
AN ANALYSIS OF METAPHOR IN INSTAGRAM'S ACCOUNT
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Abstrak

Penelitian ini menggunakan Teori Metafora Konseptual untuk mengkaji penggunaan bahasa metaforis dalam majalah Vogue edisi Musim Panas 2024. Dengan melihat bagaimana fesyen menggunakan metafora untuk menyampaikan makna. Dengan mengacu pada kerangka teoretis Metafora Konseptual oleh Lakoff dan Johnson (2003) serta teori Fashion as Communication oleh Barnard (2002), penelitian ini membahas bagaimana metafora digunakan untuk membantu berpikir dan berkomunikasi dalam jurnalisme fesyen. Metode yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kualitatif untuk mengidentifikasi, mengklasifikasikan, dan menganalisis ungkapan-ungkapan metaforis dalam koleksi tulisan atau artikel yang dipilih. Studi ini menemukan total 40 data, yang dikategorikan ke dalam 22 metafora ontologis, 11 metafora struktural, dan 7 metafora orientasional. Ragam metafora tersebut selanjutnya diklasifikasikan berdasarkan kategori bahasa fesyen: 18 data sebagai Fashion as Individual Expression, 10 sebagai Fashion as Non-Verbal Language, 7 sebagai Fashion as Cultural Communication, dan 5 sebagai Fashion as Social Communication. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa metafora dalam pembahasan fesyen bukan sekadar hiasan kata, melainkan berperan penting dalam membantu memahami ide-ide abstrak seperti identitas, kecantikan, perawatan, dan emosi—menjadi pengalaman yang nyata dan mudah dipahami. Melalui penggunaan metaforis, Vogue menunjukkan bahwa fesyen bisa menjadi sarana untuk mengeskpresikan diri, menyampaikan narasi budaya, dan pengaruh emosional. Hasil penelitian ini menekankan pentingnya metafora dalam membentuk cara fesyen dikomunikasikan, dipahami, dan dialami secara emosional oleh pembaca.

Kata Kunci: Bahasa Fesyen, Metafora Konseptual, Vogue

Abstract

This research uses Conceptual Metaphor Theory to examine the use of metaphorical language in the Summer 2024 issue of Vogue magazine. By looking at how fashion uses metaphors to convey meaning. By referring to the theoretical framework of Conceptual Metaphor by Lakoff and Johnson (2003) and the theory of Fashion as Communication by Barnard (2002), this research discusses how metaphors are used to help think and communicate in fashion journalism. The method used is descriptive qualitative to identify, classify, and analyze metaphorical expressions in a selected collection of writings or articles. The study found a total of 40 data, which were categorized into 22

ontological metaphors, 11 structural metaphors, and 7 orientational metaphors. The metaphors were further classified based on the category of fashion language: 18 data as Fashion as Individual Expression, 10 as Fashion as Non-Verbal Language, 7 as Fashion as Cultural Communication, and 5 as Fashion as Social Communication. The findings show that metaphors in fashion discussions are not just wordy, but play an important role in helping to make abstract ideas - such as identity, beauty, grooming and emotions - into tangible, relatable experiences. Through its metaphorical use, Vogue shows that fashion can be a means of self-expression, cultural narrative and emotional influence. The results of this study emphasize the importance of metaphors in shaping the way fashion is communicated, understood and emotionally experienced by readers.

Keywords: *Language of Fashion, Conceptual Metaphor, Vogue*

INTRODUCTION

Vogue magazine, established in 1892, stands as a paragon of fashion journalism, renowned for its authoritative voice in fashion, beauty, culture, and lifestyle (Muir & Coddington, 2006, p.5). Over the decades, it has not only chronicled fashion trends but also actively shaped them, influencing public perceptions and societal norms (Kopnina, 2007, p.368). With its extensive global reach, Vogue serves as a cultural barometer, as it is reflecting and directing the zeitgeist of various eras. In conclusion, it illustrates how Vogue has functioned as both a chronicler and a catalyst of cultural change. Through its global editions and editorial direction, Vogue acts as a cultural barometer, reflecting and steering the spirit of each era it engages with, thereby reinforcing its significance in both fashion and broader social discourse especially in present time.

