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Analyzing Conceptual Metaphors Through Michael Bublés 'Call Me Irresponsible' Album

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: 19 August 2024	This study explores how metaphors in song lyrics can complicate understanding. This research categorizes and analyzes metaphor types found in Michael Bublés's album, specifically focusing on 13 songs such as "The Best Is Yet to Come," "Everything," and "That's Life." Lyrics were sourced from Genius.com, and a descriptive qualitative approach guided by Lakoff and Johnson's conceptual metaphor theory was employed. Three main types of conceptual metaphors, structural, orientational, and ontological, were identified in the analysis. Structural metaphors (56 instances), orientational metaphors (42 instances), and ontological metaphors (39 instances) were found to compare different concepts, often relating to themes of love and relationships. These metaphors contribute connotative, affective, and social meanings to the lyrics, influencing interpretations. The study highlights the importance of metaphor analysis in understanding how metaphors enrich song lyrics but also pose challenges in interpretation. By systematically categorizing and scrutinizing metaphors, this research enhances our comprehension of the nuanced meanings embedded in Bublés's music, shedding light on the intricate interplay between language, metaphor, and thematic content in popular music.
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1. Introduction

Conceptual metaphor theory, originating from (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003), views metaphor as more than just linguistic decoration but as a fundamental tool for shaping and understanding reality. Over the years, this theory has evolved significantly through research across cognitive science, linguistics, psychology, and other disciplines (Gábor,

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2019; He, 2004; Lawler et al., 1981; MacKay et al., 1980; Xia, 2002). Fauconnier and Turner (2002) expand on this by highlighting how conceptual blending allows for the creation of new meanings by integrating different mental spaces. Similarly, (Gibbs, 1994) underscores that metaphorical understanding involves both linguistic and cognitive processes influenced by bodily experiences.

Semino & Demjen (2016) illustrate the practical significance of metaphors in medical communication, bridging technical language with personal experiences. Dancygier & Sweetser (2014) extend this to narratives and visual media, emphasizing metaphors' pervasive role in framing stories and perceptions. Kovecses (2011) adds a cultural dimension, showing how shared cultural experiences shape metaphors and their usage. Lakoff and Johnson's ongoing contributions, including the concept of primary metaphors rooted in bodily experiences, have further enriched the theory. This ongoing evolution has expanded the theory's scope to encompass abstract reasoning, emotions, and even moral and political thinking.

Metaphors are used in daily life, science and technology, poetry, and philosophy (He, 2004), including in song lyrics. In the context of song lyrics, metaphors can improve learners' vocabulary and express feelings more effectively (Rohmiyati et al., 2023), convey universal truth through their complexity, paradoxical nature, and variability in language expressions (Biskub, 2023), enhance emotional intensity, imagination, and communication in various ways (Ariska et al., 2021; Swarniti, 2022; Tracy et al., 2021), serve to concrete human experience, create space imagination, soften language, achieve aesthetic effects, attract attention, beautify tone, and be pleasing to be heard (Cinto et al., 2018), and improves research and reader understanding of the metaphor's intended meaning (Emily et al., 2022).

Therefore, understanding conceptual metaphors in Michael Bublé's album "Call Me Irresponsible" enhances our appreciation of how metaphors enrich artistic expression. This study aims to categorize and analyze the various metaphorical expressions within Bublé's lyrics, exploring their roles in conveying themes of love and relationships. By employing a descriptive qualitative approach, the research seeks to uncover how these metaphors shape listeners' interpretations and emotional responses. The study of conceptual metaphors continues to evolve, demonstrating its profound influence on cognition, communication, and artistic expression. By delving into specific examples like Bublé's music, researchers deepen our understanding of how metaphors function in both everyday language and cultural artifacts like music.

