Figurative language used in Blackpink featuring Selena Gomez's song lyric "Ice Cream": A discourse analysis

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Abstract - A pop song is one of the popular genres widespread in society. The label 'popular' is used as it covers a diverse range of masses, started from pre-dominantly youth to adult, that target them as the market. To the extent of the popular meaning, a song is supported with alluring music video clips, entertaining musical instruments, and lyrics that make an addiction by turning the repeat mode on a music player. Regardless, no all of the songs carried by singers incorporate lyric meanings of what they indeed seem. They thus frequently embed figurative features of the language to fit the context of a song. The figurative language feature is a variety of language that authors operate to convey out of the comprehension of literal meaning. It then involves no surface context instead of a deep one. Therefore, this descriptive qualitative analysis study was conducted to investigate how figurative language features carry and influence the meaning behind BLACKPINK-Selena Gomez's song Ice Cream. The findings showed that metaphor (48%) was the most frequent figure spotted in the musical discourse, followed respectively by simile (28%), hyperbole (12%), and repetition (12%). It indicated the song was intended to convey the lyrics contained no real-context meanings that can cause misleading or even be puzzlement if the listeners cannot comprehend the song as a whole. Therefore, further research may comprehensively consider this issue with different perspectives to broaden the language field.

Keywords: discourse analysis, figurative language, song lyric

1. Introduction

A pop song is now excessively popular among people. The term 'popular' prevails due to constituents associated with the recognition, consumption, broadcasting, and/or societal array (Shuker, 2010). People become aware and familiar with certain new release songs as the record company collaborates with other parties to promote their products massively online. The songs appear in commercial breaks, events, and music platforms. This prompts songs to be noticeable and remembered, resulting in great attraction in communities to consume the songs.

The majority of songs are generally personified with a non-actual condition. They are symbolized by cultural choices that are believed to affect the flow of tempo. It induces a sense of pleasure deduced from listening to ordering tones or sounds in succession, combination, and temporal relationships. Accordingly, a popular song incorporates the genuinely existing music for inquiry and any supply that distributes context and carries the song elements (May et al., 2020). Many metaphoric wordings decorate popular songs. As a result, this brings figurative features to get a spotlight on the stage.

Figurative language feature has been displayed to play a simultaneous role in musical composition and communication, academic extension, and scientific erudition. The figurative language feature is not unusual or solely rhapsodical; it is an omnipresent piece of oral and written discourse (Roberts & Kreuz, 1994). Unfortunately, figurative language feature is not always obvious or exact. Figuration is addressed as employment that is driven by a metaphoric or metonymy kinship to some other employment that might be somehow marked as literal. Literal thus is not kind of par for the course meaning as routine usage, whereas it is independent on a figurative aspect from one denotation to another (Dancygier & Sweetser, 2014).

BLACKPINK is a South Korea-based girl band membered of Jisoo, Jennie, Rose, and Lisa. The group debuted in August 2016 and has achieved many milestones in the music industry since then. In August 2020, the Korean group released a song entitled Ice Cream, which collaborated with an American singer Selena Gomez. The release resulted in being pinnacle at the 13th position on the US Billboard Hot 100, making BLACKPINK's first single to soar inside the chart as the top twenty. This triumph put Ice Cream became the lengthiest-registering song on the Hot 100 by a girl-membered Korean-pop group.

To some extent, a few researchers have coped with the distinct discourse intentions that bear the application of figuration in song lyrics. Setiawati and Maryani (2018) scrutinized Taylor Swift's songs of 22 and Red. The figurative language combined in both musical compositions contained simile, metaphor, hyperbole, paradox, irony, and personification. Nursolihat and Kareviati (2020) discovered that metaphor was prominent occurred in Zayn Malik and Zhavia Ward's A Whole New World. On the other hand, simile and repetition were the most intermittent categories of figuration in Katy Perry's Roar (Zama et al., 2019). In other studies, the most dominant figurative languages found are hyperbole (Dewi et al., 2020) and repetition (Alek et al., 2020).

However, most of the previous studies have failed to consider the social-cultural dimension in popular songs. Little was known about the cultural aspects of particular subjects, and it was unclear what the real meaning behind if we look at it from the cultural perspective. Therefore, the present study aimed to investigate the figurative language utilized behind BLACKPINK-Selena's Ice Cream since the popular song lyrically integrated the ice-cream-related nuance with double entendres. The song may bring implications in terms of the culture-based meaning of figurative features that need to take the issue into account.

