

**A COMPARISON OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE FOUND IN JAVANESE  
AND ENGLISH SONGS:**

**A SEMANTICS ANALYSIS**



**THESIS**

*Submitted to the Faculty of Cultural Sciences Hasanuddin University in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirement to Obtain Sarjana Degree in English Department*

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**A COMPARISON OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE FOUND IN**

**JAVANESE AND ENGLISH SONGS: A Semantics Analysis**

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**AGREEMENT**

On Friday, October 28<sup>th</sup> 2022, the Board of Thesis Examination has kindly approved a thesis by Abidah Sulthanah (F041181017) entitled “**A Comparison of Figurative Language found in Javanese and English Songs: A Semantics Analysis**” submitted in fulfillment one of the requirements to obtain Sarjana Degree in English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University.

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The thesis by Abidah Sulthanah (F041181017) entitled **A Comparison of Figurative Language found in Javanese and English Songs: A Semantics Analysis** has been revised as advised during the examination on October 28<sup>th</sup> 2022 and is approved by the Board of Undergraduate Thesis Examiners:

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Makassar, 28<sup>th</sup> October 2022



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**APPROVAL FORM**

With reference to the letter of the dean of Faculty of Cultural Sciences Hasanuddin University No.542/UN.4.9.1/KEP/2022 regarding supervision, we hereby confirm to approve the undergraduate thesis draft by Abidah Sulthanah (F041181017) to be examined at the English Literature Study Program of Faculty of Cultural Sciences.

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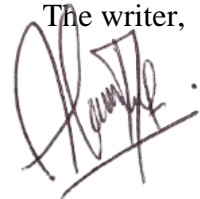
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The writer realizes that this thesis is still far from being perfect. Therefore, the writer accepts input, criticism and suggestions for improvement in the future.

Makassar, 28 October 2022

The writer,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Abidah Sulthanah', written over a horizontal line.

Abidah Sulthanah

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## ABSTRACT

**Abidah Sulthanah.** *A Comparison of Figurative Language Found in Javanese and English Songs.* (Supervised by **Karmila Mokoginta** and **Ainun Fatimah**)

This study aims to analyze the use of the types of figurative language found in two categories of songs, namely Javanese songs and English songs. In addition, the writer explains the meaning of figurative language contained in the lyrics of the songs.

The research used a qualitative descriptive method. The data were obtained from the lyrics of the song. The data collection was conducted by reading the entire lyrics and selecting parts of the lyrics that contain the types of figurative language in it, and analyzing data relevant to the formulation of the research questions.

Based on the results of the analysis, there are 48 (forty-eight) data related to the use of figurative language in song lyrics. The data types include simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole, symbol, repetition. The results show that English songs use more figurative language than Javanese songs. The most dominant types of figurative language in English and Javanese songs are metaphor and hyperbole respectively.

Keyword: *figurative language, Javanese songs, English songs, Semantics*

## ABSTRAK

**Abidah Sulthanah.** *Perbandingan Bahasa Kiasan pada Lagu bahasa Jawa dan lagu bahasa Inggris.* (Dibimbing oleh **Karmila Mokoginta** dan **Ainun Fatimah**)

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis penggunaan jenis-jenis bahasa kiasan yang terdapat pada dua jenis lagu, yaitu lagu Jawa dan lagu Inggris. Selain itu, penulis menjelaskan makna dari setiap bahasa kiasan yang terkandung dalam lirik lagu tersebut.

Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif. Data diperoleh dari lirik lagu. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan membaca keseluruhan lirik dan memilih bagian lirik yang mengandung bahasa kiasan di dalamnya, dan menganalisis data yang relevan dengan rumusan masalah pada penelitian ini.

Berdasarkan hasil analisis, terdapat 48 (empat puluh delapan) data terkait penggunaan bahasa kiasan dalam lirik lagu. Jenis datanya antara lain simile, metafora, personifikasi, hiperbola, simbol, dan perulangan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa lagu berbahasa Inggris lebih banyak menggunakan bahasa kiasan daripada lagu Jawa. Jenis bahasa kiasan yang paling dominan adalah metafora (dalam lagu-lagu bahasa Inggris) dan hiperbola (dalam lagu-lagu bahasa Jawa).

