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Foregrounding Techniques in Hanif Kureishi's *Goodbye Mother*: A Lexical and Stylistic Analysis

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Abstracts

This paper examines the use of lexical and stylistic foregrounding in Hanif Kureishi's short story *Goodbye Mother*. The present study is based on stylistic theories and reflects on how such linguistic features as lexical repetition, syntactic deviation, and figurative language create a deeper registered emotional power and cultural overtones within the narrative. This paper discusses how Kureishi employs complex and simple nouns to describe specific themes such as identity and generational conflict, while dynamic and mental process verbs focus on the inner struggle and emotional instability that the characters go through in their experiences. On the other hand, adjectives and adverbs contribute to the emotional depth of the narration. Syntactic structures and deviations, such as ellipses and interrupted syntax, mirror the fragmented psychic states of these characters, adding layers of emotional realism to the narrative. Figurative language, through metaphors, similes, and personification, opens figurative depth, underlining themes of cultural hybridity, familial bonds, and memory. By placing Kureishi's work in the larger context of postcolonial literature and British Asian narrative, this study addresses a critical gap in study, highlighting the need for stylistic analysis of short fiction. The results of the present research point to the role of foregrounding techniques in cultural critique and emotional

engagement and, as such, constitute valuable contributions toward the understanding of Kureishi's literary artistry and the greater discourse on postcolonial identity and hybridity.

1.1 Introduction

This section introduces the research topic, covering the scope of the study and how it contributes to the field of literary analysis. The given research focuses on the stylistic and lexical foregrounding techniques in Hanif Kureishi's short story *Goodbye Mother*, with the aim of exploring how such techniques enhance the cultural and emotional resonance of the narrative.

1.2 Background of the Study

Foregrounding is originally a stylistic concept- a term coined by the Prague School of Linguistics- which refers to the deliberate deviation from linguistic norms to create artistic effects to draw attention to textual elements. This technique disrupts readers' expectations, amplifies their engagement with the text, and emphasizes critical themes or emotions (Leech, 2008). The two most common devices of foregrounding through which this is achieved are deviation, which breaks linguistic conventions, and parallelism, which involves the repetition of structures to reinforce meaning and create rhythm. These stylistic tools have proved indispensable when it comes to an analysis of how authors converse with their deeper thematic concerns and emotional layers in their works.

Although foregrounding techniques have widely been applied to the analysis of postcolonial novels and poetry, relatively few scholarly works have been done on short fiction. In most cases, postcolonial literature engages in the use of stylistic and lexical devices for challenging colonialist ideologies and setting out cultural identities (Adami, 2024). The condensed nature of short fiction, however, renders the genre peculiarly fertile ground for foregrounding, relying on linguistic economy and stylistic precision for articulating complex ideas. According to Komolafe et al. (2025), since the short story is meant to be compact, stylistic features tend to be magnified, given that every lexical item and syntactic structure is crucial for the impact required in the telling of the story.

Hanif Kureishi is one of Britain's most prominent British-Asian writers, known for his subtle development of themes of cultural hybridity, migration, and intergenerational dynamics. His works often negotiate the tensions of identity and cultural belonging, reflecting those of postcolonial and diasporic experiences. *Goodbye Mother* is one of Kureishi's short stories that very well embodies all these themes while displaying a rich play of linguistic and stylistic devices. The story's focus on familial relationships and cultural dislocation is conveyed not only through its narrative but also through its meticulous use of foregrounding techniques such as lexical repetition, metaphorical imagery, and syntactic deviation.

Despite the richness of themes in Kureishi's works, many scholarships to date have been centred on the broader narrative and cultural aspects of his work at the expense of linguistic and stylistic strategies underpinning his storytelling. Hence, for example, studies on Kureishi's engagement with identity and cultural hybridity, such as Frazier (2024) and Jawad (2024), respectively, all fail largely to account for the way in which his stylistics inform such areas. This perpetuates the same approach to research found within the discourses on postcolonial literature, where there is usually favoritism regarding the consideration of novels and poetry, going as elitist as Adami (2024) entitled *Postcolonial Stylistics*, which puts forward thematic matters to the utter disregard of any stylistic articulations relating to short fiction.

