



TRACES OF AESTHETIC LANGUAGE IN THE LYRICS OF RIO SATRIO'S ALBUM CERITA DAUN DAN BUMI

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Abstract

This study examines the use of stylistic elements in the lyrics of Akun Daun dan Bumi, an album by Rio Satrio, which reflects poetic expressions of human emotions through natural imagery. The purpose of this research is to describe the forms and functions of figurative language, diction, and imagery in constructing meaning and aesthetic value in the song lyrics. This research employs a qualitative descriptive method with a stylistic approach. The data source consists of eight song lyrics from the album Daun dan Bumi Stories. Data were collected through documentation and close reading techniques, while data analysis was conducted by identifying, classifying, and interpreting figurative language, diction, and imagery based on stylistic theory. The results show that the lyrics dominantly employ personification, metaphor, and simile as forms of figurative language, which function to animate natural elements as representations of human feelings. The diction used is predominantly connotative, simple, and poetic, strengthening the emotional atmosphere of the lyrics. Meanwhile, visual, auditory, and emotional imagery play an essential role in enhancing the imaginative experience of listeners. Overall, the integration of figurative language, diction, and imagery contributes significantly to the depth of meaning and aesthetic quality of the album's lyrics.

Keywords: *diction; figurative language; imagery; song lyrics; stylistics*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji penggunaan unsur stilistika dalam lirik lagu album Cerita Daun dan Bumi karya Rio Satrio yang merepresentasikan ekspresi puitis pengalaman emosional manusia melalui simbol alam. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mendeskripsikan bentuk serta fungsi majas, diksi, dan citraan dalam membangun makna dan keindahan lirik lagu. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan pendekatan stilistika. Sumber data penelitian berupa delapan lirik lagu dalam album Cerita Daun dan Bumi. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui dokumentasi dan pembacaan intensif, sedangkan analisis data dilakukan dengan cara mengidentifikasi, mengklasifikasikan, dan menafsirkan majas, diksi, dan citraan berdasarkan teori stilistika. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa lirik lagu didominasi oleh penggunaan majas personifikasi, metafora, dan simile yang berfungsi menghidupkan unsur alam sebagai simbol perasaan manusia. Diksi yang digunakan bersifat konotatif, sederhana, dan puitis sehingga mampu membangun suasana emosional yang mendalam. Citraan visual, auditif, dan emosional juga berperan penting dalam memperkuat daya imajinatif serta keindahan lirik lagu. Dengan demikian, unsur stilistika



dalam album ini saling berpadu dalam menciptakan makna yang mendalam dan estetika bahasa yang kuat.

Kata Kunci: citraan; diksi; lirik lagu; majas; stilistika

I. INTRODUCTION

Language plays a fundamental role in human life. It serves as a means of communication and a medium of aesthetic expression, representing the inner experiences, emotions, and outlooks of its users. In a literary context, language is used creatively and intentionally to construct meanings that are not always literal, but rather symbolic, imaginative, and emotional. The uniqueness of literary language lies in its ability to present aesthetic experiences through word choice, style of expression, and language structure that differ from everyday language. Ratna states that literary language has special characteristics because it is driven by imagination, emotion, and aesthetics, allowing it to be studied scientifically through a specific linguistic approach (Ratna, 2013).

One form of modern literature that utilizes the power of language intensely is song lyrics. Song lyrics function not only as a complement to melodies but also as texts that convey ideas, social reflections, and personal expressions of their creators. In many cases, song lyrics bear structural similarities to poetry, as they both rely on poetic diction, the use of figures of speech, and the creation of imagery to construct atmosphere and meaning. Pradana states that song lyrics are a literary form that prioritizes the beauty of language and the symbolization of meaning, so they can be analyzed using the same approach as poetry (Pradana, 2018). Therefore, song lyrics deserve to be positioned as literary texts with aesthetic and academic value.

Linguistic studies of literary works, including song lyrics, can be conducted through a stylistic approach. Stylistics is a branch of literary linguistics that examines the use of linguistic elements by authors or creators to create aesthetic effects and convey specific meanings. Aminuddin explains that stylistics focuses on the relationship between linguistic form and its aesthetic function in literary works (Aminuddin, 2015). This approach places language at the center of analysis, with attention to how language choices and deviations are consciously used to produce beauty and depth of meaning.

