



Metaphor analysis in the lyrics of Red Hot Chilli Peppers' "Black Summer"

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to investigate the use of metaphor in the lyrics of the song "Black Summer" by Red Hot Chili Peppers through a stylistic analysis based on Nurgiyantoro's metaphor classification. The research aims to identify the types of metaphors employed in the lyrics and interpret their contextual meanings within the song's thematic framework. Using a qualitative descriptive method and a close-reading technique, the study categorizes metaphorical expressions and analyzes them through semantic interpretation and symbolic contextualization. The analysis identifies two types of metaphors: explicit and implicit. The findings show a more substantial presence of explicit metaphors, indicating the lyrical intention to convey emotional states and psychological conditions through direct figurative comparisons. Meanwhile, implicit metaphors appear in subtler symbolic forms, emphasizing indirect emotional nuances. Both types of metaphors contribute to constructing layers of meaning related to emotional alienation, inner conflict, psychological turbulence, and existential uncertainty depicted in the song. Overall, metaphor in "Black Summer" functions not only as an aesthetic feature but also as a conceptual tool to articulate complex emotional experiences and existential struggles. The study highlights the role of figurative language in shaping thematic depth and emotional tone in contemporary English song lyrics. The results are expected to support further stylistic research, particularly those examining metaphor in modern music discourse and exploring how linguistic creativity reflects psychological and cultural expression.

Keywords: Black Summer; metaphor; song lyrics; stylistics

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INTRODUCTION

Language in the song lyrics serves as a medium of expression that is rich in meaning and linguistic styles, conveying messages not only directly but also through various metaphorical expressions that significantly enhance the listener's experience and deepen their appreciation of the song (Oktaviani & Sukardi, 2024). The song lyrics serve as a means of artistic communication, combining language and music to convey profound and emotional meaning. The song lyrics enable the creators to express their complex emotions, narratives, and ideas through an aesthetic approach, making the message easily accessed and understandable to listeners (González, 2021). As a work of art,

a song allows its creator or singer to express emotions, ideas, and personal experiences through a sequence of sounds and words. Through the combination of melody and lyrics, a song becomes an artwork that not only expresses feelings but can also be used to voice social, political, and cultural issues (Wahyudin & Hermendra, 2024). Many songs are created as a form of concern for societal issues and as a means to encourage positive change. On the other hand, songs can also function as a form of emotional outlet or a medium for self-reflection. Thus, songs serve as a means of communication that allows individuals to express emotions and thoughts through musical language. The use of figurative language, narrative structures, and

stylistic elements in the lyrics can make songs be regarded as a form of limited literature that possesses its literary value (Washadi & Sari, 2024).

One of the commonly used figures of speech in song lyrics is metaphors, which is a comparison or analogy that does not directly mention the object being compared but uses other symbols or imagery to convey a deeper meaning (Helmi et al., 2021). Metaphors are generally understood as indirect and implicit comparisons. Fundamentally, a metaphor involves two elements: the thing being compared and the comparator. Metaphors are generally divided into three types: explicit (in praesentia), implicit (in absentia), and dead/conventional metaphor (Nurgiyantoro, 2018). In a metaphor, one thing is presented as another to create a more profound or symbolic meaning. For example, when time is described as money, it implies that time holds great value and should be used wisely.

As a figure of speech, metaphor plays a significant indirect role in everyday human communication and interaction with others (Soenjaya & Sari, 2022). Through metaphors, listeners of a song can understand the meanings in a more aesthetic and felt way. Within the field of linguistics, metaphor falls under the realm of semantics because it is closely connected to language meaning, particularly in how people express thoughts and feelings through verbal symbols, whether written or spoken (Apriliyanti, 2023). In song lyrics, poetic comparisons frequently play a crucial role in the emotional and thematic aspects of a work. Metaphors help listeners understand and feel the message conveyed by the creator or singer more deeply and clearly.

The study of metaphors in song lyrics holds significant importance because they are embedded in everyday life within popular culture (Septiani et al., 2022). Through song lyrics, listeners not only enjoy the rhythm and melody but are also invited to feel and understand complex human experiences, such as sadness, hope, and inner conflict, which are often conveyed implicitly through metaphorical language. Thus, understanding metaphors in song lyrics is not only a means to capture hidden meanings but also a way to deepen insight into the psychological and social dimensions reflected in musical works, thereby fostering a greater appreciation for the depth and complexity of music (Tiana et al., 2020). For example, the song "Black Summer" by Red Hot Chili Peppers not only presents musical sounds and harmonies but

also features symbolic narratives about chaos, alienation, and soul recovery.