The present paper attempts to fill this gap by discussing how foregrounding techniques enhance the cultural critique and emotional resonance of the narrative in *Goodbye Mother*. It explains how the stylistic methods adopted by Kureishi enrich his thematic exploration of identity and generational conflict in the novel by analyzing features such as lexical repetition, metaphorical imagery, and syntactic deviation. Kureishi navigates that liminal position in which both cultures seem to mix and intercross; thus, stylistic ways serve as a critical tool in articulating the subtle struggles that his characters stand to experience in the liminality of their existence. That makes this discussion of particular importance to postcolonial studies and investigations of style.

Moreover, the research places Kureishi's work in the bigger context of British-Asian literature, a field which, until now, has rarely been analyzed from a stylistic point of view. By elaborating on how these foregrounding techniques interact with postcolonial thematization, this research offers

further insight into short fiction understood as a channel for cultural and affective expression. As Houghton (2025) has observed, stylistic analysis of short fiction has the power to make clear the intricate ways in which language operates to create meaning, especially in texts dealing with cultural hybridity and identity formation. Thus, this research fills not only a critical gap in the analysis of Kureishi's work, it also foregrounds the potential of stylistics in deepening our understanding of postcolonial narratives.

1.3 Problem Statement

While stylistic and lexical analyses have gained crucial importance in the literary world, their applications to short fiction, especially within British-Asian literature, remain constrained. Most of the research about Hanif Kureishi focuses on the thematic elements rather than the elaborate stylistic mechanisms within the stories. In *Goodbye Mother*, the stylistic features, such as metaphorical imagery and lexical repetition, are used to convey the emotional appeal and cultural critique of the story. However, these aspects have not been dealt with in-depth, thus leaving a gap in understanding how foregrounding techniques enhance the impact of the narrative. The present paper tries to fill this gap in the analysis of stylistic and lexical features of *Goodbye Mother*, thereby underlining how linguistic choices interact with thematic expression in postcolonial short fiction, adding to the understanding of Kureishi's literary art.

1.4 Research Questions and Objectives

The study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the key lexical and syntactic foregrounding techniques employed in *Goodbye Mother*?
2. How do these techniques contribute to the narrative's cultural and emotional dimensions?
3. In what ways do Kureishi's stylistic choices reflect the broader concerns of postcolonial literature?

Based on these questions, the study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- To identify and analyze the lexical and syntactic foregrounding techniques in *Goodbye Mother*.
- To explore how these techniques enhance the narrative's engagement with themes of identity, generational conflict, and cultural hybridity.
- To situate Kureishi's stylistic and lexical strategies within the context of postcolonial literary discourse.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The present research is important for a number of reasons. First, it adds to the increasing number of studies in the field of stylistics by expanding its scope into the domain of short fiction, a genre in which few critical studies have been done. Second, this enriches our understanding of Hanif Kureishi's *Goodbye Mother* and ramifies the relationship between stylistic features and the way themes are worked out. Thirdly, the research provides an understanding of the role of foregrounding in postcolonial literature, which highlights how linguistic deviation and parallelism are used as tools for cultural critique and emotional engagement.

Addressing this gap in scholarship, this research enriches not only the understanding of Kureishi's work but also points toward the importance of stylistic analysis in exploring the complexities of postcolonial narratives. This paper provides a foundation for further studies concerning the linguistic and stylistic dimensions of short fiction, particularly within the context of British-Asian literature.

Literature review

This section aims to critically review the available literature on foregrounding techniques, stylistics in postcolonial literature, and Hanif Kureishi's short fiction, focusing on his work, *Goodbye Mother*. As the name itself suggests, the concept of foregrounding lies at the very heart of stylistic analysis and points to the artistic use of language through lexical and syntactic deviations that prove to be a powerful tool for literary expression. Most often, this postcolonial literature, concerned thematically with identity, cultural hybridity, and resistance to colonial discourse, employs these techniques in challenging dominant narratives.

The literature review will consider the theoretical underpinning of foregrounding, its use within postcolonial texts, and its purpose in short fiction- a genre which is usually not considered while carrying out a stylistic study. In addition, this section will find a critical gap regarding the analysis of Kureishi's *Goodbye Mother*, pointing at the need for a close examination of how stylistic and lexical foregrounding techniques enhance its narrative complexity. This section synthesizes insights from recent studies and lays the foundation for the research, emphasizing the importance of stylistic analysis in understanding the cultural and emotional dimensions of Kureishi's work.

