

The Analysis of Figurative Language Found in the Prestige Movie

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ABSTRACT

This research analyzes the figurative language in the The Prestige movie. In the movie, the use of language is essential as the tool to communicate with each other. About language, the figurative language is one kind of language variety. Figurative language greatly improves the way humans communicate meaning. The main goal of this study was to analyze and discover the figurative language utilized in the film of The Prestige. The purpose of this study is to identify the kinds of figurative language that are used in this film. It also seeks to identify this film's most often used metaphorical language. This study's author employs a qualitative methodology, which falls under the library research category. The dialogue from the film The Prestige serves as the research's data source. As a result, there are seven categories of figurative language identified by the study's findings. Seven kinds of figurative languages are found from the total of selected either monologue or dialogue that contains a figurative language. The figurative language found are: Personification (6 data), hyperbole (9 data), metaphor (5 data), simile (2 data), and paradox (1 data). Based on the data that was gathered and examined, it was stated that, hyperbole showed up in nine data points. The hyperbole of figurative language used is the most common form in this movie.

Keywords: *Figurative Language, Hyperbole, The Prestige*

INTRODUCTION

Language is a tool of communication that human use to interact and communicate with another human. With language, a human can do his or her daily tasks that require communication and cooperation. As stated by (Lahay et al., 2023) language is the media used for communicating and exchanging ideas with each other. On the other hand, the language cannot be separated from people since it is essential in all aspects of human's life, including technology, science, economics, education, politics, and art. In the field of art, the dialogue in the movie is one example of a language use.

A movie offers audio and context, moving images, and a screen that appears alive. This is supported by (Shakhnoza, 2023), according to prior argumentation, a movie is a method of communication that tells tales or provides information utilizing sound or moving pictures (enable people to learn). Based on these statements as mentioned above from the expert, it concludes that, a movie not only offers the background information, but also the sound or text that is required to complement the moving picture's context.

Movie is an entertaining thing. Many people enjoy watching movie, it could be any movie genres; including horror, animation, thriller, and many other of genre. People are often drawn to a movie for many purposes; such as: dramatizing the storyline, looking at the visual effect, finding out the hidden message, and understanding a language. For a particular movie, the language used is commonly figurative.

The figurative language is defined as the non-literal type of language that has meaning its literal meaning. It was not meant to be taken literally as it could cause misinterpretation and misunderstanding. As being expressed by (Kreuz & Roberts, 2022) in (Jr. et al., 1993), he states that, figurative language are forms of language used by authors or speakers delivering something beyond the literal meaning. Then, (Moss & Fussell, 2021) argued that, using figurative language does not only need an interpretation but also familiarity between the speaker and listener or between author and reader. So, without proper context or situation, some sentence containing figurative language might not work.

Plenty of previous papers or publications are similar or also focusing on figurative language found in literature. The title of those research are "An Analysis of Figurative

Language Found on *Moana* Movie" by (Siagian & Suharyanto, 2022), "An Analysis of Figurative Language in *Aladdin* Movie" by (Febriyanti, 2022), "An Analysis of Figurative Language in *Aladdin* Movie" by (Sriwedani et al., 2022), "An Analysis of Figurative Language Used in *Twilight* Movie" by (Mukti & Nugraha, 2022) and "An analysis Figure of Speech in the *Frozen* Disney Movie" by (Cahyaningrum, 2022), the researcher uses these studies as a reference for this study because of the similarity in the research and the media that they used which is movie.

Thus, from the consideration and selection of the chosen movie, the researcher would like to analyze the movie *The Prestige* by Hugh Jackman and Christian Bale starred in Christopher Nolan's film, which was released in 2006. The researcher would like to keep focusing on the dialogue or monologue shown in this movie and understand the story first, then it is about to analyze the figurative language by the character.

RESEARCH METHOD

The researcher applies qualitative method for this study. The researcher independently study and analyze the data that has been collected. The data source is *The Prestige* movie, and the primary data is the dialogue inside the movie, which contains figurative language. The secondary sources are journals with relevant or related studies to this research.

The research was conducted in a few steps: First, is to collect the movie from the internet and watch it. Secondly, the researcher then listens closely to the dialogues and identifies each dialogue that contains figurative language, and take notes of each data that has been collected. Then the researcher classifies and organizes each data found to its respective figurative language. The researcher then interprets and analyzes each dialogue containing figurative language to find its meaning. Lastly, the researcher then finds out which type of figurative language appears most according to the data that has been classified and analyzed.

