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The Poetic Expression of Gay Lexicon Conveyed through Imagery in Lines of Poems

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Abstract

The focus of this study revolves around gay literature, specifically the poetics related to homosexuality. Gay literature includes literary works authored by individuals who identify as gay, as well as literary works by heterosexual writers that explore or discuss homosexual themes, and literary works that incorporate gay terminology. While there have been recent studies on gay literature and works, there has been a lack of attention given to gayspeak, which can be referred to more formally as a lavender lexicon, being incorporated into texts or selections that are thought to have literary significance. The study seeks to address how gayspeak is depicted in literature. Are there poetic elements present in texts that use gayspeak? The study seeks to determine the potential impact of homosexual poetics or gay speak on the advancement of literature and the teaching of literature, particularly about its literary qualities. The study utilized a limited selection of only two poems due to the scarcity of available poetry incorporating gay language. Every poetry in the collection is accompanied by translations in Filipino and English, which accurately convey the original phrases written in gayspeak. The poems were assessed based on their poetic substance and the extent to which the language used in the poem's lines demonstrates literary qualities, which is the study's primary objective. The analysis of these poems involved the application of established theories and research, such as Shklovsky's concept of Defamiliarization (2004) and the Imagery and Symbolism concept by Dimalanta and Abad (2003). Gay language in poetry has literary qualities, conveying meaning through imagery. It enhances comprehension of a poet's work and creative process. Studying imagery provides insight into the poet's production and interpretation of the text, whether written in standard or specialized language.

Keywords: gayspeak, poetics, translytic poetry, literariness

Introduction

The language used by the LGBT community has undergone a transformation in the country, transitioning from informal jargon to a widely adopted mode of communication in both the entertainment industry and daily interactions. Due to the rapid emergence of lavender lexicon or commonly known as gayspeak, it has subsequently been employed in scholarly endeavors, specifically in literature. Considering the widespread exposure of Filipinos to gay language and the abundance of literature, articles, and stories with gay themes written in this language, as well as the existence of various dictionaries of gay language, this study aims to present arguments in favor of incorporating gay speak in literature. Specifically, it explores whether gay speak possesses literary qualities, referred to academically as a lavender lexicon.

Gayspeak and Gay Literature in the Philippines

"Queer Linguistics: A Brief Introduction" (2020) by Rodney H. Jones and Jack Sidnell: This book provides an overview of queer linguistics, including the study of gay lexicon. It explores how language is used to construct and negotiate queer identities, and how it reflects social and cultural attitudes towards homosexuality. This study is also based on Lavender Lexicon and Queer Theory as referenced in Luyt's work from 2014. Lavender (queer) Linguistics is a branch of Sociolinguistics that draws on concepts from Queer studies to explore how sexual and gender identities are socially produced. She emphasized that Lavender Lexicon is rooted in Queer Theory, a philosophical perspective that challenges all sexual and gender identity classifications, whether they are biological or socially created. From the Queer Linguistics perspective, it is important to examine the clear division between language usage and system, as discourses impact both, albeit to varying extents of materialization.

Lavender lexicon in its common term, Gayspeak, swardspeak, and homosexual jargon are all words that refer to the specialized language employed by those within the LGBT community for communication purposes. The origins of these languages are up to controversy, but their continuous existence is attributed to their function as a means of resisting patriarchal tyranny (Casabal, 2008), as well as a form of resistance against the dominant era and a way of carving out a space for themselves (Swardspeak, 2010).

Before exploring the significance of gayspeak and its function in literature, it is crucial to initially establish a clear definition of gay speak. Gayspeak is considered a dialect rather than a distinct language due to its regional differences (Casabal, 2008). It functions as a pidgin, as it is created by the LGBTQ+ community to enable communication among its members while concealing the true meaning behind the words used (Lim, 2009). It is also known as swardspeak, named after Tita Swarding, a well-known radio and TV broadcaster recognized for his distinctive voice and the many phrases he has created. The language is dynamic and constructed using preexisting languages such as Japanese, English, Spanish, French, and German. The rules of this language are not standardized and are subject to change. They heavily rely on the speaker's cleverness and incorporate hilarious words from popular culture and regional differences. Swardspeak, as of 2010. The dynamic collection of vocabulary words enhances the speaker's desire for unrestricted self-expression.

The advancement of gay literature in the Philippines is ongoing. Certain educational institutions include gay literature as a component of their curriculum, and several poems have been composed by both established and emerging writers. The *Ladlad Anthologies*, authored by the renowned Filipino gay poet Danton Remoto, have emerged as indispensable resources for the examination of gay literature. However, the question remains: how do Filipino artists precisely delineate gay poetry?

According to J. Neil Garcia, any writings that are produced by individuals who identify as homosexual and are aware of their sexual orientation, as well as any writings that may be interpreted from a gay perspective, can be considered as examples of gay literature. In the first group, there are numerous poems with gay themes where the poet's homosexuality is not explicitly expressed in the poetry. The reason for this is not due to a lack of desire to be interpreted within a homosexual context or a reluctance to openly identify as gay, but rather because they already align themselves with the "third tendency of gayness in gay poetry" (Evasco, 2003). An illustration of this can be seen in J. Neil Garcia's poem titled "Poem," in which he refrains from explicitly disclosing his homosexual identity yet asserts that it is inherently a gay poetry due to its inevitable emanation from the viewpoint of a gay poet.

