

Research article

Figurative Meanings Found in John Green's The Fault in Our Stars

Ni Made Yunita Sukma Dewi^{1*}, Ni Komang Githa Ratna Dewi²

Master of Linguistics, Universitas Warmadewa

ORCID

I Wayan Budiarta <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6892-7249>

Abstract.

Figurative meanings or figurative language is broadly defined as a way of saying something other than ordinary way. It is more narrowly definable as a way of saying one thing and meaning another. The focus of this paper was to find out what types of figurative meanings found in the novel and what do the figurative meanings convey in the novel. The data source for this paper was a novel entitled *The Fault in Our Stars* by John Green. The data collected was analyzed using the main theory about Figurative Language stated by Laurence Perrine (1987) in a book entitled *Sound and Sense: An Introduction of Poetry* while the supporting theory used in this paper was theory stated by (Larson, 1998) in a book entitled *Meaning-Based Translation*. Based on the result of the analysis for this paper, it was concluded that there were 45 figurative meanings and eleven types of figurative meanings found in the novel. Those 45 figurative meanings consisted of 5 metaphor, 5 simile, 6 personification, 5 hyperbole, 5 apostrophe, 5 synecdoche, 5 metonymies, 4 symbol, 2 paradox, 1 understatement, and 1 irony. The figurative meanings found in the novel conveyed something funny, serious, unpredictable and sarcasm. It influenced the novel itself so the story could be more interesting, and it helped the readers to imagine and understand the story and topics of conversation.

Keywords: figurative meanings, semantics, novel “The Fault in Our Stars”

1. INTRODUCTION

According to (Klarer, 1999) literature is referred to as the entirety of written expression, with the restriction that not every written document can be categorized as literature in the more exact sense of the word. Literature is the imaginative work that pictures the human life which can be enjoyed, understandable, and also used by the society. People who work in literature usually represent their work in a form of literary work. Literary works consists of many of forms, such as poem, novel, drama, songs, short story, and etc.

Novel is widely known as a part of literary work. Novel is a long story that present in detail the development of a character or a large complex social situation or a relationship among a few characters. Novel has a message that wants to be presented for the

Corresponding Author: Ni Made Yunita Sukma Dewi; email: yunitasukma17@gmail.com

Dates Published 04 July 2022

Publishing services provided by Knowledge E

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Selection and Peer-review under the responsibility of the ISCL 2021 Conference Committee.


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readers. Novel invites the readers to come to a new world, new life as if the readers' life is there. On the other hand, every single word has their own meaning and contains different messages. In order to make the readers get the messages of the story, authors use figurative meanings in writing the novel.

Figurative meanings play a major role in compelling literary works especially novel. Figurative meanings or figurative language is a language that uses words or expressions with a meaning that is different from the literal interpretation. It is a conspicuous departure from what users of a language apprehend as the standards meaning of words, or else the standard order of word, in order to achieve some special meaning of effect (Abrams, 1999). It requires the readers to use their imagination to figure out the author's meaning. Perrine stated about figurative language which relates to figurative meanings in 1987, he stated that figurative language is broadly defined as a way of saying something other than ordinary way. It is more narrowly definable as a way of saying one thing and meaning another. Figurative language consists of twelve types, they are simile, metaphor, personification, apostrophe, synecdoche, metonymy, symbol, allegory, paradox, hyperbole, understatement and irony.

