

Stylistics and Projection of Motifs in a Short Narrative's Beginning with particular reference to Katherine Mansfield's *Miss Brill*

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This paper aims to examine the fact that stylistics analysis of particularly the introductory part, at the beginning of any short narrative, can yield substantial projections about the narrative's central idea. The author encodes subtle clues in contextualising the story that may lead the readers or students of literature to construct a probability check to unlock the story's key message. The exactitude of these predictions depends upon the purpose of the author. Often the ending of the story may contrast the predictions made. This juxtaposition between expectations and reality may be a conscious effort of the author. The author may intentionally try to push the swing of the readers' expectations to the other side of the arc to create a degree of suspense so that when the readers sway back to the reality, the intensity of climax may fully be experienced, thereby culminating into a cathartic effect. In any case, the predictions are necessary to align the readers' expectations and keep them sufficiently engrossed. This research paper deploys stylistic means zooming to examine only the first and the last paragraphs of the short narrative of Katherine Mansfield's famous short story *Miss Brill* to investigate the predictability of the underlying idea in the story. An analysis of this kind may be helpful in contextualisation, specifically in literature and ELT classrooms, where students can be trained to focus on the use of language and study the use of literary devices that bind a literary work of art and form trenchant views on the use of language in doing so.

Key words: *Predictability, stylistics projection, contextualisation, literary stylistics, Katherine Mansfield, "Miss Brill," stylistic analysis, systemic functional analysis, rhetorics, ELT*

Introduction

Stylistics, a significant branch of Applied Linguistics, is a scientific way to study a text or discourse in a particular context aimed for its detailed interpretations supported by retrievable and testable techniques drawing upon different approaches from rhetoric, formalist, structuralist,



functionalist to cognitive, pedagogical, pragmatic, and neuroscientific. Although Stylistics is a relatively new sub-discipline, in the twenty-first century, it has been firmly established as a branch of study, taught and researched in the university departments of language and linguistics worldwide. Several journals of international repute are publishing researches that focus on various aspects of stylistics as a discipline or apply its mechanics to investigate the authorial language design in a selected piece of text.

Texts under stylistics analysis stand out for their distinctive style quotient. Specifically, in literary writing, an author's creative talent depends on the meticulous selections they make from an array of options they have in language, practicing a high degree of provident care. A creative artist may sometimes let loose the reins of his imagination to venture into unexpected terrains by breaking the conventions, thereby setting an unprecedented example to attain the desired effect. The purpose of literary stylistic analysis is to study the language by analysing it carefully and rigorously to be in a position to fully realise its magic, either to decode the underlying message or to explain the various levels of language functioning harmoniously. Partha Sarathi Misra (Misra, 2015) makes an interesting point in the role of stylistics for a literary critic and the linguist. She says, "Stylistics is a bridge between the literary critic and the linguist and makes a synthesis of the literary critic's observation and the linguist's literary intuitions. While a linguist treats discourse as an example of the language system, the literary critic tries to find out the underlying significance of a discourse." Sorlin goes on to say that stylistics practices '*indisciplinarity*.'¹ Thus, depending upon the aim of the study, either a stylistically relevant passage or the entire text (even novels) are taken into consideration for the analytical purpose.

However, there is more to stylistics than just scrutinising the language system for itself or even to explore the underlying value of the discourse. In reading a short narrative, the beginning and the ending paragraphs may be of particular interest to the readers as these are the two sections in which the expectations are built and illusions shattered, respectively. An author's use of language, literary tools, and rhetorical devices, play a crucial role in attracting the attention of the readers to the minute details at the commencement of the story and also keeping sufficiently distracted to realise the catastrophic end. Stylistic analysis can help in studying the predictability of the central motif at the beginning of a narrative text to see if those expectations are fulfilled later or not. This statement means that the narrative categories of abstract and orientation² of a story may hold several cues related to the central idea that, when stylistically checked, may emerge. Leo Spitzer's

¹ "Nothing less than a neologism could best define the essence of stylistics: it is a discipline practising *indisciplinarity*, in the sense that stylistics has created a space of its own by borrowing both its objects and theoretical tools from different fields in the social sciences." (Sorline, 2014)

