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Figurative Language Strategy as the Realization of Illocutional Speech in the Lyrics of the Farewell Theme Song Performed by Tulus and Judika: A Comparative Pragmatic-Stylistic Study

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Abstract

This study examines figurative language as a strategy for realizing illocutionary acts in ten Indonesian breakup-themed song lyrics performed by Tulus and Judika. It employed an interpretive qualitative approach and a comparative document-analysis design. The data consisted of words, phrases, clauses, and short line sequences drawn purposively from five songs by each singer. The analysis followed six stages: establishing the speech context, identifying figurative forms, interpreting literal and figurative meanings, classifying illocutionary force, explaining pragmatic functions, and reconstructing the lyrical persona. Conceptual metaphor emerged as the most productive form in both corpora. Tulus's corpus predominantly framed separation through journeys, directions, space, weather, and everyday objects, whereas Judika's corpus relied more heavily on wounds, the body, the heart, destruction, magnitude, and time. Assertive and expressive acts were the most pervasive, followed by directives and commissives, while institutional declarations were absent. Figurative language therefore did more than create aesthetic effects. It realized, intensified, mitigated, and concealed acts of stating, complaining, requesting, accusing, committing, and accepting separation. The study contributes a clause-based pragmatic-stylistic model that integrates figurative form, illocutionary force, and persona construction in a comparative analysis of Indonesian popular music.

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Introduction

Popular music is a cultural product that blends sound, performance, and language to shape a social experience that can circulate across geographical boundaries. Lyrics in this context not only follow melodies, but record lexical choices, viewpoints, evaluations, emotions, and social values. An analysis of 14,661 popular songs in the United States showed that changes in lyrical structure can be used to read changes in affective effects and cultural values, while research across five genres over five decades showed a tendency for lyrics to become more repetitive, more personal, and more representative of negative emotions (Parada-Cabaleiro et al., 2024; Varnum et al., 2021). These large-scale findings require an explanation at the micro level of how grief, loss, and disappointment are constructed through words, clauses, imagery, and interverse relationships. Lyrics also play a role in the meaning and management of listeners' emotions. The presence of words in music can activate sadness, nostalgia, and episodic memories differently according to cultural settings, while songs chosen to deal with stress are often related to the purpose of regulating emotions and well-being (Barradas & Sakka, 2022; Levy et al., 2024). Although the study did not measure audience responses, the findings confirmed that the verbal forms in songs have social power. Lyrics provide a language model for talking about relationships, interpreting loss, and repositioning oneself after a difficult emotional experience.

In the Indonesian context, popular music continues to produce narratives about love, loyalty, betrayal, mismatch, loss, and acceptance. The theme of separation is important because it brings together intense psychological experiences with interpersonal communication problems. Separation does not only refer to the statement that the relationship has ended, but includes the pre-separation phase marked by cold communication and demands for certainty, the separation event in the form of a decision to leave or a request to be let go, as well as the post-separation phase in the form of longing, regret, betrayal, forgetting and acceptance. The scope results in diverse communicative actions, such as declaring change, complaining, asking, accusing and pleasing, and ending relationships. This research positions lyrics as artistic discourse that has a persona, intended party, situational development, and communication actions. Lyrical personas are textual voices that speak through pronouns like me, you, him, and us. Personas aren't automatically the same as singers or songwriters. This distinction is necessary because songs can be written by other parties, performed without a direct biographical connection to the event, and establish fictitious situations. Therefore, the analysis of regrets, requests, accusations, commitments, and decisions is attached to the lyrical persona, not to Tulus or Judika's personal life. The effect that the listener may experience is also distinguished from the power of illocution because the effect of being moved, nostalgic, or feeling represented includes the perlocution area.

