web of semantic

Journal of Interdisciplinary Science | ISSN: 2960-9550

Research Article Peer-review, Open Access

The art of affect: Literary and linguistic strategies in woolf's suicide letters

Dr. Lubna Riyadh Abduljabbar [1]
Dr. Muhand Mohammad Khathum [2]

Abstract: Although Virginia Woolf's suicide letters provide a rare glimpse into her mental and emotional state in her last days, little is known about how she constructed affect in her language. Although biographical and psychological viewpoints have been the subject of earlier research, less focus has been placed on how language itself encodes her experiences of relational awareness, thankfulness, and despair. The vagueness of this vacuum is filled up by the words used by Woolf, structures of grammar and modality, and repetition that she employs to convey the complex emotive states especially unhappiness, dissatisfaction, and insecurity fill this vacuum. The hypothesis of the study is that, in/security is grammatically created via time and anaphoric references that indicate both cognitive and affective unsteadiness; Dis/satisfaction are unevenly distributed: dissatisfaction is more actively used in the text, and satisfaction is only indicated in some parts. Interpretation of these elements of language, the exploration of the connection between hopelessness and thankfulness, the demonstration of the fact that the letters of Woolf are not only descriptive texts but also action-oriented ones. The results of this paper show that language could possibly encapsulate the whole gamut of human feeling, as the letters of Woolf depict both the simultaneous overwhelming sadness and prolonged gratitude in a conflicting way. The combination of linguistic, stylistic, and affective analysis leads to the development of our understanding of how the use of literary language may mirror the psychological experience and how personal works may be emotional.

Keywords: affect, un/happiness, dis/satisfaction, in/security, modality, mental process verbs

[1] *Al Emam Al Aadum College, drlubna831963@gmail.com*
[2] *Directorate of Education / Ministry of Education, mohanadkd1968@gmail.com*

1.1 Theoretical Background

Besides being among the greatest writers of modern literature, Virginia Woolf (18821941) was not only a lady with a rich internal struggle. Even though her novels, such as Mrs. Dalloway (1925) and To the Lighthouse (1927), were unconventional in the style and perspective, her mental illness troubles were the secret of her creative genius (Lee, 1996, pp. 738742). She has written two goodbye notes, one note to her sister Vanessa and another one to her husband Leonard, which gives us the clue of her innermost thoughts. Both of them are tightly guarded confessions as well as carefully selected words of ending, affection and pain (Woolf, 1981, pp. 481–482). To analyze the language of these letters, this paper applies to the Appraisal Theory, a subdiscipline of Systemic Functional Linguistics that was developed by Martin and White (2005). Essentially, the concept revolves around the way people express themselves

using words to convey their feelings, opinion, and evaluate their surrounding. Attitude system is particularly relevant in its context since it is directly concerned with emotional expression (affect) (Martin and White, 2005, pp. 35-72; Martin and Rose, 2007, pp. 25-47). Through such a lens, we can better understand how her final words are full of indications of compassion, hopelessness, and moral reflection- not only her decision to leave, but also the scope of the relationships and values that she had at the moment of separation.

1.1.1The Appraisal Model

According to Horarik and Isaac (2014), appraisal is "the technical term for a set of systems within systemic functional linguistics that has been developed to map evaluation in texts" (p.67). Martin (2000) described appraisal as a method for categorizing linguistic resources used to express moral judgments, feelings, and assessments. These subcategories matched the categories of affect, judgment, and appreciation in a previous study. Affect is the conceptualization of emotions (e.g., fear, happiness), judgment is the conceptualization of moral judgments of behavior (ethical, courageous), and appreciation is the conceptualization of aesthetic perfection (e.g., innovative, desired). This paradigm was further developed by Martin and White (2005).Currently, appraisal is regarded as having three major dimensions, including affect; appreciation and judgment are subsumed within the first (attitude). The others include a graduation that measures the degree of attitude and interpersonal posture with regard to others. The three categories of attitude are effect, judgment, and appreciation. While graduation addresses the degree of attitude, engagement deals with the root of the attitude. As a result, people can use the assessment systems to communicate their opinions and thoughts about any topic in written or spoken form. The following sections provide illustrations of the three primary categories and their respective gadgets.

1.1.1.1 Appraisal Attitude

The attitude system lies at the core of evaluation theory. When it comes to emotions, such as emotional reactions, behavioral judgments, and item appreciation, attitude refers to how the speakers or writers convey their feelings in the text (Banks, 2019, p. 84). Oteiza (2017, p. 460) states that " attitude relates to the ways in which feelings are seen as a system of meanings". As a component of the Appraisal System, attitude expression is mostly observed in interpersonal interactions as opposed to self-expression. In other words, a speaker's attitudinal message is interpreted as an invitation for others to embrace their ideals, forming a community founded on common principles rather than merely pursuing social acceptance.

The attitude system comprises three semantic domains related to emotions, according to Martin and White (2005, p. 42). It starts with emotions (affect), which deals with the expression of both positive and negative feelings; moves on to ethics (judgement), which deals with attitudes toward behavior (to praise or condemn, to criticize or admire); and finally ends with aesthetics (appreciation), which deals with assessments of semiotic and natural phenomena. Sometimes attitude is expressed implicitly rather than explicitly through grammatical or semantic realizations. Martin and White (2005) considered attitude as invoked (implicit) or inscribed (explicit). The concept of inscribed language use is used to describe the overt manifestations of the evaluative meaning, happening within the linguistic structure of a text. These elements of the language are modal phrases, evaluative adjectives, adverbs, nouns, and verbs, as well as other grammatical elements that represent opinions, attitudes, and feelings. On the other hand, the concept of invoked language use is the implicit or indirect manifestations of evaluative meanings which are invoked through the application of language; these may be rhetoric strategies or figurative language.

