



Analysis Of Metaphorical Expressions Used In Johnny Cashes' Song Lyrics

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Abstract

This research explores Johnny Cash's song lyrics using George Lakoff's metaphor theory. It aims to understand the metaphorical expressions in Cash's song lyrics by analyzing their recurring themes and their connection to the socio-cultural context of the artist's era. The research includes identify metaphorical expressions and examine thematic motifs, the cultural and historical context that influenced the author's use of metaphors. The research also examined the influence of metaphorical language on the narrative depth and affective impact of Cash's compositions. Grounded theory in established metaphor analysis and the function of metaphor in artistic expression, the research expands upon the cognitive linguistic perspective by situating the analysis within Lakoff's theory. It gains insight into how metaphors communicate complex emotions, abstract ideas, and societal contemplations in Cash's lyrics. The research uses a systematic methodology to select songs and employs techniques for identifying metaphors based on Lakoff's theoretical framework. Thematic analysis is used to identify recurring patterns within the metaphorical expressions, while cultural contextualization helps understand the factors that shaped Cash's imaginative use of metaphors. This research had significant contribution to musicology, literary studies, and cultural analysis. By analyzing the metaphorical depth of Cash's lyrics from Lakoff's theory, it provides an original perspective on the artist's thought process and enhances the understanding of the lasting importance and thematic complexity of his contributions in contemporary music.

Keywords: *metaphorical expressions, Lakoff's theory, songs' lyrics*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan mengeksplorasi lirik lagu Johnny Cash dengan menggunakan teori metafora George Lakoff. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memahami ekspresi metafora dalam lirik lagu Cash dengan menganalisis tema yang digunakan dan hubungannya dengan konteks sosio-budaya pada era seniman tersebut. Penelitian ini mencakup mengidentifikasi ekspresi ungkapan metafora, motif tematik, dan konteks budaya serta sejarah yang memengaruhi penggunaan metafora. Penelitian ini juga menganalisa pengaruh bahasa metafora terhadap kedalaman narasi dan dampak afektif dari komposisi-komposisi Cash. Teori dasar dalam analisis metafora yang mapan dan fungsi metafora dalam ekspresi artistik, penelitian ini memperluas perspektif linguistik kognitif dengan dengan menempatkan analisis dalam teori Lakoff. Penelitian ini memperoleh wawasan tentang bagaimana

metafora mengkomunikasikan emosi yang kompleks, ide-ide abstrak, dan kontemplasi sosial dalam lirik-lirik Cash. Penelitian ini menggunakan metodologi sistematis untuk memilih lagu dan menggunakan untuk mengidentifikasi metafora berdasarkan kerangka teori Lakoff. Analisis tematik digunakan untuk mengidentifikasi tema yang berulang dalam ungkapan metafora, dan kontekstualisasi budaya membantu memahami faktor-faktor yang membentuk penggunaan metafora secara imajinatif oleh Cash. Penelitian ini memiliki berkontribusi signifikan terhadap studi sastra, dan analisis budaya. Dengan menganalisis kedalaman metafora dari lirik Cash dari teori Lakoff, penelitian ini memberikan perspektif orisinil tentang proses pemikiran seniman dan meningkatkan pemahaman tentang kepentingan abadi dan kompleksitas tematik yang berkontribusi dalam musik kontemporer.

Kata Kunci: ungkapan metafora, teori Lakoff, lirik lagu

Introduction

Musical expression serves as a highly effective means of communication, transcending linguistic and cultural barriers. Lyrics hold significant importance within the realm of music as they serve as a conduit for the transmission of sentiments, narratives, and societal observations at the time of composition (Cameron & Deignan, 2006).

Johnny Cash is widely regarded as an icon in the annals of country and rock music due to his distinctive vocal prowess, capacity to narrate poignant tales, and aptitude for composing melodies that elicit intense sentiments. The incorporation of metaphorical language within Cash's song lyrics enhances the depth and complexity of his work, thereby presenting an extensive array of prospects for scholarly examination and interpretation (Juliana, Arafah et al., 2023).

Johnny Cash, also known as the "Man in Black," was a renowned American singer-songwriter known for his unique blend of country, folk, and rockabilly music. His songwriting was characterized by vivid imagery, poignant narratives, and a keen sense of metaphorical expression. This research aims to explore the metaphors present in Johnny Cash's song lyrics, revealing the deeper layers of meaning embedded in his poetic language. His extensive discography covers themes such as love, loss, redemption, and social issues. His use of metaphors allows him to convey complex emotions and profound messages, offering listeners a richer

understanding of the artist's intended message.

Artists utilize metaphors as rhetorical devices to convey abstract concepts, emotions, and personal experiences by establishing associations with tangible or familiar elements. Johnny Cash's extensive discography comprises a plethora of allegorical expressions that delve into profound societal concerns, the nature of being, death, and the significance of affection.

Acquiring comprehension of the allusions that are evident in Cash's lyrics not only enhances our acknowledgment of his artistic prowess but also provides invaluable knowledge regarding the social and cultural climate of his era (Juliana, 2019).

