

Warrior Traits of Pakistani Tribal Community: A Stylistic Analysis of Lexical and Syntactic Choices in “*The Wandering Falcon*”

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Abstract

This study has conducted a stylistic analysis of The Wandering Falcon, a novel by Jamil Ahmad, a famous Pakistani English prose writer. The novel has been analyzed stylistically in terms of lexical, grammatical and figure of speech items to give a better insight of the theme of warrior traits of Pakistani tribal community of FATA. The novelist has selected specific style markers to introduce the readers to the ideological and cultural message blended in the text. Following the toolkit of linguistic and stylistic categories proposed by Leech and Short (1987), the study has used both the qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques. The different lexical, grammatical and figures of speech items from the text of the novel were collected by using frequency based quantitative techniques as well as content based qualitative interpretation to explore their moral and regional characteristics. The stylistic analysis reveals that the author has used such lexical, grammatical and figure of speech items which demonstrate the warrior traits of FATA’s tribes. This study will help the other researchers to better understand how authors use various stylistic devices to construct and reshape the meanings.

Keywords: Stylistic devices, Lexical choices, Syntactic choices, Warrior traits, FATA tribe

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the study

The world aspires to know about The Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan. There are some questions which are popping up in the minds of the people who keep an eye on international politics: Why is terrorism associated with FATA area of Pakistan? Why are the tribes of this area challenging the writ of the government? Either these people are warriors by nature or compelled to take arms against the invaders and government agencies. This study has analyzed the text of *The Wandering Falcon*, which shows that the author has observed during his stay in this region of Pakistan that these people are warriors by culture and he has used such language which shows the warrior traits and characteristics of these tribes.

The present study is the stylistic analysis of *The Wandering Falcon* written by Jamil Ahmad, a famous Pakistani English prose writer. *The Wandering Falcon* is a



realistic picture of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). FATA is a semi-autonomous tribal region in Pakistan which has its border with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Baluchistan and Afghanistan's provinces. In Abbas's (2006) description, FATA consists of seven tribal agencies (districts) and six regions. There are more than 60 Pashtun tribes which are living in this region of Pakistan. Carrying arms is a customary practice of these tribes. Honor and bravery are considered the most prominent features of their life. In this region, Afridis, Shinwaris, Mohmand, Mehsud and Wazir tribes are prominent. These tribes have different warrior and chivalric traits. Shinwaris are widely known as a courageous and fighter tribe whereas the Afridis are famous for their hot-tempered attitude and excellent fighting skills. Similarly, Mohmands are called natural guerilla fighters because of their influence and power as a tribe. Mehsud, as recorded by Caroe (1980), have never surrendered before any foreign power who has ever invaded their land.

The Wandering Falcon presents a collection of short stories about nomadic, warrior tribes settled in the region of FATA and bestowed with bravery and courage in their nature. It is usual for them to fight for *Ghairat* (the tribal sense of honor) which forms the central structure of their tribal social life. The spirit of bravery and courage is not limited to men but even their women and children are fearless, resilient and expert in fighting skills. These tribes have many features which represent the warrior nature of these tribal people. The *Wandering Falcon* truly reflects their social, economic and moral values and how they are embedded within their warrior cultural norms. The author's choice of lexical bundles, syntactic patterns and figurative expressions clearly reflects his deep understanding of tribal life which he developed after working for two decades with these nomadic tribes. This study shows how successfully the writer has employed the stylistic devices in the novel, particularly, at lexical and sentence level to depict the warrior traits of these FATA's tribes.

