

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE IN BON JOVI'S SELECTED SONG LYRICS

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ABSTRACT

This research dealt with Figurative Language in Bon Jovi's Selected Song Lyrics. Bon Jovi's songs were chosen as the source of data because they used figurative language that made the songs beautiful to listen. The analysis was focused on the types of figurative language in Bon Jovi's selected song lyrics. The figurative language in the song lyrics was analyzed using Spivey's theory. This research study was conducted by using descriptive qualitative design. The results of the study showed that there were seven (7) types of figurative language found in Bon Jovi's selected song lyrics, they were Simile, Metaphor, Personification, Onomatopoeia, Hyperbole, Idiom and Cliches.

Keywords: *Figurative Language, Song Lyrics*

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini membahas tentang Figurative Language in Bon Jovi's Selected Song Lyrics (Majas dalam Lirik Lagu Terpilih Bon Jovi). Lagu-lagu Bon Jovi dipilih sebagai sumber data karena menggunakan majas untuk membuat lagu-lagunya indah didengar. Analisisnya difokuskan pada jenis-jenis majas di dalam lirik lagu terpilih Bon Jovi. Majas dalam lagu-lagu tersebut dianalisis dengan menggunakan teori Spivey. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan menggunakan rancangan penelitian deskriptif kualitatif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan ada tujuh (7) jenis majas yang ditemukan dalam lirik lagu terpilih Bon Jovi, yaitu Simile, Metafora, Personifikasi, Onomatopoeia, Hiperbola, Idiom dan Klise.

Kata kunci: *Majas, Lirik Lagu*

1. INTRODUCTION

The language used in a song is a language which is meant to make the song more interesting and beautiful. The words used in the lyrics of a song contain connotative meaning. That is why song writers use figurative language in the songs they create. The descriptive words of figurative language have connotative meaning which has meaning other than

literal meaning. Figurative language is used in song lyrics to beautify the language, so that the listeners will be more attracted in listening to the song.

In accordance with the explanation about song lyrics and figurative language in the previous paragraph, the writer intends to analyze the figurative language in song lyrics. In this occasion, the writer chooses Bon Jovi's song lyrics. He

chooses Bon Jovi because Bon Jovi is a popular American rock band since 1983. The band's songs are written by the members of the band, Jon Bon Jovi and Richie Sambora. The lyrics are very interesting because the song writers apply some types of figurative language in the lyrics, for example in *Always*, the lyric says "Now I'm drowning in the flood". It can be understood that 'the flood' here is not a real flood, but it is used to show that the singer is really sad after his girlfriend left him. The lyric applies metaphor. Metaphor is a type of figurative language which compares two things directly and does not use words like, such as, as, similar to, and resemble. "The flood" in the lyric is compared with the sadness that the singer feels. Based on this explanation, the writer decides to analyze figurative language in Bon Jovi's selected song lyrics.

Based on the background of the study above, the researcher intends to find out the types of figurative language found in Bon Jovi's selected song lyrics.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

There are some relevant theories that are used for conducting this research, they are Semantics, Figurative Language, types of Figurative Language and song lyrics.

a. Semantics

According to Riemer (2010:2) Semantics is any attempt to understand the nature of language must be tried to describe and explain the ways in which linguistic expressions have meaning. His book introduces some of the aspects of meaning studied in linguistics, which, along with Pragmatics, has responsibility for this task. Semantics is one of the richest and most fascinating part of linguistics.

Hurtford, et.al (2007:1-2) say that Semantics is the study of meaning in language. The meaning of word, then, can be applied to people who use language, i.e. to speakers (and authors), in roughly the sense of 'intend' and it can be applied to words and sentences in a different sense.

Meanwhile, according to Kreidler (1998:2) Semantics is a comprehensive and accessible introduction to the study of meaning. Focusing on the English language, Kreidler presents the basic principles of semantics. He explores how languages organize and express meaning through words.