Related to the background, there are several previous studies are used as references in this study. (Habibi, 2016) conducted a study entitled "*An Analysis of Figurative Language in Edensor Novel by Andrea Hirata*" demonstrate that there are 6 types of figurative language in the Edensor novel. There are 20 sentences of simile, 8 sentences of metaphor, 6 sentences of personification, 5 sentences of hyperbole, 1 sentence of synecdoche, and 4 sentences of symbol. Moreover, Hasanah (2018) also conducted a study which entitle "*An Analysis of Figurative Language Used in some Poems by Oscar Wilde*" which found results based on analysis the data, they were the poems are A Lament, A Fragment, Sonnet on Approaching Italy, Symphony in Yellow, To My Wife, The 93 New Remorse, Requiescat, Desespoir, Madonna Mia, and Impression - Le Reveillon. Most of types of figurative language used in those ten poems is visual imagery. The second types of figurative language mostly used in those poems are hyperbole. The third types of figurative language mostly used in those poems are personification. Then simile is the fourth dominant, there are fourteen sentences in those ten poems. Simile is the fifth dominant, there are eleven sentences in those ten poems. While the other types of figurative languages used in these poems almost has the same frequency. Then, the contextual meaning was explained in each part of poems in the previous chapter. Some of them was 'Requiescat' poem, one of the sentences was 'the daisies grow' it means that the writer associated the woman with flowers like daisies and the kind of figurative language is symbol. On the other hand, Magfiratirrahmah (2018) also

doing similar study entitled “*An Analysis of Figurative Language on the Lyrics of Raef’s Selected Songs*”. In her research, the finding show there were 24 lines of lyrics that contained of figurative language. There were six types of figurative language found from nine types of figurative language in Kennedy’s concept they were hyperbole and personification (21%), paradox (8 %), metaphor (42 %), simile and synecdoche (4 %). In conclusion metaphor comes as the most dominant type of figurative language used, while simile and synecdoche show a very little number of usages.

Moreover, based on previous study above, this research is different from those previous study that has been explain before. This research analyze what types of figurative meanings are found in John Green’s *The Fault in Our Stars* and what do the figurative meanings convey in John Green’s *The Fault in Our Stars*. Moreover, this research aims to know structure of simple sentences and the thematic roles of the sentence elements found in the movie.

2. METHOD

The data of this research was collected from a novel entitled “*The Fault in Our Stars*” by John Green. This novel was first published in January 2012. The data were collected based on library research method through reading and taking notes. There were steps which were done in collecting the data. First, the data were read fully. The next step was the sentence that contains figurative meanings were classified by underlining them. After that, the sentences were classified again based on the types of figurative meanings. The last step was finding out what do the figurative meanings convey in the novel. The third method was the method and techniques of analyzing the data. The collected data were analyzed based on the theory by Perrine. In analyzing the data, the descriptive method was used. All the collected data were descriptively analyzed by giving some examples and explanation based on the theories concerned.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In this research, researcher discuss about the example and the meaning of figurative meanings found in a novel entitled *The Fault in Our Stars* by John Green. In this chapter, those problems are analyzed by using the theory of sentence structure proposed by Quirk and thematic roles proposed by Saeed. Based on the analysis, it was found that there are seven kinds of simple sentence structures and eleven kinds of thematic roles.

The analysis of figurative meanings found in John Green's *The Fault in Our Stars* are described in the following subchapters.

3.1. Types of Figurative Meanings Found in John Green's *The Fault in Our Stars*

The analysis of the types of figurative meanings found in John Green's *The Fault in Our Stars* were described in details in the following discussion.

3.1.1. Metaphor

The topic is the thing which is being talked about, the image is the thing which is used as the comparison, while point of similarity is a resemblance or likeness that appears between the two things. Below are the examples of metaphor found in the novel.

1. "Television is a passivity" (p.7)

Example (1) "*Television is a passivity*" is taken from chapter one page seven where Hazel's mom was trying to get Hazel to do other activities beside watching the television. Based on Perrine's statement about metaphor, this example is clearly a metaphor because it compares two things which is essentially unlike without using connective words. The things compared are "television" and "passivity".

3.1.2. Simile

Simile is comparison of two things, indicates by the word or phrase such as like, as, than, similar, resemble, or seems (Perrine, 1987:59). A simile expresses a similarity, the things compared have to be dissimilar in kind. Below are the examples of simile found in the novel.

