

Love Methapors in William Shakespeare's Drama *Romeo and Juliet*

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Abstract

An article appeared on a newspaper or magazine is interesting to read if the article is coloured with some figurative languages like metaphor, allegory, personification, metonymy, and the like. These elements will make sentences nice to read and at that moment they have driven away dull dry paragraphs. It is customary to fill the paragraphs with figurative languages, especially of metaphors if the piece of writing is of a literary work. But it is a challenge to insert few metaphors in every essay. Metaphor is comparing two objects to create a certain perception. Furthermore, metaphor may contain deeper understanding; in this way it needs extra effort to dig out the meaning from the lines. Tenor and vehicle of metaphor can be employed to understand the content embedded in a metaphor. In William Shakespeare's drama of "Romeo and Juliet" of which is famous throughout the world for its everlasting love story, there can be found many metaphors of love. Some of them are discussed in this paper.

Key words: *metaphor, love, figurative language, tenor, vehicle.*

1. Introduction

Writing an essay, an article or a story should be interesting to read. A writer cannot just expose facts because his sentences will be dull and boring. He needs to enhance his writing with figurative language; one of them is metaphor. Colouring sentences with metaphors, similes, personification, allegories, metonymies and other figurative language will make the essay good to read.

Although it is a piece of writing on scientific fields, it still needs

enhancements by the use of figurative language.

2. Synopsis of *Romeo and Juliet*

Day 1 — Sunday: Act I, Scene 1-Act II, Scene 2

As the play begins, a long-standing feud or dispute between the Montague and Capulet families continues to disturb the peace of Verona, a city in northern Italy. A clash between the servants of the feuding families prompts the Prince to intimidate both sides to keep the peace on pain of death.

Benvolio advises his lovesick friend Romeo, (son of Montague), to abandon his unanswered (not mutual) love for Rosaline and seek another. That night, Capulet holds a masked ball to encourage a courtship between his daughter, Juliet, and Paris, a relative of the Prince. Concealing their identities behind masks, Romeo and Benvolio go to the ball or party, where Romeo and Juliet fall in love at first sight, but at the end of the evening discover their identities as members of the opposed families. On his way home from the feast, Romeo climbs into Capulet's farm to glimpse Juliet again. Juliet appears at her balcony or terrace and the couple exchange promises of love, agreeing to marry the next day.

Day 2 — Monday: Act II, Scene 3-
Act III, Scene 4

Romeo asks Friar Laurence to perform the marriage ceremony. Though firstly reluctant, he finally agrees, hoping to reunite the families, and marries Romeo and Juliet that afternoon.

Meanwhile, Tybalt, Juliet's cousin, sends Romeo a challenge to a duel. Romeo refuses to fight when Tybalt challenges him because they're now related. However, Mercutio, Romeo's highly-tempered friend, intervenes and accepts the

challenge. Romeo tries to part the other two as they fight, but Mercutio is seriously wounded under Romeo's arm. To revenge Mercutio's death, Romeo kills Tybalt and then escapes.

The Prince announces Romeo's exile for Tybalt's murder. Romeo, in hiding at the Friar's cell, becomes panic-stricken at the news of his sentence and tries to kill himself, but the Friar promises to make Romeo's marriage to Juliet public and gain the Prince's pardon. Romeo and Juliet celebrate their wedding night before he leaves at dawn for Mantua.

Day 3 — Tuesday: Act III, Scene 5-
Act IV, Scene 3

That morning, Juliet notices that her father has arranged for her to marry Paris on Thursday. The Capulets, unaware that Juliet is grieving or crying for Romeo's exile rather than Tybalt's death, believe the wedding will divert her from mourning. Distressed at the prospect of a false marriage and isolated from her family, Juliet search for advice from Friar Laurence, who offers her a sleeping potion to make her appear dead for 42 hours. During this time, the Friar will send a message to Romeo in Mantua so that Romeo can return to Verona in time for Juliet to awake.

Juliet returns home and agrees to marry Paris. In a moment of joy, Capulet brings the wedding forward from Thursday to Wednesday, in that way forcing Juliet to take the potion that night and reducing the time for the message to reach Romeo.

