Stylistic Analysis of Symbolism in Dicken's David Copperfield

Asst. Lect. Zainab Kareem Ati
Directorate General of Education Baghdad –Third Risafa
zainab197501@gmail.com
Exact jurisdiction(Pragmatics)
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Abstract

Charles Dickens's "David Copperfield" is famous for its abundant use of symbolism, which plays an essential role in enriching the thematic insight and character development within the novel. The paper aims to reveal how these symbols contribute to the overarching narrative and the protagonist's journey of self-discovery and growth. Some extracts are selected from David Copperfield to be analyzed in terms of Tufte' (2006) model of syntactic stylistic devices. The paper concludes that Dickens's uses symbolism not only to enrich the reader's understanding of the themes and characters but also serves to criticize social topics of the Victorian time. Furthermore, Dickens' utilization of various symbolic elements explores that he uses concrete and real images related to the objects, settings, and characters of the novel with the aim of conveying complex ideas and emotions. Key words: Stylistic devices, Dickens, David Copperfield, Tufte's model

Introduction An exploration of the stylistic analysis of symbolism in Charles Dickens' David Copperfield unveils a tapestry of literary artistry and social commentary. Dickens, a master storyteller of the Victorian era, intricately weaves symbols throughout his narrative to convey deeper meanings, reflect societal issues, and illuminate the complexities of human experience. In David Copperfield, symbolism serves as a potent vehicle for Dickens to encapsulate the essence of his characters, settings, and themes, employing a rich palette of linguistic devices, imagery, and metaphorical constructs.At the heart of this stylistic analysis lies an examination of how Dickens employs symbols to transcend the literal, infusing his narrative with layers of meaning that resonate beyond the surface. This investigation will delve into key symbols, such as the sea, names, and settings like Bleak House, dissecting their metaphorical significance and dissecting the stylistic nuances in Dickens' portrayal. The exploration extends to characters like Mr. Micawber, Dora, and Steerforth, where their names and traits become emblematic of broader societal issues and moral dilemmas.Furthermore, the stylistic choices Dickens makes in his language and narrative technique play a pivotal role in amplifying the impact of these symbols. The use of vivid descriptions, evocative imagery, and a judicious blend of humor and irony adds depth to the symbolic tapestry, engaging readers on intellectual and emotional levels. This analysis aims to unravel the intricacies of Dickens' literary craftsmanship, shedding light on how his stylistic choices harmonize with the symbolic elements to create a narrative that transcends its temporal and social context (Oatley,1995, p.58).As we embark on this exploration, it becomes apparent that Dickens' David Copperfield is not merely a chronicle of one man's life but a multi-layered narrative where symbolism serves as a prism through which the author refracts the light of human experience, revealing profound truths about society, resilience, and the human spirit. In this sense, a writer may produce a specific mood or sentiment in a literary work. In literature, objects, persons, places and situations are all manipulated to refer to something else, i.e. ideologies, views or ideas (Anilkumar, 2015). Through a detailed examination of the sea, names, settings, characters, and the broader stylistic landscape, this analysis seeks to unveil the timeless and universal significance embedded in the symbolic fabric of "David Copperfield". Thus, this paper intends to present some theoretical background concerning details ofsymbolism. Stylistic Devices Stylistic devices are crucial elements in both written and spoken language, serving to enhance the expressiveness, persuasiveness, and overall impact of communication. Their importance can be appreciated in several key areas Writers resort

