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# Figurative Language in Short Story "The Story of An Hour" by Kate Chopin

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## ABSTRACT

*This study aimed to analyze the various types of figurative language present in Kate Chopin's short story "The Story of An Hour". It employed descriptive qualitative research techniques. The data analyzed stemmed from multiple sentences within the short story, utilizing content analysis as the primary method. The collected data comprised words and sentences reflecting distinct language style identified from "The Story of An Hour". This data collection followed a purposive technique, considering spesific langauge style criteria. The researcher utilized qualitative research methods to examine the data extrected from "The Story of An Hour". The findings revealed a total of 5 figurative languages in Kate Chopin's short story, including simile, metaphor, personification, metonymy, and symbol.*
**Keywords:** short story, figurative language, American English literature

## ABSTRAK

*Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis berbagai jenis bahasa kiasan yang terdapat dalam cerita pendek "The Story of An Hour" karya Kate Chopin. Penelitian ini menggunakan teknik penelitian kualitatif deskriptif. Data yang dianalisis berasal dari beberapa kalimat dalam cerita pendek, menggunakan analisis konten sebagai metode utama. Data yang dikumpulkan terdiri dari kata-kata dan kalimat yang mencerminkan gaya bahasa yang berbeda yang diidentifikasi dari "The Story of An Hour". Pengumpulan data ini mengikuti teknik purposif, dengan mempertimbangkan kriteria gaya bahasa tertentu. Peneliti menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif untuk memeriksa data yang diambil dari "The Story of An Hour". Temuan penelitian ini mengungkapkan total 5 bahasa kiasan dalam cerita pendek Kate Chopin, termasuk simile, metafora, personifikasi, metonimi, dan simbol.*
**Kata kunci:** cerita pendek, bahasa kiasan, sastra inggris America

## IINTRODUCTION

According to Irshad and Ahmed (2015) literature referred to the historical evolution of writings in prose or poetry that provided entertainment, enlightment, or instruction to the reader, along with the development of the literary tchniques used in communicating. When people learned and understood about literature, they did not just grasp the language's form or expression, but also the hidden meanings. This meant literature aimed to evoke feelings and comprehension in readers. Tulus Wibisono and Widodo stated that there are few types of literature provided extensive information by utilizing non-literal word meanings. For instance, stories often employ figurative language to enhance their beauty, interest, and imagination. However, readers found the meanings of expressions challenging because writers typically implied hidden meanings rather than explicitly stating the literal meaning. The use of figurative language is one way to comprehend these meanings and prevent varied interpretations.

Figurative language used words or expressions with meanings different from their literal interpretations according to Harya et al (2016). The function is as a way to communicate something without directly stating the literal meaning. According to Merriam Webster Dictionary, figurative language is a noun that was all about language that consists figures of speech. Figurative language can be found in different forms, such as in daily conversation, articles in newspaper, advertisements, novels, poems, and short story. Matthew J. Traxler & Morton Ann Gernsbacher (2006) stated that a related tendency in research on figurative language has been to note the difficulty in making a principled distinction between literal and figurative language, or meanings, and to suggest, alternatively, that literal and figurative represent different ends of a continuum of meaning.

In short story, figurative language helps the author to make the storyline interesting and helps the message conveyed. As far as we know, short stories do not only contain denotative sentences to convey the author's message. Irshad and Ahmed (2015) stated that short stories are literature that can encourages the new writers to produce their own work as well with maximum chances of acclamation. Some of the best short story writers hailed from America. The focus in this study was on analyzing the use of figurative language in Kate Chopin's short story titled "The Story of An Hour", published in America in April 1894.

The researcher chose "The Story of An Hour" short story to study the figurative language used in the short story by Kate Chopin. The title of the short story talks about the time that passes between when the main character, Louise Mallard, first hears that her husband, Brently Mallard, has died, and then finds out that he is actually still alive. The story, which shows how Louise feels free when she thinks her husband is dead, was considered very controversial in America during the 1890s.

## METHOD

To examine the various types of figurative language found in Kate Chopin's short story "The Story of An Hour," this study utilized a qualitative research approach. According to Moleong (2010) cited in Setiawati (2018) the qualitative method involves obtaining descriptions of words and behaviors that can be observed. The data analyzed in this research was extracted from numerous sentences within the short story. These data comprised words and sentences exhibiting distinctive language styles, identified from "The Story of An Hour". The analysis of figurative language within the short story was segmented into categories based on content analysis using Perrine's (1983) theory, with concurrent note-taking while classifying the data.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

After analyzing the data from the short story, the researcher found five types of figurative language. The most dominant type of figurative language that is contained in "The Story of An Hour" is metaphor.

| No | Figurative Language | Frequency |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Simile | 1 |
| 2 | Metaphor | 3 |
| 3 | Personification | 1 |
| 4 | Metonymy | 1 |
| 5 | Symbol | 1 |

Based on the total above, the author found 7 data of the types of figurative language used in the "The Story of An Hour". The discussion of the data of figurative language is presented below:

**Simile**

A simile was described as a figure of speech that compared two dissimilar things, often introduced by the words "like" or "as". It involved using these words to paint a vivid or imaginative picture in the reader's mind. Similes were employed to enhance descriptions, adding emphasis, color, or expressiveness to the text. A simile aimed to underscore a particular quality or characteristic by highlighting similarities between two things.

**Data 1**

"She sat with her head thrown back upon the cushion of the chair, quite motionless, except when a sob came up into her throat and shook her, **as a child who has cried itself to sleep continues to sob in its dreams**."