Based on the definition of Semantics mentioned, the writer concludes that Semantics is the study of meaning. It describes the meaning of linguistic elements and discusses the principle which enables the assignment of meaning to combinations of these elements.

b. Figurative Language

Keraf (2009:113) says that *Makna kiasan atau style merupakan cara mengungkapkan pikiran melalui bahasa secara khas yang memperlihatkan jiwa dan kepribadian penulis (pemakai bahasa)* (Figurative meaning or style is a way of expressing idea through language by using a special way to show the soul and personality of a writer (language user). (the writer's own translation).

Figurative language uses figures of speech, a way of saying something other than the literal meaning of the word. It is a word or phrase that departs from everyday literal language for the sake of comparison, emphasis, clarity, or freshness. It is not used in the ordinary literal sense but in an imaginative way. According to Wren and Martin (2008:297) figure of speech is a departure from the ordinary form of expression, or the ordinary course of idea in order to produce a greater effect.

Figurative language is commonly used in literary works, such as prose, poetry and dialogues in drama. Rozakis (1995:28) says figurative language saying one thing in terms of another. It means that figurative language is an expression used by person or author indirectly by using the comparison. It cannot be interpreted literally because the comparison in figurative language has meaning.

Figurative language refers to words or phrases that do not have the same meaning as their literal meaning. Authors use a variety of types of figurative language in order to convey their message. These devices are most common in poetry, but can be used in other forms of writing, as well. Sometimes figurative language adds a deeper meaning or humour to a text.

From the previous explanation, it can be concluded that figurative language is a language that uses words or expression with a meaning that is different from the literal interpretation. Figurative language is rarely used in our daily conversation. Figurative language is often found in written works, such as song lyrics, newspapers, advertisements, novels, poems, etc. Figurative language is the use of words that goes beyond their ordinary meaning. It requires you to use your imagination to figure out the author's meaning.

c. Types of Figurative Language

According to Spivey (2011:5-6) there are seven (7) types of figurative language namely simile, metaphor, personification, onomatopoeia, hyperbole, idiom and clichés.

1. Simile

A simile uses the words 'like' or 'as' to compare two explicitly unlike things as being similar.

a. My love is *as wide as the ocean*.

b. Her skin is *as white as snow*.

2. Metaphor

A metaphor suggests something or someone actually becomes or is something else.

a. I feel *blue*.

b. He is *the apple of my eyes*.

3. Personification

Personification gives animals or inanimate objects human-like characteristics.

1. *The earth is crying*.

2. The *moon seemed to smile* at me from the sky.

3. Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeia is a word that describes a natural sound or the sound made by an object or certain action.

a. Dad lit the fuse, and *POW*.

b. A horrible "*Crash!*"

4. Hyperbole

A hyperbole is a statement so exaggerated that no one believes it to be true. Hyperbole is a figure of speech in which uses an extravagant or exaggerated statement to express strong feelings. A great exaggeration is used to emphasize a point, and is used for expressive or comic effect.

a. He is *taller than the mountain*.

b. The bird flies *faster than the wind*.

5. Idiom

An idiom is an expression whose meaning is not predictable from the usual meanings of the words that make it up. Idioms do not present "like" characteristics to other things as in other forms of figurative language. One needs the context of the sentence to help understand the idiom.

a. He is *a pig-headed* person.

b. They are *a soccer-hooligan* people.

6. Clichés

Clichés are statements that have been heard so often that their once colorful play on words has become expected and stale.

a. It is *a waste of time* job. No need to do.

b. Now, he looks *as old as the hills*.

d. Song Lyrics

Lyrics are a set of words that make up a song, usually consisting of verses and choruses. The meaning of lyrics can either be explicit or implicit. Some lyrics are abstract, almost unintelligible, and, in such cases, their explication emphasizes form, articulation, meter, and symmetry of expression. A lyric is a paper written by someone who has imagination in composing beautiful words that have deep meaning. Lyrics and music combined would be a wonderful song and pleasing to the ear. The writer of lyrics is a lyricist or

lyrist. According to Hornby (2000: 802), lyrics is expressing of a person's personal feeling and thoughts, connected with singing and written for a lyric poem is the words of a song.

