

Stylistic Analysis of the Poem “Staff of Old Age” by Hafeez Jalandhari

Filza Batool¹ , Muhammad Arfan Lodhi² 

¹M.Phil Scholar, Department of English, NCBA&E University, Bahawalpur, Pakistan.

²Assistant Professor, Higher Education Department, Punjab, Pakistan.

Correspondence: samaritan_as@hotmail.com²

ABSTRACT

Aim of the Study: The study aims to highlight different literary aspects of the poem “Staff of Old Age” by Hafeez Jalandhari. Stylistic Analysis was conducted in order to analyze the text to identify the use of literary language and its impact on the reader. The poem is an illustration of Coming of Age and passing of Adolescence. The author warns the youth to refrain from frenzy and desires of life. He also requests them to make provisions for the life ahead as soon the light of worldly will fade away. The poem is an advice to the reader that life is like a journey which, will come to an end and the traveler will not know when the last stop is coming.

Methodology: The analysis of the poem is conducted by using qualitative research method. The data was collected and analyzed qualitatively. Critical case sampling technique was used to determine the sample of the text. Content-analytic framework was adopted from Leech & Short model (1981).

Findings: The findings of the research show that the poem is ironic because it points out the horrors of Old Age and what is the actual message of life, which people have forgotten. It is symbolic in nature as it compares old age to autumn season in which all the trees shed their leaves and all the plants become dead. He addresses the Youth to be prepared before the life ends and invest themselves for the betterment of others.

Conclusion: The results obtained from the study after conducting stylistic analysis of the poem highlight the symbolic view of life which should not be wasted in lustrous wants.

Keywords: Figure of Speech, Schemes and Tropes, Parallelism, Graphology, Cohesion.

Introduction

The impact of Urdu poetry is seen from the fact that artistic formation of *nazm*, harmonizes with the form. *Nazm* is traditionally viewed as inordinate part of Urdu poetry written in rhymed words and modern prose style. A Nazm by Hafeez Jalandhari follows a specific theme with each verse and sentence. The great Urdu poet Abu Al-Asr Hafeez Jalandhari, widely known for penning down National Anthem of Pakistan. His poetry has the essence of beauty that allows reader to express inner feelings (Hamariweb, 2023).

His contributions are immense in number for which he has been awarded with Hilal-e Imtiaz. His Poetry is unique as it is written in Urdu language having a melodious effect and rhythms of his songs a the poems usually deal with the themes of nature, religion, romance and nationalism which echoes South

Article History

Received:
April 16, 2023

Revised:
June 19, 2023

Accepted:
June 27, 2023

Published:
June 30, 2023

Asian voice (Pride of Pakistan, 2023). One of his known poem “Staff of an Old Age” is about passing of adult life into Old Age. Jalandhari’s unique poem has the essence nature with blend of South Asian culture depicted throughout the poem. The present study is conducted to analyze the text stylistically and find the linguistic essence in the poem. The poem is a translated version of Urdu in English. The English translated text is chosen for stylistic analysis. The aim of the study to create room for further analysis of the text and highlight the literary features as well as understand the deep meanings that reside with it.

Rational

This paper seeks to stylistically analyze the poem ‘Staff of an Old Age’ by Hafeez Jalandhari for the purpose of underlining literary aspect of the poem and what the linguistic components are in the poem that reflect the culture of sub continent. The purpose of the research is to highlight the use of language and style of the poet which adds beauty to the poem. Furthermore, the study is conducted to see particular features of the poem while comparing his poems to see the how it is distinctive from his other works.

Research Questions

1. What stylistic in the poetry “Staff of an old Age” by Hafeez Jalandhari?
2. How the poet has utilized foregrounding and poetic license in “Staff of Old Age”?
3. To what extent Hafeez Jalandhari’s other poems are different from “Staff of an Old Age”?

Significance of the Study

The aim of this study is to conduct in depth analysis of the poem “Staff of an Old Age” by Hafeez Jalandhari by performing stylistic analysis to find literary key terms and linguistic figures while discussing figurative language used by the writer. The analysis will offer other studies to be conducted related to this field. It will also pave way to have an insight of the language and meanings used in the poem

Literature Review

Stylistics is a sub discipline in linguistics, which is concerned with literary criticism. “Stylistics is the study of style of language” (Verdonk, 2002). In language, its function as interpreting various forms, structures and patterns. It is the study of style in language. According to Nordquist “stylistics emphasizes upon the figures, tropes, schemes and other rhetorical devices which is used to add diversity and clarity to the writing.” (2019). Interpretation of language is old and can trace back to 4th century BCE. Those who had command over using language effectively were known as “rhetors” which is called as “rhetoric’s”. The Rhetors used language in persuasive that affected the audience psychologically.

