

Analyzing Metaphors of Loss in Taylor Swift's Folklore Album Based on Conceptual Metaphor Theory

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ABSTRACT

Metaphor plays a crucial role in expressing complex emotions in literary and musical texts, particularly in representing experiences of loss that are often difficult to articulate directly. In contemporary popular music, metaphors function not only as stylistic devices but also as cognitive tools that shape how emotions are conceptualized and shared by listeners. This study aims to identify and analyze metaphors of loss in three songs from Taylor Swift's 2020 album *Folklore* "My Tears Ricochet," "Exile (feat. Bon Iver)," and "Cardigan" through the lens of Conceptual Metaphors Theory (CMT) proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). Using a qualitative approach, the research applies textual and interpretive analysis to song lyrics sourced from verified platforms. The findings reveal five dominant conceptual mappings: LOSS IS A BATTLE, LOSS IS SEPARATION, LOSS IS EXILE, LOSS IS MEMORY, and LOSS IS A PHYSICAL OBJECT. These metaphors illustrate how Swift conceptualizes emotional loss through concrete domains such as warfare, distance, and tangible remnants, enabling listeners to relate to abstract emotional experiences. Each song portrays a distinct dimension of loss: conflict in "My Tears Ricochet," displacement in "Exile," and nostalgia in "Cardigan." The analysis demonstrates that metaphors in *Folklore* function as both cognitive and emotional mechanisms that transform personal grief into shared, universal understanding. This study contributes to cognitive linguistics, literary criticism, and cultural studies by highlighting how popular music reflects universal human experiences. It also suggests pedagogical applications for integrating CMT into language and literature education to enhance students interpretive and analytical skills.

INTRODUCTION

Taylor Swift's music has always been a rich subject for study, evolving from catchy country pop song to thoughtful folk narrative. Her 2020 album, *Folklore*, released during COVID-19 pandemic, represents a significant shift in style, emphasizing storytelling influenced by indie folk music (Caramanica, 2020). Collaborating with Aaron Dessner of The National, Swift moved away from her typical grandiose sound, opting instead for simpler arrangements featuring acoustic guitars, piano, and soft explore themes of love, regret, and loss through fictionalized stories drawn from Swift's personal experiences, while allowing listeners to derive their own interpretations. *Folklore* received widespread acclaim for its emotional depth, debuting at number one on the Billboard 200 and earning Swift her third Album of the Year Grammy, underscoring its cultural

significant (Grammy.com 2020). This evolution from upbeat pop to introspective folk highlights Swift's adaptability as an artist, reflecting broader trends in popular music where artists use narrative depth to connect with audiences during times of global uncertainty.

This study focuses on three specific songs from the album: "My Tears Ricochet", "Exile (feat. Bon Iver)", and "Cardigan", which form an interconnected narrative about a teenage love triangle, as Swift has noted (Powers, 2020). These tracks illustrate how Swift employs metaphors to delve into the emotions of heartbreak, transforming profound sadness into poetic expressions. In contemporary music, such lyrical techniques bridge the gap between popular culture and literature, as seen in spoken word albums and lyric collections, positioning Folklore as a form of "modern poetry" (Lorde, 2017). By examining the album through linguistic analysis, we can uncover how metaphors serve as tools for emotional resonance.

A metaphor extends beyond a mere decorative device, it is a cognitive mechanism that helps us comprehend abstract emotions, such as loss, by mapping them onto familiar concepts (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). In song lyrics, metaphors enable listeners to articulate and process personal struggles through relatable imagery. Previous studies on Swift's work have primarily focused on her autobiographical elements (Diep, 2019), but few have applied specific frameworks like Conceptual Metaphors Theory (CMT). CMT, developed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, posits that metaphors are fundamental to human thought, structuring abstract ideas (like loss) by drawing from concrete experiences for instance, conceptualizing loss as a "journey" of "battle." This gap is particularly relevant in Indonesian academic context, where research on Western pop music often emphasizes translation of local adaptations, such as in dangdut remixes (Sari & Pratiwi, 2021), while overlooking cognitive linguistic approaches that could enrich cross cultural understanding.