The experience of separation is abstract because loss, longing, mismatch, alienation, and sincerity do not have a physical form that can be observed directly. Figurative language allows the experience to be understood through a more concrete realm. Relationships can be conceptualized as journey, closeness as warmth, change of feelings as distance, suffering as wounds, love as measured objects, and hearts as containers. Studies of lyrical metaphors show that the realm of concrete sources helps organize the experience of love and emotions, while figurative understanding is influenced by cultural knowledge and language community conventions (Baa et al., 2023; Kabra et al., 2023; Nasution et al., 2024). Figurative language has not fully explained the actions that personas take through lyrics. A pragmatic perspective views speech as a social action. Clauses can be used to state circumstances, assess relationships, ask for reassurance, beg, promise, complain, regret, or blame. Research on Tulus lyrics

and dangdut lyrics has proven the emergence of assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative, but the classification of speech acts needs to consider the context because the form of sentences is not always synonymous with their function. A question sentence can be a demand for certainty or a complaint, while a news sentence can contain a decision and a commitment to leave (Aprilliani et al., 2022; Lailiyah et al., 2024).

The relationship between figurative language and illocution is the main problem of this study. Figurative language describes how the message is formed, while illocution describes the actions carried out through the message. The metaphor of travel can realize assertiveness when the persona states that the relationship is coming to an end and realize commissive when the persona chooses to move on with life. The metaphor of wounds can reinforce the expressive form of complaint, the personification of the heart can support an indirect directive to reassess feelings, and hyperbolic can increase emotional distress. The relationship between the two is contextual and not one-to-one. Tulus and Judika were chosen because they provide two corpus of Indonesian-speaking male solo singers with comparable thematic terrain, but with possible differences in emotional framing. The Sincere Corpus consists of Goodbye, Be Careful on the Road, Grey Sky, Sewindu, and Shoes. The five songs represent the decision to separate, the journey that fails to achieve a common goal, the experience of being an emotional stopover, unrequited love, and a closeness that is impossible to unite. The Judika corpus consists of So I'm Just A Moment, Break Up Or Continue, I'm The One Hurt, Not Him But Me, and What If I'm Not Okay. The five songs represent the demands of empathy, the doubt of maintaining a relationship, betrayal, the decision to leave a destructive relationship, and the inability to recover after a loss. Selection is made based on thematic equivalence, not popularity alone.

Recent research still shows a tendency to separate the study of form and function. Yosiana and Wulandari (2022) inventoried the majas and imagery in the Human album, while Aprilliani et al. (2022) classified the act of illocution speech in the same album. Baa et al. (2023), Nasution et al. (2024), Suri and Sutami (2025), and Syahrani et al. (2025) show the productivity of conceptual metaphors and imagery schemes in lyrics, but do not describe their iloquuitous functions comparatively. Lailiyah et al. (2024) explain the act of speaking in dangdut lyrics, but has not focused on figurative forms as a tool for realization. As such, previous research has generally focused on a single singer, one album, or a single layer of analysis. Based on these trends, there are four research gaps. First, figurative language and illocutional speech are more often analyzed separately. Second, comparative studies with relatively commensurate themes, languages, and corpus sizes are still limited. Third, research often stops at the frequency of categories without explaining how figurative forms realize, strengthen, refine, or disguise the power of illocution. Fourth, the distinction between singers and lyrical personas has not always been applied consistently. The novelty of this research lies in the pragmatic-stylistic integration based on clauses that connect context, literal meaning, figurative meaning, illocution, pragmatic function, and persona construction in the comparison of Tulus and Judika.

This study aims to identify the form of figurative language, explain the types and functions of illocutional speech acts, describe the functional relationships between the two, and compare the pragmatic-stylistic strategies of the two corpus. The research questions were formulated as follows: (1) what form of figurative language is used in the lyrics of the farewell-themed song performed by Tulus and Judika; (2) what type and function of illocutional speech is realized by the lyrical persona; (3) how figurative language realizes, strengthens, refines, or disguises the power of illocution; and (4) what are the similarities and differences between the pragmatic-stylistic strategies of Tulus and Judika? Theoretically, the research brings together conceptual metaphors and speech actions in one

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interpretation flow. Practically, the results can support pragmatic, semantic, stylistic, poetry appreciation, and critical literacy learning.

