

# PERSONIFICATION IN MARIAH CAREY'S SONG LYRICS

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**Abstract :** The research is done in order to identify and describe the expressions of personification in Mariah Carey's selected song lyrics. This study is only focus on the personification expressions in the song lyrics of popular female singer Mariah Carey. Since there are a lot of albums popularized by Mariah Carey during her singing career, the researcher only took albums that consists of song lyrics with personification use to be the subject of the study. This study has conducted in qualitative method or also called descriptive research. In this research, the data were collected from the song lyrics of Mariah Carey. The data is analyzed using the theory According to Miles and Huberman (2007: 139-140). Based on the result, thirty personification data has been found in Mariah Carey's song lyrics. Language is fundamental to all social processes, and humans do need language to communicate to each other. In social process, there are people who communicate more than the language does. This term is called figurative language (Samola and Maru; 2016:1). Figurative languages are used in the song lyrics. Specifically, personification is the figurative language found through this study. The function of using personification expressions is to beautify or decorate the song lyrics themselves so that it is effective in attracting public and the meaning is beautifully delivered to the song listeners. Language style can help readers and listeners to better understand a meaning of songs, how composer uses words in their lyrics, and how does that mean. The composer uses personification so that the meaning of the words become more touching and beautiful.

**Keywords:** *Figurative Language Personification, Mariah Carey, Linguistics.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Language cannot be separate from human life aspect. In every day communication the tool that is often used to communicate is language, both in the form of written language and oral language (Hampp, Paula L. 2019: 15). It allows people to express their messages, feelings,

emotion, and exactly used to communicate each other. Language is used by everyone with various purposes. According to Halliday & Matthiessen (2004: 19), language is the most important aspect in the life of all human beings. Halliday & Matthiessen (2004: 19), it is possible to refer to language as text and as system, as

sound, as writing and as wording, as structure as resource. As it can be seen, language can be referred to many things but the most important function of language is to create and express meaning. Language is a resource of the construction of the meaning. With the help of lexical and grammatical structures it is possible to express different meanings.

Language has a lot of functions. One of the is expressive function. According to Halliday and Hasan (1991: 15), expressive function is the expressive being language that orientation toward the self. It means that individual express their feeling by language. Sarah Kamagi, D.J.Wowor, Elisabeth Z. Oroh (2018: 847) Language has a function as a tool of communication used by human to express their thoughts, feelings, desires, and action. Then, expressive function also expresses personal feelings, thoughts, ideas, and opinions, with different choice words, intonation, etc. These expressions are submissive to social factors and to the nature of the expression as negative or positive. (Holmes, 1992: 255). According to (Hampp, Paula L. 2019: 15) Language is a tool for expressing yourself, a communication tool, and a means for social control.

Figurative language is a language used by poets to say things in an unusual way, namely indirectly to express their meaning. The figurative language is a

deviation from the language of an apprehends as the ordinary, or standard, significance or sequence of words, in order to achieve some special meaning or effect. According to Wolosky (2001), personification is a figure of speech in which human qualities are attributed to an animal, object, or idea. Personification refers to a figure of speech equating things with humans, inanimate objects can do, thinking, and so on like humans. It becomes the type of figurative languages that attaches attributes of human beings to things that are lifeless and abstract ideas.

Basically, a song is a poem that is sung because both have similarities in elements such as sound, rhythm and rhyme which are the formal elements of a poem. In addition to these formal elements must also be considered when determining the meaning of a song. According to F.B Sumigar, M.G Maru & I.J Tuerah (2019:107) "One of communication is a song. Similar to a poem, a song applies figurative languages. It is a language expression, whose meaning is different from its literal one, it drives listeners to spend extra effort to understand the meaning of the song". Mariah Carey is a female well-known singer that can be said a great diva because her career in international music industry. As most song lyrics, Mariah Carey's song lyrics contain various figurative languages, including the use of personification. From the reasons above, the writer is interested to

conduct a research on personification expressions in Mariah Carey's song lyrics.

## RESEARCH METHOD

### Research Design

This study is conduct in qualitative research or also call descriptive research as stated by Bogdan and Biklen (1992:30) "Qualitative research is descriptive. The data is collect in the form of words or pictures rather than numbers. The written results of the research contain quotations from the data to illustrate and substantiate the presentation". It means that the data of this qualitatif research

do not deal with numbers, diagram, or formula but in form of words prase and sentence or quotation. The data is collect in the form words and sentence of song lyrics.

### Data Collection

In this research, data is collect from the song lyrics of Mariah Carey, particularly the song published in *Caution* and her another album. In accordance with the statement above, the writers collecting and identifi the data of the research.

In collecting the data, the writers following these steps below:

- a. Listening to the songs of Mariah Carey
- b. download song lyrics of Mariah Carey
- c. Read the song lyrics while listen the song

- d. Identify song lyrics that contain personification .
- e. Note the song lyrics that contain to persinificatin
- f. Recheck the song lyrics that have been collected.
- g. Grouping the songs lyrics based on the theory that I used belong.