The primary aims of this research are twofold: first, to identify and analyze the metaphors of loss in the selected song lyrics, and second, to examine how these metaphors render personal pain universally relatable. By doing so, this study contributes to ongoing discussions in literary criticism, language studies, and cultural analysis, demonstrating that Folklore is not only a compelling artistic work but also a valuable subject for research beyond Western contexts.

Metaphors play a crucial role in popular music, serving as linguistic devices that convey complex emotions and narratives through lyrical imagery. Studies have shown that song lyrics often employ metaphors to articulate abstract concepts like love, loss, and identity, making them accessible and emotionally resonant for listeners (e.g., Semino, 2008). In the context of pop music, metaphors transform personal stories into universal themes, enhancing the cultural impact of albums. For instance, research on lyrical analysis highlights how metaphors in contemporary music bridge individual experiences with collective understanding, particularly in genres like folk and indie pop (Lorde, 2017).

Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), developed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), provides a foundational framework for understanding metaphors as cognitive structures rather than mere rhetorical flourishes. CMT posits that metaphors map abstract target domains (e.g., emotions) onto concrete source domains (e.g., physical object or actions), shaping how we perceive and process reality. Applications of CMT in literary and linguistic studies have explored metaphors in poetry and prose, revealing their role in emotional expressions (Kovecses, 2020). In music, CMT has been applied to analyze how lyrics conceptualize emotions, such as "LOVE IS A JOURNEY" in popular songs, offering insights into cognitive processes behind musical narratives (Evans & Green, 2006).

Previous studies on Taylor Swift's music have largely emphasized autobiographical storytelling and cultural influence rather than systematic metaphor analysis. Diep (2019), for instance, examined Swift's lyrical narratives as reflection of personal identity and romantic relationship, focusing on biographical elements without addressing underlying cognitive metaphor structure. Similarly, Powers (2020) discussed *Folklore* as a stylistic departure toward folk-inspired storytelling, highlighting its thematic depth and emotional resonance but stopping short of applying linguistics of cognitive frameworks. Caramanica (2020) approach the album from a music journalism perspective, emphasizing its indie folk aesthetics and artistic evolution rather than its linguistic construction.

While broader metaphor studies in music and literature exist (e.g., Semino, 2008; Kovecses, 2020), they rarely focus on specific contemporary pop albums or examine metaphors of loss through a Conceptual Metaphors Theory (CMT) lens. In the Indonesian academic context, research on Western popular music has predominantly concentrated on translation strategies and local adaptations, such as dangdut remixes (Sari & Pratiwi, 2021), leaving cognitive linguistics approaches underexplored. Therefore, this study fills a clear research gap by applying CMT to analyze metaphors of loss in selected songs from *Folklore*, offering a novel contribution by combining cognitive linguistic, literary analysis, and popular music studies. The novelty of this research lies in its focused examination of loss metaphors as cognitive mappings that transform personal grief into universal emotional experiences, an aspect that has not been systematically addressed in previous studies.

The significance of analyzing metaphors in popular music is supported by prior research demonstrating that metaphors function as powerful cognitive tools for emotional processing. Semino (2008) argues that metaphors in artistic texts enable individuals to conceptualize abstract experiences, such as loss and trauma, in more tangible and emotionally accessible ways. Kovecses (2020) further explains that emotions are frequently structured through recurring metaphorical patterns, including metaphors of separation, movement, and physical objects, which are also evident in song lyrics. Empirical studies in cognitive linguistics have shown that metaphorical language enhances emotional engagement and interpretive depth among audiences (Evans & Green, 2006).

In the context of music, these findings suggest that metaphor-rich lyrics contribute to listeners emotional connection and meaning-making processes. By drawing on these established theoretical and empirical foundations, the present study strengthens its claim that metaphors of loss in *Folklore* operate not merely as stylistic devices but as cognitive mechanisms that allow listeners to understand and share emotional experiences. This theoretical grounding reinforces the importance of examining Swift's lyrics through CMT and underscores the relevance of this research within linguistic, literary, and cultural studies.

