

COLOR METAPHOR IN ENGLISH AND INDONESIAN SONG LYRICS

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Abstract: This study contrasts the concept of color metaphor in English and Indonesian song lyrics. In the concept of color metaphor, meaning must be interpreted based on certain similarities between primary and secondary meanings. This is descriptive qualitative research. The method used in this research is simak method. Padan method is used to analyze the data. The results show that the concept of color metaphor in English and Indonesian song lyrics have some similarities and differences. The striking similarities are found in the black color metaphor concept which symbolizes darkness, white color symbolizes purity, yellow color symbolizes enlightenment, and gray color symbolizes sadness. However, the different concepts of color metaphor are found in blue, red, and green colors.

Keywords: color metaphors, color concepts, English songs, Indonesian songs

A metaphor is a figure of speech used in writing and speaking for aesthetic purposes in order to get the imaginative impression that affects the reader or the listener. Metaphor is usually used in literature works namely novel, short story, and poem. However, it can also be used in everyday life, especially when it comes to expressing affection to the beloved one, for example: *Kaulah bunga hatiku*.

The expression "*kaulah bunga hatiku*" contains metaphor. Literally, the word "*bunga*" (flower) is one type of plant, meanwhile, the word "*hati*" (heart) is one part of human's organ. If the expression is interpreted literally, the mea-

ning will be odd. What the speaker means by "*kaulah bunga hatiku*" is that the concept of flower represents something beautiful and the concept of heart represents feeling. Therefore, the expression above means "*you are something beautiful in my heart*"

The use of figure of speech in color metaphor in song lyrics has been widely used by songwriters. Songwriters use the concept of color to represent emotion, for example, Desi Rata Sari, the songwriter of "*Tenda Biru*" song. Whether or not the color concept of "*Biru*" (Blue) which is attached to the "*Tenda*" (tent) has literal or metaphorical meaning? Such question motivates the

researcher to conduct a study of the use of color metaphor in English dan Indonesian Song Lyrics. In culture, Indonesia and England have different cultural perspectives. Therefore, the researcher contrasts the concept of color used in English dan Indonesian Song Lyrics.

A study on color metaphor was conducted by (He, 2011) “*A comparative study of color metaphors in English and Chinese*”. His study compares the color metaphor between Chinese and English. The result of his study shows that the reasons of similarities in the color metaphor of two different languages are related to the same perceptual experience and culture, meanwhile, the dissimilarities are related to the different environment, religion, tradition, philosophy.

Another study was conducted by (Wijana, 2015) “*Metaphors Of Colors In Indonesian*”. This study describes the color metaphor in Bahasa Indonesia. The result of the study shows that the color concept is classified into chromatic and achromatic colors. Afterward, the typically Indonesian metaphor color is sought for its relation to the aspects that is outside language aspect namely environment, history, religion, politics, and social activity. There are no significant differences between the usage of chromatic and achromatic metaphor color in English and Bahasa Indonesia. However, there is a typical metaphor color in both of them.

Another study was conducted by (Wiradharma & S, 2016) “*Metafora Dalam Lirik Lagu Dangdut: Kajian Semantik Kognitif*”. This study explains how metaphors in dangdut song lyrics project a social reality. The result of this study shows metaphorical numbers, words, and phrases that undergo concept change from literal meaning to metaphorical meaning due to the similarity of concepts, processes, circumstances, nature, form, amount, taste, character, and also a function of something that is changed. Social reality expressed in dangdut song lyrics includes someone's behavior and condition, pornographic illustrations, expressions of someone's positive and negative behavior. There are two metaphorical classifications in dangdut song lyric songs, namely ontological and structural metaphors. The findings of this study indicate that there are creative metaphors where some expressions are not yet contained in the dictionary, such as *keong racun*, *buaya buntung*, and also 69 which metaphorically contains pornography.

The next study was conducted by (Indra, 2017) “*Analisis Semantik Metafora Warna Bahasa Minangkabau*”. This study describes the color and its connotation in Bahasa Minangkabau metaphor. The data was collected from native speakers and also from books namely, Minangkabau Dictionary and Bahasa Amsal Minangkabau, Randai text and Minangkabau song lyrics. The expression of metaphoric colors was analyzed by connecting it with its literal meaning and also other factors such as physical, psychology, history, and also culture. The findings show that there are six colors in metaphorical expression namely, *it* 'black', *putih* 'white', *kulabu* 'gray', *sirah* 'red', *kunyang* 'yellow', and *ijau* 'green'. Some color such as black, white, red and yellow, contain negative and positive connotations. However, other colors such as gray and green connotation negative connotation only. These expressions of metabolic colors are unique because most of them are influenced by many factors in Minangkabau's language and culture.

