

## AN ANALYSIS OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE IN ADELE'S ALBUM "25"

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### ABSTRACT

*The purpose of this research is to know and learn more about the language style in the song lyrics in Adele's album "25" and can also provide information about the language style in the song lyrics, which means that future researchers can continue further research. This research is focused on the use of language styles in Adele's song lyrics in the album "25" where the use of language in song lyrics from time to time has developed because language can have different meanings in each sentence or word. Researchers chose Adele's album "25". Researchers used qualitative research where the research focused on language styles in song lyrics. The researcher has carried out using data collection techniques in the form of observation and taking note by using the Youtube application to make it easier for researchers to examine song lyrics from the language contained in the song. 1. Researchers found the lyrics and meaning of each song on Adele's album "25", 2. Researchers analyzed the meaning of each song. 3. Researchers analyzed the language style and majas or figurative language of each song, 4. Researchers concluded by analyzing the types of figurative language contained in the lyrics of Adele's song on the album "25". Based on the results of data analysis, there are nine types of figurative language used in the four song lyrics that have been analyzed.*

**Keywords:** Language Style, Figurative Language, Song Lyrics Analysis.

## **INTRODUCTION**

As human beings, we will certainly carry out “communication” with other people both to convey feelings, thoughts, and intended meaning to other people as our interlocutors (Fitria & Setyawan, 2023).

Language serves as a means of sharing information or messages with others (Mu'in, Noortyani & Sibarani, 2021). Our language has the ability to inspire everyone. This expression can take many forms, one of which is through music. According to Astuti et al. (2021), listening to music can boost our immune system and promote feelings of joy. Thus, music enhances the beauty of language expression. Hasibuan (2018) explains that humans naturally communicate through gestures, signals, or sounds to share their thoughts, ideas, feelings, or emotions. As such, songs are viewed as a medium for expressing emotions, allowing everyone to find comfort or joy in melodies while grasping the meanings within the song's lyrics.

Language operates in multiple contexts. It can appear as both standard and non-standard forms, including songs created by composers; incorporating everyday language. This is often referred to as different styles of language. Additionally, Language style refers to the way expressions are conveyed and can carries various interpretations (Jannah et al., 2022), while Vitria (2013) noted that the term style in language applies to its use within poems, novels, and songs, expressed through spoken and written forms. Moreover, Mu'in (2021) argues that style involves language features that are organized and interconnected with one another.

In this case, this research concentrates on the language styles present in the lyrics of Adele's album "25." Over time, the language used in song lyrics has evolved, as words and sentences can carry different meanings depending on their context. Watanabe (2018) emphasizes that song lyrics are a linguistics form worth studying because they merge spoken and written language with music. This research aims to explore the language styles within the song lyric to understand the meaning and intent conveyed to listeners (Handrianto, Jusoh, Goh & Rashid, 2021). Language style can be examined through figures of speech, including apostrophe, metaphor, metonymy, allegory, symbol, synecdoche, repetition, irony, paradox, simile, hyperbole, understatement, personification, and pleonasm (Alifah, 2015; Sarte et al., 2021).

Language style derives from the field of stylistics, which examines the unique ways language is used in texts. In this case, the focus is on analyzing the language style present in the song lyrics of Adele's album “25.” The aim of this research is to gain a deeper understanding of the language styles used in these lyrics and to provide insights that may serve as a foundation for future researches on similar topics.

Researchers chose Adele's album "25" because the song is more familiar to researchers, there is an interesting fact why each Adele album is given the name "number" because representing her age at the time of writing the songs. For instance, the album “25” was released in 2015, reflecting Adele's age of approximately 25 years during its creation.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Researchers used qualitative research where the research focused on language styles in song lyrics. It can be concluded that the object of this research is the song lyrics on Adele's album entitled "25". In this study, the researcher examines the language used in these lyrics, such as the style of lingo used in this song which includes the figure of speech or figurative language used (Sicam et al., 2021; Utami et al., 2021). The method used is a qualitative approach, and the researcher has carried out using data collection techniques in the form of observation and taking note by using the youtube application to make it easier for researchers to examine song lyrics from the language contained in the song. In analyzing the data, researchers used four steps to research: 1. Researchers found the lyrics and meaning of each

song on Adele's album "25", 2. Researchers analyzed the meaning of each song. 3. Researchers analyzed the language style and majas or figurative language of each song, 4. Researchers concluded by analyzing the types of figurative language contained in the lyrics of Adele's song on the album "25".

