
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Feminist Stylistics Analysis of Representation of Agency in *Educated*

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| ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to provide a feminist stylistic analysis of how agency is portrayed in Westover's book, *Educated*. Using an eclectic linguistic model that combines Leech and Short's (2007) figures of speech and tropes with Mills's (1995) phrase and sentence-level framework, as well as Jeffries's (2010) examination of parallelism and chiasmus, the study explores how agency is linguistically constructed and negotiated within the text. Metaphor, simile, personification, irony, parallelism, schemas, and chiasmus are among the figures of speech that are examined in this approach. The study examines how these stylistic strategies create and convey female agency in the memoir using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The quantitative analysis finds patterns and frequencies that reinforce the systematic nature of these linguistic choices, while the qualitative study offers deep insights into how these stylistic devices work to reveal resistance, self-definition, and transformation. The findings demonstrate how Westover highlights the narrator's growth of selfhood and resistance to imposed identities through the use of figurative language and grammatical patterns. The study comes to the conclusion that Westover's memoir advances feminist literature by expressing complex depictions of female empowerment, identity, and resiliency through deliberate and multi-layered stylistic choices.

| KEYWORDS

Chiasmus, parallelism, irony, metaphor, simile, agency, feminist stylistics, qualitative and quantitative analysis.

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

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1. Introduction

Feminist literary criticism has focused heavily on how women's agency is portrayed in autobiographical tales because life writing provides a special space where individual voice converges with societal and political systems (Smith & Watson, 2010; Stanley, 1992). *Educated* (2018) by Westover vividly depicts the author's quest for independence, self-awareness, and strength in a patriarchal, rural, and religiously orthodox setting. Feminist stylistics views agency as a construct realised through linguistic patterns that frame acts, roles, and identities, rather than only as a theme element (Lazar, 2005). With an emphasis on phrase and sentence-level analysis and a special focus on figures of speech as defined by Leech and Short (2007) and expanded by Jeffries (2010), this study employs an eclectic feminist stylistic framework. These figures of speech include personification, irony, metaphor, simile, and other tropes, as well as schemas like parallelism and chiasmus. These stylistic techniques have the power to either reinterpret, conceal, or reinforce agency. The study aims to reveal how figurative and schematic structures function as both aesthetic and ideological resources in depicting female agency by analysing Westover's use of such elements. For example, parallelism can highlight pivotal points in the narrator's development, personification can give agency to nebulous notions, and metaphor can concretise abstract problems (Charteris-Black, 2004;

Cameron, 2003). By comprehending these strategies, one can see how language subtly shapes ideological stances on gender and power (Toolan, 2012).

The study intends to close the gap between stylistic analysis and feminist critique by demonstrating how micro-level linguistic elements influence macro-level representations of gender and power by using this phrase/sentence-level focus (van Dijk, 1998; Jeffries, 2010). The thematic treatment of education, identity, and liberation in *Educated* has been the subject of much analysis (Anderson & Hall, 2018); nevertheless, little is known about how stylistic elements—particularly figures of speech at the phrase and sentence levels—help to depict agency. Without methodically examining the microlinguistic techniques that transmit it, a large portion of the body of extant study largely sees agency as a thematic or narrative idea (Biriotti & Miller, 1993). A more thorough comprehension of the complex language systems that support the memoir's ideological activity is limited by this lack of stylistic concentration; thus, the study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. In what ways does *Educated* employ figures of speech—metaphor, simile, personification, irony, parallelism, and chiasmus—to depict female agency?
2. What trends can be seen in Westover's application of these figures of speech, and how do they support the narrator's portrayal of herself?
3. How do stylistic decisions at the phrase and sentence levels in the book either support or contradict prevailing gender ideologies?

1.1 Significance of the Study

The research provides a deeper understanding of how Westover's tale of empowerment is produced through language by looking at these stylistic strategies at the phrase and sentence level. It examines how particular linguistic elements—particularly figures of speech like metaphor, simile, and parallelism—influence how female agency is portrayed in *Educated*. This method advances feminist literary studies and offers fresh perspectives on the connection between style and meaning in women's autobiographical writing by bringing to light nuanced language devices that affect readers' conceptions of gender and power.

1.2 Hypothesis

Westover is thought to have used figures of speech in *Educated*, specifically personification, metaphor, and parallelism, which are important stylistic devices that she uses to create and manage her agency. The narrator is able to exert control over her story and identity thanks to these tactics, which enable complex portrayals of empowerment under oppressive situations.

1.3 Aims of the Study

1. To examine how *Educated* uses figures of speech at the phrase and sentence levels to support the development of female agency.
2. To find recurrent themes and patterns that complement feminist stylistic approaches.
3. To connect stylistics with feminist literary criticism by connecting linguistic study at the micro level to more expansive ideological interpretations.

