

THE USE OF HYPERBOLE AND METAPHORS IN POP SONG LYRICS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON TOP FIVE SONGS BY ARCTIC MONKEY AND COLDPLAY

Tharissa Adila Putri, Dian Nurrachman, Agry Pramita

Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung
Corresponding email address: tharissaap@gmail.com

Abstract

Comparative literature involves comparing, analysing and understanding literary works to explore similarities, differences and influences in literature. Comparative literature can be found in song lyrics as a way to create a better understanding and convey the songwriter's feelings or thoughts to the listener. This research explores the similarities and differences in the use of hyperbole and metaphor in the top five songs from Arctic Monkeys and Coldplay. By conducting a comparative analysis of the lyrical content, this research aims to reveal how these two well-known bands use these literary devices to convey emotions and themes in their music. By using Reaske's figurative language theory and objective criticism approach. This research found that Arctic Monkeys songs often explore themes of romance, emotion, and burning desire, using hyperbole to dramatically amplify feelings, making their expressions more intense and vivid, for Coldplay lyrics often raise themes of longing, regret, and admiration. As for metaphors, both bands use metaphors extensively to convey deeper meanings and evoke emotions. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of how literary techniques are used in songwriting across different genres and styles of music.

Keywords: Arctic Monkeys, Coldplay, Comparative Literature, Figurative Language

INTRODUCTION

As the era has progressed, popular literature has also emerged. Popular literature qualifies as a literary work due to its possession of artistic and aesthetic value that can be appreciated by readers. While often presented for entertainment and relaxation purposes, popular literature still incorporates literary elements such as engaging plots, intricate characters, and the utilization of creative language. Furthermore, popular literature frequently mirrors everyday existence and raises pertinent social issues within society (Huang, 2018). A prime example of a popular literary work is a song. Much like other forms of literature, songs serve as expressions of praise, and they employ flattering sentiments to enhance the imagination of both the creators and their listeners. Songs often function as a means of conveying personal sentiments when a concrete or direct expression is not feasible. They are also regarded as capable of influencing and engaging



listeners to comprehend their content and message. In this digital era, social media plays a pivotal role in the promotion and popularization of songs. Platforms such as TikTok and Instagram have revolutionized the way songs are discovered, disseminated, and appreciated by a vast audience.

This phenomenon is one of the contributing factors to the widespread popularity of songs by Coldplay and Arctic Monkey. The existence of a song can be incredibly powerful and impactful because it can connect with people on emotional, cultural, and social levels. Songs have the capacity to inspire, heal, entertain, and communicate messages that leave a lasting impact on individuals and societies as a whole. songs have the capacity to portray a range of emotions, encompassing feelings of happiness, sorrow, affection, grief, and numerous others. Additionally, songs possess the ability to influence human emotions, potentially intensifying existing feelings or even altering an individual's emotional state. For instance, a song characterized by a swift tempo and spirited rhythm can boost energy and a sense of joy. Songs with a leisurely tempo and calming melodies can alleviate feelings of stress and anxiety (Simanjuntak et al., 2022)

The skillful use of language is intricately linked with the adept application of figurative language. Figurative language serves as a means to establish empathetic and sharp comparisons and expressions. These comparisons and expressions employ special effects or emotions in the language to craft the essence of style and beauty (Asriadi & Irawan, 2022). The presence of figurative language is an inseparable aspect of poetry for achieving a certain subtlety and beauty. In figurative language, authors use metaphorical words that equate one thing to another (Anggoro, 2009). These figurative words can draw attention in poetry, eliciting new interpretations. Figurative language has the capacity to evoke emotions and ignite the imagination of the audience (Aprilia, 2020).

Hyperbole, as a literary device, employs extravagant exaggeration of quantity, size, or characteristics to emphasize a statement or situation, thereby amplifying its impact and influence (Tarigan, 2013). Hyperbole is often used to strengthen emotional expression, and humor, or to create an impressive impression on the listener or reader. While it can add allure and expressive power, it's important to remember that hyperbole is not meant to be taken literally but as a form of exaggerated simplification for expressive purposes. By employing hyperbolic language, speakers or writers aim to intensify the effect of their message, capturing attention and provoking strong emotional responses from their audience.

