

# **A Corpus-Based Stylistic Analysis of Reem Bassiouney's Novel "Mortal Designs"**

**A paper submitted by**

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## Abstract

*Stylistics* is the study of stylistic variation in languages and of how this is exploited by users. This definition is general enough as it covers that those who use the term *stylistics* would want to be covered by it. The undertaken study is a functional corpus-based stylistic analysis of a text in which the writer uses linguistic features like adjectives, nouns, conjunctions, and sentence complexity to portray the social and cultural conditions of the texts. The main concern is to analyse the linguistic patterns to illustrate how certain stylistic devices work together to reflect certain perspectives of social life and the writer's ideology. Thus, this study aims to stylistically analyse the lexical and semantic devices and features in Reem Bassiouney's novel "*Mortal Designs*." The data were analysed using *AntConc* software (version 4.0.10) with the help of *TagAnt* 2.0.4. The corpus size consisted of 71208 words. The paper highlights what is striking about Bassiouney's narrative style. Leech and Short's list is used as a framework. The researcher presents the appropriate numbers and frequency rates of the content words of each text and shows the social reasons behind using such words. The distribution of content words shows that the most frequently used part of speech is verbs, followed by nouns, adjectives, and adverbs, and simple words with short sentences are the distinguishing features of the authors' writing style.

**Keywords:** *Corpus Stylistics Analysis, Mortal Designs, Narrative Mode, Syntactic Construction*



## Introduction

*Stylistics* is viewed as “the linguistic study of style as an exercise in describing what use is made of language.” It cannot be considered a discipline, but it is more about a means of connection between the language and its role or reflection (Leech and Short, 1981: 13). Consequently, it helps discover the reason behind the author’s use of certain words to express himself in a particular way. *Corpus stylistics* can help develop descriptive tools to identify and characterise the linguistic and stylistic features that make a text distinctive, summarised by Leech and Short as lexical and grammatical categories, figures of speech, cohesion, and context (McIntyre & Walker, 2019). Stylistic analysis is used as an analytical tool to see textual patterns and their significance. Leech (1969) defines style as the way of speaking, writing, or performing something and transferring the text’s intended meanings to the reader. Style means how something is said. Widdowson (1975, p 3) defined *stylistics* as “the study of literary discourse from a linguistic orientation.” Lawal (1997) described the style as a feature of language that deals with choices of diction, phrases, sentences, and linguistic materials within a text. Thus, linguistic interpretation of literary meaning, text, and its aesthetic effect is the main purpose of the stylistic study. Stylistic analysis is an attempt to determine the artistic principles underlying a writer’s choice of words. Simpson (2004: 2) says, “*stylistics* is a method of interpretation in which the primacy of place is assigned to language,” or it is the “analysis of the language of literary texts, usually taking its theoretical method from linguistics, to undertake this analysis” (Mills, 2005: 3). With *stylistics*, it is known that the analysts’ aim is to explain how feelings can be transferred by the words of a text when people read and get them. Ullmann (1957: 23) accounts that “the

tasks of *stylistics* are primarily descriptive.” This statement suggests that stylistics is one of the descriptive ways by which societies can be fully and comprehensively understood. Styles are ideal means for expressing implied meanings. Thus, style makes certain types of meaning interpretable. Meaning achieved using style does not have to be made semantically explicit. For Simpson (2004, p.88), transitivity can reveal how speakers use language to reflect their mental images of reality and explain their world experiences. Thus, this study aims to represent how the writer utilised certain linguistic and syntactic constructions to identify society's social and cultural identity and to highlight her ideology and narrative mode through the story context. It uses methods and tools from corpus linguistics and incorporates them with models and theories from *stylistics*. This co-operation presents a means to describe, measure, and analyse the style of both literary and non-literary texts.

