

The Conceptual Metaphors Of “Sorrow” In The Song Lyrics By John Lennon

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Abstract- This article delves into the conceptual metaphors of “sorrow” in the song lyrics by John Lennon. Utilizing a focused analysis of the song’s lyrical content, it seeks to decode the layers of meaning encapsulated within its verses. Through the lens of conceptual metaphor theory, the research elucidates the various source domains used to map onto the target domain of “sorrow”. The investigation reveals how such metaphors not only deepen the emotional resonance of the songs but also reflect broader author’s perceptions of sorrow in song lyrics.

Index Terms- Conceptual metaphors, sorrow, source domain, target domain, song lyrics.

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

John Lennon, a founding member of The Beatles and a significant solo artist, has left an indelible mark on the world of music, particularly through his exploration of sorrow. His songwriting, characterized by its depth and innovation, has been a subject of academic interest for decades. Conceptual metaphor theory, introduced by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in their seminal work “Metaphors We Live By,” posits that our understanding of abstract concepts is largely shaped by metaphoric thinking, using more concrete experiences. Lennon’s lyrics are a fertile ground for such an analysis because of their rich imagery and emotional depth. This study aims to explore the conceptual metaphors of sorrow in John Lennon’s song lyrics, drawing from a broad spectrum of his works, both with The Beatles and in his solo career. By examining how Lennon articulates these emotions, the study seeks to offer insights into his emotional landscape and artistic expression. This investigation not only contributes to the field of music studies and literary analysis but also enriches the understanding of emotional expression in popular music. The relevance of this study lies in its potential to enhance our understanding of metaphorical expressions in song lyrics and their impact on listeners. Furthermore, it endeavors to bridge the gap between linguistic analysis and musical expression, providing a deeper understanding of one of the 20th century’s most influential musicians.

1.2. Theoretical background

1.2.1. Theoretical background of conceptual metaphor:

The exploration of conceptual metaphor (CM) originated in linguistics, cognitive science, and philosophy, achieving significance with George Lakoff and Mark Johnson’s publication of “Metaphors We Live By” in 1980 (Lakoff, 1980). This era marked the rise of cognitive linguistics, a paradigm that highlights the significance of cognitive processes and mental structures in understanding language. Central to the development of this paradigm were Lakoff and Johnson, who posited that metaphors transcend mere linguistic ornamentation, serving as essential tools for grasping abstract concepts through the mechanism of “conceptual metaphor.” This concept bridges tangible experiences with abstract ideas. Their pioneering work laid the groundwork for further research into how metaphors differ across languages and cultures and their impact on cognition, communication, and societal norms. The investigation into conceptual metaphors has broadened, influencing various disciplines such as psychology, anthropology, literature, and communication studies, and has been applied to analyze phenomena from political rhetoric to marketing strategies. CM is formed based on human experiences with the world, wherein one domain (usually the concrete) is utilized to comprehend another domain (typically more abstract); the former is referred to as the source domain, while the latter is called the target domain. This encompasses Lakoff’s foundational concepts on cognitive models and modeling, concepts and conceptualization, embodiment, image schemas, mapping, and the Pragglejaz (Pragglejaz, 2007) process for identifying CM.

Despite its widespread acceptance, the field has undergone critical examination and refinement, addressing the diversity of metaphors among cultures, the physical basis of metaphorical thinking, and how cultural contexts shape metaphorical interpretation. The contributions to the study of conceptual metaphors have significantly enhanced our comprehension of the interplay between language and thought, shedding light on metaphorical thinking’s cognitive underpinnings and emphasizing metaphors’ integral role in human understanding, communication, and cultural expression.

1.2.2. The concept of “sorrow”

“Sorrow” is also a very abstract concept. It can be a complex aspect of human experience, understood and evaluated from many

different perspectives. It is not just a sensation of physical discomfort but also a deep emotional state that can arise from various sources. In this study, we are interested in the psychological perspective, where sorrow can manifest through a range of emotions such as sadness, anxiety, despair, loneliness, deceit, regret, loss, and remorse. Furthermore, psychological sorrow can also stem from unconscious experiences or concerns about the future. Additionally, the concept of sorrow can vary according to culture and social context.