Language in song really is not much different from the language of poetry. It is a short lyric poem that expresses emotion. Song lyrics are poetry that sung. Form of emotive expressions is realized in sounds and words. Language in the song lyrics has rules that are elements of poems emotive through sounds and words. In addition to obtaining a particular impression as poetry, language lyrics are concise and packed. This is due to the lyrics of the song has undergone a process of compaction of meaning and creativity of diction elected by poet.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

This study uses descriptive qualitative research. Moleong in Margono (2009:36) states that qualitative research is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of words written or spoken of the people and behaviors that can be observed. Analysis used in qualitative research is descriptive analytic to make more meaningful interpretation of the content created and arranged in a systematic/holistic and systematic. Qualitative research produces the descriptive data and consists of the

explanation about variable which is examined by giving the explanation from other references.

The objects of this study are the lyrics of ten (10) songs from six (6) Bon Jovi's album. The albums and the songs are *Slippery When Wet* (1986): *Livin' on a Prayer* and *You Give Love a Bad Name*; *New Jersey* (1988): *Bad Medicine*; *Keep the Faith* (1992): *Keep the Faith* and *In These Arms*; *Crossroad* (1994): *Always* and *Bed Roses*; *These Days* (1995): *This Ain't a Love Song* and *These Days* and *Crush* (2000): *It's My Life*. The lyrics were analyzed to find out the types of figurative language, the dominant type of the figurative language and the reasons of the occurrence of the dominant type of figurative language in Bon Jovi's selected song lyrics.

4. DISCUSSION

The data of this study were the lyrics of ten (10) songs from six (6) Bon Jovi's album. The albums and the songs are *Slippery When Wet* (1986): *Livin' on a Prayer* and *You Give Love a Bad Name*; *New Jersey* (1988): *Bad Medicine*; *Keep the Faith* (1992): *Keep the Faith* and *In These Arms*; *Crossroad* (1994): *Always* and *Bed Roses*; *These Days* (1995): *This Ain't a Love Song* and *These Days* and *Crush* (2000): *It's My Life*. The lyrics of the songs were analyzed the types of

figurative language, the dominant type of figurative language and the reason of the occurrence of the dominant figurative language.

Based on the information in Chapter II, Spivey classifies that (2011:5-6) there are seven (7) types of figurative language namely simile, metaphor, personification, onomatopoeia, hyperbole, idiom and clichés.

After doing the analysis of figurative language in Bon Jovi's selected song lyrics, the writer has found seven types of figurative language in the song lyrics. It can be seen in the table below

Table 4.1 The Types of Figurative Language in Bon Jovi's Selected Song Lyrics

No.	Types of Figurative Language	Song Lyrics
1.	Simile	1. Shake it up, just like bad medicine (<i>Bad Medicine</i>) 2. I got a jones for your affection like a monkey on my back (<i>Bad Medicine</i>) 3. Your love is like bad medicine (<i>Bad Medicine</i>) 4. I am broken like an arrow (<i>Keep the Faith</i>) 5. Like the roses want the rain (<i>In these Arms</i>) 6. Like a poet needs the pain (<i>In these Arms</i>) 7. This whole place still smells like your cheap perfume (<i>In these Arms</i>) 8. Like we got away with the perfect crime (<i>This Ain't a Love Song</i>) 9. My heart is like an open highway (<i>It's My Life</i>)