1.2. Language as the concrete vehicle of expression

Stylistics is the study of style in written texts where the linguistic concepts are applied to appreciate literary texts (Malmkjær, 1991; Chapman, 1973; Brumfit & Carter, 1986). According to Leech and Short (1987), it studies the author's writing style as an exercise of selecting the linguistics choices. Jamil Ahmad has used that language which conveys the writer's thoughts and feelings very clearly, as Irele (1981) said, "Language serves as the concrete vehicle of expression of the imaginative ideas" (p.10). Enkvist (1973, 1989) has explained that the stylistic features which distinguish a text from others are the style markers. The writer has expressed his ideas by using different stylistic devices at Lexico-syntactic levels, such as, nouns, verbs, adjectives, and literary figures of speech. Such style markers have been chosen to aptly convey the ideology and feelings of the writer. According to Cohen (1973), style is in fact the linguistic choices made by the author at various levels including phonological, lexical and syntactic levels. Jamil Ahmad has used his lexis as may be interpreted with reference to Pretorius and Swart's (1982) definition of style, that style is a way to create a special impact on reader's minds by employing the

unique linguistic choices. The dialect, purpose of writing, genre and the period in which the text is produced are the fundamental features to shape a particular style (Spencer, 1964). In this context, Jamil Ahmad's style may be analyzed in the context of Iranian revolution and Soviet invasion in addition to his selection of those lexical, grammatical and figures of speech through which he has attempted to explain the culture, tradition and predominantly the warrior traits of FATA's tribes.

The text of *The Wandering Falcon* also reflects the hidden message of the writer. According to Spitzer (1948), literary stylistics unlocks the soul of a literary work. A true stylistic analysis reveals the implicit message in the text. Widdowson (1979) rightly concludes that stylistics in the study of the implied themes of literary discourse. It is the style through which the content of the text attains its fullest expression and the critic discovers the features of that style which has epitomized the text. Jamil Ahmad has used the style which facilitates the exchange of thought between the author and the reader choosing the appealing lexical and syntactic choices.

1.3. Emerging need to know about tribal culture of Pakistan

According to Fowler (1996), "literary texts do speak and participate in society's communicative practices, and are important in influencing world view and social structure" (p.130). However, to maintain a consistent understanding of the cohesive text, the reader must build up a degree of objectivity (Burton, 1982; Richards, 1960). Similarly, the reader must be an active participant to empathize with the writer's experiences (Selden, Widdowson & Brooker, 2005). Indeed, stylistics in the study of literary discourse (Widdowson, 1979). In the context of the principles of stylistic analysis, this study has analyzed the lexical and syntactic choices which reflect the complex communicative and discursive practices of the local tribal culture through the work of Jamil Ahmad. It is the need to know about FATA's tribes, their culture, ritual and economic conditions. Therefore, this study explores the warrior traits of the FATA tribes of Pakistan through the text of Pakistani English novel, *The Wandering Falcon*. Jamil Ahmad has used different stylistic devices to show tribal sense of superiority. The author of the novel has also used certain symbolic features which reflect the revenge taking habit of these nomadic tribes. The nomenclature of these tribes also shows that these tribes have a sense of superiority which is a leading cause of warriorship. The analysis of *The Wandering Falcon* is helpful for the researchers in the field of language, literature and the general readers in understanding the underlying linguistic patterns for the description of various facets of Pakistani tribal culture. This study will also show how stylistic devices depict the hidden meanings of a written language and how effectively they create impressions on the readers' mind.

2. Methodology

2.1. Approaches and nature of research

The mixed method approach was used in this study by employing the corpus quantitative analysis techniques of frequency count and based on frequency results, the qualitative

interpretation in the specific context of study themes of tribal warrior traits were made. For analysis purposes, selection of those lexical and grammatical choices was made which could better illustrate the warrior traits of tribal people. The lexical choices included nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. For calculating the frequencies of lexical choices at word level, the corpus software AntConc 3.2.4 was used. The later qualitative interpretations of these corpus frequencies results brought to light the complex textual patterns reflecting the author's art to succinctly explain the warrior nature of FATA region along with the socio-economic and culture representations.

2.2. Research in tribal culture: Analytical framework

Following the mixed method approach, the study obtained qualitative data through corpus tools and then qualitative interpretations were made in accordance with the study themes. The comprehensive model presented by Leech and Short (1987) provided the interpretational framework of the selected lexical, grammatical and figures of speech choices, employing the detailed checklist as to how these linguistic choices associate various warrior attributes with the description of FATA tribal culture and everyday life. The frequencies of these lexical items were also determined by using AntConc 3.2.4 software. Accordingly, in sentence and clause types, different kind of sentences were analyzed from the text: either declarative, optative or exclamatory sentences. It was also observed whether there was command, request or exclamation shown in the sentences. Similarly, under figure of speech category simile, metaphor and symbol were selected carefully from the text of the novel. These figures of speech reflected the warrior culture of these tribes.

