

“YOU MOTH-EATEN MAGGOT!”

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE IN MATILDA

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Abstract

Figurative language is a significant component of literary works, contributing to enhanced expression, creating vivid imagery, and adding depth to narratives. This study, entitled "An Analysis of Figurative Language in Roald Dahl's Novel Matilda," aims to identify figurative language employed in novel Matilda and its contextual meanings using M.H. Abrams' (1999) theory. This research employed a descriptive-qualitative method, using M.H. Abrams' (1999) theory, which classified 16 types of figurative language. These devices have been shown to enhance meaning, evoke emotions, and create vivid imagery in literary works. This study collated 220 data points, including 48 similes, 1 synecdoche, 75 metaphors, 3 metonyms, 53 hyperboles, 8 personifications, 2 paradoxes, 7 sarcasms, 4 allusions, 8 epithets, 1 euphemism, 1 symbol, and 9 ironies, with metaphors identified as the most prevalent. Metaphors enhance character depth and reader engagement. Figurative language sets the scene and conveys emotions. A comprehensive understanding of sentence context, situations, and the author's literary style is imperative for effective interpretation. This study supports English educators in integrating figurative language analysis into their teaching practices, aiding students in literary analysis and appreciation. The study's findings establish a foundation for future research on figurative language and contextual meaning. The study's methodology can be used for further literary analysis and could contribute to developing linguistic and literary theories.

Keywords: Figurative Language; Matilda; Contextual Meaning

Introduction

Language serves as a communication system used by a particular country or community. It included spoken and written forms that allowed people to express ideas, thoughts, emotions, and information (Hornby et al., 1974). The capacity to communicate was a fundamental aspect of

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human existence, and language was the primary means by which this was achieved. Without language, individuals cannot convey information, express their thoughts, or communicate meaningfully with others. Language also conveys emotions, ideas, and creativity, whether spoken or written. This illustrated the essential role that language played in human life.

In linguistics, the term 'semantics' describes the study of word meaning. A principal objective of linguistic semantics was to distinguish between these various types of meaning and clarify their specific roles within a comprehensive theory of language. These meanings were examined to identify how communicators conveyed meaning and to determine how receivers interpreted the communicated meaning. Semantics was a branch of linguistics that examined the meanings present in a language, code, or other forms of representation. A component of semantics included figurative language.

Figurative language is a means of enhancing linguistic expression through the use of imagery and diverse figurative devices. As defined by Abrams, figurative language represents a means of employing words in a non-literal manner to enhance language's richness, expressiveness, and interest. Abrams identified several categories of figurative language, including simile, synecdoche, metaphor, metonymy, hyperbole, personification, paradox, sarcasm, allegory, allusion, antithesis, apostrophe, epithet, euphemism, symbol, and irony (Abrams & Harpham, 2009).

The ability to comprehend the purpose of a conversation and respond appropriately was conditional upon acquiring key language skills and social knowledge (Abdul & Norhasanah, 2022). The novel was one of the most popular forms of literary work and a genre that frequently employed figurative language. Figurative language facilitated the effective and engaging communication of ideas. Moreover, literary works comprised intrinsic and extrinsic elements, the interrelationship between which was a topic of interest in literary studies.

This research provided significant insights for English education, linguistics, and literature students by analyzing the use of figurative language in Roald Dahl's novel *Matilda*. Comprehending figurative language enhanced students' linguistic competence, interpretative abilities, and literary appreciation. Students enriched their academic vocabulary and developed an understanding of nuanced meanings beyond literal interpretation by engaging with figurative language devices such as metaphor, simile, personification, and hyperbole. Furthermore, exploring figurative expressions enabled students to grasp the cultural and contextual dimensions embedded within the text, thereby deepening their awareness of language as a creative medium (Wahyuni et al., 2020). This study also highlighted the pedagogical potential of *Matilda* as an effective teaching tool for analyzing figurative language, providing educators with strategies for facilitating interactive and critical classroom discussions (Deli & Girik Allo, 2015). By integrating literary analysis with language learning, this research contributed to students' academic development by fostering critical thinking, advanced English proficiency, and a more profound engagement with literary texts.

