The Analysis of Metaphorical Expression in Billie Eilish's Songs

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Abstract: A metaphor is a kind of figurative language. Songwriters use metaphors to facilitate listeners' comprehension of song lyrics' meanings. The objective of this study was to examine the kinds, meanings, and functions of metaphors in three chosen songs by Billie Eilish. The study was conducted using a descriptive qualitative technique. The study methodology was executed in three phases: data gathering techniques, data analysis techniques, and presentation strategies for the analysis outcomes. Data collection was conducted via non-participant methods and note-taking approaches. This study analyzes the lyrics of three selected Billie Eilish songs: "Wildflower," "What I Was Made For," and "Blue." The study identified four categories of metaphors in Billie Eilish's songs: animal metaphors, anthropomorphic metaphors, concrete-to-abstract metaphors, and synesthetic metaphors. The metaphorical use of Billie Eilish's song encompasses informational, emotive, and directive roles. The findings indicate that Billie Eilish's songs often serve as a medium to advocate for issues faced by women, including insecurity, envy, and romantic dilemmas.

Keywords: metaphor, types of metaphor, functions of metaphor, Billie Eilish's songs.

INTRODUCTION

Currently, pop songs are very popular among persons of all ages, since they often reflect the experiences that many people confront in contemporary society. Pop songs often reflect contemporary trends, since they resonate with current emotional experiences more readily. The words of pop songs are simplified by artists to ensure that audience members may easily comprehend their message. The song aims to convey the author's emotions or experiences. Songwriters often include etymological elements in their songs, with metaphorical language serving as a representation. Historically and now, representations have been extensively used throughout several musical genres, including pop.

The incorporation of representations in the song's lyrics evokes an emotional response that the author intends to convey to listeners regarding her sentiments or experiences, which she articulates through the lyrics but cannot express through conventional language in everyday life. A metaphor is a phrase used by songwriters to convey their experiences and emotions inside a song (Kovecses, 2010). Moreover, the purpose of using allegories in song lyrics is to effectively convey the meaning to the audience and create a significant impression on the song's message. Lakoff and Johnson (2003) said that metaphor transforms regular language into a more aesthetically pleasing form of expression.

Examining the depiction of metaphor in song lyrics is crucial, since each songwriter's emotions and experiences are unique, and every lyric embodies a representation they want to convey. Each musical genre employs distinct metaphorical terms. Researchers are interested in examining the metaphors included in song lyrics, since the artist conveys her thoughts and emotions to society via her music. The proliferation of songs leads to an

augmented usage of metaphors, facilitating the creation of novel terms and the extension of previously unrecognized meanings. Consequently, analyzing the representation used in a song's lyrics is essential for revealing the components of metaphorical expression.

This research examines the use of metaphors in a popular song. Billie Eilish is a pop singer known for using metaphors in her songs. The researcher selected Billie Eilish because of her status as an international pop artist, whose songs explore harmful emotions, including feelings of doubt, worthlessness, and anxiety in relationships. This study focuses on examining three pop songs by Billie Eilish: "Wildflower," "What I Was Made For," and "Blue." The researchers selected the three songs due to their many metaphors, having listened to the songs and analyzed the words thoroughly. In these three tracks, Billie Eilish attempts to articulate fears associated with interpersonal interactions. Her tracks have gained significant popularity and received the Album of the Year award.

The researchers' metaphorical analysis of Billie Eilish's song employs a pragmatic and semantic technique. While the pragmatic approach aims to understand the relevance of metaphors via the shared experiences of songwriters and listeners, the semantic technique looks at the relationship between the literal meanings of metaphors employed in songs. Additionally, it provides the context that helps listeners understand the function of metaphors in the song's lyrics.