2.3. Data sampling and delimitation of analytical framework

Being a complex arithmetical method, the sampling procedure was very carefully conducted for true representation of the population, i.e., the entire novel. For this study, three categories from the analytical model were selected, i.e., lexical, grammatical and figures of speech. *The Wandering Falcon* comprises nine different stories and 180 pages, published in 2011. These nine different stories contain 43137 words. The data samples, in the form of related extracts, were collected in relation to the study themes and stylistic devices used to present them, to ensure the maximum representation from the entire novel. This study was delimited to the stylistic analysis only at lexical and syntactic levels.

3. Data Analysis

3.1. Sense of superiority: A major cause of warriorship

The author, Jamil Ahmad associates the term "warrior" with the person who fights for the sake of honor, defense of his tribe or for the honor of his tribe (p. 78). From the text, it is found that the trait of being a warrior is linked to fearlessness and physical strength, to use arms skillfully, and especially for taking revenge and seeking power for maintaining ultimate superiority over the rivals and making one's own day. The choice of peculiar

dress distinguishes tribal valor. The huge erected *turban*, usually worn by the male member of tribal families, symbolizes the superiority and dominance of Pashtun culture. The chief wearing *turban* enjoys the authority of deciding the critical matters and disputes according to his judgment and no member of the tribe can defy his decisions. The text of the novel is full of numerous lexical and sentence references alluding to the sense of superiority of these tribal people. Here are some examples from the text:

"It is not good to hear a Baluch- even a child – cry" (p. 24).

"We do not accept the power of anyone else to decide who our chief shall be or shall not be. (p. 26)

"Our cause is right, because we think it is right" (p. 27).

"They had agreed that their willingness to talk would not compromise their honour in any way" (p. 29).

"They swear by a book, while we swear by our chief- the sardar of our tribe" (p. 30).

"Those with a few patches of land hewn into the high mountain sides would not marry into those who did not have any" (p. 152).

"If the ears of my corn be empty, let them stand as high as those of my rival" (p. 106)

"Those with a few patches of land hewn into the high mountain sides would not marry into those who did not have any" (p. 152)

"A Wazir hunts alone, he is known as the leopard to other men" (p.86)

"There are a hundred and one ways open to a man if he has the will to move" (p. 62)

"We shall go to the capital of this country and see their kings" (p. 55)

These statements show that these people do not bow before others and remain ready to fight for the cause of *Ghairat* and revenge. The case of *honor* is of utmost significance in their lives and they tend to relate every utterance and every action with their *honor* and decide their action of life accordingly. The community is hierarchically organized and at the top *Sardar* or Chief enjoys ultimate authority to influence people's lives and decisions. Every common man, being an essential part of the tribe, gets his maximum share from the community's prestige and ethnocentric superiority.

3.2. Nomenclature: A code of superiority and majesty

Jamil Ahmad very artistically demonstrates the tribal sense of superiority and theme of warriorship by depicting the nomenclature of nomadic tribes of FATA region. It is a dominating culture which affixes the word *Khan* as their surname to associate themselves with the spirit of commanding and leadership. Sardar Karim Khan in the novel ranks himself as *General* because his people have given him this title as a symbol of bravery and fighting spirit (Ahmad, 2011, p. 36). Similarly, *Malik* is not less than the tribal chief

or sub-chief who possesses the authority of punishing the criminals and appreciating the well-wishers of the society. The title of *Jangu Khan*, a person who is always engaged in the fights, clearly reflects the honor and dignity associated with being a warrior. Another title of *Tor-Baz*, the prominent character in the novel, symbolizes the black falcon who wanders among the different tribal people and cleverly collects the useful information. The author has used following titles and names in the text of the novel which show warrior nature of these tribes.

