

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE ON VARIOUS SONGS FROM MAHER ZAIN

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A Content Analysis Study On Figurative Language in Maher Zain Songs

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Writer and researcher

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

AKCNOWLEDGEMENT.....	2
TABLE OF CONTENT.....	4
ABSTRACT.....	6
CHAPTER 1.....	7
1. INTRODUCTION.....	7
1.1. Background of study.....	7
1.2. Research Problem.....	12
1.3. Research Purpose.....	12
1.4. Research Significance.....	12
1.4.1.Theorically.....	12
1.4.2 Practically.....	12
1.5. Previous Research.....	13
TERMINOLOGY.....	15
CHAPTER 2.....	17
1. Figurative Language.....	17
1.1 Definition of Figurative Language.....	17
2. Type of Figurative Language.....	18
3. Meaning.....	22
4. The Nature of Music and Song.....	23
5. Genres of Songs.....	25
6. Lyrics.....	27

7. Maher Zain.....	28
CHAPTER 3.....	31
1. Research Methodology.....	31
1.1. Research Methodology.....	31
2. CONTENT ANALYSYS.....	32
3. RESEARCH METHOD.....	36
4. DATA SOURCE.....	37
5. TECHNIQUE OF DATA COLLECTION.....	38
6. TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTION.....	38
7. DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUE.....	39
CHAPTER 4.....	41
RESEARCH FINDING.....	41
DISCUSSION.....	152
CHAPTER 5.....	154
CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION.....	154
1. Conclusion.....	154
2. Suggestion.....	154
REFERENCES.....	157
GLOSSARY.....	158

ABSTRACT

RIESTIANTO, HENDRIKO, 2024. Figurative Language on Various Songs from Maher Zain in Academic Year 2023/2024. Thesis, English Education Department, Universitas Tanjungpura.

The purpose of this research is to find the types of figurative language used in the chosen Maher Zain's songs. Another purpose is to figure out what dominant type of figurative language that are used in the chosen songs. This research uses descriptive qualitative approach. The research design was content analysis. The data was taken from azlyrics.com and the songs uses for the data collection were obtain from Maher Zain's songs titled: Peace Be Upon You, Freedom, Love Will Prevail, Guide Me All The Way, Palestine Will Be Free, For The Rest Of My Life, Never Forget, The Chosen One, Number One For Me, and Paradise. This research used observation, note-taking and transcribing. From these chosen 10 songs, has been resulted in 8 types of different figurative language with 5 major figurative language that appears in all of 10 songs being; Metaphor (53 times), Personification (21 times), Repetition (54 times), Symbolism (41 times), and Imagery (40 times). According to the result, it can be concluded that amongst the 10 chosen songs, repetition is the dominant type of figurative language that appears in the lyrics. In the English Education Study Program,

especially for student, they can improve their English ability by analyzing figurative language in song lyrics. This research can be a reference to those that have interested in doing the same type of research with hope that this research can give benefits.

Key Word: Figurative Language, Lyrics, Song, Maher Zain

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1. BACKGROUND OF THE RESEARCH

Literary works is a form and the result of the work of creative art which uses human and life as object with the language as a medium (Semi, 1988: 2. As cited by Rizqiyah & Lesmana, 2018). Object emphasised in the definition of literature is the experience of human life which includes arts. Another opinion states that literature is the expression of human as a person in the form of experience, thoughts, feelings, ideas, passion, beliefs in a form of a concrete overview which gives charm using language tools (Somardjo and Saini, 1997. As cited by Rizqiyah & Lesmana, 2018). One of literary works capable of expressing human feelings is poetry. Poetry as a literary work has the elements of dominant aesthetics. Elements of beauty make poems to be poetic. Elements of beauty or aesthetic is the main content of a poetry because poetry combines the power of language, and then put them together, in order as well as set in such a way by displaying certain rhythms and sounds so that it can produce certain aesthetic effects (Bella, 2012. As cited by Rizqiyah & Lesmana, 2018). These very elements of aesthetics are what allow readers to enjoy poetry.