² Abstract and orientation are the first two of the six categories by William Labov in which the background to the narrative is set and characters introduced. "...Labov isolates the core, recurrent feature that underpin a fully formed natural narrative. Six categories are rendered down from this body of data (Labov, 1972: pp. 359-60, cited in Paul Simpson, 2014, p. 122). Each of these categories serves to address a hypothetical question about narrative structure (What is this story about?', 'Where did it take place?' and so on) so each category fulfils a different function in a story. (Simpson, 2014, p.122)



view that the smallest detail of language can unlock the ‘soul’ of a literary work is what Geoffrey Leech and Mick Short agree, and that is what forms the motivation of the current analysis.³

This paper hypothesises that stylistics analysis of the introductory part, at the beginning of any narrative, can result in exciting predictions about the critical message that the author intends to propose. The author encodes subtle clues in contextualising the story that may lead the readers or students of literature to construct a probability check to unlock the story’s key message. The exactitude of these predictions depends upon the purpose of the author. Often the ending of the story may contrast the predictions made. This juxtaposition between expectations and reality may be a conscious effort of the author. The author may intentionally try to push the swing of the readers' expectations to the other side of the arc to create a degree of suspense so that when the readers sway back to the reality, the intensity of climax may fully be experienced, thereby culminating into a cathartic effect. In any case, the predictions are necessary to align the readers' expectations and keep them sufficiently engrossed. This research paper attempts a microscopic stylistic analysis zooming to examine only the first and the last paragraphs of the short narrative of Katherine Mansfield's famous short story *Miss Brill* to investigate the predictability of the underlying idea in the story.

Katherine Mansfield, whose fame rests chiefly on her distinct art of narration, observational powers akin to Anton Chekhov (Forward, 2016), is rightly regarded as contributing to the development of short stories in English as a genre. ‘She is a connoisseur of the ripples that mean so much more than waves, a collector of little emotions caught on the wing, never pinned or bottled in her pages, but kept alive there in all their fragile iridescent colours’ (Littell, R., 1922 in Forward, 2016) *Miss Brill* (Mansfield, 2012) is a famous short story that has been read worldwide and appreciated in literary circles as well as has been of interest to stylisticians. To the literary experts, the story is significant because it artistically sketches the character of the protagonist, maintains a degree of suspense through intelligent use of symbolism, limited third-person point of view, and climaxes with a sudden and bitter awakening, ironically ending on a melancholic note within a narrow framework of a short narrative. Stylisticians have also successfully attempted an analysis of the story to delve deep into the layer of language, either using Lexico-grammatical categories⁴ or by functional analysis.⁵

³ “Spitzer’s insistence that the smallest detail of language can unlock the ‘soul’ of a literary work is an extreme expression of the philosophy to which we subscribe: by making ourselves explain how a particular effect or meaning is achieved we not only understand better how it is achieved (which in itself is essential to the critical task of explanation) but also gain a greater appreciation of what the writer has created” (Leech and Short, 2007, p.2)

⁴ See A Stylistic Analysis of “Miss Brill” by Katherine Mansfield by Shenli Song published by Review of European Studies, Vol. 1, No 2, December 2009

⁵ See Articulating the microcosm of a short story: a functional stylistic analysis of Katherine Mansfield’s ‘Miss Brill’, published by IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS), Vol. 21, issue 12, Version 8 (Dec, 2016) pp 22-29

The Character on Focus

Mansfield's *Miss Brill* is a short story that artfully presents a peculiar character with the titular name, an aging English introvert who is also a spinster or probably a widow teaching in France. The story spans just within a few hours of a day in Miss Brill's life depicting her usual Sunday afternoon routine of visiting Jardins Publiques, premeditating to unfold her joyless life within the precise narrative. The primary focus of this narrative is Miss Brill herself. Her lonely, dreary life eventuated into pretentiousness, which she so diligently simulated in front of the world. Mansfield's unique style in general and narrative technique, in particular, laced with deft use of stylistic features and an unanticipated ironical turn of events not only succeed in providing an authentic account of her protagonist but also compels the reader to commiserate with her in the catastrophic ending of the story.