1. Introduction to Foregrounding Techniques

Indebted to the Prague School of Linguistics, the concept of foregrounding has been one of the main concerns of stylistic analysis. The term itself means that a process of defamiliarization, either through deviation or repetition of some linguistic feature, might go against the expectations of the reader and attract his attention to certain aspects of a text (Leech, 2008). According to Mukarami (2024), this high degree of awareness created in readers sets them free to find meaning beyond the literal in texts. The concept is especially relevant in literary studies, where language is deliberately manipulated for artistic purposes.

Foregrounding includes two major techniques: parallelism and deviation. While parallelism involves repeating structures to emphasize certain elements, deviation breaks the linguistic norm to engender surprise or emotional effect (Short & Leech, 2020). Alkali and Aminu (2024) illustrate these techniques within African literature, where repetition often reinforces themes of solidarity and resistance.

Recent works show the versatility of foregrounding as it takes centre stage across genres. Frazier's (2024) examination of Nikolai Gogol's use of syntactic deviation shows how such devices elicit ambiguity and tension, which serve to heighten the psychological depth of a narrative. Mahmoud (2024) has discussed foregrounding in film adaptations from Shakespeare, demonstrating how cinematic techniques evoke sensuality through various visual and lexical patterns.

Nevertheless, most works are limited to poetry and novels. For example, Elmahdi and Elamin (2024) have explored Tayeb Salih's *Season of Migration to the North*, closely relating linguistic deviation to the postcolonial struggles for identity. Their analysis is good, but their investigation excludes short fiction, which often has its foregrounding condensed and intensified by virtue of narrative brevity.

According to Houghton (2025), this foregrounding also constitutes a mode of cultural critique, as stated in his consideration of free indirect discourse. In this case, linguistic innovation resists the social norm, which forms an alternate way of considering difficult issues. Though the device finds an immense application in the field of research, the shortage of research on foregrounding in British-Asian short stories, particularly the works of Hanif Kureishi, shows serious lacunae in this area.

2. Stylistics in Postcolonial Literature

Stylistic devices in postcolonial literature are more likely to be used in the subversion of dominant narratives and reclaiming cultural identities. For example, as Adami (2024) shows in the text of *Postcolonial Stylistics*, linguistic choices in postcolonial texts are usually representative of the tension between the world of colonial and indigenous perspectives. Code-switching, metaphor, and borrowing lexical are some of the stylistic devices that allow writers to engage in critiquing colonial ideologies while claiming their cultural identity.

Joshi (2024) discusses stylistic changes in Indian English poetry and illustrates how linguistic hybridity in the works of postcolonial authors expresses cultural hybridity. On the other hand, Kahar (2024) discusses the "*Big Three*" of Indian writing Raj Anand, Raja Rao, and R.K. discuss their use of syntactic deviation to highlight themes of cultural dislocation.

The short story genre's nature or form easily lends itself to stylistic experimentation. Alkali and Aminu (2024) confirm that due to the genre's compact nature, precision in language foregrounds techniques of repetition and metaphor, among others, even more effectively. In Caribbean short stories, linguistic nonconformity, according to Jawad (2024), underlines issues such as exile and belonging.

Although volumes have been written on postcolonial novels, scholarships tend to bypass short fiction. Khan (2024) suggests that the brevity of the short story requires a stylistic economy. However, critical attention continues to centre around broader thematic concerns. Witness such studies as Frazier (2024), which investigates postcolonial identity in Gogol's work without consideration of the specific stylistic devices utilized in the short narrative.

British-Asian literature, an important subset of postcolonial writing, has received limited attention in terms of stylistic analysis. Komolafe et al. (2025) indicate that the linguistic deviation used by authors such as Hanif Kureishi reflects the complexity of cultural hybridity, however their work remains limited to thematic exploration. Shahid et al. (2024) extend this argument, emphasizing that stylistic techniques within postcolonial short fiction need closer consideration.