### **Significance of the Study**

Contemporary theories of text interpretation require considering not only what the text says but also how its meaning gets “made.” In other words, the elements of local textual context and how words, sentences, paragraphs, and the larger social contexts influence the ways texts are written, distributed, and read are examined. Likewise, when writing or reading behaviours are examined, not only the behaviours themselves but also the contextual factors that can help explain and interpret them are considered. Interpretation always comes to the question of how effectively the author has incorporated the linguistic features by using adjectives, nouns, and verbs to maintain the thematic essence. Stylistic meaning is not restricted to the author's stylistic intentions. However, the text does provide a basis for its interpretation (Widdowson, 1992). The study will provide a new vision about this topic in relation to Reem Bassiouney as

a great Egyptian writer representing the Arabic literature and culture for the other communities. The study explores the linguistic particularities to clarify the main functions of the language used by the writer to reflect the context and social issues in Egyptian society at a specific time. Additionally, the study helps the reader interpret and understand the aspects of the novelist's stylistic voice. This study demonstrates how corpus linguistics validates literary texts' quantitative and qualitative analysis. The significance of this study stems from the fact that it merges three distinct fields of study: literature, linguistics, and corpus analysis. The three areas collapse into a stylistic analysis using recent advances in corpus linguistics technologies.

## **Theoretical Framework and Review of Literature**

### **Stylistics**

style is a multi-meaning word. When applied to language studies, it can be understood as how language is used in a given context, by a given person, for a given purpose. Also, it is the reflection of an author's personality or linguistic habits (Leech and Short, 2007, p.23). Style is the form of certain content that a certain user adopts and thus anything that expresses that, which is unusual or/and deviant, or the linguistic characteristics of a particular text. Therefore, style consists of choices made from the repertoire of the language. Biber & Conrad (2009, p. 144) consider that style in fiction is made up of deliberate choices by authors depending on how they want to convey a story or messages to the reader. Thus, any fiction analysis must "cover characteristics of the imaginary world and choices of style whose functions are associated more with aesthetic preferences than the real world." It is possible to distinguish between what the writer chooses to talk about and how he chooses to talk about

it. Thus, the study of foregrounding and its interpretation is likely to be a better guide to the aesthetic function of language than the study of stylistic variants.

The function of *stylistics* is to link two main disciplines: linguistics and literary criticism. To do that, *stylistics* plays as a connective means to demonstrate how the linguistic elements act significantly in a text to produce an intended message. *Stylistics* being in the middle ground between linguistics and literary criticism, its function is to mediate between the two. For stylistic analysis, shades imperceptible to literary appreciation and the identification of what the reader or listener is guided in the literary text are sought by stylistic analysis (Fairly, 1979: 335). According to Crystal and Davy (1969: 10), *stylistics* aims to analyse language habits to identify features related to certain social context, explain the reasons behind using these features as opposed to other alternatives, and then classify these features into categories according to their function in a social context. *Stylistics* serves to identify an author and establish the authenticity of a work (Fairly, 1979). Sometimes, the author's identity is given away by small details reflecting a habit of expression or thought. This seems to confirm that each writer has a linguistic "thumb-print," an individual combination of linguistic habits that somehow betrays him in all what he writes.

*Stylistics* focuses on what makes a text or group of texts distinctive and investigates deviations from linguistic norms that trigger artistic effects and reflect creative ways of using language. According to Hoover (2003, p. 261-262), "stylistic analysis is more likely to be interested in large numbers of characteristics that together help describe the styles of authors." It is defined as the study of style (Wales, 2001, p. 372) or the study of the language of literature using empirical evidence and linguistic theory (Wynne, 2005). Ad-



ditionally, it is a “method of textual interpretation in which primacy of place is assigned to language” (Simpson, 2004, p. 2). So, it may be defined as a field of empirical inquiry in which the insights and concepts of the linguistic theory are applied to analyse and interpret texts, both literary and non-literary. Therefore, *stylistics* is something that provides explications for how texts may be understood and interpreted by readers, mainly by resorting to linguistic insights as meta-language (Carter, 2004). Recently, corpus linguistics, digital or digitalised corpora, especially those made up of literary texts, has gradually become available either from the Internet or from digital media tools designed for that purpose. Thus, using these databases, corpus linguistics insights have been incorporated in interpretative textual analysis, as will be executed in this study. Cuddon (1991) showed that the concept of style is the distinctive way of expression in writings and how authors say things. Thus, stylistic analysis of literary works involves an investigation of an author’s use of language, including choice of words, adoption of figures of speech, the use of linguistic and rhetorical devices, and the structure of sentences.

