



## Exploring Graphological Parallelism in Shadab Zeest Hashmi's "THE GREEN WALLS"

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### Abstract

*The study aims to examine the various linguistic choices in Shadab Zeest Hashmi's poem "THE GREEN WALLS" through the lens of graphological parallelism in the theory of foregrounding. Graphological parallelism is employed to unfold the concealed messages of the poem. The study is conducted to unveil how linguistic devices are used to convey the subject matter. The study found that the recurring patterns exposed the unjustified and barbarian actions of the owners and landlords. In addition, the role of the institutions and international organisations was also foregrounded through the said stylistic devices. Apart from this, it uncovered the implied themes such as discrimination, inequalities, atrocities, cruelties, injustices, ignorant attitude of the public, exploitation, maltreatment, suppressions, freedom of expression, derogatory, and disdainful remarks via repeated punctuation marks. It is fruitful for scholars who want to conduct research in the field of stylistics. It is recommended that the poetry of Shadab Zeest Hashmi may be analysed via different tools like feminist stylistics, Critical Discourse Analysis, and other literary theories.*

**Keywords:** Style, Stylistics, Foregrounding, Graphological Parallelism, Shadab Zeest Hashmi, Pakistani Literature in English

### Introduction

Stylistics is a postmodern and developing field of applied linguistics that plays a pivotal role in the objective interpretation and analysis of a text. Stylistics is the exploration of style, not only in a literary text but also in a non-literary text. Currently, non-literary text is also examined and analyzed through the various tools of stylistics. Style is employed via various figurative devices and linguistic features and for that purpose stylistics provides the theory of foregrounding to explore the style of a text. The theory of foregrounding is categorized into two types, deviation and parallelism. Parallelism is the study of repeated sounds, words, phrases, clauses, sentences, punctuation marks, themes, and discourse. In parallelism, the study of punctuation marks or graphology is done under the domain of graphological parallelism. Therefore, to explore the style of Shadab Zeest Hashmi's poem "THE GREEN WALLS", graphological parallelism is taken as a tool. Shadab Zeest Hashmi is a Pakistani poet who is living currently in America. Zeest's poetry depicts the true face of Pakistani society. Besides, Zeest contributes immensely to the developing bulk of literature called Pakistani Literature in English.

Pakistani Literature in English is a body of literature that is transcended from British Literature as the subcontinent was used as a colony by the British Empire so in this way, the writers got influence to use English as a medium to express their ideas emotions, feelings, etc.

This body of literature carries a plethora of themes such as feminism, identity, power, war, injustices, peace, love, politics, etc. Shadab Zeest Hashmi's poetry is also replete with such subject matters. Therefore, the poem "THE GREEN WALLS" by Shadab Zeest Hashmi is investigated and interpreted through graphological parallelism in the theory of foregrounding to uncover the concealed themes that are not yet explored.

### Statement of the Purpose

The theory of foregrounding is a tool of stylistics which is used to explore the style of a text that is employed through various stylistic devices. In the theory of foregrounding, parallelism is a lens that provides an objective analysis and interpretation of a text by examining parallel patterns. In this regard, graphological parallelism is taken as a tool to investigate the repeated punctuation marks in Shadab Zeest Hashmi's "THE GREEN WALLS" to find out the hidden thematic layers of the poem.

### Research Objectives

1. To investigate what linguistic choices are employed as graphological parallelism in the poem "THE GREEN WALL" by Shadab Zeest Hashmi.
2. To examine as to how meanings are suggested through graphological parallelism in the poem "THE GREEN WALL" by Shadab Zeest Hashmi.

### Research Questions

1. What linguistic choices are employed as graphological parallelism in the poem "THE GREEN WALL" by Shadab Zeest Hashmi?
2. How are meanings suggested through graphological parallelism in the poem "THE GREEN WALL" by Shadab Zeest Hashmi?

### Literature Review

#### Style

In etymology, style is a writing tool which is derived from the Latin word "elocution" which means "stylus", and in Greek "lexis". A broad term which has various meanings inside a text and outside a text. A procedure by which writers do something to be done in a different way to attract the readers is called style. Generally, style is a method that is used by poets, writers, novelists and playwrights to share their emotions, thoughts and hidden meanings with their readers through the use of language to get special effects on the readers. In this regard, Hornby (1995) defines style that it is the way to present or perform something through the usage of different linguistic choices such as diction, rhetorical devices and expressions which are used by writers.

French Linguist 'Charles Bally' introduced the stylistics course of study and said that revealing effects and systems in every language is known as style. Surprisingly, the literary language is ruled out as a range of stylistic studies by Charles Bally (Widayanti, 2014). However, style is a course of action in which someone uses language to convey anything to others (Leech & Short, 1981). Furthermore, Azhar et al. (2014) state that style means the usage of language and the style of a person is to produce utterances. Moreover, style is the method of doing something, producing utterances or writing something (Leech, 1969). Broadly, style applies to spoken and written as well as literary and non-literary texts (Leech, 2007). However, conventionally, it is especially concerned with literary text only. Thus, style can be defined as stylistics that centres on many ways of expression, especially in literary works but in non-

literary texts too, and different literary works have different styles that make them quirky (Ul, 2014).

### **Stylistics**

Stylistics is a tool as well as a discipline in the current era as Freeman (1971) claims that stylistics is a discipline which started most probably in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As Khan et al. (2023) opine, stylistics is a branch of linguistics that deals with the style of a literary text; however, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it evolved and now deals with the non-literary text too. Short (1996) considers stylistics as his friend, because the title is personified. This statement is endorsed by Yemets (2019) who says that he has the same attitude towards this science. He further explains that stylistics has its roots back in ancient times and has different classifications; however, this linguist discipline is gradually evolving its science.

Moreover, Simpson (2004) says that stylistics is good and alive in the initial phase of the twenty-first century. Moreover, stylistics gives a scientific interpretation of a text as Kumar (1987) opines that linguistic tools strive to introduce an objective analysis or explanation merely to give attention to the piece of literature and to shun the speaker's objectives. Also, through stylistics, the hidden meanings and themes in a literary piece are explored.