2. Thematic Structure

Feminist stylistics means the use of stylistic instruments to investigate how language both reflects and creates gendered identities and power dynamics (Mills, 1995; Sunderland, 2004). It exposes how ostensibly neutral linguistic elements can support, contradict, or undermine patriarchal ideas by fusing formal linguistic research with a feminist critical viewpoint (Talbot, 2010; Lazar, 2005). According to Mills (1995), feminist stylistics functions on three levels: discourse, phrase/sentence, and word. Each level reveals distinct facets of the positions of men and

women in texts. Syntactic decisions, rhetorical devices, and figures of speech that delicately frame the narrator's agency, autonomy, or passivity are the main focus at the phrase/sentence level (Jeffries, 2010; Wales, 2014).

According to feminist linguistic theory, agency is the capacity to act purposefully and have an influence on one's surroundings through social mediation (Ahearn, 2001; Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2013). The representation of agency refers to the way that capacity is linguistically encoded—through verb choice, active voice, metaphor, and rhetorical structures (Fairclough, 2003; Lazar, 2005). According to Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2013), agency involves more than merely carrying out actions; it also encompasses the capacity to oppose, reinterpret, and reinvent imposed identities. While passivisation, nominalisation, or decrease agency (Leech & Short, 2007; Wales, 2014).

2.1 Phrases and Sentences Analysis (Mills, 1995)

According to Sara Mills (1995), feminist stylistic analysis ought to look at phrase and sentence patterns in addition to individual words. Figures of speech, word order, and syntactic decisions all affect how gender and agency are portrayed. Mills shows that ideological positioning can be seen at the sentence level, such as whether women are portrayed as passive objects or grammatical subjects (agents). Noun, adjective, and verb phrases are examined at the phrase level, whereas clause kinds, sentence complexity, and information structure are examined at the sentence level.

2.2 Figures of Speech (Leech and Short, 2007)

According to Leech and Short (2007), figures of speech are an umbrella term that falls under two primary categories, according to Leech & Short's (2007) framework:

2.2.1 Tropes

These are figures of speech that give words a figurative meaning instead of their literal meaning. Tropes entail a change in meaning. Among the examples are: Comparing two dissimilar items by stating that one is the other is known as a metaphor. Using "like" or "as" to compare is known as a simile. Personification is the process of giving non-human creatures human characteristics. Irony is the antithesis of what is expected or stated. Tropes play an important role in feminist stylistics because they can use imagery and metaphorical comparison to encode societal beliefs on gender, agency, and domesticity.

1. Metaphor

One mental domain is mapped into another using metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003; Leech & Short, 2007). Metaphors can expose underlying beliefs in feminist readings. For example, metaphors of development, mobility, or conflict might highlight agency, while metaphors of confinement or vulnerability can diminish it (Lazar, 2005; Sunderland, 2004).

2. Simile

Simile means using the terms "like," "as," similes make clear comparisons (Leech & Short, 2007). According to Mills (1995), similes have the power to either support or challenge gender stereotypes, such as

(1) *like a bird in a cage*. or

(2) *as unyielding as iron*. The cultural values incorporated into the comparison serve their ideological purpose (Wales, 2014).

3. Personification

Personification is the process of giving non-human creatures human characteristics (Leech & Short, 2007). Feminist stylistics investigates whether personification enhances women's control

(3) *Knowledge called me to act*. Or transfers the agency away from women to abstract notions.

(4) *Fate pushed me forward*. (Sunderland, 2004; Jeffries, 2010).

4. Irony

According to Leech and Short (2007), irony conveys meaning that is in opposition to the literal sense. Irony, according to Mills (1995), is a subtly feminist technique for challenging oppressive conventions without resorting to direct conflict. It allows narrators to expose contradictions in gender ideologies (Wales, 2014; Lazar, 2005).

2.2.2 Schemas

These are figures of speech that, rather than altering meaning, rely on a deviation from the typical word order (syntactic patterning). They are frequently referred to as plans in classical rhetoric. Schemas manipulate structures instead of meanings. Among the examples are: Parallelism is the practice of highlighting equality or contrast by repeating identical grammatical constructs. Reversing structures to emphasise a point is known as chiasmus. Such as:

(5) *She has all my love; my heart belongs to her.*

1. Chiasmus For rhetorical effect, Chiasmus flips grammatical structures (AB → BA) (Leech & Short, 2007). The reciprocal relationship between agency and environment is reinforced with an example such as :

(6) *She shaped her education, and her education shaped her.* (Wales, 2014).

2. Parallelism (Jeffries, 2010)

According to Jeffries (2010), parallelism is the intentional repetition of comparable grammatical, lexical, or semantic structures to establish emphasis, coherence, and a thematic relationship in Jeffries' (2010) *Critical Stylistics* paradigm. Writers might emphasise differences, give notions equal weight, or accent particular ideas by repeating patterns. By putting women in active roles alongside men in identical syntactic frames, for instance, parallelism can be a potent instrument in feminist stylistics to depict agency and gender equality and challenge patriarchal hierarchies.

