The Role of Verbless Clauses as a Stylistic Marker in Selected Works by Woolf, Joyce, Mansfield and Synge, Daviot, and Priestly

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Section I /Introduction

1.1 Problem

Verbless clauses offer one concise formal means of writing which is especially suitable for the purpose of writing where brevity and economy are sought. The important question is how far such verbless constructions can function as a stylistic marker serving to differentiate one author's style from another i.e. Woolf's,, Joyce's, Mansfield's, and Synge's, Daviot's and Priestley's style. This is the question which this study tries to give an adequate answer in terms of statistical analysis and methods.

1.2 Aim

This study aims at investigating the viability of verbless clauses functioning as a stylistic marker in the works of Woolf, Joyce, Mansfield, and Synge, Daviot and Priestly.

1.3 Hypotheses

It is hypothesized that:

1. The authorial use of the verbless forms by Virginia Woolf constitutes one distinctive stylistic marker in her works.
2. Woolf uses the highest density of verbless clauses in the data, i.e. more than, Joyce, Mansfield, Synge, Daviot, and Priestly.

1.4 Procedure

The researcher adopts the following procedures:

1. Presenting the verbless constructions with their definitions, forms and functions, i.e. uses.
2. Investigating the frequencies of the verbless constructions in the selected data and analyzing them. This will be done through the selection of one work from each writer. To ensure that the rates of recurrence allow objective comparison, the works selected are equal in size.

1.5 Limit

This study limits itself to the works of Woolf, Joyce, Mansfield, Synge, Daviot, and Priestly. These are: Woolf's **Kew Gardens**,, Joyce's **Eveline**, Mansfield's **Millie**, Synge's **Riders to the Sea,** Daviot's **The Pen of My Aunt**, and Priestley's **Mother's Day**.

The reason behind choosing these two different narrative texts(short stories versus one-act plays) is that both have common features where economy and brevity are required.Furthermore,the correlation of variant according to genre can lead to contrastive studies, as comparing the densities of one linguistic feature in short stories with that of other narrative texts, like novels biographies,plays,autoniographies,etc.

1.6 Value

It is hoped that the stylistic analysis of the data conducted in this study will cast a valuable light on the characteristics and techniques of writing used by those particular writers. Such an attempt will be made to combine both linguistic and literary discrimination by investigating how the linguistic differentials are related to the techniques of writing.

1.7 Definition of Terms
1.7.1 Stylistic Marker
When the densities of certain features(optional ones) are apparently different in two texts: the studied text and the differentiating norm, then these features are style markers, i.e. stylistically significant features(Enkvist, 1973: 23).
1.7.2 Stylostatistics
Stylostatistics is the field which studies the statistical structures of literary texts(Crystal, 2003: 440). Statistical investigations of texts and their style are most directly concerned with identifying and describing the specific features in the text, their organization, and variability with two different aims in mind: statisticians study language in general, and style in particular. Students of style are primarily interested in the statistical differentials concentrated on extracting those features that make one text different from other text(James, 2001:9; Leech and Short, 1981: 129).

Section II
Verbless Clauses
Definition, Form, and Use

2.1 Definition
The verbless clause is considered by Roberts(1954: 289) as a "group of words which despite the absence of an unsubordinated finite verb, is felt to constitute a complete utterance".

It is treated as a clause because it performs the same function of a finite clause(Leech and Svartvik, 1994: 214).
    (1)   a. He walked out of the restaurant with **a spoon(was) in his   pocket**.
                b. She came whenever(**it was) necessary**.

It is clear that verbless clauses are originally finite ones because of having a missing verb "be" and a subject. Furthermore, verbless clauses can be analyzed into the same functional elements found in finite clauses as subject complement, object and adverb:
    (2)   If available [subject complement], the books will be sent to you within two weeks.
             If they [subject] are [verb] available [subject complement] the books will be sent to you within two weeks.
                              (Wekker and Haegeman, 1985: 34)
Villalón(1997) adds that if the absence of a finite verb is an excuse to explain verbless clauses, everything could be a subordinate clause if it can be transformed into a subordinate clause.
    (3)   a. I love when I dance the tango.
             b. I love **the dance of the tango.**
2.2 Forms of Verbless Clauses
Verbless clauses are formed from either the process of deletion or from the process of nominalization.
2.2.1 Deletion
Verbless clauses are formed by the deletion of the linking verb(mainly **be**) and the following structure(predicative) is left behind. According to the following example:
    (4)   Although(he was) always helpful, he was not much liked.
                              (Quirk et al., 1985: 992)

the process of linking verb deletion can be the result of another reduction, for example, from the finite clause to the non-finite, which is in turn reduced to be a verbless clause:

(5) a. John believes that the prisoner is innocent.

b. John believes the prisoner to be innocent.

c. John believes **the prisoner innocent**.

