

## Figurative Analysis On Taylor Swifts Songs

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### Abstrak

Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian dengan desain deskriptif kualitatif. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi dan mendeskripsikan jenis dan makna kontekstual bahasa kiasan yang digunakan dalam lima lagu Taylor Swift berjudul Blank Space, Bad Blood, Wildest Dream, Enchanted, dan All Too Well. Bahasa kiasan adalah bahasa yang menggunakan kata atau ungkapan. dengan makna yang berbeda dengan tafsir literal. Ada dua puluh lima lirik yang mengandung bahasa kiasan. Ada beberapa jenis bahasa kiasan yang digunakan dalam lima lagu Taylor Swift, seperti Synecdoche, Metaphor, Simile, Personifikasi, Hiperbola, Aliterasi, dan Idiom. Jenis kiasan yang dominan digunakan dalam lirik lagu Taylor Swift adalah Simile.

**Kata Kunci:** Bahasa kiasan, Lirik lagu, Taylor Swift

### Abstract

This is a descriptive qualitative design research. This study aimed at identifying and describing the type and the contextual meanings of figurative language which were used in five Taylor Swifts songs entitle Blank Space, Bad Blood, Wildest Dream, Enchanted, and All Too Well. Figurative language is language that uses words or expressions with a meaning that is different from the literal interpretation. There are Twentyfive lyrics contains of figurative language. There are some kinds of figurative language used in five TaylorSwift's song, such as Synecdoche, Metaphor, Simile, Personification, Hyperbole, Alliteration, and Idiom. The dominant of figurative type that is used in Taylor Swifts song lyrics is Simile.

**Keyword:** Figurative language, Song lyrics, Taylor Swift

### INTRODUCTION

According to Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963:366) they stated that figurative languages are images used in particular way to explore the less known through the known. It can be a special repetition, arrangement or omission of words with literal meaning or a phrase with a specialized meaning not based on the literal meaning of the words in it. Figurative language will give more meaning to the words, beautify them, and emphasize their meaning.

Perrine (1982) said that figurative language is defined as a way of saying things in a different way than usual. The use of figurative language is used by someone to express their thoughts by being different from ordinary people. In this way we will know the person's personality in addressing a problem the speaker is facing by raising his opinion using figurative language so that the listener must think about what the speaker means because when someone communicates, they better implement cooperative principles which must understand and work together in conversations with how to understand the personality of the interlocutor and also understand what he says even in figurative language.

Figurative language is a kind of language that departs from the language employed the traditional literal ways of describing persons or object. It is a language that uses words or expressions with a meaning that is different with the literal interpretation. It is used to express something in an unusual way. The use of figurative language can give an additional sense for the reader or the listener to build their imagination. Knowing the meaning of a lyric is really important because we will know the purpose of the song.

Most of English songs use figurative language on their lyrics. The use of figurative language actually can make the meaning of the lyric more interesting and lively. There are many types of figurative language such as: metaphor, personification, hyperbola, simile, symbol, irony, etc. Sometimes, listeners discover new vocabulary and don't understand its meaning in each of the lyrics. This research will make it easier for every listener to understand and enjoy the song and increase knowledge in understanding figurative language.

Basically, figurative language is part of the semantic. Semantics is the technical term used to refer to the study of meaning. semantic analysis is internally focused on meaning in words and sentences.

According to Chaer (2013:2) The purpose of semantics is to find out the correct meaning of a word, phrase or sentence, and dismiss any confusing that would lead the reader to believe that a word has multiple meanings, semantics also allows students to explore meaning, because if we dismiss or change one word from a sentence it will change the whole meaning, or the sentence becomes ambiguous.

There are some studies done by previous researchers. First by Hariyanto (2017) he conducted The Analysis of Figurative Language Used in the Lyric of Firework by Katy Perry (A Study of Semantic), his research found figurative languages used in the lyric of firework and to analyze the contextual meaning of figurative language used in that song.

