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**A STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE SHORT STORY "THE VARIANT" BY
TANZEELA K.HASSAN**

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Abstract

Tanzeela K. Hassan is considered one the most splendid Pakistani English writers due to her novel and short stories, "The Variant" is one of her magnificent literary pieces. She has used different modern techniques and devices to portray the hidden feelings and inner thoughts of her characters. This article is focused to describe the basic elements of the style that is used in "The Variant" short story by following the method of literary stylists Leech and Short (2007). The analysis is divided into four basic linguistic levels or categories of the text: Lexical levels,

grammatical levels, figures of speech, and cohesion and context. Features of parallelism, alliteration, and assonance are also discussed in this article.

1. Introduction

The actual purpose of this article is to find out and enhance the importance of using the particular choices that the author has used to convey specific meaning through their writings. "The Variant" Short story by Tanzeela K.Hassan has been selected for the purpose to make a stylistic analysis. Tanzeela K.Hassan is a Pakistani short story writer and novelist. Her novel "The Hunger" successfully grab the attention of the readers. But the actual purpose of this article is not to explore or depict the characteristics of the writer's peculiar writing style, but the major target of the paper is to investigate or explore the artistic effect of the story and how the author has achieved her target to convey her theme successfully by adopting and describing things through her particular choice of language.

2. The aim of the paper

This paper has three major aims;

- 1: To promote the work of Pakistani writers and literature.
- 2: To analyze the literary text of the short story stylistically.
- 3: To conclude the study and draw some results.

3. Research Questions

The following three research questions are covered in this study:

- 1: What are the significant stylistic features that are illustrated by the author in the given short story?
- 2: What are the actual function of the stylistic items that are utilized by the author in the story?
- 3: In what sense the author has achieved her target to convey her theme successfully by adopting and describing things through her particular choice of language?

4. Theoretical framework

The study involved the stylistic analysis of the text to get meaning from the writer's selection of words and language. The heuristic checklist of linguistic and stylistic categories that were presented by Leech and Short (2007) has been followed for a related study. According to the checklist, there are four levels for analyzing the linguistic data in any given text. These levels include lexical categories, grammatical categories, figures of speech, context, and cohesion. The lexical scheme searched in the form of parallelism, anaphora, and lexical repetitions.

5. What is Stylistics?

Different linguists and statisticians have defined stylistics in their ways. So we can find several definitions of stylistics. The identification of patterns of usage in speech and writing in linguistics is called stylistic analysis, according to Simpson (2004). Hough's (1969) views about stylistics are vast because he thinks that the field of stylistic is just a broader area related to the study of language and literature. Windows (1975:3) defines stylistic as "The study of literary discourse from linguistic orientation." Style concerns how can an author use distinctive linguistic expressions, and stylistic also concerns with distinctive linguistic expressions so it has been defined as "The analysis of distinctive expression in language and the description of its purpose and effect." (Verdonk, 2002:4). The identification and classification of the elements that are used in a language, is only the main purpose of close analysis in linguistics. The adjustment of understanding, exegeses, and interpretation, is the main purpose of literary studies. Sound, form,

structure, and meaning of the text are considering the four traditional levels of linguistic description that must be followed in any full stylistic analysis. The study of Stylistics encourages logical thought and opens different ways for other areas of academic studies, for example, the teaching of foreign language and literature. Crystal and Davy (1969:8) beautifully explain the difference between style and stylistics. According to them, Stylistics is an important part of linguistics that is describing problems of clarification, highlighting where the basis of vagueness lies or exists. And style deals with the effectiveness of a mood of expression.

Stylistic Analysis

Stylistics is a thoughtful, inquisitive, and interesting study, in which linguistic choices are applied in speech and writing. Speaker's and writer's Phonological, geographical, morphological, and syntactic choices are analyzed in this branch of linguistics. The concept of stylistic doesn't take interest in any specific linguistic item but considers every issue as important to be discussed as specially related to deviation and deducing meaning, which may be translated or interpreted with the help of stylistician's excellence. Journalism, advertising, and literary texts and also in linguistics, stylistic can be applied because in any area stylistics does not function on its own. A little attempt to establish stylistic principles as a conceptual discipline for the purpose of

explaining particular individual choices that are used in their languages. In different areas of stylistics, these principles can be implemented such as discourse analysis of pragmatics as well as in literary criticism. There are some common features of style in which include the use of dialogue, different accents, and idiolects, the use of particular registers, active and passive voice observation, and proper distribution of a sentence in lengths and many more areas. In the end, stylistics observes the language issues and illustrates what is going on within the language; and what kind of associations are present, and there are many linguistic issues that the style of a language gradually reveals.

