

Manuscript on stylistic analysis of sonnet 29 by William Shakespeare

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Abstract

The present study deals with the stylistic analysis of Sonnet 29, written by a very eminent poet, dramatist, and sonneteer, William Shakespeare. This analysis has been done keeping several categories in mind, such as graphological, grammatical, phonological, morphological, and metrical analysis, to study in depth the linguistic elements of Sonnet 29 along with what the poet wants to convey through portraying a state of hopelessness, failure, melancholy, and later positivity in the presence of his beloved. Stylistic techniques are used to unveil the hidden beauty of the poet's sentiments and writing technique. Since stylistics analysis deals with linguistic devices that impart expressive or literary refinement to written discourse, this analysis aids in comprehending how Shakespeare uplifts from negative thoughts to positive ones. This analysis delves into the theme of the sonnet, the poet's historical background, structural components, linguistic devices, concluding with a conclusion, and references.

Keywords: Style; Stylistics; Shakespeare; Graphology; Phonology; Morphology; Syntax.

1. Introduction

1.1. Style

The word style comes from the Latin word *stilus*. A style can be any particular method or approach we use to accomplish a task; it might be a manner or an approach. Style is generally defined by how something looks. Everybody's personality reflects a certain style. An individual's style also conveys his or her thoughts. In linguistic study, style comes under sociolinguistics and is used to explain the way a language is used in order to maintain social relations. It could be used to characterize an author's manner of writing (Cicero, Brutus, 100), although the more frequent term for literary style was *genus dicendi*, "mode of speech" (Leeman 1963).

1.2. Stylistics

A subfield of applied linguistics called stylistics studies textual style, particularly—though not only—in literary works. Another name for it is literary linguistics. The study of stylistics focuses on the characters, clichés, and other rhetorical strategies that give a writer's work variation and individuality. It combines literary critique with language analysis. According to Katie Wales in "A Dictionary of Stylistics," 2nd edition (Pearson 2001), "the goal of most stylistics is not simply to describe the formal features of texts for their own sake but in order to show their functional significance for the interpretation of the text or in order to relate literary effects to linguistic causes where these are felt to be relevant."

1.3. Levels of stylistics analysis

To do stylistic analysis of any literary piece one should keep the following elements in their mind-

- Phonetic level- This level deals with the production and perception of speech sounds.
- Phonological level- At phonological level we study sound patterns.
- Graphological level- At this level we examine graphology of the language that is the written language.
- Syntactic level- Syntactic level examines the syntax or grammatical structure of the language.
- Morphological level- Prefixes, suffixes, coinage, inflection, derivation these elements fall under this category.
- Semantic level- This level deals with the literal meaning of the given text.
- Pragmatic level- Contrary to semantics, this level deals with the contextual meaning.
- The Lexico-syntax level- It is the study of the way in which individual words and idioms tend to pattern in different linguistic context; on the semantics level in terms of stylistics.

1.4. Scope of this study

This study shall be stylistic, and the analysis will be conducted through the use of the different levels of stylistic analysis. This paper will be of great benefit to learners of English language and literature and those who are interested in the field of stylistics.

2. About the poet

William Shakespeare, an English poet, playwright, and actor, was born at Stratford upon Avon in 1564. The day that people most frequently commemorate his birthday is April 23, which is also said to be the day that he died in 1616. During the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods of the English Renaissance, Shakespeare was a well-known writer. At the age of eighteen, William Shakespeare wed the twenty-six-year-old Anne Hathaway. Together, they had three children. Shakespeare's career took a major turn when his first printed works were published in London. Two lengthy pieces were "Venus and Adonis" (1593) and "The Rape of the Lucrece" (1594). Shakespeare wrote 38 plays, two narrative poems, 154 sonnets, and many other poetry in his lifetime. He lost his original manuscripts to time. The First Folio, compiled of 36 of William Shakespeare's works, was released in 1623, seven years after his death. The collection was put together by two of his acquaintances, John Heminges and Henry Condell. We would not have known around half of Shakespeare's plays if not for the First Folio. Gibson (1997) notes that the first 126 sonnets, out of a total of 154, focus on a young man who is "beautiful but also unfaithful, neglectful, selfish, and cold-hearted." On the other hand, from Sonnet 126 onward, the sonnets are addressed to a woman known as the Dark Lady. Shakespeare is older than her, and she does not adhere to the Petrarchan ideas of beauty.