The analysis of metaphorical expressions in Johnny Cash's lyrics offers valuable insights into his creative process, influences, and cultural context. By analysing his metaphors, the research aims to identify recurring themes like darkness, light, journey, and redemption. It also examines the historical, cultural, and personal contexts that influenced the choice and interpretation of these metaphors. The research also investigates the impact of these metaphors on audience reception across different demographics and time periods. Finally, it compares Cash's use of metaphors with other contemporary artists to identify distinctive features that set him apart within the broader musical landscape (Juliana, 2014). This research provides a comprehensive understanding of Cash's use of language to

evoke emotions and communicate universal truths(Ding, 2009).

This research explores Johnny Cash's song lyrics using metaphors to understand his artistic legacy. It aims to uncover how Cash's language choices added layers of meaning to his music, resonating with audiences and solidifying his status as a masterful storyteller and lyricist.

Lakoff and Johnson (1998) define metaphor as an entity imbued with significance for others, serving primarily as a means of comprehension(Juliana & Army, 2021). Thus, metaphor is an element of figurative language utilized to make comparisons between two or more things. All human languages, according to Lakoff and Johnson, employ metaphorical meanings to convey information at varying degrees of abstraction from concrete reality. This is the metaphor theory of Lakoff and Johnson, more commonly referred to as the conceptual metaphor theory (J. Lakoff & Johnson, n.d.).

Lakoff and Johnson classify metaphors as follows: ontological metaphor, structural metaphor, and orientational metaphor. Structural metaphor Lakoff and Johnson (2003: 14) define structural metaphors as instances when one notion is symbolically organized inside another (G. Lakoff et al., 1980). Structural metaphor arises from the systematic connection between ordinary events. For instance, the subject under discussion is war. In arguing, we engage in many activities to ensure that the concept of argument is organized around the notion of warfare. Argument and conflict are fundamentally distinct. However, in the event of a disagreement, individuals engage in verbal confrontation. They are unwilling to lose if they engage in an argument. Therefore, an argument is referred to as a battle due to the similarities in their nature (Deignan, 2016).

Orientation Metaphor Lakoff and Johnson (2003: 15) define orientational metaphor as a metaphorical idea that does

not have an organized form but rather governs the interrelationships among the broader system of concepts. This metaphor also pertains to physical experiences and cultural aspects, such as verticality, horizontality, polarity, depth, superficiality, anteriority, and posteriority. Orientational metaphors convey the idea of spatial orientation, such as the association of "happy" with "up" and "sad" with "down"(Sullivan, 2017).

Ontological metaphor refers to a type of metaphor that involves conceptualizing abstract concepts in terms of concrete entities or objects. According to Lakoff and Johnson (2003), ontological metaphors occur when we perceive events, actions, emotions, and ideas as beings and substances. Metaphors in ontology enable us to understand and discuss entities, phenomena, and operations that lack a tangible character, yet are not as concrete or tangible as actual objects. The ontological metaphor characterizes an entity based on an established metaphor. A metaphor is a figure of speech that compares two unrelated things, highlighting their similarities in a symbolic way. Ontology enables us to approach things in a reasonable manner, drawing on our experiential knowledge (G. Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

This research intends to provide a number of substantial contributions (Gibbs, 1996): they are (a) to enhance comprehension of Johnny Cash's composition by conducting an in-depth analysis of his metaphorical language. By doing so, it will provide novel insights into Cash's creative process and the thematic considerations that influenced his music. (b) to enhance comprehension of metaphor in music: This analysis will augment the knowledge of musical communication by contributing to a broader understanding of how metaphorical expressions operate within the context of song lyrics. (c) To establishing a connection between literary and musical studies, this research will illuminate the complex relationship between artistic

expression and language, as well as emotion. This research explores Johnny Cash's use of metaphors in songwriting, contributing to musicology, literary studies, and cultural analysis. It enhances understanding of the artist's creative process, thematic complexity of his work, and the lasting impact of his work on current music. The goal of this research is to provide fresh insights on the interaction between language, culture, and artistic expression in the arena of music (Romero & Soria, 2005).

Method

The research utilized a qualitative methodology. In selecting a corpus of Johnny Cash's compositions, stylistic variety, critical acclaim, and thematic diversity will be considered. Metaphorical expressions will be identified and categorized within this corpus by employing well-established theoretical frameworks, such as those developed by Lakoff and Johnson. After identifying each metaphor, a thorough textual analysis will be performed to determine its precise function and meaning in the context of its lyrical expression. This analysis will examine the ways in which metaphors contribute to: (a) Thematic analysis: In what ways do metaphors contribute to the development of Cash's work's central themes, including redemption, faith, struggle, and social commentary. (b). Emotional resonance: In what ways do metaphors elicit, heighten, or manipulate the emotions of the audience. (c). In what way do metaphors contribute to the distinctiveness of Cash's artistic persona and voice as a performer and songwriter.