Day 4 — Wednesday: Act IV, Scene 4-Act V, Scene 2

Early on Wednesday morning, Juliet's apparently lifeless or dead body is discovered and she is placed in the family tomb. Because an outbreak of the plague prevents the Friar's messenger from leaving Verona, Romeo now receives news of Juliet's death instead. Desperate, Romeo buys poison from an apothecary and returns to Verona.

Late that night, Romeo enters the Capulet tomb, but is confronted or challenged by Paris, whom he fights and kills.

Still unaware that Juliet is in fact alive, Romeo takes the poison and dies. The Friar, arriving too late, discovers the bodies as Juliet begins to stir. He begs her to leave with him, but Juliet refuses, and then stabs herself with Romeo's dagger.

Day 5 — Thursday: Act V, Scene 3

As dawn breaks, the Watch arrives, closely followed by the Prince, who demands a full investigation or inquiry

into what has happened. The two families then arrive, and the Friar comes forward to explain the tragic order of events. The deaths of Romeo and Juliet finally bring the dispute to an end as Montague and Capulet join hands in peace.

3. Metaphor in William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*.

A. Metaphor

A metaphor is a comparison of two objects without the words "like" or "as" to create a certain perception. A metaphor is a figure of speech that describes a subject by stating that it is, on some point of comparison, the same as another otherwise unrelated object. Metaphor is a type of analogy and is closely related to other rhetorical figures of speech that achieve their effects via association, comparison or resemblance including allegory, hyperbole, and simile.

At its most basic, metaphor is a rhetorical figure of speech, where a comparison is made between two seemingly unrelated objects without using "like" or "as". It is transference of one object's characteristics onto another. However, it is not to be confused with simile, metonymy, personification, allusion, and antonomasia

Some examples of metaphor are as follow:

"My love is a rose"

"love" and "rose" are equated. The two words are compared. They are not alike, but they interact with each other, so the abstract word of "love" becomes concrete. The readers will get clearer description about what *love* looks like. Minimally imagination will fly to *rose* that has the quality of fragrance, passion, fresh and optimism; and so does the so-called *love*. *Love* that was formerly abstract, it now grows to be more obvious. In this way, readers can sense the "love" in the way the "rose" is described

Besides that, metaphor can be used to enhance a text. By employing metaphors, it gives chance to readers to interpret or sense with the fresh new meaning.

The followings are further examples of metaphor by comparing two 'things' that are not equal. Although they are not equal, they are understandable and comprehensible by logic or common sense.

Your smile is so sweet

You are a lion

You are my strength

*Jantung kota, mulut gua, kaki
gunung*

One of the most prominent examples of a metaphor in English literature is

the All the world's a stage monologue from *As You Like It* :

All the world's a stage,

*And all the men and women merely
players;*

*They have their exits and their
entrances; —*

(William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, 2.7)

This quote is a metaphor because the world is not literally a stage. By figuratively asserting that the world is a stage, Shakespeare uses the points of comparison between the world and a stage to convey an understanding about the mechanics of the world and the lives of the people within it.

Metaphors are most frequently compared with similes. The Columbia Encyclopaedia, 6th edition, explains the difference as:

A simile states that A is like B, a metaphor states that A is B or substitutes B for A. Where a metaphor asserts the two objects in the comparison are identical on the point of comparison, a simile merely asserts a similarity. For this reason a metaphor is generally considered more forceful than a simile.

The metaphor category also contains these specialised types:

a) allegory: An extended metaphor wherein a story illustrates an important attribute of the subject.

b) catachresis: A mixed metaphor used by design and accident (a rhetorical fault).

c) parable: An extended metaphor narrated as an anecdote illustrating and teaching a moral lesson, such as Aesop's fables.

Metaphor, like other types of analogy, can usefully be distinguished from metonymy as one of two fundamental modes of thought. Metaphor and analogy both work by bringing together two concepts from different conceptual domains, whereas metonymy works by using one element from a given domain to refer to another closely related element. Thus, a metaphor creates new links between otherwise distinct conceptual domains, whereas a metonymy relies on the existing links within them.

