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Beyond the Words of a poem: Uncovering the Depths of 'A Short Long Trip' from Stylistics Perspective



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Abstract

The study circles the poem 'A Short Long Trip' pen crafted by Hassin ur Rehman for its stylistic analysis. The researcher applies the Leech and Short Model (2007) to discover the role of figurative language in conveying deeper and hidden meanings for enhancing the poetic imagery in the poem. The poem conveys a diverse aspects of figurative language including metaphor, imagery, hyperbole, personification, and symbolism. The title conveys the meaning of irregularity and no continuity of the events of life. The words 'pure land' and dreamland' showcase the meaning of mental satisfaction and peace in a fantasy like place. The poem further leads towards the actual meaning of life through the constant and persistent struggles of life such as challenges, hardships, and obstacles. The poem also presents the meaning of helplessness and uselessness of human struggles and hardship through the hands of fate, but, sometimes, these struggles and helplessness give aspiration and motivation to survive mentally and physically. The overall result of the poem offers an optimistic attitude towards mental and physical strength and happiness. The researcher analyzes other research articles and books to support the topic under study.

Keywords: A short Long Trip: Stylistic Analysis: Leech and Short Model

Introduction

The most popular genre among literary readers is considered to be poetry, as it paves the path for the smooth flow of emotions. Native speakers of the English language have crafted millions of poems incorporating their various styles (Jackson, 2024). Ironically, the non-native speakers of English gave preference to English over their native language by selecting it as the medium to reflect their ideas. To examine how English poetry overpowered every other

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language, let's first dissect the reasons resulting in its popularity. In the early ages, English poetry emerged from Britain, making it a hub for English poets (Turville-Petre, 2020). Soon after the Second World War, this recognition shifted to America, making it its new residence, characterized by modern poetry. In post-1945 conditions, American universities yielded academic poetry of high and great polish. After this, the circle of English poetry widened when the Commonwealth countries, including Australia, Canada, New Zealand, West Indies, India and Pakistan gave birth to prominent English poets who used this genre to display their verse. Meanwhile, Persian was replaced by English in the subcontinent, which was used as a lingua franca. After the division of India, when powers were handed over to Congress and the Muslim League, the majority of Muslims migrated to Pakistan, bringing their literary heritage with them. Some of the artists who moved to England after separation also made progress in English poetry, despite it being their second language. Zulfiqar Ghose is one of their prominent names who composed many poems while living in Britain however he later moved to America. He is recognized as a Pakistani English poet due to his tie with Pakistan. Moreover, Kaleem Omer, Alamgir Hashmi, Maki Kureshi, Ghulam Ali Allana, Tariq Rehman, Taufiq Rafat, Adrian Husain, and Masood Amjad Ali are some great names of Pakistani English poets (Rahman, 2020).

The above information is telling the Pakistani writers writing in English while using figurative language in their literary works. They used figurative language to explore the hidden meanings of the texts. Taufiq Rafat is one of the giants writing in English in Pakistan. He used figurative language in his poems for the sake of hidden meanings (Younas, et., 2024). Similarly, Kamla Shamsie's writings also explore for the hidden meaning of her novel while using figurative language. This helps her to construct the novel and she also defines the role of language, sustaining social relationships, and cultural intimacy (UI

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Zafar, et al., 2022). Figurative language comes under the domain of stylistic where researchers used it to find out the hidden meaning of the text. Hidden meanings can be discovered through simile, personification, hyperbole, synecdoche, and paradox (Nosi, 2022). Leech and Short (2007) argued that the language used by the writer can help to identify the hidden meaning (purpose) of the text through figurative language.

The Poem

The poem was written in the first week of January 2021. The title has a unique relation to the poem. They travel all the way to Chitral just to spend a few days. The poet and his friends used to make a plan for travelling to Malakand and then Chitral. Before this plan, they made numerous plans to go outside Karachi and refresh their minds, but all of the plans vanished in thin air. One day, they started their journey without any plan. They reached Malakand which the poet called pure land and stayed there for a day and then left towards Chitral. While going to Chitral, they passed different mountain ranges to reach their destination.

After a full day's journey, they reached Chitral and spent a night there. The poet was very impressed by their culture and tradition. Suddenly, they made a plan to visit Bamborthe (Kylash) to observe the pure beauty of nature. They observe different artefacts and handmade crafts. The place is also famous for its grave which is called Madujawar. They celebrate the death for three days and then put the dead body in the coffin and put it above the land. Animals and birds come to eat the flesh. While observing this beautiful valley, the snow and strong wind started and they were forced to return. The poet says that when they were crossing the mountain range, they were not able to pass due to snow. They towed their vehicle for a distance and then rented a chain to support the tyre. After getting out of the mountain range, the chain monger was asking a high price for the chain. Somehow they gave

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them the rent and returned to their village. In the end, the poet says that though we have come back, but the place captured their souls and minds forever (Rehman, 2024).