Theoretically, stylistic studies encompass various linguistic elements, including figures of speech, diction, and imagery. Figures of speech are used as a means of indirectly

expressing meaning through figurative language, metaphor, personification, and other forms of language. Keraf states that figurative language serves to strengthen impressions and refine the delivery of ideas (Keraf, 2010). Diction relates to the choice of appropriate and aesthetically pleasing words, while imagery serves to present concrete sensory experiences for the reader or listener. These three elements are interrelated and play a vital role in shaping the aesthetics and meaning of literary works.

A stylistic approach becomes increasingly relevant when applied to song lyrics in the indie music genre. Indie music is known for its tendency to use poetic, reflective, and symbolic language. Its lyrics often utilize natural metaphors, connotative diction, and unconventional language structures to convey existential anxieties, human relationships with nature, and inner emotional dynamics. These characteristics make indie song lyrics a rich object for stylistic analysis.

One indie musical work that consistently displays the power of language is Rio Satrio's album "Testimonies of Leaves and Earth." This album emphasizes the use of poetic and reflective language, dominated by natural symbols and nuances of spirituality. The album's lyrics explore the human relationship with nature, the search for identity, and emotional experiences expressed through distinctive figures of speech, diction, and imagery. Textually, this album can be understood as a narrative and aesthetic unity, not simply a collection of stand-alone songs.

However, when reviewed in light of existing academic studies, stylistic research on song lyrics still reveals several gaps. Normatively, stylistic studies should be able to reveal the integration of linguistic elements and their aesthetic functions in constructing the meaning of literary works. Ideally, stylistic analysis should not only describe the form of figures of speech, diction, and imagery, but also systematically explain their functions and relationships within a unified text. However, empirically, most previous research has been partial, focusing on only one or two stylistic elements, and generally considering a single song, rather than an entire album, as the object of its meaning.

Previous studies, such as those by Yanuasanti (2017), Maretta and Wardani (2019), Putri and Astri (2020), and Nayiroh et al. (2025), show that stylistic studies of song lyrics generally focus on identifying stylistic elements without comprehensively examining the integrated functions of these elements. Furthermore, research specifically focusing on indie

song lyrics within an entire album as the object of stylistic study is still relatively limited. This situation indicates a research gap that needs to be filled. Based on this gap, the novelty of this research lies in its integrated stylistic analysis of the forms and functions of figurative language, diction, and imagery in indie song lyrics, examined as a single album. This research not only describes stylistic elements but also explains their role and function in constructing the meaning and beauty of the song lyrics as a whole. By selecting Rio Satrio's album "Testimonies of Leaves and Earth" as the object of research, this study offers a new perspective in the stylistic study of contemporary popular literature, particularly in the realm of indie music.

Based on this description, the purpose of this research is to describe the forms of figurative language, diction, and imagery contained in the lyrics of Rio Satrio's album "Testimonies of Leaves and Earth" and to explain the function of these stylistic elements in constructing the meaning and beauty of the song lyrics. This research is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of stylistic studies and enrich the body of popular literature research in an academic context.

II. THEORETICAL STUDIES

Literary language is a creative, aesthetic, and connotative use of language to express the author's inner experiences, emotions, and thoughts. Literary language not only serves to convey information but also to construct beauty and symbolic meaning through linguistic deviations, word choice, and the use of certain styles (Ratna, 2020). In the context of song lyrics, literary language holds a crucial position because lyrics are essentially sung poetry, thus relying on the power of diction, figures of speech, and poetic structure to create a dense meaning and emotional power (Aminuddin, 2015; Nurgiyantoro, 2017). The presence of imagery in song lyrics also plays a role in presenting a concrete sensory experience, allowing listeners to build imagination and emotional engagement with the song's content (Ratna, 2020).

A relevant approach to examining the use of literary language in song lyrics is stylistics. Stylistics is a branch of literary linguistics that studies style, or the author's distinctive way of utilizing linguistic elements to create aesthetic effects and convey specific meanings (Ratna, 2020). Stylistics places language at the center of analysis by examining the form, function, and deviations of language used consciously and strategically in literary

works. Aminuddin (2015) emphasized that deviations in language in literary works are not errors, but rather aesthetic strategies to enhance expressive power and depth of meaning. Thus, stylistics serves as a bridge between linguistic and literary analysis to understand the relationship between linguistic form and meaning comprehensively (Nurgiyantoro, 2019).

