



<http://journal.upgris.ac.id/index.php/wp>

AN ANALYSIS OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE IN THE SOUNDTRACKS OF THE GREATEST SHOWMAN : A MILLION DREAMS

Avikha Putri Dimela¹⁾

DOI : 10.26877/wp.v3i2.12136

¹ Faculty of Language and Arts Education , Universitas PGRI Semarang

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to identify the types of figurative language and analyze the contextual meaning of the figurative language used in the soundtrack of Showman A Million Dreams. This thesis uses a qualitative descriptive method. The source of the research data used is the lyrics in the Greatest Showman Soundtrack: A Million Dreams. The data collection method used selected songs from the soundtrack of the film The Greatest Showman: A Million Dreams. The collected data was then classified according to the differences, presented in the form of a table and found the types of figurative language and the metaphorical meaning of each song. Based on the analysis in this thesis, found 7 figurative language styles out of 53 which have been interpreted from 21 lyrics of the song A Million Dreams. The seven types are imagery, personification, symbol, paradox, hyperbole, repetition, and metaphor. The researcher found that from 53 figurative types, 18 types are imagery, 4 types are personification, 14 types are symbols, 2 types are paradoxes, 6 types are hyperbole, 8 types are repetition and 1 type includes metaphor. The researcher also draws the conclusion that literary creation does not only consist of entertainment purposes, but also moral values and educational essence that are very useful for English language learners such as virtue values and figurative language.

Keywords: *soundtrack, figurative language, contextual*

History Article

Received 22 Juni 2022

Approved 29 Juni 2022

Published 28 Agustus 2023

How to Cite

Dimela, A, P. (2023). An Analysis of Figurative Language in The Soundtracks of The Greatest Showman: A Million Dreams. *Wawasan Pendidikan*, 3(2), 533-543.

Coresponding Author:

Jl. Dr Cipto No. 354A, Semarang, Indonesia.

E-mail: vikhaputri@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

The status quo of metaphors nowadays are very commonly used by a group of social media user. It means metaphors are not only for literature purpose, but sometimes it was used as a daily conversation by some people. For example, person A is angry to a person B, in order to scold a person B, person A used metaphor (implicit) speech to prevent the harsh words. They used Literal meaning or non-literal meaning is important to be learned when studying language. Furthermore, if the person is a language and prose student. This leads the researcher to propose a research about figurative language because the researcher wants to understand further about the meaning of a speech. This research will also leaning further on theory from a journal by Colston Herbert (2015) "Using Figurative Language" because the researcher have the idea to do this research based on that book.

Figurative language has been widely examined by linguist in the study of literature in recent years. It is because figurative language has been essence of style and beauty. Figurative language often provides a more effective means of saying what we mean than direct statement. Colston Herbert (2015) ever studied and answered a question *why people just don't say what they want to say? Why they must hid the meaning?* Later on, in his book (Using Figurative Language) he explained that because of the fact that language takes place between highly social beings with multiple other interaction systems connecting people is crucial. Not only do people converse, but they also emote, empathize, love, hate, dismiss, resist, align, cleave, attract, and repel among one another. In their study stated that a related tendency in research on figurative language has been noted as the difficulty in making a principled distinction between literal and figurative language in terms of meanings. Literal and figurative language represent different ends of a continued meaning. This statemenyt is considered useful in recognizing that some instances of figurative language, such as novel, song lyrics, and poetic metaphor have deep intrinsic meanings in each selection of dictions. In other words, people use figurative language because of the social aspect and social paradigm that they believed to express their emotional feelings in their creation such as novels, song lyrics and poetic metaphors.

One live in community, one must respect other. To convey such sensitive speech they need to be as polite as possible. Thus, we need figurative language to speak it. Moreover, this social aspect of language accords many more concerns for researchers wishing to explain figurative language use and comprehension because talk between people is not just a means of information exchange between interlocutors. In the specific sense, figurative language may take the form of figures of speech. Figurative language is used in in any form of communication, such as in daily conversation, articles in newspaper, advertisement, novels, poem, even in song lyrics itself.

As far as we know that song is a part of literature. According to literature is a term to explain written texts that being marked by features such as creative metaphors, well turned phrases, elegant syntax, rhyme, alliteration, which are aesthetically oriented by the author to be read and are deliberately somewhat open to interpretation. In other words, song is a written text that called lyrics in which they are made to be read aesthetically and openly interpreted as what the

listener felt. Song as a piece of music with words (lyrics) that are sung by singer has a function to express the thoughts and feeling. Song has two elements, such as lyrics and music.