Table 1: Types of Figures of Speech According to Leech and Short (2007)

Category	Sub category	Definition	Example
Figures of speech	Tropes	Tropes are figures of speech in which words or phrases are used in a way that changes their usual meaning	
	Metaphor	A direct comparison between two unlike things without using "like" or "as"	<i>.Time is a thief</i>
	Simile	A comparison between two unlike things using "like" or "as"	<i>Her smile was as bright as the sun</i>

	Personification	Attributing human qualities to non-human objects or .abstract ideas	<i>The wind whispered .through the trees</i>
	Irony	Expressing a meaning that is opposite of the literal meaning, often humorous or .emphatic effect	<i>A fire station burns .down</i>
Figure of Speech	Schemas	Schemas are figures of speech that deal with word order, syntax, letters, and sounds, rather than .meaning	
	Chiasmus	A reversal in the otherwise parallel .phrases	<i>Ask not what your country can do for you ;ask what you can do for your .country</i>
	Parallelism	The repetition of a grammatical structure for effect .and rhythm	<i>.Easy come, easy go</i>

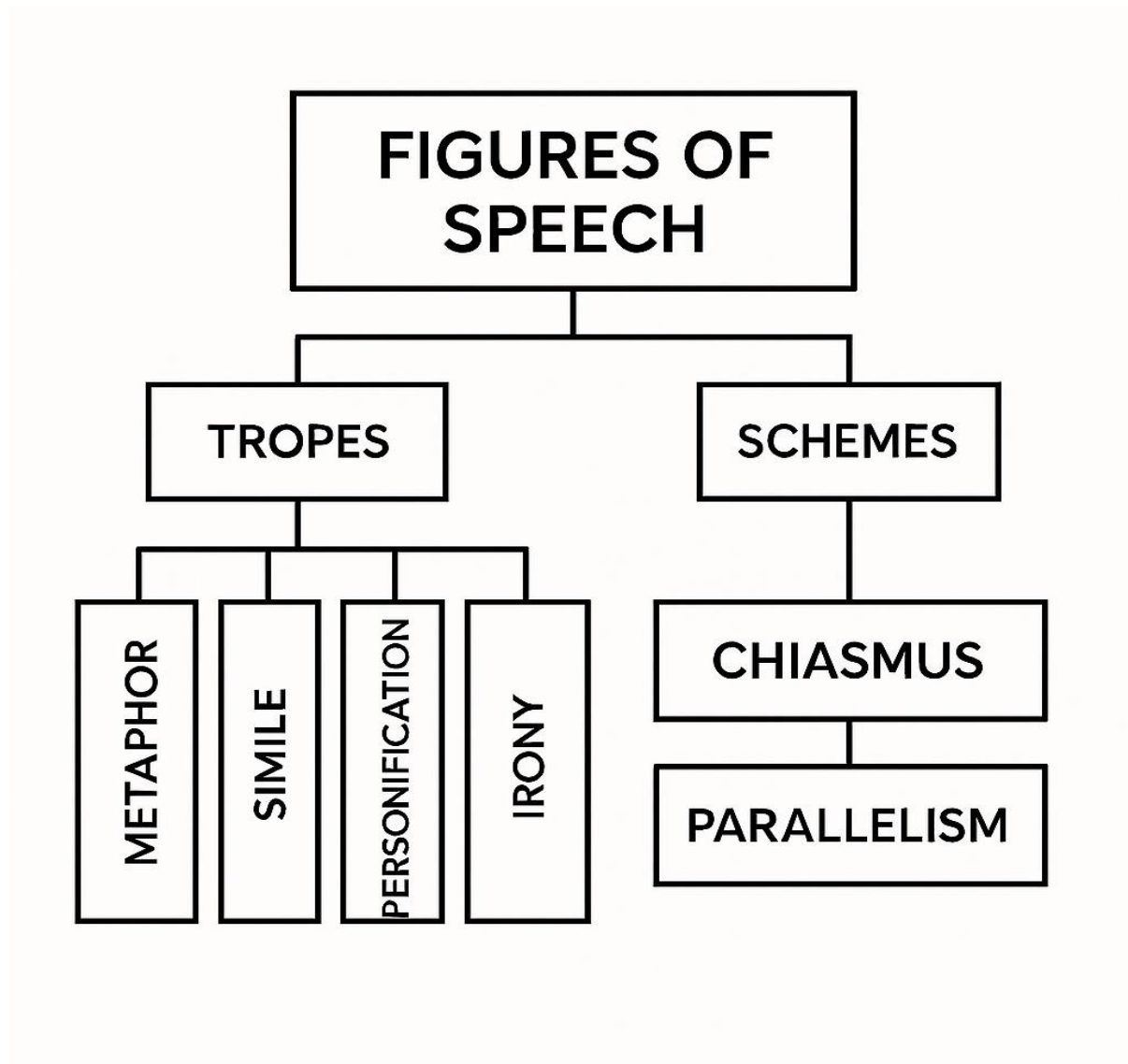


Figure (1) Figures of Speech (Leech and Short 2007)

3. Methodology

3.1 Data Selection and Description

The highly regarded memoir *Educated* (Westover, 2018) tells the story of the author's journey from a solitary upbringing in rural Idaho to becoming a distinguished academic at the University of Cambridge. Growing up in a strict Mormon survivalist household, Westover worked in her father's scrapyard and took care of her mother, a self-taught midwife and herbalist. Her father's mistrust of governmental institutions and belief in self-sufficiency was reflected in her lack of formal education and discouragement from interacting with the outside world.

