

The Usage of Figurative Language in Billie Eilish's Albums: HIT ME HARD AND SOFT

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Abstract:

This paper explores the usage of figurative language in Billie Eilish's albums, "HIT ME HARD AND SOFT." The data are collected through a combination of library research, critical discourse analysis, and textual analysis employing qualitative methods, the study aims to uncover the underlying messages conveyed by Billie in her music. The analysis reveals that Billie utilizes various forms of figurative language, such as metaphors, similes, and imagery. These elements are not merely decorative, they serve as tools for articulating complex emotions and experiences related to love and relationships. By examining the lyrical content, the research highlights the significant impact of Billie's personal feelings and life experiences on her artistic expression, illustrating how her unique perspective shapes her music. These findings suggest that figurative language in "HIT ME HARD AND SOFT" serves not only as a means of artistic expression but also as a tool for deeper emotional connection, reflecting the singer's romantic journey.

Keywords: figurative language; Billie Eilish; emotions; music

Abstrak:

Makalah ini mengeksplorasi penggunaan bahasa kiasan dalam album Billie Eilish, "HIT ME HARD AND SOFT." Data dikumpulkan melalui kombinasi penelitian kepustakaan, analisis wacana kritis, dan analisis tekstual dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap pesan mendasar yang disampaikan Billie dalam musiknya. Analisis mengungkapkan bahwa Billie menggunakan berbagai bentuk bahasa kiasan, seperti metafora, perumpamaan, dan perumpamaan. Elemen-elemen ini tidak sekedar dekoratif, namun juga berfungsi sebagai alat untuk mengartikulasikan emosi dan pengalaman kompleks yang berkaitan dengan cinta dan hubungan. Dengan mengkaji isi lirik, penelitian ini menyoroti dampak signifikan dari perasaan pribadi dan pengalaman hidup Billie terhadap ekspresi artistiknya, yang menggambarkan bagaimana perspektif uniknya membentuk musiknya. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa bahasa kiasan dalam "HIT ME HARD AND SOFT" tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai sarana ekspresi artistik tetapi juga sebagai alat untuk hubungan emosional yang lebih dalam, yang mencerminkan perjalanan romantis penyanyi tersebut.

Kata kunci: bahasa kiasan; Billie Eilish; perasaan; musik

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever listened to a song and felt like it was made for you? The researcher experienced it when listening to songs from Billie Eilish's album "HIT ME HARD AND SOFT" more precisely the songs titled BIRDS OF A FEATHER and L'AMOUR DE MA VIE. It was as if every word, every note, and every emotion poured into the lyrics penetrated directly into the feelings, touching the deepest sides that may not even be touched. Songs like BIRDS OF A FEATHER and L'AMOUR DE MA VIE have the ability to take us to certain moments, bring back memories or maybe just bring up feelings that were previously undefined. This can happen because the lyrics are so beautiful. The linguistic element is also one of the reasons why this works, the use of figurative language is also one of the keys. Figurative language is a type of language that uses figures of speech to be more effective, persuasive, or impactful rather than conveying a literal meaning. It enhances communication by enabling a speaker or writer to express ideas in creative and evocative ways. Figurative language includes various forms, such as metaphors, similes, personification, hyperbole, irony, and idioms, all of which allow for expression beyond unclear language (Colston, 2015). The researcher focuses on the songs BIRDS OF A FEATHER and L'AMOUR DE MA VIE which are songs from the album "HIT ME HARD AND SOFT" by Billie Eilish which was released in 2024.