Furthermore, Roald Dahl's novel *Matilda* presented themes relevant to education, including the value of learning, the significance of literacy, and the challenge of injustice. These themes provided a foundation for motivating students to enhance their language abilities while encouraging the development of positive values (Hidayat, 2015). Therefore, this study was expected to significantly contribute to developing English language learning in terms of linguistics and morals. This novel was also used as an effective medium for teaching the meaning and function of figurative language, thus helping students understand English in terms of structure and its use within literary works that were rich in meaning.

This research was distinguished from previous studies by examining a different literary work and utilizing a distinctive analytical framework for exploring figurative language. Previous studies investigated a range of novels, including *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *There You'll Find Me*, and *Looking for Alaska*. Each of these studies employed distinct methodologies and theoretical approaches. For example, (Winata, 2023) research employed Geoffrey Leech's theory with a descriptive quantitative method to analyze figurative language's types and contextual meanings. Similarly, studies by (Wahyuni et al., 2020) and (Magdalena, 2016) employed Perrine's and Kennedy's frameworks to identify and classify the various types of figurative language and highlight their presence within the narratives. These studies collectively provided valuable insights into figurative language in literature, establishing a foundation for further research.

Furthermore, previous studies analyzed classic or contemporary novels written for general readers or young adults. In contrast, this study examined *Matilda*, a work of children's literature known for its unique blend of humor, imagination, and moral lessons. Children's literature often uses figurative language not only to entertain but also to simplify complex ideas and convey moral values in a way that is accessible to young readers.

This study employed (Abrams & Harpham, 2009) theory, which integrates elements of rhetoric, semantics, and narrative analysis to examine figurative language. This study focused on how figurative language in *Matilda* not only enhanced the narrative but also facilitated the development of students' language and literacy abilities. It was expected that this research would provide a deeper understanding of figurative language in *Matilda* and offer insights into its use in learning, particularly in English language teaching. Thus, this study was also expected to bridge the fields of literary analysis and English education, thereby providing a novel perspective on the functions and benefits of figurative language in literature. Based on the explanation above, the researcher conducted research titled "An Analysis of Figurative Language in Roald Dahl's Novel *Matilda*."

Methods

This study used a qualitative research method. Qualitative research was an interpretive approach that aimed to obtain specific meanings and behaviors experienced in social phenomena (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Qualitative research produced descriptive data in the form of spoken or written subjects that aimed for individual and complete understanding of the background. This research was conducted using a qualitative approach, specifically descriptive-qualitative research. As defined by Moleong in (Safitri, 2021), descriptive-qualitative research is a method that employs sentences or descriptions related to a research object rather than focusing on the specifics of arithmetic and statistical calculations. The objective of this research was to examine the use of figurative language in Roald Dahl's novel *Matilda*. Consequently, the study focused on an in-depth analysis of the words within the book, with a particular focus on their contextual meaning.

In this research, the analysis focused on identifying the figurative language found in Roald Dahl's novel "Matilda." The data were collected and analyzed using textual analysis techniques. Textual analysis is a methodology that researchers use to gather information about how human beings make sense of the world. In other words, it was a process of interpreting texts to obtain insights into how, in specific cultural contexts and at particular moments in time, people made sense of the world around them (McKee, 2003). The analytical process involved selecting the primary text, extracting relevant passages containing figurative expressions, applying appropriate literary and linguistic frameworks, and interpreting the findings to reveal deeper

semantic and stylistic meanings. Thus, the objective of this study extended beyond the mere identification of figurative language to comprehend how such language functioned within the narrative context to convey meaning and enhance the literary quality of the novel.

In this study, the researcher served as the primary instrument, as the data collected was qualitative in nature. This referred to data sourced from words or sentences within the novel. The research was conducted using the method of textual analysis, which involved a close reading of the novel to understand the figurative language present in the text. The research tools included a notebook for recording all data obtained from the novel and using pencils and sticky notes for underlining and marking to identify instances of figurative language within the novel.

Following data collection, the researcher engaged in a qualitative data analysis using the methodologies defined by Miles and Huberman. They stated that the data analysis consisted of three stages: data condensation, data display, and drawing conclusion (Miles & Huberman, 1984). The following was a description of the activities that constituted the data analysis. At this stage of the analysis, the data was condensed by searching for and grouping various forms of figurative language found in Roald Dahl's novel *Matilda*, as well as the novel's contextual meaning. Following the condensation of the data, the next step was to present it in table form to classify the types of figurative language identified and the novel's contextual meaning. The final stage was to show the data analysis conclusions concerning figurative language in Roald Dahl's novel "*Matilda*."