Another research conducted by Endi Prasetyo Rusdiyanto (2018) he investigated An Analysis of Figurative Language Used by Adele And Taylor Swift's Selected Song. His findings showed that there are figurative language found in Adele and Taylor Swift song and what is the dominant form of figurative language used by both of them.

Furthermore, L.P. Karina Febriyanti Aryawan, I.W. Suarnajaya, I.W. Swandana (2019) they identified A Semantic Analysis of Figurative Language Found in Eminem's Song, their study aimed at identifying and describing the type and the meanings of figurative language which were used in Eminem's song lyrics and determining the dominant type of figurative language used in the song lyrics. They used descriptive qualitative as the method, the data were analyzed by using Cresswell's theory. The researcher conducted the analysis, 12 types of figurative language are found as data. Those are: simile, metaphor, allusion, hyperbole, imagery, idiom, irony, onomatopoeia, personification, metonymy, symbolism, and oxymoron.

From the analysis, the researcher found that there are 136 data containing figurative language the data can be described as follows: 34 or 25.00% data of simile, 30 or 22.05% data of metaphor, 11 or 8.08% data of hyperbole, 8 or 5.88% data of idiom, 5 or 3.67% data of onomatopoeia, 10 or 7.35% data of imagery, 22 or 15.44% data of allusion, 1 or 0.73% datum of oxymoron, 7 or 5.14% data of irony, 2 or 1.47% data of metonymy, 5 or 3.67% data of personification, and 2 or 1.47% data of symbolism. Simile type of figurative language is mostly used in the song lyrics.

The researcher interest in the study of figurative language, so this study focused on figurative languages which are used in the song lyric from Taylor Swift. Taylor Swift is famous American singer-songwriter. In addition, the researcher selected song lyrics of Taylor Swift as the object of research because her song was so popular. People in the world also knew and liked the songs. The researcher chose five popular songs by Taylor's, they were Blank Space, Bad Blood, Wildest Dream, All Too Well and Enchanted. The researcher chose songs by Taylor Swift because most her songs is write based on her experiences. Based on the explanation above, the researcher will take a research entitle A Figurative Analysis on Taylor Swifts Songs.

## METHODS

This study used descriptive qualitative research. Descriptive research is used to identify and obtain information on a particular issue, such as community, situation or phenomenon. Descriptive research answer the questions what, who, where, how, and when. Qualitative research is procedures of the research which produces descriptive data in the form of written words or oral words about the object that is observed.

The data were collected by applying purposeful sampling, purposeful sampling is used in qualitative research and it is employed for the identification and selection of information for the most effective use of limited resources. It is a method which the researcher purposely chose the limited numbers of selected research objects that can be served as primary data source. Purposeful sampling is applied because the researcher chose the selected songs based on the different emotions and different situations of each song. Creswell (2007, p. 125).

The data were obtained from five Taylor Swifts songs which are "Blank Space", "Bad Blood", "Wildest Dream", "All Too Well", and "Echanted". The data included words, phrases, or sentences contained in the lyrics.

The data has taken using the following steps :

- 1) Browsing the Taylor Swift song, the researches choose 5 title song which are "Blank Space", "Bad Blood", "Wildest Dream", "All Too Well", and "Echanted".
- 2) Downloaded the Taylor Swift selected song
- 3) Transcribed the lyrics of Taylor Swift selected song
- 4) Reading and understanding the lyrics. For the purpose of understanding deeply about the lyric of the songs.
- 5) Underlined the song lyrics that contain of figurative language

The data analysis of this research is to follow the following procedures:

- 1) Selecting songs that contain figurative language,
- 2) Identifying types of figurative language by reading carefully,
- 3) Classifying types of figurative language from the data,
- 4) Interpreting song lyrics to find the meanings of figurative language in the lyrics and their messages.
- 5) Making conclusions.