"Black Summer" by Red Hot Chili Peppers is a song released in early 2022 that features a blend of poetic lyrics and a distinctive musical composition. The lyrics contain various symbolic and metaphorical expressions that vividly depict complex inner moods and emotional experiences, such as sadness, alienation, and hope, both explicitly and implicitly. Using imagery-rich language and figures of speech, "Black Summer" functions not only as a musical work but also as an artistic medium that effectively conveys a narrative about change and healing, inspiring listeners with its message. Therefore, this song becomes a relevant object of research for analyzing the use of metaphors in lyrics as part of stylistic analysis (Nurgiyantoro, 2018). The metaphors in this song play a crucial role in conveying these complex emotions, making the audience feel more connected and empathetic.

Several previous studies have shown that song lyrics are a medium rich in metaphorical language styles and have been widely analyzed through stylistic and semantic approaches. Septiani et al. (2022) analyzed the song "Hati-Hati di Jalan" by Tulus using a qualitative descriptive approach and metaphor classification, as outlined by Ullman. Their results showed that the song contains anthropomorphic metaphors, synesthesia, and shifts from concrete to abstract metaphors, which are used to aesthetically depict personal emotions and human relationship dynamics. Similar research was conducted by Wahyudin and Hermendra (2024) on the song "Penjaga Hati" by Nadhif Basalamah, employing a descriptive method and Nurgiyantoro's theory. Their research identified three types of metaphors: explicit, implicit, and archaic, which form poetic depictions of themes of love and sacrifice in the lyrics. Meanwhile, Apriliyanti (2023) researched metaphors in the song "Sembilu" by Fourtwnty using a qualitative descriptive method, employing listening and note-taking techniques. She found the use of explicit and implicit metaphors to be an effective way of expressing criticism of modern routines and an invitation to step out of one's comfort zone. These studies demonstrate that metaphors play a crucial role in shaping emotional and social messages in song lyrics. Metaphors not only function as stylistic elements that enhance the beauty of language but also as primary instruments in

constructing meaning, conveying criticism, and representing psychological experiences and social realities (Oktaviani & Sukardi, 2024).

Although all these studies demonstrate that metaphors play a central role in shaping emotional and social meanings in song lyrics, a gap remains in research specifically applying Nurgiyantoro's stylistic theory to the analysis of English-language song lyrics, particularly in the alternative rock genre. Most previous research focuses on Indonesian-language songs and tends to choose themes of love or interpersonal relationships. At the same time, existential contexts and psychological recovery, which are frequently present in rock lyrics, have not been deeply explored. Therefore, this research offers novelty by examining the forms and meanings of metaphors in "Black Summer" by Red Hot Chili Peppers, utilizing Nurgiyantoro's stylistic approach, which clearly distinguishes between explicit and implicit metaphors as representations of inner experiences that are not directly stated.

"Black Summer" was chosen as the subject of research because it contains symbolic and metaphorical narratives about alienation, loss of direction, and efforts to rise from dark conditions. These meanings are conveyed through metaphors embedded within the lyric structure. By identifying and interpreting the metaphors used, this research aims not only to reveal the stylistic contents within the song text but also to show how poetic language in popular music can serve as a reflective medium of modern human conditions. Thus, this research is expected to contribute to the development of stylistic analysis in semantic linguistics and expand the scope of popular literature studies within academia, primarily through the local approach developed by Nurgiyantoro.

METHOD

This research employs a qualitative descriptive method with a stylistic approach to analyze the forms and meanings of metaphors in the lyrics of "Black Summer" by the Red Hot Chili Peppers. This approach is considered relevant because stylistic analysis allows researchers to examine the use of figurative language in depth within an aesthetic and expressive context, particularly in popular literary texts such as song lyrics. The research utilizes Burhan Nurgiyantoro's (2017) theory of figures of speech, which

classifies metaphors into three types: explicit metaphor (in praesentia), implicit metaphor (in absentia), and archaic metaphor. However, this research focuses only on the first two types—explicit and implicit—to observe how the singer expresses inner experiences through indirect comparisons in the lyrics.

