

Research Article

The Employment of Figurative Language in a Motion Picture Artwork

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Abstract

This study aimed at finding out the use of figurative language in an artwork, specifically a movie called Toy Story 3. The method used in this study was descriptive qualitative which provided the necessary data analysis to gain the information needed from the movie. The data source was a movie entitled Toy Story 3 with 103 minutes in length. In collecting data, the researcher used document analysis; later in data analysis, the interactive analysis consisting of data reduction, data display, and data verification was employed. The result shows that there are three types of figurative language consisted in the movie: Metaphor, Simile, and Hyperbole. The metaphors were used to describe something by comparing it with other objects, Hyperbole was employed in order to make the language used in the film increase a child's imagination to infinity, and Simile usage enhances the sentences to spark the curiosity of the audience—merely children. Then, it was also found that regarding the frequency, Metaphor occurs nine times and represents 60%, Hyperbole occurs five times and represents 33%, and Simile occurs one time and represents 7%. In the context of language teaching, this finding likely pertains to the use of different types of figurative language in instructional materials or student writing. It suggests that metaphors are the most frequently used, followed by hyperbole and similes. Understanding this distribution can be valuable for language educators as it helps them focus on teaching and explaining these specific types of figurative language to students.

Keywords

Artwork; figurative language; literature; movies; metaphor

Introduction

Literature is created to express the emotions and expressions of writers about environmental conditions and moods. According to Rokhmansyah (2014) the quality of literary works is also determined by the creative power of a piece of writing from the spontaneity and creative power of a literary creation written as well as the originality of the writing. In this research, a number of topics will be covered,



including the types of figurative language found in films. Research on figurative language contained in a piece of writing is crucial to understanding the meaning of sentences read and written by the author, both in the school environment and in society, including both adolescents and adults. This element can also be used as a tool to integrate educational values in many areas, including in literature artwork (Riyanto, 2010; Syahputri & Ismail, 2023).

Similarly, there are many implicit and explicit meanings that can be distinguished in terms of language style for figure of speech. In addition, the script writer wishes to delve more deeply into the elements of figure of speech so that readers will develop an appreciation for literary works, which, if studied further, will give rise to many meanings and be beneficial to society in general (Maryanti, et al., 2018). Hutaruruk (2019) also states that another definition of figure of speech is a figure of speech for a word to beautify and give meaning to another word in a short story essay; a figure of speech is also a literary work that is frequently used in other literary works such as: poetry, short stories, plays, and novels; and figure of speech is also frequently used in mass media such as newspapers and magazines; and figure of speech can be in the form of a comparison, satire, contradiction, a metaphor, or a figure of speech in a short story typically contains many meanings in other meanings or which are not real, because in a figure of speech it typically contains an expression of language or feelings from the author to express other meanings of the sentences written so as to attract interest in reading, so that people should be able to learn in schools regarding figure of speech so that people are able to understand and understand the meaning of words in every writing that connotes a particular meaning.

The figure of speech of contradiction is a style of language or figurative words belonging to one of the four groups of figures of speech that are frequently used in literary works; the figure of speech of contradiction has its own style of language, which is the opposite of or contradicts its actual meaning (Lismalinda & Ismail, 2020). This is often misunderstood or misconstrued by those who do not understand the figure of speech of contradiction; however, if you already know the meaning of this figure of speech of contradiction, namely to emphasize an utterance of a sentence in order to leave an impression and influence on the reader or listener, you will not be confused. According to Santoso (2016), a comparative figure of speech is a sentence with figurative language in the form of comparing, or it can also be referred to as a figurative word contained in a sentence, which encourages the reader's imagination and enables the reader to understand more than what is read in the sentence.

Figurative language is an expression or phrase that has a different meaning in every word/sentence that is spoken. Figurative language is usually used to beautify the language in dramas, poetries, and sometimes in the lyric of songs. By using figurative language in the song, the lyricist can convey his feelings and provides an opportunity for listeners to think more deeply about the meaning of the song. According to Keraf (2010), figurative language is divided into several types: simile, metaphor, personification, allusion, paradox, irony, hyperbole, synecdoche, and metonymy. The details about each type is as elaborated in the following.

Simile

Pradopo (1987) proposed that Simile is a comparison. It uses words with the purpose of comparing one thing with others. This figure of speech is expressed by using prepositions and conjunctions at the start of words. For instance: (1) The man is as big as an elephant, (2) My mother is as bright as the sun, (3) My partner is as cold as ice.

