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Content

SELF ESTEEM AND LISTENING COMPREHENSION RELATIONSHIP OF THIRD YEAR STUDENTS IN NOMMENSEN UNIVERSITY PEMATANGSIANTAR, INDONESIA
Bobby Pramjit Singh Dhillon

TEACHING SPEAKING BY USING TEAM-TEACHING BETWEEN NATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKING TEACHER AND NON-NATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKING TEACHER IN MAN GENUKWATU JOMBANG
Rosi Anjarwati

AN ANALYSIS CONTENT VALIDITY OF FORMATIVE TEST ITEM
Putu Ngurah Rusmawan

COMPARATIVE STUDY ON COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING (CLT) AND CONTEXTUAL TEACHING AND LEARNING (CTL)
Abu Fawani

IMPLEMENTING OUTDOOR ACTIVITY IN TEACHING SPEAKING
Afi Namah

ERROR ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS WRITING RECOUNT TEXTS AT ENGLISH DEPARTMENT FKIP UHN PEMATANGSIANTAR
Reina Sipahutar

PRAGMATICS: A CRITICAL INSTANCE ANALYSIS OF BARRACK OBAMA SPEECH ABOUT TOLERANCE
Adib Darmawan

APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND ITS AXIOM ‘BRIDGE TO PRACTICABILITY’ IN THE CLASS: SFL INQUIRY TO CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS
Hasan Khalawi

STUDENTS’ INTONATION IN NEWS DISCOURSE
Ika Lusi Kristanti

THE ENGLISH LEARNERS’ COMPREHENSION ON FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE AT FKIP UHN PEMATANGSIANTAR
Damaris E. Silalahi

DIRECTED READING THINKING ACTIVITY (DRTA) TECHNIQUES FOR IMPROVING TEACHING READING CLASS
Hartia Novianti

DEVELOPING THINK-PAIR-SQUARE STRATEGY IN TEACHING READING NARRATIVE TEXTS AT SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL GRADERS
Kiswati
THE ENGLISH LEARNERS' COMPREHENSION ON FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE AT FKIP UHN PEMATANGSIANTAR

Dumaris E. Silalahi
English Department
FKIP Universitas HKBP Nommensen Pematangsiantar


Kata kunci: Learners, comprehension, figurative language

Abstract: this research aims to describe the English learners' comprehension on figurative language at FKIP Universitas HKBP Nommensen Pematangsiantar, the subjects are the students who study at English department at eighth semester at 2014-2015. To find out the information the researcher applies qualitative research design since it elaborate the data in form of utterances. The technique of collecting data is elicitation by giving e few examples of figurative language which aims to stimulate the subjects. Then the researcher asks the subjects to write down personal letter with free topic. The research result shows that the subjects' comprehension on figurative language still low. It can be seen from the finding that there are only sixteen (16) people who write figurative language among of twenty three (23) subjects. And then there are only six (6) kinds of figurative language written in their personal letter among of sixteen (16) based on Kerat's theory (2009).

Key Words: Learners, comprehension, figurative language

INTRODUCTION

Text is attractive and unique when it consists of figurative language. Figurative language usually found in kinds of texts such as advertisements, letter, magazines, news and etc. These texts can touch the heart of the readers because figurative languages contain of figurative meaning. It means figurative languages play very essential role in writing like in personal letter. In personal letter figurative language take function to alive the content of the letter. Useless of figurative languages in personal letter, it turns into a piece of meaningless literary works. It is like a body without soul.

Figurative language is a form of language that departs from normal word or sentence on form common literal meaning of word or sentence to form common literal
meaning and goes beyond the literary meaning of words to achieve a particular effect (Picken, 2007:2). The function of figurative language is to stimulate a certain image. It affects the language beauty of work in both oral and written communication. Figurative language serves a variety of purposes. They are used to clarify meaning, to provide vivid examples, to emphasize, to stimulate associations and emotions, to give a life to inanimate object, to amuse or to ornament.