Based on the discussion above, it is evident that while Taylor Swift's *Folklore* has received considerable scholarly and critical attention, existing studies have largely focused on autobiographical narratives, cultural reception, and stylistic shifts, leaving the cognitive dimensions of metaphors underexplored. This study responds to that gap by employing Conceptual Metaphors Theory to systematically analyze metaphors of loss in selected songs from the album. By examining how abstract emotions are structured through concrete conceptual mappings, this research not only highlights the linguistics richness of *Folklore* but also demonstrates how popular music can function as a medium for universal emotional expression. The findings of this study are expected

to contribute to cognitive linguistics, literary criticism, and cultural studies, while offering pedagogical implications for language and literature education. Consequently, this research underscores the importance of investigating contemporary song lyrics through cognitive linguistic framework, paving the way for a more comprehensive understanding of how metaphor shapes emotional meaning in modern musical narratives.

METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative research design to examine metaphors of loss in Taylor Swift's album *Folklore*, with a specific focus on the songs "My Tears Ricochet," "Exile (featuring Bon Iver)," and "Cardigan". Drawing from Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), developed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), the analysis treats metaphors as cognitive structures that map abstract concepts, such as loss, onto concrete experiences, thereby revealing deeper emotional layers in the lyrics.

The research is interpretive and text-based, employing content analysis of song lyrics. Data were collected from official sources, including Taylor Swift's verified lyrics on platforms like Genius.com and her official website, ensuring accuracy and authenticity. The three songs were purposively selected due to their explicit themes of heartbreak and loss, as discussed in the literature review (Powers, 2020). This selection allows for an in-depth exploration without the need for extensive data sampling, making it suitable for a focused qualitative study.

Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) forms the backbone of the analysis. CMT posits that metaphors are not just rhetorical devices but fundamental to human cognition, involving mappings between a source domain (e.g., a physical journey) and a target domain (e.g., emotional loss). In this context, CMT is applied to identify how Swift uses metaphors to conceptualize loss, such as "LOSS IS A BATTLE" or "LOSS IS SEPARATION," thereby enhancing the understanding of the lyrics emotional impact.

The data analysis followed a systematic and theory driven procedure grounded explicitly in Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) as proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), which served as the primary analytical framework throughout the study. The data consisted of song lyrics from three selected tracks in Taylor Swift's *Folklore* album: "My Tears Ricochet," "Exile (feat. Bon Iver)," and "Cardigan." These lyrics were obtained from verified and officially recognize lyric platforms to ensure textual accuracy and reliability. The unit of analysis was metaphorical linguistic expressions related to the concept of loss.

To address the first research objective identifying metaphors of loss the lyrics were transcribed verbatim and subjected to close reading. During this stage, metaphorical expressions were identified by distinguishing non literal language from literal meanings, following CMT principles that view metaphors as mappings between a source domain (concrete experiences) and a target domain (abstract concept). For example, the phrase "*my tears ricochet*" was identified as a metaphor of loss because tears do not literally behave as physical projectiles instead, the expression maps emotional pain (target domain: LOSS) onto physical motion and impact (source domain: OBJECTS IN MOTION).

To answer the second research objective analyzing how metaphors conceptualize emotional loss each identified metaphor was patterns such as LOSS IS A BATTLE, LOSS IS SEPARATION, and LOSS IS A PHYSICAL OBJECT. For instance, lines in "My Tears Ricochet" that evoke imagery

of conflict and attack were categorized under LOSS IS A BATTLE, illustrating how grief is conceptualized as an active struggle rather than a passive emotional state.

Subsequently, each metaphor was interpreted within its lyrical and narrative context to explain its emotional and cognitive function. This interpretative step addressed the research problem of how personal pain is rendered universally relatable. For example, in "Exile," spatial metaphors expressing distances and displacement were analyzed under LOSS IS EXILE, demonstrating how emotional separation is understood through physical and geographical imagery. Interpretations were consistently supported by CMT literature, ensuring that theoretical concepts guided the analytical standpoint rather than subjective impressions.

To confirm that Conceptual Metaphors Theory functioned as the central theoretical lens, all analytical decisions identification, classification, and interpretation were directly aligned with CMT concepts such as source domain, target domain, and conceptual mapping. Supporting references from Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and subsequent CMT scholars were used to validate each metaphors classification. Cross song comparison was then conducted to identify recurring metaphorical patterns, allowing for triangulation across the three songs and strengthening the analytical conclusions.

