



The Relationship Between Literal and Figurative Meanings in the Lyrics of the Song *Metafora Berpelukan* by Dongker: A Semantic Study

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to identify expressions containing literal and figurative meanings in the lyrics of *Metafora Berpelukan* by Dongker, explain their meanings, and analyze the relationship between the two types of meaning based on the lyrical context. This study employs a descriptive qualitative method, using the song lyrics of *Metafora Berpelukan* as the data source. The data were collected through listening and note-taking techniques, then analyzed by identifying the expressions, explaining their literal meanings, interpreting their figurative meanings, and examining the relationship between the two. The analysis is based on a semantic approach. The findings reveal 11 expressions that demonstrate the relationship between literal and figurative meanings. These relationships are reflected through association, contrast, analogy, and meaning extension. Several expressions show how direct meanings can be associated with vulnerability and the need for emotional support. Other expressions use spatial imagery that goes beyond its physical meaning and allows for figurative interpretation. This study highlights that literal meaning serves as a starting point for understanding figurative meaning, while the lyrical context helps clarify the messages conveyed.

Keywords: literal meaning, figurative meaning, song lyrics, semantics

INTRODUCTION

Language serves not only as a tool for conveying information but also as a medium for humans to express thoughts, feelings, experiences, and perspectives on life. The meaning embedded in language is crucial for understanding messages conveyed through words, phrases, and sentences. The study specifically focused on linguistic meaning is known as semantics. Chaer (2013) defines semantics as the branch of linguistics that studies meaning in language. Through the study of semantics, an expression is viewed not merely in terms of the arrangement of words that compose it, but also in terms of the meaning generated by the use of those words. Linguistic meaning can be conveyed directly—making it easily understood based on conventional definitions—or indirectly,

requiring deeper interpretation. These varying modes of conveying meaning demonstrate that language comprehension does not always stop at the surface level, particularly when language is used to express human experiences and emotions through creative works (Hermandra et al., 2024). In the study of semantics, literal meaning and figurative meaning are essential concepts to grasp, as both can coexist within a single expression and form interconnected semantic relationships. Literal meaning refers to the direct sense of a word or expression based on its common usage, whereas figurative meaning conveys intent through transference, comparison, or depiction that differs from the direct meaning. In *Diksi dan Gaya Bahasa* (Diction and Language Style), Keraf (2007)

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discusses figurative language as a form of expression grounded in comparisons or similarities between entities sharing specific characteristics. This perspective illustrates that figurative language does not emerge in isolation from the literal meanings of the words employed; rather, it leverages specific relationships to convey broader intentions. Wong and Jalaluddin (2019) further demonstrate that words with opposing literal meanings can generate additional layers of meaning when placed within the context of song lyrics. The relationship between these two meanings warrants examination because the literal meaning can serve as a starting point for understanding the figurative intent, while context helps clarify the reasons for using a particular expression and the message it conveys.

Song lyrics represent a form of creative language use that can be analyzed through a semantic approach. Words in lyrics are arranged not merely to align with the musical rhythm but also to convey the creator's experiences, ideas, inner moods, and perspectives on specific issues. The choice of words, comparisons, symbols, metaphors, and figurative expressions can amplify a song's message and open up avenues for listener interpretation. Hermandra et al. (2024), in their study of the song Sorai by Nadin Amizah, demonstrated that figurative language plays a role in conveying the concept of accepting a breakup through expressions that cannot be fully understood based on their literal meanings alone. Aligning with these findings, Zihan et al. (2025) discussed the use of diction and figurative language in lyrics as linguistic choices linked to the work's themes and messages. Both studies indicate that analyzing song lyrics requires examining the relationships between words and the context of their usage. An analysis that relies solely on isolated word meanings risks overlooking the intended meaning constructed through the expression as a whole.

The song "Metafora Berpelukan" by Dongker was selected as the subject of this study because

its lyrics present expressions that invite analysis regarding the relationship between literal and figurative meanings. One section of the lyrics expresses a desire to be embraced and introduces a spatial image that shifts from the realm of everyday experience to the cosmos—framed here as a metaphor. This choice of expression offers an opportunity to examine how concrete experiences—such as an embrace or physical space—can connect to more abstract concepts, such as emotional closeness, longing, or the need for another person's presence. The inclusion of the word "metaphor" in both the title and the closing lyrics is also noteworthy, as it signals an awareness of the use of figurative language within the song itself. However, the meaning of these expressions cannot be determined solely by the song's title or a single line of lyrics; interpretation requires considering the literal meaning of each linguistic element, the relationships between words, and the overall lyrical context. These characteristics make "Metafora Berpelukan" a relevant case study for exploring the interplay between literal and figurative meanings in musical expression.

