

Metaphorical Meaning of Taylor Swift's *Reputation* Album: A Semantic Approach

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ABSTRACT

Taylor Swift is a famous singer-songwriter, and her songs are enjoyed by people worldwide. One of her well-known works is a studio album called *Reputation*. This album is composed of many metaphors as figurative language, which is sometimes hard to understand. However, to run the communication well, listeners have to understand the message the songwriter wants through this album. Due to this importance, the researchers studied the *Metaphorical Meaning of Taylor Swift's Reputation Album* study. This study aims to examine the meaning of the metaphorical phrases in the album based on Leech's metaphoric rule and Yule's meaning theory. The data were analyzed by the qualitative method along with a questionnaire, as a part of the quantitative approach to support data validation, mainly filled by Taylor Swift fans and people who often listened to her songs. The research findings show that all denotative meanings are like the connotative ones in the sense of semantic properties, which are abstract and build patterns. The findings are expected to make listeners better know and understand the metaphors and their meanings in the *Reputation* Album.

Keywords: metaphorical meaning, *Reputation* Album, semantic approach

1. Introduction

Humans are social beings, and communication is a necessary part of society. Humans can communicate with each other through language as a tool of communication. Through language, one can convey the information they want to share, express their wishes, ask questions, or even give some commands to others (Fromkin et al., 2014, p. 139). Of course, in communication, it is necessary to understand what people say to us and vice versa. However, language does not always have a literal meaning, which could be tricky. It may also have an implied meaning. An expression with an imaginative, non-literal meaning is called figurative language (Perrine et al., 2004, p. 565). Figurative language compares things, heightens the emphasis of something, and clarifies a new way to state or describe an idea so that its meaning is dissimilar from its literal meaning (Purnomo et al., 2022, p. 77). There are many kinds of these expressions. Commonly: metaphor, simile, personification, hyperbole, allusion, and synecdoche.

Figurative language can be easily found in our daily life. One of them is the song, an act of singing as a record of human activity, experience, and feelings (Sari & Anindita, 2020, p. 23). A songwriter often uses figurative language to make a song more artistic. Besides the aesthetic purpose, figurative language could make the song lyrics more catching and captivating. With this language, the songwriter could play with the listener's imagination and uniquely deliver the song's message. Unfortunately, sometimes, people feel confused or face difficulties while understanding the real point of figurative expressions. Instead of just enjoying the song, listeners should understand the genuine

meaning or message that the songwriter wants to deliver to them. As Swift said, “Songwriters need to communicate, and part of communicating correctly is when you put out a message that is understood the way you meant it” (Suskind, 2019).

Up to now, there have been some interesting studies on text analysis of songs. Purnomo analyzed types of figurative language and meanings contained in the seven lyrics of the *campursari* songs with the themes of tourist attractions on *Didi Kempot & Sobat Ambyar Orchestra*–YouTube video with semantic analysis so that the overall content of the lyrics will be easily understood by his fans and other interested general public (Purnomo et al., 2022, pp. 75–91). Zulaika analyzed the metaphorical meaning of the lyrics to *Another One Bites the Dust*, a hit song by the British rock band Queen published in 1980 (Zulaika et al., 2023, pp. 124–134). The study investigates the numerous layers of meaning provided by the song's lyrics, which have been interpreted variously by fans and critics throughout the years, by using a semantic approach. The paper offers a detailed analysis of the song's metaphors and the function of the metaphors, including analyzing the metaphor *another one bites the dust*, as a euphemism for death in one Santa Fe High School shooting in 2018, one of the deadliest mass shootings in the United States. The study concludes by reflecting on the song's lasting popularity and cultural relevance, as well as the difficulties and opportunities associated with understanding metaphorical meaning in popular music.

Unlike the two researches above, this study examines patterns of metaphorical meaning, which gives the novelty for this research and makes it different from other previous studies. By conducting this study, the researchers hope that the readers or listeners will comprehend the entire *Reputation* Album's content more easily. Thus, due to this importance, the researchers held the *Metaphorical Meaning of Taylor Swift's Reputation Album* research. This study aimed to figure out the meaning of metaphors in all 15 of Taylor Swift's *Reputation* Album songs. *Reputation* is the sixth album of the American singer-songwriter Taylor Swift. According to Taylor Swift's Official YouTube Channel, this album had 8,921,046 views by the end of June 2023, which means that this album is quite famous and frequently streamed by the public. Moreover, numerous metaphors are contained in this album, as Swift stated, “*Reputation* is a metaphor” (Hiatt, 2019). It makes this album a proper research object because this study focused on analyzing the metaphor.

2. Methodology

Metaphor is one of the figurative languages which compares some likeness (Larson, 1998, p. 272). It is related to a particular transference rule called the metaphoric rule. The rule is $F = \text{Like } L$ (Leech, 1969, p. 151). It means that figurative language (metaphor) F is obtained from the literal meaning L in the sense like L , or perhaps it is as if L . Metaphoric transference only occurs if the tenor as the literal meaning or subject of the expression has some similarities with the vehicle as the metaphor, which called the ground of comparison. Thus, the formula is X is like Y in the sense of Z , where X is the tenor, Y is the vehicle, and Z is the ground.

The metaphor in this study is examined by the qualitative–descriptive research method, which describes and interprets available conditions and relationships, growing opinions, ongoing processes, occurring consequences or effects, or developing trends (Soejono & Abdurrahman, 2005, p. 19). The object of the study in this research is limited to the phrases in 15 songs of *Reputation* Album by Taylor Swift that contain metaphors. The data in this study were collected purposively from Taylor Swift's Official YouTube Channel using tapping, listening, and note-taking techniques. The tapping technique is a method of tapping the informant's language usage, and the listening technique is done by listening to the language usage (Purnomo et al., 2022, p. 78). Meanwhile, the note-taking

technique is a method that describes what is heard, seen, experienced, and thought (Moleong, 2009, p. 209). The researchers then make a code for the collected data. The code is constructed of metaphor (M) – song track list – the data order. Then, the collected data was analyzed according to Leech’s metaphoric rule. The denotative and connotative meanings of those metaphors are figured out, and then semantic properties are examined to find their similarities. Denotative is the literal meaning of words, while connotative is the figurative meaning of words (Yule, 2017, p. 223).