Shakespearean sonnets follow the same structure:

- Contain three quatrains and a couplet.
- Written in iambic pentameter.
- Follow the rhyme scheme of abab cdcd efef gg.

Quatrains contain the main theme and couplet portrays summary of the sonnet or a change of ideas.

2.1. Introduction of the sonnet

When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
I all alone beweep my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself, and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,
Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
Haply I think on thee- and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;
For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

It examines themes of hopelessness, self-doubt, and the transforming influence of friendship and love. In the sonnet, the speaker first bemoans his own failings and sense of inadequacy before finding consolation and comfort in the memory of a cherished friend or lover, whose very presence has the power to change his perspective on life. The first two quatrains have a tone of negativity and melancholy, whereas the third quatrain and the final couplet show happiness and positivity. The speaker starts the first quatrain by describing how hopeless and alone he feels. He bemoans his unlucky situation and longs for things to be different. The speaker is jealous of people who seem to be in better situations and feels cut off from society. To express his internal agony, he makes use of imagery of darkness and clouds. The speaker continues the depressing theme in the second quatrain by thinking back on his own transgressions and failings. Feeling rejected and cursed, he makes negative comparisons to those who appear more prosperous and well-liked. The speaker's feelings of inadequacy grow worse as he focuses on his own lack of skill and luck. The speaker's tone changes in the third quatrain as his spirit starts to rise. He gets comfort from thinking of a beloved, despite his earlier feelings of hopelessness and jealousy. He is lifted from his earlier condition of melancholy by the mere thought of or presence of his beloved, which provides him comfort and joy. The speaker's outlook changes from one of self-pity to one of thankfulness for his love. The final couplet resolves the issues raised in the previous quatrains. Here, the speaker claims that the mere mention of his beloved completely changes his perspective on life, even in spite of his prior emotions of hopelessness and unworthiness. Just having his sweetheart by his side gives him the impression that he is the richest and happiest person on the planet. This couplet serves as the sonnet's triumphant coda and emphasizes the redeeming power of love.

2.2. Themes of the sonnet

- Isolation and Despair: The speaker expresses thoughts of hopelessness and loneliness at the opening of the poem. He bemoans his own unlucky situation and feels cut off from society and neglected by luck.
- Self-worth and Inadequacy: The speaker struggles with feelings of inadequate and poor self-worth. He feels low in social standing, talent, and fortune, which makes him feel hopeless and insecure about himself.
- Redemption through Love and Friendship: Though initially hopeless, the speaker finds comfort and atonement in the memory of a cherished friend or romantic partner. The speaker's perspective is altered and comforted by this person's presence, which helps him overcome his dejection.
- The Transience of Fortune: The poem explores the fleeting nature of luck and how quickly things may alter. The speaker's attitude changes from dejection to satisfaction, demonstrating how life's outcomes are erratic.
- The Power of Perspective: The power of perspective is emphasized throughout the sonnet through the speaker's changing mood. A shift in perspective can bring back optimism and contentment, even in the midst of hardship.

3. Methodologies

3.1. Graphological level

- The Sonnet has fourteen lines, three quatrains, and a rhyming couplet that ends it. It is written in the traditional Shakespearean manner. The rhyme scheme used in the sonnet is abab, cdcd, efef, and gg. The sonnet is written in iambic pentameter.
- There is capitalization at the beginning of each line, which is an example of foregrounding. Apart from this, the poet has made no use of foregrounding anywhere in the sonnet.
- Shakespeare has made no use of underline, italic, or bold letters for highlight purposes; he has also made no use of apocopes and syncopes.
- Shakespeare has used historical deviation in this sonnet in lines 10, "Haply I think on thee-and then my state" and line 13, "For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings."
- Shakespeare has also used grammatical deviation in the line 2, "I all alone beweepe my outcast state," line 9, "Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising," line 10, "Haply I think on thee- and then my state," and line 11, "Like to the lark at break of day arising".
- Lines 11 and 13 are the only lines in the sonnet with no punctuation mark. At the end of each line, there is a comma, except for lines 8 and 12. There is a semicolon at the end of lines 8 and 12, and a full stop at the end of the sonnet.
- The poet has used several punctuation marks like comma, semicolon, apostrophe (to indicate possession), em dash (line 10), and full stop (line 14).
- Shakespeare has used full stop only once in the sonnet; that too at the end, this shows a final end to the thought.