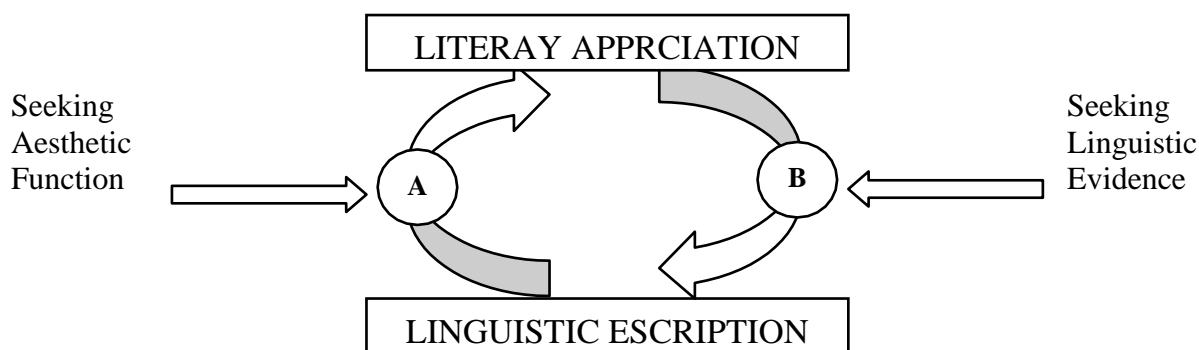
Stylistical Analysis as a critical School

According to a common point of view about a literary text, it is more convincing and understandable if it is observed or studied by making a comparison with stylistic analysis because it highlights the importance of different difficult linguistic codes that are playing a very important role in the construction and enhancement of the literary criticism. One of the text linguists M.A.K. Halliday considered that grammar works like a connecting system or a network that is applied on all semantically related different language choices, and that is considered the actual point of the stylistic analysis. Halliday (1970) defines in his *Linguistic Function and Literary style*, presents a functional theory of language, in which he explains three significant functions, such as "ideational", "interpersonal" and "textual". He makes an analysis on one of William Golding's novels language, and the name of the novel is "The Inheritors"; he successfully applied the ideational function of language and explored it stylistically. "His analysis is revealing in the way it relates precise linguistic observation to literary effect" (Leech & Short, 2001:31), or in another, to the theme of the whole novel: "the linguistic pattern of choices realize a primitive pattern of cognition, which in turns is the key to the tragic vision of the novel." (Leech & Short, 2001:32)

Halliday is widely considered as a harbinger of functional stylistics, the renowned German linguist - critic Leo Spitzer (1887-1960), is titled as a father of literary stylistics. According to his point of view, the smallest detail or a unit of a language is very important because it opens the "soul" of a literary work; he successfully achieved his task by providing a hard - and- fast technology for stylistic analysis.

In this regard, we frequently ask one question, "At which end do we start, the aesthetic or the linguistic?" According to the image that was used by Spitzer of a "philological circle," the understanding circle but looks without a logical starting point. Spitzer contends that the errand of Linguistic-abstract clarification continued by the development to and fro from semantic subtleties to the scholarly "focus" of a work or an essayist's specialty. There is a cyclic movement whereby etymological perception invigorates or adjusts artistic knowledge, and whereby scholarly understanding in its turn animates further etymological perception. (Shen Dan. 1998: 78)

Figure No 1



In analyzing the literary text, Halliday and Spitzer may use different approaches, but both of them carried out stylistic studies, however, in the case of the plausibility of the action, it provides solid evidence. This article focuses on the study of Pragmatic analysis as used in "The Variant" and trying to relate it with its theme and artistic effect.

Leech and Short's Approach

The real goal of the literary stylistic is to explain the actual relationship between language and artistic function. Like many others, Spitzer also seemed incompetent, when they faced a challenge to present a satisfactory and authentic methodology for prose style analysis.

