'Into the Unknown': a Comparative Study of Figurative Language in German, Tamil, and English

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Abstract

Figurative language is vocabulary used creatively, departing from its literal meaning. The song is one of the resources used by language learners to fill in the gaps between one another. This study was done for non-native speakers of foreign languages who might have trouble understanding figurative language. This study aims to find the most common figurative language among the three languages. Perrine's theory is applied in this study to analyze figurative language. Tilly's theory was applied to analyze the contextual meaning of figurative language. The types of figurative language were analyzed in this study using a qualitative method. There are 37 types of figurative language from the English version, 22 from the Tamil version, and 29 from the German version. The English version is the most frequently used figurative language among the three languages. Therefore, researchers in the future should examine the parallels, differences, and trends in the use of figurative language in these languages, according to this study

Keywords: *Figurative Language, German, Tamil, Frozen 2*

Introduction

According to Hutauruk (2019), figurative language is "a form of language that utilizes the imaginative use of words". Laurence Perrine (1982) asserts that the incorporation of sensory and metaphorical elements in literary works allows readers to "actively engage their imaginations.". Proficiency in figurative language usage and comprehension is crucial for developing linguistic creativity, critical thinking, and effective communication in educational contexts. However, studies may reveal that learning a figurative language is unattainable for foreign language students. Therefore, researchers have found that learning figurative language through songs can help language learners gain a deeper understanding and expand their vocabulary (Bassnett, 2002). In addition, it improves the ability to make connections between different topics and express nuanced ideas with their catchy melodies and lyrics. (Moeller, 2015.)

The use of figurative language in songs has received relatively little attention. However, previous research has extensively examined figurative language in various contexts, such as poetry (Dewi Syafitri (2018)) and novels. Studies examining the use of songs in different languages have shown that they can positively impact linguistic development and vocabulary acquisition (Camelia, 2020; Ni et al., 2022). However, these studies have focused primarily on Tamil and German rather than conducting a comparative analysis between languages.

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Therefore, the results of this study provide several explanations for figurative language, which is considered necessary for students and future researchers.

Based on the above literature review, this study builds on the imagery framework proposed by Perrine's theory. Perrine (1992) states that figurative language "includes twelve different types, including simile, metaphor, personification, apostrophe, synecdoche, metonymy, symbol, allegory, paradox, exaggeration, understatement, and irony." Therefore, studies are still needed on combining Tamil and German languages. This analysis was limited to the song lyric "Into the Unknown.".

Therefore, this study examines figurative language in the English, Tamil and German versions of the song "Into the Unknown" from Disney's Frozen 2. The significance of this study is to find out which version uses the most figurative language and how this can contribute to a deeper understanding of the role of figurative language in multilingual contexts.

The study has the following questions in particular:
1. What types of figurative language can be found in German, Tamil, and English versions of the song "Into the Unknown" from Disney's Frozen 2?
2. Which language is most frequently used in the figurative language of the Disney film Frozen's two-song "Into the Unknown"—German, Tamil, or English?

Method

This study used a qualitative approach. As stated on the Frankel and Wallen (1993) page. 23) This approach uses various techniques to characterize, evaluate and group everything. It will help readers recognize figurative language by understanding what it means in the context of the entire text. To achieve the aim of the study, which is to identify and compare the use of figurative language between the German, Tamil and English versions of "Into the Unknown", it is necessary to obtain information about a specific context or culture. Therefore, text analysis based on (McKee, 2002) was used. The primary data for the analysis was the song "Into the Unknown" from the movie "Frozen 2" and the website https://genius.com. The data collection process begins with reading "Into the Unknown" lyrics from www.genius.com. The goal is to identify the words, phrases and sentences that use figurative language. In this study, the data is then divided into different types of imagery. This study then examines how songs in three different languages use imagery.

The data for this study will be analyzed using a comparative analysis method (Tilly,1984). Initially, the Researcher hears the song and classifies the type of figurative language used in each language. Next, determine how frequently each form of figurative language appears in each rendition of the song. Make a table to display the outcomes. Analyze the themes and emotions expressed by figurative language and compare the frequency across languages to determine which are most prevalent.

Results

"Into the Unknown" contains figurative language in three different languages: metaphor, simile, hyperbole, and more. Nonetheless, the symbol was the most often figurative language in all three song versions. The analysis's findings are as follows.

Table 1: The figurative Language Of "Into the Unknown" song.

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Song	Into the Unknown					
Language FL	German		Tamil		English	
	Data	%	Data	%	Data	%
Simile	0	0	0	0	1	2.70
Metaphor	4	13.80	4	18.18	5	13.51
Synecdoche	3	10.34	0	0	0	0
Metonymy	4	13.80	0	0	4	10.81
Hyperbole	3	10.34	4	18.18	4	10.81
Personification	4	13.80	4	18.18	5	13.51
Paradox	3	10.34	0	0	0	0
Symbol	5	17.24	5	22.73	7	18.92
Allegory	0	0	4	18.18	0	0
Understatement	0	0	0	0	0	0
Irony	3	10.34	1	4.55	5	13.51
Apostrophe	0	0	0	0	6	16.22
Total	**29**	**100**	**22**	**100**	**37**	**100**

Discussion

The Contextual meaning of Figurative language

"Into the Unknown", 2019, a song from the film "Frozen II". Songwriter Idina Menzel sings this song. In the Tamil version, the song is titled "Izhukkum Maayoll" and was sung by Shruti Haasan. In addition, Willemijn Verkaik, a Dutch musical singer, sang in the German version of "Wo noch niemand war". The song is about Elsa's journey as she discovers the truth about her powers and her connection to the mysterious voice she is hearing. This song was selected because their multisensory experience and dramatic vocal performances can be effective tools for improving reading comprehension and analysis.