2. Literature Review

Many similar studies have contributed to the development of this research. Some of these studies include by (Wijaya, 2009), (Aisah & Martin, 2010), and (Perwitasari & Hoed, 2007), as well as by Hobbs & Frost (2003) and (Perwitasari & Hoed, 2007). The research by Wijaya (2009) about semantic analysis of metaphors in songs by My Chemical Romance used songs from the band My Chemical Romance to analyze metaphorical expressions. Wijaya utilized theories from Lakoff and Johnson (1980),

Kovecses (2002; 2005), and Lakoff (1987; 1993) to categorize metaphorical expressions in the data. This study provided initial guidance on metaphorical expressions, although it relied on sources like Wikipedia for information, which was insufficient to fully support the theory for this research.

A recent analysis of metaphorical expressions by Aisah and Martin (2010) identified metaphors in songs by Iwan Fals with themes of social criticism. The aim of their research was to identify nine dominant metaphorical expressions found in song lyrics and determine the most dominant source domain in the lyrics.

The study by Perwitasari & Hoed (2007) about metaphors in Enka song lyrics in Besuto Hitto Daizenshu aimed to discover metaphors in Enka music lyrics and explore the history of their usage. The technique used in this study was qualitative, identifying metaphors such as life is a journey, suffering is an uphill road, suffering is rain/wind, suffering is cold, suffering is luggage, happiness is a blooming flower, happiness is the sun, happiness is spring, happiness is a sunny day, disappointment is autumn flowers, love is a flower, hope is tomorrow, dream is a flower, and soul is fire.

Research on conceptual metaphors in Michael Bublé's album "Call Me Irresponsible" contributes uniquely compared to previous studies in several important aspects. Firstly, this research focuses on analyzing conceptual metaphors within a specific context of song lyrics from a popular music album. This differs from previous studies that may have had broader scopes or were limited to specific cultural or linguistic contexts. By selecting an album from a renowned artist like Michael Bublé, this research provides a clearer understanding of how conceptual metaphors are used and understood within the context of modern pop music.

Some research about types of conceptual metaphors in song lyrics revealed that types of conceptual metaphors include structural metaphor, ontological metaphor (Liao, 2020; Rasse et al., 2020; Wahyuda, 2022), and ontological metaphors (Agustin et al., 2018).

3. Method

Research methods encompass various procedures utilized by researchers to gather, investigate, and analyze data. This section provides an in-depth understanding of the research process, encompassing data sources, methods of collection, analysis approaches, and strategies for presenting findings.

The primary data source for this study is the album "Call Me Irresponsible," which includes 13 songs. Released on May 1, 2007, this album marks Michael Bublé's 5th studio and 3rd major label studio release. According to Perry (2024), this album earned Bublé his first Grammy Award in the Best Traditional Pop Vocal Album category, further elevating his cumulative album sales beyond 15 million units.

Data collection employed the observation method coupled with note-taking techniques. Each of the album's 13 songs was meticulously listened to multiple times, with a focused observation on the lyrical content. Official lyrics were sourced from the Genius website and downloaded using the Document app from the iOS App Store.

Metaphorical expressions within the lyrics were identified and documented through note-taking. These expressions were subsequently categorized into structural, orientational, or ontological metaphors based on the framework by Lakoff and Johnson (1980).

Data analysis integrated both qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitatively, the analysis involved a descriptive examination of the metaphorical expressions within the lyrics, focusing on their meanings conveyed through words and sentences. Quantitatively, the study quantified the occurrences of these metaphorical expressions across the album to provide numerical insights into their prevalence.

The findings are presented through an informal qualitative approach, primarily utilizing words and sentences derived directly from the lyrical content of the album “Call Me Irresponsible.” This method of presentation aligns with the non-digital nature of the data and facilitates a detailed exploration of the metaphorical themes identified in the study.