The data source of this research is the lyrics of "Black Summer" by Red Hot Chili Peppers which appears as the lead single in the album *Unlimited Love*, released in 2022. The song marks the band's return after a hiatus and introduces thematic elements of psychological struggle, alienation, and recovery that are strongly reflected through figurative language. Upon its release, "Black Summer" gained significant public and critical attention and was widely circulated across international music platforms, making it a relevant and representative object for stylistic analysis. Data were collected through the documentation method, in which the song lyrics were gathered as written text to be examined systematically. The analysis technique used in this study is content analysis, referring to Krippendorff's (2018) definition that content analysis is a systematic and replicable method for making valid inferences from texts to the contexts in which they are used. In this research, content analysis was applied to identify figurative language found in the lyrics and categorize them into explicit and implicit metaphors based on Nurgiyantoro's (2018) classification. After categorization, each metaphor was interpreted by examining its contextual meaning and stylistic function to reveal the emotional and thematic messages conveyed in the song.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings reveal a total of six metaphorical expressions in the lyrics of "Black Summer" by the Red Hot Chili Peppers. These expressions were then classified into three categories based on Burhan Nurgiyantoro's theory: explicit metaphor, implicit metaphor, and archaic metaphor. Of the six expressions, four were identified as explicit metaphors, while two were classified as implicit metaphors. This classification was determined based on the structure of comparison used in the lyrics and the degree of clarity in their associative meanings. Table 1 below presents the classification of metaphorical expressions based on their types:

Table 1

Classification of Metaphor Types in the Song "Black Summer" by Red Hot Chili Peppers

Metaphor	Type
A lazy rain am i	Explicit
The skies refuse to cry	Implicit
The night is dressed like noon	Explicit
The archers on the run	Implicit
Crack the flaming whip	Explicit
Riding on a headless horse	Explicit

Table 1 presents the findings on metaphorical expressions in the lyrics of "Black Summer" by the Red Hot Chili Peppers, categorized according to Burhan Nurgiyantoro's classification of metaphors. Out of eight data points analyzed, six expressions are categorized as explicit metaphors, and two expressions are categorized as implicit metaphors. The overall percentage indicates that 66.7% (sixty-six point seven percent) are explicit metaphors, while 33.3% (thirty-three point three percent) are implicit metaphors. These findings demonstrate the dominance of explicit metaphor usage in shaping the message and emotions within the song's lyrics.

To provide a deeper understanding of how these metaphors operate within the lyrical structure, each identified expression is analyzed individually. This analysis focuses on the linguistic form, contextual meaning, and symbolic interpretation of each metaphor in order to reveal how figurative language constructs the song's emotional and thematic atmosphere. The following section presents a detailed examination of all metaphorical expressions found in the lyrics, beginning with the first explicit metaphor.

Data (1)
A Lazy Rain Am I

Data (1) shows that the expression "A lazy rain am I" is a form of explicit metaphor, which directly juxtaposes the subject "I" with the natural object "lazy rain." Grammatically, this sentence employs a poetic stylistic feature by inverting the typical subject-predicate structure to create an aesthetic effect, thereby strengthening the metaphorical expression. Interpreted, the

phrase suggests that the speaker is comparing themselves to a slow, unenergetic rain, one that falls gently and without intensity. However, in reality, a human cannot become a form of weather.

This metaphor illustrates a fusion between natural elements and psychological states through a process of meaning transference. In this case, "lazy rain" does not merely refer to a passive weather phenomenon but functions as a symbol or reflection of the singer's emotional condition. By identifying as "lazy rain," the singer conveys a mental state of fatigue, stagnation, and perhaps alienation from their surroundings.

This metaphor demonstrates a stylistic strategy of constructing internal mood through a concrete yet double-layered visual image. Semantically, the comparison involves the transfer of traits from a non-human entity (rain) to a human subject (I), a process referred to as personification in metaphor theory (Nurgiyantoro, 2018). In the context of "Black Summer", this metaphor creates a lyrical atmosphere that is melancholic, ambiguous, and introspective. It represents a subject experiencing emotional emptiness or numbness, while simultaneously contrasting with the typical associations of summer as a season of warmth and vitality

Data (2)
The Skies Refuse to Cry

Data (2) indicates that the phrase "The skies refuse to cry" is a form of implicit metaphor that employs personification, where human traits are attributed to inanimate or non-human entities. The sky does not possess the capacity to perform emotional acts such as "crying." However, in metaphorical language, "cry" is often used as a figurative expression for rainfall, making "the sky cries" a poetic way of describing rain.