Another study was conducted by (Weihua, 2017) “*A Discussion of Color Metaphors From the Perspective of Cognition and Culture*”. This study describes the comparison of metaphor color on the similarities and dissimilarities between English and Chinese. The result of the study shows that the similarities of metaphor color in two different languages are related to the same perception experience and culture, meanwhile, the dissimilarities are related to the different environment, religion, tradition, philosophy, and etc.

Based on the previous studies, the researcher concludes that the contrastive analysis of metaphor color between English and Bahasa Indonesia has never been done before. The previous studies only contrast metaphor color between English and Chinese. Moreover, the previous studies were not focused on song lyrics but instead, they focused on the text genre namely, stories, books, native speaker's expression, and etc.

METHOD

This is qualitative descriptive research. The data of this research is English and Indonesian song lyrics which contain color metaphor concept. The method used in this research is *simak*

method, where the researcher listens and writes the song lyrics. The researcher classified the songs based on seven colors namely, blue, yellow, gray, red, white, green, and black. The data was from song lyrics on the Internet, where the researcher pick song lyrics in English and Indonesian Language for each color. In analyzing the data, the researcher used *padan method* by comparing the language aspect to extralinguistic factors namely, religion, environment, history, and sociocultural. The result of data analysis presentation was in informal, where the presentation of data was using words with extralinguistic factor namely, religion, environment, history, and sociocultural.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Blue Color Metaphor in English and Indonesian Song Lyric

Blue is a natural color. The blue color is calming. Blue is the color of the sky (Weihua, 2017). Blue symbolize the deep of entity. The expression of blue color in Indonesia may be related to the deep sorrow of someone (Wijana, 2015). The meaning of blue color is shifting into joy, happiness, and cheerfulness in “*birunya cinta*” song. Down below is the lyric.

- (1) *Birunya cinta kita berdua*
(Our love is blue)
semoga abadi seperti birunya langit
(hope it is as blue as the sky)
Hatiku pasti hatimu jua
(My heart is your heart)
Biarlah bersama di dalam suka di dalam duka
(Together in sadness and happiness)
Berdua kita bahagia
(We are happy together)

The feeling of someone who is falling in love is symbolized as blue as the sky which represents brightness, cheerfulness, as well as eternity. The blue color bears hope of a couple for harmony and joyful harmony.

The meaning of blue color in English songs mean deep sorrow. It can be seen in “Red (Taylor Swift)” song. Here is the lyric.

- (2) Losing him **was blue**
like I'd never known

Lyric (2) represents sadness. Losing someone is a very sad experience. In English, the blue color is related to sad and depressed feelings (Weihua, 2017). Blue also represents male gender, high social class, and honor (Weihua, 2017).

Yellow color in English and Indonesian Song Lyric

Yellow is a bright and cheerful color. In English, the term yellow is used to refer dishonest in an editorial comment or presenting ordinary news with sensation. “Yellow press” (Weihua, 2017). In general, yellow color represent joy, prosperity, and also wealth (Wijana, 2015). In Indonesian proverb, yellow represents wealth and kindness (Wijana, 2015).

The yellow color in Indonesian songs represent something bright, light, and joy. It is represented in “*Kuning* (Efek Rumah Kaca)” song lyric. Down below is the song lyric.

- (3) *Tentang nubuat mencerahkan*
(About the enlightening prophecy)
Berlabuh dalam keheningan
(Docking in silence)
Menyapa dalam keramaian
(Greeting in the crowd)
Pada batas yang dirasakan Resah
(Restless in the border)

Yellow in the lyric (3) represents enlightening and brightening expression. It is presented in the lyric, even though the term “yellow” is not in the lyric. Yellow is only on the title.

Yellow in English represents cowardness. It is presented in “Yellow (Rich Brian)” song. Here is the lyric of the song.

- (4) Don't fight the feeling 'cause **I'm yellow**
Will I make it? Who the hell knows
You want my soul but we don't sell those

Lyric (4) shows that the songwriter is a coward who does not want to fight. This is aligned with the statement from (Weihua, 2017), that yellow in English represents dishonest.