It analyses language using literary concepts and patterns to highlights the meaning underneath it. It is independent, replicable, subject to interpretation, inspect able, and quasi-scientific. Stylistics has progressed with time and adapted ideas regarding cognitive linguistics and has gathered huge corpora of languages. It studies oral and textual interpretations to determine important features, linguistic properties and structures. It is related to discourse because it is linked with language and use of language. “To analyze a text the procedure is to see in detail and observe what parts are and its purpose in the context of the passage. (Johnson, 2004).

The stylistic analysis mainly focuses on the qualities of a text at phonological, grammatical, lexical and semantic level. It examines the way language is used in an artistic way. The stylistic process, examining the creativity of language use, develops our understanding of literature. (Simpson 2004. 3)It represents the language system. It works to make connections between linguistic analysis and literary criticism. It develops our understanding of literature and of the underlying significance of the text. It attempts to create principles that explain the choices made by individuals and social groups in their use of language, such as socialization, the production and reception of meaning, critical discourse analysis and literary criticism.

The main purpose of stylistics is to create relation between language and its artistic function and to discover underlying meanings in the text. The style in language is related to the context, by a given person or person so on (Leech, 1981). It enhances the way we perceive language and its usage. According to Fowler (1966), it is “it’s not literary but the possession of text”. It is through stylistics readers interact with language, which affects how we read the text.

Hafeez Jalandhari as National Poet

The famous Urdu language poet Hafeez Jalandhari is known for his great contribution in writing the lyrics for the National Anthem of Pakistan and National Anthem of Azad Kashmir. Abu Al Asar Hafeez Jalandhari was born on 14th January 1900 in Jalandhar, Punjab, and British India. He is one of the famous Urdu poets lived in the first half of 20th century without getting enough education, at the age of seven he composed his first couplet (Dawn, 2017). He participated in the Pakistan movement and contributed his writings for the sake of inspiring Muslims to stand for creation of an Independent State. His writing mostly consists of Ghazal and Nazm. The main theme of his text is Pakistani Nationalism because his aim was to enlighten the Muslim Ummah with intention of having independent Muslim country. He is awarded with Pride of Performance and Hilal e Imtiaz. It makes him the only person ever lived in the history of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan who has written two national anthems, one for the homeland and the other for the independent state annexed with the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Furthermore, he wrote several patriotic songs during 1965's Indo-Pak War. His image was featured on a commemorative stamp issued by the Pakistan Post Office in 2001 as part of its 'Poets of Pakistan' series.

His notable work consists of Shanam- e- Islam, Hymn of Kashmir and lyrics of National Anthem of Pakistan. He wrote almost five books, which are Nagma Zar, Shanama I Islam, Soz o Saaz, Talkhaba I Shireen and Chiragh I Sehar. His first collection of poems was Nagma e Zar published in 1935. Jalandhari was exceptional in Urdu poetry for the magical melody of his voice and lilting rhythms of his songs and lyrics. The poetry of Jalandhari is mostly romantic, religious, and patriotic and has natural ideas. The language is a blend of Urdu and Hindi, which reflect the culture of South Asia. He is also praised for writing Hindi poem, Krishn Kanhaiya, in tribute of Hindu God Krishna. His famous song “Abhi Toh Mein Jawan Hoon” was sung by Malika Pukhraj in the 1950’s which is still famous in recent times. Jalandhari married his cousin Zeenat Begum in 1917 and had seven daughters from her. Later, he took a young Lithuanian descent, Anela as his second wife and had a daughter from her Jalandhari died in Lahore, Pakistan, on 21 December 1982.

Description of ‘Staff of Old Age’

The poem Staff of Old Age written by Hafeez Jalandhari is about dawning of Adulthood and coming of Old Age. It tells time flies away and life comes to its end. It highlights the importance of Youth which go away in playful days and time progresses towards finality. He addresses his audience that we are just travelers waiting for our journey to complete and reach the final destination which is death. He also adds that we have lost our youth in fulfilling desires rather than struggling to achieve what is right for us. The poem is a message to the young people who are indulged in never ending useless aspirations in life. We are answerable for our own deeds no one is our companion in this path of life.

The title “Staff of Old Age” reflects the acquaintances of his Old Age as he tells them that time is passing on and life is approaching towards its end. He cautions younger readers to be prepared for the coming time and to make preparations for it as the journey is progressing and there will be no second chance after it. The speaker tells that he and his companions have fulfilled their duties as a man and experienced the ups and down of life and now it is the time to get settled for the life which has come to its end. The reality of aging and how one’s youthful expectations will not be fulfilled as one’s body losing beauty and strength. The speakers say that when old age is progressing it seems that he is also fading away from life and sheens of youth. The poet says that we should enjoy the current time in which we are living rather than pass it in enjoying inclinations and frenzy.