The Vogue Summer 2024 e-magazine's issue presents a compelling case for linguistic analysis, particularly through the lens of conceptual metaphor theory, as it encapsulates the language-driven dynamics of global fashion discourse. In the context of fashion journalism, metaphors are more than decorative language—they are instrumental tools for translating complex and abstract concepts such as identity, beauty, and lifestyle into accessible and emotionally resonant narratives (Machin & Thornborrow, 2020, p.43). Vogue, as a leading authority in fashion media, uses these metaphorical expressions not only to describe clothing and trends but also to construct aspirational ideals that reflect and shape readers' desires and self-perceptions. Descriptive phrases like “empowering silhouettes” or “romantic hues” attribute emotional and ideological value to garments, positioning them as symbols of personal agency, romance, or sophistication rather than mere items of wear (Vogue, 2024, p.41).

Language not only functions as a means of communication, but also reflects the cognitive processes humans use to understand and organize their experiences. The cognitive

linguistic approach views language as an integral part of how humans think and understand the world conceptually (Langacker, 1987, p. 3). One of the most influential theories in this field is the Conceptual Metaphor Theory proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). According to them, metaphors are not merely stylistic devices but cognitive mechanisms that enable humans to understand abstract concepts through more concrete and familiar concepts (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 5). For example, the concept of time is often understood through a spatial framework, such as “the future is ahead” and “the past is behind.” Thus, this theory provides a strong analytical framework for understanding how meaning is formed in everyday language. Therefore, this study focuses on applying Lakoff and Johnson's theory to analyze the use of conceptual metaphors in language, in order to uncover how abstract concepts are expressed linguistically and cognitively.

What makes the Summer 2024 issue particularly significant is its role in setting and disseminating global fashion trends. As a publication with international reach and influence, Vogue does not merely report on fashion—it curates and globalizes style narratives that are consumed and mirrored by designers, influencers, and audiences worldwide (Zinn, 2021, p.74). The metaphors found within this issue play a critical role in framing these trends, often blending seasonal aesthetics with cultural themes, such as freedom, transformation, or empowerment, thereby embedding deeper meaning into fashion choices (Silaški & Durović, 2019, p.33). These metaphorical framings become part of a shared cultural vocabulary that extends far beyond the magazine's pages, influencing how people across the globe interpret fashion and lifestyle.

Studying Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) by Lakoff and Johnson is important because this theory reveals that metaphors are not just a figure of speech, but a fundamental way in which humans think, understand the world, and communicate. First, metaphors represent the way we think. Lakoff and Johnson explain that we understand many abstract concepts, such as time, feelings, life, and social relationships, through real or physical experiences. For example, we often think of time as money—for example, in the expressions “spending time” or “investing time.” Thus, metaphors are not merely decorative elements in language, but the way we structure and understand our thoughts. Second, by using conceptual metaphor theory to understand everyday language and culture, we can see that everyday language actually contains deeper meanings about culture, social values, and how society perceives the world. Third, it makes us aware of the influence of language in shaping opinions. Metaphors are also often used in politics, media, and advertising to influence how

people think. For example, the term “war on drugs” makes us imagine policies like military action, not a healing approach. By understanding this theory, we can be more critical and aware when language is used to shape a certain perspective.

The urgency of examining conceptual metaphors in Vogue's Summer 2024 issue lies in the evolving nature of media language and its profound impact on societal constructs. As media platforms diversify and the consumption of fashion content becomes more ubiquitous, the metaphors embedded within these narratives wield significant influence over public consciousness (Velasco-Sacristán, 2005, p.120). They shape perceptions of self-worth, success, and beauty, often perpetuating specific ideologies and norms. Tamburro (2020, p.7) analyzed that Vogue significantly influences the language of lifestyle through its metaphorical framing of various cultural and personal themes, one of the most prominent areas of influence is beauty standards and body image. This metaphorical language embeds aesthetic ideals within everyday conversations about the body, subtly encouraging readers to view their appearance as a lifelong project.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research employs a qualitative descriptive design to explore the use of conceptual metaphors in the Vogue Summer 2024 E-Magazine. A qualitative approach is chosen because it allows for in-depth analysis of language use and meaning-making within its natural context (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p.177). This method emphasizes detailed interpretation over numerical analysis, allowing the researcher to explore how metaphor shapes meaning and reflects cultural narratives. The descriptive aspect ensures that findings are presented in a clear, grounded manner, closely aligned with the original context of the data. This approach is particularly suitable for linguistic studies that seek to understand not just what is said, but how and why it is said in a particular way.