The figurative language expressions are collected and reduced. Data display is an organized, compressed assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action. The researcher showed the data that contain figurative language, but not only generally but also specifically. Furthermore, the researcher showed which sentences or phrases contain figurative language, what kind of figurative those sentence are, why those sentences or phrase categorized as their category of figurative language and then extracted the meaning of those figurative language in the lyrics. In this step the researcher classified the figurative languages that have been found in the lyrics and presented them in the following table.

Pharse or Sentences	Location	Kind of Figurative Language

The first column was used for writing the lyric of song, the second column was used to indicate the location of the songs lyric, and last column was used for determining kinds of figurative language found in the song. Next step is Interpreting song lyrics to find the meanings of figurative language in the lyrics and their

messages. To make easier in identifying the meaning of the song lyrics, the researcher read every sentence of the lyrics and found out the contextual meaning of the lyrics.

The last step to analyze the data in this research is conclusion drawing and verification. In this step, the researcher rechecked the data, stepped back to consider what the analyzed data mean and to assess their implications for the research questions.

Applying the procedures on how the data were collected, to convince that the data in this study were trusted, credibility way used to check the trustworthiness of the data. In this research the credibility of the data was supported by the use of theoretical triangulation. The data related to the types of figurative language and meaning were triangulated by the use of theories, by Leech, G.N and Perrine L.

Besides using the theoretical triangulation, the trustworthiness of the data was supported by reading many times the lyrics of the songs to identify and categorize the figurative language.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After analyzing seven types of figurative language, namely; Simile, Metaphor, Personification, Hyperbole, Idiom, Synecdoche, and Alliteration from songs lyric “Blank Space”, “Bad Blood”, “Wildest Dream”, “All Too Well” and “Enchanted”. The collected figurative languages in Taylor Swifts song lyric and presented them in the following table.

### Types of figurative languages found in “Blank Space”

No.	Phrase or Sentences	Location	Kind of Figurative Language
1.	I could show you incredible things	Stanza 1, line 2	Synecdoche
2.	Magic, madness, heaven, sin	Stanza 1, line 3	Alliteration
3.	You look like my next mistake	Stanza 1, line 6	Simile
4.	Love’s a game, wanna play?	Stanza 1, line 7	Metaphor
5.	I can read you like a magazine	Stanza 2, line 2	Simile
6.	I’m dying to see how this one ends	Stanza 2, line 6	Hyperbole
7.	I can make all the tables turn	Stanza 6, line 2	Idiom
8.	I get drunk on jealousy	Stanza 6, line 6	Hyperbole
9.	Cause darling, I’m a nightmare dressed like a daydream	Stanza 6, line 8	Simile

#### Types of figurative languages found in “Bad Blood”

No	Pharse or Sentences	Location	Kind of Figurative Language
1.	You made a really deep cut	Stanza 2, line 3	Hyperbole
2.	Baby, I couldn't breath	Stanza 3, line 6	Hyperbole
3.	Salt in the wound like you're laughing at me	Stanza 3, line 8	Simile
4.	If you live like that, you live with ghosts. if you love like that, blood runs cold	Stanza 9, line 6	Alliteration

#### Types of figurative languages found in “Wildest Dream”

No	Pharse or Sentences	Location	Kind of Figurative Language
1.	Thought heaven can't help me now	Stanza 1, line 3	Personification
2.	He's so tall, and handsome as hell	Stanza 2, line 1	Simile
3.	He's so tall, and handsome as hell	Stanza 2, line 1	Hyperbole
4.	Let these memories hunt you around	Stanza 7, line 5	Personification

#### Types of figurative languages found in “Enchanted”

No	Pharse or Sentences	Location	Kind of Figurative Language
1.	Your eyes whispered, “Have we meet”	Stanza 2, line 1	Personification
2.	'Cross the room your silhouette Starts to make its way to me	Stanza 2, line 2	Personification
3.	Counter all your quick remarks, Like passing notes in secrecy	Stanza 2, line 6	Smile
4.	I'll spend forever wondering if you knew	Stanza 4, line 3	Hyperbole
5.	My thoughts will echo your name, until I see u again	Stanza 8, line 4	Personification