This concern positively relates to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) that mainly focuses on the digressive portrayal of power abuse, such as sexism, racism, and other social disproportion models (van Dijk, 2015). The context thus can be founded in a text or talk. CDA somehow is not a distinct method of discourse studies but delivers all related methods of the humanities and social sciences to research crucial social queries (Meyer & Wodak, 2001). This is also why CDA can be viewed as a social motion that connects on conceptual interpretations

of conversational and other social circumstances and activities with the cognitive constructs underpinning discourse.

Based on the prior explanation above, two research questions were proposed: 1) what are figurative language categories spotted in Ice Cream? 2) what is the figurative language implicit meaning in Ice Cream? As the issue had been discussed, this empirical study was expected to grant language enrichment in a lyric discourse that comprised a wide variety of figurative communication means for scholars and language educators.

2. Method

A descriptive qualitative research method was conducted in this research. The data was gathered from the song lyric of the duo BLACKPINK-Selena Gomez's Ice Cream, which included figurative languages. This is because the descriptive method demands a researcher to compile the text-reference-based data by encompassing the step-by-step process worked to assemble information (Delaney & Bates, 2017). In this case, the process began by studying the lyrics. The researcher endeavoured to seek the linguistic aspects, such as words, phrases, and sentences within the figurative language, and apprehend each figuration's meaning. Some jotting was considered, at which the ones were applying figurative language.

Accordingly, some data were asserted and anatomized by a pure structuralism technique. It thus purposed to adjust on both types and meanings inserted in the figurative language to distinguish figurative language representations, for instance, hyperbole, repetition, simile, metaphor, and other metaphoric expressions. By knowing the types attached to the song, the assorted data were classified based on each label, and they were calculated by the data computation adopted from Ibrahim et al. (2019) as follows.

FK rel = Frequency of relative cumulative
FK   = Frequency of cumulative
ΣF   = Frequency of total

3. Results and Discussion

After analyzing the data from the song lyric of Ice Cream, there were four figurative language types, such as metaphor, simile, hyperbole, and repetition. The complete figures and explanations of each sample were stated below.

Table 1 Types of Figurative Language in Ice Cream

Figures	Amount of Figures	Total (%)
Metaphor	12	48%
Simile	7	28%
Hyperbole	3	12%
Repetition	3	12%

Stanza I
Line 1: "Come a little closer 'cause you lookin' thirsty"
Line 2: "I'ma make it better, sip it like a Slurpee"

In stanza I, the song attached two figurative languages: metaphor and simile. The metaphor was infused in line 1, in which, the singer (a woman singer) tried to attract "you," supposed to be a man, to approach her. A man presented by "you" looked tempting about the woman, which clearly meant the intended object was not in a drought that needed some water. Notwithstanding, "you" was sexually attracted to the woman in terms of appearance or something else.

In line 2, it can be seen that simile was inserted since the figuration addresses a comparison with other stuff (Roncero et al., 2006). The woman seemed to serve the man to be more pleased by assisting him. In this context, the song author drew a situation when the woman intended to swallow one of his private body parts. Therefore, Slurpee referred to a frozen drink brand exclusively sold at 7-eleven in many different flavours.

Stanza II
Line 1: "Snow cone chilly"
Line 2: "Get it free like Willy"
Line 3: "In the jeans like Billie"
Line 4: "You be poppin' like a wheelie"

In stanza II, BLACKPINK started to narrow the points of the song relating to ice cream. The topic was asserted with simile, founded in lines 2, 3, and 4. In lines 2 and 3, the song composer interjected a name of persons, respectively Willy and Billie. Simile was determined as all lyrics nearly used a word signal "like." Moreover, Willy referred to the man's genital that the woman called with such a nickname to bring a sense of spoiling to the man sensually. She also attempted to come closer to the man's pants to unveil his reproductive organ. Billie was used only to synchronize the lyric as it was believed to be inspired by Michael Jackson's song Billie Jean which was released in 1982.

Stanza III
Line 1: "Even in the sun you know I keep it icy"
Line 2: "You could take a lick but it's too cold to bite me"

In stanza III, the Korean group applied hyperbole for both lines. The feature demands the speaker to deliver exaggeration or extravagant toward something (Wilson, 2017). The musical group members expressed their mind intending to keep tabs with the man. The woman intended to stay closer with her spouse, whatever the condition was. She also added a clue that there was no struggling situation that can separate her from him.

Stanza IV
Line 1: "Brrr brrr frozen"
Line 2: "You're the one been chosen"
Line 3: "Play the part like Moses"
Line 4: "Keep it fresh like roses"

In stanza IV, simile was injected in lines 3 and 4. The member showed gratitudes to the man that he was selected as her favourite person in life. The lyric in line 3 was explicitly driven to sexual meaning. In addition to that, she wanted him to move her legs in different directions from a central point; the same way Moses did the Red Sea. The following line related to maintaining the exhilaration flourishing in their relationship, or more concretely, in the bedroom.

