

Research Article

Stylistic Analysis of the Poem “Lullaby for a Palestinian Child” By Faiz Ahmad Faiz

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Abstract

Stylistics, an area in linguistics, plays a key role in understanding the motivated use of diverse linguistic items, phrase structures, and syntactic structures, and the employment of stylistic devices and sources of foregrounding in a literary text. The paper attempts to analyse the text of the poem ‘Lullaby for a Palestinian Child, written by Faiz Ahmad Faiz, on different levels of stylistics: phonological, morphological and syntactic pragmatic, and graphological level, and the various techniques used for foregrounding, with the aim to explore how the various stylistic devices and sources of foregrounding foregrounds the key themes of the poem. The methods of stylistic analysis put forwarded by Leech (1969) in “*Linguistic Guide to English Poetry*” and Wales (2001) in “*Dictionary of Stylistics*” have been employed in the study. The study found that diverse stylistic devices; such as alliteration, consonance, repetition, assonance, rhyme, and cacophony, etc. and various sources of foregrounding; such as parallelism and deviation, have been employed in the poem, which results in the improved musicality of the poem. Moreover, the stylistic devices and the sources of foregrounding bring to the fore the key themes of the poem. The study, thus, hopes to stimulate interest in stylistic research, so that this area in general, and the literary works of Pakistani writers in particular, can be revisited afresh, and the established views can be re-examined.

Keywords: style, stylistics, stylistic devices, sources of foregrounding, parallelism, deviation, Lullaby for a Palestinian Child.

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1. Introduction

Stylistics is the study of style. According to Leech (1969), stylistics is a linguistic approach to literature, explaining the relation between language and artistic function, with motivating questions such as “why”

and “how” more than “what”. In stylistics, we see what are the different linguistic devices used by the author in the text, why these devices are used by the author and how do these devices function in the text. The style of a poem is analyzed in stylistics. It focuses on analysing the different features used by the writer in a text and the reasons behind using those features. “Lullaby for a Palestinian Child” is one of the most beautiful poems of Faiz Ahmed Faiz. When general Zia-ul Haq’s military rule began, Faiz left Pakistan in 1970s and became the editor of ‘Lotus’. “Lotus” was a product of Afro-Asian Writers’ association, based in Beirut, Lebanon. In those days, Beirut was the landscape of a vicious conflict between Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) stronghold there and Israel. He wrote two poems on the Palestinians, one titled ‘*Palestinian Martyrs in Foreign Lands*’, and the other, ‘*Lullaby for a Palestinian Child*’. Both are included in his book, ‘*Mayray Dil, Mayray Musaffir*’ (1981).

This heart-rending ‘lullaby’ could well have been for any child, not just Palestinian. An embodiment of innocence, fragile and precious at the same time, their plight transcends religious, political and geographical boundaries formed, set up and ferociously defended by the elders. Children are children, in every culture, every country (friend or foe), everywhere in the world. They inherit the world with all its progress and problems that the older generation leaves behind.

Faiz Ahmad Faiz was a Pakistani poet and author, and one of the most celebrated writers of the Urdu language. Among other accolades, Faiz was nominated for Nobel Prize in literature and won the Lenin Peace Prize. Faiz Ahmed Faiz relied on natural imagery, figurative language, symbolism, and tone shifts to display his point of view on war, government, and love for one’s country. Through the use of natural imagery, Faiz was able to consistently portray the delicate and beautiful objects in life to symbolize the world's potential beauty in hopes of the world becoming united. These moments were also used to emphasize the light and hope within the dark experiences of his life. The first tone of his poems usually helps reveal his given view or opinion on a topic, and later the tone shifts prove that hope and defiance help cope with the issues at hand. Amidst the shifts of tone in the poem, his use of figurative language propels his themes and contradictory ideas by allowing us insight into the deeper meaning that is hidden within the poem. Faiz uses his memories and personal experiences in life to advocate for the peace he wishes to see in the world, describing these memories through descriptive imagery to provoke the same emotion he feels towards these worldly issues.

Faiz grew up experiencing war for himself, and that shifted his perspective to attempt to achieve world unification. To do this, he understands the imperfections of our world. Faiz grew up in an environment where violence and bloodshed was dominating the earth. The countless wars fought during these period caused endless waves of pain and suffering to many. Addressing the issue, Faiz uses poetry

to allow us to love and drive away from violence being the answer. One cannot convey his/her thoughts through poetry until he/she make use of diverse appropriate lexical and stylistic devices. In order to convey his thoughts and achieve his predefined and predetermined effects through his poems, he uses a variety of stylistic devices in constructing his poems. His poems are organized at different levels. The present study attempts to analyze his poem “*Lullaby for a Palestinian Child*” at different levels. The study seeks answer to the following questions.