In addition, a questionnaire as part of quantitative research is also used in this study to support the data validation. The questionnaire was spread by snowball sampling technique to collect the respondents’ opinions on the randomly selected 15 findings of the metaphorical meaning. It used a closed-ended questionnaire that provides respondents with a set of response options to choose from, such as multiple-choice questions (Alwasilah, 2005, p. 37) with three points of the Likert Scale that consists of agree, neutral, and disagree, that used to measure people’s opinions (Yuliarmi & Marhaeni, 2019, p. 11). After that, the filled-out questionnaires were analyzed by using descriptive statistical analysis, a statistical technique for describing the data descriptively to provide an orderly, concise, and understandable description of the data of an event or situation by using a table, graphic or diagram, central tendency and variability (Mundir, 2012, pp. 4–5). The researchers calculated the central tendency, such as modus and mean of responses, to get information about the percentage of the respondent’s opinions. Modus is the most frequent value shown in data to discover the opinion majority. Mean is the average data gained from summarizing all the values and dividing it by the value total number to know the opinion average. Then, the standard deviation is calculated to measure the data spread variability. A higher standard deviation indicates higher variability in the data, while a lower standard deviation indicates lower variability. From this information, the researchers then made a descriptive conclusion.

Furthermore, the data is validated through triangulation among various documents to achieve credibility (Creswell & Poth, 2017, p. 209). The documents used in the metaphor meaning analysis are theories such as metaphor by Leech ($X=Y$ in the sense of Z) and meaning by Yule (2017), literal dictionaries such as the *Oxford and Cambridge Dictionary*, and figurative dictionaries such as *cliché and idiom dictionary* along with questionnaire as a complement to gain objectivity of this research. Moreover, the results were also written in a rich and thick description to make the study transferable between the researchers and those being studied.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1. Results

There are 90 data of metaphorical phrases found in the *Reputation* Album as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Metaphorical Phrase Findings

Song Title	Datum
Ready for It?	13
End Game	10
I Did Something Bad	5
Don’t Blame Me	6
Delicate	1

Song Title	Datum
Look What You Made Me Do	4
So It Goes...	5
Gorgeous	1
Getaway Car	16
King of My Heart	4
Dancing with Our Hands Tied	10
Dress	1
This is Why We Can't Have Nice Things	5
Call it What You Want	6
New Year's Day	3
Total	90

From those 90-research data, the researchers compared the denotative meaning with the connotative meaning of each data. Then, the researchers looked for their similarities by using semantic properties as the characteristics of metaphor: X is like Y in the sense of Z. To define the denotative meaning, the researchers used the *Oxford* and *Cambridge Dictionary* (2023) as the references. Meanwhile, to figure out the connotative one, the researchers interpreted it based on the song context and with the help of an idiom dictionary. The findings are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Metaphorical Meaning Findings

No	Data Code	Data	Denotative Meaning	Connotative Meaning	Semantic Properties
1	M-01-01	<i>A killer</i>	Someone who causes somebody to stop existing	Someone who causes a relationship to end	[+Human] [+Harm] [+End]
2	M-01-02	<i>A ghost</i>	A spirit of a dead person	A memory of the ex-lover	[+ Left] [+Remain]
3	M-01-03	<i>A phantom</i>	A spirit of a dead person	A memory of the ex-lover	[+ Left] [+Remain]
4	M-01-04	<i>Holdin' him for ransom</i>	An action to get money by forcing someone	Forcing someone to fulfil the desire	[+Demand] [+Desire]
5	M-01-05	<i>A robber</i>	Someone who takes property illegally	A Charmer	[+Human] [+Take]
6	M-01-06	<i>Stealing hearts</i>	To take someone's heart illegally	To attract someone	[+Achieve]
7	M-01-07	<i>A thief</i>	Someone who takes property illegally	A Charmer	[+Human] [+Take]
8	M-01-08	<i>Join the heist</i>	Become a partner in crime	Become a lover	[+Human]
9	M-01-09	<i>An island</i>	A secluded place that is hard to get to	A place to hide from the paparazzi	[+Place] [+Private]