Stanza V
Line 1: "Look so good yeah look so sweet"
Line 2: "Looking good enough to eat"
Line 3: "Coldest with this kiss so he call me ice cream"
Line 4: "Catch me in the fridge right where the ice be"

In stanza V, the metaphor was inserted in line 4. She was attracted to the thing, as mentioned earlier, owned by the man. As she had got fascinated with it, she planned to ingest

it. She thus gave the man a signal to find her where it was placed, indicating that she was ready to do it. The word fridge, in this fashion, pertained to the man's underpants.

Stanza VI
Line 1: "Look so good yeah look so sweet"
Line 2: "Baby you deserve a treat"
Line 3: "Diamonds on my wrist so he call me ice cream"
Line 4: "You can double dip cause I know you like me"

In stanza VI, the metaphor was instilled in both lines 3 and 4. In this part, the woman eulogized her man to be worthy. As he was attractive or seducing, she rewarded him by letting him lovingly touch her.

Stanza VII
Line 1: "I know that my heart could be so cold"
Line 2: "But I'm sweet for you come put me in a cone"

Metaphor was applied in line 2. The songwriter exhibited a hint that the woman possibly pretended to be an arrogant, cruel person. Although so, she could not be happier and could be a nice person if she was permitted to get closer to his sexual organ.

Stanza VIII
Line 1: "You're the only touch yeah they get me melting"
Line 2: "He's my favorite flavor always gonna pick him"
Line 3: "You're the cherry piece just stay on top of me so"
Line 4: "I can't see nobody else for me no"

The metaphor was injected in line 3. The stanza VIII covered a situation that the ambiance between the couple was getting intense. The woman had got blushed after receiving affection from her spouse. Accordingly, he was the only one to whom she got attracted, so she did not wish other women to replace her.

Stanza IX
Line 1: "Chillin' like a villain, yeah, ra, ra, ra"
Line 2: "Crazy insane speed in my La Fera (미친 미친듯한 속도 in my La Fera)"
Line 3: "So fast, you don't want a detour (너무 빨러 너는 삐끗 원한 다면 그냥 지름)"
Line 4: "Making Millis Billis everyday, night and summer ice on your wrist (Millis Billis 매일 벌음 한여름 손목에 얼음)"

The stanza IX culminated a repetition in line 4. Some parts in the manuscript (lines 2, 3, and 4) were translated from Korean. The whole lyrics intended to tell the listeners that the couple's high tension of intercourse continued. This was indicated in lines 2 and 3. The words Millis and Billis were the short form of millions-billions. Therefore, the woman tried to manage to get as much money as she can regularly.

Stanza X
Line 1: "Keep it movin' like my lease up"
Line 2: "Think you fly boy where ya visa"
Line 3: "Mona Lisa kinda Lisa"
Line 4: "Needs an ice cream man that treats her"

There were two figurations implanted in this part: simile (line 1) and metaphor (lines 2 and 4). The stanza started the narrative about the couple wanted to keep the pace of intercourse being stable. During the "special moment," the man was the main actor and was positioned above the woman, indicating the man was overlapping her. The lyric in line 3 suggested that Lisa was equally artistic and famous as Van Gogh's painting Mona Lisa.

Stanza XI
Line 1: "Na na na na na"
Line 2: "Ice on my wrist yeah I like it like this"
Line 3: "Get the bag with the cream"
Line 4: "If you know what I mean"

Two figurations were spotted in this stanza: repetition (line 1) and metaphor (line 2 and 3). The stanza explained that the woman was adored with the men's genital organ. As such, she planned to play with it again in the future.

The next stanza was no significantly different from the previous verse. It only was substituted with a lyric "And I'm nice with the cream" in line 3. The word cream referred to his private organ. Correspondingly, the line indicated the woman had no issue with the physical appearance of the man's phallus.

Based on the data and explanation above, it can be seen that metaphor has notably shown up for twelve times, while simile has seven samples, and both hyperbole and repetition have three items. Most of them have thoroughly different forms, which are a single word, phrase, or sentence. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that metaphor is the most frequent figure in Ice Cream.

The result of this study suggested that the figurative language was contained in the song to carry obscene tones. As figuration may vary, it also discovered that the lyrics involve metaphor, simile, hyperbole, and repetition. Each figure portrays the implicit meaning that leads to different functions and representations.

Figurative language is used, in the song, for producing literal meaning. This evidence is supported by a study (Fitria, 2018) that figuration causes effects on interpreting some linguistic aspects. She found that the figuration has roles in delivering lyrics that contain literal denotation. It is quite similar findings to the song-related study conducted by Setiawati and Maryani (2018) and Arditami (2017). The researchers identify figurative language could be a factor in deciding whether some words are comparative, and some are contradictory. The decision is based on individuals' perceptions.

