



Metaphors and Their Meaning in “Kid Krow” Album by Conan Gray

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Abstract

This study seeks to understand the meaning of metaphors in Conan Gray's Kid Krow album. The qualitative method was used in this study. This study aims to reveal how metaphors convey the author's feelings and function as a means of strong emotional storytelling. The analysis results show that metaphors are aesthetic tools to explore universal themes such as love, loss, and adolescent identity. This study found nine metaphors and two types of meaning based on the theory of meaning proposed by Leech (1981): connotative meaning and affective meaning. The connotative meaning in these metaphors gives an additional dimension to the lyrics, while the affective meaning can evoke strong emotions in listeners. This research contributes to a richer understanding of how metaphors in music can be used as a medium to express complex human experiences.

Keywords: *metaphor, song lyrics, meaning*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengacu pada pemahaman makna metafora yang terkandung dalam album Kid Krow karya Conan Gray. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah menggunakan metode kualitatif. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap bagaimana metafora tersebut digunakan untuk menyampaikan perasaan penulis serta berfungsi sebagai sarana penceritaan emosional yang kuat. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa metafora tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai alat estetika, tetapi juga sebagai sarana untuk mengeksplorasi tema-tema universal seperti cinta, kehilangan, dan identitas remaja. Dalam penelitian ini ditemukan 9 metafora dan dua jenis makna berdasarkan teori makna yang dikemukakan oleh Leech (1981) yaitu makna konotatif dan makna afektif. Makna konotatif yang terkandung dalam metafora ini memberikan dimensi tambahan pada lirik, sedangkan makna afektif dapat membangkitkan emosi yang kuat pada pendengar. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi pada pemahaman yang lebih kaya tentang bagaimana metafora dalam musik dapat digunakan sebagai media untuk mengekspresikan pengalaman manusia yang kompleks.

Kata kunci: *metafora, lirik lagu, makna*

Introduction

One of the most important instruments used by human beings for communication is language. Language is a very creative tool, full of imagination and interpretation. It works literally as a communication tool, wherein the words are used

directly to give a specific meaning. It also works in an oral capacity as a communication tool, in which words are used explicitly for communicating complex ideas and establishing social relations. It is how we convey our emotions, thoughts, and culture and transmit information. Many studies have proved that human language is enormously complex, which helps us to express communication in multiple and diverse ways. Different elements in different languages improve communication, such as figurative language, which often adds variety to the message.

Figurative language is one aspect of language learning that adds character to a language. This figurative language, or symbolic speech, conveys words or phrases reflecting deeper, richer, or more aesthetic meanings than the literal. Figurative language is often used in poetry, literary works, and everyday conversation to dramatize something, evoke a feeling, or emphasize a particular idea. Figurative language includes personification, metaphor, simile, hyperbole, and other figures of speech designed to show analogies or associations meant to be taken figuratively rather than literally. (Morner & Rausch, 1991: 83). As a result, its Greek predecessor, "Metaphereien," implies carrying meaning beyond its literal sense; figurative language is sometimes referred to as metaphorical or simply metaphor (Knickerbocker & Reninger (1963). According to Keraf (2004:129), A figure of speech is an application of language that departs from literal facts, whether in the application of terms, the construction of words, or the spelling. All prose, fiction writing, and even song lyrics contain figurative language, although poetry glaringly uses them.

Metaphor is the figurative language used to compare; the comparison is not expressed but is made when the figurative term is substituted for or identified with the literal term Perrine (1997:1994). Metaphors often link between what happens in the real world and one's interpretation, bringing clarity to the story and the resulting lyrics. It is an essential component of artistic communication. Metaphors are frequently used in literature, poetry, language, and everyday writing to craft vivid mental images and enhance language. Metaphor comparisons in music usually relate to themes, popular gossip, or relationships with other songs. Metaphors are people's most favored tool for conveying poetic imagination and producing extraordinary rather than ordinary language, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) (p. 72). Metaphorical applications are used by artists or songwriters when they compare or describe a person, action, feeling, place, or thing as something else. Metaphor is the author's attempt to concisely convey the relationship between meaning and another while serving a deeper purpose. According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980), metaphors can produce perception and understanding and make our thoughts vibrant and engaging (p. 178). According to Mooij (1976), metaphors can be identified as figurative language since they are used in a variety of contexts, including newspapers, articles, everyday conversations, philosophical writings, novels, and poetry (p. 1)

