

Excerpts from The Picture of Dorian Gray by Oscar Wild Through A Grammatical- Stylistic Analysis



مقتطفات من رواية صورة دوريان غراي لأوسكار وايلد من خلال تحليل نحوي وأسلوبية
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Excerpts from The Picture of Dorian Gray by Oscar Wild Through A Grammatical- Stylistic Analysis

Excerpts from *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wild Through A Grammatical- Stylistic Analysis

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Abstract

This research paper presents a comprehensive grammatical analysis to three Excerpts from Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. The analysis is performed stylistically depending on a grammatical approach. The aim is showing the way Wilde uses language, how he engages language as a device to display the beauty of English language itself, and how he used his talented ability to organize language. This act of his produced the most read novel since it was written. The analysis carried on engaging Leech and Shorts' framework and Foregrounding. The main conclusion arrived at is that the excellence of Wilde's language style lies in its pure zest of the irrelevances in using grammatical structures that the significant arrangement of these into an organic whole. Wilde's language in its artistic way is not an act of intelligence, it is a style of completion.

The Picture of Dorian Gray is Wilde's only novel. It belongs to Gothic, philosophical, suspense, and comedy of manners genre. It first appeared as a novella in the June 20, 1890, issue of Lippincott's Monthly Magazine. *Dorian Gray* received with criticism by critics and readers of



being an immoral story. Later, Wilde published an expanded and revised version of the story in book form the next year. He included a preface that contained a biting response to his critics. He asserted that in literature there is no moral or immoral art. In his view, a book is either written well or written poorly

ملخص

تقدم هذه الورقة البحثية تحليلاً نحوياً شاملاً لثلاثة مقتطفات من رواية "صورة دorian غراي" لأوسكار وايلد. يعتمد هذا التحليل أسلوبياً على منهج نحوي. يهدف هذا التحليل إلى توضيح كيفية استخدام وايلد للغة، وكيف يستخدمها كوسيلة لعرض جمال اللغة الإنجليزية نفسها، وكيف استخدم موهبته في تنظيمها. وقد نتج عن هذا العمل أكثر رواياته قراءةً منذ كتابتها. استمر التحليل في استخدام إطار عمل ليتش وشورتس ومنهجهما في التقديم. الاستنتاج الرئيسي الذي تم التوصل إليه هو أن تميز أسلوب وايلد اللغوي يكمن في شغفه الخالص بالهياكل النحوية غير ذات الصلة، وترتيبها بشكل جوهري في كل عضوي. إن لغة وايلد، بأسلوبها الفني، ليست عملاً عبثياً، بل هي أسلوب تكامل. رواية "صورة دorian غراي" هي الرواية الوحيدة لأوسكار وايلد. تنتمي إلى أدب الرعب القومي، والفلسفي، والتشويقي، والفكاهي. نُشرت لأول مرة كقصة قصيرة في عدد ٢٠ يونيو ١٨٩٠ من مجلة ليبينكوت الشهرية. لاقت "صورة دorian غراي" انتقادات من النقاد والقراء على حد سواء، ووُصفت بأنها قصة غير أخلاقية. لاحقاً، نشر وايلد نسخة موسعة ومنقحة من القصة في كتاب في العام التالي، وأرفقها بمقدمة تضمنت ردّاً لاذعاً على منتقديه. أكد وايلد أنه لا يوجد في الأدب فن أخلاقي أو غير أخلاقي، بل إن الكتاب، في رأيه، إما أن يكون مكتوباً بشكل جيد أو رديء.

Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

Oscar Wilde is a celebrated writer known for his wit, unique style, and commentary on society. Oscar Wilde's philosophy in his life was complex and not centred on a single idea, but it shifted according to the circumstances and conditions he experienced. The philosophy of Aestheticism which is about "Art for Art's Sake" strongly affected his personal life and works. He believed that art should exist purely for beauty and enjoyment, not to teach moral lessons or serve society. Also, he believed in "Hedonism, The Pursuit of Pleasure". Wilde thought that people should enjoy life to the fullest and seek pleasure in beauty and experiences. But later in his life, Wilde realized that too much indulgence



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could lead to suffering. In *De Profundis*, written in prison, he reflected on how pleasure alone was not enough for a meaningful life (Bennett, 2017, p. 167).

