

STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF “THE ISLAND OF MISSING TREES” BY ELIF SHAFAK

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Abstract

This research examines the novel The Island of Missing Trees by Elif Shafak on the basis of qualitative research method by applying the textual analysis along with close reading technique. The study analyzes how grammatical categories and figurative language helps to shape the portrayal of different theme such as psychological trauma, identity, memory and environmental consciousness by applying Leech and Short's (2007) model. The original text of the novel The Island of Missing Trees used as a central source for data collection. The methodology comprises to identify and categorize the features of stylistics in the text according to Leech and Short(2007) framework also involve to interpret their effects in reader's understanding about characters and their lives. The findings of this research exposed that stylistic devices are not only creating aesthetic effect but also functional in enhancing themes. This research contributes in the domain of literary stylistics by providing a focused and methodologically analysis.

Key words: Style, stylistics figurative language, grammatical categories

Introduction

Stylistics is a study of style systematically. It demonstrates interconnectedness between literary criticism and language sciences which make scholars capable to analyze literature deeply. According to Simpson, Stylistics interprets the function of linguistic features in the context despite of just describing them. Wales (2011), pointed that stylistic analysis goes beyond impressionistic literary criticism by offering a principled, linguistic foundation for the interpretation of text. Within literature stylistic plays a crucial role in the delicacies of language.

Our concern in this research will be to look that how Elif Shafak has used language enrich her communication style. Leech and Short's(2007) model serves as a framework to do stylistic analysis of this novel which is proposed in book Style in Fiction (1981). Wales, suggested Stylistics connects function and form together it helps reader to understand the mechanism of producing meanings despite of just understand the textual meaning. There are two central aspects of this novel have chosen for this research. The first point serves the great insights into how figurative and rhetoric devices enhance their aesthetic impact and expressiveness. The second point which will need to be highlight is the grammatical features such as syntax and voice reflects the psychological trauma and narrative perspective in the novel. This research is important because of it two different areas of literary study: what a story says(themes) and how it says it(style).

Literature review

Different scholars and reviewers have different perspectives about stylistics. We will try to show their point of view about this specific domain. style can distinguish between distinct literary genres and even types of poetry.it is clear that in literary analysis subject by looking the language of text,its social connection either it is psychological or philosophical we can

analyse its style in the field of stylistics. The unique and closely connected field to literature is stylistics.

Tariq states, stylistics is the outcome of "style" which is generally understood to represent the alignment of expression and idea. Language serves two aims according to style: language builds our thoughts and serving as a tool of communication. The first one language is communicative and style is expressive. Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian, refers that "Style" is "the ornament of thought" but Swift proposed "Style" as "proper words in proper places." Tariq (2018: 48), defines "style as choice from variants" as selecting from a wide range of linguistic possibilities.

According to Longman Dictionary: Style, a style of expressing oneself in words, especially when characteristic of an individual, period, school, or nation(5). In *A Grammar of Style*: In the past many writers on style appear to have considered of it as a positive and unique quality in writing to which an author ought to pursue(13). According to Peter Barry (2002: 203), stylistics was created in the 20th century to demonstrate the technical linguistic aspects of a text. Barry (2002: 203) defines stylistics as a critical approach that applies language science methodologies and conclusions in the examination of literary works."

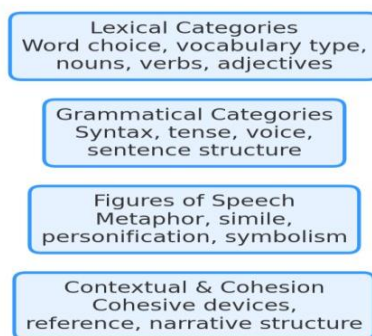
While doing the stylistic analysis of "The Island of Missing Trees" according to Leech and Short's (2007) model, it is seen that how language is taking part in the novel to create certain effects on readers. The novel "The Island of Missing Trees" delves into the category of languages which shows its multilayered structure.

Moreover, The application of Leach and Short (2007) model for the stylistic analysis of the novel "The Island of Missing Trees" provides the great insights into how language is used in literary text.

Methodology

This research is based on the qualitative research techniques such as textual analysis and close reading strategy. The novel "The Island of Missing Trees" is the actual text that is used as the primary sample in the research. The stylistic analysis of the text is chosen, which supposes the identification of stylistic properties as well as helps to create a deeper reading of the text by applying Geoffrey Leech and Mick Short's style model in their book *Style in Fiction* (2007). The examination of the stylistic features of the novel is conducted according to the model which is proposed by Leech and Short (2007). This model is as:

Leech and Short's Stylistic Model



Theoretical Framework

The research which will be conducted according to the model of style created by Leech and Short will be to comprehend the role of the language in literature works and its influence on the meaning, subjects, and organization of the readers.

