



Emily's multimodal hallucination experience in Alexandra Potter's *Me and Mr. Darcy*

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Abstract. This article examines Emily's multimodal experiences in Alexandra Potter's *Me and Mr. Darcy* with a focus on its relationship to the phenomenon of hallucinations. Hallucination is described as an incorrect sensory experience in which an individual perceives sights, odors, flavors, textures, or sounds that are not present in reality. In term of hallucination, multimodal is a type of hallucination that is a mixture of various sensory modalities, creating the perception that they originate from a single source. This article seeks to explore the types of various sensory modalities that constitute Emily's multimodal hallucination experience. This article employs a qualitative analysis method to explore an in-depth examination of the various sensory modalities of Emily's hallucination. A psychological approach is used in this article to uncover Emily's hallucination. This analysis utilizes Veague's theory about the forms of hallucination. The analysis shows that Emily experiences multimodal hallucination which is a combination of visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory, and gustatory hallucination that makes her feel that she can see the physical form, hear the voice, feel the touch, taste the food, and smell Mr. Darcy's perfume. The combination of these several sensory modalities that occur simultaneously makes the existence of Mr. Darcy seem real to Emily.

Keywords: hallucination, multimodal, sensory experience

INTRODUCTION

In general, according to (Maijer et al., 2019) hallucination characterizes as a condition where individuals experience a sensory experience that allows them to view, catch a sound, detect a smell, detect flavor, and touch something that does not exist in the real world. To put it another way, hallucination is an incorrect perception where someone feels they are experiencing a sensory experience that is not actually real. In this case, someone who experiences hallucination tends to experience those symptoms that other people around them don't experience the same thing. If the people around the sufferer are not aware of hallucination, they will tend to think that the sufferer is pretending, joking, or even associates it with mystical things.

One of the types of hallucination is multimodal hallucination. It is a type of hallucination where several senses are involved at once (Lachs, 2024). In this context, this combination of sensory input makes the hallucinatory experience feel more vivid and convincing, because the various senses work together to strengthen the perception of the object that experienced.

Hallucination exists in a different context from imagination and dream. According to Allen (2014), hallucination is a distorted form of imagination. In this case, it means that if imagination allows the person to control their imagination, then in other hand, the person experiencing hallucination cannot control their hallucination. Freud & Strachey (2010) state that hallucination and dream are similar. Both of hallucination and dream show images or scenes that aren't actually real. When someone dream, their mind creates a story that feels real while asleep. Similarly, when someone have a hallucination, their mind creates images or sounds that feel real, even though they aren't really there. The key difference between hallucination and dream lies in that while dreams occur during sleep or the transition between sleep and wakefulness, hallucination occurs when an individual is fully awake (Waters et al., 2020). When someone dreams, their mind is immersed in the subconscious, lacking direct sensory experiences of the real world. In contrast, hallucinations involve direct sensory experiences without physical objects or external stimuli.

One of the novels that have hallucination elements is Alexandra Potter's *Me and Mr. Darcy*. It narrates the story of Emily Albright, who believes she meets and interacts directly with Mr. Darcy, a fictional character from the novel she is reading. This hallucination occurs while she is on a literary tour in England, visiting places connected to Jane Austen and her writings. In light of this, the research aims to reveal the forms of multimodal hallucination experiences by Emily when she believes she meets and interacts with Mr. Darcy. It seeks to identify and analyze the combination of sensory perceptions involved in her hallucination, with a detailed understanding of how these different sensory modalities interact and contribute to her overall experience.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Hallucination

Hallucination is defined as a condition where individuals experience a sensory experience that allows them to view, catching a sound, detect a smell, detect flavour, and touch something that does not exist in the real world (Maijer et al., 2019). From this statement, it can be concluded that hallucination is subjective, which means that only individuals who experience hallucination experience it directly. Other people around them cannot feel or experience what the individual experiencing hallucination is experiencing.

B. Forms of Hallucination

In general, according to (Veague, 2007) the five most common forms of hallucination are:

1. Visual hallucination

A type hallucination that occurs when an individual is convinced that they are seeing something that cannot be seen by others. In this case, it can be seen that people who experience visual hallucination feel they can see hallucinatory objects which can be people, plants, places, animals, or light without the presence of the real object.

