

## FIGURE OF SPEECH REPRESENTING RELIGIOUS EDUCATION VALUES IN MOUSTAFA AKKAD'S *THE MESSAGE*

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**Abstract:** Figure of speech used in literary writing touches feelings, emotions based on an image of things seen, and actions experienced. When it applies to the language in a movie, it may furnish new effects or fresh insights into an idea or a subject. This study explored the figure of speech representing religious education values in Moustafa Akkad's *The Message* movie. As qualitative descriptive research, the source of data was the script of the movie analyzed from the sociolinguistic point of view. The result shows that the film used the figurative language to express religious education values through irony, simile, personification, paradox, hyperbole, oxymoron, metaphor, repetitive, metonymy, antithesis, onomatopoeia, and symbol. Also, Moustafa Akkad presented several religious values applicable to teaching English for Islamic Studies.

**Keywords:** figure of speech, religious education value, *The Message* movie

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

*The Message* movie as a religious film and the link between film reception and religion. While a singular definition of religion cannot be given (Durkheim, 2001), religion is considered to be a set of beliefs concerning the cause, nature, and purpose of the universe, religion contains a moral code that aids in the governing of human affairs (Dwyer, 2006). Providing a more or less distinguished frame for morality and ethics, religions are dominant, dynamic socio-cultural systems working at both micro (the socialization dimension) and macro (political dimension) levels of society. Regarding the interplay between religion and language used in media through sociolinguistic approach, it is noted that media provide moral and spiritual guidance and senses of a community (Hjarvards, 2008). It brings the virtue of the intersection between religion and the spirituality of a community (Luna et al., 2017). In this case, the media plays a vital role that can build and destroy any perspectives. It also considers a bottom-up apparatus that uses models and metaphors grounded in empirical observations of media in everyday life. As a field of investigation, media reception studies have been observed

as lacking coherency and thriving on anecdotalism (Barker, 2006). Movies as media can bring either good or bad influence through the language and culture represented. Moreover, a movie is last for long, even though it has been published many years ago but there are still people who watch it nowadays, and they get influenced by that.

One of the languages that have a miracle on its use, and has a uniqueness beauty while producing it, is the language used in al Quran and some related works. Such as movies or a TV show which are entirely religious and describing something about God (Allah) or one of the prophets. Figurative language uses in literary writing, should touch feelings, emotions based on an image of things seen, and actions experienced. The use of figurative language in *The Message* movie becomes the focus of this study. This movie is an excellent film representing the glorious Islamic history. Although it was released in the 1970s, it signifies the time of dearest prophet Muhammad. The film reveals the first years of early Islamic history. Published in both Arabic and English, *The Message* serves as an introduction to early Islamic history. Following Muslim beliefs regarding depictions of Muhammad, he was not depicted on-screen nor was his voice heard. This rule extended to his wives, his daughters, his sons-in-law, and his caliphs (Abu Bakr As-Siddique, Ali Ibn Abi Tālib, Umar Ibn Khattab, Uthman Ibn Affan). This left Muhammad's uncle Hamza (Anthony Quinn) and his adopted son Zayd (Damien Thomas) as the speaker of the prophet, and they cannot mention different things because of its higher degree directly, so they use figure of speech to make words more beautiful so that it suits the situation where they are with the prophet Muhammad (Ayish, 2008).

Figurative language refers to words, and groups of words, that exaggerate or alter the usual meanings of the component words. It has a purpose to make the language or the sentence more interesting, more live and the information clearer when received the addressee. Besides, it has a target to compare or to analogize something with others in order the illustration clearer, more interesting, and more live. Any language that goes beyond the literal meanings of a word to furnish new effects or fresh insights into an idea or a subject (Pradopo, 1995; Colston, 2015). Figures of speech have been integrated into religious works from various perspectives by different scholars. Some scholars have studied the use of figurative language in Hadiths concerning translation. For instance, how functional equivalence achieved when translating a figure of speech from one language to another (Al-Fadda, 2010). Another study concerns with figurative language in a movie such as an analysis of symbolic languages used in the Harry Potter movie (Lutan, 2012). It identified the use of metaphor, simile, personification, metonymy, symbol, synecdoche, paradox, hyperbole, litotes, and irony. A similar finding is found in another study examining the figurative language in the movie of "Early Persecution in Mecca" (Lowke, 2001). However, translating figurative language involves bilingual conceptualization of the contexts represented (Heredia & Cieślicka, 2015). Accordingly, this study may lead to a better understanding of figurative language and its use in *The Message* movie particularly on its religious education values.