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Adele was born on May 5, 1988 in Tottenham, London, Britain. Adele is an English pop vocalist and lyricist whose profound emotive voice and customarily made melodies made her one of the foremost broadly prevalent entertainers of her era. Respected as a British symbol, she is known for her mezzo-soprano vocals and nostalgic songwriting. Adele developed up in a challenging environment but found comfort and self-expression through music. Her profound and profoundly passionate singing fashion reflects the impact of soul, jazz, and R&B legends like Etta James and Ella Fitzgerald, whom she respected from a youthful age.

Adele's melodies regularly investigate subjects of shock, self-reflection, and flexibility, with her utilize of metaphorical dialect playing a significant part in passing on these feelings. Adele utilizes representations, analogies, and symbolism to make distinctive passionate scenes. Interests, Adele regularly joins compressions and casual dialect in her lyrics, such as "I'm" rather than "I am" or "do not" rather than "don't," which not as it were makes her melodies feel conversational and relatable but too reflects her bona fide, down-to-earth identity. The use of personification like this is common in Western culture to describe abstract concepts in a more vivid and humanized way, allowing listeners to experience deeper emotions. According to research conducted by Betari et al. (2022), in the album "30", Adele employs various types of figurative language, including personification, which accounts for 9% of the total use of figurative expressions, demonstrating her consistency in applying this style to enrich her song lyrics.

Figurative language style in the song lyrics on the album. Nine categories of figurative language hyperbole, simile, metaphor, personification, litotes, metonymy, allegory, symbol, and paradox, were identified by the research results. Figurative language is language that uses similarities or comparisons to describe someone or something. Personification, similes, metaphors, and hyperbole are some examples of figurative language. After data analysis, researchers found nine different forms of figurative language in four of Adele's songs from her album "25".

No.	Song Lyrics	Total of Figurative Language
1	Love In The Dark	4
2	Send My Love	3
3	I Miss You	7
4	Sweetest Devotion	7

### A. Love In The Dark

The lyrics of this song contain four (4) different forms of figurative language: paradox, metonymy, symbol, and simile. Nine (9) different forms of figurative language, such as personification, metaphor, hyperbole, irony, synecdoche, allegory, antithesis, and sarcasm, are absent in this song. An explanation of the four metaphorical languages is given below:

#### 1. Simile: "It fell like we're oceans apart"

The lyric above is a simile because it compares emotions to the ocean. According to the lyrics above, he and his girlfriend have quite different feelings. This shows that the songstress' feelings are difficult to experience with her partner and any relationship she has with her partner will only end in failure.

#### 2. Metonymy: "It is the world to me"

In the lyrics above, the word "world" could possibly be interpreted as life. The life of

the songwriter and his lover is not what they expected, according to the verse above. The lyric piece above explains that the writer will accept his decision gracefully and continue his life as usual, no matter how challenging it is.

3. Symbol: "I can't love you in the dark"

The word "dark" in the verse above means something bad for the future. The lyrics of the song above express the songwriter's feelings that everything that will happen to him is pointless and he feels so heavy towards his lover. According to the songwriter, his future will not be bright if he continues the relationship.

4. Paradox : "I am cruel to be kind"

The paradox above shows that the songwriter has the confidence to take another path by breaking off his relationship with his partner, which is very difficult to live with. Then, for his own benefit, the author decided to act cruelly by breaking his lover's heart.

### B. Send My Love

The lyrics of this song contain three different forms of figurative language: paradox, metonymy, and metaphor. The following ten categories of figurative language are absent in this song: sarcasm, personification, simile, irony, synecdoche, symbol, allegory, antithesis, and hyperbole. The four figurative languages are explained as follows:

1. Metaphor: "We must let go of all our ghosts"

One example of a metaphorical figure of speech is the couplet above. The original meaning of the term "shadow" still exists. Therefore, the variations in meaning of the couplet above are a living metaphor. The above lyrics convey the idea that both the songwriter and his ex-lover need to let go of all the beautiful memories they have shared.

2. Paradox "I am running, you are walking"

The purpose of the verse above is to describe how great the creator's love and affection for his lover is, but on the other hand his lover is cold and the sensations his lover feels are mediocre.

3. Metonymy "For a big leap, for a big leap"

Big leaps and big leaps are interpreted as hopes and dreams. The verse above means that his lover has a new lover, even though the songwriter has big hopes and dreams that will come true with his lover.

### C. I Miss You

Hyperbole, metonymy, litotes, and allegory are four types of figurative language present in the lyrics of this song. The nine types of figurative language that are not in this song are personification, irony, synecdoche, symbol, paradox, allegory, antithesis, sarcasm, and metaphor. The four figurative languages are explained as follows:

1. Hyperbole

- I want your heaven and your ocean too

The lyrics above are an example of hyperbole. The songwriter used the phrases "heaven" and "your ocean" to express the beauty of being together with his girlfriend. The song's lyrics express the protagonist's hope for happiness and happy memories of his lover.

