An Analysis on Figurative Language in Kitchen Nightmares TV Shows

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ABSTRACT

Figurative language is a part of semantics, which has the function of making literary works or even daily conversation more interesting, attractive, and alive. TV-show is the one of electronic media which provides variety entertainment to the people. With the infrequency of linguistics research on TV shows, therefore the purpose of this study is to analyze the figurative language that is found on Kitchen Nightmares TV shows. The research was a content analysis, evaluating and interpreting data from targeted sources. The data was obtained from the official YouTube channel of Kitchen Nightmares. The data collection was done using the data sampling method. In data analysis, the researcher classified, identified, analyzed, and calculated the data to find the dominant types. In validating the data, analyst triangulation was done. After that, the top type related to the context to then draw a conclusion. The result showed that; (1) 4 metaphor, 8 metonymy, 8 hyperbole, 1 litotes, 21 irony, 8 simile, 10 personification. (2) the percentage of the types of figurative language were 7% metonym, 13% hyperbole, 2% litotes, 35% irony, 13% simile, and 17% personification. Hence, the dominant type of figurative language was irony, with the percentage 35% or 21 data. Furthermore, this study provided contribution in the education field to increase the students' language skills.
Keywords: Analysis, Figurative language, TV Shows

Introduction

In communication, language is the primary source. Finegan (2008) states in his book that language is often known as a vehicle of thought, it has meant a system of expression that transfer the thought from one person to another. Language also has a role to serve social functions and emotional functions. To understand and communicate with others, people must know the meaning of language. In English, there is a study that studies talk about the meaning of language. The name is semantics. Semantics is the study of the language's structure meaning, especially in words and sentences (Mahmood, R., Obaid, M., &Shakir, A., 2014).

A word, as well known, has two meanings: literal and figurative. The literal meaning is that it is identical to the original. Connotative meaning is synonymous with a figurative meaning. It is concerned with the definition of an unfamiliar word, as most words have many meanings. Figures of speech are often used in figurative meaning (Al-Khaswawneh, F. M., 2021). People will always utilize both to communicate what they want to say. However, some writers, poets, motivators, and others always utilize figurative language to communicate their thoughts and feelings in a language since the figurative language demonstrates the beauty of the language (Kasma, S., Utami, N. M. V., & Jayantini, G. A. S. R., 2021).Figurative language can be used in daily communication and the most used in literary works such as; poems, novels, advertisements, etc. The use of figurative language has the function to make a literary work more interesting, beautiful and has a deep meaning (Putri, M. W., Oktoma, E., & Nursyamsu, R., 2016; Khasanah, D. U., 2015).

Humans use language in a variety of ways to express their thoughts, opinions, and facts, and figurative language is one of them. Figurative language makes the use of "figures of speech" which are a way of expressing anything different than the literal meaning of words. One of the literary components is figurative language. It is a form of expression that is employed to enhance something's beauty or emotional intensity (Hutajulu&Natsir, 2012; Pratama, I. D., 2016).

Some people are more interested in listening to and watching electronic media rather than reading a scientific or literary book. The reason is watching and listening more entertain them. After their activities on the outside like working or studying, they need to relax time

to take a rest. With electronic media, they get their own time. The other reason is, with watching and listening, can make them see, feel, human beings, and be open-minded (Al-Khawaldeh et. al., 2016)

TV-shows are one electronic media that provide a variety of entertainment to people. In the case of consuming TV-show from electronic media, especially on television, people usually respond to the meaning expressed by the artist or celebrities. But, on other hand, people do not care about the hidden meaning of every sentence expressed. All the information expressed also contents of language, especially figurative meaning (Pratiwi, D. P. E., 2016). Kitchen Nightmares is a reality TV show in the United States which adapted from a famous English TV show of the same title. Fox television show is well-known for the rude and severe criticism provided by their hosts. The host of this TV show uses scathing criticism and commentary to inspire restaurant owners to get their businesses back on track.

