

Stylistics Analysis of Foregrounding in Rohingya's Poems *Too Much Bitterness and the Unfamiliar Home*

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Abstract

This article attempts to examine the use of stylistic analysis in Yar Tin and Yasmir Ullah's poetry as a style of foregrounding in the poems of *Too Much Bitterness* and *The Unfamiliar Home* from the book *I Am a Rohingya: Poetry from the Camps and Beyond*. The present study explores the effects and implications, similarities, and differences that underlie the use of parallelism and deviation in the poems. Stylistics, outfitted with linguistics tools and methodology, may help with a logical and academic interpretation of literary works. In other words, stylistics explores unique language expressions and explains their purpose and impact. From the perspective of stylistic analysis, the two poems are analyzed through stylistic tools of foregrounding and its types. Language stands out by employing four techniques: parallelism, phonological deviation obtained using assonance, semantic variation attained using simile and paradox, and graphological variation including italicization and shape. By comparing the two poems by Rohingya poets, the study mainly focuses on analyzing the content and linguistic features to highlight the theme of desolation and the emotions expressed by the two poets. Additionally, through accessing these unconventional linguistic features, readers are supposed to deepen their comprehension and appreciation of the essence of poetry.

Keywords: Stylistic analysis; Foregrounding; Parallelism; Deviation; Desolation.

1. Introduction

The book *I Am a Rohingya: Poetry from the Camps and Beyond* is the first English-language collection of poetry written by Rohingya poets, and these significant poems have attracted public attention by commemorating individuals and places in Rohingya and fighting against the deliberately planned depredations of genocide (Disney, 2019). Rhoads (2023), indicated that many people in this book express their ambition to acquire full citizenship in Burmese. This study explores two poets, Yar Tin, and Yasmir Ullah. Yar Tin is a Rohingya poet and short story writer from Rakhine State in Myanmar. He also teaches the Burmese language to Rohingya students. Yasmin Ullah is a Rohingya feminist, author, poet, and social justice activist who advocates for Rohingya rights.

This research mainly focuses on two poems from *I Am a Rohingya: Poetry from the Camps and Beyond*, edited by James Byrne and Shehzar Doja. The Rohingya poets express their poetry of suffering and warning from the refugee camp Cox's Bazaar and genocide zone (Disney, 2019). Their poems are more accurate than news reports for details about the suffering of the most downtrodden. *I Am a Rohingya: Poetry from the Camps and Beyond* urges the world to pay attention to the voice of people who have endured some of the most outstanding human rights violations on earth. Since a situation must be addressed, these poems have no choice but to speak up. Moreover, these two poems primarily focus on the theme of desolation.

1.1. Background of Too Much Bitterness

The theme of desolation is prevalent throughout the poem "*Too much bitterness*" by Yar Tin. The poet portrays a sense of desolation through vivid imagery and emotional language, describing a bleak and devastating reality (Fogarty, 2022). The poem acknowledges that finding beauty or poetic expression in gunshots, death, and destruction is brutal. This sets the tone of desolation, as the poet's heart is not skilled enough to transform this bitterness into art. The poem then explores the pervasive presence of bullets and hatred, which dominate the environment, leading the persecuted group of Rohingyas to flee desperately. Their journey's desolation is further portrayed by the images of crushed and broken legs along the road. Moreover, the poet illustrates a sharp contrast: Some view it as a victory parade, while others see it as an apocalypse. The Rohingya people have been forced to flee their homes, seeing it as an apocalypse primarily due to persecution and violence perpetrated against them by the Myanmar government and military, who view it as a victory parade.

The simile of birds unable to fly owing to the oppressive circumstances represents a sense of confinement and hopelessness. Clouds are replaced by rising smoke from their nest, signifying the damage and loss they will soon experience. The poet wonders whether the rain will be able to extinguish the fire that destroys their homes and whether it will be able to save the helpless children, the elderly, and the weak trapped within. Desolation is further emphasized by the tears of those who have lost everything and the reference to nests destroyed by fire. The poem reflects on the tragic circumstances and the profound sense of loss resulting from wrongful displacement and the destruction of their homes.

