

## **An analysis of the interpersonal meaning of lyric and video “zombie” by day6**

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**Abstract** – Song is a learning media that often use to learn English by the students but sometimes they do not understand the meaning of the song used. This study focuses on analyze the intended meaning from some figurative expressions through the song lyric and the symbolic signs and gestures on the video clip of Day6 “Zombie”. The data of this study were the lyrics of Day6 “Zombie (English Version)” and the official video that uploaded on 11th May 2021 by JYP Entertainment. The lyrics and the video were analyzed by Fairclough’s critical discourse analysis by categorizing the figurative expressions that showed the intended meaning and explain the symbolic expressions through semiotic study. The result shows if there are six figurative expressions such as metaphor, personification, paradox, repetition, metonymy, and symbolism. The images are delivered through colour schemes, symbolic objects, and gestures. This study concluded that the intended meaning from lyrics and the music video of Day6 “Zombie” tells about the hopeless feeling of someone who always does the same thing every day.

**Keywords:** discourse analysis; figurative expressions; song lyrics

## I. INTRODUCTION

Humans are called as the sociable beings that need each other in their live. They need others existence to accompany them in doing their activities. Since of that necessary, they should have a tool to link each other. Then, they require a way of communication, which is known as language, in order to carry out their cooperation with others.

According to Hornby (1992), language is a system of sounds and words that use to convey humans' thoughts and feelings. Ramelan (1992) also stated if the use of language allows members of a social group to work together for their mutual advantage. In terms of language use, the author can argue that language plays a vital role in human life as a method of communicating ideas, feelings, and wants among persons who are members of a social community. We may communicate and express our ideas, feelings, and share information with others through the use of language. The use of music is one approach to communicate with language. Based on Rusdianto (2016), the word "music" comes from the Greek word "mousike," which is derived from the name of the God who oversaw the worlds of art and science. Music is mostly concerned with feelings and sounds. These statements imply that music's content is a revelation of sensations and noises and music helps us understand them more sensitively. Song is the part of music that is familiar for everyone.

Based on Cardinal et al (2015), when it comes to teach English to adolescents, most language teachers choose to use the most recent song by the most popular musician to engage students in the learning process. They may also invite students to locate and listen to a song by one of their favourite performers in order to increase their involvement in the language learning process (Leap, 2015). However, both teachers and students are occasionally unaware of the true meaning of the song. Setiawati and Maryani (2018) stated that when it comes to the suitability of a song for their age and socio-cultural background, the majority of them are less choosy when it comes to using it in class. The study of the analysis of song discourse (Alek et al, 2020) is interesting for the researchers who are interested in discourse analysis (Hassen, 2015; Rusdianto, 2016; Gunawan et al, 2021; Siregar, 2021; Wajdi, 2018).

This study is attempting to analyze how a song writer or composer delivers their messages through a song. This research also aims to reveal any figurative expressions on the lyrics, as well as symbolic expressions shown on the video in the form of gestures or objects, in order to make teachers more aware of any discourse markers shown on the video before deciding to use it as learning medium (Wu & Hou, 2015). The writer will concentrate on the implication meanings of Day6's song lyric "Zombie (English Version)" in this research.

Day6 is band from South Korea who was formed in 2015. They have composed a lot of popular songs that easily accepted in K-Pop (Korean-Pop industry and international market. Even though their songs were written in Korean language mostly, but they also write some of English version of their song. On May 2020, they composed and released a song that was inspired by the condition of COVID-19 pandemic entitled "Zombie". This song attracts a lot of

viewers because it has relatable lyrics for everyone. The official Youtube video of the song gained 17 million viewers after one year of its release. Moreover, this song also topped some music chart in South Korea after released. Not only in Korean language, Day6 also created the English version of this song, therefore the international listener could understand this song easily.

The use of figurative expressions, semiotics or symbols, lyrics, and a combination of them were employed as the major data for this study. Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis was used to conduct the current study and was considered to be the most appropriate guidance because the data provided on the video clip met all of the criteria of text in Fairclough's CDA, which can be found in the form of speech, writings, and images (Hassen, 2015; Lauwren, 2020). Fairclough's CDA was also deemed the most appropriate approach to investigate the appropriateness of the video clip in relation to the students' society's norms and values, as well as how language could stimulate changes in society, particularly among teenagers, as a tool to change behaviour and gain power. The current study is based on the following questions. 1) How the writer of the "Zombie" lyrics deliver his intended messages through the video clip? 2) What messages did the writer of the song want to deliver?

## **II. METHOD**

The lyrics of Day6's song "Zombie" and the official video clip on YouTube posted by JYP Entertainment on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2020 served as the study's data. The research method used in this study was critical discourse analysis, which involved categorizing any kinds of figurative expressions delivered to reveal the song's intended meaning, and the symbolic cues shown on the video clip were interpreted using a semiotic approach, as well as the nature of the socio-cultural background of the origin of the symbols shown on the video clip (Wu & Hou, 2015). The semiotic approach is the study of sign processes, which include any activity, conduct, or process, that involves signs, such as meaning formation. The semiotic tradition investigates the significance of signs and symbols in communication.