The figurative language is mostly used in literary works such as; poems, music lyrics, novels, etc. Such as the study (Harya, 2017), the result showed that 70 sentences have figurative language. The most figurative language used in the novel was a simile and the second was personification. The researcher also explained that using figurative language in the novel makes the reader can imagine the story. (Gunawan et al., 2021) where advertisements or commercials are also analyzed with figurative language. The study from (Sofyan et al., 2020) under the title Using Figurative Language in Cosmetic Advertisements on Indonesian Television, Wibowo (2016) which found that there were eleven sentences categorized into eight types of figurative language such as personification, paradox, metaphor, apostrophe, symbol, allegory, hyperbole, and repetition. Next, the other study from Pramono (2020) which showed that all types of impoliteness strategies (bald on record, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, sarcasm or mock impoliteness, and withhold politeness) were done by Gordon Ramsay to female participants and four types of impoliteness strategies (bald on record impoliteness, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, and sarcasm or mock impoliteness) performed on male participants. Figurative language on reality TV-show was difficult to find. Also, this research not only analyzed the kind of figurative language, but this research also explains the reason why this TV shows' program used those dominant types of figurative language because most studies that

discuss figurative language only discuss the dominant type. The researcher used Geoffrey Leech's theory, because Leech's approach is rhetorical which refers to the successful use of language in its most general sense, focusing on regular conversation, and then more planned and public uses of language. Kitchen Nightmares is one of the famous TV programs. The host is Chef Gordon Ramsay that famous for his criticism that contains several connotative meanings on it. Therefore, the researcher is interested in analyzing Kitchen Nightmares TV shows. There were two main research problems in this research as follow:

1. What types of figurative language are used in Kitchen Nightmares TV shows?
2. What is the most dominant figurative language in Kitchen Nightmares TV shows?

Methods

This research employed a qualitative content analysis. The data was taken from the TV show from the official YouTube channel of Kitchen Nightmares. This research analyzed a Jamaican restaurant episode.The researcher used quota sampling method. There was 1 episode to be analyzed and described under the title "The Infamous Moment Gordon Ramsay Was Accused of Planting a Mouse | Kitchen Nightmares FULL EPISODE". The data analysis phase was done through several process namely data identification, data categorization, data calculation, data description, and drawing conclusion. The data triangulation was done through expert validation.

Result and Discussion

The purpose of this research was to find the figurative language in *Kitchen Nightmares* TV Shows. The data for this research was taken from a Jamaican restaurant episode from the official YouTube channel of *Kitchen Nightmares*. After reading and analyzing, the researcher found 60 meanings that refer to figurative language.

Table 1. Figurative Language Found

No.	Types of Figurative Language	Number of Cases	Percentage
1.	Metaphor	4	7%
2.	Metonymy	8	13%
3.	Hyperbole	8	13%
4.	Litotes	1	2%

5.	Irony		21	35%
6.	Simile		8	13%
7.	Personification		10	17%
		TOTAL	60	100%

Based on the table 1, there were seven types figurative language based on Leech's theory. The result showed that there are the top 2 types that are often used in the Kitchen Nightmares TV Shows. They are irony and personification. In the Kitchen Nightmares program, Gordon Ramsay used various sentences that consisted of irony. Either with direct statement or with allusion.The plot of this program also showed many critiques from Chef Gordon Ramsay, from the food, décor, management, and sometimes doing a little inspection in the kitchen. The sentences are said by monologue or dialogue.

This program also has a session where the people in the restaurant convey their opinions in a monologue. In conveying opinion, figurative language is often used, often through personification. Such a scene from the staff about their manager.Also, the narration that is said by the narrator and has function of continuing the previous scene.Because on the television, every single episode is broadcast regularly and continuously, either because of an advertisement or aired for the next day. The use of personification in this case aims to express something indirectly through objects and serves to attract the audience to easily remember the plot that happened. The opinion from all the people that are shown in this TV-show also consists of similes. The simile is often shown in the scene serving the food and the comments on the décor. This figurative language is often used by Chef Gordon Ramsay when giving his opinion, mostly about the food and the décor. Therefore, it is no wonder and/or not surprising that the use of those types of figurative language is used in this TV program.The following explanations are the description of the data:

1. Metaphor

a. *Chef Ramsay: Was it love from the first bite?*

James: Yeah.