The poem confronts the denial of human rights and dignity. It emphasizes the sacrifices made by their community and the oppressive treatment they endure, leading to their identification as terrorists and discrimination. The title given to the group, “the world’s most oppressed people,” reflects the tremendous bias and catastrophe they experience. The residents of Rohingya are discriminated against and identified as terrorists, contributing to the atmosphere of desolation and despair. It highlights the desire to shed this oppressive title and reclaim their rightful place as residents of Rohingya. The final paragraphs depict a spirit of resilience and determination to forge ahead despite the desolation. However, the poet is aware of the pain and grief that result from having to draw inspiration for their poems from the misfortunes of others. In summary, the main idea of this poem revolves around the themes of desolation, injustice, displacement, and the yearning for dignity and freedom. It emphasizes the need for empathy, understanding, and the pursuit of justice in the face of oppression.

1.2. Background of The Unfamiliar Home

The second poem, “*The Unfamiliar Home*” by Yasmin Ullah, is closely linked to the general concept and emotions conveyed in the poem. Moreover, the poet expresses a deep sense of longing and loss, creating desolation within them. The poem portrays a profound separation between the poet and their house. Despite identifying it as her own, she feels a sense of unfamiliarity and separation from the place she barely knows. This ignorance contributes to desolation since Yasmin Ullah yearns for a connection to her home and the families she can never return to and the longing for their hugs.

Besides, the poem highlights the contrast between the familiar architectural structures and landscapes of countries that are easily accessible through screens and the true beauty and essence of the poet’s own home. The poet questions how anyone can truly understand and appreciate the beauty of their home through the limited representation provided on screens.

Moreover, the poem emphasizes excluding the poet’s home from the cover of magazines and mainstream media, despite its significance to them. The poet expresses a desire for others to understand and appreciate their home and the family that was forcibly separated from them, even though just one or two pictures. The hope is that through understanding, others would be able to relate and perhaps develop a sense of protection for this place. The poet longs for their home to be recognized, cherished, and protected, but the lack of acknowledgment adds to their desolation.

The poem concludes with the poet expressing their longing for others to honestly know and understand the depth of their connection to their home, highlighting the need for awareness and protection against the oppressive forces that threaten the innocence and tranquility of the poet’s home. The theme of desolation in “*The Unfamiliar Home*” underscores the poet’s deep longing, loss, and isolation from their home. Moreover, it calls for empathy, understanding, and action to protect the poet’s home from the injustices it faces.

The research centers on the following objectives.

- 1) To analyze the four salient linguistic features in *Too Much Bitterness* and *The Unfamiliar Home* and how the poems relate to the theme of desolation.
- 2) To compare the similarities and differences between *Too Much Bitterness* and *The Unfamiliar Home*.

Moreover, the research questions are as follows:

- 1) What are the four salient linguistic features in *Too Much Bitterness* and *The Unfamiliar Home*, and how do these poems relate to the theme of desolation?
- 2) What are the similarities and differences between *Too Much Bitterness* and *The Unfamiliar Home*?

2. Literature Review

The concepts of foregrounding, style, and stylistic analysis in poetry are covered in the literature review. It also highlights and clarifies the historical background of the Rohingya refugee situation.

2.1. Foregrounding

The concept of Foregrounding is related to the Prague School, and [Leech and Short \(2007\)](#) also used it to refer to “artistically motivated deviation”. They mentioned that foregrounding makes something stand out from the surrounding content or image. Foregrounding is a theory that guides the reader’s steps in understanding a poem and enables readers to interpret linguistic and literary patterns encountered in reading meaningfully ([Awonuga et al., 2018](#)). Parallelism and deviation are the two primary categories of foregrounding, according to [Leech \(1969\)](#). He also contends that parallelism may be considered unexpected regularity and deviation as irregularity. To be more specific, parallelism is the repetition of a particular grammatical pattern inside a sentence, while the deviation occurs at different levels: Phonological (e.g., alliteration, assonance, rhyme), Semantic (e.g., simile, metaphor, personification), morphological (e.g., word formation) ([Adeleke, 2020](#); [Najm and Kareem, 2021](#)).

