

METAPHORS USED IN BOB DYLAN'S SONGS

Muh Ma'rifatullah^{1*}, Murni Mahmud², Abdul Halim^{3*}

^{1,2,3}Universitas Negeri Makassar

E-mail: [1marifatullahmuh@gmail.com](mailto:marifatullahmuh@gmail.com), [2murnimahmud@unm.ac.id](mailto:murnimahmud@unm.ac.id), [3abd.halim@unm.ac.id](mailto:abd.halim@unm.ac.id).

*corresponding author

Abstract

This study aims to determine the types of metaphors, and the functions of metaphors contained in Bob Dylan's songs. This research is descriptive qualitative research because the purpose of this research is to describe phenomena that occur in terms of language. The data source for this research is Bob Dylan's songs, namely "*Blowing in The Wind*" and "*The Times They Are A-Changing*". In analyzing the data, the researcher used theories from Leech (1984) and J.J.A Mooij (1993). In this study, researcher obtained four types of metaphors. The types of divided metaphors are concrete metaphor, animistic metaphor, humanizing metaphor, and synesthetic metaphor. As for the study of metaphorical functions, there are three functions, namely the emotive function, the persuasive function, and the cognitive function.

Keywords— Metaphor, Types of Metaphor, Functions of Metaphor, Bob Dylan

INTRODUCTION

Metaphors are an excellent way to enliven the language. Metaphor is a way of expressing something that is equal to or has the same value as another object but is truly different. Metaphors entail a variety of parallels. If taken literally, the term is illogical, odd, and untrue. For instance, if we say that anyone could be a gemstone, we are comparing the person's quality to that of a gem, which suggests that the person's quality is comparable to that of a gem. Metaphors are frequently encountered in literary works such as poetry, fiction, and even song.

Research on metaphor analysis have been conducted, the most recent research is titled "A Study of Metaphor in Swedish House Mafia and Axwell Ingrosso's Songs" (Permana. 2019). The purpose of this research is to ascertain the metaphorical terms used in the lyrics of the Swedish artist group House Mafia and Axwell Ingrosso's song from 2008 to 2015. It recognized the song texts' metaphorical expressions. His research employs a qualitative descriptive method in order to decipher the metaphorical language and meaning. The data is derived from the song's transcript. The second study is titled "The Metaphor Analysis of Selected Eminem Rap Song Lyrics" (Rettob, 2015). As a consequence of the research, it discovered around seventeen metaphors in Eminem's rap song text. It discovered five White America metaphors, two Superman metaphors, four Without Me metaphors, and six Cleanin' Out My Closet metaphors. While each component of a metaphor is discovered, it retains its connotation meaning.

Nowadays, life is inextricably linked to music. Individuals can listen to music at any time and in any location. The music itself frequently employs metaphorical language to enhance its attractiveness and to distinguish the song as unique and aesthetic. Additionally, Robert Allen Zimmerman, or Bob Dylan, was chosen as the subject of this research due to his prominence as a singer with numerous popular songs. The author observes that the lyrics of those songs frequently

represent the realities of life, such as the allure of affection, peace, war, freedom, broken hearts, and so forth. The author chose two songs for this research because the author appraise that songs contain many elements of metaphors, there are “Blowing In The Wind” & “The Times They Are A-Changing”. From the explanations, the author took this research entitle “Metaphors used in Bob Dylan’s Songs”

LITERATURE REVIEW

Language

(Halliday, 2003, p. 2) states that language is a system of meaning. Language is described as an ad hoc vocal system via which humans communicate (Finegan, 2007, p. 22). The meaning system is the process by which meaning is formed and transferred. Every person communicates with others through language. Individuals can convey their inner ideas and feelings through language and construct a sophisticated and abstract concept in order to understand and meet their requirements.

Semantics

Semantics is a branch of linguistics that studies the meaning of sentences. Semantics is a discipline of linguistics that studies the meaning included in a language's words, phrases, and sentences (Hussain, 2015). On the other hand, Lehrer (1974) stated that semantics is the study of meaning.

Semantics is mainly concerned with the meaning of symbolic such as phrases, words, signs, symbols, utterances, and their signified. According to Ferdinand de Saussure, the creator of modern linguistics (1906), semantics comprises of elements in the form of language, sound, or symbols that serve as interpreters (signifiers), as well as all the elements that are translated from that form (signified).