*Shelly: He is a little younger than I am. But **he is my sexy chocolate**.*

The sentence above uses metaphor. In the sentence above the word, *He* (that refers to James / the manager) is directly compared with *chocolate*. Literally, it is going so far from the meaning even though the images clearly show James. James is a human, and

cannot be compared with the thing. According to Oxford Dictionary, chocolate is a sweet food that is made from cocoa beans and used to cook and mix with the cakes to add the taste. Chocolate is an attractive food that makes people moved even just by hearing the name. However, *Sexy chocolate* includes personification. In this case, it has meant to characterize James' skin color that has exotic brown skin, attractive, and interesting as chocolate.

b. *Mother Marry:* **Shelly is a cry baby**. *She is not willing to admit that she   is wrong. And that is pretty sad.*

The sentence above uses metaphor. Literally, Shelly is compared with a cry baby. The nature of a baby is crying. But the scene showed Shelly was not crying. The scene showed that Shelly gets angry when Chef Ramsay has some critiques about her system in the kitchen. Figuratively, this sentence has mean Shelly is very irritable and sensitive. The words *cry baby* describes her attitude as very easily offended like a baby who cries easily.

c. *Shelly: I think I have a winning combination here. Chef did it! Food, atmosphere, we were ready.* **Oh! That is heaven**.

Besides renewing the equipment, the *Kitchen Nightmares* teams renew the décor of the restaurant too. In the early, the décor on the Blackberries was so horrible with many records on it. After decorating the new décor, the menu is revamped by Chef Ramsay and it tasted good at all. Therefore, the words *That is heaven* is metaphor, because it has a means compared to unrelated objects. According to Cambridge Dictionary, heaven means the location where God lives, and where people are said to go once they die to enjoy perfect happiness. They do not really in heaven. *Heaven* is the word to describe how the place and the food turn into so perfect that feels like *this is the best place you can eat soul food* with new décor and new foods.

d. *Shelly: I was so skeptical, but Chef Ramsay has opened up a new world   for us here at Blackberries. I'm ready for change. It was difficult for me to see that at the beginning. But here it is,***the truth is the light**.

Literally, the light is out from some things, like fire, flashlight, etc. The truth cannot emit light. In figurative, this sentence has meant the truth, even if the truth is bitter, it will

teach someone. In this case, Shelly is expected to be able to correct herself and see the truth in front of her eyes.

2. **Metonymy**

a. *And smack in the middle of town, there is* **soul food** *restaurant named "Blackberry's". Run by a once successful caterer named Shelly Withers.*

Literally, people might be taught that soul food is a food that is cooked with all heart. But figuratively, soul food is a name for immigrant cuisine that combines West African, Western European, and American culinary traditions. Jamaica is one of the countries in the part of North America. A typical soul food includes; Black-eyed peas, macaroni and cheese as the sides. Smothered pork chop (chitlins), and chicken as an entrée. Then cornbread (muffin), drink with a red drink (a red-colored beverage), and the desserts are banana pudding, sweet potato pie, etc(Miller, 2021).

b. *And smack in the middle of town, there is soul food restaurant named "**Blackberry's**". Run by a once successful caterer named Shelly Withers.*

Literally, Blackberry is the name of the fruit. Figuratively, in this case, Blackberry is the name of a restaurant from New Jersey that serve Jamaican food or people called it soul food.

c. *Waitresses: We were just having lunch.*

Chef Ramsay: Okay, great. And this **big boy** *there. Who is that?*

James: I'm James.

This utterance used metonym. Shown with the words*big boy*. Literally, this is the first time Chef Ramsay came to Blackberries. Therefore, the scene showed he started by introducing the place and the staff. In this case, the *big boy* called by Chef Ramsay is the manager of the restaurant with the name James. Figuratively, Chef Ramsay did not know the name. The word *big boy* is what Chef Ramsay called it at the first when he did not know the name, and literally, James has a big body. Therefore, Chef Ramsay calls him a *big boy*.

3. **Hyperbole**

a. *Shelly: I am so happy with the way restaurant turned down. The décor is phenomenal. And Blackberry's has the best soul food in town.* **No doubt**.