Anyhow, today metaphor and simile are considered as the same, not different. Both terms are referred to as metaphor, not interchangeably used.

B. Tenor and Vehicle of Metaphor

A metaphor consists of two main parts: the **tenor** and the **vehicle**. The tenor

is the subject to which the metaphor is applied.

Tenor and vehicle, the components of a metaphor, with the tenor referring to the concept, object, or person meant, and the vehicle being the image that carries the weight of the comparison. The words were first used in this sense by the critic I.A. Richards. A metaphor consists of two main parts: the tenor and the vehicle. The tenor is the subject to which the metaphor is applied. The vehicle is the metaphorical term through which the tenor is applied. These two parts come together to reach a point of similarity known as a **ground**.

The following example will clarify upon what tenor and vehicle look like:

Life is a yo-yo. It's a cycle of ups and downs

Here, *life* is the tenor and *yo-yo* is the vehicle. The fact that both life and a *yo-yo* have *ups and downs* is the ground

In William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, there are some metaphors of love. Here are few of them:

1. Juliet: "Love give me strength and strength will help me through."

Quoted from:

JULIET Love give me strength and strength will help me through.

*Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou,
Romeo?*

*Deny they father, and refuse thy
name.*

*Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my
love,*

And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

*See how she leans her cheek upon
her hand!*

*O that I were a glove upon that
hand,*

that I might touch that cheek!

(Act II, Scene II)

Without reading or knowing anything about the play of *Romeo and Juliet*, this quote from Juliet to her father can be appreciated. It speaks volumes to the power of love. *Love* is compared to *strength* of which is abstract, something intangible. Comparing love and rose is more easily comprehended because both elements (*love* are tangible, concrete. It seems there is a jump from *love* towards *strength*. There must be a bridge to relate the two. To understand it, there must be deeper or further imagination to build. It can be said that love here is like a pill (a supplement pill) of which if it is taken, it will give strength, power to the person who consumes it. On the other hand, *love* is the tenor whereas *strength* is the vehicle, and the ground is that *strength will help me through*, meaning that the power of love will be able to lead the life ahead greatly instead of heavily.

2. **Juliet: "What's in a name?"**

***That which we call a rose by any other
word would smell as sweet.***

Quoted from:

*What's in a name? That which we
call a rose*

*by any other name would smell as
sweet.*

*Good night, good night. Parting is
such sweet sorrow,*

*that I shall say good night till it be
morow.*

(Act II, Scene II)

Juliet decides very quickly in the play that she doesn't care what Romeo's last name is. She loves him for who he is, not for his name or figure. To Juliet love cannot be limited by any other thing such as name, ancestor, money, status and the like. Juliet's love to Romeo is prohibited by her parents just because Romeo is from a Montague family of which is the enemy of her Capulet family for a long time. Juliet opposes her family's decision. Supposing Romeo does not bear that name, he will be easily welcomed. So *love* is the tenor whereas the vehicle is *not name, not status, not money*. The ground is *That which we call a rose by any other word would smell as sweet* because the personality of someone (Romeo) is more important

3. **Romeo: "It is the East, and Juliet is the sun! Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon."**

Quoted from:

ROMEO

But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks?

It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.

Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,

Who is already sick and pale with grief,

That thou her maid art far more fair than she:

Be not her maid, since she is envious;

Her vestal livery is but sick and green

And none but fools do wear it; cast it off.

It is my lady, O, it is my love!

O, that she knew she were!

She speaks yet she says nothing: what of that?

Her eye discourses; I will answer it.

I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks:

Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,

Having some business, do entreat her eyes

To twinkle in their spheres till they return.

What if her eyes were there, they in her head?

The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,

As daylight doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven

Would through the airy region stream so bright

That birds would sing and think it were not night.

See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand!

O, that I were a glove upon that

hand,

That I might touch that cheek!

(2.2.1)

Romeo now compares Juliet to the sun, and ignores the moon. This is an indirect way of rejecting Rosaline in favour of Juliet. *Juliet* is considered as the tenor and *the sun* is the vehicle. Romeo loves Juliet more dearly than Rosaline. Therefore, he compares Juliet as the sun from the east which is brighter, rather than Rosaline of whom is also compared to as the moon from the west, of which is less bright. The ground found in this part is *Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon*. By loving Juliet who is brighter, it will be able to eradicate the enmity, the hostility that may come from Rosaline, the moon.

