Analysis of the Hidden Meaning in the Lyrics of the Song "Vampire's Love" by Vamps

A Study of Riffaterre's Semiotic Theory

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the hidden meaning contained in the lyrics of "Vampire's Love" by VAMPS using Michael Riffaterre's semiotic theory. The song was selected because it contains various poetic expressions that cannot be fully understood through a literal reading alone. This research employed a descriptive qualitative method using heuristic and hermeneutic reading stages. The analysis focused on identifying indirect forms of expression, including displacement of meaning, distortion of meaning, matrix, model, variants, and hypogram. The findings reveal that displacement of meaning is represented through metaphor and hyperbole, while distortion of meaning is manifested through ambiguity, contradiction, and nonsense. The hermeneutic reading indicates that the lyrical persona represents a vampire who loves someone but is unable to express or realize that love directly. The song's matrix is obstructed love, while its model is " " reflected in the chorus, which emphasizes that the feeling of love persists despite being unattainable. The variants found in the lyrics include distance, memories, sacrifice, and restrained affection. The song's hypogram relates to the tradition of romantic literature concerning unattainable love and the Gothic tradition, which portrays vampires as symbols of forbidden love, loneliness, and sacrifice. Overall, "Vampire's Love" depicts the suffering of unexpressed love through a network of semiotic signs that collectively construct the song's deeper meaning.

Keywords: *Riffaterre's semiotics, song lyrics, hidden meaning, VAMPS, "Vampire's Love," Japanese language.*

1. Introduction

The term "literature" derives from a Sanskrit word composed of two roots: "sas," meaning to guide or teach, and "tra," meaning tool. Thus, literature can be defined as a tool that both guides and teaches its readers. According to Padi (2013:89), "literature is an artistic activity that uses language and other symbols as tools." Meanwhile, Rafiek (2013:98) defines literature as the writer's emotional outpouring or expression of feelings, such as sadness, frustration, joy, and so on. From these two definitions, it can be concluded that literature functions as a medium of communication that not only conveys messages explicitly but also conceals meanings beneath layers of linguistic signs.

One of the most popular and accessible forms of literary works for the general public is song lyrics. According to Semi (1988:106), lyrics are short poems that express emotions through the arrangement of words in a song. Lyrics fall within the literary genre because they serve as a medium for the expression of sequences of words, verses, poetry, and hidden messages from the writer, which then form a song. In their creative process, lyricists often use figures of speech or metaphorical language to enhance the beauty of their work while concealing messages beneath layers of meaning. This use of layered figures of speech means that lyrics cannot be fully understood with a single reading but require in-depth and systematic analysis.

In the context of Japanese music, the band VAMPS is one of the groups known for their poetic, love-themed lyrics. VAMPS is a rock duo formed in 2008 by HYDE and K.A.Z, two renowned Japanese musicians. HYDE, as the vocalist and primary lyricist, is known for his poetic writing style, filled with sweet seduction hidden behind figurative language. The song "Vampire's Love" is one of VAMPS' works richest in figures of speech and symbols, requiring a special approach to fully grasp its meaning.

The uniqueness of "Vampire's Love" lies in its use of the vampire as the central metaphor underpinning the entire lyrical narrative. In Japanese popular culture, vampires carry a distinct connotation: they are creatures that live in darkness, cannot approach the light, and love from afar without being able to express it. This metaphor is highly relevant to the song's central theme: unrequited love. The complexity of the figures of speech and symbols in this song cannot be fully grasped through a single reading; therefore, a semiotic approach is necessary to uncover the hidden meanings within it.

The most relevant semiotic theory for analyzing poetry and song lyrics is the theory developed by Michael Riffaterre (Ratih, 2016). Semiotics is a literary science that earnestly seeks to uncover the conventions that enable meaning (Teeuw, 1984:143). According to Riffaterre's theory, the interpretation of literature involves: (1) the indirectness of expression, which includes the substitution of meaning, the deviation from meaning, and the creation of meaning; (2) heuristic and hermeneutic readings; (3) matrices, models, and variants; and (4) hypograms. According to Damayantia (2024), Michael Riffaterre's semiotic model is used to analyze poetry, with the focus of the analysis on the attribution of meaning to a literary work.