3.2. Grammatical level

- The sonnet begins with the line "When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes." Here, we have a dependent clause ("when in disgrace with fortune") followed by a prepositional phrase ("with men's eyes"). The subject of the sentence is implied ("I"), and the verb is "am" or "be." The use of pronouns is notable throughout the sonnet. The speaker refers to himself with the pronouns "I" and "myself," emphasizing his personal experiences and reflections.
- The sonnet contains several verb tenses. The present tense is used to describe the speaker's current state and actions, while the past tense is used to express his wishes and desires. For example, "I all alone beweepe my outcast state" (present tense) and "Wishing me like to be one more rich in hope (past tense). In the line "And look upon myself, and curse my fate," we have a coordinating conjunction ("And") connecting two independent clauses ("look upon myself" and "curse my fate"). The verb "look" is followed by a prepositional phrase ("upon myself"), and the verb "curse" is followed by a direct object ("my fate").
- The line "Wishing me like to be one more rich in hope" contains the gerund phrase "Wishing me," acting as the subject of the sentence. The adverb "like" is followed by a prepositional phrase "to one more rich in hope" that functions as a comparative adjective phrase modifying the subject.
- In the line "Featured like him, like him with friends possessed," we have a passive construction with the verb "featured" followed by a prepositional phrase "like him" and a participial phrase "with friends possessed," modifying the subject.
- The final couplet "For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings/That then I scorn to change my state with kings" consists of two independent clauses connected by a coordinating conjunction "that." The verb "brings" is followed by a noun phrase "such wealth," and the verb "scorn" is followed by an infinitive phrase "to change my state with kings."
- The sonnet features parallelism and repetition, particularly in the structure of the quatrains and the concluding couplet. This repetition helps to create a rhythmic and cohesive flow in the poem.
- In line 9, we have an example of anastrophe: "Haply I think on thee—and then my state." Normally, the word order should be "I haply think on thee," but Shakespeare rearranges it to create a poetic rhythm and highlight the speaker's thoughts.

3.3. Phonological level

This level deals with the study of sound system.

- Rhyme scheme

| The first quatrain | Rhyme scheme | The second quatrain | Rhyme scheme |
|--|--------------|---|--------------|
| When, in disgrace with fortune and men's <u>eyes</u> , | A | Wishing me like to one more rich in <u>hope</u> , | C |
| I all alone beweepe my outcast <u>state</u> , | B | Featured like him, like him with friends <u>possessed</u> , | D |
| And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless <u>cries</u> , | A | Desiring this man's art and that man's <u>scope</u> , | C |
| And look upon myself, and curse my <u>fate</u> , | B | With what I most enjoy contented <u>least</u> ; | D |
| The third quatrain | Rhyme scheme | The rhyming couplet | Rhyme scheme |
| Yet in these thoughts myself almost <u>despising</u> , | E | For thy sweet love remembered such wealth <u>brings</u> | G |
| Haply I think on thee- and then my <u>state</u> , | F | That then I scorn to change my state with <u>kings</u> . | G |
| Like to the lark at break of day <u>arising</u> | E | | |
| From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's <u>gate</u> ; | F | | |

The sonnet 29 is a typical example of Shakespearean sonnet with the rhyme scheme of abab,cdcd,efef,gg which was introduced by William Shakespeare.

- Alliteration- The poet has used alliteration at various places in the sonnet:

| Line | The verse | Alliteration |
|------|---|---------------------------------------|
| 2 | I all alone bewEEP my outcast state, | All alone |
| 6 | Featured like him, like him with friends possessed, | Like him, like him |
| 8 | With what I most enjoy contented least; | With what |
| 9 | Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising, | These thoughts |
| 10 | Haply I think on thee- and then my state, | Think on thee- and then my state |
| 11 | Like to the lark at break of day arising | Like to the lark |
| 12 | From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate; | Sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's |
| 14 | That then I scorn to change my state with kings. | That then |