No	Data Code	Data	Denotative Meaning	Connotative Meaning	Semantic Properties
10	M-01-10	<i>My jailer</i>	Someone who prevents the prisoner from escaping from jail	Someone who prevents the songwriter to go away from him	[+Human] [+Kept]
11	M-01-11	<i>Burton to this Taylor</i>	Famous controversial couple	Famous singer	[+Human] [+Famous]
12	M-01-12	<i>Touch me</i>	To put someone's body part onto somebody	To approach someone	[+Connection]
13	M-01-13	<i>Lights down low</i>	Dark, which causing someone cannot see	Lack of information about something	[+Blindness]
14	M-02-01	<i>Chips on my shoulders</i>	To be sensitive about the chips amount	To be sensitive about something	[+Sensitive]
15	M-02-02	<i>The storm</i>	An extreme weather condition	A troublesome situation	[+Unpleasantness]
16	M-02-03	<i>Bury hatchets</i>	Peace symbol	Forgiveness	[+Peacefulness]
17	M-02-04	<i>Keep maps of where I put'em</i>	To save a diagram to show the positions of things over an area	Will never forget and possible to unforgiven	[+Unforgettable]
18	M-02-05	<i>Your handprints</i>	A mark left by someone's hand	A feeling to someone	[+Imprint]
19	M-02-06	<i>Are liquor</i>	Intoxicating alcoholic drink	Intoxicated by someone	[+Intoxicate]
20	M-02-07	<i>Is gold</i>	A precious chemical element	A precious person	[+Precious]
21	M-02-08	<i>Your endgame</i>	The final stage of a contest between people	Someone's last lover	[+Human] [+Last]
22	M-02-09	<i>Your first string</i>	The first person in a series of people	Someone's priority	[+Human] [+First]
23	M-02-10	<i>Your A team</i>	A group of the best	Someone's best lover	[+Human] [+Best]
24	M-03-01	<i>A narcissist</i>	A Greek mythology character that obsessed with his own reflection	Someone who admires himself or herself too much	[+Obsession]
25	M-03-02	<i>The flames</i>	A hot bright stream of burning gas	Anger	[+Heat]
26	M-03-03	<i>Crimson red paint</i>	A crimson red colour liquid	A crimson red lipstick	[+Color]
27	M-03-04	<i>Burning all the witches</i>	Witch-hunt phenomena	Blamed and punished for the undone things	[+Blamed] [+Punished]
28	M-03-05	<i>Their pitchforks</i>	Tools to hurt the witches	Get hurt by people	[+Hurt]
29	M-04-01	<i>My drug</i>	An addictive substance	Obsession	[+Necessity] [+Addiction]

No	Data Code	Data	Denotative Meaning	Connotative Meaning	Semantic Properties
30	M-04-02	<i>Breakin' hearts</i>	To damage the hearts	To make somebody feel very unhappy	[+Harmful]
31	M-04-03	<i>Poison ivy</i>	Poisonous plant	Toxic person	[+Toxicity]
32	M-04-04	<i>Your daisy</i>	A flower	Someone pure and innocent	[+Pure] [+Innocence]
33	M-04-05	<i>Cross the line</i>	To go from one side to the other side of a mark	To pass the acceptable behaviour	[+Pass] [+Boundary]
34	M-04-06	<i>Fall from grace</i>	Drop down from a higher behaviour quality level	To do something bad or morally wrong	[+Degradation]
35	M-05-01	<i>A Mansion</i>	A very large, impressive, and expensive house	A Good-looking man	[+Impressive] [+Admired]
36	M-06-01	<i>The gun was mine</i>	Get accused for someone's crime	Get accused for things that she has never done	[+Accused]
37	M-06-02	<i>Kingdom keys</i>	Things used to lock the castle	Things that make someone success	[+Glory]
38	M-06-03	<i>Ask me a place to sleep, locked me out, and threw a feast</i>	To ask someone for a room to rest but then prevent that person from entering by locking the door and celebrating it	To act badly toward the person who has helped	[+Attitude] [+Bad]
39	M-06-04	<i>Rose up from the dead</i>	To become alive again after having died	To rise from fragility and become stronger	[+Weakness]
40	M-07-01	<i>My magician</i>	Someone who performs tricks	My center of attention	[+Human] [+Attractiveness]
41	M-07-02	<i>Cut me</i>	To divide somebody into pieces	To overwhelm somebody	[-Resistance]
42	M-07-03	<i>Gold cage</i>	A structure made of yellow precious metal bars	A place where someone lives in luxury but has very little freedom	[+Restricted]
43	M-07-04	<i>Your illusionist</i>	Someone who performs tricks	Your center of attention	[+Human] [+Attractiveness]
44	M-07-05	<i>Gray days</i>	Cloudy days	Gloomy days	[+Dark]
45	M-08-01	<i>Magnetic field</i>	An area with a force that will attract some metals towards it	Charm	[+Attractiveness]
46	M-09-01	<i>A getaway car</i>	A vehicle	A relationship	[+Runaway]
47	M-09-02	<i>Struck a match</i>	To produce a flame	To build a suitable relationship	[+Generate]

No	Data Code	Data	Denotative Meaning	Connotative Meaning	Semantic Properties
48	M-09-03	<i>Blew your mind</i>	To explode someone's mind	To astonish or flabbergast someone	[+Shock]
49	M-09-04	<i>Were white</i>	A color	Not harmful	[+Clean]
50	M-09-05	<i>Shades of gray</i>	A color	Unclear situation	[+Vague]
51	M-09-06	<i>The light</i>	The energy from the sun makes bright	Happy face	[+Bright]
52	M-09-07	<i>A sideshow</i>	A small show	Public consumption	[+Attractive]
53	M-09-08	<i>A circus</i>	A performance of a group of people	Public consumption	[+Attractive]
54	M-09-09	<i>Poisoned the well</i>	To put a substance that causes death or harm into a deep hole	To cause harm to someone's reputation or credibility	[+Harmful]
55	M-09-10	<i>Were cursed</i>	Suffering from a curse	Experiencing problems and unhappiness	[+Unpleasant]
56	M-09-11	<i>A shotgun shot in the dark</i>	A long gun that fires small metal bullets in very little light	To guess something when s/he has no knowledge	[+Attempt] [+Blindness]
57	M-09-12	<i>Drivin' the getaway car</i>	To operate a vehicle	Decision maker	[+Control]
58	M-09-13	<i>Riding in a getaway car</i>	To sit on and control a car	Decision maker	[+Control]
59	M-09-14	<i>Sirens in the beat of your heart</i>	A device that makes a long loud sound as a signal or warning	Heartbeat	[+Sound]
60	M-09-15	<i>Bonnie and Clyde</i>	US criminal couple	Rich and fashionable people who travel a lot	[+Jet-set]
61	M-09-16	<i>Dyin' in a getaway car</i>	To stop living in the car	To leave the relationship	[+Discontinued]
62	M-10-01	<i>Made up my mind</i>	To invent a thought	To decide something	[+Think]
63	M-10-02	<i>American Queen</i>	The American female ruler	An American woman who respected	[+Female] [+Honored]
64	M-10-03	<i>The kingdom</i>	An area ruled by the king or queen	A relationship ruled by a couple	[+Territory]
65	M-10-04	<i>Broken bones</i>	The injured hard parts of the human body	Very strong pain	[+Harmful] [+Deep]
66	M-11-01	<i>Had been frozen</i>	So cold that it has become very hard	Lose warmth of feeling	[-Warmth]
67	M-11-02	<i>Deep blue</i>	A color	Sadness	[+Unpleasantness]