DISCUSSION

There are many types of figurative language. According to Abrams (1999) which is taken from (Simamora & Priyono, 2022), it is stated that, the figurative language consists of: Simile, metaphor, hyperbole, paradox, irony, Personification, metonymy, and symbolism. The researcher elaborates, analyzes, and describes those seven figurative languages in the movie of *The Prestige*.

a. Hyperbole

The hyperbole stated that, when a particular condition or situation is exaggerated to the point of overstretching, it is called hyperbole. The figurative language of hyperbole is to emphasize the point quite a bit. Hyperbole is a figure of speech that uses an extravagant statement to create a strong emotional response. The analysis of figurative language is shown as the following data.

Data 1: "*The magician takes the ordinary something and makes it do something extraordinary*"

In this scene, the character of John Cutter was talking to a girl and she stays silent the whole time. Cutter said "*The magician takes the ordinary something and makes it do something extraordinary*" This is a hyperbole because John Cutter was exaggerating about how an ordinary thing can do something extraordinary. In this context, what Cutter meant by this is that a magician would make you impressed with something normal. The stuff that the magician performed with is not extraordinary but rather the performance that makes the audience impressed

Data 2: "*Impossible. I'm afraid*"

After Angier explained why he wanted to meet Tesla, Tesla's partner, Alley said it was impossible to meet him. In this context. Alley uses a hyperbole expression by saying that Robert Angier can't meet Tesla. This does not mean it is impossible for Robert Angier to meet

Nikola Tesla, but Alley meant that Tesla does not want to meet anyone right now, so it is rather difficult to meet him, but it is not impossible.

Data 3: *"No. No one else can do my trick"*

In this scene, after John Cutter tempting Borden to sell his magic trick, Borden said "No one else can do my trick". This is a hyperbole expression because anyone can perform a magic trick, so this is an exaggeration. What Borden is saying is that nobody can have his magic trick and he will not sell it to anyone. This is similar to a man saying "No one can have you except me" to a woman. Of course, anyone can be anybody's partner. This sentence meant that the man loves the woman so much that he will not let any man be her partner except him.

Data 4: *"You'll be nothing to them"*

The phrase "You'll be nothing to them" is a hyperbole. He said it as if the boy will become utterly worthless if he tells anyone about the magic trick secret but of course it was not meant literally. The boy would not become completely worthless, the use of "Nothing" is just to emphasize how people would just perceive the boy as an ordinary person if he were to tell the secret of the magic trick

Data 5: *"Breathe as little as possible"*

In this scene, John Cutter was trying out some magic trick with Robert Angier and Olivia Winscombe. The shot switches from Cutter talking to Angier to Cutter talking to Olivia. In this particular shot, Cutter was helping Olivia to hide inside a trapdoor, under a cupboard and he said "Breathe as little as possible". Cutter meant that Olivia should hide her breathing so nobody would suspect anyone inside the cupboard when the volunteers check the cupboard on the stage for the magic trick. Cutter exaggerates this by saying "Breathe as little as possible". Olivia can breathe as much as she wants but as slow as possible so nobody would hear her breathing inside the cupboard.

Data 6: *"I've told you a million times!"*

Tesla saying *"I've told you a million times!"* In this phrase, the speaker uses the word 'million' to emphasize the number of times they have told someone something. It is unlikely that they actually said something a million times, but they are instead using exaggeration to convey a sense of frustration, as they may not be paying attention. This phrase is often used when Tesla often tells another person something, but Robert either does not remember it or does not listen to it.

Data 7: *"Following a star has to lead to where you are."*

Robert Angier was disgusted by Root's drunk behavior, he protested to Cutter but then Cutter said *"Following a star has to lead to where you are."* This line contained hyperbole as it explains how someone meets a person by following a star. In short, the sentence shows something exaggerated. As it is known, stars only appear at night. The star cannot show or give information about someone's location. The true meaning of the star in this sentence is to pray to God to give the guidance to find what it is looking for.

Data 8: *"Being purged a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes."*

This sentence is clearly exaggerated because the human cannot be cleaned the fire unless to put it out. Fire is the burning that produces light and heat, while 'eyes' is the either of the two organs of sight. Eyes when exposed to fire will definitely burn and will make an impression. Connotatively, the sentence "being purged a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes" is represents by the Olivia's feeling that she wants to move on from Tremaine who is always in his mind, because Tremaine doesn't love Olivia.