Stylistic elements that are the primary focus in literary studies include figures of speech, diction, and imagery. Figures of speech are a form of figurative language used to convey meaning indirectly and imaginatively to create aesthetic and emotional effects (Keraf, 2007). Diction relates to the choice of appropriate, poetic, and connotative words, thereby creating a certain atmosphere and nuance in literary works (Keraf, 2007). Meanwhile, imagery functions to evoke sensory images that enable readers or listeners to visually, auditorily, and kinesthetically experience the experiences depicted in the text (Wibowo, 2018). These three elements are interrelated and play a crucial role in shaping the beauty and depth of meaning of literary works, including song lyrics.

The function of stylistics in literary works is to explain how language is used to construct meaning and beauty in a distinctive way. Stylistics allows for analysis of the author's distinctive style through word choice, use of figures of speech, and creation of imagery without necessarily involving aspects outside the text (Ratna, 2020). In the context of song lyrics, stylistics serves as a theoretical foundation for viewing lyrics as poetic, symbolic, and emotional literary texts (Pradana, 2021). Therefore, in this study, stylistics is used as a theoretical framework to identify and explain the forms and functions of figures of speech, diction, and imagery in constructing the meaning and beauty of the lyrics of Rio Satrio's album Cerita Daun dan Bumi.

III. RESEARCH METHODS

This research is a qualitative descriptive study that aims to describe and interpret the stylistic elements in the song lyrics of the album Cerita Daun dan Bumi by Rio Satrio, with the research specification in the form of a study of popular literary texts in the form of song lyrics. The approach used is a stylistic approach with a content analysis method, which focuses on the study of figures of speech, diction, and imagery as linguistic elements that form the meaning and aesthetics of the lyrics. The research data are in the form of song lyric excerpts containing stylistic elements, while the data sources are obtained from official lyric documents accessed through digital platforms such as Spotify, YouTube, and trusted lyric

provider sites. The data collection technique is carried out through documentation and note-taking by reading, listening, taking notes, and grouping parts of the lyrics according to the categories of stylistic elements analyzed. Data analysis is carried out using a content analysis method through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, as well as drawing conclusions and verification, so that a systematic and in-depth understanding of the form and function of figures of speech, diction, and imagery in building meaning and the beauty of language in the song lyrics of the album Cerita Daun dan Bumi by Rio Satrio is obtained.

IV. RESEARCH RESULTS

This section of the analysis and discussion results focuses on the study of the form and function of the use of figures of speech, diction, and imagery in the lyrics of Rio Satrio's album Cerita Daun dan Bumi by identifying the types of figures of speech, choice of diction, and variety of imagery and examining their roles in building the theme, atmosphere, and message of the lyrics. The stylistic approach is used because it views linguistic elements as the main means of emotional expression and communication, as emphasized that figures of speech and language choices function to represent emotional experiences symbolically and communicatively. The use of comparative figures of speech such as metaphors and personification is proven not only to beautify the language, but also to deepen thematic meaning and build a strong emotional atmosphere (Armin, 2025; Agil, 2025), even forming a structure of meaning that goes beyond the literal meaning through the similarity of concepts and conditions between the compared elements (Salsabila, 2025). Furthermore, the selection of appropriate diction and high lexical density contribute significantly to the strength of meaning, expressive power, and aesthetic value of lyrics, both in conveying emotional messages and creating artistic cohesion in the text (Kasmilah et al., 2025; Jayanti et al., 2025). Lexical and grammatical elements also function complementary in constructing poetic meaning and emotional depth in song lyrics (Destriani & Rahmayanti, 2025). Thus, this analysis demonstrates a close relationship between the choice of linguistic form and its expressive function in representing emotional experiences, inner conflicts, and self-reflection, which are the common thread of the album as a whole.