According to Collins Cobuild advanced Dictionary of American English cúa Thomson (Thomson, 2007) “Sorrow is a feeling of deep sadness or regret” and according to Oxford Learner’s Dictionary (Hornby, 2003) “sorrow” has 2 meanings:

- a feeling of great sadness because something very bad has happened
- a very sad event or situation

1.2.3. John Lennon’s biography

John Lennon, born on October 9, 1940, in Liverpool, England, became one of the most influential figures in 20th-century music and culture. Despite a challenging early life marked by his parents' separation and being raised by his aunt Mimi Smith, Lennon’s passion for music led him to form The Quarrymen in 1956. Meeting Paul McCartney in 1957 was pivotal, as their songwriting partnership became the foundation of The Beatles. By 1960, with George Harrison and Ringo Starr, The Beatles' innovative music revolutionized popular culture with hits like “Hey Jude,” “Let It Be,” and “Yesterday.”

Lennon's songwriting often blended introspection and social commentary, influenced by his personal experiences and relationship with artist Yoko Ono, whom he married in 1969. Their union was notable for its peace activism, including the famous “Bed-In for Peace.” After The Beatles disbanded in 1970, Lennon’s solo career continued to reflect his beliefs, with iconic songs like “Imagine,” “Give Peace a Chance,” and “Instant Karma!” embodying his vision for a better world. In the mid-1970s, Lennon took a hiatus from music to focus on raising his son, Sean, but returned in 1980 with the well-received album “Double Fantasy,” a collaboration with Ono. Tragically, on December 8, 1980, Lennon was assassinated by Mark David Chapman outside his New York City residence. Lennon's legacy endures through his music and messages of peace and love, influencing generations of musicians and activists. His life exemplified the power of music as a force for change and continues to inspire with the ideals he championed.

1.3. Purposes of the study

The purpose of this study is to explore and elucidate source domains of conceptual metaphors to express “sorrow” as well as identify the frequency of conceptual metaphors embedded in John Lennon’s song lyrics. The second purpose is to get to how personal style and social context influence his musical works.

1.4. Research questions

With the above mentioned purposes, the study addresses the following research questions:

- 1.4.1. *What are the conceptual metaphors of “sorrow” found in the song lyrics by John Lennon?*

- 1.4.2. *How do John Lennon’s personal style and social context influence his musical works in relation to sorrow?*

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The exploration of emotion in literature and music through metaphorical expressions is a well-established area of study in both cognitive linguistics and musicology. Conceptual metaphor theory, pioneered by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), asserts that our conceptual system is fundamentally metaphorical in nature. This theory provides a framework to analyze how abstract thoughts and emotions of sorrow, are understood through more tangible experiences.

Conceptual Metaphor Theory

The foundation of this research is rooted in the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), primarily developed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) (Lakoff, 1980), who argue that metaphors are not merely decorative linguistic elements but serve as fundamental mechanisms through which humans conceptualize the world. Their seminal work, “Metaphors We Live By,” posits that abstract concepts are often understood in terms of more concrete experiences, a principle that has been extensively applied in analyzing linguistic and artistic expressions of emotion and thought.

Metaphors in Music

Music, with its rich emotive and expressive capacity, provides a fertile ground for metaphorical exploration. Scholars like Zbikowski (Zbikowski, 2002), have extended the application of CMT into the realm of music, suggesting that metaphorical thinking is instrumental in how listeners interpret and find meaning in musical compositions. This intersection between music and metaphor has been further explored in studies focusing on how specific emotions are conveyed through musical metaphors, with research by Gibbs (Raymond W. Gibbs, 1999) and Koelsch (Koelsch, 2015) highlighting the cognitive processes involved in musical emotion perception.