According to Widdowson (1975), stylistics is a literary discourse from the perspective of linguistics. In this connection, Traugott and Pratt (1980) assert that linguistics plays a huge part in the understanding of any text by making the readers realize why they go through some situations or experiences, what is done, and when a literary piece of text is read.

### **Foregrounding**

Whenever the term foregrounding comes, it diverts our attention towards stylistics. Foregrounding is the most pivotal and significant part of stylistics when investigating a literary text. It plays a vital role in giving a special eminence to some words as compared to other usual words. Moreover, as compared to non-literary works, literary works foreground unique linguistic features which catch the attention not only to what is said but also how something is said. Additionally, poetic language is unusual from everyday language in its usage. Thus, Leech (1969) opines that in this way, the attention of the readers is grabbed through the usage of different poetic devices such as metre, metaphor, paradox, and alliteration.

The theory of foregrounding is one of the fundamentals of stylistics. The term was borrowed from painting in which the most prominent part of the painting is called “foreground” opposite to “background”. Shklovsky (1917), Jakobson (1964), and Mukarovsky (1964) are the main exponents of the theory of foregrounding because they had the opinions to make, especially the literary text more attractive and noticeable to the readers with the help of “defamiliarization” and “literariness”. In the development of the theory of foregrounding and stylistics, the most influential work is the “Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics” by Jakobson published in Sebeok (1960). The seminal work played an important role in forging linguistics and literature that were presented as separate fields of studies, however, Jakobson integrated both disciplines as they are interlinked which paved the way for stylistics to flourish with its full momentum. Jakobson (1960) claims about the link between linguistics and literature, that “Poetics deals with the problems of verbal structure, just as the analysis of painting is concerned with pictorial structure. Since linguistics is the global science of verbal structure, poetics may be regarded as an integral part of linguistics” (p. 350).

Furthermore, in literature, poets and writers use their poetic license, a special permission for them to write in their own ways. For common people, it is not possible to use such usage of language. The main reason behind the usage of unusual language by writers and

poets is that they want to catch the attention of the readers to the specific words, sentences, structures, punctuations, and sounds for conveying hidden messages that are not possible through the usage of standard or conventional language. Therefore, in literature, poets and writers deviate from the normal use of language to express their thoughts, emotions, feelings, and ideas. In this regard, Leech (1969) states that deviation is necessary or compulsory to create an artistic work. Therefore, a poet crosses the limits of a language to express experiences and convey them through diction and many other linguistic techniques or features to attract the readers by giving them special hints.

Furthermore, foregrounding is a helpful tool through which scholars can easily analyze a text which has various deviations and code-switching. This branch of linguistics deals with the structure of language. Besides, the classification of foregrounding is qualitative and quantitative. The qualitative aspect deals with the breaching of linguistics rules. On the other hand, quantitative is concerned with the expected regularity (Leech & Short, 2007). The first approach is deviation and the second is parallelism. Parallelism is the quantitative study of the repeated stylistic features on various levels such as phonological, morphological, lexical, syntactical, grammatical, and graphological. Thus, in order to apply graphological parallelism, the poem “THE GREEN WALLS” by Shadab Zeest Hashmi is taken as a text as the poem is not yet explored from the lens of graphological parallelism.

### **Methodology**

The purpose of this study is to analyze Shadab Zeest Hashmi’s “THE GREEN WALLS” through the lens of graphological parallelism in the theory of foregrounding by Leech. In this manner, through graphological parallelism, every individual punctuation mark is taken into consideration for uncovering the concealed themes of the poem.

### **Data Collection Tools**

The data is collected from Shadab Zeest Hashmi’s poem “THE GREEN WALLS” through the process of documentation under the theoretical framework of the theory of foregrounding through graphological parallelism. Graphological parallelism is used to find out the repeated punctuation marks for objective analysis.

### **Data Analysis Tools**

The tool of analysis for this study is graphological parallelism in the theory of foregrounding. The poem is investigated, analyzed, and interpreted via graphological parallelism to uncover the implied messages of the poem.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The present study is conducted to investigate and analyze Shadab Zeest Hashmi’s “THE GREEN WALLS” through graphological parallelism under the theoretical framework of the theory of foregrounding. The theory of foregrounding is a linguistic tool that provides an objective analysis of a text examining and analyzing the various levels of language including phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, graphology, etc. Foregrounding has two categories, one is quantitative named deviation, and the other one is qualitative called parallelism. Parallelism is the repetition of sounds, morphemes, words, phrases, clauses, sentences, structures, punctuation marks, meanings, and themes. It is categorized into various categories such as phonological parallelism, morphological parallelism, lexical parallelism, syntactical parallelism, grammatical parallelism, semantic parallelism, and graphological

parallelism. Graphological parallelism is the study of repeated punctuation marks as commas, full stops, colons, semicolons, hyphens, dashes, ellipses, notes of interrogation, signs of exclamation, apostrophes, brackets, parentheses, and inverted commas as well as graphs, spaces, capitalizations, italics, bold letters, contractions, lowercases, small print, large print, specific form, layout, and design, paragraphing, and special font style.

### **Parallelism**

Parallelism is a type of foregrounding through which foregrounding effects are created in a text for some specific intentions. The foregrounding effects are presented in a text through similar repetition. The repetition of words, sounds, structures, and sentences in a text is parallelism. In addition, parallelism is not only about the repetition of sounds, words, structures, and sentences but also the patterning of meaning in a text (Gnanasekaran, 2018). Such parallelism is least noticeable as Short (1996) states that when readers find any parallel structure during reading, they always try to look for semantic relationships.

