



Ideologies Behind the Lyrics of "A Little Piece of Heaven" by Avenged Sevenfold: A Critical Discourse Analysis

Elsa Febia Kusuma¹, Yuli Kuswardani¹, Theresia Budi Sucihati¹

¹Universitas PGRI Madiun, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: elsa_2202109010P@mhs.unipma.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the lyrics of "A Little Piece of Heaven" by Avenged Sevenfold through the lens of Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). This study reveals how the lyrics build an ideology of obsessive love, violence, and defiance of societal norms through macrostructure, and microstructure. The findings indicate that the story contests romantic ideals and mirrors communal opinions influenced by the metal subculture. The study indicates that the song serves both as entertainment and a criticism of prevalent moral ideals. Specific excerpts from the lyrics are analyzed to illustrate how narrative stages and linguistic choices legitimize transgressive acts within a love story framework. the study shows how extreme music narratives function as both artistic expression and a subtle form of resistance against dominant ideologies.



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1. INTRODUCTION

Music, as a cultural text, often embeds ideology and conveys values that extend beyond mere entertainment. In the tradition of cultural studies, song lyrics are viewed as a site where diverse discourses intersect, rendering them powerful tools for communicating, contesting, or reinforcing social norms. Heavy metal, as a global subculture, is known for its bold narratives and themes of rebellion, power, and death, often pushing against mainstream moral boundaries. These lyrics frequently challenge dominant ideologies, functioning as a discourse that both reflects and critiques social realities.

Several studies have emphasized the value of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in revealing the power relations and ideologies embedded in texts. Van Dijk (1998) suggests that discourse analysis must consider cognitive and social contexts. Critical Discourse Analysis has been used to examine a variety of cultural goods, including news reports, political speeches, and song lyrics, to highlight how language usage may reinforce or undermine power relations and ideologies. Previous study in music discourse have focused on how metal lyrics generate counter-hegemonic identities. The related research file has multiple relevant studies Thobroni (2021) towards the lyrics of children's songs by AT Mahmud, AT Mahmud's four children's songs were investigated, and it was discovered that macrostructure and microstructure build ideologies that were compatible with the New Order's principles of harmony and stability. Their analysis revealed that word choices like "indah" and "ramah," as well as metaphors like "bintang kejora," were used to subtly convey ideological messages. This finding demonstrates that Van Dijk's model is effective at detecting hidden ideologies in lyrics.

Previous research has examined CDA on song lyrics using Van Dijk's framework, which supports the current findings Winarta (2024) In their article *Analisis Wacana Kritis pada Lirik Lagu "M.I.A," Karya Avenged Sevenfold* examined the macrostructure, microstructure, and social context of the lyrics "M.I.A" and discovered that the song depicts the soldier's struggle through detailed syntactic patterns and lexical choices, demonstrating how ideology is encoded in heavy metal narratives. Their findings support the premise that Avenged Sevenfold frequently incorporates social criticism and ideological opposition into their music. In addition, Herman found that(2019) in *Critical Discourse Analysis on "We Are the World 25 for Haiti" Song Lyrics* The approach of Van Dijk's theory was also used, emphasizing how macro and micro structures (such as mood choices and theme progressions) express

solidarity and power relations in a humanitarian setting. Despite differences in genre and issue, their findings demonstrate CDA's effectiveness in revealing ideological layers inside song lyrics.

These previous studies suggest that Van Dijk's CDA is efficient in evaluating song lyrics to identify underlying beliefs, therefore providing a scholarly basis for the study of "*A Little Piece of Heaven*" in this paper. This study employed a descriptive qualitative method and focus on Van Dijk's macrolevel (main/ topic) and microlevel (word choice, syntax and local structure) of discourse. These elements were interpreted to uncover how the context of song lyrics.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study used Van Dijk (1998) to uncover how the context of song lyrics "*A Little Piece Of Heaven*" focusing on the macrolevel and microlevel.