Findings and Discussion

This study analyzed the use of figurative language in Roald Dahl's novel "*Matilda*," as referenced in (Abrams & Harpham, 2009) theory. The data collection process involved the identification and categorization of diverse figurative language types, including simile, synecdoche, metaphor, metonymy, hyperbole, personification, paradox, sarcasm, allegory, allusion, antithesis, apostrophe, epithet, euphemism, symbol, and irony. Each type of figurative language was presented in a table, which summarized the frequency with which it occurred, with the aim of identifying usage patterns in the text.

The most dominant type of figurative language is Metaphor, with a total of 75 instances. This is followed by hyperbole, which accounts for 53 instances, and simile with 48 instances. The remaining findings include irony with 9 instances, personification and epithet with 8 instances each, sarcasm with 7 instances, allusion with 4 instances, metonymy with 3 instances, paradox with 2 instances, and the last, synecdoche came with euphemism and symbol with 1 instance each. These findings highlight the rich variety of figurative language used in the novel, contributing to its vivid and imaginative narrative style.

An analysis of the Roald Dahl's novel "*Matilda*" was conducted using (Abrams & Harpham, 2009) theory of figurative language, which categorizes sixteen types of figurative language: simile, synecdoche, metaphor, metonymy, hyperbole, personification, paradox, sarcasm, allegory, allusion, antithesis, apostrophe, epithet, euphemism, symbol, and irony. The analysis revealed the presence of thirteen types of figurative language in the novel *Matilda*. The following discussion will present a few of findings from the study.

Simile

Simile is a form of figurative language commonly used in literary works, where the author makes a direct comparison between two distinct entities by employing conjunctions such as "like" or "as." The purpose of this device is to facilitate a clear and compelling comparison, thereby evoking a strong image in the reader's mind (Arp, Thomas. R & Greg, 2020).

C1/P5/S3/Pg. 4: A particularly poisonous little girl might sting me into saying, "*Fiona has the same glacial beauty as an iceberg, but unlike the iceberg* she has absolutely nothing below the surface."

In the sentence, simile is seen in the explicit comparison between Fiona's beauty and the beauty of the glacier. The use of the word "as" shown a direct connection between two different things to highlight the visual similarities while adding a contrast that reinforces the implicit meaning that Fiona only has external beauty without significant internal qualities.

C1/P7/S1/Pg. 5: It is bad enough when parents treat ordinary children as though they were **scabs and bunions**, but it becomes somehow a lot of worse when the child in question is extraordinary, and by that, I mean sensitive and brilliant.

In the sentence, there is an explicit comparison between parents' treatment of ordinary children and unpleasant object, such a scabs and bunions. The phrase was shows the use of simile as it connects parents' mistreatment with something that is considered disgusting or worthless, to emphasize how unfair the treatment is, especially toward exceptional children.

C1/P48/S3/Pg. 19: "A fine writer will always make you feel that," Mrs. Phelps said. "And don't worry about the bits you can't understand. Sit back and allow the words to **wash around you, like music.**"

In the quote, Mr. Phelps employs the conjunction "like" to establish a comparison between the experience of enjoying words in a book and that of listening to music. This comparison highlights the ability of effective writing to create a deep and pleasurable effect, similar to the way in which music flows and impacts the emotions of the listener. The sentence, therefore, constitutes a simile, as it fulfills the structural and linguistic criteria.

Synecdoche

Synecdoche is a literary device in which a part of something is used to represent the whole, or conversely, the whole is used to signify a part. Synecdoche is commonly employed in literature, rhetoric, and everyday language to create emphasis, clarity, or artistic effect.

C13/P57/S2/Pg. 217: "You witless weed! You empty-headed hamster! You stupid glob of glue!" she had now stationed herself directly behind Rupert, and suddenly she extended a hand the size of a tennis racquet and grabbed **all the hair on Rupert's head in her fist.**

The phrase "All the hair on Rupert's head" functions as a synecdoche, where the hair symbolizes Rupert's entire body. This emphasizes the physical impact of Miss Trunchbull's violent actions, as she does not merely target a specific part of the child's body but exerts force over his entire being. By using synecdoche in this context, highlights the severity of Miss Trunchbull's abuse, portraying her as a tyrannical figure who disregards the dignity and well-being of the children under her authority.

