An Analysis of Figurative Language of Poetry in English Textbook for Senior High School

Faurina Anastasia[1], Mardatila[2], M. Riskiyadi Siregar[3]
UIN Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau

bundajehan.anastasia@gmail.com[1]
1010425332@students.uin-suska.ac.id[2]
mriskiyadisiregar@gmail.com[3]

Abstract
Figurative language of poetry found in English textbook was the object of this research. This study used qualitative method and content analysis approach to identify and analyse figurative language in poetry. The data collection technique used English textbook for senior high school. Three poetry were selected as samples, identified into the types of figurative language, and then analyzed into Perrine's theory of twelve types of figurative language. The technique analysis used the data coding to identify and analyse figurative language in the poetry. The findings of this study show that there are five types of figurative language found, namely: personification, simile, irony, metaphor, and symbol. From the five, the most used is metaphor. The significance of this research are identify and analyse the types of figurative language of poetry that presented in the English textbook used in senior high school; it can aid educators in developing targeted instructional strategies to improve students' comprehension and appreciation of poetic devices; and the research can contribute to the evaluation and potential enhancement of the existing English textbook by providing insights into dominant types of figurative language used in the poetry content.
Keywords: Analysis, Poetry, Figurative Language, textbook

1. Introduction

Poetry is the written medium used to convey messages and interact to the readers. According to Lintang in Linda (2021), as an art form, a poetry serves as an expression of a multitude of emotions, formalizing the various paths of expression. A poetry is a reflection of the self, which on several sides, cannot be expressed in reality, becoming the most reliable and courageous witness.

Poetry is also a literary work. Besides helping students in understanding skill in language, includes vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, writing, speaking, listening, and reading; literature also enriches the language aesthetically. Literature can stimulate students' interest in language learning, provide rich and vivid materials, and give learners the impression that they are fully immersed in the process of acquiring vocabulary, implementing grammar, and developing a feeling of language without even realizing it.

Nowadays, poetry can be used as material for teaching English. As well as being a literary work, poetry is an important medium for the development of language skills. In addition, poetry can support student in the classroom; reading poetry can inspire, motivate, and provide them with a few real-life experiences.

In the context of English Language Teaching (ELT), literature, including poetry, holds significant importance. Lyons and Kreidler in Ketaren et al (2021), underscore the importance of integrating literature into ELT, highlighting its role in enhancing students' linguistic and cognitive skills. Literature in ELT not only fosters language proficiency but also enriches students' cultural knowledge and critical thinking abilities. By engaging with literary texts, students experience language in a rich and meaningful context, promoting deeper understanding and appreciation of the language. Poetry, with its diverse themes and expressive language, offers unique opportunities for learners to explore language creatively and critically, making it a valuable resource in English language education.

The interpretation of poetry is often informed by the biographical context of the writer. Some individuals may misconstrue the moral message of an artwork due to an exclusive focus on the intellectual definition of the text, rather than on the author's intended meaning. In linguistics, semantics is the study of the underlying meaning of words and the way in which they are used in language. The term "meaning" can be understood in two distinct ways: the literal meaning and figurative language. The use of figurative language is employed with the specific intention of achieving a particular impact or impression.

According to McKenzie cited in Way et al (2023), figurative language is language that conveys thought beyond the literal meaning of a word. Richard and Schmidt in Alfianri (2018b), the term "figurative language" is used to describe a word or phrase that is employed for particular effect but does not have its regular or literal meaning. Figurative language is convincing. It is another method of introducing a new depth to words that can capture readers' attention. It indicates that metaphorical language, like poetry, can pique people's curiosity.

In fact, students have difficulty in understanding and finding the meaning of a poetry. Some researches confirmed the reason as follow: students do not understand the figurative language meaning used by the author; each poetry has a writing style according to the author's wishes which means each poetry has a different meaning; poetry has different meaning and description of the writer's real-life; and misunderstanding of getting the moral message in the poetry (Maula, 2013; Alfianri, 2015; Iskandar, 2022; Anggraini, 2022).

Other researcher found different kinds of figurative language that stated in poem; collection of poem; song; and English translation of holy book (Maula, 2013; Alfianri, 2015; Iskandar, 2022; Anggraini, 2022). Based on the source where the poetry found, significance of this research are identify and analyse the types of figurative language of poetry that presented in the English textbook used in senior high school; it can aid educators in developing targeted instructional strategies to improve students' comprehension and appreciation of poetic devices; and the research can contribute to the evaluation and potential enhancement of the existing English textbook by providing insights into dominant types of figurative language used in the poetry content.

2. Method

In this study, the researcher identified and analyzed the poetry using qualitative methods. Based on Creswell (2012), interpreting qualitative data necessitates

understanding how to make sense of text and images in order to formulate responses to your research questions. The data collected from the documents. It derived from the English textbook of senior high school. Documents can take the shape of words, images, or monumental creations created by a person (Sugiyono, 2022). The researcher chosen this technique because it allows the researcher collect the relevant data from textbooks systematically.

