

## Valuing freedom of expression at the expense of linguistic aspect: The analysis of Kaur's selected poems

Dewi Puspa Lestari<sup>1</sup>, Aam Alamsyah<sup>2</sup>

Sekolah Tinggi Bahasa Asing Technocrat<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Email: dewipuspalestari7@gmail.com

**Abstract** - As a well-known poet, Rupi Kaur has written several poems which attract worldwide accolades. The present study explores several important aspects of her selected poems, such as feminism, humor, and irony. It was conducted qualitatively. In this case, the researchers acted to analyze and collected the data consecutively. The findings indicated that the concepts of feminism described in her poems tend to be more liberal and radical. The use of crude language to depict women as "male objects" plainly supports this notion. Furthermore, Kaur employs filthy language to prick the reader's conscience and make them aware of the societal critique offered in her poems. The element of Humor identified in the poems is used to portray the injustice of societal rules that restrict women. Despite showing poor grammatical aspects, such as the use of proper subject, the poem strives to vividly criticize the role of women, which is commonly valued solely on their physical looks, dismissing their worth and complexity as humans.

**Keywords:** feminism; humor; irony; poem analysis; Kaur's selected poems

### I. INTRODUCTION

Rupi Kaur is a renowned Indo-Canada poet, writer, and artist who has received international recognition for her heart-breaking and sympathetic poetry books. Kaur's writings are distinguished by their raw honesty, sensitivity, and examination of topics like love, grief, identity, and feminism. Born in Punjab, India, and raised in Canada; Kaur's literary journey began during her undergraduate studies at the University of Waterloo, when she experimented with writing and performance poetry. Kaur has published four notable poetry collections including "Milk and Honey (Kaur, 2014)", "The Sun and Her Flower (Kaur, 2017/2019)", "Home Body (Kaur, 2020)", and "Healing Through Words (Kaur, 2022)", two of which have become New York Times Bestseller. Kaur's writings have been translated into more than 40 languages and have reached millions of people throughout the world.

Rupi Kaur's poetry, known for its simple and emotional style, has received global praise for its ability to elicit powerful emotions and connect with readers on a very intimate level. Despite the seeming simplicity of her lines, she employs a subtle yet effective use of comedy and irony to bring layers of depth and richness to her words. Kaur's works are powerful and influential in modern writing, motivating many others to discover their voices and identities. Kaur's works have received various distinctions, including the Goodreads Choice Award for Best Poetry. Also, her poems have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *The Guardian*, and *Vogue*.

Scholars have conducted extensive research on Rupi Kaur's poetry. The bulk of studies on her works, tend to focus on the topics of feminism, translation, and stylistics. Some of the identified studies on Rupi Kaur are Jayanti's (2020), Ferawati et al (2022), and Syafika et al (2023). Jayanti (2020), for instance, analyzed Paradoxes in Rupi Kaur's Poetry "The Sun and Her Flowers". She found that rhetorical paradoxes were found with two ways of interpretation to understand the contradictory relationships, namely (1) paradoxes expressed through diction and (2) paradoxes conveyed through paradoxical descriptions. The other previous research was conducted by Syafika et al (2023). They analyzed the kinds of feminism in Kaur's works (i.e., Milk & Honey, 2014). They identified two kinds of feminism based on Abbot and Wallace's theory; They are nine (9) data of Liberal Feminism and three (3) poems of Radical Feminism.

Unlike the previous studies, the present study attempts to identify more extensive concepts such as feminism, humor, and irony. To get a full knowledge of the functions of feminism, humor, and irony in selected poems from Rupi Kaur's "Milk and Honey", some research questions are formulated as follows. (1) How is the feminism described in the poems? (2) How are the humor and irony identified in the poem?

Building on the foundational analysis models presented by Antari (2022), Dewi (2023), Listiyapinto & Endraswara (2024), Wajdi et al (2024a), Wajdi et al (2024b), Wajdi et al (2024c), Mekt et al (2024), and Wajdi & Asrumi (2024), this study aims to further enrich and expand the current research framework through comprehensive benchmarking and comparative analysis.

Literature is a collection of written works. The terms have historically been used to refer to visionary works of poetry and prose that are differentiated by their writer's aims and the perceived aesthetic brilliance with which they are executed. Literature may be classed in several ways, including language, national origin, historical time, genre, and subject matter (Rexroth, 2024). According to Lombardi (2020), the term "literature" refers to written and occasionally spoken content. Derived from the Latin term *litteratura*, which means "writing formed with letters," literature most frequently refers to works of the creative imagination, such as poetry, theatre, fiction, nonfiction, journalism, and music.

According to Mijianti et al (2022), poetry is a literary work created by a poet with beautiful and meaningful words. Poetry appeals to a diverse audience, including children, students, college students, and even adults. Also, Poetry is a literary form that expresses human thoughts and emotions. The feeling is expressed in a line of words using lovely language. In contrast to everyday language, poetry employs inventive and meaningful words (Christine, 2018).