#### Types of figurative languages found in “All To Well”

No	Pharse or Sentences	Location	Kind of Figurative Language
1.	Autumn leaves falling down like piecies in place	Stanza 2, line 4	Simile
2.	And maybe we got lost in translation	Stanza 8, line 1	Personification
3.	I'm a crumped up piecie of paper lying here	Stanza 9, line 3	Metaphor

After collected kind of figurative language in five Taylor Swifts songs lyrics, the writer displayed them to make easier in identifying the meaning of the song lyrics, this step was found out the contextual meaning

of the lyrics that have been found in the songs and make the readers more understand about result of this research.

After finishing the data reduction and data display, the discussion explains about the data the researcher found and analyzed in five Taylor Swifts songs lyric which are chosen by the researcher. The title of the songs are Blank Space, Bad Blood, Wildest Dream, Enchanted, and All Too Well. After analyzing the data, the researcher found the figurative language use in Taylor Swifts selected songs. Besides finding types of figurative language used in that song, the researcher also explains the contextual meaning of figurative language use in song lyric by Taylor Swifts. There are twentyfive lyrics contains of figurative language. There are some kinds of figurative language used in five Taylor Swift's song, such as Synecdoche, Metaphor, Simile, Personification, Hyperbole, Alliteration, and Idiom.

### **SYNECDOCHE**

Synecdoche is figure of speech in which phrase or sentences using the whole thing stands for the part of the thing.

#### **Blank Space**

*I could show you incredible things (Stanza 1, line 2)*

As we can see the use of synecdoche in sentence above because the writer using the whole thing stands for the part of the thing. The sentence above means the writer wants to give the boy wonderful experience and memories if they get into a relationship. In lexical meaning, "incredible" means wonderful, amazing (Oxford, 2015). In this sentence, incredible things that writer means stand for "magic, madness, heaven, sin" this line exists in Stanza 1, line 3.

### **SIMILE**

Simile is an explicit comparison. A sign of utterance is a simile category, the expression has the word "like" or "as" which indicates a comparison between things. (Keraf, 2001)

#### **Blank Space**

*You look like my next mistake (Stanza 1, line 6)*

From the sentence above, we can see the use of simile, because the sentence compares "you" with "my next mistake" using the word "like". The meaning of its figurative language, the word "you" refers to a man that the writer met. In lexical meaning the word "you" means person or people being spoken to or written to (Oxford, 2015) and "mistake" means wrong action, idea or opinion (Oxford, 2015). The writer wants to convey that the man is trouble and will break her heart and it will be a big mistake to pursue something with him. She also knows that because of the attraction and chemistry she feels, she knows she will pursue him regardless.

*I can read you like a magazine (Stanza 2, line 2)*

As we can see the use of simile, because the writer making a comparison between 2 things using the word "like". The word "you" refers to a man that the writer met, She can't actually read him like a magazine, so therefore she is comparing his personality to a magazine. The writer wants to convey that the man personality is can be easily deciphered.

*Cause darling, I'm a nightmare dressed like a daydream (Stanza 6, line 8)*

The sentence above shows the use of Simile because the writers is comparing two things using the word "like", the word "I'm" is refers to writer is not really a nightmare dressed like a daydream, so therefore she is comparing her personality to how she can looks different inside and outside. Writer want to make is that on the outside she looks like a normal person, but on the inside she is dark and different.

#### **Bad Blood**

*Salt in the wound like you're laughing at me (Stanza 3, line 8)*

This sentence shows the use of simile because it is a comparison using the word "like". In lexical meaning, "salt" means substance obtained from mine and seawater, used to flavor food (Oxford, 2015), "wound" means injury to the body, especially one made with a weapon: a bullet (Oxford, 2015), and "laughing" means making the sounds and movements of your face that show you are happy or think something is funny (Oxford, 2015). This is contrasted with its meaning of the Figurative language, the writer wants to convey that the situation is exacerbated when her friend doesn't seem to act like the bigger person by laughing at her when times are down.

