

“HOW STARS STOLE ALL NIGHT AWAY”: A STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF PERSONIFICATION IN MOVIE *TROLLS*’S SOUNDTRACKS

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ABSTRACT

The placement of songs as soundtracks in a movie must be in line with the atmosphere, characters, and themes that are offered in the movie. By understanding the meanings of the songs, the selection of the songs can closely match with the atmosphere being represented. Personification adds the aesthetic values of a song as it is a type of figures of speech that requires creative cognitive process to understand its meaning. This study is a stylistic analysis of the soundtracks of a movie focusing on the use of personifications and their contexts. It examines the types and contexts of use of the personification used in the soundtracks of Movie Trolls. Using Zhu’s (1991) framework, the study is set to classify all the personification use into three categories: Living Creature Personification, Non-living Creature personification, and Abstractions Personification. The study analyzed lyrics of 11 songs that were selected to feature the movie: Hair Up, Can’t Stop the Feeling, Move Your Feet, Get Back up Again, Sound of Silent, Hello, I’m Coming Out / Mo’ Money Mo’ Problem, They Don’t Know, September, and What U workin’ with. The research design used in this study was qualitative research using document analysis in the process of data collection with the researchers were the main instrument of the research. The findings showed that of the 23 expressions containing personification found in soundtracks of movie Trolls, 12 occurrences were categorized into Non-living Creature personification, and 11 occurrences were found to belong to Abstraction Personification. Contexts, meanings, and the absence of the first type of personifications used are discussed in the light of the movie theme and the original theme of each soundtrack. The discussion is hoped to add knowledge to how personification use in movie soundtracks is related to the theme of a movie.

Keywords: *personification, movie soundtrack, figurative language*

INTRODUCTION

Songs add to the artistic impression in a film, especially in children's films. The placement of the song in the film must be following with the atmosphere and character that is being played in the film. By learning the meaning of the song, the placement of the song can match the atmosphere in the film.

A song is one of the media that can be used to spread the literature material easily and interestingly. Many people love to listen to the songs, especially which was written and sung beautifully by their favorite musicians. Besides, people these days also tend to listen to many popular songs which usually appear in the movie, as people call it a soundtrack. In the song, the songwriter usually put figurative language to make it becomes artistic.

Keraf (2001, p. 73) defined figurative language or style as a way of showing the mind through a special language that shows the soul and characteristic of the writer (language use). The figurative language itself is a language that uses words or expressions with a meaning that is different from the literal interpretation. Perrine (1982, as cited in Arp, 2012) stated that there are four main reasons for using figurative language. First, figurative language affords readers the imaginative pleasure of literary works. Second, it is a way of bringing additional imagery into verse, making the abstract concrete, making literary works more sensuous. The third, figurative is a way of adding emotional intensity to otherwise merely informative statements and conveying attitudes along with information. And the last, it is a way of saying much in a brief compass.

Figurative language is used to analyze the deeper meaning of words or literal language. When a poet uses literal language, he or she is simply stating the facts as they are. Figurative language, in comparison, uses exaggerations or alterations to make a particular linguistic point. There are many types of figurative language as claimed by Perrine (1982, as cited in Arp, 2012): simile, metaphor, personification, apostrophe, metonymy, symbol, allegory, paradox, overstatement, understatement, irony, and allusion. Here the researcher only focused on analyzing personification contained in the soundtracks. Personification is a type of figurative language. It means the attribution of human characteristics to an inanimate object, an abstract concept, or impersonal being.

According to Claassen (1990, p. 102), personification has been viewed as a literary device that amputates to the "humanizing" of either animal or inanimate objects. The purposes of personification are to educate, clarify process the cause of something, and decorate. Personification is frequently used in writing literary works such as novels, poems, songs, and so on.

Some characteristics can help us to detect words containing personifications, namely the existence of the choice of the actual word which is identified as human behavior. Personification is implied as a style of comparison that is comparing objects or inanimate objects, animals, and ideas that seem to do activities like humans being. It also has the effect of clarifying images (wishful imagination) produced by the listener because by equating nonhuman things with humans, the empathy of the listener is easily evoked because the listener feels familiar with the things described or conveyed in the songs.