Gray Color Metaphor in English and Indonesian Song Lyric

In metaphorical cases, gray is always related to sadness and bad things namely, deceiving and misguiding (Wijana, 2015). Gray in English

represents a sense of longing and sadness. It is presented in “Red (Taylor Swift)” song. Here is the lyric of the song.

(5) Missing him **was dark grey**

Lyric (5) shows that the sense of longing for someone else is presented by a dark gray color. The lyric represents a sad expression of someone who is separated from their partner, feeling lonely, with no company.

Gray color metaphor in Indonesian songs also represent deep sorrow and also broken heart. It is represented in “Pelaminan Kelabu (Mansyur S.)” song. Here is the lyric of the song.

- (6) *Kursi pelaminan biru di malam pengantin*
 (Blue aisle in the wedding night)
Janur kuning menghias di ruang tamu
 (Yellow leaf adorn the living room)
Tapi bencana datang melanda
 (but disaster come)
Dia istriku tercinta tanpa seizinku telah pergi
 (My lovely wife went away without a goodbye)

Lyric (6) represents sadness and broken heart expression. Gray metaphor in “Pelaminan Kelabu” song is written on the title. The sadness and broken heart are presented in the lyric where a wedding was canceled because the bride was stolen.

Red Color Metaphor in English and Indonesian Song Lyric

Red is usually related to cheerful celebrations or events (Weihua, 2017). In general, red represents vitality, expansive character, burning flame, bravery, danger, and etc. (Wijana, 2015). In western countries, red is the color of life as well as the color of fire and blood. In English, “red” is used as a warning in most cases (Weihua, 2017). The expression of red color in “Red (Taylor Swift)” song has gone through a swift in meaning, where the color was associated with love. Down below is the lyric of the song.

(7) But loving him **was red**

In lyric (7), two people who love each other are symbolized with red color. The heart color in emoticon is presented in red. These are the op-

posite of the red color concept by (Weihua, 2017), where red color is used for warning and based on (Wijana, 2015), the color is representing vitality expansive character, burning flame, bravery, and danger. In Indonesian songs, red symbolizing burning flame, anger, and also bravery as it is in “Merah (Efek Rumah Kaca)” song. Here is the lyric of the song.

- (8) *Dan kita arak mereka*
 (We paraded them)
Bandit jadi panglima
 (Thieves became commander)
Politik terlalu amis
 (The politic were fishy)
Dan kita, teramat necis
 (And we are too dapper)

Physically, lyric (8) does not contain red color metaphor. The color metaphor only appears in the title. Lyric (8) represents bravery expression, bravery against the government, and could burn one’s passion when listening to it. These, due to red color is related to anger which can burn one’s passion for something better.

White Color Metaphor in English and Indonesian Song Lyric

White is the color of the snow. White represents holiness and purity (Weihua, 2017). In western culture, Jesus and angel are believed wearing white, so the white color is considered to be the purest color in religion (Weihua, 2017). However, based on (Wijana, 2015), white is related to weakness and illness. In “White Wedding (Billy Idol)” song, white color metaphor represents holiness and purity. Here is the lyric of the song.

- (9) It's a nice day to start again
 It's a nice day for a **white wedding**
 It's a nice day to start again

White color metaphor in lyric (9) represents holy marriage instead of white wedding in literal. This is aligned with (Weihua, 2017) statement, about a wedding in a church is considered to be “white wedding” because the bride wearing a white dress, white is used to represent the pure quality or the situation. However, white color metaphor in Indonesian songs have gone through a little shifting in meaning as in “Putih (Efek Rumah Kaca)” song. Down below is the lyric of the song.

- (10) *Saat kematian datang*
(When the death come)
Aku berbaring dalam mobil ambulance
(I lay down in an ambulance)
Dengar, pembicaraan tentang
pemakaman
(Hearing a conversation about a funeral)
Dan takdirku menjelang
(And my destiny come)
Sirene berlarian bersahut-sahutan
(The siren ringing)
Tegang, membuka jalan menuju Tuhan
(So tense, opening up the way to God)

The white color metaphor in the song represents death. It can be seen in the lyrics. It is aligned with the statement of (Wijana, 2015) where white represents death and illness. On the contrary, the majority of people believe that white is symbolizing purity as in “Hitam Dunia-mu Putihnya Cintaku (Jhony Iskandar)” song. Here is the lyric of the song.