Filipinos are renowned for their adherence to traditional values, which leads them to avoid using phrases that may be considered vulgar or indecent. This enhances the attractiveness of LGBT slang to its users by adopting a liberal approach and use euphemisms for phrases that would be considered indecent by the majority (Suguitan, 2005). The terminology

spoken in the LGBT community may differ based on geographical location and the level of education of the person in question. For instance, individuals with advanced knowledge may refer to historical characters or geography to portray feelings, ideas, deeds, and so on (Casabal, 2008). For instance, a homosexual individual with a college education may employ the word "Truman Capote" to designate another homosexual person, and so forth.

Literariness in Gayspeak

Comprehending gay poetry needs both patience and creativity, as it is frequently composed in a cryptic manner (Greenwell, 2011), suggesting that the author intentionally avoids comprehensive comprehension. To fully appreciate gay poetry, it is necessary to overcome the initial surprise of its bold approach, the emphasis on form or lack thereof, and above all, to possess a sense of humor, as the process of interpreting such poetry can be amusing at times.

Gayspeak is distinguished by its innovative manner of conveying progressive concepts. This strategy is also utilized in homosexual literature. The origins of gay writing might plausibly be attributed to the era of the ancient Greek philosophers. According to some observers, during that period, homosexuality was tolerated because of the perception that it was an older and wiser individual providing guidance to a younger student. Today in the Philippines, Anvil has emerged as the leading publisher of homosexual literature, including notable works such as "The Status of Gay Literature in the Philippines" (Lim, 2009). Lim emphasized that there is a subtle distinction between Filipino and American gay literature, likely due to the fact that many of these writers received their education in the United States or were influenced by American homosexual writers (2009).

According to Simpson (2003), thoughts and emotions are the source of poetic forms. Poetry, being an expression of emotions, is characterized by rhythm. The poem, although it lacks specific words, possesses a distinct structure. Ginsberg's views emphasize that poetry is primarily driven by an eager emotional experience rather than being constrained by a rigid metrical structure. This aspect of his theories is particularly robust.

Dilley (1999) asserts that queer theory's constructional framework is based on post-modern constructionism. While sexuality holds significance and acts as a central theme, it does not include the entirety of homosexual literature. Upon initial examination, it may appear that portrayals of relationships between men cannot be separated into distinct

categories from gay literature. However, Dilley highlights that queer theory, which is interdisciplinary in nature, is based on three fundamental principles: it investigates the lives and experiences of individuals who are not heterosexual; it compares these lives and experiences with those considered "normal"; and it explores the reasons behind the classification of these lives and experiences as deviating from the norm. Contrary to the belief that employees should not discuss personal issues at work, Woods (2002) contends that teaching LGBT literature is inherently autobiographical. This is because the instructor must start by embracing their own identity, rather than conforming to societal expectations. A homosexual teacher who is open about their sexual orientation is uncommon, and heterosexual teachers may not adequately fulfill the role of teaching this subject. For instance, individuals may possess preexisting biases or conventional perspectives towards gays that could hinder the delivery of the lesson. Consequently, the student is deprived of the education they are entitled to, and their progress in the realm of gay literature is hindered. Nevertheless, Woods emphasized that there are instances in which the openly gay literary teacher may exhibit bias against the heterosexual student. The scarcity of the course may result in incorrect expectations (Woods, 2002).

What characteristics define literature as "queer" or "gay"? As previously said, it is not solely focused on same-sex relationships, which would restrict the powers of both the writer and the reader. Crandall et al. (2011) tackle this inquiry by proposing the existence of a homosexual sensibility. "Heterosexual individuals may overlook certain subtleties that are readily apparent to gay men and women." Crandall observes that the heterosexual world is heavily focused on the binary gender of male and female, causing it to perceive everything through that particular lens. The meaning conveyed by a gay male poet while writing, "we met in the park / at dusk," differs significantly from that of a heterosexual man or woman. The article argues against drawing distinctions between gay sensitivity and universal human feelings, asserting that being gay is fundamentally a part of being human. The qualities of gay poetics include a defiant attitude, a fondness for language that is concealed, coded, or altered, a preoccupation with structure, and a sense of wit. By comparing these traits to the context of gayspeak, one can identify specific similarities. Initially, it is noted that LGBT language has undergone changes as individuals seek liberation from oppression, adopting a transgressive approach. The affection for a standardized language exemplifies the fluidity of gayspeak.