The most importance, they have an essentials aesthetic purpose, widening and deepening the range of perception and response to the word of objects and ideas. In other words, figurative language serves to convey thoughts, feelings, and perceptions that cannot be adequately expressed in literal language.

**Kinds of Figurative Language**


1. **Simile**

   Simile is a part of figurative language in English uses the conjunction such as as, like, resemble and etc. They express the comparison of two different things. It is also meant as the comparison which has explicit nature. The explicit means is to say something directly which is same with other things. So, it needs the way explicitly that showed similarity, by the word or phrase such as like, as, than, similar, resemble or seems. Addition, Lazar (2003:5) states that simile is an expression that describes something as being similar to something else, using words 'as or "like"'. It is the simplest kind of figurative language. E.g.:

   I mean, I just felt like a fish out of water at his party.

2. **Metaphor**

   Metaphor is a part of figurative language using an analogy or close comparison between two things that are not normally treated as if they had anything in common.

   Metaphor is common means of extending the uses and references of words. In another words, Arvius (2003:90) states that metaphors are common in language use. It does not seem to require any particular effort to construct and understand them. E.g.:

   No one can find us while we *shrink* behind the mountains

   In this example the comparison is seem between word "shrink" in real context. In real context mean "mencipt" or decrease in size or to be smaller. In this context means "hide".

3. **Allegory**

   Allegory is narrative or description that has meaning beneath the surface one. Allegory is description that has another meaning. The meaning beneath is different from its description. Allegory is understood as a short story which contains figurative language. E.g.:

   *He threw a pine cones at a jovial squirrel and he ran with chattering fear.*

   Based on the context, the sentence means a man does not feel guilty as leaving his regiment to get his own salvation. He thinks that his act is wise and true things. More over, as he sees a squirrel save itself, he thinks that everthing in nature operates upon the principle of self-preservation.

4. **Personification**

   Personification is a part of figurative language that is giving the attribute of human beings to animal, an object or a concept. It is sub type of metaphor, an implied comparison in which the figurative term of the comparison is always human being. Personification is a kind of figurative language which describes lifeless thing as if it has human being nature (Kera's, 2009:140). E.g.:

   *Wet roofs beneath the lamp light; the strong crust of friendly bread; and many tasting food.*

5. **Allusion**

   Allusion is a part of figurative language which likes a hint try to suggest the similarity between people, places, and events. Basically, it is a reference which explicit and implicit to the events, figures,
or places in real life (Kerat, 2009:141). E. g.:
- Bandung is Paris.Java

6. Eponym
Eponym is a part of figurative language like a name of people always connected with specific nature, so the names is used for declaring its nature. Include: Hercules, Spiderman and etc. (Kerat, 2009:141). E. g.:
- Hercules is a hero (Hercules used to say Power/hero)

7. Epithet
Epithet is a part of figurative language like a hint to declare a specific nature or characteristic of the people or things. It is a descriptive phrase which explains or replaces the name of person or things, (Kerat, 2009:141). E. g.:
- Puteri malam is used for moon

8. Synecdoche
Synecdoche is the use of part for the whole. It consists of two parts, they are Pars pro toto and Totem pro parte. Pars pro toto is a part for the whole and Totem pro parte is when the whole things stand for its part (Kerat, 2009:142). E. g.:
a. Pars pro toto, partial represent whole.
- till evening, I haven't seen his nose.
His nose in the sentence is meant whole of body that consists of head, neck, stomach, hands, feet, etc. it isn't just nose as, because it represents person as whole.
b. Totem pro parte, whole represent partial.
Indonesia got gold medals in the championship.
Indonesia in the sentence is meant some persons who become winner in a competition. It is not all population in Indonesia.