The Picture of Dorian Gray is Wilde's only novel. It belongs to Gothic, philosophical, suspense, and comedy of manners genre. It first appeared as a novella in the June 20, 1890, issue of Lippincott's Monthly Magazine. *Dorian Gray* received with criticism by critics and readers of being an immoral story. Later, Wilde published an expanded and revised version of the story in book form the next year. He included a preface that contained a biting response to his critics. He asserted that in literature there is no moral or immoral art. In his view, a book is either written well or written poorly (P. Baldwin, 2000, p.7).

The Picture of Dorian Gray is a classic novel by Oscar Wilde that explores some key philosophical themes. It focuses on the idea of living for beauty and pleasure without thinking about right and wrong. The novel rejects the idea that art should teach moral lessons, instead art exists just for beauty. Though received harsh critique when first published, the novel is now seen as a masterpiece of literature.

Stylistics as a Branch of Linguistics

Stylistics deals with the study of styles used in literary and non-literary language. Different scholars attempt to define stylistics in various ways. According to Leech and Short, stylistics is "the study of the use of language in literature, and the effect of this use on the reader" (1981, p. 13). Widdowson recognizes stylistics as "the study of literary discourse from a linguistic orientation" (2013, p. 3). Similarly, Carter (1995) defines stylistics as "a bridge discipline between linguistics and literary criticism" (p. 1). In the above definitions, the interdisciplinary nature of stylistics is highlighted. Stylistics is that area of study where linguistics and literature meet.

Furthermore, Verdonk defines stylistics as "the study of style in language, as it relates to the distinctive linguistic features of particular texts or genres" (2002, p. 4). And Simpson claims that "stylistics is a method of textual interpretation in which the primacy of place is assigned to language" (2004, p. 2). These two scholars emphasize that stylistics uses language as a tool for interpreting meaning in both literary or non-literary texts.

In addition, Wales describes stylistics as "a discipline that involves the analysis of the language of texts, with particular reference to variation in language choices and how these contribute to meaning" (2011, p. 438). Also, Whiteley and Stockwell (2014, p.4) state "stylistics is progressive,



systematic, transparent, replicable, evidential and textually grounded". These definitions show the broader scope of stylistics to include any text where language variation affects the meaning.

To Jeffries and McIntyre, stylistics is "the study of language in its context of use, focusing on how linguistic forms create meaning in texts" (2010, p. 31). In this definition the role of context in explaining how language and linguistic choices work in different texts to make meaning is highlighted. In the same way, Crystal refers to stylistics as "the systematic study of style in language and how this style varies according to context, audience, and purpose" (1977, p. 66).

Burke states that stylistics "investigates how language works within texts, placing an emphasis on the choices that are made by writers and the effects these choices have on readers" (2014, p. 16). Burke focuses on the link between writer choices and reader response. Lastly, Douthwaite et al., claim that "The ability to perform painstaking textual analysis in order to obtain testable interpretations is the defining characteristic of stylistics and distinguishes it from most methodological approaches" (2017, p. 16).

In brief, while definitions of stylistics may vary slightly, all scholars agree on that stylistics examines how specific linguistic choices influence the meaning and its interpretation and response by the readers.

Grammatical Level in Stylistics

Linguistic stylistics studies how different language choices create meaning and the impact of those choices on how readers interpret texts. Simpson (2004, p. 5) explains that stylistics operates on multiple levels, each contributing to the overall effect of a text. These levels include phonology, lexis, grammar, semantics, pragmatics, discourse, and graphology.

Grammar in linguistics refers to the set of patterns that rule language. Grammatical units are useful tools to investigate the style in a text through examining the grammatical choices of the author, for instance to point out that long sentences containing more than one clause are preferred. However, Mahlberg asserts that "such observations are only the first step and do not constitute an analysis in themselves. An analysis will seek to explain and understand the functions that are fulfilled by the grammatical categories and their configurations in the specific text" (2014, p.250).

Moreover, foregrounding is created through grammatical deviations. Authors usually deviate from grammatical norms in different ways to add to the meaning and to add to the artistic value of the text. Parallelism, for instance, repeating same grammatical pattern in sequence in the same





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sentence or using unusual tenses will make some linguistic units to stand out (Short 2013, p. 47,49).

Leech and Short's Framework

Leech and Short's framework for stylistic analysis, introduced in *Style in Fiction* (2007), provides a systematic method for analysing literary texts. It focuses on linguistic features and their stylistic effects. Leech and short view stylistics as "the (linguistic) study of style, is rarely undertaken for its own sake, simply as an exercise in describing what use is made of language" (2007, p.11). stylistics if it is viewed from the linguist's angle, concerned solely with answering the question "Why does the author here choose this form of expression?" (ibid).