Metaphor

A metaphor can be described as a direct comparison of two ideas or concepts, made without the use of connecting words. The use of figurative language, such as metaphor, allows writers to convey complex ideas in a simpler and more evocative manner (Holman & Thrall, 1986).

C1/P1/S2/Pg. 1: Even when their own child is **the most disgusting little blister** you could ever imagine, they still think that they are wonderful.

This sentence is included in the metaphor because it uses the phrase "disgusting little blister" as a comparison to describe a child who considered annoying or unwanted by his parents, without using the words "like" or "by." "Blister" is a metaphor for a child's negative behavior. It symbolizes badness or dislike without mentioning it directly.

C1/P4/S2/Pg. 2: If I were a teacher I would **cook up some real scorchers** for the children of doting parents.

This sentence included in the metaphor because it compares scorchers to other forms or punishment or experiences that children might encounter. In this context, "scorchers" are the figurative expression for punishment or challenging experiences.

C1/P5/S1/Pg. 3: I might even delve deeper into natural history and say, "the periodical cicada **spends six years as a grub underground**, and no more than six days as a free creature of sunlight and air.

This phrase is a metaphor because it draws a comparison between the protracted learning period experienced by students and the prolonged development phrase of cicadas, despite the

differences between the two. This metaphor is to emphasize implicit development over achievement.

Metonymy

Metonymy is a rhetorical technique in which a word or phrase is substituted for another that is closely connected or associated with it. This device is often utilized to deepen the meaning within a text, offering a richer layer of interpretation by revealing the underlying connection between the two referenced concepts. This stylistic device is frequently employed to enhance the textual meaning and provide an additional layer of nuance, enabling the reader to comprehend the implicit relationship between the two concepts being referenced (Hutauruk, 2019). A place's name might be used metonymy to refer to its inhabitants or workers, creating a more nuanced understanding for the reader.

C2/P27/S4/Pg. 29: "Every single car that comes through my hands get the treatment," the father said. "They all have their mileage cut under the thou before they're offered for sale. And to think I invented that all by myself," he added proudly. **"It's made me a mint."**

The phrase included as a metonymy because, using "mint" as a substitute of financial gain or profit. The "mint" doesn't mean a place where money is made, it substitutes for expressions like "significant profit" or "considerable financial resources" made for reducing the vehicle's mileage.

C16/P1/S2/Pg. 262: They passed **the greengrocer** with the window full of apples and oranges, and **the butcher** with bloody lumps of meat on display and naked chickens hanging up, and the small bank, and the grocery store and the electrical shop, and then they came out at the other side of the village on to the narrow country road where there were no people anymore and very few motorcars.

This phrase is a metonymy because utilizing specific elements such as "the greengrocer," "the butcher," and "the grocery store" to symbolize the activities of life within these establishment. In this instance, object like "apples and oranges" or "bloody lump of meat" not only refer to products but also reflect the atmosphere of daily life in the village environment.

C16/P53/S2/Pg. 281: "Every poor person in England used to wash that way until not so very long ago. And they didn't have a **Primus**. They had to heat the water over the fire in the hearth."

"Primus" in this sentence indicates metonymy, where it substitutes for "water heater." in this case, "Primus" is a metonymy for modern water heater technology, replacing the traditional method of water heater used by economically disadvantaged people in England, who heated water over a fire in the fireplace.

Hyperbole

Hyperbole refers to a deliberate overstatement or exaggeration used for emphasis or effect, and it is not intended to be interpreted in a literal sense. This style of language is often used to emphasize a particular emotion or sentiment, and to create a dramatic effect to grab the attention of the listening/reading audience (Arp, Thomas. R & Greg, 2020).

C1/P3/S2/Pg. 1: It is only when the parents begin telling us about the brilliance of their own revolting offspring, that we start shouting, **"bring us a basin! we're going to be sick!"**

This sentence is regarded as hyperbole due to its use of exaggeration to convey the displeasure of children perceived to be misbehaved by their parents. The phrase "bring us a basin! we're going to be sick!" is employed to convey the intensity of the reaction to the narrative of parents who assert that their children are "brilliant," despite their unappealing appearance. This exaggeration underscores the exasperation elicited by the situation.

C1/P41/S3/Pg. 2: "your son Maximilian," i would write, **"it a total washout."**

The phrase "your son Maximilian" is hyperbole because "total washout" is excessive or exaggerated. In this context, the term "washout" denotes extreme failure or disappointment; the inclusion of "total" amplifies the dramatic effect. The sentence emphasizes the speaker's perception of Maximilian's shortcomings, though it may not represent reality. The phrase's exaggeration increases its impact.

