

Representation of Male and Female Characters in Woolf's Selected Fictions: A Corpus Based Stylistic Analysis

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ABSTRACT

The present research comprises a corpus-based stylistic analysis of Woolf's selected novel, *To the* (Woolf, 1927) and *Wolf* (Woolf, 1925). This study aims to examine the portrayal of men and women in the chosen texts. For this purpose, adjectives have been chosen from both novels that have been employed with both male and female characters. The methodology utilized is mixed-method which merges the qualitative analysis with the quantitative one. The examples of tables along with concordance lines are taken from a specialized corpus of two novels with the aid of the software LancsBox (Version 6.0). The present study has revealed that the terms man and woman have occurred 184 times and 119 times respectively. The use of positive adjectives with male characters is more frequent than with female characters. Male characters portrayed by Virginia Woolf are shown as dominating, autonomous, and powerful. The adjectives employed with men are mostly related to their status and personality. Whereas, negative adjectives used with women reflect their demeaning, struggling, and inferior status. Actually, Woolf has employed adjectives to counteract gender bias in her chosen works, though she has portrayed women in a negative light and men in a positive light. This research will prove as a great contribution to the emerging field of corpus linguistics, combining corpus studies with gender studies and it will recommend further investigation regarding gender roles in multiple contexts.

KEYWORDS:

Corpus, Gender, Stylistics, Representation.

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INTRODUCTION

Stylistics has been defined as the examination of the language of literary texts, usually taking its theoretical models from linguistics, in order to undertake this analysis. (Simpson, 2004) states that stylistics utilizes linguistic analysis to provide a window on the devices which characterize a particular work. (Crystal, 1972) has defined the term stylistics as a systematic, distinctive, intra-language variation. Stylistics is the examination of literary discourse from a language's viewpoint (Widdowson, 2014). Corpus is defined as a collection of naturally occurring language texts, chosen to characterize a state or variety of language. (Wilson, 2001) broadly defines corpus linguistics as the study of language based on examples of real-life language use. In corpus linguistics, a vast amount of electronic language data is analyzed with software tools (Baker, 2006) (Wilson, 2001). Therefore, corpus linguistics is a tool for improving stylistic analyses' repeatability and falsifiability. Corpora are large representative bodies of text which have been electronically encoded. Corpora are a way of collecting and sorting data that is the corpus access programs presenting concordance lines and calculating frequencies that are tools. According to Wilson (2009), a corpus is any collection of more than just texts. All the language texts in it are naturally occurring. Linguistically speaking, it's a collection of texts that can be accessed in a computer-readable format. (Biber, 2011) highlights that corpus analysis adds reliability and extends the scope.

This study is the corpus-based stylistic analysis for gender representation in Virginia Woolf's selected writings. This research focuses on the linguistic feature i.e., the use of adjectives in Woolf's two chosen novels to reach the thought presentation of the author. (*Wolf*, 1925) and *To the* (Woolf, 1927) are well-known works of late Victorian and early Modern writer, Virginia Woolf. These fictions are written in a highly famous narrative style known as 'stream of consciousness' which unveils the intricacies of internal thoughts and feelings of characters. Both novels are affected by World War 1, showcasing the notion of new beginnings and fleeting effect of time. In these chosen novels, Woolf explores the inner psychological insights regarding males and females under the veil of her strong and captivating narratives.

Significance and Delimitation of the Study

This work is quite significant as it probes Woolf's significant works via corpus tool. Moreover, it also mirrors the importance of gender roles in the selected piece of literature especially the portrayal of male and female characters using corpus software



as a tool. Woolf has established herself as a distinguished feminist writer in her treatment of women's helpless situations. She has unmasked the causes of women's oppression with the help of her narratives.

The present study is limited to the texts of selected fictions (Woolf, 1927),(Woolf, 1925). Due to time constraints, this research is confined to only analysis of adjectives employed in the chosen works to unpack gender roles and corpus is solely taken as an approach to analyze the chosen corpora.

