

**A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE
IN THE ALBUM SOS AND THE ALBUM SOS DELUXE: LANA BY SZA**

SKRIPSI



Presented to
IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Sarjana in English Education

By:
Rino Dwi Wahyu Pamungkas
NIM 22120018

**ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND ARTS EDUCATION
IKIP PGRI BOJONEGORO
2026**

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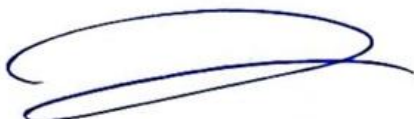
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MOTTO

“Bahwa mencintaimu berarti terbunuh, maka aku ialah yang paling kerap mati di dunia ini ; berkali kali ”

(Penulis)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Firstly, the author thanks Allah SWT for all the blessings bestowed. Secondly, the author extends peace and blessings to the Prophet Muhammad SAW, the final messenger of Allah. The author completed the skripsi entitled “A Comparative Analysis of the Figurative Language in the Album SOS and the Album SOS Deluxe: LANA by SZA.” The author would also like to give special thanks to:

- a. Dr. Junarti, M.Pd., As the Rector of IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro.
- b. Dr. Cahyo Hasanudin, M.Pd., as the Dean of the Faculty of Language and Arts Education, IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro.
- c. Ayu Fitriarningsih, M.Pd., as Head of the English Language Study Program.
- d. Chyntia Heru Woro Prastiwi, M.Pd., as Advisor I, whose support, encouragement, and patient supervision have inspired the researcher in completing this skripsi.
- e. Dr. Moh. Fuadul Matin, S.S., M.Pd., as Advisor II, whose guidance, expertise, and constructive feedback have been essential to the accomplishment of this skripsi..

May Allah give a great reply to all. To support further development, the author sincerely welcomes suggestions and constructive feedback. Finally, the author entrusts everything to Allah, aiming for usefulness, especially for writers and readers alike.

DEDICATION

All praise and gratitude are devoted to Allah SWT for His mercy, guidance, and blessings, which have given me the strength and opportunity to complete this thesis. I realize that this achievement would not have been possible without the prayers, guidance, and support of many people. Therefore, I dedicate this thesis to:

1. My beloved parents, Mr. Prayitno and Mrs. Sri Redjeki. Thank you for always being the safest place I can call home, no matter the circumstances. Thank you for your endless prayers, unconditional love, immeasurable sacrifices, and unwavering trust and support that have accompanied me throughout every step of my journey. This achievement is a reflection of your love, perseverance, and sincerity. May Allah SWT always bless you with good health, happiness, and abundant blessings.
2. My supervisors, Mrs. Chyntia Heru Woro Prastiwi, S.Pd., M.Pd., and Mr. Dr. Moh. Fuadul Matin, S.S., M.Pd. Thank you for your patience, dedication, and wholehearted guidance throughout the process of completing this thesis. Every piece of advice, constructive feedback, encouragement, and knowledge you shared has become an invaluable provision, not only for completing this research but also for shaping my future academic and professional journey.
3. All lecturers of the English Education Department. Thank you for the knowledge, guidance, experience, and inspiration you have generously shared throughout the past four years. Every lesson and piece of advice has shaped the way I think, learn, and grow, enabling me to reach this significant milestone in my academic journey.
4. My friends from Keluarga Waras, English Education Department, Class of 2022. Thank you for being an important part of this meaningful journey. Thank you for the togetherness, laughter, stories, shared struggles, constant support, and unforgettable memories that will always hold a special place in my heart. May the friendship we have built continue to flourish, even as life leads each of us down different paths.
5. Myself, Rino Dwi Wahyu Pamungkas. Thank you for staying strong, continuing to strive, and never giving up despite every challenge. This thesis is a reminder that perseverance, patience, faith, and prayer can lead me to achieve my goals. May this achievement become the beginning of a better journey filled with success and blessings.

STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY

I, the undersigned below:

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To uphold academic integrity, sincerely and without coercion from any parties, I hereby declare that the thesis entitled:

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

IN THE ALBUM SOS AND THE ALBUM SOS DELUXE: LANA BY SZA

Is the result of my own original work, and all sources of information used have been clearly cited in the reference list according to the scientific and academic code of ethics. I am aware that if any violations of scholarly ethics regarding the authenticity of this work are found, I personally accept the consequences in accordance with the applicable regulations and am prepared to bear legal sanctions.

