

## METAPHORICAL CONCEPTS IN TAYLOR SWIFT'S ALBUM FOLKLORE AND ALBUM EVERMORE

Yohanes Erick Satrio Laksono<sup>1)</sup>, Dwi Aji Prajoko<sup>2)</sup>

<sup>1)</sup>English Study Program, Faculty of Communication Sciences Widya Mandala  
Surabaya Catholic University, Madiun Campus

email: [yohanezerswift@gmail.com](mailto:yohanezerswift@gmail.com)

<sup>2)</sup>English Study Program, Faculty of Communication Sciences Widya Mandala  
Surabaya Catholic University, Madiun Campus

email: [dwiaji.prajoko@gmail.com](mailto:dwiaji.prajoko@gmail.com)

### *Abstract*

*The aim of this research was to describe the metaphorical concepts of the metaphorical expressions in Taylor Swift's album Folklore and album Evermore, and to analyze the similarities and differences between the metaphorical concepts in Taylor Swift's album Folklore and those in album Evermore. This research was qualitative. The data of the research were in the form of words, phrases, and clauses containing metaphorical concepts. The data collection technique was document analysis. The result of this research showed the most dominant metaphorical concepts are Happy is Up, Anger is Fire, Sad is Down, and Love is a Story. Some similarities in terms of metaphorical concepts were also found in those two albums, namely Anger is Fire, Time is Money, Love is a Story, and Sad is Down. This research confirms the previous research that metaphor cannot be avoided and systemic, that orientational metaphors can be dominant in some researches, and that metaphors can be used to talk about a given topic in many ways.*

**Keywords:** *Metaphorical concepts, metaphorical expressions, metaphor*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Metaphor is a figurative language that describes something as something else. Metaphor compared two unlike things that actually have something in common. Before the metaphorical concepts theory proposed, people tend to think metaphor as a linguistic expression. According to Cameron (2010) the linguistic metaphor refers to metaphors that are found in language use.

The new or modern view of metaphors see metaphor as a concept. This view proposed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in *Metaphors We Live By* in 1980. According to Lakoff and Johnson (2003) conceptual metaphor can be seen as a tool to represent a universal quality of thinking. Conceptual metaphor is understanding one conceptual domain in terms of another conceptual domain, A is B. A conceptual metaphor consists of two conceptual domains in which one domain is understood in terms of another. These two domains named the source domain and the target domain. Source domain is the conceptual domain where the metaphorical expression draw, while the target domain is the conceptual domain that people try to understand through the use of source domain.

This research not only analyze the types of conceptual metaphor, but also analyzing the similarities and differences the metaphorical concepts in the album Folklore and Evermore. This research used Lakoff and Johnson's conceptual metaphor theory. The focus of this research is the metaphor with new paradigm proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) who introduce metaphorical concept theory.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research used qualitative method since the data were in the form of words—not

numbers. This research used comparative method too because offirstly, comparing among the findings and secondly comparing the findings and theprevious researches. This confirmed that qualitative method was the umbrella term of some other researches such as descriptive, comparative, et cetera.

The data of this research were in the form of words, phrases, and clauses inthe song lyrics which consisted of metaphorical expressions. The data of this research were the words phrases, and clauses containing metaphorical expressionsin Taylor Swift’s albums: Folklore and Evermore. The source of the research data was from Taylor Swift’s albums, namely Folklore (2020) and Evermore (2020).The album Folklore consisted of 16 tracks, and the album Evermore consisted of 15 tracks.

The data collection technique was document analysis. According to Subroto(1992), the data in this technique were acquired in written sources. Nawawi and Hadari (1995) stated that the documentation technique was the way of collecting data in the form of written sources. The documents that were analyzed were song lyrics in Taylor Swift’s two albums, namely Folklore and Evermore which contained metaphorical expressions.