Objectives of the Study

- To pinpoint the use of adjectives for representation of male and female characters in the chosen fictions of Virginia Woolf
- To investigate the functioning of positive and negative adjectives in Woolf's selected novels

Research Questions

1. How are adjectives utilized for the representation of masculine and feminine characters in Woolf's *To The Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway*?

What roles do positive and negative adjectives play in the chosen novels of Virginia Woolf?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Waves of Feminism

There are different waves associated with feminism. The first wave of feminism, also known as the suffrage movement, emerged in the late 19th century and continued into the early 20th century. This wave of feminism was primarily focused on securing legal and political rights for women, particularly the right to vote. Virginia Woolf belongs to the first wave of feminism who laid the solid foundation for future generations of feminist activism. The second wave of feminism started in the 1960's and continued into the 1980's. This wave of feminism threw light on issues like sexual liberation, reproductive prerogative, and workplace discrimination.(Beauvoir, 2009 [1949])Simone de Beauvoir's (French writer) groundbreaking book, *The Second Sex* (1949) is considered a foundational text of feminist theory and proponent of this wave of feminism. The third wave of feminism appeared in the 1990's and continued into the 2000's. This wave of feminism focused on issues e g, deconstruction of gender roles, diversity, and intersectionality. The fourth wave of feminism is used to explain feminist activism that emerged in the 2010 and prevails up to the present day. This wave of feminism has set focus on social justice and online activism.

Feminism and its History

The term feminism started in 1880's in France, in British 1890 and in US in 1910. Elaine Showalter divided women's feminism in phases. In the first phase, the famous writers like Charlotte Bronte and George Eliot. These writers expressed the harsh realities and treatment of females in the patriarchal society. They didn't have their own voice to speak. The second phase discuss the problems of their writings

There are different strains of feminism; The first strain is setup by American feminist critic Annette Kolodny. She says that male voice has been dominant in society; man has power of pen and press and create the images of women in their texts. This has created anxiety of authorship in women. The second strain is French feminism which has close relation to the theory of psychoanalysis. The third strain is British Feminism. The feminists of this strain focus on reading, writing and publishing the works. One of the famous feminist writers is Virginia Woolf, her best work is stream of consciousness. Woolf's exceptional skill as a novelist and short story writer has solidified her position as one of the greatest literary minds of the twentieth century. Virginia Woolf's contributions to twentieth-century literature are widely recognized, particularly in her pioneering of modernist writing via the use of stream of consciousness as a narrative device. Woolf was deeply attuned to the realities of both the material and mental realms, capturing their meeting points in time through her narrative technique. This technique is employed in her novels such as *To the Lighthouse*, *Mrs. Dalloway*, and *The Waves*, where she hints at diverging points beyond the spatial planes, starting from the convergence or meeting point. Stylistic virtuosity and intense lyricism are fused to create vivid visual and auditory impressions in her writings.

Stream of consciousness

The narrative technique of stream of consciousness, developed from subjectivism, amplifies the methodical events in a story novel, exploiting the elements of confusion in our conscious minds. Rather than following a chronological series, this technique presents a character's inner life by combining memories, sensations, emotional condition, and feelings. Virginia Woolf, along with Dorothy Richardson and James Joyce, used this technique in their novels to capture the fluidity of an individual's personality, emphasizing subjective elements over objective ones. For Woolf, a writer must suggest mental impressions and external reality simultaneously to capture true reality. In her novels, such as *Mrs. Dalloway*, Woolf

employs her thoughts about life, reality, and truth and makes them synonyms with spirit. In this novel, the opening scene presents a middle-aged woman having an interior monologue as she walks in the streets of London, with her consciousness determined by the medley of time and the free association of images and ideas, amalgamating the past, present, and future in her self-centered consciousness. (Babajanova and Alimova, 2023) have explored the stream of consciousness in Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*. The findings have depicted that Woolf has underscored the psychological functioning of characters rather than their mingling with characters as well as the nature world.