This sentence consists of 'hyperbole'. The use of figurative meaning can be seen in the phrase *no doubt*. In the fact, this means too much. The scene showed Shelly wanted to clearly said that her restaurant is the best Jamaican restaurant in New Jersey. Shelly exaggerates the sentence with the phrase *no doubt* like the restaurant is the best of the best and nobody denies it.

b. *Shelly: (monologue) It'd be my restaurant. I'mgonnahave it my way.*

Mateen: (monologue) Shelly is super-controlled freak to the 110th power.

This sentence includes 'hyperbole'. Shown with the word *110th power*. The scene showed that the chef names Mateen exaggerate the fact too much because the word *110th power* is something that is impossible. How can people have power? Literally, this sentence tries to explain that Shelly is too handling the kitchen, therefore the team cannot work properly. Figuratively, this TV show asked all the staff of the restaurant and made it into a monologue to inform what are the problems in those restaurants. And the chef names Mateen explain that Shelly is over-controlling people and does not let the other do the job as they want.

c. *Shelly: I think everything is cooked to perfection. There is nothing on that menu that is not perfect.*

The word *nothing* is included in 'hyperbole'. The use of the word *nothing* impresses an exaggeration. Shelly says that by herself. As she stated before, she assumed that her restaurant is the best soul food in town, therefore Shelly thinks all the food is perfect either from the looks or the taste. Maybe if she asked the others how the food is, the answer will differ.This sentence explains to the audience or the viewers that Shelly did not have a problem with the food in her restaurant.

4. Litotes

a. *Shelly: Gordon Ramsay is here! I don't want be sweating over him. Can I kiss him? Can I give him a kiss?And thank him for coming or what?*

Literally, it is fine to be sweating anywhere. Furthermore, Shelly as the chef works in the kitchen anytime and of course, she must be sweating a lot. But figuratively, it has meant Shelly is nervous to meet Chef Gordon Ramsay. The scene showed Chef Ramsay has entered Blackberry's restaurant. As all know, Chef Gordon Ramsay is a world-known

chef. The words *I don't want to be sweating over him* have meant Shelly feels that she is not good enough and not worthy to meet the chef yet. The next sentence is *Can I kiss him? Can I give him a kiss?And thank him for coming or what?* It has mean Shelly is so nervous that she does not know what to say and what to do.

5. **Irony**

a. *Shelly: I don't know what I'm doing wrong.* **Perfect location, perfect food, but where are my customer?**

This sentence includes 'irony' because the expression used is the opposite meaning of the thought in the speakers say. The scene showed Shelly said *perfect location, perfect food*, but the scene showed the opposite of it. The next sentence is *where are my customer?*is the impact of the location or the food that was bad such as the scene showed.

b. *Customer: The macaroni is actually* **looks like vomit**.

This sentence was said by the customer. This sentence consists of 'irony' because it is meant to mock the food. Vomit is known as a disgusting thing. Then, the macaroni is compared with vomit. It has mean that they look or the presentation of the macaroni is pretty bad, or not appetizing at all.

c. *Mateen: She is* **helping the restaurant to fail** *even more.*

The scene showed Chef Mateen conveying his opinion about Shelly. The word *helping* that means by Chef Mateen is the opposite meaning of breaking or destroying. Helping "to fail" has meant it never helps anything or brings and manages the restaurant badly. He wanted to convey how bad the management was run by Shelly. The reason is Shelly does not know how to manage a restaurant, she does what she wanted to do, and did not care about anything.

d. *Chef Ramsay:* **Did somebody butt the wall?***I've heard about broken records, but Jesus Christ. Okay. Let's get out of there quick. I'm afraid to touch any other records.*

This question includes 'irony'. Because it has mean to accuse the people in the restaurant. It is impossible to crack the wall caused by butt the head into the wall. The scene showed after Chef Ramsay saw the crack on the wall behind the records, then he accused of asking those questions to ask what happened until the wall cracked.

