



SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE IN MIGUEL'S "SURE THING"

Annisa Rahmawati¹, Aulia Fatekhah Putri², Otto V. Siregar³

Universitas Bina Sarana Informatika,, Jakarta, Indonesia

annisarahmawati840@gmail.com¹; auliafputri@gmail.com²; otto.ovs@bsi.ac.id³

Abstract:

In this case, we have discussed song lyrics or poetry. Therefore, we chose one of Miguel's songs titled 'Sure Thing'. This provides a deep insight into how Miguel uses language to convey stories, messages, and emotions in his work. The research we analyze this time is the lyrics of Miguel's song 'Sure Thing'. The purpose of this semantic analysis research is to find out the meaning of each word and provide so that we can practice the role of each diction in communication accompanied by learning about semantics. The method used in this research is qualitative method. Based on the results of the research, 5 Metaphors, 2 imagery, 1 Simile, 3 Symbolism, 1 Personification, 1 Repetition, and 2 Alliteration were found. The total result of figurative language is 13. The reason that is the subject of this analysis is to identify and interpret the use of personification, metaphor, simile, hyperbole, and other forms of figurative language in the lyrics. Imagery and figurative language are approaches used to analyze a literary work in order to understand and explore the literary structure contained in the lyrics. Be it poetry, prose, novels, short stories, or drama. In this case, we have discussed song lyrics or poetry. Therefore, we chose one of Miguel's songs entitled 'Sure Thing'. It provides a deep insight into how Miguel uses language to convey stories, messages, and emotions in his work.

Keywords: figurative language; semantics; song lyrics

Pendahuluan

Semantics is one of the branches of linguistics that studies the meaning of language or words. Or it can be concluded that science analyzes the implied meaning contained in a language, code/symbol, or other representation (Napitupulu, 2023). Usually, it is associated with two other aspects, namely syntactic and pragmatic. Syntax with the formation of complex symbols from simpler symbols, as well as pragmatic, the practical use of symbols by the community in multiple contexts (Kroeger, 2023).

The word semantic comes from the Greek "*semantikos*" which means '*sign*' or '*meaning*'. According to Nafinuddin (2020), Semantics is a branch of linguistics that studies meaning. And According to Nafinuddin (2020), Semantics explores the relationship of a sign to an object that is the container of the application of these signs.

The song "Sure Thing" by Miguel, released in 2010 as part of the album *"All I Want Is You"*, tells a story of unwavering and strong love. Through its lyrics, Miguel illustrates a relationship filled with confidence and commitment, using various metaphors to show how two individuals complement each other in a partnership.

For example, in the lyric *"If you be the cash, I'll be the rubber band,"* he expresses how one partner will always support the other. Additionally, phrases like *"Even when the sky comes falling"* emphasize that their love will remain steadfast even in the face of challenges.

The song highlights the importance of trust, support, and commitment in building a lasting relationship. With its universal theme of love, the song continues to resonate with listeners across generations. Its popularity even saw a resurgence thanks to social media platforms like TikTok, where the song has been featured in various creative content.

While figurative language is a derivative of the study of semantics. Figurative language is a figure of speech used by writers or speakers to convey messages imaginatively and figuratively (Haryanti et al., 2024). The goal is to make the audience get a certain effect from the language style used. In general the word Figurative comes from *'Figurativus'* which means *'using figures or images'*. And word *'Language'* comes from Old French *'langage'*, Old Portuguese *'lingua'* *'lingoa'* (Glaser, 2017). According to *Pradopo 2010: 62*, Majas causes literary works to attract attention, creates freshness, is more alive, and creates clarity of imagery. And according to Boers & Lindstromberg (2008)(Rohani & Arsyad, 2018), explains that figurative language can be learnt in the EFL classroom in several ways. For example, focusing on the literal meaning of keywords used figuratively (e.g: together in joint accounts). While According to (Rohani & Arsyad, 2018; Salsabila, 2023), Imagery is a language expression technique, a language style whose meaning does not refer to the literal meaning of the supporting words, but to the added meaning, the implied meaning.

