

A STUDY OF DEVIATION IN SHADAB ZEEST HASHMI'S POEM "I LOOKED OUT THE MUGHAL WINDOW"Gulranga Haider^{*1}, Muhammad Ramzan²**Original Article**

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ABSTRACT

This current study stylistically analyzed Shadab Zeest Hashmi's poem "I looked Out the Mughal Window" from the perspective of foregrounding. Foregrounding theory has two devices i.e. deviation and parallelism, hence the scholars have chosen the device of deviation for the analysis of the poem understudy. In the poem we observed a lot of stylistic elements which give support to the main idea of the poem. The poem deviates from the normal standard of poetry writing because it is replete with a lot of semantic, grammatical, lexical and synthetic deviations. The scholars only dealt with the analysis of the poem through semantic deviation. On the other hand, the scholars also found code-switching in the poem which gave it uniqueness and attractiveness. Hashmi has perhaps deliberately used other words instead of the same language in which she writes and this is called code-switching. Being a Pakistani born, she has a natural inclination to use words of her national language. That's the reason that she used Urdu words in more of her poems, and that is why her poetry is attractive and appealing to the Urdu speaking/known people. The scholars found the poem suitable and attractive for analysis to appreciate the local writer as local voices represent the society in which they live.

Keywords: Deviation, Foregrounding, Code-switching, Stylistics, The Poet.

INTRODUCTION

Shadab Zeest Hashmi's poetry is internationally recognized. Her poetry has been translated from English into Spanish and Urdu languages, and published in various journals. She is an Anglophone poet and essayist. She has been nominated for the Pushcarts several times. She has authored several poetic collections *Wings of Silver* (1991), *Baker of Tarifa* (2010), *Kohl and Chalk* (2013), *Ghazal Cosmopolitan* (2017) and *Comb* (2020). She has won the San Diego Book Award for her two poetic collections *Baker of Tarifa* and *Kohl and chalk*, and the Nazim Hikmet Prize.

The poem "*I looked Out the Mughal Window*" is taken from her poetic collection *Kohl & Chalk* published in 2013 from Poetic Matrix Press. Donahue (2013) asserts about *Kohl & Chalk* that,

"Kohl & Chalk is a medley of piquant tableaux largely set in Shadab's native land, it would be wrong to sum up the book as a sepia-tinted paean to the Pakistan of yore. The volume's title hints at an outlook that is both cosmopolitan and gracefully political. Kohl is the black lead-based eyeliner that women in Africa and the Middle East have been wearing to dramatic effect since about 3000 BC" (Para, 3).

Donahue quotes her talking about this book in these words "My book is the story of a writing woman faced with the challenge of producing poetry while being responsible for raising a family."

Hashmi grew up in Peshawar, Pakistan. She got her graduation degree from Reed College in 1995. Her poems have been published in *Prairie Schooner*, *Vallum*, *Poetry International*, *Atlanta Review*, *The Bitter Oleander*, *Nimrod*, *Journal of Postcolonial Writings*, *Pakistani Literature Women Writings* and other journals (ibid).

The book *Ghazal Cosmopolitan* includes essays about the two genres i.e. Ghazal and Qasida, and also some sampling Ghazals and Qasidas for. Ghazal and Qasida are basically Arabic, Urdu and Persian poetic genres. Hashmi was doing MFA at Warren Wilson College in the US, when she read ghazals of Adrienne Rich and a Kashmiri poet Agha Shahid Ali's Ghazals in English. After reading these poets, she herself has become a great writer of the form. Aslam (2019) has quoted her words as;

"Agha Shahid Ali had taught at Warren Wilson College and his friends and colleagues were there. They suggested to me that I should write ghazals in English and I did that," (as quoted in Dawn, March 3, 2019).

Hashmi's essays on eastern poetic genres also have been published in the *Journal of Contemporary World Literature*, the *Washington Post* and lot of Pakistani journals.

STYLE

As a general term, Style is the way of doing something. Style refers to different kinds of activities performed by a person. When we apply this to language, it focuses on how a person writes or speaks variously. When writing poetry, the poet's choice of language is referred to as his stylistic approach. It is a technique of a poet to express his/her personality on paper. Stylistics deals with the study of a writer's style or to observe the variation in language (style). The term stylistics refers to the study of style, or the study of "variation in language (style)". It depends on the context in which the language is used and the impression the speaker or listener wants to have on reader, speaker or listener (Richards et al., 1993). It's a systematic, objective and scientific analysis of the style of a text.

The main focus of stylistic analysis is to expose and study the key stylistic elements and functions that define a particular linguistic work. Stylistics is a type of analysis that deals with examining the evident aspects of language than the subtle ones. Richards et al. (1993) and Ghazala (1994), "marked (unusual) features" refers to those linguistic expression elements that depart from the natural and frequent language use (unmarked), and are therefore, regarded as being outside of the conventional norms of language (as quoted by S. Mansoor and M. Salman).