2. Auditory hallucination
A type hallucination that occurs when an individual hears sounds or voices that those nearby cannot hear. Auditory hallucination makes people who experience it feel like they can hear human voices, footsteps, or music.
3. Tactile hallucination
A type hallucination that occurs when a person feels sensations that they cannot explain. It makes the person who experience this type of hallucination feel like someone or something is touching or blowing their skin.
4. Olfactory hallucination
A type hallucination when an individual senses scents that are not detectable by those around them. Olfactory hallucination makes the person experiencing it feel that they are smelling either a foul odor or a pleasant odor.
5. Gustatory hallucination
A type hallucination that involves tasting flavors that others cannot perceive. This type of hallucination makes the person experiencing it feel the taste of food or other objects in their mouths.

C. Multimodal Hallucination

Hallucinations that engage multiple sensory modalities at the same time and seem to come from a single origin can be termed as multimodal hallucination (Dudley et al., 2023). This means that multimodal hallucination occurs when someone experiences several sensory experiences at the same time, so that they seem to come from the same object. For example, when someone experiences visual and auditory hallucination which enable the person to see the hallucinated object in the form of a human and hear voices at the same time, then the person experiencing the hallucination will feel that the hallucinated object in the form of a human is talking to them. This can make multimodal hallucination seem more real.

METHOD

In this research, the researcher uses psychological approach to gain deeper knowledge about the hallucination experiences by Emily in Alexandra Potter's *Me and Mr. Darcy*. As noted by Santos et al., psychology of literature involves examining psychological issues and character identifications found within literary works (Filbert & Prasaja, 2023). In this case, the researcher uses psychological approach to investigate and reveal more about the hallucination experienced by Emily using several theories related to hallucination obtained from many different sources.

The researcher employs qualitative techniques to analyze the data. Qualitative research aims to provide a deeper understanding of human issues by gathering data through personal narratives or experiences and then examining it in detail (Ahmad et al., 2019). In analyzing the data, the researcher will use simple words. This means that the qualitative method used in analyzing *Emily's Multimodal Hallucination in Alexandra Potter's Me and Mr. Darcy* will allow the researcher to be able to review explanations about Emily's Hallucination in more depth using simple words so that explanations of the data being reviewed will be easier to understand for the readers.

In this study, the researcher acts as the primary instrument, engaging in every step of the research process. In this research, data collection was carried out by reading carefully, thoroughly and repeatedly the data, namely Alexandra Potter's *Me and Mr. Darcy*, with the aim of gaining an understanding of the entire story in the novel. After reading the data

repeatedly, the next step is identifying the data by marking quotations that indicate the forms of Emily's hallucination. The data analysis procedure in this research starts by classifying data that has previously been collected based on the research question, namely the forms of Emily's hallucinations. The next step is the researcher will describe and explain the data that has been classified, and this step will contain a detailed and more in-depth explanation of the analysis findings. Lastly, the researcher will summarize the findings from the analysis.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Emily's Life Background

The main character in this novel is Emily Albright. She is twenty-nine years old and lives in New York City, United States. Emily fulfills her needs by working as a manager in a bookstore. As it is stated in the following quotation "In the next morning and I'm at work at McKenzie's, a small family owned bookstore, where I'm the manager." (Potter, 2007, p. 4), it shows that Emily works in a small bookstore owned and managed by the Mckenzie family. As the name of the shop, this bookstore is owned by Mr. Mckenzie and her wife. Mckenzie's bookstore is located in SoHo (South of Houston Street), a place in Lower Manhattan, New York City. In that place, Emily holds the position of a manager in the bookstore who is fully responsible for supervising and handling the bookstore's operations, from overseeing inventory and book sales, and serving customers, to managing employees. In other words, Emily is responsible for ensuring that all book sales activities and processes run well.

After Emily experiences four consecutive failures in her romantic relationships with Bart, Aaron, Daniel, and John, Emily finally gives up and decides not to date anyone again. Emily regrets that all the men in modern times that she has dated have attitudes and manners that are very different from how men are describes in the novels she reads as almost perfect in both looks and behavior. Emily decides to just admire Mr. Darcy in the novel *Pride and Prejudice* because the character Mr. Darcy truly reflects the man of her dreams. Emily also does this as a form of disappointment and distrust of men in the modern world which too is free, wild, and has no rules. As it is stated in the following quotation:

"Why aren't men today like the men in books? I continue, unpacking a pile of classics. 'Seriously, Stella, I've had enough of modern-day love,' I say firmly. 'And I'm sick of the modern-day men. From now on I'm going to stick with the men in here.' I pause over a copy of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, fingering the cover affectionally. 'Just imagine being in a world where men didn't steal your cab, cheat on you or have an addiction to Internet porn, but were chivalrous, devoted honourable. And strode across fields in breeches and white shirts clinging to their chests... Yum...'" (Potter, 2007, p. 8)