As the connection of figurative language and song itself is the examples of Hyperbole from the reader. Hyperbole can help the writer to get their point across so that the reader or listener understand the emotion, seriousness or humor of the situation. For example *The Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad in “*I had to wait in the station for ten days an eternity*”. Conrad hyperbole the phrases of “I had to wait for an eternity” when in fact he do not wait for such a long time but it feels “so long” when he used that hyperbole to express that he had been missing the person so much. Rather than saying “I miss you” which is so simple and direct, he used the hyperbole of waiting for an eternity as replacement. Thus, can be interpreted as hyperbole in figurative language. As Gibbs (1994) mentioned before, that literal meanings may vary along numerous dimensions, depending in part on what aspects of literality are being emphasized and expressed as the part of figurative languages which is being used in the literacy creations.

In conclusion, may people appreciate figurative language because every human being is not the same in showing their true intention, their heart. People can emphasize and express their true intentions and feelings through figurative language. Therefore, in this research, the writer will choose a song lyric to discover the figurative language and what it’s meaning behind. The title of the research is going to be *An Analysis of Figurative Language in The Soundtracks of The Greatest Show Man : A Million Dreams*. The objective of study is to identify the types of figurative language found in a Showman soundtrack A Million Dreams, and to analyze and describe tye contextual meaning of thr figurative language usend in a Showman soundtrack A Million Dreams.

METHODS

This research is a qualitative research. To examine the completion of the final project, the author going to solve the problem by means of research design, research instruments, data sources, data collection, and data analysis. The study aims to understand the object of research in finding types of figurative language and to know the meaning of the metaphors in the selected songs of The Greatest Showman. Descriptive method will be applied in presenting the results of the analysis then the researcher analyzing the data and describe it. The data source in this research taken from the soundtrack of The Greatest Showman: A Million Dreams which has been released.

The types of the research is qualitative research that has set on to the analysis of the textual data because the design (which is qualitative design) refers to the definition, meaning, and description. The researcher analyze the types of the figurative language in a Greatest Showman Soundtrack: A Million Dreams. In analyzing some of the data, the researcher needs to find some sources that related to the research and in which that can be the support point of this research. The objectives of the research are finding the types of figurative language and the actual meaning in a Greatest Showman Soundtrack: A Million Dreams text lyrics. In this study, the source of the data research are the object in which the data obtained. The source of the data in this study is the lyrics in a Greatest Showman Soundtrack: A Million.

Dreams.

In this research, the researcher had a role as an observer, a data collector and a data analyzer. The researcher collected the data from the lyric in a Greatest Showman Soundtrack: A Million Dreams. And then the researcher do the observation, and do the library research. And then, the researcher analyze the data then interpret it.

The collection in this data uses selected songs from the soundtrack of the film The Greatest Showman: A Million Dreams. According to the writer this song is very popular and has many implied meanings. Figurative language that contains words, phrases, and sentences then finding the meaning from the song. The writer classifying the differences in tabular form in finding the types of figurative language and finding the metaphor meaning of each songs.

After the researcher found the source of data, the researcher identifying the types of figurative language and analyze it. By finding the meaning in figurative language, the researcher draw conclusion in each finding.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The researcher presents the research findings and discussions based on the analysis of the data through qualitative analysis To answer the objectives of the study, the researcher divided it into 2 sections. First is to identify the types of figurative language found in a Showman soundtrack A Million Dreams. Second is to analyze and describe the contextual meaning of the figurative language used in a Showman soundtrack A Million Dreams. They were presented in as follows:

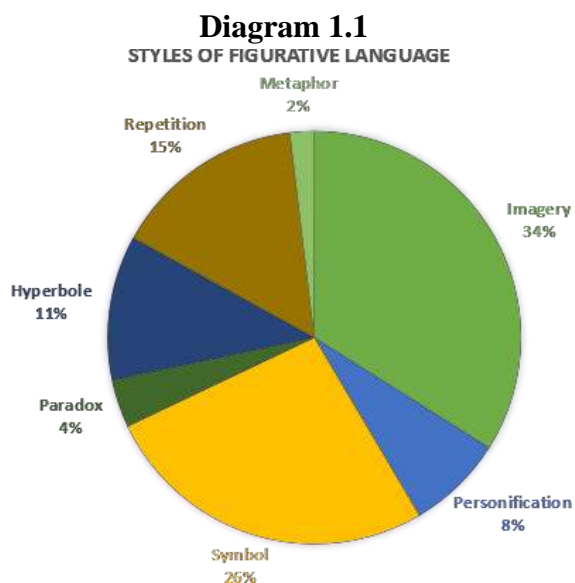


Diagram 1 Figurative language interpretation

Table 1 Figurative language analysis

No.	Lyrics line	Types of figurative language
1.	I close my eyes and I can see	Imagery, Paradox
2.	The world that's waiting up for me	Personification
3.	The world	Symbol
4.	I call my own	Personification
5.	Through the dark, through the door	Imagery, Symbol, Repetition
6.	Where no one's been before	Hyperbole
7.	They can say, they can say it all sounds crazy	Repetitions, Imagery
8.	They can say, they can say it all I've lost my mind	Repetitions, Imagery
9.	I don't care I don't care so call me crazy	Repetitions, Imagery
10.	We can live in a world that we design	Imagery, symbol
11.	Cause every night I lie in bed	Imagery
12.	The brightest color fill my head	Personification
13.	A million dreams are keeping me alive	Imagery, hyperbole
14.	Keeping me alive	Personification
15.	I think of what the world could be a vision of the one I see	Metaphor, imagery, symbol
16.	A million dreams it's all it's gonna take	Hyperbole, symbol, personification
17.	A million dreams for the world we gonna make	Hyperbole, symbol, imagery
18.	There's a house we can build	Symbol, imagery
19.	The special things I compile each one there to make you smile on a rainy day	Symbol, imagery
20.	They can say , they can say	Imagery
21.	We've lost our mind	Repetitions, Hyperbole
22.	I don't care, I don't care if they call us crazy	Imagery, Repetition
23.	Runaway to a world that we design	Imagery, symbol
24.	However big, however small, let me be part of it all	Symbol, repetition
25.	Share your dreams with me	Symbol
26.	You may be right you may be wrong	Repetition
27.	But say that you'll bring along to the world you see	Imagery, symbol
28.	To the world I closed my eyes to see	Imagery, symbol, hyperbole
29.	I closed my eyes	Paradox

From the diagram above, the researcher stated that 34% of the figurative language types are imageries which consist of 18 types from 53 findings, 8% of personification of 4 types from 53 types, 26% are symbols including 14 types that has been discovered, hyperboles with 11% average from 6 to 53 types of figuration language, 4% from 2 of 53 types are paradox, 15% from 8 to 53 types are repetitions and 2% from 1 types of figurative language is metaphor. From table 1.1 can be interpreted that each lyrics line can contain more than 1 figurative language. For the detail explanations, in the first, second and twenty first line consists of four figurative types, for the eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh, fifteenth and twentieth line, there are three figurative types that has been discovered by the researcher. Not only three or four figurative language types in one line, but in one line also can be discovered two or one figurative type. For the third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, twelfth, thirteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth, the researcher found there are two types of figurative languages while in the nineteenth line, the researcher only finds one type of figurative language which is symbol type.

To summarize from the most to the least frequency of figurative sentence are imageries, symbols, repetitions, hyperboles, personifications, paradoxes and metaphor. The most common figurative language is imageries, as we can see there a lot of the lyrics which focus on describing the author's imagination and ideas through the creation. Imagery type allows the people to create direct description from the song based on the utterance that has been chosen as the song lyrics. The researcher found many utterances of the song lyrics that strongly give broad purpose of the imagination from the lyrics. As we can see from the line lyrics such as "I close my eyes", "through the dark, through the door", "we can live in the world", "every night I lie...", "I think of...", "Every room inside is filled...", "The special things...", "Runaway to a world ...", "you'll bring me along" and " To the world....". These utterance shows the broad explanation of the author of how the author wants to bring the viewers or the listener to understand the clear imagery of the song meanings. These utterances also make the listener imagine of how are the flows of the song true meaning could be created based on the imagery type of figurative sentences that is found on those lyrics. In those utterance, imaginary type brings easy trigger to the listener to imagine about those song lyrics on their mind.