(Bailyn, 2000: 4)

2.2.2 Nominalization

Nominalization is a term used to refer to the "process of forming a noun from other word class":

(6) Red(adjective) redness(noun).

Or it is the derivation of a noun phrase from an underlining clause, e.g.:

(7) a. She answered the letter.

b. Her answering the letter

(Crystal, 2003: 314)

The relation of such type of process and the verbless clause structure can be more or less explicit depending on how far the nominalization specifies the nominal or adverbial elements of a corresponding clause through the use of modifiers and determiners. The following noun phrases are arranged from the most explicit(8. a.) to least explicit(8. e.) and each can occupy the function of nominalization:

(8) a. The reviewer's hostile criticism of his play.

b. The reviewer's criticism of his play.

c. The reviewer's criticism.

d. His criticism.

e. The criticism. (Quirk et al., 1985: 1289)

In addition, verbless clauses can be formed by means of a paraphrasing process which is a more detailed restatement than a summary which focuses concisely on one main idea(Krohn, 1971: 23). By means of such a process, the verb **to be** is omitted and the predictive is moved after the determiner:

(9) a. Because the weather **was** cold, we stayed home.

b**. Due to the cold weather**, we stayed home.

2.3 Uses of Verbless Clauses

The verbless clauses, like any finite clause, can be in a nominal, adjectival, or adverbial position:

2.3.1 Nominal

Since verbless clauses can behave like nouns, they can be the direct object, prepositional complement, appositive, or subject:

(10) The umpire declared **the runner safe**.(direct object).

(Algeo, 1974: 179)

(11) He returned home **without his shoes on**.(prepositional complement). (Garside et al., 1998)

(12) At the entrance there are two pillars, **one on each side**.(appositive). (Quirk, et al., 1985: 1314)

(13) **Wall – to – wall carpets in every room** is the house wife's dream. (subject).

(Ibid.)

2.3.2 Adjectival

In all cases, verbless clauses can function as postmodifiers:

(14) a. I've got a lot of friends, **most of them students like me.**

(Bruti, 2003:11)

b. She turned a way **furious.** (Nash, 1986: 119)

2.3.3 Adverbial

It can function as an adverb to modify the whole sentence:

(15) **Completely undismayed,** he drove the damaged car.
(Quirk et al., 1985: 351)

In addition, verbless clauses can indicate different semantic relations, as in:

(16) **While in London**, we'll stay at a hotel.(time)

(17) **Grateful for his help**, they praised Tom.(reason)
(Hasselgard,2003,5)

(18) **Without you at my side**, I am not willing to answer
questions.(condition)
(Greenbaum and Quirk, 1990: 288)

(19) **No matter whether right or wrong**, he always insisted on having
things this way.(condition – concession).
(Elsness, 2003)

(20) **In accordance with the principles of direct play**, the ball should be
thrown forward **where possible**.(place)
(Fang and Huckvale, 1996: 13)

(21) **Fresh from the oven**, rollers are delicious.(contingency)

(22) You should discuss the company with him **as though unaware** that you
were being considered for a job.(comparison) (Quirk et
al., 1985: 1078, 1110)

(23) Although always by training, he became a great soldier.
(contrast) (Close, 1975: 100)

Section III
Data Selection and Contrastive Analysis

3.1 Data Selection

Six writers have been selected for the purpose of investigating the functionality of the verbless clauses as a differentiating stylistic marker in the data. These six writers are: Virginia Woolf, J.M. Synge, James Joyce, Katherine Mansfield, G. Daviot; and J.B. Priestly. From each writer, one work has been selected: Woolf's **Kew Gardens**, Synge's **Riders to the sea**, Joyce's **Eveline**, Mansfield's **Millie**, Daviot's **The Pen of My Aunt**; and Priestley's **Mother's Day**. The stylistic analysis and the discussion of the functionality of verbless clauses will draw upon Leech and Short's(1981) model.

