

Metaphor in Literature: A Study on the Use of Figurative Language in Classical and Modern Works

Naela Mikyalul Faizah

Universitas Jambi, Indonesia

Email: naelamikyalulf@gmail.com

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ABSTRAK

Metafora tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai hiasan linguistik, tetapi juga mencerminkan nilai-nilai budaya, norma sosial, dan pandangan dunia penulis dalam konteks historis. Karya-karya klasik, seperti puisi dan prosa dari para penulis terkemuka, memberikan wawasan mendalam tentang tradisi, kepercayaan, dan nilai-nilai masyarakat pada masanya. Analisis terhadap metafora memungkinkan kita memahami bagaimana bahasa figuratif mencerminkan semangat zaman yang melatarbelakangi cara berpikir masyarakat. Meningkatnya minat terhadap bagaimana bahasa membentuk makna dalam berbagai konteks mendorong dilakukannya penelitian ini. Namun, terdapat kekurangan dalam penelitian sebelumnya yang menunjukkan kurangnya eksplorasi mengenai penggunaan metafora secara komparatif antara karya klasik dan modern. Karya-karya modern juga menjadi fokus utama, di mana para penulis kontemporer sering mengeksplorasi metafora secara inovatif, menciptakan makna baru yang mencerminkan tantangan dan dinamika kehidupan masa kini. Dalam banyak novel modern, metafora digunakan untuk mengangkat isu-isu sosial dan politik, yang terjalin dengan pengalaman pembaca. Meskipun terdapat perbedaan dalam konteks dan gaya antara karya klasik dan modern, fungsi metafora sebagai jembatan antara realitas dan imajinasi tetaplah konstan. Penelitian ini diharapkan dapat memperkaya pemahaman mengenai hubungan antara bahasa, sastra, dan pengalaman manusia. Kesimpulannya, meskipun terdapat variasi dalam konteks dan penerapannya, metafora tetap menjadi alat penting dalam membentuk pemahaman manusia tentang realitas dan imajinasi, serta memiliki pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap interaksi kita dengan dunia di sekitar kita.

Kata Kunci: Metafora, Bahasa figuratif, Nilai budaya, Norma sosial, Pandangan dunia.

ABSTRACT

Metaphors do not only function as linguistic decorations, but also reflect the author's cultural values, social norms, and worldview in the historical context. Classical works, such as poetry and prose by prominent authors, provide deep insight into the traditions, beliefs, and values of the society of the time. The analysis of metaphors allows us to understand how figurative language reflects the spirit of the times that underlies people's thinking. The growing interest in how language creates meaning in a variety of contexts is driving this research. However, there are shortcomings in the research that show a lack of exploration regarding the comparative use of metaphors between classical and modern works. Modern works are also a major focus, where contemporary writers often explore metaphors in innovative ways, creating new meanings that reflect the challenges and dynamics of today's life. In many modern novels, metaphors are used to raise social and political issues, intertwining with the reader's experience. Despite the differences in context and style between classical and modern works, the function of metaphor as a bridge between reality and imagination remains constant. This research is expected to enrich the understanding of the relationship between language, literature, and human experience. In conclusion, despite variations in context and application, metaphors



remain an important tool in shaping human understanding of reality and imagination, and have a significant influence on our interactions with the world around us.

Keywords: *Metaphor, Figurative language, Cultural values, Social norms, Worldview*

INTRODUCTION

Metaphor is a key element in the use of language that allows implicit comparisons between two things that are literally different, but have similar meanings (Heriwati., 2018). Linguistic tools, metaphors play an important role in expanding readers' understanding horizons, not only at the literal level, but also in the symbolic and conceptual dimensions (Syarif, 2023). In the world of literature, metaphor is one of the most essential tools in the creation of texts that are rich in meaning and nuance. The author's use of metaphors allows for the delivery of abstract and emotional ideas in a more creative and suggestive way, thus providing a more complex layer of interpretation (Habibuzzulfa . For example, when a writer describes love as a "burning fire," the reader can feel the intensity, depth, and ambivalence of the feeling. This use of figurative language serves as a bridge between the concrete human experience and the abstract world of thought, allowing the reader to understand and feel something beyond the written words.