Ellis (2023) states that figurative language occurs when you extend the true meaning of words for effect, whether to seem creative, make a joke, or communicate more clearly and engagingly. Figurative language is a prevalent method in narrative writing when the author aims to elicit emotional responses from the reader. Perrine (as cited in Khairunnisa, 2022), figurative language cannot be understood literally. Figurative language in literature may entertain readers, convey emotions, and ignite creativity. Transmitting it makes literature more interesting. Figurative language enhances the attractiveness of a literary work, shortens the author's narrative, and creates a certain sensation or atmosphere.

a) Imagery

According to Putri et al (2022), imagery may be described as the depiction of sensory experiences and events via words. Poetry's imagery immediately appeals to our senses through song and rhythm, which we can hear when it is read aloud. The term "imagery" is used to help readers experience things via their five senses. Imagery, pictures combined, is used to denote the objects and attributes of some understanding alluded to in a poem or other piece of writing (Sharma, 2022).

b) Humor

According to Reyes et al (2012), researchers define humor as a rich and multidimensional notion that has an important significance in human life. It does not only make people laugh; it also facilitates emotional discharge, which improves human health. Humor is simply described as a form of stimulus that causes people to laugh (Koestler, 2024).

c) Irony

In literary conditions, irony is the scenario in which someone says or does something but means another thing or plans for something else to happen that would be opposed to the idea (Leengen, 2024). According to Wilson (2012), the most typical application of irony is to climax circumstances, events, or performances that do not meet some norm-based expectation. Its principal purpose is to criticize or complain.

d) Metaphor

According to McGlone (as cited in Zulfadhlin, 2022), a metaphor is a figure of speech that uses a word or phrase to convey something beyond its literal meaning. The metaphor refers to comprehending one topic via another (Kovecses, 2000).

According to Offen (as cited in Octavia, 2021), feminism is an ideology and/or movement focused on increasing women's positions by achieving political, legal, and economic rights equal to those provided to males. According to Tong (as cited in Perawati, 2018) feminism may be classified into the following categories:

a) Liberal feminism

Liberalism primarily emphasizes the rights of women to participate in society. Liberal feminism is based on the principle of prioritizing "the right" over "the good". In other words, the entire system of individual rights is justified since it provides the foundation for us to accomplish anything. As long as someone does not violate the law, it is permissible.

Furthermore, liberal feminism focuses on liberating women from the rule of the opposite gender. For example, allowing women equal access in some domains, such as academies, forums, and marketplaces (Perawati, 2018).

b) Radical Feminism

Radical feminism believes that the only way to free women from sex or gender oppression is to eliminate the so-called fundamentally repressive and dominant patriarchal system. Furthermore, some radical feminists believe that the only way to be free of discrimination is to entirely remove and reorganize culture to be more sexually equitable. In summary, this type of feminism believes that conventional family structures should be abandoned (Mukrimah, 2017).

c) Marxist Feminism

The Marxist definition of human nature, which is prevalent in Marxist feminist philosophy, has some similarities to the liberal concept of the human being. Marxists oppose the liberal idea of human nature, emphasizing that what makes us human is that we create our means to survive (Perawati, 2018). In addition, the ideology of Marxism tends to assume that it is primarily the ruling class or the affluent who create dominance over women (Mukrimah, 2017).

d) Psychoanalysis and Gender Feminism

Unlike liberal, radical, and Marxist feminism, psychoanalytic and gender feminism suggest that basic reasons for women's actions stem from their behavior. Particularly in women's methods of thinking. Gender feminism, on the other hand, argues that there may be biological differences that contribute to psychological inequalities (Perawati, 2018).

e) Existentialist feminism

Sarte (as cited in Yusuf & Susilo, 2020) Explain that humans are primarily responsible for their freedom of choice, but they are also expected to be accountable for their actions. However, women have frequently become the targets of prejudice; in reality, most people believe that males are subjects. So, existentialism aims to help women become subjects in society rather than objects.

## II. METHOD

Qualitative is generally considered a natural inquiry that is done by humans who want to know the natural phenomena around them. More specifically in qualitative research, understanding of the scientific community is progressively refined through an iterative process. This iterative process involves making new and important distinctions as researchers gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Aspers, 2019). In this application, the goal of qualitative research is to get a thorough understanding of social phenomena in their natural contexts.

Even though several qualitative instruments, such as observation, interview, and documentary analysis, could be used, the researchers could only analyze sources found on the Internet due to time and financial constraints. This is a result of the fact that the sources and research data that the researchers inquired about were non-living objects (i.e., poetry, novels, and other written documents). There, the researchers made the following decisions on the reading and analysis of primary and secondary sources: a.) Rupi Kaur's poetry, specifically focusing on her collection "Milk and Honey" (2014), b.) the previously researched journals.