“Sorrow” in Music:

In the exploration of emotion within music, “sorrow” is a theme that transcends cultural and temporal boundaries, offering a poignant lens through which listeners and scholars alike can engage with musical compositions. The expression of sorrow in music often employs minor keys, slow tempos, and descending melodies, which universally evoke a melancholic response. Scholars such as Kastner (2015) argue that these musical elements mimic the physiological responses to sadness, such as lowered energy and subdued movement, thus enhancing the listener's emotional experience.

The portrayal of sorrow in lyrics utilizes rich metaphorical language that conveys the depth and complexity of grief and loss. Lyrical exploration of sorrow can transform personal grief into a collective experience, as observed in the works of artists like Leonard Cohen and Adele, whose lyrics often reflect themes of heartache and personal tragedy. These artists use metaphors of darkness, weather, and physical landscapes to articulate their emotional states, creating a resonant space where listeners can find solace and understanding.

Theoretical discussions by musicologists like Juslin and Sloboda (2010) have further detailed the psychological mechanisms through which music induces sorrow, suggesting that music's structure can trigger real emotional responses through mimicry of mournful speech, and through evoking memories and sensations associated with sadness. This intersection of psychology and musicology provides a valuable framework for understanding how sorrow is both represented and experienced within the medium of music.

3. RESEARCH FINDINGS

3.1. The predominant source domains expressing “sorrow” found in the song lyrics by John Lennon

In music, “sorrow” is depicted through various source domains such as tears, darkness, rain, hell, coldness, and brokenness. Tears serve as a complex metaphor for pain, representing both physical suffering and emotional release, washing away pretense and revealing true emotions. In the metaphor SORROW IS TEARS, tears signify the depth of life's

experiences and authenticity in relationships. Darkness portrays pain as an obscure and often impenetrable entity, hiding details and symbolizing the absence of happiness and peace. SORROW IS DARKNESS highlights how pain obscures emotions, making them difficult to understand and process. Rain can signify both relief and sorrow, symbolizing the natural yet harsh aspects of pain. The metaphor SORROW IS RAIN reflects the dual nature of pain as both a release and a source of ongoing suffering, with its transient nature indicating loss and the fading of hope. Coldness conveys emotional isolation and numbness, slowing life's flow and highlighting loneliness and detachment. SORROW IS COLDNESS captures the emotional freezing and isolation caused by pain. Brokenness, symbolizing both physical and spiritual fractures, reflects deep emotional cracks that are difficult to heal. The metaphor SORROW IS BREAKING illustrates how pain shatters the spirit, causing profound internal damage.

This section will analyze those conceptual metaphors based on a survey of 50 song lyrics as the following table of data:

CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR OF SORROW	Metaphor expressions		Metaphorically expressed words	
	No. songs	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
SORROW IS TEARS	6	12	12	24
SORROW IS DARKNESS	2	4	2	4
SORROW IS RAIN	4	8	4	8
SORROW IS COLDNESS	2	4	2	4

Table 1: Statistical table of conceptual metaphors of “Sorrow”

3.1.1. SORROW IS TEARS

In figurative language, “tears” are not merely an expression of sadness, but also a means to share and release repressed emotions. Saying “SORROW IS TEARS” not only evokes the image of vulnerability but also represents inner strength – the ability to confront and acknowledge one's own pain. Through the metaphor of “tears,” this expression also highlights the connection between body and soul, between the individual and the community, as personal pain is understood and shared by those around us.