## 2. THEORETICAL REVIEW

### 2.1 Sociolinguistics

The existence of language cannot be separated from society. Sociolinguistics focuses on language dealing with social and cultural phenomena in one culture, exploring its relation to social sciences, especially psychology, anthropology, and sociology (Yule, 2010). Its link to cultural phenomenon can affect the way people speak or talk since it is determined by the social context (Trudgill, 2000). Sociolinguists also try to investigate the use of language to convey messages. As language functions to transmit messages, there must be social interactions between the members of a community. Those social interactions can indicate the relationship of the people who are involved (Holmes, 2013). Thus, sociolinguistics is essential in explaining the communication between the members of society.

Language can maintain every social institution in human life. People use language for different purposes; it can be used to "carry on" love, to "carry out" hate and reveal their identity, characters, and background without realizing that they are doing so. In other words, since communication uses language as its primary means, of course, it will involve the distinctive personality, attitudes, and beliefs, and emotions of the speakers in the society (Chaika, 1995). Therefore, in sociolinguistics, there are two important objects to be identified. They are the language used and the community that uses the language.

Sapir-Whorf hypothesis says that the structure of language can affect society by influence or even control them. In other words, human's view is also influenced by the language (in Wardaugh, 2006). It brings three effects of society on language and the way in which the environment is reflected in language. First, the physical environment a community lives is being reflected in its language. For example, in several Indonesian names for the word "rice" like *padi*, *beras*, *gabah*, and *nasi*. Second, the social environment can also be reflected in the language, and often it affects the structure of the vocabulary. An example of this effect is the characteristic vocabulary of a coast tribe, such as the Nootka Indians, with their precise terms for many species of marine animals, vertebrate and invertebrate. Then, the last effect in which the environment is reflected in language is the values of a society. Different societies and religious may value certain things and do them in a certain way.

### 2.2 Figurative Language

Figurative language employs various figures of speech on kind of language, which departs from the language used in the traditional, literal ways of describing person or objects (Sivakumar, 2015). It also expresses the theme, ideas, and feeling of the author. Usually, it is used in the situation and the condition of the fact. The author writes the literary work using language as the instrument. Language can influence the reader and make the positive effect for the sake of freshness or emphasis, departs from the usual denotations of words (Kennedy, 1983).

Figurative language is wording that makes explicit comparisons between unlike things using figures of speech such as metaphors and similes (Risdiyanto, 2011). Figures of speech convey shades of meaning cannot be expressed precisely any other way. They

carry a great deal in a shorter time than would otherwise be possible, and they are immediate because they embody the meaning in imagery instead of expressing it abstractly. Figure of speech is a word or words used in an imaginative rather than in a literal sense in the same manner (Hodges, 1984). Figurative language consists of different categories based on its function (Kennedy, 1983).

### **2.2.1 Comparative figurative language**

The figurative language which is used as a means of comparing things that are essentially unlike is *a simile*. In a simile, the comparison is expressed by the use of some word or phrase such as like, as, than, similar to, resembles, or seems. For example, "Arema is like a crazy lion" merely approximates the characteristics of "Arema" to those of "a crazy lion."

*A metaphor* is used as a means of comparing things that are essentially unlike. In metaphor, the comparison is implied- that is, the figurative term is substituted for or identified with the literal term. It does not use connective words such as like or as. Metaphor only makes sense when the similarities between the two things become apparent, or someone understands the connection (Young in Stevanus, 2013). The example is "Arema is a crazy lion."

A figure of speech in imaginative something which does not have a soul, as though they have human characteristic is *personification*. It is a figure of speech in which a thing, an animal, or an abstract term (truth or nature) is made human.

### **2.2.2 Conductive figurative language**

*Hyperbole* or overstatement is figurative language that contains exaggeration element about something. It means that something is made greater than the fact or containing exaggeration (Dennis, 1996). Sometimes this kind of figurative language use for the comic purpose, but more often it is used seriously, it can produce a very dramatic effect. For example "I was surprised until half died to hear his saying."

