

SYMBOLS AND MEANINGS IN SELECTED ENGLISH SONGS

Main goals of my paperwork are to analyze and interpret the symbols, meanings and concepts present in selected English songs, explore how they shown and expressed through lyrics. Identifying common themes and motifs across different English songs.

To begin with, for better understanding and perception, I chose 10 songs from my personal playlist for review and analysis of symbols, meanings and concepts. For analyses I have chosen 10 songs: "Tolerate it" by Taylor Swift, "What He Wrote" by Laura Marling, "Chemtrails Over the Country" Club and "Ultraviolence" by Lana Del Rey, "The Dazzler" by Ex:Re, "Family line by Conan Grey, "Somewhere only we know" by Keane, "Ring", "Lose you to love me" and "People you know" by Selena Gomez.

Symbolism is a representation of an idea or a theme using symbols. They can be objects, colors, or general expressions. The music itself is symbolic of emotions, good and bad feelings, dreams and messages. It is to convey the specific meaning to the listener and reader. Through symbolism, a lyricist can depict his thoughts, abstract ideas, situation, event and the current issues prevailing in the society in a sugar quoted way. Layer by layer, lyricist takes the listener deeper into a person's thoughts [1].

"Tolerate It" by Taylor Swift

"Tolerate It" is a song by Taylor Swift that was released in 2020 as part of her album "Evermore". The song is about a woman who feels trapped and unappreciated in a relationship where she constantly goes unnoticed and is taken for granted. There are several symbols, meanings, and concepts within the song. The title itself, "Tolerate It," suggests a sense of resignation and acceptance of a situation that is less than ideal. Throughout the song, there is a recurring image of the color blue, which represents sadness and loneliness. The lyrics also mention the concept of "playing a part" or putting on a facade to please others, which can be exhausting and emotionally draining. The repeated use of the phrase *"I sit and watch you"* highlights the narrator's feelings of invisibility and lack of agency in the relationship. The contrast between the narrator's inner turmoil and the seemingly mundane activities they engage in (such as setting the table) creates a powerful sense of emotional disconnect. Overall, "Tolerate It" is a poignant exploration of the complex emotions that can arise when one is trapped in a relationship where they feel undervalued and overlooked [5].

"What He Wrote" by Laura Marlin

"What He Wrote" is a song by Laura Marling released in 2011. The song tells the story of a woman who receives a letter from her lover who has gone away to war. The central symbol in the song is the letter itself. The letter represents the only connection the woman has with her lover and serves as a source of comfort and hope during his absence. The lyrics convey a sense of longing and desperation as the woman waits for news of her lover. This concept is reinforced by the repeated phrase "how long?" throughout the song. The lyrics also touch on the theme of mortality, as the woman wonders what will become of her lover if he does not return from war. The line *"I cannot bear the thought of him / Involved in this"* speaks to the sense of helplessness

and powerlessness that many people feel in times of crisis. The final lines of the song, *"And I think I love him more / In death than I ever did in life,"* suggest that the woman has come to appreciate her lover's value and significance more fully in his absence. In conclusion, "What He Wrote" is a poignant meditation on the nature of love, loss, and separation, and explores the complex emotions that arise when one is forced to confront their own mortality or that of a loved one.

"Chemtrails Over the Country Club" by Lana Del Rey

This song was released in 2021. The song explores a range of symbols, meanings, and concepts, including the title itself, "Chemtrails Over the Country Club," refers to a controversial conspiracy theory that suggests that the trails left by airplanes in the sky are actually part of a sinister government plot. In the context of the song, the title could be interpreted as a metaphor for the ways in which society and government can be manipulative and deceptive. The lyrics touch on themes of isolation and loneliness, particularly in the lines *"I'm not bored or unhappy, I'm still so strange and wild."* This concept is reinforced by the haunting melody and atmospheric sound effects featured in the song. The lyrics also explore ideas of escape and transcendence, particularly in the lines *"I'm doing my best to find / A way to escape the city lights / And watch them fade away."* This suggests a desire to disconnect from the noise and chaos of modern life and seek out moments of clarity and peace. The repeated refrain *"Don't ask if I'm happy, you know that I'm not"* underscores the sense of emotional turmoil and instability present throughout the song. The song's music video features imagery of Del Rey and her friends gathered together, sparking nostalgia and a sense of community among its viewers. However, the innocence of this imagery is juxtaposed with darker imagery of snakes, suggesting that even in times of relative calm, there is always a lurking threat. To sum up, "Chemtrails Over the Country Club" is a complex and multi-layered exploration of the darker undercurrents of contemporary society, while also tapping into themes of hope, escape, and community.