2.2. Style

Wales (2001), indicated that style is “the perceived manner of expression in writing or speaking”. Therefore, style is how poets convey their ideas or emotions to the public through their poems. Style is frequently associated with deviation, a deviation from expectations or criteria. The poet purposefully breaks down grammar rules and writes in a distinctive style to draw the readers in and grab their attention. This allows poets to express their character traits.

2.3. Stylistics Analysis

Short (1996), illustrated that stylistics refers to a linguistic approach to comprehending and interpreting works of literature. Richards and Schmidt (2013), further explained that stylistics is “the study of that language variation (STYLE) which is dependent on the situation in which the language is used and also on the effect the writer or speaker wishes to create on the reader or hearer.” It is an “objective” or “scientific” analysis of the style of literary texts (Abrams and Harpham, 2015). Additionally, Baroudi (2021) stated that stylistic analysis is the study of how language is employed in poetry to identify the purpose of a style, the message it conveys, and the method by which it is used.

Poets use stylistic analysis to draw attention to cultural themes and ideas while defamiliarizing readers. The primary intent of stylistic research in this study is to discover and analyze the essential stylistic elements and purposes of a specific language function. Specifically, stylistic analysis in literature is used to identify the many linguistic features present in a poem and extrapolate its meaning from them. These two poems - *Too Much Bitterness* and *The Unfamiliar Home* - selected from the poetry *I Am a Rohingya: Poetry from the Camps and Beyond* may be understood more thoroughly after analysis. It uses many noticeable language strategies to depict the suffering and warning from the Cox’s Bazaar refugee camp and genocide zone. The readers are greatly affected by these vivid descriptions of the poets’ terrible life. The diversity of Rohingya poets, who all employed a variety of linguistic elements and specific common themes such as suffering, despair, desolation, homelessness, grief, perils, horror, and trauma that are sure to grab the reader’s attention, makes for highly distinctive Rohingya poetry.

2.4. The Previous Study of the Rohingya People

The earlier research on the Rohingya carried out by some scholars had a distinct focus. For example, as cited in Kingston and Seibert (2022), Leider (2018) demonstrated that the term “Rohingya” went into usage in the late 1950s when Muslim people in North Rakhine State, Myanmar, applied it to establish an exclusive ethnoreligious identity. It also gained widespread use after reports of human rights abuses there in the 1990s and once more after 2012.

Kingston and Seibert (2022) illustrated that the Rohingya are not considered a “national race” by the Burmese government, and neighboring nations like Bangladesh likewise disbelieve claims of native ancestry, which has caused the Rohingya language policies to be misunderstood and marginalized, aiding the genocidal process.

Mutaqin (2018), stated three connected issues relating to the Rohingya crisis: the only focus on persecution and nationality in Myanmar, statelessness and relocation, and flagrant human rights abuses. Moreover, the study also described how to address the problems and take action in the end.

Martuscelli *et al.* (2022), conclude that the Rohingya adopted a variety of typical resistance tactics involving disobedience, such as defying orders, refusing to pay money, or doing forced labor. They also avoided staying at home and maintaining secrecy by praying, using cell phones, moving to other areas, studying, and secretly getting married. Aside from remaining at home, sheltering girls, and getting pregnant, common resistance tactics linked to gender-oriented protection against sexual abuse were also included. Last, the Rohingya developed resistance practices to withstand the 2017 attacks, including collective escape to Bangladesh and mutual support.

Although some studies are related to the Muslim minority of the Rohingya, little research has explored the stylistic analysis of foregrounding in Rohingya poems. Therefore, the current study was examined to discover four salient linguistic features in *Too Much Bitterness* and *The Unfamiliar Home* from the poetry *I Am a Rohingya: Poetry from the Camps and Beyond* and how the poems relate to the theme of desolation. Furthermore, it attempted to compare the similarities and differences between these two poems.

