

The Analysis of the Metaphor in Selective Song Lyrics

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Metaphor, Song Lyric, Bruno Mars

How to cite:

Maulana, N. N., & Wibowo, H. (2025). The Analysis of the Metaphor in Selective Song Lyrics. *English Education, Linguistics, and Literature Journal*, 4 (1), 34-43.

ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes metaphors in Bruno Mars' song lyrics, namely *Talking to the Moon*, *It Will Rain*, and *Just the Way You Are*. This study uses a qualitative approach with the theory of Lakoff & Johnson (2003) which divides metaphors into three types: ontological, structural, and orientational metaphors. The results of the analysis show that the metaphors in the songs describe feelings of love, sadness, and deep emotional connection. This paper provides insight into the use of metaphor as a tool to convey complex emotions and meanings in song lyrics. Overall, 23 metaphors were found with a distribution of: 35% ontological metaphors, 35% structural metaphors, and 30% orientational metaphors.

1. Introduction

Music has always been widely heard worldwide, so in the millennial era to the present. There is a lot of meaning to music. This is due to the fact that for some people, music has become an integral part of who they are. In addition to providing entertainment, music may also offer support, motivation, and guidance for both individuals and groups. Thus, for some people, music has a very broad definition. In order to touch the emotions of its listeners, music is also a living embodiment of a variety of illusions and soulful tones. These days, everyone in a modern place listens to music constantly—from young children to adults. They listen to music for a variety of reasons, including happiness, sadness, falling in love, and many more. A few of them went to pop, jazz, classic, hip-hop, and other genre events. Although many people are familiar with the tunes, they are unaware of their true significance or hidden meaning. (Manalu et al., 2021) Songs are frequently utilized as a vehicle for ideas, concepts, or emotional expressions. The creator's heart song might be spoken or ideas can be put into practice inside the song's lyrics. A creator song uses puns to entice listeners and think creatively about how to deliver poetry or words with melody and tuning so that they sound delicious. In addition to music, in this research I will also discuss metaphors. A song is a poem with lyrics that is performed as an instrument is played. "Lyrics are written as a form of interaction between the writer and the listeners," claims Dallin (1994) (Rodríguez, Velastequí, 2019).

Metaphors are literary devices that are typically employed in poetry, novels, films, and books to draw comparisons between two objects. In music, comparisons frequently relate

to other songs, popular rumours of the era, or the topics of the song. The singers or authors are using a metaphor if they are portraying or comparing a person, action, mood, location, or object to anything else. (Ndraha, 2018). The transference of an image, meaning, or quality from one expression to another is known as metaphor, the relationship that one word has with another in order to generate a mean is known as metaphor. Conceptual metaphor, according to Lakoff, G. & Johnson, M. (2003), is the comprehension and expression of one type of item in terms of another. (Junaedi, 2023) A metaphor is a parable in which you compare one thing to another rather than making a comparison. (Lestari, 2020) Almost all literary works, including novels, essays, and song lyrics, incorporate metaphor. Bruno Mars song has a lot of fans, because they contain meanings that are in line with what young people are experiencing. Bruno Mars emphasizes this when he says that every song has themes that are evident from the title and also reveal deeper attitudes regarding the issues that are given, such morality, growing into virtuous humans, love, and relationships between men and women. (Rahmadhanti et al., 2022) The purpose of this study is to examine metaphors in Bruno Mars song lyrics. Bruno Mars song lyrics are that the researcher will gather as a source of data. The metaphors found in Bruno Mars' songs are the main subject of this study. Some of the lyrics reflect the songwriter's true life. The lyrics may discuss heartbreak, love, oneself, or other topics. The group band uses a lot of figurative language in their lyrics, which gives them a distinctive writing style. Furthermore, Bruno Mars frequently uses metaphors in his lyrics to convey his meaning and convey the feelings he wants the audience to understand. Furthermore, the music exhibits a greater degree of expressive and lyrical communication, encouraging listeners to engage not just with the music but also with the words (Manurung & Gurning, 2014). Talking to the Moon, Just the way you are, Grenade, The Lazy Song, Uptown Funk, 24K Magic, and That's What I Like are a few of Bruno Mars's songs. Some of his songs are also very meaningful, aiming to evoke strong emotions in the listeners. (Fajrin & Parmawati, 2021) The metaphor of grief in Bruno Mars' song is the subject of this study. There are a number of existing studies on song lyric metaphors. Among them are Bernadetta, M. P., Linuwih, E. R., & Kurniawan, Y. (2023); Fikriyah Layaly, Hesti, & Neneng Nurjanah. (2023); Jati, L. J. W. (2020), Junaedi, S. (2023); Lestari, D. A. E. P. (2020); Lukmana, D., Rosa, R. N., & Marlina, L. (2019); Manalu, C. N. F., Indonesia, U. P., Sitopu, M. K., Indonesia, U. P., Silaban, A. P., Indonesia, U. P., Saragih, E., & Indonesia, U. P. (2021); Manurung, J. T. N., & Gurning, B. (2014); Maoula, M., Simanjuntak, B., & Sihombing, J. (2022); Ndraha, L. D. M. (2018); Nugraheny, A., & Yuwita, M. R. (2023); Pardede, M., Saragi, C. N., & Sidabutar, U. (2023); Rahmadhanti, R. W., Simanjuntak, B., & Sihombing, J. (2022); Rahmat, N. M., & Dianita, D. (2024); Ramadhika Vajara. (2022); Rodríguez, Velastequí, M. (2019); Yusuf, F., & Reski Amelia, A. (2018); Zulaika, A. Y., Artanti, C., Alivia, C. P., Annisa, D., & Putri, D. M. (2023); There are only a few studies that only discuss the meanings explained in the song lyrics. Here they concentrate more on figurative language, namely Darissa'adah. (2022); Fajrin, M. Y., & Parmawati, A. (2021); This paper will analyze metaphors in several songs from Bruno Mars. The main purpose of this paper is to find out the types of metaphors used in the songs and what their actual meanings are. According to Lakoff and Johnson's theory, the objectives of this paper are (1). What is the meaning of metaphors in Bruno Mars' song lyrics? It can also determine what message the music wants to convey.