This research focuses specifically on the songs BIRDS OF A FEATHER and L'AMOUR DE MA VIE from Billie Eilish's 2024 album HIT ME HARD AND SOFT, with the research question: What types of figurative language are used in these songs, and how do these figurative elements convey the creator's emotions? The significance of this study lies in contributing to a deeper understanding of the artistic and emotional value of figurative language in contemporary music, providing insights that may assist music scholars, critics, and enthusiasts in appreciating the layered meanings within popular music. While various aspects of Billie's work have been analyzed, few studies have undertaken a detailed examination of her distinctive use of figurative language.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There is a lot of figurative language related research. In this part the researcher will provide several examples of research that has been carried out and the results and



shortcomings. The first is a paper entitled "Figurative Language Analysis in Billie Eilish's Selected Songs" by Ngailo et al. (2022) explores the use of various forms of figurative language in the lyrics of Billie Eilish's songs. The study aims to identify and analyze different types of figurative language, particularly metaphors, similes, and hyperboles, found in selected songs by Billie Eilish, including those from her albums "Don't Smile at Me" and "Live At Third Man Records". Overall, the study provides a comprehensive analysis of the figurative language in Billie Eilish's songs, revealing the complexity and depth of her lyrical content. However, the paper lacks a detailed exploration of the cultural context surrounding Billie's music, which could further enhance the understanding of her use of figurative language.

The second is research entitled "Type and Meaning of the Figurative Language Found in Niki's Selected Songs' Lyrics" by Alfiyani (2021) explores the use of figurative language in three selected songs by the artist Niki Zefanya: "Lose," "Indigo," and "La La Lost You." The study identifies seven types of figurative language present in the lyrics, including Simile, Metaphor, Apostrophe, Allegory, Paradox, Repetition, and Hyperbole. The research methodology involved watching music videos and analyzing the lyrics to understand the figurative language used and its meaning. The findings indicate that hyperbole is the most frequently used figurative language, particularly to express disappointment in relationships. The paper also discusses the emotional themes of the songs, such as love, disappointment, and the struggle to move on from a relationship. The study concludes that Niki's lyrics serve as a means of expressing her feelings and experiences, enhancing the listener's understanding of her emotional state through the use of figurative language. The paper does not provide a theoretical framework for analyzing figurative language, which could strengthen the analysis and provide a more structured approach to understanding the lyrics.

The last one is research entitled "THE FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE IN LANA DEL REY'S SONGS BASED ON TROPICO VIDEO" by Noviani and Bram (2021). This research explores the use of figurative language in the songs of Lana Del Rey, specifically focusing on three tracks from her short music film "Tropico": "Body Electric," "Gods and Monsters," and "Bel Air." The researchers aim to analyze how figurative language contributes to the songs' meanings and their overall impact. The analysis revealed various types of figurative language, including metaphors, similes, personifications, hyperboles,



and allusions. The most frequently found types were allusions, similes, and metaphors. The study primarily uses qualitative analysis, which may limit the ability to generalize findings across other songs or artists. A mixed-methods approach could provide a more detailed analysis.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research design for this study is qualitative, as it focuses on analyzing words and meanings within the lyrics of Billie Eilish's songs "BIRDS OF A FEATHER" and "L'AMOUR DE MA VIE" from her 2024 album HIT ME HARD AND SOFT. The qualitative approach is ideal for examining the figurative language used in these songs, as it allows for an in-depth interpretation of the emotional and artistic elements conveyed through metaphors, similes, personification, and other figures of speech. The instrument of this research is the researcher itself and the data is collected from Billie Eilish's songs entitled "BIRDS OF A FEATHER" and "L'AMOUR DE MA VIE" from the album "HIT ME HARD AND SOFT".

The research procedure begins with a review of relevant literature on figurative language, specifically its use in music and lyrics. Examine scholarly articles, books, and previous studies that focus on figurative language in contemporary music, particularly in the work of Billie Eilish or similar artists. This review provides a framework for understanding the types and functions of figurative language within the context of lyrical analysis. Based on the literature review, establish a theoretical framework that includes key concepts such as figurative language types (e.g., metaphor, simile, hyperbole, personification, irony). This framework will guide the identification and categorization of figurative elements within the lyrics. Read the official lyrics of "BIRDS OF A FEATHER" and "L'AMOUR DE MA VIE" from a verified source. Carefully read through and annotate the lyrics, highlighting phrases, sentences, or words that appear to employ figurative language. Mark and categorize these expressions according to the types identified in the theoretical framework. Using the annotated lyrics, identify instances of figurative language and categorize each instance according to type. Analyze each identified instance to interpret its possible meaning and emotional impact. Summarize findings by drawing conclusions on how Billie Eilish uses figurative language to convey

emotions in these specific songs. Highlight key patterns, such as recurring figurative devices or themes, and discuss their effectiveness in evoking emotional responses.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