No	Data Code	Data	Denotative Meaning	Connotative Meaning	Semantic Properties
68	M-11-03	<i>Painted me golden</i>	To color bright yellow, like gold	Does not have any problems	[+Pleasantness]
69	M-11-04	<i>We dance</i>	To move the body to the music sound and rhythm	Having fun	[+Enjoyment]
70	M-11-05	<i>An avalanche</i>	A natural disaster	A trouble	[+Misery]
71	M-11-06	<i>It's gravity</i>	The force that attracts objects in space towards each other	Fate	[+Uncontrollable]
72	M-11-07	<i>Your hands in my pockets</i>	Hold someone's hand inside the pocket	Keep secret	[+Hidden]
73	M-11-08	<i>Picture of your face in an invisible locket</i>	Wear a locket with someone's photo inside	Keep secret	[+Hidden]
74	M-11-09	<i>A sacred oasis</i>	An area in the desert where there is water and where plants grow	A pleasant period in the middle of something unpleasant	[+Exceptional]
75	M-11-10	<i>Hands tied</i>	The hands are attached so it cannot move freely	Cannot behave freely	[+Limitedness]
76	M-12-01	<i>My earthquakes</i>	Violent shaking of The earth's surface	A bad moment in life	[+Unpleasant]
77	M-13-01	<i>So Gatsby</i>	A rich fictional character	So rich	[+Wealthy]
78	M-13-02	<i>Stabbed me in the back while shaking my hand</i>	To push a knife into somebody from behind while that person takes his or her hand and moves it up and down	To betray someone	[+Harmful]
79	M-13-03	<i>Took an axe</i>	An action to get a tool used for cutting up wood	An action to ruin something	[+Action] [+Damage]
80	M-13-04	<i>A mended fence</i>	A damaged structure that has been repaired	An attempt to improve relations	[+Improved]
81	M-13-05	<i>Rain on my parade</i>	Separate water drops that fall from the sky to a public celebration	Prevent somebody from enjoying something	[+Prevention] [-Pleasure]
82	M-14-01	<i>My castle</i>	A building built by kings or queens	The songwriter career	[+Glory]
83	M-14-02	<i>Brought a knife to a gunfight</i>	To come to a fight between people using guns with sharp blade	Enter a challenging situation without being well-prepared	[+Unprepared]
84	M-14-03	<i>The crown</i>	The position of a king or queen	The songwriter successfulness	[+Achievement]
85	M-14-04	<i>Bridges burn</i>	A damaged connecting structure	Cannot return to the previous situation	[+Unrepeatable]
86	M-14-05	<i>Starry eyes</i>	Eyes that shining	Hopes	[+Enlighten]

No	Data Code	Data	Denotative Meaning	Connotative Meaning	Semantic Properties
87	M-14-06	<i>Darkest night</i>	The time with the littlest light	The time with no hope	[+Unpleasantness]
88	M-15-01	<i>Crawling home</i>	To move to the home on hands and knees or with body close to the ground	To go to for help in a way that shows one is weak	[+Difficulty]
89	M-15-02	<i>Your midnights</i>	New Year's Eve	Happy times	[+Happiness]
90	M-15-03	<i>Cleaning up bottles</i>	Throwing away the bottles	Hard times	[+Tough]

Furthermore, the analysis of meaning is explained below.

1. Ready for It?

Datum M-01-01: *A killer*

Denotatively, retrieved from *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (2023), a killer is a person, an animal, or a thing that kills. Furthermore, *Cambridge Dictionary* (2023) added that a killer is someone who kills another person. Kill itself means to cause somebody or something to die or stop living. *A killer* here is a person, as mentioned in the first line of the first verse of this song, *knew he was a killer*. Therefore, denotatively, *a killer* in this song means someone who causes somebody to die or stops existing.

Meanwhile, *a killer* in this song is a metaphor where that man is not someone who kills another person. As explained in the following line, *wonders how many girls he had loved and left haunted*, which means that the song context is a relationship between the man and girls. The man built a relationship with some girls and then broke the relationship by leaving them. Thus, connotatively, *a killer* in this verse is portrayed as someone who causes a relationship to end. The man damaged his relationship with the girls, so it no longer exists. Therefore, someone who causes somebody to stop existing is the same as someone who causes a relationship to end in the sense of a human that harms something until it stops existing.

A Killer (M-01-01)

Denotative

Someone who causes somebody to stop existing
[+Human] [+Harm] [+End]

Connotative

Someone who causes a relationship to end
[+Human] [+Harm] [+End]

2. End Game

Datum M-02-07: *Is gold*

Retrieved from *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (2023) and *Cambridge Dictionary* (2023), gold is a chemical element. It is a yellow, precious, shiny metal for making coins, jewellery, or beautiful objects. From this definition, it means that gold is worth money. Thus, gold is something precious.

The *gold* is mentioned in the third verse of this song, *your body is gold*. Connotatively, this line means someone who has a body made of gold. This line does not make sense because

the human is not either made from gold or contains gold. Thus, *gold* here is a metaphor where the songwriter compares someone with gold. Like the precious gold, the songwriter portrays the person as someone precious in her life. Therefore, a precious chemical element is like a precious person in the sense of preciousness.