Miss Brill had narcissist tendencies fancying to be held in high esteem by others. She lives in a delusion where she conjures herself as an actress: an eminent and presumably an elegant well-off woman. Her judgemental nature reveals itself when she visits the park after a long and seemingly miscalculated decision of dressing choices. It reinforces her self-worth and fuels her self-deceit, winning her odd self-gratification, especially when we notice her derogatory remarks in her contemplations on them. Her real-life encounter with the people in the story takes place only in the park, where she sits silently on her 'special' seat to eavesdrop on others, pretending otherwise and has somehow made an art of it. Her delirium comes to an abrupt awakening when she is forced to face the harsh reality of her actual condition by the scathing remarks made by two teenage lovers in the park. For the first time, her art of silently listening does her more harm than good, culminating into climax, and her very adorable fur becomes an agent of the disintegration. The theme of alienation manifests when she returns dejected to her tiny apartment with a renewed sense of loneliness and grief. However, the story's end is of particular interest to the reader. There is a degree of poignancy towards Miss Brill's insult; we pity her, but her state of denial is still unblemished as she transfers the injury to the fur and throws it away as if blaming it for her humiliation.

Throughout the story, we see the minor characters through Miss Brill's detached observations, appraising them by her train of thoughts and monologues that keep us captivated to her external world. Rarely do we realise that her views and remarks on others stem from her own misery and loneliness. The external world she sees and weaves for us is actually a manifestation of her dreary inner consciousness that is bereft of youth, fortune, and companionship. The story has minimal physical actions as far as the protagonist is concerned, and it is the others in the tale performing interpersonal functions.

The beginning and the concluding paragraphs are of particular interest to a stylistician. It is in the first paragraph that the narrator transports us to the superfluous world of Miss Brill weaved so deceptively well by the storyteller, and in the concluding section that we are jolted to the reality along with her. Mansfield has primarily tried to draw attention to Miss Brill's observational



powers and has attempted to create an impression that she was fastidious, not missing even the minutest detail encompassing her. Her astute observation and acute judgments are the sole foundations of the shock we receive at the end of the story when we realise that the seemingly perfect Miss Brill failed to acknowledge her very own shortcomings when she so cheerfully ridiculed them in others.

Theoretical and methodological framework:

The study adopts two approaches and compares them to examine the selected sections of the stories. It follows Geoffrey Leech and Mick Short's (2007) checklist of linguistic and stylistic categories as one of the analytical tools. The authors in their renowned book 'Style in Fiction: A linguistic introduction to English fictional Prose' provided a detailed checklist for aspiring stylisticians to perform an analysis from various lexico-grammatical areas, and the book has become a bible of the budding stylisticians as well as experts in the field.

The research article also used M.A.K Halliday's functional approach (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014) to study the meanings encoded, thereby providing a detailed account of the feeling evoked in the beginning and concluding paragraphs of the study.

Grammatical/Syntactical Analysis

Adjectives

The opening paragraph sets the context of the story by defining the time and place of action. Although choosing a setting is almost always the first step in a creative writing process, in Miss Brill, it is accentuated to a degree of holding a special significance. Miss Brill is a character-based story; therefore, an analysis of the initial setting is crucial to help us understand the cause and effect relationship between the backdrop of the story and the character in question to comprehend the protagonist's resulting actions and motivations. Thus, Mansfield's generous use of adjectives for descriptive purposes in the opening paragraph of the story attracts our attention before any other word-class and appears to be a deliberate choice. Besides, the author's considerable use and handling of adjectives with in the first sentence is a prominent and notable stylistic feature. They amount to the maximum number (6 out of 31; 19.4%) in the paragraph compared to any other sentence, and they are the most significant number of content words used after nouns. The figure also matches the efficacy as the narrator's choice of lexemes has a positive connotation both in semantic sense and symbolic references, causatively reflecting in the protagonist's good mood. However, the author limits her adjectival scope to only three categories: sensory, evaluative, and emotive. The sensory adjectives outscore the other two (18 out of 31). Within the sensory, it is the visual adjectives that are of particular interest. By subtle use of specific colours like 'blue,' 'gold,' white,' 'red,' and 'black,' Mansfield evokes clear mental images of the background in the mind's eye and are essential explicatures, providing sustainable grounds for implicatures.