- i. What stylistic devices have been employed by Faiz Ahmad Faiz in the poem?
- ii. What salient sources of foregrounding have been used by Faiz Ahmad Faiz in the poem?
- iii. How do the stylistic devices and the sources of foregrounding bring to the fore the key themes of the poems.

Stylistics combines literary study and linguistics together and this is what fascinates the researchers. This study is expected to be of great significance for the ones interested in English language and literature, especially for those who are particularly interested in stylistics. In addition, the study expects to inspire the future researchers to embark on stylistic analysis of various literary works. Moreover, the study hopes to stimulate interest in stylistic research so that this area in general and the works of Pakistani writers in particular can be researched and investigated and the established views can be re-examined.

2. Review of the Related Literature

According to Crystal (1985), linguistics is the academic discipline that investigates language scientifically. Stylistics is part of this discipline and it studies some aspects of language variation. Stylistics is a branch of linguistics that investigates principles and the results of the selection and the use of lexical, grammatical, phonetic and other language means for the transfer of thoughts and emotions under different circumstances of communication. Short (1996) says that stylistics is the study which deals with the analysis of literary texts by applying linguistic approach. In other words, stylistics analyzes literature by implying linguistic tools of analysis. Short consider stylistics to be more important than other fields of linguistics. He says that stylistics not only deal with the linguistic forms used in a text but also with semantics by analyzing the plot and overall message of a piece of literature. So, stylistics can be considered a mediator between language and literature.

Keeping in mind the multidimensional nature of subject and its close connection with linguistics and literature, Enkvist (1973) argues that stylistics can be regarded as a sub branch of linguistics which deals with the different characteristics of literary texts. It can be considered as a branch of literature that

uses different methods of linguistics for the analysis of a text. It can also be regarded as an independent field of study which eclectically and freely maneuvers various methods from linguistics and literary study.

Stylistics is the study of style. Murtaza and Qasmi (2015) say that style is the individual mode of expression of a writer. It is one's own way of putting his/her conceptions and thoughts into words. Two writers might be having same thoughts about a particular issue such as a political, religious or societal issue but their way of expression will be different from each other. A specific vocabulary a particular writer chooses, a specific syntactic structure a particular writer selects, and a shape a particular writer gives to his paragraphs will be different from the other writers. According to Chatman (1971), style is a product of individual choices and the patterns of choices among linguistic possibilities. All the writers have the same linguistic possibilities but every writer makes different choices from the other writers and this is what makes the writers different from one another. When two writers write about a same topic, they write differently from each other. Their style will be totally different from one another. The selection of words, the sentence structure, and their graphology will be different from one another. In stylistics, a text is analyzed at different levels such as phonetic level, phonological level, morphological level, syntactic level, graphological level and semantic level. In stylistics, the literariness of a text and foregrounding in a text is investigated.

a) Foregrounding

Foreground is a word usually used in art, having opposite meaning to background. It is a very general principle of artistic communication that a work of art in some way deviates from norms which we, as members of society, have learnt to expect in the medium used and that anyone who wishes to investigate the significance and value of a work of art must concentrate on the element of interest and surprise, rather than on the automatic pattern. Such deviations from linguistic or other socially accepted norms are labeled as foregrounding, which invokes the analogy of a figure seen against a background (Leech, 1968). The concept of foregrounding is that of contrast; and as applied to a text, the contrast is applied to the norms of a text (Hasan, 1985). For foregrounding, background is necessary. If there is no background, there will be no foregrounding. The already established rules, regulations, conventions and norms of language work as background and deviation from these rules, regulations, conventions and norms get foregrounded. If a writer strictly follows the established norms of language and does not deviate from it, he will not be appreciated by the general readers because people usually appreciate newness. If there is no newness in the poem, there will be no foregrounding and when there will be no foregrounding, the text will not be appreciated by the interpreters. In stylistics, the notion of foregrounding is used by Leech and Short (1981) to refer to ‘artistically motivated deviation’. It refers to the range of stylistic effects that occur in literature. It can occur at the phonetic level (e.g., rhyme, alliteration), the phonological level, the

grammatical level (e.g., ellipsis, inversion), or the semantic level (e.g., irony, metaphor).

There are two sources of foregrounding:

i. Parallelism

ii. Deviation

The introduction of extra-regularity into a text results in parallelism and this extra-regularity, then, gets foregrounded. Parallelism is the opposite of deviation. This extra-regularity can be introduced into a text at different levels such as phonological, morphological, syntactic, pragmatic, semantic, and graphological level etc. Deviation is another source of foregrounding. Deviation is, contrary to parallelism, the introduction of irregularities into a text. The move away from already established norms is called deviation. Like parallelism, it can be at different levels.