Data 9: *"The Great Danton is a blind fool"*

When Robert Angier and Olivia Winscombe argue about how Alfred Borden does his magic trick, Olivia makes an exaggeration and called Angier a blind fool for not listening to her explanation and instead being stubborn. Angier is not actually blind, Angier is capable of

seeing things with his eyes. What Olivia meant by this is that Angier cannot see past himself and being stubborn for not listening to her.

b. Metaphor

About the next figurative language, it is metaphor. In a metaphor, the point is about a term or phrase that, when used literally, indicates that one type of item is applied to a clearly distinct type of thing without making a comparison.

Data 1: *“A bullet catch is suicide”*

Cutter uses the word “Suicide” as a metaphor for committing something that is extremely dangerous. He thinks a bullet catch trick is too risky because anyone could put a small object inside the barrel and actually shoots a solid object to the magic performer. This could endanger the performer and might actually kill them. That is why Cutter call a bullet catch trick “Suicide” but it is not an actual suicide as the one that could kill the performer is the volunteer that shoots the gun. Cutter simply compares the trick to something as dangerous as suicide because it would hurt or even kill the performer.

Data 2: *“Use a plant”*

In the dialogue, Borden and Angier uses the word “Plant”. This is a metaphor; they did not mean actually to use a plant like trees or grasses. What they meant by this is a fake audience that works for the magician so the magician can work with someone who actually knows about the trick and not just some random volunteer. So, a plant in this context is someone who secretly works for the magic performer.

Data 3: *“He won’t get his hands dirty”*

Cutter uses a metaphor expression in *“get his hands dirty”*. This cannot be taken literally as Cutter did not mean getting his hands dirty, like touching dirt or putting your hands inside a trash bag. Cutter meant that a magician should have what it takes to do or create a new magic trick even if it means doing something dangerous or dedicating your life

for magic tricks. Cutter uses “dirty” as a substitute for doing something dangerous or doing something that against the magician moral codes.

Data 4: *“This was built by a wizard.”*

This was built by a wizard” This sentence that Cutter says is a metaphor expression. Cutter uses the word “Wizard” because the machine is unbelievable for normal people. Cutter compares Tesla to a wizard because he could make something that works like a real magic that only a wizard could do but obviously Tesla is not a wizard but man of science. Tesla cannot do a real magic but rather make something that people cannot comprehend thus it looks like real magic.

Data 5: *“I am their slave”*

Tesla uses a metaphorical expression by saying *“I am their slave”*. What Tesla meant by this is that he follows his obsession too much like a slave following their master’s order. Tesla uses slave as a comparison for himself that keeps following his obsession. Tesla is saying that obsession should be controlled instead of controlling. If an obsession starts controlling you then, you will be like a slave that follows and obeys their master and in this case the master is the obsession.

c. Personification

The definition of Personification is the process of speaking of an inanimate thing or an abstract idea as though it were alive and possessed human characteristics or emotions.

Data 1: *“If the rope swells up”*

Cutter uses personification expression in *“If the rope swells up”*. Cutter gives the attribute of a living things which is swelling, which is an abnormal enlargement to a living creature body, to a rope that is an inanimate object or something that is not alive. What Cutter meant by this is if the rope absorbs the water and getting bigger around Julia’s hands, she won’t be able to escape the knot and might be drowned inside the tank.

Data 2: *"His notebook reveals"*

In this scene, Robert Angier is monologuing after he remembers seeing Alfred Borden with his wife and child in the market. The shot changes to Angier, reading Borden's notebook inside a hotel room. Angier said "I saw happiness. Happiness that should have been mine. But I was wrong. His notebook reveals that he never had the life that I envied" Angier uses Personification by saying "His notebook reveals". Angier said it as if the book was an alive creature and not an inanimate object. Angier acts as if the book tells him about Borden's life but obviously the book cannot speak and it was the writer of the book itself that wrote about Borden's life into Borden's notebook and reveal it to Angier that reads it. The book itself does not reveal anything but acts as a medium through which the information can reach Angier.

Data 3: *"His soul is restless"*

The personification expression in this monologue is how Angier said "His soul was restless". Angier gave an attribute of restlessness, being tired, or not resting which is something that a living creature might feel, to a soul, which is very much a concept or idea. A soul cannot be restless as it is not a living creature but rather an idea of human spirit inside of each individual body.