Stylistic analysis can be carried out at different levels. First is the level of Lexical choices (word types, frequency, semantic fields). This level helps understand the author's diction in communicating themes in the text. Second, grammatical structures (sentence complexity, phrase types) which reveals stylistic tendencies in narration and dialogue. Third, figures of speech (metaphors, irony, alliteration) by which literary devices that contribute to a novel's tone and imagery are highlighted. Lastly the Contextual aspects (point of view, foregrounding) are analysed. As it is evident that in this approach no stylistic feature is overlooked in the analysis of a novel (61-64).

In short, Leech and Short's framework describes linguistic features and explains the literary and stylistic impact of those choices. It connects style to meaning by showing how stylistic choices can form themes, characters, and narrative mood.

A checklist of Linguistic and Stylistic Categories

According to Leech and Short's framework the categories for analysis are placed under four general headings: lexical categories, grammatical categories, figures of speech, and cohesion and context. Semantic categories, however, are not listed separately, because they can be arrived at through other categories, for example, lexical categories can be used to find out how choice of words involves various types of meaning (Leech and Short, 2007, p.61). The concern of this research paper is the grammatical categories.

Grammatical Categories

Grammatical category refers to the system and set of rules that govern how words are combined and used to create meaning in a language. In its broader sense, grammar includes both morphology (word structure) and syntax (sentence structure). Grammar is an essential aspect in linguistics that provides guidelines for word order, tense, agreement, and sentence



formation. Leech and Short claim that stylistic analysis at grammatical level is divided into the following subcategories. Several questions are posed to guide the stylistic analysis in each of the subcategories (2007, p.62-63):

a) sentence types. This subcategory is concerned with the following question:

- “does the author use only statements (declarative sentences)?”
- “do questions, commands, exclamations or minor sentence types (such as sentences with no verb) also occur in the text?”
- “If these other types appear, what is their function?”

b) Sentence complexity:

- “Do sentences on the whole have a simple or a complex structure?”
- “What is the average sentence length (in number of words)?”
- “What is the ratio of dependent to independent clauses?”
- “Does complexity vary strikingly from one sentence to another?”
- “Is complexity mainly due to coordination, subordination, or parataxis (juxtaposition of clauses or other equivalent structures)?”
- “In what parts of a sentence does complexity tend to occur? For instance, is there any notable occurrence of anticipatory structure (e.g. of complex subjects preceding the verbs, of dependent clauses preceding the subject of a main clause)?”

c) Clause types:

- “What types of dependent clause are favoured: relative clauses, adverbial clauses, different types of nominal clauses (that-clauses, wh-clauses, etc.)?”
- “Are reduced or non-finite clauses commonly used and, if so, of what type are they (infinitive clauses, -ing clauses, -ed clauses, verbless clauses)?”

d) Clause structure:

- “Is there anything significant about clause elements (e.g. frequency of objects, complements, adverbials; of transitive or intransitive verb constructions)?”
- “Are there any unusual orderings (initial adverbials, fronting of object or complement, etc.)?”
- “Do special kinds of clause construction occur (such as those with preparatory it or there)?”

e) Noun phrases:

- “Are they relatively simple or complex?”





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• “Where does the complexity lie (in premodification by adjectives, nouns, etc., or in post modification by prepositional phrases, relative clauses, etc.)?”

f) Verb phrases:

• “Are there any significant departures from the use of the simple past tense? For example, notice occurrences and functions of the present tense; of the progressive aspect (e.g. was lying); of the perfective aspect (e.g. has/had appeared); of modal auxiliaries (e.g. can, must, would, etc.)”

g) Other phrase types:

• “Is there anything to be said about other phrase types: prepositional phrases, adverb phrases, adjective phrases?”

h) Word classes: this subcategory deals with minor word classes (‘function words’): prepositions, conjunctions, pronouns, determiners, auxiliaries, interjections.

• “Are particular words of these types used for particular effect (e.g. the definite or indefinite article; first person pronouns I, we, etc.; demonstratives such as this and that; negative words such as not, nothing, no)?”

i) General:

• “whether any general types of grammatical construction are used to special effect; e.g. comparative or superlative constructions; coordinative or listing constructions; parenthetical constructions; appended or interpolated structures such as occur in casual speech”

• “Do lists and coordination (e.g. lists of nouns) tend to occur with two, three or more than three members?”