Figures of Speech, Diction, and Imagery in the Song Lyrics of Rio's Album Cerita Daun Dan Bumi

Table 1. Classification of Figures of Speech, Diction, and Imagery in the Song Lyrics of Rio's Album Cerita Daun dan Bumi

N o	Judul Lagu	Bentuk Majas Dominan	Contoh Kutipan Lirik	Diksi Menonjol	Jenis Citraan
1	Nyanyian Hujan	Metafora, Personifikasi	<i>"Aku adalah benang perak dunia"</i>	benang perak, tangisan cahaya, pelangi	Citraan visual, auditif, perasaan
2	Bulandari	Personifikasi, Repetisi	<i>"Bulan dari langit menemani langkah kaki gelap malam ini"</i>	menemani, luka hati, gelap malam	Citraan visual, perasaan
3	Sikuning	Alegori, Metafora	<i>"Bahagia terbuat dari fantasi"</i>	sepi, fantasi, surga	Citraan perasaan, mental
4	Hingga Terkubur	Simile, Metafora	<i>"Seumpama mentari sirna"</i>	puing, senja, kekal	Citraan visual, perasaan
5	Menjadi Lagu	Metafora, Personifikasi	<i>"Biarkan aku menjadi lagu"</i>	bayangmu, jejakmu, waktu	Citraan auditif, mental
6	Cerita Daun dan Bumi	Personifikasi, Metafora	<i>"Daun membantu usap tangisnya"</i>	tangis, harap, karunia	Citraan visual, perasaan
7	Campur Tangan Semesta	Personifikasi, Retoris	<i>"Angin memaksa kita tuk saling menyapa"</i>	semesta, hujan, angin	Citraan visual, kinestetik
8	Mati Rasa	Metafora, Repetisi	<i>"Ku ingin mati rasa ini"</i>	luka lama, semu, sisi hati	Citraan perasaan, mental

The album Cerita Daun dan Bumi displays a consistent aesthetic tendency in its use of figures of speech, diction, and imagery. The lyrics are constructed with poetic, reflective, and symbolically rich language, creating an intimate emotional experience for the listener.

The album is dominated by personification and metaphor. Abstract elements such as feelings, wounds, hopes, and emptiness are often treated as if they possess human characteristics. Feelings are described as being "hurt," "ignored," or "dead," while natural elements such as the earth, leaves, air, and ocean are given consciousness and emotional roles.

Metaphors are consistently used to represent the inner states of the lyric characters, particularly those related to grief, loss, and the process of self-healing. Emotional connections are often disguised through symbols of nature or physical conditions, so that meaning is conveyed not directly, but through layers of allusion.

Furthermore, there is a tendency to use repetition, particularly in the repetition of certain lines or phrases. This repetition serves to emphasize unresolved inner conflict, recurring pain, or the character's inability to escape certain feelings. Hyperbole also appears in limited ways to heighten emotional intensity, yet remains subtle and unexaggerated.

The album's diction tends to be simple, straightforward, and emotionally nuanced, with word choices that are close to everyday language yet possess deep meaning. Words like "hati," "luka," "harap," "tidak takut," "bored," "pati," and "rasa" appear repeatedly, demonstrating a thematic focus on the dynamics of human emotion.

Rio Satrio prefers concrete and natural diction over abstract, philosophical terms. Words referring to natural elements like leaves, earth, air, and oceans, as well as physical conditions like crying and wounds, are used as a means of conveying emotional experiences. This makes the lyrics feel down-to-earth, personal, and easily absorbed.

The diction also tends to be minimal in excessive rhetorical ornamentation, allowing the lyrics' strength to lie in their honest simplicity. This simplicity aligns with the album's theme of acceptance, resilience, and healing.

The album's most dominant imagery is emotional or sentimental. Nearly all of the songs focus on the lyricist's inner struggles, such as pain, emptiness, hope, and the desire to forget. This imagery allows the listener not only to understand the story but also to feel the psychological state of the characters.

In addition to emotional imagery, the album also exhibits a strong emphasis on visual imagery, particularly through depictions of nature and simple movements. Visualizations of leaves, earth, water, wounds, and tears help clarify the emotional symbols presented in the lyrics.

Motion and tactile imagery appear selectively, usually to emphasize the process, both the reopening of wounds and the struggle to recover and survive. All of the imagery works harmoniously to create a melancholic, contemplative, and empathetic atmosphere.

Overall, the album "Testimonies of Leaves and Earth" demonstrates aesthetic consistency through the dominance of personification and metaphor as a means of symbolizing emotion, the use of simple yet deeply meaningful diction, and an emphasis on emotional and visual imagery that supports a reflective atmosphere.

This pattern emphasizes that the album functions not only as a musical work but also as a medium for lyrical literary expression, representing the inner journey of humanity in dealing with pain, loneliness, and hope.