Stylistically, this phrase carries implicit meaning because it does not explicitly compare the sky to a human being. Nevertheless, the action "refuse to cry" can only be performed by a subject with consciousness or will. Thus, the singer implicitly associates the sky with a human-like figure who is suppressing emotions. This metaphor constructs a subdued and repressed emotional atmosphere—if the sky refuses to cry, then a potential release (in the form of rain) becomes restrained. This implies the singer's psychological state of

withholding sadness or losing the ability to feel emotionally.

Within a semantic framework, the metaphor reveals a transference of meaning from a natural phenomenon to a human internal condition. The sky's refusal to cry reflects emotional repression or a sense of numbness. Therefore, this phrase not only enhances the aesthetic quality of the lyrics but also reinforces the song's overarching themes of emptiness and the absence of emotional response in the face of distress.

Data (3)

The Night is Dressed Like Noon

Data (3) indicates that the expression "The night is dressed like noon" is an explicit metaphor that juxtaposes two naturally opposing temporal concepts: night and noon. The sentence directly states that the night is "dressed" like noon, adopting attributes that are not its own. Literally, it is nonsensical for the night to dress like a human, and even more impossible for it to resemble noon.

Stylistically, this comparison creates a sense of disorientation—a confusion or reversal of perception. A night that looks like noon can be interpreted as a condition where the boundaries between reality and illusion, or light and darkness, become blurred. Symbolically, this can represent an inner state that is no longer aligned with the reality of time or the environment, or it can depict a psychological condition that has lost clarity, direction, or stability.

Semantically, the transference of visual properties from noon to night suggests that the singer is experiencing a form of internal chaos, which is reflected in their perception of the external world. A night wearing the "clothes" of noon creates an image of something dark disguising itself as light, or suggests that even in brightness, there is a sense of concealment or falsehood. In the context of the song "Black Summer" his metaphor reinforces themes of duality and the mixture of hope and alienation. It adds poetic depth to the song's emotional narrative by blurring the line between sorrow and resilience.

Data (4)

The Archers On The Run

Data (4) reveals that the expression "The archers on the run" contains metaphorical meaning. An archer refers to a figure skilled in long-range combat, often associated with

focus, precision, and strategic thinking in battle. The phrase implies that these archers—typically symbols of strength and control—are instead retreating or fleeing.

Metaphorically, this expression is implicit, as it does not explicitly state a comparison but rather suggests meaning through symbolic imagery. "The archers" can be interpreted as a representation of individuals with purpose, direction, or specific aspirations, while "on the run" implies flight, instability, or fear. The combination of these elements forms an image of a subject losing direction or being forced to escape from reality.

In terms of stylistics, this metaphor reflects internal contradiction, where those who are usually in command and take aim are now portrayed as fleeing and threatened. This can be understood as a psychological representation of individuals under pressure, experiencing loss of control, or facing circumstances that threaten their inner stability. Within the narrative of *Black Summer*, this metaphor reinforces themes of downfall and existential tension, mirroring a fragile emotional state in which one's principles, sense of direction, or personal convictions are shaken and uncertain.

Data (5)

Crack The Flaming Whip

Data (5) reveals that the expression "Crack the flaming whip" literally depicts the action of striking with a whip that is set on fire. However, in reality, a flaming whip is not a commonly used object, making the image difficult to interpret literally. "Crack" refers to the sharp sound or forceful motion of the whip, while "flaming whip" is an extreme depiction of power or pressure. Therefore, the phrase evokes a sense of violent or intense coercion.

Stylistically, this metaphor falls into the category of explicit metaphor, as the comparison between the action and its meaning is conveyed directly. The flaming whip symbolizes painful pressure, burning coercion, or destructive control. This phrase can be interpreted as a symbol of cruel authority or a mental state filled with pressure and distress.

The use of this metaphor produces a strong emotional and dramatic effect, illustrating how the singer might be facing a situation marked by force, tension, or suffering. In the context of *Black Summer*, this metaphor reinforces the impression that the

singer is enduring a harsh and painful mental or social burden. Rather than merely embellishing the lyrics, the metaphor serves as a tool to voice invisible forms of violence, whether in the form of an oppressive system, internal trauma, or unresolved inner conflict.