Metaphor

Classe (2000) argued that Metaphor is the transfer of the image, meaning, or quality of an expression to another expression. The transfer is done by referring a concept to another concept to imply the



similarity, analogy, or relationship between the two. For instance: (1) You are such a coach potato, (2) My father has a heart of a lion, (3) You have a heart of gold.

Personification

According to Nurgiantoro (2017), Personification is a type of figure of speech that gives humanity to inanimate objects. By using personification, one can make objects other than humans be considered as if they were alive like humans. For example, inanimate objects are depicted as if they could walk, breathe, dance. For instance: The moon smiles down on us, The grass danced on the field, and so on.

Allusion

Allusion is a style of language that uses something to express something else through similarities between people, events, or places that are known to many people, such as in legends or proverbs that are commonly known and used by the community. For instance: (1) Egg yok is my Achilles heel, (2) My brother showed up looking like Venus.

Paradox

According to Keraf (2010), Paradox is a language style that contains real contradictions with existing facts. Paradox can also mean anything that attracts attention because of its truth. It can be seen from the contradictory words in a sentence. For instance: (1) The biggest failure of all time is the success, (2) War is peace, freedom is slavery.

Irony

According to Aminuddin (2013), Irony is a figure of speech that straightforwardly contains a hidden meaning. Further, the hidden meaning is conveyed through something clearly different or even the opposite of the actual meaning. For instance: (1) As soft as concrete, (2) What a beautiful stormy day for a run.

Hyperbole

According to Nurgiyantoro (2017), Hyperbole is a language style that emphasizes something exaggerating more than usual. Consequently, this figure of speech can give a witty or dramatic impression depending on how it is used. For instance: (1) I am so hunger I could eat an entire elephant, (2) My sister is as skinny as a toothpick, (3) My friend almost died of embarrassment when talking to his crush.

Synecdoche

Synecdoche is a figure of speech that uses part names to replace what was just mentioned. In addition, Synecdoche is also known as a figure of speech that gives or provides a language to complete a statement mentioned. For instance: (1) I feel like the universe was against me that day, (2) I need a headcount by morning before the meeting start.

Metonymy

Keraf (2010) revealed that Metonymy is a figurative language that uses words to express something else because they have a very close affinity. In essence, this figure of speech uses words that are related to the words that want to be expressed. For instance: (1) My friend asked his best friend hand in marriage, (2) The team need boots on the ground as soon as possible, and so on. Furthermore, a sentence or expression expressed in literacy has a deeper meaning or even a different understanding from common knowledge. Experts in literature usually channel ideas, themes, and feelings differently. They use language to write literary works. It brings a positive effect on the reader or listener. Especially the use of figurative language to make sentences more stunning. Such literature work is



more unshakeable in a movie script and screenplays. Without figurative speech, the use of language used will feel flatter and bland, having no deep impression on the film appearance as a whole.

In relation to the variable presented, this study portrays figurative language found in films. A film is defined as a product of culture and a means of artistic expression. Movie or film as mass communication combines technologies such as photography and sound recording, art, visual arts, theatrical arts, literature and architecture, and music. Apart from being entertainment for the audience, a film can also be used as educational material to provide new insights for the audience. Pratista (2008) divides films into three types, namely: documentaries, fiction films, and experimental films. This division is based on the way of delivery, namely narrative (story) and non-narrative (non-story).

In this research, a movie named *Toy Story 3* was chosen as the object of the study, specifically in the use of figurative language. This film was chosen because it contains good language models for learning settings. *Toy Story 3* is an animated cartoon directed by Lee Unkrich and produced by Walt Disney Pictures. The movie is the third sequel (2010) to *Toy Story* (1995) and *Toy Story 2* (1999). This movie shows the daily life of toys belonging to a boy named Andy. It focuses on how the toys survive when the owner Andy does not pay attention to them. The main star of this movie is the cowboy-like toy named Woody. He is the leader of all Andy's toys. In this sequel, the movie's story starts when the toys are mistakenly delivered to a daycare center instead of the attic right before Andy leaves for college. It is up to Woody to convince the other toys that they are not abandoned and decide to return home safely. This animated cartoon has a rating of 8.4 from IMDB. The movie lasts for one hour and forty-three minutes ending with a dramatic scene where Andy meets Woody and his friend once again. The research question formulated is “What are the types of figurative languages are found in the script of *Toy Story 3* and what is the frequency of occurrences?”