C1/P6/S5/Pg. 5: Mr and Mrs Wormwood *looked forward enormously to the time when they could pick their little daughter off and flick her away*, preferably into the next country or even further than that.

The phrase is an exaggeration because Mr. and Mrs. Wormwood can't literally "pick" their daughter and "flick her away" her in another country, let alone one farther away. This isn't meant literally, but is used to show their dislike of Matilda. Words like "enormously," "flick her away," and "even further than that" are exaggerated and convey negative feelings, but aren't meant to be taken literally.

Personification

Personification is a stylistic device used to assign human traits, actions, or qualities to non-human entities, such as objects or abstract ideas. Personification makes descriptions more emotional and engaging. This literary device gives non-human elements human qualities like emotions, thoughts, actions, and mortality, creating a more imaginative reading experience.

C10/P64/S4/Pg. 161: Matilda and Lavender glanced round and saw the gigantic figure of Miss Trunchbull advancing through the crowd of children with *menacing strides*.

In the sentence, the phrase "with menacing strides" employs personification, which describes Miss Trunchbull's steps as if they possess human intentions or emotions (menacing). This is an example of personification, the ascription of human characteristics to non-human entities. The steps convey human emotions, emphasizing the drama and danger of Miss Trunchbull. This figurative language vividly depicts her character.

C15/P33/S1/Pg. 256: It is extraordinary, thought Miss Honey, how often small children have *flights of fancy* like this.

In the sentence, the phrase "flights of fancy" is personified. "Fancy" (imagination) is described as if it possesses the capacity for flight, an action typically associated with living beings. This depiction brings the abstract concept of imagination to life, highlighting the uninhibited creativity of children's imaginations. This aligns with personification, which gives human qualities to non-human entities to enhance understanding and imagination.

C16/P39/S8/Pg. 274: Its massive spreading branches seemed to be *enfolding and embracing* the tiny building and perhaps hiding it as well from the rest of the world.

In this sentence, the tree is described as having large branches that "seemed to be enfolding and embracing" and "hiding" the small building, as if only a human or living creature could do so. The employment of personification in this sentence utilizes figurative language to evoke an imaginative effect, thereby creating the impression that the tree plays an active role in protecting and concealing the building. This contributes to the enhancement of the deep and warm atmosphere that characterizes the descriptive context.

Paradox

A paradox can be defined as a statement that, upon first consideration, appears to be logically contradictory or unreasonable. However, through further analysis and examination, it becomes possible to understand the statement in a way that is, in fact, logical and coherent (Abrams & Harpham, 2009). A paradox is defined as a self-contradictory statement. However, the underlying meaning of a paradox is not immediately apparent and requires careful consideration to fully comprehend. The objective of a paradox is to capture attention and stimulate new ways of thinking.

C2/P17/S2/Pg. 27: *The numbers would click backwards*, wouldn't they? But who's going to drive a flaming car in reverse for thousands and thousands of miles? You couldn't do it!"

A contradiction between logic and reality is evident in this sentence. According to the theory, if the vehicle were to move in a reverse direction, the speedometer reading would decrease, a logical conclusion. However, in reality, driving a flaming car in reverse for thousands of miles is not only impractical but also impossible. This contradiction between theoretical possibility and impracticality gives rise to a paradoxical effect.

C5/P1/S4/Pg. 62: But the new game she had invented of punishing one or both of them each time they were beastly to her *made her life more less bearable*.

In this sentence, Matilda devises a game as a form of resistance to her parents' mistreatment. Theoretically, such punishment and conflict should make her life more difficult; however, the opposite is observed, as the game actually makes her life more bearable. This contradiction highlights the idea that having power and control over situations can bring emotional satisfaction, even in hard times.

Sarcasm

Sarcasm is a form of expression that employs irony to deride or express disdain towards an individual or object. This communicative strategy is frequently utilized in a subtle yet incisive manner, with the objective of articulating criticism or satire in a more penetrating or pointed way (Attardo, 2020). In a social context, sarcasm highlights weaknesses or injustices and comments on issues directly and satirically. It also conveys the opposite of the truth to elicit a humorous or embarrassing reaction.

C1/P4/S4/Pg. 2: "*I hope you have a family business you can push him* into when he leaves school because he sure as heck won't get a job anywhere else."

