A STUDY OF SAM SMITH'S LATEST SONGS: A STYLISTIC ANALYSIS

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Abstract

This research aimed to identify the various stylistic elements used in Sam Smith's latest songs and to understand the reasons behind the popularity of both Sam Smith and their latest songs. To achieve this, the study employed Leech and Short's linguistic and stylistic checklists, focusing on figures of speech, as well as Delve & Limpaecher's Conventional Content Analysis method. The stylistic analysis of Sam Smith's three latest songs - "Unholy," "Diamonds," and "To Die For," revealed that the most frequently observed grammatical and lexical schemes were Parallelism and Anaphora, while Alliteration is the most observed in phonological schemes. Additionally, Metaphor and Hyperbole were the most commonly used foreground features. Additionally, the content analysis of three selected articles indicated that Sam Smith's popularity as well as the popularity of their latest songs could be attributed to two factors. The first factor is, according to the findings, their musical talent, and the second is their unique identity as non-binary or queer individuals.

Keywords: *Content Analysis, Figures of Speech, Stylistics*

INTRODUCTION

The way people use language in different contexts can be defined through stylistics as it generates varieties of style elements that compliment a communicative stance. Stylistics is prominent in the study of linguistics and have been defined by several linguists and academic researchers over time. Dadjo (2022) discussed style as "perceived distinct manner of expression in writing or speaking" which according to him is distinct to different people depending on their own style of writing. Then he explained that stylistics is the study of rhetorical

figures and syntactical patterns which are devices in language that help construct expression and literary style.

A song is a lyrical and poetic form of writing that is associated with rhythm, tone, and musical style. It is characterized with emotions, and feelings – it is a means of expression, and it its style contributes on the construct of expression (Arba et al., 2023; Syaputri et al., 2023). Moreover, music is lasting and rises above form of artistic and universal language human expression which one of the ways for the people and society to connect and communicate. Music encompasses bunch of stylistic elements and linguistic categories that carries stories, emotions and societal perspectives (Panasenko et al., 2023; Vizcaíno-Verdú & Abidin, 2022). In the contemporary music world, there are a lot of artists that are influential and powerful because of their music. Multiple criteria have been set by the masses in which they determine whether the song they listen to passes their standard. The style, choices of words in the lyrics of the songs, the tone, genre, rhythm, melody, and the message of the song are contributing factors to why people idolize or patronize the artist and their songs. The prevalence of contemporary songs urges the conduct of the study.

In this study, the researchers aimed to contribute to the academic study of stylistics through studying the style elements being employed in the songs of Sam Smith, and additionally, the researchers examined further the reasons behind the prominence of Smith's latest songs. Several existing research studies focus on the study of stylistics of a song from either a man or woman singer. The study aimed to bridge this gap by studying the stylistics of a song by a singer with a nonbinary orientation to see particular linguistic viewpoints, to contribute to inclusivity and to the changing world.

Sam Smith is a 30-year-old English singer-songwriter who came out as nonbinary in 2019. In an interview of Jameela Jamil with Smith on her first episode of *I Weigh Interviews* in 2019, Smith came and revealed out as nonbinary (*Street, M. (2019, March 15). Sam Smith Has Come out as Nonbinary and Genderfluid. - Google*, n.d.). Smith is also recognized as the first nonbinary artist to win the Grammy after winning the Best Pop duo/Group Performance with Kim Petras at

the 2023 GRAMMYs for their song "Unholy." (*Smith Is Also Recognized as the First Nonbinary Artist to Win the Grammy after Winning the Best Pop Duo/Group Performance with Kim Petras at the 2023 GRAMMYs for Their Song "Unholy." - Google*, n.d.). Smith songs will be selected and will serve as data for the analysis.

Three Smith's songs were selected in pursuit of the study. In order to obtain a stylistic analysis from Smith's latest songs, the study utilized Leech and Short's Checklist of Linguistic and Stylistic Categories but was delimited to examining the Foreground Features or the Figures of Speech. It was central to analyzing the Grammatical and Lexical schemes, Phonological schemes, and Tropes.