to stylistic devices for several reasons, all aimed at enhancing their writing and making it more engaging, effective, and memorable for the reader. Literary devices are practices that authors tend to employ to articulate their philosophies, develop their writing, and convey deeper meanings main literary devices (Halmyradova, 2024)In terms of the significance of stylistic devices in literary texts, van Dijk (2002, p. 231) maintains that these devices are "are geared towards the emphasis or de-emphasis of underlying meanings". As well as being negative in certain cases, these devices may also have a rhetorical purpose, for example, hyperbole. Henceforth, "hyperbole, verbose, dishonest, and immoral" are characteristically commonsensical concepts frequently abridged with the negative marker of rhetoric. In an opposite manner, positive expressions such as gentle, tolerant, peace-loving, etc., may lexicalize positive self-images of certain texts. Unlike semantic, syntactic, and stylistic constructions, van Dijk (1997, p. 35) believes thatstylistic tools are normally possible; their main job is to convince in that way subjugating amassive literary importance in a diversity of literary texts. Literary writers (dramatists, novelists and poets) often resort to the use of flexible melodious practices to evince both emotions and sources of their readers. In this regard, stylistic strategies are advanced to put on the viewers' and readers' vibrations. Writers and speakers exercise specific descriptive characteristics and inventions in their envisioned information in order to aggravate stated replies to their addresses and readers including "sympathy, empathy, hesitancy, or rejection". The developing figurative approaches involve "a word or combination of words tending to formulate a unique weight to a certain idea or notion". Relationally, persistent meaning is summarized to persuade readers or listeners towards taking into account a theme from a different viewpoint. Essentially, stylistic maneuvers are indulged in different discourses and texts to "add color and interest, and to awaken the imagination" and to "make the reader or listener use their imaginationand understand much more than the plain words" (Sayakhan, 2016, p. 7). Put differently, authors and speakers make use of these maneuvers to produce distinctive and sharp influence in their conformation to convey messages and to aid readers and listeners to better understand the piece of writing or discourse on a deeper level. Readers and listeners are assumed to gain "emphasis and clarity" in addition to more importance with either a literary text as a whole or precise characters and subjects.As much as stylistic devices are alleged to be the mindful intention to influence others, Shepherd (1992, p. 204) perceives that "in humanistic social, scientific, and critical perspectives on communication, interaction processes have typically been characterized essentially and primarilyin terms of persuasion, influence and power". In this respect, any communicative act has been observed as "primarily an attempt at persuasion or influence or as a struggle over power" (p. 206). However, the main common devices are the following (Halmyradova, 2004, pp. 37-41).

1. Metaphor is a figurative device that makes a direct likeness between two unlike things by stating one is the other, e.g. "Time is a thief."

2. Simile: indicates a comparison between two unlike things using "like" or "as", e.g. "Her smile was as bright as the sun."

3. Alliteration indicates the repetition of first consonant sounds in nearby successive words, e.g. "She fell for the fathom of sea".

4. Hyperbole indicates an exaggerated statement not meant to be taken literally, used for emphasis or humor, e.g. "I'm so hungry I could eat a horse."

5. Personification refers to giving human characteristics to non-human objects or abstract concepts, e.g. "The wind whispered through the trees."

6.Irony is a contrast between expectation and reality. It falls into three types:

A. Verbal Irony refers to saying one thing but meaning another, e.g. Saying "Great weather we're having!" during a storm.

B. Situational Irony occurs in a situation where the outcome is contrary to what was expected, e.g. "A fire station burns down".

C. Dramatic Irony takes place when a listener or audience recognizes something the characters do not, e.g. in a horror film, the audience recognizes the murderer is in the family, but the protagonist does not.

7. Symbolism refers to the use of symbols (of objects, characters, or events) to signify larger concepts or ideas, e.g. "A dove represents peace"

Symbolism It is a figurative device where a symbol, a word, person, entity, or notion, is employed to stand for a thing beyond its literal meaning. These symbols are repeatedly permeated with specific meanings by the author and can convey complex ideas, themes, or emotions within a work of literature. In literature, symbolism allows authors to add layers of meaning to their work, providing readers with a deeper understanding of the text.