How often, with all the theoretical experience of the method accumulated in me over the years, have I stared blankly, quite similar to one of my beginning students, at a page that would not yield its magic. The only way out of this state of unproductively is to read and reread. (Leech & Short, 2001: 3)

Two great text linguists took step bravery, named: Geoffrey N. Leech and Michael H. Short. In 1981, they both made a combined effort and published *Style in Fiction: A linguistic Introduction to English Fictional Prose*, later this book has become a part of the text course book for the students of English language and literature. This book is to be considered something unique because it gives importance to the work which earlier studies have failed to explain appropriately. In which, they both present a "theory " or a "model" for prose style, and also explain informal classificational tools or features of style that help in analyzing any kind of text. Leech and Short also presented a checklist for stylistic analysis; with the help of this checklist, it would become easier to gather relevant information and stylistically correct collection of data. These categories came under four general categories: lexical categories, grammatical categories, figures of speech, cohesion, and context.

Apart from, Leech & Short themselves, others have to accept the imperfectness of this entire model, for "these are attempts to give shape and system to a field of study in which much remain unclear, and hidden beneath the threshold of observation." (Leech & Short, 2001:33) Furthermore, they recommended to their readers that the understanding and comprehension of the relational study between linguistic form and literary function cannot be minimized through mechanical objectivity.

That's why, for the purpose to promote and notify the most significant linguistic features in the story "The Variant," the essential requirements are to be adopted from the above model, and the most suitable approach can be applied for analyzing the literary text.

6. A Stylistic Analysis of "The Variant"

A General overview of the story

Tanzeela k. Hassan is a Pakistani novelist and short story writer. Her short story "The Variant" is an interesting story about a brave girl. Ayman is a strong character. She is a woman who faces a journey into the unknown that would daunt many men. Tanzeela conveyed the message of empowerment of women via an interesting fiction piece. How beautifully Tanzeela has created the atmosphere in this story that makes it unique and impressive. The two different settings metaphysical as well as fantastical elements are described perfectly. The present study is the analysis of this short story set in different dimensions. Keeping the discourse factors in view, the present study aims at the stylistic study of Aymun's character, and the whole story as well.

Grammatical and lexical schemes

Parallelism and anaphora

Where many consecutive clauses and sentences start with the same word or clause then parallelism and anaphora occur.

"Dear, **it's** not about weakness; **it's** about your place in the world. **It's** what you are here for
When I ask you a question, **I** expect an answer. **It's** not about weakness; **it's** about your place.
Who washes the dishes and keeps the house clean?

Her upper half was near-human, and **her lower half was** that of a mountain goat.

It was not just any **day**, but her sixteenth **birthday**.

The table with a **thundering** crash, **the** sound of the dishes **smashing** on the floor echoed around the small kitchen.

Dear, **it's not about** weakness; but your place in this world. **It's** what you are here for.

"**Her mother** shot up from **her** seat **eager** to calm **her daughter**.

I'm not a simple **girl!** I will show you, **I'm not** this ordinary **girl**.

I'm going up there; **I'm as** strong **as** my brothers.

They had left the valley; **they had** never been there.

She slipped twice, and when **she** was about to take **her** last step, her foot **tripped over**,

The back of **her** head hit something hard.

She gasped, gathering her courage; **she climbed** to the top of the cliff. Nervous as **she** was, **she** reminded herself.

The air was thick, and **the smell was** enchanting.

The clapping - sound of a horse **rushing-** towards her, **pervading -the air and shattering- the** stillness.

Everything- was monochrome. **The trees, the ground; everything.**

"**It's not about what I want-** from you, it never was. **It's about what you**

want- from yourself."

A couch, a table in the center, a fireplace, and a small bookshelf.

Repetition

In a particular text, the repetition of certain phrases, clauses, and words is called Repetition. The writer has used this device for repeating different words and clauses as well as nouns and verbs to emphasize certain things and situations and has tried to catch the attention of the readers. For example:

I am not weak.

They are my brothers.

No Mama

I'm not this ordinary girl.

Both of her brothers

I can do this, I'm sixteen

Your brothers

Creatures

Monsters

Bazorans

Wazorans

Red gem

Hologram

Metazzoric Dimensional world and many more.

Above all these, The writer has used some other repeated devices. These are;

Rhetoric questions

The central characters of the story also used a technique of rhetoric questioning, which is an important element of a speech.

Examples:

"Who are you? Where are you taking me?"

"That's confusing. I don't understand. How come they know nothing about me?"

Apostrophes

The central character has also made a successive use of apostrophes.

"No Mama, I'm not a simple girl!"

I'm their sister!

"So you want a fight!"

"Open your eyes, dammit!"

Figures of Speech

Phonological Schemes 1:

Alliteration

The earliest repeated sound of the consonant in closely related words is called alliteration.

Throughout the story, the writer has used a number of alliterated sounds.

The sweet smell of water mixing with soil.