- (11) *Di ujung utara yang berlumur dosa*
(In the edge of the north which full of sins)
Ku datang mengharap sisa sisa cinta
(I came to beg the rest of the love)
Aku tak peduli walau apa yang terjadi
(I didn't care what happen)
Hitam duniamu putihnya cintaku
(Your dark world is my white love)

The concept of white color metaphor in lyric (11) represents the concept of purity, as in the metaphor in general. It is aligned with the statement of (Weihua, 2017) where white is the symbol of purity.

Green Color Metaphor in English and Indonesian Song Lyric

Green is the color of harmony which identically related to the growth of environment. Due to the nuance of spring, the color could challenge the other colors that confound ripeness (Wijana, 2015). The concept of green color metaphor in “Green Machine” song by (Kyuss) represents money. Here is the lyric of the song.

- (12) I'm a shuttin' down
I'm shuttin' down,
your crazy dream, [green machine]

Lyric (12) shows that “green machine” represented money machine. It is agreeing with the statement by (Wijana, 2015) where green could represent someone who is crazy about money. It is in contrast with the concept of green color in “Hijau (Efek Rumah Kaca)” song. Down below is the lyric of the song.

- (13) *Apa yang kau tawarkan, bukan*
pengetahuan
(What you offer is not knowledge)
Ucapan miskin pemikiran
(Poor mindset says)
Apa yang kau sodorkan, hanyalah
hasutan
(What you offer is just a seduction)
Ujaran penuh kemunafikan
(Words full of hypocrisy)
Keracunan omong kosong
(Bullshit poisoning)

The green color metaphor in this song describes the songwriter and the singer when they were listening to a narration of how to manage wastes and also when they were listening to a story about celebrities in social media who were still green (amateur) in knowledge and communication skills.

Black Color Metaphor in English and Indonesian Song Lyric

Black is the color of mystery, a symbol of darkness, and darkness can give people the best sanctuary when they are in a secret business. Black color is related to negative quality, and also related to something terrible, evil, and illegal (Weihua, 2017). Black color metaphor in Indonesian song is presented in “Hitam Dunia-mu Putihnya Cintaku (Jhony Iskandar)” song. Down below is the lyric of the song.

- (14) *Di ujung utara yang berlumur dosa*
(In the edge of the north which full of sins)
Ku datang mengharap sisa sisa cinta
(I came to beg the rest of the love)
Aku tak peduli walau apa yang terjadi
(I didn't care what happen)
Hitam duniamu putihnya cintaku
(Your dark world is my white love)

The concept of black color metaphor in lyric (14) represents negative quality, gloom, and darkness. Your dark world represents a woman's

life in prostitution. A life which is full of darkness, sins, and humiliations. It is also similar to the black color metaphor in English songs, where the color represents darkness, gloom, and darksome. One of the English songs that contain black color metaphor is Welcome to the black parade song by (My Chemical Romance). Down below is the lyric of the song.

- (15) Because one day I'll leave you,
A phantom to lead you in the summer,
To join the **black parade**

The black color metaphor in the lyric represents the concept of death. The lyric describes a patient dying to death. Black parade can be interpreted as a dark parade in the past.

Discussion

Metaphor is a mapping of logic from one domain to the domain that is more abstract (Taylor, J, 2004). Metaphor is a logical mapping from one domain (usually, but not always a concrete domain) to the other domain (usually, it is more abstract) (Forbes, 1992). In the concept of color metaphor, meaning should be interpreted based on certain similarities between primary and secondary meaning (Wahab, 1990) or between the concept of source domain and target domain where the target domain is more abstract than the source domain (Kövecses, 2006).

As a universal phenomenon, color is an important part of human experience and it plays an important role in our daily life. People always use colorful words to express an understanding and their thought, for example, "He is black hearted".

In the expression above, the color term is not referring to the color itself in literal, but it is used metaphorically. "Black Heart" means evil and negativity. Black color is a taboo color in western culture, where the color itself represents black magic. Other examples of black color metaphor are "black day", "black sheep", and "black appearances". "Black sheep" is referring to "a family member or a member of a group that is considered to be shameful for other members".