- Assonance and consonance- Assonance is the repetition of a vowel sound in a line of a verse or any literary piece. In the sonnet 29, lines 5 and 10 are the perfect examples of assonance since there's repetition of the sound /i/ in line 5, "Wishing me like to one more rich in hope," and the sound /e/ in line 10, "Haply I think on thee- and then my state.". On the other hand, consonance is the repetition of a consonant sound in a line of a verse or any literary piece. Lines 7, 9, and 12 are the perfect examples of consonance since the consonant sound /s/ is repeated in all of them: "Desiring this man's art and that man's scope," "Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising," and "From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate," respectively.
- Euphony – Euphony is a literary term that is used to give a harmonious poetic effect that is pleasant and melodious. Euphony comes from a harmonious combination of sounds and words. For instance, the following lines exhibit euphony through their rhythmic flow and pleasing sound combinations.

| Line | The Verse |
|------|--|
| 1 | "When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes," |
| 10 | "Haply I think on thee- and then my state," |
| 13 | "For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings" |

- Repetition – Poetic devices such as repetition allow poets to utilize the same words or phrases more than once. Examples of this literary trick are found in lines 6 and 7 respectively.
"Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,"
"Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,"
- Metrical analysis – Sonnet 29 by William Shakespeare is written in iambic pentameter with a total ten syllables in each line, with five iambs each consisting of one unstressed syllable followed by a stressed one. This technique was first used by Geoffrey Chaucer and later popularized by William Shakespeare. Below, stressed syllables have been marked in upper case and unstressed in lower case.

When, IN disGRACE with FORTune AND men's EYES,
I ALL alONE beWEEP my OUTcast STATE,
And trouble deaf HEAVen WITH my BOOTless CRIES,
And LOOK upON mySELF, and CURSE my FATE,
WishING me LIKE to ONE more RICH in HOPE,
FeaTURED like HIM, like HIM with FRIENDS posSESSED,
DeSIRing THIS man's ART and THAT man's SCOPE,
With WHAT I MOST enJOY conTENted LEAST;
Yet in THESE thoughts MYself ALmost DEspisING,
HapLY I THINK on THEE- and THEN my STATE,
Like TO the LARK at BREAK of DAY ariSING
From SULLen EARTH, sings HYMNS at HEAVen's GATE;
For THY sweet LOVE reMEMbered SUCH wealth BRINGS
That THEN I SCORN to CHANGE my STATE with KINGS.

- Consonant cluster - It is a linguistic term. It is a sequence of consonant sounds in a word. It may be at the beginning of a word (initial cluster), within a word (medial cluster), or at the end of a word (final cluster). Below are some examples of consonant clusters from Sonnet 29 by William Shakespeare.

| Initial consonant cluster | Medial consonant cluster | Final consonant cluster |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| | Disgrace | |
| State | Fortune | Outcast |
| Trouble | Enjoy | Friends |
| Cries | Bootless | Rich |
| Myself | Curse | Desiring |
| Almost | Wishing | Art |
| Friends | Remembered | Kings |
| Scope | Outcast | Almost |
| Think | Sullen | Wealth |
| Thoughts | Despising | Thoughts |
| Break | Contented | Haply |
| Change | Possessed | Lark |
| Arising | | Earth |

3.4. Morphological level

At this level, we examine the word structure, how it is formed, and where affixes have been used. here we also examine their grammatical category and grammatical structure.

- Affixes

| Prefix | Suffix |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Disgrace (dis+ grace) | Men's (men+'s) |
| Beweep (be+weep) | Eyes (eye+s) |
| | Cries (cry+s) |
| | Possessed (possess+ed) |
| | Wishing (wish+ing) |
| | Featured (feature+ed) |
| | Contented (content+ed) |
| | Thoughts (thought+s) |
| | Despising (despise+ing) |
| | Sings (sing+s) |
| | Hymns (hymn+s) |
| | Heaven's (heaven+'s) |
| | Kings (king+s) |

The sonnet is written in the first person, which gives it a more personal, emotional feel. If he had spoken about it in the third person, he would not be discussing his own experience, and the people and events would have seemed far away.

