

## **THE PERSONIFICATION AND SIMILE FOUND IN THE SONG ALL TOO WELL (10 MINUTES VERSION) BY TAYLOR SWIFT**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The goal of this study is to look at how Taylor Swift uses figurative language in her song "All Too Well (10 Minutes Version)." The primary purpose of this study is to discover the meaning behind the figurative language used in song lyrics. A descriptive qualitative approach was used to collect the data. There are various kinds of figurative language applied to express meaning in the song, but the writer only focuses on two of them: personification and simile. To summarize the analysis, the song's figurative language, which draws on personification and simile, creates an effective tool for portraying the story's deep and sensitive emotions, such as sense of loss, emptiness, and sadness.

**Keywords: Semantics, Figurative language, Personification, Simile, Song.**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Linguistics is a scientific study in the field of human language. The term for studying all the facets of human language is called linguistics (V.Fromkin:2000). Based on the Collins American English Dictionary, linguistics is the study of language with several sub-fields such as phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics.

Semantics is the study of meaning from words that are spoken or written by people. Semantics is the attempt to understand the nature of language that describes and explains how linguistic phrases have meaning (N.Riemer:2004). Inside the semantics, there is figurative language that studies the people's intentions using other words to figure out the actual interpretation.

Principally, figurative language is one of the sub-theory of semantics. The presence of words and formulations with some type of expanded or transferred meaning is central to figurative language (C.Alm-Arvius:2003). It has many kinds of figurative language such as alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeia, imagery, metaphor, simile, hyperbole, personification, allusion, and symbol. But in this article, the writer only focuses on one kind of figurative language, namely Personification and Simile.

The modification of a nonliving thing's appellation with the essence of human nature is called Personification. The rhetorical figure of personification is easily identifiable, in which anything that is not human is given a human identity or 'face'. It can also be used vice versa from the original meaning based on the context given (W. S. Melion and B. Ramakers:2016). The subjectivity can also be transformed into object hood (Escobedo:2017). For example, "You are the light of the family." Here, *Light* is an object that produces brightness to fill up the dark room or space. It means, the subject *You* are

the only hope who can raise the family from the downward. The personification occurs by the *light*, an object, resembles hope, a human nature.

Simile is one of the figurative languages that focuses on a comparison using a particular word, which in a similar meaning to the word that is being compared, linked with the word 'like' or 'as'. A simile is a declaration of a similarity or non-similarity relationship between two things that are fundamentally different yet perceived to be similar in one or more ways (P.Pierini:2007). For example, "Her hair is red like fire noodles." This indicates that her hair is red and curly, and the speaker compares it to fire noodles because her hair color and pattern are similar to fire noodles which are also red in color and curly noodles.

A song is one of the literary works that the songwriter writes to deliver a message through song lyrics with rhymes to emphasize the lyrics. The song is a highly organized art form that may express complicated relationships of meaning that go beyond the scope of daily spoken language (M. Turpin and T. Stebbins:2010).

The song that the writer chose to analyze in this article is *All Too Well (10-Minute Version)* by Taylor Swift released in 2021. This song tells a story about Taylor Swift's earlier relationship with her ex who was older than her age. At first, they fell in love deeply, but after time went by, they both started to drift apart. She tried to understand him, but he did not want to understand her perspective. Therefore, misunderstandings arose and the problem between them grew bigger until they finally broke up. Eventually, she started to move on and remembered the good and bad memories while they were still in the relationship.

*All Too Well (10-Minute Version)* by Taylor Swift has won 14 (fourteen) awards from 2021 until 2023. The song won 1 (one) award in 2021; the "Longest Song to Reach No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100" award from Guinness World Records. In 2022, the song won 8 (eight) awards from ADG Excellence in Production Design Awards, iHeartRadio Music Awards, MTV Video Music Awards, MTV Europe Music Awards, and American Music Awards; including the "Music Video" award from ADG Excellence in Production Design Awards, the "Best Lyrics" award from iHeartRadio Music Awards, the "Video of the Year", the "Best Longform Video", and the "Best Direction" awards from MTV Video Music Awards, the "Best Video" and the "Best Longform Video" awards from MTV Europe Music Awards, and the "Favorite Music Video" award from UK Music Video Awards. Finally, in 2023, the song won 5 (five) awards from Grammy Awards and Gold Derby Music Awards; the "Best Music Video" award from Grammy Awards, the awards for "Song of the Year," "Best Music Video", "Best Pop Song," and "Record of the Year" at the Gold Derby Music Awards.

