or other non-numerical forms of information.

The data collection process involved the following steps: first, listening to the 12 songs from the "Guts" album; second, carefully reading the lyrics; and finally, highlighting the figurative language identified in it. The data analyzing process was carried out in several steps—the first step involved collecting the data from Olivia Rodrigo's YouTube channel. The second step was identifying the figurative language in the song lyrics and categorizing it based on its types. After identification and categorization, the third step was compiling all the data into a table. The fourth step involved determining the type and meaning of each piece of data, using Abrams and Harpham's (2015) theory for types of figurative language and Leech's (1981) theory for meanings. The final step was to provide a detailed explanation of the results based on their identified types and meanings.

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Based on the theories from Abrams and Harpham (2015) for the types and Leech (1981) for the meaning of figurative language identified, Table 1. below presents the lyrics from the “Guts” album that contains figurative language.

Tabel 1. Types and Meaning of Figurative Language Found

No	Lyric	Types of Figurative Language	Meaning of Figurative Language
1.	“I am light as a feather”	Simile	Connotative
2.	“Bleedin’ me dry, like a goddamn vampire”	Simile	Connotative
3.	“And I make light of the darkness”	Metaphor	Connotative
4.	“Aren’t you the sweetest thing on this side of hell?”	Metaphor	Connotative
5.	“And he would take us out to parties and the night would never end”	Hyperbole	Connotative
6.	“And I damn near started World War III”	Hyperbole	Connotative
7.	“Seein’ you tonight, it’s a bad idea, right?”	Aporia	Affective
8.	“Yeah, they all say that it gets better, it gets better, but what if I don’t?”	Aporia	Affective
9.	“Bloodsucker, famef*cker”	Kenning	Connotative
10.	“When pretty isn’t pretty enough, what do you do?”	Paradox	Connotative
11.	“And now you got me thinking Two plus two equals five”	Irony	Connotative
12.	“Cause if rain don’t pour and sun don’t shine Then changing you is possible”	Irony	Connotative

This section explains the further analysis of the types and meanings of samples of figurative languages found in the “Guts” album. The analysis is as follows:

Simile Figurative Language

Data 1 : I am light as a feather

(Lyric From All American B*tch)

The lyric above shows a comparison between two different things with the word ‘as’ to compare those two, which are ‘I am light’ and ‘a feather.’ This comparison categorizes the lyric as a simile, according to Abrams and Harpham’s (2015) theory of figurative language. To express how light she feels, the singer compares her weight to that of a feather, which is light or almost weightless. This phrase is also commonly used to express a sense of freedom and being unburdened.

The lyric above is classified as having connotative meaning by Leech's (1981) theory of meaning because it exceeds its literal meaning. Since no human is ever the same weight as a feather, the expression "I am light as a feather" cannot be interpreted literally. The singer speaks to society's expectations that women should be thin, delicate, and fragile in this environment. However, she also conveys a feeling of freedom by defying these expectations and embracing herself and her choices. In the following line, she emphasizes this even more by stating, 'I am stiff as a board', implying she can be light and stiff at the same time.

Data 2 : Bleedin' me dry, like a goddamn vampire

(Lyric From Vampire)

The lyric above shows a comparison between two different things with the word 'like' to compare those two, which are 'Bleedin' me dry' and 'a goddamn vampire.' This comparison categorizes the lyric as a simile, according to Abrams and Harpham's (2015) theory of figurative language. The singer makes a comparison between her ex-boyfriend's emotional pain and the way a vampire sucks its prey. According to the Cambridge School Dictionary (2008:818), vampire is an imaginary creature in stories who, once dead, then reborn and bites people's necks to drink their blood.

The lyric above is classified as having connotative meaning by Leech's (1981) theory of meaning because it exceeds its literal meaning. "Bleedin' me dry like a goddamn vampire" is not meant to be interpreted literally, as vampires are mythical creatures, and it is impossible for someone to be drained of all of their blood and still be alive. In this context, the singer portrays her ex-boyfriend as someone who manipulated and exploited her energy and feelings for his gain.

Metaphor Figurative Language

Data 3 : And I make light of the darkness

(Lyric From All American B*tch)

The lyric above symbolizes something by saying one thing is something else without adding a comparison, which is the words' light' and 'darkness.' This categorizes the lyric as a metaphor, according to Abrams and Harpham's (2015) theory of figurative language. "Light" often symbolizes positivity, purity, goodness, hope, and life. In contrast, "darkness" typically represents negativity, impurity, evil, loss, and death.

The lyric above is classified as having connotative meaning by Leech's (1981) theory of meaning because it exceeds its literal meaning. "And I make light of the darkness" cannot be taken literally, as the word "light" symbolizes her effort to remain positive, while "darkness" represents the difficulties she faces. In this context, the singer expresses how she can face her troubles by looking for the good in them or keeping a positive mindset.