Figurative and extended uses of language are nonliteral utterances such as irony, sarcasm, and idioms and comprise a core part of social interaction. Children with typical development (TD) show a progressive adultlike understanding of figurative language around the age of ten. In contrast, individuals with neurodevelopmental disorders such as autism spectrum disorder (ASD), attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), or developmental language disorder often display difficulties with figurative language. However, these difficulties are a puzzle in that the actual underlying causes remain unclear (Chahboun et. al. 2021). Language is one of the human's cultures results which has the supreme value, because human can interact and communicate with societies around the world by using code. Humans may foster and abstract several reasons that take place in their own environment by using language (Abbas, & Jabeen, 2023). Language is very important for human life because language is a communication tool that humans use to communicate with each other. Banga (2015, as cited by Hidayatullah, 2022) admits that language cannot be separated from humans. In carrying out human activities, it is inseparable from using good language to convey ideas, thoughts and feelings. Language has a central role in various aspects of human life, such as technology, sciences, politics, economics, social, art and etc. Language is a tool that everyone uses to communicate. Every word or sentence people use has its meaning. One word could have two or more meanings based on the context. Some of the words or sentences people do not know or misinterpret the meaning of what they try to interpret. In Linguistics, Semantics is one of the linguistic branches that study the meaning of words and sentences (Riyuda & oktoviandry, 2024). Language is a social tool that offers a powerful way to signal one's group affiliations, such as ethnicity, gender, and age, and for expressing one's social identity. It is also intricately tied to culture, reflecting norms, values, and beliefs of a particular community (Gelman & Roberts, 2017. As cited by Ferguson, 2024).

A language can be defined as a set of rules or set of symbols where symbols are combined and used for conveying information or broadcasting the information. Since all the users may not be well-versed in machine specific language, Natural Language Processing (NLP) caters those users who do not have enough time to learn new languages or get perfection in it. In fact, NLP is a tract of Artificial Intelligence and Linguistics, devoted to make computers understand the statements or words written in human languages. (Khurana

et al., 2023). Language is system of conventional spoken or written symbols used by people for communicating with each other. People need language to communicate, to interact and to get information from other people. In this time, people can communicate with other through the song. It could deliver his voice to many people, there for people can understand his feelings(Ismail et. al 2020). The societies of human beings have own language and differing from some well-known but baseless opinions, every recognized language is subtle and complex, and is able to express whatever its speakers want to express and is able to be

modified according to the different needs of the speaker. Further, people use language to convey and reveal their thoughts, emotions or desires in oral or written modes of language. So, the language that use in our communication must be meaningful avoid misunderstanding or misinterpretation between speaker and listener or we can add writer and reader (Ahmad, Ahmad, & Masood, 2020).

Aras et.al (2024) stated that language is crucial to human identity and is closely linked to our thought processes, reasoning, self-reflection, and the development of advanced civilizations. Hence, the structure of language, shaped by its applications, is adaptable and flexible, capable of conveying all human communication. Language is also structured to take advantage of human creativity, evident in word games, puns, and puzzles. Language universals refer to the general characteristics of language that are found in all languages. The term language universals was first introduced by Chomsky (1966) and Zadeh (1971). The characteristics of language that are common to all languages include (1) every human being must have language, (2) all languages change, (3) there is no primitive language, every language has its own degree of complexity, (4) all languages have vowels and consonants, (5) all languages have a set of sounds that can be combined into meaningful elements, and (6) in every language, the number of nasal vowels is always lower than the number of vowels without a nasal. (Oviogun, P. V., & Veerdee, P. S. 2020)

Due to those various users of English, not only does it demand the teachers to assist the students in developing their linguistic competence but it also shows the importance of having students aware of the existence of non-native speakers using English as a foreign language (EFL). This also shows the significance of cultural skill as a student need for communication with different English speakers. Because of this significance, cultural competence has been considered to be the fifth language skill alongside listening, speaking, reading and writing (Fadliah et. al., 2020). As English has been positioned as an international

language it is plausible that the users of this language increase significantly (McKay, 2018). It becomes one of the compulsory subjects taught in most of the schools in Indonesia among other non-English-speaking countries. Because of the global reach of English, it is not particularly referring to the one English, but all varieties of English spoken around the world.