In addition, Leech (1969) states that a text can also be interpreted on pattern, various segments or layers of repeated structure but similar ones. Moreover, parallelism is a broad term and the opposite of deviation. Parallelism is a strong tool in stylistics at any level whether it occurs at phonological, semantic, graphological, or at any other level. In addition to this, proverbs and slogans are bounded by parallelism. However, slogans and ballads are highly parallels.

### **Graphological Parallelism**

Graphology is above orthography as it is the complete system of writing, including punctuation, spacing and paragraphing and that is the reason for surpassing orthography (Leech, 2014). However, the definition has been modified by Alabi (2007) who extended the scope of graphology and made addition of capitalization to the scope of graphology. Thus, graphological parallelism is the recurrent occurrence of punctuation in a text which includes, comma, full stop, semicolon, colon, hyphen, dash, question mark, quotation mark, inverted comma, apostrophe, bracket, exclamation mark etc. Also, it deals with the repetition of capitalization, spacing and paragraphing. Moreover, it is also referred to as the repeated structure of a text. Graphological parallelism is the finest but unnoticed tool which helps the readers or scholars to reach the ultimate conclusion of a text from a different and unique perspective.

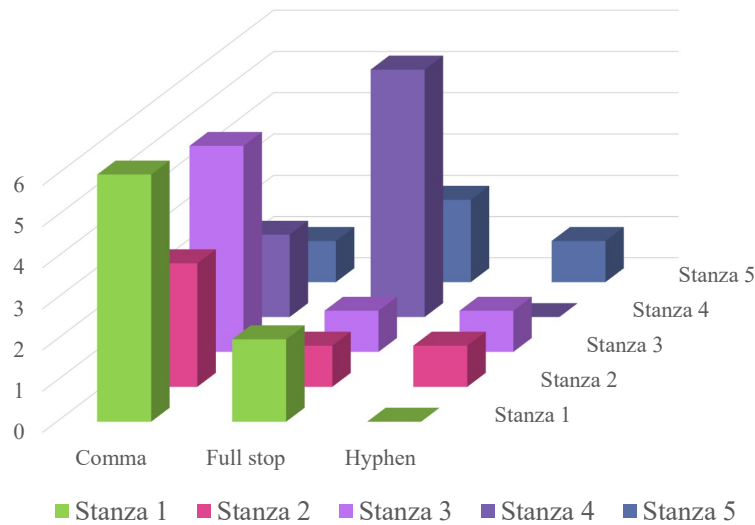
### **Data Analysis**

Graphological parallelism is the repetition of punctuations in a text such as commas, full stops or periods, apostrophes, semicolons, colons, dashes, hyphens, etc. In the poem “THE GREEN WALLS”, commas, full stops, hyphens, semicolons and apostrophes are used. In this regard, the comma is used 16 times, the full stop 12 times, and the hyphen thrice throughout the poem. However, semicolons, inverted commas, and apostrophes are used once in the whole poem in the 16<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup> and 49<sup>th</sup> lines of this poem respectively.

The following two charts are presented to show the frequency of the graphological parallelism. The graphological parallelism is graphed for the purpose of making it clear to readers that with how much quantity the linguistic features are used in this poem. The first chart is the 3-D Clustered Column chart which is about the frequency of punctuations in each stanza; however, the second one is about the overall punctuation frequency in the poem.

#### **1. 3-D Clustered Column Chart**

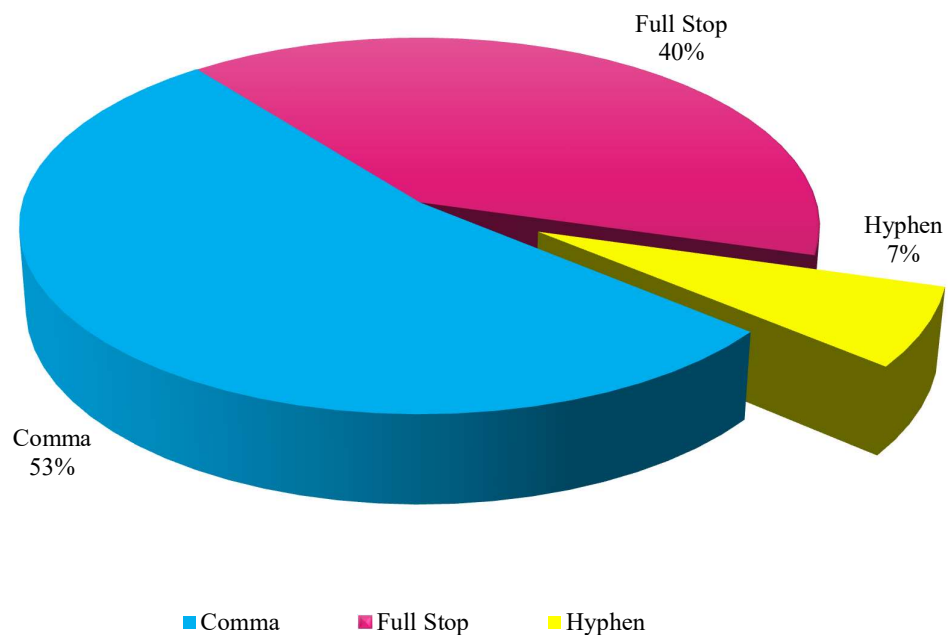
### Graphological Parallelism in Each Stanza



In the above 3-D Clustered Column chart, it is shown that the first strophe contains a lot of punctuations in this poem more than any other stanza. Moreover, the third, second, and fifth strophes contain 7, 6, and 5 punctuations respectively. Only commas, full stops, and hyphens are included in this division of punctuation in each stanza.

### 2. 3-D Pie Chart

#### Graphological Parallelism in the Poem



The second 3-D Pie Chart shows that the punctuation mark “comma” is used in 53% of whereas “full stop” and “hyphen” are 40% and 7% of the poem respectively. Therefore, to analyze the effects of this repetition, commas, full stops, and hyphens have been taken into consideration individually with a proper sequence.