3. Research Design

The study primarily adopts qualitative description, which assists the researcher in providing illustrative samples of parallel structures and phonological, semantic, and graphological deviations to better understand the significance of such poetry. Extracted from the book *I Am a Rohingya: Poetry from the Camps and Beyond*, the poems *Too Much Bitterness* and *The Unfamiliar Home*, written by the Rohingyas are used as the study’s primary sources of information. *Too Much Bitterness* comprises 55 lines, divided into ten stanzas. In comparison, *The Unfamiliar Home* contains 38 lines, but counting down the number of stanzas is challenging because of the fragmented images to describe the unfamiliar home. The researcher recognized specific parallel structures and different kinds of deviations that call for linguistic attention to appreciate and uncover the underlying meaning behind the poetry, which helped justify the selection process (Memon *et al.*, 2021). The linguistic and stylistic categories theory (Leech and Short, 2007) put forth serves as the study’s foundation, the primary analytical framework for analyzing parallel structures and types of deviation (Mwinwelle *et al.*, 2021).

4. Analysis

4.1. Analysis of the Linguistic Devices in *Too Much Bitterness*

<p>YAR TIN</p> <p>TOO MUCH BITTERNESS</p> <p>To make rhymes out of gunshots, To make poetry out of death and destruction, This heart of mine is not skilled enough.</p> <p>Bullets and hatred Rule our surroundings; Greedy to save a life, The Rohingyas of this land, this country, Fled where they could in chaos; Hundreds of legs on the run Crushed and broken along the way; For some, it's a victory parade; For others, it's apocalypse.</p> <p>We are Like birds in a blue sky backdrop With no chance to take flight; The smoke rising from our nest Takes the place of clouds.</p> <p>Might as well let it rain – To quench the fire Devouring our homes, To soothe the innocent children tossed into flames, The old and the weak trapped inside. As if raindrops could extinguish them all.</p> <p>The tears of those who have lost everything, If only they hadn't been wrongly displaced, Might have been enough to put out Our fire-ravaged nests; Might have offered shelter To the little birds tossed into the fire, The old and the weak trapped inside.</p>	<p>For the human rights we haven't tasted Since we were born from the womb, For the right to live as humans, among humans, What else must we give up?</p> <p>When our sacrifice To secure a little piece of dignity Became disproportionate, In return, We were honoured with The title of <i>The world's most oppressed people.</i></p> <p>For wanting to shed this title, We who call Arakan home Are labelled, <i>those who enter illegally,</i> <i>Terrorists,</i> And discriminated.</p> <p>All is well, At the limit of my eye is the sky, I shall stretch out my hope all the way; Along a path paved with lives, I will forge ahead.</p> <p>But When I have to use another's tragedy As pages for my poetry, My heart shudders and aches.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Translated from the Burmese by Kenneth Wong</i></p>
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4.1.1. Parallelism

Parallelism is repeating the same word or a similar poem structure (Samandarov *et al.*, 2022). The example is as follows:

<p>To make rhymes out of gunshots, (line 1)←</p> <p>To make poetry out of death and destruction, (line 2)←</p> <p>PRT + V + N + Adv + Prep + N←</p>
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These two sentences in lines 1 and 2 of stanza I exhibit similar structures: “Particle + Verb + Noun + Adverb + Preposition + Noun”. As sentences follow a similar structure, with To-infinitive “to make” followed by a noun and the preposition phrase, the syntactic parallelism achieves a pattern of equivalence (Griebler *et al.*, 2018).

In these two selected lines, grammatical parallelism and semantic antithesis provide dramatic paths for the two sides of things (Longxi, 2021). “To make” in these two lines indicates the function of purpose, emphasizing that finding rhymes in gunshots and poetic expression in death and destruction is challenging. Rhymes and poetry are parallel, related to beauty, and gunshots are like death and destruction, which are relevant to the desperate war. Therefore, the beauty and the reality form a sharp contrast (Khakimnazarov *et al.*, 2022), which sets the tone of desolation, as the poet’s heart is not skilled enough to transform this bitterness into art.

According to Short (1996), parallelism can attract readers’ attention with the antithesis and combine two seemingly unrelated elements to give the reader a sense of the poet’s attitude of seeking beauty amid darkness and sadness during the war. Furthermore, this parallel structure reinforces the challenges the Rohingyas face in pursuing dignity and justice in the face of persecution and their desire for a better life.

4.1.2. Phonological Deviation (Assonance)

Referred to Najm and Kareem (2021), Phonological deviation is a purposeful deviation from sound or pronunciation to keep a rhyme, and this study mainly focuses on assonance, one of the linguistic features in phonological deviation, which is the repetition of comparable vowel sounds occurs in two or more words that are close to each other Shrestha (2021). Additionally, Shrestha mentioned that assonance is most associated with repeating internally generated vowel sounds in words that do not terminate similarly.