Thirty-one adjectives are used in the first paragraph out of a total of 267 words. Out of the 31, 8 are used to describe the weather, 16 for the fur, and only 3 for Miss Brill (excluding the repetition of the word 'sad.'). The weather on a particular day acts as a necessary catalyst in bringing forth a change in Miss Brill's mood resulting in her temptation to "decide(d) upon her fur." The first impression that the author makes of the weather on the readers is through the lexical item "fine," graded further with two attributive adverbs "so brilliantly" to accentuate the impact. After creating the primary impression of a beautiful day, the author continues to complete the description by presenting details by the use of colours and comparisons. The proposition made by 'blue sky with gold and great spots' is sufficient explications to envision a sunny day with a clear sky like 'white wine.' Such lovely weather can obviously make anyone 'glad,' but Miss Brill was not glad about the weather; instead, she was pleased with her decision on choosing to wear the fur. The idea of 'fur' on a 'fine' day is striking and puzzles the readers as, quite obviously, the entailments encoded are mismatched. The juxtaposition is further validated by the fact that the author began her story and the first sentence with a concessive clause and subordinating conjunction 'although' to show unexpected results and contrast. However, before we doubt Miss Brill's rationale and critically adjudge her, the author quickly comes to her rescue. Mansfield returns to further describing the weather conditions, affirming the air to be 'motionless,' and having a certain degree of chillness, underscoring the chillness by making use of a simile "like a chill from a glass of iced water before you sip." The author embeds another main clause at the end of the same complex sentence by adding a piece of contrasting information: 'and a leaf came drifting-from nowhere, from the sky.' The contradictory information combined with 'and' instead of a subordinating 'but' or 'however' is a stylistic feature intended to downrank the initial proposition of air being motionless to bolster Miss Brill's important decision of choosing to wear her fur. It also indicates Miss Brill's astute observations, which reveal later in the story. We also notice repetition in the parallel structure "from nowhere, from the sky" to highlight the point of observation stated above. Apparently, the author seeks to postpone the judgment of her main character until the climax of the story to add the elements of suspense, shock, irony, and pity that are crucial to effectuate poignancy at the end of the story. The third-person point of view limited to the main character is also a conscious decision in this regard.

Mansfield used the most significant number of adjectives to describe Miss Brill's fur (16/31; 52%). Miss Brill was extremely fond of her fur, and there are several tools that the narrator uses to express her affection. The repetition of the lexical item 'little' six times, five times being for the fur, certainly shows an attempt to obtain emphasis, and the referent 'fur' immediately becomes the focal point of our attention. The use of two attributive adjectives 'dear' and 'little' before the fur reveals the fact that the fur was more than just a piece of clothing for Miss Brill, and she longed to use it as it lay shut in a black box for most of the time. Mansfield use of the freest form of direct speech in "Dearest little thing!" - fuses the thought and the expression of Miss Brill. She repeats this style the second time when Miss Brill calls the fur as 'a little rogue' before returning to her indirect narrative reporting. This method is an essential indication of the bond Miss Brill shares with her fur because the narrator removes herself and any punctuation or reporting phrases, thus truncating the sentence to allow us close access to Miss Brill's thoughts. It also reveals the

fact that Miss Brill was so lonely that she treated the fur as her baby or a pet, referring to it as 'little rogue' twice and its 'dim little eyes,' and that "she could have taken it off and laid it on her lap and stroked it." She even personifies it by putting words into its mouth.

Moreover, by removing the variation between narrative report and speech, Mansfield adroitly forms the impression that Miss Brill and her fur are unified and relatively indistinguishable aspects of the same state. Later in the story, we notice that she is very sharp in observing the clothing of other characters and is quick to perceive that the 'shabby ermine toque' of the woman in the park was old and her hands in glove were like 'a tiny yellow paw.' However, she never noticed or diligently ignored the fact that she herself has turned old, and so has her fur.

The narrator pre- or post- modifies those adjectives that even faintly suggest adverse effects. This technique proved crucial to avoid the readers from predicting Miss Brill's impending melancholic end. The method channelises the negativity of whatever there is dark or dull to dilute its strength, for instance, by adding 'some' before black or 'little' before 'dab of black sealing wax.' Although the nose 'wasn't at all firm' is followed by a declaration 'never mind' that could be fixed when it was 'absolutely necessary,' thus diminishing its decrepit condition. Miss Brill's situation was the same as the fur. She was shut away in her tiny apartment like the fur in the black box, devoid of any human contact, aging silently. Thus, the onset of weather that brought the fur out of the box actually rubbed the life back into her. Although she feels a strange sadness, it is curbed by her rephrasing it as 'not sad, exactly' but 'something gentle.' Just as she ignored the fact that she was old, desolate, and depressed, similarly, the fur's decrepit condition was intentionally overlooked, and the use of adjectives as pre and postmodifiers help in achieving that effect.

