



Dollhouse And Mrs. Potato Head : Figurative Language Used In Melanie Martinez Selected Songs

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Abstract: This study explores the use of figurative language in Melanie Martinez's songs "Dollhouse" and "Mrs. Potato Head," highlighting how these linguistic elements contribute to the thematic and emotional depth of the lyrics. Through a detailed analysis, the research identifies and interprets various figures of speech, including metaphors, similes, and personifications, which Martinez employs to address complex themes such as family dynamics, societal pressures, and self-image. The findings reveal that figurative language in "Dollhouse" vividly portrays the façade of a seemingly perfect family life, while "Mrs. Potato Head" uses similar techniques to critique beauty standards and the pursuit of physical perfection. By examining the intricate use of figurative language in these songs, the study underscores Martinez's ability to convey powerful messages and evoke emotional responses, enhancing listeners' engagement and understanding of the underlying issues. This analysis not only contributes to the appreciation of Martinez's lyrical artistry but also provides insights into the broader implications of figurative language in contemporary music.

Keywords: Figurative Language, Melanie Martinez, Dollhouse, Mrs. Potato Head

Introduction

Many people can use music for a variety of purposes, such as media for learning, hiburan, or expressing emotions or feelings through songwriting (Hari & Agustin, 2020; Muhamad & Rahmat, 2020). People understand if someone trying to communicate their sentiments, emotions, and thoughts through music just by listening to the song. Lyricists have the ability to convey a narrative to their audience either directly or indirectly (Ananthi, 2018; Octaberlina, 2023). Songwriters typically employ figurative language when their meaning is being communicated subtly. A tool for discourse language can be understood as a phrase or expression with a concealed or altered meaning; this interpretation relies on the song's author or the image's language style (Metrouh & Nedjai, 2022). The intention of the song's author is for the listener to derive meaning from the song, and every listener interprets the lyrics' metaphorical language differently (Ayuthaya, 2018).

Melanie Martinez's music captivates audiences with its poignant exploration of societal norms, personal identity, and the complexities of human experience. Two

standout songs, "Dollhouse" and "Mrs. Potato Head," showcase Martinez's adept use of figurative language to convey profound themes. This journal examines the figurative language employed in these songs, offering a detailed analysis of how metaphors, similes, personifications, and other literary devices enrich the lyrical narratives. "Dollhouse" vividly depicts the facade of a perfect family through metaphorical imagery, while "Mrs. Potato Head" critiques beauty standards using allegory and irony. Through this exploration, the study reveals Martinez's skill in using figurative language to evoke emotional responses and deepen understanding of complex social issues. By delving into Martinez's lyrical artistry, this research contributes to a broader appreciation of the role of figurative language in contemporary music and its impact on listeners' perceptions and interpretations.

Methodology

Using a qualitative content analysis methodology, this study analyzes at Melanie Martinez's use of figurative language in a few of her songs, namely "Dollhouse" and "Mrs. Potato Head." Because it is appropriate for thoroughly analyzing textual data and enables the identification and interpretation of patterns, motifs, and subtleties within the lyrical content, qualitative content analysis is the method of choice (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). The purpose of this study is to determine the different types of figurative language that Melanie Martinez uses in a selection of her songs by analyzing their contextual meanings. Factual material is described in the research, and then analysis and interpretation come next.

Theoretical frameworks relevant to the study's objectives will be applied:

- 1. Interpretation of the data (lyrics from Melanie Martinez's songs) for analysis.
- 2. Analysis of the data (lyrics from Melanie Martinez's songs) to identify the types of figurative language used.
- 3. Drawing conclusions based on the findings from data analysis

Result and Discussion

In this findings, the researcher present the figurative language that found Lyrics Songs Melanie Martinez's in a few of her songs, namely "Dollhouse" and "Mrs. Potato Head." from in form of table alongside with the lyrics:

o	Title	Lyrics	Figurative language
1.	Dollhouse	"Throw on your dress and put on your doll faces"	Metaphor
		"Everyone thinks that we're perfect / Please don't let them look through the curtains"	Personification
		"Living in a dollhouse / Pulling strings to make us move"	Hyperbola
		"Crumbling like pastries"	Irony

		"Smile, smile, smile and pretend that you're okay"	Simile
		"Living in a dollhouse, I see things that nobody else sees"	Symbolism
		"Places, places, get in your places"	Repetition
		"Throw on your dress and put on your doll faces"	Euphemism
		"Crumbling like pastries"	Oxymoron
		"Please don't let them look through the curtains"	Parallelism
		"Everyone thinks that we're perfect / Please don't let them look through the curtains"	Antithesis :
2.	Mrs. Potato Head	"Oh, Mrs. Potato Head, tell me, is it true that pain is beauty?"	Metaphor
		"But if you stick out your tongue, you're gonna catch flies"	Hyperbole
		"You used to be a little, now you're just so big"	Irony
		"It's such a waste, when little girls grow into their mother's face"	Simile
		"Plastic faces seem to find grace in plastic places"	Symbolism
		"Oh, Mrs. Potato Head, tell me, is it true that pain is beauty?"	Repetition
		"You used to be a little, now you're just so big"	Parallelism

Discussion

A. Song Analysis : *Dollhouse* - Melanie Martinez

"Dollhouse" by Melanie Martinez serves as a poignant critique of societal expectations and the facade of perfection. Through vivid imagery and metaphorical language, the song portrays a family meticulously maintaining an idealized image ("Throw on your dress and put on your doll faces"), yet hiding their imperfections behind closed doors ("Please don't let them look through the curtains"). It explores themes of control and manipulation ("Living in a dollhouse, I see things that nobody else sees") and challenges the pressures to conform to societal norms of beauty and behavior. The lyrics suggest a contrast between appearance and reality, emphasizing the emotional toll of maintaining a facade ("Crumbling like pastries"). Overall, "Dollhouse"

invites listeners to question the authenticity of outward appearances and reflects on the complexities of identity and self-perception in a world that often values surface-level perfection.