The challenge in interpreting the lyrics of "Metafora Berpelukan" lies in the potential discrepancy between an expression's literal meaning and the significance it acquires when read within the song's context. Literally, an embrace is understood as the act of holding someone with one's arms, while "the cosmos" (or angkasa) refers to the vast expanse beyond the Earth's surface. Yet, when these images appear in lyrics discussing the desire to be embraced and the possibility of inhabiting a space described as a metaphor, the interpretation can transcend physical definitions. An embrace, for instance, can be viewed as both a physical act and a potential symbol of emotional closeness or support. Such interpretations must be validated by examining how the expression relates to other parts of the lyrics, ensuring the analysis goes beyond the reader's subjective opinion. This issue demonstrates that figurative meaning should not be entirely divorced from literal meaning, as



the direct sense provides an initial basis for tracing shifts or extensions of meaning. The present study positions the relationship between these two types of meaning as a central issue requiring explanation through an analysis of the language and the lyrical context.

Previous research provides a foundation for examining how figurative meaning in song lyrics has been addressed within semantic studies. Hermendra et al. (2024), in their article *Kajian Semantik: Implementasi Makna Kiasan pada Lagu “Sorai” Karya Nadin Amizah (A Semantic Study: The Implementation of Figurative Meaning in the Song “Sorai” by Nadin Amizah)*, examine the use of figurative language in the lyrics and link it to the message of sincerely accepting a separation. That article identifies figurative expressions as crucial elements in conveying the song's meaning. Another study was conducted by Wong and Jalaluddin (2019) in the article *Bahasa Kiasan dalam Lagu “Mati Hidup Semula”: Analisis Semantik Inkuisitif (Figurative Language in the Song “Mati Hidup Semula”: An Inquisitive Semantic Analysis)*. Published in *Jurnal Bahasa* (Vol. 19, No. 2, pp. 231–258), this study analyzes two implicit expressions and finds that the relationship between the words "life" and "death" represents not merely a literal opposition but also generates additional meaning within the song's context. These findings are highly relevant to the present study, as they highlight the importance of interpreting literal meaning alongside the meaning that emerges from the context.

More recent research by Zihan et al. (2025) in the journal *Onoma: Pendidikan, Bahasa, dan Sastra* examines the diction, figurative language, and meanings found in the song lyrics of the band Romi & The Jahats. That article appeared in Volume 11, Number 4, on pages 4152–4168. Collectively, these studies establish a diverse foundation for the analysis of figurative language in song lyrics. The present article focuses on elucidating the relationship between literal and figurative meanings within selected expressions—

specifically, how the direct meaning serves as a basis for figurative interpretation and how the lyrical context expands that meaning. This approach represents a distinct direction of inquiry rather than a claim that no similar research has ever been conducted. Establishing the study's novelty more robustly would require a broader literature review, including semantic research on metaphors, connotative meanings, and semantic relationships within Indonesian song lyrics.

This study employs a semantic framework to explain the meanings of expressions in the lyrics of the song "Metafora Berpelukan" by Dongker. The concept of literal meaning is used to identify the direct sense of words or phrases, while the concept of figurative meaning is used to explore intended meanings arising from comparisons, semantic shifts, or figurative depictions. Keraf's (2007) insights on figurative language styles aid in identifying forms of expression that utilize comparison or analogy. These ideas are integrated with findings by Wong and Jalaluddin (2019), which highlight the importance of linking literal meanings to context-based interpretations. The analysis proceeds by examining expressions in stages: identifying the direct meaning, determining potential figurative meanings, elucidating the relationship between the two, and assessing their alignment with the lyrical context. If metaphors mapping concrete experiences to abstract concepts are identified, a cognitive semantic approach may be considered to support the interpretation. The application of such a supplementary approach must be tailored to the actual data encountered to ensure the analysis remains focused and avoids imposing theoretical categories onto the expressions under study.