Personification is a figurative language technique where an object or idea is given human characteristics or qualities. In other words, the poets make an object or idea to do something that usually is only done by people. By using personification, the poets tried to make the object or idea resembles a person and, hence, they personify the poetry. Personification is not exactly people, but it surely thinks and acts like one.

Words used in the text usually only have one meaning, but the words in figurative language sometimes have a different meaning from the actual meaning of the words contained in the dictionary. Meaning that corresponds to the situations in which they are used is contextual meanings (Lyons as cited in Manik (2013, p.8). In this kind of meaning, the readers are required to think of the meaning based on the context in the sentence to understand the meaning of the words.

Meanwhile, students have difficulty in learning a figurative language in class because students tend to memorize and review words from the contextual meaning. Therefore, a student needs to add their insight and enrich language so they are more likely to think critically in understanding a word. One way to improve this critical thinking ability is through understanding figurative language in English, the target language learned at school. Figurative language can be found in various genres of works including poetry, rhymes, songs, and others. Of these works, the song seems to be the most popular form of art to students nowadays. They can spend hours per day listening to songs and this could be positive because song as a version of literary works constitutes a good resource for learning and understanding figurative language. Sometimes, a collection of songs that can represent a common theme is selected to be the soundtracks of a movie. Movie *Trolls*, for example, has 13 songs that bind the movie together and represent the movie theme. Figurative languages can be found in the lyrics of *Trolls* movie soundtracks. Two of the most popular songs, for example, *True Colors* and *Can't Stop the Believin'* has the following figurative language */Got that sunshine in my pocket/, /Got that good song in my feet/, /this world makes you crazy/, /I see your true color/*. These are all language that cannot be understood literally because they are the figurative language used as one of the most important components of literary works. Based on those cases, the researcher is curious about the personification that is used in that song and the contextual meaning behind those personifications.

DATA AND METHODS

This is a qualitative study using document analysis, a type of qualitative research in which interpretation a certain topic regarding human behavior is displayed through recorded materials: tapes, songs, movies, or other documents (Ary, et al., 2010). This type of method suits the purpose of this research which is to analyze personifications in the song lyrics of movie soundtracks. In this research, data were taken from 11 soundtracks of the movie *Trolls*. The personifications were analyzed and classified using Zhu's framework which classified personifications into three types (Zhu, 1991). Data were then analyzed through the process of reduction, display, and conclusion as suggested by Miles, et al. (2014)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Based on the framework of Zhu (1991) about types of personification, the researcher found 23 personifications in the soundtrack's songs of the movie *Trolls*. Those personifications were classified into three types. The researcher displayed a table to present the percentage of each type of personification.

Table 1. The Number of Personification Types in Movie *Trolls*

No.	Types of Personifications	Number of Occurrences	Percentage
1.	Non-living creature/Prosopopoeia	12	52,2%
2.	Abstraction / Prosopographia	11	47,8%
3.	Living creature	0	0%
	Total	23	100%

As seen in Table 1, this study identified 23 personifications in the lyrics of the songs. There were 12 occurrences identified to belong in the type of non-living creature and 11 in abstraction, while there were no occurrences that can be identified to belong to living creature type.

Non-living Creature Personification

In this type of personification, non-living beings include natural phenomena, such as mountains, rivers, lakes, earth, stars, moon, sun, and clouds as well as artificial products such as houses, ships, and vehicles are personified and given subjective awareness or feelings as humans do (Zhu, 1991).

There are 12 data (52.2%) classified into non-living creature personification. The example of this personification types from the data are shown as below (E refers to excerpt lyrics):

(E1) Remember how stars stole all night away

In the sentence above (E1), the main point that should be analyzed is the word "stole" which refers to the personification expression. In the sentence above, stars are categorized as a noun (non-living creature). "Star Stole" is personified as if it could do something as a human does. Logically, the "star" cannot steal something especially the night since they do not have a hand. The "night" also is not something that can be taken away. Thus, it was included in non-living personification.

Based on the context, the word "stole" here means that the brightest star that takes over the night of September with its beauty, and the night becomes beautiful without darkness. This definition is applied concerning personification expression. Moreover, the basic meaning of stole is to take something without permission or knowledge of the owner. It is related to something that humans capable to do. So, the writer tried to refer the star as a person since only humans can steal something.