### Comma (,)

A comma is a short pause in writing. It is used to connect ideas, clauses, phrases, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, etc. It employs the meaning of continuity and flow of thoughts. Likewise, it metaphorically indicates a changing and evolutionary process of something. The comma has been repeated 16 times in 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, 32<sup>nd</sup>, 39<sup>th</sup>, and 41<sup>st</sup> lines of this poem. In addition, in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> lines, the comma has been used twice. In this regard, the most important part of this poem is the first strophe where comma is used 7 times out of 18. In the first strophe, the speaker talks about those “**GREEN WALLS**” where child labourers spend their lives and transform childhood into adolescence and adolescence into youth. So, in the first strophe, the first comma is used after the first line which is “**These green walls,**”, followed by two short lines “**so dirty,**” and “**so dark,**”. Here, the repetition of commas explicates the meaning of how these walls or boundaries push child labourers into a dark and dirty life from which they cannot escape easily because the changing poverty process or cycle instils them more deeply into this darkness and nastiness.

The main purpose of a comma is to take a short pause so here the repetition means that child labourers need a short pause or rest during working hours as it is the law: included in the constitution of Pakistan (Pakistan Employment of Children Act, 1991) that child labourers must have given minimum an hour for their rest during working hours. Here, the abundant usage of commas in this stanza illustrates the long continuous process of child labourers' lives.

In the same stanza, the comma is used in the 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> lines after one another. The lines are “**of handprints,**” “**of busy, filthy boys,**” and “**running errands,**”. So, the comma in these lines talks about the continuity of child labourers' vulnerable and disastrous conditions for centuries. Handprints are used symbolically for a childhood and black handprints for dark legacy. Thus, the comma after “**handprints**” indicates here that a short pause should be given to child labourers so that they complete their childhood period peacefully. Also, it shows the continuity of the dark legacy of the world where even children are not safe and going through extremely tragic and pathetic phases of life. Additionally, the comma after the 5<sup>th</sup> line proclaims the connectivity and continuity of the chain of child labourers from one generation to another generation.

After that, the 6<sup>th</sup> poetic line is about uncleanness and working that child labourers keep themselves busy in their work with great focus and hard work that they even do not have enough time for themselves to take a short break and clean their bodies. It can be also said that owners take services from child labourers more than what they are capable of. As Fallon (2014) claimed in a report almost 12 to 14 hours of services have been taken by the brick kiln owners. Therefore, that is why they have no energy to clean themselves after continuously working 12 to 14 hours. This comma also tries to say that continuously working more than 12 hours makes them busy and filthy. Moreover, it also explicates that child labourers have no adequate time for cleaning their hands; so, a break in the sense of a short pause should be given for them to clean their hands or bodies and clothes as well.

Along with this, the comma at the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> line of this poem bespeaks the swamped working hours of child labourers in which they complete their tasks successfully with a minimum time duration and during the tasks no break or short pause is allowed for them rather required work continuously without any interruption. Therefore, the comma in the 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> lines sketch a picture of child labourers who work continuously without any break or pause during their working hours even though they have water to clean themselves physically but due to pursuing their tasks, they do not have enough time for themselves.

In the next strophe of the poem, a comma is used thrice in the 12<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 18<sup>th</sup> lines. The repetition of commas in this strophe suggests the flow of child labourers' work from the kitchen where wooden shelves are there which contain china cups in them; to the outside of the kitchen where customers sit and wait for their orders. Similarly, this repetition also indicates the changing nature of child labourers' work in workplaces. They work in the kitchen as well as serving food items to customers. Moreover, it also produces a deep meaning that wooden shelves could be their bookshelves. They would not use it for china cups but for their books to get education but things have changed and evolved. Now, they have wooden shelves not for keeping books but for cups and other utensils. However, in the 18<sup>th</sup> line, the usage of comma appeals to the masses who go to the places where child labourers work; to take a short pause and show some patience after ordering something because calling again and again could worsen the situation for child labourers as their owners can humiliate them for offering late to customers.

The next repetition of commas is occurred in the 23<sup>rd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, and 29<sup>th</sup> lines of the 3<sup>rd</sup> stanza of this poem. This graphological parallelism exposes the brutal owners who do not miss any opportunity to disdain child labourers in front of customers and in private as well. However, child labourers are brave enough to bear all these contemptuous things even not letting tears come outside from their eyes. So, it gives the message that the cycle is going on and such events continuously/repeatedly happen with no pause. On the other hand, it is also a depiction of an event where child labourers offer something to the customers and look at them with guilty eyes. It means that they are not given such food which is why they are looking at food but with guilty eyes, as they do not want it but hunger compels them to do so. Additionally, it expresses that child labourers daily feel themselves convicted to be there in workplaces but they are facing and handling it with bravery. Moreover, the inner voice gives them a way that is as bright as light through which they can get to their actual destination. Thus, it makes the message visible that the flow of thoughts in their minds is continuously moving towards their freedom despite the regular guilt and derogatory remarks along with vicious attitudes and behaviours of owners.

Furthermore, the comma is also repeated in the “32<sup>nd</sup>, 38<sup>th</sup>, and 41<sup>st</sup> lines delivering an impactful message regarding the determination of child labourers against atrocities by their owners. The repetition of commas demonstrates that whatever atrocities are imposed on child labourers, how constantly they are forced and suppressed, also how continuously they are locked in the walls; these all things cannot change their way of thinking and their original identity. They would be forever as they truly are from their birth. No matter how much the intensity of the workload gets severe, they will always rise and shine because they know what they are. Here, the continuity of their determination can be seen daily in their work. Additionally, the occurrence of commas also shows the regular flow of cruelties and suppressions by owners.