Just like in poetry, metaphor can be found in song lyrics. Song lyrics are often filled with metaphors to captivate listeners and enhance their listening experience. Utilizing metaphors in song lyrics allows songwriters to express their feelings and stories more suggestively and profoundly. Conan Gray, a singer-songwriter known for his powerful and emotion-filled lyrics, is one prominent example of the use of metaphors in song lyrics. Conan Gray's album *Kid Krow* shows how metaphors can be used effectively in song lyrics to create powerful and moving stories. Gray uses

various metaphors to express feelings of loneliness, identity search, and the experience of growing up in this album. For example, his songs "Heather" and "Maniac" show how he uses metaphors to describe complex relationships and deep emotions. Kid Krow captures listeners' attention and invites them to reflect on their own life experiences through the lens of rich and varied metaphors through an honest and reflective writing style.

This study was conducted by reading and reviewing several references related to metaphor. The first article comes from Ndraha (2018). This article discusses metaphors used in Westlife song lyrics, often used to convey feelings and messages to listeners. The descriptive analysis method found in Goatly's book is used in this qualitative research to identify the types of metaphors found in Westlife song lyrics. The second text comes from the article of Rahmadhanti et al. (2022). This study analyzes the use of metaphors found in the lyrics of Alan Walker's song "Different World." The author uses qualitative descriptive methods to criticize environmental and social issues such as pollution, waste, garbage, and global warming. The song uses metaphors to show the adverse consequences that may occur if improvements are not made immediately, such as the loss of a comfortable place to live and the extinction of animals and plants. The third article is taken from Maoula et al. (2022). This research discusses the meaning of life that humans often overlook due to ambition, which makes them miss the most beautiful part of their lives. The metaphors found in Adam Levine's song "Lost Stars" lyrics were researched qualitatively. According to the research results, the song lyrics use many metaphors and parables. One of the metaphors is about an arrow asking for a return, which describes someone who has been together for years but then gives up. The fourth article is from "Vikri and Nicholas (2022). The study "Metaphor Analysis in Coldplay Song Lyrics" discusses the metaphors in the band's song lyrics. The authors used the literature research method in this study. They collected data about metaphors, then analyzed them, and found the most dominant types of metaphors. This study used Parera's theory, which divides metaphors into four categories: anthropomorphic, animal, synesthetic, and concrete-abstract. The fifth article is taken from Ramadhika (2022). This study focuses on the types and meanings of metaphors used in Adele's song lyrics. A qualitative descriptive method based on the ideas developed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson was used. The results show that, compared to ontological metaphors, structural metaphors dominate Adele's lyrics. Usually, these metaphors use known structural metaphors to describe feelings or ideas. Titled.

Based on the literature above, the five references evaluated have apparent differences and similarities. The similarities lie in the topic discussed, namely the analysis of metaphors in song lyrics, and the approach used, namely a qualitative descriptive approach used to understand and explain the use of metaphors. In contrast, there are differences in the data sources; the current study uses songs from Conan Gray, while the previous research uses songs from various artists. In addition, the difference lies in the data source. This data refers to Conan Gray's song lyrics.

American singer-songwriter Conan Gray became well-known through YouTube. His music resonates with young people because it tackles relatable themes like teenage struggles, adolescent identity, and heartbreak. On the other hand, his songs are catchy and personal, hence their entertaining and emotional effect. This

makes the author interested in analyzing and compelled to learn more about how the metaphors contained in the lyrics can reflect individual feelings and experiences and how they affect the listener. Therefore, this study will thoroughly discuss the power of metaphor in his music and how this element is the main attraction of his songs. The main focus of this study is to examine in depth how the metaphors in this album represent the messages and feelings of the author. Furthermore, it reveals the meaning conveyed through the lyrics.