Defamiliarization is another theoretical framework that can be employed to comprehend gay poetics. This viewpoint emphasizes the reader's obligation to value the language employed in the poem rather than only interpreting the writer's message (Shklovsky, 2004). Given that gay poetics often utilize a standardized language, it is incumbent upon the reader to appreciate and derive enjoyment from the writer's choice of language. In 2004, Shklovsky stated that the purpose of art is to make objects appear foreign and forms more challenging to enhance the duration and complexity of perception. This is because the act of perceiving is an artistic goal in itself and should be extended. By engaging in the process of defamiliarization, one can ensure a consistent examination of homosexual literature, with a specific focus on the utilization of gayspeak. This is because the process of becoming familiar with familiar objects is gradually achieved via the diligent examination of gayspeak. This philosophy is evident in the poems "Ang Lasenggang Becky" and "Ang Balur at ang mga Jiboney" authored by Jonri Manuel.

Linguistic features of Gayspeak / Speaking in queer tongues

Cameron and Kulick (2000) contend, as cited in Wong (2005), that previous studies on homosexual language, often known as Gayspeak, during the 1980s and early 1990s were problematic due to their underlying premise that all gay men partake in uniform linguistic behaviors. The assumption made here is not viable: due to the interaction between sexual identity and other social distinctions (such as age, ethnicity, and socioeconomic class), it is impracticable to consider homosexual men as a uniform collective and generalize about their speech patterns. One specific aspect of language may indicate someone's sexual identity, but it typically does so indirectly by reflecting their attitudes, behaviors, and actions (Podesva et al, 2002 in Wong, 2005). Cameron and Kulick's objections fundamentally challenge the validity of what many researchers have labeled as 'gay language.'

The notion of equating language with a mere collection of expressions would likely cause discomfort among most linguists. The benefits of studying 'lavender English' as opposed to specific lexical items are not clearly understood. Although not explicitly defined, "gay English" appears to refer to the English language used by individuals with non-normative sexual orientations. Wong (2005) fails to elucidate the distinctions between this particular version and the English variety employed by individuals who identify as heterosexual. Aside from the speakers' identification as sexual minority groups, there are no apparent

justifications for labeling this particular kind of language as 'gay English'. This presents an issue since, as Cameron and Kulick highlight, the mere usage of a specific characteristic or variation by gay individuals does not inherently render that characteristic or variation gay.

Gayle: The Language of Kinks and Queens: A History and Dictionary of LGBT language in South Africa, is a captivating, enlightening, and amusing book. It is surprising to discover that a 'dettol doosie' is a gay guy who hides his sexual orientation, an 'Adele adder' is a gay man who is vengeful, and a 'Ramona rottencrotch' is a gay man with unpleasant body odor. A book exploring the relationship between language and homosexuality in the South African context has the capacity to greatly enhance the field of gay language, which is a well-established area of study in sociolinguistics globally but has been largely overlooked in South Africa. However, the realization of this possibility relies on one's position regarding the criticism of the area of gay language put forth by theorists like Deborah Cameron and Don Kulick (Kulick, 2000; Cameron & Kulick, 2003, 2004, 2005; Cameron, 2005 in McCormick, 2009). Cameron and Kulick criticize gay language for its association with essentialist concepts of gay identity. Moreover, Kulick (2000) argues in McCormick (2009) that the concept of a separate homosexual or lesbian language does not exist. Kulick's study argues that the portrayal of homosexual language in Kinks and Queens does not correspond to a South African gay language, since it also depends on the notion of a stable and essentialized gay identity. Gayle, the distinctive language used by gay and lesbian individuals in South Africa, is characterized as a "counter language" (Cage, 2003 in McCormick, 2009) and serves as a form of protest against the imposition of a linguistic value system that does not accurately represent the speaker's lived experiences. According to Kinks and Queens, Gayle serves as a covert language among self-identifying homosexuals in all gay environments. It is acquired during the process of coming out, as individuals solidify their gay identity. Gayle becomes an essential component of one's identity during this period (Cage, 2003 in McCormick, 2009). Furthermore, it is asserted that the term "Gayle" serves as a symbol of one's sexual orientation, specifically indicating that an individual is homosexual and seeking acceptance within certain social circles. It functions as a distinct marker of identity within the gay community, akin to an imperceptible linguistic emblem (Cage, 2003 in McCormick, 2009). This linguistic marker enables gay individuals to unequivocally disclose their sexual orientation and position themselves as potential members of a specific social group. Gayle is portrayed as a language mostly used by gay men, characterized by wit, comedy, and creativity. This is exemplified by the remark that "gay men enjoy verbal

wit..." (McCormick, 2009). No homosexual event is considered fully satisfactory without a present from the prevailing fragrance for gay men... The utilization of Gayle serves as an additional means for gay guys to express their artistic inclinations. (Cage, 2003 as cited in McCormick, 2009). In addition to the limited emphasis on race and gender, the lexicon section of *Kinks and Queens* has identified four other areas of concentration.