### **Full stop or Period (.)**



A full stop or period is a sign of completion of ideas, sentences, clauses, phrases, etc. Full stop is used to separate the ideas, sentences or clauses and also a stoppage of ideas and sentences etc. However, a period also gives birth to new ideas. In this poem, full stop has been used 12 times and mostly used 6 times out of 12 in the 4<sup>th</sup> stanza. On one hand, it shows the separation of child labourers from the rest of society, in wealth, food, clothes and even their social status. On the other hand, it depicts the breakage of the barriers which are standing in their way. The periods or full stops are used in the 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>, 32<sup>nd</sup>, 34<sup>th</sup>, 35<sup>th</sup>, 36<sup>th</sup>, 38<sup>th</sup>, 40<sup>th</sup>, 46<sup>th</sup>, and 48<sup>th</sup> lines of the poem which are **“stumbling to get samosas and chai.”**, **“and hands obeying without a question.”**, **“and no masalah in haleem.”**, **“with “Coca Cola” signs.”**, **“will pull me, press me.”**, **“out of this suffocating kitchen.”**, **“No white lies will help.”**, **“No ordering eyes will help.”**, **“and no animal.”**, **“a helpless man.”**, **“and gone from here.”**, **“but of me and my misery.”**. As has been already discussed the main purpose of using full stop is to break or stop the idea or sentence so here in the 8<sup>th</sup> line it means that child labourers must take a break in working hours as they are not capable of doing work continuously because they are small and physically weak that is why they **“stumble”** in offering nonstop services; so, this must be stopped as it affects their mental health as well as physical. Conversely, the 10<sup>th</sup> line is like an effect of the said statement that despite all these hard works; they are unable to ask questions about anything as their mind have been locked by their owners in order to use them because if their minds are free then they will start thinking about the atrocities and brutalities by owners. In addition to this, they will start asking questions from owners, people in the society, government, from the world eminent organizations and other human rights organizations as well as different NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) as they are preaching equality, justice and humanity. It is a clear call for all organizations and administrations to break their silence in this matter and execute their planning and laws which are currently limited merely to a piece of paper. In addition, the 10<sup>th</sup> line also proclaims the worst form of freedom of expression as little child labourers only obeying orders of their lords or masters and they are not allowed to raise a question in any matter otherwise they would face disdainful and derogatory remarks; even get punishment and more than that they would be fired from their jobs. Thus, the full stop at the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> line is considered as a plea to the world communities to stop this humiliation of child labourers; break this trend, and also give them a right to ask if they find something unusual and uncomfortable as full stop’s main function is to stop or break an idea.

Furthermore, the next full stop occurs after the line **“and no masalah in haleem.”**. This period is an indication of the completion of the idea of the second strophe as it has been used at the end of the second stanza. It also clearly demonstrates the idea of separation that in restaurants, hotels and cafeterias, girls, boys, and kids order different types of foods and drinks but in the same place, children work as labourers who offer food and drinks to other children and people. Therefore, it portrays the discriminating harsh picture of this world where some children get what they want but some are busy facilitating other children for the sake of their survival as they do not have any financial support from anyone; neither from their relatives, people surrounding them nor from the government or international communities. Additionally, it also suggests that this discrimination should be stopped at every level and everywhere in this world.

Moreover, the period is used once more time at the end of the 30<sup>th</sup> line of the poem that is **“with “Coca Cola” signs.”** which sheds light on the production process of the multinational cold drinks’ companies such as Pepsi and Coca-Cola (the one that has been mentioned in the middle of this line). According to the International Labour Organization, due to the improper

collection of data by many countries in the industries of sugar cane, there are no exact figures or numbers of child labourers in this industry but statistics show in a recent report (Child Labour: Global estimates 2020, trends and the road forward) by the International Labour Organization and UNICEF that a large number of child labourers over 60% of the global child labourers (112 million), 20% in services (31.4 million) and 10% in industry (16.5 million) are working in the agriculture sector. As sugar cane comes into the domain of agriculture and after stating the statistics regarding child labourers who are working in agriculture, it can be assumed that a huge number of child labourers are working in the sugarcane industries. In this way, the full stop in this line strikes the attention of the scholar to go after the word “Coca Cola” which is a brand enormous multinational beverage and cold drink company according to Britannica (n.d., para, 1), Coca Cola founded in 1892 in America also offering products in more than 200 countries. For the purpose of getting sugar for cold drinks, Coca-Cola needs sugarcane and this could be achieved only from sugarcane industries which are directly linked with the agricultural sector. Therefore, multiple electronic sources accentuated and more important Human Rights Watch lead researcher Bochenek (2004) released a special report “Turning a Blind Eye: Hazardous Child Labor in El Salvador’s Sugar Cane Cultivation” in which he asserts that child labour is widespread and uncontrolled in El Salvador’s sugar cane plantations. This issue has been also highlighted by The Sydney Morning Herald and Business & Human Rights Resource Centre (2004). They state that around 30,000 child labourers under 18 age, are working in El Salvador’s sugar canes in serious and hazardous conditions. Therefore, it means that Coca-Cola uses products which are made by child labourers. In this regard, the full stop after the word Coca-Cola makes a plea to all the multinational cold drinks companies to stop taking illegal services from children who are under 18.

Additionally, the “red” colour also suggests a lot if taken symbolically. It is known that red colour is a sign of revolution means blood because revolution is all about bloodshed. Thus, it employs a message that Coca-Cola or any other cold drinks that are used by people all over the world are made of blood by child labourers who are working in sugarcane industries. In this connection, the comma at the end of this line demands loudly that this inhumane heinous activity should be stopped immediately everywhere. Moreover, the full stop also illustrates that special support is also needed from these multinational companies to create a safe zone for child labour; help them in order to fulfil (complete) their dreams and allow them to complete their childhood life cycle in peace along with joy. Apart from this, it also suggests that people should stop purchasing such products where child labourers work whether directly in their companies or in their production chain.