Previous Researches

(Zhao, 2012) in her work, "The Art of Balance: A Corpus-assisted Stylistic Analysis of Woolfian Parallelism To the Lighthouse" investigated the author's use of language and literary techniques to manifest a unique style. Some recurrent themes in Woolf's writing, like the sea and time passing, were also identified by the analysis. Although the novel's narrative structure is fragmented, these motifs served to maintain a sense of coherence and continuity throughout the novel. Overall, (Zhao, 2012) corpus-assisted stylistic analysis showed that Woolfian parallelism can be characterized by a profusion of appositional structures, juxtaposed propositional phrases, -ing participles, antithetical and synonymous lexical bundles. She used rhetoric of opposition, rhetoric of simultaneity and development, and rhetoric of uniqueness to distinguish her particular sentential development and these elements provided valuable insights into Virginia Woolf's writing style especially about techniques she deployed to create her literary magnum opus. The research by Evans and Greaney (2014) is titled as "The use of passive voice in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse*: A corpus-based feminist stylistic analysis" who used corpus linguistic tools to probe the use of passive voice with a focus on how passive voice plays a role in portrayal of gender and power relations in Woolf's selected novels. They contend that the use of the passive voice has an impact on how gender is portrayed because it is frequently employed to obstruct agency and responsibility. They discover that passive voice is employed more often when referring to female characters, and they speculate that this is because women are typically stereotyped as being passive and uninvolved in society. Evans and Greaney's (2014) findings suggest that passive voice is utilized more frequently in relation to female characters compared to male characters, and this illustrates the societal propensity to attribute women's passivity and inaction. Overall, the research by Evans and Greaney (2014) shows how corpus-based feminist stylistic analysis can be used to identify linguistic patterns and trends that influence how gender and power dynamics are portrayed in literature.

(Hussein and Kadhim, 2020) have carried out their study, "A Corpus-Based Stylistic Identification of Lexical Density Profile of Three Novels by Virginia Woolf: *The Waves*, *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse*" using Word Smith Tools (4.0) so as to get the number of tokens and lexical word. Their findings have showed that *To the Lighthouse* ends up with the lowest ratios, *The Waves* takes home most of the higher lexical density ratios. At the intersection of *The Waves* and *To the Lighthouse*, *Mrs. Dalloway*'s curve falls into an intermediate position. And so, of the two novels, *The Waves* has been shown to be the denser. The lexical density ratio has demonstrated its ability to yield rigorous statistical accounts and valuable insight regarding the growth and decline of the author's lexical repertoire. The findings suggest that throughout the time, the novelist's lexical repertoire has renewed and developed once more. (Arslan, Mehmood, and Haroon, 2022) used a corpus-based analysis to look at how sexist language was employed in Woolf and Bennett's discourses. Methods of corpus linguistics were utilized to analyse the works of Virginia Woolf, such as *The Voyage Out*, *Mrs. Dalloway*, *To the Light House*, and Arnold Bennet, who wrote *Anna of the Five Towns*, *The Old Wives Tale*, and *Helen with the High Hand*. The gendered binary oppositions of lady-gentleman, girl-boy, female-male and woman-man, were examined for their concordance lines using sexist language analysis, and the outcomes were assessed using feminist theories. The examination of the girl and boy revealed that Bennett employed more adjectives to convey the characteristics of the girl than the boy, even though Woolf used nearly the same amount to describe the boy.