The Poet

Hassin ur Rehman is a Pakistani short story writer and poet. His contributions not only in teaching but also in the field of research are remarkable. His various research articles have been published in International and National Journals. He has been working in the teaching field for more than 12 years. He is teaching English literature, Philosophy and Grammar in various Universities and colleges. Currently, he is presenting his services at Hamdard University in Karachi (Rehman, 2019).

Framework

The researcher selects the Leech and Short model as a framework for Hassin Ur Rehman's poem 'A Short Long Trip' (2021) to analyze the hidden meanings of the text while using the element of figurative language. There are four elements in this model; Lexical, Grammatical, Context and Cohesion and figure of Speech (Leech & Short, 2007).

Research Objective

□To explore the role of figurative language in conveying deeper and hidden meanings for enhancing the poetic imagery in the poem.

Research Question

1.What is the role of figurative language in conveying deeper and hidden meanings for enhancing the poetic imagery in the poem?

Literature Review

Exposition of the theory

In order to understand the significance of the writer's word choice and language, the research includes a stylistic analysis of the text. For a comparable investigation, the heuristic checklist of linguistic and stylistic categories was followed which was provided by Leech and Short (2007). The checklist states that there are four stages for the

analysis of linguistic information in a particular text. Some examples of these levels include, Lexical and grammatical categories, figures of speech, context, and cohesiveness. The searched scheme was lexical and some of its precedents are, anaphora, lexical repetitions, and parallelism.

Hidden Meanings Through Figurative Language

Nosi (2022) elaborates that figurative language assists to go beyond the literal or apparent meaning of the text. When the researcher discovers the aims of using figurative language, then they can also go for the underlying meanings of the text. Harya (2017) articulates that figurative language can easily lead towards the actual meaning of the text rather than the literal meanings. The researcher analyzed Paulo Coelho's *Alchemist* from the perspective of figurative language to get the underlying meaning of the novel. Wiranota and Arifin (2024) illustrate that Figurative language definitely provides the base for the meanings other than the apparent meanings of a text. They analyzed Frost's poem 'Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening' through figurative language to explore the hidden meanings of the poem.

Leech and Short's Approach

Leech and Short provided a stylistic analysis checklist. This checklist would make it simpler to collect data that is stylistically right and pertinent. The four general categories are lexical and grammatical categories, figures of speech, coherence, and context.

Figure 1: Model of analysis adopted by (Atu, 2022)

Figurative Language

Figurative language refers to the use of words or expressions in a non-literal sense to convey meanings beyond the surface level. It includes techniques like metaphor, simile, personification, hyperbole, and more. Symbolism

According to Khan et al., (2023) symbols are words, objects and events that represent meanings or ideas indirectly. Night is a word

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used by the poet to give its symbolic meaning of gloominess on account of fated doom in the poem "On Set". Moreover, the poem is rich of symbols and urges the readers to identify its core hidden meanings and may relate it accordingly (Latif et al., 2022).

Metaphor

A study conducted by Fajardo (2023) that a metaphor is employed to compare two things directly in order to create strong imagery and ideas to express in a more interesting way.

Simile

Saeed (2021) explains that a simile is a term used in literature to compare two things by using as and like. They are used not only to make writing more engaging but also to create vivid descriptions. Additionally, it is a figure of speech in a language that is utilized to empower the said words. 'Fixing poles like fates' is an example of a comparison of two objects using similes.

Personification

Saeed (2021) conducted a study of stylistic analysis of Rizwan Akhter's poems. Personification is one of the poetic devices used to give living things attribution to non-living things. It is crafted in text and utterance in such a way that the listeners and readers assume that is performed by human beings. 'The country is a blind bird' the country is a word that is attributed human quality of being blind.

Hyperbole

Hyperbolic is a common figurative language that is utilized in everyday conversation especially in literature to add more colour so as to make the language more effective and interesting (Hammad, 2022). Urooj (2023) stated in her study that the utility of hyperbolic statements emphasizes humor in a more dramatic way to express ideas beyond their literal meaning. Like 'The beads of candlewax' is used rampantly to emphasize non-literal meaning.