3.2 Leech and Short's Model(1981)

Stylistics has typically been concerned with literary language.Literary stylistics explains the relation between linguistic choices and literary or aesthetic funiction.Style can be relatively transparent or opaque: transparent implies paraphrasing ability; opacity implies that a text cannot be adequately paraphrased, and that the interpretation of the text depends greatly on the creative imagination of the reader. Stylistic choice is limited to those aspects of linguistic choice which concern alternative ways of reading the same subject-matter. This defines a more restricted concept of style, which maybe called **style**, to distinguish between what the writer chooses to talk about how to talk about it. The study of literary function of language can be directed towards the stylistic values associated with stylistic variants. There is no one model of prose style, which is applicable to all texts.

Leech and Short(Ibid: 70) maintain that there is no complete list of the linguistic properties of a text; therefore one has to select which features to study.

There is also no direct relation between statistical deviance and stylistic significance: literary considerations must therefore be the guide in selecting what features to examine.

The process of measuring style is to find out what is distinctive about the style of a certain corpus or text and to work about the features it contains and then to measure the figures against equivalent figures which are normal.Therefore,style is to be measured in terms of deviation either higher or lower frequencies from the norm(Ibid.:43).

3.3 The Authorial Densities of the Verbless Clauses in the Data

3.3.1 Verbless Clauses per Sentence Ratio

In comparison with the total number of sentences each work has, Woolf's **Kew Gardens** contains(91) sentences, and Joyce's short story has(131) sentences, and Mansfield has(205) sentences whereas Synge's play has(297), Divot's has(351), and Priestley's play has(500) sentences. The verbless clauses found in each work are as follows: **Kew Gardens** and **Eveline** contain(10) verbless clauses and **Millie** contains(5) only. In comparison with the three one act – plays, **Mother's Day** contains(19), **The Pen of My Aunt** has(18), and(35) for **Riders to the Sea**. The following table shows the figures mentioned above.

Table(1) The Ratio of Verbless Clauses in the Data

Writers	Total Sentences	Total Verbless Clauses	Means of Verbless Clauses per Sentence
Woolf	91	10	0.1
Joyce	131	10	0.07
Mansfield	205	5	0.02
Synge	297	35	0.11
Daviot	351	18	0.05
Priestly	500	19	0.04

The styloanalysis of the selected data shows that verbless clauses in Woolf's **Kew Gardens** obtain a distinctively high density in sentence(24) with(2) occurrences. They are used to show Caroline's view of the past in **Kew Gardens** i.e. according to her, that place was represented by a kiss to her by an old gray haired woman:

And suddenly a kiss, on the back of my neck.

(**Kew Gardens•,*** S: 24)

The density of the verbless clauses in Joyce's **Eveline** is manifested in(2) occurrences found in the subtext in sentence(130). This density shows that **Eveline** is seized by a sudden anguish, which makes her unable to move from her place, leaning the boat sail away and response, as in the extract below:

She set her white face to him, **passive**, **like a helpless animal**.

(**Eveline,** S: 130)

In Mansfield's **Millie**, the density of verbless clauses is from sentence(13) to sentence(15) with(2) occurrences. Their use is to show Millie's reaction against the news of murdering Mr. Williamson, i.e. to show her exclamatory feeling by giving exclamatory sentences:

• * S stands for the number of the sentences in the original work.

Such a dreadful thing! And Mrs. Williamson left all alone with those kids. **Funny**! She couldn't think of Mr. Williamson being dead.

(**Millie**, S: 13 – 15)

The highest density of verbless clauses in Synge's **Riders to the Sea** has(6) occurrences in sentence(1 – 3). Though the use of the verbless clauses, Synge tries to give a pictorial view of the scene opening his play by describing the place and the people preparing the reader to see what is going on in his tragic play. The extract below clarifies this point:

Scene – **An Island of the West of Ireland**. **Cottage kitchen, with net**, **oil skis,** spinning wheel some new boards standing by the wall, etc. Cathleen, **a girl about twenty**, finishes kneading cake and puts it down in the pot oven, then wipes her hands, and begins to spin at the wheel. Nora, **a young girl**, puts her head in the door.

(**Riders to the Sea**,S:1-3)

The Pen of My Aunt by Daviot shows a density of verbless clauses which appears in the subtext beginning from sentence(139) to sentence(144) with(14) occurrences. The functions here are of description, giving information and exclamation i.e. they are used to show the servant's and stranger's feelings and manners while the servant tries to give him information to deceive the Corporal by saying that the papers are in the coat which is sent to the laundry while the stranger tries to show his exclamation and unbelieving about what happening, as shown in the following extract:

Stranger: **To the laundry**!

Simone: Yes, monsieur; **This morning; in the basket**.