2.	Metaphor	1. Shot through the heart (<i>You Give Love A Bad Name</i>) 2. Darling, you give love a bad name (<i>You Give Love A Bad Name</i>) 3. An angel's smile is what you sell (<i>You Give Love A Bad Name</i>) 4. When passion's a prison, you can't break free (<i>You Give Love A Bad Name</i>) 5. Oh, oh, you're a loaded gun (<i>You Give Love A Bad Name</i>) 6. Paint your smile on your lips (<i>You Give Love A Bad Name</i>) 7. Bad medicine is what I need (<i>Bad Medicine</i>) 8. Gonna take more than a shot to get this poison out of me (<i>Bad Medicine</i>) 9. Now this boy's addicted 'cause your kiss is the drug (<i>Bad Medicine</i>) 10. I don't need no needle to be giving me a thrill (<i>Bad Medicine</i>) 11. And I don't need no anesthesia or a nurse to bring a pill (<i>Bad Medicine</i>) 12. I got a jones for your affection
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		like a monkey on my back (<i>Bad Medicine</i>) 13. There ain't no paramedic gonna save this heart attack (<i>Bad Medicine</i>) 14. I need a respirator 'cause I'm running out of breath (<i>Bad Medicine</i>) 15. For you're an all night generator wrapped in stockings and a dress (<i>Bad Medicine</i>) 16. There are wars that can't be won (<i>Keep the Faith</i>) 17. Trying to wash away this pain (<i>Keep the Faith</i>) 18. This Romeo is bleeding But you can't see his blood (<i>Always</i>) 19. Now I'm drowning in the flood (<i>Always</i>) 20. Well, there ain't no luck In these loaded dice (<i>Always</i>) 21. We can pack up our old dreams and our old lives (<i>Always</i>) 22. We'll find a place where the sun still shines (<i>Always</i>) 23. Sitting here wasted and wounded
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		<p>at this old piano (<i>Bed of Roses</i>)</p> <p>24. 'Cause a bottle of vodka's still lodged in my head, (<i>Bed of Roses</i>)</p> <p>25. While some marching band keeps its own beat in my head while we're talking (<i>Bed of Roses</i>)</p> <p>26. I wanna lay you down in a bed of roses, (<i>Bed of Roses</i>)</p> <p>27. For tonight I'll sleep on a bed of nails. (<i>Bed of Roses</i>)</p> <p>28. With an ironclad fist I wake up and French-kiss the morning (<i>Bed of Roses</i>)</p> <p>29. I'd give each night to see through this pay-phone. (<i>Bed of Roses</i>)</p> <p>30. 'Til the bird on the wire flies me back to you (<i>Bed of Roses</i>)</p> <p>31. I should have seen it coming when roses died (<i>This Ain't a Love Song</i>)</p> <p>32. Should have seen the end of summer in your eyes (<i>This Ain't a Love Song</i>)</p> <p>33. If the river I cried ain't that long (<i>This Ain't a Love Song</i>)</p> <p>34. But we were just a legend in my mind (<i>This Ain't a Love Song</i>)</p> <p>35. You and I were the renegades, some things never change (<i>This Ain't a Love Song</i>)</p> <p>36. With a suitcase full of dreams (<i>These Days</i>)</p> <p>37. No one wants to be themselves these days (<i>These Days</i>)</p> <p>38. Still there's nothing to hold on to but these days (<i>These Days</i>)</p> <p>39. Tryna learn to fly (<i>These Days</i>)</p> <p>40. Even innocence has caught the midnight train (<i>These Days</i>)</p> <p>41. I know Rome's still burning (<i>These Days</i>)</p>
3.	Personification	<p>1. Chains of love got a hold on me (<i>You Give Love A Bad Name</i>)</p> <p>2. I got a dirty down addiction that doesn't leave a track (<i>Bad Medicine</i>)</p> <p>3. There were nights that died for you baby (<i>This Ain't a Love Song</i>)</p> <p>4. Jimmy Shoes busted both his legs (<i>These Days</i>)</p> <p>5. Even innocence has caught the midnight train (<i>These Days</i>)</p>