6. Simile

a. *Chef Ramsay: Thank you! Very happy to be here. Wow, look at this place!* **Somebody having a party?**

Although there are no words *like, as, etc* this sentence includes 'simile'. The scene showed Chef Ramsay entering the restaurant and seeing many records there. *Party* refers to the decor of the restaurant which is full of records. Then, it has meant when people entered the restaurant, people will feel like entering a party.

b. *Chef Ramsay: Who designed this place?* **I feel like Donna Summer gonna comes through the door***.*

Shelly: That would be me.

This sentence consists of 'simile' because it is comparing two things with the word *like*. The décor of the restaurant is compared with the condition Donna Summer coming to the restaurant. Based on the finding on the internet, Donna Summer is a singer and dancer. She is known as the *Queen of Disco*. Then, the records of the décor are like the party that invited Donna Summer.

c. *Chef Ramsay: (touching the record and see the crack on the wall) So, what...Oh Jesus! What happened?* **Was it the fried chicken or the cornbread, or what?**

James: I have no idea. I've never seen before.

This question consists of 'simile'. The scene showed that Chef Ramsay found cracks on the wall behind the record. Then, the crack on the wall is compared with *fried chicken or cornbread*. Because the texture of it seems like the crack of the wall which has crispy sides.

d. *Portia: Shelly is delusional about how fabulous her food is. I hate the macaroni and cheese.* **Just look like crap on a plate***.*

The scene showed macaroni and cheese are ready to serve. Then, one chef names Portia said those sentences. It is clear to identify this sentence as a simile. Because it is compared with the word *like*. Literally, comparing the food with *crap* has no sense. If translated in Indonesia *crap* means*omongkosong*. But, figuratively it has mean the macaroni and cheese either from the look or from taste is pretty bad.

7. Personification

a. *Narrator: Plainfield New Jersey. A middle-class city with a strong sense of community, and **smack in the middle of town**, is a soul food name "Blackberry's".*

Literally, the word *smack* is used on the small or same size like door, wood, etc. The town has a large area. It is impossible for a human to smack the town. Then, this sentence consists of personification. Figuratively, the verb *smack* has mean "right in" or "precisely" in the middle of town.

b. *Mateen: The problem is Shelly is in denial. She thinks that the décor is amazing and the food tastes spectacular. But **the food is suffering**, the customers are suffering, and the **restaurant is suffering**.*

This sentence clearly includes personification, because the object or the thing doing the human act. Literally *the food* and *the restaurant* cannot feel anything. *Suffer* is only can felt by humans or might be animals too. Figuratively, it means the quality of the food is bad and no one comes to the restaurant because of it.

c. *Shelly: I ask my fiancé if I could kiss you. He is a manager.*

Chef Ramsay: The… (touch his chin)

Shelly: Yeah

Chef Ramsay: Oh, come on!

Shelly: Sexy, right?

*Chef Ramsay: You'll**get arrested for cradle snatching**.*

The scene showed Chef Ramsay was shocked knowing that the manager is dating the owner. Then, Chef Ramsay was saying those sentences with whispered. It is impossible for being arrested by the cradle. Therefore, it includes 'personification'. Figuratively, it means the women will be lulled with love.

d. *James: (whispered to Shelly) I was telling him (Chef Ramsay) like almost **plant that vermin** and everything.*

Literally, humans only can plant a seed, tree, etc. It is impossible to plant vermin. How can humans plant vermin? Hence, this sentence consists of 'personification'. Figuratively, it has meant that Chef Ramsay is assumed to take a mouse in the front of the door. The word *everything* is unknown what was it.

The researcher found that the dominant type of figurative language used in Kitchen Nightmares TV Shows after analyzing the meaning of figurative language found in Kitchen Nightmares TV Shows according to Leech theories. The chart can be seen below:
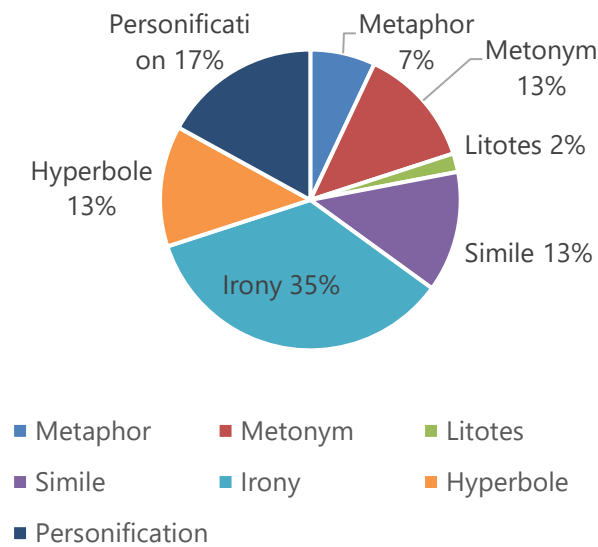