Based on this premise, this study aims to identify expressions within the lyrics of the song "Metafora Berpelukan" by Dongker that potentially carry figurative meaning, to explain their literal meanings, and to analyze the relationship between these two meanings within the lyrical context. The study also seeks to

elucidate the role this semantic relationship plays in shaping the song's message and expressive depth. It is hoped that this research will enrich semantic discourse, particularly regarding the interplay between literal and figurative meanings in creative language. For readers, the findings demonstrate that understanding song lyrics requires more than merely looking up individual word definitions; it necessitates attention to inter-word relationships, the choice of expressions, and the surrounding context. Within the field of Indonesian language and literature studies, this research serves as an example of applying semantic analysis to contemporary music, focusing specifically on the process of meaning formation rather than simply categorizing the figures of speech identified.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative descriptive method to examine the relationship between literal and figurative meanings in the lyrics of the song "Metafora Berpelukan" by Dongker. Bogdan and Taylor (Moleong, 2017; Razak, 2017) explain that qualitative research yields descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words and observable behavior. This perspective aligns with the current study, as the data analyzed consists of words, phrases, and expressions within the lyrics that require interpretation based on their context of use. The study utilizes Keraf's (2006) theory of language style as a framework to identify and analyze the use of figurative language, specifically expressions that convey meanings beyond their direct definitions.

The data source for this study is the lyrics of the song "Metafora Berpelukan" by Dongker, while the data itself consists of words, phrases, or expressions that potentially carry both literal and figurative meanings. Data collection was conducted using the "listen and note" technique. The researcher read and listened to the lyrics thoroughly to grasp the song's content and context, then marked sections indicating potential figurative

language use. Selected expressions were recorded as research data and re-examined against the lyrical context. To ensure data accuracy, the lyric text was cross-referenced with reliable sources.

Data analysis was carried out in six stages. The first stage involved reading and listening to the lyrics comprehensively to gain an initial understanding of the song's content and context. The second stage involved marking words, phrases, or expressions that might contain figurative meaning, paying attention to word choice and potential discrepancies between the direct meaning and the intended message. The third stage involved explaining the literal meaning of each data point based on lexical sources, such as a trusted Indonesian dictionary. The fourth stage involved interpreting the figurative meaning by considering the expression's context within the lyrics and its relationship to other parts of the song. At this stage, Keraf's (2006) theory of figurative language is employed to help identify the use of figurative language and understand the function of expressions in conveying specific intended meanings.

The fifth stage involves analyzing the relationship between the literal and figurative meanings within each data item. This analysis is conducted by comparing the basic meaning of an expression with the meaning emerging from the song's context—examining whether the relationship is established through resemblance, comparison, semantic shift, or other forms of connection supported by the data. The sixth stage entails drawing conclusions based on the overall analysis results. These conclusions encompass the identified forms of expression, their interpreted meanings, and the relationship between literal and figurative meanings in constructing the lyrical message. The researcher utilizes a data recording sheet to categorize lyric excerpts, literal meanings, figurative interpretations, and the results of the analysis regarding the relationship between the two meanings, thereby ensuring the analysis process is structured and traceable.

RESULT

The identification of the lyrics to the song "Metafora Berpelukan" by Dongker reveals a number of words, phrases, and expressions that can be examined in terms of their literal and figurative meanings. The selected data encompasses expressions related to questions, beauty, anger, hostility, separation, vulnerability, and embraces, as well as spatial imagery such as meadows, cramped rooms, and the open sky. This data comprises 11 instances of literal and figurative meanings. To clarify the trends regarding these literal and figurative meanings, the analysis results are summarized in the following description.

1. Data-1

"Padahal ada semua jawaban tentang hal indah" [Yet, all the answers regarding beautiful things are right there.] Literal Meaning: An answer related to something beautiful. Figurative Meaning: An understanding or resolution regarding something deemed good and valuable

2. Data-2

"Jujur, satu hal termudah yang enggan terucap" [Honestly, the easiest thing is the one thing I hesitate to say.] Literal Meaning: Speaking honestly is considered easy, yet the words are difficult to utter. Figurative Meaning: True feelings or admissions one wishes to convey but holds back due to a lack of honesty.

3. Data-3

"Marah, teruslah kau marah, Arahkan padanya" [Be angry—go ahead and stay angry—and direct it at him.] Literal Meaning: Anger directed at a specific party. Figurative Meaning: Venturing anger or targeting the party held responsible.