The data analysis techniques of this research include domain analysis, taxonomy analysis, component analysis, and cultural theme analysis. Data analysis is the activity of sorting, marking, and classifying data in such a way as to producefindings to answer research problems. Based on ethnographic analysis, which is a search for parts of a culture and the relationship between the various parts and thewhole (Spradley, 2007).

### **3. RESULT AND DISCUSSIONRESULT**

#### **3.1 Metaphorical Expressions in Swift’s Folklore and Evermore Albums**

The following analysis focuses on the explanation of metaphorical expressions that found in 31 songs of both Swift’s Folklore and Evermore Albums and another example of metaphorical expressions in a metaphorical concept according to Lakoff and Johnson’s metaphorical concept theory (1980). The total number of metaphorical expressions in both albums are 138 under the 126 metaphorical concepts.

##### **3.1.1 Metaphorical Expressions in Swift’s Folklore**

The album Folklore consists of 16 tracks. There are 67 metaphorical expressionsunder 60 metaphorical concepts in Swift’s Folklore.

01. *I think I've seen this film before/And I didn't like the ending.* (F/Exile/L7-8)

The word “films” in line 7 is a metaphorical expression since the word “films” is said in terms of love. Swift describes the idea of love through the metaphorical expressions “film” as an object that can be seen. Swift explains that she did not like the ending of the film she has seen means that she does notlike that her love relationship has come to an end which is usually not in a good way. The metaphorical expression “film” in this line says that love acts as film that can be seen and enjoyed, and it also consists of several events or plots (beginning, climax, ending).

Saying “love” in terms of “films” is based on the metaphorical concept LOVE IS A STORY. Story means an account of imaginary or real people and events are told for entertainment. Under this metaphorical concept, there are some other metaphorical expressions. For example, “You know the greatest films of alltime were never made” (F/The 1/Line 6), “You knew the hero died, so what's the movie for?” (F/Hoax/Line 21), “His love

was like a fantasy,” “She lives upon a fairytale he gave,” “I’m so tired of all the myth she gave me when we were together,” et cetera.

02. *And when I felt like I was an old cardigan/Under someone's bed/You put me on and said I was your favorite.* (F/Cardigan/L13-15)

The word “cardigan” in line 13 is a metaphorical expression since the word “cardigan” describes the person. In this song, Swift describes a person as a clothes. A cardigan is a type of clothing in the form of a knitted sweater fastening down the front, typically with long sleeves. In these lines, Swift compares someone’s feelings to clothes. Being someone’s favorite clothes is the same as being someone’s favorite person. From the context of the lines above, she feels like she was someone’s favorite person in their life same as a cardigan who always being put on, but when that person does not like that person anymore, they will throw or leave that person away just like they throw it under the bed.

Therefore, saying persons in terms of the cardigan is based on the metaphorical concept PERSONS ARE CLOTHES. Under this metaphorical concept, there are some metaphorical expressions. For example, “Did I leave you hanging every single day?” (E/Coney Island/Line 32) “She was my favorite coat during the winter,” and “I’m just your old jeans fade away in your closet.”

03. *If I'm on fire, you'll be made of ashes too.* (F/My Tears Ricochet/L3)

The word “fire” is a metaphorical expression since this word is used to explain the sense of anger in this line. My Tears Ricochet is the fifth song out of 16 contained on the album Folklore. This song tells a story about young love turned sour and all of a sudden this person that you trusted more than anyone is the person that can hurt you the worst. In this line, Swift says that if she is angry, it can cause catastrophe in her relationship which can damage it. When she is mad it feels like she is on fire and her boyfriend will be burned into pieces like ashes. This means that anger can destroy everything.

Saying “fire” to explain the sense of anger is based on the metaphorical concept ANGER IS FIRE. When we are angry, our anger can be compare to fire that can burn and destroy anything near them. Under this metaphorical concept, there are some metaphorical expressions. For example, “Now I breathe flames each time I talk” (F/Mad Woman/Line 21), “My cannons all firin' at your yacht” (F/Mad Woman/Line 22), and “So yeah, it's a fire/It's a goddamn blaze in the dark” (E/Ivy/Line 35-36).