In the sentence, the speaker uses sarcasm to indirectly undermine the listener's ability to get a job elsewhere. The implication is that the individual lacks the necessary skills or opportunities to secure employment elsewhere. Phrases like "he sure as heck won't get a job anywhere else" underscore the mockery and clarify the sarcasm.

C9/P41/S1/Pg. 139: "But does it not intrigue you," Miss Honey said, "that a little five-year-old child is reading long adult novels by Dickens and Hemingway? Doesn't that make you *jump up and down with excitement?*"

Miss Honey uses rhetorical questions in a tone that seems enthusiastic, but she's actually satirizing Mr. and Mrs. Wormwood's underestimation of Matilda's abilities. The phrase "Doesn't that make you jump up and down with excitement?" is a literal expression of enthusiasm. Miss Honey uses this phrase to critique Mr. and Mrs. Wormwood's apathy towards Matilda's intelligence.

C13/P24/S1/Pg. 210: "I knew it as soon as I saw you that you were nothing but piece of filth!

***What is your father's job, a sewage worker?*"**

The speaker expresses contempt for the addressee. They associate their profession with that of a sewage worker, mocking them. This is more than irony; it's accompanied by clear contempt. The speaker intends to degrade and humiliate, not inquire about the occupation of the addressee's father.

Allusion

Allusion is a rhetorical device that enriches and deepens language by referring to famous works, figures, or events. This approach facilitates more engaging and understandable communication. Allusion can be defined as a brief and unexplained reference to a character, place, historical event, literary work, or other component of a literary work (Abrams & Harpham, 2009). Sometimes allusions are used ironically to contradict a topic, creating a contrast between the allusion and the topic.

C12/P16/S1/Pg. 200: On the way home from school that afternoon she began to mull over the various possibilities, and when at last the germ of brilliant idea hit her, she began to expand on it and lay her plans with the same kind of care *the Duke of Wellington had done before the Battle of Waterloo.*

The sentence alludes to the Battle of Waterloo and the Duke of Wellington. By comparing Lavender's planning to Wellington's strategy, the sentence conveys Lavender's sophistication and meticulousness without direct mention.

C12/P6/S2/Pg. 200: Admittedly the enemy on this occasion was not *Napoleon*. But you would never have got anyone at Crunchem Hall to admit that the famous Frenchman.

The sentence refers to Napoleon, a historical figure, without explaining him directly. Napoleon is used as a comparison to describe a very feared enemy (Miss Trunchbull). Although

not Napoleon, the students at Crunchem Hall still see him as equal to the military leader known for his power. This reference strengthens the students' fear and fear of Miss Trunchbull.

C16/P43/S6/Pg. 275: It was like an illustration in *Grimm or Hans Andersen*.

The sentence "It was like an illustration in Grimm or Andersen" makes an allusion, implicitly referencing the renowned fairy tale writers. In this context, the comparison with the fairy tales' illustrations evokes typical images of a magical or creepy fantasy world.

Epithet

Epithet denotes an adjective or adjectival phrase used to define a distinctive quality of a person or thing (Abrams & Harpham, 2009). An epithet is a term used to describe an individual, location, or object by means of a sobriquet or appellation that accentuates certain characteristics. In essence, an epithet is frequently an adjective or phrase that provides supplementary information about the subject.

C3/P1/S1/Pg. 35: The following morning, just before the father left for his *beastly* second-hand car garage, Matilda slipped into the cloakroom and got hold of the hat he wore each day to work.

The word "beastly" in the sentence is an epithet. This word describes the garage objectively and reflects the speaker's negative attitude toward it. This aligns with the function of the epithet in adding subjective or emotional meaning to the word.

C8/P9/S17/Pg. 118: Her father said *she's a real wart*.

The word "wart" is an epithet in the sentence "Her father said she's a real wart," using negative connotations like "annoying" or "undesirable." "Wart" isn't used literally, but figuratively, highlighting negative characteristics. This approach aligns with the definition of an epithet, which involves using a word that typically refers to a particular object to create a vivid image of the subject.

C11/P25/S1/Pg. 174: "Do you deny it, you *miserable little gumboil*? Do you plead not guilty?"