The procedure of collecting the data in this study was divided into several steps. For analyzing the lyrics: (1) Reading - in the first step, the writer will read and re-read and also listen to the song in order to get the meaning and the feeling. (2) Analyzing - analyzing the words which need to be explained to find the meaning. (3) Reporting - the data which had been analyzed will be drawn in the form of conclusion by paraphrasing the song based on the use of figurative expressions.

Then, for analyzing the symbolic cues shown on the video: 1) Watching- the writer will watch and re-watch the music video to get the symbolic cues shown on the video. (2) Analyzing - analyzing the scenes that need to be described to reach the meaning. (3) Reporting - the writer will get the conclusion from the data that already analyzed by collecting the scenes on the music video to find the symbolic cues.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following are findings gleaned from Day6's "Zombie" song lyrics and video. The findings revealed how the messages were delivered through the video clip, which contains both aural and visual cues in the form of lyrics, images covering the symbols shown on the video, and action covering certain meaningful gestures done by the model of the video, based on Fairclough's critical discourse analysis. From the video clip, there are also some literal and metaphorical languages that the song's songwriter has mixed to convey the song's intended meaning, as well as visual cues covering symbolic pictures and gestures that deliver meaningful messages.

Table 1 Figurative expressions on the lyrics

Num	Figurative Expressions	Lyrics
1.	Metaphor	1. Breathing but I've been dying inside 2. Not alive but I'm still walking
2.	Personification	Let the demon sing me a lullaby
3.	Paradox	Today's a present that I don't want
4.	Repetition	Wanting something I can't see And something I can't reach Or something that could not exist
5.	Metonymy	Wishing to stop and close my eyes
6.	Symbolism	I became a zombie

#### 3.1 Symbolic images on the music video

The visual images in the video are divided into various major groupings of symbols. There are some elements of symbols based on Bruce and Mitford (1996) found including colour scheme, symbolic objects, and gestures as follows.

1. The colour schemes that most appeared on the music video are black and grey.
2. The symbolic objects that often shown on is the human that acted like a zombie.
3. The gesture appeared on the music video are human who is tired, weak, and hopeless.

#### 3.2 The Analysis of Figurative Expression and Meaning in Song Lyric "Zombie"

##### a. Metaphor

*Breathing but I've been dying inside  
 Not alive but I'm still walking*

The lyrics are included into the metaphor because those express something that doesn't make sense literally but it only makes sense when someone recognizes the link. The first lyric contains meaning as someone who still alive but his/her soul is dying. It has correlation with the second lyric that also state if someone still doing activities but without passion or hope so it does not feel meaningful.

##### b. Personification

*Let the demon sing me a lullaby*

The lyric is a personification because it describe things, animals, and ideas which given human characteristics. The demon is a devil or thing that cannot do something that usually does by human, but on this lyric that demon could sing a lullaby or whispering something to human like an ordinary human being does.

##### c. Paradox

*Today's a present that I don't want*

That lyric is a paradox because it appears to contradict itself yet after closer inspection it does not. We know if every people will be happy for a present or gift, but "I" feel unhappy for it. After we inspect it closely, "I" is the hopeless person that never ready to start a new day. Then, the word "present" that refers to "today" is something he/her is afraid of. Therefore, the word "present" in here feels make sense to be something that do not expected by "I".

d. Repetition

*Wanting something I can't see  
And something I can't reach  
Or something that could not exist*

Those lyrics appear several times in a text to emphasize an emotion or idea of the composer so that it meets the criteria of repetition. The word "something" is repeated three times. Even though the true meaning of "something" is still mysterious, the writer assume that it refers to a dream or hope that owned by "I" that still far away from his/her reality.

e. Metonymy

*Wishing to stop and close my eyes*

It refers to a thing or idea that replaces another thing which it shares a strong connection so it can be a metonymy. For someone who depressed and hopeless of their live, but they should still work everyday then he/her will hope to end everything as soon as possible. The word "eyes" could be the main idea of this lyric. The writer thinks if it does not mean eyes in literal meaning, it could be the representation of someone's live. Since the human being start their day after open their eyes in the morning, it is same like every babies who start their live after they are giving birth and see the world. Then, after a day ends, everyone will sleep and close their eyes. It has a connection with every human being that die until they close their eyes and the soul leaves their body. That lyric represent if someone hope to stop their life and leave this world.

f. Symbolism

*I became a zombie*

Symbolism is a literary device in which words, persons, markings, places, or abstract concepts are used to signify something other than their literal meaning. Then, that lyric could represent the symbolism of the song, especially the word "zombie". Zombie is a will-less and mute individual believed to have died and been supernaturally reanimated. It is similar with the characteristic of "I" that described on the whole song. "I" is someone who is hopeless and pessimist that turned to be depresses person but he/her should still work and do activities just like every normal human being. It makes "I" become a zombie who does not have will or passion in doing everything but still walking and pretend to have a normal life.