The **T**able with a **T**hundering.
Though it was the first **T**ime.
Picking her **P**late...

She **t**hrew **i**t **a**t **t**he **w**all.
They **c**ould **b**e **i**n **T**rouble.
The valley was the safest place to live in.

2: Assonance

The equally repeating sound of a vowel in nearly uttering words is called assonance. Some examples of assonance found in this short story are:

You're the sister.

She walked forward yet.

Hey, I asked you something.

What do you want from me?"

"Suit yourself, there's noway back until you come in,"

She turned around and started closing the gate.

3: Consonance

The repeating sounds of 's', 't', and 'd' are used in Consonance. Some examples from the story are:

She had been trying to get out of the cage for a long time.

Maybe this lock is different.

She rushed out of the big door.

3: Rhyme

The repeated similar or exact same sounds specifically in the ending stressed syllables that usually consist of two or more words. Such rhyming devices enhance the beauty of the writer's peculiar styles especially in poems and songs.

Tanzeela K. Hassan's has beautifully used the rhyming technique in her story. Such poetic lines increase the artistic effect of the story:

"Over the hills and far away,

He **s**wore **t**hat **h**e'd **r**eturn **o**ne **d**ay.

Back to The mountains and the seas,

But **i**n **h**er **a**rms, **h**e **j**ust **c**an't **b**e

over the hills and far away."

Similes and Metaphors

Another significant quality of Tanzeela K.Hassan's writing style, that is revealed after reading her story "The Variant" is her ability to use different figurative languages specially metaphors, similes and personification. Some examples are;

The air was **thick** and the smell was enchanting. **Metaphor**

The **black horse-like** creature sprang the sky. **Simile**

Everything was **monochrome**. **Metaphor**

She looked **like a ghost**. **Simile**

The books being different, **like vintage collection**. **Simile**

Which looked **like an unusual sign** language to her? **Simile**

"How can it be? Did I **time travel**?" **Metaphor**

Like in your brothers' case they are half human." **Simile**

"Oh, I get it, **like a werewolf.**" **Simile**

7. Findings

The writer is fully aware of how to use different literary devices making her theme clearer and more fanciful. The story is rich in different stylistic elements such as some repeated sounds used in a story. The writer has used various sound devices in a unified way. The selection of these words which carried out the effect of different sound devices and their organization in a single stretch sentence, the writer is fully blessed in using this technique. For example,

"She looked around at the hallway, carpeted with an indigo material that had elaborated golden design, draped with tapestries and dark fabrics, making the whole place look regal."

In the given sentence, there is a repetition of the initial consonant sound, and "t" is draped and dark and that and tapestries. Then there is a repetition of the "ed" sound in looked, carpeted, elaborated, and draped. The repetition of "d" sound there is not ignorable, such as looked, round, carpeted, indigo, design, draped, golden, had, and in dark. In the researcher's point of view, in the mentioning sentence, the writer has applied the techniques of alliteration, assonance, and consonance all at the same time.

8. Discussion

When talking about the story, two levels of meaning are applied in this story. At one level, there is a sixteen-year girl named Ayman who is addressing her family members and other metaphysical characters one-by-one during her mysterious journey to find her brothers and return them home. At a deeper level, the story highlights the importance of women's empowerment and gender equality in all situations, in a metaphorical way. The other characters of the story are introduced to us by the author slowly through the character Ayman's step-by-step journey that proceeds from one world to another. After using this technique used by the author, the readers are emotionally attached with a sense of curiosity. Their intensity level is increased, when she fought a battle with her brothers after they became wild. The element of suspense remained till the end, when she woke up, finally, from a whole year-long coma. Likewise, regarding the protagonist character, the readers remained in doubt either she was dreaming or experience all horrible incidents after reaching the magical world with the name of Metazoric Dimensional World.

9. Conclusion

After discussing all the elements above in the story "The Variant," the researcher easily concludes that the writing style of the writer is something unique or distinctive. In the story "The Variant," the writer has used exclamations and different rhetorical questions, and sometimes it has created a form of an address. It is delivered by a sixteen-year-old girl Ayman, though the applied language by her is not befitting a sixteen-year-old girl because it is very significant, powerful, and revealing. The use of stylistic devices such as rhymes, assonance, alliteration, and anaphorical parallelism has created the effect of musical composition with a sound as progressive as a march. In the title of the story "The Variant", the writer has used a metaphor by creating the concept of a woman's empowerment and her mysterious journey and all the battles that she suffered describing the different phases and troubles of a woman's life in an allegorical sense.

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