Leech and Short (1981: 74) claim that all texts are marked by individual properties, and even though the author is the same, these properties can vary from text to text. Mahlberg (2007) further expands on their claim, saying that *corpus stylistics* can be applied to distinguish “tendencies, intertextual relationships, or reflections of social and cultural contexts.” What is more, *corpus stylistics* can contribute with descriptive tools that pinpoint characteristic features of a text. Leech and Short (1981) introduced useful categories in a stylistic analysis like “the high number of adjectives in a text, or the predominance of simple sentences, the fact that nouns tend to be postmodified by prepositional phrases, and so on” (Mahlberg, 2007: 222). She emphasises two important factors about frequency

and function words. Firstly, she explains that frequency helps draw a comparison of words in one text. Mike Scott's software, Word-Smith tool (Scott 2004), has a function called *keywords* that makes a list of words "which are unusually frequent (or infrequent) in a text as compared to the reference corpus" (ibid: 223). These keywords are basically proper nouns, content words signifying what the text is about, and function words. "Scott (2004-2006: 116) points out that the function words thrown up by keywords may indicate stylistic features." Secondly, Mahlberg underlines that, despite being frequent, function words tend to occur in collocations. Therefore, they affect the collocational patterns of content words. She also adds that it is necessary to look at the cooccurrence of words in a sequence. In her corpus project, Mahlberg calls these sequences "clusters," which appear to be the most frequent three-, four-, and five-word clusters found in the Dickens corpus. As Mahlberg highlights, all of them contain function words and have a stylistic value.

The latest linguistic turn within *stylistics* is corpus linguistics. Recently, corpus linguistics has been used in the literary text treatment. It is inspiring insights using digital or digitalised corpora databases made up of literary texts, which have gradually become available either from the Internet or from digital media and have been incorporated in interpretative textual analysis. For Mahlberg (2007a: 221), "*corpus stylistics* can provide quantitative data and analyse an individual text by providing various options for the comparison of one text with groups of other texts to identify tendencies, inter-textual relationships, or reflections of social and cultural contents." There are three possible corpus analytical approaches to text: (a) corpus-assisted analysis, (b) corpus-based analysis, and (c) corpus-driven analysis. Corpus-assisted analyses are carried out to check out a stylistician's intuition about the stylistic effects of a particular

target text. It does not require the construction of specialist corpora or expertise in computing or corpus analytical techniques as it deals with intratextuality analysis, and the focus is on the target text to extrapolate information relating to that text alone (Adolphs, 2006). Whereas corpus-based and corpus-driven analyses differ from corpus-assisted analysis, they treat the target analytical text (or texts) as a corpus. It is an intertextual analysis based on comparing the target corpus with a reference corpus. Biber (2011, p. 15-16) summarises the cross-fertilization between the two disciplines by arguing that:

*...a corpus provides the best way to represent a textual domain, and a corpus approach is the most powerful empirical approach for analyzing the patterns of language use in that domain. Such analyses are applicable in any-sub-discipline of linguistics that includes consideration of language use, including the study of lexical and grammatical variation, discourse patterns, spoken and written register variation, historical change, etc.*

It is beyond the scope of this paper to provide a detailed list of the stylistic studies which have been corpus-assisted, corpus-based, or corpus-driven. Such comprehensive coverage may be found in the study by Ho (2011). The main belief behind all the work within corpus linguistics is that frequency is an important parameter for detecting the meaning of a lexical item and for making general claims about understanding the discourse. A particular advantage of applying corpus linguistics techniques is that quantitative evidence can be provided. This combination of *stylistics* and corpus linguistics has come to be known as *corpus stylistics*, in which

*[t]he computer does not provide a single method of text*

*analysis but offers a range of exploratory techniques for investigating features of texts and corpora. The findings of corpus stylistics (comparative frequencies, distributions, and the like) sometimes document more systematically what literary critics already know (and therefore add to methods of close reading), but they can also reveal otherwise invisible features of long texts. (Stubbs 2005: 22)*

Stylistic analysis finds out how style resources are creatively put together to work. It is to do with designs in talk and the fashioning and understanding of social meanings. In Halliday's conception, style is the semantic organisation of linguistic choices taking account of communicative purposes and circumstances. It is as much about the "what" of language use, such as what gets talked about, and in what terms, as it is about the "how" of language use. There is no act of speaking without a register or style dimension at work within it (Coupland, 2007, p.26). For him (p.122), members of cultural groups perform their culture by creating "texts" of various sorts, the process of inter-textualization. They are aware of and engage in distinctive ways of speaking and interacting, and some of these are ritualised into familiar speech genres. Therefore, culture lays down or "sediments" texts by which one realises the culture (Bauman, 1996; Hanks, 1996; Irvine, 1996; Urban, 1996).