### 3.1.2 Metaphorical Expressions in Swift’s Evermore

Album Evermore consists of 15 tracks. There are 71 metaphorical expressions under 62 metaphorical concepts in Swift’s Evermore.

01. *Honey, when I'm above the trees/I see this for what it is.* (E/Happiness/L1-2)

The phrase “above the trees” is a metaphorical expression since that phrase explains about the feeling when we are on top of something. It shows the positive nuance that means happiness. Song Happiness is about overcoming a breakup by learning to be happy for someone else. Moreover, Swift explains that this song tells a story about realization that maybe the only path to healing is to wish happiness on the one who took it away from you. From the context, we can understand in the beginning, Swift’s relationship with her ex was fine. She said when she felt that joy she saw that relationship as what it is, happy, bright, and full of joy.

Saying “above the trees” in terms that refer to a feeling above something that is happiness is based on the metaphorical concept HAPPY IS UP. The concept of happiness is

conceptualized into something that is upward. Under this metaphorical concept, there are some metaphorical expressions. For example, “But I, I was high in the sky” (F/Seven/Line 7), “I guess it’s the price I paid for seven years in Heaven” (E/Happiness/Line 32), and “To be certain we’ll be tall again”(E/Evermore/Line 27).

02. *But now I’m right down in it, all the years I’ve given/Is just shit we’re dividin’ up.* (E/Happiness/L3-4)

The word “down” is a metaphorical expression since that word is used to show the sense of sadness. This word shows a negative spatial orientation that has meaning sadness, hurt, sorrow, depressed, et cetera. These lines talk about Swift’s feeling when she was on a state that she encountered unhappiness. These lines are in contrast with the previous lines, where at the beginning of a relationship Swift feels so much joy and happiness but now she is in a state of unhappiness and hurt.

By saying “down” in terms of unhappiness state of feelings is based on the metaphorical concept SAD IS DOWN. The concept of sadness is conceptualized into something that goes downward. Under this metaphorical concept, there are some metaphorical expressions. For example, “Love slipped beyond your reaches”(E/Champagne Problems/Line 22), “I’ve been down since July” (E/Evermore/Line 2), and “When I was low, they have always been there”.

03. *’Cause we were like the mall before the Internet.* (E/Coney Island/L25)

The phrase “we were like the mall” is a metaphorical expression since this phrase literally means a certain type of building, namely a mall. But, in this line this phrase is applied to refer to a person. The song Coney Island is a breakup song that Swift wrote in Evermore. In this line, Swift refers to the want of a better time, a simpler time, and a more innocent world. As we know, before the internet era came around 80-90’s, mall was the favorite place for most people at that time. We could find anything, doing fun things in the mall at that time, but when the internet came up it changed. This means that Taylor refers to her relationship, where it was sweet, but that sweetness can sour over time.

Saying “we were like the mall” to indicate human entity is based on the metaphorical concept PERSONS ARE BUILDINGS. According to this metaphorical concept, the characteristic of a person is saying in terms of building. Under this metaphorical concept, there are some metaphorical expressions. For example, “Upin and Ipin look like Petronas Tower, almost can’t tell the difference,” “We are the church of His Holy name,” and “You used to be my home.”

### **3.2 Comparison Between Swift’s Folklore and Evermore Albums in terms of Metaphorical Concepts and Expressions**

#### **3.2.1 The Same Metaphorical Concepts with Different Metaphorical Expressions**

Metaphorical concepts are systemic. Accordingly, under the same metaphorical concepts, there must be more than one metaphorical expressions. This can be seen in this research. There are ten metaphorical concepts in which each has different metaphorical expressions. This is like an iceberg phenomenon meaning that in the future the songwriters may create many more different metaphorical expressions under the same metaphorical concepts.