Metaphors enhance the aesthetic and intrigue of a phrase (Zbikowski, 2002, p. 512). According to Zbikowski, metaphors empower song lyrics by making them more captivating and aesthetically pleasing. According to Lakoff and Johnson, metaphor may help us create realities, especially social realities. Since pop songs often mirror the social circumstances of their creators, many songwriters turn to metaphors as a means of expressing social concerns in a more captivating way. Lakoff and Johnson (2003: 8) claim that metaphor is an essential language need because it allows abstract ideas to be translated into more straightforward, tangible forms, which allows songwriters to explain complicated topics to audiences via well-known allusions. According to relevance theory, understanding a metaphorical statement entails decoding the language input by taking into account the utterance's possible meanings and drawing conclusions from the results of linguistic decoding (Hakim, M. & Medina, S. 2017).

Metaphor is a fundamental aspect of linguistic innovation (Ortony, 1979), indicating that metaphor represents a divergence from conventional language usage. Metaphors are used in daily communication for certain tasks and objectives. Ullmann (1962, p.78) asserts that metaphors are founded on a certain form of resemblance or shared generic characteristics. According to Keraf, it is a linguistic statement that draws comparisons between entities with similar features. Keraf (2004, p. 139) defines metaphor as "a figure of speech that directly compares two entities without employing terms such as, like, as, or if." Metaphors convey the author's thoughts and emotions on an event.

A metaphor is a mode of personal expression used by a speaker. Metaphor refers to the use of phrases or words that convey meanings apart from their literal interpretations (Croft, W. & Cruse, D. 2004). For instance, the term "angel" is used as a replacement for "you," since the notion of an angel encapsulates the speaker's desires. An angel is a divine entity, fashioned by God to resemble a person, whose purpose is to safeguard humanity (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2010). This statement is often spoken by a child to their mother, implying that she is a saviour who keeps them alive.

According to Ullman (2004), there are four categories of metaphors: synesthetic, anthropomorphic, animal, and concrete-to-abstract metaphors.

Anthropomorphic Metaphor

This metaphor successfully contrasts the speaker's own physical condition with an event or feeling that they have gone through. Anthropomorphic metaphors use words related to human anatomical parts. A kind of metaphor known as an anthropomorphic metaphor gives inanimate objects human traits, giving them the appearance of life. The statement, "Earth is crying," is an example of an anthropomorphic metaphor since the word "crying" often refers to a human feeling of sadness that frequently results from human behaviour. According to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2010), Earth is one of the worlds where people live. "Earth is crying" refers to humanity's failure to properly care for the earth, which has led to a number of disasters.

Animal Metaphor

An animal metaphor is a figurative expression that describes an event by including aspects related to animals. This metaphor often conveys the speaker's feelings by using animal aspects, such as the animal's name, characteristics, or bodily parts. An example of an animal metaphor is "my life is a butterfly." Butterflies are a category of flying animals characterized for their exquisite wings. Butterflies undergo many stages to transform from caterpillars to butterflies with exquisite wings, progressing through a cocoon phase over an extended period. Speakers use the term butterfly to correlate with the phrase my life.

Concert to Abstract Metaphor

An abstract or imprecise notion may be transformed into a physical shape using a concrete to abstract metaphor, and vice versa. Your eyes gave me a feeling of home. The human body's eyes are anatomical structures that are utilised for seeing. Since eyes are a representation of sentiments, they may be used to communicate a person's thoughts and feelings. Therefore, meaning may be conveyed without verbal conversation just by looking into someone's eyes or making eye contact. Home, according to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2010), is the process of expressing one's ideas and feelings via communication. "I saw home in your eyes" is a statement that.

Synesthetic Metaphors

Figurative statements that include a variety of senses, such as sight and sound, are known as synesthetic metaphors. A figurative word known as a "synesthetic metaphor" connects one human sense to another to evoke feelings. A synesthetic metaphor might be "You smell like love." Generally speaking, love is an emotion that can be felt via taste. This phrase portrays love as a substance that can be inhaled and sensed via the sense of smell.