The writer of any genre is motivated by aims, that is, to entertain, inform, or persuade. Thus, the shared knowledge of the context between the writer and the intended audience bears some on what is written. There are some typical and recurrent meanings that are constituted using a stylistic variation, for example, to express one's relation towards a situation through the degree of formality or institutionalization of speech activities, to enable the self-presentation

of the speaker/writer, to tailor activities for types of recipients, to define a kind of relation between speaker or writer and recipient, and to set apart different kinds of activities in their sequence. Language is of stylistic significance if interpreted and treated as a meaningful resource. In this perspective, regional dialect can be used as a kind of "regional style" symbolizing its speakers' regional identity and allegiance, or sociolects can be deployed as "social styles" which symbolise different social worlds and their meanings for speakers and participants in the interaction. Certain ideas will also be taken for granted and so not fully explained in virtually any text, especially those ideas which relate to the cultural and social background against which the writing takes place. A good starting point for analysing any literary text is to examine the clear foregrounded parts and provide an interpretation which connects those parts (Short, 1996: 31). Foregrounded features are considered the parts of the text that the writer or speaker shows as essential to our understanding of what he has written. Leech (1970, p.38) used the term cohesion foregrounding to call the strategy of connecting foregrounded features. The researcher will analyse the linguistic features that are stylistically relevant and, for some reason, attract some degree of foregrounding. Stylistic «categories are more complex and often difficult to define, but they are describable in terms of linguistic categories.

### Corpus Analysis

Corpus linguistics has evolved from computational linguistics to test the applicability of computational software tools against naturally occurring data. It has developed as an objective technique to subject large corpora to an objective investigation. Therefore, reliability and replicability are fundamental to corpus linguistics. Its main concern is finding systematic patterns in language and decod-

ing the meanings attached to those patterns. Fischer-Starcke (2010, p. 1) showed that corpus linguistics makes it possible to (1) run a systemic lexical and grammatical analysis of a large collection of data looking for patterns and (2) interpret the meanings in those patterns. It “provides data with which conclusions can be reached more consistently” (Sinclair, 2010, p. 15). Corpora have been introduced into other linguistic disciplines and have succeeded in opening new research areas or bringing new insights to traditional research questions. A very common use of corpora in recent studies is to provide a detailed study of a particular grammatical construction that yields linguistic information on the construction, such as the various forms it has, its overall frequency, the specific contexts in which it occurs, and its communicative potential. Corpora are a very useful resource for pursuing various research agendas like dictionaries (Meyer, 2002: 29). While it is quite common to use corpora to investigate a single grammatical construction in detail, it is also possible to use it to obtain information on the structure and usage of many different grammatical constructions and to use this information as the basis for writing a reference grammar of English. According to Sinclair (1991), the idea of corpus linguistics lies in the concept that a word does not carry meaning, but that meaning is made through several words in a sequence.

Mahlberg (2007: 3) reported that *corpus stylistics* is “a way of bringing the study of language and literature closer together.” Additionally, a corpus stylistic analysis may reflect the peculiarities of the author's style as whole texts are considered. As Marina Bondi points out, “keywords are not necessarily a key to culture; however, they may facilitate understanding of the main point of a text, constituting chains of repetition in text” (2010: 3). Keywords carry significant implications for a text or culture. Thus, in quantitative analysis,

they appear to be more frequent or infrequent in a particular text or corpus than in a reference corpus (Scott, 1997; Baker, 2004; Scott & Tribble, 2006, cited by Bondi, 2010: 3).