### **Wildest Dream**

*He's so tall, and handsome as hell (Stanza 2, line 1)*

The sentence above shows the use of simile, in this lyric "as" is used to describe somebody to be something else, "as" compares somebody to a place like the word "hell" and the word "tall and handsome" describes someone's. In lexical meaning "tall" refers to more than average height and "handsome" refers a man having an attractive and good-looking. In this case the writer wants to convey that "he's" refers to a man that the writer met is really attractive and good looking.

### **All Too Well**

*Autumn leaves falling down like pieces in place (Stanza 2, line 4)*

In the lyrics above using the word "like". Therefore, the utterance is a simile because they compare two things between how the writer felt and "autumn leaves". The writer want to convey that she can still remember all of these relationship that she obviously isn't over. She remarks how everything she felt right "pieces into place".

### **Enchanted**

*Counter all your quick remarks, Like passing notes in secrecy (Stanza 2, Line 6)*

The sentence above shows the use of simile, in this lyric "like" is used to compares. Countering all your remarks is being compared to passing notes in secrecy. The writer want to saying that they are sending each other signals in someway.

### **METAPHOR**

Metaphor is a multitude of analogies that directly compare two things, but in a short schema (Keraf, 1994: 139).

### **Blank Space**

*Love's a game, wanna play? (Stanza 1, line 7)*

This sentence shows the use of metaphor as an implied comparison on the basis of similarity between literal meaning and the thing or situation. Its figurative meaning could be the writer Compares love to games and relationships to storms that build up over time, "Love's a game, wanna play?" because cheating ruins the game, therefore winning or losing isn't that important.

### **All Too Well**

*I'm a crumpled up piece of paper lying here (Stanza 9, line 3)*

The writer use of metaphor as an implied similarity between literal meaning and the thing or situation. In this case, the writer comparing the way she feels to a crumpled piece of paper. Its figurative language in order to convey the sense of feels lonely and broken with all her messy thoughts which is likened to a piece of crumpled paper.

### **HYPERBOLE**

Hyperbole is a figurative language that contains an element of exaggeration about something (Potter, 1967: 135)

### **Blank Space**

*I'm dying to see how this one ends (Stanza 2, line 6)*

It is a hyperbole because the writer is overly exaggerating. She is not really dying to how it will end, so therefore she is exaggerating how urgent she is. The point is that the writer is eager and impatient to know how her relationship will turn out to be.

*I get drunk on jealousy (Stanza 6, Line 6)*

The use of hyperbole in the sentence above because an exaggeration to make a point. Actually she cannot get drunk on jealousy, she exaggerating the situation to show how frustrate she is because the person she mention is flirting with another girl or the other way around.

### **Bad Blood**

*You made really deep cut (Stanza 2, Line 3)*

This lyric shows the use of hyperbole as an exaggeration used to emphasize a point. The word "deep" means going a long way down from the top or surface and word "cut" means making an opening or wound in



something with something sharp. In this case, 'you' person that writer mention has not really made a deep cut. The writer wants to convey that deep cuts leave scars and cause long-term pain. The person who referring as "you" acting will leave an indelible mark on her and will not be quickly forgotten.

*Baby, I couldn't breath (Stanza 3, Line 6)*

This lyric shows the writer is overly exaggerating. She not really can't breathe she is exaggerating her emotions by saying she couldn't breathe because he hit her is referring to lyric that exist together with this line "Did you have to hit me, where I'm weak? Baby, I couldn't breathe" in Stanza 3, line 6.

#### **Wildest Dream**

*He's so tall, and handsome as hell (Stanza 2, Line 1)*

While this line is a simile it's also a hyperbole. She's exaggerating how handsome he is.