Is Gold (M-02-07)

Denotative	Connotative
A precious element	A precious person
[-Human] Preciousness]	[+Human] Preciousness]

3. I Did Something Bad

Datum M-03-02: *The flames*

The bridge of this song, *they're burning all the witches even if you aren't one, ..., so light me up*, shows that the songwriter used the witch-hunt phenomenon as a reference. This phenomenon occurred when people hunted and punished innocent women suspected of being witches because they were considered dangerous and unacceptable in society. They will bring their pitchforks as their weapon and then catch the witches. After that, people punish them by hanging or burning them alive. The songwriter portrays herself as the hunted and burned suspected witch. Thus, *the flame* in the pre-chorus, *I can feel the flames on my skin*, denotatively means that the songwriter feels the flames on her skin because people burned her as her punishment for being the witch. Flame causes her to get burned. Retrieved from *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (2023), the flame is a hot, bright stream of burning gas that comes from something on fire.

Meanwhile, the songwriter is not the suspected witch, and she does not experience that kind of burning thing. A flame is a phrase usually used connotatively to express anger and emotion. Psychologically, when someone gets angry, his/her temperature will rise. Besides that, fire is a symbol of heat. Therefore, *the flames* are like anger in the sense of heat.

The Flames (M-03-02)

Denotative	Connotative
A hot bright stream of burning gas	Anger
[+Heat]	[+Heat]

4. Don't Blame Me

Datum M-04-01: *My drug*

Retrieved from *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (2023), a drug is an illegal substance that some people smoke or inject for its physical and mental effects. According to *Cambridge Dictionary* (2023), a drug is any natural or artificially made chemical taken for pleasure to improve someone's performance in an activity or because a person cannot stop using it. This substance could make someone addicted. When someone is already addicted to the drug, it becomes a necessity for him/her. One will need to use the drug and will do anything to consume it. When one could not get the drug, one could not think straight and act normally.

The *drug* is mentioned in the chorus of this song, *Lord, save me, my drug is my baby, I'll*

be usin' for the rest of my life. In this line, the songwriter compares a drug with a human who is her baby or lover. Human is not a substance and vice versa. Thus, the *drug* here is a metaphor where the songwriter portrays her lover as the drug. In this song, the songwriter is obsessed with her lover as an addict addicted to a drug. Her lover drives her crazy as mentioned in the chorus, *love made me crazy*. Her mind is filled with a man. She cannot live without him and needs him for the rest of her life. It is like a drug that becomes a necessity in the addict's life and is a very precious life. She cannot lose her lover because she needs and depends on her love for her entire life. Thus, the drug becomes a necessity in the addict's life, like the songwriter lover who needs it in her life. Therefore, an addictive substance is like an obsession in the sense of necessity and addiction.

My Drug (M-04-01)

Denotative	Connotative
An addictive substance	Obsession
[+Necessity] [+Addiction]	[+Necessity] [+Addiction]

5. Delicate

Datum M-05-01: *A mansion*

A mansion, retrieved from *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (2023) and *Cambridge Dictionary* (2023), is a very large, impressive, and expensive house. Usually, this enormous house has a beautiful interior and exterior, which impresses people. People admire how large and beautiful the mansion is.

In the third verse of this song, *handsome you're a mansion with a view*, the songwriter describes the man as a mansion. Indeed, the man here is a human, not a house. Thus, this phrase is a metaphor. This phrase connotatively means that someone is impressive, a man who makes the songwriter admire him because he is handsome, as mentioned in the lyric. Therefore, a large house is like a good-looking man in the sense of being impressive or admired.

A Mansion (M-05-01)

Denotative	Connotative
A very large, impressive, and expensive house	A good-looking man
[+Building] [+Impressive] [+Admired]	[+Building] [+Impressive] [+Admired]

6. Look What You Made Me Do

Datum M-06-04: *Rose up from the dead*

Dead, retrieved from *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (2023), means no longer alive. Death comes to every person without any exception. It shows that human is weak because they are not immortal. Then, *rose up from the dead* denotatively means to become alive again after having died. The phrase *rose up from the dead* is mentioned in the pre-chorus, *Honey, I rose up from the dead, I do it all the time*. However, the songwriter is not dead yet. She is still alive. Thus, the dead here is a metaphor.

Dead here portrays the songwriter's weakness when she was at her lowest time before she released the *Reputation* Album. Having problems with some artists and getting bullied on social media led her to fragility. It also made her disappear from social media. No news from

her is like she was no longer alive. But then, as written in the pre-chorus, *but I got smarter, I got harder in the nick of time*, she became stronger and rose from her fragility. She came back to the world. Therefore, death is like fragility in the sense of being weak.

Rose Up from the Dead (M-06-04)

Denotative

To become alive again after having died
[+Weak]

Connotative

To rose from fragility and become stronger
[+Weak]

7. So It Goes...

Datum M-07-02: *Gray days*

Retrieved from *Cambridge Dictionary* (2023), the day is 24 hours. Besides that, according to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (2023), gray means the colour of smoke or ashes. *Cambridge Dictionary* also added that gray is the colour of rain clouds. Thus, from the above definitions, *gray days* mean a time with cloudy weather. When the sky is covered by gray rain clouds, the sky that was previously bright and blue becomes gray. The clouds that block the sun's rays make them cannot shine on the earth. Without sunlight, the sky and the earth become dark.

However, *gray days* here are not talking about the weather. In the second verse, *I make all your gray days clear*, someone cannot change the weather. Thus, this phrase is a metaphor where the songwriter connotatively addresses a gloomy time in someone's life. At this time, when someone is gloomy, the person is sad and in a no-hope condition. Gloomy is portrayed as not bright or dark. It is the same as the dark sky caused by clouds. Therefore, cloudy days are like gloomy days in the sense of the dark.