Moreover, a content analysis was utilized to study and discussed the prominence of Smith's latest songs. This paper aimed to distinguish the linguistic and stylistic patterns that are peculiar to Sam's Smith songs as well as to know the complexity of the linguistic choice and the stylistic nuances of these songs that impacts the artistry in the music world. The conduct of this study served as a significant contribution in the study of stylistics. This research would be beneficial to the field of stylistics as this study employs new approach in analyzing songs.

METHOD

The study is an approach to Qualitative study which is descriptive in its analysis and its research design is fundamental in studying thematically a concept or phenomenon (Doyle et al., 2020; Ozuem et al., 2022; Tomaszewski et al., 2020). The study intended to observe, examine, analyze and explain the occurrences of style elements in Sam Smith's song including a content analysis on what makes their latest song popular today. Thus, a qualitative approach suits the objectives of the study and therefore selected to be utilized in order to obtain a comprehensive analysis

In an attempt to study stylistically a song, Sam Smith was chosen and selected as source for data analysis. From the existing research studies, the often source for stylistic elements of song is mostly either a man or woman singer. In this study, the researchers aim to bridge this gap through analyzing and studying the songs of a singer with a nonbinary orientation, Sam Smith. In an online news article posted in Grammy.com, *Sam Smith & Kim Petras won the GRAMMY for Best Pop*

Duo/Group Performance at the 2023 GRAMMYs for their song "Unholy.", and Sam Smith is acknowledged as the first nonbinary artist to win the Grammy (*Smith Is Also Recognized as the First Nonbinary Artist to Win the Grammy after Winning the Best Pop Duo/Group Performance with Kim Petras at the 2023 GRAMMYs for Their Song "Unholy." - Google*, n.d.). Moreover, one of the objectives is to analyze what makes Smith's latest songs popular today and the study will attempt to relate it in Smith's gender orientation inductively.

The method of analysis began with observing and analyzing different stylistic elements seen and being employed in Smith's latest songs, and in order to obtain a comprehensive analysis for this, the study utilized the Leech and Short's Checklist of Linguistic and Stylistic Categories. However, it is delimited to analysis of Figures of Speech. To examine its figures of speech, the summarized guidelines of the Leech and Short's checklist for figures of speech (Ramzan et al., 2021) was used. It started with examining and analyzing its Grammatical and Lexical schemes, followed by its Phonological schemes, and its Tropes that encompass its stylistics.

For the data gathering, this is the criteria for selection:

1. A song by Sam Smith.

2. The song was produced between the year 2020-2023.

3. The song has reached millions of views on the official YouTube page.

4. The song contains of a prevailing concept related to the study

5. Only the top 3 songs that are characterized with the criteria will be selected.

Upon the collection of songs which serves as data and basis for analysis, here are the list of selected songs by Sam Smith that best suit the criteria and the study:

1. Unholy by Sam Smith and Kim Petras, 212 million views, released in the year 2022.

2. Diamonds by Sam Smith, 141 million views, released in the year 2020

3. To Die For by Sam Smith, 63 million views, released in the year 2020

Furthermore, the second part of the analysis is relative to the aim of the researches on the exploration of reasons to the prominence of Sam Smith and their

latest songs. A Content Analysis was utilized to comprehensively discuss this matter. Moreover, three online articles that is relevant to the objectives of the study was collected as basis for content analysis.

Specifically, the data source was gathered based on the following criteria:

a. The blog/ article discusses Sam Smith's and their songs.

b. The blog/article was publicly published online.

c. The blog/article was written between the year 2020-2023.

d. The blog/article should have at least 500 words.