<p>“Bullets and hatred” (line4)</p>

For example, “Bullets and hatred” in line 4 of stanza II have assonance due to the exact pronunciation of the short “I” vowel since this noun phrase involving this vowel sound fails to end in perfect rhymes. Bullets refer to weapons during the war, while hatred is a strong feeling of dislike. These two words further illustrate the persecuted group of Rohingyas who wanted to flee desolately. What is more, as Shrestha indicated, this allows the researcher to emphasize the pervasive presence of bullets and hatred, which dominate the Rohingyas’ terrible situation, as well as creating a sense of the rhythm of the short “I” vowel and enhancing the pessimistic mood of the devastating reality.

4.1.3 Semantic Deviation (Simile)

Ibrahima *et al.* (2020), presented that semantic deviation is described as a meaning deviation in which the meaning of a given word, phrase, or even an entire sentence is ambiguous. Leech (1969), classifies semantic deviations under numerous categories, and simile is one of the categories that will be analyzed in this research. Nainggolan *et al.* (2021), mentioned that simile is a sort of figurative speech in which differences between two dissimilar objects are used in order to render them resemble with the use of the word “like” or “as”.

In the third stanza of the poem: *Too Much Bitterness* by Yar Tin

We are	(line 1)
Like birds in a blue sky backdrop	(line 2)
With no chance to take flight;	(line 3)
The smoke rising from our nest	(line 4)
Takes the place of clouds.	(line 5)

In this poem of *Too Much Bitterness*, one salient simile is illustrated in stanza III, lines 1-3 because of the word “like”. The sentence “We are like birds in a blue-sky backdrop with no chance to take flight” shows that the poet compares “We” (the persecuted group in Rohingyas) to “birds”. “We” refers to “the Rohingya people”, while “birds” are “creatures with feathers and wings, which are usually able to fly” and are often associated with freedom (Tomshinsky, 2019). This simile of birds unable to fly due to oppressive circumstances represents a sense of confinement and hopelessness. In addition, using “birds” to represent “the persecuted people in Rohingyas” gives the reader to visualize (Sodiqova, 2023), understand the difficulties that they meet, and feel sympathetic for them. It also makes it a lot more vivid and descriptive of the situation that the Myanmar government and military initiated the war, which put the Rohingyas in trouble and could not flee from the desolation.

4.1.4. Graphological Deviation (Italicization)

The graphological deviation is a comparatively minor and superficial style aspect regarding spelling, capitalization, and italicization (Leech and Short, 2007).


In the eighth stanza of the poem: *To Much Bitterness* by Yar Tin

For wanting to shed this title,	Line 1
We who call Arakan home	Line 2
Are labelled, <i>those who enter illegally,</i>	Line 3
<i>Terrorists,</i>	Line 4
And discriminated.	Line 5

Graphological deviation in this poem is demonstrated in the form of italicization in Stanza 8, lines 3-4, “those who enter illegally, Terrorists”, which indicates that people in Rohingya are subjected to negative labels and stereotypes. Furthermore, they are wrongly associated with illegal entry and terrorism, portraying the unjust accusations and assumptions they face.

The italicization makes the label stand out from the poem (Evaristo, 2023), thus foregrounding the sharp contrast between their identification with the people of Rohingyas and people with illegal entry and terrorism. Furthermore, Alabi (2007) illustrated that the italicized words are always written in a different character than the poem, which is also the poet’s intention to distinguish that they are the indigenous Rohingya people instead of terrorists. Moreover, Naseem and Talaat (2021) mentioned that italics function to emphasize points or parts of words. The eighth stanza explores the struggle the people of Rohingya face, burdened with negative labels and discrimination. It conveys the poet’s empathy and solidarity with them, challenging the unjust treatment they endure. The stanza emphasizes addressing these stereotypes and discrimination to achieve a more just and inclusive society.