Symbols can be universal, with widely recognized meanings, or they can be specific to a particular work or culture (Womack, 2005). Consider these examples:A Rose is often used as a symbol of love and beauty, a rose in a story might represent romantic love, purity, or the transient nature of beauty.A Dove is commonly a symbol of peace, a dove in a narrative might represent a hope for reconciliation or the end of conflict.A Journey can symbolize personal growth, change, or the human experience. Characters embarking on a physical journey may also be on a metaphorical journey of self-discovery.A Red Color, depending on the context, the color red can symbolize passion, danger, love, or anger. Symbols can be found in various elements of literature, including characters, settings, objects, and actions. The effectiveness of symbolism often lies in its ability to evoke emotions, stimulate thoughts, and offer layers of interpretation beyond the literal events of the story. MethodologyThe paper makes use of qualitative research method as it intends to provide an identification, description of symbolism focusing on the syntactic techniques based on Tufte's (2006) approach to syntactic symbolism. This model suggests practices for generating syntactic symbolism e.g. poetic language, sound symbolism, and syntactic stylistic devices. These devices signify aesthetic ideals or imply actions or personalities (p. 253-255). The study of symbols is an intriguing endeavor. Through symbolism, authors convey their thoughts and opinions to readers. In fact, the main theme of David Copperfield is racialism; it is indirectly linked to the symbolism, which searches for rejection and identity. Data are collected and selected on the basis that the chosen extracts are articulated to have symbolism. The data is selected on the basis of its clarity and accuracy as it supports the researcher's purpose. Tufte's Model Tufte's model is based on the investigation of syntactic stylistic devices with which symbolism can be identified. As stated by Galperin (1981), authors, in general, resort to particular syntactic and stylistic strategies in prose. That is, there is an association between words and sentences. In the study of linguistics, syntax is concerned with the kinds of relations between words and sentences. Consequently, syntax must be seen as one of the key characteristics of style in literary work (p. 191-192). This model comprises the following:

i. Repetition

Repetition in Tufte's (2006) model refers to a syntactic stylistic device that is regularly utilized in "fiction, prose, essays to indicate an artistic function or emphasize on something specific". It tends to create a balance between sentences (p.223). Furthermore, syntactic symbolism is attained via the employment of repetitions (of nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs or propositions). It is the easiest symbolic influence as it involves no translation from the receiver/ reader (p. 256). Examine the repetition of the word even in the following example which plays a great role in determining the meaning intend ed by the writer as much as he/she grips his breath, "it will not rain, there will be no raindrops, no schizoid water wobbling, sideways, straight back, it will be an even, even, even, even, even, even, even, world" (ibid).ii.Parallelism   Tufte (2006) elucidates that "parallel processing" involves the repetition of the same construction in the same manner. It is the correspondence between two objects or constructions "such as a verb with a verb, a noun phrase with a noun phrase, an adjective with an adjective, a noun with a noun". A parallel model of repeated phrases "makes parallel processing a more cohesive and inclusive tool" (p. 217). According to Tufte (2006), literary works are often found to include a lot of cases of parallelism. Parallelism attends the function of correspondence between entities and likeness between them. Moreover, it is employed to designate a specific movement or rhythm (p. 259). In the given instance, its tone fluctuates with "kaleidoscopic rapidity-from irony to pathos to ridicule to poetry" (ibid); the parallel construction displays the parallels of syntactic structure. It enhances a certain kind of rhythm or movement. This type of parallelism, in addition to musicality, adds a sense of fixing meaning and supports memorization.iii. Polysyndeton Polysyndeton is taken to mean a stylistic device that joins "sentences, or phrases, by using conjunctions or prepositions". It connects homogenous components of thoughts and ideas in one sentence. It has a rhythmical function (Galperin,1981, p. 226). Additionally, it enhances sequences. That is, a polysyndeton in grammar indicates a "coordination in which all the connectives are linked with conjunctions" (p.227). In the instance, "the heaviest rain, and snow, and hail, and sleet, could boast of the advantage over him in only one respect", the word and is overused by the author to give emphasis on the coordinated nouns (rain, snow, hail and sleet).iv. Asyndeton In Tuftle's (2006) model, Asyndeton is used to investigate symbolism. Galperin (1981) add that it is the term for a parenthesis. It is described as the influences "between parts of a sentence or between sentences without any formal sign, becomes a stylistic device if there is a deliberate omission of the connective where it is generally expected to be according to the norms of the literary language". Furthermore, asyndeton, in most cases, is employed to enhance   aesthetic function and determine intonational patterns. Hence, without conjunctions, the sentence sets alone and gives extended pauses. A stylistic analysis of asyndeton affirms that it

has an effect on intonational patterns (p. 226). For instance, "Soames turned away; he had an utter disinclination for talk, like one standing before an open grave, watching a coffin slowly lowered" (ibid), this complex sentence is initiated without any overt conjunction. Put differently, "He had an utter" stands independently by deleting the conjunction "because" or "for". The semicolon here splits the sentence into portions causing lengthy pause.