4. Data-4

"Pada kuasa dan kesombongan nihil" [On power and arrogance nil] Literal Meaning: Power and arrogance linked to the concept of nothingness or absence. Figurative Meaning: Criticism directed at power and arrogance perceived as hollow or worthless.

5. Data-5

"Anjing, aku lelah anjing" [Damn, I'm so fucking tired.] Literal Meaning: An animal name used as a profanity. Figurative Meaning: An outburst born of frustration and disappointment, expressing exhaustion with one's current circumstances.

6. Data-6

"Terus bermusuhan dengan sekitarku" [I remain at odds with those around me.] Literal Meaning: Remaining in a state of hostility toward others or one's surroundings. Figurative Meaning: A depiction of alienation, social conflict, or difficulty in forming relationships.

7. Data-7

"Sayang, kenapa kita berpisah? Padahal bersama adalah hal indah" [Sayang, kenapa kita berpisah? Padahal bersama adalah hal indah] Literal Meaning: Questioning the reason for parting ways, despite togetherness being deemed beautiful. Figurative Meaning: Togetherness viewed as a source of happiness or emotional value, contrasting with separation.

8. Data-8

"Kawan, baru kali ini ku merasa sedih ketika sadar atau karena minuman" [Friend, this is the first time I've felt sad—whether from being sober or because of the drink.] Literal Meaning: The speaker declares that this is the first time they have felt such sadness—whether while sober or under the influence of alcohol. Figurative Meaning: Deep and unprecedented sorrow.

9. Data-9

"Ingin dipelukmu, sayangku, peluk aku" [I want to be held by you, my love—hold me.] Literal Meaning: The speaker desires an embrace from a loved one. Figurative Meaning: A longing for closeness, tranquility, or emotional support.

10. Data-10

"Di padang rumput, di petak kamar yang sempit" [In the meadow, in the cramped room] Literal Meaning: Two settings: a meadow and a cramped room. Figurative Meaning: A suggestion that the desire for closeness is not bound to a specific location.

11. Data-11

"Di angkasa yang hanya metafora belaka" [In a sky that is merely a metaphor]. Literal Meaning: The sky is depicted through a metaphor. Figurative Meaning: The sky/heavens interpreted as a representation of a distant, vast, or intangible space within the context of the expression.

Based on this categorization, the relationship between literal and figurative meanings within the lyrics can be observed through several patterns. The identification process reveals that the lyrics of the song "Metafora Berpelukan" by Dongker contain expressions capable of linking literal meanings with emotional, social, and symbolic ones. Expressions regarding difficult-to-voice admissions, anger, hostility, vulnerability, the desire for an embrace, and spatial imagery serve as relevant data for further analysis. The findings presented here consist of a mapping of the data and potential semantic relationships; the rationale for classifying the stylistic devices and the in-depth interpretation are reserved for the discussion section.

DISCUSSION

Data 1

The expression *Padahal ada semua jawaban tentang hal indah* can be understood literally as a statement that answers concerning something beautiful are, in fact, available. The word jawaban (answer) refers to that which is used to respond to a question, while indah (beautiful) relates to a quality that evokes a pleasant or admirable impression. In the field of semantics, Chaer (2009) explains that meaning is a crucial component of language, understood through the relationship between linguistic units and their referents. Based on this perspective, the interpretation of this expression begins with the fundamental meaning of each word, followed by an examination of the inter-word relationships within the sentence. In the context of the first stanza, this expression appears after the question "Sorry, why do you ask so many questions?" and is followed by a statement regarding something one is reluctant to voice. This sequence suggests that the "answers regarding beautiful things" are not merely responses to ordinary inquiries but rather represent something already known or felt yet not openly expressed. This understanding aligns with a semantic approach that considers context to elucidate the meaning of expressions that cannot be fully grasped through their lexical definitions alone. Jalaluddin (2014), employing an inquisitive semantics approach, emphasizes the importance of deeply exploring the meaning of expressions by considering both context and the rationale behind word choice. Based on this approach, the semantic relationship within this expression can be understood as a contextual extension of meaning: while the word jawaban (answer) retains its core definition, within the sequence of lyrics, it may allude to a potential confession or an unexpressed emotion. This interpretation does not imply that the expression is automatically a metaphor; its figurative meaning must be determined through the



interrelationships between words and the overall lyrical context, rather than relying on a single word in isolation.