The second figurative type is symbols, the use of indirect meaning to utter the true purpose itself are commonly high in the findings, from fifty three figurative types which has been interpreted, fourteen types are symbols. Symbol or symbolization is secondly most common figurative types that has been implemented on the A millions dream lyrics. Some symbols that the researcher found along the song lyrics are "the world", "the door" in the second line, "brightest color", "million dreams", "house", "every room inside", "special things", and "your dreams". The world as the parts of some lyrics can symbolize the life which someone desired about it, it can also be the purpose of someone life goals, "the door" can be replacement of the way to get the dreams to become true. The author of the song describes the brightest color as the wonderful ideas of thinking through hard difficulties in the life. The researcher also interpreted that "a million dreams" refers to the anything that can be done through our long live. The

utterance “house” refers to something or someone that can be the best place to vent on. The part of “every rooms inside” interpreted as the substitute of the memories of moments that can be kept in the mind. Based on symbol figurative style, “special things” is referring to the special effort of someone toward someone as the proof of the hard works and sincerity that had been accomplished. Then, the part of lyrics “your dreams” symbolize the purpose of live from someone that can be full filled if it’s together.

The third most discovered figurative type is repetition. Repetition lyrics also had been implemented in the lyrics song. 8 types of repetition have been discovered in the song. Repetition is commonly used to strengthen the direct meaning of the lyrics. For example, in the most commonly appear lyrics “they can say, they can say”. This utterance strengthens “*they*” as the subject who will judge the action from the indirect meaning of the song itself. Because of the three dominances of the figurative language, some of lines from the lyrics has more than three figurative language types for example the first line and the second line.

The least figurative types that the researcher discovered are hyperbole, paradox, personification and metaphor. 11% of discovery reveals 6 from 53 types of hyperbole. Such as “a million dreams are keeping me awake” and “A million dreams is all gonna take”. Both of these lyrics contains hyperboles and personification. The figurative type of personification is showed on how the million dreams will keep someone awake, as if the million dreams is a human who can accompany person to keep awake by talking, hence also how the million dreams can take everything from someone as if the million dreams have pair of hands. The hyperbole type is on the “million” dreams as the part of the song lyrics in a line. The researcher interpreted “million” as the hyperbole because using phrase “dreams” with s as the plural addition is enough to create sense which is someone has many dreams. In terms of making the lyrics song sound more wonderful and dreamier, the author add “million” as the sign that the dream which is described is categorize of something that people can count because it is “million” dreams. Clearly, the author of the song chooses hyperbole type to boost the inner meaning to make it sounds more wonderful for the people.

The two least discovered figurative language type which only found 1 and 2 from 53 types are paradox and metaphor. Paradox figurative sentence is currently used to contradict two contrasting statements on the one line. “I close my eyes and I can see the world” and “The world I close my eyes to see” are the interpretation from the researcher as the paradox. The researcher stated that these two lines are paradox, caused by the opposite sense that is performed by these two lyrics. Normally, when people close their eyes, nothing can be seen, in the other words these two contradict statements followed by the actions (close their eyes) create opposite things but shows the greatest interest of how can people see something, when their eyes are closed. But, the explicit meaning of these lyrics is how someone can see their life goals or purpose by imagining them while closing their eyes. This is how paradox figurative language plays the role as the style that can make two opposite utterances become more dramatic and trigger the emotions and the visualizations itself.

Imagery the researcher identify 18 types from 53 types that has been found are imageries. There are some lyrics that used imagery as the figurative language type, the first line of the song

lyrics, the song lyrics “I close my eyes and I can see” shows that the listener or the singer imagine that the listener or the singer will close the eyes and probably can see something when the listener or the singer close their eyes. This is the kind of actual imagery that shows by the lyrics. “Through the dark, through the door”, the next lyrics show the interpretation of the imagination after the listener or the singer close their eyes. It shows that the imagination start when the listener or the singer close their eyes and see the darkness after entering the door as the condition of their imagination. “They can say, they can say it all sounds crazy”, “They can say, they can say it all I’ve lost my mind”, “I don’t care I don’t care so call me crazy”, from the third lyrics here, the description of the lyrics conquer that many people will judge and prejudice the listener or the singer dreams or imagination to the side that people will say that the listener or the singer crazy.