9. Metonym
Metonymy is the use of something closely related to the thing actually meant. It can be considered that metonymy is the substitution of a word naming an object for another word closely. Kerat (2009:142) states that Metonym is a figurative Language which used a word to declare other things, because it has relationship closely. E. g.: He is addicted to the bottle
It is another way of saying that he drinks too much whiskey, so it is called using metonymy.

10. Antonomasia
Antonomasia is also a specific form of synecdoche which is formed as using epithets for replacing names, official, profession and etc. (Kerat, 2009:142). E. g.: The Majesty couldn't be able to attend a meeting

11. Hipalasse
Hipalasse is a kind of figurative language where a specific word used to explain that word, which should be affected with another word (Kerat, 2009:142). E. g.: He is lying on a worry pillow (Basically 'worry' is human being, not pillow)

12. Irony
Irony is the opposite of what one means. Irony is a hint that wants to say something with other meaning on what it contains in the words (Kerat, 2009:142). E. g.: I know you're a beautiful girl in this world that able to have this position.

13. Satire
Satire is an expression which rejects someone or something. This formed is not needed should have irony nature. Satire contains a critic about the weakness of human being. It main purpose is there will be improvement esthetically (Kerat, 2009:142). E. g.: Your voice isn't deserve to be a winner.

14. Innuendo
Innuendo is like betray with decrease or smaller. It declared a critic with indirect suggestion, and often seem not to hurt heart if we see clearly (Kerat, 2009:142). E. g.:
a. When the parties always be held, his face often seen clearly.
b. He becomes a rich man because he did a bit an official commercial.

15. Antiphrasis
Antiphrasis is like irony which formed of using a word with contrary meaning, which is able regarded as irony or the words used for denying a criminal, bad
spirit and etc. (Keraf, 2009:142). E. g.: Look! A giant has already come
16. Pun or Paronomasia
Pun is a kind of figurative language which uses similar sound. It is a playing word
based on the similarity of its sound but it has much differential in a meaning (Keraf,
2009:142). E. g.: I know you're a beautiful girl in this world that able to have this
position.

Research Methodology
This research uses qualitative as research design. Bogdan and Biklen (2007: 5)
say that qualitative research is a research where data are collected in form of words or
pictures rather than numbers. All the data in this research are elaborated in the form of
utterances refers to figurative language implemented by the subjects in their personal
letter that's why this research uses qualitative research design.

Research Subject
The subjects of this research are the students who study English at the eighth
semester 2014-2015 at FKIP UHN Pematangsiantar. The selection of subjects of
eighth semester by consideration that they have studied figurative language in
compulsory subjects such as Reading I-IV, Critical Reading, Literature, Novel, Drama,
and Correspondence. The data are taken from the students who study in Seminar on ELT II
subject, group J. They are consists of 26 students, but when the data are taken, three
students are absent.

Technique of Collecting Data
The data are taken by asking the subjects to write down personal letter in given piece of
paper. This task is watched by the researcher herself in classroom. It is done to avoid
plagiarism of the letter from other subjects. In this technique the researcher did elicitation
data collection. Elicitation is meant that the researcher express a few vocabularies in form
of figurative language. It aims to stimulate the subjects to use of figurative language in
their personal letter (Ritchie and Bahtia's 1996: 367) and (Gass and Selinker, 2008:
64).

Technique of Analyzing Data
After collecting the data, the writer analyzes data by following steps, they are (1)
Reading the students' handwriting of personal letter. (2) Typing the subjects'
personal letter. (3) Identifying each of figurative language used. (4) Coloring the
figurative language indeed in students' personal letter (5) Interpreting the meaning of
all the figurative languages used. (6) Classifying on what kinds of figurative
language are used in the personal letter. (7) Listing the most figurative language used in
their writing. (8) Concluding the analysis.