Foregrounding in postcolonial literature often cuts across linguistic boundaries, fusing cultural and stylistic features to form new kinds of literature. In Ajah (2024), this was applied to Ahmadou Kourouma's *Quand on refuse de montrer comment on a été humilié* to show how corpus stylistics uncovers lexical items that have been used to critique postcolonial power dynamics. Similarly, Beromi (2024) has shown the importance of stylistic analysis in the understanding of Persian postcolonial texts, thus underlining the universality of the application of these techniques.

Despite these interventions, important gaps in scholarship prevail. As Edung and Owan (2024) observe in this collection, studies of stylistic innovation in postcolonial literature rarely engage with the intersection of lexical foregrounding and narrative form in short fiction. This stance is emphatically reflected in discussions of Hanif Kureishi's *Goodbye Mother*, whose stylistic subtlety is inexorably tied to the articulation of its themes of identity and generational conflict.

3. Hanif Kureishi and Stylistic Techniques

Works by Hanif Kureishi have especially been at the centre of much critical attention due to their thematic engagement with issues of identity, migration, and cultural estrangement. According to two critics, Jawad (2024) and Frazier (2024), Kureishi employs such narrative techniques as free indirect discourse and focalization to depict complex emotional landscapes. Analytic readings of

his short stories, *Goodbye Mother*, are still scant, being more focused on thematic rather than stylistic dimensions. This is a critical gap, as stylistic features such as lexical repetition, metaphor, and syntactic deviation in Kureishi's work need further investigation.

4. Foregrounding in Short Fiction

Short fiction is, according to Alkali and Aminu (2024), always characterized by the linguistic economy in which foregrounding techniques play a central role. Their research evidence in African short stories has shown exactly how lexical deviation magnifies the thematic echo within the tight fold of stories. Although their findings are quite bright, they do not extend to British-Asian writers such as Kureishi, whose stylistic ways are dictated by unique cultural and linguistic milieus.

5. Research Gap

Whereas there is a huge amount of research regarding the foregrounding techniques in the novels and poetry of postcolonial settings, very little work has been carried out to outline the way in which these devices have manifested themselves in short fiction, particularly in the novel *Goodbye Mother* by Hanif Kureishi. The already published studies lay more emphasis on general thematic and narrative interests and bypass the lexical and stylistic artistry underlining Kureishi's cultural critique. This gap provides an enabling space to establish how foregrounding techniques, such as lexical repetition and syntactic deviations, including metaphorical imagery, accentuate the emotive appeal in the narrative arc and its impact on culture.

The identified research gap will be addressed, thus offering useful insights into how stylistic devices interrelate with thematic expression in postcolonial short fiction. A close reading of *Goodbye Mother* will underline how Hanif Kureishi employs foregrounding techniques, such as lexical repetition, syntactic deviation, and metaphorical imagery, to enhance the cultural and emotional dimensions of the narrative.

This paper, therefore, intends to illustrate the specific possibilities of the short story genre as a means of cultural articulation, underlining its dependence on linguistic precision and stylistic

invention. Thus, the gap between thematic and stylistic analysis will be bridged, and the research will contribute not only to a deeper understanding of Kureishi's work but also to the general discussion of stylistic analysis in postcolonial literature.

This contribution is particularly significant in an era where cultural hybridity and identity formation remain central to global literary discourses. Through its detailed exploration of *Goodbye Mother*, the paper will underline the importance of bringing foregrounding techniques to the fore as tools of engagement with these complex issues, reaffirming their relevance in contemporary literary analysis.

Methodology

3.1 Overview

This section highlights the methodology employed for analyzing linguistic and stylistic features in Hanif Kureishi's *Goodbye Mother*. The present study is based on a qualitative approach to the text, with a focus on foregrounding techniques like lexical, syntactic, and figurative devices in their contribution to the cultural and emotive aspects of the narrative. The framework adopted in this research work aims to show ways in which these stylistic options will shape psychological, social, and thematic dimensions in the story to come up with insights into its depth and complexity.

3.2 Research Design

The paper is designed as a textual and stylistic analysis, focusing on linguistic features in *Goodbye Mother*. The objective is to trace and interpret the ways in which Kureishi employs stylistic devices to increase the narrative's engagement with the themes of identity, generational conflict, and cultural hybridity. This analysis focuses on the interaction between lexis, syntax, and figurative language in constructing the story's psychological and thematic effect.