(Mumtaz, 2022) has carried out her research in Nadeem Aslam's novel, for *Lost Lovers* regarding gender representation via corpus software, AntConc 3.5.8. The data comprises examples of adjectives, taboo terms and verbs that have been employed with different characters. The findings shed light on the fact that writer has employed such terminologies that revealed verbal and physical violence of male characters against female characters. (Anwar, Kayani, and Kiyani, 2022) have investigated the portrayal of gender in Singh's *Train to Pakistan* & Sidhwa's *The Ice Candy Man* with the aid of corpus tool. For this purpose, the researchers have taken the instances of adjectives that have been utilized with both genders. The findings have underscored that female characters are given less representation in both texts compared to male characters. Furthermore, (Qayyum and Syed, 2023) have examined the representation of males and females in Hossieni's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* under the light of AntConc 4.2.0. For gender representation, the researchers have considered the example of verbs, adjectives and taboo phrases. (Qayyum and Syed, 2023) findings have demonstrated that male characters are portrayed as strong, autonomous, powerful and courageous, while female characters are shown as timid, weak, marginalized and oppressed. Moreover, (Arslan et al., 2022) have undertaken the study to determine the language variation among four male and female novelists. The researchers have selected adjectives that these writers have used with their characters in order to carry out gender-dependent investigation of books. The results marked the differences between male and female on the basis of gender. Male characters are highlighted on the account of their supremacy and dominance compared to female characters who are delicate and kind in their nature. (Mawaddah, 2022) have studied

the portrayal of male and female characters in Rick Riordan's Percy Jackson & The Lightning Thief. Using the corpus technique, it has been found that gender roles are subverted i.e., female characters are depicting more male-dominating traits compared to male characters, thus highlighting the shift in gender roles through this study.

Research Gap

The researches highlighted above demonstrate that plethora of studies has already been conducted via corpus tool but the present study stands tall from previous researches because the selected fictions have not been explored from the perspectives of gender representation. So, this study fills the void by utilizing corpus software, LancsBox (Version 6.0) to manifest male and female characters using the analysis of adjective terms. So, the present research is also corpus-based.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study uses mixed method approach as it merges qualitative textual analysis with quantitative statistical results. Moreover, quantitative findings always strengthen the qualitative analysis. So, both chosen novels are analyzed statistically with the aid of corpus software LancsBox (Version 6.0) as it enhances the reliability and validity of findings.

This research has deployed the plain texts of Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* & *Mrs. Dalloway* as their corpora, and, for that purpose, both texts are downloaded in pdf files. These pdf files are converted into word files and with the aid of text fixer, all data is cleaned from punctuation marks, pictures, writer name, book preface etc. and taken in plain texts to gain correct and appropriate data for the analysis in the software. In this way, these word files convert into plain files also known as txt files and this process is mandatory to obtain the frequencies of desired items.

Chosen Fictions	To the Lighthouse & Mrs. Dalloway
No of Tokens	133652
Lemmas	9221

Table 1: Total Words in Virginia Woolf's Chosen Novels.

This study utilizes corpus software LancsBox as a tool and corpus consists of 133652-word tokens and 10453 word types along with 9221 lemmas of chosen books i.e., *To the Lighthouse* & *Mrs. Dalloway*, written by Virginia Woolf. The main focus of this study is analyzing the chosen corpora on word level i.e., analysis on level of adjectives



Figure 1: View of Lancsbox Tool Showing Total number of Words in Woolf's Selected Novels

DATA ANALYSIS

The data is analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. This research studies adjectives utilized in binary oppositions (men). The pair is analyzed contextually using concordance tool in software LancsBox. After using the *whelk* option of LancsBox tool, the word list is obtained with concordance list. With the use of concordance line, the researcher has easily accessed any word or phrase used in the context. It has helped the researcher to see what kind of adjectives are used with male and females. By using this tool, the frequency of the binary opposition occurs and the concordance lines also emerged. Women using the concordance lines, both singular and plural form (man /men, woman /women) are also included.

Adjectives used with Men and Women

In both novels of Virginia Woolf, the term men occurred 114 times, and man occurred 184 times while women 90 and woman 119 as shown in the Table 1.

According to Pearce’s (2008) analysis of adjectives collocating with the man /woman shows that women are described as weak, vulnerable oppressed, limited adjectives of power and sexual violence while men are portrayed as strong, powerful, robust, and autonomous. (Gesuato, 2003) said that there is tendency to portray women by their physical appearance while men are portrayed as non -physical appearance. According to (Caldas-Coulthard and Moon, 2010) and Pearce (2008), men are portrayed through their status while women are depicted through physical appearance and sexuality.