The Function of Figurative Language, Diction, and Imagery in the Lyrics of the Album Cerita Daun dan Bumi

The use of figurative language in the lyrics of the album Cerita Daun dan Bumi serves as a primary tool to deepen the emotional and philosophical meanings conveyed by the songwriters (Adhityapranata & Adlan, 2025; Fatimah, 2025; Nasruddin, 2025; Sabili et al., 2025). The lyrics are composed in poetic, reflective, and symbolically rich language, thus creating an intense emotional experience for the listener. Personification, metaphor, and simile dominate almost all of the songs, depicting nature as a living, conscious entity that interacts emotionally with humans. For example, the personifications of the awakened earth, the crying rain, and the tears-wiping leaves bridge the inner experiences of the lyric characters with natural phenomena, making the song's message more universal and reflective (Adhityapranata & Adlan, 2025; Fatimah, 2025; Nasruddin, 2025; Sabili et al., 2025). Through metaphor, the characters' inner states—such as sadness, loss, and the process of self-healing—are symbolically conveyed, while repetition emphasizes recurring inner conflicts, and hyperbole is used sparingly to subtly add emotional intensity.

The diction in this album has significant aesthetic and symbolic functions. The choice of words tends to be simple, poetic, and natural, such as rain, moon, wind, leaves, earth, dusk, and loneliness. These words create a mellow, contemplative, and intimate atmosphere, in keeping with the album's themes, which highlight the inner journey, solitude, and humanity's relationship with nature. The use of abstract words such as "sepi," "luka," "harap," and "bahagia" (happy) allows for greater interpretative space for the listener, making the lyrics reflective and not merely narrative. The repetition of certain words or diction also serves to emphasize emotions, such as loss or longing, making the experience of listening to the lyrics feel deeper and more engaging (Adhityapranata & Adlan, 2025; Fatimah, 2025; Nasruddin, 2025; Sabili et al., 2025).

The imagery in this album plays a crucial role in creating an imaginative experience for the listener. Visual imagery is evident in the images of falling rain, refracting rainbows, the moon accompanying the night, and leaves growing from hope. Auditory imagery is present

through expressions such as splashes that become the tone and song of the rain, creating an imaginary sense of sound and rhythm. Meanwhile, emotional imagery serves as the central link throughout the song, as nearly all visual and auditory imagery is directed at emphasizing the inner state of the lyricist. This imagery functions not only to enhance the lyrics but also to foster an emotional bond between the listener and the lyricist (Adhityapranata & Adlan, 2025; Fatimah, 2025; Nasruddin, 2025; Sabili et al., 2025).

Overall, figurative language, diction, and imagery work synergistically to convey both aesthetic beauty and depth of meaning. Figures of speech enrich the symbolization of emotions, diction builds poetic nuance and atmosphere, while imagery enlivens the listener's imaginative and emotional experience. Nasruddin (2025) emphasized that metaphors in lyrics not only enhance the text aesthetically but also strengthen the listener's emotional appreciation, while Sabili et al. (2025) showed that the use of metaphors adds a complex and layered experience, deepening the understanding of the meaning and emotional value of the lyrics. Thus, this album shows aesthetic consistency through the dominance of personification and metaphor, the choice of simple but meaningful diction, and the emphasis on imagery that builds a reflective atmosphere, making it a medium of lyrical literary expression that represents the human inner journey (Adhityapranata & Adlan, 2025; Fatimah, 2025; Nasruddin, 2025; Sabili et al., 2025).

V. CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study shows that the use of figures of speech, diction, and imagery in the lyrics of Rio Satrio's album Cerita Daun dan Bumi plays a significant role in building meaning and poetic beauty of language. The dominant figures of speech in the form of personification, metaphor, and simile serve to bring natural elements to life as representations of human inner experiences, so that emotional messages such as loneliness, hope, love, and pain can be conveyed symbolically and deeply. The chosen diction tends to be simple, connotative, and nuanced with nature, which not only creates a soft and reflective atmosphere, but also opens up space for interpretation for the listener. Meanwhile, visual, auditory, and emotional imagery work synergistically to present a strong imaginative experience, so that the song lyrics are able to arouse feelings and build emotional closeness with the audience. Thus, it can be concluded that the stylistic strength of this album lies in the integration of figures of speech, diction, and imagery that make the song lyrics not just a

means of entertainment, but a medium of aesthetic expression and philosophical reflection on the relationship between humans, nature, and the universe.

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