The contribution of metaphor to the creation of more dynamic meanings in literary works cannot be ignored, as it connects two different concepts and creates a new perspective on common experiences (June., 2019). Authors often use metaphors to explore universal themes such as life, death, love, and loss, which may be difficult to express in literal language (Darmawan et al. In this context, metaphors are not just a decoration of language, but also a tool to explore and convey complex human experiences (Huszka et al., 2024). The use of metaphors in literature is greatly influenced by cultural, social, and historical contexts. Every society, with its own cultural background and unique values, has its own way of shaping and understanding metaphors (Idris., 2019). In Eastern literature, as seen in Japanese, Chinese, and Indian works, many metaphors are tied to nature and spirituality, where natural elements such as water, mountains, and plants often symbolize the journey of life and the relationship of humans with the universe (Winarno., 2020). On the other hand, in Western literature, metaphors tend to focus more on interpersonal and existential relationships, with authors such as Shakespeare and Dostoevsky using metaphors to describe the complexity of emotions and moral conflicts. Social context also influences the use of metaphors; in a collective society, metaphors reflect shared experiences, while in individualistic societies, it emphasizes personal experiences (Arif., 2015). The historical aspect also exerts a great influence, where historical events and social changes shape the use of symbols in literature, often as a tool to convey trauma and hope (Junyanti., 2024). An understanding of cultural, social, and historical backgrounds is essential for evaluating the use of metaphors, which are not only linguistic devices, but also reflections of the values and experiences of a particular society (Kuncoro et al., 2023).

Overall, metaphor is one of the important components in the narrative structure and aesthetics of literature (Al Hidayat et al., 2019). Its existence not only enriches the text with layered meanings and nuances, but also serves as a tool to bridge diverse human experiences (Rismawati et al., 2022). Metaphors create a bridge between reality and imagination, allowing readers to understand new experiences through familiar lenses. The use of figurative language by authors can convey complex ideas in a more digestible and in-depth way. Metaphors play a role in shaping cultural and social identities, reflecting the way people think and interact with the world around them (Wati et al., 2023). Understanding the use of metaphors is important to explore linguistic aspects as well as understand how figurative language shapes and changes the reader's experience

(Rahmawati et al., 2023). Metaphors can evoke emotions, create a bond between characters and readers, and provide layers of meaning that can be interpreted differently by each individual, depending on their background and life experiences (Muthmainnah., 2022). In many literary works, metaphors serve as a tool to convey universal themes, such as love, loss, struggle, and hope (Sari., 2020). The depiction of these feelings and experiences through metaphors allows the author to make a deeper connection with the reader, who may find themselves in the situation or feeling described. Metaphor analysis in literary studies can also reveal the mindsets, values, and beliefs that underlie a text, thus delving deeper into how authors view the world and how it is reflected in their work. An in-depth exploration of the use of metaphor in literature opens the door to a broader understanding of the complexity of language, identity, and human experience, making literature a mirror that reflects reality and imagination at the same time (La'biran., 2024).

METHODS

This research method uses a qualitative approach with a focus on literature studies to understand and analyze the use of metaphors in classical and modern literary works. This research will draw data from literary texts that include classics from famous writers such as William Shakespeare, Soekarno, or Sapardi Djoko Damono, as well as contemporary literary works from writers such as Eka Kurniawan and Dewi Lestari. Data collection was carried out through literature studies to identify and collect examples of the use of metaphors in these works. Furthermore, text analysis will be carried out to extract and analyze the metaphors contained in the selected work. Methods of analysis include narrative analysis to assess the function and impact of metaphors in a narrative context, as well as thematic analysis to group metaphors based on specific themes, such as love, loss, struggle, and hope. Researchers will also compare the use of metaphors in classical and modern works to identify shifts in approach and meaning. The results of the research will be compiled in the form of a report that includes an introduction, literature review, methodology, data analysis, and conclusions, as well as recommendations for further research. The use of this method is expected to provide in-depth insights into the use of metaphors in literature and how figurative language reflects human values and experiences in different contexts.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study successfully identified and analyzed various uses of metaphors in classical and modern literary works (Rifana., 2024). An analysis of classics such as William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* and Sukarno's poems shows that metaphors are often used to describe feelings of deep love as well as emotional conflicts. For example, the metaphor "love is a journey" not only shows that love involves a long and winding journey, but also describes the challenges, growth, and changes experienced by the characters, reflecting how the experience of love can take an individual in unexpected directions, including happiness and sadness. In Soekarno's poems, the use of metaphors related to struggle and independence, such as "a burning fire," symbolizes an unquenchable fighting spirit. This metaphor reflects courage and resilience, and describes the collective passion of the Indonesian people in achieving freedom (Susilawati., 2024). The study also examines the differences in the use of metaphors in different cultural and historical contexts, where modern works often reflect more complex social and political issues. This use of metaphors creates a bridge between personal experience and broader social issues. This research makes an important contribution to the understanding of the role of metaphor in literature, its impact on the reader's experience, and its relevance in the broader cultural and social context (Azzahra

et al., 2023). A deep understanding of metaphor allows us to appreciate more the richness and complexity of literary works, both classical and modern.