The memoir delves into how Westover's quest for education turned into a source of intense family strife as well as an act of freedom. She was admitted to Brigham Young University through self-directed learning, where she came across viewpoints and concepts that contradicted her family's beliefs. Her struggle to balance her deep-rooted devotion to family and faith with her developing sense of self and independence is depicted in the story.

3.2 Tools of Analysis

Using an eclectic feminist stylistic model at the phrase and sentence level, this study mainly draws from Mills's (1995) feminist stylistics framework and Leech and Short's (2007) figures of speech taxonomy, with additional parallelism-related insights from Jeffries (2010). Finding and analysing rhetorical strategies that serve and symbolise agency in the story of *Educated* is the main focus of the analysis (Westover, 2018).

3.3 Methods of Analysis

Using a mixed-methods approach, this study examines how agency is portrayed in Tara Westover's memoir *Educated* (2018) by combining qualitative and quantitative analysis.

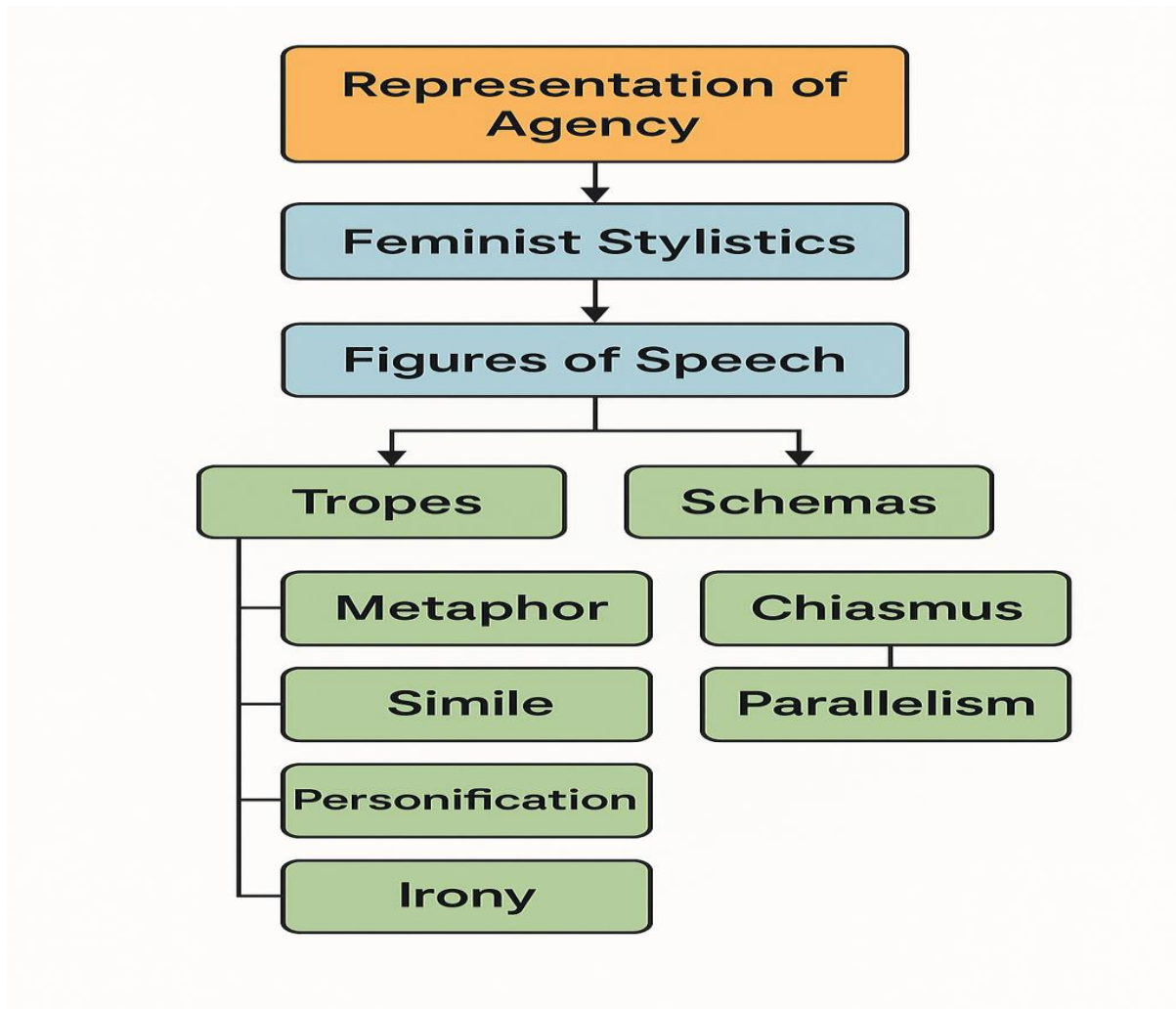
Following Mills's (1995) approach to feminist stylistics and utilising Leech and Short's (2007) figures of speech taxonomy, the analysis is based on an eclectic feminist stylistic framework at the phrase and sentence level. Jeffries (2010) provides additional insights on parallelism. A close reading of a few chosen extracts is required for the qualitative component in order to recognise and analyse figures of speech that support the development of agency.