Taylor Swift has been one of the top western female singers in this era. Taylor Swift always puts her heart into her music and makes it more alive because most of the music that she creates is based on her actual stories in real life. The song "All Too Well" was released in 2012 but in a shorter duration of the song, 5 (five) minutes long. In a Yahoo Music interview (2014), Taylor Swift said that the song was originally 20 (twenty) minutes long due to everything she wanted to say in "All Too Well", but she could not put it on her album at that time. Therefore, she cut the song into 5 (five) minutes long. In 2021 the 10 (ten) minutes duration of the song was released. The detail of the story in the song that Taylor Swift wants to convey to the listener is rather vivid to common listeners. In order to make it clear, the writer decided to use *All Too Well (10-Minute Version)* as the writer's object to analyze in this article.

Exploring figurative languages in song lyrics helps us understand how music can be used to transmit messages and emotions in a unique and creative way. Furthermore, it enhances the listening experience by allowing listeners to immerse themselves more thoroughly in the lyrics and offers a fresh viewpoint on the link between words, emotions, and art.

The writer analyzes the All Too Well (10-Minute Version) song by Taylor Swift with a Linguistics approach and Semantics theory, as well as the Figurative Language for the sub-theory of Semantics features. There has been some previous research on Figurative Language in relation to music and song. To avoid the usage of equivalent material and explanations, past studies should be reviewed. The author has read the following additional relevant research. To finish this research, the author reviewed previous studies on figurative languages.

Amanina and Mia (2023) explores the usage of conceptual metaphors in SZA's song lyrics, with an emphasis on the source and target domains. The study finds conceptual metaphors in five SZA songs using a descriptive qualitative research technique. The study offers a spotlight on the level of originality and creative expression in SZA's songs, and it may help future semantics and cultural studies research by improving the knowledge of the sophistication and beauty of SZA's lyrics.

Suleman, Rusni, Irmawaty, and Meity (2023) investigates the various meanings of figurative language in Taylor Swift's 1989 albums, blank space and new romantics. The research identified seven categories of figurative language using descriptive qualitative methodologies and semantic analysis. Furthermore, the study discovered five categories of semantic meaning in the songs: connotative, emotive, social, intellectual, and collocative meaning.

Dianti and Sukma (2019) examined the figurative language of Taylor Swift's song "Red" by utilizing qualitative approaches in this study. According to the results, simile and exaggeration are the major figurative languages utilized to describe Swift's deepest sentiments. The song's prominent usage of figurative language reveals the sort of language applied.

Lenno and Mia (2022) used a qualitative analysis and Perrine's theories to investigate figurative language in Eminem's songs Mockingbird, When I'm Gone, and Zeus. Figurative language, such as simile, metaphor, exaggeration, personification, symbol, and allegory, was found to be applied to express meaning and make the songs more varied and significant, according to the study.

Based on the previous studies, indicates that there are various types of figurative language that are being used as the main focus of earlier studies. The focus of the study is what distinguishes it from other studies in this field. The primary focus of this study that the writer will be analyzing in this article is Personification and Simile in a song by Taylor Swift called All Too Well (10 Minutes Version).

## **METHODS**

This study utilized a qualitative technique, specifically a qualitative descriptive method. According to Siswanto in 2005, the descriptive technique may be used as a problem-solving procedure with the object of study (a person, institution, etc.) at the current moment based on the facts as they are. The very first stage in gathering data was to select All Too Well (10 Minute Version) by Taylor Swift as the object for analysis. Then, pick the lyrics from the Genius website and type them out while also

comprehending the entire lyric. The final stage was to collect the lyric that contains figurative language and analyze it.

During the analysis, the writer engages in data reduction and categorization processes. Understand the lyrics of Taylor Swift's All Too Well (10 Minute Version) song first, then categorize it. Following that, analysis begins with identifying each figurative language, followed by analyzing the meaning of all figurative languages that were used in the song. Then comes the conclusion, which is used to draw a conclusion from the evidence that has been examined.

## **RESULTS**

In this analysis, the writer defines two kinds of figurative language in All Too Well (10 Minute Version) from a Taylor Swift song. In the All Too Well (10 Minute Version) song, there are 9 (nine) lines of lyrics in total that the writer chose to be analyzed in this study, such as 5 (five) line which is Simile and 4 (four) line which is categorized as Metaphor. The lyrics to each figurative language are classified in the table below.

