

AN ANALYSIS OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE IN SELECTED HARDY'S POEMS

Jaya Kurnia Sandy, M. Natsir, Chris Asanti

English Department, Faculty of Cultural Sciences

Mulawarman University

Email: jayakurnias@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study is focused on the types and the meaning of figurative language used in the selected Hardy's poems. The poems are Rain on a Grave, Her Immortality, The Spell of Rose and The-To-Be-Forgotten. By using descriptive qualitative method, this study purposed to answer the following questions. The first research question is what kinds of figurative language are used in four selected Hardy's poems. The second research question is what are the meanings of figurative language used in four selected Hardy's poems. The result of the analysis using Perrine's theory showed that four selected Hardy's poems contain 24 figurative languages. From the analysis, there are 9 types of figurative languages that appear such as, simile, metaphor, personification, apostrophe, synecdoche, metonymy, symbol, hyperbole and understatement. By analyzing the figurative language, the researcher is able to define the meaning of the lines that contain figurative language.

Keywords: figurative language, poem, Thomas Hardy

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini di fokuskan pada jenis-jenis dan arti dari majas yang di gunakan dalam puisi-puisi Hardy yang terpilih. Puisi-puisi tersebut berjudul Rain on A Grave, Her Immortality, The Spell of Rose dan The-To-Be-Forgotten. Dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif, kajian ini bertujuan untuk menjawab pertanyaan-pertanyaan berikut. Pertanyaan penelitian pertama adalah jenis-jenis majas apa yang digunakan dalam empat puisi Hardy yang terpilih. Pertanyaan penelitian kedua adalah apa arti dari majas-majas yang digunakan dalam empat puisi Hardy terpilih. Hasil dari penelitian yang menggunakan teori dari Perrine menunjukkan bahwa empat puisi Hardy terpilih mengandung 24 majas. Berdasarkan penelitian, ada 9 jenis majas yang muncul yaitu, simili, metafora, personifikasi, apostrof, sinekdok, metonimia, simbol, hiperbola dan understatement. Dengan menganalisa majas, peneliti mampu untuk menjelaskan arti dari baris puisi yang mengandung majas tersebut.

Kata Kunci: majas, puisi, Thomas Hardy

A. INTRODUCTION

Wellek and Warren (1977:15) described that "literature is creative, an art". It describes the creativity of human's imagination which expresses feelings and

thoughts about human's life experience. Human uses literature to convey their ideas, attitudes and experiences. It corresponds with Eagleton's idea which states literature as an imaginative writing of fiction (1996:1). One of creative form in literature is poetry. Perrine (1977:9) explained that poetry is the most condensed and concentrated form of literature and said in fewer words in less space. The poets usually use the poem to convey their emotion, imagination or experiences of life. In order to picture what is happening in literature, language is used as the medium.

Language holds an important role in human communication. Wardhaugh (1995:2) averred that language is arbitrary system of vocal symbol which human used for communication. Human uses language to communicate meaning, to establish and to maintain relationship (Spolsky, 1998:4). Language that the human used in daily conversation is different with the language that the author of literary works used. Eagleton (1996:4) describes that literary language as a set of deviations from a norm, a kind of linguistics violence: literature is a special kind of language, in contrast to the ordinary language we commonly use. In his book, Eagleton (1996:6-7) explains when the poet tells us that his love is like a red rose, we know that he puts this statement in metre that we are not supposed to ask whether he actually had a lover who for some bizarre reason seemed to him to resemble a rose. He is telling us something about woman and love in general. The author rather chooses language style which emphasizes on aesthetic factor, in this instance is figurative language.

The poet tries to convey his idea and imagination by using language as the medium in his works. He for example often uses figurative language to express his feelings with an attractive word. It assists the poet to get special effect from the reader. In this research, the researcher attempts to analyze figurative language used in the selected Thomas Hardy's poems. The researcher chooses Hardy's poems entitled *Rain on a Grave*, *Her Immortality*, *The Spell of The Rose* and *"The-To-Be-Forgotten* because those poems have similar topic. They talk stories about love and death. The languages of the poems illustrate many subject of Hardy's life.

The purposes of this study were to investigate the types of the figurative language in four selected Hardy's poems entitled *Rain on A Grave*, *Her Immortality*, *The Spell of The Rose* and *The-To-Be-Forgotten*, this study also described the meaning of figurative languages those are used in four selected Hardy's poem. It was expected to have a significant contribution to the literature world and linguistic. Hopefully, the result of the research could give any information about figurative language to the readers who will analyze figurative language in the other literary works.

B. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

1. Definition of Figurative Language

Perrine (1977:61) declared that figurative language is any way of saying something other than the ordinary way. Figurative language cannot

be interpreted literally (or should not be taken literally only) and rather to choose say one thing to mean another. If we take it literally, it will not make any sense because we need to discover the relation of the comparison between two things that the figurative language uses. Figurative language is a language that compares two different things to gain some effects. It is not purposed to be taken in literal way but in an imaginative way. In daily life, people avoid to say something that can hurt someone's feeling by using figurative language. In other words, figurative language serves to convey thoughts, feelings, and perceptions that cannot be adequately expressed in literal language.

2. Types of Figurative Language

The conceptions of figurative language are going to be used to provide deeper understanding on Thomas Hardy's selected poems and in order to comprehend it in a broad way, the kinds of figurative language are described as follow:

a. Simile

According to Perrine, simile is an expression comparing two different things by using the word or phrase, such as like, as, than, similar to, resembles, or seems (1977:61). It compares things that are essentially alike. Abrams said that simile is an explicit comparison between two different things which is indicated by the word "like" or "as" (2009:119). In addition, Diyani (2004:563) proposes that simile establishes the comparison explicitly with the word like or as. Simile explicitly compares one thing as the same as the other.

b. Metaphor

Metaphor is a type of analogy that directly compares two different things in brief form without any connective word showing comparison, e.g. like, as, etc (Perrine 1977:61). Perrine described that simile and metaphor is similar. The distinction that makes them different is the use of connective words. Abrams explained that metaphor is a word or expression that in literal usage denotes one kind of thing is applied to a distinctly different kind of thing, without asserting a comparison (2009:119). This kind of figurative language compares implicitly two unlike object by identifying or substituting one with another.

c. Personification

Based on Perrine, personification consists in giving attributes of human being to an animal, an object, or a concept (1977:64). It is a subtype of metaphor, and implied comparison in which figurative comparison is a human being. Personification is a figure of speech that portrays things which have human characteristic. By using personification, the poet wants to make his language live.

d. Apostrophe

Perrine (1977:65) enlightened that apostrophe consists in addressing to someone absent or dead or non human as a person who is present and able to replay what is being said. It is closely related to personification. In addition, Abrams (2009:313) proposes that apostrophe consists in addressing either to an absent person or to an abstract or non human entity explicitly.

e. Synecdoche

Synecdoche is a figure of speech which uses part of something to represent the whole or uses the whole of something to represent part of it (Perrine 1977:67). In addition, Diyani (2004:63) stated that synecdoche is a kind of figurative language which uses a part of something to refer to the whole.

f. Metonymy

According to Perrine metonymy is a figure of speech which using something closely related for the thing actually meant (1977:67). Metonymy uses a word or phrase substituted for the thing actually meant which is closely associated. Abrams stated that metonymy is a literal term that is used to refer other term which has correlation in general experience (2009:120). In addition, Diyani (2004:563) described that metonymy is substituting an attribute of a thing for thing itself.

g. Symbol

Symbol is broadly defined as anything that signifies something. It means that all words are symbols. In literary discussion, the term symbol is applied only to a word or phrase that signifies an object or event which in its turn signifies something or has a range of reference beyond itself (Abrams 2009:311). There are two kinds of symbol which are "conventional" or "public" and "private" or "personal". Symbol is defined as something which means more than what is (Perrine, 1977:82). Metaphor and symbol are sometimes difficult to distinguish. In general, metaphor means something other than what it is and symbol means what it is and something more too.

h. Hyperbole

According to Perrine, hyperbole is an exaggeration that is used to emphasize the truth (1977:102). In his book, Abrams (2009:149) argued that hyperbole is an extravagant exaggeration of fact that may be used either for serious or ironic.

i. Understatement

Understatement is the opposite of hyperbole that is used by the author to create the situation less important. It says less than it means, may exist in what one says and in how one says it (Perrine, 1977:102). Based on Abrams, understatement is a term to represents something as much less in magnitude or importance than what it really is (2009:149).

j. Irony

Irony is the opposite between what is said and what it is really meant (Perrine, 1977: 103). In addition, Abrams stated that irony is the statement in which the meaning that the speaker expresses has sharply different meaning from the speaker implies (2009:165). It usually involves an explicit expression of attitude or evaluation but with indication in the speech situation the speaker intends an opposite attitude or evaluation.