Data (6)

Riding on a Headless Horse

Data (6) reveals that the expression “Riding on a headless horse” literally depicts someone riding a horse without a head. Taken literally, this image is illogical, as a headless horse cannot be alive, let alone be ridden. However, in Western horror culture, the image of a headless horse is often associated with terrifying or supernatural elements.

Stylistically, this metaphor falls into the category of explicit metaphor, as it directly juxtaposes the subject “rider” with the symbolic object “headless horse.” Within the framework of figurative meaning, the horse typically symbolizes a journey, movement, or direction in life. However, when the horse is headless—symbolically lacking control, reason, or vision—the journey becomes one of chaos and loss of direction. Thus, the metaphor implies that the singer is undergoing an emotional or existential journey in a state of confusion, without guidance, and possibly without full awareness of their intended destination.

Furthermore, this metaphor reflects a dark and uncertain existential condition. Riding a headless horse not only conveys a loss of control over life’s direction but also evokes a sense of helplessness in confronting confusing or destructive circumstances. In the context of “Black Summer”, this expression underscores the inner absurdity and turmoil the singer experiences. It portrays a somber emotional journey, and the metaphor stands out as one of the strongest indicators of a psyche engulfed in uncertainty, chaos, and a loss of purpose in navigating life.

DISCUSSION

Data (1): A lazy rain am I

The metaphor “A lazy rain am I” expresses the speaker’s identification with “lazy rain,” a form of personification that symbolizes emotional exhaustion, stagnation, and an inability to initiate recovery. While rain typically acts as a symbol of cleansing and emotional renewal, this image subverts that convention by presenting rain that refuses to

fall and therefore fails to purify. The metaphor emphasizes a suspended emotional state and delayed healing, aligning with the song’s overarching themes of internal conflict and non-linear emotional struggle. It reflects a psyche caught in inertia, unable to release tension or regenerate inner strength.

This finding parallels Aprilianti’s research (2023) on Fourtwny’s “Sembilu,” where rain appears as a cathartic medium for emotional release. However, unlike the healing orientation in “Sembilu,” the metaphor in “Black Summer” portrays emotional blockage and psychological stagnation. Similarly,’s study(year) on Yura Yunita’s “Tutur Batin” emphasize self-acceptance and spiritual affirmation through metaphor, which contrasts sharply with the existential fatigue expressed in this song. Furthermore, the emotional warmth and interpersonal longing reflected in “Penjaga Hati” (source & year) differ from the solitary alienation and introspective withdrawal found in “Black Summer.”

Thus, this metaphor illustrates that “Black Summer” uses figurative language not to articulate romantic vulnerability or healing optimism, but to portray existential fatigue and unresolved emotional tension. This distinguishes the song from contemporary Indonesian music studies, which generally highlight relational healing and emotional affirmation. Instead, Red Hot Chili Peppers construct a darker, more introspective emotional landscape, positioning the metaphor as a vehicle to explore alienation, paralysis, and the suspended state of self-recovery.

Data (2): The skies refuse to cry

The metaphor “The skies refuse to cry” symbolizes emotional tension that remains suppressed, portraying a condition in which natural catharsis is denied. Rain, commonly understood as a metaphor for emotional release and cleansing, is here subverted: the skies “refuse” to cry, implying an emotional blockage where grief cannot be expressed. This creates an atmosphere of psychological pressure, internalized pain, and unresolved sorrow. Rather than depicting emotional release, the metaphor highlights an inability to process feelings, aligning with “Black Summer’s” overarching narrative of delayed healing and internal turmoil. It reflects a state of silent suffering, suggesting that emotional numbness has replaced vulnerability.

When compared to metaphors found in Septiani et al.’s research (2022) on Tulus’

"Hati-Hati di Jalan," the contrast is apparent. Tulus' lyrics acknowledge sadness openly and offer emotional honesty as a step toward acceptance. In contrast, "Black Summer" portrays a withheld emotional state, emphasizing suppression rather than expression. Likewise, studies on Yura Yunita's "Tutur Batin" reveal metaphors of emotional honesty and spiritual acceptance, whereas this Red Hot Chili Pepper's metaphor demonstrates emotional paralysis. Research on "Penjaga Hati" also highlights emotional warmth and longing, further underscoring the stark difference between themes of relational expression in Indonesian pop and the isolating emotional stagnation in Red Hot Chili Pepper's work.

