

---

# A Metaphorical Expressions on Justin Timberlake's Songs

Miftakhul Nur Rochma  
Virny Melisa Irwandi

Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo  
Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo

The purpose of this article is to analyze the types of metaphors and analyze the meaning in the lyrics of the song "Mirrors" and "Cry Me a River" by Justin Timberlake. The method uses qualitative because the data used contains song lyrics. Analysis of documents used to find data consists of phrases and sentences containing metaphorical expressions. The results of the discussion data showed that there are. There are 3 metaphors used in the two songs. These three are: Active Metaphor, Dead Metaphor and Mimatic Metaphor. This song uses metaphors and other types of meaning to beautify the song and to convey implicit messages in the song. The lyrics found in song lyrics have an important role in creating certain feelings and conveying messages.

---

## Introduction

The meaning of words, phrases, and sentences is very important to be analyzed because it can make things are more understandable to be communicated to others. According to Yule (2006:112) semantics is the study of the meaning of words, phrases, and sentences. Semantics is one of the richest and most interesting linguistic parts. There are several ways of expressing ideas, which deviate from semantic conventions with figurative language and idioms. Figurative language is used to create special effects or feelings. This is characterized by figures of speech - languages which compare, exaggerate, or interpret something other than what first seems to mean (Perrine, 1977: 61). Metaphor is one of the most common and widely used figurative languages.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 3) states, "Metaphor for most people is that poetic devices, imagination, and rhetoric grow extraordinary language problems than ordinary language." That is, metaphors are used by people to express ideas through language by using language outstanding. For example. "You were my earth", "my earth" refers to life. Furthermore, Goatly (1997: 8-9) said, "Metaphors occur when a discourse unit is used to refer unconventionally to an object, process or concept, or link in an unconventional way. And when these unconventional reference or collusion actions are understood based on similarities, matches or analogies involving conventional references or sequences of actual unconventional units and references or colligates". In Goatly's book (1997:136) there are six types of metaphor, namely:- 1) Active Metaphor, 2) Inactive Metaphor, 3) Asymmetric Metaphor, 4) Subjective Metaphor, 5) Dead Metaphor, and 6) Mimatic Metaphor.

*Active metaphors* have a close relationship between the main subject and the modifier. It depends on the interaction of the vehicle and the specific topic, which is referenced, and their reasons will be variables according to the text. Dissonance or deviation of active metaphors between sentence meanings (literal meanings, etc.) and the intended speaker or inferred meaning. Active metaphors that do not have a second meaning listed in the dictionary, must be interpreted through the concept of a vehicle, or at least this concept must be "switched on": they can be considered as "in series" cables. The active metaphor of reference from the V-term (vehicle term) is entirely unconventional. Besides, active metaphors are not agreements or open denials.

Then, *Inactivemetaphors* are directly referenced through conventional and fixed meanings of v-terms and vehicles available but are not connected in parallel under normal processing, otherwise, the concept of the topic can be predicted. Inactive metaphors often provide information that can

provoke positive or affirmative responses. This can be a different interpretation according to the culture of the metaphor user. This metaphor becomes inactive because they use it repeatedly and enter entries in the dictionary with the second meaning. Inactive Metaphors, metaphorical connections, already exist and can be activated. In this case, the user considers the word as polysemous (Goatly 1997: 34).

*Asymmetrical metaphors* are a type of metaphor in which metaphorical intentions or interpretations do not fit between the speaker and the listener. With symmetrical metaphors the speaker's metaphorical intentions, that speech does not, or not only, statement, must be recognized by the listener, and must be assumed by the speaker that the listener recognize it (Loewenberg in Goatly 1997: 127). This asymmetries are often exploited for the purpose of humor which is intended as a metaphor by the speaker but is not understood by the listener, or vice versa is not intended as a metaphor by the speaker but is interpreted as such by the listener. *Subjective metaphors* is the description of metaphor because the speaker has different idealogical or physical view of the world from the hearer (Goatly 1997:131).

*Dead metaphor* is a metaphor which has lost the original imagery of it's meaning due to extensive, repetitive popular usage because dead metaphors have a conventional meaning that differs from the original (Goatly 1997:132-134). Dead metaphors is a metaphor that through overuse has lost figurative value. When you say that you "feel blue." Everyone knows that you feel sad and are not really blue. These metaphors have been used so often that people understand their meaning instantly and they are no longer thought to stimulate the mind. *Mimatic Metaphors* are unique metaphors that extend to non-verbal expressions, deviating from linguistic texts into visual and plastic arts. Mimic metaphors require us to imagine a world where assertions or descriptions are literally true (Goatly 1997: 134).