In modern literary works, such as Andrea Hirata's novel *Laskar Pelangi* and Dewi Lestari's poetry collection, the use of metaphors shows a wealth of deep meaning. In *Laskar Pelangi*, the metaphor of "light of hope" is used to describe the potential and dreams of children despite the various challenges they face in life. This metaphor not only highlights the desire to achieve goals, but also reflects their fighting spirit and perseverance in overcoming obstacles, so that the "light of hope" serves as a symbol of motivation and inspiration for readers, reminding that in the midst of difficulties, hope is always there. Dewi Lestari's poems often utilize metaphors related to nature and emotions, such as "rain of tears" to describe deep sadness. This metaphor creates a powerful image of an overflowing expression of feelings, in which tears are perceived as inevitable rain, hinting that sadness is an integral part of life, and that along with the rain, there is a possibility to experience renewal and growth. The use of metaphors in these works not only enriches literary language, but also allows readers to feel deeper emotions and meanings (Jamil et al., 2024). Metaphors serve as a tool to convey universal messages about life, hope, and struggle that can be appreciated by readers from various backgrounds. An analysis of the use of metaphors in **Laskar Pelangi** and Dewi Lestari's poems shows that metaphors are not just language expressions, but also a means to explore and understand the complexity of human experience, where the writer can create a deep emotional connection with the reader, evoke a sense of empathy and reflection on the situation depicted.

In linguistic studies, the term "analysis" refers to the in-depth process carried out to understand the structure and elements of a language, including observation, grouping (Herpindo et al., 2023), and interpretation of various linguistic aspects such as phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics. On the other hand, in a laboratory context, "analysis" is used to describe the activities of examining the composition and content of certain substances in various fields, including chemistry, biology, and materials science. However, attention to the use of this word is increasing among academics, especially linguists, because the term is an absorption of the English language, namely "analysis," which has undergone a change in the suffix from "-isys" to "-isis" in Indonesian. This change became a focal point for linguists to discuss the importance of accuracy in the use of foreign terms, in order to maintain the integrity and richness of the Indonesian language. Therefore, straightening out the use of terms and language is crucial to improve the clarity of communication and contribute to the preservation and strengthening of the nation's cultural identity. By recognizing the importance of proper language use, we can contribute to efforts to maintain and advance the Indonesian language, as well as ensure its relevance in a global context. Through good linguistic practices, we not only improve the quality of communication in various fields, but also strengthen the sense of nationality and love for the Indonesian language and culture, which is an important step in facing the growing challenges of globalization.

The use of metaphors in classical and modern literature indicates developments as well as shifts in the way writers express ideas and emotions. In classical works, metaphors tend to be more tied to universal themes such as love, death, and struggle. The poetic language and powerful allusions create emotional depth that captivates readers, allowing them to experience the characters more deeply. In Shakespeare's works, for example, metaphors are often used to describe the internal and external conflicts experienced by his characters. This rich metaphor not only gives color to the narrative, but also invites the reader to reflect on the deeper meaning behind each event. Along with the development of literature, the use of metaphors in modern works has shifted. The author

began to explore more contemporary and complex themes, often depicting social, political, and identity issues. The metaphors used in these works are often more explicit and diverse, creating a more direct relationship between the author and the reader. In modern novels, metaphors can be used to create powerful imagery of everyday reality, reflecting the challenges individuals face in an ever-changing society.

This change reflects an evolution in people's thinking and values. In modern works, the author often uses metaphors to respond to and challenge social norms, highlighting the struggle of individuals in finding identity and meaning amidst the noise of a complex world. Although universal themes remain relevant, metaphorical ways of conveying and interpreting have evolved to reflect the diversity of human experience. An analysis of the use of metaphors in classical and modern literature provides insight not only into the style of language, but also about the ongoing changes in cultural and social perspectives in society. A deeper understanding of metaphors allows us to appreciate how writers use these tools to shape narratives and convey deep emotions to readers.

On the other hand, in modern literary works, there is a tendency to associate metaphors with more complex social and personal contexts. Metaphors not only serve to describe emotions, but also to create connections with contemporary issues such as education, identity, and hope. In many modern works, the author uses metaphor as a tool to highlight the realities of everyday life and the challenges that individuals face in society. In novels that focus on education, metaphors can be used to describe the learning journey as a "bridge" that connects the uncertainty of the future and the hope of better knowledge. This creates a layer of meaning that enriches the reader's understanding of the importance of education as a foundation in building a better life.