Method

This research uses a qualitative descriptive approach methodology. The data for this research is taken from seven Conan Gray songs in the album “Kid Krow”. The seven songs are Heather, Wish You Were Sober, Yours, The Cut That Always Bleeds, Comfort Crowd, Astronomy, and Maniac. The data collection methods used are as follows: first, searching for song lyrics on the internet from several platforms such as YouTube, Spotify, and Google. This process ensured that the author had access to the full text of each evaluated song. Second, read the lyrics of each song carefully to understand the intent and meaning of each word and sentence. Third, listening to the music repeatedly. In addition to reading, the author also listened to the music. This helps the writer understand language, feelings, and situations that cannot always be expressed through writing alone. Then, make notes to classify each song lyric that has a metaphorical meaning. The last step is to analyze the meaning by using the theory of meaning presented by Leech (1981). 2 types of meaning are most often found in this study, namely connotative meaning and affective meaning. The connotative meaning in this study expresses the author's personal experience, feelings, and loss. While affective meaning describes how the lyrics create a strong connection between the music and the listener's emotions.

Result and Discussion

This part shows the metaphor found in the Kid Krow album by Conan Gray. The author found 9 metaphors and 2 types of meaning, namely connotative meaning and affective meaning. The results of the findings can be seen in the following table;

Table 1. List of metaphors found in Kid Krow Album by Conan Gray

No	Song Titles	Lyrics	Occurrence
1.	Heather	<i>She is such an angel.</i>	3
2.		<i>What a sight for sore eyes brighter than the blue sky</i>	
3.		<i>I Wish I were Heather</i>	

4.	Wish You Were Sober	<i>But I'm over this roller-coaster.</i>	1
5.	Yours	<i>The only thing that's harder than sleepin' alone is sleepin' with your ghost</i>	1
6.	The Cut That Always Bleed	<i>And beat my heart to black and blue.</i>	1
7.	Comfort Crowd	<i>By blood, we're bound.</i>	1
8.	Astronomy	<i>It's Astronomy, we're two worlds apart</i>	1
9	Maniac	<i>Some say that I'm your maniac."</i>	1
Total			9

Table 1 presents nine song titles, lyrics, and occurrences to provide an in-depth overview of the distribution and presence of important elements in each lyric. By including the occurrence of element occurrences, the table facilitates further analysis of patterns that may appear in the lyrics and how these elements contribute to the overall meaning of each song.

Table 2. Types Of Meaning

No	Types of Meaning that found In Kid Krow's album	Occurrence
1.	Connotative meaning	3
2.	Affective meaning	6
Total		9

The results of this analysis were found in 9 data of metaphors, and two types of meaning from seven types of meaning were found based on the theory of meaning presented by Leech (1981). There are three connotative meanings and six affective meanings. The connotative meanings in this research are words or phrases that have an additional meaning resulting from cultural relations, personal experience, or language use in a particular situation. Meanwhile, the affective meanings are the emotional impact or reaction that a word or phrase has on the listener. It is how a song's lyrics or words affect the listener's feelings or emotions.

According to Leech (1981), connotative meaning covers a word or expression's additional meanings beyond its literal, conceptual content. These meanings come from associations, emotions, and subjective interpretations that people attach to the word based on their personal, cultural, and societal experiences. While conceptual meaning focuses on a word's core, essential meaning, connotative meaning covers the broader, often changing interpretations that a word can have. He also stated that affective meaning, which transmits the emotional content of language, can be explicit, which means strong feelings are expressed directly or implicitly through words based on

factors like tone, politeness, and style. This meaning often relies on other semantic categories, such as conceptual, connotative, and stylistic, to mediate emotions. For instance, the tone of voice might make a courteous request appear pleasant or scornful. A statement's emotive meaning mostly depends on factors like tone and intonation. Furthermore, interjections like "Aha!" and "Yippee!" are used to convey feelings without the need for additional meaning instantly, Leech (1981).