## Method

The type of this research is qualitative research, because in this research the researcher is going to describe the meaning and to classify the types of metaphor. Fraenkel and Wallen in Creswell (1994: 162) stated that qualitative research is data obtained from qualitative research that is descriptive that is data are reported in words (especially participant words) or pictures rather than in numbers. In this research, the object is the analysis of metaphorical expressions found in selected lyrics of "Mirrors" and "Cry Me a River" by Justin Timberlake. The data of this research are phrases and sentences containing metaphorical expressions. The systematic techniques in conducting the analysis are as follows: identifying the types of metaphor which are found in selected lyrics of "Mirrors" and "Cry Me a River", the writer uses the theory of metaphor classification from Goatly, describing the elements which are being compared in such metaphors of selected lyrics from "Mirrors" and "Cry Me a River", the writer uses the theory of Goatly, and explaining the functional meaning of the metaphor in selected lyrics of "Mirrors and Cry Me a River".

## Finding and Discussions

Finding of the research discusses the answer of the research. Based on the analysis of theresearcher, it can be concluded that :

No.	SONG LYRIC	TYPE OF METAPHOR
1	'Cause your shine is somethin' like a mirror	Active Metaphor
2	You reflect in this heart of mine	Dead Metaphor
3	The glare makes me hard to find	Dead Metaphor
4	'Cause with your hand in my hand and apocket full of soul	Mimatic Metaphor
5	The vacancy that sat in my heart	Mimatic Metaphor

6	It's like you're my mirror	Active Metaphor
7	My mirror staring back at me	Mimatic Metaphor
8	Yesterday is history	Active Metaphor
9	Tomorrow's a mystery	Active Metaphor
10	You were my sun	Active Metaphor
11	You were my earth	Active Metaphor
12	Cry me a river	Mimatic Metaphor

**Table 1.** Type of Metaphor in “Mirrors” and “Cry Me a River” songs.

1. Total numbers of metaphors used in “Mirrors” and “Cry Me a River” song lyrics” is 12 metaphors. The meaning of each metaphor have been described in the previous part.
2. There are twelve ( 12 ) types of metaphors which were applied, they are :

TYPE OF METAPHOR	NUMBER
Active Metaphor	6
Inactive Metaphor	-
Asymmetrical metaphor	-
Subjective metaphor	-
Dead Metaphor	2
Mimatic Metaphor	4
TOTAL	12

**Table 2.** Twelve ( 12 ) types of metaphors which were applied

After analyzing the metaphor in “Mirrors” and “Cry Me a River” the researcher can conclude that the song is a type of literary work that is widely applied metaphors in conveying, representing ideas, and communicating to give certain effects to the tastes of songs to attract readers to read and listen to songs. Despite that metaphor it is more difficult to interpret its meaning, but many writers use their writing or any publication to make it more interesting and enjoyable. Based on the results of the data, the total number of metaphor that the researcher found in the script of “Mirrors” and “Cry Me a River” by Justin Timberlake are twelve metaphors, as follow :

1. Song lyric of *Mirror* consists of 9 metaphors.
2. Song lyric of *CryMea River* consists of 3 metaphors.

## Conclusions

Based on the discussion data it can be denied that the metaphorical expression was found in the lyrics of the song which has the titles "Mirrors" and "Cry Me a River" by Justin Timberlake. There is a terminology in the lyrics that has a semantic connection. Expressions are categorized into metaphorical types as suggested by Goatly's book (1997: 136) there are six types of metaphors, namely:- 1) Active Metaphor, 2) Inactive Metaphor, 3) Asymmetric Metaphor, 4) Subjective Metaphor, 5) Dead Metaphor Metaphor, and 6) Mimatic Metaphor. In this case, 3 of the 6 metaphors are found in the lyrics of "Mirrors" and "Cry Me a River". The three are Active Metaphor, Dead Metaphor, and Mimatic Metaphor. Metaphorical expressions are found in the lyrics to make a good song in the listener and to convey the message.

## References

1. Creswell, J. W. 1994. Research Design. Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches. London: SAGE Publication. Inc.
2. Perrine, Lawrence. 1977. Sound and Sense “An Introduction to Poetry”. New York: Hartcout

Brace Jovanovich Inc.

3. Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. 1980. *Metaphor we live by*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press
4. Goatly, Andrew, 1997, *The language of Metaphor*, London: J&L Composition Lyrics licensed by MusixMatch. 2002. Justin Timberlake Lyrics  
<https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/justintimberlake/crymeariver.html>