All actions and attitudes that are used to express something originate from thoughts, feelings, and mindsets. In addition to being a tool for expressing emotions, music can help people achieve self-actualization, which is a desire that they must fulfill.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Semantic

The study of linguistic meaning is called semantics. It looks at what meaning is, how words acquire meaning, and how a complex expression's meaning is dependent on its constituent components. Making the distinction between sense and reference is one step in this process. Reference is the thing that an expression points to, whereas sense is provided by the ideas and concepts connected to an expression. Semantics stands in contrast to pragmatics, which examines how people use language in conversation, and syntax, which analyzes the principles that determine how to construct grammatically valid sentences.

2.2. Song

A song is a piece of music sung by a human voice. The voice frequently uses patterns of sound and silence to convey the melody, which is a set of distinct and fixed pitches. Songs typically consist of portions that are later repeated or played in a different way, and they have a structure, such as the standard ABA form. A cappella is a song performed without the use of instruments. Although the term is typically not used for large classical music vocal forms like opera and oratorio, which use terms like aria and recitative instead, a song can be for a solo singer, a lead singer accompanied by background singers, a duet, a trio, or a larger ensemble with more voices singing in harmony.

2.3. Metaphor

A metaphor is a figure of speech that mentions another item in order to explicitly relate to it for rhetorical impact. It can reveal (or obfuscate) underlying parallels between two disparate concepts. Typically, the purpose of metaphors is to evoke a similarity or analogy. Metaphors are grouped by analysts with other forms of figurative language, including simile, metonymy, hyperbole, and antithesis. Gibbs (1994) defined a metaphor as a comparison between two terms used to examine the character of one. Moreover, metaphor is the expression of comprehending one notion in terms of another, where there is some relationship or link between the two, according to Lakoff (1987).

2.3.1. Types of metaphor

1. Metaphor of structure

Structural metaphors are one concept that is metaphorically structured in other concepts, according to Lakoff and Johnson (1980). The systematic connection of everyday occurrences forms the basis of structural metaphors.

2. Oriental metaphor

Oriental metaphor, according to Lakoff and Johnson, is a different type of metaphorical thought that is unstructured but nevertheless governs the system as a whole in connection to one another. Additionally, this metaphor describes physical sensations as front-back, deep-shallow, on-off, in-out, and up-down. "Happy is up, sad is down" is one example.

3. Ontological metaphor

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) assert that ontological metaphors arise in the analysis of concepts, occurrences, actions, and feelings. Ontological metaphors can be used to understand and talk about things, events, and processes, but not precisely or abstractly as if they had unique physical characteristics. Ontological metaphors describe phenomena using pre-existing metaphors. We use experience to guide our logical responses to situations.

3. Research Methodology

This paper used descriptive qualitative to explain the types of metaphors in Bruno Mars' song Doo Wops & Hoologans based on Lakoff & Jhonson's theory, and explain the types of metaphors. This method was chosen with the aim of describing data containing metaphors in Bruno Mars' song lyrics. The purpose of the descriptive method is to describe the situation or field under study accurately and factually. The data source of this paper was taken from Bruno Mars' song lyrics. This study include the following steps: First, reading the song lyrics on Spotify, then examining one by one the parts that contain metaphors, then selecting lyrics that contain metaphors, and finally collecting data selection based on metaphor types (Ontological, Structural, and Orientational).