The analysis of the data is descriptive in nature and focuses on two aspects: figurative language analysis and poetry analysis. The objective of the figurative language analysis is to identify the types of figurative language employed in the poetry, with a particular focus on the most frequently used ones. The poetry analysis, on the other hand, is centred on the messages conveyed by the figurative language. The research employed the technique of content analysis for the analysis of the collected data.

Content analysis is any research technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying specified characteristics within text. In this research, the researcher utilized some of these steps to analyze the data. Specifically, the steps involved in content analysis as following: reading the poetry, underlying some words which are the figurative language, writing about the figurative language, and coding data. Coding data is used to analyze about figurative language in the poetry an also to give initial for page and line.

The codes are: Simile is "SM", Metaphor is "MP", Personification is "PF", Apostrophe is "AT", Synecdoche is "SD", Metonymy is "MN", Symbol is "SB", Allegory is "AG", Paradox is "PD", Hyperbole is "HB", Underestimate is "UT", Irony is "IR". The same process to be done to the other poetry. The researcher then proceeds to analyze the meaning of the figurative language in accordance with Perrine's theory. Subsequently, the researcher analyzes the figurative language to ascertain its meaning in line with Perrine's presentation of the theory.

3. Results

3.1. Kinds of figurative language of poetry in English textbook
1) Poetry 1:

Table1. Kinds of figurative language of poetry 1

No.	Quotations of the poem	Figurative Language
1.	Out of the *night* that *covers* Me	Personification
2	Black *as* the pit from pole to pole,	Simile
3	I *thank* whatever gods may be For my *unconquerable soul*.	Ironic
4	In the fell clutch of *circumstance* I have not winced nor *cried* aloud.	Personification

5.	Under the **bludgeonings** of chance	Metaphor
6.	My head is bloody, but **unbowed**	Metaphor
7	Beyond this place of wrath and tears	Metaphor
	Looms but the Horror of the shade,	
8	And **yet** the **menace** of the **years**	Metaphor
	Finds and shall find **me unafraid**.	
9	How **charged** with punishments the scroll	Simile
10	It matters not how **strait the gate**	Symbol
11	I am the master of my **fate**	Symbol
	I am the captain of my **soul**	

The table above presents excerpts from the poem, accompanied by a description of the figurative language employed. As can be seen in the table, the poem makes use of a variety of figurative language techniques, including personification, simile, irony, metaphor, and symbolism. Personification is evident in the initial and concluding excerpts, ascribing human qualities to otherwise abstract concepts. A comparison is made in the second and ninth excerpts, using the device of a simile to explicitly draw a parallel between two things. The poem is characterized by the prevalence of metaphor, which is employed on four occasions to convey a more profound emotional resonance. The final two excerpts utilize symbols to convey concepts that are not explicitly stated, such as fate and the soul. The aforementioned descriptions illustrate the richness and variety of language styles employed in the poem, which serve to reinforce the thematic message.

From the table above we can see there are four metaphors (in line 3 and 4 of the second stanza, line 1,2,3, and 4 in the third stanza) in the *Invictus p*oetry by William Earnest Henley, two personifications (in line 1 of the first stanza, in line 1 of the second stanza), one simile (in line 2 of the first stanza and line 2 of the fourth stanza); two Irony in line 3 and 4 of the first stanza, and three symbol (in line 1, 3, and 4 of the fourth stanza).

2) Poetry 2:

Table 2. Figurative language of poetry 2

No	Quotations of the poem	Figurative Language
1.	Then took the other, *as just as fair*	Simile
2.	*Two roads* diverged in a wood, Though *as* for that the passing there	Simile

From the table above we can see there is two similes (Line 1 of the first and second stanzas).

3) Poetry 3:

Table 3. Figurative language in poetry 3

No	Quotations of the poem	Figurative Language
1.	Life is *broken-winged bird*	Metaphor
2.	*Life* is a barren field	Metaphor
3	Hold fast to *dreams*	Personification and Symbol

From the table above we can see there are two metaphors (in line 3 and line 7), one personification and one symbol.

3.2. Types of figurative language of poetry dominantly found in English textbook

Table 4. The Dominant Figurative language in poetry

No	Figurative Language	Invictus	The Road not Taken	Dream	Total
1.	Personification	2		1	3
2.	Simile	2	2		4
4.	Irony	1			1
3.	Metaphor	4		2	6
5.	Symbol	2		1	3

Table 4 illustrates the predominant types of figurative language employed in the poems "Invictus," "The Road Not Taken," and "Dream." As illustrated in the table, metaphor is the most frequently occurring form of figurative language, with a total of six instances dispersed throughout the poems "Invictus" and "Dream". Additionally, the literary device of the simile is employed on four occasions in two distinct poems. Personification and symbolism each appear on three occasions, whereas irony is only present once in the poem "Invictus." This analysis indicates that metaphor is the dominant figurative language, with simile representing a significant but less pervasive element. The use of figurative language varies considerably between the poems.

Based on the table above, the researcher can infer that metaphor is the most regularly used figurative language in the collection of poetry discovered in the English textbook. Figurative language is a means of communication that employs the use of exaggerated or extravagant statements to convey strong emotions and achieve specific outcomes, rather than the literal representation of reality.