#### **Enchanted**

*I'll spend forever wondering if you knew (Stanza 4, Line 3)*

This lyric shows the use of hyperbole as an exaggeration used to emphasize a point. The word "spending forever wondering" is a deliberate exaggeration. The writer wants to convey that she will continue to be wondering for a long time if that person she mentions as "you" knew that she always wondering.

### **PERSONIFICATION**

Personification a language in the imagination of something that has no soul, as if it has a human quality (Potter, 1967:54), it means that the dead objects in this world are considered animated by giving some attributes to inanimate objects. So people who read, guess, can do everything as a person.

#### **Wildest Dream**

*I thought heaven can't help me now (Stanza 1, Line 3)*

A personification occurs is whenever an inanimate object or abstraction is given human qualities or abilities. In this line, the writer gives an abstract or imaginary object "heaven" the ability to perform an action.

*I bet these memories hunt you around (Stanza 7, Line 5)*

From the sentence above, we can see the use personification. These lyrics give an overall aura of the writer and her significant other's past an that she wants him to remember her. These lyrics show that writer and her significant other may have had a tough time at the end of their relationship.

#### **Enchanted**

*Your eyes whispered, "have we meet" (Stanza 2, Line 1)*

From the sentence above, we can see the use personification. These lyrics give an human qualities provide abilities that do not match their actual function, in reality eyes cannot really whisper or speak.

*'Cross the room your silhouette, Starts to make its way to me (Stanza 2, Line 2)*

The use of personification showing in this line, the writer gives object "Silhouette" ability to perform an action, because in reality silhouette cannot walk.

*My thoughts will echo your name, until I see u again (Stanza 8, Line 4)*

The use of personification in this lyrics showing an abstract object "thoughts" the ability to perform an action, in reality thoughts cannot really echo anything.

#### **All Too Well**

*And maybe we got lost in translation (Stanza 8, Line 1)*

A personification occurs in this line, the writer gives an abstract object "translation" the ability to perform an action. In actual the writer wants to mentioning the possible things that could lead to their separation.

### **ALLITERATION**

Alliteration is a figure of speech that is related to onomatopoeia in that it involves the sense of sound, figure of speech that repeats the beginning sounds of neighboring words

#### **Blank Space**

*Magic, madness, heaven, sin (Stanza 1, Line 3)*

The sentence above show the use of Alliteration, Alliteration is the occurrence of the same letter or sound at the beginning of the word or closely connected words. The letter M and the sound (Ma) is repeated in the beginning of the words Magic and madness.



### **Bad Blood**

*If you live like that, you live with ghosts. if you love like that, blood runs cold (stanza 9, Line 6)*

The use of Alliteration because This sentence has five Words that start with L [live, like, live, love, like].

### **IDIOM**

Idiom is a type of figurative language that is a phrase that people say that is commonly accepted as having a different meaning that the individual words may lead you to believe.

### **Blank Space**

*I can make all the tables turn (Stanza 6, Line 2)*

This sentence shows the use of idiom, "I" refers to the writer can't really make all the tables turn. The writer is trying to make is that the events leading up to their breakup formed a blanket of emotions and that she can cause change and control whats happening to make it better or worse in an almost threatening way.

### **CONCLUSSION**

From the discussion, it can be concluded that the five songs lyric from Taylor Swifts contains figurative languages. Figurative language is language that uses words or expressions with a meaning that is different from the literal interpretation. There are twentyfive lyrics contains of figurative language. There are some kinds of figurative language used in five Taylor Swift's song, such as Synecdoche, Metaphor, Simile, Personification, Hyperbole, Alliteration, and Idiom. The contextual meaning of figurative language is also stated in this research. The dominant of figurative type that is used in Taylor Swifts song lyrics is Simile. We might learn and understanding how the authors try to tell us about the story of a song.

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