To date, research on Japanese song lyrics using Riffaterre's semiotic theory remains limited. Previous studies, such as that conducted by Santoso (2019), analyzed Indonesian poetry using Riffaterre's theory and identified the creation of meaning but did not find hypograms. Meanwhile, Raharjo (2023) analyzed J-Pop song lyrics and found shifts in meaning in the form of metonymy and synecdoche, which differ from the findings in this study. Mandala (2021), in a Riffaterre semiotics analysis of the song lyrics "Citta" by Laura Pausini, also did not identify the matrix, model, variants, and hypogram in their entirety. Based on these research gaps, this study aims to comprehensively analyze the hidden meanings in the lyrics of the song "Vampire's Love" by VAMPS using a thorough examination of Riffaterre's semiotic theory, covering all components within that theory.

2. Method

This study employs a qualitative descriptive method. According to Sukmadinata (2011), qualitative descriptive research aims to describe and explain phenomena—whether natural or man-made—with a greater emphasis on analyzing the characteristics, qualities, and relationships among various activities occurring within the context under study. This approach

was chosen because literary research is fundamentally interpretive and cannot be reduced to statistical figures.

The descriptive method is a research method that describes the object or subject of study as it is, with the aim of systematically and accurately depicting the facts and characteristics of the object. This method is particularly well-suited for literary research, especially regarding songs, because the data obtained can be analyzed solely based on the song lyrics themselves, without the need to incorporate external data. Meanwhile, the qualitative approach prioritizes the process over the results, allowing for the interpretation and detailed analysis of song lyrics through a hermeneutic reading.

Qualitative research methods can also be considered naturalistic research methods (Sugiyono, 2012:8). The use of qualitative methods in this study allows the researcher to conduct a more detailed and in-depth analysis of the hidden meanings in the song lyrics, thereby yielding more accurate results compared to using descriptive methods alone. Since Riffaterre's theory employs heuristics and hermeneutics, this is closely related to the qualitative descriptive method used in this study.

The data source for this study is the lyrics of the song "Vampire's Love" by VAMPS, along with their translation into Indonesian. Data were collected through the " " documentation technique and then analyzed using the following steps: (1) a heuristic reading to understand the literal meaning of the lyrics; (2) a hermeneutic reading to uncover implied meanings; (3) identification of discontinuities in expression, including meaning substitution, meaning deviation, and meaning creation; (4) determination of matrices, models, and variants; and (5) tracing of potential and actual hypograms.

Data validity is ensured through source triangulation, namely by comparing the findings of this analysis with previous studies that employ the same theory, as well as by referring to authentic sources regarding the cultural and literary context of Japan. The entire analytical process was conducted meticulously and systematically in accordance with the established theoretical framework of Riffaterre.

3. Result and Discussion

1. Heuristic Reading

Heuristic reading is the first stage of analysis that yields a literal understanding of meaning. According to Hastuti (2024), heuristic reading yields a literal (raw) understanding of the meaning of a literary work—the explicit or actual meaning.

まぶしい可憐な笑顔は

この僕には遠く…

日差しの向こうへ行けたら君

に何の話をしただろう？ねぇ

こうして君を想うだけで

この胸は煌めいてたよ.. あのころ

このままでいい…

澄んだ空曇らないように

僕は触れず見守っていたずっとね

ぇこうして君を想うだけで

この胸は煌めいているいまでもいまでも

誰より何よりも大切だから…

汚さないよう

ただそっとガラス越しに言った

届かない「愛しているよ」

こうして君を想うだけで

この胸は煌めいている.. いまでも

Based on a heuristic interpretation, the song *"Vampire's Love"* literally tells the story of a "I" who loves someone but is unable to express those feelings directly. The "I" can only watch and protect the one they love from a distance. One of the key phrases in these lyrics is 「ガラス越し」(garasu-goshi), which literally means "through glass" or "from behind glass." In its denotative sense, ガラス refers to a transparent object that allows light to pass through and is commonly used in windows, glasses, and other objects.

However, upon closer analysis, ガラス is no longer interpreted as merely a physical object, but rather as a barrier separating the "I" character from the "you" character. This barrier can take the form of emotional distance, differences in their worlds, or the "I" character's inability to express their feelings directly.

The choice of the word ガラス in these lyrics also carries significant meaning. If the lyricist had used the word 壁 (kabe, wall), the relationship between the two characters would be portrayed as one of absolute separation, since a wall prevents one from seeing the other side. In contrast, glass is a transparent barrier, so both parties can still see each other even though they cannot touch directly.

