

ANALYSIS OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE IN SONG LYRICS OF ROAR BY KATY PERRY

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Abstract

This research aimed to discover figurative language of song lyrics “Roar” by Katy Perry. The research methodology employed was descriptive qualitative. This involved examining song lyrics to classify various types of figurative language employed within. The data analysis processes consisted of several steps: reviewing song lyrics, searching for instances of figurative language, discerning specific types of figurative language present, categorizing song lyrics accordingly, and producing comprehensive report or conclusion based on the findings. This research centered on finding figurative language presented in Katy Perry’s song, “Roar”, sourced from the website www.azlyrics.com. After conducting analysis of the data, it became evident that Katy Perry’s song “Roar” was rich in figurative language, with seven distinct forms being identified. These included allegory, hyperbole, metaphor, symbol, repetition, simile, and paradox. Among these, allegory emerged as the prevailing form, appearing nine times. Following closely behind was hyperbole, which made its presence known three times. Repetition and simile appeared three times as well. Lastly, metaphor, symbol, and paradox each made a single appearance. In terms of percentage, the occurrence of allegory accounted for 37.5%, while hyperbole stood at 25%, metaphor and symbol at 4.16% each, repetition and simile at 12.5% each, and paradox at 4.16%.

Keywords: Analysis, Figurative, Language, Song

1. INTRODUCTION

Literature serves as a magnificent manifestation of the human spirit, a profound expression of our thoughts, opinions, and experiences. Through the artful use of language, literature invites us to embark on imaginative journeys, unveiling profound truths about our reality and the world around us. Language, with its intricate system of symbols and rules, becomes a vessel for communication, allowing us to share valuable knowledge and wisdom both within our cultural communities and on an individual level. It is through the power of speech that we can pass down our ideas, experiences, and beliefs from generation to generation, preserving the essence of our culture and enriching the lives of those who come after us. These elements of language, such as words, phrases, and sentences, become the very building blocks that shape our cultural heritage and perpetuate the legacy of our shared human experience (Rahmadhanti et al., 2022).

The art of song serves as a timeless vessel through which ideas, emotions, and profound sentiments find their voice (Rahmadhanti et al., 2022). Within the delicate tapestry of lyrics, lies a powerful conduit for the manifestation of thoughts and the heartfelt expression of the composer. In the creation of a song, a composer invests considerable time and effort, spanning from a few days to possibly several months, in order to craft a piece with captivating and thought-provoking lyrics. These lyrics serve as a heartfelt expression of the songwriter’s innermost emotions. To enhance the aesthetic appeal and elicit a sense of enjoyment, the writer employs the use of figurative language (Hulu et al., 2021). As highlighted by Yastanti et al. (2018), this literary device adds a

distinctive touch to the composition, allowing the audience to engage their imaginative faculties and delve into the deeper significance concealed within the verses.

According to Azwardi (2016), figurative language serves as a captivating form of expression that goes beyond its literal meaning. It encompasses the various linguistic elements found in song lyrics, which convey a deeper essence within a work of literature through the use of figurative speech. Within these lyrics lies the potential to evoke profound emotions within the listener, whether it be sadness or pleasure. This infusion of figurative language adds a touch of beauty to the lyrics, captivating the audience and making them more receptive to the song's message. Consequently, this allure contributes to the song's popularity and fame.

The analysis of figurative language in song lyrics is a captivating endeavor that offers fascinating insights (Swarniti, 2021). For the purpose of this research, song lyrics were chosen as the primary data source. The decision to use "Roar" by Katy Perry as the primary data source for this research stems from the inherent richness of data found within song lyrics. Songwriters often leverage figurative language to captivate listeners and convey hidden meanings implicitly. "Roar" is a compelling choice due to its widespread popularity and cultural impact. Katy Perry, recognized as one of the world's most iconic singers, consistently delivers songs that resonate profoundly with her audience. The selection is driven by the expectation that the song, known for its artistic expression and creative use of language, will offer a nuanced exploration of how linguistic elements contribute to its overall impact.

Moreover, the emotional and inspirational content commonly found in Katy Perry's songs, including "Roar," adds depth to the analysis. The lyrics often touch on themes of empowerment, self-expression, and overcoming challenges, providing a fertile ground for investigating how language is employed to convey these messages effectively. The diversity of figurative language, including metaphors, similes, and personification, within the song further enhances its suitability for linguistic exploration.