DEVIATION

Studying and analyzing a number of poems, Leech (1969) coined the term linguistic deviation. He exposed various irregularities in language use from a linguistic point of view (Rahman and Weda, 2019). Leech (1976) described nine types of stylistic/linguistic deviation in poetry such as lexical, phonological, semantic, syntactic, graphological, morphological, historical, register and dialectal (p. 42-52). Lexical deviation takes place when words deviate from their natural usage, or when new terms are created in the procedure known as neologism to achieve a particular stylistic effect. According to Leech (1969) this process is known as lexical invention or lexical innovation (p. 42). The syntactic deviation occurs when a writer deviates from the norms of syntax. It is a departure from the normal rules of grammar. It is a kind of deviation in which poets do not follow the rules of grammar and sentence formation. In this level a writer deviates from the rules of syntax. It deviates from the established grammar standards. It is a kind of deviation where writers ignore the norms of syntax and sentence structure.

The researchers found semantic deviations in the poem under study but the main focus of them is on semantic deviation especially the Transference. There are also some foreign words

other than the language of the poem which is known as code-switching. There is also focused on code-switching which is a device of deviation.

1. SEMANTIC DEVIATION

Leech (1976) puts that in accordance with semantic deviation a usual word can have an unusual meaning depending on the speaker's life and his/her cultural background.

1.1 Code-switching

Shadab's this poem is stuffed with different stylistic and foregrounding elements. She has practiced various foregrounding devices that attract the attention of readers and researchers. The main focus of the study is given on the poem's use of different foregrounding techniques i.e. deviation and code-switching. According to Milroy and Muysken (1995) code-switching is "the alternative use by bilinguals of two or more languages in the same conversation" (p.7). Macswan (1999) puts that "code switching is a speech style in which fluent bilinguals move in and out of two (or conceivably more) languages" (p.37). Researchers have been studied code-switching in diverse ways thus encouraging different understanding or interpretations toward this language experience.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Writers use different techniques to make a piece of literature stylish and attractive. It is known as 'Stylistics'. Stylistics is a branch of applied linguistics which is initiated as a technique of applying linguistic models to a literary text. Widdowson (1975) defines stylistics as "the study of literary discussion from a linguistic orientation". M. Short and C. Candlin (1989) defined stylistics in these words, "Stylistics is an access to the study of literary texts using linguistic explanation and considers it as a linking method"

Famala Eka Sanhadi Rahayu (2012) has been investigated and conducted a study about linguistic deviation on William Shakespeare's Selected Sonnets. She main has focused on exploring the lexical and syntactical deviation in Shakespeare's sonnets. Meliana Sri Rahayu Widodo (2004) study deals with stylistics devices on the songs in Psalm, whose forms were the same with poetry. Widodo (2004) has tried to find out stylistic tools and syntactic deviation that happened in the songs of Psalm. She also found out the theme and tones in the selected text. Using the theory of diction and syntax, she also analyzed the lexical selection and syntactic deviation.

METHODOLOGY

The study is both qualitative and quantitative in nature. The current stylistics study of the poem explores the role of foregrounding by examining the effect it has on a piece of literatur as a whole. Foregrounding is a technique or method which is used to defamiliarize language. Simpson (2004) concludes that "whether the foregrounded pattern diverges from a median, or whether it reproduces a pattern through parallelism, the role of foregrounding is that it strikes a reader's attention towards itself" (Ramzan et al., 2021).

DATA ANALYSIS

Stylistic elements in literary texts evoke exciting effects of the thoughts uttered in it. The words, compound words and phrases used in poetry evoke loaded imagery and feelings as compared to the normal communicative procedure.

In this study, deviant processes such as semantic, lexical and syntactic deviation is given special focus and attention. Attention is also given to the use of other words other than the main language of the poem.

1. SEMANTIC DEVIATION

This level is considered a significant level of deviation as there we find figurative language which is the heart of poetry. Deviation has been divided into two types i.e. transference and honest deception.

Here, the researchers have only focused on the transference issue in the poem. The main means of transference are metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche and simile.

1.1 Metaphors

Metaphor is a figure of speech which compares two contradicted qualities or things. In the very first sentence we find a figurative expression in the use of the Urdu word **sanwayan**. Here, the poet used the word in its implied meaning which stands for cultural identity. The poet wants to say that Pakistani culture is a rich and unique in terms of social values. The poet laments on the fact that nowadays no one is ready to follow his/her own culture.

Another word **topaz** is used metaphorically for representing the end of the day and the horizon is yellowing like the brownish-yellow stone which is used as jewel. The expression "**I looked out the window of the Mughal tower**" has its implied meaning that represents Muslim culture and the past grandeur. The phrase "**a wisp of yellow hair**" gives the meaning of decaying cultural values. The poet wants to represent that modern men has placed aside all their cultural values and costumes and have lost cultural identity. There is another implied meaning of the word **shadows** in the poem. It shows the indifference of the Muslims toward their own culture. In the same line the shadows are compared with bayonets and rhino horns which imply the meaning of the cruel and sorrowful conditions of Muslims.

