



## A Discourse Analysis of Emotional Expression in Dhruv's "Double Take"

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**Abstract.** This study explores how emotional expression is represented in Dhruv's song Double Take through a discourse analysis approach. This study looks at how four key word choices diction, metaphors, pronoun usage, and repetition help shape the emotional heart of song lyrics. Using a qualitative approach, I analysed the official lyrics of the song Double Take, drawing on insights from linguistics and communication experts like Geoffrey Leech, George Lakoff, Mark Johnson, Norman Fairclough, and Deborah Tannen. The analysis uncovered twelve distinct emotional expressions driven by these four features. Specifically, the choice of diction captures a sense of raw sincerity, deep longing, and inner conflict. Metaphors breathe life into abstract feelings, making them vivid and imaginative. Pronoun Usage spotlight the shifting dynamics between people and personal points of view, while repetition drives home the sheer intensity and lingering uncertainty of the emotions involved. Together, these linguistic features construct complex emotional meanings, including vulnerability, obsession, and ambiguity throughout the song. This analysis shows that emotional expression in song lyrics is shaped by the interaction of multiple linguistic elements rather than isolated features alone. The research contributes to discourse analysis by offering a better understanding of how language expresses subtle emotions in contemporary music and may serve as a reference for future studies in linguistics and literary analysis.

**Keywords:** Discourse Analysis; Double Take; Emotional Expression; Linguistic Features; Song Lyrics.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Song lyrics have become a primary of popular discourse, conveying emotions, identities, and interpersonal experiences. The growing popularity of digital music platforms has enabled listeners to engage closely with lyrical content, making song lyrics an important object of linguistic investigation. Beyond entertainment, song lyrics often represent complex emotional experiences that reflect personal feelings, social relationships, and psychological conditions. Understanding how emotions are expressed through language has become a significant concern in discourse analysis.

Emotional expression in song lyrics is rarely conveyed directly. Emotional expression in song lyrics is rarely conveyed directly; instead, songwriters employ linguistic resources like diction, metaphor, pronoun usage, and repetition to construct emotional meanings and evoke responses from listeners. These linguistic features create complex emotional meanings, including vulnerability, obsession, ambiguity. Discourse analysis provides an appropriate framework for examining how language functions in the construction of emotional experiences.

Language serves as a medium of communication and a means of expressing emotions, identities, and interpersonal relationships. Through language, individuals convey feelings, attitudes, and personal experiences that reflect their psychological and social realities. In discourse analysis, language is examined within its social and contextual environment to reveal

how meanings are constructed and communicated (Gee, 2005). One form of discourse that provides rich linguistic data is song lyrics. Song lyrics combine linguistic creativity and emotional expression, allowing listeners to experience emotions through carefully selected words and stylistic devices. Emotional expression in discourse is commonly realized through various linguistic features, including diction, figurative language, pronoun usage, and rhetorical strategies. According to (Leech, 1981), diction plays an important role in conveying emotional nuances because words possess both denotative and connotative meanings. (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003) argue that metaphor functions as a conceptual mechanism through which abstract experiences, including emotions, are understood and expressed. (Fairclough, 1995) emphasizes that pronouns contribute to the construction of interpersonal relationships and social positioning in discourse, while (Tannen, 1989) suggests that repetition strengthens cohesion and highlights emotionally significant meanings.

Several previous studies have explored emotional meaning in song lyrics from different linguistic perspectives. (Nurjannah, 2025) examined deixis in Rosé's song lyrics and found that personal pronouns contribute to the construction of emotional intimacy between the speaker and the listener. (Indriani & Widianingsih, 2025) investigated deixis in "Nothing's Gonna Change My Love for You" and revealed the dominance of personal deixis in expressing affection and emotional attachment. Other studies have focused on metaphorical expressions and rhetorical devices in song lyrics. However, these studies generally investigate linguistic features separately and tend to categorize emotions into broad categories such as love, sadness, or happiness.

Recent studies have demonstrated a growing interest in the relationship between language, emotion, and meaning construction in song lyrics. (Fadhilah & Juanda, 2023) found that conceptual metaphors in Jay Chang's *Is You* represent emotional experiences through mappings between source and target domains, particularly in themes of romantic relationships and memory. (Rizky et al., 2025) revealed that metaphors in Kali Uchis's *Territorial* function not only as stylistic devices but also as cognitive tools that construct meanings related to love, jealousy, emotional boundaries, and self-defense. (Amalia et al., 2026) emphasized that metaphorical language plays a significant role in constructing emotional and conceptual meanings in contemporary song lyrics, allowing abstract feelings to be represented through more concrete linguistic expressions. From a cognitive semantic perspective, (Dewi, 2025) argued that song lyrics provide a rich medium for expressing emotional experiences through metaphorical language, enabling listeners to connect personal feelings with broader conceptual meanings. Furthermore, studies on figurative language in contemporary albums have shown

that metaphor remains one of the most dominant linguistic strategies for conveying emotional depth in song lyrics (Santika & Syafryadin, 2023). However, most studies primarily investigate figurative language, especially metaphor, while limited attention has been given to how multiple linguistic features such as diction, pronoun usage, metaphor, and repetition interact to construct emotional expression within a discourse analytical framework.