The selection of blogs and articles is also delimited to three (3). In accordance to the criteria, the three articles selected are from *The Atlantic, Billboard,* and *GQ Magazine*:

1. Sam Smith's Radical Centrism by Spencer Kornhaber (2023, January 26), posted in *The Atlantic*

2. Stepping into 'Queer Joy': With Sam Smith at their English Country Getaway by Stephen Daw (2022, August 4), posted in *Billboard*

3. The Radical Liberation of Sam Smith by Jeremy Atherton Lin (2022, October 24), posted in *GQ Magazine*

For the method of Content Analysis, this qualitative study applied the Conventional Content Analysis method. Qualitative content analysis is a coherent method for textual data analysis that is utilized with the aim of a better understanding of the phenomenon (Yoosefi Lebni et al., 2023). In conventional content analysis, categories and subcategories are obtained directly from the data. CCA is usually used in studies that focuses on exploring a phenomenon when the existence of theoretical literature or research on the phenomenon is limited. By doing this, researchers apply inductive logic without imposing a categorical structure for interpreting the data (Picciotto & Fox, 2018).

Data analysis involves seven (7) stages that aids the purpose of summarizing, analyzing, and interpreting the collected data in a manner that it responds to the second research question and objectives. The analysis of data will be derived from the process of Conventional Content Analysis propose by (Delve

& Limpaecher, 2022).

a. **Collect Data** - In this process, the researchers will gather a comprehensive set of textual content from various sources such as online articles, blogs, and any online published material related to Sam Smith.

b. **Immerse in Data** - In order to compile and interpret the categories within the collected data, the second process involves reading the data collectively several times (Delve & Limpaecher, 2022).

c. **Identify Codes** – Here, the researchers will identify words, phrases or sentences that represent key concepts related to the study's second research question, *"What makes Sam Smith's latest songs popular today?"* These codes will serve as the foundation for creating a coding scheme.

d. **Code the Transcript** - Here, the researchers will organize the codes that was extracted from the transcript. This is done to prepare for the coding process.

e. **Group Codes** - The next step is organizing the codes into meaningful categories and subcategories based on their inherent relationships. This step is necessary to develop categories and themes by grouping codes that share similar characteristics. This step involves recognizing patterns and connections between different codes, leading to the emergence of themes and subthemes. Categories can also be referred to as subthemes, they are the broader groupings of codes, while themes are overarching ideas that emerge from the data. In this process, the identified themes, subthemes, and codes will be arranged in tabular form.

f. **Define Codes, Categories/Subtheme, and Themes** - This process serves as preparation for the reporting of findings (Delve & Limpaecher, 2022). Here, the researchers will clearly define each code, subthemes, and overall theme that has emerged from the analysis.

g. **Prepare Narrative** - Here, the researchers task is to explain the relationships between the different codes, categories, and themes, including providing insights into the prevalent topics and sentiments regarding the subject.

Stylistic Analysis

The first part of analysis is the stylistic analysis. In this analysis, the researchers utilized Leech and Short's Checklist of Linguistic and Stylistic Categories. However, it is delimited to the Figures of speech Category. In the criteria, the three songs that are selected are *Unholy*, *Diamonds*, and *To die For*. This will be analyzed through its Grammatical and Lexical schemes, followed by its Phonological schemes, and its Tropes that encompass its stylistics.

The subsequent section presents the data, sample extracts, and explanations of each figure of speech category.

I.   "Unholy" by Sam Smith and Kim Petras, 212 million views, released in the year 2022.

   1.   Grammatical and Lexical Schemes

      1.1   Anaphora

         He lucky, lucky yeah

The successive mentions of "lucky" creates an anaphoric effect.

      1.2   Parallelism

         And when you want it, baby, I
         know I got you covered And when
         you need it, baby, just jump under
         the covers

The lines have a similar grammatical structure that creates parallel ideas. In this case the parallel structure is evident at the beginning of each line which is the "*And when you*", followed by the "*want it*" and "*need it*" which creates a same grammatical structure, and then followed with the same actions "*I know I got you covered*" and "*just jump under the covers*".

2. Phonological Schemes

  2.1   Alliteration

      He's sat back while she's dropping it, she be popping it

The speech sound of (p) appearing in the "dropping and popping". An alliteration to this lyric, are used to create rhythmic speech sounds that create closely connected words. In this phrase, the repetition of the "d" and "p" sounds in dropping and popping, the song lyric interpreted by some as having a sexual connotation, possibly referring to a dance or sexual activity.