4. **Juliet: "My only love, sprung from my only hate! Too early seen unknown, and known too late!"**

Quoted from:

JULIET

My only love sprung from my only hate!

Too early seen unknown, and known too late!

Prodigious birth of love it is to me,

That I must love a loathed enemy.

(1.5.10)

Juliet is heartsick when she discovers that her true love, Romeo, is a member of the family she is supposed to hate. *My only love* is the tenor, and *my*

only hate is the vehicle. Juliet feels annoyed and desperate because his love (Romeo) comes from a family of whom his big family hates for years. She imagines she cannot marry Romeo just because Romeo is from Montague family, whereas she is from Capulet family. It is too late to know the reality about Romeo's family because she does not realize it. She has been in love with Romeo before knowing about family long dispute or feud. Long before that, she knows that Montague and Capulet are in quarrel.

5. ***Mercutio: "You are a lover. Borrow Cupid's wings and soar with them above a common bound."***

Quoted from:

MERCUTIO

You are a lover; borrow Cupid's wings,

And soar with them above a common bound.

ROMEO

I am too sore enpierced with his shaft

To soar with his light feathers, and so bound,

I cannot bound a pitch above dull woe:

Under love's heavy burden do I sink.

MERCUTIO

And, to sink in it, should you burden love;

Too great oppression for a tender thing.

ROMEO

Is love a tender thing? it is too rough,

Too rude, too boisterous, and it pricks like thorn.

MERCUTIO

If love be rough with you, be rough with love;

Prick love for pricking, and you beat love down.

(1.4.2)

Mecutio give Romeo quite a lot of advice and motivation in this play. Here he tells Romeo not to be burdened by his hopeless romantic ideals, but to embrace them. *You* (in this case is addressed to *Romeo*) is regarded as the tenor, whereas *a lover* is the vehicle. Romeo is in despair due to his great ideal that is hard to be manifested, to be realized. A close friend of his motivates Romeo not to look lame, exhausted or desperate but to be friend with it, to understand it. In this way, Romeo will have more spirit to lead his life. The ground saying *Borrow Cupid's wings and soar with them above a common bound* will make Romeo stronger because a cupid has wings and so does Romeo. Motivation is very important to make someone enthusiastic.

6. ***Romeo: "Love is a smoke raised with the fume of sighs. Being purged, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes."***

Quoted from:

ROMEO *Love is a smoke raised with the fume of sighs;*

Being purged, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes;

Being vex'd a sea nourish'd with lovers' tears:

What is it else? a madness most discreet,

A choking gall and a preserving sweet.

(1.1.7)

In this line, Romeo laments about the duality of love - how it can feel both good and bad at the same time. Love is like two sides of one coin. It can both make someone happy and sad as well. In one hand, love possibly makes someone cry, in the other hand, love can make someone laugh. Both feelings interchangeably control someone's heart.

How can it be? It is caused by the heart (say = feeling) of someone. The characteristic of someone's heart is habitually unstable (easily changeable) except the tough heart of which is usually filled with faith.

7. **Romeo: "One fairer than my love? The all-seeing sun never saw her match since first the world begun."**

Quoted from:

ROMEO [talking about Rosaline]

When the devout religion of mine eye

Maintains such falsehood, then turn tears to fires;

And these, who often drown'd could never die,

Transparent heretics, be burnt for liars!

One fairer than my love! the all-seeing sun

Ne'er saw her match since first the world begun.

(1.2.10)

There are several minor notes in this play which show Romeo's complex taste in women, and this is the first glimpses of one. Here he is saying that the sun will never see a woman more beautiful than Rosaline, whom he compares to the moon.

Romeo's taste on women is very high. Meeting Rosaline, Romeo falls in love dearly with her, filled with imagination. It seems there is no one in this world comparable to Rosaline or more beautiful than her. Anyhow it contradicts to Romeo's later statement after he meets with Juliet. He throws away Rosaline from his mind. He considers Rosaline is as something of little worth to be compared to Juliet, Romeo describes Rosaline and Juliet as night and day.