Enjambment

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Mehmood et al., (2021) had a study on stylistic analysis of Mending Wall by R.L Frost. He explained that enjambment is a literary device that is used where the meaning of a sentence continues to other stanzas or lines without punctuation to create sense. This application indicates that the poet is very rich in having plenty of ideas at the same time.

Repetition

This application of figure of speech in poetry highlights key themes, ideas and emotions of the poet to stress rhythm and effect using sounds, words and structural elements intentionally. Moreover, the utilization of repetition may vary according to the purpose of the poet of the context of the poem. Hashmi et al., (2019) had their study on stylistic analysis using the Leech and Short model on Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening. 'Miles to go before I Sleep' the mentioned verses is repeated twice in the poem to express the writer's obligation as the repetition creates a sense of reinforcement and urgency that the writer must complete his all tasks before he takes rest.

Poetic Imagery

According to Fajardo (2023), imagery is a poetic device that is employed to give descriptive language and sensory details to create a vivid picture in the minds of listeners and readers. This literary tool has many forms such as gustatory, kinesthetic, olfactory, organic and tactile. Khan, et al.,(2023) explain through 'A Nightingale' poem by Keats that the employment of imagery helps not only the poet's thought but also increases readers' understanding i.e. 'though of hemlock I had drunk.....' This line creates a vivid and captivating image of the poet's unhappy condition.

In agreement with the list given by Barry, the current study makes an attempt at linguistic analysis of a short poem, and its impact on the reader on account of the author's choices and its intended use. The

selected poem has not been yet analyzed from any research perspective and it was written in 2021 so it gives a vast area to explore. Therefore, the researcher has selected this poem to apply the Leech and Short model. A stylistic analysis of the aforementioned poem will be conducted by using Leech and Short model.

Methodology

The researcher has applied the model of Leech and Short to find out the hidden meaning of the text through textual analysis with the help of close reading.

Data Analysis

The title "A Short Long Trip" contains an oxymoron like 'short long'. It gives a sense of complexities and contradiction. It means that the journey is long, but the time is very short or in this short trip, the poet faces various obstacles, challenges, and issues. The title gives a unique experience to the readers including the aspect of contrast, complexities of human life experience, and contrast of the circumstances.

Metaphor

'We leave Karachi for pure land'

The utilization of metaphor is to compare two things directly as "Pure land" is a word used for comparison of a place with state of mind. The word 'pure land' may also be taken as a perfect utopian state in which all humans dwell with peace and harmony. The poet seems not to be happy and feeling good about the present situation which is why the poet wants to live in a world where all these would not be part of his utopian world. Similar characteristics have also been identified by (Fajardo 2023). It conveys a sense of aspiration and desire for a better place mentally and physically.

Metaphor

"Dream Land"

It is a metaphorical expression which associates and compares a place

to a dream, suggesting a fantastical, imaginary, or idealized location. This word implies that the poet wants to escape from the hardship, difficulties, and constraints of daily life into the world of fantasy and imagination where he may reside and explore his wishes freely without any restriction. A similar aspect has also been identified by (Fajardo 2023). The village has a unique landscape including mountains, rivers, fields, and waterfalls which offer a magical land that represents a sense of dream.

Allusion

"Dream Land" also has the sense to allude to the idea of a utopia, a peaceful, perfect or idyllic place, which is a common concept in literature and culture. The place has spectacular sights that mesmerize to compel the writer in their spell which he denotes it a dream land. Simply, the place was so beautiful and attractive to spellbound the writer; therefore, the writer compares it with a dreamland.

Enjambment

Where the meaning of a sentence continues to other stanzas or lines without punctuation to create sense. The usage of enjambment may indicate that the poet is very rushed to pen craft his ideas and thoughts in such a way that he has forgotten to use punctuation or pause. It is the extension of a thought to the next line of verse without any pause. Mehmood (2021) has also identified the same aspect in his study. The poet uses enjambment to tell that there is no break in the struggle from the beginning till the end of the journey as in a few lines there is no pause (punctuation) which presents the continuity of experience, enjoyment and struggle.

Personification

'That is the fate of our hand'

Here "fate of our hand" gives fate control like humans. Through personification, the poet evokes the clear picture imaginatively that fascinates the readers' attention and brings the text to life. The

aforementioned personified statement presents to imbue giving the attribution of human 'fate' to non-human characteristics of 'our hand' that indicates the sense of destiny is in our hand though it is not. Saeed (2021) has also discussed a similar feature. It emphasizes the sense that the idea our choices and actions shape our fate and destiny.