4.2. Analysis of the Linguistic Devices in *The Unfamiliar Home*

<p>YASMIN ULLAH</p> <p>THE UNFAMILIAR HOME</p> <p>I keep missing a place I barely know.</p> <p>Home – untouched families I can never return to, how I long for their hugs.</p> <p>Countries are known for architecture, buildings, landscapes, so accessible on-screen, but on-screen – how can you know anything about beauty missed.</p> <p>None of it makes it to the cover of magazines, yet I wish you knew this place, my place, my home, taken from me,</p> <p>I wish – you saw the family they ripped a- part from me,</p> <p>I wish you knew through even one or two pictures, so you would</p>	<p>at least be able to relate,</p> <p>and maybe... only maybe, you would cherish this place as much – as I do,</p> <p>perhaps you would try to protect it, from the tyrannical oppression of the innocents, in their own home.</p> <p>How – I wish you could know.</p>  <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">PHOTO: LOUI SHREBERG</p>
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4.2.1. Parallelism

As Samandarov *et al.* (2022) mentioned, parallelism is the repetition of the same word or a similar poem structure. In this poem, lines 15, 18, and 21 show a similar structure with “I wish you knew/saw”, and the parts of speech are “Pronoun + Verb + Pronoun + Verb”. “I wish” elaborates on the poet’s hope and will, expressing a deep longing and loss.

<p>I wish you knew this place, my place, my home, taken from me,</p>	line15
<p>I wish – you saw the family they ripped a- part from me,</p>	line 18
<p>I wish you knew through even one or two pictures,</p>	line 21

In this poem, “I wish you knew” in line 15, “I wish you saw” in line 18, and “I wish you knew” in line 21 form a parallel expression. Specifically, the first “I wish” shows that the poet desires others to understand and appreciate the poet’s home. The Second “I wish” indicates that the poet wants others to understand that her family is broken and forcibly separated from them. The third “I wish” demonstrates that the poet still wants others to know this place, even though one or two pictures. These repeated structures illustrate the poets’ desire, which hopes to develop a sense of protection for this place. Additionally, the poet longs for her home to be recognized, cherished, and protected, but the lack of acknowledgment of her home adds to their feelings of desolation.

Furthermore, “this place” in line 15 is parallel with “my place, my home” in line16, emphasizing the poet’s home, and so do the similar structure of “I wish you knew/saw”; the poet uses delicate, artfully designed parallelisms to express the desolation of the unfamiliar home (Longxi, 2021).

4.2.2. Phonological Deviation (Assonance)

As mentioned above, assonance is a literary technique in which similar vowel sounds are repeated in two or more words that are close to one another in a line of poetry (Shrestha, 2021).

perhaps you would	
try to protect it,	line 31
from the tyrannical oppression	line 32
of the innocents,	line 33
in their own home.	

In this poem, “perhaps you would try to protect it, from the tyrannical oppression of the innocents, in their own home” is a sentence that assonance is found through repetition of the “ə” vowel sound, even if the sentence containing the “ə” vowel does not end in harmonious rhymes. This allows the poet to highlight crucial words like protect, the tyrannical oppression, and innocents, as well as to add rhythm with “ə” vowel sound, lift the desolate atmosphere, and produce a poetic impact using these words and “ə” vowel sounds. Furthermore, assonance highlights the need for awareness and protection against the oppressive forces that threaten the innocence and tranquility of the poet’s home.

4.2.3. Semantic Deviation (Paradox)


Paradox is a semantic deviation in which two opposing phrases or expressions express two sides of the same concept (Mwinwelle *et al.*, 2021).

Countries are known	line 7
for architecture, buildings, landscapes,	line 8
so accessible on-screen,	line 9
but on-screen – how can you know	line 10
anything	line 11
about beauty missed.	line 12

In this selected poem, the positioning of the words “countries are known for...” and “beauty missed” has a paradoxical effect. Since the countries are famous for architecture, buildings, and landscapes, the beauty of the countries cannot represent initially with something missed, which achieves the effect of sarcasm and criticism of the brutal oppression of Burmese authorities (Mwinwelle *et al.*, 2021), foregrounding the theme of desolation. Countries cannot be fully visualized on-screen because something beautiful may be absent. The poet utilizes the rhetoric of paradox to uncover the corruption of the government, highlighting the contrast between the familiar architectural structures and landscapes of countries that are easily accessible through screens. However, the true beauty and essence of the poet’s own home may be lost. Therefore, the poet questions how anyone can truly understand and appreciate the beauty of their home through the limited representation provided on screens.