3. Semantics

Semantics is the systematic study of meaning, and linguistic semantics is the study of how language organizes and express meanings (Kreidler 2002:3). It attempt to explicate the knowledge of any speaker of a language which allows that the speaker to communicate facts, feelings, intentions and products of the imagination to other speaker and to understand what they communicate to him or her. Kriedler (2002:58) notes that the denotation, the connotation and sense relation are three general aspects in the meaning of a lexicon.

4. Pragmatics

Yule (2003:4) proposes that pragmatics is the study of the relationships between linguistic forms and the users of those forms. It learns about people's intended meanings, their assumptions, their purposes or goals and the kind of action that they are performing when they speak.

C. RESEARCH METHOD

1. Research Design

The design of the research was necessary for the researcher to accomplish the research. Bryman (2004:269) suggested that qualitative research is a research strategy which usually emphasizes words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data essentially emphasizes an inductive approach to the relationship between theory and research. In this research, the researcher uses qualitative method to investigate the data because there are no numeric data in the research. This research prepossessed to describe the meaning of figurative language of four selected Hardy's poems. In the descriptive method, the researcher observed, classified, labeled and interpreted the data source to gain the data.

2. Data and Data Source

The data of this study was the lines of selected Hardy's poems which contain figurative language. The researcher collected the data from four poems written by Thomas Hardy entitled *Rain on A Grave*, *Her Immortality*, *The Spell of The Rose* and *The-To-Be-forgotten* as the data source.

3. Research Instrument

Instrument was a tool which used to collect the data. It meant that the data's quality depend on the instrument. The key instrument of this research was the researcher himself. The researcher did observation, identification, collection, classification and analysis the data of four Thomas Hardy's poems. The researcher obtained the data based on parameter of figurative language.

4. Data Collection

The first step that researcher do to collect the data was reading whole content of the poems repeatedly and closely. After reading the poems, the researcher wrote notes which are needed to answer research questions. Then, the researcher chose the data that contains figurative language and observed it carefully to discover its meaning. The researcher also attempted to seek additional information which is relevant with the research.

5. Data Analysis

Based on Miles and Huberman (1994:10), there are three flow activities needed in conducting qualitative research. Three steps to analyze data which the researcher used are data reduction, data display and drawing conclusion.

First, Data reduction referred to the process of selecting lines that contain figurative language. It reduced and transformed qualitative data in many ways; through selection, through summary, through being subsumed in a larger pattern, so on. The data reduction process continued until a final report was completed.

Then, data display was an organized assembly of evidence which permits to drawing and taking action (Miles and Huberman, 1994:11). This research displayed the data in form of table. It included sentences from selected Hardy's poem which contain figurative language along with its type of figurative language. After presenting the whole data of selected Hardy's poems, the researcher displayed the result of the analysis in descriptive form.

The last step was the researcher makes the conclusion. It is conducted based on the data display which has been analyzed using

Perrine, Abrams and Diyanni's of figurative language. It was the answers of the research questions which are what kinds of figurative language are used in four selected Hardy's poems and the meanings of figurative language used in four selected Hardy's poems.

D. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

1. Types of Figurative Language

The researcher classified the data into several kinds of figurative language. The findings of the data are analyzed by using Perrine's figurative language theory as the main theory which is supported by Abrams and Diyanni. The researcher figured out that the total number of line that contains figurative language is twenty four. This number includes three similes, three metaphors, six personifications, one apostrophe, four synecdoches, two metonymies, two symbols, two hyperboles and one understatement.

2. Meaning of Figurative Language

In order to reveal the meaning behind figurative language the researcher uses Kriedler's semantics theory and Yule's Pragmatics theory. Kridler stated that that the denotation, the connotation and sense relation are three general aspects in the meaning of a lexicon (2002:58). Yule (2003:4) noted that pragmatics learns about people's intended meanings, their assumptions, their purposes or goals and the kind of action that they are performing when they speak. In order to get more thorough understanding, the explanations below are provided:

a. Simile

The line "*As at touch of dishonor*" is a simile because it compares two unrelated things by using the word as. This line is the fifth line of the first stanza. It compares the rain which pelts the speaker's lover to dishonorable act. The contextual meaning of this line is the speaker tells that his lover doesn't like being caught in the rain.