In the Philippine setting, the use of Gayspeak is widespread across all social strata. Similar to the African and American gayspeak discussed before, the emergence of gayspeak in the Philippines follows a similar pattern in terms of vocabulary. Gayspeak, as previously said, is a type of slang that is characterized by its dynamic nature, in contrast to colloquialisms. It is constructed using existing languages. It intentionally modifies or invents words that bear resemblance to terms from several languages, notably English, Japanese, Chinese, Spanish, French, and German. The text is characterized by vibrant colors, cleverness, and comedy, incorporating vocabulary influenced by popular culture and regional variants, similar to the linguistic style known as African gayspeak. It is unfathomable to individuals who are unfamiliar with the Filipino LGBT culture or lack awareness of the usage requirements.

Research questions

How do lines of poem contain imagery to portray the subtle aspects of gay terminology in poetry?

Which thematic and linguistic patterns of gay language in lines of poetry mirror the use of imagery?

How do the poets represent themselves as writers to preserve queer linguistic meaning associated with imageries in their poetry?

Methodology

It is important to mention that only a total of two (2) poems were chosen as a sample due to the limited availability of poems that include gay terminology. All possible conflicts of interest have been declared and dealt with in accordance with research ethics. Furthermore, the authors of the poems included in this study have kindly provided informed consent, guaranteeing complete understanding and permission for use. However, the researcher intends to include additional literary works such as short stories

or novels in future iterations of this study. Each poem pick will be accompanied by a comparable translation in Filipino and English, derived from its original lines in gayspeak. They are selected based on the incorporation of homosexual terminology inside the verses of poems. The poems are assessed based on their poetic substance and qualities, namely the literary quality of the language employed in the lines of the poem. This is the primary focus of the study. The analysis of these poems is conducted utilizing established theories and studies, such as Shklovsky's concept of Defamiliarization (2004) and the research on Imagery and Symbolism by Dimalanta and Abad (2003). The researcher offered approximate translations of the example poems in Tagalog and English to facilitate comprehension for some readers. However, the analysis of the poems is conducted in their original form, which is gayspeak. This approach is adopted to ascertain whether there exists a poetic quality within gayspeak.

Poem 1

Ang Balur at ang mga Jiboney (Gayspeak)

ni Jonri Manuel

Ang Balur at ang mga jiboney

Balurchinang stone cold, standing still sa gitna ng bukid.

Jutay lang masightsung, wititchikeliboomboom kaya ang utaw.

F na f ang julungkyutan sa pag o-all by myself na nakakalurkey.

I-witness sa sakuna. Lakas everbilenang umaapaw.

Bagyong Afraidy Aguilar ang arrive, Keri Hilson lang.

*If we hold on together ang drama ng pagpapflylalu ang mga jiboney
mula sa windows 95*

Nakikinerbyos sa ondoy na witit ma-noseline kung 'gang kelan .

Ditech nila nasightsung ang proteksyong di igi-give away.

Bawat krompal ng Hangin sa labas, kebs lang, wa silang care

Balur lang naman ang nagsasuffer.

Pero wititit naman itetchiwang magiispluk,

Kasi waley naman itong buhay ever.

Ang Bahay at ang mga Ibon

(Approximate Filipino translation)

*Ang bahay at ang mga ibon
Bahay na bato, nakatirik sa gitna ng kabukiran
Maliit lang kung tingnan, ni tao hindi makayanan
Damang dama ang kalungkutan sa pagiisang nakakabaliw*

*Sumaksi sa mga unos. Lakas ay kailanma'y umaapaw
Bagyong nakakatakot ang pagdayo, hindi nito alintana
Ang mga ibon, sabay sabay lumipad paloob mula sa bintana
Nangangamba sa unos na di alam kung hanggang kailan sasapit*

*Dito nakita ang proteksyong hindi kailanman ipagpapalit
Bawat hambalos ng hanging malupit hindi nila maalala.
Dahil tahanan ang sasalo ng hapis at pighati
Hindi ito magwiwikang pait*

Dahil buhay ay ni miminsan di nito nakamit.

The House and the Birds

(Approximate English translation)

*The house and the birds
A house made of stone situated in the middle of the rice field
So small if you will see even a man hardly sees
Feeling the sadness of unbearable solitude*

*Witnessed the storms and overpowering its strength
The coming of the scary storm was just ignored
Flock of birds flew inside from the window
Worrying about when will the storm attack*

*Here they found the protection that cannot be replaced
For every strike of strong wind, they cannot remember
Because this house will shoulder the sorrow and pain
Will never utter bitterness*

Because life has yet to be achieved.