Thus, the primary meaning of ガラス in these lyrics lies not in the thickness of the barrier, but in the inability of the "I" to reach the one they love, even though that person is within their line of sight. Glass is a barrier that can be physically broken, but in these lyrics, the barrier is emotional and psychological in nature, making it impossible to overcome easily. Therefore, "glass" is a more fitting symbol than a wall, as it depicts a situation where a person can clearly see the one they love but remains unable to express their feelings.

In the first stanza, the first-person narrator describes the person they love using the phrase 「まぶしい可憐な笑顔」 (*mabushii karen na egao*), which means "a smile that is so dazzling and graceful." The word まぶしい (mabushii) literally means "so bright it dazzles the eyes," while 可憐 (karen) means "beautiful, gentle, and evoking a desire to protect." The use of these two words not only describes the physical beauty of the character "you," but also

indicates that this person is viewed as so perfect as to be out of reach. This is reinforced by the phrase 「この僕には遠く」 (*kono boku ni wa tooku*), which means "too far for me." The word 遠い (tooi) not only indicates physical distance but can also be interpreted as the emotional, social, or existential distance between the "I" and the "you."

In the next verse, the phrase "日差しの向こうへ行けたら" (*hizashi no mukou e iketara*) appears, which literally means "if I could go beyond the sunlight." The word 日差し (hizashi) refers to the sunlight that shines on the earth, while 向こう (mukou) indicates a place that lies behind or beyond something. Literally speaking, it is impossible for a human to go "beyond the sunlight." Therefore, this phrase creates a shift in meaning that requires a hermeneutic interpretation. In the context of the song *"Vampire's Love*," sunlight can be interpreted as a boundary that a vampire cannot cross. The desire to go beyond the sunlight reflects the "I" character's longing to transcend their own limitations so they can exist in the same world as the one they love.

In the following lines, the first-person narrator reveals that their feelings are still alive through the phrase 「この胸は煌めいている」 (*kono mune wa kirameite iru*). The word 煌めく (kirameku) literally means "to sparkle" or "to emit light." Since a person's chest or heart cannot literally sparkle, the phrase " " indicates a metaphorical shift in meaning. The sparkle referred to here is not physical light, but rather a feeling of love that remains alive even as time has passed.

Furthermore, the lyric "I watched over him without touching him, all along" (*boku wa furezu mimamotte ita zutto*) reveals the inner conflict of the "I" character. The word **触れず** (furezu) comes from the negative form of **触れる** (fureru), which means "to touch," and thus means "without touching." Meanwhile, 見守る (mimamoru) does not merely mean "to watch," but also carries the nuance of guarding, protecting, and caring for someone with affection. The "I" character chooses to continue watching over the person they love from a distance without making direct contact. This shows that the "I" character's love is not expressed through possession, but rather through sacrifice and protection.

Thus, the progression of the song's lyrics reveals the emotional journey of the "I" character—from admiration for the beloved, to the desire to transcend the boundaries separating them, to the acceptance that this love can only be sustained from a distance. Through this series of expressions, *the* song *"Vampire's Love"* conveys the idea that love continues to shine even when it cannot be realized directly.

2. **Hermeneutic Interpretation**

From a hermeneutic perspective, this song depicts someone who can only love their beloved from afar without being able to express their feelings. When examined through the context of the song's title, "Vampire's Love," the "I" in the song is a vampire who loves a mortal. In mythology, vampires cannot be exposed to sunlight, so the phrase "if I could go beyond the sunlight" conveys a profound longing to live like a mortal and experience love freely.

The "I" in the song deeply hopes that their love story can be repeated, but can only daydream about the past ("just like back then"). The glass or mirror (ガラス越し / garasu-goshi) mentioned in the final verse is not merely a physical barrier, but a symbol of the

insurmountable boundary between the worlds of vampires and humans. Even something as simple as saying "I love you" (愛しているよ / aishiteiruyo) cannot be expressed directly because there is an invisible barrier between the narrator and their beloved.

