

How effectively does  
the composer use  
language to create  
the world of the novel



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How effectively does the composer use language to create the world of the novel? The composer, Michael Parker uses a variety of language techniques and narrative techniques to effectively to create the world and atmosphere of *Doppelganger*. This novel is about a teenager named Andrew Davies, who incidentally finds himself travelling between two parallel worlds, one of which is civilised and the other being uncivilised with no morals, laws and ethics. Andrew soon finds himself having to stop a drug war that will indirectly affect both worlds. Throughout the story, Parker has cunningly used an array of language techniques to establish and form the characters and to explore themes. The novel, *Doppelganger*, is set in a contemporary time in the streets of Sydney.

The 'other' Sydney is established through dominant descriptive language. This captures the responder's imagination, leaving them with a horrendous image of what Sydney would be like without any morals, laws and ethics. As Andrew wakes up from being 'spilled' over to the other Sydney, he begins to describe what it looks like. The use of metaphors and the use of personification thoroughly emphasises how dreadful the 'other' Sydney is. This also forms a terrifying atmosphere. 'I wake up naked in the middle of some monster Sydney where the buildings are a nightmare and the sky has gone insane.' [p. 40].

Another great example of Parker's ability to create imagery is when Josh organises a reconnaissance of Inner Station's headquarters at Sydney University. Andrew has no choice but to go with him. The effect of the simile 'as if there had been some sort of street orgy the night before' describes the chaos in the streets and the horrible condition of the cities. The

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used condoms lying on the ground shows an immoral image and shows that there is no decency in this ??? other??™ Sydney. ??? All I made out were wet streaks of people hanging on the street corners, frightened old women scurrying into doors with what looked like bags of tripe, and used condoms lying on the ground as if there had been some sort of street orgy the night before.??? [p. 108].

It also gives an ominous atmosphere, leaving the responder with a menacing sense of fear. Parker has also used allusions to show references to Heart of Darkness. This happens when Andrew has been forced to go with Josh and the Hallboys for an attack on Inner Station. This allusion further contrasts the similarities between the characters of both novels. Andrew is forced at knifepoint to go with Josh and the Hallboys to attack and takeover Inner Station and the metsin factory. The composer is setting the scene for the violence and savagery that is soon to take place, making the train tunnels seem like the path to that violence.

??? Going up those train tunnels was like the longest walk of my life. Just like the book had said ??“ it was like being on a river at night travelling up into some sort of ancient jungle, back to the earliest beginnings of the Earth.??? [p. 226]. The simile further suggests that the surroundings make Andrew feel like he is in a primitive environment where there is no civilisation. Parker??™s dominant descriptions throughout the novel have proven effective as he has left the responder with intense imagery of what the ??? other??™ Sydney is and how Andrew is experiencing it.

Parker has used various language techniques so that the responder can easily identify the characters. An example of this is how Kurtz is identified. He is portrayed as a cold and calculative character. He is also Andrew's doppelganger and is the leader of Inner Station. Furthermore, he allows his guards to capture innocent people for experiments. Furthermore, he stands depicted as the main antagonist throughout the novel.

However, he believes that he must do these things because of his environment and surroundings. This is shown in the following quote when he explains why he must killed Dr Hoeg. He also attempts to justify his own actions through this. 'Because some people get lives that let them do things, other people get lives that make them do things. You got lucky.

I didn't.' [p. 281]. This contrasts the lives of both Andrew and Kurtz.

It shows that Andrew was the one who was 'lucky', being born in a more civilised society. Throughout the novel, Parker has explored the theme of evil and the nature of violent through references of Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness. Parker's novel has explored the evil side of human nature. He has achieved this through the actions of the main characters.

Andrew is someone who understands what is right and what is wrong. Conversely, he frequently watches violent actions of his best friend, Josh. He does not do anything about it as he doesn't want to jeopardise his relationship towards Josh. Fortunately, his sense of what is right triumphs in the end of the novel as he refuses to become savage and violent like Kurtz, his very own doppelganger.

He becomes more proactive and speaks up more in the final chapters of the novel. As Andrew is the main protagonist, the composer has written the story in first person narration, allowing the responder to connect with Andrew and to see his development in the novel. To explore the themes more thoroughly, Parker has used quotes from Heart of Darkness to show the similarities between the two novels. The "heart of darkness" metaphor symbolises the evil and savage side of human nature which is what is being explored in Parker's novel.

"We penetrated deeper and deeper into the heart of darkness." [p. 151].

This reminds the responder of the thematic connection between the two novels as both quotes are exactly the same in both novels. More than just following the plot, it is clear that Parker is trying to engage his audience, making them reflect on the nature of evil and violence. Michael Parker has thoroughly and effectively created the parallel worlds of Doppelganger through various language techniques and dominant narration which help the responder to identify characters and to captivate the responder's imagination. Parker has also successfully explored the theme of evil and the nature of violence through these effective techniques.