Metaphor

According to (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003, p. 36), "metaphor is a way of expressing one thing in terms of another, and its fundamental purpose is to facilitate comprehension." A metaphor is just something that derives its meaning from something else, and its primary purpose is to aid with comprehension.

(Leech, 1969, p.158) classifies metaphors into four categories:

1. Concretive Metaphors
This metaphor represents an aspect of abstract realities or physical life
2. Animistic Metaphors
This metaphor strongly conveys the features of inanimate
3. Humanizing Metaphors (Anthropomorphic)
This metaphor expresses non-human attributes
4. Synesthetic Metaphors
This form of metaphor is one that is carried from one sensory domain to another.

(Mooij J. J. A, 1993, p. 67) classifies metaphors into three functions:

1. Emotive Function
Emotive function is to express feelings and represent a person's emotions.
2. Persuasive Function
The persuasive function is a sentence made to influence other people, be it habits or opinions.

3. Cognitive Function

Cognitive function is a complex function in the human brain that involves aspects of memory, both short and long term, attention, planning, and reasoning and strategies in thinking of a person.

Review of Song Lyrics

According to (Budiarti, 2017, p.39), the song is composed in meaningful language, contains a tune, and is audible. The song has some moral content that can be deduced from the lyrics. The lyrics, as defined by (Cambridge Dictionary, 2020), is a little poem that communicates the creator's personal feelings. The lyrics, or song text, are not only an addition to the song, but also an essential component of the musical elements in determining the song's theme, qualities, and mission.

A song's lyrics are a combination of ideas that are structured in a particular way and have a particular tone. Lyrics, in general, are a reflection of how someone has seen, heard, or experienced. According to (Bertoli-Dutra and Bissaco, 2006, p. 1053), "each song conveys a unique message." The lyrics determine the song's attraction and uniqueness to its listeners. The message included in the song lyrics could be expressed in a variety of ways, depending on the author's choice of words".

The lyrics provide insight into the song's audience information. "Lyrics are a means of communication between the author and the listener. Songs are created by the interaction of musical and literary features, or song lyrics serve as a method of mass communication. Song lyrics contain a message in the form of written words or sentences that can be utilized to evoke a mood and imagery in the listener, as well as to convey a variety of meanings.

Review of Bob Dylan

According to (Merdeka.com Editor 2022), Bob Dylan is one of the most influential American singer, songwriter, musician and poet in the world. Bob Dylan whose full name is Robert Allen Zimmerman, is known as a singer who has spoken out against war and defended human rights to become a voice for the US grassroots.

Bob Dylan was born on May 24, 1941. Throughout his life, Dylan managed to create phenomenal works such as "*Blowin' in the Wind*" and "*The Times They Are A-Changin'*", which became the "anthem" of the anti-war movement and civil rights movement. Some of Dylan's best works were noted in the 1960s, when he became a figurehead of American upheaval.

As a vocalist and songwriter, Dylan also managed to break that a singer doesn't to have a good voice in singing. Meanwhile, as a musician, he sparked several genres of pop music, including electrification of folk rock and country rock. Throughout his career, Bob Dylan has received several prestigious awards. Rolling Stone magazine also ranked Bob Dylan at the second list of "Greatest Artists of All Time". In addition, Bob Dylan also received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2016 because his works were considered capable of creating new types of poetic expression. The Nobel Prize itself is given by institutions in Sweden and Norway to figures who are considered to have contributed to academic, scientific and cultural progress. Uniquely, Bob Dylan became the first American to win a Nobel Prize after novelist Toni Morrison was last in 1993.

METHODS

1) Research Design

The author employ a qualitative descriptive design in this study since the data will be analyzed descriptively. Qualitative descriptive investigations are concerned with elucidating the nature of the researched event.

2) Sources of Data

Data could be defined as group of facts and information that could be found through many kinds of activities, specifically research. The data sources are classified into two categories: primary and secondary data.

3) Procedure of Collecting Data

The objective of collecting data is to gather the necessary information for the study. This study investigates the various kinds and functions of metaphors in Bob Dylan's song lyrics.