Words	Frequency
Man	184
women	119

Table 2: Total frequency of gendered binary opposition (men and women) in two selected corpora.

Adjectives Employed with Men (Positive Connotation)

The frequency shows that majority adjectives used with men in positive connotation like, tall, well-dressed, great, self-educated, great manufacture, kindest, sincere etc.



Figure 2: View of concordance tool depicting the use of term men

Adjective Utilized to describe Personality

Most adjectives are used to describe the personality of men as shown in the Figure 2. Such as kind, quiet, rich, good, powerful, great, head famous, sincere, clever etc. In both To the Lighthouse and Mrs. Dalloway, Virginia Woolf portrays men as great in various ways. While she explores the complexities of human nature and the limitations imposed by societal norms, she also presents male characters who possess qualities of strength, creativity, and intellectual prowess.

Personality		Appearance	
Adjective	Frequency	Adjective	Frequency
Great	03	Tall	1
Powerful	03	Young	29
Famous	09		

Table 3: Frequency of adjectives describing the man.

Here are a few examples from texts: "He looked very strong, and his face, heavily lined, was burned by the sun" (Chapter 2, To the Lighthouse) This quote describes Mr. Ramsay, a central male character in the novel. Despite his flaws and insecurities, Mr. Ramsay is depicted as physically robust and weathered, embodying strength and endurance.

Thus, he is confined to stereotypical gender role. "His beauty was simply the negation of all that was bad" (Chapter 9, To the Lighthouse). This line throws a light on Mr. Carmichael, another male character in the novel. While he is not a major character in the novel, his beauty is represented as transcendent, representing an idealized form of goodness and purity, showing him in a typical gendered language. "He had a plan, too. He had a vision" (Chapter 1, Mrs. Dalloway). This line refers to Peter Walsh, one of Clarissa Dalloway's old flames. Peter is portrayed as a man of goal and vision, capable of making plans and envisioning a different future. "He loved her so much more than she loved him" (Chapter 3, Mrs. Dalloway). This statement describes Septimus's Warren Smith's love for his wife, Lucrezia. Although Septimus's character is complex, his capacity for deep love is showcased, depicting him as a man capable of nuanced emotions.

It is important to note that while Virginia Woolf portrays men as having typical gender roles in certain aspects, highlighting the male's supremacy but she also sheds light on their flaws and limitations, consequently questioning traditional ideas of male's greatness and challenging the societal constructs that perpetuate them.