Nouns

The nouns used by Katherine Mansfield are mostly common and physical without being abstracted. However, the concrete names are intellectualised by acts of perception. A noteworthy stylistic feature in the story is the author's use of homonyms of human (and animal) body. Nearly a quarter of the nouns (11 out of 42, 26% approximately) are the nouns referring to body parts, namely: mouth, hand, eyes, nose, tail, ear, lap, hands, arms, and bosom. Naming the specific body part in the description, sometimes twice, is apparently a deliberation to show Miss Brill's keen and calculating observation. The writer grades almost every noun by either force or focus by particularising almost every noun down to its sharp exactness as in 'a faint chill', 'iced water', 'little thing', 'good brush', 'little eyes', 'red eiderdown', 'black composition', 'little dab', 'black sealing wax', 'just by her left ear'. Mansfield's reiteration of the protagonist's observations reappear in the story when Miss Brill critically scrutinises the minutiae of almost everybody in the park with the same incisiveness, for instance, the conductor's 'new coat', an English Man's "dreadful Panama hat" and the lady's "buttoned boots", the little French dolls 'dressed up in velvet and lace', two peasant women 'with funny straw hats' and the lady in the shabby "ermine toque" and her hands "in its cleaned gloves". The use of the specific nouns from the noun-family of clothing is, again, modified by her perception through the use of adjectives like 'new,' 'dreadful,'



'buttoned,' 'funny,' 'shabby,' and 'cleaned.' Either force or focus further grade the adjectives by the use of lexis instead of intensifiers. Such a careful rendition of others' accouterment, as well as their actions coupled with the disparaging remarks bordering on ridicule, convinces the readers that there is no place for such imperfections in flawless Miss Brill's impeccable world until her affectations are exposed leading to the ironical ending.

Miss Brill's derision is voiced by Mansfield statement presented as the freest form indirect thought: "They were odd, silent, nearly all old, and from the way they stared, they looked as though they'd just come from dark little rooms or even—even cupboards!"

The nouns standing as separate units and not as group nouns or family nouns posits the theme of detachedness, enacted by Miss Brill's loneliness, detachment from the world and her judgemental nature. She was aloof, without any family attachments, and her only human interaction was through eavesdropping on strangers. She listened to their disconnected conversations and dwelled on them. The fact that she noticed every single detail from the weather to clothing, from the idiosyncrasies of people around to the music and even presence and absence of a piece of almond in her honey-cake every Sunday, reveal that there was nothing substantial in her own life to preoccupy her thoughts and she desperately longed for conversations but never initiated one. The author presents her thoughts when a couple seated next to her remain silent:

They did not speak. This was disappointing, for Miss Brill always looked forward to the conversation. She had become really quite expert, she thought, at listening as though she didn't listen, at sitting in other people's lives just for a minute while they talked around her. (Mansfield, 2012)

Thus, the nouns in the story may represent the character of Miss Brill, who was intelligent enough to notice the quirks in others but strangely 'odd' to overlook her own.

Verbs

An analysis of verbs used in the opening paragraph of Miss Brill reveals that the author has made use of a large number of copular verbs that aide in her omniscient narrative technique. The copular and transitive choice of verbs further highlight the cause and effect relationship vital to the story's framework. For example, the sentence below from the paragraph is an exciting indication of the author's use of a series of verbs and infinitives to express the cause and effect relationship between the fur and its resultant effect on Miss Brill. "Oh, how sweet it was to see them snap at her again from the red eiderdown!" The author's use of the verb phrase 'snap at' is especially interesting in this context. The sentence could have been written in a number of different ways but the particular use of the word 'snap at' suggests a physical action originating from the fur as if it were alive to quickly grab Miss Brill from the eiderdown and/or had been waiting for an opportunity to do so which caused her to feel happy. Another sentence that exhibits the fact that Miss Brill felt her fur to be her living companion is in the sentence: "She could have taken it off and laid it on her lap

and stroked it.” The use of the parallel structure in the use of infinitives only reiterates the fact stated above and is a conscious choice of the narrator that only pronounces Miss Brill’s loneliness.