The researcher finds another simile in the sixth line of the first stanza. It says "*Such arrow of rain*". The denotative meaning of this line is such arrow which is made of rain. The poet compares the way the water falls from the sky and the arrow by using connective word "such". It can be connotatively meaning as the raindrops which fall on the grave hurts someone inside it who is the speaker's lover.

The last simile that the researcher finds in the selected Hardy's poems is "*Like star on the ground*". This line has correlation with the line before it which says "*And daisies be showing*". These lines are in the last stanza of the poem. The poet uses simile to compare star to daisy flower. Based on the poem's context, the poet compares the similarities between star and daisies which are their shape and their number. Having five or

more point is a conventional or stylized representation of a star shaped and daisies shaped. Both of them have countless number. This line means that daisies not only cover the grave but also beautify it which is similar to star which cover and beautify the night sky.

b. Metaphor

The researcher finds metaphors in three selected Hardy's poems entitled *Her Immortality*, *The Spell of the Rose* and *The-To-Be-Forgotten*. First, the researcher analyzed the poem entitled *Her Immortality* and found one metaphor in it. In this poem the researcher found metaphor in the last line of the eighth stanza. The line that contains metaphor is "*Think, I am but a shade*". It is because the poet compares the speaker "I" with an inanimate object "*a shade*". This line connotes that the speaker is a ghost who shelter in the memory of her lover.

Second, the researcher found one metaphor in *The Spell of Rose* poem. The statement that called as metaphor is "*Perhaps now blooms that queen of trees*". It is because this statement contains comparison between a female ruler or finest (most outstanding) women in particular group and a part of plant. Based on the context of the poem, this statement can be connotatively meaning as the most charming flower.

Another poem that contains metaphor is *The-To-Be-Forgotten*. The line that contains metaphor is in the last stanza of the poem. It has correlation with the line after it. The researcher needs to interpret the whole stanza to figure out the meaning behind metaphor. The line that contains metaphor is "*We were but Fortune's sport*". It means that his life depends on other thing which is the memory of the living. The poet compares the speaker's life with a competition which depends on unpredictable events by using metaphor.

c. Personification

The researcher finds six personifications in selected Hardy's poems. The researcher finds two personifications in the poem entitled *Rain on a Grave*, which are in the first line of the first stanza and in the fifth line of the second stanza. The sentence "*Clouds spout upon her*" called as personification because the poet uses the word spout to personify the cloud. Here, the cloud does not really spout because we know that cloud does not have any physical form to spouting something in this case, the woman's grave. The meaning of this sentence is the clouds rain their water on the woman's grave. The poet uses personification to show the reader about the feeling of the woman who does not like to be caught in the rain. This personification connotes that the clouds insult the woman by spouting on her grave.

Another personification in the *Rain on A Grave* is "*if drops chanced to pelt her*". This line is considered as personification because it gives human's

attribute to the inanimate object. The poet personifies the object “drops” by giving it human’s quality which makes the drops seem alive. This line describes that the drops which are inanimate objects have intention to pelt the women.

The researcher finds one personification in the *Her Immortality* poem. The personification is in the first line of the eight stanza. It goes “*A tremor stirred her tender lips*”. This line is categorized as a personification because it endows a tremor which is an inanimate object with life and can move something slightly. The poet uses the word “tremor” to show the way of the woman speech. This line means that her mouth trembles when she is about to speak.

The personification also appears in the poem entitled *The Spell of Rose*. It is the second line of forth stanza which says “*And so, at dead of night*”. This line called as personification because it gives quality of life to the abstract concept. The poet personifies the night as it is a living creature by giving the word dead. This line can be connotatively meaning as at the quiet night. In this case the speaker of the poem describes the situation when she goes and hides from the sight at the quiet night.

The researcher analyzed Hardy’s poem entitled *The-To-Be-Forgotten* and found two personifications in it. The first personification is in third line of second stanza. The line which called as personification is “*When, with the living, memory of us numbs*”. This is because the poet gives human feeling to abstract concept. It considers memory as an abstract concept which has human quality like numb. Memory is the faculty by which the mind stores and remembers information. Numb is the condition of a part of body which deprives of the power of physical sensation. The poet uses personification to describes the condition when someone’s memory begin to forget the memory of their

The second personification of poem entitled *The-To-Be-Forgotten* is in second line of the third stanza which goes “*Lie here embraced by deeper death than we*”. This line is personification because it considers death as an abstract concept which can do human activity. Death is the end of the life of a person. The poet personifies the death as a human by giving it the human action; “*embrace*” means an act of holding someone closely in one’s arms. In this line, the speaker tells that the ancestry buried here have died longer than him.