Adjectives Employed for describing Age and Status

Index	File	Occurrences	Texts	Corpus	Context	Display Text
1	novels of ar	58 (7.33)	1	Corpus 1	7	
1	novels of ar		ground and up their spring, the whitening	young	men, and laughing girls in their transparent	
2	novels of ar		millions of heads gave back to their	young	blouses were pouring from the front by	
2	novels of ar		this or were that. She felt very	young	at the same time unscrupulously aged. She	
4	novels of ar		charms gave her such a firm the	young	woman leaning forward, the man looking quiet;	
6	novels of ar		but she must cry out that	young	man on the sea had given her	
7	novels of ar		her mouth. Lip signs. There's a free	young	before ahead of it. Mrs. Dermotter's	
7	novels of ar		to come to, perhaps, she had held	young	people, who were grateful to her, had	
8	novels of ar		cheeks with colour, made her look very	young	very old, very large even as the old	
8	novels of ar		them with an ambiguous square, as if a	young	man, strong, and fresh, inconceivable, were swinging dumb-bells.	
9	novels of ar		only had good shaves left.) For he understood	young	people, he liked them. There was always	
9	novels of ar		here, he thought in the hearts of	young	men like that of young men such	
12	novels of ar		fronds of young men like that, of	young	men such as he was, thirty years.	
13	novels of ar		The future lies in the hearts of	young	men like that, he thought. A father	
14	novels of ar		might wonder, he had not got so	young	for years. He had once said with utter	
15	novels of ar		born so holding. I haven't got so	young	for years thought Peter, so young (only of	
15	novels of ar		the character of the hummer, came a	young	memorably, as the passed London's	
16	novels of ar		woman he had always had in mind,	young	but stable, merry, but discreet, black, but	
17	novels of ar		the red—But she's not married, she's	young	quite young, though Peter the red carnation	
18	novels of ar		But she's not married, she's young, quite	young	though Peter, the red carnation he had	
19	novels of ar		first time. She was taking to a	young	man on her right, he had a	
21	novels of ar		his first love of this kind—a girl	young	man, rather awkward, sitting on a deck-chair,	
22	novels of ar		quarter to twelve, and that to being	young	Peter Walsh thought as he passed them.	
22	novels of ar		about, he wondered, what had the	young	man in the crowd been doing to	
24	novels of ar		had undoubtedly taken place. What did the	young	people think about? Peter Walsh asked himself.	
25	novels of ar		and coming home there were two of	young	man and girls—both and the	
26	novels of ar		make a passer-by suspect there is a	young	man who lingers in fact the greatest	
27	novels of ar		Lancelot had swayed up many minutes of	young	men, Lancelot Smith, though nothing of the	
27	novels of ar		he thought, and, being paternal with his	young	men, and thinking very highly of Smith's	
28	novels of ar		My Brown's calculations, took away his assist	young	beliefs, and eventually, so young and insidious	
30	novels of ar		wedded Sir William Bradshaw no longer	young	he had wedded was that he had	
31	novels of ar		in his good humoured way, to bring some	young	but heads of his acquaintance to lunch with	
32	novels of ar		been told and then, that respect for	young	people of both sexes born of respectable	
33	novels of ar		she had search in them, ran in	young	men either, but in our dateable social	
34	novels of ar		she had often told him, of a	young	think, that first evening she saw him.	

Figure 3: View of concordance tool showing the use of term young

The word young has been frequently deployed to pinpoint man as compared to woman. In Virginia Woolf's selected fictions, including *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway*, the adjective young is occasionally used to describe men. However, it is important to note that Woolf's focus is not merely on the age of male characters, but rather on their experiences, perspectives, and roles within society as shown in the Figure 3.

Here are a couple of examples where this term is associated with men: "Charles Tensely, young, impoverished, ambitious, and temporary" (Chapter 1, *To the Lighthouse*). This statement refers to Mr. Tensely, a young academic who is staying at the Ramsay family's house as a guest. The adjective young here emphasizes his age and position in life, highlighting his ambitious nature as he seeks recognition and success. "It was the young man in the grey suit who always spoke to her" (Chapter 1, *Mrs. Dalloway*): This line introduces Peter Walsh, Clarissa Dalloway's ex lover. The utilization of this adjective here characterizes Peter's age compared to Clarissa, depicting their past relationship and the impact it had on their lives. Woolf's use of the adjective "young" with men add depth to her male characters and they are depicted in positive manner. However, it is just one aspect of their portrayal, as Woolf dives into their inner thoughts, emotions, and societal roles to showcase a more complex picture of masculinity.

Virginia Woolf's use of the adjective old in her fictions shows both male and female characters, and it serves to highlight the impacts of time, experience, and societal expectations on individuals. Here are a few instances where old used to describe characters of both genders:

"Her husband's old friend, Carmichael, had been there drinking whisky" (Chapter 1, *To the Lighthouse*). This line refers to Mr. Carmichael, a male character. The adjective old here manifests his long-standing friendship with Mrs. Ramsay's husband and shows a sense of association and history between them. "The clock was striking. The leaden circles dissolved in the air. He made her feel the beauty; made her feel the fun" (Chapter 1, *Mrs. Dalloway*). In the selected lines, the pronoun "he" refers to an older man, Sir William Bradshaw. As the term old is not explicitly employed, it is manifested through the context of his position and authority.

Adjectives Used with Men having Negative Connotation

Out of 184, only few adjectives used male in negative terms. Talking aloud, not educated, devil tempts, greediest, vulgar, intolerable, pitied, dead, queer, egotistical. This depicts that males are given more priority and importance and that's why, they are assigned more positive roles compared to females who are shown timid, fragile and weak etc

Adjectives used with women

In both novels of Woolf, woman is used 119 times while women are 90 times.