### Data Analysis

In analyzing the qualitative data of this research, according to Miles and Hubermen (2007: 139-140) the steps were used as follows:

#### 1. Data Reduction

Data reduction is done by summarizing and separating the points that relating to this research problems, and then it is arranged systematically to describes and to make easy the reasercher to reduction the data searching if sometime it is needed. Not all the obtain data in this research are important. It means just take the important information and unimportant information should be ignored. In this process of data reduction, the researcher selected, focuses and abstracted the data in the notebook. The data reduction is done during research activities. and on this case, the researcher

reduce the information during the activities of research, so researcher might be found the data that not support the research that researcher's needed.

## 2. Data Display

The Data display is used to represent the result of the research. After the data has been finished, and researcher can be able to check and verify it to be meaningful data. It means describing data in the form of writing text or spoken words. As the second step to analyzing data, this step is used in arranging the information, description, or narration to make conclusion. By presenting this conclusion or result the researcher has decided what the step will be. The data then were categorized using theory by Wolosky (2001:96)

## 3. Conclusion and Verification

The result or conclusions is taking out from the course of the study. The researcher collects the data from her interpretations as she goes along. The researcher wrote up not the only things that she found each day but also her interpretation of those findings.

# DATA ANALYSIS

## 1. Data Reduction

In Mariah Carey's Song lyrics, the researcher found out that there were many words that are in form of figurative languages. The researcher reduced the data and took only personification expressions as presented below. There are 30 personification expressions as found in Mariah Carey's Song lyrics.

- 1) ***He had eyes that said, "Girl, I'll save you"*** (With You, line 10)
- 2) And once we lit this towering inferno  
The flame is burning higher, hotter we go  
***And the temperature is rising, crack a window*** (One Mo'Gen, line 16)
- 3) ***Thursday wake up and now it's Sunday***  
Everyday she helps me, got no money (Stay Long Love You, line 37)
- 4) ***Bought her diamonds if they mess with the Chanel pearls***  
We stay together and we can take over the whole world (Stay Long Love You, line 39)
- 5) Here beyond the looking glass  
Somewhere off the beaten path (Portrait, line 3)
- 6) ***Let the moonlight kiss your skin***  
When you dance like that, your jeans so tight

Oh, you're killing me, baby do it again (Beautiful, line 23)

7) ***You're beautiful, and your mind is fucking beautiful***  
(Beautiful, line 26)

8) But your love rained down upon me  
***Washing away uncertainty (I am Free, line 20-21)***

9) ***Soft heavenly eyes gazed into me***  
Transcending space and time  
(***When I Saw You, line 1***)

10) You are the one for me  
And it's evident  
***And your eyes told me so***  
***And your eyes let me know...***  
(***When I Saw You, line 24-27***)

11) Sinking in the memories  
***Shadows of you keep washing over me***  
(***Long Ago, line 20-21***)

12) ***A flower taught me how to pray***  
But as I grew, that flower changed  
(***Petals, line 5-6***)

13) Everytime I try to leave  
***Something pulls me back baby***  
(***Irresistible, line 1-2***)

14) Gypsy, sittin lookin pretty  
***A broken rose and laughin' eyes*** (***Bringing on the Heartbreak, line 1-2***)

15) We clickin' glasses,  
Compliments of the club,  
Raise they status,  
***So you know they show us love***  
(***Migrate, line 42-45***)

16) I'm going bout a hundred  
***Mascara runnin***  
***Laughing out of anger***

But it don't strike me as funny  
(***Bethca'Gon Now, line 18-21***)

17) So I pulled to the side  
Of the road to fix my face  
But I can't cover with make up  
***What my tears want to erase***  
(***Bethca'Gon Now, line 38-41***)

18) Boy, you remind me of a love that seemed so sublime.  
***Your kisses told me oh so many lies*** (***Standing O, LINE 6-8***)

19) 'Cause lighting don't strike the same place twice  
***When you and I said goodbye I felt the angels cry***  
(***Angels Cry, line 12-13***)

20) And we sat close enough  
That we just barely touched  
***While roman candles***  
***Went soaring above us and baby*** (***Fourth of July, line 8-11***)

21) ***Thunder clouds***  
***Hung around***  
***So threateningly***  
Ominously hovering (***Fourth of July, line 33-36***)

22) ***Guardian angel I***  
***Sail away on an ocean***  
***With you by my side***  
***Orange clouds roll by***  
***They burn into your image***  
***And you're still alive***  
(***Close My Eyes, line 31-36***)

23) ***I wanna be your babydoll***  
***Wrap me up nice and tight***  
***Love me all through the night***  
***Come lay me down***  
***Enfold me in your arms***  
(***Babydoll, line 11-15***)

24) ***A full moon (yeah yeah)***

***Is waiting in the twilight***  
*Maybe soon*  
*(Sweetheart, line 9-11)*

**25)** You are the one for me  
 And it's evident  
**And your eyes told me so**  
**And your eyes let me know**  
*(When I Saw You, line 26-27)*