Kata Kunci : *bahasa kiasan, Lagu bahasa Jawa, Lagu bahasa Inggris, Semantik*

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **A. Background of the Study**

A figurative language is a form of language that can be used to describe thoughts or feelings. It is the language used in all types of creative writing. Figurative language gives a deeper, hidden, and indirect meaning to words in conveying messages effectively because it can produce more intensity of feeling and provide imaginative enjoyment to the readers and listeners. Through figurative language, speakers or writers express their thoughts using attractive language styles. One of the works that use a lot of figurative languages is a song.

Figurative language gives appeal to song lyrics so that listeners have the ability and interest to understand the meaning and mission of the song. Songs are kind of imaginative literary work in which composers use figurative language to create beautiful and fancy lyrics. The lyrics express someone's personal feelings and thoughts. In this case, songs can be used as a means to convey ideas and feelings so that people can understand what the creator meant.

Listening to music is fun and relaxing. Therefore, listeners usually only listen to songs to calm their minds, relax, and enjoy each instrument in the



song, but often do not understand the meaning of the song. Some people like to listen to songs from other regions even though they do not understand the language, just because they feel the song is very pleasant to hear. However, understanding the meaning of the song's lyrics is important because we can know the song's meaning and purpose. Some songs have impolite lyrics, so knowledge about the song's mean can be useful. Another benefit of knowing the meaning of the song is to appreciate and understand the culture of other people.

In this study, the writer chose ten songs for her research, five Javanese songs and five English songs. The writer chose them because they were both so popular from ancient times until now. Javanese songs are widely known everywhere because they have pleasant instruments such as *koplo* and *dangdut*. English songs are already well known in various circles, and there is no doubt about their popularity. Another reason why the writer chose Javanese songs is that it follows the writer's hometown, namely Java. The writer is curious about the differences that occur in the types of figurative language used in Javanese and English songs, so the writer raises the object as the primary data in this study. The writer has not found a research that comparing songs from different language, so it is expected that the present study can fill this gap.

## **B. Identification of the Problem**

According to the background above, the writer identified that there are some problems of this study, as follows :

- 1) There are some difficulties in understanding the meaning of Javanese songs.
- 2) Some lyrics have double meaning, so it is difficult to find the true meaning.
- 3) Some songs contain impolite words.
- 4) There are some difficulties in understanding the figurative language in Javanese songs.
- 5) There are significant differences in figurative language in Javanese and English songs.

## **C. Scope of the Problem**

Based on the identification of the problem above, the writer decided to limit the scope of the problem only to focus on what types of figurative languages are most dominantly used in Javanese and English songs. The author analyzed only ten songs (five Javanese songs and five English songs). The Javanese songs are *Cidro* by *Didi Kempot*, *Sewu Kuto* by *Didi Kempot*, *Kartoyono medot janji* by *Denny Caknan*, *Sayang* by *Via Vallen*, *Bojo Galak* by *Nella Kharisma*, and English Songs are *Halo* by *Beyonce*, *Heal the World* by *Michael Jackson*, *Perfect* by *Ed Sheeran*, *I'm Yours* by *Jason Mraz*, and *Perfect* by *One Direction*. The author uses the theory of Perrine (1993) as the theoretical background of this study.

#### **D. Research Questions**

- 1) What types of figurative language are used in Javanese and English songs?
- 2) What are the meanings of figurative language used in Javanese and English songs?
- 3) What are the most dominant types of figurative language used in Javanese and English songs?

#### **E. Objectives of the Study**

Based on the research question above, this research has several objectives as follows:

- 1) to analyze the types of figurative language used in Javanese and English songs,
- 2) to explain the meaning of figurative language used in Javanese and English songs, and
- 3) to identify the most dominant types of figurative language used in Javanese and English songs.

#### **F. Significance of the Study**

The writer hopes that this research can help contribute to others. The benefits can be divided into two as follows:

- 1) Theoretical Significance

This research can be used as a basis for obtaining additional information and increasing knowledge about figurative language, especially in Javanese and English songs

## 2) Practical Significance

This research can be a guide for future researchers to improve their knowledge in researching a song, especially regarding the types of figurative language in songs. Also, it can be used as a reference to readers regarding the types and the meaning of figurative language in songs.

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### A. Previous Study

In completing this research, the writer found four similar studies related to figurative language. They are used as references in this study. The researchers are explained below:

A study by Sungkowati (2017), *Figurative Language of Short Story 'Surabaya' by Totilawati Tjitrawasita* found that three figurative languages are mostly used by Totilawati Tjitrawasita in "Surabaya" short stories, namely similes, metaphors, and personifications. The three figurative languages dominated the choice of language used by Totilawati Tjitrawasita in describing the struggle of human life in the midst of nature, in the villages and city, which was not on her side.