4.2.4. Graphological Deviation (Shape)

As cited in Zhou (2021), Wang (1990) illustrated that graphological deviation could be “categorized as a sub-area of graphology, as can be the shape of the text, the type of print, grammatics”. Due to its distinctive shape, the poem’s shape is particularly unique. Literary poetry’s shape might be created with unusual aesthetics to allude to a particular literary theme (Zhou, 2021). In this poem, the poet uses the shape of a fractured family to describe the unfamiliar home, making the desolation theme stand out. Look at the poem below:

<p>YASMIN ULLAH</p> <p>THE UNFAMILIAR HOME</p> <p>I keep missing a place I barely know.</p> <p>Home – untouched families I can never return to, how I long for their hugs.</p> <p>Countries are known for architecture, buildings, landscapes, so accessible on-screen, but on-screen – how can you know anything about beauty missed.</p> <p>None of it makes it to the cover of magazines, yet I wish you knew this place, my place, my home, taken from me,</p> <p> I wish – you saw the family they ripped a- part from me,</p> <p>I wish you knew through even one or two pictures, so you would</p>	<p> at least be able and maybe... only maybe, to relate, you would cherish this place</p> <p> perhaps you would as much – as I do, try to protect it, from the tyrannical oppression of the innocents, in their own home.</p> <p>How – I wish you could know.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">PHOTO COURTESY UNHCR</p> </div>
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As Al-Khafaji (2016) illustrated, the “visual stanza” or “pictograph” is a typical graphological device employed frequently by Cummings in which lines are organized according to a form expressing the poet’s idea rather than rhyme and meter. Therefore, throughout the poem, it visually suggests a broken and strange home, which becomes unfamiliar to the poet. It also indicates that the poet can never return to the familiar home and further express the need to protect the innocence and tranquility of the poet’s familiar home.

5. Discussion

5.1. Similarity

These poems, *Too Much Bitterness* and *The Unfamiliar Home* are all related to the same theme: “desolation”. *Too Much Bitterness* is desolate because of the Rohingyas people. At the same time, *The Unfamiliar Home* is desperate since the Burmese authorities destroyed the home, and the poet yearns for a connection to her familiar home that she can never return to and families that she longed for their hugs.

Besides, the two poets Yar Tin and Yasmir Ullah adopted the same narrative perspective: first-person perspective, which can bring the content, thoughts, and feelings for their ethnic group conveyed in *Too Much Bitterness* and *The Unfamiliar Home* closer to their readers (Langellier, 1989).

Moreover, the same linguistic features of parallelism and assonance were employed in these two poets when analyzing the content of the poetry. To be more specific, the definition and function may be alike in explaining the linguistic devices. These two poems attain a structural balance and express the poet’s great desire to take action to change the situation considering the depressing state of people and homes; At the same time, they all use the assonance of the short vowel, the negative emotions have been amplified by the short vowel’s duration reduction and tempo acceleration, which creates a sense of rhythm, enhances the desolate mood, and offers a lyrical effect of protecting the people and their homes (Shrestha, 2021).

6. Differences

Although these two poems have many similarities, there are still significant disparities. The examples are as follows: In *Too Much Bitterness*, Parallelism achieves balance and symmetry in sentence structures and constitutes the same rhythm as “to make. Moreover, the poet found it difficult to catch beauty or poetic expression in gunshots, death, and destruction. While in *The Unfamiliar Home*, the similar structures with “I wish you knew/saw” convey a deep sense of longing and loss, which creates a feeling of desolation towards the unfamiliar home. The repetition of the structure serves as an emphasis, highlighting the poet’s hopes and desires to return to the familiar home, evoking resonance and raising awareness of protecting the primitive home for the readers.

As for the phonological deviation, assonance in “Bullets and hatred” in *Too Much Bitterness* makes readers feel the rapid firing of bullets and the countless hate accompanying bullets' sound towards the Rohingya people. In *The Unfamiliar Home*, the “ə” vowel sound adds to the gloom of the inability to show their homeland's actual beauty and the indignation at the oppression.