"Ultraviolence" by Lana Del Rey

"Ultraviolence" is also the next song by Lana Del Rey that released in 2014. It is known for its haunting melody and poetic lyrics, which explore a range of symbols, and meanings. The title "Ultraviolence" itself is a reference to the term "ultra-violent" used in Anthony Burgess' novel "A Clockwork Orange." This suggests a connection between the song's themes of violence, exploitation, and darkness with the futuristic dystopian themes of the novel. The lyrics explore themes of toxic relationships and emotional abuse, particularly in the lines *"He hit me and it felt like a kiss / I can hear violins, violins / Give me all of that ultraviolence."* This suggests a desire for intensity and drama that threatens to consume the narrator. The repetition of the phrase *"heaven is on earth"* creates a sense of ambiguity and disorientation, suggesting that even in moments of pleasure or ecstasy, there is always a lurking sense of darkness and danger. The lyrics also touch on themes of power and control, particularly in the lines *"He used to call me DN / That stood for deadly nightshade / 'Cause I was filled with poison / But blessed with beauty and rage."* This suggests a complex interplay between strength, femininity, and vulnerability. The song's haunting melody and atmospheric sound effects reinforce the sense of melancholy and desperation present throughout the lyrics, creating a moody and evocative tone. Overall, "Ultraviolence" is a powerful exploration of the darker corners of love and obsession, and a testament to Lana Del Rey's unique ability to tap into complex emotions and themes with her music [6].

"The Dazzler" by Ex:Re

"The Dazzler" is a song the solo project of Elena Tonra from the band Daughter that was released in 2019. The song is known for its haunting melody and introspective lyrics. Title "The Dazzler" is a reference to a type of military technology used to confuse enemy radar during World War II. This suggests a connection between the song's themes of deception, manipulation, and surveillance with wartime tactics. The lyrics explore themes of emotional detachment and self-preservation, particularly in the lines *"I'm always one step ahead / I keep my feelings in check."* This suggests a desire to protect oneself from harm or vulnerability, even at the expense of one's own emotional well-being. The repeated refrain *"it's not enough"* creates a sense of restlessness and dissatisfaction, suggesting a longing for something more meaningful or fulfilling in life. The lyrics also touch on themes of power and control, particularly in the lines *"I know the horses are restless / But it's all under control."* This suggests a complex interplay between strength, confidence, and an underlying sense of anxiety or fear. The song's sparse instrumentation and subtle sound effects reinforce the sense of melancholy and introspection present throughout the lyrics, creating a moody and evocative tone. All in all, "The Dazzler" is a strong exploration of the complexities of human emotion and the ways in which we navigate our own vulnerabilities and desires.

"Family line" by Conan Grey

The next song that explores a range of symbols is "Family line" released in 2021. Title itself suggests a focus on the connections and legacies passed down through generations of a family. The lyrics explore themes of personal identity and the struggle to define oneself within the context of one's family, particularly in the lines *"I don't wanna be a part of the family line / I don't wanna live inside another lie."* This suggests a desire to break free from the expectations and limitations imposed by family ties. The repeated refrain *"I'm not like them"* creates a sense of alienation and difference, suggesting a longing to be seen as an individual separate from one's family. The lyrics also touch on themes of personal growth and self-discovery, particularly in the lines *"I'm gonna find somebody, somebody just like me / And we'll be happy on our own."* This suggests a desire to find a sense of belonging and acceptance outside of traditional family structures. The song's upbeat, pop-infused sound contrasts with its introspective lyrics, creating a tension between the dissatisfaction expressed in the words and the hopefulness suggested by the music. Lastly, "Family line" shows how many of us may have suffered through traumatic childhoods, because most victims of such trauma don't tend to talk about it in public. In the grand scheme of things, it probably isn't good to keep all of that hurt in, and professional musicians like Conan Gray are in a unique position to really have their voices heard [2].