4.	Onomatopoeia	<p>1. Whoa, we're half-way there (<i>Livin' on A Prayer</i>)</p> <p>2. Whoa, livin' on a prayer (<i>Livin' on A Prayer</i>)</p>
5.	Hyperbole	<p>1. And it'll take more than a doctor to prescribe a remedy (<i>Bad Medicine</i>)</p> <p>2. Gonna take more than a shot to get this poison out of me (<i>Bad Medicine</i>)</p> <p>3. There ain't no paramedic gonna save this heart attack (<i>Bad Medicine</i>)</p> <p>4. I need a respirator 'cause I'm running out of breath (<i>Bad Medicine</i>)</p> <p>5. Sometimes I wait forever (<i>Keep the Faith</i>)</p> <p>6. Take a look into these eyes They burn with fire, yeah (<i>In these Arms</i>)</p> <p>7. And love you 'til the end of time (<i>In these Arms</i>)</p> <p>8. And I would do anything I'd beg, I'd steal, I'd die (<i>In these Arms</i>)</p> <p>9. And I would give anything My blood, my love, my life (<i>In these Arms</i>)</p> <p>10. We stared at the sun (<i>In these Arms</i>)</p> <p>11. I'll be there 'til the stars don't shine (<i>Always</i>)</p> <p>12. 'Til the heavens burst and the words don't rhyme (<i>Always</i>)</p> <p>13. And I'll be there forever and a day, always (<i>Always</i>)</p> <p>14. She's seen all the disciples and all the wanna-bes (<i>These Days</i>)</p> <p>15. Tryna learn to fly (<i>These Days</i>)</p>

6.	Idiom	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. He's down on his luck (<i>Livin' on A Prayer</i>) 2. I got a jones for your affection like a monkey on my back (<i>Bad Medicine</i>) 3. I am laying down my guns (<i>Keep the Faith</i>) 4. A king's ransom in dimes (<i>Bed of Roses</i>) 5. You're really on your knees, (<i>This Ain't a Love Song</i>) 6. when you think you're standing tall (<i>This Ain't a Love Song</i>) 7. Just a face in the crowd (<i>These Days</i>) 8. Tryna keep myself out of the rain (<i>These Days</i>) 9. Everybody's got their cross to bear these days (<i>These Days</i>) 10. I guess she's tryna be James Dean (<i>These Days</i>) 11. These days the stars hang out of reach (<i>These Days</i>) 12. These days there ain't a ladder on the streets (<i>These Days</i>) 13. I ain't gonna be just a face in the crowd (<i>It's My Life</i>) 14. This is for the ones who stood their ground (<i>It's My Life</i>)
7.	Clichés	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Oh, I wanna be just as close as the Holy Ghost is, (<i>Bed of Roses</i>) 2. Saw a vagabond king (<i>These Days</i>)

A. Simile

A simile uses the words 'like' or 'as' to compare two explicitly unlike things as being similar.

The writer has found simile in Bon Jovi's song lyrics. The lyrics classified as simile are:

1. Shake it up, just like bad medicine (*Bad Medicine*)

This lyric is a simile because the man compares 'love' with 'bad

medicine' because his love to a girl has given a bad effect to him.

2. I got a jones for your affection like a monkey on my back (*Bad Medicine*)
This lyric is classified into simile because it compares the way the man loves his girlfriend with a burden or a problem that it is difficult for him to get rid of. It is a bit strange that he compares his deep love for the woman he loves with a burden or a burden.

B. Metaphor

A metaphor suggests something or someone actually becomes or is something else. The writer has found Metaphor in Bon Jovi's song lyrics. The lyrics classified as Metaphor are:

1. Shot through the heart (*You Give Love A Bad Name*)

This lyric is a metaphor because the action of 'shot' in this lyric does not really mean 'shot'. It means that the man expresses what he has in his heart.

2. Darling, you give love a bad name (*You Give Love A Bad Name*)

This lyric is a metaphor. The lyric tells that love is something that can be given a name. It is impossible to give love a name. What the man means is what his girlfriend has done

to him makes him not believe in love anymore.

C. Personification

Personification gives animals or inanimate objects human-like characteristics.

