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# Stylistic Analysis of The Lyrics of ‘Subtitle’ by Official HigeDandism

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## Abstract

This research aims to analyze the language styles present in the lyrics of the song Subtitle by Official HigeDandism. The stylistic approach is employed, referring to the theories of Shigeo Inagaki, Seto Kenichi and Nakamura Akira. The research method used is informal data analysis with a qualitative descriptive approach. The analysis results indicate the presence of various language styles such as simile, allegory, hyperbole, climax, epizeuxis, metaphor, oxymoron, and paradox. Each language style imparts emotional nuances and profound meanings to the song lyrics, creating a complex and artistic portrayal. These findings contribute to infinitive the artistic expression in the form of song lyrics and contribute to the study of stylistics in the analysis of literary works, particularly in Japanese musical literature.

Keywords: Stylistics; Official HigeDandism; Subtitle

## Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis gaya bahasa yang terdapat dalam lirik lagu "Subtitle" karya Official HigeDandism. Pendekatan stilistika yang digunakan dengan merujuk pada teori Shigeo Inagaki, Seto Kenichi dan Nakamura Akira. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah analisis data informal dengan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif. Hasil analisis menunjukkan adanya berbagai gaya bahasa seperti simile, alegori, hiperbola, klimaks, epizeuksis, metafora, oksiromon, dan paradoks. Setiap gaya bahasa memberikan nuansa emosional dan makna yang mendalam pada lirik lagu, menciptakan gambaran yang kompleks dan artistik. Temuan ini dapat membantu memahami ekspresi seni dalam bentuk lirik lagu dan memberikan kontribusi pada kajian stilistika dalam analisis karya sastra, khususnya pada karya sastra musik Jepang.

Kata Kunci: Stilistika; Official HigeDandism; Subtitle

## 1. Introduction

The term “sastra” etymologically originates from Sanskrit where “Sas” means to teach, direct, provide guidance or instructions, and “tra” means tool or means. Literary work is the expression of someone's feelings or thoughts conveyed through language, either orally or in written. A literary work is considered a creative art that can possess artistic value, beauty, and entertainment due to the harmonious combination of form and content, writing and substance, as well as the manner of expression and what is expressed (Nurgiyantoro, 2019; Noor, 2010). Song lyrics fall into the category of poetic literary works because they are essentially adopted from lyrical units that can be called poetry. Lyrics are the expression of someone in conveying something that seen, felt, or heard. The language used by the composer (songwriter) in the lyrics of their composition is concise, rhythmic, harmonized with imaginative word choices. A lyric can become a song through the aesthetic process of pouring one's heart onto a piece of paper with words. Subsequently, these verses are united, adjusted to the tone or melody, then become a song to be enjoyed (Waluyo, 2022; Nugraha, 2016). Stylistics, an English term derived from the word “style”, refers to language style and is interpreted as “stile.” Thus, stylistics and style refer to the same definition. Stylistics is a study that is highly beneficial in linguistic or literary studies in the field of language. In literature and literary criticism, stylistics is useful in implementing or interpreting literature, especially those related to precision and beauty (Nurgiyantoro, 2019). Essentially, stylistics investigates the use of unique or special language, which is the identity of a writer, literary genre, and so on, or can be said to deviate from everyday language or language considered normal, standard, and so on (Pradopo, 2020; Teeuw, 2015).

Previous research by Cindy A. titled “Stylistic Study with Cultural Elements in the Lyrics of *Home Sweet Home* by Yuki Ishoya” using the stylistic approach has been conducted on the song *Home Sweet Home* by Yuki Ishoya, utilized the style theory of Shigeo I & Seto K in Japanese, cited from the *Japanology journal* (2016), which includes Climax (ぜんそほう Zensohou), Epizeuxis (反復法 Hanpukuhou), Metaphor (隠喩 In'yu), Oxymoron (同着法 Douchakuhou), Euphemism (婉曲法 Enkyokuhou), and Paradox (逆説法 Gyakusetsuhou). Cindy A also employed the style theory of Nakamura. A in Japanese, cited from the *Japanology journal* (2008), covering Simile (直喩 Chokuyu), Allegory (諷喩 Fuuyu), Allusion (引喩 Inyu), and Hyperbole (張

喩 Chouyu). According to the stylistic theory of language by Shigeko I, Seto K & Nakamura A, there are 10 stylistic theories in the Japanese language, namely:

1. Simile (直喩 chokuyu)  
Simile is a figure of speech that compares two different things using the words "like" or "as."
2. Allegory (諷喩 fuuyu)  
Allegory is a form of expression where ideas or messages are hidden behind a narrative form or concrete illustration.
3. Allusion (引喩 inyu)  
Allusion occurs when a writer refers to a specific literary work or event in their own work.
4. Hyperbole (張喩 chouyu)  
Hyperbole is a form of statement that exaggerates for dramatic effect.
5. Climax (ぜんそほう Zensohou)  
Climax is the peak of events or tension in a narrative.
6. Epizeuxis (反復法 hanpukuhou)  
Epizeuxis is the repetition of a word or phrase for emphasis.
7. Metaphor (隱喩 in'yu)  
A metaphor is a figure of speech that describes an object or action with words that are not literally applicable but create a new understanding or deeper meaning.
8. Oxymoron (同着法 douchakuhou)  
Oxymoron is the combination of two words or phrases with contradictory meanings.
9. Euphemism (婉曲法 enkyokuhou)  
Euphemism is the use of softer or gentler words to convey ideas that may sound harsh or impolite.
10. Paradox (逆説法 gyakusetsuhou)  
Paradox is a statement that seems contradictory or absurd but may actually have hidden truth or wisdom.

Previous research on stylistics has also been conducted by Fadli Zaki and Kusmiati (2020) on "Figurative Language in the Lyrics of *Spirits Of The Sea* by Kenshi Yonezu," which identifies various figures of speech based on the directness of meaning in the lyrics of the song *Spirits of the Sea* by Kenshi Yonezu, such as personification, hyperbole, and others. The similarity in this research lies in both examining the use of figures of speech in lyrics through the lens of stylistics. However, the researchers employ the theory of Gorys Keraf's stylistic approach. Furthermore, a research by Suwaryo (2022) titled "Stylistic Analysis of the Lyrics of *Asmalibrasi* by Soegi Bornean" analyzes the diction found in the lyrics, with the majority being connotative. The similarity in this research is the common focus on the study of language style. However, the earlier research is more centered on the use of diction in the lyrics. This study aims to reveal the meaning and figures of speech used in the lyrics of *Subtitle* by Official HigeDandism, using the theories of Shigeko Inagaki, Seto Kenichi and Nakamura Akira presented in previous research. The song *Subtitle* is known for its emotional atmosphere and deep meaning in its lyrics, creating a complex and artistic portrayal. It was released on October 12, 2022, with 5 minutes and 5 seconds under the Irori Records label.

## 2. Research Method

The research method employed to analyze the lyrics of the song *Subtitle* by Official HigeDandism is an informal data analysis method, presenting the results using clear and understandable words. The data analysis method utilized in this study is descriptive with a qualitative technique. Descriptive method involves accurately describing an object, while the qualitative technique is employed to explore the meaning, understanding, and description of an object naturally (Azwardi, 2018; Winarni, 2018). The steps taken to analyze the lyrics of the song *Subtitle* by Official HigeDandism involve searching for or listening to the song repeatedly and write the lyrics to be analyzed, translating each verse, and identifying words containing figures of speech. The results of the data analysis will be presented based on the existing text, processed, and then outlined in a report conforming to the Shigeko I, Seto K & Nakamura A categories in Japanese, namely Simile (直喩 chokuyu), allegory (諷喩 fuuyu), allusion (引喩 inyu), hyperbole (張喩 chouyu), Climax (ぜんそほう Zensohou), epizeuxis (反復法 hanpukuhou), metaphor (隱喩 in'yu), oxymoron (同着法 douchakuhou), euphemism (婉曲法 enkyokuhou), and paradox (逆説法 gyakusetsuhou).