According to them, the use of mental imagery has become part of the pedagogical approach to idioms, created because of ideas in the cognitive semantics school of thought. Under the cognitive semantics approach, icons in idioms and figurative expressions are useful to show some people that Figurative expressions can be motivated by underlying conceptual metaphors or figures of speech. The notions of figures of speech and vocabulary themselves have a very era of reciprocal relationships where both aspects will provide benefits.

Nowadays, songs have become people's companion as a way for them to interpret what they are thinking or feeling. However, some of them are still mistaken in knowing the true meaning of the song. With this research on figurative language, it can help them understand the meanings in the lyrics of the song 'sure things' by Miguel, where the song gives an impression that explains the trust and confidence in sincere and eternal love.

Miguel Jontel Pimentel, known as the stage name Miguel, is a R&B singer from America. Famous for the song he delivered "Sure Thing", which was produced by Happy Perez. Appears in his first album with the theme "All I Want Is You" on November 26, 2010. It is the most popular song and is often praised because of its strong lyrics and charming melodies (Pareles, 2015).

Metode

In order to analyze deeper and solve the problem in this research, we used the qualitative method. Qualitative research methods focus more on descriptive words rather than the use of numbers, making it the opposite of quantitative research. The goal of qualitative research is not to generalize, but rather to interpret understanding in an ideographic way (Luthfiana, 2020). According to Moloeng, (2007: 6) explains that qualitative research is research with the aim of understanding phenomena about what the research subject experiences thoroughly by means of descriptions in the form of words and language, in a special context experienced and by utilizing various scientific methods (Waruwu, 2023). And According to Perreault and McCarthy (2006: 176) explain that qualitative research is a type of research that aims to explore information in depth and is open to a variety of responses (Waruwu, 2023). This research tries to get people to express their thoughts on a topic without giving them much guidance or direction.

Data sources in this study were taken from Miguel's song. The song is on one album. The album titled is All I Want Is You which was released on November 30, 2010(*Sure Thing (Miguel Song)*, n.d.). There are specific steps in this research.

1. First, researchers download a song of Miguel, titled "Sure Thing."
2. Second, printed out the lyric of the song.
3. Third, the whole of the song lyric and underlined the words that contained types of figurative language.
4. Fourth, the researchers classified the figurative languages.

Hasil dan Pembahasan

A. Results

NO	THE TYPES OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE	LYRICS
1	Metaphor	• If you were cash, I would be a rubber band • You be the match, I'll be the lighter, boom • You are the cigarette, and I am the smoker • We raised a bet cause you're the joker • You're the chalk and I can be the blackboard

2	Simile	• Love you like a brother, treat you like a friend, respect you like a lover
3	Symbolism	• Painter baby, you could be the muse • Saint I'm a sinner, praise I am a winner • Paper baby I'll be the pen
4	Personification	• If I am the lyric baby, you could be the note
5	Repetition	• You could bet that, never gotta sweat that
6	Alliteration	• Say that I am the one, cause you are a ten • Real and not pretend
7	Imagery	• Even when the sky comes falling, even when the sun don't shine • Down to the wire, even when it's do or die

B. Discussions

The Examination of Figurative Expression and Contextual Significance in Song Lyrics.

1. Personifications found in the song of Miguel titled "Sure Thing":

a. *'If I were the lyrics, baby, you could be the note'* (Salma, 2023) :

This gives life to an abstract concept, describing a relationship that is harmonious and necessary for balance.

This personification gives a human quality to the abstract concepts (lyrics and tune) (Egan et al., 2020; LiteraryDevices Editors., 2014b, 2014a). This comparison shows that just as a lyric is incomplete without a tune, a relationship cannot be fully realized without harmony between two individuals. The lyrics represent the message or substance of a relationship, while the tune is the musical element that brings it to life. This suggests that both people are essential for the relationship to work; without each other, the relationship would not exist. This highlights the importance of both partners working in unison to create balance and harmony.

2. Metaphors found in the song of Miguel titled "sure thing":

a. *'If you were cash, I would be a rubber band'* (Salma, 2023) :

This relationship is seen as complementary, where one party supports or complements the other.

A metaphor is a figure of speech that makes a comparison between two non-similar things (Egan et al., 2020). In this comparison, the relationship is expressed as complementary, where one partner ('cash')

symbolizes value or wealth, while the other partner ('rubber band') symbolizes support and flexibility. The rubber band can stretch and hold things together, similar to how the singer feels that she connects things for the other person. This comparison depicts a relationship where each individual has an important and interdependent role, with one party providing the foundation and the other supporting or stretching to ensure the success of the bond.