Data 1

She's such an angel
(Heather. L. 18)

The clause “She's such an angel” uses the metaphor figure of speech, where two things are openly compared without using prepositions like “like” or “as.” This clause adds a lot more imagination and vividness to the comparison. Angels are commonly known as beautiful, caring, kind, loving, and innocent figures or things that refer to goodness. At the same time, the metaphor implies that “she” is a kind and affectionate person. The use of this metaphor has an effective meaning. The writer describes someone perfect, like an angel. The word “angel” in the lyrics of this song refers to the writer's feeling that he found someone perfect who amazed him to fall in love.

Data 2

What a sight for sore eyes
Brighter than the blue sky.
(Heather. L. 6)

“What a sight for sore eyes, brighter than the blue sky” is a sentence containing metaphors and affective meaning because it expresses strong positive emotions. The metaphor “a sight for sore eyes” describes something very pleasant to look at, as if it were a cure for tired or sore eyes, and the metaphor “brighter than the blue sky” compares beauty or happiness. The metaphor in this sentence allows the writer to convey ideas and emotions imaginatively and effectively. It is a powerful tool for language that will enable us to express the object or concept being described. The lyrics above belong to personal experience to convey the impact of the scene being defined according to the idea of affective meaning in this sentence, reflecting the writer’s attitude and emotional response through language and to the scene in a subjective and individualized way.

Data 3

I wish I were Heather.
(Heather. L. 13)

The desire to be someone else, in this case, “Heather,” which is not meant literally, is expressed in the sentence “I wish I were Heather.” She compares herself to “Heather,” someone considered more lovable or desirable, even though it is physically and

identity-wise impossible to be someone else. This is a way of expressing envy or lack of confidence in the attention Heather receives. This sentence is categorized as an affective sentence because its purpose is to convey strong emotions to the reader or listener; this sentence contains deep feelings related to the desire to be accepted, loved, or recognized like Heather, as revealed in the song's lyrics.

Data 4

But I'm over this roller-coaster.
(Wish You Were Sober L. 23)

The sentence “But I'm over this roller coaster” is a metaphor. In this sentence, the words have an affective meaning because they convey the writer’s feelings. The word “roller coaster” is used as a metaphor to express emotions and situations that are up, down, and unstable. In this context, “rollercoaster” does not refer to an actual physical ride but rather describes the ups and downs of emotions or situations that a person experiences. The comparison lies in using “rollercoaster” to represent a turbulent emotional ride. This sentence also exemplifies a new creation. It refers to the concept of the goal depicted and can be interpreted as “over,” which is a unique and challenging aspect of life. On the other hand, a roller coaster symbolizes an easily understood symbol of experience characterized by fluctuations, sudden changes, and lack of control. Because of this symbolic nature, life changes are not physical amusement park rides. Instead, it invites the reader to think in parallels: exhilarating highs are combined with lows, sudden changes reflect unexpected challenges, and the fast pace reflects various aspects of the world.

Data 5

The only thing that's harder than sleepin' alone
Is sleepin' with your ghost
(Yours L. 20)

A metaphor in the sentence “The only thing that’s harder than sleeping alone is sleeping with your ghost” describes the emotional difficulties associated with the presence or memory of someone who is no longer around. The expression of emotions such as longing, sadness, or unresolved emotions related to the presence of a “ghost” within a person becomes deeper and stronger. The meaning closest to Leech's theory is affective meaning, based on the sentence, “The only thing harder than sleeping alone is sleeping with your ghost.” This is because the sentence conveys a strong and emotional feeling, which, through language, reflects the speaker's attitude and emotions. The image of being haunted by the memory or presence of someone who has died can evoke deep feelings, such as loneliness, longing, and sadness. The word “ghost” symbolically describes the lingering emotional presence of someone who has left, which adds to the sorrow and loss. The affective response of sadness harmonizes with the speaker's emotional tone, highlighting the deep emotional impact of the statement. This affective meaning encourages the listener to feel sad and empathize, emphasizing the strong emotional resonance of the sentence.