In the conceptual metaphor SORROW IS TEARS, the source domain “tears” encompasses four primary attributes: they are visible, they flow from the eyes, and they are triggered by an external factor and are sometimes uncontrollable. When these attributes are mapped onto the target domain “sorrow,” they illustrate how sorrow is something that can be felt, originates from the heart, has a cause, and is often difficult to control as stated in the following mapping:

Source domain (Tears)		Target domain (Sorrow)
They are visible	>>>	Something that can be felt
They flow from the eyes	>>>	Originates from the heart
They are triggered by an external factor	>>>	Originates from the heart
Sometimes uncontrollable	>>>	Often difficult to control

1. Mapping diagram SORROW IS TEAR

There are 4 attributes of the source domain “tears” mapping onto the target domain “sorrow”. The first one is “visibility” as metaphorically stated in the following examples:

- (1) “And a bit of **tear** and flesh”. (Give me something)
- (2) “Well, everybody’s **crying** and no one makes a sound”. (Nobody told me)

Visibility in the metaphor SORROW IS TEARS is depicted through the presence of tears and the act of weeping. The line “And a bit of tear and flesh” uses the tangible imagery of tears mixed with flesh to emphasize the physical manifestation of sorrow. “Well, everybody’s crying and no one makes a sound” portrays a collective, silent sorrow where the visibility of tears contrasts with the absence of sound, highlighting the profound yet

visible impact of grief. The second one is “flow from the eyes” as metaphorically stated in the following example:

(3) “I’m sorry that I made you **cry**”. (Jealous guy)

The flow of tears from the eyes directly symbolizes the outpouring of sorrow. In “I’m sorry that I made you cry,” the act of making someone cry suggests that sorrow is being expressed through tears that flow from the eyes. This flow represents the release of emotional pain. The third one is “triggered by an external factor” as metaphorically stated in the following example:

(4) “Somewhere Mama’s **weeping** for her blue-eyed boy”. (Man of peace)

Sorrow often has an external cause, which is highlighted in these expressions “Somewhere Mama’s weeping for her blue-eyed boy,” illustrates an external cause of sorrow: the loss or harm of her child. The external trigger here is the event concerning the blue-eyed boy that caused the mother’s sorrowful weeping.

The last one is “uncontrollability” as stated as “shed a tear” or “crying”:

(5) “I won’t cry, I won’t **cry**, no, I won’t shed a **tear**”. (Stand by me)

(6) “Why do I laugh when I feel like **crying**?”. (Every man has a woman who loves him)

These lines emphasize the uncontrollable nature of sorrow. In “I won’t cry, I won’t cry, no, I won’t shed a tear,” the repetition and insistence on not crying highlight the struggle to control an overwhelming emotion. Despite the speaker’s efforts, the underlying sorrow is implied to be powerful and difficult to contain. “Why do I laugh when I feel like crying?” captures the conflict between outward expressions and inner emotions. The desire to cry, despite laughing, shows how sorrow can be difficult to suppress and control, revealing the involuntary and overpowering nature of deep emotional pain.

In conclusion, the metaphor SORROW IS TEARS effectively maps the attributes of tears onto the concept of sorrow.

The visibility of tears parallels the perceptibility of sorrow; the flow of tears from the eyes mirrors the deep, emotional origin of sorrow; and the external triggers and uncontrollable nature of tears reflect the causation and difficulty in managing sorrow. These metaphorical expressions vividly illustrate the multifaceted nature of sorrow, making the abstract concept more tangible and relatable through the lens of tears.

3.1.2. SORROW IS DARKNESS

The metaphorical source of “darkness” in SORROW IS DARKNESS offers a profound and rich perspective on how we perceive and describe pain. In many cultures and contexts, darkness is often associated with the absence of light, unclear or hidden things, inexplicable feelings, loss of faith and hope, and feelings of loneliness and incomprehensibility. “Darkness” is not merely the lack of light but a psychological state immersed in obscurity and loss. When we say SORROW IS DARKNESS, we describe pain as an overwhelming entity that engulfs the mind and obscures other perceptions of life. Comparing pain to “darkness” also emphasizes the aspect of uncertainty, where each person must find their own way through it. Thus, “darkness” in this metaphor symbolizes not just the absence of light but also represents a deeper entity, a metaphor for the darkest human experiences, challenging us to confront and overcome them.