The model suggests four large categories of style analysis and they include: lexical categories, grammatical categories, figures of speech, and cohesion and context.

Things to explore from Leech and Short(2007) model

Stylistic Category	Sub-Elements	Exploration of aspects in novel
1. Figures of speech	Metaphor Simile Personification	Representation of metaphors and symbols of trauma, exile and memory
	Irony Symbolism Assonance Alliteration Imagery Repetition	personification is highlighted through fig tree narration) Stimulation of the emotions and senses in terms of imagery and assonance Repetition and irony as ways to emphasize the system of psychological fragmentation and connection series of generations
2. Grammatical Categories	Syntax Voice (passive/active) Tense shift (past to present) Sentence complexity	Fragmented sentences as a result of trauma. Passive voice to conceal the agency on painful memories Time distortion with the depiction of non-linear temporal movement Mental state and movement of story through length of Sentence.

Analysis

The discussion of the novel *The Island of Missing Trees* by Elif Shafak (2021) revolves around postcolonial trauma, memory with respect to the eco-system, disphoric identity and how in the past incidents have long-term effects on humans and their societies. The relationship between nature and life of people is describe by the use of symbolic language, fragmented sentences and poetic use of words. Analyzing the interconnection of grammatical categories and figures of speech, this paper will point out how they promote the stylistic effects of the novel. The use of model according to Geoffrey Leech and Mick Short provides the

understanding of the level of the novel basing on figures of speech, grammatical cohesions and the context.

Figurative language

In The island of missing trees Shafak's use of figurative language such as metaphor ,simile, personification etc goes beyond the traditional storytelling, urges readers into philosophical and emotional connection that reveals the aesthetic and expressive dimensions of literary style.

Simile

The similes in this novel bring out inner states of the characters affected by traumatic experiences, loss, missing someone or something and that would link emotions to images therefore making abstract emotions more bodily.

"Silver rivulets which glittered before her as though she were skating upon water." (Page: 102)"

Simile plays as a dream in this line which highlight that the process of absorbing trauma by her. her mind not only processing this traumatic situation with loud memories but also with calm pictures that covers her sensory world.

"There are some lying on the ground, like sour fruit..(Page: 132)"

The neglected bodies(which could be humans, bats etc) are compared with rotten fruits that are declines and wasted.

Personification

Elif shafak used personification widely throughout the novel to give the concept of interconnectedness with nature.

"I would have liked to explain to him the fact that loneliness is a manmade thing. no tree lives in solitude..."

The affected fig tree that happens to be a living object affected by the effects of displacement, love, and trauma is an active reader of the human destruction in war. It discloses generational trauma and loneliness and refers to emotional connection and belonging in society.

Irony

"Human beings start caring when they lose something."

The writer observed that people don't see the sign of positivity, consistency and inheritance they just focus upon the future expectations. this highlights the human desire to invest for unseen benefit for generations in future.

"Branches are a marker of love and violence"

Author highlighted that lovers seeks permanency in nature as a sign of love when they cut initials or hearts in the trunks basically they implanting their feelings in such living things for life time. shafak highlights that how human emotions of love cause harm ironically.

Symbolism

"To immigrant and exiles all around the world/ to those trees where we rooted ourselves in our memories"

This line explores the emotional landscape of novel: For example trees serves as suppressed memory, looks like inactive but still grounded and alive and are able to bear the conditions.

“ Colonial beginnings and cultural inheritance are epitomized by the origin of the fig tree in 1878 on the territory of Cyprus ”

The origin of fig tree in 1878 is Symbolic due to Cyprus .this date is not random ,have a great significance of history as of British control in Cyprus.

Assonance

1. *bury the fig in city clay repetition of, i/ee*
2. *“the silence protects the secrets” -i- sound*
3. *memory murmurs muted /// u sound*

Imagery

“Without you I... am a fallen tree, my roots hacked about on all sides; you can lay me with a finger.”

This line indicates the emotional impact of loss by using beautiful natural image. ***“The time of a human being is linear... Arboreal time ... goes round and round ... twists itself in endless cycles, as you can observe after carving us out you see.”***

This line creates a stunning image that make comparison of tree with our experiences. The line “circles within circles” is proposed on the basis of the natural image of tree rings, appears only when it is cut and presents trauma ,change and yearly development.