Qualitative descriptive design is a methodological approach aimed at providing a comprehensive summary of specific events or experiences, articulated in everyday language (Sandelowski, 2000, p.334). This design is particularly useful when researchers seek to understand the "who, what, and where" aspects of phenomena, especially in areas where limited prior research exists. It emphasizes staying close to the data, offering straightforward descriptions without extensive interpretation. This approach is grounded in a naturalistic perspective, focusing on studying phenomena in their natural settings. It is especially

beneficial in applied fields such as health sciences, education, and social research, where practical insights are paramount.

The descriptive design focuses on identifying, classifying, and interpreting metaphorical expressions found in the magazine. This involves close reading of textual elements—such as feature articles, headlines, captions, and fashion descriptions—to locate metaphorical language (Altheide & Johnson, 2011, p. 581). The identified metaphors are then categorized into structural, orientational, or ontological types based on Lakoff and Johnson’s typology.

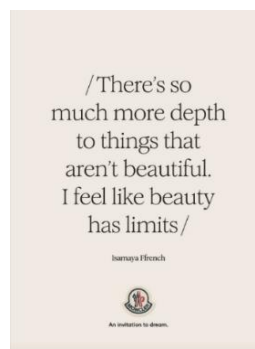
FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

This chapter presents the key findings of the metaphorical analysis conducted on selected fashion texts, based on Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) and Fashion as Communication theory by Barnard (2002). From the data analysis based on Conceptual Metaphor Theory, there are 92 types of metaphors identified and categorized into three types of metaphors, namely, Structural Metaphors (11 data), and Orientational Metaphors (7 data), Ontological Metaphors (22 data). While from the data analysis based on the theory of Fashion as Communication, there are a total of 40 metaphor data included in fashion and beauty which are classified into four categories of fashion language.

A. Conceptual Metaphor

By mapping one conceptual structure onto another, structural metaphors influence both interpretation and emotional engagement with fashion narratives.

1. Structural Metaphor



“There’s so much more depth to things that aren’t beautiful.”

In this metaphor, the concept of physical depth—such as the measurable distance from a surface downward is structurally mapped onto the abstract idea of emotional or intellectual complexity. This metaphor goes beyond surface resemblance by

organizing how we think about complexity, suggesting that things lacking conventional beauty may possess greater substance beneath the surface.

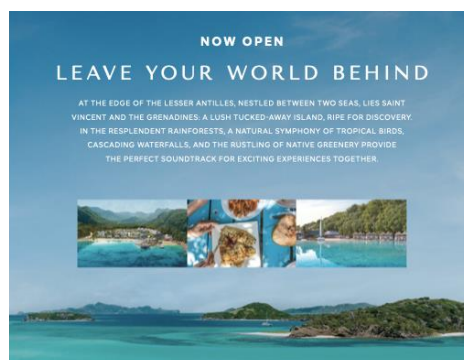
2. Ontological Metaphor



“An expression of love’s enduring protection.”

It conceptualizes the abstract emotion of love as a tangible, protective object. By mapping love onto the physical characteristics of a lock, associated with security, durability, and containment, the metaphor provides a concrete framework for understanding emotional commitment. It positions love not as a fleeting feeling but as a stable, protective force with physical boundaries, enhancing its emotional resonance and perceived permanence.

3. Orientational Metaphor



“Leave your world behind.”

It allows the reader to interpret vacation not just as a physical act of travel, but as a metaphorical cleansing—where proximity to “the world” (i.e., stress and obligation) is diminished by distance, both literal and emotional. Such metaphoric language is typical of luxury travel branding, framing escapism as both a physical and mental act of liberation.

B. Fashion as Communication

1. Fashion as Non Verbal Language

“Revolutionary Eye Tool”

These findings fall predominantly into the category of Fashion as Non-Verbal Language. This term refers to a physical product designed to alter or enhance appearance—specifically around the eyes—communicating beauty, youthfulness, or alertness without the need for words. As part of the beauty and fashion world, such tools operate through visual and bodily transformation, sending non-verbal cues about self-care, status, and aesthetic refinement.

2. Fashion as Social Communication

“What on earth will they think of this flimsy-looking thing?”