Method

This research employed descriptive-qualitative approach. The method applied in this research is descriptive, which fundamentally depends on how the researcher presents the study using his own language ability. Berg (2007) explained that the qualitative method referred to meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things. The researcher believes that the qualitative method provides the necessary data analysis to gain the information needed for the research. Ospina (2004) claimed that qualitative research involved an interpretive and naturalistic approach. This meant that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings and attempt to make sense of it or to interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people could understand. Mason (2002) and Zaimar (2010) explained that qualitative was a method of analysis to understand the complexity, detail, and context of the research data involving analysis, explanations, and argument-building methods. Thus, the purpose of this method is to produce a complete contextual understanding of the detailed data.

In collecting data, the researcher used document analysis as the method. Bowen (2009) stated that document analysis was a form of qualitative research in which the researcher interpreted documents to give voice and meaning to the research topic. Hence, this analysis technique is very appropriate for qualitative research, particularly descriptive-qualitative research. Further, the collection of the data was initiated by watching the movie *Toy Story 3* with the subtitle to understand the context and then later analyzing the transcript to comprehend the use of figurative language in the movie. The researcher used some steps, and those steps were: (1). Watching the movie—since the data source of this research is a movie, repeating an action like watching the movie twice or more is a fundamental yet vital step in this research progress. The researcher applied a comprehensive approach to carefully observe the movie in order to comprehend the context first and later, the figurative language use of the movie. (2).



Identifying and classifying the data. The researcher identified and classified the data by reading the movie transcript and classifying them into their own figurative language group. Later, the data will be shown in a figure chart. In this phase, the researcher used the process of document analysis proposed before to make it easier to classify the result of the research. (3). Selecting and analyzing the relevant data— In selecting and analyzing the relevant data, the researcher read the theory about types of figurative languages proposed by Keraf (2010) and then decided which types of figurative languages the results belonged. Last, (4) analyzing the data. The method used to collect data is the document analysis method of the movie script. The analysis mainly depends on the integrative and interpretive skills of the researcher.

Data were analyzed using several steps according to the theory of Miles et al. (2014), namely analyzing data in three steps: data condensation, presenting data (data display) and drawing conclusions or verification (conclusion drawing and verification). Miles et al. (2014) stated that data condensation is the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data obtained in this study. The next step after data condensation is data presentation which is interpreted by Miles et al. (2014) as a set of structured information that allows concluding and taking action. By looking at the presentation of the data, researchers will more easily understand what is going on and what should be done. This means whether the researcher continues his analysis or tries to take action by interpreting the findings deeper. Of the several stages that have been carried out, the last is concluding the analysis that has been carried out and re-checking the understanding and use of figurative language.

Results

Summary of the Movie

The film Toy Story 3 was about Andy, a toy owner who had grown up and rarely played with his toys and would like to donate all of them, but for some reason, he still had the attachment and various memories with them, made him doubtful to do so. Woody and his friends felt sad when forced to move out. In the end, they were accidentally taken to a place called Sunnyside. This place was where their friendship bond became closer, portrayed by always helping each other in danger. Woody did not want to leave Andy. He felt that Andy could not live without him. He was looking for a way home to return to Andy's house. It did not stop there. Woody's struggle continued after knowing that his friends were in danger because there was an evil bear named Lotso, the leader toy of Sunnyside. Woody's struggle was not easy. Thanks to good coordination with his friends, he successfully created a plan to trick the toy guards patrolling around the place. Woody's struggle to bring his friends out of Sunnyside was described scarily, a representation of how loyal Woody is to his friends to save them all.

After leaving, the evil bear Lotso and his troops confronted Woody and his friends. They negotiated with each other until, finally, a garbage truck comes. Suddenly Lotso fell into a trash can and pulled Woody into it. Woody's friends did not just stand there blankly. They followed Woody into the trash and tried to save him from the destruction. In the end, even though he was hostile to Lotso, Woody still helped Lotso, who was pinned and almost crushed by a trash crusher. However, after being given help, Lotso betrayed them and left them in the trash container, so they would be destroyed by a trash crusher. But later, three small alien toys came to save them using heavy equipment until they were all saved from the danger. At the end of the story, they all successfully returned to Andy's house. But in the end, they were packed into cardboard boxes to be donated to a home with young children. Arriving at the house, Andy gave all his toys, including Woody, his favorite toy. With a heavy heart and looking deeply at Woody, he finally willingly let go of Woody with a sad look.