Methods

This study employed an interpretive qualitative approach using a comparative document analysis design to examine figurative language and illocutionary acts in farewell-themed songs performed by Tulus and Judika. This approach enabled an in-depth interpretation of linguistic forms, contextual meanings, and communicative functions without seeking statistical generalisation (Busetto et al., 2020; Morgan, 2022). The research was conducted digitally in Surabaya in July 2026. The corpus comprised ten Indonesian-language songs, consisting of five songs by each singer, selected through purposive sampling based on thematic relevance, identifiable lyrical personae and intended addressees, and verifiable lyrics. Primary data included words, phrases, clauses, and short lyrical sequences, while secondary sources comprised official recordings, song metadata, dictionaries, and relevant scholarly literature. Data were collected through documentation, intensive reading, transcription verification, segmentation, and systematic coding. Each linguistic unit was assigned a unique identifier indicating the singer, song, stanza, and clause. Repeated refrains were recorded as potential rhetorical intensification rather than independent figurative categories. Data collection followed the principles of the READ framework, encompassing preparation, extraction, analysis, and interpretation (Dalglish et al., 2020).

Data were analysed using directed qualitative content analysis combined with comparative thematic interpretation. The analytical framework incorporated figurative language categories, including metaphor, simile, personification, hyperbole, irony, and metonymy, alongside five illocutionary categories: assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative. Analysis involved identifying speech contexts and lyrical personae, classifying figurative expressions, interpreting literal and contextual meanings, determining dominant illocutionary functions, and examining how figurative language expressed, intensified, mitigated, or indirectly conveyed communicative intentions. Emerging pragmatic subfunctions were identified inductively before comparing patterns within and across the two corpora. Descriptive frequencies supplemented contextual interpretation without serving as the primary analytical basis. Research trustworthiness was strengthened through source verification, theoretical triangulation, peer checking, deviant-case analysis, and selective recoding. An audit trail documenting lyric sources, coding decisions, analytical memos, and category revisions was maintained to support dependability and confirmability. Researcher reflexivity was also applied to minimise preconceived assumptions concerning the linguistic characteristics of either singer, consistent with principles of transparency and methodological rigour in qualitative research (Amin et al., 2020; Braun & Clarke, 2021).

Results and Discussions

1. Figurative Language Patterns in the Tulus and Judika Corpora

The analysis of ten Indonesian farewell-themed songs, comprising five songs performed by Tulus and five by Judika, identified six principal forms of figurative language: metaphor, personification, simile, hyperbole, metonymy, and irony. Metaphor emerged as the most prominent figurative form across both corpora, although the conceptual domains and contextual meanings differed. The Tulus corpus predominantly employed metaphors associated with journeys, direction, weather, space, and everyday objects to represent relational incompatibility, separation, longing, and emotional acceptance. In contrast, the Judika corpus frequently employed metaphors of bodily injury, emotional wounds,

destruction, the heart, and emotional magnitude to represent betrayal, psychological suffering, and unresolved attachment. Personification appeared in both corpora, particularly through representations of time, the heart, and abstract emotional conditions as entities capable of acting or responding.

The findings further revealed differences in how figurative expressions structured relationship narratives. In the Tulus corpus, journey metaphors represented incompatible relationship goals and the continuation of separate lives, while the extended metaphor of paired shoes conveyed emotional closeness without the possibility of union. Weather and spatial imagery represented sadness, uncertainty, and relational distance. In the Judika corpus, bodily and destruction metaphors expressed emotional injury, whereas temperature metaphors represented declining intimacy. Heart-related expressions conveyed persistent attachment and requests for emotional recognition. These patterns demonstrate variation in the figurative representation of romantic separation across the two corpora.

2. Illocutionary Acts and Pragmatic Functions

Four illocutionary categories were identified: assertive, expressive, directive, and commissive, whereas institutional declarative acts were not found. Assertive and expressive acts were the most prominent categories in both corpora. In the Tulus corpus, assertive acts primarily conveyed reflective assessments of relational circumstances, while expressive acts represented sadness, nostalgia, concern, and acceptance through symbolic language. Conversely, the Judika corpus contained more explicit evaluations of betrayal, emotional suffering, and perceived neglect. Directive acts in the Tulus corpus generally involved requests for release and clarification, whereas those in the Judika corpus focused on empathy, certainty, emotional acknowledgement, and assistance. Commissive acts appeared through commitments to leave relationships, discontinue prolonged waiting, or continue life after separation.