3. Research Methodology

This is an analytical research work in which the researchers look into different stylistic features found in a selected poem “*Don’t Cry, My Child*” by Faiz Ahmad Faiz. The methods of stylistic analysis put forwarded by Leech (1969) in a “*Linguistic Guide to English Poetry*” and Wales (2001) in a “*Dictionary of Stylistics*”, are of vital importance as far as this study is concerned. Both put forward the ways of analyzing a literary text. They propose different devices for analyzing a text. According to them, foregrounding, parallelism, verbal repetition, rhyming and metrical scheme, figurative language, ambiguity and indeterminacy are some of the key concepts which must be analyzed while having stylistic analysis of poetic language. They also favor that any piece of poetry should be analyzed at different levels- phonological, figurative, thematic etc. The current study also attempts to analyze the poem “*Don’t Cry, My Child*” by Faiz Ahmad Faiz at different levels and investigate the various stylistic devices and diverse sources of foregrounding employed in the poem.

4. Analysis and Discussion

4.1. Phonological level

Phonology is one of the branches of linguistics that deals with pattern of sounds in language. It studies how sounds are organized in language to form words. It is concerned with the study of how speech sounds are organized in the mind and used to convey meaning. It studies two types of devices: sound devices and literary devices

4.1.1. Sound devices

Sound devices are also known as musical devices. These are the devices used by the researcher to make poetry a special form of art. Poets use sound devices to create auditory imagery for their readers. The sound devices they use are alliteration, consonance, onomatopoeia, repetition, assonance, rhyme, and cacophony etc. Sound devices that are used in “lullaby for a Palestinian child” are the following:

Alliteration	Consonance	Assonance	Repetition	Rhyme scheme
<p>Left, land May, make Cry, cry Make, more</p>	<p>Don't, child Has, dozed After, crying, for An, eternity After, eternity Just, taken From, lifetime, of From, lifetime Your, brother Left, for Left, alien, land Elusive, butterfly Chasing, dreams Your, sister Sister, to Sister, foreign Married, never- ending Your, very Courtyard Dead, received Sun, its Sun, funeral Received, burial Brother, sister Cold, buried Sun, moon From, afar</p>	<p>Cry, my Mummy, just After, eternity Alien, land Never, future Never, ending Mummy, brother Are, watching From, afar May, make</p>	<p>At the beginning of every stanza, there is repetition. Don't cry, my Child, Don't cry The pronoun “your” is repeated in every third line of each stanza. Other repetitions are: Has just, has just The dead, the dead</p>	<p>In the first two stanzas, the rhyme scheme is abcd. In the next two stanzas, the rhyme scheme is abac. In the 5th stanza, the rhyme scheme is abacd. In the last stanza, the rhyme scheme is abcdcef.</p>

<p>Arg, from May, make Cry, make Some, more Cry, more Make, more Smile, may Smile, all- Come, back Play, silent Silent, disguise</p>			
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4.1.1.1. Consonant Cluster

The sequence of two or more than two consonant sounds is called consonant cluster. It can occur at the beginning of a word, middle of a word, and at the end of a word. When it occurs at the beginning of a word, it is called initial cluster. When it occurs at the middle of a word, it is called medial cluster and when it occurs at the end of a word, it is called final cluster.

The three types of consonant clusters used in the poem are as follows:

Initial consonant clusters	Medial consonant clusters	Final consonant clusters
C ry	A fter	Ch ild , ch as ing
F rom	A nguished	Don't, dream s
B rother	Exist ence	J ust, court yard
D reams	Butter fly	Angu ished , i ts
S mile	Court yard	Le ft , lan d
P lay	S is ter	C old

4.2. Morphological level

The study of word formation and word structure is known as morphology. It involves the study of “word derivation” in which words are formed from other words, “word inflections” in which grammatical category of a word changes within syntactic category of the word, and “morpheme”, the smallest unit of meaning or grammatical function.