The sentence (E1) is found in the September song lyrics. This song tells about the feeling of someone who is in love with one certain night in September. The characters in the movie tried to pour out their emotion and very memorable experience on that night through the song so it can be remembered. This song is related to the character of the film when princess poppy feels sad when other people corner her and say that princess Poppy is not suitable to be a queen in her kingdom because she does not dare to save her people from the giant Bergen.

(E2) When my eyes were stabbed by the flash of a neon light

In sentences (E2), the word "stabbed" can be categorized as an expression of personification. In the Cambridge dictionary, the word "stabbed" means to have stabbed someone with a sharp object. It is very clear that the word "stabbed" is an act that can only be done by humans.

Besides, the word stabbed has meaning based on its context. A neon flash is a noun (non-living creature). It should not be able to pierce the eye because he does not have hands that can coordinate activities like humans. Thus, it is called a non-living personification.

The meaning implied in the sentence (E2) is that someone glares at a very bright fluorescent lamp that can break the silence and the dim of the night. The sentence of the lyrics "when my eyes were stabbed by the flash of a neon light" can be found in the sound of silence song. While, according to the researchers, the overall meaning of this song tells about the courage to express an opinion. This song also criticizes our sense of humanity that has faded from time to time.

The word Stabbed was chosen by the songwriter because the word is more suitable to describe the level of brightness and can be blinding. The songwriter uses the word stabbed so that the song connoisseur can understand that not only is it blinding as usual but the light is pierced by the flash of light.

(E3) This world makes you crazy

The word "crazy" in the sentence (E3) can be analyzed as an expression of personification. "Crazy" is a trait that only humans can feel or show. Based on the Cambridge dictionary, "crazy" means stupid or not reasonable so it is related to human expression.

In other contexts, the word "crazy" has various meanings. The meaning of a word will depend on the context in the sentence. "Crazy" can also have the meaning of someone's mental illness. It's referred to ashuman action or condition.

This song is sung during the movie's climax, Poppy and the other Trolls were thrown into a pot to be served to the Bergens. This causes all the Trolls to lose their colors, except Branch who always already grey to begin with. Branch breaks his 20 years "no singing" vow to brighten up Poppy who begins to glow pink, during the song he confesses he loves her. Seeing her brighten up causes himself to show his True colors and glow in turn, the entire village re-colors.

This sentence is found in True colors song lyrics. True colors are songs that tell about someone who feels unable or afraid to be themselves. This song is included in the self-motivational song. This digital era makes people sometimes forced to become another person to suit the community instead of changing to be accepted by the wider community.

The repetition is used throughout the song. Repetition of the words "True colors" is used to emphasize its importance and significance in the song. True colors is a song originally written by Cindy Lauper and has been sung by many different artists including Justin Timberlake and Anna Kendrick.

(E4) *Because a vision softly creeping*

In sentence (E4) the word *creeping* can be categorized as an expression of personification. In the Cambridge dictionary, the word "creeping" means developing or moving slowly. The word "creeping" is an act that can only be done by humans.

Besides, Vision is a noun (non-living). He shouldn't be able to do creeping because he doesn't have hands or feet as humans do. Based on context, the vision here has the meaning of scenery while creeping here means creepy. So, the sentence has the meaning of the surrounding scenery which feels creepy.

In the movie, this song is sung by princess poppy when they want to save their friends who have been taken by the giant Bergen. He went with his friend named Branch very happy about the silence and forbid princess poppy to sing and also forbid all people to embrace. He loved the silence. This lyric is contained in the song Sound of Silence. Some words in this song have meanings that are difficult to translate literally. The lyrics/words composed by songwriters are words that are very aesthetic so they need more attention to understand the meaning of the song.

4.1.1.1 Abstraction Personification

Zhu (1991) stated that this kind of personification makes speeches, actions, human behavior, and so on can be done by abstract objects, such as time, opinion, disease, hunger, and war.

(E5) *Now **December found love** we shared in September*

Sentence (E5), the word found is a basic sense that only exists in humans. While the basic meaning in the Cambridge dictionary found word has the meaning to bring something into existence, December is an abstract word that cannot find something (love) like humans found is only done by living things that can move. Human basic sense implies found is an activity that is only done by humans and we know it is included in the category of abstraction personification.

While the contextual meaning of the word December found is someone who finds the certainty of his love in the month of December that they have established in September. In the movie, this song relates to those trolls who enjoy their days of happiness due to being free from the restraints of the giant Bergen.