A hermeneutic reading reveals that this song tells the tragic story of a love that cannot be conveyed, even though the feelings remain very strong. The phrase "this chest glows," which appears twice in the song (verses 3 and 5), undergoes a shift in temporal reference: from "just like in the past" to "even now," indicating that the feeling of love has never faded despite the passage of time, and that the vampire knows his love can never be realized. The narrator chooses to love from afar out of fear of "tarnishing" his beloved if he were to get too close.

3. Discontinuity of Expression

a. Metaphorical Substitution

Changes in meaning in this song are found in the form of metaphors, personification, similes, and hyperbole, which work synergistically to construct the song's overall meaning.

1) Metaphor

Data 1: ただそっとガラス越しに言った**届**かない「愛しているよ」-

In terms of vocabulary, "ガラス" refers to

砂などを高**温**で溶かして作られる透明な物質。

Glass is a transparent material made from sand or minerals heated to high temperatures. Basic properties of glass: Transparent (see-through), allows light to pass through , thin and fragile, separates two spaces, yet still allows both sides to see each other

Why not a wall? If the songwriter had written 壁越し, which means "through the wall," it would raise issues such as: walls are not see-through; the view is completely blocked, and one cannot see beyond them. Meanwhile, in the song, the "I" character still sees, remembers, loves, and still has the desire to watch over. This means that what is blocked is not the person's presence, but the ability to reach them. Why is it a metaphor? Because there is a shift in meaning: "glass" is no longer a literal object but has transformed into fear, helplessness, or an emotional barrier.

If "glass" were interpreted literally as a physical object, the existence of that barrier would not provide a sufficient reason for the "I" character to be unable to express their feelings, since glass is a thin and easily breakable object. Therefore, a hermeneutic reading is necessary to uncover a deeper meaning.

Through a hermeneutic reading, ガラス is no longer understood as a physical barrier, but rather as an inner barrier consisting of the "I" character's fears, doubts, and limitations. The "I" character can still see the person they love, but is unable to reach them or express their feelings directly. Thus, ガラス functions as a metaphor for the fears and emotional boundaries that confine the "I" character, resulting in a shift in meaning that indicates the presence of a metaphor according to Riffaterre's theory of semiotics.

Data 2: この胸は煌めいてたよ

The expression "この胸は煌めいてたよ" (kono mune wa kirameiteta yo) literally means "this chest was sparkling" or "my chest was sparkling." This phrase is composed of the words 胸 (mune) and 煌めく (kirameku), each of which has its own lexical meaning.

In terms of vocabulary, 胸 (mune) refers to the 人間の心**臓**や肺がある部分 "part of the human body where the heart and lungs are located."

Thus, the basic meaning of 胸 is the chest or the part of the body where vital organs are located. However, in Japanese, the word 胸 is not only used to refer to the physical part of the body but is also often used to describe a person's heart, feelings, emotions, and inner state.

For example:

胸が痛い(My heart aches)

胸が熱くなる (I feel warm or moved)

胸が高鳴る (my heart is racing)

This shows that the Japanese word 胸 has both a physical and an emotional meaning.

Meanwhile, the word 煌めく(kirameku) literally means "to sparkle," "to twinkle," "to shine beautifully," or "to emit a sparkling light." This word is generally used to describe something that emits a beautiful light or, figuratively, something that stands out and is full of charm.

For example:

星が夜空で煌めいている (The stars are sparkling in the night sky)

彼女の瞳が煌めいていた (Her eyes were sparkling)

若者たちの煌めく未**来** (A bright future for young people)

Based on these examples, it's clear that 煌めく is not only used to describe physical light but can also be used to describe something that shines emotionally or symbolically.

The kanji 煌 is composed of the kanji 火, meaning "fire," and the kanji 皇, which conveys a sense of brightness, grandeur, and radiance. The presence of the kanji 火 evokes a sense of heat, energy, and a flame that continues to burn, while the kanji 皇 conveys a sense of vast and bright light. Therefore, the kanji 煌 carries the meaning of light that radiates strongly and beautifully.

Additionally, the verb suffix ～めく in the word 煌めく indicates a specific state or quality that stands out. Thus, 煌めく does not simply mean "to shine," but rather "to emit a continuous radiance" or "to appear to shine beautifully."