The primary data source for this research will be five selected poems from Rupi Kaur's book "Milk and Honey." These poems will be chosen based on their exemplary use of humor and irony, as determined by the researcher's initial reading and analysis. Each selected poem will be accurately examined to identify instances of humor and irony. This involves close reading techniques that pay attention to literal meaning vs. intended meaning, juxtaposition of ideas or situations, and use of wordplay or figurative language. The findings of this research can contribute to a deeper appreciation of Kaur's ability and exactly the unique ways in which humor and irony can enhance the power and impact of poetry.

Some steps that the researchers used in conducting the research are as follows. Firstly, the researchers read Rupi Kaur's book "Milk and Honey". The researchers discussed the role of humor, and the role of irony as some potential important themes identified in the book. The researchers identified some important themes considered relevant to the research questions. Finally, the researchers wrote the summary.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 The Feminism Described in The Poems

Rupi Kaur's poetry, with its clear and plain approach, has won the hearts of people all over the world. Behind the language's clarity are powerful messages about feminism that question gender stereotypes, expose inequity, and promote women's empowerment. In this discussion, we will look at how Rupi Kaur employs comedy and irony to promote her feminist message. We will examine her word choices, figures of speech, and poetic structure to see how she challenges gender stereotypes, gives voice to disadvantaged women's experiences, and celebrates women's strength.

##### Poem 1, Milk and Honey p.9

you  
have been  
taught your legs  
are a pit stop for men  
that need a place to rest  
a vacant body empty enough  
for guests but no one  
ever comes and is  
willing to  
stay

This study explores the poem's criticism of cultural conditioning that objectifies women's bodies. The key metaphor, **"legs as a pit stop for men"** (lines 3-4), sets the poem's premise. It depicts women's bodies as mere conveniences for male satisfaction, emphasizing the degrading power of objectification. The speaker refers to her legs and body as **"vacant"** and **"empty"** (line 6), implying a loss of identity and value due to objectification. The statement **"a vacant body empty enough for guests but no one ever comes and is willing to stay"** (lines 6-10) perpetuates the objectification by depicting women's bodies as vessels to be filled by men, while men are passive **"guests"** (line 7) who never give meaningful connection.

The poem's impact comes from its use of vivid imagery and subtle sarcasm. The humorous depiction of males as **"need a place to rest"** (line 5) places of interest the assumption that women cater to male demands. This ironic contrast emphasizes the power disparity in cultural expectations around gender and sexuality. "Milk and Honey" supports feminist concerns of objectification. It demonstrates how society's conditioning reduces women to their physical characteristics while ignoring their emotional depth and unique wants. This objectification hurts women's self-esteem and autonomy. This poem serves as a poignant reminder of the continuous battle to liberate women from the objectifying gaze. By removing these deeply established beliefs, we may create a more equal and rewarding experience for everyone.

### Poem 2, Milk and Honey P. 16

*every time you  
tell your daughter  
you yell at her  
out of love  
you teach her to confuse  
anger with kindness  
which seems like a good idea  
till she grows up to  
trust men who hurt her  
cause they look so much  
like you*

*-to fathers with daughters*

This study explores the poem's Criticism of how dads may prolong emotional abuse disguised as love, compromising their daughters' capacity to build healthy relationships. The poem focuses on the normalizing of rage within the father-daughter relationship. The sentence **"you yell at her / out of love"** (lines 3-4) presents an ironic paradox, emphasizing the difficulty it causes in daughters. The phrase **"you teach her to confuse / anger with kindness"** (lines 5-6) demonstrates the harm caused by such behavior. Daughters may misunderstand rage as affection, rendering them vulnerable to further manipulation.

The poem uses dark humor to highlight the cyclical cycle of abuse. The lyric **"which seems like a good idea / till she grows up to / trust men who hurt her / because they look so much / like you"** (lines 7-11) implies that girls who have been taught to accept rage as love may seek mates with similar abusive traits. "Every Time You" reflects feminist concerns about power dynamics inside families. It demonstrates how conventional gender norms may legitimize emotional abuse, limiting women's capacity to create healthy and secure relationships.

By encouraging men to notice their communication patterns, the poem promotes a more loving and empathic approach to parenthood. This encourages healthy emotional development in females, preparing them to recognize and prevent future abuse. While the poem does not expressly discuss sexual issues, the emotional abuse it depicts can have a thoughtful influence

on a daughter's future sexual relationships. It may make her more susceptible to manipulation and coercion.

