



**FIGURATIVE LANGUAGES IN WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S
POEM: A FAIRY SONG, A MADRIGAL, BRIDAL SONG, DIRGE,
AND SONNET 116**

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Abstract

The problem in this thesis is figurative language in Shakespeare's poetry. The reason for choosing the figurative language in William Shakespeare's poetry is because all of his works contain many literary qualities, which are figurative and each of these poems has a beautiful story that is translated into a beautiful figurative form.

The purpose of this study is to analyze types of figurative language, figurative language formulas, and figurative language functions in Shakespeare's poetry. In this writing, library research is taken as a data collection method. As for the data analysis method, the researcher describes literary work as a not-based structure that forms it as an internal factor of literature. Data collection techniques use documentation techniques to find data relevant to the research. In data analysis techniques, the author uses a formalist approach, all elements needed to understand the work contained in the work itself. The main purpose for formalist criticism is to determine how elements in Shakespeare's poetry work together with text content to form meaning to the reader.

The findings in this thesis are: 1) figurative language in Shakespeare's poetry can be divided into simile, metaphor, hyperbole, personification, and repetition. Simile can be found in Madrigal poetry; Metaphorical figurative languages can be found in four Shakespearean poems, A Fairy Song, Song Bridal, Dirge, and Sonnet 116; personification can be found in two poems Shakespeare, A Madrigal and Dirge; hyperbole can be seen A Fairy Song, Dirge, and Sonnet 116; and Repetition can be seen in three poems of Shakespeare, A Fairy Song, A Madrigal, and Dirge.

Keywords: Figurative Languages, Poem, Fairy Song, A Madrigal, Bridal Song, Dirge

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I INTRODUCTION

In this research, the writer analyzes the figurative language on Shakespeare's poem. The reason for choosing figurative languages in William Shakespeare's poems is because all of his works consists lots of literary qualities, which are the figure of speech. All of Shakespeare's poems have been recognized worldwide for its figurative language such as simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole, and so on. Meanwhile, the poems of *A Fairy Song*, *A Madrigal*, *Bridal Song*, *Dirge*, and *Sonnet 116*

are chosen from the frequency of figurative languages that can be found, each of these poems have beautiful story that are translated into the beautiful form of figurative language.

This purposes are taken from limitations of problem as the aim of the research, they are to describe the types of figurative language in Shakespeare's poems, to explain the formula of figurative language in Shakespeare's poems, and to explain the functions of figurative language in Shakespeare's poems.

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II RESEARCH METHODS

In the collecting data, the writer applies library research. It means that the writer applies the data which the writer takes from library and other written material from book store or even internet. Pradopo in *Metodologi Penelitian Sastra* (2001:153) states that he library research is the observation that is executed in the library, which the writer gains the data and information about his object through the books and other audiovisual equipment that related and relevant to the topic.

The data analyzing procedures concern with the way of the writer to conduct the analysis of the data. This analysis uses structuralism method, it looks the internal element of literary work such

the actions of the main character, such as characters and author. Pradopo in *Metodologi Penelitian Sastra* (2001: 54) state that the researcher has a chance to explain literary work as structure base on the elements that formed them. From the explanation, structural method has function to explain the internal factor of literature.

In the procedure of analyzing the data, the primary data is taken from novel itself, the writer tries to analyze it by using the information based on the novel itself. In doing this research, the writer starts by analyzing some intrinsic elements of this novel that becomes the basic of the problem that will be analyzed.

III RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There are five poems from William Shakespeare to be analyzed in figurative languages, which are *A Fairy Song*, *A Madrigal*, *Bridal Song*, *Dirge*, and *Sonnet 116*.

A Fairy Song

The Fairy Song is a poem about a fairy going around and spreading dew drops on the flowers. He is spreading the dew drops for the fairy queen. A cowslip is the type of the flowers that he is spreading the dew on. To help the fairy queen spreading dewdrops on the flowers, the writer must go everywhere like hills, dales, fires and floods. He spread the dew on every place that he passed.

A Madrigal

In *A Madrigal*, Shakespeare compares Youth and "Crabbed age" (old age). He describes them as a couple which cannot live together since they are the complete opposites of each other. While Youth is careless, summer-like and healthy, Age is weak, sad and has "short breath". Madrigal is a type of music composition which comes from Italy. It is a secular form of music. It is often used as a part-song and was very popular during the time of Renaissance. It was polyphonic and usually unaccompanied, since it used a plenty of voices.

Bridal Song

In *Bridal Song*, this poem is a kind of a funeral or an interment song, written four stanzas of six lines each. Shakespeare invites all the good

within everything available in nature such as a rose flower into the bridal home to bless the bride and her bridegroom. Shakespeare is inviting the good within everything available in nature such as a rose flower into the bridal home to bless the bride and her bride groom.