The key distinction between inscribed and invoked language use is the extent of outrightness and explicitness displayed by the inscribed evaluative meanings as opposed to the indirect nature of invoked evaluative meanings. A critical analysis of a text will incorporate both of such evaluative meanings but the proportion of each of them will depend on the specific context and the purpose of communication (Martin & White, 2005, p. 67). Whereas the other two concepts can be considered as codified feelings and formalized emotions respectively, the idea of affect can be considered as the basic system.

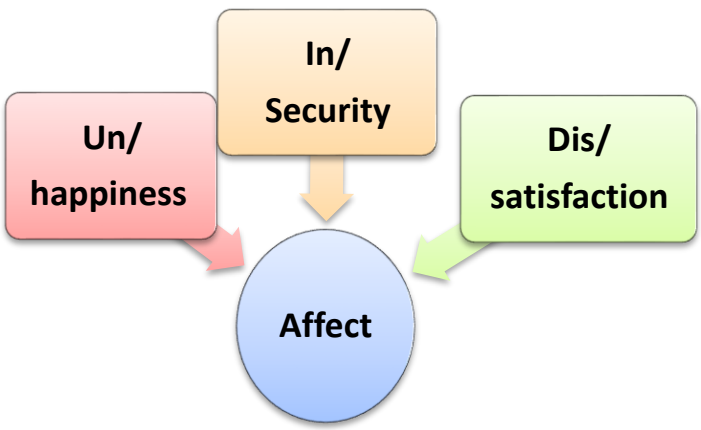
Appreciation and judgment may be interpreted as social organized emotions. Judgment refers to transformation of emotions into opinion about the actions of people determining whether they are right or wrong. These evaluations frequently constitute a rule or a law, backed by a government or a religion.Appreciation, on the other hand, is concerned with transforming emotional states into opinions concerning the worth of things, in terms of their importance, usefulness or beauty. This type of valuing is witnessed in systems such as grades, prizes and awards. Judgment and appreciation on the part of the child starts at a young age and more so in the family. Parents and caregivers guide children by managing their strong emotions and teaching them how to express and evaluate feelings (Martin & Rose, 2003; Martin & White, 2005)However, in this study the focus will be on Affect the direct expression of emotions while judgment and appreciation remain outside the scope of analysis.

1.1.1.1.2The Attitude Affect

Since the word "affect" has several connotations in different fields, it is crucial to define its usage in this research. Affect, as used in psychology, is a general term for the experience of emotion or mood, which is occasionally separated from emotion as a deeper physiological condition (Russell, 1980, p. 1165). In clinical psychology, it refers to the outward manifestation of emotions, as in the concept of a "flat affect." The term for pre-conscious physiological intensities or visceral reactions that come before organized emotion is used in philosophy and cultural studies, especially in Affect Theory (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, pp. xvi–xvii; Massumi, 1995, p. 88). Affect is a verb that simply meaning "to influence" in common English. However, affect is more precisely described as the language encoding of emotions within the context of Systemic Functional Linguistics and Appraisal Theory, which serves as the study's compass. It describes how language expresses emotions, whether positive or negative, and how these feelings are related to other people, things, or occasions (Martin & White, 2005, p. 42).

In the current study, the term is employed in this sense: to represent emotional meanings through speech. Banks (2019) linked affect to the "expression of emotion and the elements of a text which reveals this; that is, with the feelings that are expressed in relation to people, objects, or events around us" (p. 84). Stated differently, affect studies how language represents emotional experience and how it is expressed toward other people, objects, or circumstances. According to Martin and White (2005, p. 42), Affect is one of the three primary subsystems of Attitude in the Appraisal paradigm, together with Appreciation and Judgment.

An attitude "concerned with registering positive and negative feelings," affect encompasses a broad spectrum of human emotions, including joy, sorrow, interest, love, hatred, anxiety, and hope, according to their definition. As a result, Affect focuses on the resources for interpreting emotional responses and offers analytical instruments for comprehending how texts depict and assess emotions. Martin and White (2005) use systems of opposition, namely positive vs negative sentiments, to classify affect in order to systematize the study of emotions. The three primary areas of emotions unhappiness, insecurity, and dissatisfaction each represent a distinct perspective on the human condition and make the final affect as seen the following diagram:



1. Un/happiness -The domain of unhappiness pertains to what Martin (2000, p. 150) refers to as the "affairs of the heart." It encompasses feelings of love, affection, hatred, or antagonism in addition to joy and sadness. Emotions fall into this area and can be represented as moods (generic feelings of happiness or sadness), expressive responses (smiles, tears, laughter), or reactions to particular persons or objects (liking or hating). For example, saying "I am delighted to see you" conveys positive happiness, whereas saying "My heart is full of sorrow for them" conveys negative misery (Martin & White, 2005, p. 42).
2. In/security: The category includes the sensations of stability or safety or tranquility relative to stress, anxiety, and vulnerability, which are ecosocial well-being-related. As insecurity is composed of anxiety, worry and uncertainty, the same is also the case with security, as it is composed of trust, confidence and assurance (Martin and White, 2005, p. 49). As an example: "The captain was confident and nervous. These emotional orientations demonstrate the way individuals are associated with danger, threat, or security in the environment.
3. Dis/satisfaction: This field is concerned with the emotions experienced as a result of striving to achieve something or do something, particularly the contentment, frustration, or loss. Examples of dissatisfaction include feelings of boredom, annoyance or disinterest which are examples of dissatisfaction whereas examples of satisfaction include feelings of interest, enthusiasm and accomplishment. Macken-Horarik and Isaac (2014, p. 71) claim that this category links feelings with the evaluation of goals and outcomes. As an example, the captain was fed up/absorbed. Fed up in this case means discontent, and absorbed means contented.

Affect, in its turn, can be characterized as a linguistic tool that enables speakers and writers to exhibit their emotional orientation to individuals, objects, events, or situations. Not only does it show the internal condition of the speaker, but also it includes the audience to be either in agreement with or in opposition to the position of the speaker. As an example, when the author says in the line So this meant the grieving took place again, sorrow is being formed as a shared emotion (Martin & White, 2005, p. 42). Academics have emphasized that meaning-making involves affect. Besides being expressive, emotional language is also found to determine the relationship between speakers and listeners, as described by Bednarek (2008, p. 9). On the same note, Oteíza (2017, p. 460) observes that affect is capable of influencing the readers to adopt particular moral and emotional positions in the text such as historical narratives. Consequently, due to the amplification of the rhetorical and evaluative functions of language, affect is closely connected with the language expressing the feeling of joy or sorrow, safety or insecurity, contentment or discontent. It is a key prism through which the encoding, transmission, and control of emotions in texts is analyzed and the element of attitude that is most directly concerned with feelings. The table as shown below clarifies Textual Illustration of Affect domain:

Table (1) Textual Illustration of Affect adapted from (Martin & White, 2005, p. 42)

Affect Domain	Positive Affect	Negative Affect
Un/happiness (emotions of the heart: joy, sorrow, love, dislike)	delighted – “I am delighted to see you. loved – “She felt loved by her friends. hopeful – “He remained hopeful about the future.	sad – “She felt sad after the news. miserable – “He was miserable all week hateful – “They spoke in a hateful tone
In/security(emotions of ecosocial well-being: safety, fear, trust)	confident – “The captain felt confident before the journey safe – “Children felt safe at home. trusting – “She was trusting of her mentor	anxious – “The captain felt anxious about the storm. fearful – “He grew fearful of the darkness.” insecure – “She felt insecure in the new environment

Dis/satisfaction (emotions of goal pursuit: achievement, frustration, interest) |	satisfied – "He felt satisfied with his work." absorbed – "She was absorbed in the story." excited – "They were excited about the trip."	bored – "The students felt bored during the lecture." frustrated – "He was frustrated by the delay." fed up – "She was fed up with the constant noise

1.2 Research Methodology

a) Research Design : The present research design is aimed at a qualitative research design with descriptive-analytical methodology, and it aims at exploring the linguistic stylistic process of building affect in suicide letters that are attributed to Virginia Woolf. The study aims to describe and explain the encoding of such emotional conditions as un/happiness, dis/satisfaction, in/security as a result of linguistic properties lexical choice, syntax, modality, repetition, and negation. A qualitative design would be suitable since the research involves textual analysis, meaning patterns, subtle characterization of language and emotion as opposed to variables to be measured.

b) **The Unit of Analysis**: The major units of analysis are the sentences, clauses and phrases used by Woolf in the two suicide letters. The paper examines the affective expression using lexical, grammatical, and syntactic frames such as:

Mental process verbs (e.g., I feel, I begin)

Modality markers (e.g., shall, can't, must)

Negation (e.g., shan't, cannot)

Temporal deixis and anaphoric references

The overall wording of each suicide letter is the secondary unit of analysis with a view of identifying the patterns of dissatisfaction, unhappiness and insecurity in the letters on a broader level.

c) **Procedure of Analysis:** The analysis based in the concepts of Appraisal Theory and Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), the approach to the analysis employed in the study is linguistic and stylistic. The analysis includes:

1. Identifying the words and phrases describing emotional feelings.
2. The verbs of mental process, modality, and negation are classified to determine how the emotional intensity, incapacity and certainty are conveyed.
3. Evaluating anaphoric and temporal references in order to determine recurrent, delicate and unstable patterns.
4. The interpretation of cumulative textual patterns, in particular the way in which the structures of the phrases form the paradoxical coexistence of thankfulness and despair.
5. Fusing the affective interpretation with the linguistic findings to understand how language brings emotion rather than merely describing emotion.

d) **The Data:** The source of data in the study is two suicide letters that Virginia Woolf (18821941) wrote to her sister Vanessa Bell as well as her husband Leonard Woolf. She talks about how she loves, thanks as well as takes care of her family in both letters yet she also shows the extreme interior turmoil and understanding of her mental illness. They offer a targeted and emotionally charged corpus for examining her language using Appraisal Theory's Attitude component. These letters are regarded as genuine, intimate writings that capture Woolf's mental and emotional state at the time of composition. Close text reading and linguistic annotation are the study's main methods; neither experimental manipulation nor outside intervention are used.