**26)** While roman candles  
**Went soaring above us and**  
**baby**  
*(Fourth of July, line 10-11)*

**27)** **Everyday crucial situation**  
**wrackin' my mind**  
**Tryin' to break me down**  
*(Breakdown, line 40-41)*

**28)** **Alone will tell**  
 If you feel the way I feel  
 When I look in your eyes  
*(After Tonight, line 20-22)*

**29)** **Flower taught me how to pray**  
 But as I grew, that flower  
 changed  
 She started failing in the wind  
*(Petals, line 5-7)*

**30)** All my life  
**My love's been waiting for you**  
 All my life  
**My heart's been waiting too**  
*(All my life, line 9-12)*

## 2. Data Display

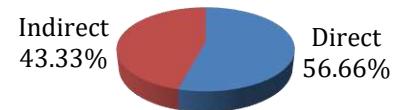
Having reduced and obtained the personification expressions in Mariah Carey's Song lyrics , the researcher displayed the data by grouping the personification expressions based on their types

as contributed by Wolosky (2001:96). He argued that there are two types of personification namely direct personification and indirect personification. Direct personification are consider to be direct because these personification involve something that usually happened, even though it's being described in an unrealistic way. Direct personification tends to be more powerful than indirect one. personification. On the other hand, indirect personification needs readers' more imagination and interpretation to gain the meaning of the words personified by the writer or composer.

The chart of the personification use is present below.

The chart is below:

**THE USE OF PERSONIFICATION IN MARIAH CAREY'S SONG LYRICS**



## 3. Data Conclusion and Verification

After putting the entire personification data found in the songlyrics of Mariah Carey,

categorizing based on types, explaining the meaning and context, the data were then interpreted as findings of the study. It is interpreted that the figurative languages were used in the songlyrics of Mariah Carey, distributed in many albums popularized. There are twenty personifications in the songlyrics of Mariah Carey. Particularly, personification which signifies human abilities to non human references is frequently used in the songlyrics. The personification is functional since most frequently the expressions are used in the purpose of decorating and beautifying the words chosen to be the lyric of the song. Therefore, the meaning becomes more social, implied, more living and stronger.

Dealing with the types of personification, there are two types mainly used in the songlyrics of Mariah Carey, namely direct personification and indirect personification. Based on the findings, there are thirteen personification expressions used in the different songlyrics of Mariah Carey. Indirect personification is also found where there are eleven personification expressions. In percentage, direct personification is the most frequent personification type in the songlyrics of Mariah Carey

with 13 data (56.66%), whereas indirect personification is the least type with 11 data (43.33%).

Song is one of the media to channel ideas, messages, one's feelings and creativity. In this connection, the language used in song lyrics is an interesting thing to study because it contains aesthetic and artistic values that are displayed through use of various types of language styles. The style of language used in a song can help the listener understand the ideas that are being conveyed, feel the emotions that want to be raised, and see the creativity that is displayed by its creator.

Figurative language is a typical way of expressing thoughts and feelings in oral or written form. Language style is a way of expressing thoughts through language that typically shows the soul of the personality of the language user.

Each song must have a specific purpose to be conveyed to the public as the listener. The song contains a line of words that are arranged well with an interesting style of language by the composer and delivered with a beautiful voice singer. This study analyzes the lyrics of songs because they have varying attractiveness.

## Conclusion

- 1) Language style can be help readers and listeners to better understand a meaning of the songs, how composer use words in their lyrics, and how does that mean. Figurative languages are used in the song lyrics. Specifically, personification is the figurative language found through this study. Personification in the song lyrics of Mariah Carey are very frequent. The songwriter used personification so that the meaning of the words are become more touching and beautiful. Mariah Carey, in conclusion is the singer whose song lyrics contain personification that are very dominant
- 2) There are twenty four personification data found in Mariah Carey's song lyrics. From those expressions, there are thirteen expressions that are classified as direct personification (56.66%) which are easier to be understood by song listeners, while the rest are eleven personification expressions are grouped as indirect personification (43.33%) since it needs more interpretation of the song listeners. Mostly, the function of using personification expressions is to beautify or

decorate the song lyrics themselves so that it is effective in attracting public and the meaning is beautifully delivered to the song listeners.

### **Suggestion**

- 1) Figurative language is an effective way to beautify words used in song lyrics since song lyrics have power to bring message to people about life, love and many other aspects. By using figurative language, songwriter becomes more poetic and the words become more powerful. Personification is one of the figurative languages commonly used and is capable to compare things to human qualities so that the words and their meaning become more vivid and powerful.
- 2) To the lecturers, the study result that personification is commonly used in the song lyrics can be a suggestion that in the process of teaching literature and linguistics may involve song lyrics as media or object since this is a linguistic phenomenon. To the students, it is recommended to use as reference and input so that there will be interest to study or research deeply on semantics. To the next researchers, there can be

more studies that deal with semantics or other subfields of linguistics, other figurative languages, other song lyrics, other singers or songwriters.

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