1. His gait was crooked like his smile. (p.14)

Example (1) "*His gait was crooked like his smile*" is taken from chapter one page fourteen. This sentence is categorized into simile because there is the connective word "like" in the example. It is also clearly compares two things which are "his gait" and "his crooked smile" which belongs to Augustus Waters. His gait is said to be "crooked" like his smile, "crooked" means something that is not straight or bent. Therefore, the example above means that Augustus Waters's gait or the way he walks is slouching or it is not normal due to one of his prosthetic legs.

3.1.3. Personification

In personification a thing or object which is not human is given a human characteristic because of some similarity between the thing and a person. The component of animateness is being added to the meaning of objects, resulting in figurative usage (Larson, 1998:139). Below are the examples of personification found in the novel.

1. My lungs were acting desperate, gasping, pulling me out of the bed trying to find a position that could get them air. (p.25)

Example (1) *My lungs were acting desperate, gasping, pulling me out of the bed trying to find a position that could get them air* is taken from chapter two page twenty five where Hazel was telling Augustus her cancer story. The example is categorized into personification because it gives the attributes of human beings to an object, which is Hazel's lungs. Hazel said that her lungs, which is not a living thing, were acting desperate, gasping, pulling her out of her bed, trying to find a position that could get them air. However, "acting desperate", "gasping", "pulling" "trying to find a position" are activities which only can be done by a human being. Therefore, example (1) is categorized into personification. While the meaning of this example is Hazel felt the overwhelming pain in her chest because the lack of oxygen in her lungs.

3.1.4. Hyperbole

With hyperbole, the literal meaning is not intended meaning. It is the opposite of understatement. Below are the example of hyperbole found in the novel.

1. And then i started to read An Imperial of Affliction for the millionth time. (P.48)

Example (1) *And then i started to read An Imperial of Affliction for the millionth time* is taken from chapter four page forty eight where Hazel was about to go to sleep in her bedroom. This example is categorized into hyperbole, because it is simply an exaggeration. It means that this example also has hyperbolic meaning. In the example, Hazel said she read the book for the millionth time, while the truth is it is impossible to read a book for a millionth time. In fact, it will take countless hour to do so. The phrase "for the millionth time" exaggerates the meaning of the example while the real meaning is Hazel has read the book many times she has lost count of it.

3.1.5. Apostrophe

Apostrophe is a figure of speech where a character addresses an object, idea, or animal as if they were a human. Below are the examples of apostrophe found in the novel.

1. “Lord Jesus Christ, we are gathered here in Your Heart, literally in your heart, as cancer survivors” (p.14)

Example (1) “*Lord Jesus, we are gathered here in YourHeart, literally in your heart, as cancer survivors*” is taken from chapter one page fourteen where Patrick, the leader of the Support Group, was about to end the gathering. Based on Perrine’s explanation, Apostrophe is defined as addressing something non human as if it was a live and present and could reply to what is being said. In this example, Patrick was talking to Lord Jesus, and assuming that Jesus would hear and reply to his words, but the truth is he is not getting any respond, because as far as we know, Jesus is non human thing. Therefore, the example is categorized into apostrophe.

3.1.6. Synecdoche

Below are the example of synecdoche found in the novel.

1. Isaac leaned a hand against the snack table and focused his huge eyeson me. (p.15)

Example (1) *Isaac leaned a hand against the snack table and focused his huge eyes on me* is taken from chapter one page fifteen where Hazel and Isaac was having a conversation. This example is categorized into synecdoche because it uses part to represent a whole. “his huge eyes” refers to Isaac’s eyes. It represents Isaac’s whole body. Therefore, the meaning of this synecdoche is Isaac is really focused on Hazel when they were having the conversation.

1. Metonymy

The difference between synecdoche and metonymy is that metonymy is the substitution of the name of an attribute or adjunct for the thing closely related. Below are the examples of symbol found in the novel.

1. “I don’t even know anymore, is that diet?” I nodded and handed it to her. (p.42)

Example (1) “*I don’t even know anymore, is that diet?*” *I nodded and handed it to her* is taken from chapter three page forty two where Hazel was going out with her

bestfriend, Kaitlyn. A metonymy is the use of something closely related to the thing actually meant. In the example above, it is considered as metonymy because the use of the word “diet”. “diet” here is not the actual diet, or it is not the activity where we limit our appetite, but it refers to a kind of soft drink. Therefore, the real meaning of the metonymy above is Kaitlyn was asking if she was drinking a soft drink.