Gray Days (M-07-02)

Denotative

Cloudy Weather
[+Dark]

Connotative

Gloomy
[+Dark]

8. Gorgeous

Datum M-08-01: *Magnetic field*

A magnetic field is an area around the magnet. When a metal is in a magnetic field, the metal will be attracted and stick to the magnet. Retrieved from *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (2023), a magnetic field is an area around a magnet or magnetic object where a force will attract metals towards it.

The charm here is about the handsomeness of the man. Like the song title, *Gorgeous*, in the chorus, *you're so gorgeous, I can't say anything to your face, 'cause look at your face, (gorgeous)*, the songwriter is enchanted by his gorgeousness. The lyric *your magnetic field being a little too strong* portrays how the songwriter admired the man because he had a charm that attracted her strongly.

Magnetic Field (M-08-01)

Denotative	Connotative
An area with a force that will attract some metals towards it	Charm
[+Attractiveness]	[+Attractiveness]

9. Getaway Car

Datum M-09-11: *A shotgun shot in the dark*

A shotgun is a weapon. Retrieved from *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (2023), a shotgun is a long gun that fires many small metal bullets used for shooting birds or animals in particular. The act of firing that shotgun is called shoot or shot in the past tense. On the other hand, dark means with no or very little light. Thus, *a shotgun shot in the dark* denotatively means a long gun that fires small metal bullets in very little light.

The phrase is mentioned in the last line of the pre-chorus of this song, *we never had a shotgun shot in the dark*, which is a metaphor. Retrieved from *Cambridge Dictionary* (2023), this phrase is an idiom that means an attempt to guess something when you have no information or knowledge about the subject and therefore cannot possibly know the answer. The shot is an attempt. Retrieved from *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (2023), a shot could also be defined as an act of trying to do or achieve something. Then, the dark portrays the blindness of the answer. When someone is in a place with no light, s/he cannot see around. One doesn't know what is around the person or what is happening there. Therefore, a weapon that fires in very little light is like someone guessing something when they have no information about the subject in the sense of attempt and blindness.

A Shotgun Shot in the Dark (M-09-11)

Denotative	Connotative
A long gun that fires a lot of small metal bullets that fire in very little light	Someone that guessing something when they have no information about the subject
[+Attempt] [+Blindness]	[+Attempt] [+Blindness]

10. King of My Heart

Datum M-10-02: *American queen*

Retrieved from *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (2023), an American is a person from America, especially the United States. Meanwhile, a queen is a female ruler of an independent state who has a royal family or is the wife of a king. Thus, from the above definitions, the American Queen is a royal female independent state ruler from the United States of America. As the ruler, a queen is very honoured and admired by society.

However, the songwriter is not a royal person. Thus, the queen here is a metaphor. In the first line of the pre-chorus, *salute to me, I'm your American queen*, Swift, as the songwriter, portrays herself as someone's American Queen. She was born in Pennsylvania, one of the states of America, which makes her American. In that line, the songwriter commands the man to salute her, to show his respect and admiration for her because she is a queen who deserves the honour. Therefore, connotatively, the *American queen* here means someone who is respected.

American Queen (M-10-02)

Denotative

An American female ruler
[+Human] [+Female] [+Honored]

Connotative

A respected American woman
[+Human] [+Female] [+Honored]

11. Dancing with Our Hands Tied

Datum M-11-05: *An avalanche*

An avalanche is a natural disaster that happens unexpectedly and could cause a lot of damage. Retrieved from *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (2023)*, an avalanche is a mass of snow, ice, and rock that falls down the side of a mountain. Likewise, according to the *Cambridge Dictionary (2023)*, an avalanche is a large amount of ice, snow, and rock falling to the side of a mountain quickly.

The phrase is mentioned in the second verse of this song, *so, baby, can we dance through an avalanche*. It does not make sense to dance in a disaster because it is dangerous and life-threatening. Thus, this phrase is a metaphor. Connotatively, an avalanche is a catastrophe in someone's life. It is a sudden event that causes difficulties or causes someone to suffer. Here, someone has to face a troubled condition inevitably. The problems, worries and difficulties suddenly come to the songwriter's life as the mass of snow, ice, and rock falls quickly. Then, like a disaster causes damage, the troubles damage her. All these unpleasant things lead the songwriter into a tough time. Therefore, this natural disaster is like a misery in someone's life in the sense of harm.

An Avalanche (M-11-05)

Denotative

A natural disaster
[+Harm]

Connotative

A misery
[+Harm]

12. Dress

Datum M-12-01: *My earthquake*

An earthquake is a natural disaster caused by a geological hazard. Retrieved from *Online Etymology Dictionary (2023)*, earthquake is composed of the earth, which means land or ground, and quake, which is a move or shake violently. Thus, from the above definitions, an earthquake is a violently shaking ground. A big-scale earthquake could cause buildings to collapse into ruins, which may cause people inside to get injured by them. In this song, the earthquake is mentioned in the bridge, *flashback to my mistakes, my rebounds, my earthquakes*. The denotative meaning, natural disaster, is not suitable in this line. Thus, this phrase is a metaphor.

Overall, the bridge portrays the songwriter's lover as her support system. *Even in my worst times, you could see the best of me ... Even in my worst lies, you saw the truth of me*. He is always on the songwriter's side, even when the world is against her. Connotatively, the

earthquake illustrates the songwriter's life that shakes like the earthquake. The earthquake portrays a shock in her life that ruins her. Shock means a strong feeling of surprise because something happens, especially something unpleasant. The unpleasant event occurred in the songwriter's life and caused her life ruined into a mess, like the sudden earthquake that wrecked the building into pieces of mess. Therefore, the shaking earth is like a shocking moment in life in the sense of sudden, unpleasant, and harmfulness.