The use of English as an international language is certainly widely used not only by native English speakers but also by non-native English speakers in countries that make English a foreign language (EFL) (Baleghizadeh & Shayesteh, 2020). Nowadays, English language is used by tremendous range of cultures and communities as an international language (Keles, 2020). Thus, in countries that use English as a foreign language (EFL), it will be difficult without learning the culture of the target language. To be good at interacting with speakers of different languages, one must have a solid grasp of the target culture's underlying knowledge (Boukendakdji et al., 2022; Purba, 2011). This indicates that the role of culture is very important in language learning in contexts such as Indonesia where English is used as foreign language.

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According to Wardani (2018), Figurative language is language style used by people to communicate. In communication people communicate with each other in many ways such as by using song, because in the part of single words on the song's lyrics there are many figurative languages that use by musicians. Meanwhile, Vitria (2018), mention that Figurative language is language in compatible term force the reader to attend connotation rather to the denotation. Figurative language is sometimes called —tropes or commonly — figure of speech. An imagine is figurative when it must be understood in some sense other than the literal.— My love is like a red, red rose is an example if figurative language since the love cannot literal be like a rose. Figurative language itself is usually used to analyze the deeper meaning of words. In songs for example, it is also used to make the lyrics sound more beautiful (Adilia & yunitari 2023)

NISA (2020), said that figurative language is a type of language that varies from the norms of literal language. Figurative language does not mean exactly what it says, but instead forced the reader to make an imaginative leap in order to comprehend an authors point. It usually involving comparison between two things that may not be. At first, seem to relate to one another. Way people do to delivers their ideas are many, one of them being is through song. There is not little in terms of number of people when it comes to conveying their voices. This what Maher Zain also does. He convey his voice to many people. This way, people can understand his feeling and idea. Figurative language often provides a more effective means of saying what people mean than direct statement. In the specific sense, figurative language may take the form of figures of speech such as metaphor, hyperbole, personification, simile, irony and etc (Khairunnisa, Dirgeyasa, putri 2020)

Song as a form of music with words functioned as a way to express thoughts and feelings. There are 2 elements of song, music and lyric. According to Griffé (1992), songs are vocally produced, linguistically meaningful and have melody. So, it can be concluded that song is a piece of music that has words which are linguistically meaningful and sung by a singer. When listening to the music with proper focus, listeners will be able to grasp the message with ease. Meanwhile, when the listeners' focus is off, they will struggle to understand the lyrics. With particular genres or compositions of music, people have experienced significant life moments. Figurative language refers to words, and groups of words, that exaggerate or alter the usual meanings of the component words. Figurative language may involve analogy to similar concepts or other contexts, and may involve exaggerations. Whenever you describe something by comparing it with something else, we are using figurative language. By using figurative language, writers can evoke emotion and imagery from their writing that literal language just cannot provide. By doing so,

&gurative language makes expressing meaning through writing easier and more relatable to the reader (Suszyńska, 2016). Munandar (2021) explain that Song is a musical composition of a combination melody, rhythm, and lyrics that can make the listeners feel a sense of empathy and understand about the story of the lyrics by lyricist. To make students enjoy learning English and do not get bored, teacher must use songs. Songs that are chosen to be analyzed are songs that have educational values because songs can have big impact to the listeners especially students. Beside that, form of words that is used to create a representation or known as imagery also need to be analyzed so the students can gain deeper understanding.

Song is a musical composition typically consisting of a combination of melody and lyrics. It is usually performed by a singer or group of singers accompanied by musical instruments such as guitar, piano, drums, and others.

Music occupies a significant place in the lives of human especially of the youngsters. This is usually the cause of creating harmony among them. They like to share their music with one another and thus share their feelings and interests. Students talk about their favorite artists and share their common interests. Talking about the student's most favorite artists or singers is included in their everyday life and this creates harmony among them. Music is also linked to various areas of lives. People who like similar sorts of music, it is seen that there is a particular bond and a specific kind of understanding among them (Anjum, et. al. 2023). Music has evolved throughout the history and has become an essential part of human life. Many Muslims and non-Muslims saints listened music to attain spiritual levels. Moreover, music can be used as a tool to learn a non-native language. Music and its lyrics can stimulate verbal skills so the learner can have more output in a sense of language learning. People express their ideas in many forms like in oral or in written. There are several aspects of language but one side that is quite unique is "Language as an art". There are certain popular forms of expression within a specific language by which people convey their desired message effectively. In all forms music is one of the common and popular forms in almost all languages (Brown, & Wang, 2018). Music is used for many purposes such as love, patriotism, courage, bravery religion etc. Music has a universal link with human instinct because of its various appeals to his emotions. In today's world music has different types like classic, pop, jazz etc. People of different age likes different music for instance an old person will prefer classic music to pop music while a teenager will love to listen pop music. The likeness depends on an individual. However, music is relaxation in one form or another (Butschety, & Onea, 2023).