*A paradox* is an apparent contradiction that is nevertheless somehow true. In a paradoxical statement, the disagreement usually stems from one of the words being used figuratively or with more than one denotation.

*The irony* is the use of contrast or opposition in which the real statement diminishes the important or the magnitude of the subject matter. It can be taken as an example of judgment and call for sympathy and compassion. It involves a relationship between the realities describes and the term used to describe it (Kennedy, 1983).

*Litotes* is figurative language that contains a statement which made smaller from original or expressed by negating its opposite. It is meant that people usually use it to make it simple so that they are not arrogant because they guess something invaluable although exactly is so valuable.

### **2.2.3 Correlative figurative language**

*A symbol* may be defined merely as something that means more than what it is. It also means a sign of some kind (a word or thing) that suggest something outside and beyond itself (Kennedy, 1983). Whereas the simile says A is like B, the symbol would

speak only about B; the symbol may be a concrete thing an object, a person, or an action, described for its own sake and suggestion of meaning.

*A metonymy* is a form of figurative language that involves the substitution of one word to another. It is a device of letting one word stand for another closely related word (Jimenez-Munoz & Martinez, 2017). While, *synecdoche* is the use of the part for the whole and metonymy the use of something closely related for the thing meant are alike in that both substitute some significant detail or aspect of an experience for the experience itself (Littlemore, 2015).

*Allegory* is a narrative of description that has a second meaning beneath the surface. Although the surface story or narration may have its interest, the author's primary interest is in the ulterior sense. While *ellipsis* is figurative language that eliminates word or part of the sentence.

#### **2.2.4 Repetitive or enforcement figurative language**

*Pleonasm* is figurative language that misuses words to emphasize the meaning of a word (Keraf, 1994), for example: "He falls of the ground." Verb falls in the sentence means something or a person who rare to the bottom (ground) and down also has the same meaning with falls that rare to the bottom. So, both of these words fall and down are force one another.

*A climax* is a figurative language that states something from small to great for example: "Children's, teenagers, and old people have the same right in-laws." The subject in the sentence is consecutively based on age. It begins from young to old. *Anticlimax* is the opponent of climax figurative language for example: "Headmaster, teachers, and students have attended the ceremony." The subject in the sentence is consecutively based on job level. It begins from senior to the junior level in a job.

*Rhetoric* is figurative language in question that the answer has known by the questioner for example "Who doesn't want to be happy?" While *repetition* is figurative language that uses repetition word to emphasize meaning. For example "Goodbye my girl, goodbye my sweetheart, goodbye my angel."

### **3. METHODS**

This research employed a descriptive qualitative method since it involved the collection of data to describe the existing condition. It focuses on cultural, social, personal identity and its goal is more descriptive than predictive on the religious education value of the movie analyzed (Vanderstoep & Johnson, 2009). The data of this research is a movie script and the utterance used on *The Message* movie, available online through [https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie\\_script.php?movie=messag\\_e-the](https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=messag_e-the). The steps of analysis cover figuring out the figurative language used in the film and analyzing the meaning presented by the figurative language used by the characters. Also, it also examines the religious education aspect appear in the movie performed by the actors.

## 4. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Types of Figure of Speech in *The Message*

Based on the data, the conversation in the movie represents some types of the figure of speech such as irony, simile, personification, paradox, hyperbole, oxymoron, metaphor, repetitive, metonymy, antithesis, onomatopoeia, and symbol. The simile is the most dominant one, such as the following.

*AMMAR: Yes Muhammad says before God all men are equal as the teeth of gum (Data 2).*

*WALID: Away? You can't... You must meet them at Badr we can bring them down like raw eggs (Data 10).*

*HIND: I will hunt, like a lion I will make Hamza, my lion, my prey (Data 13).*

In data 2, Ammar here wanted to share what the prophet come up with which is the equality between all men. He resembled the equality concerning all stand in the same level with the same length. No one is preferred by God, because of his/her skin color or social power. In the simile, the comparison is expressed by the use of some word or phrase such as like, as, than, similar to, resembles, or seems. Similarly when it applies to the data 10 and 13.