The phrase compares how Mrs. Mallard sobs to the way a child cried itself to sleep continues to sob in its dreams. It paints a vivid picture of how her sobs are not just occasional or fleeting but rather continuous, much like a child who cries in their sleep without waking up fully. This simile reemphasizes Mrs. Mallard's fragility and vulnerability, which were can be found at the beginning of the story.

**Metaphor**

Metaphor is a figure of speech in which a word or phrase literally denoting one kind of object or idea is used in place of another to suggest an analogy between them. It refers to one thing by mentioning another to imply a comparison or resemblance between them. Metaphors create a symbolic representation to describe an object, person, situation, or idea by asserting that it is another thing.

**Data 2**

" When the **storm of grief** had spent itself she went away to her room alone."

The metaphor vividly compares Mrs. Mallard's grief to a tempest, highlighting the depth and intensity of her sorrow. Just as a storm brings torrential rain and fierce winds that seem to sweep away everything in their path, her tears and anguish are portrayed as a powerful, overwhelming force. This comparison underscores not only the strength of her emotional turmoil but also the way it consumes and exhausts her, leaving her in a state of weary desolation as she seeks refuge in her private space."

**Data 3**

"She could see in the open square before her house the tops of trees that were all aquiver with the new spring life. **The delicious breath of rain** was in the air. In the street below a peddler was crying his wares. The notes of a distant song which someone was singing reached her faintly, and **countless sparrows were twittering** in the eaves. There were **patches of blue sky** showing here and there through the clouds that had met and piled one above the other in the west facing her window."

In this paragraph, we can find various depictions of metaphor as something that concerns the senses. The sentence "the delicious breath of rain" is an analogy of smell and taste that evokes the smell or "taste" of rain in the air. In "countless sparrows twittering" is an analogy of auditory, and "patches of blue sky through the clouds" is an analogy for visual. All these examples of imagery show moments of positive change that seem to contradict the news Mrs. Mallard has just received.

**Data 4**

"She was beginning to recognize this thing that was approaching to possess her, and she was striving to beat it back with her will — as powerless as her two **white slender hands** would have been."

In this sentence, Mrs. Mallard's attempt to prevent herself from admitting that she is very happy to be free of her husband is likened to a physical argument, not strong enough to counter the consciousness she is trying to ignore. The imagery of "her slender, white hands" not only underscores her physical frailty but also amplifies the emotional intensity of her situation.

**Personification**

Personification is the description of an object or an idea as if it had human characteristics. It involves attributing human characteristics, emotions, behaviors, or abilities to things that are not human. By doing so, it humanizes the non- human, making it easier for readers or listeners to relate to or understand the object or concept being described.

**Data 5**

"Her fancy was running riot along those days ahead of her."

In this sentence, some phrases refer to a running, which is something that humans can do. In the verb phrase "running" which refers to the word "fancy" or can be known as "imagination" means that a person quickly considers all possibilities without process or moderation. In other words, Mrs. Mallard's imagination is not just active but is going all out, free to explore and imagine all kinds of things without any restraint. This shows how Mrs. Mallard's thoughts are filled with excitement and endless possibilities as she thinks about her new life ahead.

**Metonymy**

Metonymy was defined as a figure of speech where the name of one thing was used to refer to another thing that it's closely connected to or associated with. It involved substituting one word or phrase with another that had a close relationship or association, albeit not identical in a literal sense. It's a form in which the substituted word is used to represent something with which it is commonly associated. This literary device encompassed referring to something using a word that depicted one of its attributes or characteristics.

**Data 6**

"There was a feverish triumph in her eyes, and she carried herself unwittingly like a **goddess of Victory**."

In this sentence, there is a mention of the goddess of victory which in ancient Greek mythology, the goddess of victory is Nike. This indicate that Mrs. Mallard carries herself like the goddess of Victory which means carrying herself triumphantly, and the word "unwittingly" means that Mrs. Mallard carries herself triumphantly without knowing or without trying.

**Symbol**

Symbol was described as something that represented or hinted at something else due to a connection, association, convention, or incidental similarity. It functioned as an analogy where an object, person, situation, or action conveyed something beyond its literal meaning. The significance of a symbol was more connotative or suggestive rather than definitive, allowing for various interpretations. Symbols contributed to the depth of the text, aiding in the communication of abstract concepts, themes, or messages.

**Data 7**

"What could love, the unsolved mystery, count for in face of this possession of **self-assertion** which she suddenly recognized as the strongest impulse of her being!"

In this sentence, the word "self-assertion" symbolizes the ability to say Mrs. Mallard desires. Personal freedom is very important to Mrs. Mallard, who values the possession of this self-assertion more highly than the love she has for her husband. It doesn't matter to Mrs. Mallard whether he ever loved her husband or not, what matters to her is freedom, which she describes as her "strongest drive".

## CONCLUSION

Figurative language encompasses various types, including simile, metaphor, personification, apostrophe, synecdoche, metonymy, symbol, allegory, paradox, hyperbole, understatement, irony, and several others. This study delves into the analysis of numerous forms of figurative language within the short story with title "The Story of an Hour". The study found a total of 7 data of figurative language present in the text. Based to the research findings, 5 types of figurative language were identified in the short story namely simile, metaphor, personification, metonymy, and symbol. The researcher detected 3 sentences using methapor, and 1 on each

simile, personification, metonymy, and symbol. Each of these sentences conveys meanings through figurative language.

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