Chart 1. Figurative Language in Kitchen Nightmares TV Shows

Based on the chart above, there are 100% data that are included in figurative language, there are 7% data in metaphor, there are 13% data in metonymy, there are 2% data in litotes, there are 13% data in simile, there are 35% data in irony, there are 13% data in hyperbole, and there are 17% data in personification. Then, the researcher can conclude that the dominant type of figurative language found on Kitchen Nightmares TV Shows is Irony with a total of 21 data or 35%.

The most dominant types that could be found on Kitchen Nightmares TV Shows is Irony. This was not surprising since this TV program had many types of figurative language irony, This TV program starred by a well-known host, a chef who is known throughout the world, a British chef, Chef Gordon Ramsay, who has been being famous for his stinging criticism of various cooking shows on TV. For people who own a restaurant in the same class as Blackberries, criticism in the form of mocking and ridicule was certainly difficult to accept. Such as the scene when Chef Ramsay critiqued about the uncontrolled system in the kitchen, therefore the food was long to serve. The scene when Chef Ramsay found a mouse, and indicated that the restaurant was lacking in terms of cleanliness. It was an irony for the

owner, the manager, and all the staff at the restaurant to know the criticism that contains facts whether it was about the place, food, or management system. For that reason, there was a war of argument between owner and manager with the host which indicated that criticism and judgment were difficult for them to accept. But the criticism here aimed to improve the restaurant itself which was on the brink.

Conclusion

Figurative language that is found on Kitchen Nightmares TV Shows is mostly from the daily conversation and was expressed directly and did not pay attention to the meaning. The use of figurative language varied; it was caused by the situation and the conditions that happen on the restaurant. After classifying, identifying, and analyzing, the researcher then found several types of figurative language. They are 4 or 7% data in metaphor, 8 or 13% data in metonymy, 1 or 2% data in litotes, 8 or 13% data in simile, 21 or 35% data in irony, 8 or 13% data in hyperbole, and 10 or 17% data in personification. The most dominant types that found on Kitchen Nightmares TV Shows is irony. The least figurative language that is found on Kitchen Nightmares TV Shows are personification, simile, hyperbole, metonymy, metaphor, and litotes. Analyzing figurative language in TV-Shows differs from analyzing other literary works in that it does not refer to genuine context, which does not require further interpretation. To develop the most suitable or appropriate meaning of the conversation and make the outcomes remain worthwhile, profound interpretation and imagination are required. As a result, using figurative language allows one to not only learn vocabulary but also understand the meaning of a sentence or utterance in the TV shows or the other literary works. By learning a figurative language, people can learn about the functions, themes, or meaning instead of watching TV shows. They could also find what they have never found in daily conversation or written form by learning a figurative language. It might envision and experience the emotion that the conversation intended to portray if it understands the figurative language used in TV shows. The use of figurative language also had benefit for writing, reading, and listening skills. Learners can dress up and enhance their language by utilizing figurative language. The variety of figurative language prevents readers from being bored since they can choose words that have never heard. This literary

works hoped giving contribution in the field of education. The use of figurative language can also present the language (language variety) in teaching English. The teachers or the lecturers should be using the figurative language because it is an effective way to improve students' critical thinking skills. Furthermore, the students might use figurative language to express all their rhetoric. This is critical because they would be able to cast a vote of no confidence if they could use rhetoric, which is required at the university level. Based on the explanation above, it could be understood that the ability to understand the figurative language has an important role in improve students' language skills because literary works or even daily conversation would not apart from figurative language. The figurative language caused a literary works, or even a conversation to attract attention, created freshness, alive, and especially created vivid imagery.

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