The next study was conducted by Amelia (2019) entitled *Figurative Language in Beyonce's selected songs*. She found that Beyonce's selected songs used six types of figurative languages : simile, metaphor, personification, repetition, symbol, and hyperbole but only four types of figurative language that appear most often in the song, namely metaphor, simile, personification and repetition.

Camelia et al. (2020) wrote about *Comparative Types of Figurative Language in Aam Amalia's Jangji Asih*. They found that figurative language in Sundanese is very diverse. However, based on the data

contained in the novel, several comparative language styles can be divided into four types: *ngupamakeun* (simile), *lalandian* (metaphor), *mijalma* (personification), and *silib* (sarcasm).

The last study is from Dewi L.A. (2020), *Figurative Language in Maher Zain's song lyrics*. According to the research, the most dominant figurative language used in Maher Zain's songs was hyperbole. She said that the use of hyperbole was meant produce images in the minds of listeners and to explain ideas and emotions in a more efficient way so that Maher Zain's songs can be understood easily.

Based on the result from the researches above, the writer will identify the figurative language in some English and Javanese modern songs based on the theory of figurative language proposed by Perrine (1993) which was constructed by Greg Johnson and Thomas R. Arp (Thirteenth Edition).

## **B. Theoretical Background**

### **1. Meaning (Linguistics)**

In linguistics, meaning is conveyed in words, sentences, signs, or symbols by people through the language of communication. It is about how a writer or a speaker conveys the message to the readers or listeners. Meaning has an important role in communication because there can be no language without meaning, as Acheoah et al. (2018:1)



said that if the meaning is a system, then language is systemic. That means meaning has an important role in all forms of language.

There are seven types of meanings according to Leech (1981:9-20) :

- a) Conceptual meaning or sense, which is logical, cognitive, or denotative content.
- b) Connotative meaning is an expression that has communicative value because of what it refers to.
- c) Social meaning is conveyed through the social context in which language is used.
- d) Affective meaning is the communication of the feelings and attitudes of the speaker or writer.
- e) Reflected meaning refers to meanings that arise in the context of multiple conceptual meanings when one meaning of a word is part of our response to another meaning.
- f) Collocative meaning includes the associations a word acquires due to the meaning of the word that occurs in that context.
- g) Thematic meaning is conveyed by organizing information in sequence and focus.

Fromkin et al. (2013:140) stated that semantics is the study of the linguistic meaning of morphemes, words, phrases, and sentences. From these theories, the writer concluded that semantics is the study of the meaning of words, phrases, and sentences to find more conventional meanings.

## **2. Figurative Language**

Figurative language is a language that cannot (or should not) be taken literally (Johnson & Arp, 2016:774). It is a language that cannot be taken literally and has a meaning other than its true meaning. According to Permatasari et al. (2016:91), figurative language depends on the communication situation and the context in which words are used, which seems to be characteristic of language in general. Also, Perrine (in Ratnasari, 2019:10) stated that figurative language is an extraordinary way of describing the true meaning of things. Knowing the type of figurative language is helpful to identify them more clearly when analyzing songs.

Figurative language is a language used to give beautiful feeling, interesting impression, emphasize feelings, and thoughts about something to be conveyed. In figurative language, everything becomes imaginative, and has an implied meaning, and does not describe the real meaning so that it makes the listeners/readers have to guess what the real meaning is.

Johnson & Arp (2016:780-781) stated that Perrine defined four main reasons for using figurative language. Firstly, figurative language provides the readers the imaginative pleasure of literary works. Secondly, it is a way of bringing additional imagery into verse, making the abstract concrete, and making literary works more sensuous.

Thirdly, figurative is a way of adding emotional intensity to otherwise merely informative statements and conveying attitudes along with information. The last is a way of saying much in a brief compass.

Also, Perrine divided that figurative language consists of 12 kinds, they are: simile, metaphor, personification, apostrophe, synecdoche, metonymy, symbol, allegory, paradox, hyperbole/overstatement, understatement, and irony.

They are types of figurative language consists of 12 kinds, as follows:

**a) Simile**

A simile is a comparison between two things that are essentially unlike by using a connective word. It is figure of speech that compares one thing to another that is similar which uses “as” or “like”. Simile also uses some other words such as “than”, “resembles”, “similar”, “to”, or “seems” to express something.