Poem 2***Lasengerang Beki (Gayspeak)***

ni Jonri Manuel

*Mega rampage aketch sa Malate
Lunurin si watashi sa isang bote
Kahit lukalukaretan at chakaness
Keribels, broken hearted kasi akez
Beauty pa itetchiwang vodka*

*Mabuti pa itong vodka
Mas mahal ako kaysa kay Papa
Witit akez ilileave me alone
Ngayong gabi waley s'yang choice*

*Bawal ang pachoosy
Gora lang dancing galore
Ang drama parang si Mareng Madonna
Jusko! Daming afam ditechiwa*

*Jumikot-jikot na ang ulo
Filingerang palaka lasing na akez
Hulasey na ang eyeliner kez
At mga muk-ap kumacrayola*

*Wit ko matanggap
After ilambeses naheard ko si fafa
Aba! Nandito magmomoda din pala
Pinahiran kez madumi kong fez*

*But look and behold, jutanginamiz
Mas merlat pa si fafa kesa sa aketchiwang
Kuntodo wigaloo kung makapagdraga
Wiz akez makapaniwala Julie Vega ko siya*

*Akala kez truliling fafa, palaka rin pala
Black pepper din pala siya
Ismelanie Marquez man lang sana
Akala ko havey pero Luz Valdez akez*

*Wit na akez natuto ni Gary V.
Wa tuloy akez nahita
Anyway highway, move on na lang akez
Ititch vodka na lang ime-make love kez*

Lasengerang Bakla*(Approximate Filipino translation)*

*Sobrang rampa ako sa Malate
 Nalunod ako sa isang bote
 Kahit lukaluka at panget
 Okay lang suagatang puso kasi ako*

*Mabuti pa itong vodka
 Mas mahal ako kaysa kay Papa
 Hindi ako iiwang mag isa
 Ngayong gabi wala syang pagpipilian*

*Bawal ang mapamili
 Sige lang sayaw kung sayaw
 Ang drama parang si Mareng Madonna
 Diyos ko! madaming mapagkunwari dito*

*Umiikot-ikot na ang ulo
 Ambisyosang palaka lasing na ako
 Humuhulas na ang kolorete ko
 At mga umiyyak na kolorete pa*

*Di ko matanggap
 Pagkatapos kong marinig ng ilambeses si Papa
 Aba! nandito magmomodelo din pala
 Pinahiran ko madumi kong mukha*

*Pero tingnan at malasin, putang ina mo
 Mas babae pa si Papa kaysa sa akin
 Kuntodo wig kung makapagsuot pambabae
 Hindi ako makapaniwala, huli ko siya*

*Akala ko totoong Papa palaka din pala
 Paminta din pala siya
 Nag Melanie Marquez man lang sana
 Akala ko panalo pero talo pala ako*

*Di na ako natuto ni Gary V.
 Wala tuloy ako nahita
 Ganun pa man tuloy ang buhay ko
 Itong vodka na lang magiging kasiping ko*

Drunken Gay

(Approximate English translation)

*I overly ramped at Malate
Drowned myself in one bottle
Even though I'm crazy and ugly
It's all right because I am broken hearted*

*It's good to have this vodka
Who loves me more than my boyfriend
And who will never leave me alone
Tonight, he has no choice*

*There's no way to choose
But to dance all throughout
And act like Madonna
Oh God! There's a lot of pretentious around*

*Feeling dizzy already
Ambitious frog I'm already drunk
My eyeliner starts to smudge
And my make up starts to cry too*

*I can't accept
After I repeatedly heard my boyfriend
To my surprise he's here to model too
I wiped my dirty face*

*But look and behold, mother fucker
He is more of a girl than I am
Wearing wig throughout and dressed like a girl
I can't believe, I caught him*

*I thought he is a real boyfriend
But he is also a black pepper
If he could only be like Melanie Marquez
I thought I won but I'm a loser*

*Like the song of Gary V's, I did not learn
I gained nothing
Anyway, I have to move on
I will just make love with this vodka*

Results and Discussion

Analysis of the Poems "Ang Lasenggang Becky," and "Ang Balur at ang mga Jiboney"

The current study draws inspiration from both past and recent research on various poetic works, with a particular focus on Casabal's exploration of queer language. This paper seeks to examine gay language, often known as gayspeak, with a particular focus on its components and the role of literature in its creation. In the subsequent pages, the writer will utilize poems and short tales as examples to elucidate the arguments being made. The writer apologizes in advance if the reader perceives any concepts as being assumed or without contextualization.

In order to demonstrate the literary qualities of gayspeak, the writer will commence by examining the concepts of "image" and "imagery" from a theoretical standpoint. This analysis will be supplemented by references to gay terminologies, which explores the varying interpretations of these terms throughout the history of literary criticism. This section will outline a straightforward approach to analyzing imagery, drawing on the ideas established by Dimalanta and Abad (2003) and the theory of Defamiliarization.

The term "imagery" is defined in *The Princeton Encyclopaedia of Poetry and Poetics*, which will serve as the foundation for this study. Moreover, Dimalanta mentioned that poetry is observation plus imagination and explained that effective imagery should be radiating from a given metaphorical center that is the core of the poem's body.

Imagery pertains to mental images evoked by language, where the words might either allude to events that could elicit bodily sensations if the reader were to really undergo those experiences, or to the sensory perceptions themselves.

In literature, language serves as a catalyst for creating images, allowing a poet to remember or relive moments of tangible, sensory experience. Language can be viewed as a connection that links the exterior world, which we become aware of through perception, with the human mind, where images evoke sensory experiences. The term "image" can be strongly associated with synesthesia, which refers to language that describes sensory experiences rather than metaphor or other figures of speech (Salvador 1986 in Llorens 2010).