I. First letter : “Sunday Dearest, You can’t think how I loved your letter. But I feel I have gone too far this time to come back again. I am certain now that I am going mad again. It is just as it was the first time, I am always hearing voices, and I shan’t get over it now. All I want to say is that Leonard has been so astonishingly good, every day, always; I can’t imagine that anyone could have done more for me than he has. We have been perfectly happy until these last few weeks, when this horror began. Will you assure him of this? I feel he has so much to do that he will go on, better without me, and you will help him. I can hardly think clearly anymore. If I could I would tell you what you and the children have meant to me. I think you know. I have fought against it, but I can’t any longer. Virginia.”

II. Second letter “Tuesday Dearest, I feel certain that I am going mad again. I feel we can’t go through another of those terrible times. And I shan’t recover this time. I begin to hear voices, and I can’t concentrate. So I am doing what seems the best thing to do. You have given me the greatest possible happiness. You have been in every way all that anyone could be. I don’t think two people could have been happier ’till this terrible disease came. I can’t fight any longer. I know that I am spoiling your life, that without me you could work. And you will I know. You see I can’t even write this properly. I can’t read. What I want to say is I owe all the happiness of my life to you. You have been entirely patient with me and incredibly good. I want to say that everybody knows it. If anybody could have saved me it would have been you. Everything has gone from me but the certainty of your goodness. I can’t go on spoiling your life any longer. I don’t think two people could have been happier than we have been. V.”

1.3 Analysis of the Data

1.3.1 The analysis of Affect in Woolf’s letters

Appraisal theory's Affect component addresses how emotions, both positive and negative, are expressed in relation to other people, things, occasions, or circumstances (Martin & White, 2005, p. 42; Banks, 2019, p. 84). Woolf's feelings are conveyed in her suicide letter using a variety of word choices and idioms that capture her inner struggle and love for her loved ones. Three domains Un/Happiness, In/Security, and Dis/Satisfaction can be used to analyze affect in accordance with Martin and White's typology. The components of the Affect attitude in this letter are evaluated as follows:

A. Un/Happiness.

B. In/Security

C. Dis/Satisfaction

1.3.1.1 The Un/Happiness of Affect

Unhappiness, which includes feelings of sadness, despair, grief, and love, is the first aspect of affect that dominates Woolf's first letter. As she faces the return of her illness, Woolf's words capture the depth of her despair: "I am certain now that I am going mad again." The fact that I always hear voices is precisely as it was when it was first happening, and I will never be able to overcome that. The language that Woolf uses to create the effect of the inevitable doom and emotional breakdown compounds the effect of the inevitability of this doom and this breakdown: modal certainty (I am certain) and future impossibility (shan't get over it now). Although the repetition of I am at the very first sentence of the following sentences makes the emphasis on her inner world and personal experience, the present continuous in I am always hearing voices illustrates the constant, continuous nature of her pain. This sentence has placed her squarely at the negative side of the affective axis giving off a sense of sadness and resignation. However, the overall sadness is not the only thing since there are some sensitive and heartwarming points in the Woolf letter. She glorifies her husband with the amount of devotion he has shown her by saying that for her, Leonard has been so wonderfully good, day after day, always, that she can not imagine the amount of good that one person could have given her. The hyperbolic phrase "I can't imagine that anyone could have done more" linguistically conveys her deep gratitude, while the intensifier "so" and the adverbial repetition "every day, always" highlight Leonard's consistent care. One example of how syntax and

lexical choice can modulate affect within a single text is the transition from declarative expressions of despair to evaluative statements about Leonard's goodness. She writes: "If I could I would tell you what you and the children have meant to me," demonstrating her love for her sister and the kids in addition to her husband. I believe you are aware. Although the direct address (you and the children) and the first person plural we exist in other parts of the letter help to foster the feeling of interpersonal relationship, the grieving pattern of conditional construction (If I could I would) helps Woolf accentuate her intolerance of being unable to express herself to the full extent. She emphasizes the fact that she has long-term emotional attachments when she speaks of warmth and attachment even while she is saying her goodbye. Her letter is not only a declaration of hopelessness, but also a testimony to the significance of her relationships, since her remarks show how love, gratitude, and kindness can coexist with despair. All in all, language in the letter is softened by outbursts of positive happiness, although it is pervaded by negative unhappiness in the form of sorrow, grief and despair. Woolf, in her final parting, discloses a rich emotional terrain which combines love and despair by use of modal forms, intensifiers, evaluative adjectives and grammatical switches.