Bojonegoro,.....2026



Rino Dwi Wahyu Pamungkas
22120018

ABSTRACT

Pamungkas, Rino Dwi Wahyu. 2026. A Comparative Analysis of the Figurative Language in the Album SOS and the Album SOS Deluxe: LANA by SZA. Skripsi, English Education Department, Faculty of Language and Arts Education, IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro. Advisor (I) Chyntia Heru Woro Prastiwi, M.Pd., Advisor (II) Dr. Moh. Fuadul Matin, S.S., M.Pd.

This study was motivated by the importance of the use of figurative language in song lyrics as a medium for conveying meanings, emotions, and messages indirectly. The objectives of this study were to identify the types of figurative language found in the song lyrics of SZA's SOS and SOS Deluxe: LANA albums, describe the meanings conveyed through the figurative language, and analyze the similarities and differences in the use of figurative language between the two albums. This study employed a descriptive qualitative method with a comparative approach. The data source consisted of the lyrics of ten purposively selected songs, including five songs from the SOS album and five songs from the SOS Deluxe: LANA album. The data were collected through documentation by identifying, classifying, comparing, and interpreting the figurative language found in the song lyrics. The findings revealed six types of figurative language: metaphor, hyperbole, symbolism, simile, personification, and irony. Metaphor was the most dominant type found in both albums, while irony appeared only in the SOS album. The meanings conveyed through the figurative language were dominated by themes of love, heartbreak, emotional conflict, self-healing, identity, and personal growth. Furthermore, both albums shared similarities in the use of several types of figurative language but differed in the distribution of figurative language types, emotional intensity, and styles of meaning expression. The findings indicate that figurative language plays an important role in enhancing the aesthetic value of song lyrics, expressing emotions, and shaping the distinctive characteristics of the lyrics in both albums.

Keywords: Figurative Language, Comparative Analysis, Song Lyrics, SOS, SOS Deluxe: LANA, SZA.

ABSTRAK

Pamungkas, Rino Dwi Wahyu. 2026. A Comparative Analysis of the Figurative Language in the Album SOS and the Album SOS Deluxe: LANA by SZA. Skripsi, English Education Department, Faculty of Language and Arts Education, IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro. Advisor (I) Chyntia Heru Woro Prastiwi, M.Pd., Advisor (II) Dr. Moh. Fuadul Matin, S.S., M.Pd.

Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh pentingnya penggunaan figurative language dalam lirik lagu sebagai media untuk menyampaikan makna, emosi, dan pesan secara tidak langsung. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi jenis-jenis figurative language yang terdapat dalam lirik lagu pada album SOS dan SOS Deluxe: LANA karya SZA, mendeskripsikan makna yang terkandung di dalamnya, serta menganalisis persamaan dan perbedaan penggunaan figurative language pada kedua album tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan pendekatan komparatif. Sumber data penelitian berupa lirik dari sepuluh lagu yang dipilih secara purposive, yaitu lima lagu dari album SOS dan lima lagu dari album SOS Deluxe: LANA. Data dikumpulkan melalui teknik dokumentasi dengan cara mengidentifikasi, mengklasifikasikan, membandingkan, dan menginterpretasikan bentuk-bentuk figurative language yang ditemukan dalam lirik lagu. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat enam jenis figurative language, yaitu metaphor, hyperbole, symbolism, simile, personification, dan irony. Metaphor merupakan jenis yang paling dominan pada kedua album, sedangkan irony hanya ditemukan pada album SOS. Makna yang disampaikan melalui figurative language didominasi oleh tema cinta, patah hati, konflik emosional, penyembuhan diri, identitas, dan pertumbuhan pribadi. Selain itu, kedua album memiliki persamaan dalam penggunaan beberapa jenis figurative language, tetapi menunjukkan perbedaan pada distribusi jenis bahasa kiasan, intensitas emosional, serta gaya penyampaian makna. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa figurative language memiliki peran penting dalam memperkuat nilai estetika, menyampaikan emosi, serta membangun karakteristik lirik lagu pada kedua album tersebut.

Kata Kunci: Bahasa Kiasan, Analisis Komparatif, Lirik Lagu, SOS, SOS Deluxe: LANA, SZA.