- Then kiss me back to life to see

In the example above, the author expresses his desire for his lover to always be in his life, because he misses their constant presence and enthusiasm.

2. Allegory

- We play so dirty in the dark

Dirty in the dark is an allegory that reflects his feelings and inner journey during a long distance relationship. Songwriters usually face many difficulties things while waiting for his partner.

3. Litotes

- Treat me soft but touch me cruel

The composer uses gentle yet brutal denial to convey his emotions. Show me that you really love me by treating me gently. and cruelly touched me as if to scold him if he made a mistake. The author of the verse above wants to show that he and his partner are able to communicate with each other.

#### 4. Symbol

- Baby don't let the lights go down

The verse above is a metaphor which indicates that the composer of the song has high hopes for the relationship he is in and hopes that his lover will not disappoint him.

- Baby give me light

Similar to the previous verse, the songwriter also uses figurative symbols to describe the great hope that the lover will continue to provide love and affection even though they are separated by distance. And he wishes Perhis beloved love and love will not diminish even if separated by distance.

#### 5. Personification

- I want to step into your great unknown

Unknown is a personification metaphor that expresses the songwriter's desire for a beautiful future with his partner and the ability to experience beautiful things in the future.

#### D. Sweetest Devotion

There are six types of figurative language in the lyrics of this song, namely: hyperbole, simile, metaphor, personification, metonymy, allegory. There are seven types of figurative language that are not found in this song, including: irony, synecdoche, litotes, symbols, paradox, antithesis, and sarcasm. The following is an explanation of the four figurative languages:

##### 1. Hyperbole

- I've been frozen!

The verse above is an exaggerated metaphor that expresses the songwriter's unique and deep feelings for the love he is feeling. The verse above conveys the songwriter's sense of comfort and reluctance to welcome new individuals into his heart.

- You're the right kind of madness

The use of excessive language in the previous stanza turns "madness" into hyperbole. In the lyrics above, the composer describes feelings of love and affection for his partner as crazy.

##### 2. Simile

- Hitting me like an explosion

The singer uses imagery in the lyrics above to describe a feeling of beauty that has never been experienced before. The main idea is that the composer experiences extraordinary things with his current girlfriend's affections that he did not experience in the previous story.

- That finally feels like home

Because it compares love with a house, the sentence above is a parable. One definition of home is a location where a person can return and find solace and security. The lyricist uses figures of speech in the verse above to represent the feeling of comfort that is felt or experienced. One interpretation of the verse above is that the songwriter will always return to his lover, whatever the circumstances.

##### 3. Personification

- That tears down my wall

In the verse above, the word "wall" shows an emotion or belief that has never been experienced before. One interpretation of the lyrics above is that his lover has the ability to return love to his heart.

#### 4. Metonymy

- In every face that I've ever know

The stanza is a metonymic figure that shows that the writer's current romantic feelings are considered very unique and among past loves.

#### 5. Allegory

- When you wonder if I'm gonna lose my way home

Because the verse above is an allegory, it contains the meaning that the songwriter will always find a way to return to his lover and his love will never waver in the slightest.

Results identified nine (9) categories of figurative language in the four song lyrics investigated. Researchers identified four types of metaphorical language in the song "Love in the Dark": Lyrics in personification, symbolism, imagery, and metonymy.

The second is "send my love", researchers identified three types of figurative language: metonymy, metaphor, and contradiction. Researchers identified nine categories of figurative language in the song "I miss you": metonymy, hyperbole, metaphor, symbol, and allegory. Researchers identified seven types of figurative language in lyrics, including personification, simile, hyperbole, allegory, metonymy, and metaphor ("sweetest devotion").

In this discussion, focuses on the various kinds of figurative language in song lyrics. The researcher analyzes symbolic language in four songs from Adele's album "25". They include Love in the Dark, Send My Love, I Miss You, and Sweetest Devotion. The researcher collected 21 figurative language meanings from song lyrics through documentation. The researcher employs Gorys Keraff's (2009) theory, which identifies thirteen varieties of figurative language, including hyperbole, simile, metaphor, personification, irony, metonymy, litotes, synecdoche, symbol, paradox, allegory, antithesis, and sarcasm. This research identified nine categories of figurative language in four song lyrics, including hyperbole, simile, metaphor, and metonymy, personification, allegory, litotes, symbols, and paradox. Synecdoche, antithesis, irony, and sarcasm are examples of non-lyric figurative language.

#### Discussion

The researcher identified nine (9) different figurative languages in four (4) songs based on the data provided. Four hyperbolic lyrics, three simile lyrics, one metaphor lyric, two personification lyrics, three metonymy lyrics, one litote lyric, three symbol lyrics, two paradox lyrics, and two allegory lyrics, in total there are 21 figurative language data.