In the conceptual metaphor SORROW IS DARKNESS, the source domain “darkness” encompasses two primary attributes: lack of light, and being obscured and hidden. When these attributes are mapped onto the target domain “sorrow,” they transform into notions of lack of faith and hope, and emotions being concealed and difficult to understand. The provided metaphorical expressions illustrate these attributes and their mappings onto the concept of sorrow as the following mapping:

Source domain (darkness)		Target domain (Sorrow)
Lack of light	>>>	Lack of faith and hope
Being obscured and hidden	>>>	Emotions being concealed and difficult to understand

2. Mapping diagram SORROW IS DARKNESS

There are 2 attributes of the source domain “darkness” mapping onto the target domain “sorrow”. The first one is “lack of light” as in:

(7) “When the night has come, and the land is **dark**”

The attribute of darkness as a lack of light is directly tied to the idea of sorrow as a state of hopelessness or despair. “When the night has come, and the land is dark” uses the imagery of night and dark land to symbolize a period of sorrow and hopelessness. The absence of light represents the absence of joy and hope, making the connection between darkness and sorrow clear. The other one is “being obscured and hidden” as in this following example:

(8) “When the night has come, and the land is **dark**”. (Stand by me)

Darkness as something that obscures and hides reflects how sorrow can conceal true emotions and make it difficult to understand or express them. “Then I’m lying in the darkness”

suggests a state of hidden sorrow, where the individual is submerged in their own hidden emotions, unable to bring them to light. The use of “lying” indicates passivity and being overwhelmed by the hidden aspects of sorrow. “When the night has come, and the land is dark” emphasizes the pervasive and all-encompassing nature of sorrow, where everything becomes obscured, and it’s hard to discern any details or emotions clearly. This expression underscores how sorrow can shroud one’s life in darkness, making it difficult to navigate or understand one’s feelings.

In conclusion, the metaphor SORROW IS DARKNESS effectively maps the attributes of darkness onto the concept of sorrow. The lack of light in darkness reflects a lack of faith and hope in sorrow; the lack of clarity in darkness represents the inexplicability of sorrow; and the obscured and hidden nature of darkness parallels how sorrow can conceal true emotions, making them difficult to understand. These metaphorical expressions

vividly illustrate the multifaceted nature of sorrow, making the abstract concept more tangible and relatable through the lens of darkness.

3.1.3. SORROW IS RAIN

The metaphorical source of “rain” in SORROW IS RAIN leverages a familiar yet powerfully expressive image. Rain, in its physical nature, is a natural event that brings life but can also evoke feelings of gloom, coldness, and even disruption. These characteristics are used to describe pain in the psychological and emotional understanding of humans. Gentle rain symbolizes mild,

deep-seated pain that is not overwhelming. Conversely, heavy rain and storms represent intense, uncontrollable pain. Sudden showers are like fleeting pains, while persistent rains resemble prolonged, heavy pain that deeply affects daily life.

In the conceptual metaphor SORROW IS RAIN, the source domain “rain” carries several attributes: it has visible signs (clouds, wind), it changes with the seasons, and it can last long or pass quickly. When these attributes are mapped onto the target domain “sorrow,” they transform into notions of being recognizable, changing with circumstances, and enduring or fleeting as stated in the following mapping:

Source domain (Rain)		Target domain (Sorrow)
It has visible signs (clouds, wind),	>>>	Being recognizable
It changes with the seasons	>>>	Changing with circumstances
It can last long or pass quickly		Enduring or fleeting

3. Mapping diagram SORROW IS RAIN

There are 3 attributes of the source domain “rain” mapping onto the target domain “sorrow”. The first one is that “It has visible signs (clouds, wind)” as in:

(9) “As it started to rain”. (9 dream)

Visible signs of rain, such as clouds and wind, are akin to the recognizable signs of sorrow. “As it started to rain” signifies the beginning of a recognizable emotional change. Just as rain is preceded by observable signs, the onset of sorrow can be marked by visible changes in demeanor, behavior, or external circumstances. This expression captures the initial, observable phase of sorrow, indicating that emotional turbulence is approaching, much like the first drops of rain signal an impending shower. The second one is “changing with the seasons” as in:

(10) “Rain or shine or life or death”. (Every man has a woman who loves him)

Rain changes with the seasons, just as sorrow fluctuates with life’s circumstances. “Rain or shine or life or death” highlights the variability of experiences and emotions. This expression suggests that, like the changing weather, sorrow and joy are part of the natural ebb and flow of life. The juxtaposition of “rain or shine” with “life or death” underscores the inevitability of changing emotional states, reflecting how sorrow can come and go, influenced by the broader context of one’s life. The third one is that “It can last long or pass quickly” as in:

(11) “Saving up your money for a rainy day”. (The ballad of John and Yoko)

Rain can last long or pass quickly, reflecting the varying durations of sorrow. “Saving up your money for a rainy day” implies the expectation of future sorrow that could endure for a significant period. This expression suggests preparedness for tough times, indicating an awareness that sorrow, like rain, will

come and may last long enough to require foresight and preparation. It captures the enduring aspect of sorrow, where individuals brace themselves for prolonged emotional hardship.

In conclusion, the metaphor “SORROW IS RAIN” effectively maps the attributes of rain onto the concept of sorrow. The visible signs of rain reflect the recognizable indicators of sorrow; the seasonal changes in rain parallel how sorrow changes with circumstances; the cooling effect of rain symbolizes the numbing effect of sorrow; and the duration of rain parallels the enduring or fleeting nature of sorrow. These metaphorical expressions vividly illustrate the multifaceted nature of sorrow, making the abstract concept more tangible and relatable through the lens of rain.

3.1.4. SORROW IS COLDNESS

The metaphorical source of “coldness” in SORROW IS COLDNESS explores the image of coldness or the lack of warmth, evoking feelings of loneliness and isolation. Coldness is not just a physical state but also a symbol of the absence of warmth, closeness, and a sense of being cared for. In this conceptual metaphor, “coldness” is used to describe pain not only emotionally but also spiritually. It encompasses feelings of abandonment, isolation, and emotional deprivation, which people deeply experience during the most difficult moments of their lives.

In the conceptual metaphor SORROW IS COLDNESS, the source domain “coldness” encompasses three primary attributes: lack of warmth, and perceptibility. When these attributes are mapped onto the target domain “sorrow”, they transform into notions of lack of sharing, and being able to be felt as in the following mapping:

Source domain (coldness)		Target domain (Sorrow)
Lack of warmth	>>>	Lack of sharing
Perceptibility	>>>	Being able to be felt

4. Mapping diagram SORROW IS COLDNESS

There are 2 attributes of the source domain “coldness” mapping onto the target domain “sorrow”. The first one is that “lack of warmth” as in:

(12) “The food is cold/ Your eyes are cold/ The window’s cold/ The bed’s cold”. (Give me something)

Coldness as a lack of warmth directly translates to the absence of emotional warmth and comfort in the context of sorrow. “The food is cold/ Your eyes are cold/ The window’s cold/ The bed’s cold” uses physical coldness to convey an environment devoid of warmth and comfort, suggesting that everything around is marked by the chill of sorrow. The “perceptibility” is the second attribute and metaphorically stated in this example:

(13) “Something warm, sudden cold”. (9 Dream)

(14) “Why death/ Why Life/ Warm hearts/ Cold darts”. (9 Dream)

Coldness is easily perceptible, just as sorrow can be felt deeply. “The food is cold/ Your eyes are cold/ The window’s cold/ The bed’s cold” lists multiple instances of coldness, each perceptible through physical sensation, underscoring how sorrow can be similarly felt in various aspects of life. The coldness of the food, eyes, window, and bed collectively portray a pervasive sense of sorrow that is tangible and unmistakable. “Why death/ Why Life/ Warm hearts/ Cold darts” uses the contrast between warm and cold to emphasize the perceptibility of sorrow. The “cold darts” are felt sharply against the “warm hearts,” making the presence of sorrow distinct and palpable.