While "Roar" serves as a robust choice for this research, alternative songs could be considered based on specific research objectives. Researchers might explore songs from different genres, time periods, or cultural backgrounds to gain a comprehensive understanding of how language functions in songwriting across diverse contexts. The selection of a song is contingent on the specific themes, linguistic features, or cultural phenomena the researcher aims to investigate, allowing for flexibility and a tailored approach in choosing a relevant data source.

The aim of this research is to delve into the linguistic intricacies of songwriting, using "Roar" by Katy Perry as the primary data source. By focusing on the rich tapestry of figurative language, metaphorical expressions, and symbolic elements embedded in the lyrics, the study seeks to unravel the implicit meanings and nuances present in the song. Through a qualitative analysis of the chosen data, the research aims to shed light on how language is strategically employed in "Roar" to captivate listeners and convey messages of empowerment, self-expression, and resilience. Furthermore, the investigation intends to explore the broader implications of such linguistic devices in the context of popular music, contributing to a deeper understanding of the intersection between artistic expression and language within the realm of contemporary songwriting.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Figurative Language

According to Sharndharma and Suleiman in Yusnitasari et al. (2022), figurative language serves as a means of articulating one's thoughts and ideas. Figurative language is a captivating form of expression that allows us to communicate with depth and artistry. It goes beyond the literal meaning of words, offering a rich tapestry of imagery and emotions. As Ratna (2017) suggests, figurative language is a means of enhancing speech, elevating it to a realm of elegance and beauty. It enables us to paint vivid pictures, evoking specific feelings and atmospheres such as solitude, vibrancy, or romance.

According to Perrine in Megazain & Sulistyanto (2022), figurative language encompasses a range of powerful techniques that can elevate our expression and captivate audiences. (1) Metaphor enables us to create intricate and captivating comparisons without relying on common words such as "like" or "as." This allows for a more sophisticated and engaging form of communication. (2) Repetition harnesses the persuasive power of recurring words to reinforce and emphasize a specific message. This technique lends a sense of authority and conviction to our words. (3) Paradox, despite its apparent contradiction, offers a hidden truth that stimulates contemplation and encourages a deeper understanding of complex ideas. It challenges our thinking and provokes intellectual growth. (4) Hyperbole intentionally exaggerates for dramatic effect, aiming to create a profound impact and evoke strong emotions in our audience. (5) Symbolism utilizes the inherent meaning of objects or concepts to convey a profound statement. By adding depth and layers to our narrative, it enriches our storytelling and engages our readers on a deeper level. (6) Allegory, a form of storytelling, weaves intricate narratives that possess a secondary meaning. This encourages readers to delve into profound insights and contemplate the hidden messages within the story. (7) Apostrophe, as a linguistic device, breathes life into non-human entities or absent beings. This allows for engaging and interactive dialogue, making communication more dynamic and compelling. (8) Simile, with its explicit comparisons using words like "like" or "as," sheds light on the similarities between two distinct entities. This enriches comprehension and broadens perspective. (9) Synecdoche simplifies complex ideas by substituting a part for the whole. This enables concise and impactful communication, ensuring that message is easily understood and remembered.

2.2. Song Lyrics

Songs are the embodiment of poetry, intertwined with enchanting melodies and harmonies, evoking a sense of pleasure and delight to the ears. In the present era, the act of indulging in music has become a highly sought-after pastime, captivating the hearts of countless individuals. Often, people find solace in immersing themselves in the world of music during their leisure moments. As expounded by Setiawati & Maryani (2018), songs represent a form of literary expression, brought to life through captivating vocals and accompanied by melodious symphonies.

A song is a melodic arrangement that captures the essence of rhythm (Yusnitasari et al., 2022). Its appeal transcends age, captivating both children and adults alike. The fascination lies in the lyrical content, which forms the heart and soul of a song. Each stanza within the song lyrics is meticulously crafted to harmonize seamlessly, creating a poetic masterpiece.