The mixture of love and despair in the second letter to Leonard Woolf creates no less effective image of Un/Happiness. Virginia Woolf is ready to recognize that her mental illness reappears and she is not able to recover and that she is overwhelmed by pessimism and emotional misery immediately. To express the intensity of her grief such expressions as I feel sure I am going mad again and I shan’t come back this time again make use of modal certainty and impossibility. The use of present-tense constructions and a first person singular pronouns emphasizes Woolf experience and therefore makes the suffering personal. The negative pole of Affect system is her verbal decisions, which report profound disrepidity and a state of emotional breakdown. But there is, as well, a stream of love and gratitude as forceful as all these manifestations of sorrow. Woolf often depicts Leonard as the center of her ultimate happiness in life, informing him that he has been everything anyone could be and the best possible happiness. The physical juxtaposition of the words thankfulness and despair within successive sentences serves to emphasize the emotional conflict, whereas superlative constructions and absolute evaluatives contribute to stressing the positive affect. In order to emphasize the extreme of her previous happiness and the poignancy of her current despair, she employs negative polarity in her statement that "I don't think two people could have been happier." The letter is emotionally challenging because of this duality: intense sadness combined with kind gratitude. On the one hand, Woolf acknowledges that she is a burden by admitting, "I know that I am spoiling your life," which blends the present continuous tense with the epistemic modality ("I know") to demonstrate constant self-reflection. However, she reinforces her positive affect despite her despair by using evaluative superlatives to elevate Leonard's kindness and concern to almost redemptive virtues. She strikes a balance between self-blame and genuine thanks and love in these comments, reflecting a paradoxical moment of good bliss in the middle of negative unhappiness..Therefore, the second letter is a tapestry of emotional opposites rather than just a note of despair. By contrasting deep sadness with profound love, Woolf captures the Un/Happiness category of Affect through lexical contrasts, modal constructions, evaluative language, and syntactic variation. The letters' linguistic texture shows that Woolf's emotional world is still bound to her ability to show affection and her acknowledgment of the joy Leonard brought into her life, even in her lowest moments.

1.3.1.2The In /Security of Affect

Virginia Woolf eloquently expresses a feeling of insecurity in her letter to Vanessa Bell, which reflects her own nervousness as well as her worry for her family. The achievement of this is through the use of linguistic elements of sentence structure, modality, and vocabulary. Woolf in general uses modal verbs reflecting uncertainty and lack of control as two basic signs of insecurity, including I can hardly think clearly anymore and I feel he will be better without me. These modal expressions point to her anxiety and mental vulnerability and encode her subjective evaluation of her instability. Moreover, her use of language is insecure. The words and phrases such as gone too far, mad again, I can no longer, and others express very strong negative connotations and underline her feeling of powerlessness, despair and fear. There is an abundance of the word again, which underlines the cyclic character of her situation and

increases the feeling of inevitable insecurity. Similarly, Leonard anticipatory concern is also revealed in the fact that he has much to do as indicated in the statement, which indicates that she cares not only about herself but the social environment and emotional wellbeing of other people. A role is also played by sentence structure. The complexity and instability of her emotional state are captured by Woolf by using long and flowing sentences with multiple clauses. An example of using modal verbs, conjunctions, and subordinate clauses to syntactically convey her worry, her concern and her uncertainty simultaneously is her remark about Leonard, when she says, I feel he has so much to do that he will continue, better without me, and you will help him. The short, staccato phrases, such as I can hardly think clearly anymore, on her part, on the contrary, give language clues to mental instability and add dots of extreme emotional instability to the letter. Consequently, the first letter offers a semantic and language example of the In/Security element of Affect. Woolf also tries to provide her family with an emotional balance and at the same time reveals the deep sense of personal insecurity by using modal forms, anxious words, and syntax. Besides the demonstration of her inner struggle, such mix of linguistic resources indicates how intentionally she organizes her language to address herself and her dearest ones.

The in/security of affect can be best traced in the second letter of Virginia Woolf to Leonard Woolf where there is a depiction of an emotional landscape that is paradoxical and delicate. Woolf feels very vulnerable and self-doubtful and she immediately writes, I feel certain that I am going mad again. I believe we do not have the possibility to go through the terrible times. And this time, I won't get well. On the linguistic level, epistemic modality of I feel certain suggests that her certainty is full of anxiety and subjectivity and heightened emotional awareness is denoted by the repetition of first-person reporting verbs I feel. The hedging in I feel we can't go through another and so on. implicates reticent thoughtfulness, underlining her emotional frailty, but the impossibility modal shan't recover underlines a inevitability further. A combination of these traits of language forms an emotional condition of hopelessness and insecurity.

Woolf is also insecure of the affect as the oscillations between self-reproach and attachment reveal to the reader. I know I am destroying your life, I know, she tells herself. The epistemic verb know gives an assurance but the content of these expressions expresses self-doubt and guilt. This opposition leads to a pointing out of the conflict between the relationships issues of Woolf on the outside and her perception of inadequacy on the inside. This is an example of the interaction of self-perception with interpersonal relationships that results in emotional vulnerability. This is her affective insecurity, not only because she is terrified of becoming mentally weak, but because it seems to her that her disease is having the same impact it has on Leonard. Even in times of her disillusioning, the letter contains moments of affective security particularly when she recognizes the unconditional love of Leonard. Woolf says, You would have been the one that could have saved me. Through a mixture of regret and trust, the conditional statement, If... would have been, denotes the use of counterfactual. Attachment to Leonard in this instance is a stabilizing factor to the emotional turmoil and reveals the dissonant nature of her emotional condition: reassurance and insecurity go hand-in-hand and generate a complex emotional swirling. The use of words and the judgment that Woolf uses play a part in further accentuating this exchange. Her immense appreciation of Leonard is expressed in such terms as the greatest possible happiness and everything anyone can be, which at the same time demonstrates to us the full scope of what she believes to be her loss and the precariousness of her emotional wellbeing. This emotional instability is also observed in her phrase patterns: she often constructs short and terse sentences, which will suggest fragmentation and a sense of hurry (I feel certain that I am going mad again). Words have been compounded and made longer in description of the dedication of Leonard to widen her emotional register as well as suggest that her instances of feeling secure are temporary and embedded in the sense of constant vulnerability. "I won't get better this time"). Finally, the second letter that Woolf wrote, which stands on the balance of connection, appreciation, shame, and despair, is an ideal illustration of the in/security of affect. Some of the linguistic choices that demonstrate a movement between emotional vulnerability and intermittent confidence include modality, tense, pronouns, evaluatives, and syntactic diversity. In such a way, the world of feelings of Woolf is characterized by unsteadiness: she is

emotionally reassured by the stability of Leonard and painfully uncomfortable in herself, forming an emotional icon, delicate, tender, and too human.