The use of personification in the movie refers to a thing is made as human. In other words, it is giving a non-human object a human characteristic as the following.

*MUSAB: Open the windows! Let the world hear (Data 3).*

*WALID: I say: Fight! We stand in the present, and the future will look after itself (Data 11).*

The actor Musab used the term hear because he felt that the world must listen to the miracle. This figure of speech shows that Islam will spread all over the place. Musab treated the world as the human creature which has ears to listen through, eyes to see things going around, and nose to smell, while in real life it does not, the world is an abstract. Similarly to the word "future" that become humanized in data 11.

The irony is used by the characters in the movie in such a way that their intended meaning is different from the actual meaning of the words. It involves a relationship between the realities describes and the term used to describe it as found in the following.

*HIND: You! Kick him for his cleverness (Data 1)*

*HAMZA: Stand up! Hit me back if you dare! I affirm my nephew's religion, and I say what he says, whoever dares to fight, to fight with me! Muhammed, when I hunt the desert at night, I know that God is not kept in a house (Data 4).*

The actress Hind tends to use the term cleverness instead using stupid. Because she thought it is more meaningful when she does not use the term literary. The context shows that the answer of Ammar was dared to be answered to a person such as Hind, who resembled the wife of Abo Sofian who is the leader of Mecca. Similar to data 4, it

shows the irony in which words are used in such a way that their intended meaning is different from the actual meaning.

Oxymoron in which two opposite ideas are joined to create an effect occurs in the dialog below.

*SALOOOL: Of course, it's the healthy hypocrisy (Data 7)*

*HAMZA: Besides their numbers, I'd say it's a fair fight we see them, and they see us what faces me has never frightened me (Data 14.1).*

The metaphor is used in the movie to in the statement that one thing is something else, which in a literal sense, it is not. It does not use connective words such as like or as. Metaphor only makes sense when the similarities between the two things become apparent, or someone understands the connection. The following are the examples.

*AMMAR: "Work is worship," he says (Data 8).*

*HAMZA: I said, cut them loose and give them water and share your food, same mouthfuls. And if they walk, walk beside them, any prisoner who can teach 10 Muslims to read will go free (Data 12).*

In the movie, hyperbole is also found in the statement containing exaggeration, not for the comic purpose, but more often it is used seriously to produce a theatrical effect. For a clear explanation as in the following

*ABYSSINIA: The difference between you and us is not bigger than this line, Not for a mountain of gold will I give them up to you; you may live in Abyssinia in peace as long as you wish May God's blessings be upon you when you return (Data 6).*

*HIND: You coward! Are you the leader of Mecca? Look at yourself! You are broke; they swallowed you and sput you out. When my father and brother die, my husband ran away? You go home! You! (Data 18)*

In this context, Abasinis did not mean a gold literary, but even though if Quraish people bring him wealth and amount of money to take them back, Abasinis won't give them again unless they need to go. The religious aspect appears here was after Jafar has said what Islam is like. Muslims attitude should be like to worship one god, to speak the truth, to love our neighbors as ourselves, to give charity, even a smile can be charity, to protect women from misuse, to shelter orphans and to turn away from gods of wood and stone. The same exaggeration also occurs in data 18 in the statement "they swallowed you."

Repetitive is found in the dialog to show emphases, for instance, repeating the word "fight" to let everyone know the strategies of a fight come from Allah, and that it is not only carrying a weapon and fight anytime and anyone, but it has plans to follow. The sentence is as the following.

*ZAID: It is newly revealed by God to his messenger Fight, but the fight in the way of God against those who fight against you, Drive them out of the places from where they drove you out, for persecution is worse than slaughter. Fight them until persecution is no more, and religion is God, but if they stop, let there be no more war for God never loves the slaughters of wars so, fight in the way of God against those who fight against you (Data 9).*

Metonymy in the movie replaces the name of a thing with the name of something else with which it is closely associated. The following is the example.

*HAMZA: When Muhammad gives the word, we'll go to them. (Data 14.2)*

In here it does not mean that the prophet is not talking to them and not using any word, so they are waiting for his speech. But "the word" here replaces starting the battle or associated with the context of the dialog.