2.3. Previous Research

There are several previous research that are related to this research, including 1) A research by Yusnitasari et al. (2022). The purpose of the research was to gain insight into the various forms of figurative language employed in Anne Murray's renowned song "You are My Sunshine." Through a descriptive qualitative approach, the researchers meticulously analyzed the song lyrics to identify and categorize the different types of figurative language present. By reading and scrutinizing the lyrics, the researchers successfully determined nine distinct forms of figurative language, including metaphors, hyperboles, symbolism, repetition, idioms, and imagery. Out of the thirteen potential types of figurative language, four were found to be absent in the lyrics, as they primarily consist of plain, everyday language; 2) A research by Swarniti (2022). The objective of this research was to analyze and categorize the lyrical content of Adele's song "Easy On Me" by examining its use of figurative language. This research utilized a qualitative approach and drew data from the song lyrics themselves. The data collection method employed was careful observation, while the theoretical framework was based on the work of Miller and Greenberg regarding figurative language. The findings indicated that the song predominantly employed comparative figurative language, specifically through personification. Overall, Adele's lyrical composition showcased rich tapestry of figurative language, effectively conveying emotions and ideas through imaginative and evocative imagery; 3) A research by Bagul et al. (2023). The objective of this research was to discern the various forms of figurative language and their intended meanings. The researchers collected song lyrics by browsing and downloading from Internet, thoroughly studying and comprehending the lyrics, and meticulously noting and classifying the data based on the different types of figurative language. The data were then analyzed in a descriptive manner using a qualitative approach. Upon analysis, it was discovered that Jamie Miller's song lyrics contained six types of figurative language, including two metaphors (16.6%), two similes (16.6%), two personifications (16.6%), one paradox (8.3%), two apostrophes (16.6%), and three hyperboles (24.9%). It is noteworthy that all of these forms of figurative language possess connotations that subtly convey hidden messages and values pertaining to life.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

The research methodology employed in this research was a descriptive qualitative approach. The utilization of qualitative descriptive methods allows for the comprehensive analysis of events and theories within a specific timeframe (Mukhtar & Pd, 2013). By focusing on the written word rather than numerical data, this research employed a descriptive qualitative approach, which presented information in a rich and expressive manner. This methodology is particularly effective in the analysis of song lyrics, as it enables the interpretation of figurative language and the creation of qualitative data. By presenting the findings in a descriptive manner, this method ensures clarity and enhances the reader's understanding of the research outcomes.

The method employed was qualitative in nature, focusing on the interpretation of textual data generated by subject of research. This involved examining song lyrics to identify and classify the various types of figurative language employed within. The data analysis process, as outlined by Sugiyono (2018), consisted of several meticulous steps: reviewing the song lyrics, searching for instances of figurative language, discerning

specific types of figurative language present, categorizing song lyrics accordingly, and ultimately producing a comprehensive report or conclusion based on the findings.

This research centered on the exquisite craftsmanship of lyrical compositions. It delves deep into the masterful utilization of figurative language presented in Katy Perry's song. Specifically, the chosen piece for meticulous analysis is "Roar," sourced from the website www.azlyrics.com.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The culmination of this research was presented through a meticulous analysis of the collected data. The primary objective of this research was to ascertain the various forms of figurative language employed in song lyrics of Roar by Katy Perry.

Seven distinct types of figurative language were presented. The research findings revealed that the song lyrics of Roar predominantly employed seven types of figurative language, namely allegory, paradox, repetition, metaphor, symbol, simile, and hyperbole. The lyrics, unfortunately, did not embrace the depth that can be achieved through the use of apostrophe, and synecdoche. Additionally, it is important to acknowledge that some lines within the song lyrics lack any form of figurative language altogether, relying solely on simple and direct language. With these enlightening discoveries in mind, a comprehensive analysis of the lyrics in song lyrics "Roar" shall be unveiled.

ROAR (By Katy Perry)

*I used to bite my tongue and hold my breath
Scared to rock the boat and make a mess
So, I sat quietly, agreed politely
I guess that I forgot I had a choice
I let you push me past the breaking point
I stood for nothing, so I fell for everything
 *You held me down, but I got up (hey)
 Already brushing off the dust
 You hear my voice, you hear that sound
 Like thunder, gonna shake the ground
 You held me down, but I got up (hey)
 Get ready 'cause I've had enough
 I see it all, I see it now
Reff : *I got the eye of the tiger, a fighter
 Dancing through the fire
 'Cause I am a champion, and you're gonna hear me roar
 Louder, louder than a lion
 'Cause I am the champion, and you're gonna hear me roar
 Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh
 You're gonna hear me roar
Now I'm floating like a butterfly
Stinging like a bee, I earned my stripes
I went from zero, to my own hero
Back to *, Reff...**

4.1. Research Results

The research findings revealed that the song lyrics of Roar predominantly employed seven types of figurative language, namely allegory, paradox, repetition, metaphor, symbol, simile, and hyperbole.

4.1.1. Allegory

According to Araya in Hidayati (2017), allegory is a captivating artistic medium that delicately weaves together characters and events to symbolize profound qualities or ideas, intricately connected to the realms of morals, religion, or politics.