3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS (10 PT)

This study used Van Dijk (1998) to uncover how the context of song lyrics "*A Little Piece Of Heaven*" by focusing on the macrolevel and microlevel.

3.1 Macrostructure

Table 3.1 Macrostructure Analysis of the Lyrics of the Song "*A Little Piece of Heaven*"

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Discourse Structure	Element	Lyrics	Part of Lyrics
Makrostructure	Topic	'Cause I really always knew that my little crime Would be cold, that's why I got a heater for your thighs And I know, I know it's not your time But bye, bye	Chorus
		And a word to the wise, when the fire dies	
		You think it's over but it's just begun	
		But baby, don't cry	
		(St. 4, 8 & 12)	

In table above suggests that the lyrics :

" 'Cause I really always knew that my little crime// Would be cold, that's why I got a heater for your thighs//" are taken from the chorus of the song lyrics which are repeated in the fourth, eighth and twelfth verses. In this section, it explains that the song tells about extreme acts committed in the name of love and committing acts of gun violence. In the lyrics, the killer also realizes that his lover was killed prematurely. Then, the lyrics : "*You think it's over but it's just begun// But baby, don't cry//*" tell of the emphasis and rejection of death as the end. This gives rise to the idea that their love will continue even after death. Thus, it can be concluded that the topic of the song "*A Little Piece Of Heaven*" tells about a love story full of obsession and violence that leads to a tragic death. However, it is told as an eternal romantic story through death.

3.2 Microstructure

Element	Lyrics	Part Of the Lyrics	Observed Results
Microstructure	Before the story begins, is it such a sin For me to take what's mine, until the end of time?	Intro	In the first stanza, the narrative begins by asking a rhetorical question that invites the listener to consider whether the character's actions are a sin. The words "Before the story begins" and "until the end of time?" are local structures that relate to the time that governs the flow of the story. The sentence "is it such a sin" implies moral justification which shows that the character realizes the potential sin but still questions it. This is a form of rationalization of violence in the narrative. (Local Structure)
	We were more than friends, before the story ends And I will take what's mine, create what God would never design (St. 1, L 1-4)		The use of the interrogative phrase "is it such a sin" is a form of reflective impression of the morality of the act. This structure can influence the reader by considering personal justifications for the perpetrator's actions. (Syntax) The choice of words "take what's mine, create what God would never design" states that ownership is extreme and the perpetrator creates a counter that even God would not design. The lyrics reinforce the tone as a form of rebellion against social and religious norms (Word Choice)

In the table above, the microstructural analysis of the song lyrics “A Little Piece of Heaven” by Avenged Sevenfold reveals a complex narrative, especially related to moral justification, depiction of violence, and characters' inner conflicts. In the local structure dimension, the narrative follows a causal and temporal progression to justify violent behavior. The narrative progresses from intention, to execution, to regret. In terms of syntax, the use of short sentences, repetition, and interrogative sentences reflect the psychological instability and emotional tension of the characters. The choice of sharp, ironic and symbolic words emphasizes the perverted values and ideological tendencies of the characters. These elements portray the perpetrators as conscious subjects, but the violence is part of a norm-distorting constructed narrative.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on an analysis using Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis model (1998) The lyrics of Avenged Sevenfold's song "A Little Piece of Heaven" have been found to include ideology that goes beyond mere entertainment, with an emphasis on the macro and microlevels. At a macro level, the song covers the theme of obsessive love manifested via acts of violence and tragic death, yet it is presented as an everlasting love tale, as indicated by the recurrence of words that legitimize extreme deeds in the name of love. Meanwhile, on a micro level, this song constructs a narrative that justifies violence and defies societal and religious standards using sharp and symbolic word choices, rhetorical questions in sentence structure, and a predictable temporal development. The combination of these two levels reveals that this song is an ideological discourse that articulates alternative ideals while defying traditional moral bounds in its interpretation of love and death.

5. REFERENCES

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