Emily feels disappointed because her expectations of having a good partner and a romantic relationship are dashed by the reality that Emily is dating men who she thinks does not meet her expectations. This makes Emily imagine what it would be like if she managed to find and date someone who met her expectations, this will make Emily very happy. In the quotation above, it can be concluded that the traumatic experience of dating

men makes Emily tired of being in a romantic relationship again. Emily thinks that it is very difficult for her to find a good man in this modern era.

B. The Forms of Emily's Hallucination

Hallucination is a condition that makes a person feel that they are experiencing a sensory experience that allows them to see (visual), hear (auditory), smell (olfactory), taste (gustatory), and feel (tactile) something that does not exist in the real world. Emily experiences a type of multimodal hallucination because the hallucination she experienced is a combination of several types of hallucinations, namely visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory and gustatory. This combination of several types of hallucinations makes Emily feel that she can see, hear, feel touch, smell aromas, and taste the taste of food which she believes comes from the object of her hallucination, Mr. Darcy. The combination of several types of hallucinations experienced by Emily is explained in detail as follows:

1. Visual Hallucination (Sight)

Visual hallucination allows the sufferer to experience a sensory experience of vision, it means that the person experiencing this hallucination feels like they can see an object that is not there. Emily experiences visual hallucination during her first meeting with Mr. Darcy which makes her feel that she can see the physical appearance of Mr. Darcy. Emily first experiences hallucinations while she is touring Chawton Manor, England in December. Emily, who previously fell asleep on a table in one of the rooms at Chawton Manor due to fatigue and jet lag, remembers that she has just arrived in England, a few moments later, she is suddenly awakened by a man who suddenly appears out of nowhere. As it is stated in the following quotation:

“I open my eyes to see a man over by the fireplace. Tall and board, he has thick black hair curling over his collar and dark eyebrows that look like two smudges of charcoal. They're pitched together in curiosity. ‘Hello, can I help you?’ he says.” (Potter, 2007, p. 69)

Chawton Manor is one of the houses where Jane Austen lived. This house is a silent witness when Jane Austen wrote her books. Emily first meets Mr. Darcy in one of the rooms of the house. Emily, who is asleep on one of the benches, is woken up by Mr. Darcy who appears suddenly. The man offers to help because he is confused to see Emily in the room alone and has fallen asleep on the table. In this quotation, it can be seen that Emily can see the physical characteristics of Mr. Darcy whom she describes as a tall, sturdy man, with thick black hair and thick eyebrows.

According to the explanation in the theoretical review, visual hallucination occurs when an individual believes they are seeing something that is not visible to others. Here, not being visible to others can mean that the experience of visual hallucinations is only experienced by the sufferer. The object of Emily's visual hallucinations at her first meeting with Mr. Darcy is the physical form of the man. This visual hallucination allows Emily to see in detail the physical characteristics, clothing, accessories, and movements made by Mr. Darcy.

2. Auditory Hallucination (Sound)

Emily experiences auditory hallucinations in her first experience meeting Mr. Darcy that makes her feel that she can hear the voice of Mr. Darcy. Emily first experiences auditory

hallucination while she is touring Chawton Manor, England, in December. Emily, who previously fell asleep on a table in one of the rooms at Chawton Manor due to fatigue and jet lag, remembers that she has just arrived in England. A few moments later, she is suddenly awakened by the sound of a man's cough. As it is stated in the quotation "'Ahem.' I must have dropped out, because the next thing I'm jolted awake by someone coughing." (Potter, 2007, p. 69), Emily suddenly wakes up from her sleep because she is shocked when she suddenly hears the sound of a man coughing. The man offers help to Emily, as it is stated in the quotation "Hello, can I help you?" (Potter, 2007, p. 69). The man offers to help because he is confused to see Emily in the room alone and has fallen asleep on the table. The quotes indicate that Emily can hear Mr Darcy coughing and speaking.