Names & Titles	Literal Meanings
<i>Khan</i>	Commander", "leader", or "ruler"
<i>Sardar</i>	Leader
<i>Jangu Khan</i>	A fighter leader
<i>Ghairat Gul</i>	A person who is symbol of <i>Ghairat</i> (tribal sense of honor)
<i>Roza Kkhan</i>	A person who blocks the others person
<i>General</i>	Leader, ruler (army rank)
<i>Colonel</i>	Leader (a rank in army)
<i>Dawa Khan</i>	a person who claims that he is right
<i>Painda Khan</i>	A fighter
<i>Tor-Baz</i>	Black falcon
<i>Sarmast Khan</i>	A person who is not under control of anyone
<i>Zabta Khan</i>	One who controls
<i>Jalat Khan</i>	A man of great dignity
<i>Daulat Khan</i>	A man having abundant wealth
<i>Mehboob Khan</i>	A leader who is loved by everyone
<i>Sher Beg</i>	A brave man like a lion
<i>Afzal Khan</i>	The supreme leader
<i>Sherakai</i>	One who belongs to the lion's family?

The names and titles highlighted by the author of the text manifest power, command and valor of tribal people.

3.3. War items: Mark of warrior nature of FATA's tribes

The description of war items in the novel also approves the idea that tribal people have the customary use of these arms in their real life. The writer of *The Wandering Falcon* has employed the terms related to war weapons to show how much they love to keep war weapons to fight and use against anyone who challenges their dignity and honor. Here is a brief list of some significant war items, frequently used in the text of the novel.

1. Gun
2. Sword
3. Dagger
4. Stone
5. Grenades
6. Woolen cords

7. Machine guns
8. Dagger
9. Bullet
10. Gun powder

The presence of various nouns of the weapons in the text specifies the significance of war and fights in tribal communities. The *Gun* is an integral part of their everyday life and a symbol of honor and courage. Jamil Ahmad has best described this tribal life as, "a household stove may be allowed to go cold but barrel of a gun must be kept warm" (p.12). The quality and sophistication of weapons signify the superiority over other tribal group. This sense of superiority is measured by the number of male members in the tribe, the quality and number of guns and number of bullets the *Malik* possesses. Another war item used in the novel is *Sword* signifying the power, force, control and authority both inside and outside the tribal sphere. The codes of conduct and dealings which they have established over centuries are established and enforced through sword, a symbol of power. Another similar word used frequently in the novel is of *Dagger*, very commonly found with most of the people. Tor-Baz was especially trained to hold a dagger with him. Mehsud and Wazir tribes jump into mutual fights even today and the use of deadly weapons such as guns, powder, grenades, and machine guns can be fearlessly used in resolving blood disputes or honor claims.

3.4. Carnivore animals and birds of prey depicting warrior nature of FATA's tribes

Jamil Ahmad has used names of different carnivore animals and birds of prey in the text of the novel which show that the tribal people have developed a taste to keep carnivore and birds of prey. These animals with their wild and hunting nature ultimately please the tribal people's spirit of warriorship. Following are some animals that are mentioned in the novel.

1. *Falcon*
2. *Wolves*
3. *Leopard*
4. *Dog*
5. *Eagle*

These carnivore animals have symbolic representation in the novel. The presence of *Falcon* in the title of the novel is quite meaningful and symbolizes the valor and courage of these people. In fact, the author wants to signify in *The Wandering Falcon* that these tribal people are brave hunters and love to keep and associate themselves wild hunting animals. The fifth chapter of the novel uses the title of *wolf* for Mehsud people, "The Mahsuds, because they always hunt in groups, are known as the wolves of Waziristan" (p. 86). Similarly, the Wazir tribe is metaphorically associated by the author with *Leopard*, signifying how they love to hunt alone and fearlessly with unchallenged force, command and sense of superiority. Referring to the Wazir tribe as the *leopard* of

the FATA, the author claims, "A Wazir hunts alone; he is known as the leopard to other men" (p.86).