However, the 32<sup>nd</sup> line of the poem “will pull me, press me.” draws a picture of cruelties in the workplaces where child labourers are forced by owners to stay and work for them even though some of them are not willing to do work for them. Even though, this act of forcing child labourers has been also banned by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in the Forced Labour Convention, 1930, Article (2) and it is a penal offence according to Article (25) of the said convention but unfortunately, it is still in practice all over the world. Additionally, in the face of the fact, that is an international crime, the Bureau of International Labour Affairs (2021) states that according to the International Labour Organization, 25 million people are forcefully working worldwide as labourers and among them, 4 million are child labourers. These statistics are alarming as it is increasing yearly; so, as the punctuation mark period’s main aim is to stop an idea or sentence, similarly, it employs the meaning that it needs special attention and planning to stop this issue and create creative opportunities which could help child labourers to make their own future and life.

The next full stop is used in the line **“Out of this suffocating kitchen.”** which explores the whole process of the kitchen where child labourers work in the summer heat above 50°C for hours with zero health safety and no proper checking of the authorities. Due to this kitchen, the child labourers have been separated from the rest of the world as well as from nature to breathe there because they feel suffocated in the kitchen as periods separate two ideas or sentences etc. Thus, this full stop aims to wake up the authorities, civil societies and other organizations from their sleep to stop this life risky activity where child labourers are at risk of their lives because the kitchen feels them suffocate due to carbon dioxide and nitrogen plus other gases which have been released by fire but when they need to go outside of the kitchen to breathe in a fresh air; they are abused and got corporal punishment from owners or bosses.

Furthermore, the next repetition of the full stop occurs in the 35<sup>th</sup> line **“No white lies will help.”** pictures disheartened situations where child labourers neither see no one far, nor near to help them out in these dejected situations. They know that all the promises, laws, bills, conferences, and seminars are useless until these all are proved in the favour of child labourers. However, they also know that everything which is done by both the authorities and organizations is completely a hoax. They tell lies in front of the public in favour of child labourers to save their faces. Furthermore, when new bills or laws are passed, the birth of hope takes place in the hearts of child labourers that this could be the law or bill that would help them to stay out of this hell and will not be the same as other laws or bills which are only limited to documents. However, it is a destruction of child labourers' hope, also making fun of their sentiments and emotions to give them a new hope of freedom from this jail-like life when they come to know that the new bills or laws are going to be the same bills or laws that could not help them in any way or matter in the past. Here, it also explicates the meaning that authorities try to deceive child labourers by white lies means all the legislations regarding child labour are white lies and tactics only to deceive them. Thus, the full stop in this line appeals to authorities to stop this fun with child labourers; end all the laws if it is not giving relief and protection to child labourers; and also complete your promises if not then stop planting a seed of hope in child labourers' heart because such hope will not help child labourers but rather destroy them.

The following line **“No ordering eyes will help.”** also contains a full stop at the end which exposes all those who come and give orders of something while ignoring the forlorn condition of child labourers. Among such people, government employees and officers are also included who come to visit not child labourers but for their own needs like tea, lunch and dinner etc. Thus, on one hand, this full stop employs the implied meaning that all the customers whether they are in government services or any other services if they cannot help child labourers through their official sources then they should also not go there and order child labourers without a shame for their own need rather they should completely boycott individually or stop purchasing items from those restaurants, hotels, tea shops, stalls and many more who have child labourers in their staff. In this way, the staff will realize and will set free all bounded or forced child labourers who have many dreams in their eyes.

On the other hand, it speaks the inner voice of child labourers that there is no more hope is present in child labourers because ordering eyes means people who come as customers and also those who are at big offices both of them do not help child labourers despite of knowing and see every brutality and atrocity in workplaces. Even though, government officials do not bother to visit; check child labourers' conditions and take strict actions against the wrongdoers rather they have also child labourers in their homes as domestic labourers. Therefore, the full

stop shows here the end of the hope of child labourers after knowing about the conscience of ordering eyes that their conscience is in deep sleep or even dead.

Once again, the full stop repeated in the 38<sup>th</sup> line of this poem is **“and no animal.”** which expresses the wretched and deplorable feelings of child labourers. The word **“animal”** suggests that owners and bosses treat child labourers like animals who do not speak against barbarism as they have no speaking ability; however, on the other side child labourers have speaking ability although they cannot speak despite having the ability to speak because their ability of speaking has been taken by owners and authorities; and if they start speaking against the cruelty then they will be tortured or abused physically and sexually even punished to death. Thus, after all these things, unfortunately, no single action will be taken by authorities in this regard as owners have strong political influence and contacts with many elite people. In support of this argument, Kara (2012) states that the child labourers who work at brick kilns in Pakistan are mostly owned by influential politicians' relatives and even politicians themselves own many of them. For that reason, the full stop imparts the meaning that these inhumane behaviours and actions must be stopped immediately as it is against international law and conventions as well as fundamental rights. Additionally, it sympathetically demonstrates that child labourers are not animals but humans; so, end this discrimination and let them live freely for the sake of humanity.

The next period is repeated at the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> strophe and 40<sup>th</sup> line of this poem which is **“a helpless man.”** This full stop displays a paralyzed picture of child labourers in which they are bent by the owners forcefully; and no one speaks against these owners neither people in the society nor the institutions, departments and government. Though some raise against these owners and do their efforts to do something for child labour, unfortunately, death threats have been faced by them even some of them have been beaten, tortured and broken their organs as well. In this regard, Fallon (2014) reported an event in the city of Faisalabad in Pakistan where Labour Qaumi Movement (LQM) general secretary Aslam Meraj was brutally attacked, who was returning from a meeting with kiln workers, broken his jaw by brick kiln owners. After this incident, no one took action neither police nor any other law enforcement agencies because brick kiln owners are strong enough due to their political influences. Consequently, no one would dare to go against these mafias. In this manner, the tiny support has also been taken from child labourers by owners. Thus, child labourers remain helpless as everyone is already barely ignoring them. Therefore, the use of a full stop at the end of this poetic line articulates the message that someone should come forward in support of child labour; and also show resistance against these crooks to stop them so that child labourers do not feel helpless. Lastly, end the era of brutality by owners.