### Poem 3, Milk and Honey P. 35

*you plough into me with two fingers and i am mostly shocked. it feels  
like rubber against an open wound. i do not like it. you begin pushing  
faster and faster. but i feel nothing. you search my face for a reaction  
so i begin acting like the naked women in the videos you watch when  
you think no one's looking. i imitate their moans. hollow and hungry.  
you ask if it feels good and i say yes so quickly it sounds rehearsed.  
but the acting. you do not notice.*

This poem explores the details of female experience in heterosexual relationships, concentrating on subjects such as sexual expectation, communication, and performance. The poem sets a tone of vulnerability and discomfort with metaphors like **"rubber against an open wound"** (line 2), emphasizing the potential for sex to be unpleasant. The humor stems from the disparity between the male partner's expectations and the woman's realities. Her emotional detachment contrasts with his imagined desire for pleasure.

The poem uses sarcasm to highlight cultural pressures on women to display sexuality in ways that privilege male enjoyment. The woman's act of impersonating erotic groans **"i begin acting like the naked women in the videos you watch when you think no one's looking / i imitate their moans"** (lines 4-5) represents her knowledge of these expectations and her use of inauthenticity to meet them. This poem, "You plough into me" is consistent with feminist criticisms of the masculine gaze and the objectification of women. It emphasizes the pressure to follow unrealistic sexual scripts and the suppression of women's actual wants. The poem underlines the value of communication and sincerity in close relationships.

The poem questions the idea that female pleasure is a passive response to masculine action. It encourages readers to understand the emotional details of sex and the importance of open communication between lovers. Kaur criticizes patriarchal sexual conventions by emphasizing women's experiences.

### Poem 4, Milk and Honey P. 91

*did you think i was a city  
big enough for a weekend getaway  
i am the town surrounding it  
the one you've never heard of  
but always pass through  
there are no neon lights here  
no skyscrapers or statues  
but there is thunder  
for i make bridges tremble  
i am not street meat i am homemade jam  
thick enough to cut the sweetest  
thing your lips will touch  
i am not police sirens  
i am not the crackle of a fireplace  
i'd burn you and you still  
couldn't take your eyes off me  
cause i'd look so beautiful doing it  
you'd blush  
i am not the hotel room i am home*



*i am not the whiskey you want  
i am the water you need  
don't come here with expectations  
and try to make a vacation out of me*

This poetry investigates feminine identity and self-worth, questioning society's standards and celebrating unusual beauty. The poem employs opposing imagery of a metropolis and a village to emphasize the speaker's refusal to be viewed as a fleeting pleasure. The metaphor of **"homemade jam"** (line 10) depicts the speaker as important and substantial, challenging the objectification of women.

The poem uses sarcasm to undermine the appeal of transitory experiences commonly associated with cities. The city, which represents excitement, is shown as lacking depth **"no neon lights,"** (line 6). This contradicts the notion that women should provide a short, exciting experience. This poem, "did you think i was a city" is consistent with feminist critiques of the male gaze and the pressure on women to adhere to a certain sort of appearance. The speaker opposes becoming a **"weekend getaway"** (line 2) and defends her right to be regarded as her true self.

The poem honors women's inner power and complexity. By comparing oneself to **"homemade jam"** (line 10), the speaker highlights her inner richness and lasting value. This calls into question the idea that women are disposable things and instead encourages true self-worth. While sexual components are not specifically discussed, the poem's emphasis on rejecting a **"vacation"** mindset (line 23) implies a desire for a deeper and more meaningful connection, which might include a more emotionally close relationship.

### Poem 5, Milk and Honey P. 99

*even when you undress her  
you are searching for me  
i am sorry i  
taste so good  
when the two of you  
make love it is  
still my name  
that rolls off your  
tongue accidentally*

This poem delves into the complexity of female subjectivity and the enduring effects of previous relationships, notably on women's self-esteem. The poem explores the emotional fragility of women once a romance ends. The speaker imagines that their ex-partner still desires them, even while they are dating someone fresh. The metaphor **"i taste so good"** (lines 3-4) might be taken as both a confident statement and a lingering fear of being replaced.

The poem uses irony to emphasize the power of memory and its destructive character. While the ex-partner gets physically acquainted with someone else, the speaker's name comes out **"accidentally"** (line 9). This unexpected entrance calls into question the notion that women are readily forgotten once a relationship has ended. This poem, "Even when you undress her" is consistent with feminist beliefs that romantic connections shape female identity. The speaker struggles with the sensation of being replaced, although not actively participating.

The poem delves into the emotional details of breakups and the difficulties women encounter in recovering their self-esteem after a relationship ends. While the sexual parts are provocative, the poem focuses on the emotional endurance of memories and their ability to influence a woman's sense of self.

## 4.2 The Humor and Irony Identified in The Poems

Rupi Kaur's poetry book, "Milk and Honey," uses humor and irony as effective instruments for societal critique and female empowerment. This study digs into the complex usage of these literary elements in each of the five poems you contributed, emphasizing their significance to the collection's overall message and impact.