3.3 Data Collection

In this research, data are mainly from the short story *Goodbye Mother* by Hanif Kureishi. The text was selected on account of its linguistic wealth and relevant themes to be explored in the postcolonial literature regarding cultural hybridity and family dynamics. By secondary data, one would understand the critical essays, academic articles, and theoretical works in stylistics and postcolonial literature. These sources contextualize the analysis by placing the findings within the wider discourse on Kureishi's work and stylistic analysis.

3.4 Analytical Framework

The analysis comprises three basic parts: lexical, syntactic, and figurative language analyses. This falls within the area of lexical, where abstract nouns like "*dereliction*" and "*anguish*" on one extreme to concrete nouns like "*television*" and "*garden*" act as the emotional and thematic anchors. Verbs are also analyzed, including dynamic verbs like "*thrashing*" and "*blazing*" that denote action and intensity, and mental process verbs like "*wondered*" and "*thought*" that denote the character's psychological states. Adjectives and adverbs are also analyzed, including descriptive and evaluative forms, for their role in enhancing sensory and emotional depth.

The syntactic analysis also explores sentence structures and their narrative effects, focusing on the interplay of simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences. It further analyzes how syntactic deviations, such as ellipses and interrupted syntax, reflect emotional turbulence and psychological complexity. The employment of clauses is explored clause, temporal subordinate clause, and relative clause to understand how they provide the narrative with thematic and emotive resonance.

The metaphorical usage of the figurative language of analysis can be included in such aspects as metaphor, similes, personification, irony, and hyperbole. Among them can be distinguished conceptual metaphors such as "*a sunken ship in the depths of his memory*" representations that account for memory being understood as some spatial arrangement in which the location of concepts changes with ease and rapidity. In contrast, others change very hard or may become totally unavailable. In contrast, expressions with similes can express more "sensual experiences than terms do: "*like a hair-dryer blowing all over me*" is much better. Personification, like "*The television was talking at her,*" shows how inanimate objects dominate the lives of the characters,

while irony and hyperbole are discussed with respect to their contribution to social critique and the development of characters.

3.5 Reliability and Validation

The study cross-references with already existing scholarly interpretations of Kureishi's works to grant credibility to the analysis. Throughout the study, a systematic analytical framework is pursued, through which subjective bias is reduced to a minimum. Claims are based on cited textual evidence in some detail, thus making the interpretation firmly based on the linguistic and stylistic features of the text. In so doing, the findings become reliable and located within established academic discourse.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

The analysis remains objective and text-based, avoiding ungrounded assumptions or biases. The interpretation respects Kureishi's narrative intention in relation to thematic and stylistic nuances in the text.

This section discussed the qualitative methodology to be used in analyzing the linguistic and stylistic features used within *Goodbye Mother*. The study will look at the usage of lexical, syntactic, and figurative elements to determine how Kureishi's stylistic choices show and enhance the cultural and emotional resonance of the narrative. Thus, pragmatic credibility is established to analyze and discuss the findings in the next chapter.

Analysis

4.1 Introduction

This chapter examines Hanif Kureishi's short story *Goodbye Mother*, assisted by lexical and stylistic foregrounding techniques. Specific attention will be paid to how lexical repetition, syntactic deviation, and figurative language create and emphasize the cultural and emotional depth of the narrative. Within the theoretical framework set in the previous chapters, the research

explores how linguistic features shape the story's engagement with themes of identity, generational tension, and cultural dislocation.

4.2 lexical analysis

The lexical choices concern the painstaking layering of meaning that underlines the psychological and thematic complexity within the telling of *Goodbye Mother*. The text makes use of an overwhelming combination of abstract, concrete, and proper nouns, as well as dynamic and mental process verbs, which are sure to evoke emotional struggles and cultural dislocations among its characters.

4.2.1 Nouns: Abstract and Concrete

The frequent use of such abstract nouns as "*madness*," "*anguish*," "*happiness*," and "*dereliction*" underlines the emotional and psychic weight of the story. These terms not only reflect the interior world of the characters but also act as thematic markers that fall in line with the story's exploration of identity, familial tension, and cultural dislocation. For instance, the word "*madness*" is widely used when depicting Harry's attitude toward his mother: he thinks that she is crazy and detached from the real world. A sentence proves it, "*She was, really, mad, or disturbed. This realization brought him relief*" (Kureishi, 2008, p. 2). Another example is that "*anguish*" and "*happiness*" are opposed to each other, presenting the emotional ups and downs of the characters. The phrase "*a general notification, perhaps, of inner dereliction*" (Kureishi, 2008, p. 1) shows Harry's existential despair, epitomizing his feelings of loss and guilt as he reflects on his mother's declining state. Abstract nouns such as these are critical to framing the psychological and emotional lens through which the story is experienced, offering insight into Harry's struggles with generational expectations and unresolved familial guilt.