Discussion and Finding
The total of subjects who write personal letter is 23 students. Based on the analysis
there are 16 subjects who involved figurative language in their personal letter. The
figurative language are analyzed based on theory of Keraf (2009: 138) they are
consisted Simile, Metaphor, allegory, Personification, Allusion, Eponym, Epithet,
synecdoche, metonymy, Antonomasia, Hipflask or Hipalase, Irony, Satire, Innuendo,
Antiphrasis, and Paronomasia. In this discussion the researcher describes only one
example of the same kinds of figurative language. It done if there are more than one
example of the same kinds of figurative language founded in one' personal letter. It is
done because the purpose of this research not to count the number of figurative language
used by the subjects but to know their comprehension by applying kinds of
figurative language as mentioned above in their personal letter.

Data 1:
a. METAPHORS
- I begin my letter sadly through the
  tears fall down heavily.
- heavily
It is constructed on the spot by the author
to give an illustration of his feeling. It is
one which is understood only after paying
special attention to the comparison
between heavily in real context and in its
context. There is comparison meaning
between HEAVILY in real context always used to measure (WEIGHT, RAIN OR BERAT AND DERAS). But in this context it can be called TERSENDUH-SENDUH OR SADLY which related on the author’s feeling. The meaning of metaphor is translated by keeping the topic and adding point of similarity related to the text.

b. PERSONIFICATION
- This lonely always touch in my heart. It can be said as a personification because in the real context the word “touch” always refers to the human action which is used anatomy such Hand to touch somebody/things. But by looking the data above that it is used a personification because the word “lonely” as if a human being which has a nature such able to describe a human action.

c. SIMILE
- It was like a drama on the stage. It can be clearly and easily seen that the data uses simile as a kind of figurative language because the statement above use LIKE as a characteristic of smile and it describes the expression of sadness of authors ‘feeling who has a love problem. So, he compares his separation with a drama because in a drama can be seen as a play game where sometimes happy or sad in role playing.

d. ANTONOMASIA
- Prince, I presented the beautiful jacket only for you. In the data above it can be identified as Antonomasia because the word “Prince” always refers to the human who formed as using an “Epithet” for replacing names of him in imagination. But by looking the data above that he hope that his girlfriend called himself not use his real name but called himself Prince.

e. EPONYM
- Adinda. In the data above it can be identified as eponym because it uses a name of people which always connected with nature. In the real context the word “Adinda” related to the girl specific nature who has beautiful face and soft feeling, mind to behave with somebody/things.

f. HIPALASE
- I hope there will be me lying at heaven door in your heart.
In the data above it used a kind of figurative language namely as a Hipalase because in the real context the word “Heaven door” always refers to the abstract nature and the word “Heaven” is a certain word or a deserve word to express for such “abstract”. The word “door” is a lifeless thing which is possible to see by human.

Data 2

a. METAPIORS
- Because you are able to give the light in my heart.
In the data above it can be said as a metaphor because it is constructed on the spot by the author to give an illustration of his feeling that “his girlfriend is compared with Light” which is related to his imagination only. It is one which is understood only after paying special attention to the comparison between light in real context and in its context. There is comparison meaning between you and light in real context al. But in this context compare that “You” as human is able to give “Light”. It can be called KEBAHAGIAH OR HAPPINESS which related on the author’s feeling. The meaning of metaphor is translated by keeping the topic and adding point of similarity related to the text.

b. PERSONIFICATION
- Your attitude and smile bring myself to one of place
In the data above it can be identified as a personification because in the real context the word “Your attitude and smile” always refers to the non-human or lifeless thing which did an action of human being such “bring” which is used anatomy such hand as a tool to bring things. By looking the data above that it is used a personification because the nature of personification is a kind of figurative language which can describe things as if it has a human nature.

c. HIPALASE
- It is called loves’ heaven.
In the data above it used a kind of figurative language namely as a Hipalase because in the real context the word "Heaven" always refers to the abstract nature and the word "Heaven" is a certain word or a deserve word to express for such "abstract". The word "love" is a lifeless thing or concrete noun which is possible an expression of feeling had by human.

d. SIMILE

- We looked for some books as my guidance books to make a proposal. In the data above it can be clearly and easily seen that the data uses simile as a kind of figurative language because the statement above use AS as a characteristic of simile. By using simile the word "We looked for some books as my guidance books to make a proposal." is an utterance of a thing which declares in the same condition with equal things.