The poet has used metaphoric language for representing cultural identity, self identity, religion and unity. The use of figurative language and style of the writer has made the text attractive and impressive.

1.2 Simile

Simile is a figure of speech used to compare two or more things of different kinds or persons and so on. It is generally used for making a statement more emphatic or vivid.

The researchers find only one example of simile in the clause "**and doors that were like sieves**". The poet, here, shows her expectations from the young Pakistanis of progress, bright future.

1.3 Metonymy

It is a figure of speech which involves a phrase or word standing in or substituting for another phrase or word. Metonymy adds deeper meaning or symbolism a poem. There are some examples of metonymy in the poem understudy the collocated words "**Mughal tower**" stands here, for the grandeur of Mughal Empire. The word "**flowers**" used in the same line stands for the flourishing of the Mughal Empire once a time. From this, the poet wants to describe the past grandeur of the Mughal era through using figurative language.

Furthermore, the phrase "**a wisp of yellow hair**" represents the decay of the past grandeur, and the loss cultural identity.

1.4 Synecdoche

Synecdoche is a figure of speech by which a part is put for the whole and the whole for a part. It is used for the purpose to help the writer emphasize important themes and make the imagery in the reader's mind vivid.

In this poem we find two uses of synecdoche. The use of the words “*sons*” and “*daughters*” are used as part of the whole Pakistani race. The speaker has some expectations and hope from the new generation that they will fix the broken walls of our past grandeur and culture.

2. CODE-SWITCHING

Code-switching refers to a change in language that takes place at the line level of a poem. As a result, when a stanza of a poem is fragmented into lines, some lines appear in one language while others do so in another. Hashmi's this poem is swollen with different foregrounding elements. She has practiced various foregrounding elements that strike the attention of readers as well as researchers. The following table is helpful in giving detail of code-switched words and phrases in the poem.

The code-switched words in the poem:

Words	Line No.
Sanwayan	1
Chambeli	12
Rubaiyat	14
Kulha	14
Naags	17

The word “*sanwayan*” attracted the attention of the researchers and readers. It is an Urdu name of a Pakistani food which Muslims cook on some occasions. Here, the word represents the cultural values of Muslims. From the very beginning line of the poem, we are given the clue to what the poet wants to convey through her poem or what is the theme of the poem. The main idea the poet wants to convey is cultural and religious values. In this poem the writer wants to show that we have our own rich cultural values but no one is prepared to follow.

Similarly, the word “*chambeli*” is again an Urdu word which means the flower Jasmine. It symbolizes that after a long fight for freedom from the foreign cultural attack, our own cultural as well as religious values are still alive. It points toward the British occupation on the subcontinent of India. The poet wants to justify the ways for own cultural values as now the Muslims are free from foreign dominance.

The word “*rubaiyat*” means the poetic genre in which there are total four lines. It represents again, the customs and values of Muslims. The poet wants to convey the message that one should not lose one's own culture and identity. To say, one's own culture gives a person self identity and realization.

Through the word “*kulha*” the poet wants to expose all her cultural values and the ways of living. Pakistani society has some cultural values and customs which are the living standard of Muslims. The word means a beautifully decorated turban that a groom wears on the occasion of his wedding. It's again a reference to cultural values.

The word “*naags*” is a pot which is used on the occasions of celebrating or weddings. It is also used in homes during eating meals.

DISCUSSION

Throughout the whole poem, the poet conveys the message of self identity, cultural identity, religious and social values, and the hope for the future generation to perpetuate the past grandeur of Muslim civilization. Shadab makes the Muslims to know about their religious and cultural values

and their own identity and then she stirs the sense of hope in them. She wants the readers to own their values and culture and not to lose them.

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Appendix

The poem

“I LOOK OUT THE MUGHAL WINDOW”

On the last dream the *sanwayan* was hot but no one was hungry. I heard a cackle while I waited for my husband to finish the teakwood shelf, the day already topaz and breaking Who was it? The washerwoman or a mountain magpie? I looked out the window of the Mughal tower carved with flowers. For a moment I thought I saw a wisp of yellow hair on the polished tiles down below. Perhaps it was brushed aside by the breeze. Some of the cobalt and turquoise tiles had split. There was much that needed mending. Our sons would fix walls damaged by cherry bombs and doors that were like sieves, so many bullets had passed through them. Our daughters would inscribe from memory all that our burnt books had contained. Long after the attack, the latticed pillars remained scented with *chambeli* buds. We had just begun whitewashing the house for the wedding, when they came again. Later, the bride sifted through the rubble for *Rubaiyat* the groom, washed the *kulha* he had meant to wear for the ceremony, its gold woven cloth grimy for once in hundreds of years. The shadows are bayonets, rhino horns. We are never safe when feasts are offered us on the heads of *naags*. We see shadows darting. What they steal most is our work, so we never have time to sit together and eat. We strain to write down each syllable our elders left us. Our children do not laugh any more. Our supper gets cold, uneaten

(Hashmi, 2013)