Personification

"The land captures our soul and brain"

The land has a power control like humans. The poet portrays personification as an influential and active force in the human being's life as the land is so fascinating to capture spiritual dimensions and deeper psychological and physical aspects of human beings. Saeed (2021) has also discussed a similar feature. It gives the idea that the journey has a profound impact on the traveller, shaping their thoughts and emotions.

Imagery

'The valley is vast and splendid

the snow is everywhere at the top of the mountain'

The visual imagery, in the aforementioned verses, begets an evocative mental picture of a 'vast valley' along with the word 'splendid' that represents beauty. To add some more ice to the cake, a snow-covered up-mountain depicts a spectacular arena in the minds of readers and listeners. A similar aspect has been explored by (Khan et al., 2023). It creates vivid pictures in the reader's mind, inducing a sense of wonder and amazement.

Symbolism

Initially, the writer presents 'snow' for enjoyment and recreation in the poem whereas the later lines of the poem vouchsafe the symbol of hardship, obstacles, challenges, issues, or a test of endurance as a part of life as life is unpredictable and full of ups and downs. The poet may want to suggest that prepare for the worst and hope for the best. Latif et al ., (2023) have discussed the similar characteristic of his

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study. It gives the idea that the journey is not just physical, but also an emotional and spiritual test.

Symbolism

'Dream Land' is a symbol of hope, desires, imagination, and aspiration. The poet has created his utopian world in which all the desires and wishes are fulfilled without any suffering and restrictions and difficulties are resolved. Additionally, the state is full of happiness and felicities with love and tranquility. A similar feature has been addressed by (khan et al., 2023).

Hyperbole

Struggle, exhaustion, and pain are employed to highlight the problems someone is facing and induce strong emotional responses. By combining these words, the poet stresses the gravity of the situation and indicates the toughness of the individual enduring these hardships. Life is full of felicities and glooms, obstacles and easiness. The poet emphasizes the aforementioned issues during his journey making it easier for the readers and listeners to be determined and persistent in the face of adversity to be successful. A similar feature has been addressed by (khan et al., 2023). The aforementioned hyperbolic examples emphasize the challenges faced on the journey and the strength and resilience needed to overcome them.

Conclusion

Stylistic analysis offers an in-depth understanding of a literary text for its actual and unique meanings. Sometimes it provides a peculiar sense of atmosphere and the construction of vivid imagination. It is related to the complexity of life and human emotions. Stylistic assists in getting the idea of themes and authentic messages from the author's side. It gives a pathway to the readers to explore and discover the internal and external purposes of the text while contemplating the poem from a linguistic perspective. Usually, it suggests the richness and complexity of the text comparing life to its original manner.

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Similarly, the selected poem A Short Long Trip has alike perspectives on language. The title is contradictory as it explains short and long at the same time which means there is no continuity and rationale in the events in life. The poet utilizes metaphor to compare the place with a state of mind, a peaceful place, a utopia, and an idealized location. The poet further mentions enjambment for the reason that life has similar characteristics in regard to its struggles and continuity of issues. The usage of personification leads the readers towards the point where they cannot do anything with and in their lives. The employment of imagery marks the visualization of hardships, challenges, obstacles, and issues for getting prepared mentally for all kinds of situations. The writer symbolizes aspiration, imagination, and desires for the sake of physical and mental endurance. The use of hyperbole is for exhaustion and pain which diverts the attention of the readers towards the problem faced in life; therefore, all hyperbole helps to recognize these issues as exaggerated things nothing else. Conclusively, while using all these devices, the poet produces a masterpiece which is beautiful, and meaningful, inviting the reader to reflect on their own journey and the challenges they face. The purpose of using all these devices is to create a sense of rhythm and musicality, making the poem more engaging and memorable.

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Appendix A

A Short Long Trip

Written by: Hassin ur Rehman

It is better to go early

Than to make a plan

There are reasons for delaying

They made a definite plan

We make we cancel again

Again we make and stick to the plan

We leave Karachi for pure land

That is good for our mind and brain

We arrive early in the morning late

That is the fate of our hand

We visit our village dream land

Then to snow and mountain

We decide to check our strength

And courage from this far land

We pass the lower and upper mountain range

to find their culture, tradition and sand

suddenly there is a wish to see

the place where people made things by hand

the valley is vast and splendid

they are also famous for their grave land

the snow is everywhere at the top of the mountain

that takes our struggle, exhaustion and pain

we want to come back as soon as

the wind starts and snow touches the land

we also find difficulties to pass the mountain range

the tires slip and these want chains

we arrange the chains to cross the lane

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but we rent the chain and pay with lame
we want to do daring in our life
we face it without hesitation and blame
now we reach again but
the land captures of our soul and brain