In conclusion, the metaphor SORROW IS COLDNESS effectively maps the attributes of coldness onto the concept of sorrow. The lack of warmth in coldness reflects the absence of sharing in sorrow; the sense of isolation in coldness parallels the feeling of loneliness in sorrow; and the perceptibility of coldness mirrors how sorrow can be sharply felt. These metaphorical expressions vividly illustrate the multifaceted nature of sorrow, making the abstract concept more tangible and relatable through the lens of coldness

3.2. John Lennon’s personal style and social context influence on his musical works in relation to sorrow

John Lennon's musical works are profoundly shaped by his personal style and the social context of his time, particularly in their exploration of sorrow. From the early days with The Beatles, Lennon's music exhibited traces of sorrow amidst general happiness. For instance, “Help!” is a poignant cry for assistance, revealing his personal struggles and vulnerability behind the band's cheerful facade.

As the 1960s progressed, Lennon's songwriting evolved to include more introspective themes. Albums like “Rubber Soul” and “Revolver” showcased deeper explorations of his inner world. “In My Life” blends nostalgia with melancholic reflections on past experiences and lost relationships. “Strawberry Fields Forever” captures a whimsical yet longing tone, illustrating the dual nature of human emotions. Lennon's solo career further emphasized sorrow. Songs like “Mother” and “Isolation” delve into feelings of abandonment and loneliness, offering stark portrayals of his sorrows. Despite hopeful messages in some works, his personal sorrow remained central, reflecting his emotional struggles. The social context of the 1960s and 1970s shaped Lennon's music, bringing out themes of disillusionment and sorrow. “Revolution” reflects ambivalence and uncertainty, while the 1970s peace

activism highlighted ongoing struggles and injustices. “Working Class Hero” underscores the harsh realities faced by ordinary people, emphasizing the gap between idealistic visions and sorrowful truths.

Lennon's personal life and relationships also influenced his music. Battles with addiction and the pressures of fame are evident in tracks like “Jealous Guy” offering raw expressions of his inner sorrow and struggles.

4. Conclusion

In examining the conceptual metaphors of “sorrow” in John Lennon's song lyrics, this study has illuminated the intricate ways in which sorrow is expressed through metaphoric language. By employing the framework of conceptual metaphor theory, the analysis has revealed how Lennon utilizes various source domains such as tears, darkness, rain, and coldness to convey the multifaceted nature of sorrow. These metaphors not only enhance the emotional depth of his lyrics but also reflect his broader perceptions and experiences of sorrow.

The metaphor SORROW IS TEARS illustrates sorrow as a visible, emotional release, mapping attributes of tears such as visibility, flow, external triggers, and uncontrollability onto the abstract concept of sorrow. The SORROW IS DARKNESS metaphor conveys the obscuring and overwhelming nature of sorrow, depicting it as a lack of light and clarity. SORROW IS RAIN highlights the variability and inevitability of sorrow, drawing parallels between the changing, visible, and enduring aspects of rain and emotional pain. Lastly, SORROW IS COLDNESS portrays sorrow as a lack of warmth and emotional isolation, emphasizing the perceptible and tangible experience of sorrow.

John Lennon's music, shaped by his personal style and the social context of his time, often explores themes of sorrow. Early Beatles songs like “Help!” reveal his struggles beneath a cheerful exterior. As his songwriting matured, albums like “Rubber Soul” and “Revolver” included introspective themes with songs like “In My Life” blending nostalgia and melancholy. In his solo career, tracks such as “Mother” and “Isolation” delve into feelings of abandonment and loneliness. Social upheavals of the 1960s and 1970s influenced his music, with “Revolution” and “Working Class Hero” reflecting disillusionment and societal struggles. Lennon's personal battles, including addiction and fame, further colored his music, as evident in “Jealous Guy”.

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