Lyrics are the words of song. They are created by artists who know how to react not only in a physical environment but also through verbal symbols. Lyric of song is someone's expression about something they have seen, heard or experienced. The songwriter performs words and language to create attraction and distinctiveness towards the lyrics (Fajrina et. al 2019)

People have become accustomed to listening to English songs, especially young people who are vulnerable to following trends due to social and social media influences. Plus listening to music has become a habit and hobby among young people. Because usually, young people feel a song can represent their feelings. Džanić & Pejić (2016) as mention by Maherni and Ratminingsih (2018), claim that songs are an excellent language package that, in just a few rhymes, combine culture, vocabulary, listening, grammar, and a variety of other language skills. This suggests that employing music as teaching material is a wise decision because it may be connected to other English language learning objectives. When the When a teacher uses music to get the students' attention, the students will assess their own knowledge English and Arabic in his song.

English is the international language, while Arabic is rather more common in Islamic state. As a result, his song uses both Arabic and English, making it more accessible to a wider audience worldwide. All of Maher Zain's song titles have moral lessons and Islamic messages that are beneficial to Muslims worldwide. Maher Zain's song conveys a multitude of ideas and intentions to the listener. Every song has a melody, a beat, and lyrics. Maher Zain's song also features lovely lyrics and a lot of messages. Maher Zain's songs are likely to be wellknown to a wide audience due to the language utilized in them. Maher Zain also offers a lot of concepts and goals for the audience to take away from his song. Understanding figurative language and linguistic elements is more important for deciphering the song's implied meaning and

messages. To understand the song's meaning and content, one needs examine the song's lyrics. In the music industry, there are many bands or solo singers. One of them is Maher Zain, who has plentiful popular songs and it is divided into two albums; Thank You Allah and Forgive Me. In January 2009, Maher Zain began to work on an album at Awakening Records. His first debut album was Thank You Allah and the second debut album was Forgive Me which was released in 2012, with 14 songs and two bonus tracks (Khodijah, 2019)

According to the justification given, the writer is drawn to studying figurative language in music because all songs have a message. The meaning of the story told in the song can be connected to by fans of the music. The Songs are beloved by listeners because they are able to fully understand the meaning of the lyrics and metaphorical language. Students who enjoy western music has the ability to understand the meaning of figurative language. The majority of songs use straightforward language that helps listeners grasp the meaning and fully comprehend the music. The majority of songs are inspired by social interactions, love, and life experiences.

An example of figurative language in Maher Zain's song is in one of the chosen song titled "peace be upon you". There are lyrics sound "there's faith in my world". Which fall into figurative language category "metaphor". Because the description of the world as a place where faith resides is metaphorical and implies an inward, individual experience. There will be ten songs of Maher Zain that will be analyze. There are; peace be upon you, freedom, love will prevail, guide me all the way, Palestine will be free, for the rest of my life, never forget, the chosen one, number one for me, and paradise. There are no particular reason on why are these songs are chosen to be the data collecting object, as understanding figurative language and language itself became the main point of the research.

Content analysis is this research's way of data analysis. Liauw (2022) stated that content analysis is a well-established and widely used research method. In its early form, it was used extensively in the quantitative analysis of newspapers, and its applications later evolved to include electronic media such as radio and television. It has recently been applied to digital media, including the Internet. As a "systematic analysis of text," content analysis (CA) has a long history dating to the 17th century with church-related studies (theology), which evolved into "quantitative newspaper analysis" in the mass communication era at the beginning of the 20th century (Krippendorff, 2013). The use of English as an international language is certainly widely used not only by native English speakers but also by non-native English speakers in countries that make English a foreign language (EFL) (Baleghizadeh & Shayesteh, 2020).