### **Ideologies**

In the context of narrative fiction, ideology may be defined as the frame of values informing the narrative. It is always the reader who pieces together the ideology of the fiction at hand, but relevant choices invariably emerge from an interaction between three elements: reader, context, and text. Theories of ideology can be categorised according to the element they stress, psychological approaches are mostly concerned with the reader, sociological analyses tend to highlight the context (including the author), and discursive inquiries focus on the actual text. Any aspect of narrative form can lead to multiple ideological interpretations on the reader's part, but some narrative scholars have wanted to associate formal characteristics such as voice and focalization with a specific ideological meaning. Louis Althusser showed that it is impossible to access the "real conditions of existence" due to our reliance on language. Althusser posits a series of hypotheses that he explores to clarify his understanding of ideology. (1) "Ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence." This means that ideology does not "reflect" the real world but "represents" the "imaginary relationship of individuals" to the real world; the thing ideology (mis)represents is itself already at one remove from the real. In other words, we are always within ideology because of our reliance on language to establish our "reality"; different ideologies are but different representations of our social and imaginary "reality," not a representation of the real itself. (2) "Ideology has a material existence," which means that ideology always manifests itself through actions, which are "inserted into practices."

Language can only function if it is social and ideological. There is no abstract or nonideological language. And vice versa, there can be no ideology without a sign system: "everything ideological possesses *meaning* it represents, depicts, or stands for something lying outside itself. In other words, it is a *sign*. *Without signs, there is no ideology*" (9). Ideology can be considered a rhetorical effect of language that turns words into realities. It is defined as the power to present linguistic reality as *the* reality: "what we call ideology is precisely the confusion of linguistic with natural reality, of reference with phenomenism" (de Man 1986: 11). Van Dijk (2003: 4) showed that ideology neutrally is considered "socially shared beliefs that are associated with the characteristic properties of a group, such as their identity, their position in society, their interests and aims, their relations to other groups, their reproduction, and their natural environment."

Through literature, writers criticise or endorse social conditions, expressing their own opinions and viewpoints of their world. It is important to remember that each piece of literature is a deliberate construction. Every decision (structuring a text using certain words) a writer makes reflects their views and values about their culture, morality, politics, gender, class, history, or religion. This is implicit within the style and content of the text. This means that the writer's views and values are always open to the readers' interpretation and possibly even controversial. This is obtained by interpreting the relationship between the text and the ideas it explores, examines, endorses, or challenges in the writer's society. Ideology is defined in terms of consciousness, art, and fiction; thus, it is regarded as part of the broader sociology of knowledge that connects ideas to the social systems in which they arise (Eagleton, 2007). In the context of narrative fiction, ideology may be defined as the frame



of values informing the narrative (Herman & Vervaeck, 2013). It is not surprising that the study of narrative fiction and ideology has often been met. Generally, literary studies of ideology aim to uncover the connection between the literary field and aspects such as unconscious fantasies or class and gender. Ideology in fiction was most often studied as the "range of cultural stereotypes or accepted knowledge" (Culler, 1994: 141) contained within the narrative and accepted by the reader as natural and self-evident. Ideology forms part of the "cultural code" that refers to a body of cultural knowledge activated by the narrative. Cultural conventions are turned into natural and self-evident givens.

Tambling (1991) reported that when studying narratives, one investigates "the everyday life beliefs that operate through a culture," which is a part of a conventional way of thinking that is so automatic [...] that they are passed off as natural and spontaneous ways of thinking." Ideology is part of the thematic component of the text to be distinguished from the mimetic (with reference to the real world) and the synthetic elements (Phelan, ٢٠٠٥a: ٢٠). Combining the world of the text with the reader's realm, rhetorical narratology tries to reconcile the claims of the text (typically imposed by the authority of the implied author) with the freedom of the narrative audience. Consequently, the reader's response is at the same time linked with the ethics of everyday life (Gregory, ٢٠٠٩).