The use of simple but meaningful language in modern literary works is very important to create accessibility for all readers. This allows various social, cultural, and educational backgrounds to connect with the themes raised, so that literature becomes more inclusive. Modern works tend to avoid overly poetic or complicated language, which can often leave the reader feeling alienated or confused. The author chooses a more direct and clear language, without sacrificing the depth of meaning. The right choice of words and concise sentences are able to convey emotions and ideas effectively. Metaphors serve as a very useful tool; Connecting the author's personal experience with the broader social reality, metaphor creates a bridge between the two worlds. This not only enriches the reading experience, but also creates a strong resonance in the reader's mind. The simplicity of this language does not diminish the power of the narrative; On the contrary, this strengthens the emotional impact of the work. When readers can easily digest the content of the writing, they tend to be more open to interpreting deeper meanings. In a broader social context, this can inspire discussion and reflection, making literature not just an entertainment, but also a tool for social understanding and change. The use of simple but meaningful language in modern literary works is not just a stylistic choice, but a strategic step to reach and move readers from various walks of life, creating space for dialogue, understanding, and a wider sharing experience in society.

The comparison between classical and modern works reveals how cultural and social values influence the use of metaphors in literature. Classical works often reflect a more romantic and idealistic worldview, with poetic and symbolic language. Classic writers portray life through the lens of beauty, love, and greatness, creating an alluring and aspirational image for the reader. Metaphors in this context serve to convey hopes and dreams, often involving large themes such as eternal love or heroic struggles. On the other hand, modern works show a stronger sense of realism, where the author seeks to create a more realistic representation of human life and experience (Setiawan., 2021). Metaphors in modern works are often more direct and relevant to current social

conditions, reflecting the challenges and uncertainties that individuals face in their daily lives (Nasution et al., 2024). These differences reflect changes in cultural and social values throughout time, where classical works are influenced by rigid social norms, while modern works reflect a shift towards individualism, pluralism, and social consciousness. In this context, metaphors not only function as aesthetic tools, but also as a means to express critical views on existing social conditions (Rizky et al., 2019). The comparison between classical and modern works shows how the use of metaphors evolved along with cultural and social changes, creating a rich and profound layer of meaning in literature. This study shows that metaphors are not just a language device, but also reflect diverse values, experiences, and worldviews (Huszka et al., 2024). Metaphors serve as a bridge that connects readers with deeper meanings, allowing them to explore the various layers of emotions and ideas contained in literary works (Gunawan et al., 2024). The use of figurative language in literature provides depth of meaning and shapes the way readers understand and feel the story (Faizun., 2020). With metaphors, writers can convey complex ideas in a more digestible way, enriching the reading experience and inviting readers to reflect on the broader reality. The presence of metaphors also creates space for diverse interpretations (Surtantini., 2020). Readers with different backgrounds can find different meanings, depending on their experiences and perspectives (Lin Rachmawati., 2020). This makes literature a dynamic and interactive medium, where readers are not only recipients of messages, but also active participants in creating meaning (Harahap., 2022). An understanding of the use of metaphors in classical and modern literary works is essential for appreciating the richness of language and the complexity of the human experience presented in literature.

An analysis of metaphors in the social and cultural context behind each work can provide insight into how society and existing values affect the way the author expresses himself (Wati et al., 2023). Metaphors that appear in literary works can reflect individual struggles in facing social challenges or express longing for the past (Astutik., 2024). In-depth research into metaphors can also open up opportunities to understand the relationship between language and identity, as well as how these two elements influence each other in forming rich and meaningful narratives. The study of metaphor in literature is not just a linguistic study, but also an effort to understand the complexity of human experience and the cultural dynamics that shape it (Al munir., 2021).

CONCLUSION

In classical works, the use of figurative language is not just linguistic embellishment; More so, it reflects the cultural values, social norms, and philosophies that were dominant in its time. The analysis of these works allows readers to explore deep insights into the author's worldview as well as the historical and cultural context behind the work. On the other hand, in modern works, authors often explore and adapt metaphors in more innovative and experimental ways, creating new layers of meaning capable of reflecting the challenges, changes, and increasingly complex dynamics of contemporary life. This shows how the development of the times affects the way the author uses figurative language to communicate with readers. The author's use of metaphors creates a rich and complex imagery, which not only enriches the reader's aesthetic experience but also gives a deeper meaning to the themes, characters, and conflicts presented in the narrative. Metaphors serve as a bridge that connects human experiences with abstract ideas, helping readers understand concepts that are often difficult to express directly. With variations in context, style, and writing techniques between classical and modern works, the essence of metaphor as a means of expressing reality and imagination remains consistent. An in-depth understanding of the use of metaphors in different literary eras

provides readers and researchers with the opportunity to develop a greater appreciation of the richness of language and the literary ability to convey subtle nuances. An analysis of the use of metaphors not only contributes to the study of literature, but also enriches our insights into how language can be used to reflect complex human experiences, making literature a mirror of the social, cultural, and psychological realities that exist in societies in every era. This research also encourages us to appreciate more the beauty and power of language, as well as the important role of literature in shaping and reflecting the cultural identity of a nation.

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