4.2.1. Morphemes

Various morphemes used in the given poem are listed below:

Free		Bound	Root	Prefix	Suffix
Do	Bath	Dozed	Dozed	Afar	Dozed
Not	Moon	Crying	Crying		Crying
Cry	Cold	Taken	Taken		Taken
My	They	Anguished	Anguished		Anguished
Child	If	Chasing	Chasing		Chasing
Your	May	Elusive	Elusive		Elusive
Mummy	Make	Dreams	Dreams		Dreams
Has	Some	Married	Married		Married
Just	More	Ending	Ending		Ending
Off	Smile	Received	Received		Received
After	Back	Buried	Buried		Buried
For	One	Watching	Watching		Watching
An	Day				
Eternity	Play				
Of	Disguise				
Existence	Gone				
Brother	Foreign				
Left	Future				
Alien	Very				
Land	Dead				
The	Sun				
Sister	Funeral				

4.2.2. Word Formation Process

Word class to which inflection applies	Inflectional Category	Affix used
Noun	Numbers	Dreams

Verb	Past participle	Dozed <u>ed</u> Buried <u>ed</u> Received <u>ed</u> anguished <u>ed</u> married <u>ed</u> Taken <u>en</u>
	Present participle	Chasing <u>ing</u> Watching <u>ing</u> Ending <u>ing</u>
Indefinite aspects	1st form of verb	Cry, make, smile, come, play
Continuous aspects	Present participle	Crying, chasing, watching

4.2.3. Word Derivational Process

Word class to which derivation applies	Derivational category	Affix used
Noun	-ence	Exist <u>ence</u>
Adjective	-ed, -ive, -ing, -ied	Anguished <u>ed</u> , elusive <u>ive</u> , ending <u>ing</u> , buried <u>ed</u>

4.2.4. Parts of Speech

Noun	Verb	Pronoun	Adverb	Adjective	Preposition	Conjunction	Article
Child	Cry	My	Just	Anguished	Has	And	An
Mummy	Dozed	Your	After	Alien	For	If	A
Daddy	Crying	It		Elusive	Of		The
Lifetime	Taken	They		Foreign	From		
Existence	Left	His		Never-	To		
Brother	Chasing			ending	In		
Land	Gone			Funeral	With		
Butterfly	Married			Dead			
Dreams	Received			Cold			

Sister				Buried			
Future	Watching			One			
Courtyard	Make			Silent			
Sun	Come						
Bath	Play						
Moon							
Burial							
Day							
Disguise							

4.3. Syntactic level

On the syntactic level, the patterns of phrases, clauses and sentences are studied. The different patterns of phrases, clauses and sentences are checked to see if there is any regularity in them and how this regularity contributes to the construction of meaning.

There are six stanzas in this poem. Every stanza begin with the same words i.e. don't cry, my child. The first two lines of every stanza are in present tense. The 3rd line of the first 4 stanzas is in present perfect tense and the 4th and 5th line of the 5th stanza is in the present perfect tense.

- i. Your mummy has just dozed off.
- ii. Your daddy has just taken leave.
- iii. Your brother has left for an alien land.
- iv. Your sister has gone to a foreign land.
- v. The dead sun has received its funeral.
- vi. The dead sun has received its burial.

4.3.1. Phrase Patterns

The DMN pattern is constantly repeated in the poem. “D” stands for determiner, “M” for modifier, and “N” for noun. In the noun phrase “the elusive butterfly”, *the* is determiner, *elusive* is modifier, and *butterfly* is noun.

Determiner	Modifier	Noun
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The	Elusive	Butterfly
An	Alien	Land
A	Foreign	Land
A	Never-ending	Future
The	Dead	Sun
The	Dead	Moon
The	Cold	Sun
The	Buried	Moon

The third line of every stanza starts with a determiner and a noun. This pattern is constantly repeated in the every stanza. These all patterns add to the musicality of the poem.

- i. Your mummy
- ii. Your daddy
- iii. Your brother
- iv. Your sister
- v. Your courtyard
- vi. Your mummy

4.4. Pragmatic level

Pragmatics is a field of linguistics that deals with the importance of context in the construction of meaning. It studies how context contribute to the general understanding of a text. Faiz Ahmad Faiz is also called revolutionist as he belonged to an era where people faced many problems and Faiz wanted to highlight those problems and bring change. The context of his time has an enormous effect on his writing. His works are revolutionary in nature and the theme of his poems revolves around the revolution. At the time of Faiz Ahmad Faiz, the families were in trouble. The children were forced to cry. This poem contains words that reflect the age of Faiz Ahmad Faiz. At the beginning of every stanza, the word “cry” is repeated twice that shows that the children and the society were in trouble. In every stanza, different words such as cry, eternity, anguished existence, alien land, foreign land, never-ending future, dead sun, funeral, dead moon and buried moon are used that indicate the gloomy environment of Faiz’ times. Keeping in mind the context of Faiz’ time, one can easily understand the poem. The repetition of these several words emphasizes the key themes of the poem.