Dirge

In *Dirge*, the meaning of the word dirge is a musical term which refers to a funeral song, a slow, mournful musical composition. In this poem the lyrical self calls for death. In the second stanza the lyrical self addresses his friends and his lovers and prohibits them to feel sorry for him. He does not want flowers to be thrown to his coffin, nor he wants his lover to cry over his grave.

Sonnet 116

This sonnet attempts to define love, by telling both what it is and is not. In the first quatrain, the speaker says that love, "the marriage of true minds", is perfect and unchanging; it does not "admit impediments," and it does not change when it find changes in the loved one. In the second quatrain, the speaker tells what love is through a metaphor: a guiding star to lost ships ("wand'ring barks") that is not susceptible to storms (it "looks on tempests and is never shaken"). In the third quatrain, the speaker again describes what love is not: it is not susceptible to time. Though beauty fades in time as rosy lips and cheeks come within "his bending sickle's

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compass,” love does not change with hours and weeks: instead, it “bears it out ev’n to the edge of doom.” In the couplet, the speaker attests to his certainty that love is as he says: if his statements can be proved to be error, he declares, he must never have written a word, and no man can ever have been in love.

Then, Shakespeare’s poems have lots of figurative language, especially simile, metaphor, hyperbole, personification, and repetition. Five of his poems, *A Fairy Song*, *A Madrigal*, *Bridal Song*, *Dirge*, and *Sonnet 116*, are analyzed from these figurative languages.

Simile

A simile is a comparison between two unlike things using the words “like” or “as”. It is a way to draw a connection between two ideas or things and create a deeper level of meaning for the reader. The figurative language of simile can be only found in Shakespeare’s poem *A Madrigal*.

Youth like summer morn,
Age like winter weather;
Youth like summer brave,
Age like winter bare.

In this poem, youth is compared to summer morn and summer brave, while age is compared to winter weather and winter bare. Shakespeare compares youth and age, he describes them as a couple which cannot live together since they are the complete opposites of each other. Shakespeare also describes them as a couple which cannot live together since they are the complete opposites of each other. While Youth is careless, summer-like and healthy, Age is weak, sad and has short breath.

Metaphor

Unlike a simile, a metaphor compares two unlike things or ideas without the use of “like” or “as”; the connection between the two is more implied than explicitly expressed by the author. The purpose of a metaphor is to again establish a deeper connection and another layer of meaning to a character, the plot, or the theme. Metaphor figurative language can be found in four Shakespeare’s poems, which are *A Fairy Song*, *Bridal Song*, *Dirge*, and *Sonnet 116*.

First, in *A Fairy Song*, Shakespeare compares directly between dewdrops and pearl because they have the same physical appearance:

“I must go seek some dewdrops here / And hang a pearl in every cowslip’s ear.” Second, in *Bridal Song*, the comparison is between roses and maiden because both of them symbolizes beauty: “Roses, their sharp spines being gone / Not royal in their smells alone / But in their hue / Maiden pinks, of odour faint / Daisies smell-less, yet most quaint / And sweet thyme true.” Shakespeare is inviting the good within everything available in nature such as a rose flower into the bridal home to bless the bride and her bride groom. This is exemplified in the first line “ROSES, their sharp spines being gone,” the meaning behind this poem is not negative, but optimistic of love even after locking ball-in-chain to yourself in marriage.

Third, in *Dirge*, Shakespeare shows the comparison between flower and lover because they also share the beauty in Shakespeare’s life: “Not a flower, not a flower sweet / On my black coffin let there be strown / Lay me, O, where / Sad true lover never find my grav / To weep there!” Shakespeare self addresses his friends and his lovers and prohibits them to feel sorry for him. He does not want flowers to be thrown to his coffin, nor he wants his lover to cry over his grave.

Fourth, the comparison can be seen in *Sonnet 116* between love and rosy lips because they have cause and effect similarity: “Love’s not Time’s fool, though rosy lips and cheeks / Within his bending sickle’s compass come.” With a masterful control of rhythm and variation of tone, the heavy balance of “Love’s not time’s fool” to open the third quatrain; the declamatory “O no” to begin the second, the speaker makes an almost legalistic argument for the eternal passion of love, and the result is that the passion seems stronger and more urgent for the restraint in the speaker’s tone. Compared to previous figurative language, Shakespeare uses metaphor more than simile in the comparison between two things.

Personification

Personification is the assigning of human qualities to an inanimate object, person, animal, or abstract idea. Personification is used to simplify a more complex concept, to provide humor, or to provide a more clear look at a complicated idea or situation. Personification is most often used in poetry to create an image or to help establish mood. Personification can be

found in two Shakespeare's poem, which are *A Madrigal* and *Dirge*.