Figurative Language Results

Below the researcher tabulated all data taken from the script of Toy Story 3. The data are in the form of text derived from the official website of Toy Story 3. After carefully analyzing all the text, the researcher found three types of figurative language consisted in the movie, namely, Metaphor, Simile, and Hyperbole. The type of figurative language found in the movie were tabulated as followed:

Table 1. Figurative language results

No	Script	Type of Figurative Language
1	I always wanted to go out with a bang!	Metaphor
2	To infinity an beyond!	Metaphor
3	Quiet, musical hog! Knock it off!	Metaphor
4	Well, I might be old, but I still got a spring in my step.	Metaphor
5	Don't be such a baby!	Metaphor
6	Okay. First off, we all knew Operation Playtime was a longshot	Metaphor
7	You need a hand?	Metaphor
8	Daycare?! What? Have you all lost your marbles?	Metaphor
9	I'll fire up the computer.	Metaphor
10	No, it's okay, Mom. It's a fifty-foot baby from outer space! And she's on a rampage! Run for your lives!	Hyperbole
11	Buzz, mind if I squeeze in next to you?	Hyperbole
12	Course he's not a pea brain! They don't even have a head!	Hyperbole
13	And we are eternally grateful.	Hyperbole
14	Mom, we've said good bye like 10 times.	Hyperbole
15	Ride like wind, Bulls' Eye!	Simile

The data analysis shows three types of figurative language out of the nine types proposed by Keraf (2010) found in the script. They are Metaphor, Hyperbole and Simile. These three types of figurative language were used in the script because the definition and the purpose of those figurative languages matched how kids' movies should be presented. The movie Toy Story 3 is a kids' movie where the target audience of the movie is those below 13 of age.

Consequently, figurative language, such as metaphors which function to describe something by comparing it with other objects, makes the language used in the movie more attractive to children. The use of the Hyperbole figure of speech also makes the language used in the film increase a child's imagination to infinity, considering that the characteristics of the Hyperbole itself are the use of a unique term to describe situations that could have been ordinary to extraordinary. In addition, Simile is also found once in the script of the film. This figurative language also enhances how the sentences are conveyed in the film. The script "Ride like the wind, Bullseye!" found in the film could spark the curiosity of those who watched the film. In the end, they will try to find the real meaning of such expressions, which later will be beneficial to the growth of language use of the watchers.

Discussion

In the following are presented results and some excerpts from the movie. In accordance with the understanding of Metaphor, according to Classe (2000), this figurative language focuses on replacing a common expression with other terms to beautify the language used. The frequency with which this



figure of speech appears, namely nine times, makes it dominant in the script of Toy Story 3. This is, of course, closely related to the scriptwriter's preference. The author must have decided to enrich the terms used in the film to make it more interesting. It also shows the writer's imagination and how much the writer loves to use different approaches to convey language. Further, in the field of film script, this type of figurative language is tolerable and acceptable to the film's target audience. Considering the terms used are easy for children to comprehend. The figurative language is also supported by the context of the film, especially by the movement and body language of each film character. Consequently, the watchers will still understand the Simile's meaning and purpose by looking at the scene of the movie.

Analysis of Metaphor

The researcher chose three examples from the gathered data to be analyzed in detail, those examples are as follow:

Excerpt 1: "Don't be such a baby".

If we translated it into Bahasa, this expression would mean 'Jangan cengeng kali jadi orang'. This expression, without a doubt, could not be translated literally, as the meaning of the language would change if one did so. This is also an interesting way for the author to convey language and meaning with a different approach. The word 'baby' is mostly associated with telling someone who cries a lot and is easy to hurt. Thus, when the words are expressed, it is not fundamentally saying he or she is a baby but contextually saying that someone is weak and prone to give out tears when hurt.

Excerpt 2: "You need a hand?"

Again if one tries to translate it into Bahasa, this expression would mean "Perlubantuan?". This expression is also forbidden to be translated literally. It could mean someone will give others his hand. These words need to be understood contextually and abstractly. This expression is quite common in daily conversation as it is a shorter and unique way to offer help to others. Therefore, the words are classified as Metaphor as it uses another term to represent other meaning.