The song lyrics from the film "Frozen 2" provide the data for the figurative language. A thorough analysis of the German translation of "Into the Unknown" identified 29 figurative words corresponding to the lyrical content. Comparably, a thorough investigation of the Tamil translation of "Into the Unknown" revealed a total of 22 types of figurative that comprised the poem's content. Turning to English, a close inspection uncovered 37 figurative expressions covering all the lyrical material.

A   German Version

Table 2: The Contextual Meaning Of "(Wo noch niemand war)".

Figurative Language	Song lyrics	Literal Translation	Contextual meaning

Metaphor	*"Du bist nicht hier, nur ein Geräusch in meinen Ohren"* *(Wo noch niemand war, line10)*	"You are not there, only a noise in my ears."	The above data is a song lyric classified into metaphors. The metaphorical comparison "Ein Geräusch "(A noise) suggests that Elsa only hears a faint noise that reminds her of the person but that the person is not actually with her.
Synecdoche	*"Alle, die ich liebe, sind bei mir, ich bin zuhaus".* *(Wo noch niemand war, line12)*	"All those whom I love are with me, I am at home."	Here, Elsa uses her home and sense of belonging as a synecdoche for "alle, die ich Liebe" (all those I love). Their loved ones stand in for the coziness and safety of their house. Elsa's comfort level in the company of those she loves is conveyed in this sentence.

A   Tamil Version

Table 3: The Contextual Meaning Of "(Izhukkum Maayoll)"

Figurative Language	Song lyrics	Literal Translation	Contextual meaning
Metaphor	*"உனை தேடினால் என்னாவேனோ உன் ஜாலத்தால்":* *(Izhukkum Maayoll, line 13)*	"If I search for you, will I be trapped by your net?"	According to the metaphor, the target of the search has a "*ஜாலம்* ("net") that can trick Elsa. The metaphor of being "caught in a net" suggests that looking for the person you are looking for could have unanticipated and unpleasant consequences. Elsa may approach the situation hesitantly and cautiously because she knows the risks of looking for this person. In conclusion, Elsa is reluctant to pursue the person addressed because of the risks involved. She is aware of the possible adverse outcomes.
Symbol	*"துளி"* *(Izhukkum Maayoll, line 19)*	"Teardrops"	An illustration of the use of symbolism is found in the Tamil song "Izhukkum Maayoll.". The term "*துளி"* (tears) conveys the Elsa's emotional state, which is frequently connected to sadness or grief. Elsa's tears provide a visual depiction of the feelings and turmoil going on inside.

A   English Version

Table 4: The Contextual Meaning Of "(Into the unknown)"

Figurative Language	Song lyrics	Contextual meaning

Irony	*"You're not a voice, you're just a ringing in my ear"* *(Into the unknown, line 10-11)*	The irony in this line comes from the speaker's admission that Elsa can hear the voice calling her, despite her insistence to the contrary. She adds that she is "spoken," which generally denotes that a person is engaged or in a committed relationship; however, in this instance, it means that she is not available to take the call
Hyperbole	*"There's a thousand reasons I should go about my day."* *(Into the unknown, line 5)*	Elsa has a lot of reasons to follow her current course and ignore the whispers, but this line overstates them by using hyperbole. The exaggeration serves to support the theory that Elsa is attempting to explain and defend her choice to remain in her current location.

Conclusion

The analysis of the song "Into the Unknown" revealed some intriguing differences in the quantity of components included in each rendition. Regarding the quantity of figurative elements in the song, the English translation appears to be predominant. Moreover, the most used imagery in three languages is the symbol.

The findings of this research highlight the importance of accounting for linguistic and cultural peculiarities when examining and translating lyrical content, as different translations of the same song employ figurative language in different ways. The distinctions in the kinds and frequency of figurative language that are noted can be attributed to several factors, including linguistic obstacles, cultural disparities, and the imaginative choices made by the translators. Data from a single song might not be sufficient to identify trends or patterns in figurative language. This may complicate the process of identifying cross-linguistic differences or broader research implications.

This study thoroughly compares the use of figurative language in English, Tamil, and German for the first time. In addition, this study could be a learning material for students with difficulty with figurative language and a teaching material for educators.

Recommendations

Based on this study, the following recommendations for German, Tamil, and English studies can be considered. First and foremost, it would be beneficial to carry out additional analysis of figurative language in a more extensive selection of English, Tamil, and German literary works. This can assist in determining the similarities, variations, and patterns in how these languages use figurative language. In addition, future Researchers can expand the study of figurative language in various genres such as poetry, screenplays, poems and novels.

Acknowledgements or Notes

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