• “Do the coordinations, unlike the standard construction with one conjunction (sun, moon and stars), tend to omit conjunctions (sun, moon, stars) or have more than one conjunction (sun and moon and stars)?”

Foregrounding

Foregrounding is the English version of the Czech word *aktualisace*. The term means the use of some linguistic devices and techniques that ‘push’ the act of expression into the foreground. Using foregrounding techniques enable language to draw attention to itself (Cuddon, 2013, p.284).

Moreover, the notion of foregrounding has its roots in the work of the Russian Formalists. Viktor Sklovskij is a formalist whose name most often associated with foregrounding asserts that “The function of art is to make people aware of the world in a fresh way. The device whereby this



is achieved is defamiliarization, or 'making strange'" (Van Peer, 1986 p.1).

According to Van Peer, the essence of poetic language lies in the deviation from the standard language norms and rules. He adds that this violations results in forming a two-way relationship: "this relationship is seen as essential for the very existence of poetry while at the same time the violations of the standard found in poetry enrich the standard language itself" (1986, P.6). This means the systematic violation is what makes the poetic use of language possible. Similarly, Leech points out that language deviation is what makes up the poetic language as he states "linguistic deviation which is essential to a linguistic account of literary language. It is a commonplace that poets and other creative writers use language in unorthodox ways: that they are by convention allowed 'poetic licence'" (Leech, 2013, p. 14). As a result, poetic language is not defined in term of literary features alone. what truly defines it is its function which is to create an aesthetic effect. Following Van Peer, this aesthetic effects "results from the fact that attention is concentrated on the linguistic sign itself, and not, as in ordinary language, on the communicative result" (1986, P.6).

In addition to that, Leech uses the term 'unique deviation' to refer to 'foregrounding' which was used by the pre-war Prague School of linguistics. What is interesting is that the Prague Circle followers emphasize that deliberate linguistic 'foregrounding' is not limited to creative writing and literature. It is, however, can be found in other contexts, for example, in joking speech and children's language games (2008, p.18).

Roman Jakobson one of the prominent figures in this field, proposed two main concepts under the general framework of foregrounding: deviation and parallelism. parallelism is "a pattern of equivalences and/or contrasts that are superimposed on the normal patterns of language organization". Hence, while deviations result from violations of the rules and norms, parallelism is the opposite process in the sense that author repeatedly makes similar choices where the normal user of language would tend to choose variation. It is worth mentioning that both devices of foregrounding, may occur on different levels of linguistic: phonology, lexical, grammar, and semantics (Van Peer, 1986, P.23).

Moreover, Short believes that "Parallelism is an important tool for the writer in exercising control over the reader" (2013, p. 67). The reason for this claim is summarized in three points: First, parallelism helps readers to focus more on certain ideas which the writer wants to stress while hiding the less important ones. Second, it makes readers to get familiar to





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new semantic relations between words even if there would not be any link between them in normal language use. Lastly, parallelism improves cohesion of a text by linking its parts together. With this, it supports foregrounding and draws attention to key parts of the text (ibid, Pp. 67,68)

Another perspective on foregrounding is its pragmatic characteristic. foregrounding as a pragmatic aspect refers to dynamic interaction between authors (literary) text and reader. This combination “will guide the reader in his interpretation and evaluation of the text; on the other-hand the reader will look for such devices in order to satisfy his aesthetic need in reading a literary text” (Van Peer, 1986, p.20). thus, the foregrounding devices help readers to understand the meaning of the text. At the same time, these features will make the reading of a literary text an enjoyable experience.

According to Leech and Short, there are two main types of foregrounding: quantitative foregrounding and qualitative foregrounding. Quantitative kind of foregrounding tries to find which linguistic feature is repeated more frequently than expected. This repetition makes that linguistic pattern to stand out within a given text. This can be in the form of repetition of certain words, sentence structures, or syntactic patterns. qualitative foregrounding, in contrast, deals with deviation from standard linguistic norms. The deviation is achieved through using non-standard grammar, metaphorical language, or unusual syntactic structures. This kind of foregrounding contributes highly to the unique stylistic identity of a text (Leech and Short, 2007, Pp. 112-113).