Finding the frequency of each recognised trope and schema in the chosen extracts is the quantitative component. By highlighting trends in the distribution of particular stylistic techniques across the memoir's beginning, middle, and end, this numerical data bolsters the qualitative interpretation. To show which devices are most frequently used in encoding agencies, the frequency data is displayed in tables and charts. To find patterns in agency representation, a quantitative tabulation of occurrences is joined with a qualitative examination of each instance's stylistic and ideological role. A thorough explanation of how phrase and sentence-level style elements support the portrayal of agency in *Educated* is provided by this dual approach, which guarantees both depth (by qualitative interpretation) and breadth (via quantitative frequency analysis).

3.4 Procedures

1. Analysing carefully the memoir *Educated* by Westover (2018)'s narrative development, thematic evolution, and language elements that pertain to the portrayal of agency.
2. Choosing purposively pivotal sections from the memoir's opening, middle, and conclusion to highlight changes in agency throughout the story. Priority was given to extracts with noteworthy phrases and sentence-level stylistic techniques.
3. Using a descriptive study at the phrase/sentence level, backed by Mills's (1995) feminist stylistics model, in conjunction with the parallelism figures of speech taxonomy offered by Leech and Short (2007) and Jeffries (2010).
4. Outlining instances of the schemas (chiasmus and parallelism) and tropes (metaphor, simile, personification, and irony) in the chosen excerpts. Every incident was categorised using the framework, taking into account its rhetorical role and linguistic structure.
5. Analysing how each identified figure of speech contributes to the memoir's construction, restriction, or transformation of agency. Interpretations took into account how gender, power, and self-representation intersected.
6. Noting how frequently each cliché and schema appears in order to pinpoint the most common stylistic elements used in the representation of agency. To bolster qualitative findings, data were arranged in tables and charts.
7. Combining the qualitative thematic interpretations with the quantitative distribution of devices to uncover the ways in which Westover's linguistic choices encode acquiescence, resistance, or empowerment.

Figure (2) : The Eclectic Model of Analysis



I will select four extracts from the beginning, the middle, and the end of *Educated*. These extracts will specifically reflect themes of agency. By analyzing them, I aim to explore how these themes evolve throughout the memoir.

1. Extract 1

Here's an extract from the beginning of *Educated* by Westover that reflects agency, particularly her early awareness of control and her will to resist limitations:

Dad said public school was a ploy by the Government to lead children away from God. I had never been in a classroom, but when I was seven, I'd been registered for school. Days later, Dad found out and demanded I be taken out. My mother agreed. I didn't understand school. I'd never set foot in one. But the word gave me a feeling: it was as if I'd been told that the sky was green, or that ice hurt to the touch. I couldn't reconcile it. School was something to be feared. Then why did I want to go? (Westover, 2018, p 1).

Phrase /Sentence level Analysis

Figures of Speech

A. Tropes:

1. Metaphor: There is no explicit metaphor.

2. Simile: The sentence, *it was as if I'd been told that the sky was green, or that ice hurt to the touch* uses as if to parallel the emotional dissonance Westover experiences when confronted with contradicting or unusual phenomena, creating a direct comparison. The sky was green illustrates rupture or cognitive dissonance. Ice hurt to the touch challenges one's sense of bodily intuition. This comparison conveys an early feeling of independent judgement, which is essential to agency, and demonstrates Westover's mental resistance to indoctrination.

3. Personification: Here, the *word* in *The word gave me a feeling* is personified, word (school) is endowed with the human ability to evoke feeling. This means that language itself is active, not passive—resonating with Mills's feminist critique of discourse and identity. The phrase implies that language carries power, framing Westover's emotions.

4. Irony: The irony in *School was something to be feared. Then why did I want to go?* lies in the contrast between what Tara is told (fear school) and what she instinctively desires (to attend school). This rhetorical question uses ironic contrast to emphasize the tension between internal agency and external control, subtly critiquing Westover's parents' authority.

B. Schemas

1. Parallelism: *I had never been in a classroom. I'd never set foot in one.* Syntactic and semantic parallelism reinforces absence and exclusion. This pair of clauses reinforces Westover's unfamiliarity with education using structural repetition. The repetition with variation (classroom / one) underscores Westover's lack of exposure to formal education.

