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Metaphors in Adele's Song Lyrics: A Linguistic Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Metaphor is one of the figurative languages that takes two different things by identifying one with another. By using metaphor, it helps speakers or writers to give a clear description through comparison or contrast. Music is the attribute of sound in every background of human. To investigate the form and the meaning of metaphor found in the lyrics of the songs of Adele aims at the readers, especially the students of English Literature Major to use lyrics of the songs as a media in studying meaning. The method which is used in this research is descriptive method. In collecting data, the writer focused on identifying the words, phrases or noun. The result shows in terms of the identified metaphors, the writer found that the lyrics of the songs can be categorized as metaphor nominative subjective, metaphor nominative objective, metaphor predicative and metaphor sentence. The parts of sentences identified as metaphors are analyzed based on Lakoff is theory about tenor and source. Tenor refers to the underlying idea or principal subject of metaphor while source conveys the underlying; the borrowed idea, or the thing that has been resembled. The result of this study shows that the metaphor contains a certain meaning based on the context and each of them refers to a certain object of tenor and source.

1. Introduction

Language is a sound communication system, which uses sound symbols that have meaning based on agreement. The form of language research is through a scientific study called linguistics. Linguistics is the science of language and is divided into two major parts, namely internal and external linguistics. Internal linguistics consists of phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics, while external linguistics includes sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, ethno linguistics. According to Hurford et al., semantics is the study of meaning in language. Metaphors are not only found in everyday speech or literary works but also songs. The song is

part of art, and art is part of life.^{1,2}

It is also realized that songs have become an inseparable part of every background of human life. Song lyrics are a pitched arrangement of words. Song lyrics are a person's expression of something he has seen, heard, or experienced. In expressing their experiences, poets or songwriters play with words and language to attract and uniqueness to the lyrics or poetry. In general, the way a person writes song lyrics is the same as poetry in that the lines do not continue to the edge of the page. The text in the song lyrics is a monologue, which means that there is only one subject (the writer) and rarely or never involves

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other parties speaking. Luxembourg said that the text of poetry includes literary works and language expressions that are proverbs, messages, advertisements, political slogans, prayers, and song lyrics.¹⁻³

Based on the explanation above, the writer focuses his research on the metaphor in Adele's song lyrics as the object of research. The author realizes that the lyrics of these songs contain metaphors and tend to describe the realities of life, for example, the charm of love and heartbreak. In addition, the song's lyrics are well known by many people, especially young people; the lyrics of the song are entitled "Someone like you, Skyfall, and Set fire to the rain." This study aims to identify the form of metaphor and analyze the meaning in Adele's song lyrics.

Etymologically, metaphor comes from the root words meta and pherein (Greek). Meta means to transfer or across, and pherein means to carry. Metaphor is one type of figurative language. According to Kridalaksana (2008), figurative language is a language used to expand the meaning of a word or group of words to obtain a specific effect by comparing or associating two things.³⁻⁶

Metaphor as a figurative language is a linguistic tool because it has various possible meanings in several words. Metaphors have been used in conversation, literary works, prayers, or song lyrics. Concerning song lyrics, the meaning of metaphor can be viewed from free context or semantic meaning. Bloomfield states that meaning can be seen as an ordinary meaning or another central meaning as a marginal meaning or meaning. Wahab defines metaphor as a linguistic expression that cannot be interpreted directly from the symbols used but from the symbols used predication that can be used both by the symbol and from the meaning intended by the expression of the language. Wahab then divides metaphor into three forms, namely nominative

metaphor, predicative metaphor, and sentence metaphor. Lakoff and et al., use targets and sources in analyzing metaphors. Target refers to something about which something else is said, and source refers to something else used to convey something about the target.⁷⁻⁹

2. Methods

The method used in this research is the descriptive method. The author looks for metaphorical concepts that match the object of research and reads all of Adele's songs to find metaphors and interpret them to get a good understanding. After that, the author chooses one of Adele's songs that contains a metaphor and then identifies the lines in each song lyrics that contain a metaphor. The song is identified based on Wahab's opinion about the form of the metaphor; the identified data is written on small cards and numbered to make it easier for researchers to get the shape metaphor. The data that has been identified is then analyzed based on Lakoff and Johnson's concept of target and source.^{9,10}