In contrast, concrete nouns like "*television*," "*garden*," and "*cemetery*" provide physical milestones, anchoring the narrative in certain tangible realities while symbolizing deeper emotional and thematic conflicts. The television is a recurring motif and serves to reveal the mother's emotional numbness and her dependence on external stimuli to divert her attention from the inner chasm. For example, in the line, "*If she couldn't actually take the television with her in the car, she would become the television herself*" (Kureishi, 2008, p. 1), the television is

anthropomorphized to reflect the mother's dependence upon it as a substitute for an interpersonal relationship that is fulfilling. This dependence is symbolic of her inability to connect emotionally with those around her, especially Harry.

The garden and the cemetery, as spatial metaphors, emphasize the themes of life and death, as well as the generational gap between Harry and his mother. The garden, which is supposed to be full of life, stands in striking contrast with the final and decaying aspect of the cemetery. In the walk to the cemetery accompanied by his mother, the physical topography turns this place into something of reflection towards mortality, and finally, the unfollowed-through issues between them through the line expressed, "*They walked through the gates. The cemetery was busy*" (Kureishi, 2008, pg 9). Two such places and their contrast together reflect Harry's attempting to forge along and his mom's lingering thoughts about the past times.

What is more, these concrete nouns act as emotional anchors, whereby the internal experiences of the characters become intertwined with their external environment. The house is another important concrete noun, standing for a physical and metaphorical storehouse of memories. Harry sees the house as "*a sunken ship in the depths of his memory,*" (Kureishi, 2008, p. 2) which reveals the weight of his unresolved emotions and his ambivalence toward his family. Such concrete imagery allows the narrative to connect the state of mind of the characters with the state of their environment, and such layering accomplishes a lot in the textual experience.

By interweaving abstract and concrete nouns, Kureishi effectively balances the introspective with the external dimensions of the narrative. This can create a much deeper understanding for the reader regarding the nature of the character's struggles in the real, tangible world in which they are set. As such, these nouns will not be mere linguistics but crucial devices driving the story's themes of generational conflict, cultural displacement, and personal identity.

4.2.2 Verbs: Dynamic and Mental Processes

There is immense use of dynamic verbs that show physical actions after emotional turmoil and strained relationships; verbs like "*thrashing, blazing, or trembling*" use physical intensity to create the image that best represents the inner workings of the minds of the participants. For instance, the line "*thrashing his head as if to drive away the insanity*" (Kureishi, 2008, p. 13) in

turn, represents his helpless efforts of trying to put his frustrations and loose ends together. Such a vivid motion not only enhances the sense of urgency of the whole narration but also allows a literal feeling of what is going on with Harry's psyche.

Another driving element in the story is dynamic verbs. Verbs for connotation of confrontation and height of emotions include "*ran*," "*shouted*," and "*kicked*," which set a tight relationship, especially between Harry and his mother. The verb "*trembling*," used in "*Mother was trembling*" (Kureishi, 2008, p. 3), pointlessly tells of vulnerability and fragility, rightly depicting her decline in both physique and emotion. By integrating those active verbs into sensory imagery, Kureishi allows the contrasting tension in Harry's frustrations with his mother's frailty to come through as a multilayered portrayal of familial conflict.

Along with dynamic verbs, the mental process verbs "*wondered*," "*remembered*," and "*thought*" are required to bring forth the introspective element and emotional depth of the characters. The verbs admit the readers into Harry's world of an interior struggle for guilt, resentment, and a sense of responsibility. For example, in the sentence, "He wondered if his children would one day think of him the way he thought of his mother" (Kureishi, 2008, p. 2), Harry reflects on the ghee relationship that exists within families and how the pressures of generation influence and continue long after events have passed. The use of mental versus dynamic verbs shows the two sides to Harry's experience. While his physical actions denote anger, his interior thoughts are laced with fertilized vulnerability and intelligent self-awareness.