To enhance the reliability of the findings, the analysis was conducted iteratively, with metaphor classifications reviewed multiple times. Where possible, peer consultation was used to verify the consistency of metaphor identification and categorization. Ethical considerations were minimal, as the data consisted of publicly available song lyrics; nevertheless, all sources were properly cited to respect intellectual property rights.

This methodology ensures a rigorous and replicable analysis, allowing for meaningful insights into how CMT illuminates the poetic elements of Folklore. Limitations include the subjective nature of metaphor interpretation and the English only focus, which may overlook cultural adaptations in non-Western context.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of metaphors of loss in the selected songs from Taylor Swift's *Folklore* reveals a complex and systematic pattern of conceptual mappings, as interpreted through the framework of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT). By examining the source target domain relationships embedded in the lyrics, this study identifies several dominant conceptual metaphors, including LOSS IS A BATTLE, LOSS IS SEPARATION, LOSS IS EXILE, and LOSS IS MEMORY / A PHYSICAL OBJECT. These metaphors do not function independently; rather, they interact to concrete and embodied domains such as warfare, distance, exile, and material objects, abstract emotional suffering is rendered intelligible and emotionally resonant for listeners.

Loss as Warfare in "My Tears Ricochet": In "My Tears Ricochet," loss is primarily conceptualized through the metaphor LOSS IS A BATTLE, in which emotional pain is framed as an active and violent conflict. Expressions such as "*my tears ricochet*" and "*you turned into your worst fears*" map grief onto the source domain of warfare and physical confrontation. The verb *ricochet* evokes imagery of bullets or projectiles bouncing back after impact, suggesting that emotional pain is not only forceful but also cyclical hurt inflicted by another rebounds and continues to wound both parties.

Within CMT, this mapping emphasizes loss as an aggressive and destructive force rather than a passive emotional state. The speaker is positioned as both victim and combatant, indicating

that grief involves resistance, retaliation, and endurance. This metaphor aligns with Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) assertion that people often conceptualize emotional suffering through embodied experiences of conflict and struggle. By farming loss as warfare, Swift intensifies the emotional stakes of betrayal and separation, allowing listeners to perceive grief as something fought against rather than quietly endured.

Moreover, the repeated violent imagery throughout the song reinforces the persistence of loss. Emotional wounds do not heal easily; instead, they echo and "bounce back," illustrating unresolved trauma. This finding supports Kovesces' (2020) view that emotion metaphors often highlight dynamic processes, portraying feelings as ongoing rather than static.

Loss as Separation and Exile in "Exile": In contrast to the confrontational tone of "My Tears Ricochet," "Exile" conceptualizes loss through the metaphors LOSS IS SEPARATION and LOSS IS EXILE. Here, emotional pain is structured through the source domain of physical and social displacement. Lines such as "*I can see you standing, honey, with his arms around your future*" and "*I think I've seen this film before, and I didn't like the ending*" portray the speaker as excluded from a shared emotional space and future.

Exile, as a source domain, implies forced removal, isolation, and powerlessness. When mapped onto loss, it frames heartbreak as being pushed outside the boundaries of intimacy and belonging. This metaphor highlights the asymmetry of emotional experiences: one person moves on while the other remains displaced. According to CMT, such spatial metaphors are particularly effective in expressing emotions because humans understand abstract states through bodily experiences of distance and orientation.

The due structure of "Exile" further strengthens this conceptualization. The alternating male and female voices represent two irreconcilable perspectives, reinforcing the metaphorical distance between the speakers. Their inability to align musically mirrors their emotional disconnection, thus extending the metaphor beyond language into performance. This finding demonstrates how metaphor in music operates multimodally, combining lyrics and vocal arrangement to deepen emotional meaning.

Loss as Memory and Physical Object in "Cardigan": "Cardigan" presents a more reflective and nostalgic conceptualization of loss, primarily through the metaphors LOSS IS MEMORY and LOSS IS A PHYSICAL OBJECT. Rather than depicting loss as conflict or exile, the song frames it as something preserved in remembrance. Lines such as "*to kiss in cars and downtown bars*" and "*you drew stars around of my scars*" recall fragmented moments of intimacy, constructing loss as a collection of memories that remain emotionally vivid.