According to YU (2021), Figurative language is typically understood to serve ornamental purposes, adding unique aesthetic value to a speech or writing. Therefore, figurative language is fresh and imaginative, while literal language is traditional and commonplace. "Figural" refers to a usage that is extended from a literal use, whereas "literal" refers to a meaning that is independent of a figurative extension from another meaning in cognitive linguistics (CL), which has been a driving force in figurative language research over the past few decades. According to this definition, metaphoric and metonymic patterns are common in language and mind, and figurative meaning is woven into the very foundation of language is based on two categories: direct and indirect meaning. The figures of speech compare one thing with another thing and find the similarity between these two things. Moreover, we can find some examples to compare the figure of speech. The first one is rhetoric figure of speech and the second is allusion figure of speech. Both can be found in simile, metaphor, allegory, personification, satire, hipalase, irony, innuendo, antiphrasis and paronomasia. Figurative language is used in imaginative rather than literal sense, it is used

widely in daily speech and writing. Beekman and Callow (1974:94), said that figurative senses are based on associative relations with the primary sense.

Figurative language is often used in the daily communication, literary works (novel, poems, poetry, and short story), speech, and in advertisement.

The reason for the research to choose figurative language analysis as the main theme is because it is one of the simplest type of research as it did not requires the researcher to linguistic structure (Dansygier and Sweetser 2014:), Based on the information above, the writer will proceed in conducting the study with the title “figurative language on various songs from Maher Zain” move from one place to another. It is a very simple topic that requires little to none movement to other place.

In communication, figurative language is a language which uses figures of speech (a way of saying one thing and meaning another). Keraf (1986:129), identifies that fi gurative

2. RESEARCH PROBLEM

2.1 What figurative language are frequently used in Maher Zain's songs?

2.2 What figurative language is the most dominant used in the chosen Maher Zain's songs?

3. RESEARCH PURPOSE

Based on the problem above, this study has objective:

3.1 To figure out what are the figurative language used in the Maher Zain's songs

3.2 To figure out the dominant figurative language that are used in the chosen Maher Zain's song

4. RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE

This study is expect to give information to the following.

4.1 Theoretically

The writer expect this study to give information to the readers about figurative language use in the chosen song from Maher Zain. The writer also wish that this study will give an understanding on what figurative language is.

4.2 Practically

4.2.1 For teacher/researcher

It will help teacher/research who likes Maher Zain to be inspiration and example in literature.

4.2.2 For student

It will help students who interested in figurative to learn about figurative language

4.2.3 For readers

It will help readers who are interested in figurative language to understand figurative language in Maher Zain's song

5. PREVIOUS RESEARCH

There are several number of previous research related to figurative language. These research will help as a guidance in doing this study. Study from Glucksberg (2001), titled

“Understanding Figurative Language: From Metaphor to Idioms” that are released for Oxford Psychology Series. This study provides a thorough explanation of how people interpret idioms and metaphors in regular speech. Figurative language has historically been seen as more sophisticated and deriving from literal language. An alternative viewpoint is put out in the study, which contends that literal language and figurative language both employ the same linguistic and pragmatic processes. In order to explain the usage of metaphorical language, a new theory of metaphor understanding combines linguistic, philosophical, and psychological viewpoints.

Another study came from Andruss (2023), with study title “Salmon’s Approach to Figurative Language”. Salmon utilizes Arabic literary theory to interpret Lamentations, a work rich in figurative language and poetic imagery. The usage of linguistic terms like majāz (figurative language), isti’āra (metaphor), tamthīl (analogy), mathal (parable), and ḥaqīqa (real meaning) by Salmon is examined in this chapter. Salmon's deft application of this technical jargon puts him in the same league as modern Muslim exegetes, who similarly experimented with the word as its meaning changed throughout the tenth century. His conversations about figurative language reveal his involvement in an intellectual environment in Arabic where problems to interpretation cut over religious lines. For Salmon, analyzing rhetoric was a means to an end, not a goal in and of itself, for figuring out and elucidating Lamentations' spiritual message.