Functions of Metaphorical Expression

Metaphors serve several roles in song lyrics, each fulfilling a significant role. There are four roles of metaphor: the informational function, the expressive function, the directing function, and the weariness function (Leech, 1982). The primary role of metaphor is to convey information. The information function serves as a channel for transmitting the speaker's ideas and emotions to the listener. This function has properties indicating an implicit message the speaker intends to communicate to the listener. The components of ideas, anger, joy, worries, and more are often included in this informative function. One example of a metaphor with an informative purpose is "There is no moon like you." The utterance's informative goal is to express the speaker's feelings for a person who is important to him.

The expressive function is the second function. By using metaphorical language to embody their aspirations and ambitions for the listener, the expressive function expresses the speaker's attitude towards the context of the message meant for the listener. One example of an expressive function in metaphorical language is "Thank you for reminding me of the sensation of butterflies." The speaker wants his ex-girlfriend to be happier with her new companion, as the metaphor suggests.

A prescriptive function is the third one. When elements like instructions, enquiries, or threats influence the interlocutor's behaviour, the directive function takes place in a metaphorical statement. "Are we not the roses in this relationship?" is an example of a directing role in metaphor. The metaphor depicts the speaker's effort to get their partner to remember how their relationship had deteriorated because both of them were contradicting.

The role of fatigue is the fourth function of metaphor. The characteristics of the fatigue function in a metaphor stand in for the information the speaker wants to convey in order to build a good connection with the audience. A metaphor's exhaustion function includes elements that communicate a message to the audience and promote harmony between the speaker and the audience. A fatigue function might be "Hallo my sunshine." In order to maintain the balance of their relationship, spouses often use this metaphor.

Semantics is a language discipline that examines meaning. Yule (2010) asserts that semantics examines the significance of words and sentences. Semantics investigates the link between different meanings. Semantics also examines the evolution and revitalization of meaning. Griffths (2006) posits that semantics seeks to elucidate and comprehend the essence of knowledge pertaining to meaning and language. The semantic approach to metaphor ascertains the genuine meaning of a metaphor to remove ambiguity that may lead to misinterpretation. The semantic method elucidates the link between the meanings of metaphors in song lyrics, whereby metaphors are generated from the juxtaposition of unrelated words.

George Yule defines **pragmatics** as the examination of speaker meaning (Yule, 1996: 3). Pragmatics is the comprehensive examination of how context affects the interpretation of sentences by speech participants and the study of meaning. Pragmatics examines the language significance of an utterance, whether written or spoken, in relation to contextual circumstances (Sperber & Wilson, 2005: 468). In his book Pragmatics (1996), George Yule asserts that pragmatics investigates the intended meaning of speakers, distinguishing it from the literal meaning of the written word. According to Yule, the pragmatic method seeks to ascertain the meaning of a metaphor from the listener's perspective, after an analysis of its semantic implications by examining the interrelations of its meanings inside language. When speakers use metaphors, such as "Lawyers are also sharks," they often want to convey meanings that extend beyond the literal interpretation of these terms (Gibbs, 2011).

Context pertains to comprehending the significance of a statement. Context aids speakers and listeners in comprehending meaning throughout both written and spoken communication. Yule (1996) defines context as the speaker's ability to comprehend the time, situation, and audience of their discourse. This research aims to elucidate the significance of the metaphors in the lyrics of Billie Eilish's songs. The song lyrics derive from the author's assumptions, which must be comprehended within context. This aligns with Yule's (1996) assertion that context informs the listener's understanding of the expression's reference. The context of metaphors aids listeners in comprehending their intended purpose and meaning, whether the metaphor requires literal or non-literal interpretation.

RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter examines the methodology and techniques used to address the research problem. The researchers will use a qualitative descriptive study design. This descriptive qualitative study seeks to elucidate the phenomena of the topic, which will be characterized in detail. Ary (2002) defines qualitative research as an inquiry aimed at comprehending a

phenomena via particular occurrences or behaviors, articulated in a clear, thorough, and comprehensive way utilizing language.