3. Tropes

3.1 Simile

She got married to a boy like you

The comparison of this line "She got married to a boy like you", that someone got married to a boy that has similarities with the person being addressed in the song. In this case, the sentence is comparing the boy to someone else, suggesting that they share similar qualities or characteristics.

3.2 Metaphor

Mummy don't know daddy's getting hot at the body shop, doing something unholy

In this context the phrase "*doing something unholy*" implies an immoral behavior that represents a wrongdoing of the person at the body shop secretly. The use of the phrase "getting hot" implies an intensified feeling.

3.3 Hyperbole

Daddy's getting hot

The lyric is an exaggeration of the word *hot* to create an intense emotional or physical state. It creates a dramatic quality creating a vivid and memorable image.

3.4 Metonymy

I hear them whispering 'bout the places that you've been

The word "places" is used metonymically to refer to the experiences or situations that the person has been in.

The analysis implies that the song Unholy by Sam Smith explores the theme of an adulterous relationship. The song highlights the wrongness and disrespectfulness of the actions, invoking a divine perspective on the situation

The analysis of "Unholy" by Sam Smith and Kim Petras reveals several stylistic elements employed in the song. Firstly, grammatical and lexical schemes, including anaphora and parallelism, these elements highlight the song's themes and emphasize its important phrases. Second, phonological schemes, particularly alliteration, contribute to the rhythmic quality and add a layer of meaning with possible sexual themes. Third, tropes such as simile, metaphor, hyperbole, and metonymy deepen the message of the lyrics and intensify the emotions. Fourthly, phonological elements, through repetition, enhance the emotional impact and

artistic rhythm of the song. And lastly, figurative devices like hyperbole and metonymy further enhance the complex emotions within the song.

II. Diamonds" by Sam Smith, 141 million views, released in the year 2020

1. Grammatical and Lexical Schemes

1.1 Anadiplosis

How little I care, how little I care

Lines like "You lied to me, lie-lied to me" and "How little I care, how little I care" are examples of how the last word of one clause is repeated at the beginning of the next clause, which adds emphasis and momentum to the lyrics.

1.2 Anaphora

How little I care

The phrase "How little you care" is repeated, highlighting both the other person's lack of concern and the subject's emotional vulnerability. The use of anaphora in the lyrics emphasizes the emotional impact of the phrase by giving it a sense of rhythm and repetition. In addition to adding to the subject's sense of emotional intensity, the repeated phrase "How little you care" highlights their feelings of betrayal and hurt.

1.3 Diacope

Diamonds, diamonds, diamonds, diamonds Diamonds, diamonds, diamonds, diamonds Diamonds, diamonds, diamonds, diamonds Diamonds, diamonds, diamonds, diamonds

Diacope is the repetition of word/s without or with single word interruption, in the case above word diamonds is repeated without interruption creating a rhythmic and emphatic effect. The use of this repetition emphasizes the central theme of the song which revolves around diamonds that are used figuratively.

1.4 Parallelism

Extract 1

You're never gonna hear my heart break

Never gonna move in dark ways

The structure is parallel in both lines where the phrase " never gonna" is

repeated at the beginning of each line that creates a parallel grammatical structure. This enhances the rhythmic flow of the lyrics.

Extract 2

Rip our memories off the wall

The use of sentence elements that are grammatically identical or comparable in terms of their structure, meaning, meter, or sound is known as parallelism. The parallel structure of this line's phrase "rip our memories off the wall," where the verb "*rip*" is followed by the prepositional phrase "o*ff the wall*" and the direct object "our memories," is what makes it parallel. This parallel structure emphasizes the action being described in the line and gives the lyrics a poetic quality.

2. Phonological Schemes

2.1 Alliteration

You lied to me, lied-lied to me

The repetition of the sound *"l"* creates an alliterative effect. The constant repetition of this vowel sound creates a rhythmic quality to the line making it more impactful and memorable to the listener. Alliteration was not only used for the purpose of style but rather it added emphasis to the act of deception in the lyrics, highlighting betrayal.