1) Metaphor :

"Throw on your dress and put on your doll faces"

- Metaphorically comparing putting on a facade to putting on doll faces.

2) Personification :

"Everyone thinks that we're perfect / Please don't let them look through the curtains"

- Personifying curtains as something that hides imperfections.

3) Hyperbole :

- "Living in a dollhouse / Pulling strings to make us move"

- Hyperbolically suggesting control and manipulation within the family dynamic.

4) Irony :

"Crumbling like pastries"

- Irony in comparing something delicate (pastries) crumbling, reflecting underlying fragility.

5) Simile :

"Smile, smile, smile and pretend that you're okay"

Using a simile to compare pretending to a smile.

6) Symbolism :

"Living in a dollhouse, I see things that nobody else sees"

- Symbolizing the dollhouse as a representation of a superficial and controlled environment.

7) Repetition :

"Places, places, get in your places"

- Repetition of the word "places" for emphasis and rhythm.

8) Euphemism :

"Throw on your dress and put on your doll faces"

- Using "doll faces" as a euphemism for putting on a fake appearance.

9) Oxymoron :

- "Crumbling like pastries"

Combining contradictory terms ("crumbling" and "pastries") to emphasize vulnerability.

10) Parallelism :

"Please don't let them look through the curtains"

- "Please don't let them," repeated in a parallel pattern, emphasizes the need to keep appearances consistent.

11) Antithesis :

"Everyone thinks that we're perfect / Please don't let them look through the curtains"

- Contrast between the facade of perfection and the reality hidden behind curtains.

B. Song Analysis : *Mrs. Potato Head* - Melanie Martinez

"Mrs. Potato Head" by Melanie Martinez offers a critical exploration of beauty standards and the pressures to conform to societal ideals. The song metaphorically addresses themes of identity and self-worth through the character of Mrs. Potato Head, known for her interchangeable features. Martinez questions the sacrifices made for

beauty ("Oh, Mrs. Potato Head, tell me, is it true that pain is beauty?") and critiques the obsession with physical perfection ("You used to be a little, now you're just so big"). The lyrics highlight the superficiality of plastic surgery ("Plastic faces seem to find grace in plastic places") and suggest that conforming to societal expectations can lead to losing one's true self ("It's such a waste, when little girls grow into their mother's face"). Overall, "Mrs. Potato Head" encourages listeners to embrace individuality and challenge the pressures of conforming to unrealistic standards of beauty.

1) Metaphor :

"Oh, Mrs. Potato Head, tell me, is it true that pain is beauty?"

- Metaphorically comparing pain to beauty, questioning societal standards.

2) Hyperbole :

"But if you stick out your tongue, you're gonna catch flies"

- Exaggeration to emphasize the consequences of being overly critical.

3) Irony :

"You used to be a little, now you're just so big"

- Irony in describing physical growth while referencing a toy known for changeable features.

4) Simile :

"It's such a waste, when little girls grow into their mother's face"

- Using a simile to compare girls growing up to resembling their mothers.

5) Symbolism :

"Plastic faces seem to find grace in plastic places"

- Symbolizing plastic surgery and artificial beauty seeking acceptance.

6) Repetition :

"Oh, Mrs. Potato Head, tell me, is it true that pain is beauty?"

- Repetition of the question about pain and beauty for emphasis.

7) Parallelism :

"You used to be a little, now you're just so big"

- Repeating "you used to be" and "now you're" in a parallel pattern highlights how things change throughout time.

The analysis of Melanie Martinez's "Dollhouse" and "Mrs. Potato Head" shows how she explores difficult subjects like identity, conformity, and self-image while criticizing society conventions through the use of figurative language. These songs are moving meditations on the difficulties people encounter in balancing their sense of self with society standards.

Conclusion

Melanie Martinez successfully uses figurative language in her songs "Dollhouse" and "Mrs. Potato Head" to examine topics of identity, self-image, and societal expectations. Martinez creates stories that connect with audiences by highlighting the differences between exterior appearances and interior truths using metaphor, symbolism, and striking imagery. Martinez criticizes the flimsiness of projecting a picture-perfect family while concealing disorder and emotional pain behind closed doors in "Dollhouse," using the metaphor of a dollhouse. The words of the song depict conformity and facade, highlighting

the challenges people undergo to uphold appearances in the face of social expectations. Similar to this, "Mrs. Potato Head" questions societal standards of beauty and self-worth by using personification and exaggeration. Martinez criticizes the extraordinary steps people take to comply to cultural ideals of attractiveness and the fixation with physical appearance. She challenges listeners to reevaluate the effects of prioritizing outward appearance over inner sincerity through moving songs. Both songs use strong figurative language to encourage reflection and critique social structures. Martinez's music is a sensitive commentary on the intricacies of identity and societal constraints because of her ability to weave metaphorical storytelling with current issues. This elevates Martinez's music beyond just entertainment. Finally, Melanie Martinez's "Dollhouse" and "Mrs. Potato Head" serve as excellent examples of how to employ metaphorical language to successfully communicate deep ideas about identity, conformity, and the human condition. Martinez pushes listeners to accept their real selves, flaws and all, and to face hard realities about society expectations through her music.

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