d. Apostrophe

The researcher finds one apostrophe in the poem entitled *The-To-Be-Forgotten*. The sentence “*Wherefore, old friend, said I, are you distress?*” is called apostrophe because the speaker of the poem attempts to ask someone who cannot respond in reality. In that poem, the speaker heard a sad sound in the graveyard and apostrophizes that sound by asking some questions.

e. Synecdoche

The researcher found four synecdoches in selected Hardy's poems. The poem entitled *Her Immortality* contains two synecdoches. The first is in the fourth line of the first stanza which goes "My dead Love's living smile". This line uses synecdoche 'smile' to represent the corpse of the speaker's lover. In the first stanza of the poem, it shows that the speaker pilgrims to the place where he last saw his love's dead body. It indicates that the speaker attended his love's funeral to see his love for the last time.

The second synecdoche of the poem entitled *Her Immortality* is in the fourth line of the third stanza. It says "That used to light her eye" which correlate with line before it which says "The same, even to the marvelous ray". The word "her eye" is synecdoche because it is partly of something to explain the whole thing. This synecdoche means that her eye represents for her vision.

Another synecdoche that the researcher found is in the poem entitled *The Spell of Rose*. It is in the first line of the first stanza which says "I mean to build a hall anon". In this line, Hardy uses a part as referring the whole to describe house. He chooses a hall for he means a house. Hall is a room or space inside the front entrance of a house.

The last synecdoche which the researcher found is "Nor shape nor thought of theirs can you descry". It is the third line of third stanza in the poem entitled *The-To-Be-Forgotten*. Hardy uses synecdoche to refer the history of ancestry who buried in that graveyard by explaining parts of it.

f. Metonymy

The researcher found metonymies in the poem entitled *Rain on A grave and Her Immortality*. The researcher analyzed the poem entitled *Rain on A Grave* and figured out one metonymy in it. The ninth line of second stanza which says "And the birds close their bills" is called as metonymy because the word bills closely related to the chirp of the bird. The sentence "And the birds close their bills" refers to the birds stop to chirp.

The third line of seventh stanza in the poem *Her Immortality* which says "I'll use this night my ball or blade" is metonymy. This is because the author uses the word ball which refers to bullet. In Hardy's era, the bullet and the ball have similarity. They have same solid spherical shape. The bullet has closely related with gun. In that line, Hardy describes the choices that the speaker can take to end his own life which are shooting himself with gun or stabbing himself with blade.

g. Symbol

The researcher found two poems which contain symbol which are *Her Immortality* and *The Spell of Rose*. The first symbol that the researcher found is "My husband clasps another bridge". It is the third line of fifth stanza of poem entitled *Her Immortality*. The word clasp has more meaning than what it literally is. This word literally means grasp something tightly

with hand. Hardy uses this word to symbolize that the husband of the speaker marries another women.

Another symbol that the researcher discovered is the seventh line of fifth stanza of the poem entitled *The Spell of Rose* which says “*Gave me his heart anew*”. This is because the word “*heart*” has symbolic meaning which is love. This line does not mean to give someone a part of human’s body but it symbolizes to give love for someone.

h. Understatement

The researcher found one understatement in the selected Hardy’s poem entitled *The Spell of Rose*. The line that contains understatement is the first line of fifth stanza which goes “*But I was called from earth – yea*”. The author uses understatement to describe the subject as being much less important than what it literally is. In this line, the author states less than the truth that the speaker is no longer exist in the world which means that the speaker dies.

E. Conclusion

Based on the findings, they are 24 figures of speech that found from 9 types of figurative language which are 3 similes, 3 metaphors, 6 personifications, 1 apostrophe, 4 synecdoches, 2 metonymies, 2 symbols, 2 hyperboles and 1 understatement. The poem entitled *Rain on a Grave* has 3 similes, 2 personifications and 1 metonymy in it. Then, the poem entitled *Her immortality* contains 1 metaphor, 1 personification, 2 synecdoches, 1 metonymy, 1 symbol and 2 hyperbole. The figurative languages that the researcher found in poem *The Spell of Rose* consists of 1 metaphor, 1 personification, 1 synecdoche, 1 symbol and 1 understatement. The researcher found 1 metaphor, 1 personification, 1 synecdoche, 1 symbol and 1 understatement in poem *The Spell of Rose*.

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