This statement reflects a concern with how others will perceive a garment, highlighting the role of fashion in social judgment and interaction. It shows that clothing is not just about personal taste, but also about how one is read or evaluated by others within a social setting. The word “flimsy” suggests vulnerability or deviation from expected norms.

3. Fashion as Cultural Communication

“The Chloé that helped define the look of the 2000s.”

This statement positions the fashion brand Chloé as a cultural force that shaped the visual identity of an entire decade, highlighting how fashion reflects and influences broader cultural aesthetics. By referencing “the look of the 2000s,” it acknowledges that fashion carries historical and symbolic meaning, marking specific moments in time.

4. Fashion as Individual Expression

“The face you see in the mirror is real beauty.”

This statement emphasizes a personal and introspective understanding of beauty, affirming that authenticity and self-acceptance define true attractiveness. It shifts the focus away from external validation or societal standards, encouraging individuals to find beauty in their own reflection. Fashion and beauty here are portrayed as tools for self-recognition and self-love, rooted in one’s unique features and identity.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Conclusion

This study set out to explore the use of conceptual metaphors in contemporary fashion discourse, specifically within Vogue summer e-magazine 2024, by employing Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) and Barnard's (2002) theory of Fashion as Communication. The analysis focused on identifying the types of metaphors used, their cognitive functions, and how they intersect with the communicative categories of fashion language. A total of 38 data were analyzed and categorized into three primary metaphor types: Ontological Metaphors (21 data), Structural Metaphors (11 data), and Orientational Metaphors (6 data). Additionally, each metaphor was classified based on its function in fashion communication: Fashion as Individual Expression (16 data), Fashion as Non-Verbal Language (10 data), Fashion as Cultural Communication (7 data), and Fashion as Social Communication (5 data).

The findings demonstrate that ontological metaphors dominate fashion discourse, reflecting a tendency to transform abstract emotional or psychological states—such as beauty, love, identity, and resilience—into tangible, graspable entities. These metaphors allow complex internal experiences to be communicated more concretely, thus reinforcing the personal and emotional dimension of fashion narratives. Structural metaphors serve to frame abstract experiences like recovery, transformation, or empowerment through familiar conceptual structures such as journeys or battles. Orientational metaphors, though fewer in number, reveal how spatial orientations grounded in physical experience—such as “up,” “down,” or “under”—shape how emotional states and social positions are perceived and described.

In terms of the language of fashion, the dominance of Fashion as Individual Expression highlights the deeply personal function of metaphor in constructing identity, emotion, and self-perception. Fashion is shown not merely as a material or aesthetic domain, but as a narrative space where individuals articulate their inner worlds. Meanwhile, non-verbal language underscores how appearance and physical styling communicate meaning silently, and cultural and social communication categories illustrate how metaphors reflect broader social norms, collective beliefs, and symbolic values.

Overall, the study affirms that metaphors in fashion are not incidental or ornamental; rather, they are essential mechanisms through which language constructs, communicates, and reinforces meaning. By mapping abstract ideas onto concrete imagery, conceptual

metaphors serve both a cognitive and communicative function. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of how fashion texts engage readers emotionally and ideologically, using metaphor as a bridge between internal experience and external expression. Furthermore, it positions fashion discourse as a rich site for interdisciplinary linguistic inquiry, where language, identity, culture, and aesthetics intersect meaningfully.

B. Suggestions

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, several suggestions are proposed for future research and practical application. First, future studies are encouraged to expand the scope of analysis beyond a single publication or brand—such as Vogue—to include diverse fashion media platforms, such as advertisements, social media content, fashion blogs, or video campaigns. This would allow for a broader comparison of how conceptual metaphors are used across formats, audiences, and cultural contexts. Comparative studies could also explore how metaphorical expressions differ between Western and non-Western fashion discourses, thereby offering insights into cultural variation in fashion communication and metaphor usage.

Second, it is recommended that future researchers incorporate audience reception analysis to understand how metaphorical language in fashion is interpreted by readers or consumers. While this study focused on textual analysis, audience perspectives would enrich the findings by revealing the effectiveness, emotional impact, or persuasive function of metaphors in shaping public perception, identity construction, and consumer behavior. Third, interdisciplinary approaches that combine linguistic analysis with visual semiotics would further enhance the understanding of how verbal metaphors interact with visual elements in fashion communication. Since fashion media is inherently multimodal, exploring the interplay between language, image, and design would offer a more comprehensive account of meaning-making processes.

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