4.2.3 Adjectives and Adverbs

Adjectives play a very important role in *Goodbye Mother*, shaping the sensual and emotional texture of the narration. The following descriptive adjectives, "*musty*," "*bitter*," and "*frozen*," show the sensory surroundings of the characters. The descriptive words "*musty*, *slightly foul*, *bitter*" (Kureishi, 2008, p. 2) are not only literal for the mother but also metaphorically used the word while Harry considers his mother as someone who is so emotionally distant from him and one who burdens his life. '*Frozen*' defines stagnation within their relationship-the grudges and conflicts coming their way seem to have crippled the bonding between the two.

Adjectives such as "*stupid*" and "*remarkable*" are examples of evaluative adjectives, reflecting Harry's conflicted feelings toward his mother. While the dismissive adjectives suggest frustration and an inability to understand the degree of her plight, adjectives like "*remarkable*" show instances of momentary admiration. Therefore, his resentment is not quite absolute, and a recognition of strength in her exists beneath it all.

The story also uses adverbs to modify the verbs in developing certain actions and emotions by the characters. Adverbs like "*wearily*," "*reluctantly*," and "*furiously*" emphasize the emotional burden of some everyday actions that have been carried out. For instance, in the sentence, "*Harry wearily and reluctantly got out of bed*" (Kureishi, 2008, p. 1), the adverbs "*wearily*" and "*reluctantly*" reveal Harry's emotional exhaustion and reluctance to face his mother. Adverbs like "*furiously*" and "*suddenly*" suddenly bring moments of intensity, revealing the volatility in their relations and simmering tensions throughout the story.

4.3 Syntactic Analysis

In *Goodbye Mother*, sentence structures reflect the emotional and psychological complexity of the narrative. The predominance of complex sentences (45%) and compound sentences (25%) underlines the layered dynamics between characters and the multifaceted nature of their emotions. Complex sentences allow Kureishi to dovetail Harry's thoughts and observations with unfolding events to form a rhythm that reflects his internal oscillation between frustration and guilt.

In the sentence, "*He owned every inch of the house, but he'd forgotten it existed as a real place rather than as a sunken ship in the depths of his memory*" (Kureishi, 2008, p. 2), the compound-complex structure connects Harry's physical surroundings with his emotional state. The causal clause, "*but he'd forgotten it existed as a real place*," (Kureishi, 2008, p. 2), shows how the weight of his memories influences Harry's perception of the house, while the metaphor "*sunken ship in the depths of his memory*" (Kureishi, 2008, p. 2), captures the inescapable pull of the past.

4.3.1 Syntactic Deviation

Syntactic deviation, such as interrupted syntax and ellipses, portrays the emotional instability of the characters and the fragmentation of their thoughts. This is well portrayed in the mother's speech, where the frequent use of ellipses occurs, for example: *"I was... just sitting here, thinking..."* (Kureishi, 2008, p. 3). The ellipses indicate her indecision and deteriorating mental state, showing that her thoughts are as fragmented as her sentences. The syntax here is fragmented, adding layers of realism to her character-she is vulnerable and emotionally disoriented.

4.3.2 Clause Patterns

Such diversity in clause patterns enriches the story of Goodbye Mother because the complexity of the characters' emotions is revealed. Subordinate clauses of causality and time are used to link past events to present feelings: *"If she couldn't actually take the television with her in the car, she would become the television herself"*. (Kureishi, 2008, p. 2), While the condition, *"If she couldn't actually take the television,"* (Kureishi, 2008, p. 3) refers to the fact that she is dependent upon an outside stimulus, a distraction, in essence, to pass her time or escape her mind, the main clause personifies the television with her emotional reliance upon it.

4.4 Figurative Language

Figurative language in Goodbye Mother enriches the entire story with another symbolic dimension to increase the reader's involvement.

4.4.1 Metaphors and Similes

Harry's inability to come out of the heaviness of his past is shown through metaphors like *"a sunken ship in the depths of his memory."* (Kureishi, 2008, p. 2). This metaphor illustrates how his unresolved emotions, though buried, have a strong bearing on his present. Similarly, the line *"television did her dreaming for her"* (Kureishi, 2008, p. 3) brings into focus the mother's disconnection with reality and how she relies on an external source to come out of her inner void.