Data 3
METAPHORS

- I hope our friendship never broken. In the data above it can be said as a metaphor because it is constructed on the spot by the author to give an illustration of his feeling that "friendship never broken." which is related to her imagination only. It is one which is understood only after paying special attention to the comparison between "broken" in real context and in its context. In real context "broken is Hancur so, there is comparison meaning between broken in real context and its context as Putus. In this context compare the word "broken" with "friendship" as a measurement of feeling.

Data 4
SIMILE

- I hope you get close friend like me In the data above it can be clearly and easily seen that the data uses simile as a kind of figurative language because the statement above use Like as a characteristic of simile. By using simile the word "You get close friend like me." is an utterance of her feeling as a hope of herself to her friend so she can get a friend such herself.

Data 5
HIPALASE

- Hmmmm... give my deepest greet to the other friends there. In the data above it used a kind of figurative language namely as a Hipalase because in the real context the word "DEEPEST" always refers to the measure the deepest things such "hole" and the word "greet" is a certain word or a deserve word to express feeling in abstract noun. The word "greet" is a lifeless thing or which is impossible can't be known whether it has a "hole".

Data 6
a. ANTONOMASIA

- How are you dear? In the data above it can be identified as Antonomasia because the word "DEAR" always refers to the human who formed as using an "Epithet" for replacing names of her boyfriend. By looking the data above that it can be identified as Antonomasia because it tells about the usage of it which uses epithet such "dear" to replace the names of people.

b. METAPHORS

- I love the way your eyes sparkly when you tell a funny story? In the data above it can be said as a metaphor because it is constructed on the spot by the author to give an illustration of his feeling. It is one which is understood only after paying special attention to the comparison "sparkly" as "BERKILAU" in its context. In this statement the writer try to describe by making a comparison meaning between sparkly used by eyes but Sparkly in explicit meaning is always used to describe a star.

Data 7
a. SIMILE

- I hope you're okay like me. In the data above it can be clearly and easily seen that the data uses simile as a kind of figurative language because the statement above use Like as a characteristic of simile. By using simile the word "you're okay like me." is an utterance of her feeling to her father that
she asked himself to have same condition with herself.
b. METAPHORS
- you always fight in our field
In the data above it can be said as a metaphor because it is constructed on the spot by the author’s feeling. It is one which is understood only after paying special attention to the comparison the word “fight” as “berhantum” in real context. But in this statement the writer try to describe by making a comparison meaning between “fight in the field”, and fight in real context refers to BERHANTAM. But in implicit meaning above is always used to describe as work or job.

Data 8
a. SIMILE
- you’ve been like a brother for me.
In the data above it can be clearly and easily seen that the data uses simile as a kind of figurative language because the statement above use Like as a characteristic of simile. By using simile the word “you’ve been like a brother for me.” is an utterance of her feeling to her friend that she has already regarded as his brother.
b. METAPHORS
- But all memories of you always live in my mind.
In the data above it can be said as a metaphor because it is constructed on the spot by the author’s feeling. It is one which is understood only after paying special attention to the comparison the word “live” as “hidup” in real context. But in this statement the writer try to describe by making a comparison meaning between “all memories of you always live”, and the word live in implicit meaning above is always used to describe “an existence or ada”.

