

Group Text Analysis Project

Question:

Dolly Parton's 'Jolene' is about love and desperation, jealousy and insecurity, and power and helplessness. This is why we decided to investigate how the repetition of words and phrases contribute to the song's emotional intensity and/or thematic depth. More particularly we are focused on quantitatively tracing the presence of words/phrases that are usually associated with romantic expression or emotions, and on analyzing their frequency and influence in the song.

Prediction:

Based on what we know about Dolly Parton, we are predicting that the song will repeat the word “Jolene” and mention relationships in some form, potentially through the use of the word “love” or “man.” Our prediction stems on the fact that deliberate use of linguistic repetition has an amplifying effect on the song’s emotional strength. Additionally, we deduce that the frequent invocation of “Jolene” in the presence of a love triangle might also be enhanced (throughout the romantic narrative of the song) by words from the group: 'love,' 'like,' 'smile', etc. (words that are frequently used in this context).

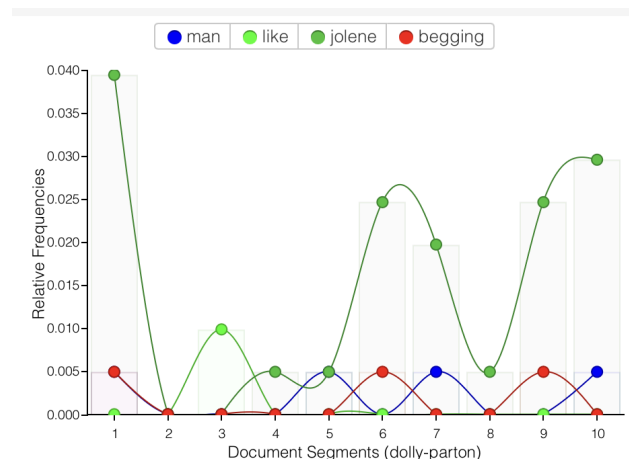
Voyant Findings



After adding in stopwords of “I’ll,” “I’m,” “there’s,” and “It’s,” above is the resulting word cloud. The word that occurs the most is “Jolene,” which is in line with our prediction. The other words with higher occurrence are “man,” “begging,” “like,” and “just.” “Man” being the second most common word is also in line with our prediction (as he is at the center of the conflict), but it is surprising that “love” is not high up on the list. As we discussed, we also assumed that we are going to see more “like,” “smile,” “eyes,” etc. - words used in a typical scenario like the one depicted in the song. This is partly confirmed by the presence of the word “like” - with the 4th highest frequency. However, the fact that the word “love” is mentioned only once and the words like “eyes,” “breath,” “voice,” or even “skin” all have a frequency of only once (each), hints that the song’s emotional intensity is not conveyed through the typical (physical) romantic intimacy but rather through themes like vulnerability, desperation and jealousy.

The most used words in the song “Jolene” are shown above. As predicted, the word “Jolene” can clearly be seen as the most repeated word in the song. It further reinforces the idea of expressing one’s love through a more symbolic way that focuses on the emotional value of the person rather than through fleeting physicalities. We also found it interesting to see that there was not much repetition of words in the song other than “Jolene.” Possibly, the author has really wanted to highlight the effect of the symbolic representation of a “Jolene” in the love triangle. We could not find any visible correlation between the relative position of the 4 most common words in the song as shown in the graph below.

		Term	Count	Trend
⊕	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 jolene	31	
⊕	<input type="checkbox"/>	2 man	4	
⊕	<input type="checkbox"/>	3 begging	3	
⊕	<input type="checkbox"/>	4 like	2	
⊕	<input type="checkbox"/>	5 just	2	
⊕	<input type="checkbox"/>	6 easily	2	
⊕	<input type="checkbox"/>	7 voice	1	
⊕	<input type="checkbox"/>	8 understand	1	
⊕	<input type="checkbox"/>	9 talks	1	
⊕	<input type="checkbox"/>	10 talk	1	
⊕	<input type="checkbox"/>	11 summer	1	
⊕	<input type="checkbox"/>	12 spring	1	



This tool is particularly interesting because it makes it easy to tell when the chorus is sung as Jolene is repeated over several times in the chorus. We also liked how Voyant shows the vocabulary density - in our case, 0.433, as well as the readability index - 8.994 (which even though is not as important for a lyrical piece, it still adds a layer of information to our analysis).

R Findings:

	anger	anticipation	disgust	fear	joy	sadness	surprise	trust
1	0	2	0	0	5	1	1	3

This is the result of looking at the sentiment of the song. It is interesting to see that there is a strong sentiment of joy, when the root of the song is that she is begging for Jolene to not steal her man. This is also why it is interesting that trust has a higher value because we would think that distrust would be more of what the meaning of the song is. This contrast could indicate that, despite its apparent desperate plea, the song carries a tone of hope/strength that is likely conveyed through its melody and/or vocal delivery. Additionally, it is curious to see that the anger is not present at all as it has a value of 0, which is also surprising because in the context of a love triangle where there is a strong romantic “rivalry,” we would expect to see a certain degree

of frustration from the victim. We deduce that this might indicate that the song focuses more sincerity and sadness (as shown it has a higher value than anger) rather than on resentment and or even wrath.

	negative	positive
1	3	7

take
man
can
begging
jolene
dont
your
please
and

After using R to look at the polarity of the song, it tells us that the song is more positively correlated than it is negative. Also, the word cloud on R clearly shows how Jolene was repeated the most, both through the sheer size difference, but also through the words facing in different directions.

Summary

We preferred using Voyant because of how easy it was to use. Voyant made it very simple to access the information we were looking for and it was clear that it was designed for people with no prior knowledge or experience to use. R required some more information and it was not as straightforward as Voyant was. The graphics on Voyant were also much more visually appealing than what was produced in R. When directly comparing the word clouds between the Voyant and R versions, the Voyant one had much more depth and more colors, while the R one felt like it was much more flat and lacked information that the Voyant had.