Similes like "*like a hair-dryer blowing all over me*" (Kureishi, 2008, p. 1) provide sensory vividness for the text, where one can feel the discomfort of the mother for being disturbed from outside physically. This simile brings into view her highly sensitive self but, at the same time, reveals the fragility of her nature, which happens to be the theme throughout the story.

4.4.2 Personification and Irony

Personification, as in "*The television was talking at her*" (Kureishi, 2008, p. 2), outlines the mother's reliance upon anything external to a large degree, which may divert her feelings and fill the void in her life. The television acts more like a stand-in companion, emphasizing how isolated she is and how detached from her family.

Irony is also used to criticize social norms and the characters' disillusionment with their roles. Harry's inner thought, "*Nothing of interest has happened in the world today*" (Kureishi, 2008, p. 11), speaks volumes about his dissatisfaction with his work as a news editor; it shows the contradiction between the external role and the internal state.

Overall, the analysis of Hanif Kureishi's *Goodbye Mother* attests to his accomplished employment of lexical and stylistic foregrounding techniques in raising the cultural and emotional depth of the narrative. Through the strategic use of the interrelation between abstract and concrete nouns, dynamic and mental verbs, different adjectives and adverbs, with the use of tropes, Kureishi manages to express the complex relationships among family members, generational conflicts, and cultural dislocation. Besides syntactic deviations, the nuanced sentence structures further reflect the fragmented and emotionally charged states of the characters, while metaphors, similes, and personification add symbolic layers that may engage a reader on many levels.

Through such stylistic dimensions, Kureishi manages to underline psychological agonies and cultural tensions that supply the core around which the story will develop. Therefore, *Goodbye Mother* should be read as an enabling inquiry into the issues of identity and family relationships. By discussing salience and its workings in thematic resonance for this story, there are broader insights for both Kureishi's writing and the broader discursive context within which postcolonial fiction of the short story genre would be located.

Conclusion

This paper discusses the stylistic and lexical foregrounding techniques used in Hanif Kureishi's short story, *Goodbye Mother*, to enhance its cultural and emotional depth. Through qualitative analysis of the text, the research has demonstrated how Kureishi strategically uses lexical choices, syntactic structures, and figurative language to underline the narrative of engagement with themes of identity, generational conflict, and cultural dislocation. The findings reveal the way in which Kureishi uses language to merge the internal and external dimensions of the characters in order to make the tale both deeply personal and universally resonant.

It focuses on how important abstract and concrete nouns are in pinning the emotional axis of the narration and in relating the characters' psychic states to the physical environment. The tense relations between action and introspection, or mental and physical activity, come into greater relief through dynamic and mental process verbs; these latter stress the internal fight that characterizes each individual and their emotive contrasts. With the addition of nuance and sensory richness brought in by adjectives and adverbs, emotional depth was introduced within the telling to draw one into the experiences lived by the characters.

The analysis of the syntactic structure supports the evidence for the characters' fragmentation and emotive states using syntactic deviation, such as ellipses and interrupted syntax. These stylistic devices point toward the psychological instability and complicated relationships between Harry and his mother. The rich use of metaphors, similes, and personification gives further symbolic quality to the narrative, reinforcing the exploration of cultural hybridity, memory, and familial bonds within it.

It places *Goodbye Mother* in a larger perspective of postcolonial literature and British-Asian narratives. This collection fills the critical lacuna in the literature not only through due attention given to the aspect of stylistic analysis but particularly about the genre of short fiction. Given this interaction of linguistic choices and the articulation of themes, the present work will foster an understanding not just of Kureishi's literary art but considerably contribute to the discourse about foregrounding techniques as constituents in cognitive processes involved in postcolonial narration.

Kureishi's *Goodbye Mother* shows how stylistic innovation can effectively transmit such complex emotional and cultural themes. The results of this study confirm the usefulness of stylistic analysis in uncovering nuanced layers of meaning in short fiction, especially in the postcolonial context. This research consequently bridges the gap in thematic and stylistic perspectives and forms the basis for further studies on linguistic and literary dimensions of British-Asian writing and its broad ramifications for the conceptualization of identity, culture, and belonging within contemporary literature.

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