There are some similarities and dissimilarities in English and Indonesian song lyric color metaphor. A study on color metaphor in English and Indonesian song lyrics have never been conducted before according to the literature review of the researcher. An example of dissimilarities

in color metaphor in English and Indonesian song lyrics are found in the blue color. The dissimilarities are due to different cognitive and sociocultural aspects between the songwriter of "Birunya Cintaku" and "Red", where both of the songs contain the interpretation of blue color. In "*birunya cintaku*" song, the blue color represents joy and happiness, meanwhile, in "red" song, the blue color represents sadness. In English, blue color is usually related to sad and stressful feelings (Weihua, 2017). Blue also represents male, high social class, and honor (Weihua, 2017). Blue also represents the deep of an entity. However, In Indonesia, the blue color represents deep sorrow (Wijana, 2015). It is very different from the previous study where the blue color represents sadness, the opposite of the study which stated that blue represents happiness.

Yellow color represents dishonesty in an editorial comment or in presenting ordinary news with sensation in English. "Yellow press" (Weihua, 2017). Yellow, in general, represents joy and happiness, prosperity, and wealth (Wijana, 2015). Yellow in Indonesian proverb describes wealth and kindness (Wijana, 2015). Both of the studies represent yellow metaphor both in English and Bahasa Indonesia.

Yellow in Indonesian song "*kuning*" by Efek Rumah Kaca represents an enlightening leader, meanwhile yellow in "red" song represents deep sorrow. Both of them are different due to different cultures.

Gray color in Bahasa Indonesia brings the nuance of sadness or bad things such as deceiving and misguiding (Wijana, 2015). Gray color in English represents sadness. Therefore, there is a similarity between gray color metaphor in English and Bahasa Indonesia, which both of them means something negative. It is presented as in "red" song by Taylor Swift which describes "missing him was dark gray". Meanwhile, in "*pelaminan kelabu*" song, the color represents "sadness". It is based on someone's cognitive experience when they are looking at the gray color in the sky when it is about to rain, people usually feel worried, terrified, anxious.

The red color usually related to cheerful celebrations or events (Weihua, 2017). In general, red symbolizing vitality, expansive character, burning flame, bravery, danger, and etc. (Wijana, 2015). In western countries, red is the color of life as well as the color of fire and

blood. In English, “red” is used as a warning in most cases (Weihua, 2017). Red metaphor in “Red (Taylor Swift)” song has gone through a little shifting in meaning, where the red color represents love. However, in “Efek Rumah Kaca” song, the red color represents bravery, fury, and resistance. Both of the representations are represented differently where in English the red color represents love and in Indonesian song, it represents bravery.

Green in English and Indonesian songs have different representations. In English songs, green represents “money”. It is based on the color of money in America and England, which is green. However, in Indonesian songs, green represents environment and fertility. On the contrary, in the song by Efek Rumah Kaca, green represents the bullshit of the candidate of people’s representation. It is because Efek Rumah Kaca is an indie band that loves to criticize the government.

Black is the color of mystery, a symbol of darkness, and the darkness could give people the best sanctuary when they are involved in a secret business. Black is related to negative quality, and also means something horrible, evil, and illegal (Weihua, 2017). Black in English and Indonesian songs represent the same thing, the color that represents something dark, and is the color of negativity.

White color represents holiness and purity (Weihua, 2017). People in western countries believe that Jesus and Angel are wearing white, so

they believe that white is the holiest color in Christianity (Weihua, 2017). However according to (Wijana, 2015), white represents weakness and illness. In English songs, white represents holiness, as in “*white wedding*” which represents a holy wedding, meanwhile in Efek Rumah Kaca song, white represents death. It is based on when people die, they will be covered in white and the ambulance that carries them is also in white color.

CONCLUSION

From this study, the researcher concludes that there are some similarities and dissimilarities in the concept of color metaphor in English and Indonesian song lyrics. The striking similarities can be found in the concept of black color metaphor, which represents darkness, white color metaphor represents purity, yellow color metaphor represents enlightening, and gray color metaphor represents sadness. The dissimilarities are found in blue, red and green color. Red color in Indonesian songs represent burning flame, bravery, and boldness. However, in English, red represents “falling in love”. Blue in English songs represents sadness, but in this study, the meaning was shifting into “happiness” in “*birunya cintaku*” song. In English songs, the concept of green color metaphor represents “money”, meanwhile, in Indonesian songs, it represents “environment”.

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