Data 4 : Aren't you the sweetest thing on this side of hell?

(Lyric From Lacy)

The lyric above symbolizes something by saying one thing is something else without adding a comparison, which is the words' sweetest thing' and 'hell. This categorizes the lyric as a metaphor, according to Abrams and Harpham's (2015) theory of figurative language. 'Sweetest thing' can symbolize several things depending on the context, but it often represents a general expression of appreciation or fondness for a person, memory, or experience. On the other hand, 'hell' usually symbolizes something horrible, sinister, wicked, full of agony, hopelessness, and misery."

The lyric above is classified as having connotative meaning by Leech's (1981) theory of meaning because it exceeds its literal meaning. "Aren't you the sweetest thing on this side of hell?" is not meant to be taken literally. The term "sweetest thing" in this line refers to the singer's boyfriend's ex-girlfriend, "Lacy," who is described as having an endearing and caring character that the singer finds admirable. Meanwhile, "hell" metaphorically represents the singer's world, filled with insecurity and jealousy towards 'Lacy'. In this context, the singer expresses how she views 'Lacy' as someone she admires and is increasingly obsessed with due to 'Lacy's' perceived perfection, leading to intense self-comparison and deep romantic obsession.

Hyperbole Figurative Language

Data 5 : And he would take us out to parties and the night would never end

(Lyric From Get Him Back!)

The lyric above shows an excessive exaggeration of a situation, which is the phrase 'the night would never end'. This categorizes the lyric as a hyperbole according to Abrams and Harpham's (2015) theory of figurative language. The phrase is an exaggeration used to convey how enjoyable the situation is, making it feel like it could last forever. However, it is known that night cannot last forever and will eventually turn to morning.

The lyric above is classified as having connotative meaning by Leech's (1981) theory of meaning because it exceeds its literal meaning. "And he would take us out to parties and the night would never end" is not meant to be taken literally since the night cannot last forever. The singer expresses that whenever she went out to parties with her ex-boyfriend, the experience felt so enjoyable that she wished it would continue forever.

Data 6 : And I damn near started World War III

(Lyric From Love Is Embarrassing)

The lyric above shows an excessive exaggeration of a situation which is the phrase, 'And I damn near started World War III.' This categorizes the lyric as a hyperbole according to Abrams and Harpham's (2015) theory of figurative language. A world war involves most major nations globally, with severe consequences. There have been two such conflicts in history: World War I and II. The phrase "World War III" refers to an intense and painful emotional experience that follows a challenging circumstance, such as a breakup, which may cause someone to act in ways they usually would not.

The lyric above is classified as having connotative meaning by Leech's (1981) theory of meaning because it exceeds its literal meaning. "And I damn near started World War III" is not meant to be taken literally, as it is impossible for the singer actually to start a global conflict over a boy. In this context, the singer exaggerates the situation to convey how deeply hurt and heartbroken she felt, using the phrase to emphasize that she was on the verge of an emotional breakdown.

Aporia Figurative Language

Data 7 : Seein' you tonight, it's a bad idea, right?

(Lyric From Bad Idea, Right?)

The lyric shows a hint of uncertainty or doubt in the form of a question. This categorizes the lyric as an aporia according to Abrams and Harpham's (2015) theory of figurative language. Uncertainty or doubt can be either genuine or feigned, with different purposes, such as seeking opinions, views, or ideas or asking a rhetorical question that does not require an answer. Here, the song's lyrics express a pretended doubt that does not require an explanation because the singer already knows the answer.

According to Leech's (1981) theory of meaning, the lyric above carries affective meaning because it conveys an emotional connection to the word "bad." "Bad" is used to express an unpleasant feeling toward something or someone. In this context, the singer expresses uncertainty about seeing her ex-boyfriend. This uncertainty is reflected in the repeated questioning throughout the song. However, the question is not meant to be answered, as the singer has already made up her mind. This is evident in the following lyric, "F*ck it, it's fine," which suggests that she does not care whether her actions are good or bad; for her, the decision is acceptable.

**Data 8 : Yeah, they all say that it gets better, it gets better, but what if I
Do not?**

(Lyric From Teenage Dream)

The lyric shows a hint of uncertainty or doubt in the form of a question. This categorizes the lyric as an aporia according to Abrams and Harpham's (2015) theory of figurative language. Uncertainty or doubt can be either genuine or feigned, with different purposes, such as seeking opinions, views, or ideas or asking a rhetorical question that does not require an answer. Here, the lyrics express a genuine sense of doubt.