### Poem 1, Milk and Honey P. 9

The poem includes dry humor in the phrase **"that need a place to rest"** (line 5). This seemingly benign comment about males requiring a **"pit stop"** (line 4) reveals a deeper truth about cultural expectations. By comparing men to tired travelers and women to highway rest stops, the poem reduces men's wants to a basic necessity while portraying women's bodies as only a means to a goal. The humor comes from the understatement, in which the startling truth about objectification is given in a monotonous, deadpan manner.

The irony of Subversion: The poem challenges the common romantic concept of a woman's body as a source of pleasure and satisfaction. Instead, the female body is represented as an empty vessel, **"vacant"** and **"empty enough for guests"** (line 6). This irony emphasizes the objectification of women and the power disparity in cultural expectations. Men are shown as active agents, or **"guests"** (line 7), who come and go as they choose, but women are docile and disposable.

Another irony present in this poem is the Irony of Expectation: There is an additional layer of irony in the line **"but no one ever comes and is willing to stay"** (lines 8-10). This implies that, even in the objectified view, the expectation of males finding fulfilment is not satisfied. This unexpected reversal adds another layer to the critique, implying the hollowness and unsustainable nature of such a partnership.

The poem's dry humor and irony combine to highlight the ridiculousness of cultural expectations surrounding women's bodies. The poem's use of humor enhances the crucial message's engagement and recall. It disarms the reader and reveals the reality of objectification in a fresh light. The comedy also adds a depth of melancholy, emphasizing the emotional toll such demands may place on women.

### Poem 2, Milk and Honey P. 16

The poem's dark humor may be seen in the line **"which seems like a good idea / till she grows up / to trust men who hurt her / because they look so much like you"** (lines 7-11). The speaker uses a sarcastic tone, hinting that normalizing yelling as a kind of **"love"** (line 4) in a father-daughter relationship sounds appealing at first. However, the punchline reveals the horrible consequence: the daughter is more prone to trust abusive men later in life since their behavior mirrors that of her father. The second poem uses dark humor to effectively startle the reader. By mocking a serious matter in such a bleak manner, the poem forces us to confront the truth of abuse and its cyclical nature. The humor becomes unpleasant, underlining the terrible consequences of normalizing wrath in families. It compels readers to think about their own acts and societal norms that may perpetuate such abuse.

The poem uses the irony of expectation to highlight the opposing impacts of the father's actions. He probably shouts out of annoyance or a misguided sense of discipline, thinking it demonstrates care. However, the unintended consequence is that the daughter confuses rage and affection. This irony exposes flaws in traditional parenting practices that normalize fury.



The dark humor and irony in the second poem combine to give a striking message about the risks of emotional abuse in families. The poem guarantees that the message is understood by the reader by employing unpleasant humor. It places of interest the long-term effects of such conduct and promotes healthy communication and emotional expression within families.

### Poem 3, Milk and Honey P. 35

The poem emphasizes situational irony by contrasting the male partner's expectations with the woman's actual reality. The man's strong gestures, "**you plough into me**" (line 1), imply an anticipation of intense intercourse. However, the woman's emotional detachment "**mostly shocked,**" "**i do not like it**" (lines 1 & 2) defies this assumption. The contrast to "**rubber against an open wound**" (line 2) underscores how awful the experience was for her. Another element of irony is added by the woman's willingness to emulate pornographic noises "**I imitate their moans**" (line 5). Her activities are a performance to satisfy the man's demands, not an expression of her pleasure. The final sentence, "**but the acting, you do not notice**" (line 8), emphasizes the irony. The male ignores the woman's discomfort and inauthenticity, being solely focused on his enjoyment.

The poem's comedy is subtle and based on the absurdity of the circumstance. The woman's distant retelling of a terrible occurrence generates a feeling of black comedy. It raises questions about the cultural expectations on women to perform sexuality for male enjoyment, regardless of the circumstances.

The poem's comedy is subtle and centerer on the strangeness of the situation. The woman's detached narration of a tragic event creates a sense of black humor. It calls into question the societal expectations placed on women to perform sexuality for male gratification, regardless of the circumstances.

### Poem 4, Milk and Honey P. 91

Poem 4 employs the irony of comparison extensively to criticize the masculine gaze and objectification of women. The speaker likens herself to a "**town surrounding**" (lines 3). Cities are frequently linked with excitement and transient experiences, but towns are disregarded and have a deeper, sometimes neglected, charm. This analogy challenges the notion that the woman is a "**weekend getaway**" (line 2) primarily for male enjoyment. The poem's message revolves around the dramatic contrast between "**street meat**" (line 10) and "**homemade jam**" (line 10). Street meat is inexpensive, easily accessible, and disposable, reflecting the objectification of women. Homemade jam, on the other hand, is unique, takes time and effort to make, and has long-term value. This contrast emphasizes the speaker's innate value and uniqueness.