This study mostly used data gathered from the website https://www.genius.com/ to analyze the lyrics of Billie Eilish's songs. Supporting sources for this research were acquired from papers, journals, and books pertinent to the study, serving as references for reading and comparison among scholars. This study analyzes metaphorical terms used in three songs by Billie Eilish: "Wildflower," "What I Was Made For," and "Blue." The data gathering method will be qualitative, with the researchers serving as the instrument in qualitative research. The researchers categorized the analogies identified in the three lyrics of Billie Eilish's song. The researchers will design and execute the data collection and processing till completion. Researchers have a pivotal role in qualitative research since they are the primary instrument for data collection, analysis, and presentation (Ary et al, 2002).

Non-participant observation and note-taking were used in this research to collect data. According to Surdayanto (2015), non-participant observation involves researchers acting as observers without being directly involved. By recording the metaphors found in Billie Eilish's song lyrics, the note-taking method helps identify them and makes data categorisation easier for scholars.

When gathering data, the researchers follow certain protocols. Through reading and listening to the lyrics of Billie Eilish's songs "Wildflower," "What I Was Made For," and "Blue" on the website https://www.genius.com/, the researchers began their observational process. Researchers identify analogies in music lyrics in the next stage. The researcher uses a note-taking technique in the next step to record the metaphors found in the four songs. The recognised metaphors are grouped based on their characteristics and functions.

The distributional technique and the pragmatic-identification method were used in this work to analyse the data. To understand the lexical relevance of metaphors in Billie Eilish's song lyrics, this study used the distributional method, a data analysis technique in which the language itself serves as the main instrument (Surdayanto, 2015). Drawing on the theories of Ullmann and Leech, this study uses a descriptive technique to clarify the forms and functions of metaphors utilised in Billie Eilish's song.

The researchers adhere to certain procedures in data analysis. Initially, the researcher identified the metaphors present in four of Billie Eilish's songs. Secondly, in accordance with Ullmann's and Leech's theories, the researcher categorizes the metaphors identified in Billie Eilish's four lyrics according to their kinds and purposes. The researchers conducted a semantic analysis of the data to identify the sorts of metaphors and their literal interpretations in Billie Eilish's songs. The researchers used a pragmatic methodology to ascertain the meaning derived from the metaphor's context and function. The last phase of data analysis involves the researchers' findings derived from the obtained data.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The analytical findings will be presented using both formal and informal methodologies as outlined by Sudaryanto (2015). This study will provide the facts in an informal manner. Informal approaches are used to descriptively portray the facts, specifically elucidating the metaphors utilized and their roles in three chosen songs by Billie Eilish. Surdayanto (2015) asserts that the informal way of data presentation involves conveying information orally via words. The formal presentation of data involves displaying the outcomes of data analysis using graphs, formulae, images, or tables. This study will provide the data results using tables.

Twenty data points have been studied herein. The data is randomly numbered from Billie Eilish's tracks. The symbols used are S (Stanza) and L (Line).