Age		Appearance	
Adjective	Frequency	Adjective	Frequency
Young	4	Pretty	16
Old	14	Charming	14
Attractive	8	Beautiful	55
Middle age	19	Nice	36

Adjectives deployed with women having negative connotations

The adjectives used with women in terms of appearance. Mostly adjectives used with women are related to their beauty and age as shown in the Table 4. Little, charming, red headed, attractive, good, pink etc. Adjectives related to status like well setup, capable, strong material. "She was getting old. She was going blind" (Chapter 4, Mrs. Dalloway). This quote refers to Miss Kilian, a female character. The adjective "old" is used here to describe her advancing age, which contributes to her sense of vulnerability and fading physical abilities. Here, women are reduced to their physical attributes, a thing of beauty that fades away with age, thus contributes to marginalization of women.

Woolf's use of the adjective old with both male and female characters serve to highlight the passage of time, the impact of age on one's experiences and perceptions, and the societal expectations associated with aging. By including characters of various ages and exploring their interactions, Woolf delves into the complexities of human existence and the influence of time on individual lives. Virginia Woolf prefers to present middle-aged women's stories i.e. Mrs. Dalloway and Mrs. Ramsay. In Victorian society, the females were need to be young. This acknowledgment of females as young is mainly done due to their marriage concerns. Woolf has used the term old more frequently with women that shows that Woolf does not want to accept this discrimination. Adjectives used to show women as oppressed are poor, old, mouse, like dull difficulty, stooping groaning, stepped stemmed battered old woman is shown in the Figure 4. She uses middle aged adjective with women more frequently as shown in the table 4. Woolf was acutely aware of the prevailing societal expectations that placed emphasis on women's appearance and perceived delicacy.

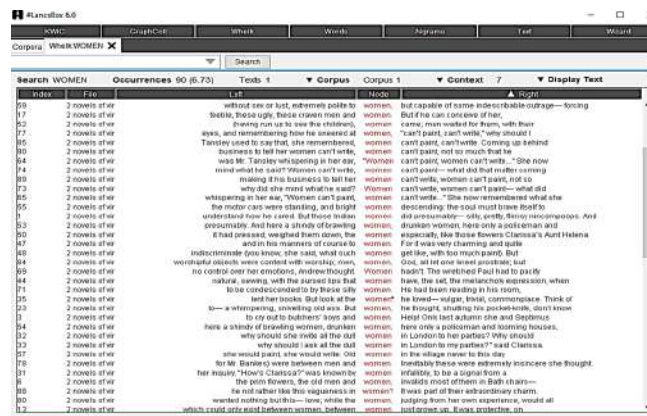


Figure 4: View of concordance tool showing the use of phrase woman.

By highlighting these aspects, she sought to shed light on the oppressive nature of such expectations and the impact they had on women's lives. Through her characters, she often challenged and questioned these conventional notions of femininity. All these adjectives show how women are considered inferior and an object of beauty. Apart from using adjectives that describe physical appearance and beauty, Virginia Woolf has used adjectives with women that show the treatment of women as passive agents of the society. The adjective poor show how women are considered low status. As (Mills and Mullany, 2011) say that language presents females negatively generalizing them as men and women negatively. There is no usage of adjectives that show their mental abilities and intelligence, reducing them to their stereotypical portrayal. This trend was common in Victorian Era. When Woolf was writing these novels, she didn't use any qualities attributed to women are worthless. Among these negative connotations, the most frequent adjectives used with females are poor, little, old. Other few examples are silly, dull heartless, ill-tempered wrong women which are used frequently. But

all these adjectives are simple and positive in contextual meaning. Apparently, all these adjectives seemed to be negatively but Woolf has not used all these negative adjectives in order to humiliate the females. The writer has used majority (80 percent) of the adjectives with men in positive terms. Woolf describes man frequently with his age and status. Adjectives that show that the appearance is mostly described with man; among them the word young has been frequently used.