### 3.3 The symbolism image

a. The colour scheme

The colour of grey and black on the video clip "Zombie" is used mostly. It represents the loss of hope, motivation, enthusiasm, and energy of the song as well as every lyric tells for the listeners. The viewers will feel the gloomy and hopeless vibration from the colour scheme of the music video.

b. The symbolic object

The symbolic object of the video is the human who acted like a zombie. He was miserable, untidy, weak, pale, very thin, and had panda eyes because lack of sleep. He represents an employee who works from morning until midnight that does not have rest time because his life is only about wake up from the sleep, work, and sleep again. It repeated everyday and make he became a “zombie” who never enjoy his life.

c. The gesture

The model of the video clip was acted like a very miserable person who did not clean himself, walk very slowly, his sight was empty, and he did not have any expression. He looked very tired, weak, hopeless, and so depressed.

The mixture of the lyrics and images

There are some meaningful scenes that combine the lyrics and images on the music video. The most dominant combination of lyric and image scenes are explained below.

1.



Figure 1 The music video of “Zombie”



Figure 2 The music video of “Zombie”

The lyrics “breathing but I've been dying inside” and “not alive but I'm still walking” fit that image. The model of the video walks very slowly and swaying like he does not have soul inside his body. It is different with other people that move very fast in the road. Then, on the office, the model looks very tired unlike other workers who work very fast to finish their work only. It shows if the hopeless feeling appears on those scenes.

2.



Figure 3 The music video of "Zombie"



Figure 4 The music video of "Zombie"

"Wishing to stop and close my eyes" has the strong connection with the pictures above. On the first image, the model was looking out at the road below from the bridge after go back from the office. He thought to suicide by jumping to the road. However it never happened because he still go home and lying on his bed. His thought to end his life will be replaced by just closing his eyes and do the same activity for tomorrow. It shows the will to end everything but he could not do that because of the certain reason appears on those scenes.



Figure 5 The music video of "Zombie"

The lyrics "I became a zombie" could describe the picture above. The model looks so pale, has panda eyes, and miserable just like the zombie does. It is the close up image that shown the face of the model. From the previous pictures, those also show if the gesture of the model looks very weak and less of spirit as how

zombie's gesture. It shows the feel of tiredness, disgust, and less energy appears on that scene.

The lyrics and the images appears on the music video were combined perfectly to deliver the message from the composer of the song. On this song, the lyric "zombie" as the symbolism of someone who is hopeless appears several times to underline if the lyrics want to imagine if the live of some people just like a zombie that less of enthusiasm, motivation, and energy. Then, the image namely a person who repeat his tiring daily work also represent someone especially adult that should face out the live that was very bored but they need to do it because the necessity of still surviving.

Moreover, this song has a strong connection within the current phenomenon which is pandemic of COVID-19. Every activity that has done from home make everyone feels depressed and tired. The feeling of losing motivation and fear to face the same daily activities is related to this song. The marketing strategy of this song is created a song that relate for everyone's life. It can also be a good example of a song that shares a good meaning. Even though we feel tired and hopeless, we need to survive and face every new day to still alive.

The following are findings gleaned from Day6's "Zombie" song lyrics and video. The findings revealed how the messages were delivered through the video clip, which contains both aural and visual cues in the form of lyrics, images covering the symbols shown on the video, and action covering certain meaningful gestures done by the model of the video, based on Fairclough's critical discourse analysis. From the video clip, there are also some literal and metaphorical languages that the song's songwriter has mixed to convey the song's intended meaning, as well as visual cues covering symbolic pictures and gestures that deliver meaningful messages.

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

The lyrics of the song and the music video try to show the deep message from the composer and the singer to the listener. The feeling of tiredness, loss motivation, and suicidal thoughts are several feeling that often owned by a lot of people on this worst situation of COVID-19 pandemic. The singer delivers the message of the song through the lyrics that contains some figurative expressions such as metaphor, personification, paradox, repetition, metonymy, and symbolism. Then, the music video also shows the feeling of emptiness, hopeless, and unmotivated through the black and grey colour schemes, the zombie symbolism, and the gesture of the model which is weak, walk slowly, and miserable. Furthermore, the mixture of the lyrics and the images shows the meaning of the song which is everyone is struggling in working their daily activity. Even though they should become a "zombie" who looks weak and hopeless but they cannot run away from their live. The only ways they can do is just by starting the work, finishing the work, and take a rest, and then that cycle is repeated over and over again. Actually this song also contains another meaning which is encouraged someone to still alive and do not suicide easily because if we support each other, the life will be easier and not that scary. The teacher could use this song to teach how to survive on this

pandemic situation using this song and lead the students to find the good meaning of this song.

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