Data 6

And beat my heart to black and blue.
(The Cut That Always Bleed L. 25)

The sentence “And beat my heart, to black and blue” is a metaphor because it describes emotions in terms of something physical (bruises and blue). In this case, a heartbeat that turns black and blue; this metaphor uses vivid images to convey complex emotions more effectively. The sentence “And beat my heart black and blue” can be interpreted as Affective Meaning. This is because the sentence conveys strong emotional and personal feelings, reflecting the speaker's attitudes and emotions through language. It conveys the metaphorical idea of emotional pain or heartache. The author uses the term “beat my heart” as a metaphor to describe emotional pain so severe that it is described as being like a heart that has been beaten until it is bruised. “black and blue” is used figuratively to describe the intensity of emotional suffering.

Data 7

By blood, we're bound
(Comfort Crowd L. 36)

The sentence “By blood, we're bound can be categorized as a metaphor. This sentence here is effective because Blood symbolizes life and lineage. This suggests that the bond of kinship is solid and inseparable, like the blood connection between family members. Blood can also represent sacrifice. This implies that family members are willing to make sacrifices for each other. Using the “blood” metaphor makes the sentence more poetic and impactful. The phrase “By blood, we're bound” is considered to have a connotative meaning due to the emotional and cultural associations it carries. This connotation goes beyond the literal interpretation of the words and encompasses the deep, emotional connections and loyalties often associated with familial or communal bonds. “blood” in this context evokes a sense of shared heritage, kinship, and unbreakable ties deeply ingrained in cultural and emotional contexts. As a result, the phrase is rich with connotative meaning, reflecting the complex web of emotions and cultural significance associated with the concept of being bound by Blood.

Data 8

It's astronomy; we're two worlds apart.
(Astronomy L. 11)

The sentence “It's astronomy, we're two worlds apart” is a metaphor. In this context, it shows a distance or emotional separation between two people. The comparison of “astronomy” to “two worlds apart” shows the vastness and separation between two people and how difficult it is to bridge emotionally or relationally. This magnitude and distance metaphor refers to astronomical objects such as planets and stars, representing emotional distance or relationships between people. This suggests that the emotional or relational gap is as great and impassable as the distance between celestial bodies. This metaphor adds depth and clarity to the expression of emotional distance, creating a strong sense of separation and unbridgeable space. This sentence can be categorized

as having a connotative meaning. The meaning of this word goes beyond the definition of words and has an emotional or cultural connection. In this sentence, the author wants to express emotional distance and separation by using the metaphor of astronomical distance to represent the emotional gap or connection between two persons.

Data 9

Some say that I'm your maniac.
(Maniac L. 21)

The sentence "Some say I'm your maniac" is a metaphorical expression of figurative language. Presented by explicitly describing a clinical condition, this sentence can illustrate an individual's heightened emotional or behavioral state. In this situation, the term "maniac" is not meant to be used literally but to describe a strong level of enthusiasm, dedication, or obsession. Additionally, a speaker's complete devotion or commitment to something is sometimes a direct statement about his mental state. "Some say I'm your maniac" has a connotative meaning that deepens the emotional connection related to strong actions or feelings. It may resemble obsession or irrational behavior if it indicates deep emotional involvement or presence.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the metaphor and meaning of the album "Kid Crow" by Conan Gray using Leach's theory of meaning, the following conclusions can be drawn: This unrequited love and confusion. By using metaphors, Gray can convey these complex emotions more richly and imaginatively, allowing listeners to understand better the emotional experiences expressed in his lyrics. Based on this research, nine metaphors were found: four of Connotative meaning and seven of the affective meaning. Overall, it shows that metaphors are essential in expressing emotion and meaning in Conan Gray's music. Using connotative and affective meanings in metaphors helps listeners understand the singer's feelings and experiences and connect with the music emotionally. This research contributes to understanding the use of metaphor and their meaning in popular music. It paves the way for further research on the role of language in expressing emotion in music.

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