Figurative language performed three recurring pragmatic functions: mitigation, intensification, and indirectness. Mitigation occurred when metaphors conveyed relational incompatibility or separation without direct personal accusations. Intensification appeared through hyperbole, repetition, and descriptions of severe emotional suffering. Indirectness was particularly evident in rhetorical questions and personification, where interrogative or figurative expressions communicated requests beyond their literal meanings. The representative evidence in Table 1 illustrates the relationship between figurative categories, contextual meanings, illocutionary acts, and pragmatic functions.

Table 1. Representative evidence of figurative language and illocutionary functions

Data code	Contextual meaning	Figurative category	Illocutionary act	Pragmatic function
TL1/D1	Different directions represent incompatible relationship goals	Journey metaphor	Assertive	Expressing relational incompatibility
TL2/D7	Separate journeys represent the continuation of individual lives	Journey metaphor	Commissive	Expressing commitment to move forward
TL3/D3	Grey skies represent sadness and emotional uncertainty	Weather metaphor	Expressive	Conveying grief and longing
TL4/D5	Ending prolonged waiting represents relinquishing emotional attachment	Spatial metaphor	Commissive	Reinforcing the decision to stop waiting

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TL5/D1	Paired shoes represent closeness without complete union	Extended metaphor	Assertive	Acknowledging relational limitations
JD1/D2	Imagining oneself in another's position represents perspective-taking	Conceptual metaphor	Directive	Requesting empathy
JD2/D2	Coldness in conversation represents declining emotional intimacy	Temperature metaphor	Assertive	Evaluating relationship deterioration
JD3/D4	Removing love represents the desire to eliminate emotional attachment	Erasure metaphor	Directive	Requesting divine assistance
JD4/D3	Personal destruction represents psychological suffering caused by betrayal	Destruction metaphor	Commissive; assertive	Expressing a decision to leave and its justification
JD5/D7	The heart as a container represents persistent emotional attachment	Container metaphor	Expressive	Conveying unresolved attachment

Note: TL = Tulus; JD = Judika. Contextual meanings are analytical paraphrases rather than verbatim lyrical quotations. The classifications follow the qualitative coding reported in the research data. Source: Research data analysis.

The representative data demonstrate that figurative expressions were associated with different communicative actions depending on their lyrical contexts. Journey metaphors in TL1 and TL2 accompanied relationship assessments and future-oriented commitments, whereas weather imagery in TL3 conveyed emotional distress. In the Judika corpus, bodily and destruction metaphors accompanied complaints, relational evaluations, and decisions to leave, while temperature and container metaphors represented emotional detachment and continuing attachment. Rhetorical questions and repeated expressions further contributed to indirect requests and pragmatic intensification.

3. Comparative Pragmatic-Stylistic Patterns

The comparative analysis identified distinct tendencies in figurative source domains, illocutionary realisation, pragmatic indirectness, and lyrical persona construction. The Tulus corpus predominantly represented separation through symbolic and reflective expressions, with lyrical personae evaluating relationships, acknowledging limitations, and articulating decisions through metaphorical descriptions. In contrast, the Judika corpus more frequently represented separation through explicit emotional evaluations, bodily suffering, and requests for recognition. Its lyrical personae commonly expressed emotional vulnerability, questioned their partners' actions, and communicated decisions following experiences of betrayal or loss.