### Previous Studies

A lot of research is conducted about stylistic analysis, and others are mad about using computers in analysis. Hori (2004: 12) reports that "[t]he study of unusual collocations with high frequencies in the corpus of writers' whole texts may reveal their predilection for particular collocations; and repeated usual collocations in their

works could be considered the characters' idiolects." Previous research involving *corpus stylistics* includes Stubbs' study (2005) of the theme of vagueness and uncertainty in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, where he considers and uses corpus techniques to look at other lexical items denoting uncertainty. He searches for recurrent phrases using the N-Gram tool as a way of revealing current themes in the novel. In another study, Turci (2007) uses similar techniques to investigate word forms of the lemma DARK in the same work to look at the portrayal of imperialism. Other studies have investigated the characterisation of authorship, such as Burrows (1987), who analyses frequency profiles of individual words in Jane Austen novels in relation to the specific idiolects of certain characters, and Hoover (2002), who identifies authorial style by means of statistical analysis of highly frequent words and word clusters in a corpus of novels written by different authors. Barnbrook (1996) shows how frequency lists of *Frankenstein* can be analysed to extract all nouns that might refer to Frankenstein's creations, making concordance searches to differentiate individual items according to their context of use. Using a corpus-based approach, Semino & Short (2004) investigate how well the model of speech and thought presentation outlined in Leech and Short (1981) have worked on written text types other than the novel by means of a systematic and detailed annotation of a corpus of written fictional and nonfictional narratives for speech, writing, and thought presentation categories. Along similar lines but from a Systemic-Functionalist perspective, Torsello (2007) compares projection in literary and non-literary texts. In the same line, Mahlberg (2007a) uses a *corpus stylistics* approach to study local textual functions as stylistic features of the text in novels by Dickens. She investigates clusters as pointers to meanings and textual functions and compares clusters in *Bleak House* with clusters in other

Dickens novels. She found that certain functional groups played a particularly important role in characterisation. She also reaches a significant conclusion that the most frequent clusters are the short ones. Longer clusters of more than five-word clusters tend to be less frequent in the Dickens corpus. In another study by Khafagy (2021), he focuses on the translation of the literary Arabic text of "*Mortal Designs*" and its English form. He compares the translation of modern standardised Arabic and colloquial one in the novel, applying Newmark's semantic and communicative approach. It is a trial to deal with translated Arabic language varieties and how the translator dealt with the problems related to these varieties. Wijitsopon (2013) applies a corpus-driven approach to Jane Austen's six major novels to see how well the corpus approach is applicable to literary texts. He investigates the lexical patterns and their textual function in six novels by Jane Austin. He uses the keyword corpus tool compared to a reference corpus and uses three descriptive tools to investigate the stylistic features of keyword, collocation, and cluster. Hasab El-Nabi (2018) adopts a corpus-based approach to uncover the linguistic features that signal Alice Munro as a feminist writer. She compiles a corpus of Munro's thirteen short stories to be tested against a larger corpus of male short stories. Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar forms the linguistic framework of the study to reveal the lexico-grammatical features that characterise Munro's writing. She draws a quantitative and qualitative analysis using two software tools, AntConc and TACCO, for a grammatical analysis of the cohesive device of reiteration.

Review of related studies on *corpus stylistics* analysis applying corpus linguistics to literary texts also indicated that it is a very valuable future field. Most scholars like Mahlberg (2010), Mahlberg & McIntyre (2011), Mahlberg et al. (2013), O'Halloran, (2007), Sinclair

(2010), and Stubbs (2005) analyse lexico-grammatically patterns in one or two literary texts. They executed their studies either to elaborate on some stylistic features of the authors of these texts or to define some features characterising a certain register using computational linguistic tools for analysis. Mahlberg (2010) focuses on how corpus linguistics as a methodology validates quantitative and qualitative analysis of literary texts. Mahlberg & McIntyre (2011) use corpus linguistics for semantic analysis of the key semantic domains of the keywords in Fleming's *Casino Royale*. They classify the keywords into two groups characterised as text-cantered and as reader-cantered. The findings of their study prove that "corpus methods can aid the identification of elements of a text worthy of further qualitative analysis." O'Halloran (2007: p. 227) uses keyword list and concordance lines to reveal some of the subconscious intimations in James Joyce's novel "*Eveline*," reducing as much as possible arbitrariness and circularity in his analysis and interpretation. He compares the novel to the BNC-Baby reference corpus to extract keywords. Faiz et al. (2018) analyse the category of adjectives in the novel *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia*. He adopts Leech and Short's model to identify the author's choice of adjectives and their functions. His study throws ample light on the life, culture, economic scenario, and love and gender relations construed in the text through adjectives. Most of the above-mentioned studies focus on one or two descriptive features and their textual interpretation by analysing keywords, collocation, and extended lexical phrases.