**Table 1. Figurative Language: Personification**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Lyrics</b>	<b>Line</b>
1.	The magic's not here no more	10
2.	But all I felt was shame and you held my lifeless frame	29
3.	I'm a crumpled-up piece of paper lying here	48
4.	A never-needy, ever-lovely jewel whose shine reflects on you	55
5.	And did the twin flame bruise paint you blue?	85

**Table 2. Figurative Language: Simile**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Lyrics</b>	<b>Line</b>
1.	But something 'bout it felt like home somehow	2
2.	Autumn leaves falling down like pieces into place	7
3.	You kept me like a secret, but I kept you like an oath	39
4.	And you call me up again just to break me like a promise	46

## **DISCUSSION**

### **1. Figurative Language: Personification**

The first figurative language found in the song of Taylor Swift called All Too Well (10 Minute Version) is Personification. In this song, Taylor put a lot of Personification in her songs to emphasize the words into something more beautiful and

aesthetically pleasing to hear. Personification also made the song more meaningful to the listener. According to the results, the writer discovered 5 (five) lines that use Personification and will be analyzed in this part of the article.

**The magic's not here no more  
(Taylor Swift - All Too Well (10 Minute Version), Line 10.)**

The lyrics above mention two words that are using Personification. The first one is *magic*. Hereby, *magic* implies that it is viewed as if it has a will or activity and may be present or absent. Magic is frequently connected with amazement, enchantment, or a unique characteristic that offers delight or curiosity and it is the same like we do in a relationship. The second one is *not here no more*. The phrase *not here no more* conveys a sense of absence or loss. In this context, it means that whatever magical or unusual characteristic was formerly present has now vanished or fallen apart.

In the end, the lyric might imply discontent or nostalgia, implying that the amazement or *magic* previously associated with a situation, relationship, or event has gone or is no longer existent. The thought of losing something rare or unusual is given more passion and character by personifying *magic*.

**But all I felt was shame and you held my lifeless frame  
(Taylor Swift - All Too Well (10 Minute Version), Line 29.)**

In the lyrics above, Taylor tries to convey her situation and how she feels about the situation that she experienced. *You* indicate her ex-boyfriend seeing Taylor being ashamed, then he hugs her to make her feel safe. It means, the *lifeless frame* represents Taylor had no spirit or energy inside her that makes her feel empty.

By that, the *lifeless frame* is the Personification that Taylor used in this lyric. The term *frame* is typically linked with structure or barrier and in this context the *frame* can be referred to her body. The *frame* characterizes as *lifeless*, which implies a lack of vitality, soul, or liveliness.

**I'm a crumpled-up piece of paper lying here  
(Taylor Swift - All Too Well (10 Minute Version), Line 48.)**

In this lyric, the *crumpled-up piece of paper* implies that it is being described as if it had feelings or is in a state of being. The personification lends an emotional dimension to the *paper* rather than simply reporting its physical state. The phrase "lying here" gives the paper a feeling of presence and place, as if it is purposefully in a specific state. Personifying the action of lying down or being in a certain location implies an intentional, possibly emotional context such as a sad feeling.

Therefore, the lyrics might imply emotional or psychological discomfort. Taylor Swift may be utilizing the *crumpled-up piece of paper* as an expression for feeling rejected, ignored, or emotionally crushed by personifying it. The sight of crumpled paper frequently brings up feelings of being used, rejected, or enduring mental suffering.

**A never-needy, ever-lovely jewel whose shine reflects on you  
(Taylor Swift - All Too Well (10 Minute Version), Line 55.)**

This lyric gives human attributes to the *jewel* and its *shine*. Personifying the *jewel's shine* as something that *reflects on you* implies a link between its brightness and its effect on the subject. It means that the jewel's radiance has an effect on the person who sees it. The personification here emphasizes that the *jewel's* attributes or beauty are somehow mirrored or transmitted to the person experiencing it, signifying adoration, inspiration, or good influence.

From this point, the *jewel* is personified in this sense as having the power to *reflect*, which is a human action. Shining and reflecting are frequently linked with brilliance, attractiveness, or radiance.

**And did the twin flame bruise paint you blue?  
(Taylor Swift - All Too Well (10 Minute Version), Line 85.)**

There are three phrases in the lyric above that Taylor uses as Personification. The first one is the word *twin flame*. In this context, *twin flame* most likely refers to a spiritual or interpersonal idea in which individuals are seen to be perfect mates or reflections for one another. Personifying the *twin flame* implies that it has the potential to have an emotional or transforming effect.

The second Personification in the lyric above is *bruise*. Personifying the *bruise* signifies that it has an aim or activity. *Bruises* are often physical injuries caused by trauma, however, the term here conveys a deeper emotional impact. The concept is that the *twin flame* has left an emotional impact or changed *you* in some manner.

The third one is to *paint you blue*. The act of painting someone blue indicates a shift in their emotional condition. The color *blue* is frequently linked with sadness or melancholy. Personifying the painting activity implies intent or a planned impact generated by the *twin flame*.