Despite these differences, both corpora employed figurative language to represent relational experiences, communicate emotional states, formulate indirect requests, and express future-oriented commitments. Assertive and expressive acts appeared prominently in both corpora, while directive and

commissive acts varied according to the communicative purposes of individual lyrical passages. The principal comparative findings are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Comparative pragmatic-stylistic patterns in the Tulus and Judika corpora

Analytical dimension	Tulus corpus	Judika corpus
Prominent figurative domains	Journey, direction, weather, space, everyday objects	Wounds, body, heart, destruction, emotional magnitude
Assertive acts	Reflective relationship assessment	Accusation and evaluation of betrayal
Expressive acts	Symbolic sadness, nostalgia, acceptance	Explicit suffering, disappointment, regret
Directive acts	Requests for release and clarification	Requests for empathy, certainty, and recognition
Commissive acts	Leaving, stopping waiting, continuing life	Leaving for self-protection
Pragmatic functions	Mitigation and symbolic indirectness	Intensification and indirect demands
Lyrical persona	Reflective, restrained, accepting	Wounded, emotionally expressive, recognition-seeking

Note: The table summarises qualitative tendencies identified in the analysed lyrics rather than statistically quantified differences. Source: Research data analysis.

Overall, the findings identify metaphor as the principal figurative mechanism in both corpora, alongside differences in conceptual domains and communicative functions. The Tulus corpus predominantly associates figurative expressions with reflective assessments and symbolic emotional disclosure, whereas the Judika corpus more frequently connects them with explicit emotional evaluations and requests for acknowledgement. Across both corpora, figurative language accompanies assertive, expressive, directive, and commissive acts, with its pragmatic functions varying according to the context and communicative intentions of the lyrical personae.

4. Discussion

The findings demonstrate that figurative language plays a central role in conceptualising and communicating romantic separation in the songs performed by Tulus and Judika. Although metaphor emerged as the most prominent figurative form in both corpora, the conceptual domains employed differed considerably. The Tulus corpus predominantly utilised metaphors associated with journeys, directions, weather, space, and everyday objects, whereas the Judika corpus emphasised bodily injuries, emotional wounds, destruction, and the heart. These findings align with Conceptual Metaphor Theory, which explains that abstract experiences are understood through mappings from concrete conceptual domains (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Similar findings were reported by Gunawan et al. (2021), who identified metaphor as a prominent figurative feature in popular song lyrics, and Price and Wilson (2019), who emphasised the importance of contextual interpretation in understanding metaphorical expressions. However, the present study extends these perspectives by demonstrating that metaphorical expressions not only construct emotional meanings but also contribute to the realisation of illocutionary acts. Journey metaphors in the Tulus corpus frequently accompany reflective evaluations and commitments to move forward, while injury-related metaphors in the Judika corpus reinforce emotional complaints, accusations, and requests for recognition. Thus, differences in conceptual domains are associated with distinct pragmatic functions in the representation of romantic separation.

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A further finding concerns the relationship between metaphorical structure and the organisation of lyrical narratives. In Tulus' Shoes, the extended metaphor of paired shoes represents companionship, interdependence, relational limitations, and the impossibility of union throughout the song. This differs from localised metaphors that operate within individual clauses to communicate particular emotional states or evaluations. Reijnierse et al. (2018) emphasised the importance of examining metaphorical expressions within their discourse contexts, while Steen (2023) highlighted the multidimensional nature of metaphor use and comprehension. The present findings indicate that extended metaphors can organise several interconnected communicative acts within a coherent lyrical narrative, whereas local metaphors tend to support specific evaluative or emotional expressions. This distinction illustrates that figurative language operates at both the linguistic and discourse levels, contributing to the construction of contextual meaning and the continuity of communicative intentions.

The identification of assertive, expressive, directive, and commissive acts further demonstrates that farewell-themed song lyrics perform communicative functions beyond emotional expression. Assertive acts describe relational conditions and evaluate changes in affection, expressive acts convey sadness and disappointment, directive acts communicate requests for particular responses, and commissive acts express future-oriented decisions. No institutional declarative acts were identified because statements concerning separation did not fulfil the conventional conditions required for declarative speech acts (Searle, 1979). These findings correspond with Milantina et al. (2025), who identified expressive, assertive, and directive acts in popular song lyrics without finding declarative acts. Nevertheless, the present research offers a comparative perspective by demonstrating that similar illocutionary categories may be realised through contrasting figurative strategies. Assertive acts in the Tulus corpus predominantly express reflective relationship assessments, whereas those in the Judika corpus more frequently communicate accusations and evaluations of betrayal. Accordingly, identifying illocutionary categories alone is insufficient to explain the communicative characteristics of lyrical discourse without considering figurative choices and interpersonal contexts.