## 3. Results and Discussion

The discussion below elaborates on each figure of speech found in the lyrics of the song *Subtitle* by Official HigeDandism as follows:

3.1. *Simile (直喩 - Chokuyu)*

"「凍りついた心には太陽を」"

Kōritsuita kokoro ni wa taiyō o

"Let the sun shine on the frozen heart"

The phrase above consists of 「凍りついた心」, literally means "a frozen heart" or "a heart frozen." Here, the heart is depicted as something frozen or cold in literal, but there is a simile in this line that interprets the frozen heart as a heart that is emotionally numb and empty. 「太陽を」 means "the sun." The sun is portrayed as a source of warmth, and the sunlight is someone who comforts the heart and brings hope to the emotionally numb heart. The heat of the sun is depicted as joy and hope that will melt the empty heart. By combining these two elements in this phrase, we can see a comparison or simile that describes a change or thawing from a cold emotional state ("凍りついた心") towards something warm and illuminating like the sun ("太陽を"). In other words, this simile illustrates a change in emotions or a transformation within the heart from an empty state to a warmer and brighter one, like when someone bringing hope appears. Therefore, it can be said that this phrase uses simile to depict emotional transformation or change within the heart.

3.2. *Allegory (諷喩 - Fuuyū)*

"言葉はまるで雪の結晶 君にプレゼントしたくても夢中になればなるほどに 形は崩れ落ちて溶けていって 消えてしまうけど"

Kotoba wa marude yuki no kesshō Kimi ni purezento shitakute mo Muchū ni nareba naru hodo ni Katachi wa kuzureochite tokete itte Kiete shimaukedo

"The words are like snowflakes, even though I want to present them to you. The more absorbed I become, the more they crumble, melt away, and disappear, but."

In the phrase "言葉はまるで雪の結晶 君にプレゼントしたくても" the use of metaphor (言葉はまるで雪の結晶) creates a beautiful and intricate imagery. Through this metaphor, words are likened to snow crystals, conjuring images of beauty and fragility. "夢中になればなるほどに 形は崩れ落ちて溶けていって 消えてしまうけど" expresses the idea that the more one becomes absorbed, the more difficult it is to capture or maintain their form. This can be interpreted as a representation of the transient or rapidly changing nature of something in a state of unconsciousness or obsession. Thus, the hidden message in the allegory of the lyrics is that the singer wants to offer words as beautiful as snowflakes, yet fragile—they cannot be grasped like snowflakes. As one gets carried away, over time the words will change their form and become increasingly difficult to hold, further crumbling due to their fragility. Overall, these lyrics create a deeper and more complex portrayal, and these elements can be interpreted as representations of larger concepts or feelings. Therefore, the snippet of lyrics can be characterized as an allegory.

3.3. *Hyperbole (張喩 - Chōyū)*

"火傷しそうなほどのポジティブの冷たさと残酷さに気付いたんだよ"

Yakedo shi-sōna hodo no pojitibu no Tsumeta-sa to zankoku-sa ni kidzuita nda yo

"I realized the chilling and cruelty of my almost scorching positivity."

In this verse, the expression "火傷しそうなほどのポジティブの冷たさと残酷さ" is literally translated as "the chilling and cruelty of my almost scorching positivity" or more freely interpreted as "the brutality and coldness that almost feels like causing burns." However, the mind cannot be cold and does not possess qualities, so how can coldness and cruelty burn positive thoughts? Coldness and cruelty are also opposing qualities to ignite something. In everyday language usage, the term "火傷しそうなほど" is a hyperbole because it exaggerates the level of brutality and coldness, creating a very strong and intense imagery where the coldness and cruelty can burn the mind. This adds emotional depth and appeal to the expression, allowing it to be described as hyperbole.

3.4. *Climax (ぜんそほう - Zensōhō)*

"君の胸を震わすのを 諦められない愛してるよりも愛が届くまで もう少しだけ待ってて"

Kimi no mune o furuwasu no o akirame rarenai aishiteruyori mo ai ga todoku made Mōsukoshidake mattete

"I can't give up making your heart tremble, just wait a little longer until love reaches beyond 'I love you.'"

In this verse, there is an escalation of emotion and intensity with the expression "諦められない" followed by the comparison "愛してるよりも愛が届くまで," reaching its climax at 待ってて. This phrase creates a culmination of intellectual thought or emotional peak, giving the impression that the singer is willing to wait and fight for a deeper level of love surpassing the mere

declaration of 'I love you.' The verse reflects intensity and the pinnacle of a love statement, emphasizing the inability to give up and the willingness to wait until love truly materializes. Therefore, it can be categorized as the climax of the verse.

### 3.5. Epizeuxis (反復法 - Hanpukuhou)

“重ねて重ねて重ねて 見つけたんだいつか最高の一言一句を”

Kasanete kasanete kasanete mitsuketai nda itsu kasaikou no ichigon ikku wo

“I want to pile up, pile up, pile up, and find it. Someday, the best words and phrases.”