3. Tropes

3.1 Metaphor

Extract 1

Diamonds, diamonds, diamonds, diamonds

The concept of "diamonds" here is used frequently to allude to both material and emotional attachment. "Diamonds" are used in the song to represent the priceless and enduring quality of love and emotional ties. The lyrics emphasize the depth of the subject's feelings by comparing their emotional experiences to diamonds, implying that they are just as precious and long-lasting.

Extract 2

You dream of glitter and gold

The phrase *"glitter and gold"* alludes to wealth and material prosperity. The idea of richness and extravagant lifestyle is conveyed by this metaphorical expression, which represents the subject's ambitions and desires for a luxurious lifestyle.

Extract 3

Rip our memories off the wall

In a metaphorical sense, "*ripping memories off the wall"* refers to erasing or removing memories connected to a previous relationship. The emotional impact of letting go is emphasized by drawing comparisons between the memories and actual objects on a wall.

3.2 Hyperbole

All the special things I bought, they mean nothing to me anymore

Hyperbole is best illustrated by the use of elaborate phrases like "*Have it all*" and "All the special things I bought, they mean nothing to me anymore." Exaggeration is used in these sentences to highlight how intense the subject's emotional experience is. The hyperbolic wording heightens the emotional effect of the lyrics by exaggerating the importance of material goods and their resulting depreciation.

3.3 Personification

My diamonds leave with you

The diamonds are personified as though they have the capacity to go with someone in Sam Smith's song "Diamonds," as expressed in the line "*My diamonds leave with you*." By evoking a sense of loss and heartbreak, this personification deepens the song's emotional impact. The diamonds stand for more than just material goods; they also symbolize emotions, commitment, and love. The vocalist effectively conveys both the anguish of separation and an emotional attachment by personifying the diamonds.

The analysis of "Diamonds" by Sam Smith offers a detailed exploration of the stylistic elements employed in the song. First, in terms of grammar, the examination of sentence structures reveals a mix of verb tenses, including present, past, and future, as well as the use of personal pronouns and conjunctions to

construct the lyrics. Second, prepositions, this plays a role in indicating relationships, time, and direction. Third, repetition, the repetition of the word "diamonds" serves as a poetic device that emphasizes the valuable quality of both material and emotional attachments related to it. Fourth, phonology, the alliteration, assonance, and consonance contribute to the rhythmic and melodic qualities of the lyrics. Fourth, figurative languages, the use of metaphors, hyperbole, and personification deepens the emotional impact, with "diamonds" symbolizing both material and sentimental value. Therefore, the song, both grammatically and figuratively, explores themes of heartbreak, love, and the emotional complexity of relationships.

III. "To Die For by Sam Smith", 63 million views, released in the year 2020

1. Grammatical and Lexical Schemes

1.1   Parallelism

Pink lemonade sippin' on a Sunday Couples holding hands on a runway

These lines presented a parallel structure that creates a vivid picture of contrasting scenes. *"Pink lemonade sippin on Sunday"* shows The sweetness of the drink could metaphorically represent a desired sweetness in life, currently absent in the speaker's experience. However, *"Couples holding hands on a runaway"* can be a way of showing external joy.

1.2 Anaphora

I look for you

Every day, every night I close my eyes

From the fear, from the light

　　　In this verse, the beginning of both lines *"I look for you", "I close my eyes"* both begin with "I" and it presents the speaker's subjectivity and focuses on their own experience.

1.3 Antithesis

Extract 1

They're all posing in a picture frame Whilst my world's crashing down

Extract 2

Every day, every night

Antithesis is a figure of speech that has a contrasting Idea. "Posing in a picture frame" could be a sign of a family or individual who is happy and "crashing down" means falling or could be shown as defeated or loneliness. "Day and Night" has opposite ideas.

1.1 Ellipsis

Every day, every night
From the fear, from the light
"Every" and "From" words are being omitted in these lines.