The speaker tells that when old age arrives we are often unprepared so it is necessary to have all the provisions of the journey in order to move on smoothly. The Old man advises youth to slow down trying to grow up and enjoy their youth. They have been through the process of aging and have much experience. Growing old is not as amazing as it may seem to the youth. The speaker also tells to the present youth not to make same mistake as they made and enjoy their adolescence. He compares Old age to autumn season as they have all harsh realities of life. The poem is quite thought provoking as it aims at the old age which is something one cannot escape from and it guides its readers to be prepared for it in order to have no regrets at the end of life which fading out its light.

Methodology

The poem “Staff of Old Age” by Hafeez Jalandhari is analyzed using stylistic analysis focusing on lexical categories, syntactic categories, figure of speech, context and cohesion. The entire poem is analyzed using all these five levels to conduct a detailed analysis. The study examines the way language used by the poet tells the unique concepts in the text and reveals deeper meanings. The poem is in verse form and is a translated version from Urdu to English by Khurram Khurshid and Waqas Khawaja.

Population of the study is a group of members on which the researcher draws conclusion about the research Bhandarii. P., (2020). The population of the current study are the entire poems written by Hafeez Jalandhari. All the 29 poems written by Hafeez Jalandhari are included in the population.

A sample is a sub group selected from the population that researcher will collect data from. The size of sample is less than the total population size (Bhandari. P. 2020). The poem “Staff of old Age” is selected from 29 poems of Hafeez Jalandhari. Only single poem is considered as the sample size from total population.

Content-analytic Framework



Figure 1

The Content-analytic Framework is qualitative technique that is a step-by-step approach mostly used in applied research. It enables researchers to thoroughly analyze data by participants and themes (Delve, n.d.). The analysis is the significant part of the research. The text has been read closely and is evaluated on behalf of five categories in stylistic analysis. It can be seen that lexical categories find out nouns, verbs, adverbs, pronoun and adjectives. In the syntactic category, word class, sentence type and clause type to identify the role syntax in the text. Figure of speech is also an important element of stylistic analysis which looks upon use of figurative language in the text like in the text the poet has used imagery, metaphor, consonance, antithesis, personification, epistrophe, ellipsis, irony, symbolism and repetition. In

addition, it sees context by indirect and direct speech. Lastly, Cohesion is the most important part of analysis in which moderate and low cohesion is known. Parallelism is also prominent in this poem. It is a rhetorical structural pattern or device that is having to or more phonetic or lexical items repeated in a text having pragmatic or syntactic connection (Baro. H. & Dwivedi, P., 2020)

Data Analysis

Table 1: *Content Analysis*

Categories	Sub Categories	Examples
Lexical Categories	Noun	World, journey, breath, Life, companions, night, caravan, cliffs, road, travelers, star, autumn, self-indulgence
	Verb	Fled, noise, wrecked, dawning, seize, cutting , shines
	Adverb	Uproar, towering, ready, playful
	Pronoun	You, me
	Adjective	ecstasy
Syntactic Categories	Sentence Type	Declarative Sentence: “The caravan of life has passed beyond youth’s valley of joy. The poem is written in declarative sentence type.
	Word Class	Prepositions: of, for, this , to Conjunctions: and, that
	Clause Type	Dependent and independent clause is used. Compound sentence: “Fled, that time of self - indulgence, the world of noise and uproar, wrecked.
	Imagery	Auditory imagery: noise and uproar Visual imagery: dawning day, towering cliffs
	Metaphor	Air’s ecstasy , feet find no footing, skull will shatter
Figures of Speech	Repetition	A thousand obstacles at every step Fled that time of self -indulgence
	Antithesis	Keen and cutting wind
	consonance	Dawning day, forehead of hope’s firmament, star that shines
	Personification	Air’s ecstasy,
	Epistrophe	Step
	Ellipses	Dawning day -
	Irony	A slight slip, and the skull will shatter
	Symbolism	Journey, travelers , Autumn, star
Context	Direct & Indirect speech	Direct speech is used.

Cohesion	Low cohesion Moderate Cohesion High cohesion	Low Cohesion is used.
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Discussion and Analysis

This poem is a free verse poem. It has total four stanzas but there is no definite number of sentences in each stanza. None of the sentences rhymes and thus cannot be read in a song manner. Instead, the poems way of addressing speaks of the lesson that the old man is giving to the young generation to be well prepared for the coming of age. There is great use of nouns and verbs, which describe life as a journey that is going on and moving towards its destination. Mostly visual imagery and auditory imagery is used to show that people are indulged in their affairs and care free not bothering what is happening next. They are busy in the world of noise and our unable to listen what the speaker is trying to say.