Despite these contributions, several research gaps remain. First, previous studies rarely integrate multiple linguistic features within a single analytical framework to explain emotional expression comprehensively. Therefore, a discourse-oriented investigation that combines multiple linguistic features is necessary to explain how emotional meaning is constructed holistically in contemporary song lyrics. Second, subtle emotional states such as vulnerability, uncertainty, hesitation, and emotional dependency have received limited attention. Third, contemporary song lyrics are often treated as ordinary texts, resulting in insufficient exploration of their stylistic and poetic characteristics.

To address these gaps, this study investigates emotional expression in “Double Take” by Dhruv through a discourse analysis approach. The study focuses on four linguistic features: diction, metaphor, pronoun usage, and repetition. Specifically, it aims to examine how these linguistic features interact in constructing emotional meanings and how they represent complex emotional experiences in contemporary song lyrics.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Discourse analysis**

Discourse analysis is a branch of linguistics that examines language beyond the sentence level and focuses on how meaning is constructed within particular social and cultural contexts. According to (Gee, 2005), discourse analysis investigates how language functions in communication and how it reflects social identities, relationships, and ideologies. Unlike traditional linguistic approaches that focus on grammatical structures, discourse analysis explores how language represents experiences, constructs meanings, and attitudes. It enables researchers to identify the linguistic strategies employed by writers or songwriters to communicate emotions and personal perspectives in literary and musical texts. Song lyrics can be understood as a form of discourse that reflects both linguistic creativity and emotional expression.

### **Emotional Expression in Song Lyrics**

Emotional expression refers to the linguistic representation of feelings, attitudes, and psychological states through language. According to (Bednarek, 2008), emotions can be

expressed explicitly through lexical choices or implicitly through discourse structures and stylistic devices. In song lyrics, emotional expression is often realized through figurative language, repetition, and interpersonal markers that allow listeners to interpret the emotional experiences of the speaker. Because songs combine artistic creativity with personal experience, emotional meanings are frequently communicated indirectly and require contextual interpretation. Analyzing emotional expression in song lyrics provides insights into how language functions as a medium for representing human emotions.

### **Diction**

Diction refers to the selection of words used by speakers or writers to communicate particular meanings and effects. (Leech, 1981) argues that words contain both denotative and connotative meanings, allowing language users to convey emotions and attitudes beyond literal interpretation. In literary and musical discourse, diction plays a significant role in shaping emotional tone and influencing audience perception. The use of informal, contrastive, or emotionally loaded vocabulary may reveal psychological states such as longing, sadness, uncertainty, or affection. Therefore, the analysis of diction is essential for understanding how emotional meanings are constructed in song lyrics.

### **Metaphor**

Metaphor is a linguistic device that allows one concept to be understood in terms of another. (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003) propose that metaphor is not merely a stylistic ornament but a conceptual mechanism that structures human thought and experience. Through metaphor, abstract concepts such as emotions, relationships, and personal experiences can be represented in more concrete and relatable forms. In song lyrics, metaphors often function to intensify emotional expression by transforming feelings into imaginative images. Consequently, metaphor analysis helps reveal how songwriters conceptualize and communicate complex emotional experiences.

### **Pronoun Usage**

Pronouns are linguistic elements that establish relationships between discourse participants and contribute to the construction of interpersonal meaning. (Fairclough, 1995) argues that pronoun usage reflects social positioning and helps define relationships between speakers and listeners. First-person pronouns, such as "I" and "we," typically emphasize personal experience and subjective perspectives, whereas second-person pronouns, such as "you," create direct engagement with the audience or addressee. In song lyrics, pronouns play an important role in expressing intimacy, emotional involvement, and relational dynamics.

Therefore, examining pronoun usage provides valuable insights into how interpersonal relationships are represented through language.

### **Repetition**

Repetition refers to the recurrence of words, phrases, or structures within a discourse. According to (Tannen, 1989), repetition serves multiple communicative functions, including emphasizing important information, strengthening cohesion, and reinforcing emotional meaning. In literary and musical texts, repetition is frequently employed to highlight key themes and intensify emotional impact. Repeated expressions may indicate emotional attachment, uncertainty, desire, or psychological fixation. As a result, repetition functions not only as a stylistic device but also as a significant mechanism for constructing emotional expression in discourse.