2. Phonological Schemes

2.1 Alliteration

Solo shadow on a sidewalk

The beginning *"s"* sounds adds to the sound pattern of the lines.

2.2 Assonance

Every day, every night

The beginning vowel sounds *"e"* are being repeated in these lines.

3. Tropes

3.1 Simile

Lonely days, I'm feeling Like a fool for dreaming

Simile used when describing something like something else. In these lines, *"Lonely days, I'm feeling Like a fool for dreaming"* illustrates the emotional state of the speaker and vulnerability. Comparing his or her self to a foolish act.

3.2 Metaphor

Extract 1

Whilst my world's crashing down

These lines show metaphors. "*My world's crashing down*" a phrase to show the speaker's emotions.

Extract 2

Pink lemonade sippin' on a Sunday

"Pink lemonade sippin on a sunday" metaphorically represents superficial happiness and carefree living, contrasting with the speaker's deeper pain.

Extract 3

Solo shadow on a sidewalk

"Solo shadow on a sidewalk" could be interpreted as a metaphor for the speaker's feeling of isolation and loneliness.

Extract 4

Sunshine livin on a perfect day

"Sunshine livin on a perfect day" symbolizes idealized joy and contentment, further highlighting the speaker's isolation and loneliness.

3.3 Hyperbole

I just want somebody to die for

I just want somebody to die for (To die for)

These repeated lines show the intense desire of the speaker to have somebody to die for. It could be seen as exaggeration, emphasizing the intensity of the speaker's desire for connection.

The analysis of "To Die For" by Sam Smith reveals various stylistic elements employed in the song. First, in terms of grammatical structure, the use of parallelism, anaphora, antithesis, and ellipsis shows a diverse range of sentence structures, this emphasizes the speaker's personal experience, contrasting ideas, and also creates a sense of rhythm. Second, phonological structures, the incorporation of alliteration and assonance contributes to the melodic and rhythmic qualities of the lyrics which enhances the overall experience in the song. Third, tropes such as simile, metaphor, and hyperbole add layers of meaning to the song that portray the speaker's emotional state, vulnerability, and intense desire. Fourth, figurative language, the analysis emphasizes the exploration of themes like loneliness, the fear of dying alone, and the speaker's comparison of their life to others. Fifth, the presence of rhetorical devices adds imaginative elements to the lyrics which creates a vivid and emotional narrative.

Content Analysis

Moreover, the second part of the analysis was the content analysis. In the

criteria, the three articles for analysis selected are (1) Sam Smith's Radical Centrism by Spencer Kornhaber (2023, January 26), posted in *The Atlantic,* (2) Stepping into 'Queer Joy': With Sam Smith at their English Country Getaway by Stephen Daw (2022, August 4), posted in *Billboard*, and (3) The Radical Liberation of Sam Smith by Jeremy Atherton Lin (2022, October 24), posted in *GQ Magazine.*

In this analysis, the researchers utilized the seven stages of Conventional Content Analysis method proposed by (Delve & Limpaecher, 2022). The subsequent section presents the data, sample extracts, and explanations of each code, subthemes, and themes that emerged from the analysis.

Sam Smith's Radical Centrism by Spencer Kornhaber (2023, January 26), posted in *The Atlantic*

Table 1. Codes and Subthemes of Artistic Evolution and Versatility

Codes	Subthemes	Theme
"Smith's other new songs mine queer culture both gritty and gaudy."	Musical Growth	Artistic Evolution and Versatility
"Sam Smith is entering a new phase of power and influence – and embracing their ascendance from musical megatalent to full-blown cultural icon.		
"The track pulls from the style known as hyperpop, an underground, queer-dominated brew."	Genre Flexibility	
"Gloria—Smith's fourth studio album—is a similarly mild statement piece. Many of the songs are mid-tempo fare recycling various radio fads of the past 10 years: tropical pop, nu disco, The Weeknd–style R&B."		