According to Llorens (2010), the majority of poets utilize imagery to transform abstract concepts into tangible forms, making them more comprehensible and memorable for readers. Figuration is the term used by literary theorists to describe the expression of abstraction in tangible terms. In Llorens' illustration, T.S. Eliot employed vivid sensory descriptions (such as aridity, drought, barrenness, and heat) in his poem "The Waste Land" to symbolize abstract concepts pertaining to the society he inhabited: despair, materialism, and the profound impact of a war that exceeded all prior conflicts in its capacity for devastation. Psychologists have examined mental imagery and categorized it into seven distinct types: visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory, gustatory, organic, and kinesthetic. The first five categories correspond to the five senses, while the remaining two encompass bodily functions and the perception of movement, respectively. The subsequent items consist of illustrations from Eliot's poems as gathered by Llorens (2010), and are categorized based on the type of imagery they evoke:

Type of image	Example from Eliot's poetry
Visual	the hawthorn blossom and a pasture scene
Auditory	the pleasant whining of a mandolin
Tactile	endeavors to engage her in caresses ... exploring hands encounters no defense
Olfactory	in vials of ivory and colored glass unstoppered, lurked her strange synthetic perfumes...
Gustatory	they had a hot gammon, and they asked me into dinner
Organic	wind in and out of unwholesome lungs
Kinesthetic	so we moved, and they, in a formal pattern, along the empty alley, into the box circle

According to Llorens (2010), the images in Eliot's works are primarily visual and other sorts of images are rare. There are a few examples of images related to taste, as the ones mentioned above mainly allude to

food rather than the experience of tasting. Llorens intentionally selected uncomplicated visuals to depict each category, yet readers of the poems will encounter highly intricate visuals that present intriguing concepts about human perception. For instance, in Eliot's visual representation, "the roses had the look of flowers that are looked at," the act of seeing becomes an inherent quality of the observed object.

The study of images has been a focus for both literary critics and psychologists. However, it is important to remember that our main focus is language, and the connection between words and images is a crucial aspect of linguistic theory.

The brief poems utilized in this investigation are composed in gayspeak, commonly referred to as "bekimon," and depict mundane events. "Ang Lasenggang Becky," for example, explores the vexation experienced by a homosexual individual upon discovering that the person he is interested in is actually more inclined towards being a drag queen than he is. He vents his aggravation by indulging in a bottle of vodka, which he selects as his companion for the evening. "Ang Balur at ang mga Jiboney" effectively captures the pre-storm atmosphere, yet the writer skillfully incorporates gayspeak to add a touch of levity to the somber setting.

Shklovsky's concept of defamiliarization not only compels the audience to perceive a literary work as art but also enables the author and audience/reader to detach themselves from the gravity of the message. This allows the piece to be appreciated as art, rather than being reduced to a mere political diatribe. Both of these poems demonstrate the implementation of defamiliarization through the straightforward process of reading them. The discussed subjects in the aforementioned works revolve around mundane occurrences, nevertheless the authors have managed to enhance their appeal by the utilization of diverse expressions and terminologies (1990).

Shklovsky (1990) posits that defamiliarization can also be accomplished by the utilization of distinctive or challenging vocabulary. He asserts that, in accordance with Aristotle's view, poetic language should possess an air of unfamiliarity and fascination, frequently taking the form of alien elements. This compels the reader to engage more actively in the reading process, as they must exert more effort to decipher the peculiar and exotic words in order to comprehend the poem. The incorporation of gayspeak in these two poems renders the lines rather challenging to comprehend, necessitating the reader to spend additional effort in deciphering, as queer language is not universally recognized. The unfamiliarity of it captivates the reader's intellect as something novel and alien. Comprehension will develop as the reader forms connections between

various individuals or objects encountered during the reading, resulting in a challenging and pleasurable experience. The objective of defamiliarization, as described by Shklovsky (1990), is to render an object unfamiliar through the use of language, the distinctive portrayal of characters, or the depiction of specific events. This transformation aims to turn a piece of ordinary prose into extraordinary art by making the object appear strange and unfamiliar. In addition to employing defamiliarization, gayspeak poems, like any other poem, also exhibit literary attributes such as the utilization of figurative language/figures of speech, rhythm or meter, and theme, rendering them more analogous to recognized works of literature. According to the renowned poet Cecil Day-Lewis (1992) as referenced by Dimalanta (2003) in his esteemed publication, "The Poetic Image," an image is a verbal representation that must fulfill a specific function inside a poem. As a functional device, an image must fulfill three levels - sensuous, emotional, and ideational. The sensuous level involves appealing to multiple senses. The emotional level involves recreating the emotional atmosphere in line with the poem's meaning. The ideational level involves contributing to the development of the theme or point. An effective functional image should strive to satisfy all three levels. In her book, Dimalanta (2003) further stated that effective imagery refers to continuous imagery that emanates from a metaphorical center, which serves as the core of the poem's body. According to her, poetry requires the imagery to be both fresh and vivid, with its characteristics and attributes determined by its role within the poem. For example, certain visuals possess the essence of dreams, fantasies, and the purported hallucinatory potency of fevers, resulting in the images acquiring an almost surrealistic nature. In the gay poem *Ang Balur at ang mga Jiboney*, the author skillfully employs words to convey fantasies and dreams, as well as the surrealistic qualities of the images. This is evident in lines such as "krompal ng hangin" (the gust of wind), "flaylalu ng mga jiboney" (the enchantment of the jiboney), and "stone cold standing still."