Stranger:(**in incredulous anger**). You sent my coat, with my papers in the pocket to the laundry!

Simone:(**defensive and combatant**). I didn't know monsieur's paper in the pocket.

Stranger: You didn't know! You didn't know that a pocket of documents weighting half a ton were in the pocket**. An identity card, an army discharge, a permission to wear civilian clothes, a permission to go farther than ten miles to the east, a permission to go more than ten miles to the west, a permission to ---------------.**

(**The Pen of My Aunt**, S: 139 – ff)

Finally, Priestley's **Mother's Day** contains a high density with(7) occurrences in the subtext beginning with sentence(27) to sentence(42). It is used to shed lights on the dramatic climax and the character's reactions when Mrs. Fitzgerald is trying to persuade Mrs. Pearson to revolute against her family and to show Mrs. Pearson acceptance of the idea but by words only. The extract below shows them clearly:

Mrs. Fitzgerald: **No doubts about it at all**. Where's Labette for spoilt – frown when a lad or girl**!? Nobody.**........
Never in all your life. It's the ruin of them as well as you.........

Mrs. Pearson:(**dubiously**) I – keep dropping a hint.

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Mrs. Fitzgerald: **Hint**? It's more than hints your family needs; Mrs. Pearson.

Mrs. Pearson:(**dubiously)** I suppose it is.....

.... **Nothing ready** and they'll he home and minute – and probably all in a hurry to go out again........

(**Mother's Day**, S: 27 – 42)

3.3.2 The Differentials of Verbless Clauses per Sentence

As shown in table(1) above, the mean of verbless clauses used by each writer is different, since it is(0.07) for Joyce,(0.1) for Woolf,(0.02) for Mansfield,(0.04) for Priestly,(0.05) for Synge, and(0.05) for Daviot. In contrastive terms, this means that Priestly uses(0.01) less verbless clauses per sentence than Daviot,(0.06) less verbless clauses than Woolf, and more(0.02) than Mansfield. Priestly, on the other hand, uses(0.07) less verbless clauses than Synge and less(0.03) verbless clauses than Joyce. Daviot uses(0.05) less verbless clauses than Woolf,(0.03) more verbless clauses than Mansfield, and less(0.02) verbless clauses than Joyce. Synge use(0.06) verbless clauses more than Daviot,(0.01) more than Woolf,(0.03) more than Joyce, and(0.09) more than Mansfield. Woolf, on the other hand, uses(0.03) verbless clauses more than Joyce, and(0.08) more than Mansfield. Finally, Joyce uses(0.05) more verbless clauses than Mansfield.

If this differential per sentence is expressed in terms of the whole text by multiplying this mean by the total number of sentence in the works under discussion, we get the following means: According to the whole data, Priestly uses(4) verbless clauses less per each work than Daviot,(5) less than Woolf,(10) more than Mansfield,(21) less than Synge, and less(4) than Joyce. Daviot uses(5) verbless clauses more than Woolf, but Daviot uses(3) verbless clauses more than Joyce, and(11) more verbless clauses than Mansfield. Woolf, on the other hand, uses(4) verbless clauses more than Joyce, and(7) more verbless clauses than Mansfield. Joyce uses(7) more than Mansfield. Finally, Synge uses(18),(10),(3), and(2) more than Daviot, Joyce, Woolf, and Mansfield respectively. This is clear in Table(2):

Table(2) The Differentials of Verbless Clauses Per Sentence

Writers	Differentials of Verbless Clauses	Means of Verbless Clauses per each Work
Priestly / Daviot	0.05 – 0.04 = 0.01	0.01 x 351 = 4
Priestly / Synge	0.11 – 0.04 = 0.07	0.07 x 297 = 21
Priestly / Joyce	0.07 – 0.04 = 0.03	0.03 x 131 = 4
Synge / Daviot	0.11 – 0.05 = 0.06	0.06 x297 = 18
Joyce / Woolf	0.1 – 0.07 = 0.03	0.03 x 91 = 4
Woolf / Mansfield	0.1 – 0.02 = 0.08	0.08 x 91 = 7
Joyce / Mansfield	0.07 – 0.02 = 0.05	0.05 x 131 = 7
Priestly / Woolf	0.1 – 0.04 = 0.06	0.06 x 91 = 5
Priestly / Mansfield	0.04 – 0.02 = 0.02	0.02 x 500 = 10
Daviot / Joyce	0.07 – 0.05 = 0.02	0.02 x 131 = 3
Daviot / Mansfield	0.05 – 0.02 = 0.03	0.03 x 351 = 11
Daviot / Woolf	0.05 = 0.1 = 0.05	0.05 x 91 = 5
Synge / Joyce	0.11 – 0.04 = 0.03	0.03 x 297 = 10
Woolf / Synge	0.11 – 0.1 = 0.01	0.01 x 297 = 3
Synge / Mansfield	0.11 – 0.02 = 0.09	0.09 x 297 = 2