Personification Based on the data, there are four types of personification. The first type is in the first line and the seventh line of lyrics. The first line of the lyrics stated that “the world that’s waiting up for me that I call my own”, in this line clearly said that the world as the noun here, will *waiting up* for the interpreter. This is the sign of the personification type which can make noun as the object will likely do something such as *waiting*. Normally, subject that can *wait* is a person. The sign of the second personification is in the seventh line which says “The brightest color fill my head”, the lyrics stated that the brightest color will fill the interpreter’s head. As we can know, brightest color is the part of the noun but, it described that the brightest color can *fill* a person’s head which is called the sign of noun act.

Then the third and the fourth’s personifications have been founded in the “million dreams are keeping me alive” and “A million dreams it’s all it’s gonna make” in the eighth and the tenth line. Both line refer to the noun which stated as “dream” that can *keeping me alive* and *gonna make*. In these both lines, the dream can performs acts likely as human doing something for good’s sake.

The researcher have been identify 14 types of symbolization in the A Million Dreams lyrics from 53 total figurative types findings. Those 14 types of symbols are “the world” in the first line, “the dark, the door” from the second line, “the world” in the sixth line, “vision” from the ninth line, “A million dreams” from the tenth line and the eleventh line, “a house” in the twelfth line, “things” in the thirteenth line, “rainy day” in the fourteenth line, “the world” in the seventeenth symbol, “however big, however small” in the eighteenth line, “dreams” in the nineth line, “the world” in the seventieth line and “the world” in the twenty first line.

Paradoks in general inferences, Paradox is a figure speech which has two facts that are showing the , boton the reseracher’s investigation, the researcher found two types of paradoxs. The first type is in the first line which is “I close my eyes and I can see the world”, from the act of *closing eyes* there are several inferences of the first paradox. In the lyric, it has mentioned that the interpreter is likely closing the eyes. Normally people with closed eyes can’t see anything. But, in this context when we closed the eyes we could see the world. Barely know, most of views can be only seen through open eyes. This is the contradictory based on the act and the reality.

The second paradox's figurative speech has been found in the twenty first line of the lyrics which stated as "To the world I closed my eyes to see". Basically, the inference of the last lyrics contains the same meaning and contradictory as the first paradox style. But, the structure of the lyrics is the opposite placement. To conclude, both of the paradoxes figurative speech that has found by the researcher implies to the act of contradictory of the closing eyes to see something in the factual context.

Hyperbole based on the diagram that has been created by the researcher, 11% of the figurative speech findings are hyperboles. There are six lyrics that contains hyperbole figurative speech. "Where no one's been before" from the second line, "A million dreams are keeping me alive" in the eight line, "A million dreams it's all it's gonna make" in the tenth line, "A million dreams for the world we gonna make", in the eleventh line, "we've lost our mind" in the fifteenth line and "To the world I closed my eyes to see" in the last lyrics are categorized as hyperboles figurative speech that has been analyzed by the researcher.

Repetitions from the analysis, the researcher inferred that there are eight repetitions of the figurative language from the greatest snowman soundtrack "A million dreams". Repetition is the figurative language style which makes the repetition phrase to make strong impression on the inferential meanings. Repetitions on the A million dreams' song lyrics started from the second line "Through the dark, through the door through ", in the third and the fourth lyrics line " They can say, they can say it all sounds crazy" and "They can say, they can say it all I've lost my mind", then continued in the fifth line "I don't care I don't care so call me crazy" next are in the fifteenth and the sixteenth lines which are "They can say , they can say we've lost our mind" and "I don't care, I don't care if they call us crazy", after that followed by repetition in the eighteenth and twentieth lyrics such as "However big, however small" and "You may be right you may be wrong".

Metaphor truthfully, through the deep analysis the researcher only found one type of metaphor during the research. The metaphor figurative language has been found in the ninth line of the song lyrics which is written as "I think of what the world could be a vision of the one I see". The main goal of metaphor is to create logical comparison between literatures attribute. From the ninth line, the researcher found that the author of the song already make logical comparison between the world that the author has been imagine and the vision of life. The ninth lyrics implies that the world that the author imagines in the dreams can be the vision of the author's life goals. To conclude, the author create comparison in order to explain to the interpreter that the world that comes from dreams imagination can be the aims of lifetime.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the above discussion, we may come to the conclusion. Based on research findings and discussion, The research finding were divided into two sections based on the objective of the research, (1) To identify the types of figurative language found in a Showman soundtrack A Million Dreams. (2) To analyze and describe the contextual meaning of the figurative language used in a Showman soundtrack A Million Dreams.

