

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the Study

Love is one of the most persistent and widely explored subjects in music. Across cultures and time periods, musicians have turned to song as a means of expressing the experience of love, and in doing so, they have consistently relied on figurative language, most notably metaphor, to make the abstract communicable (Climent & Coll-Florit, 2020; Bamford et al., 2024). This reliance on metaphor in expressing love raises a question that goes beyond simply observing its presence: not merely that love is expressed through metaphor in song, but how it is expressed—what conceptual structures underlie that expression, and how those structures shape the meaning of the songs themselves. These are the two questions this study sets out to answer.

This question becomes especially interesting when directed at a specific musical era. Rock music of the 1960s, produced within the English-language of both the United States and the United Kingdom—what this study refers to as the *Western* rock—emerged in a period of significant cultural transformation. The decade was marked by countercultural movements, shifting social values, and an evolution of norms surrounding love, relationships, and individual freedom (Eyerman & Jamison, 1998; Britannica, n.d.-a; Taylor & Morin, 2009). Songwriters of the era experimented with lyrical themes and language in ways that reflected the

energy of the time. This cultural distinctiveness is what makes 1960s rock a compelling era to examine, and it provides the broader context within which the metaphorical expressions of love in these lyrics can be situated. The primary focus of this study, however, remains linguistic: identifying and analyzing the conceptual metaphors of love that appear in the selected songs, and understanding how those metaphors contribute to each song's central theme.

The analytical framework this study applies is Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), as introduced by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). CMT proposes that metaphor is a feature of thought. Rather than being a stylistic device writer uses for, metaphors, in this sense, are the cognitive structures through which human beings make sense of abstract concepts by mapping them onto concrete, tangible experience (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Gibbs, 1994; Kövecses, 2002). Love is one such abstract concept. It is not something that can be described entirely in literal terms, and so it is consistently understood and expressed through concrete source domains—journeys, fire, madness, light. It is this understanding of metaphor as a cognitive phenomenon, rather than a linguistic one, that makes CMT the appropriate framework for a study concerned with how love is conceptualized in 1960s rock lyrics, rather than simply how it is described.

CMT also comes with a body of work that is directly applicable to the focus of this study. Kövecses (1990, 2002) developed a systematic mapping framework for love-specific conceptual metaphors, tracing the relationships between source

and target domains through which love is commonly structured. The Master Metaphor List (Lakoff et al., 1991) extends this further into a broader inventory of conceptual metaphors across emotional domains. These frameworks serve as the primary reference points for categorizing the linguistic metaphors found in the selected lyrics throughout this study. The identification of those metaphors, however, is carried out through a separate procedure. The Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP), as proposed by the Pragglejaz Group (2007), provides a systematic, lexical unit by lexical unit approach to determining whether a word or phrase is being used metaphorically in context. Where CMT and the Kövecses frameworks handle interpretation and categorization, MIP handles identification.

The six songs examined in this study are “Sunshine of Your Love” by Cream, “Sweet Caroline” by Neil Diamond, “Femme Fatale” by The Velvet Underground & Nico, “Lady Jane” by The Rolling Stones, “Love or Confusion” by Jimi Hendrix, and “Somebody to Love” by Jefferson Airplane. These songs were selected through purposive sampling based on two main criteria. First, each song is thematically centered on love, making them directly relevant to the focus of this study. Second, each song is widely known and recognized within the 1960s rock scene, meaning they charted successfully, received significant airplay, or are otherwise regarded as representative works of the era rather than an of underground scene or obscure recordings. This recognizability matters because it positions these songs not as outliers but as expressions that were widely heard and received by

audiences of the time. As the most direct and stable textual record of how love is expressed within a song, lyrics are well-suited for systematic linguistic analysis in a way that other dimensions of music, such as melody or instrumentation, are not. The six mentioned songs span both American and British rock scene and represent a range of tonal and thematic approaches within the broader genre. The use of the term “Western” in this study refers to this English-language, Anglo-American rock tradition specifically. This boundary is consistent with the methodological position taken by Climent & Coll-Florit (2020), who note that linguistic familiarity is important for accurate metaphorical interpretation, and it distinguishes the scope of this study from non-English-language musical traditions.

Research applying CMT to love in music is rich and varied, spanning different languages, cultures, artists, and time periods. This study situates itself within that ongoing conversation, contributing a focused examination of how love is metaphorically conceptualized in six selected songs from the 1960s Western rock scene, and how those conceptualizations shape the meaning of each song. The studies that have informed and shaped this work are discussed in further detail in section 1.4.

## **1.2. Research Problems**

Conceptual Metaphor Theory has proven to be a sustainable framework for understanding how love is expressed in song lyrics. Studies have examined love metaphors across different languages, cultures, individual artists, and historical

timelines, and they have built a meaningful picture of how love is cognitively structured through song. However, any understanding built from a collection of studies is also shaped by what those studies have and have not examined. The perspectives that are absent is as significant as those that are present.

One such perspective is of a culturally and historically specific musical era. The 1960s Western rock scene represents a distinct musical and cultural moment whose metaphorical expressions of love have not yet been closely examined. Without this, our understanding of how love is metaphorically conceptualized within this era remains limited.

This study addresses that by examining the conceptual metaphors of love in six selected songs from the 1960s Western rock scene, approaching part of the lyrics as linguistic data through the framework of Conceptual Metaphor Theory. Specifically, it sets out to answer the following research questions:

- (1) How is the concept of love represented metaphorically in the six Western 1960s rock songs?
- (2) How does the conceptual metaphors of love in selected Western 1960s rock songs contribute to and support each song's central thematic message?