Table 1. Allegory of Song Lyrics “Roar” by Katy Perry

No.	Lyrics	Explanations
1	“I used to bite my tongue and hold my breath”	The meaning of this lyric is about someone who always remains silent and surrenders to everything that happens to him/her. For example, when he/she was ostracized, he/she also remained silent, without doing anything.
2	“Scared to rock the boat and make a mess”	The meaning of this lyric is about someone who often stays silent without doing anything because they are afraid of making mistake. Or in other words not confident and pessimistic.
3	“I let you push me past the breaking point”	The meaning of this lyric is about someone who allows other people to put them down and take them for granted.
4	“I stood for nothing, so I fell for everything”	The meaning of these lyrics are about someone who has no foundation in life, is inconsistent, and is always tossed about in whatever he/she does.
5	“Already brushing off the dust”	The meaning of this lyric is about someone who has risen and faced all the problems and exclusion he/she received from other people.
6	“I got the eye of the tiger, a fighter”	The meaning of this lyric is about someone who has risen and is full of confidence like a tiger who is not afraid of anything, it is as if he/she is a warrior who always fights for his/her life bravely.
7	“Cause I am a champion”	The meaning of this lyric is about someone who is full of confidence and thinks he/she is a champion.
8	“And you’re gonna hear me roar”	The meaning of this lyric is about someone who is ready to face problems and is ready to face people who take them for granted.

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| 9 | “I went from zero, to my own hero” | The meaning of this lyric is about someone who is proud of himself/herself who fights for his/her identity from zero to becoming someone who is useful to many people. |
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4.1.2. Hyperbole

Hyperbole, a captivating figure of speech, artfully amplifies a statement to evoke a heightened effect. As Fitria (2018) eloquently describes, it is a deliberate form of exaggeration, skilfully utilized to add a touch of humour or drama. Through its exaggerated portrayal, hyperbole may occasionally transcend logical boundaries, yet its impact remains undeniably compelling.

Table 2. Hyperbole of Song Lyrics “Roar” by Katy Perry

No.	Lyrics	Explanations
1	“I got the eye of the tiger”	This lyric exaggerates human abilities because it is impossible for humans to have eyes like a tiger.
2	“Dancing through the fire”	This lyric is redundant because humans cannot dance in fire. If this happens, the human will lose his/her life.
3	“You’re gonna hear me roar”	This lyric is redundant because humans cannot roar like tigers. Even if they scream, humans cannot surpass the roar of a tiger.
4	“Now I’m floating like a butterfly”	This lyric is exaggeration because humans cannot levitate at all, let alone fly through the air like butterflies. This is absolutely impossible.
5	“Stinging like a bee”	This lyric is redundant because humans cannot sting like bees. Because bees are animals, not humans.
6	“I earned my stripes”	This lyric excessive because humans cannot possibly have stripes on their bodies.

4.1.3. Metaphor

Metaphor, an artful linguistic device, enables us to convey profound meaning by directly equating one concept with another. As Lukmana et al. (2019) elucidate, metaphors serve as a powerful tool for indirect comparison, transcending the confines of literal language. It is important to note that while metaphors and similes both facilitate comparison, they possess distinct characteristics. Metaphors boldly assert that one thing is synonymous with another, while similes suggest a resemblance between two entities.

Table 3. Metaphor of Song Lyrics “Roar” by Katy Perry

No.	Lyrics	Explanations
1	“You hear my voice, you hear that sound”	These lyrics mean two activities where someone conveys to others that they are listening and seeing the struggle voiced by someone.

4.1.4. Symbol

The symbol can be described as a visual representation of a concept, possessing a profound meaning that transcends its mere physical form. As Perrine in Hulu et al. (2021) aptly asserts, these symbols employed within this discourse are inherently accessible, effortlessly comprehensible, and inherently familiar to the audience, encompassing depictions of animals, objects, plants, and models.

Table 4. Symbol of Song Lyrics “Roar” by Katy Perry

No.	Lyrics	Explanations
1	“Like thunder, gonna shake the ground”	This lyric has the symbol of thunder, where thunder is a symbol of something that can make a thunderous sound.

4.1.5. Repetition

In the realm of language, repetition is an art that embraces the harmonious repetition of words to assert and eloquently communicate a distinct significance. This masterful utilization of repetition wields a formidable influence, gracefully affirming and fortifying one’s desired message (Megazain & Sulistyanto, 2022).