v. Sound Symbolism In Tufte's (2006) model, sound symbolism is viewed as an aesthetic device. It is a syntactic stylistic device which assists to produce an influence in terms of word order. nevertheless, syntax is concerned with the arrangement of "words, sentences and word order, their length, and sound" (p. 254-255). Examples are so Suzi said "yes ma'ma", and hopped down the shingle walk, "crunch crunch crunch beneath the tress, and was gone" (ibid). The instance displays the onomatopoeic tune of the word "crunch" which gives musical influence.

vi. Ellipsis Ellipsis is a figurative device which is formed via the sense of parallelism. It embodies a sequence of symbolic performances (Tufte, 2006, p.221-222). Crystal (1985, pp. 158-159) clarifies that the term ellipsis is used in grammatical study to refer to a sentence that undergoes pointless omission or removal for the purpose of economy. Mostly ellipsis can used for the sake of emphasis or elegance. This omitted part can be made recoverable in terms of the context in which it is used. Linguistically, this elliptical part tends to be stressing something and essential for the omission. However, the elliptical part must not make the sentence ambiguous. Consider this example: A: What is your name? B: Salim Hasan Stylistic Elements of Symbolism in David Copperfield Certain stylistic elements in the novels are employed to develop the use of symbolism in the novel; they play an important role in highlighting symbolism throughout the events of the novel.i. Realism Dickens' use of detailed descriptions and realism enhances the symbolic meaning of everyday objects and events. By embedding symbolism in the mundane aspects of life, he underscores the significance of ordinary experiences and their impact on his characters.ii. Character DevelopmentSymbols in "David Copperfield" often serve to deepen our understanding of characters. For example, Mr. Micawber's association with the idea of emigration symbolizes his perpetual hopefulness and resilience, despite his continuous failures.iii. Resonance The symbolic elements in the novel often evoke strong emotional responses, as they are tied to the central themes of growth, loss, and redemption. The recurrent imagery of the sea, for example, can elicit feelings of both dread and hope, mirroring the complex emotional landscape of the characters.iv. Narrative Structure Symbolism in "David Copperfield" also plays a crucial role in the novel's narrative structure. The repeated motifs and symbols create a sense of cohesion and continuity, guiding readers through David's journey from childhood to adulthood.Data Analysis Dickens' "David Copperfield" is expected to be a rich and complex novel with various layers of symbolism that contribute to its overall meaning and themes. Through the use of symbols in this novel, he wants to express a lot of purposes and meanings. The images produced in this novel helps him to reflect his ideas and opinions. Here are some examples taken from David Copperfield in which their stylistic significance is selected on the basis of their employment of symbolism i. The Sea "To hear the wind getting up out at sea, to know that the fog was creeping over the desolate flat outside, and to look at the fire, and to think that there." The sea is a recurrent symbol in "David Copperfield," representative of the instable and often risky environment of life. It is linked to the novel characters like Ham and Em'ly, whose lives are intensely influenced by it. The sea's power and unpredictability echo the unrestrained experiences David bears. In this sense, the sea stands for both risk and freedom. It is a constant presence in the lives of characters like Peggotty and Ham, representing the unpredictable nature of their life. The sea's duality is most evident in the character of Mr. Micawber, who looks to emigration and the promise of a new life in Australia as a form of salvation from his financial troubles. For David, the sea is associated with his childhood memories and the freedom he feels at Peggotty's home in Yarmouth. Through the employment of parallelism of the type To +V+ Object (to hear … + to know...+ to look … and to think…), Dicken is able to reflect people's (characters') lives which are unstable. Parallelism helps him to convey people's life by creating an image of the sea which is not regularly constant. ii. The Rookery "It is necessarily crowded with the austerity of good housekeeping, and this though we had, as Ms MacIntosh herself would admit, neither a rookery nor a cookery. Things were very bad, very unhealthy and corrupting, not at all as they had been in old What Cheer where the children's feet were frozen, where one broke the ice on the brook in order to get a bucket of water for the family wash, the few clothes that were to be washed. Winter and summer, Miss MacIntosh insisted that the windows be kept open at night …"The Rookery, David's childhood home, is a symbol of his lost innocence and the happier times of his early years. The name itself, suggesting a place where birds (rooks) live, evokes a sense of security and familial warmth. As David's life becomes more challenging, the Rookery represents a nostalgic symbol of a simpler, happier time. The transformation of the Rookery from a warm and loving home to a cold and unwelcoming place after the arrival of Mr. Murdstone reflects the loss of David's