- b. *'You be the match, I'll be the fuse, boom'* (Salma, 2023) : *This reflects the spark and energized relationship between lovers.*

This comparison reflects the intensity and strong chemistry between two lovers. Both the match and the fuse serve important functions in lighting the fire, and the 'boom' represents the inevitable awakening of passion or emotional connection. By comparing themselves to these elements, the singers emphasize that when they come together, there is an undeniable spark that leads to something powerful. This suggests that this relationship is destined to be deep, energy-laden, and perhaps also unexpected.

- c. *'You are the cigarette and I am the smoker'* (Salma, 2023) : *Indicates dependence and closeness, where one party cannot live or function without the other.*

In this comparison, the singer compares the relationship to the interaction between a cigarette and a smoker, which shows dependence and closeness. Just as a smoker needs a cigarette to get satisfaction, this comparison shows that both people in the relationship need each other to satisfy each other's emotions. There is an element of necessity in this comparison, which suggests that one individual cannot fully live or function without the other. This also leads to thoughts of attraction that may have addictive and destructive properties.

- d. *'We raised a bet cause you're a joker'* (Salma, 2023):

Describes a partner as comparable to a wild card, someone who adds an element of unpredictability or fun.

The comparison of a partner to a joker in a deck of cards suggests unpredictability, excitement and fun. A joker often serves as a wild card, an individual who can change the rules of the game or insert a twist in a situation. In the context of relationships, this simile suggests that partners bring an element of surprise, risk, and thrill. By saying 'We bet,' the singer is also indicating a willingness to take risks in the relationship, creating an exciting sense of challenge and adventure.

- e. *'Checked off, you are the chalk, and I can be the blackboard'* (Salma, 2023):

Represents collaboration, with each person playing an important role in creating something together.

This simile represents co-operation and complementarity. In this frame of comparison, the partner ('chalk') is the individual who writes or creates, while the singer ('blackboard') provides the surface to express the idea or action. This suggests a relationship in which both partners contribute in specific ways—one partner's action (like chalk) leaves a mark on the other, while the other partner provides a solid base or platform for that action. This parable emphasizes the importance of teamwork, balance, and the need for both individuals to collaborate to produce something meaningful.

3. Symbolisms found in the song of Miguel titled "Sure Thing":

- a. *'Painter, darling, you can be an inspiration'* (Salma, 2023) : Couples as idea generators, illustrating how love can spark creativity.

Symbolism means imbuing an object with a specific meaning that is different from its original meaning or function. This statement uses the image of a painter and muse to illustrate the power of this relationship. In the art world, inspiration acts as the source of ideas, which often guides the artist's creativity. Here, the couple is likened to a source of inspiration, suggesting that their presence ignites the singer's passion. This sentence shows that love is capable of fueling creativity, with the partner providing an emotional or artistic boost that enriches his or her personal expression. It shows that this relationship is more than just romantic love; it has the potential to influence and create.

- b. *'Paper, baby, I'll be the pen'* (Salma, 2023) : This image highlights their interdependence and ability to create something valuable.

This symbolic comparison illustrates the interdependence between individuals in a relationship. The paper represents the container for the work to be produced, while the pen is the tool that creates the mark. The singer shows that their relationship is a shared process, where both parties have important roles. This symbolism hints at the idea of co-creating something meaningful, whether it is a life story, a journey, or a memory, indicating that both contribute to the overall storyline.

- c. *'Saint I'm a sinner, Prize I'm a winner'* (Salma, 2023)

This sentence shows the duality in their relationship. The use of the words 'saint' and 'sinner' acknowledges the positive and negative sides of each partner, emphasizing that love embraces imperfection. The singers' recognition as "saint" and "sinner" reflects acceptance of weaknesses and faults, creating balance in their dynamic. Likewise, 'gift' and 'winner' symbolize the mutual recognition of each other's worth, reinforcing the idea that despite imperfections, they complement each other and make the relationship worthwhile.

d. Repetition found in the song of Miguel titled "Sure Thing":

'Love you like a brother, treat you like a friend, respect you like a lover' (Salma, 2023): Uses comparison to equate love with the sibling, friendship, and love-making variations of affection, which underlines the diverse nature of relationships.