These figures show that Synge uses the highest means of verbless clauses in the data, and Mansfield the lowest, with Woolf, Daviot, Joyce, and Priestly in between. When expressed in terms of percentage, Priestly uses(10%) verbless clauses less than Woolf and Joyce,(1%) less than Daviot and(15%) verbless clauses more than Mansfield, but(16%) less than Synge. Synge uses(17%) more than Daviot,(26%) more

than Woolf and Joyce, and(31%) more than Mansfield. Daviot uses(9%) less than Joyce and Woolf, and more(14%) than Mansfield. Joyce uses(5%) more verbless clauses than Mansfield, but the same as Woolf. Finally, Wolf uses(5%) more verbless clauses than Mansfield. The following table can help to clarify this:

Table(3) The Percentage and Differentials of Verbless Clauses Per Sentence

Writers	Total	%	Verbless Clauses	%
Priestly	500	14	19	20
Daviot	351	29	18	19
Synge	297	24	35	36
Joyce	131	10	10	10
Woolf	91	7	10	10
Mansfield	205	16	5	5
Totals	1224	100	97	100

Differentials				
Priestly / Daviot	**Priestly / Synge**	**Synge / Daviot**	**Joyce / Woolf**	**Woolf / Mansfield**
1%	16%	17%	0%	5%
Joyce / Mansfield	**Priestly / Joyce**	**Priestly / Woolf**	**Priestly / Mansfield**	**Woolf / Mansfield**
5%	10%	10%	15%	9%
Daviot / Woolf	**Daviot / Joyce**	**Synge / Joyce**	**Woolf / Synge**	**Synge / Mansfield**
9%	14%	26%	26%	31%

Section IV
Conclusions

This section sums up the main results and conclusions arrived at through the statistical analysis. The statistical analysis of the densities of the verbless clauses in the works of each writer reveals the following facts:

1. Woolf uses a least number of sentences in comparison with other writers with a high density of verbless clauses in comparison with Priestly who uses the highest number of sentences in the data.

2. The highest density in the use of the verbless clauses is found in the play of Synge having the ratio of(0.11 / 1) per sentence, whereas the lowest verbless clauses density is found in Mansfield's short story having the ration of(0.02 /1).

3. Translated in terms of the differentials of use in the data of each writer, the ratios above show that Synge uses(18) verbless clauses more that Daviot, and(21) verbless clauses than Priestly,(10) more than Joyce,(3) more than Woolf, and(2) more than Mansfield. Daviot has verbless clauses(4) more than Priestly and(11) more than Mansfield, but less than Woolf in(5) uses and less than Joyce in(3) uses. Woolf uses(4) verbless clauses more than Joyce, more(7) verbless clauses than Mansfield, and more(5) verbless clauses than Priestly. Priestly uses(10) verbless clauses than Mansfield, but less(4) verbless clauses than Joyce. Finally, Joyce uses(7) verbless clauses than Mansfield.

4. In terms of percentages of use in the whole data, Synge uses(17%) verbless clauses more than Daviot,(26%) more than Woolf, and(31%) more than Mansfield. Priestly uses(10%) verbless clauses more than Woolf, and Joyce, and more(15%) than Mansfield, and(1%) more than Daviot. Daviot uses(9%) more than Woolf and Joyce, and more(14%) than Mansfield. Joyce uses(5%) more verbless clauses than Mansfield, but the same as Woolf, and less(26%) than Synge. Woolf, in return, uses(5%) more verbless clauses than Mansfield. These percentages are all significant and they validate the first hypothesis that

the authorial use of the verbless clauses by Woolf constitutes one distinctive stylistic marker in Woolf's work in comparison with the other writers in the study. At the same time, these ratios and differentials refute the second hypothesis that Woolf uses the highest density in the data because Synge's work is the highest regardless of the number of the sentences found in each work for each writer.

5. Finally, verbless clauses show significant narrative functions in the selected work of each writer. For illustration, they are used to describe, exclamate, comment, and give information.

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