Furthermore, the poem is adorned with numerous additional features, enhancing its literary essence. However, there are also pictures that lack sensuality and emotional depth, as they serve as integral components of a cerebral poem (Dimalanta 2003). According to Dimalanta, poems that incorporate gay language or gay speak may have been written by novice poets, making them contemporary in nature. Initially, these beginning poets tend to adhere to certain fundamental rules to ensure safety in their work. However, as a poet's skills and personal style develop, they may choose to deviate from or even challenge these rules, not out of ignorance but with a more significant artistic purpose in mind (Dimalanta, 2003). Imagery can vary in its abundance, ranging from minimal to abundant, as demonstrated

by the two sample poems provided. The level of exuberance in the imagery depends on the specific requirements of each poem. Undoubtedly, imagery has the power to not only enhance our comprehension of a poem but also evoke deep emotions within us (Dimalanta 2003).

The image, as described by Wyndham Lewis (2003), is referred to as the "primary pigment of poetry" and represents the visual aspect of words. According to *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, pictures are defined as the mental recreation of an experience caused by a physical perception. According to Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren (1991), it is defined as the "tangible portrayal in poetry of any sensory experience." In his work published in 2004, Ezra Pound defines an image as a representation of a combination of intellectual and emotional elements that can be grasped in a single moment. The purpose of poetry is to depict the tangible realm of objects and evoke the visual, auditory, and tactile sensations associated with them. This leads us to perceive that universe with the same immediacy and certainty as we perceive the actuality of life itself (Dimalanta 2003). In contrast, Abad (2003) asserts that imagery is a consistent element in all forms of creative expression, such as poems, stories, and plays. According to Abad, writers create images using words to depict and evoke human experiences, while readers must also generate these images in order to comprehend the intended experience. This is most well demonstrated in the poem *Ang Lasenggang Beki*. A selected passage from the poem states:

*Mabuti pa itong vodka
Mas mahal ako kaysa kay Papa
Witit akez ilileave me alone*
(Approximate English translation written above)

The writer ascribed a sentiment to the image depicted by these sentences, conveying it through descriptive language. This elucidates the literary caliber of gayspeak. In the stanza, the boyfriend and vodka are contrasted to emphasize themes of control, emotional support, and dependability. Personified vodka stands for an inanimate, trustworthy source of solace in contrast to the emotional complexities and possibly unpredictable nature of human relationships. The speaker's emotions of choosing alcohol as a comfort over an erratic emotional bond with their boyfriend are further supported by the imagery.

A poetic symbol, as defined by Dimalanta (2003), is an object or concept that represents or denotes something else. Like dove is an elegant bird that serves as a universal emblem of peace, representing a well rooted

heritage. However, modern poets have begun to assign personal connotations to items, and the dove may even represent sensual love or creativity.

Abad explains that in symbolism, an object, based on its attributes or properties, not only acts as a logical substitute for representation but also stimulates the mind by providing a glimpse into a broader range of related representations that are beyond its understanding (2003). The symbol, as indicated by Abad in 2003, had a strong evocative quality that surpasses the rational comprehension of the intellect, while simultaneously enhancing its reservoir of indescribable comprehension. The poem "Ang Balur at ang mga Jiboney" contains a title that prominently features two distinct symbolic representations: the balur, which may symbolize a shield, and the jiboney, which may symbolize freedom. The poem's comparison of the storm and the shelter draws attention to the differences between the interior haven and the chaotic outside world. The storm is a metaphor for unpredictable, terrifying energies, while the shelter is a metaphor for a caring, safe place that provides solace and security. This juxtaposition explores the themes of harshness vs unconditional protection and worry versus certainty, highlighting the priceless value of a safe, loving haven in the face of outside hardship. Hence, After a thorough analysis of these poem aspects, it can be concluded that the poem's juxtaposition of the storm and the shelter draws attention to the striking contrasts between the safe, cozy inside refuge and the turbulent outside world.

An important sign in the poem Ang Lasenggang Beki is the reference to vodka, an alcoholic beverage associated with a frail character or a means of seeking solace from sadness, as consuming alcohol induces a state of relaxation and unconsciousness. The poem is filled with imagery, which is difficult to analyze systematically. However, it is impossible for literary scholars to overlook its significance. The phrase "gayspeak" might be regarded as interchangeable with other equally ambiguous and elusive terms such as atmosphere, mood, and the overall image communicated to readers. The communication of meaning in poetry, particularly in most poetic genres, primarily relies on the use of imagery. By studying imagery, we can enhance our comprehension of a poet's work and their poetic output. Additionally, we can gain valuable insights into both the creative process and the act of interpreting the text, whether it is written in standard language or specialized terminology like gayspeak.