The poem has subtle comedy, which originates from the speaker's confident and light-hearted tone. She describes herself as a place "**you've never heard of**" (line 4), which is a funny understatement. It emphasizes the propensity to undervalue women's depth and complexity. Hyperbolic expressions in this poem include "**I make bridges tremble**" (line 9) and "**I'd burn you and you still couldn't take your eyes off me**" (lines 15-16). This humorous exaggeration climaxes the speaker's great inner strength and magnetism, which extend beyond physical appeal.

The role of irony and humor strengthens the speaker's message. The poem defies cultural expectations by playfully demolishing tropes used to objectify women. The role of humor makes the critique more interesting and memorable, urging readers to reconsider how women are typically depicted and valued. The poem finally pleads for a deeper and lasting connection based on mutual respect and admiration for a woman's inherent traits.

### Poem 5, Milk and Honey P. 99

This poem is based on verbal irony, using the ex-lover's unintended slip of the tongue to convey a striking message. The irony is most evident in the phrase **"It is still my name / that rolls off your tongue accidentally"** (lines 6-9). The ex-lover's unconscious behavior of mentioning the speaker's name amid closeness with a new person defies expectations.

The poem's effect extends beyond simple linguistic sarcasm. It investigates the emotional details of sorrow and the difficulties women encounter in restoring self-esteem once a relationship ends. The speaker's name remains, implying that the ex-lover is not quite over the relationship. This produces a sense of irony since the new companion appears to be a replacement, yet the old love remains. The phrase **"i am sorry i / taste so good"** (lines 3-5) might be taken in two ways. It might be a sarcastic shot at the ex-lover's superficiality or a sign of residual nervousness over being replaced. The uncertainty lends dimension to the poetry. Despite the pain, the poem implies that the speaker cannot be simply replaced. The ex-lover's unconscious behavior recognizes a persistent presence, even if unwelcome.

The poem has dark and subtle humor. The irony of the scenario - being remembered during an intimate time with another - provides a bittersweet sense of comedy. It emphasizes the difficulty of moving on from a relationship, as well as the long-term influence a former love may have.

The poem's humor and irony combine to provide a moving meditation on sorrow and self-worth. By employing the ex-lover's linguistic slip as a metaphor, the poem questions the notion that women are readily forgotten. It digs into the long-term impact of previous relationships, as well as the struggle to restore one's identity and self-esteem.

This examination of five poems from Rupi Kaur's "Milk and Honey" reveals how the book uses humor and irony as potent weapons for criticizing societal standards and advocating female empowerment. To challenge women's objectification and show the limitations of traditional gender roles, the poems use a variety of approaches such as situational irony, linguistic irony, irony of comparison, and black humor. The book "Milk and Honey" uses humor and irony to convey a powerful message of female empowerment. Kaur's poetry paves the path for a more equal and meaningful future for women by breaking down cultural preconceptions and encouraging introspection.

Rupi Kaur's critique of societal expectations for women is consistent with liberal feminism's emphasis on attaining equality via legal and social transformation. Her poetry, by stressing women's limitations, and fighting for equal rights and opportunities, which are central to liberal feminism. Poems that challenge objectification, for example, are in line with the liberal feminist campaign against gender inequality in sectors such as employment and education. While Kaur's art shares the purpose of female empowerment, it goes further, challenging the fundamental mechanisms that perpetuate inequity. This is consistent with elements of radical feminism, which see patriarchy as the primary source of women's oppression. Poems that deconstruct tropes of femininity and sexuality may be interpreted as questioning patriarchal control over women's bodies and identities.

Kaur uses comedy and sarcasm to highlight the ridiculousness of cultural conditioning that limits women to their outward features while overlooking their inner depth and complexity. The poems challenge engrained stereotypes and call for a more nuanced understanding of female sexuality and identity. Besides, the use of humor enhances the critique's engagement and memorability. By using humor and fun exaggeration, Kaur disarms the reader and puts important subjects in a new perspective. This technique encourages critical thinking and forces readers to evaluate different viewpoints on gender dynamics and relationships.

Despite highlighting the important aspects of women life. It should be admitted that Kaur's works tend to devalue linguistic aspects. The missing of punctuation, grammatical accuracy, and capitalization tends to disregard the values of language. If her works continuously be applauded globally, it is possible that in the future, the value of linguistic aspects will be

considered worthless compared with the aspects of meaning. Particularly, with the growth and the continuous spread of social media, the use of sarcastic, vulgar, and abusive can probably more popular and be appreciated than the ones written carefully by those who appreciate the values of language.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

It is indeed true that poems can invigorate and illuminate certain issues related to human lives. Kaur's poems can probably provide more inspiration to those longing for women's equality and freedom. Based on the findings, it can also be identified that most of the feminist concepts inside her poems are liberal and radical. The vulgar choices of words in narrating women as 'the objects of man' clearly indicate the above concepts. Besides, she also tends to express vulgar words to provoke the readers' thoughts to be aware of the critical insight that she presents in her poems.