Antithesis is also found in the movie as a result when a pair of strongly contrasting terms are presented together (Mhiwaki: 2004). This kind of figurative language found in the following utterance.

*HIND: Death is too small (Data 15)*

In this scene, Hind used antithesis showing opposite words or group of them, which contain a contrastive idea. She was pleased with Hamza's death, and she spoke to him with entire anger, that death is so near and easy to be conducted, she did not mean the size of death is big or small.

The paradox in the movie occurs as a combination of two contrast ideas in one sentence such as in the following sentence.

*JAFAR: She is different but equal (Data 5).*

Jafar means that according to Islam, the women have right as men do, in the worship, in their choice of marriage, in their study and so many else unlike how they were before Islam. Once they mistreated them, they bought and sold women as if they were a piece of goods, and they are different. Because there is such a work which is not suitable for women to have, also in the worship Allah give her permission not to pray nor fast while she is in her period. Because of the women's kindness, they can provide their witness with two women and men and so many else. It also shows an ambiguous statement in which the contradiction usually stems from one of the words being used figuratively or whit more than one denotation.

Onomatopoeia is used in the dialog which means that is to say the word nothing more than sounding it or the sound accrues of the word represent its meaning. The following is the example.

*ZAID: He said, you're the prophet of God, you can't go round scratching for firewood But he looked at me mumbling God does not like the man (Data 16).*

The utterance means Zaid was telling people about the prophet Muhammed and his humility. He uses two sweet words which are scratching and mumbling, even for those readers who are not familiar with those words but they can guess their meaning by their sounds. Scratching means looking for while muttering means talking or saying. The use of figurative language gives beauty to the sentences.

The symbol means to signify ideas and qualities, by giving them symbolic meanings that are different from their literal sense. It is shown in the following.

*ABO SOFIAN: I am Mecca, I am the leader of Mecca (Data 17).*

When Abo Sofian said that, he did not mean that he is the place which named Mecca, but he used Mecca as a representation of him as he is the leader in Mecca. It symbolizes excellent power; the symbol is described for its own sake and suggestion of meaning based on the context.

#### **4.2 Religious Education Values**

Since the movie is a religious movie that shows the message which has been brought from Allah to his prophet Muhammad, a lot of religious aspects appeared in The Message movie, Islam has some values and dimension that all Muslims follow and believe in, and each utterance delivers a message. As language functions to convey messages, there must be social interactions between the members of the community. Those social interactions can indicate the relationship of the people who are involved (Holmes, 2013). It suggests how the community interact through the lens of language and communication (Blommaert, 2017). Hence, in the movie analyzed the religious aspect that appears within the use of figurative language by the characters and how these dialogues can deliver different meaning even though the kind of the figurative language is the same.

One of the Islamic values or in other words the religious aspect appear in this movie is the faith in Islam, the trust and they believe in Allah and his prophet shown in a different scene in the film with the use of different kinds of figurative language. The finding indicates that the different dialogue or context and varied use of words lead to one dominant meaning (Holmes & Wilson, 2017). Styles provide a variety of ways of saying the same thing for example when Ammar said: "*Yes Muhammad says before God all men are equal as the teeth of a gum*" (Data 3). The religious aspect appeared when Hind and Omaia asked Bilal to whip Ammar because he was brave to prove the strength of the message brought by Muhammad. Bilal refused to do that because he felt in deep that this is the truth, and God has created all the men to be equal to each other nor to be oppressed.

Also when Ammar said, "*Work is a worship*" (Data 8) the religious aspect appears in how Muslims help each other and how they work with all of their heart as they love Muhammad and God, their belief and trust, even though a small thing like work or giving effort in doing a job can resemble the worship and pray to Allah. Allah does not like people to only sit down and wait for others to work for them even if they are praying all the time, once they work they can get that Hasanat doubled. In this

scene, Ammar said this phrase with confidence and he tend to mention that work resembles worship (Holmes & Wilson, 2017). It also implies that people may use different pronunciations, vocabulary, grammar, or styles of a language for various purposes, mainly when it expresses the speaker's feeling (Ekasani, 2015).