Another form of figurative language frequently employed in song lyrics is metaphor, which opens the door to the realm of imagination. Metaphor not only enhances the beauty of language but also enriches the listener's experience by inviting them to delve into and comprehend hidden meanings. Metaphors or figurative language are employed in song lyrics for aesthetic purposes, aiming to make the song beautiful, pleasant to the ear, and aiding listeners in better understanding the meaning of a song. Metaphors serve as a means to express an intention or message indirectly to others, making the message not easily understood in a straightforward manner. The idea of metaphor has its roots in the Greek language, derived from the term "metaphorḗ." This term consists of two words, with "meta" signifying "above" and "phrein" meaning "to carry" (George, 2013). The significance of metaphor in song lyrics also lies in its ability to bridge language gaps.



Metaphors can embrace various layers of society and culture due to the richness of their meanings, which can be interpreted differently by each individual. In other words, metaphor invites listeners to bring their own experiences and understanding into the interpretation of the song. Metaphor in song lyrics becomes not only an artistic tool but also a gateway into human life and understanding.

Arctic Monkeys were seen as pioneers in how up-and-coming bands promote themselves and connect with the market through the Internet (Asriadi & Irawan, 2022). Arctic Monkeys are a British rock band formed in 2002 in Sheffield, South Yorkshire. They are renowned as one of the most influential and successful indie rock bands globally. The group comprises four core members: Alex Turner (lead vocals and guitar), Jamie Cook (guitar), Nick O'Malley (bass), and Matt Helders (drums). In 2005, Arctic Monkeys released their breakthrough debut album, "Whatever People Say I Am, That's What I'm Not." It became an instant hit, topping the UK album charts. A pivotal moment in their career came in 2013 with the release of "AM." The album achieved global success and introduced them to a broader audience. Hit singles like "Do I Wanna Know?" and "R U Mine?" are still widely recognized. Arctic Monkeys remain one of the most influential forces in contemporary rock music, blending indie, rock, and experimental elements in their stylish and innovative work. The fanbase name for Arctic Monkeys is "Monkeys' Fans" often referred to as "Arctic Monkeys' Fans." There is no official name designated for their fanbase.

On the other band, Coldplay, a rock band of a different genre, has been active since 1997. Their genre spans alternative rock, pop rock, and post-britpop. They rose to fame in the early 2000s with their debut album, "Parachutes," which included hit singles like "Yellow" and "Trouble". Coldplay remains renowned for its emotionally charged lyrics, infectious melodies, and adept use of figurative language, idiomatic expressions. Their impressive track record includes seven Grammy Awards, nine Brit Awards, and seven MTV Video Music Awards. The fanbase name for Coldplay is "Coldplayers," although this title is not officially recognized.

These differences reflect the musical style and artistic focus of each band. Personal preferences play a significant role in determining which songs someone may prefer, as each song carries different feelings and messages. This research is conducted because there has been no previous study that examines comparative literature between the top five songs of Arctic Monkey and Coldplay, and to gain a better understanding of the feelings, thoughts, and messages found in the songs of each band.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The Use of Hyperbole in The Top five songs by Arctic Monkeys and The Top five songs by Coldplay

Hyperbole is a style of language that deliberately exaggerates a statement to make it seem more exaggerated and extreme than it is (Keraf, 1994). The process of forming a hyperbola is not significantly different from that of a metaphor; the focus here is on conveying a more intense meaning (Mar'atun, 2016). The use of hyperbole is often found in song lyrics to create a dramatic effect or emphasize a certain point. This research will find the similarities and differences of hyperbole found in the lyrics of Arctic Monkeys'



top five songs "Do I Wanna Know", "I Wanna Be Yours", "Why'd You Only Call Me When You're High?", "505", "R U Mine?". And Coldplay's top five lyrics are "Something Just Like This", "Yellow", "Viva La Vida", "The Scientist", and "A Sky Full of Stars".