### **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

This study aims to gain a deeper understanding of how conceptual metaphors of love were used in the six selected 1960s rock music. Specifically, it aims to achieve the following objectives:

- (1) Identify and analyze the conceptual metaphors used to represent love within selected Western 1960s rock songs.
- (2) To explore how conceptual metaphors of love in selected Western 1960s rock songs contribute to and support each song's central thematic message.

#### **1.4. Previous Studies**

Research applying Conceptual Metaphor Theory to love in song lyrics has grown steadily, and the existing body of work offers a rich set of perspectives that this study builds upon. Studies in this field have approached the subject from a range of angles—individual artists, specific languages and cultures, and broad historical timelines—and they collectively demonstrate a consistent finding: that context, whether personal, cultural, linguistic, or historical, shapes how love is expressed in its lyrics.

Several studies have examined love metaphors within specific cultural and linguistic contexts. Al-Khaza'leh & Alzubi (2022) compared love conceptual metaphors in English and Arabic songs, finding that Arabic songs place greater emphasis on conceptual metaphors of fluidity, fire, and place compared to English. Anudo & Kodak (2017) analyzed Dholuo songs, revealing metaphors centered on joy, sadness, and the physical aspects of love within their specific cultural setting. These studies collectively show that the language and cultural background of a musical tradition meaningfully influence its metaphorical representations of love. Rather than positioning this as a limitation, this study takes a similar approach:

focusing on a specific linguistic and cultural tradition, the English-language Anglo-American rock scene, as a context worth examining on its own terms.

Other studies have focused on individual artists: Gavelin (2015) traced consistent metaphorical patterns across Mariah Carey's career, suggesting that songwriters develop personal conceptualizations of love that evolve over time. Zahra & Nirmala (2022) examined Taylor Swift's heartbreak metaphors, identifying frames drawn from film, homelands, and fragility. Pradikta (2017) analyzed Ed Sheeran's love metaphors through CMT alongside Kövecses' emotion frameworks, and Jannah & Istiqomah (2021) did similarly for the Indonesian band Kahitna. These studies are valuable in showing the depth of metaphorical expression possible within a single artist's work, and they establish that CMT is well-suited for close lyrical analysis of this kind. This current study applies a similar close analytical approach, extending it across multiple artists within a shared era rather than focusing on a single artist's career.

Fu (2010) offers a particularly relevant point of reference. Focusing specifically on the LOVE IS UNITY metaphor in love song lyrics, Fu demonstrated how a single conceptual metaphor can be used to express closeness, stability, and the emotional bond between lovers. LOVE IS UNITY is among the metaphors identified in this study as well, appearing across two of the six selected songs. Fu's work provides a useful foundation for understanding how this specific metaphor functions, and this study builds on it by situating LOVE IS UNITY within a broader

set of metaphors and examining how it contributes to each song's thematic meaning.

Two studies are particularly close in scope to this one. Thu (2019) analyzed structural metaphors of love in English songs from the late 20th century, and Climent & Coll-Florit (2020) examined metaphors in Billboard year-end number one songs from 1946 to 2016. Both studies demonstrate that love metaphors in English-language popular music follow recognizable patterns and shift across time. This study is indebted to both, particularly in its use of CMT as the analytical framework and its focus on English-language songs. Where it differs is in scale and focus. Rather than tracing patterns across decades, this study examines a smaller, purposively selected set of six songs from a single decade. The goal is not to represent the 1960s entirely—six songs cannot do that—but to allow for a closer, more systematic analysis of how love is conceptualized within a specific and culturally distinct musical moment, and how those conceptualizations function within each song's meaning.

### **1.5. Scope of the Study**

This study focuses on analyzing the lyrics of selected Western rock songs from the 1960s, including: "Sunshine of Your Love" by Cream; "Sweet Caroline" by Neil Diamond; "Femme Fatale" by The Velvet Underground & Nico; "Lady Jane" by The Rolling Stones; "Love or Confusion" by Jimi Hendrix; and "Somebody to Love" by Jefferson Airplane

Conceptual Metaphor Theory, as proposed by Lakoff & Johnson (1980), were used to examine the various ways rock lyricists in the 1960s conceptualized love. Works by Kövecses (1990, 2002) and the Master Metaphor List (Lakoff et al., 1991) also served as the main foundation for this analysis. The Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) (Pragglejaz Group, 2007) were applied by the researcher to systematically identify and analyze love-related metaphors in the lyrics.

## **1.6. Writing Organization**

This study is divided into four following chapters, and two sections:

### **CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION**

This chapter covers the background, the questions, the objectives, the scope, and the writing organization of this study. This chapter also covers several previous studies that are related to this current study.

### **CHAPTER II THEORY AND METHOD**

This chapter explains the theoretical framework used as the foundation to analyze the data of this study. This chapter also includes the approach, the method of data collection, and the method of data analysis that were applied in this study.

### **CHAPTER III RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter starts with a description of the result of the data analysis, then followed with its discussion. The discussion is

divided into two parts, each answers the research questions in order.

#### **CHAPTER IV**

#### **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

This chapter concludes the result and the discussion of this study. Several suggestions also included for further studies.

#### **REFERENCES**

#### **APPENDIX**