Style as Choice⁶:

Mansfield style discrimination and Miss Brill’s character can be better comprehended through an analysis of the text through a system of transitivity expressed by the ideational meta-function of M.A.K Halliday’s Systemic Functional Grammar (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). According to Geoff Thompson, in Systemic Functional Grammar,

The use of the term 'choice' does not necessarily imply a conscious process of selection by the speaker: what we aim to uncover through a functional analysis are the meaning-wording options that are available in the language system and the factors that lead to produce a particular wording rather than any other in a particular context (Thompson, 2014).

An analysis of the opening paragraph is critical because it sets the context of the story, and we get to know Miss Brill through the choices made by the author in delineating her character in a certain way and underlying motives that are exposed only at the end.

We notice a fairly organised use of transitivity patterning in the opening paragraph of *Miss Brill*. The section may roughly be divided into four parts in the way they have organised in depicting transitive pattern. The first part captures relational processes, followed by the most significant part showing the material process, and concluded with a combination of mental and behavioural processes. Although there are some breaks in between with sparse verbal and odd existential processes, the author's choice of the relational, material, and mental process outscore the others. Within the first sentence, we see the four types of processes mentioned above manifesting themselves in the same pattern, namely: relational, material, mental, and behavior. The story opens with a set of attributive relational processes represented by the description of the qualities of the weather immediately followed by the material process in the comparison “like white wine splashed over the Jardins Publiques.” This cause results in her mental state to be 'glad' reflected through the mental process, which is conveyed by her behavior in deciding to wear the fur explicated through the behavioural process. The rest of the paragraph follows the same arrangement.

After the relational process in the first part of the paragraph, as already mentioned afore, we notice a series of declarative sentences that show material processes. The physical action showed by Miss Brills’s taking the fur out of the box, shaking out and brushing the moth-powder, and finally, rubbing the life back is the only material process that we notice that can be attributed to Miss

⁶ “The experiential function is an important marker of style, especially so of the style of narrative discourse, because it emphasises the concept of *style as choice*... Choices in style are motivated, even if unconsciously, and these choices have profound impact on the way texts are structured and interpreted.” (Simpson, 2014, p. 22)

Brill. They appear only in the opening paragraph and the concluding paragraph. In the rest of the story, any indication of a material process is represented only by the other people where Miss Brill assumes the role of a Senser or Behavior watching silently and rejoicing herself.

Followed by the material process, we notice a mental process encoded in the statement, “She felt a tingling in her hands and arms.” Paul Simpson writes, “Mental processes constitute the second key process of the transitivity system and are essentially processes of *sensing*.” (Simpson, 2014) Unlike the material processes in which the actor is in charge of the actions directed towards a goal, in a mental process, a senser’s reaction, whether it is cognition, a feeling, a response, or a perception, is involuntarily triggered by a phenomenon. In any case, the role of the senser is predetermined as a resultant mental action against the phenomenon. Even though the weather and fur were favorable presences for Miss Brill, she could not avoid feeling sad, albeit she counterbalances them with her constant repression. The paragraph concludes with the author counteracting mental processes by a behavioural process:

“And when she breathed, something light and sad—no, not sad, exactly— something gentle seemed to move in her bosom.” (Mansfield, 2012)

In terms of patterning the transitivity processes, the concluding paragraph stands as a stark contrast to the opening in the choice of style. It is also an essential example of foregrounding in the story as all the sentences are simple sentences or compound sentences, and the author has abstained from using any subordination to create complex sentences at all, unlike earlier anywhere in the story. She very proficiently captures the experiential meta-function represented by a series of material processes expressed through the actions of Miss Brill. There are only five sentences with nine clauses. Among these nine clauses, eight show a quick chain of material processes, and, for the first time in the story, we see Miss Brill making haste, which also foregrounds her initial actions. Thus, the syntactic structure comprising simple sentences representing the material process adds to the quick movement also expressed by the semantic and functional meanings. After reading the story, we are well equipped to form implicatures about the abrupt and swift actions of Miss Brill and perceive her odd character as she was all of that which she ridiculed in others. In the final paragraph, she acts briskly, and we feel her discomposure and embarrassment in front of herself and the outsiders upon being exposed by the young couple. The fur assumes the role of a Behaviour when “crying” rather than Miss Brill, and once again suppressing her genuine feelings of sadness, pretends to be unaffected, to be a mere Senser only performing the mental process of ‘hearing.’ This style is intentionally chosen by the narrator to highlight the fact that Miss Brill was forced to face the brutal reality of her old age and meager means which has been so diligently avoiding and yet, customarily, once again suppresses it by ascribing the behavior to an inanimate object: that it was the fur that was offended and heartbroken, but in actuality, the readers understand that it was Miss Brill herself as the fur cannot cry (Ahmadi et al., 2018).