However, Leech and Short assert that despite all the advantages of foregrounding, it is a challenging concept. First, foregrounding is not a fixed concept as it is a context-dependent discipline. For instance, what is considered foregrounded in one text may be a standard feature in another. Additionally, foregrounding relies on reader perception. different readers may interpret foregrounded elements in different ways based on their linguistic background and familiarity with literary styles. Ultimately, foregrounding allows for more creativity and gives a sense of freedom and individuality in doing stylistic analysis (Leech and Short, 2007, p. 115)

The Analysis

This section is devoted to stylistic analysis at the level of grammar. For this purpose, two frameworks to stylistics are used, namely, Leech and short' framework (1981) and Foregrounding, to analyse the grammatical choices in several extracts from the novel “*The Picture of Dorian Gray*”.



Excerpts from The Picture of Dorian Gray by Oscar Wilde Through A Grammatical- Stylistic Analysis



Excerpt One:

“As the painter looked at the gracious and comely form he had so skilfully mirrored in his art, a smile of pleasure passed across his face, and seemed about to linger there. But he suddenly started up, and, closing his eyes, placed his fingers upon the lids, as though he sought to imprison within his brain some curious dream from which he feared he might awake. “It is your best work, Basil, the best thing you have ever done,” said Lord Henry, languidly. “You must certainly send it next year to the Grosvenor. The Academy is too large and too vulgar. Whenever I have gone there, there have been either so many people that I have not been able to see the pictures, which was dreadful, or so many pictures that I have not been able to see the people, which was worse. The Grosvenor is really the only place.”

Wilde 1931, p.12

According to Leech and Short’s framework (1981) to stylistics, sentence type is the first category that grammatical approach deals with. In this extract, the dominant sentence type in both narration and utterance, as expected, is declarative sentence. In prose or narratives, declarative form serves as the default grammatical sentence type to describe events or characters, present thoughts, and report dialogues or monologues. Further, there are no other sentence types, namely, interrogatives, exclamatory or imperatives. However, some clauses though they are declarative in form, they function as an exclamation. For instance, “*which was dreadful*” and “*which was worse*” are both relative clauses in a larger compound- complex sentence. Both clauses are grammatically declarative, and they modify the preceded clauses within the same sentence, yet they function as exclamation because they express strong emotions, judgments, or sarcasm. While both clauses are evaluative comments by Lord Henry, the former conveys disapproval and the latter shows irony.

Second grammatical feature in this framework is sentence complexity. Leech and Short in their checklist for the grammatical stylistic analysis point out the importance of categorizing whether the sentences are simple or complex because this affects the artistic value of the text. In this extract sentences are mostly complex as they contain subordinate and coordinate clauses. For instance, “*As the painter looked at the gracious and comely form he had so skilfully mirrored in his art, a smile of pleasure passed across his face, and seemed about to linger there*” is one sentence containing four clauses. ‘As the painter looked at the gracious





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and comely form' is an adverbial subordinate clause precedes another clause 'he had so skilfully mirrored in his art', then comes the main clause 'a smile of pleasure passed across his face' and followed by coordinate clause with ellipted subject 'seemed about to linger there'.

Another instance of complex sentence structure in this extract is "*But he suddenly started up, and, closing his eyes, placed his fingers upon the lids, as though he sought to imprison within his brain some curious dream from which he feared he might awake*". This sentence has eight clauses within its complex structure. The clauses vary between relative, subordinate and infinitive types plus the main clause. Wild uses multi layered sentences to slow down reader's processing to stop and think about the link between character's emotional state and the words being said.

Foregrounding theory deals with texts at two main levels, deviation and parallelism. Though this extract do not contain any obvious deviation from grammatical rules and structure, it has some stylistically motivated deviations. The first sentence begins with fronted subordinate clause "as the painter". with this, the main clause "a smile of pleasure..." is delayed. This displacement of clauses creates a foregrounded grammatical structure. Wilds uses this technique to emphasize the order of feelings, first Basil looks then a smile comes to his face. This aligns with the philosophy of 'Aestheticism' which favors physical beauty over all other forms of beauty. Wild views beauty as source for all other sensual reactions.

Parataxis is another grammatical feature that foregrounds the text in this extract. Wild uses clauses side by side without showing clear grammatical subordination "*But he suddenly started up, and, closing his eyes, placed his fingers upon the lids*" these three clauses are joined with 'and' and 'but' or even without conjunction to create rhythmic flow. This technique reflects emotional intensity and suggests psychological state that foregrounds the sentence grammatically.