### **Double Take**

“Double Take” is a song performed by Dhruv and released on the album \*Rapunzel\* in 2019. (Abrams & Harpham, 2014), lyrics are a form of literary expression used to convey personal thoughts and feelings. The song depicts the experience of romantic attraction accompanied by doubt, hope, and uncertainty regarding a developing relationship. Through poetic and emotional language, the song showcases various expressions of vulnerability, emotional honesty, and a desire for certainty in a relationship. Therefore, “Double Take” is a relevant subject for analysis because it contains various linguistic features such as diction, metaphors, pronoun usage, and repetition that play a role in constructing emotional meaning within the song’s lyrics.

## **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study employed a qualitative descriptive design within the framework of discourse analysis. Qualitative research was selected because it enables an in-depth exploration of linguistic phenomena and allows researchers to interpret meanings embedded in textual data (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The study focuses on how emotional expression is constructed through linguistic features in song lyrics. The data source of this research was the song “Double Take” by Dhruv. The data consisted of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences that represent emotional expressions throughout the lyrics. The identified linguistic expressions were classified into categories of diction, metaphor, pronoun usage, and repetition.

The study analyzed the song’s lyrics using the documentation method. The researchers obtained the official lyrics of the song and conducted repeated readings to identify linguistic elements associated with emotional expression. Subsequently, relevant expressions were

highlighted, categorized, and organized according to the four linguistic features under investigation. The analysis followed an interactive qualitative model consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The identified linguistic expressions were classified into categories of diction, metaphor, pronoun usage, and repetition. Each expression was interpreted contextually to determine its contribution to emotional meaning. The findings were analyzed using (Leech, 1981) theory of meaning, (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003) Conceptual Metaphor Theory, (Fairclough, 1995) perspective on pronoun usage, and (Tannen, 1989) theory of repetition. Finally, conclusions were drawn regarding the role of these linguistic features in constructing emotional expression within the song.

Theoretical triangulation was applied by employing multiple theoretical perspectives in the interpretation of the data. This approach enabled a more comprehensive understanding of emotional expression from different linguistic dimensions.

#### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on an analysis of the lyrics to the song "Double Take" by Dhruv, 12 data points were identified that represent emotional expressions through four key linguistic features. The data were classified as follows:

**Table 1.** Linguistic Features and Emotional Expression in "Double Take"

No.	Data	Feature	Interpretation	Emotional Meaning
1.	"I would be lyin"	Diction	The use of informal contraction emphasizes sincerity, reflecting emotional honesty.	Vulnerability
2.	"pretend I'm happy for you"	Diction	The lexical contrast between "pretend" and "happy" highlights emotional dissonance between genuine feelings and expressed behavior.	Emotional Conflict
3.	"Spend a summer or a lifetime with me"	Diction	The contrast between "summer" and "lifetime" emphasizes the speaker's desire for enduring commitment.	Desire for Commitment
4.	"We'll be friends forever"	Diction	A past commitment that contrasts with present relational changes.	Nostalgia
5.	"hooked onto something"	Metaphor	Love is likened to an addictive attachment, suggesting emotional dependency.	Emotional Dependency
6.	"rose-tinted dreams"	Metaphor	A romanticized and idealized perception of love.	Romantic Idealization
7.	"you're my muse"	Metaphor	A couple as a source of inspiration, highlighting admiration and emotional dependence.	Emotional Admiration
8.	"constellations of stars"	Metaphor	The metaphor frames emotional experience within a cosmic domain, suggesting depth, complexity, and	Sense of Wonder

			a sense of wonder in the speaker's feelings.	
9.	"I don't see nobody but you"	Repetition	The repetition functions as an intensifier, reinforcing emotional exclusivity and cognitive fixation.	Emotional Fixation
10.	"Do you feel the love?"	Repetition	Repeated questions indicate emotional insecurity and a need for validation.	Emotional Uncertainty
11.	"I could say I never dare"	Pronoun Usage	First-person pronouns emphasize a personal perspective.	Self- Reflection
12.	"Tell me"	Pronoun Usage	The imperative form directly addresses "you", indicating urgency and a desire for response.	Validation Seeking

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Source: Data analyzed from the lyrics of "Double Take" by Dhruv (2019), retrieved from Spotify.

The findings reveal 12 data points of emotional expression distributed across four linguistic features: diction, metaphor, pronoun usage, and repetition. These features interact to construct nuanced emotional meanings like vulnerability, uncertainty, longing, and obsession.

From the perspective of diction, emotional honesty in the song is expressed through carefully selected lexical choices rather than direct statements. The conversational word "lyin" (Data 1) creates a sense of authenticity and vulnerability, while "pretend I'm happy for you" (Data 2) reveals emotional conflict between genuine feelings and outward behavior. Similarly, "spend a summer or a lifetime with me" (Data 3) conveys longing and a desire for commitment, whereas "we'll be friends forever" (Data 4) reflects nostalgia and emotional transition. These findings support (Leech, 1981) view that connotative meaning enables language to communicate subtle emotional nuances beyond literal interpretation. Overall, the diction in the lyrics transforms simple expressions into representations of complex emotional experiences.