According to Leech's (1981) theory of meaning, the lyric above has affective meaning since it expresses an emotional bond with the word "better." The word "better" conveys the impression that something or someone is better quality. Here, the singer conveys a sincere doubt about whether maturing will genuinely result in a better life. Others have told her that life gets better as she gets older, but she is unsure what would happen if her life did not go as planned.

Kenning Figurative Language

Data 9 : Bloodsucker, famefucker

(Lyric From Vampire)

The lyric consists of two words to describe the noun, which are the words 'blood' and 'sucker' to describe the word vampire. This categorizes the lyric as a kenning according to Abrams and Harpham's (2015) theory of figurative language. "Bloodsucker" is commonly associated with the word "vampire." A vampire is a mythical creature known as a once-dead person who is revived after being bitten by another vampire and survives by drinking the blood of their victims.

The lyric above is classified as having connotative meaning by Leech's (1981) theory of meaning because it exceeds its literal meaning. "'Bloodsucker' goes beyond its literal meaning, as the singer is not referring to her ex-boyfriend as a real vampire or someone who literally sucks blood. Rather, she metaphorically describes how her ex-boyfriend exploited her emotions, similar to how a vampire drains its victims' blood. The lyric describes how her ex-boyfriend played on her emotions, acting as though he loved and cared for her. However, in truth, his acts were deceptive, similar to how a vampire lures its victims into a secret location only to murder them by sucking blood."

Paradox Figurative Language

Data 10 : When pretty is not pretty enough, what do you do?

(Lyric From Pretty Isn't Pretty)

The lyric shows conflicting and absurd ideas, but if we look closer, it expresses a deeper meaning and truth. This categorizes the lyric as a paradox according to Abrams and Harpham's (2015) theory of figurative language. 'Pretty' is a term used to describe someone or something as attractive or beautiful. At first glance, the lyric may appear odd—how can something or someone be considered pretty yet not pretty enough? However, if one looks closely, the phrase has a deeper meaning about the absurdity of

beauty standards, which may make someone doubt and feel self-conscious about their looks.

The lyric above is classified as having connotative meaning by Leech's (1981) theory of meaning because it exceeds its literal meaning. The question "When pretty isn't pretty enough, what do you do?" has more depth than it first appears to since the singer is not only posing what to do when one does not match society's ideals of beauty. Instead, she expresses her emotional struggle and frustration with keeping up with these unrealistic standards. In this situation, the singer expresses her insecurities and belief that she is never attractive enough despite her best attempts to fit in.

Irony Figurative Language

Data 11 : And now you got me thinking two plus two equals five

(Lyric From Logical)

The lyric shows a contradiction between what is expected and what happened. This categorizes the lyric as a paradox according to Abrams and Harpham's (2015) theory of figurative language. "It is well acknowledged that two plus two equals four, not five. The lyric reflects a situation where the expected outcome is completely different from reality. It symbolizes being deceived into believing something illogical and untrue. The singer thought she would be in a typical, loving relationship where he would feel the same, but instead she ended up in a toxic relationship where he deceived and manipulated her."

The lyric above is classified as having connotative meaning by Leech's (1981) theory of meaning because it exceeds its literal meaning. Moreover, now you got me thinking two plus two equals five" is not meant to be taken literally. It is an idiomatic expression illustrating how love can cloud judgment, causing someone to reject reality and doubt even the most basic realities. The singer describes how her ex-boyfriend played on her feelings in this situation, knowing she would accept whatever he said, even if it went against logic.

Data 12 : 'Cause if rain don't pour and sun don't shine then changing you is possible

(Lyric From Logical)

The lyric shows a contradiction between what is expected and what happened. This categorizes the lyric as a paradox according to Abrams and Harpham's (2015) theory of figurative language. The singer's desperate attempt to hold onto hope that the other person would change—even though he never will is depicted in the line. She compares unrealistic optimism that 'changing you is possible' and the statement 'if rain don't pour and sun don't shine.' The lyric emphasizes that changing him is as impossible as denying these natural truths because rain does fall and the sun does shine.

The lyric above is classified as having connotative meaning by Leech's (1981) theory of meaning because it exceeds its literal meaning. 'Cause if rain don't pour and sun don't shine then changing you is possible' convey the singer's expectation that her ex-boyfriend would change, even if it seems impossible. She describes how her ex-boyfriend's fake acts of affection and manipulations make her believe in something unlogical.

4. CONCLUSION

This study answered the two research problems, which revolve around identifying the types of figurative language in the "Guts" album and understanding its underlying

meaning. The writer examined 12 data and found seven types of figurative language such as simile (2), metaphor (2), hyperbole (2), kenning (1), paradox (1), irony (2), and aporia (2). Simile, hyperbole, kenning, paradox, and aporia are the most dominant. Meanwhile, for the meaning, the writer only found two types, connotative and affective, with connotative being the most dominant.

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