In the semantic deviation, the poet in *Too Much Bitterness* adopts a simile to describe the birds that cannot fly in the sky, which indicates that the Rohingya in Myanmar are just like birds that are small and negligible in the wide-open sky, expressing a sense of helplessness and desolation. On the other hand, the poet in *The Unfamiliar Home* employed the paradox with “countries are known for...” and “beauty missed” which illustrates the sarcasm and criticism directed towards the oppressive actions of the Burmese authorities, hence strengthening the misery and desolation of Rohingya people under such severe persecution.

At the level of graphological deviation, the poet in *Too Much Bitterness* uses italicization in Stanza 8 lines 3-4 “those who enter illegally, Terrorists”, which indicates that people in Rohingya were subjected to negative labels and stereotypes, emphasizing the struggle faced by the Rohingya people, who were burdened with discrimination. However, the poet in *The Unfamiliar Home* utilizes the unusual shape to depict a visually desolate scene of the fragmented homeland of the Rohingya. This helps highlight the need for awareness and protection against the oppressive forces that threaten the innocence and tranquility of the poet’s original home.

Furthermore, the poem *Too Much Bitterness* intensifies the bitterness of the Rohingya people, highlighting the themes of desolation, injustice, and the yearning for dignity and freedom. However, the poem *The Unfamiliar Home* centers on the profound separation between the poet and the home. The poet longs for their home to be recognized, cherished, and protected, highlighting the need for awareness and protection against the oppressive forces that threaten the innocence and tranquility of the poet’s home.

7. Conclusion

The analysis of parallelism and deviations in the poems demonstrates a connection between literary works and social issues that impact the daily lives of the Rohingya people. The poems effectively use parallelism through the To-infinitive structure and complex sentences. It draws attention to how unfairly Burmese government officials treat their citizens, contributing to the Rohingya’s deplorable socioeconomic circumstances. This study explores types of deviation, including phonological deviation achieved through assonance, semantic variations obtained via simile and paradox, and graphological variations that involve italicization and shape. Assonance with the short “i” vowel in *Too Much Bitterness* and the “ə” vowel sound in *The Unfamiliar Home* contributes to their sadness because of their incapacity to protect their fellow citizens, showcase the genuine beauty of their locality, and voice their discontent towards oppression. The simile reinforces the impact of the Burmese government’s cruelty towards the Rohingya people, furthering the theme of desolation. At the same time, the paradox is exploited to expose double standards in evaluating home and country, to attack the gap between reality and media portrayal, and to critique the oppression of Burmese politics. Italicization represents that the Rohingyas was always labeled as terrorist by the Burmese. They were burdened with discrimination, and shape indicates the Rohingya poets visually and psychologically depicted the fragmentation of their families and even their country.

7.1. Limitations

This study examines the parallelism and deviations in the Rohingya poems *Too Much Bitterness* and *The Unfamiliar Home*. Numerous literary strategies are used in the poetry of Rohingya poets, but the literature reveals that few studies have analyzed these forms. Therefore, the analysis of literary devices in the poetry of Rohingya poets should be given more focus. Additional research could be done comparing the academic strategies used in poetry with the same themes written by Rohingya and non-Rohingya poets. Additionally, more poems in the book *I Am a Rohingya: Poetry from the Camps and Beyond* should be analyzed with linguistic devices. This will contribute to a deeper comprehension of literary devices in literal works.

7.2. Implications

This study has implications for theory, research, and practice (Rohingya and Myanmar governments). Theoretically, the framework of foregrounding for linguistic and stylistic categorization used in the study makes the view a viable linguistic theory that can be used to explain the terrible life the Rohingya people lead under the tyranny of the Burmese government. On the literary front, this study makes a small contribution to understanding parallelism and deviations in poetry. The poems *Too Much Bitterness* and *The Unfamiliar Home* benefit significantly from this study, providing a new perspective on previous research. This research will be an invaluable resource for stylistic studies that teach students how to analyze the stylistic characteristics of poetry. Reproducing the analysis in this work on different literary texts will be helpful for students and academics.

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