Arctic Monkey's song "Do I Wanna Know" was released in 2013 and is found in the album AM. The song is now a top 1 song from Arctic Monkey. "Do I Wanna Know" tells the story of one's doubts and confusion in relationships. Meanwhile, "Something Just Like This" is a collaboration song between rock band Coldplay and DJ The Chainsmokers, which was released in 2017. The song entered the top 1 Coldplay song. "Something Just Like This" is a song that tells about a person's desire to be a hero for his loved ones. Hyperbole in the song "Do I Wanna Know" by Arctic Monkey.

Do you ever get the feeling that you can't shift the tide
That sticks around like something's in your teeth
And some aces up your sleeve

If the lyrics are interpreted in literal meaning in the first line, it means, have you ever felt that you can't change the tide. Meanwhile, if the lyrics are interpreted through hyperbole or non-literal meaning, then the lyrics refer to feelings that are difficult to overcome, like a tidal wave that cannot be changed. Emotions often resemble waves, fluctuating in intensity, reaching a peak, then gradually diminishing and ultimately fading away. Occasionally, these emotions resurface, triggering another wave or a lesser ripple (Saulsman & Nathan, 2012)

Furthermore, hyperbole is found in the song "Something Just Like This" by Coldplay.

Achilles and his gold
Hercules and his gifts
Spider-Man's control
And Batman with his fists
And clearly, I don't see myself upon that list

The last line has a literal meaning that the author does not find himself on the list of characters like the previous ones such as Achilles, Hercules, Spider-Man, and Batman. Meanwhile, the non-literal meaning of the statement is hyperbole because it is an exaggeration. Because the author exaggerates his inability to match the heroic figures by saying that he is not on the list. The use of hyperbole intends to emphasize inferiority or insecurity. The writer expresses this feeling in an exaggerated way to create a poetic and emotional effect in the song lyrics.

The similarity of hyperbole between the lyrics of the songs "I Wanna Know" by Arctic Monkeys and "Something Just Like This" by Coldplay, is the similarity of using hyperbole to exaggerate emotions and feelings. In the song "I Wanna Know" by Arctic Monkey hyperbole is used to describe feelings that are difficult to overcome, and in the song "Something Just Like This" by Coldplay hyperbole is used for the desire to get sincerity in relationships. Another similarity is the use of hyperbole to create poetic and emotional effects. Both songs use hyperbole to give a poetic and emotional feel that they want to convey through their lyrics.

The differences exist between the lyrics of the songs "I Wanna Know" by Arctic Monkey and "Something Just Like This" by Coldplay. The difference in themes is conveyed

through hyperbole, in the song "I Wanna Know" by Arctic Monkey uses hyperbole to describe the feeling of burning love and a huge desire to get someone's love, while the song "Something Just Like This" by Coldplay, the use of hyperbole for the desire for simplicity in relationships. In addition, the difference in the delivery of hyperbole in the lyrics of the song "I Wanna Know" by Arctic Monkey is expressed with exaggerated expressions that describe actions or feelings. Whereas in the lyrics of the song "Something Just Like This" by Coldplay, hyperbole is often associated with fictional or mythical characters who have extraordinary powers.

The Use of Metaphors in The Top five songs by Arctic Monkeys and The Top five songs by Coldplay

Metaphor is often considered a comparative language style based on similarity, metaphor has a very broad meaning. The use of metaphors in the form of sentences holds more power than in the form of a single word (Antara, 2007). After analyzing the hyperbole in Top five songs by Arctic Monkeys and Top five songs by Coldplay, the next research will find the similarities and differences of the metaphors contained in the lyrics of Top five songs by Arctic Monkeys, namely "Do I Wanna Know", "I Wanna Be Yours", "Why'd You Only Call Me When You're High?", "505", "R U Mine?", And the lyrics of the top five Coldplay songs are "Something Just Like This", "Yellow", "Viva La Vida", "The Scientist", "A Sky Full of Stars".