### Data of the Study

Reem Bassiouney is an award-winning Egyptian novelist. She is a Professor of Sociolinguistics at the American University in Cairo, having taught at Cambridge, Oxford, and Utah. She writes widely on

gender and linguistics. She has written several novels and short stories and won the 2009 Sawiris Foundation Literary Prize for Young Writers for her novel *Dr Hanaa*. Bassiouney (2011) shows that, the deliberate use of one variety rather than the other depends on the context in which it is used. For her, people use their language to express their identities. In this study, the researcher uses the current novel because it represents the contemporary Egyptian novel in general and includes a lot about the features of Egyptian social issues and recent and lasting problems. It is translated by the American University in Cairo to represent the recent literary work in the Arabic area, in general, and Egypt in particular. The novel is written in colloquial Egyptian language to be considered as means to express the identity and ideology of the Egyptian society at the time of the story events. Hough (1969, p.3) shows that the author's style is the dress of his/her thoughts and is an expression of his/her personality. So, the question here is to identify Bassiouney's style and thoughts as a writer and individual of the society. Furthermore, he indicates that style is an aspect of meaning and the choice of the lexical and semantic resources built in a specific cultural and social entity. Indexical forms can imply and/or construct identity. The concept of indexicality involves the creation of semiotic links between linguistic forms and social meanings (Ochs, 1992; Silverstein, 1996). Ochs (1992) argues that one should consider identity formation at multiple indexical levels. Bucholtz & Hall (2010: 21) define an index as a linguistic form that depends on the interactional context for its meaning. Indexical processes occur at all levels of linguistic structure and use (Johnstone, 2010). "*Mortal Designs*" is a beautiful translation of Reem Bassiouney's Arabic novel (*Ashiaa Raa'e'a*). It is a love story born in the middle of many kinds of struggles, from social class and cultural differences, generation and gender clashes,

power struggles, and finally the dilemma of an internal struggle. The novel was translated by Melanie Magidow and was published in January of 2016 by The American University Press.

The story is about Captain Murad who is busy planning for the afterlife. He dreams of a grand, sunlit mausoleum on the banks of the Nile. To realise his pharaonic folly, the retired captain kindles an unlikely romance between Hazem, a feckless architect longing for immortality, and Asma, an impoverished single mother who strives for a better life for her children. As Murad's tomb rises on the riverbank, Hazem and Asma fall in love. A contemporary Egyptian romance of rare grace and wit, played out by characters trapped in their attitudes towards class and gender. It is a story of love, struggle, and sacrifice amidst corruption. The story is set in prerevolution Egypt with plenty of reflections on previous eras in Egypt's modern history. The two main characters, Asma and Hazim, though coming from completely different worlds, both claimed to defy the norm and despise corruption, only to realise that they are contributors to it in their own way. Asma, the third main character, is a widow who has vowed to raise her three children on her own. She refuses to give in to the boundaries and low expectations set for her by her community in Benha. She fights to change her reality, determined to rise above her status, no matter what it takes. She plans a detailed future for each of her children and a place in history for her name because she has changed the way people see women of her social class. Then, she sets off to execute her plans, enduring all kinds of blows along the way. She meets Dr Hazim, an elite architect from a higher social stratum who seeks immortality through his creations. Initially, Hazim alienates Asma and merely feels pity for her situation. The architect has lived a luxurious life, keeping himself at a distance from everything and everyone around him. He believes in

Egypt that he had created in his own head from the memory of his “good old days” and refuses to mingle with the public. But eventually, his ivory tower crumbles as he faces his own demons. The worlds of those two polar characters collide with what they believe is mutual benefit, which turns out as much more than that. They find themselves changing daily and fighting with themselves, society, and corruption. The other characters in the story are allegorical, representing different aspects of our society through vivid personas we meet every day. They play essential roles in shaping the destinies of Asma and Hazim, whether through directly impacting them or being the driver that makes them act one way or the other. The story open ends in what is believed to be a very realistic style. It is full of monologues, scenes, and imagery that make the readers’ mind wander and reflect on the world they live in. Within the literature, ideas, views, values, and issues do not exist in a vacuum. They arise out of the writer’s style and create meaning. By analysing how the text critiques, challenges, or endorses the accepted values of the society in the text, the reader demonstrates an understanding of the social and cultural context of the text, thus acknowledging the multifaceted layers that exist within the literature. One is identifying the writer’s commentary on humanity through your own interpretation. So, “*Mortal Designs*” can be dealt with from this perspective.