Moreover, Wild foregrounds the grammatical patterns through parallelism. "...so many people that I have not been able to see pictures..... so many pictures that I have not been able to see people" this is an example of grammatical parallelism where the writer repeats the same syntactic pattern in the same sentence. This technique creates rhetorical symmetry and draws attention to contrast and irony. Another instance of parallelism is "... which was dreadful, which was worse". However, beside the primer function of parallelism that is to make the idea stand out by repeating it, it creates function shift of the relative clauses by adding exclamatory tone their declarative form to function

emotively rather than descriptively. Parallelism can be also seen in “*too large and too vulgar*” where Wilde uses coordination of two adjective phrases with repetition to highlight personal opinion and to put emphasis on how the speaker views the objects being described.

Hence, Wilde’s grammatical choices in this extract are not neutral as it seems at the first look. Though the language follows the grammatical rules, it is crafted in a certain way to reflect emotional states, aesthetic values, and psychological struggles. For example, the use of ‘paratactic structure’ in Basil’s description hints at the instability of his emotions. While he is stunned by thinking of Dorian Gray, he struggles to control his emotions. Even the lack of subordinations which means that no clause is grammatically depending on the other gives equal psychological importance to all actions. Wilde succeeds in describing Basile’s inner world through the grammatical structure by using participle clauses, for instance ‘closing his eyes, placed his finger’ create a smooth and flowing rhythm. This technique helps to slow down time and makes the reader to imagine character’s inner world as if Wilde tries to blur the boundary between Basile’s thought and physical movement. With this, Wilde communicates the philosophy of Aestheticism where the beauty is source of most emotional reactions. On the other hand, Wilde uses different structure when Lord Henry is speaking. The grammatical structure is foregrounded, and it is full of parallelism and irony to show Lord Henry’s cleverness in playing with words.

Excerpt Two:

“To project one’s soul into some gracious form, and let it tarry there for a moment; to hear one’s own intellectual views echoed back to one with all the added music of passion and youth; to convey one’s temperament into another as though it were a subtle fluid or a strange perfume; there was a real joy in that—perhaps the most satisfying joy left to us in an age so limited and vulgar as our own, an age grossly carnal in its pleasures, and grossly common in its aims.”

(Wilde, 1931, p.47)

According to Leech and short, sentences can be declarative, interrogative, imperative, or exclamatory. This extract is composed of one single sentence, and it is declarative. Wilde uses a relatively long declarative sentence to make a statement and to assert a belief or idea which is about projecting one’s soul into another through aesthetic expressions is the



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source of deep joy and happiness. Though using declarative sentence type is typical in narrative prose writings, Wilde adds an extra layer by giving the declarative sentence a poetic quality.

The second aspect in grammatical approach is sentence complexity. Leech and Short in their framework to stylistics distinguish between simple, compound, complex and compound-complex sentences in term of structure. This extract while composed of one single sentence, it contains multiple clauses that makes it be compound-complex sentence. The sentence begins with non-finite clause "*To project one's soul into some gracious form*" which is an infinitive because it starts with 'to project'. Then follows a coordinated clause "let it tarry there for a moment" linked to the preceded clause by 'and'. The next two clauses in the sentence are infinitive clauses "to hear..." and "to convey...", then comes a subordinate clause "as though it were a subtle fluid or a strange perfume". The main clause of the sentence is "there was a real joy in that" that starts with a dummy subject. This main clause concludes the result of all previous clauses into one. Then it is followed by a post modifying clause "perhaps the most satisfying joy left to us in an age so limited and vulgar as our own" to describe and to give extra detail about the noun 'joy'.

In addition, foregrounding theory approaches grammatical choices at a different level. It involves making language stand out from the norm. this can be achieved through deviation and parallelism. The aim for using foregrounding is often to intensify meaning, evoke emotions, slow down the reading pace, and to reveal psychological or thematic aspects.

Grammatical deviation is found in the use of three infinitive clauses in sequence, namely, '*to project.... to hear...to convey*'. Since the form of the sentence is declarative and supposedly should follow the normal structure of SVO, these clauses appear as if they are the sentence subjects, but the actual subject- verb structure is delayed. Hence this is a case of foregrounding by deviation because standard English would not place infinitive clause in string. Wilde deliberately uses this technique to force readers slow down and linger when they read the clauses to think about each of them as independent philosophical statement. Concerning parallelism, in this extract grammatical foregrounding is achieved through by syntactic parallelism. Repetition of infinitive phrases in three clauses in row '*to project.... to hear...to convey*', creates parallelism.