This song is played at the end of part of the movie Trolls. This song was recycled by Justin Timberlake & Anna Kendrick the voice actor and made one of the soundtracks in the movie trolls. This September song is a song in 1996 performed by Earth, Wind & Fire. Nostalgic by duet Justin Timberlake & Anna Kendrick. When compared to Can't Stop the Feeling, of course, the music in September is far more stomping and enjoyable, especially coupled with the voices of Justin and Anna who give a new color to this old song. Even so, in some parts, we will still hear the original versions of Earth, Wind & Fire.

(E6) *In the key that **our soul were singing***

A soul is an inanimate object (abstract object) that cannot do activities like humans in general. Singing is a vocal act to produce musical things by using sounds and also adding regular speeches of course coupled with adding a continuous voice tone in its use, also rhythm, and various other vocal techniques. Therefore, it can only be done by humans, so it belongs to the type of abstraction personification. Sentence (E6) means that someone who is remembering a beautiful night for them when they dance and spend the night together also feels their body as if singing to accompany the beautiful night.

In the Cambridge dictionary, the lyrics of Soul have the meaning of the spiritual part of a person that some people believe continues to exist in some form after their body has been edited or the part of a person that is not physical and experiences deep feelings and emotions. While singing is the activity of making musical sounds with the voice, usually a tune with words. Therefore, we can include that this is included in the category of personification, especially those of abstraction personification.

This song tells about someone very meaningful in his life. This song has a romantic tone where the singer talks about falling in love and finding something around them equal to their emotions. However, this song becomes a very good song when dancing. In the second verse, the singer revealed that today is December, and she knows that the love they shared in September is real and will remain here. In this movie, the song is sung at the end of the movie. This song is very suitable to be included in the Trolls movie soundtracks list because the theme of this film is comedy fun movie animation while at the end of the movie is a happy ending so here it is very suitable to put this song.

(E7) *It's in the air, it's in my blood, it's rushin' on*

In the sentence (E7) said **it's** here refers to feeling. According to the Cambridge dictionary, the feeling has the meaning of feeling something physical or emotion, specifically, those are influenced by other people, and the word feeling can be categorized as an abstract object. While **rushin'** here has the meaning of moving quickly.

Based on contextual meaning, **it's rushin' on** here has the meaning of someone's feeling which can be happy, sad, disappointed, or as it travels so fast in one's pulse and flows throughout the body. In this movie, when this song is sung, the trolls are feeling very happy because finally, the Bergen can understand that happiness is already present in everyone but just need someone else to help feel the happiness.

These lyrics can be found in the song *Can't Stop the Feeling*; this song is a special song created by Justin Timberlake to become the main soundtrack in the movie Trolls.

This song tells about unification, about togetherness. Justin Timberlake says that being different means that you make a difference. So, leave them. If you are black or brown, or whatever, don't feel sad. No need to think about the person who said that and this song successfully made the hypnotized people remember that the soundtrack *Can't Stop the Feeling* has a beat that has never failed to make others happy.

(E8) *I've got fever coming on*

fever is an abstract thing in which there are no legs that can come like humans. In the Cambridge dictionary, fever is a noun that has the meaning of a medical condition in which the body temperature is higher than usual and the heart beats very fast or it can also mean a state of great excitement. While the word coming is an adjective that humans think of.

However, based on the meaning of the context, the word **fever coming on** has a meaning where the feeling is as strong as wanting to dance or being very enthusiastic. In the movie Trolls, Trolls like cuddling, dancing, singing, and other fun activities. When they hear the music, they feel as if the song is inside them until it feels in their bones and as if telling them to enjoy the song.

These lyrics can be found in the song called *Hair Up*. This *Hair Up* song tells the story of trolls with their characters colored hair. When the trolls spread their hair upwards, they seemed to merge with the song which was a very beautiful color of hair. This song is a song that fits perfectly in the fun atmosphere where this song is played by the DJ (Disk jockey). The meaning of the word **hair up** here is to place their distinctive hair as an atmosphere enhancer to be more enthusiastic in dancing.

Living Creature Personification

According to Zhu (1991), this type of personification makes plants or animals behave as if blessed by human's actions. They also have qualities, thoughts, feelings, etc. just like humans.