PREFACE

Praise be to Allah SWT, the Almighty, for His endless blessings, mercy, and guidance, which have enabled the researcher to complete this undergraduate thesis entitled "A Comparative Analysis of the Figurative Language in the Album SOS and the Album SOS Deluxe: LANA by SZA." This thesis is submitted as one of the requirements for obtaining the Bachelor's Degree in English Education at the English Education Study Program, IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro.

The completion of this thesis would not have been possible without the assistance, guidance, encouragement, prayers, and support of many individuals. Therefore, the researcher would like to express sincere gratitude to everyone who has contributed to the completion of this study.

The researcher realizes that this thesis is still far from perfect and may contain limitations. Therefore, constructive criticism and suggestions are highly appreciated for the improvement of this academic work. It is hoped that this thesis will provide valuable insights for readers, particularly students, lecturers, and future researchers in the field of English Education, and serve as a useful reference for studies related to English speaking anxiety and students' coping strategies.

Finally, the researcher prays that Allah SWT will bless and reward all those who have supported the completion of this thesis. Hopefully, this study will make a meaningful contribution to the development of knowledge, especially in the field of English language education.

Bojonegoro, July 2026

Rino Dwi Wahyu Pamungkas
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

Language serves as the primary medium through which humans express experiences, ideas, and emotions using meaningful symbols and structured systems. In artistic expression, particularly in music, language functions not only as a means of communication but also as an aesthetic medium that creates beauty through sound, rhythm, and symbolic meaning. One important linguistic element frequently found in song lyrics is figurative language, such as metaphor, simile, personification, and hyperbole, which enables songwriters to convey abstract emotions and complex experiences indirectly and poetically.

According to the conceptual metaphor theory proposed by Lakoff and Johnson, human beings understand abstract concepts through metaphorical systems embedded in language, in which concrete experiences are used to explain intangible ideas. This theory explains why figurative language is highly effective in communicating emotional and psychological meanings. (Nugraheny & Yuwita, 2023) affirm that the use of figurative language enriches the meaning of song lyrics while strengthening the emotional connection between singers and listeners.

In the context of contemporary popular music, particularly within the R&B and pop genres, figurative language plays a central role in establishing emotional intimacy between artists and audiences. Through symbolism and imagery, artists are able to portray personal struggles, emotional vulnerability, and identity exploration. (Menza & Hariyanto, 2023) argue that SZA's lyrical

expressions successfully represent the complexities of Black women's experiences amid social and psychological pressures, conveyed through reflective and symbolic language.

SZA released the album *SOS* in 2022, which presents a cohesive emotional narrative centered on heartbreak, anger, self-worth, and personal growth. The album is characterized by intense emotional expression and the frequent use of metaphorical and symbolic imagery to depict internal conflicts. In 2023, SZA released *SOS Deluxe: Lana*, an extended version of *SOS* that includes additional tracks and collaborations. Although closely related, *SOS Deluxe: Lana* offers further emotional depth, stylistic variation, and thematic development, indicating potential differences in the use of figurative language that merit comparative analysis.

In the digital era, song lyrics are increasingly regarded as a form of popular literature with aesthetic and intellectual value. (Kurniawan, 2021) considers song lyrics as a form of modern poetry that reflects cultural and psychological values within society. The widespread availability of lyrics through digital platforms has expanded opportunities for audiences to interpret and engage with song meanings, positioning lyrics as significant cultural texts.

The emergence of female artists such as SZA reflects a cultural shift toward more authentic and emotional self-expression in the global music industry. Figurative language functions not only as an aesthetic device but also as a symbolic medium for expressing vulnerability, trauma, and resistance against restrictive social norms. Through metaphor and symbolism, emotional

and identity-related issues are articulated in a poetic yet communicative manner.

This phenomenon is further reinforced by social media culture, where symbolic lyrics often circulate widely and generate diverse interpretations. (Salsabila & Setyowati, 2024) note that online platforms create interpretive communities in which audiences actively participate in meaning-making processes. This demonstrates that figurative language extends beyond aesthetic value and contributes to dynamic cultural interaction between artists and listeners.

Previous studies have shown that metaphors and personifications are among the most frequently used figurative devices in song lyrics to express themes of love and sadness (Swarniti, 2022), (Zahria & Wibowo, 2024). However, (Fitriani et al., 2020) highlight that many studies remain limited to emotional functions and rarely examine figurative patterns across entire albums, even though albums often function as thematic narratives reflecting an artist's emotional and psychological journey.