When Hamza said "*When Muhammed gives the word, we'll go to them*" (Data 14.2), the religious aspect appeared here is the trust which has been delivered by the prophet. He knows the right and wrong things, and where and when to start, every Muslim donate him/herself to Allah from the wrong thing which may happen to the right thing.

Another religious aspect is implied in the sharing of the same value in different context with different use by the characters. The religious element deals with charity in Islam. The most beautiful charity we do when decorating every work we do both in our dealings with God Almighty when performing his duties and right to worship, or in our dealings with humans, animals, and plants, charity is one of the highest houses of slavery and the best and a great kind of showing the belief in Allah. For example as in when Abisinia said "*The difference between you and us is not bigger than this line, Not for a mountain of gold will I give them up to you, you may live in Abyssinia in peace as long as you wish, May God's blessings be upon you when you return*" (Data 6). It was a reflection toward what has Jafar said. Abasinia got influenced by Jaffar's word which was the retelling of the Quran and the prophet sayings. The religious aspect appears here was after Jafar has said what the Islam is like, and how Muslims attitude should be like to worship one god, to speak the truth, to love neighbors as ourselves, to give charity, even a smile can be charity, to protect women from misuse, and to shelter orphans. It leads Abasinis to enter Islam with all of his people because of the strong influence he got from the prophet and the miracle which is the Quran when Surat Mariam was retold.

The value of good character which is one of the central values that the prophet came up with and he advised all of his people to have a proper role in which it will bring them closer to God, and it will make the communication with people easy and kindly. God Almighty blessed the last of the prophets Muhammad peace be upon him this great credit is the preferred collection of ethics and ethics of the arts. Said God Almighty in his book describing our beloved and our master Muhammad peace be upon him, saying: (and you have a great creation), has indicated this verse Kindly that the Messenger of Allah Muhammad peace be upon him has demonstrated this excellent moral, and was able to collect in his personality, peace be upon him.

In another dialog, the religious education aspect can be inferred. When Abo Sofian came to Madina and wanted to meet the prophet after he has broken the truce, he said "*I am Mecca, I am the leader of Mecca. Why am I insulted like this?*" (Data 17). The religious aspect appeared here was how the prophet and his people face the coming of Abo Sofian with kindness, and they did not try to hurt him physically, they tend to ignore and turn out of him. In every community, there is a range of varieties from which people select according to the context in which they are communicating (Holmes & Wilson, 2017). As the prophet Mohammad and Khaled in this scene they use a selected

way of treating Abo Sofian unlike other people, they use this kind of language because they knew it would be more effective on him.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The kinds of figurative language found in *The Message* movie are irony, simile, personification, paradox, hyperbole, oxymoron, metaphor, repetitive, metonymy, antithesis, onomatopoeia, and symbol. The most dominant figurative language used is a simile, which is a type of figurative language that used to explain the resemblance of two objects (in shape, color, and characteristic). The characters use this kind of figurative language to make things like and the dialect more evident than usual, and because of its simplicity in understanding by people to get to know the religion more.

Every figurative language used by the character has a meaning beyond that which is not the literal meaning (Holmes & Wilson, 2017). In sociolinguistic point of view, people may use different dialects of a language in different contexts, and in some communities, people select different languages according to the situation in which they are speaking. People tend to use figurative language to give beauty to their sentence, and it would be more effective. The meaning presented within the use of figurative language vary, and each type has a different meaning from the other. In the dialog, the most potent meaning was presented when Musab said "Open the windows! Let the world hear." The actor Musab used the term hear because he felt that the world must listen to this miracle. This figure of speech shows that Islam will spread all over the place. Musab treated the world as a human creature which has ears to listen through, eyes to see things going around, and nose to smell, while in real life it does not, the world is an abstract. This usage of figurative language was dominant in the Message movie because of the meaning it conveys beyond its literal meaning.

Regarding the most dominant religious aspect in *The Message* movie, it is found that the movie stressed on the faith in Allah by Muslims in which they believe in one god and Muhammad is his messenger. They give the trust and release the strength and spiritual motivation from Allah. Besides, faith in God is the absolute belief in the existence of the Almighty without a doubt and that the Almighty is the Creator of everything, in reality, is the only God in the universe and the only deserving of worship. These religious values are represented in one term namely "The Message."

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