This comparison draws a distinction between different types of relationships: kinship, friendship, and romance. With the word 'like,' the singer emphasizes that love is diverse. This metaphor signifies that the singer's affection is deep, but not limited to just one form of love; it encompasses the warmth of family relationships, the trust of friendship, and the passion of romantic love. This emphasizes that love is not just one-dimensional; it can be tender, supportive, and passionate all at once, reflecting the complexity of genuine relationships. Repetition has been a staple in popular music for centuries, serving as a memorable and catchy tool for songwriters to get their message across. From the simple repetition of a chorus to the repetition of a single phrase, repetition has the power to make a song instantly recognizable (Nunes et al., 2015).

4. Alliterations found in the song of Miguel titled "Sure Thing":

a. *"Say that I am the only one because you are ten"* (Salma, 2023): The repetition of the "s" sound gives this line a pleasant rhythm.

Alliteration in a song refers to the repetition of consonant sounds, especially at the beginning of words, in close proximity within a line or multiple lines of lyrics. Alliteration can make certain lines or phrases more memorable or catchy, thus increasing the overall impact of the song on the listener (Rohani & Arsyad, 2018). The repetition of the "s" sound creates a harmonious and rhythmic flow, adding a musical feel to the lyrics. This alliteration improves the overall quality of the song's lyrics, making it more pleasing to the listener. The line also confirms the singer's admiration for her partner, referring to the metaphor of "ten" (perfect grade) to show how much they appreciate their partner. The combination of voice patterns and feelings amplifies the impact of the statement. Alliteration also makes the lyrics more engaging and appealing, drawing attention through repetition (Egan et al., 2020).

b. *"Real and not pretend"* (Salma, 2023): The "r" and "p" sounds give a subtle musical touch to the expression of authenticity. The repetition of the "r" and "p" sounds produces a gentle rhythm in this sentence, which reinforces sincerity and authenticity. By expressing "real and not pretentious," the singer affirmed the honesty and sincere nature of their feelings, affirming that the love they have is real and not just small talk. The use of alliteration

here makes the message you want to convey stronger and easier to remember.

5. Imageries found in the song of Miguel titled “Sure Thing”:
6. Imagery is one of several techniques used to make a work more powerful. It has its great importance as it helps readers activate their sense organs and perceive the message as intended (Sharma Paudyal, 2023).
 - a. *‘Even when the sky comes falling, even when the sun don’t shine’* (Salma, 2023): Depicts difficult times, but with confidence in faith and unity. This vivid imagery depicts very extreme and challenging situations, such as the sky crumbling or the sun not shining events that represent the greatest hardships one might experience. However, despite facing these formidable obstacles, the singer assures the listener that their love will remain stable. The image of natural elements ‘falling’ or ‘not shining’ evokes a sense of chaos or disaster, which contrasts with the unwavering support and faith in the relationship. This suggests that no matter what external obstacles arise, the bond between them will remain strong and unshakable.
 - b. *‘Down to the wire, even when it’s do or die’* (Salma, 2023): Evokes images of high stakes and pressure, yet emphasizes the strength of their bond. This statement creates an image of high stakes, showing a situation where every second counts, and the outcome is crucial. ‘Down to the wire’ suggests that there is very little time left, while “do or die” adds a sense of urgency and intensity. This image emphasizes that despite pressure or difficult circumstances, the singer and her partner will stick together. It shows the strength of their relationship, even in highly stressful or crisis moments.
7. Similes found in the song of Miguel titled “Sure Thing”:

‘Love you like a brother, treat you like a friend, respect you like a lover’ (Salma, 2023): Uses comparisons to equate love with the sibling, friendship, and love-making variations of affection, underscoring the diverse nature of relationships. Similes can be used to create vivid imagery or to draw surprising connections between two unrelated things (Eoghan Ryan, 2023). This comparison draws a distinction between different types of relationships: kinship, friendship, and romance. With the word ‘like,’ the singer emphasizes that love is diverse. This metaphor signifies that the singer’s affection is profound, but not limited to just one form of love; it encompasses the warmth of family relationships, the trust of friendship, and the passion of romantic love. This emphasizes that love is not just one-dimensional; it can be tender, supportive, and passionate all at once, reflecting the complexity of genuine relationships.