In the 11 soundtrack songs of the movie *Trolls*, no lyrics were containing this kind of personification. The songwriters did not personify any animals or plants to do something as if they were human or have any ability to feel something as humans do.

DISCUSSION

This research was conducted to address the research question of *what types of personification types are used in the soundtracks of the movie Trolls?* The researcher analyzed the soundtracks of the movie *Trolls* found 23 expressions in the soundtracks identified as to contain personification meanings. The analysis was performed based on the three-type framework offered by Zhu (1991) living creature personification, non-living creature personification and abstraction personification.

The finding of this study shows that Non-living creature personification is the most frequently used in the soundtracks of the movie the non-living creature personification, in which an object is made as if it was alive or doing activities like humans, seems to be more easily understood personification and the type is more commonly found in many songs. In this study, this type is found to be used more often than the other types as laid out in the previous sections. . As defined by Claassen (1990, p. 102), personification is "humanizing" of either animal or inanimate object which include natural phenomena, such as mountains, rivers, lakes, earth, stars, moon, sun, and clouds as well as artificial products such as houses, ships, and vehicles. These inanimate objects are personified and given subjective awareness or feelings as humans do. Non-living creature personification has been studied and found in many literary works. An example is the study Mentari (2018) who, although not examining the personification in detail, found a lot of uses of personifications, especially the non-living creature personification type.

Another important finding is Abstraction personification type. The study found has 11 uses this type. The uses of this type were found almost as many as the non-living creature personification type. Abstraction personification includes "humanizing" abstract objects. As define by Zhu (1991), This kind of personification makes speeches, actions, human behavior, and so on can be done by abstract objects, such as time, opinion, disease, hunger, and war. In that way, the thoughts and feelings can be expressed more clearly. For example, *Lekimia took the country girl to town to see a doctor* (Peng, 2013). This type is also widely found because many are related to human feelings and logic. In songs, there are many uses of abstraction personification words when a songwriter sends a message about someone's feelings. Therefore, the intent of the songwriter can be conveyed well. According to De Man (1988, as cited in Paxson, 1994) emotions, abstract concepts, and natural forces have all been given human characteristics in myth and literature. Abstraction personification was also found in a previous study conducted by Arta (2017). He found 3 abstract ideas being personified in the songs he researched. In the study, he found three sentences of abstract ideas. In Artha's study, he focuses more on the meaning of personification. Meanwhile, this study only focuses on type of personification song lyrics.

Based on these results, it can be concluded that the use of personification is common and found in many songs. Personification are usually used to beautify a literary work. By using personification, the writer can convey the message aesthetically with the hope that it can be easily received.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on research findings, there are 23 personifications found in the soundtracks, in this research only one type was not found in the soundtracks of the movie *Trolls*. There are two types most commonly found in the soundtracks. The types are non-living creature personification and abstraction personification. Meanwhile, living creature personification was not found in song lyrics. The highest percentage belonged to non-living creature personification (52.2%), the next is abstraction personification was (47.8%) and the last is living creature personification was (00.0%). It can be concluded that the songwriter mostly used the non-living creature personification for more artistic and put it in the movie as soundtracks.

This study examines the use of personification in the soundtracks of movie *Trolls*. Besides the finding of the personification type in the soundtracks, the researcher also looked at the contextual meaning inherent in the lyrics and movie. It aims to see the contextual meaning.

The findings of this study have to be seen in the light of some limitations. The first limitation is not all of the songs included in the movie. Only some of the songs appear in the film. The second is the song used in films where most of the audiences are children to teens. The third limitation is the difficulty of distinguishing types from personifications in the soundtracks of the song. Because of the limitation of this study, it is very naïve if we make the result of this study as the main benchmark of metaphors in literature works especially in Indonesian songs.

To gain the broader result of personification analysis in literary works in one language, it is necessary to conduct research in the other soundtracks and pick a greater number of resources. It will be useful information if the future researchers conduct a study in this area using the other music genres to gain better information about personification, especially in songs as one of literary works. In conducting the

current study, it is noted that there was a difficulty in distinguishing several types of personification and analyzing the songs as literary works.

To the further researchers who are interested in conducting the study in this area, they should understand the distinction of every single type of personification they use as the framework in analyzing the subject. It is also very helpful to have background knowledge about literature such as the song and its characteristics.

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