The writer has found Personification in Bon Jovi's song lyrics. The lyrics classified as Personification are:

1. Chains of love got a hold on me (*You Give Love A Bad Name*)

The type of figurative language used in this lyric is personification because it is known that chains of love are not a living thing, so they are not able to hold someone.

2. I got a dirty down addiction that doesn't leave a track (*Bad Medicine*)
Addiction is an abstract thing. It is not a living thing, so it does not leave tracks. It is clear that this lyric is a personification.

D. Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeia is a word that describes a natural sound or the sound made by an object or certain action

The writer has found Onomatopoeia in Bon Jovi's song lyrics. The lyrics classified as Onomatopoeia are:

1. Whoa, we're half-way there (*Livin' on A Prayer*)

This lyric applies onomatopoeia. It can be seen clearly that the natural sound of 'whoa' is used in this lyric.

2. Whoa, livin' on a prayer (*Livin' on A Prayer*)

This lyric is the same as the previous data. It applies onomatopoeia. It can be seen clearly that the natural sound of 'whoa' is used in this lyric.

E. Hyperbole

A hyperbole is a statement so exaggerated that no one believes it to be true. Hyperbole is a figure of speech in which uses an extravagant or exaggerated statement to express strong feelings. A great exaggeration is used to emphasize a point, and is used for expressive or comic effect.

The writer has found Hyperbole in Bon Jovi's song lyrics. The lyrics classified as Hyperbole are:

1. And it'll take more than a doctor to prescribe a remedy (*Bad Medicine*)

It is a doctor's job to prescribe medicine, but this lyric tells that what the singer feels must be treated by a medicine that is prescribed by more than a doctor. It is something exaggerated, so it is classified as hyperbole.

2. Gonna take more than a shot to get this poison out of me (*Bad Medicine*)

The man is exaggerating his feeling in this lyric. He says that it needs more than a shot to take the poison out of him. Actually he does not take any poison, so he does not need to take a shoot. He applies hyperbole to exaggerate the feeling of love that he has for a girl. His love for the girl is so deep that he feels so crazy about the girl and thinks his love as a poison that will cause something bad happen to him.

F. Idiom

An idiom is an expression whose meaning is not predictable from the usual meanings of the words that make it up. Idioms do not present “like” characteristics to other things as in other forms of figurative language. One needs the context of the sentence to help understand the idiom.

The writer has found Idiom in Bon Jovi’s song lyrics. The lyrics classified as Idiom are:

1. He's down on his luck (*Livin' on A Prayer*)
This lyric contains idiom. ‘down on his luck’ is an idiom which means that someone is experiencing a period of bad luck.
2. I got a jones for your affection like a monkey on my back (*Bad Medicine*)

The idiom in the lyric is ‘got a jones for your affection’. It means that the man has a strong desire or craving for the affection of the girl he loves.

G. Clichés

Clichés are statements that have been heard so often that their once colorful play on words has become expected and stale. The writer has found Clichés in Bon Jovi’s song lyrics. The lyrics classified as Clichés are:

1. Oh, I wanna be just as close as the Holy Ghost is, (*Bed of Roses*)
This lyric is a clichés. When a person believes in God, he will feel that he is very close to Him. It is not the same for human being. Although someone loves someone else very much and they want to get close to each other, it is not as close as with God.
2. Saw a vagabond king (*These Days*)
This lyric is a clichés. A vagabond is someone who does not have a place to live. He is so poor that it is difficult for him to get food to eat. So, it is a clichés when it is said that a man is a king while actually he is a vagabond.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The analysis shows ten (10) Bon Jovi’s selected songs, which are *Livin' on*

a Prayer, You Give Love a Bad Name, Bad Medicine, Keep the Faith, In These Arms, Always, Bed Roses, This Ain't a Love Song, These Days and *It's My Life* apply figurative language in the lyrics. The result of the analysis shows that the song lyrics apply seven (7) types of figurative language, which are Simile, Metaphor, Personification, Onomatopoeia, Hyperbole, Idiom and Clichés.

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