The result of data finding on the first section were divided into two parts thus are the figurative language found based on diagram 1.1 and the figurative language found on the table 1.1. The researcher found that there are 7 types of figurative language from 53 that have been interpreted from 21 lyrics of A million dreams, soundtrack from the greatest showman movie. Those seven types are imagery, personification, symbol, paradox, hyperbole, repetition and metaphor. The researcher discovered that from 53 figurative types, 18 types are imageries, 4 types are personifications, 14 types are symbols, 2 types are paradoxes, 6 types are hyperboles, 8 types are repetitions and 1 type belongs to metaphor.

The result of the data finding on the second section were analyzing and describing the contextual meaning of the figurative language used in a Showman soundtrack A Million Dreams. For example, as we can see from the line lyrics such as *“I close my eyes”, “through the dark , through the door”, “we can live in the world”, “every night I lie...”, “I think of...”, “Every room inside is filled...”, “The special things...”, “Runaway to a world”, “you’ll bring me along” and “ To the world.....”*. These utterance shows the broad explanation of the author of how the author wants to bring the viewers or the listener to understand the clear imagery of the song meanings. These utterances also make the listener imagine of how are the flows of the song true meaning could be created based on the imagery type of figurative sentences that is found on those lyrics. In those utterance, imaginary type brings easy trigger to the listener to imagine about those song lyrics on their mind.

The researcher also draw a conclusion that literary creation do consist of entertainment aims, but also moral value and educative essence which is very useful for the English language learners such as virtues value and figurative languages. In A Million Dreams Song, English learners can understand seven types of figurative languages such as Imagery, Personification, Symbol, Paradox, Hyperbole, Repetition and Metaphor also two virtue values which are profitable as the moral motivation to their long life journey, as the entertainment and can be inspiration in the life. By knowing various figurative language types, the learner can deeply understanding both implicit and explicit true meaning of Million Dreams songs, being inspired by the song and getting more knowledge about literary elements which could not be easily found in any general English textbook, furthermore the learners can create and criticize the relationship between the utterance and the context to know or interpreter the meanings form the song lyrics.

REFERENCES

- Herbert L. Colston, Vassiliki Rentoumi. (2009). *Sentiment Analysis of Figurative Language using a Word Sense Disambiguation Approach*. Internasional Conference RANLP: Borovets, Bulgaria, pages 370-375.
- Mayer J, Jim Meyer. (1997). *What Is Literature? A Definition Based on Prototypes*. Work Papers of the Summer Institute of Linguistic, University of North Dakota.
- Joseph Conrad, Delphi Classics. (2013). *Heart of Darkness*. United Kingdom: Parts Edition (in 51 parts).
- Terry Eagleton, Charles Swann, Raymond Williams. (1983, 1996). *Literary Theory*. Second Edition: *St Catherine's Oxford*.
- Hornby, A S. (2010). *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary new 8th edition*. Oxford University Press. New York.
- Arif Fatoni. (2008). *An Analysis of Figurative Language on The Cold Play's Songs in Album "X & Y"*. English Department Faculty of Letters Jember Universty.
- Putri Rahmawati Pratiwi. (2011). *Modern People Facing The Death in Ernest Hemingway's Short Story "The Snows of Kilimanjaro"*. English Department Faculty of Language and Arts Semarang State University.
- Hariyanto. (2017). *The Analysis of Figurative Language Used in The Lyric of Firework by Katy Perry (A Study of Semantic)*. Lampung University.
- Maria Josep Cuenca, Ludivine Crible. (2019). *Journal of Pragmatics*. Accessed through: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2018.12.001>
- T. E. Tarigan. (2015). *Teaching English in Indonesian*. Indonesian Union Collage, Bandung, Indonesian. Accessed through: <http://eltj.oxfordjournals.org/>
- Julio Salcedo Fernandez, Rafael Moneo. (2016). *Journal of Architectural Education. Building, Teaching, Writing*. Accessed through: <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rjae20>
- Herbert L. Colston. (2015). *Using Figurative Language*. *University of Alberta*. Accessed through: www.cambridge.org/9781107105652 . Cambridge University Press