Eventually, in this one sentence extract, Wilde's grammatical choices lift the artistic value to align with the philosophical tone of the novel. The sentence type and its complexity by mixing different types of clauses with different functions reflects the complexity of Lord Henry's inner world in the novel.

Excerpt Three:

“Don’t go to the theatre to-night, Dorian,” said Hallward.

“Stop and dine with me.”

“I can’t, Basil.”

“Why?”

“Because I have promised Lord Henry Wotton to go with him.”

“He won’t like you the better for keeping your promises. He always breaks his own. I beg you not to go.”

Dorian Gray laughed and shook his head.

“I entreat you.”

The lad hesitated, and looked over at Lord Henry, who was watching them from the tea-table with an amused smile.

“I must go, Basil,” he answered.

“Very well,” said Hallward; and he went over and laid down his cup on the tray. “It is rather late, and, as you have to dress, you had better lose no time. Good-bye, Harry. Good-bye, Dorian. Come and see me soon. Come to-morrow.”

“Certainly.”

“You won’t forget?”

“No, of course not,” cried Dorian.

“And . . .

Harry!”

“Yes, Basil?”

“Remember what I asked you, when we were in the garden.”

“I have forgotten it.”

“I trust you.”

“I wish I could trust myself,” said Lord Henry, laughing.

“Come, Mr. Gray, my hansom is outside, and I can drop you at your own place. Good-bye, Basil. It has been a most interesting afternoon.”

(Wilde, 1931, Pp. 40-41)

This extract contains speeches of three main characters in the novel, namely, Lord Henry, Dorian, and Basile. This makes the language be very rich stylistically as each character uses different style reflecting his psychological state. In this dialogue three sentence types are used: declarative, interrogative, and imperative. Firstly, imperative sentences are prominent in Basile’s utterances, like *“Don’t go to the theatre to-night, Dorian,”* and *“Stop and dine with me”*. these direct commands by Basil intensify the urgency of his request and imply seriousness as if he





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warns Dorian from going out by being very direct and using emotionally forced speech acts. In this case, however, it is hard to decide whether Basile tries to protect Dorian from Lord Henry, or he feels jealousy of Lord Henry and fears that he wins the friendship with Dorian.

Later in the dialogue, again Basile uses imperative but with different effect. When he says “*Good-bye, Dorian. Come and see me soon. Come to-morrow.*” Though the grammatical form is imperative, but it feels like an emotional plea. Even the repetition of the verb ‘come’ reflects rising emotions as a signal of desperation rather than being neutral. Basile’s emotional force becomes clearer when he desperately says “*I entreat you*” as if he gives up using imperative to prevent Dorian from the act of going out for dinner with Lord Henry, therefore, he decides to speak more directly and begs Dorian not to go. Moreover, Basile uses imperative, again, but with different tone when he tries to remind Lord Henry of what they had agreed on when he says, “*Remember what I asked you, when we were in the garden.*”

On the other hand, declarative sentences dominate Dorian’s speech as he responds to Basile’s requests and questions. For instance, “*I can’t, Basil.*”, “*Because I have promised Lord Henry Wotton to go with him.*”, and “*I must go, Basil,*” are all declaratives. These are short and compact responses that convey emotional distance. Lord Henry also uses declarative when he responds to Basile as in: “*I have forgotten it.*” and “*I wish I could trust myself.*”. However, Lord Henry as usual uses his wit and comic style in asserting his opinion though the language is charged with irony or sarcasm.

The other grammatical form of sentence present in the dialogue is interrogative. For instance, as Basile says “*Why?*” and “*you won’t forget?*”. In the first one he uses one word question to reflect his unexpected emotional demand. The second sentence is interrogative in function, but the form is declarative which makes the sentence be stylistically marked. This kind of instances shows emotional insecurity as if Basile asks a question and begs Lord Henry to not forget, at the same time.

Wilde carefully deals with sentence types to show tension, intimacy and emotional state of the characters. Basile’s use of imperative and interrogative illustrate pleading and urgency, Dorian’s use of declarative conveys detachment and distance, and Lord Henry’s declarative sentences reveal his dominant character.

Regarding the sentence complexity, the dialogue contains mostly simple and short structure with occasionally complex and compound structures.