Humor is a tool for highlighting the absurdity of societal conditioning that restricts women. It is used to demonstrate how society frequently defines women only primarily on their physical looks, ignoring their worth and complexity as people. While irony is the use of words or circumstances that have multiple meanings demonstrates that women are not things that may be handled as they like by males, but rather humans who have the right to be treated with respect.

The present study focuses only on some selected poems written by Rupi Kaur. Further studies on Rupi Kaur should involve more poems written by her so that more generalized findings leading to conclusive statements can be more dependable.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We significantly express our appreciation for the editors who have proceeded the work to be appropriate for publication. According to Wajdi et al (2018), the paper was rechecked in accordance with plagiarism.

#### REFERENCES

- Antari, N. K. D. (2022). An analysis of the interpersonal meaning of lyric and video "zombie" by day6. *Journal of Language and Pragmatics Studies*, 1(1), 16-24. <https://doi.org/10.58881/jlps.v1i1.3>
- Aspers, Corte. (2019). What is Qualitative in Qualitative Research. *Qualitative Sociology*, (42), 139. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11133-019-9413-7>.
- Christine, M. (2018). A Study of Structural, Sense and Sound Devices in Samuel Taylor Coleridge's Selected Poem: A Formalistic Approach. (Undergraduate Thesis of English Department Faculty of Humanities, Putra Batam University). <http://repository.upbatam.ac.id/3885/1/cover%20s.d%20bab%20III.pdf>.
- Dewi, N. M. S. C. (2023). Lexical and grammatical cohesion analysis of "nothing like us" song lyrics: written discourse analysis. *Journal of Language and Pragmatics Studies*, 2(1), 19-27. <https://doi.org/10.58881/jlps.v2i1.9> (Original work published March 31, 2023)
- Ellis, M. (2023, June 21st). Figurative Language Examples: How to Use These 5 Common Types. Grammarly. <https://www.grammarly.com/blog/figurative-language/>.
- Ferawati, F., Baa, S., & Iskandar, I. (2022). Investigating Rupi Kaur's selected poems: an analysis of figurative language. *International Journal of Humanities and Innovation (IJHI)*, 5(1), 20-26. <https://doi.org/10.33750/ijhi.v5i1.142>
- Jayanti, Umbas Lestari. (2020). *Paradok Dalam Antologi Puisi Rupi Kaur "The Sun and Her Flower"*. Wanastra: Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra, 12(2), 1. <http://doi.org/10.31294/w.v12i2.8591>.
- Kaur, R. (2024). Rupi Kaur. <https://rupikaur.com/pages/about-me>.
- Kaur, Rupi. (2014). *Milk and Honey*. Createspace Independent Pub
- Kaur, Rupi. (2017). *The Sun and Her Flowers*. United States: Andrews McMeel Publishing.
- Kaur, Rupi. (2019). *The Sun and Her Flowers: Matahari dan Bunga-Bunganya*. Jakarta: POP.
- Kaur, Rupi. (2020). *Home Body*. Andrews McMeel Publishing.
- Kaur, Rupi. (2022). *Healing Through Words*. Andrews McMeel Publishing.