Data 2

The relationship between literal meaning and implied intent is clearly evident in the expression "Honesty—the easiest thing, yet one we are reluctant to voice." Literally, *terucap* (voiced/spoken) implies something capable of being—or actually—spoken, while *enggan* (reluctant) signifies an unwillingness or hesitation to act. According to Chaer (2009), semantic analysis concerns the meaning of linguistic units, including word meanings that can be examined lexically. Based on this understanding, the words *enggan* and *terucap* can be interpreted through their basic definitions and then linked to the expression as a whole to reveal the resulting meaning. There is a conflict between something described as "easiest" and the reality that it remains unsaid. This contrast provides a basis for interpreting the expression as a depiction of a confession that is linguistically simple yet feels burdensome to the speaker. This interpretation aligns with the views of Nor Hashimah Jalaluddin (2014) in *Semantik dan Akal Budi Melayu* (Semantics and the Malay Mind), which explains that linguistic meaning is not limited to explicit content but can also encompass implicit meanings requiring interpretation through the context of use. In these lyrics, the difficulty in speaking out may stem from fear, doubt, or anxiety regarding others' reactions. The context supports this interpretation through the question "Why are we afraid of that?", pointing to an emotional barrier in communicating something. The semantic relationship here is primarily formed through the contrast between the stated ease of the act and the reluctance to actually speak. The expression demonstrates that lyrical meaning does not always arise from metaphors but can emerge from the contrast between words and the situations depicted within the lyrics.

Data 3

In the second stanza, the expression *Marah, teruslah kau marah, arahkan padanya* illustrates the relationship between an emotion and an action directed toward a specific target. Literally, *marah* (anger) refers to an emotional state in which someone feels displeased or offended, while *arahkan* means to direct or aim something toward a specific point. These words can be understood through their basic definitions and then interpreted based on their relationship within the lyrics. Gibbs (1994) explains that literal and figurative meanings cannot always be absolutely separated, as language interpretation is influenced by the reader's context, knowledge, and experience. This perspective supports the view that the expression cannot be adequately understood merely by looking at the individual meanings of the words in isolation. In the context of the lyrics, the act of directing anger toward the party mentioned subsequently can be understood as a call to clearly identify the target of that anger. This relationship demonstrates that contextual meaning can broaden one's understanding of an expression, even if it does not necessarily transform it into a metaphor. In this instance, a figurative meaning cannot be definitively established based solely on the expression itself; interpretation requires consideration of the subsequent lines of the lyrics.

Data 4

The expression "Anjing, aku lelah, anjing" (Dog, I'm tired, dog) must be interpreted by considering the word's function and the context of the utterance. Literally, *anjing* refers to the animal. In everyday language, however, the word often functions as an expletive used to intensify an emotional outburst. According to Geoffrey Leech (1981) in *Semantics: The Study of Meaning*, linguistic meaning can be analyzed through various types of meaning, including connotative meaning—which relates to the associations or additional values attached to an expression. This

perspective helps explain that the word *anjing* is understood not merely by its denotative meaning (the animal itself) but also by the associations that arise in specific contexts. Repeating the word alongside the statement "aku lelah" (I am tired) emphasizes the speaker's state of exhaustion. While *lelah* can refer to physical fatigue following activity, the stanza's context—which speaks of anger and hostility—suggests that this exhaustion may also reflect emotional weariness. This understanding aligns with J.R. Firth's (1957) view on the importance of situational context in comprehending linguistic meaning. Interpreting words within lyrics requires considering their relationship to other utterances and the depicted situation. The semantic connection here is forged through contextual association: the word *lelah* acquires a broader range of meaning when juxtaposed with expressions of anger and conflict. Nevertheless, the word *anjing* cannot simply be classified as a metaphor, as its usage here functions more as an expletive or an emotional intensifier.