4) Technique of data analysis

To analyze the data in this study, the author employs Leech's (1969) theory to identify the types of metaphors found in the lyrics of Bob Dylan's song, while Mooij's (1993) theory will be used to interpret the function. The data will be analyzed using Miles, M. B., and Huberman, A. M., and Saldana, J. theory (2014).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on the used of the research method, the author will analyze one by one of the lyrics which can help to find out the types and function of metaphor that contain in the lyrics of Bob Dylan's songs.

Findings

Types of Metaphors in Bob Dylan's Songs

1) Concretive Metaphor

DATA 3: "The answer is blowing in the wind"

This line is a concretive metaphor because the sentences in bold "the answer" and "blowing in the wind" are related to each other. The phrase "blowing in the wind" is abstract because it defines ignorance or non-existence while "the answer" is concrete because it refers to Bob Dylan's emphasis on providing information.

DATA 9: "If your time to you is worth saving"

This sentence is a type of concrete metaphor because the word "time" is an abstract word or can be interpreted as something that is intangible. While the word "saving" refers to a concrete activity because it emphasizes the previous abstract word.

2) Animistic Metaphor

DATA 1: "How many seas must the white dove sail before she sleeps in the sand?"

This line is categorized as an animistic type of metaphor because the phrase "white dove sail" which refers to "white dove" belongs to an animate characteristic associated with the word "sail" which is something that is only done by inanimate objects in this case can only be done by ships.

DATA 10: "And you better start swimming or you'll sink like a stone"

This line is clearly included as an animistic metaphor because the phrase "you'll sink" is a characteristic that is animate in this case is categorized as an activity carried out by humans or living things which is then likened to an inanimate object with the reference phrase "like a stone".

3) Humanizing Metaphor

DATA 8: “And admit that the waters around you have grown”

In that line, it can be seen that the phrase "the waters" refers to a characteristic of an inanimate or inanimate object which is then humanized by the phrase "have grown" which is something that is only experienced by living things or humans. Therefore, the sentence “and admit that the waters around you have grown” is categorized as a humanizing metaphor.

DATA 13: “Your old road is rapidly aging”

The sentence “your old is rapidly aging” is categorized as a humanizing metaphor because the term “old road” is classified as something inanimate and then humanized by the word “aging” which clearly refers to something that is alive or can be categorized as human.

4) Synesthetic Metaphor

DATA 5: “Yes, and how many times can a man turn his head and pretend that he just doesn’t see”

This line belongs to the type of synesthetic metaphor because there is a transposition of activity from "a man turn his head" to "he just doesn't see". The two phrases are related to each other and this line contains elements of a synesthetic metaphor because it shows the characteristics of the sense of sight, that is the word "see".

DATA 12: “And keep your eyes wide the chance won’t come again”

In this sentence there is an element of synesthetic metaphor because there is the expression "keep your eyes wide" which represents the sense of sight. Then the expression is correlated with the following words, namely "the chance won't come again" and emphasizes that in this sentence there is a transposition from the sense of sight to perception that is uncertain.

Metaphor Function in Bob Dylan’s Songs

1) Emotive Function

DATA 1: “How many roads must a man walk down. Before you call him a man?”

In the lyrics of Bob Dylan's song entitled "*Blowing In The Wind*" almost all of the lyrics contain an emotive function and the interaction model applied in the lyrics of the song is social criticism interrupting questions that represent Bob Dylan's emotional feelings. In this discussion, you can see the lyrics "how many roads must a man walk down. Before you call him a man?" which shows Bob Dylan's concern for people who have struggled but whose struggles are not recognized. The question “How many roads must a man walk down” illustrates how much struggle or sacrifice must be made by a man or someone, then continued "Before you call him a man?" which means when will that person's identity be recognized thanks to his struggle or sacrifice.

DATA 24: “please get out of the new one if you can’t lend your hand”

In this sentence Bob Dylan wants to emphasize to individuals who are hesitant about the struggle that is carried out together against oppression. The many phenomena of apathetic people that Bob Dylan saw made him furious and satirized people who behaved like that. The phrase "please get out" emphasizes that Bob Dylan insinuates people to leave or not to interfere in enjoying the results of the struggle carried out together. Then it is emphasized again with the phrase "if you can't lend your hand" describing skeptics and individualists who are only concerned with themselves rather than the common interest or taking action against them together.