4.5. Sources of Foregrounding

4.5.1. Parallelism in the Text

The introduction of extra-regularity into a text is known as parallelism. Parallelism can be at the level of phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics etc. The extra-regularity is introduced into the text through the repetition of the same lexical items, same clauses, same sentences, same sentence structures and the use of words that convey almost the same meaning. In the poem, extra-regularity can be found at different levels. Some instances of parallelism at phonological level are:

- i. **Don't cry my child Don't cry**
- ii. **Your mummy daddy brother and sister**
- iii. **The dead sun has received its funeral bath The dead moon has received its burial.**

Similarly it can be found at morphological level as well. For instance,

- i. **Your** daddy
- ii. **Your** mummy
- iii. **Your** sister
- iv. **Has** just, **has** just

Apart from parallelism at phonological and morphological level, extra-regularity is also there at the syntactic level. Same phrase structures and syntactic structures have been used by the author to achieve his predetermined aims. Some instances of parallelism at syntactic level are the following:

- i. **Don't cry my child Don't cry**
- ii. **Your mummy has just.....**
- iii. **Your daddy has just.....**
- iv. **Your brother has.....**
- v. **Your sister has.....**
- vi. **The dead sun.....**
- vii. **The dead moon.....**

The examples given above follow the same phrase structures; such as D+N and D+M+N, and sentence structures; such as S+Aux.V+Adv+V3, S+Aux.V+V3, and S+Aux.V+V1ing+O etc. Moreover, in the first line of every stanza, present indefinite tense is used. The third line of every stanza is in present perfect tense. The same patterns are repeatedly used in the poem such as DMN (determiner modifier noun) and DN (determiner noun). The word "cry" is used 16 times in the poem that shows the gloomy

nature of the poem. The other words used in the poem such as dozed, anguished, dead moon, dead sun, funeral, and burial also contributes to the gloomy environment of the poem. The same theme is repeated in every line of the every stanza. In every line we can find words that, in one way or the other, contributes to the general meaning of the poem. The words used in the poem are semantically related with one another.

4.5.2. Deviations in the Text

Moving from established rules, regulations and conventions of language is known as deviation. Deviation refers to the irregularities in the text. When a poet deviates from already established norms of a language, it gets foregrounded. In the poem, deviations of various kinds can be found such as phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic deviations. For instance, the poet says,

“Your father has just taken leave from a lifetime of anguished existence.”

It is semantic deviation because life has no physical existence from which you can take leave.

In the 3rd stanza, ***butterfly of dreams*** is another semantic deviation. There is no “*butterfly of dreams*” in real life.

In the 4th stanza, the poet says that ***your sister has married to a never-ending future***. No one can get married to future because it has no physical existence.

The dead sun, the dead moon, the cold sun and ***the buried moon*** are the other examples of semantic deviation. The poet says that the dead sun has received its funeral bath. It is semantic deviation because it is not possible to give funeral bath to sun in real life.

5. Conclusion

The study analysed the poem “Don’t cry my child, Don’t cry” written by Faiz Ahmad Faiz from the perspective of stylistics. Stylistics is one of the important areas for understanding the motivated use of diverse linguistic items and phrase and syntactic structures, which, as a result, lead to the improved understanding of a piece of literature. The study found that the author, Faiz Ahmad Faiz, has employed several stylistic devices in his poems, such as alliteration, consonance, repetition, assonance, rhyme, and cacophony etc. All the devices add to the musicality of the poem and make the poem beautiful. Apart from the diverse stylistic devices used in the poem, the author has used several sources in order to foreground diverse important aspects of the poem, such as parallelism and deviation. The author has made

effective use of these sources to foreground different things. Through the use of these stylistic devices and sources of foregrounding, the author has brought to the fore the key themes he wants to convey to the general readers.

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Appendix

Poem

Lullaby for a Palestinian Child

Don't cry my child Don't cry,
Your mummy has just dozed off
After crying for an eternity.

Don't cry my child Don't cry,
Your daddy has just taken leave

From a lifetime of anguished existence.

Don't cry my child Don't cry,
Your brother has left for an alien land
Chasing the elusive butterfly of his dreams.

Don't cry my child Don't cry,
Your sister has gone to a foreign land
Married to a never-ending future.

Don't cry my child Don't cry,
In your very courtyard
The dead sun has received its funeral bath

The dead moon has received its burial.

Don't cry my child Don't cry,
Your mummy daddy brother and sister,
The cold sun and the buried moon,
They are all watching you from afar.
If you cry they make you cry some more,

If you smile they may all come back one day,
And play with you in silent disguise.

(Faiz: Merey dil Merey Musafir, pp.63-65)