The next full stop occurs at the end of the 46<sup>th</sup> line **“and gone from here.”** of this poem. This full stop illustrates that child labourers want to end their lives here because these all-work places are like Hell for them in this world as they burn them daily physically and mentally only for tiny wages. Child labourers clear the air that they cannot go far away from here means from these workplaces because no one is on their side; so, the full stop after the word **“here”** shows that there is only one possible way according to them to stop their breath and end their lives to end their journey with these places and cruel owners. Consequently, the places will be left not by their lively bodies but rather by dead bodies. Moreover, on the other side, **“here”** also means those societies, cities, countries and even the world where they live; they also want to end their relations with the people of this world as the full stop is used to end a sentence. In this connection, they want to finish their lives and leave these places or the world because everyone

is blind here and does not see their miseries and sufferings. However, the full stop is also a crystal-clear call for people all over the world to take care of child labourers and give special attention to them, especially to their mental health. Therefore, in order to do that, it will help them to stop such acts that can result in losing their precious lives.

The 48<sup>th</sup> line in the poem also contains a full stop at the end. Child labourers say to themselves that it should be thought of own miseries because here everyone is like a stranger in this matter and expecting help or support from them is like increasing their own miseries more than what is now. Thus, expecting from them should be stopped for the sake of their own benefit. Furthermore, the full stop also conveys an implied message that people should stop talking about the miseries and difficulties of child labourers after their demise because they are not doing anything in favour of when they are alive. Therefore, it is useless to talk about their vulnerable lives after their death. Thus, this drama should also be stopped like a full stop aims to stop a sentence. Lastly, as the main function of the period is to stop or end the idea so here it employs the meaning in the understudy poem that the child labour issue must be ended and the atrocities by owners should also be stopped at every level and everywhere.

### Hyphen (-)

Hyphen is an important punctuation and has a crucial role in combining or joining words. Similarly, Palmer and Brummitt-Yale (2021) define a hyphen as a punctuation mark which is used to combine two, or more than two words to create a different word with a new meaning. The main aim of using this punctuation mark is to connect words that can be independent words and prefixes to a root word and make compound adjectives, and numbers. However, a hyphen is also used to separate syllables of a single word (Wikipedia, 2022). The producer of the text Shadab Zeest Hashmi used another linguistic choice in this poem that is hyphen which attracted the scholar's attention. Therefore, the hyphenated words have been parsed to take out the hidden meaning. In this poem, the hyphen is used thrice in the 16<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, and 42<sup>nd</sup> lines which are **“half-ful”**, **“tube-lights”**, and **“tell-tall”**.

The first word **“half-ful”** contains two independent words, **“half”** and **“ful”**, that have been combined through a hyphen and converted into a single word. As it has been discussed the main function of a hyphen is to connect words so here it conveys the meaning that all communities should join hands with each other against this child labour issue and also those who are the real culprits. Either they are poles apart in the matter of culture, language, religion and race or they are competitors and enemies. They should make themselves the voice of child labourers despite all the said differences like a hyphen makes a new word to combine different words as combined by the speaker in this poem which is **“half-ful”** in which **“half”** means partial whereas **“ful”** originally **“full”** means completed. Therefore, after presenting the function of the hyphen, and how the hyphen joins two opposite words and creates a new word, the scholar finds that it imparts the concealed message which is an emotional appeal for help that all the communities should also make an alliance. Keeping aside all differences and adversaries solely for the great cause which is the elimination of this worst form of inhumane issue in which every horrific and terrifying activity and form is currently practised under the nose of provincial, national, and international institutions or administrations.

The hyphenated word **“half-ful”** implies two hidden messages; on one side, it portrays a pessimistic view that it is half empty while on the other side, it deploys an optimistic meaning that it is half full. In this connection, the life of child labourers is full of pessimism because of the harsh nature of owners, customers and people surrounding them. Also, the nonserious

attitude of international communities in this matter pushes them into a dark place where they find themselves isolated. So, these all things compel them to live under a dark shadow of pessimism; however, optimism is also there in the form of family as they do hard work day and night in order to fulfil all the needs of the family and it gives them inner satisfaction. It also provides a pathway that leads to the heaven of optimism. Optimism is a light as it helps in the dark to find a way and it ends the darkness as Victor Hugo (n.d.) says that the darkness of night will end and the sun will be risen. This statement clarifies that everything has its end. Thus, it clears the idea that a person should always look in an optimistic way to the end of the bad days. Additionally, it illustrates that optimism is the only weapon through which one can kill darkness and fears that forbid a person to do great things. Similarly, child labourers should also look for the brightest side rather than the darkest side and so do that, the opportunities will knock on their doors to provide a safe path to escape far away from this jail.

Moreover, the aforementioned word also conveys a message that life is short and incomplete means **“half-ful”** as Bennett (n.d.) affirms in his book *The Light in the Heart* that one should not waste time in anger, remorse, worries and resentments because life is very short to be unhappy; so, to enjoy life without worries, child labour should also seek happiness in their own limited social circle and facilities. The words also suggest that failures are far away from success same as **“half”** is far away from **“ful”** because of the hyphen which is occurred between the two words. Therefore, child labourers must try again and again to learn from failures to get the place that they desire.

Furthermore, if a person is **“ful”** in life means successful in a manner of wealth, but real success is concerned with the care of the lower class as here child labour is the lower and needy class of society. So, those wealthy people who do not give much attention to child labourers, also part themselves from child labourers, which means that they are not successful as real success is to care for low-class and needy people. In this regard, as hyphen separates words; similarly, the care of child labour would also separate or far away all failures from the life of those rich people. However; the life of child labourers is **“half-ful”** means incomplete in the sense that they do not have basic facilities and necessities; also, other basic human rights. Moreover, it also shows that life is the name of struggles and full of challenges as **“half”** proclaims failures or bad experiences while **“ful”** indicates achievements in life. Thus, it suggests that child labourers should never give up if they are in the dark days of their lives because the ups and downs are obvious in everyone’s life. The repetition of the hyphen suggests that everyone should forget about their own interests quite for some time; and only ponder over one thing as to how it would play a pivotal role in eradicating of child labour issue if they join hands with one another even with foes as well.