Data 4: *"His wife and child tormented by his fickle and contradictory nature."*

Angier uses personification expression in his diary by writing, "His wife and child are tormented by his fickle and contradictory nature." He makes it as if Borden's contradictory nature is an alive creature that could torment and torture to his wife and child. Obviously, someone's nature or trait is not alive but rather an idea of someone's characteristic in life and how they behave in life

Data 5: *"You must be curious to see what so much money has bought you"*

Tesla uses a personification expression by saying "what so much money has bought you". What Tesla meant by this is that Angier must want to know what kind of machine that

he pays for. Tesla said it as if the money were an alive creature that could walk around and buy Angier the machine that he wants but obviously, it is actually Angier that bought the machine with the money by paying Tesla to create it.

Data 6: *"Fitting you should be here for her maiden voyage"*

Tesla's calling his machine "her" is an old form of personification. Commonly, people only call or uses "her" to a living creature that is a female. Sailor used to call their ship a "she" because a ship is a shelter or home for the sailors that sail the sea and those attributes are comparable to a mother that protects. Over time, many people use the same Personification to any inanimate object they love and use, or usually an object they create like a vehicle or a house. Tesla follows an old tradition and applies the same Personification to his machine.

d. Irony

About the current figurative language, it is Irony. The meaning of Irony stated that, when a presenter makes a statement that implies something quite different from what it pretends to be, it is considered ironic.

Data 1: In this dialogue, Borden uses an irony expression by saying *"I mean, Milton has gotten success, whatever that means, and now he's scared"*. The irony in this sentence is how Milton's success has made him scared to try something new. A success usually makes people more confident to try something new but the irony is that Milton's success is only makes him scared and unconfident to create new magic tricks or even try dangerous one.

Data 2: *"The secret impresses no one"*

In this scene Alfred Borden was explaining the importance of keeping the secret of a magic trick to a kid and the kid stays silent all the time. Borden said "Are you watching closely? Look closer. Never show anyone. They'll beg you and flatter you for the secret but as soon as you give it up, you'll be nothing to them. You understand? Nothing. The secret impresses no one. The trick you use it for is everything.

e. Metonymy

The next points out a metonymy, it is a term used literally to describe the application of one item to another that is closely related due to frequent association in shared experience.

Data 1: *"I can't do this alone, give me a hand"*

The sentence of "Give me a hand" on that example means giving for a help. "Hand" in the example has been replaced for the word "help". Thus, it can be understood that "hand" and "help" has a related meaning. By examples above, in metonymy, an object is designated by the name of something which is generally associated with it.

f. Simile

When defining about simile, the terms of "like" and "as" directly denote a comparison between two quite dissimilar objects.

Data 1: *"He must be as strong as an ox."*

Angier uses a simile expression by saying "He must be as strong as an ox". This simile shows how Angier compares the Chinese magician's strength with an ox. An animal like ox is much stronger than a human in term of strength. So, Angier thinks that the Chinese magician is so strong that his strength might be comparable to an ox because he could lift a goldfish tank filled with water by only using thigh or leg.

Data 2: *"it was like going home"*

Cutter once told a story about a drowning sailor and how the sailor described that drowning feels like "going home". This metaphor expresses how the sailor sees death as being peaceful, like going home, back to where you belong. But Cutter was lying and drowning is indeed felt like agony and not peaceful at all.

g. Paradox

The paradox as the figurative language is meant to be in conflict with itself. On the other hand, a fair interpretation is actually possible.