4. Results and Discussion

In the album “Call Me Irresponsible” a conceptual analysis identified 137 metaphorical expressions categorized into 56 structural metaphors, 42 orientational metaphors, and 39 ontological metaphors across 13 songs. The study’s framework facilitated the exploration of these expressions by categorizing them and interpreting their meanings within the album’s context. It utilized the Metaphor Identifier Procedure to decode the connections between source and target domains, addressing questions of “world knowledge” to provide a normative explanation. The album’s thematic focus on love is depicted through metaphors representing love as a gift, flavor, game, object, and fragile item, evident throughout various song titles. Each metaphorical expression, denoting the source domain in italics and the target domain underlined, is presented alongside its corresponding song title to provide contextual clarity.

4.1 Types of Conceptual Metaphor in the Album Call Me Irresponsible

Michael Bubl e’s album “Call Me Irresponsible” employs metaphors that delve into rich emotional narratives, analyzed through Lakoff & Johnson’s theory of conceptual metaphors. According to this theory, metaphors serve as fundamental elements in human cognition and understanding of the world (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). Within the album, structural metaphors articulate complex emotions concretely, ontological metaphors give shape to abstract feelings, and sociological metaphors reflect interpersonal dynamics. Analyzing these metaphors unveils Bubl e’s profound exploration of human experiences, enhancing our appreciation of his lyrical depth.

4.1.1 Structural Metaphor

In the album “Call Me Irresponsible,” a conceptual analysis of its metaphorical structure has been conducted by writers, and a total of 56 data have been identified. The album contains numerous elements that employ metaphorical structures in its lyrics and messages, using figurative language to connect different concepts. These metaphors may

convey specific messages to the listeners, providing insights into how the album *call me irresponsible* deeper meanings and emotional effects.

Tabel 1. Structural Metaphor in the Album Call Me Irresponsible

No	Song title	Amount of data
1	The Best is Yet to Come	10
2	Mrs. And Jones	5
3	I'm Your Man	3
4	Comin' Home Baby	3
5	Lost	5
6	Call Me Irresponsible	3
7	Wonderful Tonight	3
8	Everything	4
9	I've Got the World on a String	3
10	Always on My Mind	3
11	That's Life	5
12	Dream	4
13	It Had Better Be Tonight	6

The abundance of structural metaphors in Michael Bublé's album "Call Me Irresponsible" highlights the complexities of language and communication barriers. Bublé's rich, poetic songwriting style, which explores themes of love, relationships, and life experiences, naturally incorporates metaphors to enhance emotional resonance and relatability. These metaphors create vivid imagery, making his storytelling more engaging and the lyrics more impactful. With 57 structural metaphors, Bublé's creative use of language deepens the artistic and emotional appeal of his music. This analysis underscores the significance of metaphors in musical expression and their role in conveying emotions and messages.

4.1.2 Orientational Metaphor

In the album *Call Me Irresponsible*, a conceptual analysis has been conducted to examine the presence of orientational metaphors. This analysis has successfully revealed 54 examples of such metaphors within the album's content. Orientational metaphors are specific types of metaphors that involve spatial or directional concepts to convey abstract ideas or emotions. In this album, these metaphors are used to convey various meanings and emotions to the listeners. By identifying and analyzing these orientational metaphors, we gain a deeper understanding of how the lyrics and messages in this album are structured. These metaphors can provide unique insights into the artist's creative expression and the intended impact on the listeners.

Table 2. Orientational Metaphor in the Album Call Me Irresponsible

No	Song Title	Amount of Data
1	The Best is Yet to Come	6
2	Mrs. And Jones	1
3	I'm Your Man	3
4	Comin' Home Baby	2
5	Lost	4
6	Call Me Irresponsible	3
7	Wonderful Tonight	3
8	Everything	4
9	I've Got the World on a String	3
10	Always on My Mind	1
11	That's Life	3
12	Dream	3
13	It Had Better Be Tonight	2

The research on Michael Bubl 's album "Call Me Irresponsible" has revealed the presence of 54 orientational metaphors in its lyrics. Orientational metaphors are types of metaphors that involve spatial or directional concepts to convey abstract ideas or emotions. These findings indicate that Bubl  uses these metaphors to convey various meanings and emotions to the listeners.