My Earthquake (M-11-01)

Denotative

A sudden, violent shaking
that causing great damage

[+Sudden] [+Unpleasant] [+Harmful]

Connotative

A shocking bad moment in life

[+Sudden] [+Unpleasant] [+Harmful]

13. This is Why We Can't Have Nice Things

Datum M-13-06: *Rain on my parade*

Retrieved from *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (2023), rain is water that falls from the sky in separate drops. Meanwhile, a parade is a public celebration of a particular day or event, usually with bands in the streets and decorated vehicles. In this song, *rain on my parade* is mentioned in the pre-chorus, *so why'd you have to rain on my parade?* A human cannot bring the rain because it comes naturally, and the songwriter is not holding a parade. Thus, this phrase is a metaphor.

The parade is held outdoors. Thus, when it's raining, it will make people there get wet and uncomfortable. They even could get sick because of it. Besides that, the rain also blocked and ruined the view, which caused people cannot enjoy the show, whereas people were supposed to be having fun in the parade because they were celebrating something. From the above explanation, connotatively, *rain on my parade* means ruining someone's happiness, like the rain prevents people from enjoying the parade. Furthermore, retrieved from *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (2023), *rain on someone's parade* is an idiom that means to prevent somebody from enjoying an event. Therefore, separate water drops that fall from the sky to a public celebration of a particular day or event are like to prevent somebody from enjoying an event in the sense of prevention.

Rain on My Parade (M-13-06)

Denotative

Separate water drops that falls from
the sky on a public celebration

[+Prevention] [-Pleasure]

Connotative

To prevent somebody from
enjoying an event

[+Prevention] [-Pleasure]

14. Call it What You Want

Datum M-14-05: *Bridges burn*

A bridge, retrieved from *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (2023), is a structure built over a road, railway, or river so people or vehicles can cross from one side to the other. In line with the *Oxford Dictionary*, retrieved from *Cambridge Dictionary*

(2023), a bridge is a structure built over a river, road, or railroad to allow people and vehicles to cross from one side to the other. Besides that, according to *Oxford and Cambridge Dictionary* (2023), burn means to destroy, damage, injure, or kill somebody or something by fire. When a bridge burns, people or vehicles from one side cannot return to the other and vice versa. Thus, from the above definitions, *bridges burn* connotatively means connecting structures that were destroyed or damaged by fire and causing people or vehicles could not cross towards it.

Bridges burn is mentioned in the second verse of this song, *and I know I make the same mistakes every time bridges burn, I never learn*. This line is about a mistake made by the songwriter and how she keeps making the same mistake. Thus, the bridge damaged by the fire does not fit this line. *Bridges burn* here is a metaphor that portrays a condition where the songwriter did something that turned into a mistake, but she could not rewind the time to fix her fault or to prevent it from happening. Like people who cannot return to the other side of the bridge because it was damaged by fire, the songwriter also could not return to her previous situation, where she had not made a mistake yet. Furthermore, this phrase comes from an idiom *burn your bridge*. Therefore, a circumstance where people cannot return from one side to another because of a damaged bridge is like a situation where someone does something, and it is impossible to return to a previous condition in the sense of something unrepeatable.

Bridges Burn (M-14-05)

Denotative

Damaged connecting structures
which cause people from one side cannot
return to the other side and vice versa

[+Unrepeatable]

Connotative

A situation where someone
do something and impossible
to return to the previous situation

[+Unrepeatable]

15. New Year's Day

Datum M-15-02: *Your midnights*

Midnights, retrieved from *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (2023), denotatively means midnight. In line with the song title and context, *New Year's Day*, the songwriter brings a new year atmosphere as the background of this song. The new year is well known for its midnight kiss tradition. In this tradition, people will spend their time together with someone on New Year's Eve. By midnight, people will do the countdown, and when it ends, they will kiss their partner. There are chemical reactions inside the human body when someone spends time or kisses someone s/he loves. One of the chemicals released is serotonin, a hormone that gives someone a sense of pleasure to make him/her happy.

However, *your midnights* here do not mean that the songwriter wants her midnight kiss or to spend her time with him on New Year's Eve. The songwriter connotatively wants to spend the happy times she has with the person. Therefore, New Year's Eve is like a happy time in the sense of happiness. Furthermore, in the chorus, *I want your midnights, but I'll be cleaning up bottles with you on New Year's Day*, the songwriter shows that true love is someone who is not only there at midnight and shares the midnight kiss but also the day after. Someone willing to stay no matter what happens, neither is good nor bad.

Your Midnights (M-15-02)

Denotative	Connotative
New Year's Eve	Happy times
[+Happiness]	[+Happiness]

Furthermore, the researchers made a snowball questionnaire that contained 15 metaphorical meanings above. Then, the researcher spread it on social media, such as Line, WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook, for three days, from 5 May 2023 until 7 May 2023. Sixty-one people filled out the questionnaires. Due to the ease of the calculation, the researchers only used 60 responses from the respondents. They were 16 to 40 years old, with the majority of 17- and 22-year-old students. They were mainly Taylor Swift fans and often listened to her songs.

The results show that 89% of respondents agreed, 10% were neutral, and 1% disagreed with the metaphorical meaning. Therefore, it can be inferred that most respondents agreed with the metaphorical meaning found in this research. Next, the researchers calculated that the standard deviation was smaller than the modus of data, which indicated that the data had less variability. The respondent's opinions with the mean, modus, and standard deviation calculation results are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Respondents' Opinion

Questions	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	\bar{X}	<i>Mo</i>	<i>s</i>
1	0	4	56	2.9	3	0.2
2	0	6	54	2.9	3	0.3
3	0	7	53	2.9	3	0.3
4	2	5	53	2.9	3	0.4
5	0	8	52	2.9	3	0.3
6	0	9	51	2.9	3	0.4
7	0	2	58	3	3	0.2
8	0	3	57	3	3	0.2
9	0	6	54	2.9	3	0.3
10	0	6	54	2.9	3	0.3
11	1	10	49	2.9	3	0.4
12	1	4	55	2.9	3	0.4
13	1	7	52	2.9	3	0.4
14	0	6	54	2.9	3	0.3
15	1	11	48	2.8	3	0.5
	6 (1%)	94 (10%)	800 (89%)			