The cardigan itself functions as a central metaphorical object. As a tangible item associated with warmth and comfort, it maps onto emotional attachment and lingering affection. Through CMT, this reflects how abstract emotions are often conceptualized as objects that can be kept, worn, or lost. However, while the memory object is preserved, it is no longer accessible in the present, creating a sense of bittersweet longing.

This metaphor suggests a later stage of grief, where pain has transformed into quiet reflection. Unlike the aggression in "My Tears Ricochet" or the displacement in "Exile," "Cardigan" portrays loss as something internalized and integrated into identity. This supports the idea that metaphorical patterns can reflect emotional progression, moving from conflict to separation and finally to remembrance.

Across the three songs, a clear pattern emerges in how metaphors of loss evolve. "My Tears Ricochet" externalizes grief through violence, "Exile" spatializes it through distance and exclusion, and "Cardigan" internalizes through memory and objects. This progression mirrors psychological models of grief, in which individuals move from intense emotional reactions toward reflective acceptance.

By employing different conceptual metaphors, Swift transforms deeply personal experiences into universal emotional archetypes. Warfare, exile, and memory are shared human experiences, allowing listeners to project their own emotions onto the narrative. These findings confirm that metaphors in *Folklore* function not merely as poetic embellishments but as cognitive mechanisms that structure emotional understanding.

Overall, the analysis demonstrates that Conceptual Metaphor Theory provides an effective framework for uncovering how loss is linguistically and cognitively constructed in popular music. Through consistent metaphorical mappings, *Folklore* bridges personal grief and collective emotional experiences, reinforcing its significance as both an artistic and linguistic text.

Table 1. Key Metaphors of Loss Identified in Selected Songs from Folklore Album

Song	Metaphor (CMT Mapping)	Example Lyric	Brief Description
My Tears Ricochet	LOSS IS A BATTLE	"my tears ricochet"	Maps loss to physical projectiles in warfare, representing uncontrollable emotional turmoil.
My Tears Ricochet	LOSS IS RETALIATION	"you turned into your worst fears"	Maps loss to emotional conflict, depicting heartbreak as a retaliatory act.
Exile (feat. Bon Iver)	LOSS IS SEPARATION	"I can see you standing, honey, with his arms around your future"	Maps loss to physical and social displacement, illustrating abandonment.
Exile (feat. Bon Iver)	LOSS IS EXILE	"I think I've seen this film before"	Maps loss to repeated banishment, evoking cyclical isolation.
Cardigan	LOSS IS MEMORY	"to kiss in cars and downtown bars"	Maps loss to nostalgic recollection, connecting past intimacy to present longing.
Cardigan	LOSS IS A PHYSICAL OBJECT	"you drew stars around my scars"	Maps loss to tangible remnants like clothing, symbolizing preserved but inaccessible memories.

The findings reveal that metaphors of loss in Taylor Swift's *Folklore*, particularly in the songs "My Tears Ricochet," "Exile," and "Cardigan," are deeply rooted in Conceptual Metaphors Theory (CMT), mapping abstract emotions to concrete domains like warfare, separation, exile, memory, and physical objects. Point by point, the analysis identifies "LOSS IS A BATTLE" in "My Tears Ricochet" as portraying grief as an active conflict, "LOSS IS SEPARATION" and "LOSS IS MEMORY" and "LOSS IS A PHYSICAL OBJECT" in "Cardigan" as capturing nostalgia and tangible remnants. These metaphors enhance the universal reliability of personal loss by transforming individual experiences into shared archetypes, fostering empathy across cultures, and offer

implications for cultural studies and language education in non-Western context like Indonesian, such as bridging cross-cultural themes and integrating cognitive tools into curricula.

When situated within previous scholarship, the findings of this study extend and refine earlier interpretations of Taylor Swift's lyrical work rather than contradicting them. Diep (2019) successfully demonstrated that Swift's songs are deeply rooted in autobiographical storytelling, emphasizing emotional authenticity and personal narrative. The present study builds upon this insight by showing that such autobiographical expressions are not conveyed solely through narrative content, but are cognitively structured through systematic metaphorical mappings of loss, such as LOSS IS A BATTLE and LOSS IS SEPARATION. In other words, while Diep identified *what* Swift expresses emotionally, this study explains *how* those emotions cognitively organized and linguistically realized.