Through the identification and analysis of these orientational metaphors, we gain a deeper understanding of how the lyrics and messages in this album are structured. These metaphors provide unique insights into the artist's creative expression and the intended impact on the listeners.

The use of orientational metaphors in this album helps to reinforce the emotional and artistic messages that Bubl  aims to convey, showcasing the complexity and depth of his lyrics. This analysis also offers insights into the literary techniques used to create powerful and impactful musical works.

4.1.3 Ontological Metaphor

The album *Call Me Irresponsible* contains elements that depict or express ontological metaphors within its lyrics and messages. Ontological metaphors are a type of metaphor that associates abstract concepts with physical or existential concepts. In this album, the singer or songwriter may use ontological metaphors to convey deeper messages and meanings to the listeners. This analysis can provide deeper insights into how this album combines different elements in its lyrics to create deeper meanings or specific emotional effects. To further understand the types of ontological metaphors found in this album, we can explore specific examples and how the use of figurative language contributes to the overall understanding of the album, which comprises a total of 45 data points.

Table 3. Ontological Metaphor in the Album Call Me Irresponsible

No	Song Title	Amount of Data
1	The Best is Yet to Come	4
2	Mrs. And Jones	2
3	I'm Your Man	4
4	Comin' Home Baby	2
5	Lost	4
6	Call Me Irresponsible	3
7	Wonderful Tonight	1
8	Everything	5
9	I've Got the World on a String	3
10	Always on My Mind	2
11	That's Life	2
12	Dream	1
13	It Had Better Be Tonight	1

Based on the results of data analysis, ontological metaphors are often used to provide deeper expression to the meaning or messages that the singer or songwriter wants to convey. In other words, they allow the singer or songwriter to communicate complex ideas or strong emotions in a more meaningful way. Each ontological data point in this album may contain specific messages or deeper meanings. The analysis of these 45 data points can be used to unpack these messages, revealing what the singer or songwriter intends to convey to the listeners. This helps deepen the understanding of the lyrical content of the album. The use of ontological metaphors in the songs of this album reflects artistic creativity and the way the singer or songwriter chooses language to communicate meaning. This data analysis can help appreciate the depth of thought and creativity involved in the creation of these songs.

5. Conclusion

The results have revealed interesting findings regarding the use of metaphors in the song lyrics. This album consists of 13 song titles, and the analysis has identified three main types of metaphors used in this album: structural metaphors, orientational metaphors, and ontological metaphors. First, 56 data points were categorized as structural metaphors. This indicates that consistently throughout the album, figurative language is used to connect different concepts or domains. The use of structural metaphors adds an additional dimension to the meaning of the song lyrics and enriches the messages being conveyed. Second, 42 data points were categorized as orientational metaphors in the album. The use of orientational metaphors reflects the use of spatial or directional concepts to depict ideas and emotions. This suggests an effort to provide intensity and depth in expressing emotions in the song lyrics. For example, the use of directions like “up” or “down” can be employed to depict emotional ups and downs. Third, 39 data points were categorized as ontological metaphors in the album. This reveals that in the lyrics of the songs in this album, abstract concepts are linked to physical or existential concepts. The use of ontological metaphors adds a deeper and more complex layer of meaning to the songs, making them richer in their message to the listeners. Overall, the

album “Call Me Irresponsible” demonstrates a richness in the use of figurative language, including various types of metaphors. The use of structural metaphors shows an effort to connect different concepts, adding dimension and enriching the lyrics’ messages. Orientational metaphors show intensity and depth in expressing emotions, providing spatial imagery to feelings and experiences. Meanwhile, ontological metaphors link abstract concepts to physical or existential ones, adding a complex and deep layer of meaning. All of this not only illustrates the creativity and artistic depth of this album but also enhances the listening experience by conveying deeper messages, emotions, and meanings.

Conflict of interest

The author(s) declare(s) that there is no conflict of interest.

Authors’ contribution

Author made substantial contributions to the conception and design of the study. The authors took responsibility for data analysis, interpretation and discussion of results. The authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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