1.3.1.3 The Dis/Satisfaction of Affect

It is an immensely ambivalent affective state as dissatisfaction may coexist with the feeling of awe-inspiring gratitude that is manifested in the first suicide letter of Virginia Woolf. On the one hand, the letter is full of dissatisfaction: Woolf admits that her illness has come back and she will never be completely recovered, showing immensely the feelings of worthlessness and desperation. She says that she feels final in her state of mind through such phrases as I am sure now that I am going mad again and I will not get over it now. The subjectivity and personal responsibility is enhanced by the repetition of the first-person pronoun, I, in the declarative clauses which puts her dejection in an internalized perspective. The modality of her language is also quite significant: high-certainty modal verbs, like I am certain, I shan't, establish a closed semantic environment inside of which there is no way to bring hope in. This is a negative pole of dissatisfaction on linguistic side life is projected as irreparable. Moreover, the time is built as a cycle and as oppressive, which means that she suffers continuously as the temporal deixis (now, always) is used to indicate that her suffering is not one-dimensional. This framing in time brings to focus her dissatisfaction with her disease and its frequent recurrence. The slight yet clear current of gratification that will balance this despair is best expressed in the words she says about Leonard: Leonard has been so wonderfully good, every day, always; I cannot imagine that any one could have done more of the sort to me. In this case, the mental processes in Woolf are transformed into relational as opposed to selfish, and it provides her husband with lasting characteristics. Regularly, the use of the rhythmic device every day, always, and the use of the intensifier word astonishingly, the word intensifier expresses high assessment of the role of Leonard. The graduation (intensifying language) and amplification (repetition) make Leonard a character of eternal loyalty by Woolf and translates to some form of emotional fulfillment in the face of sadness. In the case of Leonard, the letter by Woolf is alternating between brief, direct statements of fact, such as I am certain now, I shan't get over it now, and more lengthy, cumulative ones. This opposition is coded in two affective worlds: the all-encompassing, flowing rhythm of appreciation and the cut-off, terminal tone of displeasure. The juxtaposition is used to highlight the fact that she is grateful to have a husband who has been very much steadfast in their relationship, and at the same time unhappy with the situation she was in. Appraisal Theory describes the differences between the Affect (sadness, hopelessness), the contentment of Appreciation (an evaluation of the goodness in Leonard), and the sadness of Judgement (self-condemnation as a burden) in Woolf. Her assessment words reveal her as someone who is permanently injured and Leonard as someone who is ethically and emotionally superb. Consequently, the discontent or dissatisfaction of the letter is not in form of conflict but it is interaction. Woolf is playing with language to bring out two worlds of reality: relational world of appreciation and appreciation, and personal world of hopelessness and futility. This tension is more traumatizing because in her short but powerful second suicide letter to Leonard, Virginia Woolf is grateful with the amount of love she had received, but she is also unhappy with her continuing life. However, the general mood of the letter is much more toward hopelessness, the emotional sub-current of her farewell is determined by one, bright expression of satisfaction which remains in that obscurity. The language, rhythm, modal certainty, intensification, and negation, used by Woolf to express her infinite satisfaction with love and her devastating dissatisfaction with life is what makes this letter so unbelievable. Woolf leaves us with a feeling of imminent doom of her condition even on the first line: I feel sure that I shall be going mad again. Besides the meaning of the phrase, it is interesting how the phrase is constructed. The expression, feel certain, suggests the subjective experience as well as conviction with no doubt combining the word emotions and knowledge. Placing the misery in the cycle, the time mark again implies that her misery is not a singular event in her life but it is a sequence in an endless process cycle. This sense of repetition is what further adds to the discontent in the letter as Woolf sees her illness as a re-entry to pain instead of a single crisis. What she says next adds to the hopelessness. I believe that we can not live those horrible days in the past. Through the pronoun, we, she extends her grief to be more than what it was, that is, to herself, and she involves Leonard in the tragedy. "And I shan't recover this time.". The choice of the term