3.2 Discussion

This part presents the result which provides evidence to respond to research questions pertaining to the types of figurative language employed in poetry within an English textbook and to elucidate the significance of figurative language in the poetry within the context of a second-grade senior high school textbook.

This findings arranged based on Perrine's theory (1969). He defined poetry as a type of language that says more and more strongly than conventional language. Poetry is a form of literature that is often more challenging to comprehend than other literary works, because it is a creative expression that does not use language in the same way as ordinary communication. The use of figurative language, word choice and messages by poets serves to express their ideas, which can be difficult for readers to understand. He identified there are twelves figurative language: simile, metaphor, personification, apostrophe, synecdoche, metonymy, symbol, allegory, paradox, hyperbole, understatement, and irony.

Simile is a figure of speech that compares one item to another that has a different meaning but is regarded comparable and may be identified by the use of the words "like" and "as." Metaphor connects two subjects directly in a short period of time, without the use of words such as like, the same, as, and so on.

The process of personification involves the ascription of human characteristics to an animal, object, or idea. Perrine discovered that an apostrophe is used to address someone absent or something inhuman as though it were a sentient entity, capable of repeating the words being uttered. The figure of speech known as synecdoche is used to symbolize a portion of something as a representation of the whole, or vice versa. Metonymy is a figure of speech whereby one thing is represented by another with which it is closely associated. It could be proposed that a symbol is an object or concept that represents more than itself, serving as a visual indicator or emblem that conveys a deeper meaning.

An allegory is a narrative with a concealed underlying meaning. A paradox can be defined as an apparent contradiction that, upon closer examination, may in fact be true. It could be a situation or a statement. Hyperbole is simply exaggeration, but exaggeration that serves to illustrate a truth. Understatement is the reverse of hyperbole, which is employed by the author to make the issue appear less serious. It expresses less than it means. The term 'irony' is not solely used as a figure of speech; it has connotations that extend beyond this use. In a business context, irony can be defined as a statement that is contrary to the speaker's actual meaning.

4. Conclusion

The researcher identified kinds of figurative language of poetry in English textbook, namely: personification, simile, irony, metaphor, and symbol. Metaphor is the most prevalent figurative language used in poetry from an English textbook.

The researcher also suggested the readers to pay attention to figurative language when reading poems or stories that contains many certain language styles. It is different from one book to another. For the teacher, it is suggested to help the students in learning and interpreting figurative language expressed in poetry. For other researcher, it is need to analyse kinds of figurative language in poetry that used in other English textbook.

References

Alfianri, W. (2018a). A *study on students' ability in identifying figurative language at state senior high school 1 kampar kampar regency.* https://repository.uin-suska.ac.id/13225/7/7. CHAPTER II_2018612PBI.pdf

Anggraini, A., Aryanika, S., & Indrasari, N. (2022). Figurative Language and Contextual Meaning: In Thomas Hardy Poems. Wiralodra English Journal (WEJ), 6(2), 38–53. https://doi.org/10.31943/wej.v612.186

Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational Research* (P. A. Smith (ed.); 4th editio). Pearson Education, Inc.

Ketaren, S. V., Sipahutar, S. R., Marpaung, E. M., & Saragih, E. (2021). Figurative Language Use in Song Lyrics in English Textbook Senior High School. *FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE USE IN SONG LYRICS IN ENGLISH TEXTBOOK SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL*, 4(2), 300–305. https://doi.org/10.31539/leea.v4i2.1997

Linda. (2021). *Dr. Lintang Ratri Rahmiaji S.Sos., M.Si (Dosen Komunikasi FISIP UNDIP): Puisi Menjadi Momen Penting Dalam Proses Pemeliharaan dan Peremajaan Jiwa Yang Sehat*. Universitas Diponegoro.

Maula, M. (2013a). an Analysis of Figurative Language on the Poems Entitled "Classic Poetry Series" By William Blake. *Repository.Syekhnurjati*. https://repository.syekhnurjati.ac.id/1843/

Maula, M. (2013b). *An analysis of figurative languageon the poems entitled"classic poetry series"by william blake*. https://core.ac.uk/reader/147420716.

Perrine, L. (1969a). *Sound and Sense an Introductio to Poetry* (Third Edit). https://archive.org/details/soundsenseintrod00perrrich/page/n4/mode/1up

Rina, D. (2018). VISION: Journal of Language, Literature & Education. *File:///C:/Users/Lenovo/Downloads/Ijtsrd358461.Pdf*, 13(13), 1–27.

Sugiyono. (2022). *Quantitative, Qualitative, and R&D Research Methods*. Bandung: Alfabeta.

Way, L. M., Girsang, M., Batara, B., Praditya, T., Rohana, A., Tamba, P., Samosir, A. C., & Kianlin, J. A. (2023). *Figurative Language in Digital Frank Sinatra ' s Song*. 4778(1930), 902–907. https://doi.org/10.24256/ideas.v10i2.3652