After analyzing the hyperbole found in the songs "Do I Wanna Know" by Arctic Monkey and "Something Just Like This" by Coldplay. As explained earlier. That "Do I Wanna Know" is a top 1 song from Arctic Monkey and "Something Just Like This" is a top 1 song from Coldplay. The song "Do I Wanna Know" tells the story of a person's doubt and confusion in a relationship. "Something Just Like This" is a song that tells the story of a person's desire to be a hero to his loved ones. So from the two songs, we will look for metaphors in the lyrics and also find out how the differences and similarities of the metaphors of the two songs. Here are the metaphors found in the lyrics of Arctic Monkey's "Do I Wanna Know".

Have you got colour in your cheeks?

Do you ever get that fear that you can't shift the tide

That sticks around like summat in your teeth?

In the lyrics there is a metaphor, the metaphor is found in the third line. The literal meaning of the lyrics talks about something that sticks to one's teeth, maybe like food scraps. However, in the non-literal meaning of the lyrics, "that" does not refer to something that sticks to the teeth, then in the sentence "sticks around like summat in your teeth" is a metaphor that likens feelings to something stuck to the teeth that feels difficult to remove. The lyrics are included in concrete metaphors because they concretize something abstract such as feelings by comparing it to something physical, namely something stuck to the teeth. According to Leech, (1974) concrete metaphors are characteristics of real and physical existence to the abstract or vice versa. By using imagery in the lyrics, this metaphor makes abstract concepts more real, easier to describe, and easier to understand because feelings are attached and disturbing, just like something stuck to the teeth that is uncomfortable. Metaphors play a crucial role in



shaping and facilitating the understanding and application of abstract concepts. They enable us to leverage tangible, familiar realms to grasp and think about abstract ideas (Jamrozik et al., 2016).

Furthermore, metaphors in the lyrics of the song "Something Just Like This" by Coldplay.

Achilles and his gold

Hercules and his gifts

Spider-Man's control

And Batman with his fists

In the lyrics there is a metaphor. In the first lyric line, the literal meaning is that Achilles has physical gold. But the non-literal meaning of the lyrics refers to the strength of Achilles as a tough hero in legend. So the metaphor contained in the lyrics uses a concrete object of gold to represent the concept of strength, so the metaphor in that line is a concrete metaphor. Then, in the second lyric line, the literal meaning of Hercules has a physical gift. However, the non-literal meaning of the lyrics refers to the extraordinary abilities that Hercules has, so the metaphor in the lyrics uses the object of the gift to represent the concept of ability. So the lyric uses two concrete metaphors where the concrete objects of gold and gifts are used to symbolize power and ability.

From analyzing the metaphors in the lyrics of the songs "Do I Wanna Know" by Arctic Monkey and "Something Just Like This" by Coldplay. The number of metaphors in "Do I Wanna Know" by Arctic Monkey is six metaphors, while the song "Something Just Like This" by Coldplay only has three. In the analysis that has been done, there are several types of metaphors found in the lyrics of the song "Do I Wanna Know" by Arctic Monkey, namely, concrete metaphors, synesthesia metaphors, animistic metaphors, humanizing metaphors. While in the song "Something Just Like This" by Coldplay, the types of metaphors in the lyrics are concrete metaphors, synesthesia metaphors, animistic metaphors. In addition, the metaphors in the lyrics of the songs "Do I Wanna Know" by Arctic Monkey and "Something Just Like This" by Coldplay also have some similarities and differences in the use of metaphors in conveying the messages contained in the songs. Similarities found in the metaphors of the lyrics of the songs "Do I Wanna Know" by Arctic Monkey and "Something Just Like This" by Coldplay. In the use of metaphors to convey emotions, both songs have similarities in that both songs use metaphors to convey more complex emotions and feelings, namely both songs use metaphors to describe love and a complex relationship. In addition, the similarities contained in the song are the use of concrete metaphors. Both songs use concrete objects or concepts to represent abstract concepts.