childhood security and the harsh realities he must face. In this extract, a lot of syntactic-stylistic devices are used to depict symbolism. Polysyndeton is observed as conjunctions are overused "It is necessarily crowded with the austerity of good housekeeping, and this though we had, as Ms MacIntosh herself would admit, …" This device is intended to emphasize the significance of the place of David's birth. Sound symbolism is also found to highlight Rookery "neither a rookery nor a cookery", rookery and cookery are used here for poetic purposes and musical influence. Parallelism is employed in the excerpt "where the children's feet were frozen, where one broke the ice on the brook in order to get a bucket of water for the family wash" in which the construction where clause is followed by another where clause to elaborate on the happy and pleasant events in Rookery. All these devices are used to expound the happy times, joyful events and favorable environments David experienced iii. Em'ly's Broken Heart " Well, it's fur our little Em'ly. You see, the path ain't over light or ... Only upon us two. 'Ham! what's the matter?' 'Mas'r Davy!—' Oh, for his broken heart, ..."Little Em'ly's heartbreak after her failed relationship with Steerforth symbolizes the loss of innocence and the harsh realities of life and social class distinctions. Her emotional turmoil and downfall reflect the destructive consequences of social ambition and betrayal. Sound symbolism is found in this extract to add musical load to it. It is represented by the use of terms such as little and Ham. They help to explain Em'ly's unpleasant state and her broken heart. In other words, the above description symbolizes Em'ly's unfriendly circumstances under which she livediv. The Window at Dr. Strong's House "Doctor Strong looked almost as rusty, to my thinking, as the tall iron rails and gates outside the house; and almost as stiff and heavy as the great stone urns The window at Dr. Strong's house symbolizes transparency and honesty in relationships. Dr. Strong's open and trusting nature contrasts with the deceit and subterfuge exhibited by other characters, highlighting the virtues of integrity and trustworthiness. Polysyndeton is observed in this excerpt as the conjunction as is overused; it is found four times to give emphasis and create rhythmical tune "Doctor Strong looked almost as rusty, to my thinking, as the tall iron rails and gates outside the house; and almost as stiff and heavy as the great stone urns ..v. Fire "My uncle's house burned down when I was 6 years old. We got out safely. But ever since, I've had a nightmare of dying in a fire."Fire is used many times in the novel to symbolize destruction and renewal. For instance, the fire that consumes the Peggottys' house represents the end of an era and the harsh realities they face, but it also paves the way for new beginnings and changes in their lives. This fire symbolizes both physical and spiritual destruction of the character. Through the use of parallelism of the constructions (SVO) as in "My uncle's house burned down when I was 6 years old. We got out safely."vi. Flowers"To see her lay the flowers against her little dimpled chin, was to lose all presence of mind and power of language in a feeble ecstasy."Flowers are a recurring symbol in "David Copperfield," often associated with innocence, purity, and the passage of time. As they are linked to Dora Spenlow, they symbolize fragility and the fleeting nature of beauty and life. Dora's delicate nature and her premature death reflect the transient qualities of youth and happiness. Yet, for David's mother, Clara, they tend to a symbol of her own fragile beauty and her transient happiness. Similarly, the flowers at Dora's grave represent both the ephemeral nature of her life and the lasting impact she had on David. In the above excerpt, symbolism is syntactically realized through the use of the technique of sound symbolism represented by little dimpled chin and a feeble ecstasy which are employed to add musical influence and enhance poetic feature. vii. David's Aunt Betsey's Cottage"I followed the young woman, and we soon came to a very neat little cottage with cheerful bow-windows: in front of it, a small square gravelled court or garden full of flowers, carefully tended, and smelling deliciously… where a muslin curtain partly undrawn in the middle, a large round green screen or fan fastened on to the window-sill, a small table, and a great chair, suggested to me that my aunt might be at that moment seated in awful state.' Aunt Betsey's cottage symbolizes stability and sanctuary. It is a place where David finds refuge and support, contrasting with the instability he experiences elsewhere. The cottage represents the safety and unconditional support that Aunt Betsey offers him. The use of parallel expressions and sound symbolism exemplified by "neat little cottage with cheerful bow-windows, a small square gravelled court or garden full of flowers, carefully tended, and smelling deliciously, a muslin curtain partly undrawn in the middle, a large round green screen or fan fastened on to the window-sill, a small table, and a great chair" help Dickens to reflect the calm and comfortable situation that Aunt Betsey lived under. These expressions provide elegant patterns and musical effects to the readers to motivate him to follow the events of the novel.In addition to the events mentioned above, there are other instances of contrived symbolism represented by specific names and things viii. Bleak House The name of Mr. Murdstone's house, where David is sent to live after his mother's death, serves as a symbol of the oppressive and joyless atmosphere that dominates David's early life. The name itself suggests a place devoid of warmth or happiness, and indeed, David's time there is marked by cruelty and neglect.xi. The Lighthouse The