Rhetorical Devices

Stylistics and rhetoric are inseparable, and the fundamental core of stylistics lies in the rhetoric of the classical world. (Burke, 2018, p. 2). One of the most versatile and useful rhetorical devices metaphor because it connects one subject with another that may not be obviously related. When used appropriately, it allows the writer to do this in a way that is both stylistically pleasing and concise. (McGuigan, 2016, p. 5).

Metaphor and Simile: In *Miss Brill*, Mansfield starts her very first sentence strategically with the rhetorical devices of metaphor and simile: “the blue sky powdered with gold and great spots of light like white wine splashed over the Jardins Publiques.” In describing the weather, Mansfield makes it sound poetic to amplify the beauty of the weather. The rhetorical devices in the example above, helps the reader envision the climatic conditions with a precise mixture of cold and heat represented by blue sky and golden spots of light, thus hinting at a favorable weather condition that creates a clear mental picture and appeals to the senses. It also suggests contradicting the choice of Miss Brill to wear her fur. The metaphor also hints at her ingenuity and attention to detail. The blue sky powdered with gold and great spots of light may also indicate that this time was a golden period in the usual dull life of Miss Brill and she eagerly awaited it, and even though they were great, they were few like spots as they appeared for a brief period before the winter.

A simile further reinforces the metaphor: “... like white wine splashed over the Jardins Publiques”. Wine in culturally connotes purity, and the color white has the same meaning figuratively. Wine often stands for happiness, celebrations, and friendship in society and literature (whitewine.co.uk, 2011). To Miss Brill, the park was the only place to experience life as she got to see different people and peeped into their lives. It provided a temporary relief into her loneliness and procured pure joy. She considered herself a vital part of the ritual of visiting the park every Sunday and was even sure that she would be missed if she did not come. She made this routine a holy ritual, and the use of ‘white wine’ strategically corresponds to this habit.

Parallelism

Mansfield makes use of parallelism in her initial paragraph to show how intently and carefully Miss Brill her afternoon in getting her fur ready to be out in the sun once again. The use of parallelism also adds persuasiveness for the readers to be convinced about the importance of the fur to Miss Brill.

Personification

Among many other rhetorical devices, the one that most particularly attracts readers’ attention is the use of personification. Personification emphasizes Miss Brill's passion for her fur. It appears distinctively in the opening paragraph. She adored it and treated it as a living creature when she imagines it questioning: “What has been happening to me?” This stylistic tool also reminds of



her life that was bereft of love and companionship – and she found them both in her fur. She personifies it at the beginning and the even in the end, when she feels depressed. However, in the end, personification plays a different role, and the aim of the author changes. It no longer stands as evidence to Miss Brill's love for the fur, and instead, it reflects her determination to suppress her genuine feelings. In any case, the personification as a device renders the narrative its soul.

Conclusion

The stylistic analysis of the introduction and conclusion thus confirms that Mansfield has made deft use of various syntactic and semantic tools as well as literary and rhetorical devices to encode the central idea of the story. Miss Brill is a character-based story, and the commencement of the short narrative establishes a relationship between the character and the text. The readers envision the personality traits of Miss Brill and clearly decipher her fondness for her fur. At the end of the story, the stylistic study elucidates a shift in Mansfield's style to heighten the irony, unraveling the bitterness of Miss Brill's reality. Hence, a stylistic analysis focussing on the setting and background of the story is crucial to uncover the life of the story that may lie throbbing under the beautiful layers of language which may be beneficial to both literary analyst or a linguist.



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