3.1.7. Symbol

A symbol can suggest a great variety of specific meanings. Below are the examples of symbol found in the novel.

1. “In the darkest day, the Lord puts best people in our life” (p.28)

Example (1) “*In the darkest day, the Lord puts best people in our life*” is taken from chapter two page twenty eight where Augustus’s dad was having a conversation with Hazel. This example is considered as symbol because it has other meaning which is more suggestive, it can be seen by the use of “the darkest days” that symbolizes all the hard times that they experienced in their life. Therefore, the literal meaning of the symbol above is the Lord will put the best people in our life when we have to go through hard times.

3.1.8. Paradox

Paradox as a figure of speech that contains a real contradiction with the facts. Below are the examples of apostrophe found in the novel.

1. “Not that i dont trust you, of course, but i dont trust you” (p.78)

Example (1) “*Not that i dont trust you, of course, but i dont trust you*” is taken from chapter five page seventy eight where Hazel was reading an email reply from her favorite novelist, Peter Van Houten. The email reply is about how Peter refused to tell Hazel what is happening in the end of his book. This example is categorized into paradox because it is an apparent contradiction that is nevertheless somehow true. In the example, Peter said “not that i dont trust you” which means that he trusts Hazel but he said “but i dont trusts you” which means he doesnt trust Hazel at all. That statement is a contradictory. In fact, the meaning of Peter’s statement is he is still skeptical to Hazel that he doesnt trust her yet because they never met before.

3.1.9. Understatement

Below is the example of understatement found in the novel.

1. "I had a little touch of osteosarcoma a year and a half ago" (p.11)

Example (1) "*I had a little touch of osteosarcoma a year and a half ago*" is taken from chapter one page eleven where Augustus introduced himself in front of his friends in the Support Group. The example above is categorized into understatement because it is saying less than what is actually meant. In the example, Augustus said he had a little touch of osteosarcoma. An osteosarcoma is bone cancer that needs a serious treatment in order to cure it. But here in the example, Augustus understated it by saying he had "a little" touch of osteosarcoma. Augustus said "a little" to make it seem not such a big deal while the truth is his cancer is a big deal and he needs to cure it.

3.1.10. Irony

Below is the example of Irony found in the novel.

1. Well the good news is that you won't be deaf and I was like "thank you for explaining that my eye cancer is not going to make me deaf" (p.15)

Example (1) *Well the good news is that you won't be deaf and I was like "thank you for explaining that my eye cancer is not going to make me deaf"* is taken from chapter one page fifteen where Isaac and Hazel were having a conversation about Isaac's surgeon he just met.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis for the collected data taken from a novel entitled *The Fault in Our Stars* by John Green in the previous chapter, some conclusions can be made according to the points related to the types of figurative meanings. There are various types of figurative meanings found in the novel, they are: metaphor, simile, personification, hyperbole, apostrophe, synecdoche, metonymy, symbol, paradox, understatement, and irony. The types of figurative meanings found in the novel were used as the data analysis. Starting from Metaphor is comparison between two things that are essentially unlike, while simile is similar but with the connection words such as: like, as, similar to, resemble or seems. Personification is the figurative language that is giving the attribute

if human beings to animal, an object or a concept. Hyperbole is simply exaggeration used to express something or state of condition in a bigger way than its ordinary one. Apostrophe is defined as addressing someone absent or something nonhuman as if it was a live and present and could reply to what is being said. Synecdoche is the use of part for the whole. Metonymy is the use of something closely related to the thing actually meant. Symbol is defined as something that means more than what it is. Paradox is an apparent contradiction that is nevertheless somehow true. Understatement is saying less than one means that may exist in what are says or merely on how one says and Irony is the opposite of what one means.

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