Example :

She is cute as kitten

He look like a Prince

### **b) Metaphor**

Metaphor is a figurative term that compares two fundamentally different things without using conjunctions such as "like" or "as". Metaphors are used to explain an intention or idea by providing an easier-to-understand parable.

Example :

Time is money.

She is the sunshine in your life

### **c) Personification**

Personification is giving the attributes of the human being to an animal, an object, or an idea. It is a condition where an inanimate object, abstract, or aspect of natural elements is described as if it were human.

Example :

The sky misses the sun at night

The words leapt off the page

### **d) Apostrophe**

An apostrophe is defined as addressing someone absent or something non-human as if it is alive, present, and could reply to what is being said. It is used as an arrangement of words addressing a non-existent

person or an abstract idea in such a way as if it were present and capable of understanding feelings.

Example :

Twinkle - Twinkle the star song; *Twinkle, twinkle, little star, how I wonder what you are. Up above the world so high. Like a diamond in the sky.* (a child addresses a star: an imaginary idea).

#### **e) Synecdoche**

Synecdoche is the word or phrase in which a part for the whole of something. It is a part of a thing to signify the whole thing or uses the whole to signify the part.

Example :

Australia lost by two goals. (Australia is used to represent the Australian team).

Let's see my new Anggoras. (Anggora is part of cat and cat as the whole).

#### **f) Metonymy**

Metonymy is a figure of speech that uses a word to represent another thing closely related to the intended thing. The relationship between the word and represented thing can be as an inventor and his invention, owner and the owned thing, and so on.

Example :

The white house has announced its new cabinet (The white house as the President house)

### **g) Symbolism**

Symbolism is an object or a word to represent an abstract idea. An action, person, place, word, or object can all have a symbolic meaning. Symbolism can give a literal work more richness, interest, and make the meaning deeper. Symbols can often be people, places, things, or events that figuratively represent other things. A symbol can be defined as something more meaningful than itself.

Example :

Red Rose (symbolize love or something beautiful)

Sunflower (Symbolizes a bright life)

### **h) Allegory**

Allegory has been defined sometimes as an extended metaphor and sometimes as a series of related symbols. Allegory is a narrative or description that has a second meaning beneath the surface one in which the ideas are in the form of narrative to describe characters.

Example :

George Orwell – Animal Farm.



John Bunyan – The Pilgrim’s Progress.

**i) Paradox**

As a figure of speech, a paradox is a statement that is seemingly self-contradiction or opposed to what is commonly held to be true but which nevertheless contains a truth. Statements that contain paradoxes, often contain contradictory words. Two contradictory words are usually antonyms. The paradox is an obvious contradiction, but true in a way.

Example :

Feel lonely in the crowd

**j) Hyperbole**

Hyperbole or overstatement is simply exaggeration but exaggeration in the service of truth. Hyperbole is an overstatement when talking about something that looks ridiculous. It is formed from the basic several jokes that are used as a way to insult, or simply is used to dramatize a situation, where in the reality of the situation may not be that bad.

Example :

Your skin is softer than silk

If I can’t get a new girlfriend, I will die

### **k) Understatement**

Understatement is a figurative language that makes less meaning. It is saying less than one means that may exist in what are we said or merely in how one says it.

Example :

After wrecking the car; There's a little scratch.

After giving something special; Take it! just a little gift.

### **l) Irony**

Irony is a figurative language that implies something different, sometimes even contrary to what is said. It is saying the opposite of what one means. The sentence of which the real meaning is completely opposed to its professed or surface meaning. On other hand, it is a literary device or figure that may be used in the service of sarcasm or ridicule.

Example :

That movie was so good, you fell asleep in the cinema.

I love your voice when you stop singing.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **A. Research Design**

This study used qualitative descriptive method as a type of research method, where the main object is based on five Javanese songs and five English songs. Descriptive method is used in presenting the data. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (In Anastasia: 49), It is a method of explaining, analyzing, and classifying things through a variety of techniques, surveys, interviews, questionnaires, and tests.

The descriptive method that used is combined with a semantic approach to knowledge representation used an implicit semantic context that defines a meaning (Stanojevic, 2009). It was to examine the problem because this study aims to describe and classify the different types of figurative language found in Javanese songs and English songs. The qualitative method used by the writer in this study also aims to directly analyze the existing figurative language. The writer focused on the lyrics of Javanese songs and English songs to analyze figurative language used.

#### **B. Data Collection Method**

In order to collect all the data for this research, there were several steps the writer will did, as follows :

1. The songs were downloaded from digital music or internet site,