First, in *A Madrigal*, both youth and age are described to have human qualities, mainly youth is strong while age is weak: "Youth is full of sports / Age's breath is short / Youth is nimble, Age is lame / Youth is hot and bold / Age is weak and cold / Youth is wild, and Age is tame. Shakespeare contrasts the 2 many times. He uses many metaphors to contrast the 2, saying things like "Youth is wild, age is tame". The speaker is an aging person talking of how he is aging and thinking of his future. The reaction to a Madrigal is that the comparison is rather shocking. The opposites of young and old brought out in this poem seem to be very exaggerated. The poem makes old and young people sound like oil and water. In the modern world I feel as if these points no longer make much sense, as there are old people doing exactly what young people do, and vice versa. Second, in *Dirge*, breath is described to have the ability of flying like the bird: "Fly away, fly away, breath / I am slain by a fair cruel maid."

Hyperbole

A hyperbole is an obvious exaggeration or overstatement to make a point. It is not meant to be taken seriously, and usually when explored, reveals a deeper meaning. Hyperboles occur most often in poetry, but often times they also appear in common cliches or sayings. In Shakespeare's poems, hyperbole can be seen *A Fairy Song*, *Dirge*, and *Sonnet 116*.

First, in *A Fairy Song*, Shakespeare creates the hyperbole through the exaggeration that the poem is faster than the moon rotation even through flood and fire: "Thorough flood, thorough fire! / I do wander everywhere / Swifter than the moon's sphere. The poem is all about a fairy serving the fairy queen. He said that he does everything what faeries do. She explained that she wanders various places like briers, fires, dales, parks and floods quickly to serve the queen of fairy by dropping dew drops over the bushes and grass.

Second, in *Dirge*, Shakespeare exaggerates the amount of sighs that the poem does: "A

thousand thousand sighs to save." Third, in *Sonnet 116*, the hyperbole can be seen in the exaggeration of love that can survive for a long time, even to the end of the world or the edge of doom: "Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks / But bears it out even to the edge of doom." Shakespeare describes what love is not: it is not susceptible to time. Though beauty fades in time as rosy lips and cheeks come within "his bending sickle's compass," love does not change with hours and weeks: instead, it "bears it out ev'n to the edge of doom." In the couplet, the speaker attests to his certainty that love is as he says: if his statements can be proved to be error, he declares, he must never have written a word, and no man can ever have been in love.

Repetition

Repetition is a literary device that repeats the same words or phrases a few times to make an idea clearer and more memorable. As a rhetorical device, it could be a word, a phrase, or a full sentence, or a poetical line repeated to emphasize its significance in the entire text. Figures of speech that employ repetition usually repeat single words or short phrases, but some can involve the repetition of sounds while others might involve the repetition of entire sentences. Repetition can be seen in three of Shakespeare's poems, they are *A Fairy Song*, *A Madrigal*, and *Dirge*.

In *A Fairy Song*, the repetition can be seen in the words of over and thorough: "Over hill, over dale / Thorough bush, thorough brier / Over park, over pale / Thorough flood, thorough fire!" Second, in *A Madrigal*, the repetition is found on the words of youth and age: "Youth is full of plesance, Age is full of care / Youth like summer morn, Age like winter weather / Youth like summer brave, Age like winter bare / Youth is full of sports, Age's breath is short / Youth is nimble, Age is lame / Youth is hot and bold, Age is weak and cold / Youth is wild, and Age is tame." Third, in *Dirge*, the repetition can be seen from the words come away and fly away: "Come away, come away, death / And in sad cypres let me be laid / Fly away, fly away, breath / I am slain by a fair cruel maid."

IV CONCLUSION

There are three findings in this thesis. First, figurative language in Shakespeare's poetry can be divided into simile, metaphor, hyperbole, personification, and repetition. Simile can be found in Madrigal poetry; Metaphorical figurative languages can be found in four Shakespearean poems, A Fairy Song, Song Bridal, Dirge, and Sonnet 116; personification can be found in two poems Shakespeare, A Madrigal and Dirge; hyperbole can be seen A Fairy Song, Dirge, and Sonnet 116; and Repetition can be seen in three poems of Shakespeare, A Fairy Song, A Madrigal, and Dirge. Shakespeare uses metaphors more than

other figurative languages, followed by the use of hyperbole and repetition. On the other hand, Shakespeare rarely uses simile and personification in his poetry. Therefore, it can be concluded that the real power in Shakespeare's poetry is a direct comparison of metaphors. Second, in figurative language, Shakespeare uses the formula of flowers and trees, stars, and weather and seasons into his poetry. Third, all Shakespeare's poems show general characteristics of functions in figurative language, which are different types of romantic love, the danger of lust and love, real beauty vs. cliché beauty, responsibility to be beautiful.

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