3. Results and discussion

The lyrics in Adele's songs are almost all themed on love, the journey of life, and sadness. The writer finds that in expressing his feelings, the poet uses language style to beautify the lyrics of the song. In these songs, the use of metaphorical language style is found. However, not the entire line contains a metaphorical form. To make analyzing the form of metaphor easier, the writer reads the song's lyrics and then identifies it based on Wahab's opinion¹⁰ about the forms of metaphors, namely nominative, predictive, and sentence metaphors. The identified songs contain metaphorical forms, namely Set Fire to the Rain.

Identify the metaphor forms in the lyrics of the song "set fire to the rain"

Lines with metaphorical form in this song:

I was over (verse 1, line 3); This array is a subjective nominative metaphor because the figurative symbol contains the subject of the sentence *I*, while the other sentences are still stated in the direct meaning.

The games you'd play; This lyric is a form of subjective nominative metaphor because the figurative symbol is found on the subject of "the games" while the other sentences are still stated with a direct meaning.

Set fire to the rain; This lyric is a sentence metaphor because all the figurative symbols are found in the whole sentence.

I threw us into the flames; This lyric is a form of complementary nominative metaphor because the figurative symbol is found to complement the sentence, namely the flames.

It burned while I cried (verse 3, line 3); This lyric is a form of subjective nominative metaphor because the figurative symbol is found in the sentence's subject, while other sentences are still stated with direct meaning.

That heart you caught must be waiting for you; This line is a subjective nominative metaphor because the figurative symbol is found in the subject of the sentence "that heart" while the other sentences are still stated with direct meaning.

In Adele's song, not all of the lyrics emphasize the lyrical subject. There is the idea of songwriting, and poets are more likely to use lyrics that describe as if it was the poet's own experience. In this case, the lyrics' subject also function as a means of self-realization.

Interpretation of the meaning of the metaphor in the song "Set Fire to the Rain"

These lyrics tell the love life of the lyric subject who wants to be a significant meaning and function

for his lover, but what he receives from his lover's treatment is not what he wants. This lyric also tells the pain of the lyric subject that is so deep because his lover talks many things that are not true to him; but in this case, the subject of the lyrics tries to strengthen his heart because the subject of the lyrics realizes that all things that happen, whether happy or sad, come back to him. In this case, it is intended that the subject of the lyrics can control his heart so that he will not always be sad. That is what it means to burn a fire in the rain, to remove all sorrow by rising from the sadness itself. The subject of the lyrics represents someone, either a man or a woman, who wants to be a part of her lover's life. However, what he received was far from what was expected.

This song tells about the former lover of the lyric subject who turns out to be two-faced. The ex-lover loves the subject of the lyrics and loves another girl as well. The ex-lover then married another girl, lived a quiet life, and what the girl gave to her lover could not be given by the subject of the lyrics. Memories of the lyrics' past, ups, and downs experienced by the subject made him decide that what he had gone he gave up and prayed for to be something good. The subject of the lyrics states that no matter what, someone who has passed will never return, and the memories remain imprinted in the heart, but we must rise from adversity to look to the future.

The song is a person's expression of something that has been seen, heard, or experienced. In expressing their experiences, poets or songwriters play word games or language to create interest in the lyrics or poetry. Language games in song lyrics can be vocal games, word deviations, and language styles such as metaphors.

4. Conclusion

The metaphorical expressions found in Adele's songs are in the form of subjective nominative metaphors, predicative metaphors, nominative-complementation metaphors, complementary-

objective metaphors, and sentence metaphors. The meaning of the metaphor contained in each song's lyrics has the same meaning even though with a different picture. Each line that contains a metaphorical meaning has a specific meaning, but basically, almost all of them have a meaning: the failure of love. The author chooses Adele's songs as a medium for learning the meaning of metaphors, not because they are motivated by the songwriter's life but on the use of metaphors in the context of the songs.

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