The second hyphenated word used in the 29<sup>th</sup> line of the understudy poem is **“tube-lights”** which symbolizes the wide role of light in the life of child labourers. Light is known as knowledge and enlightenment in human life and so these two things change the perception of a person and change life. As a hyphen joins or combines two words to make a new word along with a new meaning; so, here **“tube”** and **“light”** are connected through a hyphen to strike the reader's attention to delve into this word and find out the hidden meanings behind this word. The word **“tube”** is a kind of thing that is used for transportation of something whether liquid or gas; however, **“light”** is a thing that is used to see things clearly whether the light of the sun and moon or other human-made substances that produce light. Here, combining these two words and making them a single word shows that moving towards the destination, a straight way is essential and moving fast without any hurdles and other difficulties, light is also

important to provide a clear visible way to avoid unnecessary pieces of stuff. Similarly, child labourers also need a way that leads them to their destination and for that purpose, they need someone who makes a clear road for them; means to become a voice for child labourers; educates them means spreads awareness among child labourers; so, that they also make themselves strong enough, then after providing a transportation way as “**tube**” to them also enlightens them as “**light**” would lead them to their desired destinations. Apart from this, as hyphen joins words, similarly, it will help child labourers to reunite themselves with other children and also with the world from which they were separated a long ago. Moreover, light can be easily obtained from another source like fire; but is not suggested as “**tube-light**” used. Thus, it indicates the modern scientific approach. So, in this way, modern scientific ways of rehabilitation should be opted to rejoin these children with their loved ones as well as with the rest of the people especially those who are physically, mentally and sexually exploited by owners or lords.

The last hyphenated word is used in the second line of the last strophe of this poem which is “**tell-tall**”. This hyphenated word is a combination of two words “**tell**” and “**tall**” with the help of a hyphen. This is a unique and new word which has a similar structure like “**tell-tale**”. Thus, on one side, this word points out the tall green walls which imprison the little and small kids. The first part of this word “**tell**” means to speak about something; the second part of this word “**tall**” means “high” or “height”. Thus, the word “**tell-tall**” talks about the highness of the walls not in the sense of height but in the sense of moral highness that these tall walls will start speaking one day in support of child labourers after seeing savageries against child labourers; also speak about their miseries, not like humans who see child labourers in critical situations but their hearts are like these nonliving walls and do not speak for child labourers. However, these walls will join hands with us as hyphen joins different words and make them into a single word. Likewise, child labourers and these walls will be joined with each other regardless of the fact that both are different, even child labourers are human and living, but walls are nonliving. Despite all these differences, they will be combined into a single entity against all the brutality and atrocities with child labourers as the hyphen joined “**tell**” and “**tall**” and made a new word.

### Conclusion

The scholar analysed the poem through the level of graphological parallelism in the theory of foregrounding to uncover the concealed messages of the poem. The study found that the repetition of commas exposes the Hell-like situations of child labourers in the world where they are getting more involved in this profession due to the poverty cycle which compels them to remain as child labourers. It was found that the occurrence of commas shows the continuous and long-lasting process in the workplaces by which they cannot find a moment to make themselves clean and remove nastiness. In addition, the dark legacy of the world is beautifully depicted which proclaims the world as so cruel that children are not safe and live extremely pathetic lives. The repetition of commas shows the chain of child labourers from one generation to another. Moreover, the changing nature of their work in workplaces is also exposed. It also calls for the masses to show some patience while ordering in restaurants, cafeterias, and hotels because it results in the humiliation of child labourers. Through repetition of commas, it is also exposed how and why the brutal owners disdain child labourers in front of customers as well as in private. However, child labourers are so courageous that they bear such contemptuous things throughout their journey. They bear such derogatory remarks and vicious attitudes by the owners because they hope that one day, they will be freed from all these things. Moreover,

the determination of child labourers by which they will be shined and risen in the face of all heavy workloads, cruelties, and suppressions.

Furthermore, the study also found that the abundant usage of full stop shows the worst form of freedom of expression due to which child labourers cannot raise their voices against the atrocities by the owners and landlords. Also, multinational companies and the worst form of child labour “Forced Labour” are also exposed categorically. The occurrence of the full stop requests to the people that they should stop purchasing from those companies which have child labourers directly or indirectly in their production chain and boycott the restaurants, hotels, cafeterias, or tea stalls which have child labourers in their staff. In addition, the officials’ conscience is in deep sleep because they know everything but do not take strict actions against the offenders. Apart from this, the study discovered through repetition of full stop that child labourers are treated like animals by the owners or landlords. However, they are humans so, the discrimination should be ended and give them a right of freedom.

Moreover, the repetition of the punctuation mark, full stop pleads to the masses to stop the brutality by the landlords and take care of child labourers’ mental health so, that they do not take such actions which may risk their lives. Additionally, the helpless conditions of child labourers and the inhumane attitude of owners towards them were also brought to light.

Furthermore, through hyphenated words one more time an appeal is made to the world that everyone should keep aside all their differences and join hands with one another to play a vital role in eradicating the child labour issue. However, it is not only discussed that child labourers should be educated and enlightened but also, they should be aware of their situations along with their consequences. Additionally, awareness should also be disseminated among the general public. Moreover, modern approaches should be opted for the rehabilitation of those child labourers who are suffering and exploited physically, sexually, and mentally. Correspondingly, humans are badly exposed and portrayed like walls as they see everything but do not speak for child labourers because everyone is busy with their own lives.

### **Recommendation**

The study suggests that future scholars may conduct a meticulous study on Shadab Zeest Hashmi’s poetry. Besides, feminist stylistics, Critical Discourse Analysis, and Marxism can be applied to her poetry for the exploration of hidden thematic layers of meanings as well as to make it reader-friendly.

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