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Dorian in his speeches uses simple sentences as in *“I can’t”* and *“I must go”*. These short sentences reflect emotional minimalism and inner struggle and conflict of Dorian as he tries to avoid elaboration. On the other hand, Basile uses compound-complex sentence when he says, *“It is rather late, and, as you have to dress, you had better lose no time”*. This sentence contains two coordinated main clauses joined by conjunction ‘and’ plus one subordinate clause between them where Basile gives reason for his statement saying, *“as you have to dress”*. This grammatical complexity adds emotional layers to the language that reflects speaker’s appeal and disapproval.

Beside the conversation between the characters, this extract contains narrative voice, too. Unlike the direct speeches in the dialogue that mostly contains imperative and interrogative, the narrative sentences rely primarily on declarative form. For example, *“Dorian Gray laughed and shook his head.”* and *“The lad hesitated, and looked over at Lord Henry, who was watching them from the tea-table with an amused smile.”* both sentences are declarative that are used to describe characters and present events. However, Wilde uses these plain declarative sentences to convey emotional shifts via narrator’s detached tone of observation. With this, he allows the readers to imagine or interpret internal state of characters through the description of their physical movements. Besides, in narration, Wilde uses compound and complex sentence structures. For instance, *“The lad hesitated, and looked over at Lord Henry, who was watching them from the tea-table with an amused smile.”* contains three clauses that make the sentence be compound-complex. The main clause is *“The lad hesitated”*, followed by a coordinated clause *“looked over at Lord Henry”* and then comes the relative clause *“who was watching them from the tea-table with an amused smile”* that modifies Lord Henry with an ironic tone. Wilde uses this kind of structure complexity to make a combination of external actions and internal states in one sentence possible.

On the other hand, foregrounding deals with grammar from different aspect. It looks for grammatical patterns that are violating the rules of grammar. Syntactic deviation is used to foreground Dorian’s response to Basil when he says *“Because I have promised Lord Henry Wotton to go with him”*. The sentence consists only of a subordinate clause and the main clause is omitted which is an elliptical construction. A standard grammar would be a complete sentence with both main and subordinate clauses. This incompleteness in grammar is stylistically marked because it violates the usual sentence expectations. Here, Dorian seems to avoid rejecting Basile openly and directly, instead he omits the refusal part of





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the sentence to highlight the excuse. Further examples of elliptical grammatical deviations are “*why?*”, “*certainly*”, “*yes, Basil*”, and “*no, of course not*”. In dialogues, writers usually use this kind of constructions where some grammatical elements are left out. However, Wilde uses them to show emotional pressure or hesitation of characters. The one-word question “*why?*” does not demand information, instead it looks for emotional explanation.

Another feature of foregrounding present in the extract is functional shift. Basil tells Dorian “*You won’t forget?*” is interrogative in form of declarative yet in fact it is meant to function as plea. Wilde uses this mismatch between form and function to show insecurity and emotional struggles inside Basil.

Parallelism in grammar is repetition of similar patterns in sequence to make the idea stand out or in some cases to slow down the reading pace. An example of grammatical parallelism is “*Come and see me soon. Come to-morrow*” where the imperative clause ‘come’ is repeated to add desperation and emotional urgency of Basil. Further example is “*Good-bye, Harry. Good-bye, Dorian*” the same grammatical pattern is repeated. Lastly, grammatical features in this extract function as powerful tools for characterisation. Through the grammatical choices, Wilde presents Dorian as evasive and passive person, Basil as being desperate person yet sincere in his emotions, and Lord Henry as detached person. Hence, grammar in prose writings, besides being structural feature of language, it can be a stylistic tool that reveals characters’ psychology, emotional tone, and relationships.

Conclusions

Following are the conclusions arrived at:

1. Wilde’s grammatical are not neutral as it seems at the first look. Grammatical rules are followed yet it is crafted in a unique way to reflect emotional conditions, aesthetic values, and psychological struggles.
2. The technique used by Wilde helps to slow down time and puts the reader in an imagination condition to picture the character’s inner world. This is done to confuse the boundary between contemplation and physical movement. With this, Wilde communicates the philosophy of Aestheticism where the beauty is source of most emotional reactions.
3. Wilde’s grammatical choices lift the artistic value to align with the philosophical tone of the novel. The sentence type and its complexity by mixing different types of clauses with different functions reflects the complexity of the character’s inner world in the novel.

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4. Grammar in prose writings, as shown in the analysis, besides being structural feature of language, it can be a stylistic tool that reveals characters' psychology, emotional tone, and relationships.

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