Table 1. The types and functions of metaphors that found in the songs

Stanza and Line	Song Tittle	Metaphorical Expressions	Types of Metaphors	Functions of Metaphors
S1 L1	Wildflower	Things fall apart	Anthropomorphic Metaphor	Information function
S1 L2		And time breaks your heart	Anthropomorphic Metaphor	Information function
S1 L5		You showed her the world	Concrete to Abstract Metaphor	Information function
S2 L6		I should put it all behind me, shouldn't I?	Concrete to Abstract Metaphor	Directive function
S3 L1		But I see her in the back of my mind all the time	Concrete to Abstract Metaphor	Information function
S3 L2		Like a fever, like I'm burning alive, like a sign	Anthropomorphic Metaphor	Information function
S3 L3		Did I cross the line?	Concrete to Abstract Metaphor	Directive function
S4 L1		Well, good things don't last (Good things don't last)	Anthropomorphic Metaphor	Information function
S4 L2		And life moves so fast (Life moves so fast)	Anthropomorphic Metaphor	Information function
S4 L6		Happy and free in leather (Happy)	Concrete to Abstract Metaphor	Information function
S1 L1	What I was made for	I used to float, now I just fall down	Concrete to Abstract Metaphor	Information function
S2 L1		Takin' a drive, I was an ideal	Concrete to Abstract Metaphor	Information function
S2 L2		Looked so alive, turns out I'm not real	Concrete to Abstract Metaphor	Information function
S5 L1		When did it end? All the enjoyment	Concrete to Abstract Metaphor	Directive function
S7 L2		Somethin' I'm not, but somethin' I can be	Concrete to Abstract Metaphor	Information function
S1 L1		I try to live in black and white, but I'm so blue	Concrete to Abstract Metaphor	Expressive function

S2 L2		Birds of a feather, now I'm ashamed	Animal Metaphor	Information function
S2 L6		In the back of my mind, I'm still overseas	Concrete to Abstract Metaphor	Information function
S2 L7		A bird in a cage, thought you were made for me	Animal Metaphor	Information function
S5 L1	Blue	You were born bluer than a butterfly	Animal Metaphor	Information function
S5 L2		Beautiful and so deprived of oxygen	Concrete to Abstract Metaphor	Information function
S5 L3		Colder than your father's eyes	Synesthethic Metaphor	Information function
S7 L2		Victim of your father's plans to rule the world	Concrete to Abstract Metaphor	Information function
S7 L4		Paranoid and petrified of what you've heard	Concrete to Abstract Metaphor	Information function

The analysis identifies up to twenty four metaphorical phrases in three of Billie Eilish's songs: "Wildflower," "What I Was Made For," and "Blue." The researchers identified results contingent upon the formulation of the initial research question, revealing four categories of metaphors in four of Billie Eilish's songs: three instances of animal metaphors, five instances of anthropomorphic metaphors, one instance of synesthetic metaphors, and sixteen instances of concrete to abstract metaphors. The metaphor used in song lyrics is a technique that assists the composer in conveying the implicit message and also contributes an aesthetic aspect to the composition. In three of her songs, Eilish transforms abstract concepts into tangible elements, facilitating her communication of the song's meaning and enhancing listeners' comprehension of its purpose.

This section presents and analyzes the data on the sorts of metaphors in three songs by Billie Eilish.

Datum 1
Anthropormophic Metaphor
Metaphors that include human elements such as bodily parts, human personalities, or human behavior are known as anthropomorphic metaphors. An explanation of the metaphors discovered is provided below:

Things fall apart
And time breaks your heart
I wasn't there, but I know
She was your girl
You showed her the world
But fell out of love and you both let go
Source: Billie Eilish – Wildflower lyrics | genius.com

The lyric excerpt in data 1 above has an anthropomorphic metaphor. The phrase "And time breaks your heart" personifies time, attributing it with the capacity to execute actions often associated with people. Ullmann said that anthropomorphic metaphors are those that associate concepts with human attributes, including nature, character, and physical features. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2010) defines time as that which is measured in minutes, hours, days, etc.

Datum 2
Animal Metaphor
Expressions pertaining to an animal's name, traits, noises, or bodily parts are expressed using animal metaphors. An explanation of the metaphors discovered is provided below:

> **You were born bluer than a butterfly**
> Beautiful and so deprived of oxygen
> Colder than your father's eyes
> He never learned to sympathize with anyone
> Source: Billie Eilish – Blue lyrics | genius.com

The aforementioned lines use an animal metaphor. The term is considered an animal metaphor due to the comparison of the word "butterfly" (animal) to "you" (human). According to Ullmann (2004) on the animal metaphor, the speaker employs a butterfly to characterize their look and personality in the aforementioned metaphor. A butterfly is a flying insect characterized by a slender body and four big, often vibrant wings (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2010). Butterflies are recognized for their exquisite wings and graceful flight. The butterfly in the aforementioned metaphor seems to represent the intended disposition of a speaker experiencing grief and dejection, as indicated by the term "bluer." The metaphor "You were born bluer than a butterfly" signifies that the speaker embodies a range of feelings and ideas, such as melancholy, tranquility, serenity, and sagacity.