Table 1 presents the theme of "Artistic Evolution and Versatility" in the context of Sam Smith's musical career. After thoroughly analyzing the data, the

researchers were able to determine 2 subthemes based on the codes. These subthemes were classified as (1) *Musical Growth* and (2) *Genre Flexibility.*

The first subtheme discusses Sam Smith's progression and development as a musician which emphasizes their commitment to evolving their music and style over time. The first code described Smith's new songs and suggest that it encompasses range of queer experiences. This exploration showcases Smith's commitment to representing the queer culture. Additionally, the second code provided suggests a significant evolution in Smith's career. The code suggests that Sam Smith's role within the music industry has evolved from being recognized solely for musical talent to becoming a symbol of queer cultural icon.

On the other hand, the second subtheme highlights Sam Smith's ability to explore and adapt to various musical genres, including pop, nu disco, and R&B. The first code suggests that one of Sam Smith's songs draws inspiration from the musical style known as hyper pop. By adding elements of hyper pop into their track, Sam Smith not only showcases a willingness to experiment with different genres but also contributes to bringing this music genre closer to a much larger audience not just for LGBTQ audiences. On the second code suggests that the album has mid-tempo tracks that draw on popular trends from the past decade. This suggests that Sam Smith is still undergoing musical exploration and aims to adapt to changing musical genres.

The analysis of Table 1 implies that Sam Smith's and their songs popularity today comes from a combination of musical growth, versatility, and genre flexibility. Their role as a cultural icon and their ability to adapt to different genres contribute to a lasting audience appeal in the field of modern music.

Stepping into 'Queer Joy': With Sam Smith at their English Country Getaway by Stephen Daw (2022, August 4).

Table 2 presents the theme of "Musical Versatility and Timelessness." After thoroughly analyzing the data, the researchers were able to determine 2 subthemes based on the codes. These subthemes were classified as (1) Adaptability Across Genres and (2) Flexibility in Music Production.

Table 2. Codes and Subthemes of Musical Versatility and Timelessness

Codes	Subthemes	Theme
"— they (Sam Smith) can and always have been able to naturally flow between genres."	Adaptability Across Genres	Musical Versatility and Timelessness
" Smith triumphantly calls their "first nonheartbreak album."		
"Smith was able to approach new music with a revitalized attitude, too."	Flexibility in Music Production	
"I want to learn how to produce more. I want to vocal arrange more than I have. I want to be more involved in everything."		
"...taking an increased role in production and vocal arrangement, even attempting to learn piano."		

The first subtheme discusses Sam Smith's ability to effortlessly transition and navigate through various musical genres. The first code emphasizes Sam Smith's ability to transition between various musical genres effortlessly. The phrase *"naturally flow between genres"* suggests that this adaptability is natural for Smith and this ability enables Smith to explore and succeed in different musical styles. This versatility allows Smith to appeal to a wide audience with different musical preferences. The second code then suggest Smith's willingness and ability to shift their musical themes, this code showcases their adaptability by exploring new and different subjects in their music and not just a specific focus of a *"heartbreak genre music"*. This signifies efforts to evolve and broaden their musical expression beyond a specific genre or theme.

The second subtheme revolves around Sam Smith's involvement and evolution in the music production process. The first code *suggests* that Sam Smith brings a refreshed mindset when approaching new music. The term *"revitalized*

attitude" indicates a new sense of passion which reflects their willingness to experiment with different sounds, themes, or musical techniques. In the second code, the statements *"learn how to produce more"* and *"be more involved in everything"* emphasizes a hands-on approach and shows Sam Smith's ambition to broaden their skills beyond singing. Furthermore, the third code shows Smith's commitment to a more active role in music production.

The analysis of Table 2 implies that the factors that contributes to Sam Smith's and their songs popularity todayare musical versatility, timelessness, and commitment to evolving their music production.

The Radical Liberation of Sam Smith by Jeremy Atherton Lin (2022, October 24), posted in GQ Magazine.