The sky was green, or that ice hurt to the touch. The parallel noun clauses create syntactic balance, underscoring the unnaturalness of Westover's perception—evoking the absurdity of fearing education. Parallelism enhances coherence and emphasis, making her inner conflict more vivid.

2. Chiasmus: There is no explicit chiasmus.

2. Extract 2

It's strange how you give the people you love so much power over you. I had accepted my father's vision of my life, until that moment. But when I turned away, when I defied him, something shifted. I could feel it. A new self was being formed, one that would exist apart. (Westover, 2018, p. 199).

Phrase/Sentence level Analysis

Figures of Speech

A. Tropes:

With the phrases *something shifted* and *a new self was being formed*, the metamorphosis theme is used frequently in this extract, " These arouse feelings of inward transformation and individual growth.

1. Metaphor: By attributing a transfer of power to a relational dynamic, the metaphor *you give the people you love so much power over you* depicts the act of giving power as a concrete, nearly physical action. This metaphor illustrates the intricate relationship between emotion and control by positioning love as a means of granting power. *The self in a new self was being formed*, views the formation of a new identity as a creative process, analogous to the moulding of a physical object. The idea that the self can be formed, which suggests a process similar to moulding or shaping an object, is used metaphorically.

2. Simile: There is not any overt simile in this passage.

3. Personification: *Something* is given agency in *something shifted, as though it could move or alter on its own initiative*, giving the story a feeling of dynamic transformation. The moment of agency is made a living, almost tangible experience by its personification.

4. Irony: *You give the people you love so much power over you* emphasizes the contradiction of willingly ceding authority to those closest to oneself, who are supposed to support and empower rather than control. The irony is that those one loves, who ought to give support and freedom, instead exercise authority and control, thereby restricting one's capacity for agency.

B. Schema: This extract is established around a cause-and-effect schema, where the act of "defying" her father results in the emergence of a new self. This schema underscores the transformative impact of agency. Here, the contrast between I had accepted my father's vision of my life and when I turned away, when I defied him structures a binary opposition that underscores the conflict between compliance and rebellion, emphasizing the thematic dichotomy of submission versus agency.

1. Parallelism: The phrase *when* is repeated in *When I turned away, when I defied him* to emphasize the two acts of defying and turning away as essential points in Westover's claim of agency. By using two closely linked actions in quick succession, the speaker reinforces the seriousness and decisiveness of her decision.

2. Chiasmus: There isn't any overt chiasmus.

3. Extract 3

I had begun to understand that my father saw the world differently than I did. That I could take an interest in politics or feminism or history, and he could reject them utterly, and we could still be father and daughter. That my thoughts could have value, even if he did not value them. (Westover, 2018, p. 157)

Phrase /Sentence level Analysis

Figures of Speech

A. Tropes

1. Metaphor: *...My father saw the world differently than I did.* is a conceptual metaphor based on the "seeing equals understanding" mapping. This is a conceptual metaphor: seeing the world metaphorically represents perception, values, and worldview. It does not refer to literal visual perception but epistemological perspective. It encodes cognitive differences. The metaphor of seeing the world suggests that worldview is not merely cognitive but experiential—something embodied and directional. It implies subjective truths shaped by one's ideology or lived experience. The metaphor turns abstract difference in ideology into a spatial, visual difference, grounding the abstract in the tangible.

2. Simile: This trope is not immediately realized in this passage because there is no clear simile (no usage of "like" or "as") in the extract.

3. Personification: *Even if he did not value my thoughts, they could still have value.* Thinking having value is a subtly personified statement. Personifying ideas as having intrinsic value, regardless of how they are received, implies agency and self-determination. The narrator's inner world gains moral and intellectual substance from the metaphorical framing.

4. Irony: *...My thoughts could have value, even if he did not value them,* has a tone of subdued irony, acknowledging that one's ideas may be valuable in and of themselves regardless of parental recognition. The bitter contradiction of the father's rejection and the declaration of self-worth are at odds.

B. Schema: The passage develops a schematic contrast: two people can hold entirely divergent views and yet maintain a relational identity ("father and daughter"). A → B despite C: I could take an interest in politics/feminism/history → He could reject them → We could still be still father and daughter. This mirrors concessive schema, helping encode emotional complexity and resistance to binary logic. The paragraph also employs a repetitive schema of concessive coordination: That I could..., and he could..., and we could still... Followed

by: That my thoughts could have value, even if...This pattern creates cohesion and rhythm through a logical schema that juxtaposes independence and familial continuity.

1. Parallelism: We could still be father and daughter even if he completely rejects my interest in politics, feminism, or history. That I could, he could, and we could are repeated clause-initials that combine to make a tricolon. Although each clause concludes with relational continuity, they all follow a pattern of paternal opposition vs personal agency. In feminist contexts where power and relationality must coexist, this parallelism affirms multiple subjectivities by reinforcing the presence of opposition and connection while refusing resolution.