BIRDS OF A FEATHER Lyric

I want you to stay [1]

'Til I'm in the grave [2]

'Til I rot away, dead and buried [3]

'Til I'm in the casket you carry [4]

If you go, I'm goin' too, uh [5]

'Cause it was always you (Alright) [6]

And if I'm turnin' blue, please don't save me [7]

Nothin' left to lose without my baby [8]

Birds of a feather, we should stick together, I know [9]

I said I'd never think I wasn't better alone [10]

Can't change the weather, might not be forever [11]

But if it's forever, it's even better [12]

And I don't know what I'm cryin' for [13]

I don't think I could love you more [14]

It might not be long, but baby, I [15]

I'll love you 'til the day that I die [16]

'Til the day that I die [17]

'Til the light leaves my eyes [18]

'Til the day that I die [19]

I want you to see, hm [20]

How you look to me, hm [21]

You wouldn't believe if I told ya [22]

You would keep the compliments I throw ya [23]

But you're so full of shit, uh [24]

Tell me it's a bit, oh [25]

Say you don't see it, your mind's polluted [26]

Say you wanna quit, don't be stupid [27]

And I don't know what I'm cryin' for [28]

I don't think I could love you more [29]

Might not be long, but baby, I [30]

Don't wanna say goodbye [31]

Birds of a feather, we should stick together, I know ('Til the day that I die) [32]

I said I'd never think I wasn't better alone ('Til the light leaves my eyes) [33]

Can't change the weather, might not be forever ('Til the day that I die) [34]

But if it's forever, it's even better [35]

I knew you in another life [36]

You had that same look in your eyes [37]

I love you, don't act so surprised [38]

Analysis

Metaphors

“‘Til the light leaves my eyes” (line 18): Here, “light” metaphorically represents life. The idea of light leaving the eyes evokes a vivid image of mortality, highlighting the speaker's willingness to remain with their partner until death.

Hyperbole

“I’ll love you ‘til the day that I die” (line 16) and **“If you go, I’m going too”** (line 5): These phrases use hyperbole to capture the idea of an eternal bond, with the speaker willing to go to extremes for their partner. They show the speaker's exaggerated commitment and the impossibility of imagining life without this person.

“If I’m turning blue, please don’t save me” (line 7): This hyperbolic statement reflects a strong level of dependency, suggesting that life without the partner is unendurable, to the point of preferring death over separation.

Imagery

“‘Til I’m in the grave... ‘Til I rot away, dead and buried” (lines 2-3): These lines create strong visual imagery around death. The suffering of these images underscores the speaker's unshakable commitment.

“How you look to me... You wouldn’t believe if I told ya” (lines 20-21): The speaker suggests an admiring perspective that isn’t fully articulated but invites the listener to imagine the intensity of their gaze. This allows listeners to feel the adoration as if it’s a powerful image in their minds.

Personification

“Say you don’t see it, your mind’s polluted” (line 26): Here, the speaker personifies the mind as if it could be “polluted.” This personification hints at internal struggles with self-worth or insecurity.

Allusion

“I knew you in another life” (line 36): This line suggests a past-life connection, subtly alluding to the spiritual or mystical belief in reincarnation. It adds an ethereal layer to their relationship, suggesting their connection is timeless and fated.

Symbolism

The constant references to life and death throughout the lyrics (e.g., “grave,” “casket,” “die”) symbolize the depth and extremity of the speaker’s commitment. Death, in this context, becomes a symbol of the ultimate loyalty and an unbreakable bond.

Oxymoron

“I said I’d never think I wasn’t better alone” (line 10): This line is almost paradoxical, with the speaker implying they once believed they were better alone but no longer do. The oxymoron encapsulates a change in belief, adding complexity to the emotional journey within the song.