"Somewhere only we know" by Keane

This song by Keane was released in 2004. The title of the song suggests a focus on a personal, meaningful place that exists only for the individual or a small group of people who share it. The lyrics explore themes of escapism and the desire to retreat to a safe place away from the outside world, particularly in the lines *"Oh simple thing where have you gone / I'm getting old and I need something to rely on."* This suggests a longing for comfort and stability amidst the chaos and uncertainty of life. The repeated refrain *"This could be the end of everything / So why don't we go somewhere only we know"* creates a sense of urgency and a desire to seize the moment before it's too late. The lyrics also touch on themes of nostalgia and the bitter sweetness of

memories, particularly in the lines *"Is this the place we used to love? / Is this the place that I've been dreaming of?"* This suggests a wistful yearning for a past that may never return. The song's gentle, piano-driven melody and soaring chorus reinforce the sense of hope and emotion present throughout the lyrics, creating a tender and uplifting tone. Overall, "Somewhere Only We Know" is a powerful exploration of the human experience of finding comfort, safety and warmth in the midst of life's challenges and uncertainties [4].

"Ring" by Selene Gomez

"Ring" was created in 2021. The title suggests a focus on communication and connection, particularly through the use of technology and social media. The lyrics explore themes of romantic longing and frustration, particularly in the lines *"Wrapped 'round my finger like a ring, ring, ring / They just like puppets on my string, string, string."* This suggests a desire for control and power in a relationship, as well as a sense of frustration with partners who do not meet her expectations. The repeated refrain *"Are you, are you / Coming to the tree"* creates a sense of mystery and intrigue, suggesting a hidden meaning or message that is not immediately clear. The lyrics also touch on themes of emotional vulnerability and the difficulty of trusting others, particularly in the lines *"I don't trust nobody / Not even the ones who tell me they love me."* This suggests a fear of being hurt or betrayed, as well as a deep-seated emotional turbulence. The song's sultry, atmospheric sound and haunting vocals reinforce the sense of mystery and longing present throughout the lyrics, creating a moody and evocative tone. In conclusion, "Ring" is an exploration of the complexities of modern romance and the ways in which technology can both connect and disconnect us [3].

"Lose you to love me" by Selena Gomez

The title "Lose You to Love Me" shows a focus on the painful but necessary process of letting go of someone or something in order to ultimately find self-love and inner peace. The lyrics explore themes of heartbreak and transformation, particularly in the lines *"We'd always go into it blindly / I needed to lose you to find me."* This suggests a realization that the end of a relationship may lead to personal growth and self-discovery. The repeated phrase *"To love, love, yeah"* creates a sense of hopefulness and resilience, suggesting a belief in the power of love to heal and transform. The lyrics also touch on themes of self-sabotage and learning from past mistakes, particularly in the lines *"I saw the signs and I ignored it / Rose-colored glasses all distorted."* This suggests a recognition of one's own faults and a desire to learn from them in order to move forward. The song's simple, stripped-down melody and emotive vocals reinforce the poignant and introspective tone of the lyrics, creating a raw and vulnerable atmosphere. Summing up, "Lose You to Love Me" shows emotional complexities of heartbreak and self-discovery, as well as the resilience and hopefulness that can arise from these experiences [7].

"People you know" (Selena Gomez)

This song was released in 2020. The title "People You Know" suggests a focus on the relationships and connections we have with others, particularly those who are familiar to us. The lyrics explore themes of heartbreak and regret, particularly in the lines *"I had a dream we were back to seventeen / Summer nights and the liberties."* This suggests a longing for a past relationship or a simpler time, as well as a sense of loss and nostalgia. The repeated refrain *"People you know, people you know"* creates a sense of familiarity and repetition, suggesting a cycle of relationships and connections

that may come and go. The lyrics also touch on themes of self-doubt and personal growth, particularly in the lines *"And I don't wanna disappoint no one / But I've been alone too long."* This suggests a struggle to find a balance between pleasing others and staying true to oneself, as well as a desire for companionship and connection. The song's upbeat, pop-infused sound contrasts with its introspective lyrics, creating a tension between the pain expressed in the words and the hopefulness suggested by the music. In conclusion, "People You Know" is a poignant exploration of the complex emotions and experiences that arise from our relationships with others.

To sum up, my paperwork examines the symbols and meanings present in a selection of English songs, and explores how concepts are expressed and conveyed through lyrics. My work also analyze how cultural context and societal norms influence the symbolism and meaning in English songs, and evaluate the effectiveness of using songs as a medium for conveying complex ideas and emotions.

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