Thus, "The skies refuse to cry" demonstrates a poetic portrayal of muted suffering and emotional stasis. Rather than presenting metaphors of release or growth, the song uses figurative language to depict an emotional landscape marked by silence, repression, and existential fatigue. This stands in contrast with contemporary Indonesian music studies that emphasize healing, emotional openness, and relational connection. As such, this metaphor reinforces "Black Summer" as a representation of modern psychological struggle, characterized by isolation and emotional rigidity rather than catharsis or resolution.

Data (3): The night is dressed like noon

The metaphor "The night is dressed like noon" constructs a temporal paradox in which night, conventionally associated with darkness, "wears" the appearance of daylight. This inversion symbolizes confusion, psychological disorientation, and blurred emotional boundaries. Rather than providing comfort or clarity, the brightness imposed upon the night amplifies inner turmoil, suggesting an inability to rest mentally even when circumstances call for stillness. It evokes a state in which emotional cycles are disrupted, and the boundary between clarity and uncertainty becomes indistinguishable. This imagery reflects a mental landscape where the mind remains active, restless, and burdened by unresolved thoughts, reinforcing the theme of existential instability present throughout "Black Summer".

Compared with metaphors in Tulus' "Hati-Hati di Jalan," which focus on emotional honesty and grounded human experience, this metaphor leans toward a surreal and abstract emotional depiction. Likewise, Yura Yunita's "Tutur Batin" uses metaphor to

articulate clarity, spiritual grounding, and gentle healing (Oktaviani & Sukardi, 2024), contrasting sharply with the destabilizing liminality expressed in Red Hot Chili Pepper's lyric. In Fourtwny's "Sembilu," metaphors trace a slow yet deliberate journey toward emotional recovery, whereas "The night is dressed like noon" suggests suspension and confusion rather than progression. These distinctions reveal that "Black Summer" employs metaphors to articulate existential ambiguity and mental tension rather than relational healing or emotional affirmation.

Thus, this metaphor further illustrates how "Black Summer" situates itself within a darker emotional register, presenting psychological fragmentation and blurred perception rather than catharsis or equilibrium. In contrast to contemporary Indonesian music studies that emphasize acceptance, interpersonal warmth, and emotional recovery, Red Hot Chili Pepper's metaphor emphasizes uncertainty, liminality, and disruption. This reinforces the song's thematic commitment to portraying inner chaos and the difficulty of navigating emotional reality when the internal world no longer aligns with external rhythms.

Data (4): The archers on the run

The metaphor "The archers on the run" introduces imagery of archers fleeing, symbolizing a dramatic shift from strategic readiness to vulnerability and retreat. Archers traditionally represent precision, strength, and defensive capability; however, here they abandon their position, suggesting fear, disorientation, and a breakdown of emotional or mental fortitude. This imagery conveys the collapse of internal defenses and the surrender to overwhelming internal conflict rather than confronting it. The metaphor thus encapsulates a crisis of agency and a psychological withdrawal, aligning with Black Summer's overarching themes of instability and existential fatigue amidst inner turmoil.

In contrast with Fourtwny's "Sembilu," where emotional struggle progresses toward cautious healing, this metaphor portrays regression—an emotional retreat rather than movement toward recovery. Similarly, Yura Yunita's "Tutur Batin" frames emotional conflict as an opportunity for affirmation and inner strengthening, while "The archers on the run" reveals emotional fragility and avoidance. Furthermore, the warmth and relational longing found in "Penjaga Hati" (Wahyudin & Hermandra, 2024) stand in stark contrast to the solitary psychological

collapse expressed here. Meanwhile, Tulus' "Hati-Hati di Jalan" embraces emotional maturity and acceptance, whereas this metaphor reflects defensiveness, fragmentation, and psychological escape.

Thus, this metaphor reinforces *Black Summer's* depiction of emotional instability, presenting withdrawal and internal collapse rather than confrontation or resolution. The contrast with contemporary Indonesian music studies—which foreground healing, relational strength, and emotional authenticity—highlights the unique emotional register of Red Hot Chilli Pepper's work. Instead of narrating recovery, this metaphor situates the persona in a state of existential retreat, illustrating the struggle to maintain emotional equilibrium in the face of overwhelming internal conflict.