Next study is by Konnrod and Danziger (2013), with the study title “Wii Will Rock You!” The Use and Effect of Figurative Language in Consumer Reviews of Hedonic and Utilitarian Consumption”. In this study explained that Positive opinions toward products are influenced by figurative language in advertising in a variety of situations. Conversely, the current study shows that because consumer-generated content adheres to particular conversational standards, the use and efficacy of figurative language vary depending on the

situation. Research 1 demonstrates that conversational norms about figurative language control the effect of customer reviews with higher levels of figurative language on favorable opinions in hedonic, but not utilitarian, consumption scenarios. According to Study 2, reading a review that uses metaphorical language makes readers choose hedonistic options more frequently than utilitarian ones. Finally, studies 3 and 4 show that consumers use figurative language more when sharing experiences about hedonic than utilitarian consumption, and that review extremity influences figurative language use only in reviews of hedonic consumption. These findings are based on an analysis of online consumer reviews and a lab experiment. The research emphasizes how important conversational norms are for understanding and producing user-generated material.

From the study above, there are similarities to be found. From the first 2 mention can be found that the perception and comprehension of figurative language, including metaphors and idioms, are at the center of both studies. While Andruss' study concentrates on the interpretation of figurative language in a particular literary work, *Lamentations*, Glucksberg's study explores how individuals understand idioms and metaphors in ordinary conversation. In order to understand the use of metaphorical language, Glucksberg's work combines linguistic, philosophical, and psychological perspectives, indicating a multidisciplinary approach. Similarly, Andruss's study integrates philosophical and linguistic viewpoints from a different cultural context by using Arabic literary theory to explain *Lamentations'* metaphorical language. Konnrod and Danziger's study is focused on the application and consequences of figurative language, same like the other studies. They specifically look at how consumer evaluations' use of metaphorical language affects readers' perceptions and decisions about hedonistic and utilitarian purchase. Konnrod and Danziger investigate how figurative

language influences interpretation and decision-making processes, which is similar to the findings of Glucksberg's study. They look into how readers' decisions between hedonistic and utilitarian options are influenced by the usage of metaphorical language in customer reviews.

Study from Ita Purnamasari that entitled "*An Analysis Of Connotative Meaning On Justin Bieber's Song Lyrics*". In this research, the researcher focus on connotative meaning using Chaer's theory and sense a values of American people using theory by Khol's. Study from Wahyuni that entitled "*An Analysis On Connotative Meaning Of Yusuf Islam's Songs*". This research focuses on connotative meaning, the researcher comparing denotative and connotative meaning of the data. The connotative meaning classified into three types namely positive, negative and neutral. The researcher use descriptive qualitative method. The researcher use song lyrics by Yusuf Islam in album "Footsteps in the light". Researcher choose five song in this album entitled : "The Wind", "Seal of The Prophet", "I Look, I See", "Angel of War", and "God is The Light". In result show that there are thirty-six data which contain connotative meaning; nineteen data of positive, twelve data of negative, and five data of neutral.

6. TERMINOLOGY

It is very common to for most people that have heard about songs, music, and figurative language. But little that know what the meaning of the mentioned words is. In this chapter, the research would like to explain the meaning of each words.

6.1 Figurative Language: a thought of as being one aspect of what gives a text, in particular, poetic text special aesthetic value". It is a language that is used imaginatively and not literary because it employs words or expressions with meanings that differ from the literal interpretation. (Dancygier & Sweetser., 2014)

6.2 Songs: a musical composition intended to be performed by the human voice.

It typically combines melody, lyrics, and often accompaniment by instruments.

6.3 Lyrics: a short poem intended to be sung that expresses the poet's thoughts and feelings or a comparison. Lyrics are the words that make up a song, which typically consists of verses and choruses. It is a collection of words that accompany music and make up a song, usually using creative diction and chosen words. (Brewster, 2009)

6.4 Maher Zain: a Lebanese-Swedish singer/song writer whose major theme of his songs are Islamic. Religion. Maher Zain's works invite the listener to always remember Allah and His Messenger, so that people are always grateful for the blessings that have been granted upon them, and always hold onto morality. As an example of a song that is categorised as having religious value on the pillars of faith in Islam is Raḍitu Billahi Rabbā, in which there is a religious value that God is the only God, and invites the listeners to reflect and depend only on God. The other song about religious values of the Prophet Muhammad is Yā Nabi Salām 'Alaika which tells of the love for the Prophet and his examples. Another song of Maher Zain's, Ramadhān, is a song always played every month of Ramadan comes, which contains Islamic religious values for the common people. Another song, Jannah, which seems a little different from the previous songs, is related to heaven in accordance with the title.