Commissive acts constitute another important finding because they indicate a movement from expressing emotional experiences towards articulating decisions and future intentions. In the Tulus corpus, commissive acts are associated with ending prolonged waiting, accepting separation, and continuing life independently. Meanwhile, the Judika corpus includes commitments to leave relationships characterised by emotional suffering and betrayal. These findings are consistent with Setyawati et al. (2024), who demonstrated that commissive acts in song lyrics communicate commitments and future-oriented intentions. However, the present study identifies a more specific function within farewell-themed discourse, namely the renegotiation of relational boundaries following emotional conflict. The transition from expressive complaints to commissive decisions indicates that lyrical personae are not merely represented as individuals experiencing separation but also as communicative agents capable of determining their subsequent actions.

The relationship between figurative language and illocutionary force was found to be context-dependent rather than fixed. Three prominent pragmatic functions emerged: mitigation, intensification, and indirectness. Mitigation was particularly evident in the Tulus corpus, where metaphors of direction and spatial separation communicated relational incompatibility without explicitly assigning blame. Conversely, intensification was more apparent in the Judika corpus, where bodily metaphors, hyperbole, and repetition strengthened complaints and emotional evaluations. These differences do not necessarily indicate variations in emotional intensity between the performers but instead reveal different linguistic mechanisms for representing emotional experiences. The findings also show that indirectness frequently operates through rhetorical questions, which communicate requests for

empathy, clarification, reassurance, or emotional recognition beyond their literal interrogative meanings. This corresponds with Frank (1990), who demonstrated that rhetorical questions perform complex pragmatic functions that cannot be determined solely from grammatical structure. The present analysis extends this observation by identifying how rhetorical questions interact with metaphorical expressions and repetition to realise indirect directives within Indonesian popular music.

Repetition also emerged as an important mechanism of pragmatic intensification. Repeated expressions of suffering in the Judika corpus reinforced requests for empathy and acknowledgement, whereas repeated statements concerning the cessation of waiting in the Tulus corpus strengthened commissive intentions. Importantly, repetition did not necessarily introduce new figurative categories but increased the prominence and communicative force of existing expressions. This distinction demonstrates the need to differentiate figurative variation from rhetorical recurrence when analysing song lyrics. Consequently, pragmatic-stylistic analysis should consider not only the identification of linguistic forms but also their placement, recurrence, and communicative purposes within the development of lyrical narratives.

The comparative analysis further revealed differences in the construction of lyrical personae. The Tulus corpus generally represents reflective individuals who negotiate relational changes through symbolic expressions, emotional restraint, and acceptance of limitations. In contrast, the Judika corpus more frequently constructs personae who explicitly articulate emotional injury, evaluate betrayal, and seek recognition from intended addressees. These findings reinforce Price and Wilson's (2019) argument concerning the importance of contextual interpretation in metaphor analysis. Nevertheless, both corpora also demonstrate that emotional vulnerability does not necessarily imply passivity. Through commissive acts, lyrical personae express commitments to leave, discontinue waiting, or pursue independent lives. Therefore, persona construction emerges through the interaction between figurative representations of emotional experiences and the communicative actions undertaken within lyrical discourse. These differences should be understood as textual tendencies within the selected songs rather than personal or psychological characteristics of the performers.

The findings offer important theoretical implications for the integration of semantics, pragmatics, and stylistics. First, they extend the application of Conceptual Metaphor Theory by demonstrating how mappings between conceptual domains correspond with distinct illocutionary functions. Journey metaphors, bodily injury, spatial distance, and container imagery not only represent romantic experiences but also contribute to evaluations, complaints, requests, and commitments. Second, the findings reinforce the importance of distinguishing grammatical structure from communicative intention in speech-act analysis. Interrogative expressions may realise indirect directives, while grammatically declarative statements may perform assertive, expressive, or commissive functions according to context. Third, the comparative framework demonstrates the analytical value of examining figurative language, illocutionary acts, and lyrical persona construction as interconnected dimensions of discourse. This integration provides a more comprehensive account of how linguistic choices shape interpersonal meanings in popular song lyrics.