Similarly, the author has referred to various wild hunting birds to signify the warrior spirit of tribal people. The bird *Eagle*, being famous for its sharp sight, attacking speed and high elevation of flight while hunting its prey, represents the warrior trait of tribal people. Another title of *Tor-Baz*, the prominent character in the novel, symbolizes the black falcon that wanders among the different tribal people and cleverly collects the useful information.

Table 1 below presents a list of words with their frequency, used in the novel text to represent the theme of warriorship. These example words are related with wars and fights directly or indirectly and it can be easily understood how these words constitute their everyday discourse and design their lifestyle.

Table 1: *Summary of lexical representation of theme of warriorship*

Word	Frequency	Word	Frequency	Word	Frequency
Gun	17	Wanted	10	Turban	21
Sword	09	Screamed	21	Power	10
Dagger	06	Sinned	11	Alone	11
Stone	37	Wolves	07	Bravely	06
Grenades	06	Leopard	09	Completely	06
Woolen cord	06	Dog	11	Ghairat	24
Terror	19	Eagle	08	Dominated	11
Cruel	17	Falcon	07	Severity	06
Killed	26	Sardar karim	04	Furiously	28
Frightened	04	Ghairatgul	08	Proud	16
Demolished	05	Sher-Beg	05	Tribes	38
Avenged	06	Malik	09	Conquered	07
Bloodshed	08	Jangu khan	06	Violated	09
Tension	07	Afzal khan	06	Fired	17
Fearful	16	Chief	10	Terrible	20
Crushed	24	General	09	Hostage	11
Black	05	Sardar	20	Kidnapped	10

3.5. Grammatical representation of theme of warriorship

This analysis of the novel has found at numerous places how various types of sentences represent the warrior traits of tribal people. The author of the novel has chosen perfectly the syntactic patterns which explain the situation related to the idea of warriorship. For instance, the text has frequent examples of imperative sentences highlighting control and command and the conditional sentences reflecting one condition over other. Similarly,

the warrior traits of these nomadic people have been signified through the use of appropriate noun and verb phrases. For instance the noun phrase *tribal war* alludes to the simple dispute of the tribal people which once started, assumes the form of long lasting tribal conflicts. Likewise, another noun phrase, *black falcon*, signifies the warrior spirit of Wazir and Baloch tribes dwelling on the border of Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan. *The hunting falcon*, another noun phrase, reflects how the author is representing the warrior nature of these hunting people. Upon asking the identification from Tor-Baz, he proudly declares, "Think of Tor Baz as your hunting falcon that should be enough" (p. 94). The title of the novel *The Wandering Falcon* is in it a noun phrase signifying the warrior spirit of the people of FATA. The verb phrases also, e.g., *shot it dead*, presents a revengeful picture of these people who never take mercy for their enemy; *avenged insult*, brings to the fore that revenge is taken not only for bodily or physical damages but for honor and respect also. That is the reason why Siahpad tribe builds high towers to bury the revenged body.

Below is the list of some selected verb phrases, noun phrases, conditional clauses that represent warrior traits of FATA's tribes. These phrases and clauses are related with wars and fights directly or indirectly and it can be easily understood how these words constitute their everyday discourse and design their lifestyle.

◆ Grammatical representation of warriorship theme:

1. *We have been told to shoot, if necessary*
2. *Frenzied grip*
3. *Engraved rifle*
4. *Rusty gun*
5. *Thick woolen cords*
6. *Savage looking*
7. *The dead warrior*
8. *Boiling with anger*
9. *Don't make it difficult for us*
10. *Turn back, move forward at your own risk*
11. *If you do, we will fire*