In addition, the researchers found some of the metaphorical meaning establish patterns as follow:

Table 4. Patterns of Metaphorical Meanings

No	Category	Datum	Pattern
1	Natural Disaster	M-02-02, M-11-05, M-12-01	Hard times or unpleasantness
2	Character	M-01-11, M-03-01, M-03-04, M-09-15, M-13-01	Human traits
3	Plant	M-04-03, M-04-03	Human traits

Storms, avalanches, and earthquakes are categorized as natural disasters. Based on the results, all of them portray a condition where someone faces a difficult or unpleasant time, like a natural disaster that brings damage and harm. Next, characters in this album, such as Burton-Taylor, Bonnie-Clyde, Gatsby, Narcissus, and witches, portray someone's trait. The Burton-Taylor portrays someone famous, Bonnie-Clyde portrays a jet-set, Gatsby portrays a rich person who likes to throw a party, Narcissus represents someone who is obsessed with himself, and witches illustrate someone who is accused and punished. Lastly, the ivy and daisy poisons, that categorized as plants, also represent someone's trait. The ivy poison portrays someone toxic, and the daisy one describes someone pure and innocent.

However, not all of the metaphorical meaning found has a pattern. Besides the patterns found above, the researchers also found that the meanings are abstract. For example, the data categorized as colour, such as grey, white, blue, and golden, have an abstract pattern. Gray on the grey days portrays gloomy days and grey from shades of grey, which means vagueness. Then white portrays something not harmful, blue portrays sadness emotion, and golden represents a pleasant situation. The other examples are the data talk about the profession, such as killer, robber, thief, jailer, magician, illusionist, and queen, as well the data categorized as a place, such as an island, mansion, and circus.

3.2. Discussion

According to the data in Table 1, most metaphors are contained in the ninth track of the *Reputation* Album, the *Getaway Car* song. Of 90 metaphorical phrases, 16 of them are in this song. With many metaphors in this song, personally, this song becomes the researcher's most unexpected song. Firstly, before analyzing this metaphor, the researchers interpreted this song as a song that tells listeners about a robbery as related to the song title, *Getaway Car*. The crime scene is also portrayed clearly in the breakdown of this song: *I'm in a getaway car, I left you in the motel bar, put the money in a bag and I stole the keys*. Surprisingly, after the analysis, it turned out that this song is not solely about a robbery. Deeper than that, this song tells a story about a rebound relationship. The getaway car here is not a vehicle but metaphorically a rebound relationship. On the other hand, the least metaphor contained in three songs, *Delicate*, *Gorgeous*, and *Dress* which only have one metaphor each. Unlike the *Getaway Car*, which is arranged from many metaphors, these songs are easier to understand because almost the whole album can be interpreted literally. Thus, the song's message is conveyed to the listeners easily, like *Delicate* and *Dress*, which tells about flirting with someone or *Gorgeous* which expresses interest in someone.

Moreover, according to the questionnaires that were filled out by 60 respondents, most of them agreed with the metaphor interpretations made by the researchers. It means that the interpretations are not subjective to the researchers' opinion but are objective. The researchers inferred that those respondents agreed because they thought the meaning was related to the song or not out of context. Moreover, the respondents are mainly Taylor Swift's fans and often listen to Swift's songs, which indicates that they know about the *Reputation* Album and its songs.

After all, based on the discussion above, the researchers conclude that the song with the least metaphor is easier to understand than the most. The use of literal words makes the song's meaning clear, whereas the use of metaphor may lead the listeners to miscommunication even though it makes the lyrics more beautiful. The metaphors, the non-literal expressions, have to be interpreted figuratively. It makes listeners have to guess the real meaning, which causes the song's context or the message that the songwriter wants to convey tricky and harder to understand. As the researchers mentioned in the introduction chapter, understanding messages becomes a significant part of communication. In this case, the researchers find it easier to understand the whole context and the real message of songs in the *Reputation* Album after understanding the metaphors. Thus, metaphor comprehension is significant due to understanding the overall context of the *Reputation* Album to avoid miscommunication between the songwriter or singer and the listeners.

Besides that, as mentioned in the introduction, this research is similar to the journal entitled *Tourist Attractions in Campursari Lyrics: Analysis of Figurative Language and Meaning* by Purnomo, et al. and *Metaphorical Analysis and the Meaning of the Song "Another One Bite the Dust" by Queen* by Zulaika, et. al. The journal by Purnomo aimed to find the figurative language types and their meaning types in *campursari* songs. The result of this journal is there are 5 figurative language types and 7 meaning types, which lead to a better understanding of the lyrics. On the other hand, the Zulaika journal aimed to find the metaphor and analyze its function in the Queen song. As a result, there are 15 metaphors and 4 metaphor functions based on Jacobson's theory. The similarities between this research and previous research are examining figurative language or metaphor in the song and discovering its meaning. However, this research is different from those two previous studies. Besides the dissimilar data, theories, and approaches, what makes this research different from previous studies listed above is the pattern of the metaphorical meaning findings examined in this study, as mentioned in the findings section. This finding gives the novelty for this research and makes it different from other studies above.

4. CONCLUSION

This research has been able to meet the research objectives articulated in the Introduction. The objective of the study concerns the metaphor meanings. As proved in the analysis, all denotative meaning is like the connotative one in the sense of semantic properties, which are abstracts and build patterns. The findings are expected to make listeners better know and understand the metaphors and their meanings in the *Reputation* Album. By their understanding of the metaphors and their meaning, miscommunication between the singer-songwriter and listeners can be avoided.

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