Emily cannot believe it when the man introduces himself as Mr. Darcy, she thinks that this man is just an ordinary person who claims himself to be Mr. Darcy. On the other hand, Mr. Darcy also cannot believe it when Emily says she is from New York. As it is stated in the following quotation:

“Your accent, where is it from? he’s asking now. ‘I have been trying to place it, but-’
 ‘New York,’ I blurt, breaking his gaze and looking away. He’s making me all jittery.
 ‘New York?’ His expression is one of astonishment. ‘You are from America?’
 Just the way he speaks is adorable. He has that lovely deep voice and the sexiest English accent.” (Potter, 2007, p. 76)

Initially, Mr. Darcy feels strange when he hears Emily's unfamiliar accent. However, when Emily says that she is from New York, Mr. Darcy is surprised because Emily turns out to be from America, a place he thinks very far from England. The quotation shows that Emily can hear Mr. Darcy's deep voice when he speaks using his British accent.

According to the explanation in the theoretical review, auditory hallucination occurs when someone hears sounds or voices that others around them cannot hear. Here, others around them cannot hear means that the experience of auditory hallucination is only experienced by the sufferer. In experiencing auditory hallucination, the object of Emily's auditory hallucinations at her first meeting with Mr. Darcy is the voice of Mr. Darcy which makes her feel that she was chatting with the man. This auditory hallucination allows Emily to hear that Mr. Darcy has a deep voice and speaks with a British accent.

3. Tactile Hallucination (Touch)

Emily first experiences tactile hallucination during her third meeting with Mr Darcy. The tactile hallucination that Emily experiences at this meeting makes her feel that she can touch and hold Mr. Darcy's hand. This is proven by the fact that Emily and Mr. Darcy touch and hold each other hands on the way to the lake. As it is stated in the following quotation:

“I feel the warmth of his body against my arm. It still doesn’t make sense. Mr. Darcy isn’t supposed to be real. And yet... Without even glancing down at me, he seems to sense me looking at him and wordlessly places his free hand reassuring across mine. And yet, the funny thing is, Mr. Darcy feels more real to me than any of the men I’ve been on first dates with.” (Potter, 2007, p. 155)

In this quotation, it is noticeable that Emily and Mr. Darcy have made physical contact. As they walk hand in hand towards the lake, Emily's arm is pressed against Mr. Darcy, and the man decides to hold Emily's hand which makes Emily feel warm. Emily thinks that Mr. Darcy feels very real, even more real than all the men she has ever dated because she can feel the touch of Mr. Darcy, which makes part of Emily convinced that the man beside her is truly Mr. Darcy. The quotation indicates that Emily can feel Mr. Darcy holding her hand.

According to the explanation in the theoretical review, tactile hallucination occurs when a person feels sensations that they cannot explain. Here, the sentence 'feels sensations that they cannot explain' can be interpreted that these physical sensations do not exist and cannot be explained logically. In experiencing tactile hallucinations, the object of Emily's tactile hallucinations during her third meeting with Mr. Darcy is in the form of physical contact with Mr. Darcy who makes her feel that she can feel the touch, hold hands, and feel her body bumping into Mr. Darcy. In this case, it can be seen that the tactile hallucinatory touch sensations experiences by Emily are not logical because these tactile sensations come from Mr. Darcy and the things he brings, where Mr. Darcy himself is a fictional character who does not exist in the real world.

4. Olfactory Hallucination (Smell)

Emily first experiences olfactory hallucination on her fourth meeting with Mr. Darcy. The olfactory hallucination that Emily experiences at this meeting makes her feel that she can smell the perfume that she believes came from Mr. Darcy. When Emily and Mr. Darcy arrive at Sham Castle, she is amazed by the view of Sham Castle which she thinks is very beautiful. The atmosphere at Sham Castle is very romantic because there is only her, Mr. Darcy, the horses, and accompanied by the stunning view of Sham Castle. Emily can smell the perfume when Mr. Darcy moves closer to her. As it is stated in the quotation, "I can feel his warm breath close against my neck. Smell his cologne. Feel his lips..." (Potter, 2007, p. 222). On this date, when Mr. Darcy draws closer to Emily, her heart beats fast because she expects that Mr. Darcy will kiss her. The two of them are so close, that Emily can feel Mr. Darcy's breath touches the skin of her neck and she can smell Mr. Darcy's fragrance. The quotation indicates that Emily can smell perfume which she believes comes from Mr. Darcy when the man approaches her.