"those terrible times" is an anaphoric reference to the previous events in medicine; the deixis of the term "those" makes the memories simultaneously very familiar and distant. The rhythm of the sentences that is composed mainly of short clauses indicates the level of directness with which her desperation is expressed. Finality is performed by the syntax; no room in terms of language can be left over ambiguous or to reconsider. The linguistic structure of incapity, which is developed through repeated negatives, i.e., shan't and can't, supports unhappiness as a state of complete certitude. But there is yet another thread, which gives contentment to this web of despair. Woolf writes that you have made me the happiest person on earth. The wording alters the theme and the subject. This statement is aggressive and affirmative unlike the preceding lines that possessed negativity and incompetence. The statement presents Woolf as the grateful recipient and Leonard as the actor and as the giver of the gift when he says that you have given me. The intensifying lexis, the greatest possible happiness, gives Leonard love the highest level possible, which has the maximum evaluation. The introduction to the statement, I want to tell you, matters since it presents the statement as a performative statement, and not a description. Woolf gives a satisfying conclusion to the final feel of her parting by choosing to be thankful. The depressing and thankful passages of the letter are sharply contrasted with each other. By using a progression of clauses that add pictures of disease, revival and helplessness, the displeasure is extended. On the contrary, the satisfaction is recapped in one sentence. But it makes no difference that it is short, on the contrary it makes it the more striking. This is the final outcry of gratitude, which appears after the monotonous march of hopelessness, and it is bright with its concentration. It is the last step to linguistic and emotional as Woolf is condemned to live in despair and her love is confined to satisfyment. Accordingly, the second suicide letter is the presentation of discontent and dissatisfaction as an imbalance instead of a coexistence. Woolf is not happy with her life and illness that is why her discontent with life and disease permeate her writings. Nonetheless, she admits that she loves Leonard to the full extent and allows satisfaction to be delivered in one, powerful form. Thus, the letter is a crystallization of love and despair living in the dainty, touching equilibrium, and a declaration of hopelessness and an ultimate sign of appreciation.

1.4 Findings of Analysis

The affective construction is a complicated issue that can be analyzed through the letters of suicide by Virginia Woolf to reveal the way in which the inner world in her life is reflected in the stylistic and linguistic choices. Un/happiness, dis/satisfaction, and in/security become the three principal features that are important in understanding the linguistic and emotional significance of these letters.

Happiness is the most dominant feeling in both letters since it is evidenced through numerous confessions of mental collapse, hopelessness, and despair that Woolf expresses. The phrasing of I am certain now that I am going mad again and I am always hearing voices in the first letter puts her desperation in a never-ending cycle of sickness. The feeling of the situation being not changeable is brought to the fore when she uses language of inevitability and repeats verbs that pertain to mental processes. The second letter adds to her misery with short direct sentences such as I can not concentrate and I will not be able to recover this time, which indicate the urgency and the end of the end of her pain. High-certainty modality, negation, and repetition can be used by Woolf to linguistically encode unhappiness, which leads to a sense of psychological prison and lifelong emotional pain.

The combination of desperation and thankfulness has the effect of generating dissatisfaction in the letters of Woolf. The gratitude of the long-term can be seen as a toning down of disillusionment with life and sickness in the first letter: All I want to say is that Leonard has been so unbelievably good every day, every day always. In this case, the enjoyment of satisfaction is weaved into the narrative with the help of relational processes, lexical intensifiers, and cumulative structures that emphasize the consistency of Leonard in terms of his care. There are dismal, high-certainty phrases that are prevalent in the second letter and are indicative of unhappiness but when the letter ends with a focused and concluding statement which says, I want to tell you that you have given me the greatest possible happiness, we see satisfaction. This lopsided structure keeps thankfulness as a poignant good-bye to underline the sorrowfulness. As the

letters demonstrate, the emotional experience of Woolf is multifaceted not only sadness, there is contentment, which is carefully noted down and augmented by linguistic attention.

The affective nature of in/security is the dimension behind which Woolf views herself and her world. In her writings, she has a sense of vulnerability, insecurity, and lack of mental and physical control. Even such phrases as I feel we can not go through another of those awful times and I begin to hear voices prove not only her sensitivity but also her clarity in the realm of the uncertain relationships and life. The fact that Woolf recognizes the caring of Leonard, however, serves as a respite to this feeling of insecurity and provides a temporary emotional ground. Verbs of mental processes, anaphoric references to repetitive suffering, temporal deixis, and time-related suffering are all linguistic manifestations of in/security that generate a changeable and unstable emotional landscape. The combination of these dimensions (affective) explains how intricate the lingual and emotional expression of Woolf is. She is not entirely dejected, as the letters reveal; she does not lack thankfulness, she is aware of relations and knows well the vulnerability of her emotions. Such a complicated interdependence of affect is supported and superficialized through the elements of style, such as repetition, modality, intensification of lexicon, and the alternation of declarative and cumulative phrases.

Ultimately, the suicide letters of Woolf can be viewed as the illustration of the power of the intensely personal writings to be affective objects, employing language to make the struggle between the feelings of attachment and pain, love and hopelessness, fragility and stability. They show the unassailable unity of emotion and language that show how, despite her approaching death, Woolf was able to remain incredibly human in her voice, which was clear and lucid.

1.5 Conclusions

This affective analysis of this study on suicide letters by Virginia Woolf has focused primarily on its un/happiness, dis/satisfaction and in/security categories. Findings reveal that the later productions of Woolf are dense products of the language which have been laced with emotion, thought, and style to capture the multi-facetedness of her inner being, as well as being highly personalized testification. Woolf builds her affective world, and she does it intentionally with a clear purpose even during the moments of psychological suffering, which can be observed through the choice of words, the structure of grammar and the repetition of certain expression patterns.