- Parts of speech

| Noun | Pronoun | Verb | Adverb | Adjective |
|----------|---------|------------|--------|-----------|
| Disgrace | | | | |
| Outcast | | | | |
| Fortune | | | | |
| Eyes | | | | |
| State | | Beweep | | |
| Trouble | | Cries | | |
| Heaven | | Look | | Deaf |
| Art | I | Wishing | | Alone |
| Man | My | Desiring | | Bootless |
| Fate | Myself | Enjoy | When | Rich |
| Hope | Me | Despising | Almost | Possessed |
| Friends | One | Think | Haply | Contented |
| Scope | Him | Break | All | Sullen |
| Thoughts | What | Arising | Then | Featured |
| Lark | Thee | Sings | | Sullen |
| Earth | Thy | Remembered | | Sweet |
| Hymns | | Brings | | |
| Gate | | Change | | |
| Love | | Curse | | |
| Wealth | | | | |
| Scorn | | | | |
| Kings | | | | |
| Day | | | | |

| Preposition | Conjunction | Article | Determiner |
|-------------|-------------|---------|------------|
| In | | | |
| With | | | Least |
| Upon | | | Most |
| Like | | | More |
| To | And | The | This |
| On | Yet | | That |
| At | | | These |
| Of | | | Such |
| From | | | |

- Lemmatization- Lemmatization is the process of identifying a lemma from a given word or phrase. A lemma is a dictionary entry of a word, i.e., the word you find in dictionaries.

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|--|
| When, in disgrace with fortune and men eye, I all alone beweep my outcast state , And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cry, And look upon myself, and curse my fate, Wish me like to one much rich in hope, Feature like him, like him with friend possess, Desire this man art and that man scope, With what I much enjoy content least; Yet in these thought myself almost despise, Haply I think on thee- and then my state, Like to the lark at break of day arise From sullen earth, sing hymn at heaven gate; For thy sweet love remember such wealth bring That then I scorn to change my state with king. |
|--|

3.5. Poetic devices

Poetic devices are tools and methods of adding meaning, depth, and beauty to any literary piece, especially verses. These devices help to evoke emotions, and they give an aesthetic touch to the literary work. Below are examples of poetic devices that have been used in Sonnet 29 by William Shakespeare.

- Simile: This poetic device is used to show comparison between two or more entities using words like “like” and “as.” In line 5, the speaker compares himself to someone who is more fortunate and expresses his desire to be like him, “like to one more rich in hope,” which is a good example of a simile. Another example is in line 6, “Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,” and line 11, “Like to the lark at break of day arising.”
- Metaphor: This poetic device is also used to show comparison between two or more entities without using any comparative words. For example, in line 3, “bootless cries” shows that the speaker is trying to compare their cries for help to “bootless” or futile attempts to reach heaven. This suggests that the speaker’s pleas go unheard and unanswered, emphasizing his sense of despair and loneliness.
- Personification: This poetic device is used to give human characteristics to non-human things. For example, in line 3, “deaf heaven” is a good example of this poetic device since the poet has attributed human characteristics to non-human things because heaven can’t be deaf like humans. Another example is in line 12, “sullen earth,” since earth can’t be bad or I’ll temper it like humans.
- Enjambment: This poetic device is used to show the continuation of a sentence from one line to another. Lines 13 and 14 are the perfect example of this poetic device: “For thy sweet love remembered, such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.”
- Pun: Pun is a humorous use of a word with different meanings each time. In the sonnet 29, Shakespeare has used the word “state” three different times with three different meanings. He first used the word in the second line to denote his social state, then he used the word in the tenth line to denote his mental state, and finally he used the word in the last line to denote the kingdom of a king.

4. Conclusion

Finding out Shakespeare’s writing style and techniques for the sonnet was the goal of this investigation. The sonnet was subjected to multiple stylistic analyses in order to analyze it thoroughly. Additionally, it has been demonstrated that a literary work of writing contains a variety of hidden elements that the reader must examine in order to interpret and understand it. Words are the keys that open the door directly to the interpretation and meaning of any given literary genre. We can appreciate the creativity of English literature, particularly English poetry, through its stylistic analysis. Shakespeare has used a number of literary and linguistic elements in Sonnet 29 to emphasize his main points. In the sonnet, the poet uplifts from a state of self-loathing to self-confidence in the mere presence of his beloved, which gives a way to confidence in oneself. The sonnet is a linguistic miracle in addition to its artistic qualities.

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