8. **Juliet: "O, swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon. That monthly changes in her circled orb, lest that thy love prove likewise variable."**

Quoted from:

O, swear not be the moon, the fickle moon,

the inconstant moon, that monthly changes

*in her circle orb,
Lest thy love proves likewise
variable.*

(Act II, Scene II)

Here, Juliet rebuffs Romeo's attempts to liken her to the moon or his love to something which changes so often. In the past, a beautiful woman was often compared to a beautiful moon. This happened because the moon was considered the most beautiful thing that was comparable or equal to a woman's beauty.

Anyhow, time has changed. A woman is not proud or even angry if her beautiful face is compared or likened to the moon after Neil Amstrong had landed his feet on the moon. And it proves that the moon is not beautiful at all. It is barren and dry land of which is not equivalent to a woman's face.

9. *Romeo: "Not mad, but bound more than a mad man is. Shut up in prison, kept without my food, whipped and tormented."*

Romeo whines quite frequently of his inability to truly be with the one he loves. This can be seen when he loves Rosaline and then he loves Juliet more than the first. This happens because Romeo sees with his eyes that Juliet is not

only more beautiful than Rosaline but Juliet has more qualities than Rosaline.

Romeo is confused of himself upon his embedded love that can change and move from one woman to another one easily. Romeo forgets that a man tends to love more than one woman. His eyes cannot be closed while a beautiful girl is passing. It is customary. Only a man with strong personality and strong faith will be able to avoid his eyes from glancing at her.

10. *Romeo: "Did my heart love 'till now? Forswear its sight. For I never saw true beauty 'til this night."*

Quoted from:

ROMEO

*O, she doth teach the torches to
burn bright!*

*It seems she hangs upon the cheek
of night*

*Like a rich jewel in an Ethiope's
ear;*

*Beauty too rich for use, for earth
too dear!*

*So shows a snowy dove trooping
with crows,*

*As yonder lady o'er her fellows
shows.*

*The measure done, I'll watch her
place of stand,*

*And, touching hers, make blessed
my rude hand.*

*Did my heart love till now?
forswear it, sight!*

*For I ne'er saw true beauty till this
night.*

(1.5.1)

Up until this point in the play, Romeo is smitten over Rosaline. The moment he lays eyes on Juliet, thoughts of his love for Rosaline are completely forgotten. Again, this proves that Romeo's love to a woman is not faithful. It might be faithful at one time but unfaithful at another time.

Some people say that a man tends to be polygamy whereas a woman tends to be monogamy. Only self-control can prevent a man from his tendency to be a polygamist. It is different from a woman who normally tends to be monogamy.

3. Conclusion

William Shakespeare's drama of *Romeo and Juliet* contains metaphorical sentences of love and hatred. The love metaphors that spread in some acts and scenes throughout the play not only have enhanced and intensified the meaning but also have created stronger perceptions on the readers' mind.

Exploring some love metaphors in *Romeo and Juliet* drama and also accompanied by involving components of *tenor* and *vehicle* (the term *tenor* refers to the concept, object, or person meant, and the *vehicle* refers to the image that carries the weight of the comparison) will only amplify appreciation on this particular literary work.

The *tenor* is the subject to which the metaphor is applied. The *vehicle* is the metaphorical term through which the *tenor* is applied. These two parts come together to reach a point of similarity known as a *ground*. To quote one of the metaphors stating:

Juliet: "What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other word would smell as sweet."

Quoted from:

What's in a name? That which we call a rose

by any other name would smell as sweet.

Good night, good night. Parting is such sweet sorrow,

that I shall say good night till it be morrow.

(Act II, Scene II)

The quotation above means Juliet's attitude upon Romeo is insistent and firm. She doesn't care and question on what Romeo's last name is. She loves him for who he is, not for his name nor figure nor family background. To Juliet, love cannot be limited by any other thing outside that of love such as name, ancestor, money, status and the like. Juliet's love to Romeo is prohibited by her parents just because Romeo is from a Montague family of

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