The introduction of linguistic signs of negation and inevitability as a form of displeasure is also one of the most significant findings of the study by Woolf. An unchangeable reality formed with the help of modal verbs and mental processes, such phrases as I am sure that I am going mad again and I will not recover this time are the linguistic enactment of hopelessness and not the expressions of despair itself. Therefore, her discontent with her life and illness is written in grammar of her sentences, paralyzing any opportunity of recovery and hope. Though, the research also demonstrates that the works by Woolf cannot be used in a simple way of hopelessness interpretation. Her discontent and unhappiness go hand in hand with a strong vein of contentment, which is occasioned by her emotional attachments, particularly towards Leonard. Her relational satisfaction is not lost despite her succumbing to her illness since even in her sickness, she expresses loving words towards her: You have been so very patient with me and so very good. This mixture of gratitude and despair can be called an affective paradox since the letters written by Woolf speak of love and at the same time say goodbye because of despair.

The linguistic analysis also reveals the way of how contrast and repetition mediate the affect of Woolf. Although the use of such a cute term as Dearest makes her confessions less unbearable, the fact that she cannot get out of the loop of obsessive thoughts is emphasized by the numerous sentences that include verbs, which describe mental processes, I feel, I start hearing, I am unable to focus. This stylistic contradiction of open utterances of the insanity and delicate utterances of affection represents the two-sidedness of dissatisfaction and contentment. The conscious contrast between these opposites emphasizes her extraordinary linguistic sensitivity, even when the patient is psychologically hopeless. Another important observation is that the letters written by Woolf when she was committing suicide are a mixture

of literary material and autobiographical memories. They are stylistically aware, as her fiction is, even though they are personal and private. Her letters are precise and brief even without decorations, which makes her emotional condition real. Razing and heartrending sincerity is expressed by the absence of rhetorical flourishes and the application of plain and simple words. This enquiry leads to the conclusion that the letters of Woolf on suicide are not merely farewell notes. The opposition of life and death, illness and affection, hopelessness and gratitude is acted through the language in these emotional writings. Happiness and dissatisfaction interaction shows how Woolf strengthened the alliances that provided her with purpose in life when she was working through the unbearable circumstances of her mental illness. Her language choices make her personal difficulty an emotionally interesting kind of testimony. Thus, the letters written by Woolf are linguistic and emotional documents, not fragments and parts of biography. They show how emotion is coded in the words and how the thankfulness and despair can co-exist and how the voice of Woolf was still quite expressive even when she was on the brink of speech. Based on analysis of the language, the paper emphasizes the significance of linguistic analysis in the analysis of the private correspondence and it is evident that Woolf demonstrates the impossibility of breaking down the connections between language, emotion, and the human experience even in the parting word.

References

1. Banks, D. (2019). The discourse of writing and the writing of discourse.Routledge.
2. Bednarek, M. (2008). Emotion talk across corpora.Palgrave Macmillan.
3. Celis, A. M. (2018). A study of the linguistic features of female suicide letters: From the writings of ordinary women to the writings of Virginia Woolf. Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research, 5(2), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jallr.2018.02.001
4. Hashemi, A. (2023). Martin & White's (2005) Appraisal Theory in focus. Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies, 19(2), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.24084/lls.2023.19.2.2824
5. Lee, H. (1996). Virginia Woolf: Chatto & Windus.
6. Malini, N. L. M. S., & Tan, V. (2016). Forensic linguistics analysis of Virginia Woolf's suicide notes. International Journal of Education, 9(1), 53–65. https://doi.org/10.17509/ije.v9i1.3718
7. Macken-Horarik, M., & Isaac, A. (2014). Appraising appraisal. In G. Thompson & L. Alba-Juez (Eds.), Evaluation in context (pp. 67–92). John Benjamins.
8. Martin, J. R. (2000). Beyond exchange: Appraisal systems in English. In S. Hunston & G. Thompson (Eds.), Evaluation in text: Authorial stance and the construction of discourse (pp. 142–175). Oxford University Press.
9. Martin, J. R., & Rose, D. (2003). Working with discourse: Meaning beyond the clause . Oxford University Press.
10. Martin, J. R., & Rose, D. (2007). Working with discourse: Meaning beyond the clause (2nd ed., pp. 25–47 Oxford University Press.
11. Martin, J. R., & White, P. R. R. (2005). The language of evaluation: Appraisal in English .Palgrave Macmillan.
12. Mesquita, A. C. (2023). On affectively translating Virginia Woolf's diary. Translation and Literature, 32(1), 45–61. https://doi.org/10.1111/tal.12345
13. Mishra, V. (2018). Semantic analysis of suicidal elements in Virginia Woolf's The Waves. Redalyc, 10(2), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.7038/703876867006

14. Oteíza, T. (2017). The appraisal framework and discourse analysis. In T. Bartlett & G. O'Grady (Eds.), The Routledge handbook of systemic functional linguistics (pp. 457–472). Routledge.
15. Shirkhani, K. (2011). Small language and big men in Virginia Woolf. Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction, 52(3), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1080/00111619.2011.582907
16. Wei, Y., Wherrity, M., & Zhang, Y. (2015). An analysis of current research on the Appraisal Theory. Linguistics and Literature Studies, 3(5), 235–239. https://doi.org/10.13189/lls.2015.030506
17. White, P. R. R. (2015). Appraisal theory. In The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Literature (pp. 1–3). Wiley-Blackwell. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118445112.wbel0002
18. Wilson, R. (2011). Appraisal Theory as a linguistic tool for the analysis of literary texts. White Rose eTheses Online. https://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/21142/1/658609.pdf
19. Woolf, V. (1981). The letters of Virginia Woolf, Vol. 6: 1936–1941 (N. Nicolson & J. Trautmann, Eds., pp. 481–482) .Hogarth Press.