DISCUSSION & FINDINGS

While Virginia Woolf's works do explore aspects of women's appearance and delicacy, it is important to consider the broader context of her writing. Woolf was known for her nuanced portrayal of female characters and her critique of societal expectations placed upon women. Her investigation of beauty and delicateness is frequently interconnected with more general themes of gender roles, social norms, and restrictions placed on women. She might have portrayed women in this way for the following reasons, among others:

Critical Commentary

Woolf scrutinized and questioned society norms in her writings. She wanted to show the limitations and superficiality of a society that frequently admired women primarily for their appearance and perceived vulnerability by portraying women in terms of appearance and delicacy. She was able to advocate for more autonomy and personal responsibility and criticized the limited roles that are available to women as a result.

Subverting Stereotypes

Although Woolf acknowledged the existence of stereotypes and societal expectations, she also made an effort to challenge them with her complex character development. Even though Woolf addressed beauty and delicateness in her representations of women, it's important to consider these portrayals in the context of her entire body of works. She devoted her life to questioning and challenging social conventions, giving women nuanced, multidimensional representations that went well beyond simple descriptions.

In her works, *To the Lighthouse* and *Mrs. Dalloway*, Virginia Woolf frequently used disparate adjectives to characterize men and women in order to interfere with gender norms and emphasized the universal human experiences that cut beyond gender. Woolf was well-known for her feminist viewpoint and her attempts to challenge traditional gender standards. Though, she attempted to undermine the idea that some traits or attributes were intrinsically gendered but she highlighted the differences between the sexes by employing different adjectives for men and women.

Empathy and Understanding

By highlighting her characters' good traits, Woolf aimed to make them relatable and sympathetic. Woolf challenged the restrictive and frequently unfavorable stereotypes that are common in literature by subverting them. She refuted these preconceptions and provided a more complex picture of her characters by selecting adjectives carefully.

Psychological Realism

Woolf was fascinated by the complexity of the human mind and the subtleties of human psychology. She accentuated the inner struggles, inclinations, and motivations of her characters by using negative adjectives that delved into their inner lives and thoughts. Her depiction of her characters was more thorough and sympathetic as a result of the psychological realism. In order to confront stereotypes and create sympathetic, multidimensional characters, Woolf purposefully used adjectives with negative connotations in her writing. She aimed to capture the complexity, contradictions, and growth potential of the human experience through her intricate approach to characterization.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study is to use the corpus software, LancsBox (version 6.0) to analyse how men and women are represented in the selected texts (*To the Lighthouse* & *Mrs. Dalloway*). The research aims at exploring the adjectives with male and female characters in the chosen novels by using corpus tool. Based on corpus based stylistic analysis, it has been concluded that Virginia Woolf uses more adjectives to present men as compared to women. Woolf used more adjectives in order to describe the appearance of men and also mentioned him as powerful, strong, robust and autonomous characters. Women are portrayed as weak, submissive, fragile, lower and worthless in status. In her both novels, she uses adjectives with both positive and negative connotations. She uses the adjectives to describe man and woman in terms of their age, appearance, personality, occupation etc. The inequality of using adjectives with different connotations with both genders show that Woolf wanted to portray typical gender roles but also challenged the stereotypical social norms of Victorian society.

The study is noteworthy because it has collected a large number of adjectives from chosen books that are reflection of Victorian society via corpus tool. This research would help teachers and students of literature to probe literature from a unique perspective regarding gender roles and would employ a corpus-based methodology to help them gain a deeper understanding of the Victorian Era. Furthermore, an objective of the current study is to explore the relationship between language, literature, and corpus approach. This study would provide insights into the Victorian woman as she is portrayed in the chosen novels, which frequently reflects the status of women in Victorian society. Such an insightful depiction will open up new avenues for scholars to look into more Victorian-era literature in the future.

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It is declare that all authors don't have any conflict of interest.

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