Table 5. Repetition of Song Lyrics “Roar” by Katy Perry

No.	Lyrics	Explanations
1	“You hear my voice, you hear that sound”	This lyric means repetition in the form of “You hear”, which is someone’s emphasis on another person.
2	“I see it all, I see it now”	This lyric means repetition in the form of “I see it”, which is someone’s activity when looking at something.
3	“Louder, louder than a lion”	This lyric means repetition in the form of “louder”, which is someone’s activity of emphasizing a strong sound.

4.1.6. Simile

The simile, an element of figurative language, draws connections between two seemingly disparate entities. As Syafitri & Marlinton (2018) explain, the simile allows us to explore the similarities between these distinct entities, shedding light on their shared characteristics. Through the skilful use of conjunctions such as “like” and “as,” the simile paints a vivid picture, effortlessly conveying how one thing resembles another.

Table 6. Simile of Song Lyrics “Roar” by Katy Perry

No.	Lyrics	Explanations
1	“Like thunder, gonna shake the ground”	The word “thunder” in these lyrics is something strong that can make a thunderous sound like shaking something.
2	“Now I’m floating like a butterfly”	In this lyric, it is likened to someone who has the ability to be like a butterfly, which is an animal that has the ability to fly or float.
3	“Stinging like a bee, I earned my stripes”	In this lyric, it is likened to someone who has the ability to be like a bee, which is an animal that has the ability to sting.

4.1.7. Paradox

Paradox, an intricate phenomenon, encompasses the presence of situations or statements that exhibit a striking contradiction, diverging from established truths (Mc Arthur in Krisnawati (2017)). It embodies the coexistence of opposing notions of righteousness and fallacy, seamlessly interwoven within a single sentence.

Table 7. Paradox of Song Lyrics “Roar” by Katy Perry

No.	Lyrics	Explanations
1	“You held me down, but I got up”	This lyric means there is resistance from someone. When someone knocked him/her down, he/she still got up and fought.

4.2. Discussion

The song exuded an exquisite medley of literary devices, evoking a captivating tapestry of artistic expression. For a visual representation of the manifold forms of figurative language utilized, they are presented below.

Table 8. Figurative Language of Song “Roar” by Katy Perry”.

No.	Figurative Language	Frequency	Percentage
1	Allegory	9	37.5%
2	Hyperbole	6	25%
3	Metaphor	1	4.16666667%
4	Symbol	1	4.16666667%
5	Repetition	3	12.5%
6	Simile	3	12.5%
7	Paradox	1	4.16666667%
Total		24	100%

After conducting a thorough analysis of the data presented in table 8, it became evident that Katy Perry’s song “Roar” was rich in figurative language, with seven distinct forms being identified. These included allegory, hyperbole, metaphor, symbol, repetition, simile, and paradox. Among these, allegory emerged as the prevailing form, appearing a remarkable nine times. Following closely behind was hyperbole, which made its presence

known three times. Repetition and simile, on the other hand, appeared three times as well. Lastly, metaphor, symbol, and paradox each made a single appearance. In terms of percentage, the occurrence of allegory accounted for an impressive 37.5%, while hyperbole stood at 25%, metaphor and symbol at 4.16% each, repetition and simile at 12.5% each, and paradox at 4.16%.

In song of Roar by Katy Perry, the lyrics embraced the art of figurative language, weaving a captivating tapestry of allegory. Through this figurative language, the song effortlessly imbued its words with profound symbolism, elevating each verse to a vessel of hidden meanings. Thus, every lyric became a profound reflection of the artist's intent, inviting listeners to embark on a poetic journey of discovery and interpretation.

5. CONCLUSION

In light of the research findings, a plethora of insightful conclusions can be drawn by researchers. Firstly, an analysis of Katy Perry's song "Roar" reveals a rich tapestry of figurative language, encompassing seven distinct forms: allegory, hyperbole, metaphor, symbol, repetition, simile, and paradox. Allegory emerged as the predominant form, making nine appearances, closely followed by hyperbole, which manifested three times. Repetition and simile each occurred three times, while metaphor, symbol, and paradox made singular appearances. This comprehensive identification and categorization of figurative language within the lyrics contribute to a nuanced understanding of Katy Perry's lyrical craftsmanship.

Moreover, a quantitative perspective on the occurrence of these forms in "Roar" provides additional insights. Allegory takes the lead, constituting a substantial 37.5%, followed by hyperbole at 25%. Metaphor and symbol each contribute 4.16%, while repetition and simile account for 12.5% each. Paradox, with a presence of 4.16%, rounds out the diverse range of figurative language used in the song. This statistical breakdown offers a quantitative lens through which researchers can grasp the prevalence and distribution of these linguistic devices, enhancing our comprehension of the song's artistic and communicative dimensions.

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