Data 5

The social context of the second stanza becomes increasingly apparent through the phrase *Terus bermusuhan dengan sekitarku*. Literally, *bermusuhan* signifies a hostile relationship, while *sekitarku* refers to the environment or the people surrounding the speaker. The expression can still be understood directly as a state in which the speaker is in constant conflict with their surroundings. Saeed (2015), in his discussion of literal and non-literal meaning, provides a basis for distinguishing between meanings understood directly and those requiring further interpretation. Regarding this data, the literal meaning serves as the starting point for understanding the expression before the researcher considers other possible meanings. Leech's (1981) ideas on the dimensions of meaning—specifically conceptual and associative meaning—also help explain how an expression can possess a core meaning while simultaneously evoking specific associations based

on experience and the context of use. A figurative meaning can only be considered if the broader context indicates that the hostility refers not merely to actual quarrels but also to feelings of alienation or an inability to establish positive relationships. The connection to the preceding lines reveals that anger, exhaustion, and hostility form part of a single continuum of experience. This interrelationship helps the reader perceive that the conflict depicted in the lyrics carries an emotional burden for the speaker. In this instance, the literal meaning remains the primary basis, whereas the meaning concerning alienation represents a potential interpretation that requires support from the song's overall context.

Data 6

In the third stanza, the question "Darling, why did we part?" is followed by the statement "Yet, being together is beautiful." Literally, the word "part" (or "separate") denotes a state where two parties are no longer together, whereas "together" signifies a state of togetherness. The word "beautiful" in this expression is not merely understood as a visual quality but also as an assessment of a pleasant or valuable experience. Pateda (2010), in his discussion of various types of meaning in language, provides a basis for understanding that word meaning can relate to aspects of feeling and judgment, beyond its basic definition. Leech's (1981) views on conceptual and associative meaning also help explain how a word can evoke specific impressions based on its semantic connections to experience and the context of use. In these lyrics, the word "beautiful" demonstrates an interpretive shift from a sensory impression to an emotional evaluation of togetherness. The contrast between "parting" and "being together" reinforces the impression that the speaker is contemplating two opposing states: togetherness is valued, yet separation has occurred. This distinction creates an atmosphere of loss and longing without requiring every word to be interpreted figuratively. The emotional context



arises from the interplay between the question, the statement, and the semantic contrast employed. Thus, the literal meaning remains the foundation for understanding the lyrics, while the emotional value of the word "beautiful" and the sense of loss emerging from the contrast between these two states enrich the interpretation of the speaker's experience.

Data 7

The expression "Friend, only now do I feel sad—whether while sober or because of the drink" presents a different interpretive issue. Literally, the word "sad" denotes a feeling of sorrow or unhappiness, while "sober" (or "conscious") relates to the state of knowing or being aware of something. The mention of a drink suggests a context potentially linked to the consumption of alcohol, although the specific type and intent cannot be definitively determined from that line alone. Keraf (2009), in his discussion of figurative language, explains that figurative interpretation involves a meaning that differs from the direct sense of the words employed. Similarly, Saeed (2015) addresses the distinction between literal and non-literal meanings, as well as the importance of context and inference in language comprehension. Viewed in this light, the expression can be interpreted as an admission of profound sorrow—experienced perhaps for the first time, whether in a sober state or within a scenario involving alcohol consumption. Establishing a figurative meaning requires support from the relationships between words, the overall lyrical context, and cues indicating an intent beyond the literal sense.

Data 8

The repetition of the word *lemah* (weak)—"I am weak, oh weak, I am weak"—serves to emphasize the speaker's state of being. Literally, **lemah** means lacking strength or possessing insufficient power. In the context of the song, the word appears following a discussion of separation and sorrow, and is immediately followed by a

desire to be held. This sequence provides a basis for interpreting this weakness as emotional vulnerability rather than merely a lack of physical strength. The connection between the literal and figurative meanings is established through association: a state of lacking strength is linked to feelings of sadness, a need for support, and a desire for closeness. The repetition of the word *lemah* also intensifies the emotions being expressed. Within Keraf's (2006) framework, such recurrence qualifies as a form of repetition when the same linguistic element is repeated for emphasis. In this instance, the repetition functions primarily as a stylistic device, while the emotional significance is derived from the lyrical context.