This research used eight songs at random out of 7 different albums and 1 single Johnny Cash. The lyrics of each song written on sheets of paper. Then, identify each songs containing metaphors based on Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) theory of types of metaphors by providing information on how many stanzas and lines which number. After the

data is identified based on its type, then the data is processed analysis (Creswell et al., 2007).

Result dan Discussion

Types of Methaphorical Expressions used in Jhon Cash's Song Lyrics

Structural Metaphor in the identification results there are 15 arrays containing structural metaphors. The following is an example of this type of structural metaphor in a Johnny Cash song: *Love is a burning thing*. It means "*Cinta adalah sesuatu yang membakar*" (Ring of Fire: 1st verse, 1st line). This line is a type of structural metaphor because the concept of love, the concept of love uses the word "burning thing" as a figurative word which is usually used in the concept of fire.

Orientalional Metaphor In the identification results there are 12 arrays containing orientational metaphors. Following is an example of the type of orientational metaphor in the Johnny Cash song: The old familiar sting "*kepedihan yang dulu terasa akrab*" (Hurt: stanza 1, line 6). The array is a type of orientational metaphor due to the familiar sting concept 'familiar pain' became a figure of speech referring to one's physical condition.

Ontological metaphor in the identification results there are 17 arrays containing ontological metaphors. The following is example of the type of ontological metaphor in the Johnny Cash song: a). The container metaphor from the back door of your life, you swept me out dear "*kau sapu aku dari pintu belakang hidupmu*" (Flush from the bathroom of your heart: stanza 1, line 1) The array is a type of container ontological metaphor because the entity swept me out is an abstract entity that describes the back door of your life trope as a container object. b) personification Upon my liar's chair "*Di atas kursi pembohongku*" (Hurt: stanza 3, line 2)

This array is a type of personification ontological metaphor because the entity chair 'a chair which is an inanimate object' uses the word 'liar liar' as a figurative word that is usually done by humans (G. Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

Meaning Analysis of Metaphorical Expression used in Jhon Cash's Song Lyrics

The expression "Love is a burning thing" means "Cinta adalah hal yang membakar". Goal: love Sumber: burning thing Love is a target because it is abstract, while burning thing is a source because it is stated clearly. The phrase "love is a thing that burns" becomes a metaphorical expression because the phrase "love is juxtaposed" with the word 'burns'. If the expression burn is juxtaposed with the word fire, then the expression is not a metaphorical expression because fire is indeed something that burns. The meaning of the metaphor in this line is that love is like fire. People who are in love will feel something hot, burning and agitated, inside.

The expression "The old familiar sting" means "Kepedihan yang dulu terasa akrab". Target: sting Source: familiar Painful stings become targets because they are abstract, whereas familiars become sources because they are clearly stated. The expression of pain that used to feel familiar becomes a metaphorical expression because the expression 'pain' is juxtaposed with the word 'familiar'. When a familiar expression is juxtaposed with a person's word, the expression is not a metaphorical expression because in words people often use familiar words to get to know or know the person in question. The meaning of the metaphor in this line is someone who still feels pain when he tries to injure himself and the pain doesn't just go away.

From the expression "the back door of your life, you swept me out dear" means "Kau sapu aku dari pintu belakang hidupmu". Goal: life Sumber: swept Life 'life becomes an

abstract target, while swept' is a source. The expression you sweep me from behind the door of your life is a metaphorical expression because in the expression I am juxtaposed with 'broom. If the word 'broom' is juxtaposed with 'dust', then the expression is not metaphorical because the main function of the broom is to clean dust. In addition, the door is an object that can enter and exit described as 'life where someone can come and go in our lives. The meaning of the metaphor in this song is that the subject of the lyrics is considered as a person who no longer has any meaning for the lover because the lover no longer thinks of him.

The expression "Upon my liar's chair" means "Di atas kursi pembohongku". Target: implied Source: chairs Chair 'the chair becomes the source while the target is not stated (implied). The expression 'on my liar's chair' becomes a metaphorical expression because the expression 'chair' is juxtaposed with the word 'liar. If the expression 'liar' is juxtaposed with the word 'person', then this expression is not a metaphorical expression because the word 'liar' is usually used to describe a person's character. The meaning of the metaphor in this line is due to circumstances that make a person do things that are full of lies (G. Lakoff et al., 1980).

Conclusion

Based on the results of the analysis meaning of the song "Ring of Fire, Hurt, You Are My Sunshine". "The Story of a broken Heart", "Cause I Love You", "I Drove Her Out of My Mind", "Flushed from The Bathroom of Your Heart", and "A boy Named Sue", it is found that in the lyrics of the song there are similarities in meaning which equates this based on meaning analysis using Target and Source.

From the results of the analysis, it can be concluded that the meaning of each song line is a literal meaning which is then transferred

into the meaning of a metaphor. For example, in the song "Ring of Fire" there is a metaphorical meaning that equates "love like fire" in the song "You Are My Sunshine", there is a metaphorical meaning that equates "women like the sun", and lines that provide metaphorical meanings so that the two concepts are different become an equivalent concept.

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