Putting it all together, the lyric might be questioning if the strong bond with two individuals has left an emotional mark, perhaps generating a shift in sentiments or a sense of emotional bruising resembling the color *blue*, by which sadness.

**2. Figurative Language: Simile**

The second figurative language that is found in All Too Well (10 Minute Version) song by Taylor Swift is Simile which is describing things that are similar to the context that is being talked about. According to the result, the writer found 4 (four) lines that are using Simile to be analyzed in this part of the article.

**But something 'bout it felt like home somehow  
(Taylor Swift - All Too Well (10 Minute Version), Line 2.)**

In the lyric above, the simile is contained in comparing the given event or scenario to the idea of *home*. Taylor expresses a sense of comfort, belonging, or familiarity when he or she says that *something felt like home*. The adverb *somehow* admits that this sensation may be difficult to describe or articulate precisely.

Hereby, the lyric implies that, despite some unidentified attribute or trait of a situation, there was an intangible factor that made the speaker feel at ease and at home. The simile, which compares the experience to the sensation of being at home, implies a deep emotional connection or a sense of comfort in that specific situation.

**Autumn leaves falling down like pieces into place**  
(Taylor Swift - *All Too Well (10 Minute Version)*, Line 7.)

The lyric above used a simile to compare the dropping of autumn leaves with the concept of *pieces into place*. Creating a visual image, Taylor used *autumn leaves falling down* that depicts the seasonal phenomenon of autumn leaves dropping. Meanwhile, *pieces into place* implies a sense of order, harmony, or completion. The visual representation of pieces falling into place frequently generates a sense of things fitting together or aligning well.

In the end, the lyric uses the comparison to bring up a lovely and figurative representation of autumn leaves falling in a manner similar to the satisfaction and orderliness of pieces dropping into their appointed locations. It may convey a sense of natural beauty and harmony linked with the passing of the seasons.

**You kept me like a secret, but I kept you like an oath**  
(Taylor Swift - *All Too Well (10 Minute Version)*, Line 39.)

In this lyric, Taylor compares how she and the other person treated their romantic relationship. Taylor stated in the lyric *you kept me like a secret* implies that the other person treated Taylor or their relationship privately, maybe keeping it concealed or unacknowledged, as if it were a *secret*. It suggests a lack of transparency or frankness.

Contrary to that, Taylor continued to be loyal to *you*, the other person, like an *oath*. This simile suggests a firm commitment, earnest vow, or guarantee. An *oath*, unlike a *secret*, tends to come with a public or serious commitment.

The lyric as a whole implies a contrast in how the persons that were in the relationship treated the partnership's secrecy and commitment. While the other person kept it hidden like a secret, Taylor maintained it with the seriousness and commitment of an oath. The similes emphasize the various levels of importance and visibility that each individual promised to the relationship.

**And you call me up again just to break me like a promise**  
(Taylor Swift - *All Too Well (10 Minute Version)*, Line 46.)

The lyric blends the Simile elements to compare the act of being *called* with the sensation of having a *promise* broken. *And you call me up* indicates the action of someone approaching or calling the subject, in this context means Taylor. Then, *just to break me like a promise* suggests that the act of calling is similar to breaking a commitment or trust, causing emotional hurt or disappointment.

The lyric essentially delivers a sense of emotional grief and betrayal. The comparison highlights the destructive aspect of the relationship, meaning that the act of reaching out is intended to create emotional pain, similar to how breaking a promise causes disappointment and hurt.

## CONCLUSION

Figurative language used to deliver meaning. Song is one of the literary works that frequently use various kinds of figurative language. In the song “All Too Well (10 Minutes Version)”, Taylor Swift conveys her intentional message through beautifying figures of lyrics for the listeners. Hence, the analysis titled "The Personification and

Simile Found in the Song All Too Well (10 Minutes Version) By Taylor Swift" reached this conclusion.

After analyzing the Personification and Simile in the song All Too Well (10 Minutes Version) by Taylor Swift, the writer can finally draw a conclusion that based on the result, there are 9 pieces of data found and were also being analyzed in this paper. The writer uses 5 data to analyze the Personification and 4 data to analyze the Simile aspects. In this song, Taylor Swift uses Personification to bring memories to life, making them vivid and emotionally intense. Meanwhile, the Similes successfully wrapped into the lyrics enhance the emotional impact, helping listeners to connect more intimately with the songwriter's experience of love, grief, and contemplation. The figurative language in the song, which uses personification and simile, acts as a strong tool for communicating the story's deep and delicate emotions.

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