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Findings

Metaphors in linguistic studies are typically categorised into a few sorts according to the notions they represent. Metaphors fall into three main categories: ontological, orientated, and structural. The findings of this study will be presented in a descriptive and qualitative manner. The researcher will categorize the analyzed data according to each kind of metaphor. The results are as follows:

Table 1: An analysis result types of metaphor

No	Types of Metaphor	Amount	Percentage
1.	Ontological Metaphor	8	40%
2.	Structural Metaphor	7	35%
3.	Orientational Metaphor	5	25%
	Total	20	100%

Talking to the Moon

1. Ontological Metaphor:

An ontological metaphor is when something immaterial or abstract (such feelings, ideas, or connections) is treated as though it were a tangible item.

"Talking to the Moon"

The moon is seen as a living being with the ability to hear or react. The narrator of the song tries to communicate with the person they miss by speaking to the moon. Despite the fact that the moon cannot technically speak back, it becomes a tangible thing that can help with communication.

Speaking to the moon is a metaphor for the narrator's intense desire and emotional bond with a distant person. Despite the great distance and the person's absence, it is more than simply a celestial body; it is a representation of a route of connection.

"Someone's talking back"

Additionally ontological is the idea that someone—the one the narrator is yearning for—will respond. It implies that the narrator feels a spiritual connection or some sort of response when they speak to the moon, despite the fact that they are alone themselves. As if "responding" through the moon, the person they want is abstracted into this metaphysical connection.

2. Structural Metaphor: A structural metaphor entails interpreting one thought in terms of another, frequently structuring abstract concepts with tangible images or physical space.

"In hopes you're on the other side talking to me too"

In this structural metaphor, the "other side" stands for both existential or emotional separation as well as physical distance—possibly an inaccessible location. The phrase "other side" frames the idea that the narrator's desire to reconnect is framed in terms of the distance between them and the person they are longing for. The physical distance between the narrator and the person they love is equated to an emotional distance that they wish to bridge through talking to the moon.

3. Orientational Metaphor: An orientational metaphor involves conceptualizing one idea in terms of spatial orientation, such as up/down, in/out, or here/there.

"At night, when the stars light up my room"

This phrase uses an orientational metaphor by positioning the stars in relation to the narrator's room. The stars "lighting up" the room suggests a shift in the emotional or mental atmosphere, where the physical space (the room) is metaphorically filled with the distant light of stars, representing the narrator's thoughts and feelings being illuminated by the distant memory or connection to the person they long for.

"Somewhere far away"

The idea of "somewhere far away" uses spatial orientation to convey emotional distance. The person the narrator is yearning for is conceptualized as being far away, both physically and emotionally. The distance creates a sense of separation that defines the emotional landscape of the song.

It Will Rain

1. Ontological Metaphors: These metaphors treat abstract concepts (such as feelings, connections, or experiences) as though they were tangible things.

"Pick up these broken pieces 'til I'm bleeding"

Here, the metaphor considers the narrator's emotional suffering as though it were composed of "broken pieces" that need to be put back together, just like physical pain. The narrator's act of picking up the "broken pieces" suggests that

the loss of love has left them feeling fractured or fragmented. "Bleeding" is a metaphor for the emotional scars left by love, which exacerbates the physical sensation of loss and suffering.

"No religion that could save me"

This metaphor implies that the narrator's emotional anguish is so severe that it cannot be remedied by any kind of spiritual or religious intervention. It conveys the idea that conventional means of consolation or salvation are insufficient to alleviate the narrator's anguish.

"It would take a whole lot of medication to realize what we used to have"

The narrator's emotional condition is treated as something that can be medically dulled or changed by the notion that medicine would be required to "realize" what they formerly had. The importance of the relationship is so great that its absence is viewed as a disease that has to be treated.

2. Structural Metaphors: Using physical or tactile images, structural metaphors help us understand one idea in terms of another.

"There'll be no sunlight if I lose you, baby" / "There'll be no clear skies if I lose you, baby"

The loss of the loved one is compared in this metaphor to the lack of sunlight and clear skies, which are generally thought of as being bright, warm, and clear. It is implied that the narrator's life would feel hopeless and aimless without the individual since losing them is compared to a dark, hazy, and ambiguous emotional condition.

"Just like the clouds, my eyes will do the same if you walk away"

The narrator uses the weather to frame their emotional reaction to the loss. The narrator's eyes will "do the same," meaning that they will get obscured with tears and sorrow, much like clouds block sunshine. This implies that their lover's presence or absence has a direct impact on their emotional condition.