The use of the word 煌めく in these lyrics is also interesting because the writer did not use the word 光る (hikaru). The word 光る is generally used to describe light directly, such as:

ライトが光る。(The light is shining)

太陽が光る。(The sun is shining)

星が光る。(The stars are shining)

Meanwhile, 煌めく carries a more poetic, beautiful, emotional, and enchanting nuance. Therefore, the choice of the word 煌めく gives the impression that the light in question is not merely physical light, but rather light emanating from within the "I" character.

If the expression "この胸は煌めいてたよ" is taken literally, the meaning "a shimmering chest" becomes nonsensical because parts of the human body cannot emit light like stars, fire, or other luminous objects. Therefore, there is a discontinuity in the expression that requires a hermeneutic reading.

Through a hermeneutic reading, the word 胸 is no longer interpreted as the physical chest, but rather as the heart or feelings of the "I" character. Meanwhile, the light implied by the word 煌めく is no longer understood as physical light, but rather as the feelings of love, admiration, happiness, and longing that still live within the "I" character.

Thus, the expression 「この胸は煌めいてたよ」 is a metaphor that depicts the feeling of love that continues to burn and shine within the "I" character's heart. There is a shift in meaning from physical light to emotional light, so this expression qualifies as a metaphor according to Riffaterre's theory of semiotics

2.) **Hyperbole**

Data: 誰より何よりも大切だから (Dare yori nani yori mo taisetsu dakara) — "More precious than anything and anyone"

The phrase 誰より何よりも大切だから literally means "because you are more precious than anyone and anything." This phrase consists of the word 誰 (dare), which means "who," 何 (nani), which means "what," the comparative particles より (yori) and よりも (yori mo), and the adjective 大切 (taisetsu), which means "precious," "important," or "meaningful."

In Japanese grammar, より is used to express comparison with the following pattern:

A より B のほうが～

which means:

"B is more ... than A."

Meanwhile, the form よりも has a meaning almost identical to より, but places stronger emphasis on the object being compared. The particle も serves to reinforce the meaning of the comparison, resulting in a more intense nuance.

In these lyrics, the phrase 誰より can be interpreted as "than anyone," while 何よりも means "than anything else." The sequential use of より and よりも emphasizes that the person loved by the "I" in the song holds a value that surpasses all other people and everything else that exists.

Grammatically, the より pattern is generally used to compare two clear and measurable objects, as in the sentence:

日本語は英語より難しい。

"Japanese is more difficult than English."

However, in these lyrics, the "I" does not compare the person they love to a specific person or object, but rather to all of humanity (誰) and all things (何) as a whole. This comparison is difficult to prove logically because it is impossible for a person to compare the value of an individual to that of everyone and everything in the world.

Through a hermeneutic reading, the phrase 誰より何よりも大切だから indicates that the "I" character places the person they love above everyone and everything else. This phrase is not intended as an objective comparison, but rather as an affirmation of the depth of the "I" character's love.

Thus, the use of the patterns より and よりも in these lyrics creates an effect of exaggerated meaning, thereby falling under the rhetorical device of hyperbole. According to Riffaterre's semiotic analysis, there is a shift in the meaning attributed to the value of the beloved to demonstrate the depth of the "I" character's love and sacrifice.

b. Deviation of Meaning

1.) Contradiction

Data: 僕は**触**れず見守っていた ずっと (Boku wa furezu mimamotte ita zutto) — "I could only watch from afar, unable to touch them, forever"

The expression **触**れず見守っていた literally means "watching over without touching." The word **触**れる (fureru) means "to touch," "to come into contact with," or "to reach out." The form **触**れず derives from the negative pattern ～ない → ～ず, which means "without doing" or "not doing." Thus, **触**れず means "without touching."

Meanwhile, the word 見守る (mimamoru) is composed of the kanji 見, meaning "to see," and 守, meaning "to protect" or "to watch over." Unlike the word 見る, which simply denotes the physical act of seeing, 見守る carries a nuance of attention, protection, care, and affection toward the object being observed.

Semantically, the word **触**れず conveys distance and the inability to make direct contact, whereas 見守る actually conveys deep care and affection. It is this tension between the desire to protect and the inability to touch that creates a contradiction in the lyrics.

Through a hermeneutic reading, it becomes clear that the "I" character harbors deep feelings of love for the "you" character. However, the "I" character chooses instead to watch over from a distance without making direct contact. The desire to be close conflicts with the

act of distancing oneself that the character carries out.