Miss Trunchbull used the phrase "do you deny it, you miserable little gumboil? Do you plead not guilty?" as a form of taunt. It is both physically descriptive and derogatory/rude. This epithet underscores Miss Trunchbull's oppressive interactions with children, contributing to her depiction as an authoritarian figure in the novel.

Euphemism

Euphemisms are words that are considered more polite than others. People use them to avoid words that could be considered harsh or inappropriate. Euphemisms are often used in daily conversations to create a peaceful environment. In other words, euphemisms serve to reduce the negative impact that certain words can have, which may be offensive or perceived as inappropriate in certain contexts (Holman & Thrall, 1986).

C16/P57/S2/Pg. 282: "I'm afraid I don't have any sugar," she said. *"I never use it."*

In the sentence "I'm afraid I don't have any sugar." The phrase "I never use it" is a euphemism for her lack of sugar due to financial constraints. By stating that she "never uses it," Miss Honey avoids explicitly conveying her financial constraints, thereby preserving her self-esteem and avoiding external pity.

Symbol

A symbol is an object, word, or image that represents more than its literal meaning. The use of symbols in a work of literature serves to enhance the depth of meaning conveyed by the text, facilitating a connection between concrete experiences and abstract concepts (Arp, Thomas. R & Greg, 2020). Writers use symbolism to enrich their works and facilitate understanding of intricate nuances and meanings that language alone cannot convey.

C11/P79/S3/Pg. 189: They had prepared themselves for an unpleasant scene in which the wretched boy, stuffed to the gills with *chocolate cake*, would have to surrender and beg for mercy and then they would have watched the triumphant Trunchbull forcing more and still more cake into the mouth of the gasping boy.

The chocolate cake is a symbol of control, punishment, and abuse of power in this sentence. The sweet treat, typically linked with enjoyment, is used as a form of torment by Miss Trunchbull, showing how something that should be enjoyable can turn into a tool of domination and humiliation. Trunchbull uses her authority in a cruel and tyrannical way, which is symbolized by the chocolate cake.

Irony

Irony is a situation where what is expected and what actually happens are very different, used to create humor or offer a critical view. Irony is also a rhetorical device that uses a contradictory message to make people think deeply about what is normal and what values are important. The use of irony highlights the differences between what we expect and what we find. This makes us think more deeply about what we think is right and wrong.

C1/P7/S5/Pg. 5: To tell the truth, I doubt they would have noticed had *she crawled into the house with a broken leg*.

The phrase "she crawled into the house with a broken leg" ironically suggests that they wouldn't have noticed her obvious condition. But this also critiques their apparent indifference and inattentiveness. The irony in the statement stems from the disparity between expectation and reality.

C2/P8/S4/Pg. 24: Ignoring Matilda, he turned to his son and said, "*I'm always glad to buy a car when some fool has been crashing the gears so badly, they're all worn out and rattle like mad.*"

Matilda's father, Mr. Wormwood, is "happy" about buying a vehicle that's been damaged by someone else, even though a damaged car is considered a loss, not a gain. This example shows literal and figurative meanings of a statement that contradict each other, which is irony. Through irony, Mr. Wormwood is presented as dishonest. He sells damaged cars to customers without their knowledge to profit.

C2/P12/S1/Pg. 25: "*No one ever got rich being honest,*" the father said. "Customers are there to be diddled."

The irony of Matilda's father's statement is evident. He says honesty doesn't lead to financial gain, and deceiving customers is acceptable. This contradicts common values, such as the virtue of honesty. The father's values are contradicted by his actions, creating negative outcomes. His actions show that his principles are false.

Discussion

Roald Dahl's *Matilda* is not only interesting because of the story and characters, but also because it uses many language styles that make the story more powerful and fun to read. Dahl uses different literary devices like hyperbole, personification, paradox, sarcasm, allusion, epithet, euphemism, symbol, and irony to give deeper meaning, help readers imagine better, and sometimes to criticize bad behavior, especially from adults.

One of the most often used devices is hyperbole, or exaggeration. For example, the sentence "Bring us a basin! We're going to be sick!" is not really true, but it shows strong feelings when adults talk too much about naughty children. Another example is when the narrator says that Mr. and Mrs. Wormwood wanted to "flick [Matilda] away... into the next country." This is not a real action, but it shows how much they dislike their daughter. Hyperbole like this makes the story more dramatic and also funny.

Personification is used to make actions or objects act like humans. For example, when Miss Trunchbull's steps are called "menacing," it makes her seem scarier. The tree that "embraces" the building or "flights of fancy" are other examples where something not human is described like a person. This device helps readers to feel the emotions in the story more clearly.