Excerpt 3: "Well, I might be old, but I still got a spring in my step."

This expression is considered a metaphor as it compares one attitude to one of the known seasons of man, the spring. If one tries to translate it literally, the meaning will not be transferred to their mind. However, if one tried to think deeper about the sentence, one would know that those words mean much more than that. This expression is used to tell others that the speaker is still energetically and cheerfully doing something they have not done for a long time. For instance, an older man saying that he still can run despite his age, so he will say "I might be old, but for running, I still got a spring in my step."

Next, it is the finding about hyperbole. In line with the purpose of Hyperbole, according to Nugriyanto (2017), this language style stresses exaggerations, emotions, dramatic effects, and vivid images to beautify the use of language in a movie. This figurative language is the second most frequent language in the film, occurring five times in the whole script. The use of Hyperbole will enhance the dramatic effect of the movie spectators. It grabs the attention of language proficient who are watching the movie. The use of Hyperbole in the film world also creates a contrast between what is the normal aspects and what is the important aspects of the story.

However, it is vital not to take Hyperbole word-for-word. One needs to understand that this language style is the overstatement of the expression transmitted from one person to others.



Analysis of Hyperbole.

The researcher chose two examples from the gathered data to be analyzed in detail, those examples are as follow:

Excerpt 4: “And we are eternally grateful.”

These words frequently describe how grateful one individual is to the other. By adding the word 'eternally', the value of saying thankfulness increases dramatically. Nevertheless, one should not grasp the meaning word for word, as it is not meant eternally or, in another term, forever. The words just meant he or she is extremely thankful to someone because of something. Consequently, this sentence is in line with the way of Hyperbole works.

Excerpt 5 “Mom, we’ve said goodbye like 10 times!”

This expression is usually used when saying numbers that are not true, often exaggerating the number. The phrases are what a kid consistently uses when answering his or her mother. "I have done it millions of times" or "You always disturb me days and nights" does not mean that an individual did it millions of times, at most, probably, only a couple of times. This is also the same case as the expression used in the movie Toy Story 3. The Mom in the movie is not exactly saying goodbye 10 times, at most, if one is counting, probably only three to four times. However, as the saying goes, this exaggerating technique works like a charm. It shows the emotion of the movie's character towards something, and this emotion will travel to the watcher's mind to feel.

Correspondingly to the meaning of Simile proposed by Pradopo (1987), this language style increases the value of a language meaning the audience feels. It allows them to relate to the ideas of the sentence being expressed. Even though the researcher only found one example in the movie's script, it is to be understood. Simile works in way children hard to understand. It needs deeper comprehension, and if a child learns the words, the parents must teach them what the character in the movie was trying to say. Thus, it is to be expected that the author only used one expression of Simile in his movie. The researcher took the only expression of Simile in this study to be analyzed in detail, the example is as follow:

Excerpt 6: “Ride like a wind, Bullseye!”

This sentence does not mean to go as fast as the wind. Naturally, no living thing could travel as fast as the wind. This expression’s purpose is to demand that ‘Bullseye’ needs go as fast as possible. This is how simile works. It compares two things to meet the general understanding of the conveyed messages. It makes the expression more unique since it uses another way to say another thing.

Conclusion

The movie Toy Story 3 used only a few figurative speeches. This is to be expected because the movie targets the audience of 10-13 of age, in other words, a movie for children. The language used in the movie is also in the simplest form. This need to be considered to achieve the movie's goal, which is to entertain children. Nonetheless, all 15 figurative languages found in the movie could be used by the parents to teach their kids how such language works. It is crucial to the development of language for the future. In other words, the pedagogical implications are also generated from the result, they are the enhancement of language awareness, literary analysis skills, visual literacy, and cultural awareness.

However, this study still has limitations regarding the subjectivity, sample size, context, and cultural background. Interpretations of figurative language can vary from person to person, making it challenging to establish objective findings. Concerning the sample size, the analysis may be limited by the number of instances of figurative language in the movie, which could affect the generalizability of



the results. Speaking of context, understanding the context in which figurative language is used is crucial, and this can be challenging in a complex narrative like a movie. Additionally, interpretations of figurative language can differ across cultures and languages, complicating cross-cultural analyses. Besides, determining the intent of the filmmakers in using figurative language may require speculation, as it is not always explicitly stated.

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