When considered in relation to the song title *"Vampire's Love"* and the visuals of the music video, the character "I" can be interpreted as a vampire who loves a human. Therefore, the inability to touch signifies not merely physical distance, but the awareness that such closeness could endanger the one he loves.

Thus, the phrase "I watched over them without touching them, all along" reveals a conflict between love and separation—between the desire for closeness and the decision to stay apart. This conflict of meaning indicates a contradiction according to Riffaterre's theory of semiotics.

3) Nonsense

Data: 日差しの向こうへ行けたら (Hizashi no mukou e iketara) — "If I could go beyond the sunlight"

The phrase 日差しの向こうへ行けたら literally means "if I could go beyond the sunlight." This phrase consists of the word 日差し (hizashi), meaning "sunlight"; 向こう (mukou), meaning "beyond" or "the side beyond a boundary"; the directional particle へ; and the conditional form 行けたら, meaning "if I could go."

The word 日差し refers to the sunlight that shines on the earth and is often associated with daytime, warmth, life, and hope. Meanwhile, 向こう is generally used to indicate the other side of a physical boundary, such as a river, a road, or a wall. Examples include 川の向こう (across the river) and 壁の向こう (beyond the wall).

However, in the phrase "日差しの向こう," the word "向こう" is applied to "日差し," which physically has no boundaries, sides, or opposite sides. Sunlight has no end or space that can be crossed, so the expression "going to the other side of the sunlight" is logically impossible.

Grammatically, this sentence contains no errors. However, semantically, the expression yields a nonsensical meaning when taken literally. Therefore, the reader must engage in hermeneutic interpretation to understand the hidden meaning.

Through a hermeneutic reading that takes into account the song title *"Vampire's Love"* as well as the visuals in the music video, 日差し can be interpreted as a symbol of the human world, daytime life, and the freedom to love openly. For a vampire, sunlight is something that cannot be approached. Therefore, the phrase "日差しの向こうへ行けたら" expresses the "I" character's desire to reach the unattainable world of " "—that is, a normal human life that allows him to love and be loved without limits.

Thus, this expression reveals a semantic deviation in the form of nonsense because it is logically impossible to carry out; however, through a hermeneutic reading, it yields a deeper meaning regarding longing and hope that cannot be realized according to Riffaterre's theory of semiotics.

4. Matrix, Model, and Variants

The model for the song "Vampire's Love" is found in the verse

"ねえこうして君を思うだけでなくこの胸をきらめていたよ"

The expression 想う (omou) in these lyrics uses the kanji 想, which is different from 思う. The word 思う generally means "to think" or "to consider," whereas 想う carries emotional nuances such as longing for, loving, or remembering someone. Therefore, the phrase 君を想う does not merely indicate the act of thinking but also conveys deep feelings of love and longing.

The pattern ～だけで means "just by" or "simply by." Thus, the phrase 君を想うだけで means "just by thinking of you." The use of this pattern indicates that the mere presence of the character "you" in the character "I"'s memory is enough to evoke an emotional response in the character "I."

Furthermore, the word 胸 (mune) literally means "chest," but in Japanese it is also often used to refer to one's heart, feelings, and inner state. Meanwhile, the word 煌めく (kirameku) means "to sparkle" or "to radiate a beautiful light." This word is generally used to describe stars, light, or anything that shines.

Literally, the phrase この胸は煌めいてたよ means "my chest was sparkling." However, since a human chest cannot physically emit light, there is a shift in meaning from physical light to the feelings of love, happiness, and longing that dwell within the heart of the "I" character.

The repetition of this verse indicates that the core of the entire lyric lies in the act of loving from a distance. The "I" character cannot touch, approach, or express their feelings directly. They can only think of the person they love, and from those feelings, a sparkle is born within their heart.

Based on this, the thematic matrix of the song "Vampire's Love" can be defined as unrequited love. This matrix is then developed into a model through the verse 「ねぇ こうして君を想うだけで / この胸は煌めいてたよ」. which serves as the strongest representation of the song's overall meaning. As for the various variations of " " that appear in the lyrics—such as the inability to get close, hidden love, protection from a distance, and longing for an unattainable world—all of these are extensions of that matrix.