lighthouse that David sees from his bedroom window at Mr. Wickfield's house symbolizes guidance and stability. It serves as a reminder to David that even in times of darkness and uncertainty; there is always a beacon of hope to lead him forward. The lighthouse also represents Mr. Wickfield himself, who becomes a mentor and father figure to David during his time in Canterbury.x. The Micawbers' Debtors' Prison The Micawbers' repeated imprisonments for debt symbolize the instability and uncertainty of economic life in Victorian England. Their struggles serve as a reminder of the harsh consequences of financial mismanagement and the precarious position of those living on the margins of society. However, despite their hardships, the Micawbers maintain a sense of optimism and resilience, symbolizing the power of hope in the face of adversity. xi. The Weather Weather in the novel often mirrors the emotional states of the characters and the narrative's tone. Storms and rough weather frequently correspond to periods of turmoil and conflict. For instance, the tempest during which Ham attempts to save Steerforth but loses his own life highlights the chaos and destructive power of nature, echoing the turmoil in David's personal life. xii. Windows and Doors Windows and doors in "David Copperfield" often symbolize the transitions and thresholds in David's life. Open windows and doors suggest opportunities and new beginnings, while closed ones signify barriers and confinement. For instance, David's escape through a window from Murdstone and Grinby's warehouse represents his break from a life of drudgery and his step toward independence and self-determination. xiii. The Spinning Wheel The spinning wheel is a potent symbol of domesticity and the passing of time. It is particularly associated with Peggotty, who often spins while listening to David. The rhythmic motion of the wheel suggests the continuity of life and the enduring presence of nurturing figures like Peggotty, who provide stability amidst the chaos of David's life.Conclusion Through the use of symbolism, Dickens knits a multifaceted textile of meanings that develop the narrative profundity of "David Copperfield," making it a splendidly textured and durable novel. Dickens' novel is abundant with several levels of symbolism that contribute to its complete connotation and ideas. The employment of symbolic elements contributes to the integrity of Dickens' stylistic approach, enriching the description, deepen meanings in the novel and presenting profounder understandings into the characters and themes. The utilization of symbols, for example, the sea, weather, flowers, the Rookery, windows and doors, and the spinning wheel demonstrates his mastery in knitting intricate demonstrative and thematic levels into his novel. Symbols are powerful tools which help him to convey ideas, opinions and feelings more obviously and more rapidly. They are employed to create real physical images of places and persons or ethereal atmosphere of happiness, joy, irritation, fear, … etc. They play an essential role in producing specific emotion, mood and sensation within the novel. Thus, symbols can be seen as positive maneuvers which mainly create both expressive meaning and real images which help understanding the novel.

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