2. Chiasmus: There is no chiasmus here.

4. Extract 4

This extract is from Chapter 35 in Westover's memoir *Educated* (2018). It is near the end of the memoir.

Finally, I was able to tell him. I said, 'I have to go.' And I walked away. I didn't turn back to see if he was watching. I didn't even hear if he called my name. I simply left him standing there, feeling the power of my own decision. (Westover, 2018, p. 270).

Phrase /Sentence level

Figures of Speech

A. Tropes: Though subtle motifs emphasise empowerment and separation, this extract primarily favours a literal, direct storytelling style.

1. Metaphor: *The power of a decision in feeling the power of my own decision.* is an abstract conceptual metaphor where the act of deciding is metaphorically conceptualized as a source of strength or energy. This metaphor reinforces the narrator's internal shift from dependence to autonomy, representing agency.

2. Simile: This extract does not contain any similes.

3. Personification: Neither nature nor abstract entities nor objects are personified. The narrator herself is given agency, not inanimate objects or abstract ideas.

4. Irony: Irony is absent from this extract.

B. Schema: This section adheres to the schema of a freeing departure, which is a prevalent theme in memoirs and accounts of personal development. I have to go signifies a turning point in the speaker's life as she ultimately leaves a circumstance or someone who formerly influenced her. By separating from repressive relational dynamics, the female subject regains her autonomy, which is reflected in a feminist schema of personal agency.

1. Parallelism: The speaker's resolve and finality are emphasised by parallel structures: *I didn't turn back to see if he was watching. Even if he called my name, I didn't hear it.* Parallel negative sentences that start with I didn't... support her total lack of interest. The parallel grammatical structure created by repeating the subject I, followed by a negative auxiliary didn't and a verb phrase in *I didn't turn back... I didn't even hear*, which strengthens the speaker's resolve and detachment. According to Jeffries, this type of syntactic parallelism implies coherence and emphasis, particularly when expressing decisiveness.

2. Chiasmus: There is no chiasmus in this extract.

4. Result

This section is involved in presenting a quantitative analysis of selected linguistic features drawn from a feminist stylistic framework, applied to the representation of agency in the text. The analysis includes Figures of speech. The frequencies and percentages were calculated to reflect the prominence of each feature within the data set.

The following table shows the frequencies and the percentages of each tool in the four analyzed extracts, which are taken from the memoir.:

Table (2) The Frequency and Percentages of Figures of Speech Types Figures of Speech

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Metaphor	3	%20
Irony	3	%20
Simile	1	%6.6
Personification	3	%20
Parallel	5	%33
Chiasmus	0	%0
Total	15	