5. Hypogram

The potential hypogram in the song *"Vampire's Love"* is revealed through the repetition of vocabulary and grammatical patterns that indicate the "I" character's inability to express their feelings directly. This is evident in expressions such as 「僕は**触**れず見守っていた」(Boku wa furezu mimamotte ita), 「**届**かない『愛しているよ』」 (Todokanai "aishiteiru yo"), 「ただそっとガラス越しに言った」 (Tada sotto garasu-goshi ni itta), serta 「日差しの向こうへ行けたら」 (Hizashi no mukou e iketara).

Lexically, the word **触**れず indicates an inability to touch, **届**かない indicates something that cannot reach its destination, while ガラス越し depicts a barrier separating the two parties. Additionally, the conditional form 行けたら expresses hope for something that has not yet been or cannot be realized. The repetition of these negative and conditional forms conveys a sense of separation, distance, and the inability to reach a loved one.

Thus, the potential hypogram in this song can be formulated as love that cannot be realized or conveyed directly.

The lyrics of this song can be linked to the concept of platonic love—a form of love that is not expressed through physical intimacy or possession. In platonic love, a person continues to love another even though they cannot possess them or form a direct relationship with them. This is evident in the lyric 「僕は**触**れず見守っていた」 which shows that the "I" character chooses to protect and care for the person they love without touching or getting close to them.

Through a hermeneutic interpretation that takes into account the song's title, *"Vampire's Love*," as well as the visuals in the music video, the "I" character can be understood as a vampire who loves a human but cannot live with the one they love. This situation means that the "I" character is only able to love from a distance, watch over, and keep their feelings to themselves without being able to express them freely.

Thus, the actual hypogram in the song *"Vampire's Love"* points to the concept of platonic love—that is, love that remains alive even though it cannot be realized through closeness, touch, or a direct relationship. This concept serves as an intertextual foundation that reinforces the song's overall meaning regarding love that is hindered by a barrier.

4. Conclusion

Based on Michael Riffaterre's semiotic analysis of the lyrics to VAMPS's song *"Vampire's Love*," it can be concluded that the song's primary meaning is love that cannot be realized or expressed directly due to a barrier separating the "I" from the person they love. Through a heuristic reading, the lyrics depict the "I" character who constantly thinks about and loves the "you" figure but is unable to approach, touch, or express their feelings directly. Meanwhile, through a hermeneutic reading that takes into account the song's title and the visuals of the music video, the "I" can be interpreted as a vampire who loves a human but must keep his distance to protect the one he loves.

The indirect nature of the expression in these lyrics is evident through various forms of substitution and deviation from literal meaning. A metaphor is found in the phrase ガラス越し, which depicts the barrier separating the "I" and "you" characters, as well as in the phrase この胸は煌めいている, which conveys the feelings of love and longing that remain alive within the "I" character. Hyperbole is found in the phrase 誰より何よりも大切だから, which positions the beloved as the most precious thing compared to anyone and anything else.

Contradiction is found in the phrase 僕は**触**れず見守っていた ずっと, which reveals the conflict between the desire to be close and the awareness of the need to keep a distance. Meanwhile, nonsense is found in the phrase 日差しの向こうへ行けたら, which is literally impossible to achieve but, hermeneutically, expresses the "I" character's desire to reach a world beyond their grasp.

An analysis of vocabulary, kanji, and grammatical patterns shows that word choice in the lyrics plays a significant role in the construction of meaning. The use of the word 想う, which differs from 思う; the word 煌めく, which is more poetic than 光る; and the word 見守る, which carries the nuance of watching over and protecting, reveals that the "I" character does not merely love, but loves with deep, self-sacrificing feelings. Furthermore, the use of negative forms such as **触**れず and **届**かない, as well as conditional forms such as 行けたら, reinforces the sense of impossibility and separation.

The theme of this song is unrequited love, as exemplified in the verse 「ねぇ こうして君を想うだけで / この胸は煌めいてたよ」which serves as the focal point for the development of the lyrics' overall meaning. The variations that emerge include the inability to get close, watching from afar, expressions of unrequited love, and hopes for a world that cannot be reached.

The potential hypogram in this song is the idea of unrequited love, while the actual hypogram relates to the concept of platonic love—love that remains alive even though it cannot be realized through physical closeness or a direct relationship. Thus, the lyrics *of "Vampire's Love"* as a whole convey the meaning of someone who chooses to love, protect, and sacrifice their feelings from a distance for the sake of the safety of the one they love.

5. Reference

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