Furthermore, (Fairuz & Lestari, 2024) emphasize the importance of cultural context in interpreting figurative language. In musical traditions, metaphors often represent cultural values and collective experiences. This perspective is particularly relevant to R&B music, which is deeply connected to identity formation and lived experiences within the African-American community. Therefore, analyzing figurative language in SZA's works can

enhance understanding of the relationship between language, culture, and artistic expression.

In SZA's lyrics, figurative language functions as a representation of women's experiences and the realities of the Black community in America. Songs such as *Good Days* and *Kill Bill* depict emotional conflicts between love, pain, and independence through powerful psychological imagery (Menza & Hariyanto, 2023). The symbolism employed in these works serves as a form of resistance against gender and racial stereotypes that constrain emotional expression.

From a pragmatic perspective, meaning in figurative language is shaped not only by linguistic forms but also by social, cultural, and personal contexts of the audience. (Fadzillah et al., 2022) argue that figurative expressions create interpretive space that invites listeners to participate in the construction of meaning. Stylistically, recurring symbols such as water, color imagery, and inner space form thematic motifs that create coherence across the albums *SOS* and *SOS Deluxe: Lana*, reflecting SZA's emotional and artistic development.

Considering the limited number of studies that integrate stylistic, semantic, and pragmatic approaches in analyzing interconnected musical works, this research seeks to fill the gap by conducting a comparative analysis of figurative language in the album *SOS* and the album *SOS Deluxe: Lana* by SZA. The study aims to identify types of figurative language, interpret their connotative meanings, and compare similarities and differences in their usage across both albums.

B. Formulation of the Problems

Figurative language, or majas, is one of the essential elements in literary works, including song lyrics. It functions to strengthen emotional expression, deepen meaning, and create aesthetic appeal within a text. In the context of popular music, the use of figurative language serves as a medium for singers and songwriters to convey complex, personal, or social messages symbolically and poetically. The album *SOS AND SOS Deluxe: Lana* by SZA is a remarkable example of musical artistry that highlights the power of lyrics filled with emotional depth and distinctive linguistic style. This album not only reflects the artist's inner journey and personal experiences but also presents a profound exploration of various forms of figurative language that enrich the meaning of each song.

Accordingly, the research problems of this study can be formulated as follows:

1. What types of figurative language are found in the song lyrics of SZA's album *SOS* and the album *SOS Deluxe: Lana*?
2. What meanings are conveyed through the figurative language used in both albums?
3. What similarities and differences exist in the use of figurative language between the album *SOS* and the album *SOS Deluxe: Lana* by SZA?

C. Objective of the Study

The objectives of this research are as follows:

1. To identify the types of figurative language found in the song lyrics of SZA's album *SOS* and *SOS Deluxe: Lana*.
2. To describe the connotative meanings of figurative language used in both albums.
3. To analyze the similarities and differences in the use of figurative language between the two albums.

D. Significances of the Study

1. Theoretical Significance

This research contributes to the development of linguistics, particularly in the fields of stylistics and semantics, by expanding the scope of study from conventional literary texts to modern song lyrics. Through the analysis of figurative language, this study enriches the understanding of how language style and connotative meaning reflect the social, cultural, and emotional aspects of society. In addition to strengthening theories of stylistic function in popular media, this research also emphasizes the relationship between language, aesthetics, and cultural identity, while opening opportunities for developing more contextual and interdisciplinary approaches to linguistic analysis. The study enhances understanding of how figurative language

functions across interconnected musical works and reflects emotional, cultural, and social narratives.

2. Practical Significance

a. For Educators

Providing a concrete example of how linguistic theories can be applied in contemporary contexts. Educators may use this study as teaching material to enrich courses in discourse analysis, stylistics, and semantics, allowing students to see the connection between linguistic theory and real-world language phenomena.

b. For Creative Industry Professionals (Musicians, Lyricists, Music Editors)

The study's findings can help professionals understand how the use of metaphors, personifications, and other stylistic devices enhances the aesthetic and emotional value of song lyrics, encouraging the creation of music that is both meaningful and communicative.

c. For the General Public

Offering deeper insight into the implicit meanings and aesthetic values within modern song lyrics. As a result, listeners can appreciate music not merely as entertainment but as a form of cultural expression and social reflection.

d. For Future Researchers

Providing an empirical foundation for subsequent studies focusing on the relationship between figurative language and

audience perception, or between linguistic style and cultural identity across different musical genres.