Repetition

In The whole novel repetition is used in two aspects as stylistically and symbolically to show main themes .these include generational trauma, ecological connection ,psychological repression and diaspora.thre are different repeated ideas such as burial represents trauma have a cyclical nature imitating unconscious working.

1. *secret, secrets*
2. *buried and buried*
3. *remember, remember*

Grammatical categories

Leech and Shor’s model for stylistic analysis builded to examine that how tense,voice and syntactic manipulation helps to reveals character’s internal conflicts mainly that of cultural displacement,intergenerational trauma and emotional constrains.this analysis is supposed to focus upon three main things fig tree which is a symbolic witness, Kostas who is the father and Ada who is teenage daughter. The grammatical categories serves as tools to unlock the emotional detachment,pain and fragmentation.

Expresion of psychological trauma with fragmented thoughts and according to syntax:

Omission and Fragmented sentences

“No words. No thoughts. Just numbness.”

Fragmented rhythm can be created by the removal of some definite verbs. Grammatically incomplete sentences shows the Ada’s reaction to emotional shock.

“Then, a silence all sticky and fluffy, fell dripping into the place about her.”

To show Ada and Kostas testimonies Shafak used structure of sentence in which clauses are located alongside to highlight trauma remembrance and emotional dodging.

Stylistic confusion and referencial Repetition

“She did not know what to do with them, she could not dispose of them, nor was she capable of throwing them away.”

The clear contrast between “neither...nor” along with mental conflict reveals her shock stylistically with the help of sentence arrangement.Defne mental condition is highlighted.

Point of view and voice

oppression and passive voice

the lack of authority in characters is a prominent feature of trauma which is depicted through passive voice.

“She was captured. Without warning.”

This is the figure which is used to create effect in describing generational and historical trauma. the absence of subject which is grammatically removed reveals mental distortion and confusion resulted by violence.

Discontinuity and shift in tense

When memory blurs the present the prominent grammatical trait is shift in tense which reveals the discontinuity.

“She was incongruently disoriented, the room shifting like wave under her feet.”

Present tense disrupted the past simple tense which is memoir and present tense is in the voice of tree.

Break down and stream of consciousness

To emerge the breakdown of cognition Shafak used the technique of manipulation of sentence stretch. this is clear from Ada's breakdown moment.

“Her back came up in response, apparently to something in her body before her mind of possibly some threat of which she had (not yet) been conscious...”

“She screamed.”

The psychological disruption imitated through the instant movement of complex sentence towards declarative sentence. The signs of emotional dilemma associated with disrupted word order are clearly aligned by Leech and Short.

Fig Tree's Perspective in a symbolic sentence

Personification

The philosophical narrative style of tree highlights that the tree has the human like traits such as grammar but sophisticated dense dependent clauses. Such as the statement:

“I had to tell myself that life was not a business deal, a bargaining give-and-take thing...”

The sentence structure is introspective that exposes God like perspective. It plays as a role of connection between non human and human perception. Ada's uncertainty is compared through its grammatical features and the complex nature of sentence expresses freedom.

Role of Repetition as recalling memory

In fig tree's narration repetition plays a significant role grammatically as a feature of stylistic memory:

“How sore I hitched I had the power to convert my branches into arms... my trunk to a heart...”

Fig tree is made substitute by desire and constrains which is strengthens the balanced sentence structure for unresolved feelings. which serves as a proof to trauma which is cannot be expressed or spoken by human beings.

Shift in Tenses

It is clear from the novel storytelling style that the fig tree is first person, and the third person role is played by Ada and Kostas. it reveals the truth that trauma can access our consciousness. the voice of fig tree is clear and the narrative style is philosophical.

Conclusion

This thesis has discussed the work of Elif Shafak, The Island of Missing Trees in a stylistic way; it has adopted the concept created by Leech and Short (2007) in a bid to understand the role played by the figurative and grammatical judgment Shafak uses a very diverse set of stylistic devices to make the story sound more emotional. Through a meticulous examination of application of metaphors, symbolism, repetitions, syntax, tense, and voice in the novel, this paper has indicated how the stylistic elements have a complex connection to the narration of memory, identity, psychological trauma and environmental consciousness. The importance of the grammatical choices in the further narrative structure and voice were also raised by the

thesis. Fragmented syntax and passive language, as well as tense shifts, are characteristics of confused minds of the characters who experience loss, displacement, and psychological trauma. However, this stylistic study of *The Island of Missing Trees* demonstrates the way in which Elif Shafak combines linguistic structure and the depth of themes into one harmonious and emotionally strong story.

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