The title of the poem is ironic because the poet himself is aging and he calls all the fellows of his age group as his companions. The companions of his age are his major audience to whom he is addressing to and is sharing ideas regarding how old age approached to them and their life is ending soon just as their days of joy ended up.

The poem is a message to all the young people who are progressing towards their old age. The speaker cautions them to have all the necessary essentials to be prepared for the future as it is going to snatch all the strength and beauty of youth. The speaker uses the metaphor “skull will shatter” which means the body cannot handle its weight because it will become so weak and one slip can cause whole body shatter so it is important to have a “steady step”. The speaker symbolizes autumn is coming of old age. Old age is like the autumn season in which leaves have shed from the trees and devoid of beauty or life just like old people who have lost the essence of life and loveliness. Life becomes hard and every step seems difficult to lift.

The speaker also uses journey as a symbol to compare it with life, which is going on and will reach its final destination that is death. People are the travelers who are passing by unknown when they will reach their final stop. The speaker also tells that there will be no “start again “once the journey ends. The passengers on board are not known to each other but travelling on the same journey, which lead them to the ultimate destination.

The poet repeats most of the verses to make an impact on reader’s mind that life is not easy as it approaches towards old age. The speaker tries to show his audience that there very few days of joy and more struggling days so a person should be well prepared for end of life because it is our last chance. The poet ends the poem comparing youth to shining star that has dulled and lost its shine just like an old man who have lost his strength and good looks that were once the reason of his admiration. The speakers also acclaim that there is only one star that is his companion and shines like a star. It is the one whom he is addressing to and is giving a message regarding how old age exactly is and what should one do to prepare oneself for the final day of life.

Justification of Research Questions

The poem “Staff of Old Age” by Hafeez Jalandhari is a depiction of what actually Old Age looks like. It is the time to fade away with all the memories of life. Adolescence is a blessing and no one should waste it in merry making but to make use of it for the betterment of society and one’s own self. Time is just passing on and everything will diminish at one stage. The message given to the reader is to enjoy youth and understand the meaning of life.

The poem is stylistically analyzed to interpret meanings and context of the text so the reader is aware of use of language and helpful in getting in-depth knowledge about the text and language. In the poem, there is considerable use of nouns which is almost 13 in number while verbs are also greatly used which are

almost six. The sentence type in the poem is mostly declarative sentence. The majority of word class used in text are prepositions which are of 4 kinds and conjunctions are only of 2 types. The clauses in the text are Dependent and Independent clause and mostly Compound Sentences are used. The figurative speech makes the work more appealing and the writer has used different kinds of literary devices which are imagery, metaphor, repetition, antithesis, consonance, symbolism, irony, epistrophe, ellipsis and personification. The speech is mostly direct and the poem is written in low cohesion.

The poem is compared with other poems of Hafeez Jalandhari to prove interesting insights into his writing style, themes, figurative speech and poetic voice. For example, His poem “*Lab pe Aati hai Dua Ban Ke Tammanna Meri*” and “Staff of Old Age” have the recurring theme of aging and passage of time. Also, another poem “Soch” (Thought) explores the power of thought on our lives just as “Staff of Old Age” creates awareness among the youth to be thoughtful. Most of the poems of Jalandhari share the same concepts which are depicted through the use of rich imagery and metaphoric language in the poems.

It is noteworthy that, among all the poems of Hafeez Jalandhari “Staff Old Age” conveys a message for all not only Muslim Ummah. He wrote mostly for the Indo-Pak Muslims but this poem pertains to every human being who will have to go through the phase of old age from adolescence. The poem is an address to the coming youth who are living in the world of desires. He wants to awake the children from the sleep of wants and prepare themselves for the well-being of the society before they approach their old age.

Conclusion

During the course of research, there is an attempt to analyze linguistic features of the poem to understand its significance and key concepts. The study is concluded in a way that with the use of stylistic techniques can easily interpret the poem which is about progressing of old age and ending of adolescence which is flying like time passing away. The unrhymed verses show no connection which is telling about the human body is losing its connection with world and is going into a new world awaiting for it. The poet is pondering upon life as a journey, which will end soon with coming of death. Therefore, it is evident that Jalandhari is highlighting the importance of youth which should not be wasted for undesirable needs.

Acknowledgments

None.


Conflict of Interest

Authors declared no conflict of interest.

Funding Source

The authors received no funding to conduct this study.

ORCID iDs

Filza Batool ¹ <https://orcid.org/0009-0001-5017-7774>

Muhammad Arfan Lodhi ² <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5627-5666>

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