2) Persuasive Function

DATA 14: “and you better start swimming or you’ll sink like a stone”

This line is related to the previous line which refers to Bob Dylan's way of persuading people. If the previous line explained that people must accept their own destiny, this line explains the persuasive model used by Bob Dylan to influence people to fight against their own destiny. The phrase “and you better start swimming” is a way of influencing people to move and fight against their destiny then emphasized by the phrase “or you'll sink like a stone” which is the result of indifference or indifference if people don't want to moving or struggling against his destiny.

DATA 16: “come writers and critics who prophesize with your pen”

In that line there is an element of persuasive metaphor as evidenced by the phrase "come writers and critics" which aims to invite influential people including writers and critics to fight together against oppression. They are all classified as influential people because the actions they take can really influence people, just like the continuation of the sentence, namely "who prophesizes with your pen".

3) Cognitive Function

DATA 20: “for he that gets hurt, will be he who has stalled”

The sentence above explains that someone who is injured is someone who has stopped or no longer wants to fight. This has been felt by Bob Dylan and has become his life experience. Then he sees other people who feel the same way, namely they feel the pain of not wanting to fight anymore. Therefore, apart from showing the knowledge gained from his personal experience and the experiences of others, Bob Dylan also wanted to tell how important it is to fight in one's life. If understood properly, the sentence above can motivate someone not to be spoiled and not always expect help or mercy from others.

DATA 21: “The battle outside raging will soon shake your windows and rattle your walls”

This line is related to the previous line. Bob Dylan again showed his concern by trying to give everyone an understanding that the battle out there is really great. As humans, we must fight to be able to fight every battle we face in our lives. Implicitly, the battle in question is not only about war using weapons, but also about the life's problem that we face in our daily life.

Discussion

Based on the results of the research described above, it was found some lines containing metaphors. The researcher takes data 2 songs of Bob Dylan from different albums. The songs analyzed are the song that selects purposely which means the songs analyzed that are considered to contain metaphors because the researcher realized that not all Bob Dylan's songs contain metaphors in them.

1) Types of Metaphors in Bob Dylan's Songs

Based on the results of the research, it was found that in the Bob Dylan songs there are several types of metaphors according to the theory by Leech (1984). He stated metaphors into four types namely, concreative metaphor, animistic metaphor, humanizing (anthropomorphic) metaphor, and synaesthetic metaphor. From the research, all the types are found in Bob Dylan's song. In this study, the researcher obtained as many as 14 lines containing metaphors from the four types of metaphors.

2) Metaphor Function in Bob Dylan's Songs

Based on the research, it was found that the metaphor found in this study has a metaphorical function according to the theory by J.J.A Mooij (1993) which categorizes the function of the metaphor into three functions including *emotive functions*, *persuasive functions*, and *cognitive functions*. In this research, based on two songs chosen for research it found several data were obtained related to the metaphoric function, including 12 data for the emotive function, 5 data for the persuasive function, and 6 data for the cognitive function.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

Based on the research findings and discussion that has been discussed in the previous chapter regarding the types of metaphors and the functions of metaphors in the 2 songs of Bob Dylan selected for research. There are four types of metaphors found in Bob Dylan's songs. These types are *concretive metaphor*, *animistic metaphor*, *humanizing metaphor*, and *synesthetic metaphor*.

All the songs analyzed in this study have a humanist theme that talks about the struggle for human rights and the anti-war movement using Bob Dylan's rhetorical style. The metaphorical meaning in metaphorical sentences is based on the context of the song. All the songs examined were written by Bob Dylan himself, which made him the winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2016 and makes him the only musician in history to have won the award so far.

Based on Mooij's theory which categorizes metaphor function into three functions, namely *emotive function*, *persuasive function*, and *cognitive function*. This research provides a new perspective in the study of metaphor, which is related to the function of metaphor. Apart from confirming previous research, this research also provides new research regarding the function of metaphor in songs, especially research on songs written and sung by Bob Dylan.

Suggestion

Based on the problems and results of research that has been done by author, the author has the following suggestions:

- 1) Research on metaphor can not only be done in songs but it can be used in many other types of literary works. Therefore, it is necessary to do further research on metaphors with different objects and problems.
- 2) To find out more about the use of figurative language other than metaphors, the writer suggests that there are researchers who examine other types of figurative language such as simile, hyperbole, personification, metonymy, and others that can be investigated in other song lyrics.
- 3) Other students can use this research as a reference in conducting similar research.