Similarly, Powers (2020) highlighted Folklore as a shift toward fictional and folk-inspired storytelling, noting its thematic focus on loss and emotional distance. This research accommodates Powers findings by confirming the centrality of loss in the album, while advancing the discussion by demonstrating that these themes are consistently conceptualized through recurring metaphorical domains, particularly warfare, exile, and memory. By applying Conceptual Metaphor Theory, this study reveals that the album's storytelling coherence is underpinned by shared cognitive patterns, offering a more systematic explanation for the emotional unity Powers observed descriptively.

In the Indonesian context, Sari & Pratiwi (2021) examined the adaptation of Western popular songs into local musical forms, focusing primarily on translation and cultural transformation. While their findings illuminate how meaning shifts across cultures, the present study complements and extends this perspective by addressing the cognitive dimension underlying such meanings. The identification of universal metaphorical structure of loss in *Folklore* suggest that emotional experiences may be shared across cultures through similar conceptual mappings, even when expressed in different musical or linguistic forms. This opens new avenues for intercultural research, such as comparative analyses between metaphorical representations of loss in Western indie folk music and Indonesian folk or traditional songs.

Grounded in Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), the findings of this study propose a more sophisticated understanding of loss as an active, dynamic, and embodied process rather than a passive emotional state. By integrating insights from previous narrative focused and cultural studies with a cognitive linguistic framework, this research demonstrates that metaphors function as fundamental mechanisms shaping emotional meaning in song lyrics. Consequently, this study not only accommodates prior research but also advances the field by revealing the cognitive architecture underlying emotional expression in contemporary popular music.

CONCLUSION

This study examined metaphors of loss in selected songs from Taylor Swift's *Folklore*, "My Tears Ricochet," "Exile," and "Cardigan," through the framework of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). The analysis identified several dominant conceptual metaphors, including LOSS IS A BATTLE, LOSS IS SEPARATION, LOSS IS EXILE, LOSS IS MEMORY, and LOSS IS APHYSICAL OBJECT, which systematically map abstract emotional experiences onto concrete and embodied domains. These findings support the central

claim of CMT that metaphor is not merely a stylistic device but a fundamental cognitive mechanism through which humans conceptualize and make sense of complex emotions such as loss.

By demonstrating consistent metaphorical patterns across the three songs, this study extends previous research on Taylor Swift's work that has primarily emphasized autobiographical storytelling and thematic interpretation (Diep, 2019; Powers, 2020). While earlier studies successfully identified loss as a recurring theme in *Folklore*, the present research advances the discussion by explaining how this theme is cognitively structured through recurring source domains such as warfare, spatial separation, and material objects. In this sense, the findings do not challenge existing interpretations but refine and deepen them by revealing the cognitive architecture underlying emotional expression in the lyrics.

Furthermore, the findings align with and reinforce broader CMT based studies in literary and linguistic research (Semino, 2008; Kovesces, 2020), which argue that emotions are frequently conceptualized through embodied and experiential metaphors. However, this study also contributes to current global research trends by applying CMT to contemporary popular music, a domain that remains underrepresented in cognitive linguistic scholarship. The identification of metaphorical patterns of loss in *Folklore* demonstrates that the theoretical principles of CMT are applicable beyond traditional literary texts, thereby expanding the scope of the theory to modern musical narrative.

In the context of Indonesian and non-Western scholarship, this study addresses a notable research gap where analyses of Western popular music have largely focus on translation, adaptation, or cultural reception (Sari & Pratiwi, 2021), with limited attention to cognitive linguistic perspective. By foregrounding conceptual metaphors, this research suggests that emotional meanings in music may be shared cross culturally through similar cognitive mappings, offering a foundation for future comparative and intercultural studies.

Overall, this study positions itself as a complementary and theory-extending contribution to Conceptual Metaphor Theory and popular music studies. It affirms CMT'S relevance in analyzing emotional expression in contemporary cultural texts while highlighting the importance of integrating cognitive approaches into literary and linguistic research on music. Future studies may build on these findings by incorporating audience reception analysis, cross cultural comparisons, or interdisciplinary applications such as music therapy and language education. Ultimately, *Folklore* exemplifies how metaphor driven songwriting fosters empathy and shared understanding, underscoring the enduring cultural and cognitive significance of metaphor in music.

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