L’AMOUR DE MA VIE Lyric

I wish you the best for the rest of your life [1]

Felt sorry for you when I looked in your eyes [2]

But I need to confess, I told you a lie [3]

I said you [4]

You were the love of my life [5]

The love of my life [6]

Did I break your heart? [7]

Did I waste your time? [8]



I tried to be there for you [9]

Then you tried to break mine [10]

It isn't asking for a lot for an apology [11]

For making me feel like it'd kill you if I tried to leave [12]

You said you'd never fall in love again because of me [13]

Then you moved on immediately (Bum, bum, bum) [14]

But I wish you the best for the rest of your life [15]

Felt sorry for you when I looked in your eyes [16]

But I need to confess, I told you a lie (Told you a lie) [17]

When I said you (I said you) [18]

You (You) were the love of my life [19]

The love of my life [20]

So you found her, now go fall in love (Go fall in love) [21]

Just like we were if I ever was (If I ever was) [22]

It's not my fault, I did what I could (Did what I could) [23]

You made it so hard like I knew you would [24]

Thought I was depressed or losing my mind [25]

My stomach upset almost all of the time [26]

But after I left, it was obvious why (Oh), mm [27]

Because for you, you [28]

I was the love of your life, mm [29]

But you were not mine (But you were not mine) [30]

It isn't asking for a lot for an apology [31]

For making me feel like it'd kill you if I tried to leave [32]

You said you'd never fall in love again because of me [33]

Then you moved on, then you moved on [34]

Then you moved on, then you moved on [35]

Then you moved on, then you moved on [36]

Ooh [37]

You wanted to keep it [38]

Like somethin' you found [39]



'Til you didn't need it [40]
But you should've seen it [41]
The way it went down [42]
Wouldn't believe it [43]

Wanna know what I told her [44]
With her hand on my shoulder? [45]
You were so mediocre [46]
And we're so glad it's over now [47]
It's over now [48]
It's over now [49]
It's over now [50]

Camera [51]
Caught on camera [52]
The girl's on camera [53]
Your girl's a fan of— [54]
You miss me [55]
Say you miss me [56]
It's such a pity [57]
We're both so pretty [58]

Analysis

Metaphor

"**My stomach upset almost all of the time**" (line 26). Although this line can be read literally, it metaphorically suggests the emotional toll of the relationship, manifesting as physical discomfort. This line captures the response to a toxic relationship, emphasizing the extent of emotional distress.

Hyperbole

"**Making me feel like it'd kill you if I tried to leave**" (line 12). This line uses hyperbole to express the partner's over-the-top reaction to the idea of the speaker leaving. It illustrates how the partner's dependence becomes a burden, creating guilt and emotional manipulation.

Personification

"**Thought I was depressed or losing my mind**" (line 25). Here, depression and sanity are treated as entities capable of being "lost" or wrestled with. It humanizes these mental states, making them feel like external forces affecting the speaker's life.

Repetition

The repeated line "**Then you moved on, then you moved on**" (line 34–36). Repetition here heightens the sense of betrayal, emphasizing the ease with which the partner moved on.

Imagery

"**The way it went down / Wouldn't believe it**" (line 42–43). This vague imagery invites the listener to imagine a dramatic ending to the relationship, leaving room for interpretation. This line creates a sense of betrayal or shock without needing explicit detail, relying on the audience's imagination.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the analysis of figurative language in Billie Eilish's songs BIRDS OF A FEATHER and L'AMOUR DE MA VIE from her 2024 album HIT ME HARD AND SOFT reveals the powerful role of metaphor, hyperbole, personification, and other devices in conveying complex emotions. Through hyperbolic expressions of affection, metaphorical descriptions of life and death, and personifications of emotional confusion, Billie expresses the themes of love, loss, and self-discovery. Her use of figurative language enhances the lyrics' emotional depth, allowing listeners to connect personally with the experiences and emotions depicted. This study highlights how figurative elements in contemporary music can improve the storytelling, giving audiences a deeper experience. By examining these songs, we gain insight into Billie's ability to use language as a tool for emotional resonance, emphasizing the power of music to evoke heartfelt responses.

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