Kesimpulan

The analysis of Miguel's song *"Sure Thing"* reveals the use of seven types of figurative language: Metaphor (5), Personification (1), Imagery (2), Simile (1), Symbolism (3), Repetition (1), and Alliteration (2), with Metaphor being the most frequently used and Personification, Simile, and Repetition the least. The lyrics convey the sincerity of someone deeply in love, highlighting unwavering commitment and the willingness to sacrifice for their partner's happiness. The metaphor *"Cause you're a cigarette, and I'm a smoker"* illustrates a deeply intertwined bond, emphasizing that relationships face challenges and require trust as their foundation. The song resonates emotionally with listeners, serving as a medium for expressing feelings toward loved ones, while interpretations may vary based on personal experiences and familiarity with Miguel. This study aims to support those interested in literary analysis, particularly of song lyrics, while also serving as a reference for future research. Potential studies could explore comparative figurative language across Miguel's works, analyze the relationship between lyrics and musical composition, or investigate cultural and social contexts influencing lyric interpretation, enriching the understanding of figurative language in contemporary music.

Daftar Pustaka

- Egan, C., Cristino, F., Payne, J. S., Thierry, G., & Jones, M. W. (2020). How alliteration enhances conceptual–attentional interactions in reading. *Cortex*, 124, 111–118.
- Eoghan Ryan. (2023). What Is a Simile? | Meaning, Definition & Examples. <https://www.scribbr.com/rhetoric/simile/>.
- Glaser, K. (2017). Metapragmatic perceptions in native language vs. lingua franca settings: Does target language status during study abroad make a difference? *Study Abroad Research in Second Language Acquisition and International Education*, 2(1), 107–131.
- Haryanti, S., Ana, S., & Im, H. N. (2024). Figurative Language On Jazz Music. Research Report.
- Kroeger, P. R. (2023). Analyzing meaning: An introduction to semantics and pragmatics. Language Science Press.
- LiteraryDevices Editors. (2014a). Definition of Metaphor. Literary Devices.
- LiteraryDevices Editors. (2014b). Definition of Personification. /Literarydevices.Net.
- Luthfiana, S. (2020). Salma Luthfiana (NIM. 1710111220027)" revisi Proposal Salma" Mata Kuliah Metode Penelitian Kualitatif-Kuantitatif.

- Nafinuddin, S. (2020). Pengantar semantik (pengertian, hakikat, dan jenis).
- Napitupulu, E. (2023). Analysis of Language Style Classification In The Little Prince Novel.
- Nunes, J. C., Ordanini, A., & Valsesia, F. (2015). The power of repetition: Repetitive lyrics in a song increase processing fluency and drive market success. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 25(2), 187–199.
- Pareles, J. (2015). Two sides to every song; Miguel starts claiming his own identity with new album, 'Wildheart'. *International New York Times*, NA-NA.
- Rohani, T., & Arsyad, S. (2018). Semantic Analysis of Figurative Language Expressions in "Feature" of the Jakarta Post. *JOALL (Journal of Applied Linguistics & Literature)*, 1(1), 97–114. <https://doi.org/10.33369/joall.v3i1.6168>
- Salma, N. (2023). Lirik dan Terjemahan Lagu Sure Thing Oleh Miguel yang Viral di TikTok. *Berita Terpopuler*.
- Salsabila, N. W. (2023). Figurative language and imagery meaning found in Selena Gomez's selected song and its contribution to English teaching. *STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY*.
- Sharma Paudyal, H. N. (2023). The Use of Imagery and Its Significance in Literary Studies. *The Outlook: Journal of English Studies*, 14(July), 114–127. <https://doi.org/10.3126/ojes.v14i1.56664>
- Sure Thing (Miguel song). (n.d.). Wikipedia.
- Waruwu, M. (2023). Pendekatan penelitian pendidikan: metode penelitian kualitatif, metode penelitian kuantitatif dan metode penelitian kombinasi (Mixed Method). *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai*, 7(1), 2896–2910.