Data (5): Crack the flaming whip

The metaphor "Crack the flaming whip" evokes a powerful image of force, punishment, and internal violence through the union of fire and a whip. Associating fire with discipline and aggression creates a symbolic depiction of emotional coercion, self-punishment, and intense psychological pressure. Rather than signaling growth or transformation, the metaphor illustrates an emotional landscape defined by brutality, urgency, and the internalization of harsh discipline. It suggests a psyche overwhelmed by internal conflict, compelled to push itself through pain instead of seeking calm or understanding. The flaming whip thus becomes a metaphorical instrument of self-inflicted suffering and emotional volatility, reinforcing the song's depiction of psychological tension and unresolved turmoil.

Compared with Yura Yunita's "Tutur Batin," which frames emotional struggle through gentle introspection and spiritual grounding, this metaphor represents radical internal aggression and emotional strain. Similarly, whereas Fourtwny's "Sembilu" conveys gradual healing and emotional acceptance, here we see a portrayal of resistance and self-imposed emotional punishment. The relational longing and warmth central to "Penjaga Hati" sharply contrast with the violent emotional tone signaled by Red Hot Chilli Pepper's imagery. Tulus' "Hati-Hati di Jalan" metaphorically acknowledges heartbreak with quiet humility, in contrast to the intense, self-directed emotional compulsion represented by the flaming whip.

Thus, this metaphor underscores *Black Summer's* thematic foundation in internal conflict, emotional extremity, and existential struggle. Instead of presenting a healing narrative, Red Hot Chilli Peppers offers a portrayal of psychological unrest marked by force and volatility. This distinction sets the song apart from contemporary Indonesian music metaphors that foreground connection, emotional openness, and gradual recovery. In "Black Summer", metaphor functions as a conduit for depicting pressure, self-discipline turned harmful, and emotional turbulence, reinforcing the song's identity as a representation of inner conflict rather than resolution.

Data (6): Riding on a headless horse

The metaphor "Riding on a headless horse" creates a striking image of movement without direction and existence without control. In traditional symbolism, a horse represents power, freedom, and intentional progress; a rider typically signifies agency and purpose. Yet, here, the horse is headless — eliminating the sense of guidance, rationality, and orientation. The rider continues to move, but the trajectory is aimless, suggesting psychological disorientation, emotional instability, and existential drift. This metaphor evokes a sense of being propelled forward by forces beyond one's control, caught in momentum without clarity or volition, embodying a profound loss of purpose and internal compass.

In contrast to the metaphors found in Fourtwny's "Sembilu," which gradually orient emotional struggle toward acceptance and healing, this metaphor conveys the absence of emotional direction entirely. Yura Yunita's "Tutur Batin" frames inner wounds as part of a reflective journey toward clarity and self-acceptance; in "Black Summer", however, clarity is lost and emotional chaos prevails. Meanwhile, metaphors in "Penjaga Hati" emphasize relational anchoring and emotional purpose, which contrasts sharply with the isolation and disorientation depicted by the headless horse. Even Tulus' "Hati-Hati di Jalan," though melancholic, reflects emotional maturity and acceptance — qualities missing in the frantic, purposeless movement of this metaphor.

Thus, "Riding on a headless horse" reinforces *Black Summer's* thematic commitment to portraying psychological instability, existential uncertainty, and unresolved inner turbulence. Unlike contemporary Indonesian music metaphors

that emphasize healing, relational grounding, and emotional clarity, Red Hot Chili Peppers offers a narrative of chaotic motion and identity displacement. This final metaphor solidifies the song as an expression of existential fragmentation and emotional disorientation rather than recovery or resolution, distinguishing its emotional landscape from the healing-oriented tone prevalent in Indonesian popular lyric studies.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the lyrics of "Black Summer" by Red Hot Chili Peppers, six metaphorical expressions were identified: four explicit and two implicit metaphors. These metaphors not only enhance the aesthetic quality of the lyrics but also serve to convey the singer's emotions and inner experiences. Overall, the six metaphors construct emotional and symbolic meanings related to alienation, psychological pressure, and uncertainty in life's direction. These findings suggest that metaphor in "Black Summer" is not merely ornamental but also carries profound psychological and existential significance.

These results are consistent with the study's objectives, namely to identify the types of metaphors present in the lyrics and to explain how these metaphors contribute to meaning-making in a stylistic context. For future research, it is recommended to conduct a comparative analysis of several songs within the same album or genre to examine the consistency of metaphor usage in shaping lyrical identity.

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