Data 9
a. SIMILE
- I really hope you are really fine like me.
In the data above it can be clearly and easily seen that the data uses simile as a kind of figurative language because the statement above use Like as a characteristic of simile. By using simile the word “I really hope you are really fine like me.” is an utterance of her feeling to her friend that she has asked her friend to have same condition with herself.
b. ANTONOMASIA
- My dear
In the data above it can be identified as Antonomasia because the word “DEAR” always refers to the human who formed as using an “Epithet” for replacing names of her boyfriend. By looking the data above that it can be identified as Antonomasia because it tells about the usage of it which uses epithet such “dear “to replace the names of people.
c. PERSONIFICATION
- My heart jumps fast when I see his smile
In the data above it can be identified as a personification because in the real context the word “jumps ” always refers an action did by human being such which is used anatomy such foot as a tool to jump. By looking the data “my heart “as if a human which is able to do the human activity. It is called a personification because the nature of personification is a kind of figurative language which can describe things as if it has a human nature.

Data 10
a. METAPHOR
- the simple smile you make.
In the data above it can be said as a metaphor because it is constructed on the spot by the author’s feeling. A metaphor can be described as a comparison that shows how two things that are not a like in most ways. There is comparison meaning between word “simple” in explicit meaning or real context in the sentence above. In its meaning actually called “sederhana” means look in size. But in implicit meaning above can be understood as senyum manis or sweet smile.
b. SIMILE
- I keep hoping that this will never end as same as with our parents that they never stop loving each other.
In the data above it can be clearly and easily seen that the data uses simile as a kind of figurative language because the statement above use “as” as a characteristic of simile because it has a nature to declare directly of something which is same with the others things.

**Data 11**

a. SIMILE
   - I felt like someone that stayed in forest.
   
   In the data above it can be clearly and easily seen that the data uses simile as a kind of figurative language because the statement above use Like as a characteristic of simile. By using simile the word “I felt like someone that stayed in forest.” is an utterance of her feeling to feel lonely.

b. PERSONIFICATION
   - The distance make me become the oldest person
   
   In the data above it can be identified as a personification because in the real context the word “make” always refers a process of an action did by human being such which is used anatomy as a tool. By looking the data “The distance as if a human which is able to make the human become better. It is called a personification because the nature of personification is a kind of figurative language which can describe things as if it has a human nature.

c. METAPHOR
   - Mom you are best partner
   
   In the data above it can be said as a metaphor because it is constructed on the spot by the author’s feeling. A metaphor can be described as a comparison that shows how two things that are not a like in most ways. There is comparison meaning between words “mom is compared with best partner”.

**Data 12**

a. PERSONIFICATION
   - Sun never talks fakely.
   
   In the data above it can be identified as a personification because in the real context the word “talks” always refers a process of an action did by human being such which is used anatomy such a mouth as a tool to communicate with somebody. By looking the data “Sun as if a human which is able to do communication with the human. It is called a personification because the nature of personification is a kind of figurative language which can describe things as if it has a human nature.

b. ANTONOMASIA
   - Dear, How is your study?

1. Talk

In the data above it can be identified as a personification because in the real context the word “talks” always refers a process of an action did by human being such which is used anatomy such a mouth as a tool to communicate with somebody. By looking the data “Sun as if a human which is able to do communication with the human. It is called a personification because the nature of personification is a kind of figurative language which can describe things as if it has a human nature.

2. She and Light

In the data above it can be identified as a metaphor because in the real context the word “she” always refers to human being as a singular person and light is always refers to lifeless thing which is impossible for human being have a light. She in implicit meaning or in its context is a word that refers to” Sun”.

**Data 13**

a. SIMILE
   - The sun shine brightly looks like a beautiful lamp in the darkness, don’t stop to read dear.
   
   In the data above it can be clearly and easily seen that the data uses simile as a kind of figurative language because the statement above use Like as a characteristic of simile. By using simile the word “The sun shine brightly looks like a beautiful lamp.” is an utterance of his feeling to feel his happiness of someone that he loved and he compare unconsciously” the sun shine with lamp ”.
In the data above it can be identified as Antonomasia because the word "DEAR" always refers to the human who formed as using an "Epithet" for replacing names of her boyfriend. By looking the data above that it can be identified as Antonomasia because it tells about the usage of it which uses epithet such "dear" to replace the names of people.