In this sentence, the word 重ねて meaning “repeatedly” is repeated three times in succession to emphasize a strong desire or urge to find the best phrase that one can express someday. This repetition can convey a deep emotional tone and depict the singer's determination or strong passion, thus categorizing it as epizeuxis.

### 3.6. Metaphor (隠喩 - In'yu)

“言葉など何も欲しくないほど 悲しみに凍てつく夜でも”

Kotoba nado nani mo hoshikunai hodo kanashimi ni itetsuku yoru demo

“Even in a night frozen by sadness when I don't want anything, like words.”

The sentence “言葉など何も欲しくないほど 悲しみに凍てつく夜でも” falls under the use of metaphor. In this case, “悲しみに凍てつく夜” is a depiction involving feelings of sadness and cold. Although literally, the night cannot freeze, the use of the word “凍てつく” here, meaning “to freeze,” is a way to portray the intensity and strength of the sadness felt on that night. The metaphor suggests how the coldness of the night seems to be caused by an extraordinary sadness, almost freezing the night itself. This line illustrates how metaphor can be employed to convey feelings or experiences in a more powerful and profound manner.

### 3.7. Oxymoron (同着法 - Douchakuhou)

“薄着でただそばに立ってても 不必要に汗をかいてしまう僕なんかもう”

Usugide tada soba ni tattete mo fuhitsuyō ni ase o kaite shimau boku nanka mō

“In thin clothing, even just standing by your side makes me unnecessarily break into sweat.”

In this sentence, 薄着で (in thin clothing) and 不必要に汗をかいてしまう (unnecessarily break into sweat) form a contrasting pair of concepts. Thin clothing like a T-shirt shouldn't cause excessive sweating, yet the speaker sweats when simply standing next to the person. This indicates that something, perhaps nervousness, makes them sweat without reason. The use of this oxymoron creates an intriguing imagery and adds an emotional nuance to the song lyrics.

### 3.8. Paradox (逆説法 - Gyakusetsuhou)

“かけた言葉で割れたヒビを直そうとして 足しすぎた熱量で 引かれてしまったカーテン”

Kaketa kotoba de wareta hibi o naosou to shite Tashi sugita netsuryō de hika rete shimatta kâten

“Trying to mend the broken cracks with spoken words, but ended up drawing the curtains with an excessive heat.”

In the line “かけた言葉で割れたヒビを直そうとして,” there is an attempt to fix something cracked or broken using spoken words. This creates an image of trying to resolve a problem or conflict through communication or verbal expression. “足しすぎた熱量で 引かれてしまったカーテン” However, simultaneously, “足しすぎた熱量で” and “引かれてしまったカーテン” create a paradox. The idea that the effort to fix with spoken words actually leads to an unintended consequence, pulling the curtains and creating distance or separation, is expressed in “drawing the curtains”. Thus, the paradox lies in the contradiction between the initial intent to mend cracks with spoken words and the undesirable outcome of such actions, resulting in isolation or restriction, as indicated in “drawing the curtains.” This provides depth and complexity to the imagery in this stanza.

## 4. Conclusion

The results of the study on the elements of language style in the lyrics of the song “Subtitle” by Official HigeDandism lead to several conclusions. The analysis revealed the presence of various literary devices, including 1) Simile (直喩 chokuyu); 2) Allegory (諷喩 fuuyu); 3) Hyperbole (張喩 chouyu); 4) Climax (ぜんそほう Zensohou); 5) Epizeuxis (反復法 hanpukuhou); 6) Metaphor (隠喩 in'yu); 7) Oxymoron (同着法 douchakuhou); and 8) Paradox (逆説法 gyakusetsuhou) within the lyrics. However, two categories from Shingeko I, Seto K and Nakamura A theory, Alusion (引喩 inyu) and Euphemism (婉曲法 enkyokuhou), were not found in this research. The meanings uncovered in the lyrics of *Subtitle* by Official HigeDandism are successfully depicted through emotional atmospheres and profound desires, creating complex and artistic imagery. Given the

broad scope of stylistic analysis, further research on the song *Subtitle* by Official HigeDandism can be expanded, particularly focusing on the analysis of diction, imagery, and patterns within the lyrics.

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