Data 1: *“Because exact science, Mr. Angier, is not an exact science”*

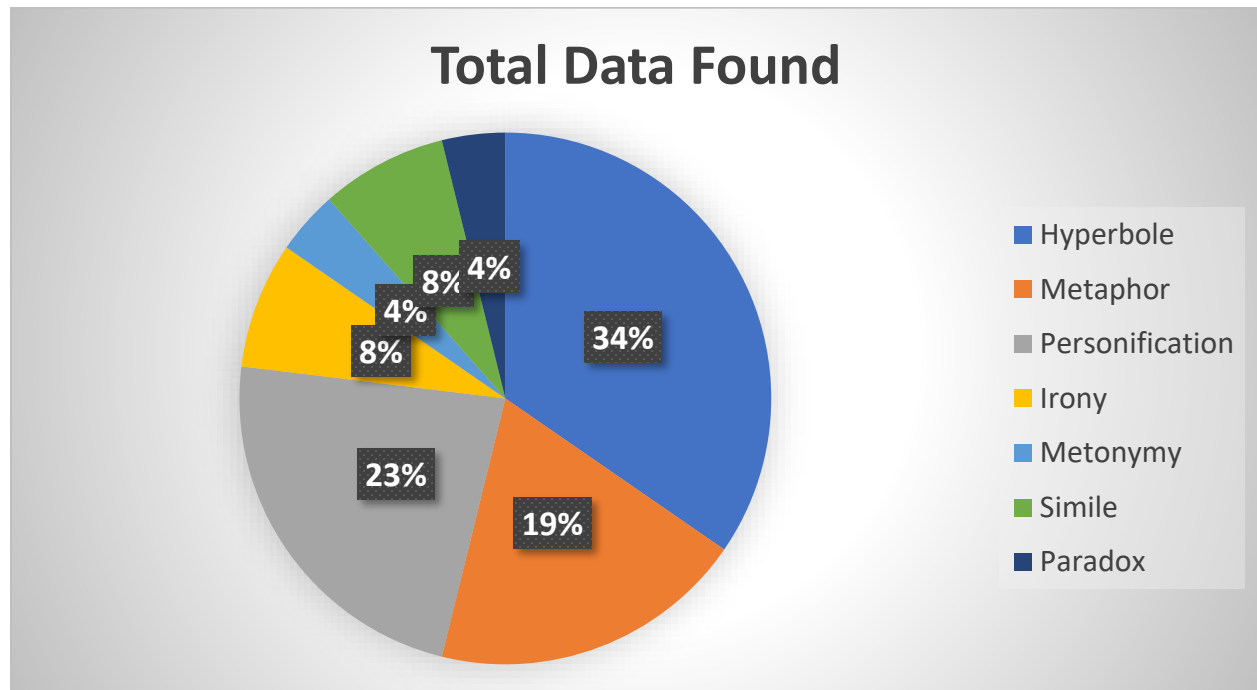
Tesla make a Paradox figurative language by saying “Exact science is not an exact science”. This sentence does not make any sense at a glance because it contradicts itself. What Tesla meant by this is that in making something with science, sometimes what you found is not what you expected. This is true for the story where in the making of teleportation device, Tesla create a cloning device.

Table. 1 – The Figurative Language Analysis and Categorization

No	Data	Figurative Language Type
1	<i>The magician takes the ordinary something and makes it do something extraordinary</i>	Hyperbole
2	<i>Impossible. I’m afraid</i>	Hyperbole
3	<i>No. No one else can do my trick.</i>	Hyperbole
4	<i>You’ll be nothing to them</i>	Hyperbole
5	<i>Breathe as little as possible</i>	Hyperbole
6	<i>I’ve told you a million times!</i>	Hyperbole
7	<i>Following a star has to lead to where you are.</i>	Hyperbole
8	<i>Being purged a fire sparkling in lovers’ eyes.</i>	Hyperbole
9	<i>The Great Danton is a blind fool</i>	Hyperbole
10	<i>A bullet catch is suicide</i>	Metaphor
11	<i>Use a plant</i>	Metaphor
12	<i>He won’t get his hands dirty</i>	Metaphor
13	<i>This was built by a wizard</i>	Metaphor
14	<i>I am their slave</i>	Metaphor
15	<i>If the rope swells up</i>	Personification

16	<i>His notebook reveals</i>	Personification
17	<i>His soul is restless</i>	Personification
18	<i>His wife and child tormented by his fickle and contradictory nature</i>	Personification
19	<i>What so much money has bought you</i>	Personification
20	<i>Fitting you should be here for her maiden voyage</i>	Personification
21	<i>I mean, Milton has gotten success, whatever that means, and now he's scared</i>	Irony
22	<i>The secret impresses no one</i>	Irony
23	<i>I can't do this alone, give me a hand.</i>	Metonymy
24	<i>He must be as strong as an ox</i>	Simile
25	<i>It was like going home</i>	Simile
26	<i>Because exact science, Mr. Angier, is not an exact science</i>	Paradox

Thus, based on the analysis found of this *The Prestige* movie and with the proper reference of underlying a particular figurative language, the type of figurative language that appears the most is Hyperbole. It has 9 data of a hyperbole as the figurative language found in this movie.



CONCLUSION

To conclude, the result of this analysis points out, there are 26 data taken from the either monologue or dialogue that contains 7 different forms of figurative language. Further information, the figurative language within this movie consists of nine data of hyperbole as the figurative language, five data of metaphor as the figurative language, six data of Personification as the figurative language, two data of simile as the figurative language, two data of irony as the figurative language, and one data of paradox as the figurative language; and no result symbolism of the figurative language. By using a movie as their object, this research will help readers understand more about figurative language and its various forms. In addition to amusing, a movie can teach language. So, there is also an education in watching movie such as understanding the character's language. The language that is meant is the figurative language that aims to add extra and beyond the literal meaning of a particular context.

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