Table 3. Codes and Subthemes of Cultural Impact and Queer Representation

Codes	Subthemes	Theme
" I think queer music can be country, it can be folk, it can be jazz, it can be anything."		
"Smith nods brightly. Whereas the new sound, I continue, is undeniably queer."	Redefining Queer Culture	Cultural Impact and Queer Representation
"... from musical megatalent to full-blown cultural icon."		
"... "Queer joy is the most powerful thing to me in the world.	Queer Joy as a Radical Act	
"Over the last few years, as I've become confident in my skin."		

Table 3 presents a breakdown of the cultural impact and representation of Sam Smith within the queer community. After thoroughly analyzing the data, the researchers were able to determine 3 subthemes based on the codes. These subthemes were classified as (1) Redefining Queer Culture and (2) Queer Joy as a Radical Act.

The first subtheme indicates that Sam Smith is challenging traditional

perceptions of queer culture particularly in the music industry. The first code is about Sam Smith's denial of the stereotype that queerness is just about dance music. Smith challenges this limitation, they said that queer music encompasses diverse styles such as country, folk, jazz, and any other musical form. Smith statement shows their commitment to widen the representation of queerness in the music industry. Then, the second code signifies a positive response from Sam Smith as they nod brightly in acknowledgment that their new sound is about queerness. This suggests that Smith made an effort to include aspects of their queer identity in their music. Thus, this code reflects that Smith will shift and embrace queer sound, this shift will contribute to a more diverse music in the industry. Furthermore, the third code portrays Sam Smith's transition into a new phase as queer which can increase their power and influence. The *description "... ascendance from musical mega talent to full-blown cultural icon"* highlights Smith's growing impact in the music industry. This suggests that Smith is not only redefining their own identity but also playing a significant role in reshaping perceptions of queerness and contributing to a more inclusive representation of queer culture.

The second subtheme suggests that Smith's expression of joy as queer is seen as a powerful and radical act. In the first code, Smith expresses the beauty and power of queer joy, they emphasize its significance in contrast to the pain that the queer community often experiences. Smith suggest to embrace joy as a form of resistance and empowerment. This code highlights the resilience within the queer community. The second code provides a personal reflection of Sam Smith's journey towards embracing queer joy. Smith expressed confidence in their own skin and described this as a positive shift in their life as receiving *"loads of wonderful romantic attention."* This code suggests that embracing one's true identity and finding joy in personal relationships can be a transformative and empowering act.

The analysis of Table 3 implies that Sam Smith's and their songs popularity today is connected to their evolution into a gender-fluid style icon, their embrace of queerness, and their influence on redefining the queer culture. Additionally, Smith's advocacy for more diverse representations of queer music in the industry has also contributed to their popularity.

CONCLUSION

The stylistic analysis of Sam Smith's latest songs, including "Unholy," "Diamonds," and "To Die For," reveals a diverse range of stylistic elements employed in the lyrics. The analysis reveals that among the three songs, the most frequently used rhetorical devices under the Grammatical and Lexical schemes are Parallelism and Anaphora. In the phonological schemes, Alliteration is the most used. These schemes are present on the three selected Sam Smith's songs. On the other hand, under the foreground features or tropes, Metaphor, Hyperbole, were commonly and frequently used. These stylistic elements contribute to the melodic and rhythmic qualities of the lyrics. It also creates vivid and imaginative narratives that emphasize the intense emotions and the singer's personal experiences portrayed in the songs.

Moreover, the content analysis suggests that Sam Smith's continued popularity and the popularity of their latest songs can be attributed to several factors. Based on the analysis of the three articles, the findings reveal that the number one factor that contributes to Smith and their songs popularity is their talent in making music as indicated in the subthemes of *musical growth, genre flexibility, adaptability across genres, and flexibility in music production*. Smith's versatility and innovation in making music highlights their ability to evolve and adapt to different musical styles which makes him a timeless musician.

Furthermore, the second factor that contributes to Smith and their songs popularity is their own unique identity as non-binary or queer as indicated in the subthemes of *redefining queer culture and queer joy as radical act*. By openly embracing their non-binary identity and promoting queer representation, Smith defies traditional norms and contributes to a more inclusive and diverse environment in the musical field. For this reason alone, makes Smith an icon in the industry.

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