3.6. Figures of speech reflecting theme of warriorship

The text of the novel presents numerous figures of speech signifying the idea of warriorship of FATA's tribal people. The most frequently used figurative items include metaphor, simile, hyperbole and symbolism. Simile is a figure of speech which links two dissimilar things that are often introduced by *like* or *as*. For instance, the story of kidnapping, "a wazir hunts alone, he is known as the leopard to other men" (p. 86). The simile "as the leopard" signifies the hunting spirit of Wazir tribes who love to hunt and wander like brave and fearless leopards. The simile of leopard is quite meaningful in the context of tribal people of Wazir community who are being presented as carnivore, fearless, commanding and ruling the other people ruthlessly. This illustrates how the war

and terror is reflected in their everyday life. This technique of using wild animal similes also grabs the curiosity of the readers who presume the tribal people are war lovers and ruthless fighters, void of delicate and soft emotions. Similarly, in the text, many wild animals have been referred to as being similar to warrior nature of tribal people, for instance, lion, leopard and wolf which strengthen the idea that they love to fight and hunt.

Using the figurative expression effectively, the author has frequently used the metaphors to make the text more powerful and authoritative, for instance, the story of "A Pound of Opium", the family names its newborn daughter *Sherakai* (the female cub), reflecting the idea that she would become a strong and brave girl. Different metaphoric representations have been depicted by the author in the text to signify the warrior nature of these tribes. The recurrent use of these symbolic features promotes the warrior nature of this area when they use guns as a sign of *Ghairat* and manhood. The text presents plenty of examples, some of which can be read below:

1. *Stone tower* signifying that the revenge has been taken
2. *Shalwar* a sign of maturity. (Revenge can be taken in this age)
3. *Wolf* signifying strength and power
4. *Leopard* signifying strength and power
5. *Falcon* a wild bird of prey

The apt use of various symbols in the text supports the idea of warrior nature of tribal people. When a boy wears *Shalwar* (local dress), he is considered a grown up and mature person now as he has passed from the transitional phase of childhood to adulthood and now revenge can be taken from him of any crime committed by his family or tribe. As understood by Pashtunwali, a boy is not a mature man till the time he starts wearing *Shalwar*. Following the consistent pattern in symbolizing, the author, for instance in the story of death of camels, has signified various carnivorous animals symbolically representing the tribal strength and power. The list of similes, metaphors and figures of speech signifying the warrior nature is given below of those tribes:

1. *He slides down in small jerks like a broken doll*
2. *A wazir hunts alone, he is known as the leopard to other men*
3. *Think of Tor-Baz as your hunting falcon*
4. *Naming your new born daughter Sherakai*
5. *Tor-Baz the black falcon*
6. *Our cause is right because we think it right*

4. Findings and Conclusion

Stylistics offers a wide-ranging analysis to comprehend and interpret literature in an effective way and appreciate how the style of a particular text represents various textual themes which create a powerful impression on the reader's brain. *The Wandering Falcon*, comprising a systematic collection of short stories, very aptly makes a cultural representation of FATA's nomadic tribes signifying their spirit of warriorship and love of hunting, fighting and associating themselves with fierce animals. The author has

abundantly used various stylistic features, namely lexical, syntactic and figures of speech signifying the warrior nature of tribal society of FATA region. The fundamental reasons around which the inter-tribal and intra-tribal conflicts and hostilities move are *Ghairat* and tribal honor which never let them bow before any rival group. Revenge and uncompromising attitude are the strong characteristics of their tribal life which has been depicted in the novel through plentiful use of various kinds of war weapons. The novelist has selected specific style markers to make the readers understand the tribal life and their cultural values blended in the text. To show how meanings are constructed through interplay of different textual features, the text has employed stylistic techniques at lexical and syntactic level.

The Wandering Falcon written by Jamil Ahmad is a remarkable novel presenting the true picture of FATA's tribal life. The FATA's tribes have been presented as brave and warrior communities. Their entire life moves around valor and courage which they show in different tribal disputes. To live with guns and powder and to defeat the enemy tribes explains their entire lifestyle. The stylistic analysis of the novel reveals how numerous lexical, syntactic and figurative expressions carry the theme of bravery and warriorship. The author has aptly used the lexical and stylistic markers to depict the valor based tribal lifestyle which is truly reflected in their love of war, revenge and hunting. Based on the lexical and syntactic analysis of style, this study will help the researchers in the field of language and literature to better understand how authors use various stylistic devices to construct and establish various social and cultural meanings.

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