Summary of results

RQ1: 1. How do lines of poem contain imagery to portray the subtle aspects of gay terminology in poetry?

Poets can use imagery in their poems in a variety of ways to highlight the nuanced facets of LGBT language.

- a. Symbols such as masks, closets, and rainbows, as well as poetry, balur, and jibon, clearly arouse feelings and establish connections with readers who are aware of the underlying meanings.
- b. Moreover, readers may develop empathy for the people and circumstances depicted in the poetry by reading rich descriptions of places, feelings, and interactions.
- c. Natural metaphors, like birds soaring free or beer drinking in one of the poems, can mirror the difficulties and conflicts gay people confront while also expressing the richness and beauty of queer identities.

Poets who masterfully use imagery in their poetry can not only capture the nuanced characteristics of gay language, but also foster a sense of solidarity and acceptance among gay readers, thereby honoring and validating a range of perspectives and experiences.

RQ2: Which thematic and linguistic patterns of gay language in lines of poetry mirror the use of imagery?

This study makes the following claims on how specific language and thematic patterns in poetry reflect the use of imagery:

The use of imagery in poems exploring identity, desire, and belonging often follows the thematic patterns of gay language. Poetry uses linguistic devices like personification, symbolism, and metaphor to create rich imagery that captures the complexity of gay lives. For instance, images of masks, closets, or veils can symbolize the recurring themes of concealing and disclosing, while images of bridges or open doors can symbolize the longing for acceptance and connection.

The linguistic patterns found in gay language poetry may be indicative of the use of imagery, as evidenced by the repetition of specific words or phrases that have powerful visual associations. Poets can paint a vivid picture of homosexual encounters by drawing on a wide lexicon of hues, textures, and sensations. Furthermore, the application of figurative language, such as metaphor and simile, can provide vivid imagery that

emotionally engages readers. By deftly blending theme and grammatical patterns, poets can produce poems that not only highlight the diversity of gay identities but also shine light on the common human emotions of love, longing, and resilience.

RQ3: How do the poets represent themselves as writers to preserve queer linguistic meaning associated with imageries in their poetry?

To maintain queer linguistic meaning in their poems, queer poets may present themselves as writers in a variety of ways.

Poets embrace their own voices and viewpoints as authors to preserve the queer linguistic value associated with images in their works. To give their writing authenticity and depth, authors might draw on personal experiences, gay cultural practices, and cultural inspirations. Poets can create a collection of poetry that not only reflects the multiplicity and diversity of LGBT experiences, but also challenges and questions conventional notions of language and communication through the deft integration of identity, language, and imagery.

Poets actively participate in the history and development of gay literature, maintaining the distinct linguistic importance associated with pictures in their poems. To acknowledge the rich history of queer narrative, they might use references to well-known gay authors, movements, and symbols in their artistic creations. Poets can also push the boundaries of language and structure, questioning accepted literary conventions and creating fresh, welcoming spaces for anyone to express themselves. They honor the achievements of their forebears while also providing avenues for upcoming gay writers to memorialize and express their unique viewpoints.

Conclusion

Based on the thorough investigation done by this study, the author can draw numerous conclusions about the use of imagery in analyzing gay language in poetry. It can be inferred that imagery is a powerful tool that poets use to depict the intricate elements of gay language. They deploy symbols, metaphors, and vivid descriptions to elicit emotions and forge connections with readers. Also, the thematic and linguistic patterns in gay-language poetry frequently resemble the use of imagery. These patterns include the repetition of motifs such as masks, closets, and other metaphors. These recurrent elements serve to convey the intricate nature of gay identities and experiences. It can also be brought to a point that gay poets

uphold queer linguistic significance by embracing their unique voices and experiences, including personal narratives, cultural practices, and historical settings, to enhance their poems and question traditional standards of language and communication. Meanwhile, it is also implied that poets actively contribute to the ongoing development of homosexual literature by pushing the boundaries and creating new, inclusive spaces for the expression of a wide range of gay identities as manifested in the construction of the two poems. Hence, it can be concluded that imagery in gay language, poetry functions as a versatile instrument for depicting, conveying, and safeguarding cultural heritage, enabling poets to encapsulate the abundance and variety of gay encounters while promoting unity and inclusivity within and outside the community.

Recommendations

It is important to conduct comparative research to look at the various linguistic and cultural contexts in which poets use LGBT terminology. Also, a further study on the influence of the author's aim and creative process on the use of gay terminology in poetry looks at the inspirations, goals, and challenges poets face in this area. It is also recommended to examine the evolution of gay language in poetry, paying close attention to shifts in linguistic conventions, cultural viewpoints, and literary movements abroad, while emphasizing the importance of poetry as a vehicle for identity preservation. In the academe sector, the need to develop instructional strategies for teaching poetry that integrate gay slang, encourage critical conversations about language, identity, and representation, and address ethical issues by addressing both real-world difficulties and ethical considerations.

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