No.	Types of Figurative Language	Total	Percentage
1	Metaphor	1	4,8%
2	Simile	3	14,28%
3	Personification	2	9,52%
4	Hyperbole	4	19,04%
5	Metonymy	3	14,28%
6	Litote	1	4,8%
7	Allegory	2	9,52%
8	Symbol	3	14,28%
9	Paradox	2	9,52%
<b>Total</b>		<b>21</b>	<b>100%</b>

The song Love in the Dark has four categories of metaphorical language, according to the statistics presented above. In the lyrics, similes, metonymies, symbols and paradoxes are

used, such as "It feels like we are oceans apart", "This is the world to me", and "I can't love you in the dark". In the second song, "Send My Love", the researcher identified three types of figurative language: metaphor, metonymy, and paradox. For example, the lyrics "We have to let go of all our ghosts", "I run, you walk", and "for a big jump, for a big jump" are examples. The song "I Miss You" is identified as having five types: hyperbole, metonymy, litotes, and allegory. For examples I want your heaven and your ocean too, we play so dirty in the dark, treat me soft but touch me cruel, baby don't let the light go down, I want to step into your great unknown. The last is Sweetest Devotion there are five types of figurative language. For example: I've been frozen, hitting me like an explosion, that tears down my wall, in every face that I've ever know.

The analysis of figurative language in Adele's album "25" reveals a diverse use of stylistic devices, each contributing to the emotional depth and narrative richness characteristic of her music. Among the 21 instances of figurative language identified, hyperbole emerged as the most frequent type, accounting for 19.04% of the total. This prevalence highlights Adele's inclination to intensify emotions, a hallmark of her storytelling style that resonates deeply with listeners. For instance, hyperbole amplifies the feelings of longing, regret, and passion that permeate songs like "Hello" and "When We Were Young", aligning with the intense emotional expressions often found in British pop ballads.

The second most frequent types—simile, metonymy, and symbol—each contribute 14.28% to the total. Similes, which create vivid imagery by drawing comparisons, enrich Adele's lyrics, making complex emotions more relatable. Similarly, metonymy, reflecting a subtle shift of meanings, aligns with British English's cultural tendency for understatement and layered communication (Leech, 1983). Symbols in her songs often encapsulate universal themes of love and loss, demonstrating a connection to British literary traditions that value poetic abstraction.

Personification, allegory, and paradox, each constituting 9.52%, illustrate Adele's ability to animate emotions and abstract concepts, adding depth and ambiguity to her lyrics. These devices align with British English's appreciation for wit and complexity, reflecting cultural preferences for nuanced expression over overt emotionality.

The less frequent types—metaphor and litotes, both at 4.8%—nonetheless play a significant role in enriching Adele's lyrical tapestry. While metaphors are universal in their appeal, their restrained usage here could reflect Adele's preference for direct emotional connection over elaborate symbolism. Litotes, a form of understatement, aligns closely with British English's cultural disposition towards modesty and subtlety (Crystal, 2003).

Adele's lyrical style demonstrates a fusion of global appeal and cultural specificity. Her use of figurative language embodies elements of British English's cultural context, including understatement, subtlety, and poetic tradition, while maintaining universal relatability. This duality may explain the widespread resonance of her music across diverse audiences.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of four selected songs, researchers identified a total of 21 instances of figurative language. These examples encompass various literary devices, including four instances of exaggeration, three instances of similes, one instance of metaphor, two instances of personification, three instances of metonymy, one instance of litotes, three instances of symbols, two instances of allegory, and two instances of paradox. However, the analysis revealed an absence of several other figurative elements such as synecdoche, antithesis, irony, or sarcasm. Each type of figurative language identified contributes uniquely to the meaning and emotional depth of the lyrics, aligning with or enhancing the themes of the songs. Nevertheless, it was noted that certain uses of figurative language were not consistent with the thematic context of the songs, indicating a potential mismatch between the

lyrical expressions and the intended message.

The analyzed songs— Love in the Dark, Send My Love, I Miss You, and Sweetest Devotion—each explore distinct themes, including toxic relationships, the inability to move on, longing, and falling in love. Figurative language such as metaphors and symbols appears selectively within the lyrics to amplify the intended meanings, adding layers of complexity to the emotional narratives. For instance, exaggeration might reflect the heightened emotions of love and heartbreak, while allegory and paradox may underscore the intricate and often contradictory nature of relationships. This detailed examination highlights how literary devices are strategically employed to enrich the listener's experience, even as some elements occasionally diverge from the thematic consistency of the songs.

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