While the differences contained in the lyrics of the songs "Do I Wanna Know" by Arctic Monkey and "Something Just Like This" by Coldplay, namely, in the song "Do I Wanna Know" by Arctic Monkey, the metaphors used tend to convey the nuances of uncertainty, doubt and dynamics in romantic relationships. Whereas in the song "Something Just Like This" by Coldplay the use of metaphors is used to convey the desire to have a simple relationship that is not as far-fetched as in fairy tales or fictional stories. So even though both songs use concrete type metaphors to describe abstract concepts about feelings and romantic relationships, the song "Do I Wanna Know" by Arctic Monkey conveys more nuances of burning love, and sometimes painful. Whereas the song

"Something Just Like This" by Coldplay conveys a desire for love that is simple, realistic and not made up like in a work of fiction.

CONCLUSION

Both Arctic Monkeys and Coldplay incorporate a significant number of hyperbolic expressions, with Arctic Monkeys' top five songs containing 19 hyperbole and Coldplay containing 20 hyperbole. However, the themes and styles in which these hyperboles are employed differ markedly. Arctic Monkeys' songs often explore themes of romance, emotion, and burning desire, using hyperbole to dramatically amplify these feelings, making their expressions more intense and vivid. In contrast, Coldplay's lyrics frequently address themes of longing, regret, and admiration. Their use of hyperbole tends to be more poetic and abstract, subtly enhancing the emotional depth of their messages. This stylistic difference underscores how each band uniquely leverages hyperbole to connect with their audience and convey their distinct emotional landscapes.

The top five songs by Arctic Monkeys contain 19 metaphors, while the top five songs by Coldplay feature 24 metaphors. Both bands use metaphor extensively to convey deeper meanings and evoke emotions. However, Coldplay's writing style is more poetic and abstract, often creating a dreamlike or introspective atmosphere through its metaphors. In contrast, Arctic Monkeys, led by Alex Turner's expressive poetic style, employs metaphors that are more direct and clear about emotions and circumstances. Turner's lyrics are poetic but straightforward, making the emotions and situations more immediately accessible to the listener.

Despite these differences, both bands effectively use metaphors to enhance the lyrical depth and emotional resonance of their songs.

REFERENCES

- Anggoro, R. (2009). *Ketaklaksanaan Ekspresi dalam Lirik Lagu Karya Ebiat G Ade (Sebuah Tinjauan Stilistika)*. <http://eprints.undip.ac.id/5693/>
- Antara, I. G. P. (2007). *Metafora Bahasa Bali di Kabupaten Buleleng*. Universitas Udayana.
- Aprilia, R. (2020). *Simile dan Metafora dalam Lirik Lagu Billie Marten: Kajian Semantis*. [Universitas Widyatama]. <http://repository.widyatama.ac.id/xmlui/handle/123456789/11626>
- Asriadi, R. D., & Irawan, A. M. (2022). Analysis of Figurative Language Used in Selected Song Lyrics of Arctic Monkeys in "Am" Album. *English Language and Literature*, 11(1), 71–78.
- George, L. M. . (2013). *Metaphors We Live By*. The University of Chicago Press.
- Huang, Y. (2018). Popular Literature, Elite Literature and Folk Literature. In Narrative of Chinese and Western Popular Fiction. *Springer Berlin Heidelberg.*, 8(2), 22–34. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-662-57575-8_2



- Jamrozik, A., McQuire, M., Cardillo, E. R., & Chatterjee, A. (2016). Metaphor: bridging embodiment to abstraction. *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review*, 23(1).
- Keraf, G. (1994). *Diksi dan Gaya Bahasa*. PT. Gramedia Pustaka Utama.
- Leech, G. (1974). *Semantics*. Penguin Books.
- Mar'atun, S. (2016). *Penggunaan Gaya Bahasa Hiperbola Dalam Kata-Kata Mario Teguh*. Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar.
- Saulsman, L., & Nathan, P. (2012). Facing Your Feelings. *Centre for Clinical Interventions*. www.cci.health.gov.au
- Simanjuntak, B., M., S., M., R., Mayuni, I., & Sutrisno. (2022). The Value of Parents' Image in Seven Batak Toba Songs (Literary Art Study). *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai*, 6(2), 8540–8551.
- Tarigan, H. G. (2013). *Pengajaran Gaya Bahasa*. Angkasa.