Metaphors such as "hooked onto something" (Data 5) and "rose-tinted dreams" (Data 6) demonstrate how emotional experiences are conceptualized through figurative language. The metaphor "hooked" portrays emotional attachment as a form of dependency that limits personal control, while "rose-tinted dreams" reflects an idealized perception of love. Likewise, "you're my muse" (Data 7) and "constellations of stars" (Data 8) elevate emotions into artistic and cosmic domains. These findings support (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003) argument that metaphor functions as a conceptual mechanism through which abstract emotional experiences are understood and communicated. Repetition intensifies emotional expression and highlights the speaker's psychological state. The repeated question "Do you feel the love?" (Data 10) reflects emotional uncertainty and a continuing search for reassurance, while "I don't see nobody but you" (Data 9) reinforces emotional fixation and exclusivity. Consistent with (Tannen, 1989) theory, repetition functions as a discourse strategy that emphasizes emotionally significant

meanings, strengthens cohesion, and reveals the speaker's longing for validation.

Pronoun usage plays a crucial role in constructing interpersonal meaning. In Fairclough's framework, pronouns contribute to the construction of subject positions. The frequent use of "I" and "you" establishes an intimate interpersonal relationship in which the speaker negotiates identity, emotional dependence, and relational expectations. "I" (Data 11) indicates a strong focus on personal reflection and subjective emotional experience. Meanwhile, the use of "you" (Data 12) establishes direct emotional engagement with the addressee. This pattern illustrates how pronouns function to position the speaker and the listener within an intimate relationship. These findings are consistent with (Fairclough, 1995) view that pronouns contribute to the construction of social relations and subject positions in discourse. This study contributes to contemporary discourse analysis by demonstrating that emotional meaning in popular music emerges through the interaction of multiple linguistic resources rather than through isolated linguistic features. Therefore, the primary focus of this study is not the identification of individual linguistic features, but the way these features interact to construct emotional meaning in discourse. This study extends previous research by showing that emotional expression in song lyrics involves nuanced emotional states like hesitation, vulnerability, and ambiguity, rather than merely broad emotional categories like love or sadness. The interaction of diction, metaphor, pronoun, and repetition reveals how language functions as a significant instrument in representing complex emotional experiences in contemporary music.

## **5. CONCLUSION & SUGGESTIONS**

This study aims to analyze how emotional expression is constructed in the song "Double Take" by Dhruv through four linguistic features: diction, metaphor, pronoun usage, and repetition. The findings indicate that emotional meaning is not expressed explicitly but is developed through the interaction of these linguistic elements. The findings demonstrate that emotional expression in contemporary song lyrics is a multidimensional discourse phenomenon shaped by the interaction of lexical, figurative, interpersonal, and rhetorical resources. Diction reflects internal conflict and emotional intensity through simple yet meaningful word choices. Metaphor allows abstract emotions to be conceptualized in more concrete and imaginative ways. Pronoun usage constructs interpersonal relationships and highlights the speaker's subjective perspective. Meanwhile, repetition reinforces emotional emphasis and reveals the speaker's need for validation. Together, these features create a cohesive and layered representation of emotional experience. However, this study has several

limitations. First, it focuses only on a single song, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Second, the analysis is restricted to four linguistic features, leaving out other possible aspects such as syntax, tone, or discourse structure. Future research is recommended to analyze a wider range of songs or incorporate additional linguistic frameworks to provide a more comprehensive understanding of emotional expression in discourse.

In conclusion, this study highlights the importance of linguistic analysis in uncovering how emotions are constructed in song lyrics. More specifically, it extends contemporary discourse analysis by demonstrating that emotional meaning is produced through the interaction of multiple linguistic features, namely diction, metaphor, pronoun usage, and repetition, rather than through isolated linguistic elements. The findings reveal how these features work together to construct nuanced emotional states such as vulnerability, emotional dependency, uncertainty, and longing. Therefore, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of how language functions as a resource for representing complex emotional experiences in contemporary musical discourse. Based on the findings and limitations of this study, several suggestions can be proposed. First, future researchers are encouraged to analyze emotional expression in a wider range of songs from different artists, genres, and cultural backgrounds to obtain more comprehensive findings. Second, future studies may investigate additional linguistic features, such as syntax, discourse structure, modality, and tone, to provide a broader understanding of how emotions are constructed in discourse. Third, comparative studies involving multiple songs or albums may be conducted to identify similarities and differences in the linguistic construction of emotional expression. Finally, this study is expected to serve as a useful reference for students and researchers in the fields of linguistics, discourse analysis, and literary studies who are interested in examining the relationship between language and emotional meaning in song lyrics.

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