REFERENCES

- Akmajian, A., Demers R., Farmer, A., and Harnish, R. (2001). *Linguistics (An Introduction to Language and Communication)*. United States of America: Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- Bertoli-Dutra, P., & Bissaco, C. M. (2006). In the Name of Love—Theme in U2 Songs. In *33rd International Systemic Functional Congress*.
- Budiarti, A. (2017). *Analysis of Figurative Language on Song Lyrics Provided in "Pathway to English" Textbook Published by Erlangga for Eleventh Grades of Senior High School*. Thesis. English Education Department. Surakarta:IAIN.

- Cartier, F. A., Harwood, K.A. (1953). *On Definition of Communication*. Journal of Communication. Vol. 3; Iss. 2
- Finegan, E. (2007). *Language: Its structure and use (5th edition)*. Boston: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Firdaus, E. A. (2013). *Textual meaning in song lyrics*. Passage, 1(1), 99-106.
- Frederick, Robin. (2013). *What Is Song Structure*. Available online at: <https://mysongcoach.com/what-is-song-structure/>
- Fromkin, V. R., & Hyams, R. N. (2011). *An Introduction to Language (9th Edition)*. Canada: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
- Goffman, E. (1976). *Replies and Responses. Language in Society*. University of Pennsylvania. Philadelphia: Great Britain. 5, 257-313.
- Griffiths, P. (2006). *An Introduction to English Semantics and Pragmatics*. Edinburgh University Press, Ltd.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (2003). *On language and linguistics (Vol. 3)*. A&C Black.
- Hussain, Safaat. (2015). *Semantics in EFL Classroom: A Brief Review*. IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science. 20. 39-43. 10.9790/0837- 20933943.
- J. J. A, Mooij. (1993). *Metaphor and Truth: A Liberal Approach. Knowledge and Language*. Springer
- Knowless, M. & Rosamund M. (2006). *Introduction Metaphor*. New York: Routledge.
- Kracht, M. (2007). *Introduction to linguistics. Departement of Linguistics*. Los Angeles. University of California.
- Krauss, R. M. (2002). *The psychology of verbal communication. International Encyclopaedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences*. London: Elsevier, 16161-16165.
- Kroeger, Paul. (2019). *Analyzing meaning: An introduction to semantics and pragmatics. Second corrected and slightly revised edition*. (Textbooks in Language Sciences 5). Berlin: Language Science Press.
- Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (2003). *Metaphors we live by*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Lambert, V. A., & Lambert, C. E. (2012). *Qualitative descriptive research: An acceptable design. Pacific Rim International Journal of Nursing Research*, 16(4), 255-256.
- Leech, G. N. (1969). *A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry*. New York: Longman Group Ltd.
- Lehrer, K. (1974). *Knowledge*. Oxford: Clarendon Press
- Lukmana, Deru. Rusdi N.R., and Leni Marlina. (2019). *"An Analysis of Metaphor in the Lyrics of Selected Minangkabau Songs"*. English Department. JELL Vol. 8 No. 3.
- Masaitienė, D. (2009). *Introduction into linguistics: a teaching guide*. VMU Press.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, J.(2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook*, 3.
- Permana, Nurvian. (2019). *A Study of Metaphor in Swedish House Mafia and Axwell A Ingrosso's Songs*. English Department, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, State Islamic University of Sunan Ampel Surabaya.
- Pratiwi, A., Safnil, S., & Arasuli, A. (2017). *An Analysis of Metaphoric Expressions Found in RI Hann A's Song Lyrics*. Doctoral dissertation, Universitas Bengkulu.
- Rettob, Marria Godeliva. (2015). *The Metaphor Analysis of Selected Eminem's Rap Song Lyrics*. Yogyakarta. Sanata Dharma University.
- Searle, J. (1979) *Expression and Meaning: Studies in the Theory of Speech Acts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Wellek, R., & Warren, A. (1977). *Theory of Literature*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Zaltman, G., & Zaltman, L. H. (2008). *Marketing metaphoria: What deep metaphors reveal about the minds of consumers*. Harvard Business Press.

Peristiwa 24 Mei Kelahiran Bob Dylan Musisi Legendaris dengan Karya Inspiratif.
<https://www.merdeka.com>