Dahl also uses paradox to show ideas that are opposite but true at the same time. For example, Matilda feels happy when she does bad things to punish her parents, which is not usually accepted, but it shows she is fighting for justice. Another paradox is when Mr. Wormwood drives

a car backward to reduce the kilometers. This is not logical, but it shows how he tries to cheat in silly ways.

Sarcasm is another strong device used in the novel. Sometimes characters say something, but they mean the opposite. For example, someone says, "I hope you have a family business you can push him into..." which is not a real wish, but a way to criticize the boy's poor school performance. Miss Honey also uses sarcasm when she says she is "jumping up and down with excitement," but really she is not excited. These sarcastic lines help to show the unfair or silly behavior of the adults.

Allusion is also used by Dahl to make comparisons with famous people or stories. For example, Lavender is compared to the Duke of Wellington at the Battle of Waterloo. This shows she is smart and plans very carefully. When the story says something looks like "an illustration in Grimm or Andersen," it makes the reader think of magical fairy tales, even if the situation is scary. These allusions help readers to understand the meaning without long explanations.

Epithet is a word or phrase that gives a strong meaning or feeling about someone. For example, calling the garage "beastly" shows a bad feeling about it. When someone is called a "wart," it does not mean real skin problem but means the person is annoying. Miss Trunchbull also calls a child "you miserable little gumboil," which is rude and hurtful. These epithets help to show the character's personality or attitude clearly.

Euphemism is used to make bad or uncomfortable things sound softer. For example, Miss Honey says, "I never use [sugar]," instead of saying she is too poor to buy sugar. This makes her situation less embarrassing. Euphemism is often used to keep people's dignity or avoid hurting feelings.

Symbol is when something stands for more than what it really is. The chocolate cake in Bruce's punishment is a symbol. Normally, cake means fun or reward, but in this story it is used to show power, punishment, and cruelty. It shows how Miss Trunchbull uses her control in a very bad way.

Irony shows a big difference between what people expect and what really happens. For example, when the narrator says Matilda's parents would not notice if she came home with a broken leg, it shows their bad parenting. Mr. Wormwood also says he likes to buy broken cars because "no one got rich being honest." This is ironic because honesty is usually good, but he says the opposite. Irony in the story helps readers see what is wrong or unfair.

To conclude, Matilda is full of different language styles that make the story more colorful and meaningful. Devices like hyperbole, personification, sarcasm, irony, and others help readers enjoy the story and also think more about the message. Roald Dahl uses these styles not just for fun, but also to criticize bad people, especially those who misuse power. These stylistic devices help the readers to learn and feel more connected to the story.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis of figurative language in Roald Dahl's novel "Matilda", it can be concluded that in the context of literary analysis, figurative language serves as a crucial element in examining the narrative strength of Roald Dahl's novel Matilda. A comprehensive analysis of the data revealed the utilization of thirteen out of sixteen types of figurative language in the novel, including simile, synecdoche, metaphor, metonymy, hyperbole, personification, paradox, sarcasm, allusion, epithet, euphemism, symbol, and irony. In this study, the researcher has 220 data collected. Of these, 48 data were identified as similes, 1 as synecdoche, 75 as metaphors, 3 as metonyms, 53 as hyperboles, 8 as personifications, 2 as paradoxes, 7 as sarcasms, 4 as allusions, 8 as epithets, 1 as euphemisms, 1 as symbols, and 9 as ironies. A dominant figurative language type in Roald Dahl's novel Matilda is the metaphor. A metaphor is a figure of speech in which a word or phrase that literally refers to one object or idea is used to describe something else. Metaphors transfer meaning from one concept to another, creating a deeper understanding. The use of metaphors in narratives makes characters and situations more engaging, enabling readers to understand characters' feelings and experiences more profoundly.

In identifying the contextual meaning of figurative language, the researcher first read the novel in its entirety, seeking words or sentences that contained figurative language. These words or sentences were then underlined, and notes were made. The results were analyzed to determine the contextual meaning. The results of this study indicate that the contextual meaning of figurative language in the novel tends to describe the moment and build the emotion in situations and characters in the novel. To ensure a comprehensive understanding of the contextual meaning, it is essential to first grasp the context of the sentence, the situation, and the language style employed by the novel's author.

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