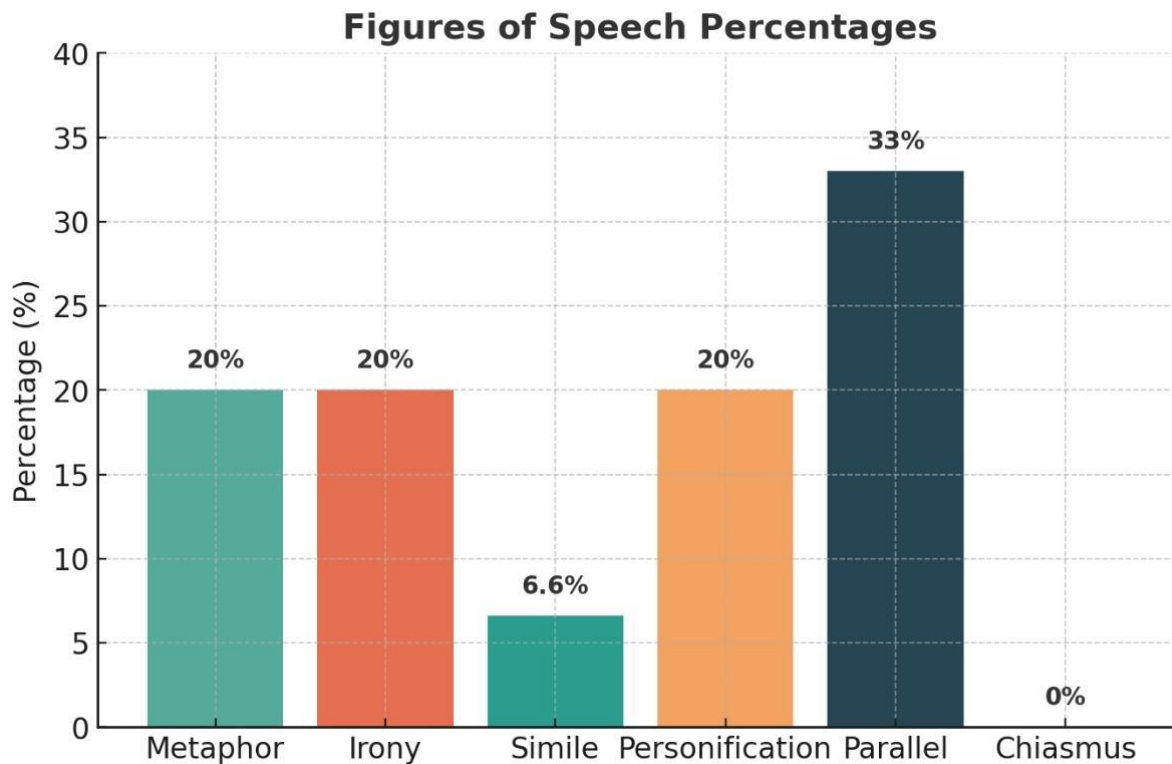


Figure (3) The Percentages of Figures of speech Types

The results show that the most common figure of speech is parallelism (33%), indicating that the author primarily uses structural repetition to establish coherence, rhythm, and emphasis. By reiterating important ideas and giving the story a sense of harmony and clarity, this strategy can also be used as a persuasive tool. At 20% each, personification, metaphor, and irony are equally common, indicating a strong predilection for figurative techniques that provide the text depth, criticism, and emotional relevance. Personification animates inanimate things, making abstract notions more tangible and emotionally compelling; irony reveals contradictions and permits subtle critique; and metaphors ask readers to interpret experiences through vivid, frequently symbolic imagery.

Although direct analogies are evident, the author tends to favour the implicit and layered meaning of metaphors over the more explicit "like/as" construction, as evidenced by the significantly lower frequency of similes (6.6%). The lack of chiasmus (0%) indicates that the story opts for parallelism's simpler repetition patterns rather than inverted repetition as a stylistic decision. All things considered, the distribution exhibits a stylistic approach that blends rich figurative language with repetition to both visually engage the reader and communicate underlying thematic and ideological messages, especially in enhancing the narrator's viewpoint and influencing how agency is portrayed.

5. Discussion

Using Leech and Short's (2007) taxonomy of tropes and schemas, the examination of figures of speech at the clause/sentence level reveals clear stylistic trends in *Educated*'s portrayal of agency. Since repetition of grammatical structures highlights thematic emphasis and fosters coherence, parallelism, the most common figure (33%), is consistent with Leech and Short's and Jeffries's (2010) focus on its rhetorical potency. According to feminist stylistics (Mills, 1995), this frequent use of parallelism may reinforce narrative authority, emphasise recurring acts of resistance, and affirm the narrator's voice—all crucial elements in the representation of female agency.

With 20% of instances each, personification, irony, and metaphor show how the text relies on layered figurative methods to reframe experienced events. As noted by Leech and Short (2007), metaphor plays a crucial role in developing mental mappings that turn abstract challenges into realistic, approachable pictures. These metaphors frequently challenge prevailing discourses around schooling and domesticity in a feminist style reading, thus establishing the narrator as an active creator of meaning. Here, personification gives spaces, organisations, or abstract ideas agency and relational significance within the feminist narrative framework of the memoir, while irony serves as a discursive tool for implicit critique, reinforcing the inconsistencies between the narrator's lived reality and patriarchal expectations.

The low frequency of similes (6.6%) indicates a preference for the implicit richness of metaphors over similes' explicit comparative structure. Similes are used sparingly in *Educated*, yet they nonetheless provide vividness and are frequently used to make difficult feelings easier for readers to understand or to make comparisons easier. The total lack of chiasmus (0%) suggests that parallelism is used to establish structural emphasis rather than inverted syntactic patterns, which are not part of the author's stylistic arsenal. Overall, this distribution reveals that Tara Westover's narrative style in *Educated* employs a purposeful blend of repetition and layered figurative language to produce a voice that is both aesthetically captivating and ideologically motivated. In feminist stylistics terms, these decisions highlight the narrator's command over meaning, allowing her to question and reinterpret the conceptualisations of her agency.

6. Conclusions

Based on the previous discussion, it is now time to draw some conclusions:

1. The examination of *Educated* shows how Westover deliberately uses personification, irony, parallelism, metaphor, simile, and other figures of speech to create and express female agency.

2. Irony highlights the narrator's critical reflection on constrictive familial and societal standards, while metaphors and personifications provide tangible form to internal feelings, supporting her emotional and cognitive development.
3. The most common technique, parallelism, highlights instances of self-realization and agency assertion while reinforcing important contrasts and patterns in the story.
4. Chiasmus is conspicuously absent, indicating that syntactic inversion is less fundamental to Westover's style method, and similes are used less frequently, indicating that direct structural and figurative emphasis takes precedence over comparison illustration.
5. By emphasising her power negotiation, defiance of restrictive gender conventions, and assertion of autonomy, Westover's stylistic choices at the phrase and sentence levels often conform to feminist stylistic principles.
6. A nuanced representation of female agency is supported by the patterns in Westover's use of figures of speech, which show a purposeful interaction between structural recurrence and figurative meaning.
7. Through the use of these strategies, the memoir questions dominant gender ideologies and presents a story in which the narrator actively constructs her identity, defies constraints, and takes control of her own life narrative.

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