- Khairunnisa, Iskandar. (2022). *Figurative Languages Used in Robert Frost's Selected Poems*. ELIRATE Journal of English Linguistics and Literature Studies, 2(1). <https://doi.org/10.26858/elirate.v2i1.%20Dec.40689>.
- Koestler, A. (2024, July 8th). Humor. Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/humor>.
- Kovecses, Z. (2000). *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction*. Oxford University Press. [https://acikders.ankara.edu.tr/pluginfile.php/159239/mod\\_resource/content/1/the%20study%20of%20metaphor.pdf](https://acikders.ankara.edu.tr/pluginfile.php/159239/mod_resource/content/1/the%20study%20of%20metaphor.pdf).
- Leengen, M. (2024). Irony Literary Definition and Meaning. *Figurative Language*. <https://figurativelanguage.net/irony.html>.
- Listiyapinto, R. Z., & Endraswara, S. (2024). Language style in serat piwulang Hamengkubuwana 1 manuscript. *Kajian Pendidikan, Seni, Budaya, Sosial & Lingkungan*, 1(1), 18–25. Retrieved from <https://ojs.ympn2.or.id/index.php/KPSBSL/article/view/6> (Original work published February 1, 2024)
- Lombardi, E. (2024, July 21st). What Literature Can Teach Us. ThoughtCo.. <https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-literature-740531>.
- Mekt, Y., Getahun, A., & Meseret, T. (2024). A critical discourse analysis (CDA) of a political speech of Mr. Christian Tadele speech in the parliament. *Journal of Education, Social & Communication Studies*, 1(2), 56–62. Retrieved from <https://ojs.ptmjb.com/index.php/JESCS/article/view/16> (Original work published April 26, 2024)
- Mijianti, Ahsin, Setiyawan, Yudha, and Suwandi. (2022). *Analysis of Poetry Reading Skills in Kartini Young Literature*. *Budapest International Research and Critics Institute-Journal (BIRCI- Journal)*, 5(3), 22739. <https://doi.org/10.33258/birci.v5i3.6286>.
- Mukrimah. (2017). The Event of Radical Feminism in Movie "All Cheerleaders Die". (Under graduate thesis of English and Literature Department of Adab and Humanities, Alauddin State Islamic University Makassar). <https://repositori.uin-alauddin.ac.id/7785/1/MUKRIMAH.pdf>.
- Octavia, K. (2021). *Semiotic Analysis of The Feminism in The Film Hidden Figures*. (Undergraduate Thesis of the English Department, Faculty of Letters and Cultures Gunadarma University), 10. <https://library.gunadarma.ac.id/repository/semiotic-analysis-of-the-feminism-in-the-hidden-figures-movie-ssm>.
- Perawati, H. (2018). *Feminism In Maleficent Film by Robert Stromberg*. (Undergraduate Thesis of The State Islamic University Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi), 1-60. Retrieved from the State Islamic University Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi: [repositori.uinjambi.ac.id](https://repositori.uinjambi.ac.id).
- Putri, Molla Jamaludin. (2022). *An Analysis of Figurative Language and Imagery Used in Dua Lipa's Song "Levittaing"*. *PROJECT (Professional Journal of English Education)*, 5(6), 1158. <https://journal.ikipsiliwangi.ac.id/index.php/project/article/view/12211/pdf>.
- Rexroth, K. (2024, May 22th). Literature. Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/art/literature>
- Reyes, Rosso Buscaldi. (2012). *From humor recognition to irony detection: The figurative language*. Elsevier, 74(1-12), 2. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.datak.2012.02.005>.
- Sharma, L. (2022). *Analysis of figurative language u=in Robert Frost's poem: Stopping by Woods on a Snowing Evening*. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Growth Evaluation*, 3(1), 254. <https://doi.org/10.54660/anfo.2021.3.1.12>.
- Syafika, Jannah Kone (2023). *Kinds of Feminism in Rupi Kaur Selected Poems*. *Jurnal Karya Ilmiah Mahasiswa (KIMA) Pusat Penerbitan & Publikasi Ilmiah (P3i)*, 2(3), 1. <https://jurnal.fs.umi.ac.id/index.php/KIMA/article/view/610>.
- Wajdi, M., & Asrumi, A. (2024b). Analysing the slogan "LUBER" in Indonesia's 2024 general election: A critical discourse analysis. *Journal of Language and Pragmatics Studies*, 3(1), 53–65. <https://doi.org/10.58881/jlps.v3i1.39>.
- Wajdi, M., Darlina, L., Sanjaya, I., & Susanto, B. (2024a). A Self-Confident Profile: An Analysis of the Novel The Old Man and the Sea. *Journal of Language and Literature*, 24(1), 186-200. doi:<https://doi.org/10.24071/joll.v24i1.6673>
- Wajdi, M., Purnomo, S. H., Mariam, S., Suriyadi, S., & Amrullah, A. (2024c). Exploring social class dynamics in the novel "Laskar Pelangi": An in-depth analysis. *Journal of Education, Social & Communication Studies*, 1(1), 35–45. Retrieved from <https://ojs.ptmjb.com/index.php/JESCS/article/view/5> (Original work published January 15, 2024)
- Wajdi, M., Sumartana, IM., & Hudianingsih, NPD. (2018). *Avoiding Plagiarism in Writing a Research Paper*. *Soshum: Jurnal Sosial Dan Humaniora*, 8(1), 94-102. <https://doi.org/10.31940/soshum.v8i1.769>.

- Wilson, Sperber. (2012, June 5th). Explaining irony. Cambridge University Press.  
<https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/abs/meaning-and-relevance/explaining-irony/574C9D35891F91743F5C3B4FACA448FB>.
- Yusuf, Susilo. (2020). *Existentialist Feminism of Woman's Struggle in Cigarette Girl Novel*. Ideas Journal on English Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature, 8(1), 69.  
<https://doi.org/10.24256/ideas.v8i1.1275>.
- Zulfadhina, Rangkuti Putri. (2022). *Metaphor in Atticus' Selected Poems*. Journal of Language, 4(1), 2.  
<https://doi.org/10.30743/jol.v4i1.4821>