According to the explanation in the theoretical review, olfactory hallucination involves smelling odors that others cannot detect. Here, the words 'others cannot detect' can be interpreted that the aroma is an incorrect sensory experience, where the aroma does not exist in the surrounding environment. The object of Emily's olfactory hallucination in her fourth meeting with Mr. Darcy is the smells of perfume which she believes comes from Mr. Darcy. At the fourth meeting, Emily feels that she can smell the perfume when Mr. Darcy draws closer to her. In this case, it can be seen that the olfactory hallucinatory smell sensation experienced by Emily is an incorrect sensory experience because she thinks that the aroma comes from Mr. Darcy, where Mr. Darcy himself is a fictional character who does not and never exist in the real world.

5. Gustatory Hallucination (Taste)

Emily only experiences gustatory hallucination on her fifth meeting with Mr. Darcy. The gustatory hallucination that Emily experiences at this meeting makes her feel that she can taste the food brought by Mr. Darcy. This hallucination occurs when Emily is at Sham Castle. Emily realizes that Mr. Darcy carries a picnic basket on the back of the horse he

is riding. The picnic hamper contains quite complete picnic equipment. In the picnic hamper, Mr. Darcy has several types of bread, fruit, cheese, meat, and wine to fill their stomachs and accompany their conversation. Emily is amazed when she sees Mr. Darcy opens his belongings and begins arranging them one by one on a thick blanket. After it is neatly arranged, the two of them start eating the dish. This is proven by the quotation, “‘Why, thank you.’ I smile, popping a grape in my mouth. Mmm, yummy. Hungrily biting into the cheese and bread, I glance across at Mr. Darcy.” (Potter, 2007, p. 263). Emily feels strange seeing Mr. Darcy arranging the grapes neatly on a plate, thinking that they will end up eating the grapes anyway. The quotation indicates that Emily can taste the wine, cheese, and bread that Mr. Darcy has brought.

At this meeting, the tactile hallucination that Emily experiences also makes her feel that she can taste the drink that Mr. Darcy brings. This hallucinatory experience occurs when Emily is enjoying spending time and chatting with Mr. Darcy at Sham Castle, Emily drinks the wine brought by Mr. Darcy. This is proven by the quotation, “‘But, no, I can't.' Having blocked it out this whole time, I suddenly felt the familiar ache of worry. Taking a gulp of wine, I stare into my wine glass.” (Potter, 2007, p. 265). Emily takes a sip of the wine while they are talking about Emily's possibility of extending her stay, Emily says that she can't stay in England any longer considering that Mr. Mckenzie, the owner of the bookstore where she works, is sick. Emily thinks that if she extends her stay in England, then no one will be able to take care of the bookstore. The quotation indicates that Emily can feel herself drinking the wine brought by Mr. Darcy.

Based on the evidence above, it can be concluded that the type of hallucination that Emily experienced is multimodal hallucination. Multimodal hallucination involves multiple sensory modalities happening at the same time, all seeming to come from a single source. Emily experiences a combination of visual and auditory hallucinations during her first encounter with Mr. Darcy. The combination of these two hallucinations that occur at the same time allows Emily to see physical forms and hear voices that she believes came from the same source, namely Mr. Darcy. At the third meeting, Emily experiences a combination of visual, auditory, and tactile hallucinations. The combination of these three hallucinations that occur at the same time makes Emily able to see physical forms, hear voices, and feel touches that seemed to come from Mr. Darcy. At the fourth meeting, Emily experiences a combination of visual, auditory, tactile, and olfactory hallucinations at the same time. The combination of these four hallucinations allows Emily to see physical forms, hear voices, feel touch, and smell aromas that seem to come from Mr. Darcy. Apart from that, the combination of these hallucinations also makes Emily able to see physical forms, hear a neigh, and feel that Emily can touch Lightning, Mr. Darcy's horse. At the fifth meeting, Emily experiences a combination of visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory, and gustatory hallucinations at the same time. The combination of these hallucinations makes Emily able to see physical forms, hear voices, feel touch, smell aromas that seem to come from Mr. Darcy. Apart from that, Emily also feels that she can see the physical form and feel the taste of the food that Mr. Darcy has brought.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the analysis reveals that Emily experiences hallucination. The hallucination that Emily experiences allows her to interact with Mr. Darcy, a fictional character in the novel she reads. The type of hallucination that Emily experiences is a multimodal hallucination which is a combination of visual, auditory, tactile, gustatory, and olfactory

hallucinations. The combination of these hallucinations makes Emily feels that she can see, hear, feel the touch, smell the aroma, and feel the taste of food that she believes come from the food that Mr. Darcy brings. The combination of these hallucinations makes Emily's hallucinatory experience feels very real because it involves many sensory experiences at the same time.

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