Those ten metaphorical concepts are LOVE IS COLOR with metaphorical expressions *painted* in *We never painted* by the numbers, baby(F/The 1/L22), *colors* in *You showed me colors/ You know I can't see with anyone else* (F/Illicit Affairs/L26-27) and *fades* in *We wandered 'round had never/Seen a love as pure as it/And then it fades* into the gray of my day old tea(E/Gold Rush/L24-26), PERSONS ARE CLOTHES with metaphorical expressions *cardigan* in *And when I felt like I was an old cardigan/Under someone's bed*(F/Cardigan/L13-15) but also the metaphorical expression *hanging* in *Did I leave you hanging* every single day?(E/Coney Island/L32), PERSONS ARE A PLACE with metaphorical expressions *homeland* in *You're not my homeland* anymore(F/Exile/L9), *town* in *You were my town*(F/Exile/L11), and *Gardens of Babylon* in *Now you hang from my lips/Like the Gardens of Babylon*(E/Cowboy Like Me/L38-39).

ANGER IS FIRE with metaphorical expressions *fire* in *If I'm on fire*, you'll be made of ashes too(F/My Tears Ricochet/L3), *flames* in *Now I breathe flames* each time I talk(F/Mad Woman/L21), *cannons all firin' at your yacht* in *My cannons all firin' at your yacht*(F/Mad Woman/L22), and *blaze* in *So yeah, it's a fire/It's a goddamn blaze* in the dark/And you started it(E/Ivy/L35-36), HAPPY IS UP with metaphorical expressions *high* in *But I, I was high* in the sky(F/Seven/L7), *above the trees* in *Honey, when I'm above the trees/I see this for what it is*(E/Happiness/L1-2), *Heaven* in *I guess it's the price I paid for seven years in Heaven*(E/Happiness/L32), and *tall* in *To be certain we'll be tall* again (E/Evermore/L27).

PERSONS ARE LIQUIDS with metaphorical expressions *sipped away like a bottle of wine* in *August sipped away like a bottle of wine* (F/August/L9), *water* in *I'm like the water* when your ship rolled in that night(E/Willow/L1), and *your current like a priceless wine* in *Lost in your current like a priceless wine*(E/Willow/L5), TIME IS COLOR with metaphorical expressions *blues* and *purple pink* in *Time, wondrous time/Gave me the blues* and then *purple pink* skies (F/Invisible Strings/L38-39) but also metaphorical expression *Gray November* in *Gray November* (E/Evermore/L1).

TIME IS MONEY with metaphorical expressions *takin'* in *I'm takin'* my time(F/Mad Woman/L28), *taking time* in *Always taking* up too much space or *time*(E/Tolerate It/L23), and *moments that we stole, borrowed time* in *I'd live and die for moments that we stole/On begged and borrowed time*(E/Ivy/L30-31), LOVE IS A STORY with metaphorical expressions *films* in *You know the greatest films* of all time were never made (F/The 1/L6) and in *I think I've seen this film* before/And I didn't like the ending (F/Exile/L7-8). And also metaphorical expressions *movie* in *You knew the hero died, so what's the movie* for? (F/Hoax/Line 21), and SAD IS DOWN with metaphorical expressions *down* in *But now I'm right down* in it, all the years I've given/Is just shit we're dividin' up (E/Happiness/L3-4) and in *I've been down* since July (E/Evermore/Line 2), but also metaphorical expression *slipped* in *Love slipped* beyond your reaches (E/Champagne Problems/Line 22).

### 3.2.2 The Same Metaphorical Concepts with Same Metaphorical Expressions

The metaphorical concept found in album Folklore and Evermore also has some similarities in terms of its metaphorical expressions. There are four metaphorical concepts with same metaphorical expressions. Those four metaphorical concepts are ANGER IS FIRE with metaphorical expression *fire* in *If I'm on fire*, you'll be made of ashes too(F/My Tears Ricochet/L3) and in *So yeah, it's a fire/It's a goddamn blaze* in the dark/And you started it (E/Ivy/L35-36), TIME IS MONEY with metaphorical expression *taking* in *I'm takin'* my time (F/Mad Woman/L28) and in *Always taking* up too much space or time (E/Tolerate It/L23).