Datum 3
Concrete to Abstract Metaphor
Speakers may utilise a concrete to abstract metaphor to convert abstract ideas into concrete representations or the other way around.The following elucidates the metaphors identified:

> **But I see her in the back of my mind all the time**
> Like a fever, like I'm burning alive, like a sign
> Did I cross the line?
> Source: Billie Eilish – Wildflower lyrics | genius.com

The kind of concrete to abstract metaphor is included in the metaphor in data 3 above. In the back of my mind, I perceive her as an abstract idea that is shown as solid. She is really within the mind since the composer gives the impression that she exists in the metaphor above. The component of a person that permits consciousness, thought, and emotion is referred to as the mind (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2010).
It is difficult to ascertain individuals' thoughts and emotions, since we can only see their external expressions or bodily looks. Songwriters evoke the listener's imagination, creating the illusion that an internal voice is tangible.
The term "see" in the aforementioned metaphor denotes the speaker's imagination and is associated with the concept of the mind. The metaphor signifies that the speaker appreciates the creativity and intellect conveyed in the song lyrics.

Datum 4
Synesthetic Metaphor
A synesthetic metaphor is a statement that changes the meaning of a word by transferring its function from one sense to another. The synesthetic metaphor from Billie Eilish's song is seen here:

> *You were born bluer than a butterfly*
> *Beautiful and so deprived of oxygen*
> **Colder than your father's eyes**
> *He never learned to sympathize with anyone*
> Source: Billie Eilish – Blue lyrics | genius.com

The aforementioned metaphor exemplifies a synesthetic metaphor, since it involves a transference across distinct sensory modalities (Ullmann, 2004). This occurs when the speaker use the term cooler. As to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2010), the term 'cold' denotes a temperature that is below the typical level, specifically lower than that of the human body. The term cold is often linked to anything that may be physically touched or sensed. The term 'cold' in the aforementioned metaphor is conveyed as if it were a tangible sensation perceivable via sight.

The term "cold" in the aforementioned metaphor exemplifies the speaker's feeling. The metaphor signifies that the speaker perceives herself as devoid of feeling and without amiability towards others in her vicinity.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The study indicates that the three tracks of Billie Eilish use metaphors. This study analyzes 24 metaphors. The study examines the varieties of metaphors and their purposes in chosen songs by Billie Eilish. The researchers identified four categories of metaphors in three of Billie Eilish's songs: "Wildflower," "What I Was Made For," and "Blue." These categories include animal metaphors (3 instances), anthropomorphic metaphors (5 instances), concrete to abstract metaphors (15 instances), and synesthetic metaphors (1 instance). The use of various metaphors might assist songwriters in articulating their emotions or experiences. For listeners, these metaphors facilitate comprehension of the speaker's intended meaning and emotions, as articulated by Crowther (1995), who defines metaphor as the creative use of words or phrases to elucidate concepts for enhanced understanding.

Metaphors in song lyrics serve to communicate the concepts and emotions of the composers to the audience, therefore fulfilling a specific purpose for the songwriters. Three metaphorical functions were found by researchers in three of Billie Eilish's songs: an expressive function with just one occurrence, a directive function with three instances, and an informative function with twenty instances. According to research, Billie Eilish mostly uses the informational function in her songs to explore how women might be empowered to face social realities, especially those related to insecurity and feminine fortitude.

The researchers recommend that subsequent investigators explore metaphors using more data from literature or quotes. Currently, individuals are more inclined to express their emotions via quotations rather than through music.

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