Data 14
a. **ANTONOMASIA**
   - Hey my prince charming.
In the data above it can be identified as Antonomasia because the word "Prince" always refers to the human who formed as using an "Epithet" for replacing names, title, profession, and official. But in this case she called prince is refers to a name of her boyfriend. By looking the data above that it can be identified as Antonomasia because it tells about the usage of it which uses epithet such "dear" to replace the names of people.

b. **HIPALASE**
   - I don’t know why but I am feeling love you in my deepest heart.
In the data above it used a kind of figurative language namely as a Hipalase because in the real context the word "DEEPEST" always refers to the measure the deepest things such "hole" and the word "heart" is a certain word or a deserve word to express feeling in abstract noun. The word "heart" is a lifeless thing or which is impossible can’t be known whether it has a "hole".

data 15
a. **METAPHOR**
   - The wind wave in our face
In the data above it can be identified as a metaphor because in the real context the word "Wave or mengombak" always related with sea-water. But by looking the data above the word "wave" is suitable used "Menerpa". Because the meaning of the metaphor is translated without keeping the metaphorical imagery.

b. **SIMILE**
   - To have a friend like you is the lucky day that I have ever have.

In the data above it can be clearly and easily seen that the data uses simile as a kind of figurative language because the statement above use Like as a characteristic of simile. By using simile the word "a friend" it compares she herself with lucky day as she hoped to be.

c. **PERSONIFICATION**
   - I see the doll smiles to me
In the data above it can be identified as a personification because in the real context the word "Smile" always an action did by human being not for a thing such a doll. By looking the data "doll" as if a human who is able to do an action. It is called a personification because the nature of personification is a kind of figurative language which can describe things as if it has a human nature.

Data 16
a. **SIMILE**
   - It like knife in my heart.
In the data above it can be clearly and easily seen that the data uses simile as a kind of figurative language because the statement above use Like as a characteristic of simile. By using simile the word "it" it compares with knife and it is an utterance of her feeling to feel his sadness of long distance with someone that she loved.

b. **PERSONIFICATION**
   - I felt the stars and moons shrink behind my sadness.
It is personification because it constructed on the spot by the author to give an illustration of his feeling. It is one which is understood only after paying special attention to the comparison between heavily in real context and in its context. There is comparison meaning between Shrink in real context "mencikut" always used to measure (Size or decrease). In this context as implicit meaning it can be called "Bersembrunyi or Hide" which related on the author’s feeling. The meaning of metaphor is translated by keeping the topic and adding point of similarity related to the text. It is called a personification because the nature of personification is a kind of figurative
language which can describe things as if it has a human nature.

c. HIPALASE

- You can set my love on fire.
In the data above it can be clearly and easily seen that the data uses “Hipalase” as a kind of figurative language. Because the statement above in the real context the word “on fire” always refers to a thing such match fire “Api” but in this statement above related with love of course it can be called or replaced on fire “api” become spirit “semangat” in emotion as human feeling “Emotion” is a word or to express for human body.

d. METAPHOR

- You're one package in all my dream.
In the data above it can be identified as a metaphor because in the real context the word “You” always related with human as a person. But by looking the data above the word “you” is compare as “package.” Because the meaning of the metaphor is translated without keeping the metaphorical imagery.

CONCLUSION
The data analysis shows that there six (6) kinds of figurative language involved in subjects personal letter, they are Metaphor, Personification, Simile, Antonomasia, Eponym, and Hipalase. The six kinds of figurative language are part of figurative language among of sixteen kinds based on Keraf (2009) as mention in previous paragraph. It can be concluded that there are only six kinds of figurative language comprehended by the subjects. The six kinds founded in the subject’s personal letter indicate that the subjects do not comprehend figurative language yet.

References