Data 9

The relationship between literal and figurative meaning becomes particularly interesting in the expression *Ingin dipelukmu, sayangku, peluk aku* ("I want to be held by you, my love; hold me"). Literally, being held (*dipeluk*) refers to the act of one person embracing another with both arms. The request "hold me" (*peluk aku*) can certainly be understood as a desire for a physical embrace. However, its occurrence after the repeated use of the word *lemah* suggests that the embrace may also symbolize a need for security, acceptance, or emotional support. Leech (1981), through his discussion of conceptual and associative meanings, provides a framework for understanding how an expression can convey a core meaning while simultaneously evoking associations based on experience and the context of use. Similarly, Saeed (2015) discusses the roles of context and inference in the interpretation of linguistic meaning. Both perspectives can be used to explain the relationship between the physical act and the potential emotional significance within this expression. A hug is a concrete action that, in certain contexts, can be associated with affection, closeness, and emotional support. This interpretation does not negate the literal meaning but rather illustrates how a physical act can convey broader emotional

significance. This connection is significant because the desire to be hugged does not exist in isolation; rather, it is linked to feelings of sadness and vulnerability, as well as questions regarding separation that have previously arisen. Viewed within this broader context, the hug can be interpreted as a need for emotional closeness.

Data 10

The spatial imagery in the phrase "whether in a meadow or in a cramped room" presents two contrasting settings. Literally, a meadow is an expanse of land covered in grass, whereas a "cramped room" depicts an enclosed, confined space. These two images highlight the distinction between an open, expansive space and a confined one. In the context of the desire to be hugged, this contrast underscores that the specific location is not the primary factor in the longing for closeness; the envisioned hug could take place in either an open setting or a confined space. This aligns with Keraf's (2009) view on figurative language—specifically, that interpreting an expression requires considering the relationship between linguistic form and intended meaning—as the semantic connection here relies on the analogy and contrast between the two spatial images. The physical differences between the locations deepen the reader's understanding of the situation envisioned by the speaker. Nevertheless, the interpretation that the location is unimportant remains a contextual reading rather than the direct lexical meaning of the words "meadow" or "room."

Data 11

The phrase "or in the sky"—which functions purely as a metaphor—emerges as one of the most prominent elements in this study. Literally, "sky" refers to the vast expanse beyond the Earth's surface, whereas a metaphor is a means of expression that transfers meaning based on a specific relationship. The word "merely" emphasizes that the preceding term is viewed solely as a metaphor. The explicit use of the word

"metaphor" makes this line intriguing, as the lyrics do not merely present an image of space but also acknowledge the figurative nature of that image. In *Metaphors We Live By*, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) explain that metaphor is not merely a linguistic form but a way of understanding an experience through another, more concrete experience or concept. This perspective allows the image of the "sky" to be interpreted as something transcending physical space, contingent upon the relationships established within the lyrics. Similarly, Saeed (2015) discusses the roles of context and inference in meaning interpretation, noting that understanding an expression requires considering its relationship to other parts of the text. In this lyrical context, the "sky" can be interpreted as a space that is distant, vast, or inaccessible, while the preceding stanza relates to a desire for an embrace. This connection suggests that the "sky" represents an imaginative space transcending physical locations. However, there is insufficient evidence to definitively conclude that the "sky" symbolizes freedom, eternity, or impossibility. Synthesizing these views, the image of the "sky" is best understood as a metaphorical possibility whose meaning is constructed through the interplay between the expression and the song's context. A more measured interpretation is that the image of the "sky" expands the imaginative scope of the lyrics while highlighting its metaphorical nature, without discarding the literal meaning of the word "sky" as a starting point for understanding.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, the lyrics of the song *Metafora Berpelukan* by Dongker contain several expressions that illustrate the relationship between literal and figurative meanings. Phrases such as "the easiest thing left unspoken" (*satu hal termudah yang enggan terucap*), "I am weak" (*aku lemah*), "wanting your embrace" (*ingin dipelukmu*), and "in the sky" (*di angkasa*)—which serve as mere metaphors—demonstrate how the

direct meaning of a word or phrase can evolve into a broader significance when interpreted within the lyrical context. The relationship between these two types of meaning emerges through association, contrast, analogy, and semantic extension, although not all the analyzed expressions are entirely figurative.

The interplay between literal and figurative meanings enables the reader to grasp the emotional experiences depicted in the song, such as the difficulty of expressing feelings, anger, sadness, separation, vulnerability, and the longing for closeness. While the literal meaning serves as the initial basis for understanding an expression, the lyrical context expands its interpretation, allowing for a deeper comprehension of the song's message. These findings indicate that a semantic analysis of song lyrics should not merely identify forms of figurative language but must also elucidate the relationship between direct meaning and the meaning shaped by the context of usage.

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