Following that, Glucksberg (2003) argues that literal languages' processing is deemed automatic that any language input activates it. On the other hand, figurative language failed perception is frequently found as it is caused by the inability to make sense of a literal interpretation. This means that figurative interpretations tend to take longer than concrete since these interpretations are only found after the creation, and the identification of a literal interpretation is possible. A moment of thought should reassure that this cannot always be accurate, and in reality, this intuition is backed by psychological studies. Having said that, the idiom "kick the bucket" can be considered as an example. In the literal meaning, this word is rarely meant. Consequently, the first meaning that comes to mind is idiomatic mean, indicating something to die (McGlone et al., 1994).

A metaphor and simile are the way of interlocutors to convey their expression with a symbol. In this case, the song Ice Cream attempts to show the audience that its lyrical context embraces a single object to others in a sensual manner. The argumentation is proved by (Siallagan et al., 2017). They discover that metaphor and simile play a role by representing something with other things. This leads to perception to individuals when they consider two different objects seemed alike.

Moreover, both conceptual thoughts are closely analogous. The difference is that simile adds the signals, such as "like" and "as" in the utterance or expression. Glucksberg and Keysar (1990) argue that metaphors reflect better similarities than equivalent comparisons and argued that the transfer or the contrast of a metaphor is similar. For instance, the simile "My surgeon is like a butcher" is considered as a softer accusation than the metaphor "My surgeon is a butcher." If an analogy is carried out with a simile comparison with a metaphor, a simile will allow the listener to see that the contrast is not as extreme as implied. This implies some of the words are equal to metaphor and simile as both associate other objects with a symbol (Yastanti et al., 2018; Harya, 2016; Deignan, 2012; Ritchie, 2008). The usage depends on the intended purposes of the interlocutor.

Hyperbole also takes involvement in the song by exaggerating a situation as if it is possible to happen or exist, whether it is not. It is in line with the study (Nursolihat & Kareviati, 2020), highlighting hyperbole as language means to create an object more extensive than the actual one. Burgers et al. (2016) also draw a situation that hyperbole requires gross distortion when defining something better than it is. For instance, this declaration includes an exaggeration of the waiting period if you are late to reach a friend, and the friend comments, "I am waiting for ages." McCarthy and Carter (2004) attribute hyperbole as "extreme circumstances," which means that hyperbole is typically located at the very end of the denotative stage. Similar to a metaphor, hyperbole is a pragmatic system. An assertion such as "the biggest disaster of the 21st century," when it relates to the COVID-19 pandemic, it may have no hyperbolic intention, but it is when your favourite team is defeated in a game.

The repetition occurs in the song intending to emphasize the rhythm. The figure is indicated when words, phrases, and sentences are replicated in the same line (Fitria, 2018). As repeating the same word is necessary, repetition can also be utilized to affirm the conveyed expression (Harya, 2016). Atamuratova (2020) thus notices in the study that repetition is beneficial for the readers to bear in mind their importance memo after viewing or listening to it the stated key words, clauses, or sentences perpetually.

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that the whole lyrics of Ice Cream contain metaphor, simile, hyperbole, repetition. The lyrics do not seem to be the real meaning; instead, they include impish messages behind the song. Some of the lyrical aspects need to comprehend deeply to prevent misinterpretation. As the figuration injects no actual meaning, the listeners have to be cautious that not all songs do not always carry positive substances.

4. Conclusion

The study has scrutinized Ice Cream lyrics by BLACKPINK featuring Selena Gomez. Based on the findings and discussion above, it can be concluded that numerous kinds of figurative language were found in the song lyrics. Four types of figurative language were metaphor, simile, hyperbole, and repetition. The metaphor was the dominant (48%) of figurative languages found in the song lyrics. The words stated in the songs were to call objects that refer to someone or something else.

BLACKPINK and Selena Gomez intended to describe and emphasize the condition where there was a couple in love. The song showed how the woman was desired to have intercourse with her boyfriend. In addition to that, the lyrics had vulgar meaning, addressing the sensual nuance of the song. As a result, the teachers need to be careful in selecting songs as their primary material in a class since some popular songs are not safe for students' environment. This requires teachers to research the intended songs first whether they may seem harmful lyrics to comprehend by the students.

The current study was limited to figuration used in a song Ice Cream popularized by BLACKPINK featuring Selena Gomez. Future research may investigate figuration meaning behind the element of music movie clips and focus another perspective of discourse analysis in the scope of lyrical song. This research was also expected to contribute to the academic field,

particularly to examine the figurative language discourse in lyrical texts, as songs are learned, starting from a junior to a high school level.

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