E. Definition of Terminologies

1. Figurative Language

Figurative language is a form of language use that departs from literal meaning to express ideas, emotions, and experiences more imaginatively and aesthetically. According to (Simbolon et al., 2025), figurative language includes devices such as metaphor, simile, personification, hyperbole, irony, and metonymy, which serve to enrich the meaning of a text and create interpretive depth (Exploring the Experiential Meaning of Song Lyrics). In the analysis of popular music, figurative language is used to articulate complex emotional experiences, trauma, and identity (Liana et al., 2025).

In the context of the SOS and SOS Deluxe: Lana album, figurative language is understood as a linguistic and artistic strategy employed by SZA to convey feelings of loss, self-healing, and empowerment through symbolism and lyrical imagery. The researcher will identify figurative forms through discourse and semantic analysis, highlighting how stylistic choices reinforce the album's thematic messages. A close reading of each song will be conducted using the figurative language categories from the theories of (G. Leech, 1969) and (Abrams, 1999), expanded by contemporary studies such as (Nuriman & Nurhapitudin, 2025), to

classify the data into categories such as metaphor, hyperbole, simile, and others.

2. Album “SOS”

The album *SOS* (2022) by SZA is defined as a contemporary R&B album that represents the musical and narrative expression of Black female experience within modern emotional realities. In this study, an *album* is understood not merely as a collection of songs, but as an integrated cultural text that possesses thematic, emotional, and linguistic coherence. *SOS* functions as a medium of personal storytelling that articulates intimate experiences, relational conflicts, and self-reflection through distinctive diction, lyrical structures, and vocal delivery.

The term *figurative language* in the context of the *SOS* album refers to the use of non-literal expressions such as metaphor, symbolism, personification, and hyperbole, which serve to represent the psychological and social conditions of the lyrical speaker. Figurative language in this album operates not only as an aesthetic device but also as a means of constructing implicit meanings related to emotional wounds, relational tensions, and identity negotiation. Consequently, the lyrics in *SOS* can be examined as linguistic artifacts that convey layered denotative and connotative meanings.

Black female identity in the album *SOS* is conceptualized as a socially and culturally constructed identity shaped by the intersections of race, gender, and lived experience. This identity is articulated through

narratives of emotional vulnerability, resistance to societal expectations, and the reclamation of personal agency. Within the landscape of contemporary R&B music, such representation is significant as it positions Black women as active subjects who articulate and interpret their own emotional and social realities rather than being passively represented.

Within the framework of *qualitative linguistic analysis*, the album *SOS* is positioned as a textual corpus examined through semantic and pragmatic approaches. Semantics is employed to analyze lexical meaning and relational meaning within the lyrics, while pragmatics focuses on context-dependent meanings shaped by emotional states, implied social relations, and situational contexts. Through this analytical lens, *SOS* is understood as a cohesive emotional narrative in which each song contributes to the construction of meanings related to love, loss, and self-reconstruction.

3. Album “SOS Deluxe: Lana

The *SOS Deluxe: Lana* (2023) album is an extended version of SZA’s *SOS* (2022), featuring new songs including a collaboration with Lana Del Rey. Thematically, the album explores the emotional journey of a modern woman through the dynamics of love, inner wounds, and self-discovery. As a cultural product, the album functions as a social text that reflects Black female identity within the landscape of contemporary R&B music.

In this study, the album is positioned as a textual corpus for qualitative linguistic research. The songs are analyzed as linguistic artifacts containing

symbolism, metaphor, and other forms of figurative rhetoric that represent the singer's inner and social conflicts. The analysis interprets the figurative meanings in each lyric through semantic and pragmatic approaches, while tracing the interrelations among figurative expressions in constructing the album's emotional narrative. A comparative approach is also employed to examine expressive differences between the collaborative tracks ("Lana") and the solo tracks ("Snooze," "Kill Bill").

SOS Deluxe: Lana can also be understood as an intertextual expression that brings together two distinct artistic styles SZA, with her introspective and experimental R&B nuances, and Lana Del Rey, with her melancholic aesthetic and baroque poetic symbolism. This collaboration enriches the album's layers of meaning, creating a musical and emotional dialogue that highlights themes of alienation, intimacy, and self-reconciliation. In a qualitative linguistic context, this phenomenon demonstrates how diction choices, natural metaphors, and personification are strategically employed to depict the complexity of contemporary women's experiences in confronting their emotional and social realities (Liana et al., 2025; Simbolon et al., 2025).