LOVE IS A STORY with metaphorical expression *films* in *You know the greatest films* of all time were never made (F/The 1/L6) and in *I think I've seen this film* before/And I

didn't like the ending (F/Exile/L7-8)., and SAD IS DOWN with metaphorical expressions *down* in But now I'm right down in it, all the years I've given/Is just shit we're dividin' up (E/Happiness/L3-4) and in I've been down since July (E/Evermore/Line 2).

### 3.3 Comparison Among Other Researches

Metaphors are found anywhere including in song lyrics. Wulandari (2018) finds 31 metaphorical concepts in a Coldplay's album and Istiqomah (2021) gets 9 metaphorical concepts in 30 Kahitna's song lyrics. Similarly, Chuyi (2020) who concentrates on one topic, namely love, finds three metaphorical concepts, namely LOVE IS A JOURNEY, LOVE IS A GAME, and LOVE IS HEART, which generate 18 metaphorical expressions in 19 songs.

This research finds that the metaphorical concept HAPPY IS UP (4 metaphorical expressions), ANGER IS FIRE (4 metaphorical expressions), and SAD IS DOWN (3 metaphorical expressions), and LOVE IS A STORY (3 metaphorical expressions) are dominant. The dominance is similar to Wulandari's (2018) whose findings are the metaphorical concept HAPPY IS UP (3 metaphorical expressions) and SAD IS DOWN (3 metaphorical expressions). This research confirms that orientational metaphors can be dominant too in some research.

The topic of love said metaphorically in this research is also similar to Chuyi's (2020). In my research, the topic of love takes 13 metaphorical concepts consisting of 18 metaphorical expressions. Chuyi (2020) focusing on the topic of love finds 3 metaphorical expressions implementing in 18 metaphorical expressions in 19 songs. Three metaphorical concepts whose topic is love, namely LOVE IS A JOURNEY, LOVE IS CONTAINER, and LOVE IS AN OBJECT, are similar to Istiqomah's (2021). This confirms that metaphors can be used to talk about a given topic in many ways. Some are similar, some others are different.

## 4. CONCLUSION

The result of the analysis shows that the conceptual metaphor is widely used in Taylor Swift's song lyrics especially collected in her two albums, namely Folklore and Evermore. Many of them are different in both metaphorical expressions and metaphorical concepts but some of them are similar in terms of metaphorical expressions and metaphorical concepts, some others are similar in terms of metaphorical concepts.

The dominant conceptual metaphor found in this research are HAPPY IS UP, ANGER IS FIRE, SAD IS DOWN, and LOVE IS A STORY. The dominance is similar to Wulandari's (2018) whose findings are the metaphorical concept HAPPY IS UP and SAD IS DOWN. Other similarities with the other research are in terms of love. In this research, the topic of love consists of 13 metaphorical concepts with 18 metaphorical expressions, which similar to Chuyi's (2020) whose focusing in three majors of love namely LOVE IS A JOURNEY, LOVE IS A GAME, and LOVE IS HEART. Other similarities also found in Istiqomah's (2021) which consists of conceptual metaphor LOVE IS A JOURNEY, LOVE IS CONTAINER, and LOVE IS AN OBJECT. This evidence proves that metaphors can be used to talk about one topic in many ways.

This research uses conceptual metaphor as a tool to reveal the usage of metaphor in language, especially on Taylor Swift's two song lyrics to know what lyrics contain metaphorical expressions and belong to what metaphorical concept. For further research, it is suggested to use another data to get deeper and broader analysis through the study of conceptual metaphor. Therefore, this suggestion may give another opportunity to analyze broader research using conceptual metaphor as a theory.

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