"I'll pick up these broken pieces 'til I'm bleeding"

In this logic, emotional destruction is framed as a physical healing process. According to the metaphor, the narrator feels compelled to mend the relationship's problems, even if doing so hurts them more. It conveys a sense of obligation or a desperate attempt to put things right, even at a high emotional expense.

3. Orientational Metaphors: These metaphors use spatial orientations such as up/down, in/out, here/there, etc. to conceptualize abstract ideas.

"There'll be no sunlight if I lose you" / "There'll be no clear skies"

"Sunlight" and "clear skies" are used in this orientational metaphor to represent happiness and clarity in life. The words "sunlight" and "clear skies" connote

warmth, joy, and hope; their absence implies a decline in the narrator's emotional condition.

Just The Way You Are

1. Ontological Metaphors: These metaphors treat abstract ideas (such as identity, beauty, or emotions) as if they were actual things.

"You're amazing just the way you are"

In treating the person's innate traits (beauty, personality) as something that can be summed up or described in a single word, "amazing," this sentence is an ontological metaphor. According to the narrator, this attribute is palpable, suggesting that the individual is already whole and ideal in their current state.

"The whole world stops and stares for a while"

This portrays the "world" as a thing that responds to the subject's smile. It lends the world human characteristics, implying that when the narrator smiles, everything around them stops. The subject's beauty or charm is shown as captivating the entire world.

"Her eyes... make the stars look like they're not shinin"

The narrator's view of the subject's beauty as overwhelming and unmatched is emphasized by the metaphor of the eyes making the stars appear dull. The brilliance of her eyes overshadows the stars, which are typically associated with amazement and brightness.

2. Structural Metaphors: These metaphors help us understand one notion in terms of another, and they frequently use physical, spatial, or tangible images to organize abstract concepts.

"When I see your face, there's not a thing that I would change"

The concept of "seeing your face" serves as a framework for how beauty is perceived. The narrator considers the face to be flawless in its whole and presents it as a representation of the individual's full self. It frames the idea of "perfection" in terms of a visible, immutable aspect of the face.

"Her laugh, her laugh, she hates, but I think it's so sexy"

This metaphor frames "her laugh" as something that, depending on the viewpoint of the spectator, might be interpreted in several ways. The subject might not find the chuckle "sexy," but the storyteller does. This draws attention to the structural distinction between the narrator's and the subject's experiences of the same trait.

"If perfect's what you're searchin' for, then just stay the same"

The idea of "perfection" is framed as something that must be pursued or achieved. According to the metaphor, perfection is an inherent quality of a person's present state rather than a goal to be altered or enhanced. The narrator's wish to preserve the subject's authenticity is emphasized by this format.

3. **Oriental Metaphors:** These metaphors use spatial orientation (up/down, in/out, etc.) to conceptualize abstract concepts.

"The whole world stops and stares for a while"

The "world" pauses and gazes in this metaphor, suggesting that the subject's beauty has the ability to stop the normal flow of events. The act of "stopping" implies that beauty has the power to temporarily alter time or attentional flow, placing the subject at the center of attention. The notion that the universe pauses suggests that the topic is so engrossing that all else disappears.

"Just the way you are"

This expression suggests a specific mode or state of being by using the concept of "way." It suggests that the subject exists in a particular, ideal orientation or position, and the narrator wants the subject to stay in that ideal state. The idea that no change is required is reinforced by an implicit "orientation" that is consistent with the subject's present self.

4.2 Discussion

This paper shows that the use of metaphors in Bruno Mars' song lyrics has a significant role in describing the emotions, meanings, and messages he wants to convey to listeners. Each type of metaphor analyzed-ontological, structural, and orientational-has unique characteristics in framing emotional experiences and creating connections between song lyrics and real life. This study adds significantly to the field of linguistics, particularly in the area of comprehending how metaphors are used in popular media like music. The results can be utilized as teaching resources for English, particularly to present figurative concepts in engaging and pertinent contexts. Further research opportunities are also presented by this study, such as examining how metaphors impact listeners' interpretations of songs or comparing their usage across various musical genres. This conversation highlights that metaphor is a powerful tool for expressing meaning, emotion, and experience in song lyrics in addition to being a stylistic device.

5. Conclusion

Based on the analysis of metaphors in three Bruno Mars songs, it can be concluded that the main themes of the songs are related to love stories and sadness. The metaphors used reflect the deep emotions and hidden messages in the lyrics, such as despair, hope, and the natural beauty of humans. By referring to Lakoff and Johnson's theory, this study found that ontological metaphors are used to make abstract concepts such as feelings real. Structural metaphors help frame emotional relationships with physical imagery, while orientational metaphors provide a spatial perspective on emotions and relationships. This paper confirms the importance of metaphors in song lyrics to create richer communication and touch the listener on a deep emotional level.

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