Beyond theoretical contributions, the findings have implications for language education, particularly in semantics, pragmatics, stylistics, and discourse analysis. Song lyrics can provide contextual materials for examining conceptual metaphors, distinguishing literal and figurative meanings, identifying illocutionary acts, and interpreting indirect communication. Integrating these dimensions into language learning may encourage students to move beyond the identification of figurative categories towards a contextual understanding of how language performs communicative actions. The analytical framework may also be adapted for examining other forms of artistic discourse, including poetry, film dialogue,

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and literary narratives. However, these applications remain potential pedagogical implications rather than educational outcomes directly evaluated in the present research.

The study employed a focused qualitative analysis of ten purposively selected farewell-themed songs, allowing detailed examination of figurative expressions and their contextual pragmatic functions. Accordingly, the findings represent patterns within the selected corpora rather than the complete discographies of Tulus and Judika or Indonesian popular music more broadly. This analytical scope supports contextual depth while providing opportunities for further comparative investigation. In addition, the study concentrated primarily on lyrical texts, whereas vocal delivery, melody, rhythm, and performance may contribute additional dimensions to the interpretation of communicative intentions. Future research could integrate multimodal analysis and audience reception to examine how figurative expressions and illocutionary acts are interpreted in actual listening contexts. Larger and more diverse corpora could also be examined using complementary corpus-linguistic methods to investigate the distribution and transferability of the identified patterns. Consistent with Braun and Clarke (2021), the quality of qualitative analysis depends on methodological coherence, transparency, and interpretative rigour rather than statistical generalisation alone. Therefore, the present study provides a contextual foundation for further investigation into the relationship between figurative language, pragmatic meaning, and lyrical persona construction in popular music.

Conclusion

This study concludes that figurative language in Indonesian farewell-themed songs functions not merely as an aesthetic feature but also as a conceptual and pragmatic mechanism through which lyrical personae construct relational experiences, communicate emotions, and perform illocutionary acts. The comparative analysis of ten songs performed by Tulus and Judika identified metaphor as the most prominent figurative form, accompanied by personification, simile, hyperbole, metonymy, and irony. The Tulus corpus predominantly employed metaphors of journeys, direction, weather, space, and everyday objects to convey reflective relationship assessments, symbolic emotional expressions, and commitments to move forward. Conversely, the Judika corpus more frequently utilised metaphors of bodily injury, emotional wounds, destruction, and the heart to communicate suffering, evaluate betrayal, and seek emotional recognition. Assertive and expressive acts were prominent in both corpora, while directive and commissive acts reflected requests for interpersonal responses and decisions concerning relationship continuity or separation. No institutional declarative acts were identified. These findings establish that the relationship between figurative language and illocutionary force is context-dependent, with figurative expressions functioning to mitigate, intensify, or indirectly communicate intentions. The study thus demonstrates the value of an integrated pragmatic-stylistic approach for explaining how linguistic choices shape communicative functions and lyrical persona construction.

Future research should extend the analysis to larger and more diverse corpora, including songs performed by female artists and those representing different musical genres, while incorporating multimodal and audience-reception approaches to examine the interaction between lyrics, vocal delivery, musical elements, and perceived communicative effects. Complementary corpus-based analysis and systematic coding procedures may further strengthen comparative investigations of figurative and illocutionary patterns. For practitioners, particularly language educators and discourse analysts, the findings provide an analytical framework for integrating figurative language, contextual meaning, and speech-act interpretation into the teaching of semantics, pragmatics, stylistics, and critical literacy. At the institutional and policy levels, the findings may inform curriculum development and

instructional guidelines that encourage the use of culturally relevant popular music as authentic learning material for developing students' linguistic awareness, contextual interpretation, and critical communication skills. Such applications should be accompanied by appropriate instructional design and further evaluation of their educational effectiveness.

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