### Methodology

Leech and Short (2007, p. 61) introduce a checklist of linguistic and stylistic categories, including lexical categories, grammatical categories, figures of speech, and cohesion and context. The lexical categories for nouns enable the researcher to see whether the nouns are abstract or concrete, the kinds of abstract nouns, and the use of proper names and collective nouns. The lexical categories for ad-

jectives are based on whether they are frequent and whether they denote physical, psychological, visual, auditory, colour, referential, emotive, or evaluative attributes. Adjectives are also categorised according to whether they are adjectives restrictive or non-restrictive, gradable or non-gradable, or attributive or predicative.

A digital copy of "*Mortal Designs*" by Reem Bassiouney functions as the primary corpus for this paper. The novel's analysis is based on two systematic theoretical approaches, Leech and Short's (2007) Analytical Checklist and Halliday's (2014) Systematic Functional Linguistics Approach. The two approaches mainly focus on analysing the linguistic features of the novel. This is an eclectic model that provides a clear framework with text analytic tools that enable analysts to find out what the text is doing conceptually, and the way readers perceive the world presented in the text. As Halliday's theoretical approach is known, systemic functional grammar is largely an attempt to model the increasingly detailed meaning choices that speakers make and how meanings come to be realised utterances because it tries to trace meaning choices that are made available in social contexts. Systemic functional linguistics has not specialised in modelling variable language use at the level of accents and dialects. But its general perspectives on style are useful for sociolinguistics, particularly in stipulating that style is socio-semantically motivated. It emphasises that style is a part of the process of meaning-making in discourse. Issues of social context are at the heart of any language style analysis.

This study uses two types of software to conduct the quantitative analysis of Reem Bassiouney's novel "*Mortal Designs*". The first is *AntConc* software (2020) version 4.0.10 with the help of *TagAnt* software (Anthony, 2015) version 2.0.4, which is used to annotate the corpus. *AntConc* software is chosen for being free and user-



friendly, and it provides the researcher with all the descriptive tools that validate the quantification of the corpus, such as the *wordlist*, *keyword list*, and *concordance* tools. Leech and Short's list is used to interpret the syntactic patterns used in the study. Systematic patterns are found and traced in the analytical corpus using tools such as concordance, which "is a display format that shows a search word with a specified amount of context to its left and to its right" (Mahlberg, 2010, p. 292). Another tool is the *keyword* that enables "the comparison of word frequencies across corpora, annotating corpora with further information to retrieve specific grammatical patterns and applying statistical tests to assess the significance of frequency information" (Mahlberg, 2010, p. 293). *Wordlist* is a tool to find out the most frequently used words in the text analysed. Finally, in the light of the systematic functional grammar approach, the purpose of using certain patterns is identified, and the writer's ideology is interpreted and highlighted.

The following few lines will show how these steps are carried out. Thus, this study seeks to demonstrate Bassiouney's use of various linguistic patterns in her novel "*Mortal Designs*" (2016) to reveal how she creatively uses those linguistic devices and techniques to depict, reinforce, and enhance meanings in her novel. Analysing "*Mortal Designs*" is a feasible study since it seeks to analyse Bassiouney's use of (a) lexis (nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs), (b) grammar (simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences), (c) poetic figures of speech (metaphor, simile, and personification), and (d) using Halliday's socio-semantic variables of field, tenor, and mode to analyse the context defining Bassiouney's stylistic voice. Therefore, this linguistic analysis explores how the artistic effect of the novel is achieved and how themes are harmoniously expressed through the writer's linguistic choices. It is also concerned with in-

investigating sentence complexity to reveal how language functions in a literary work to communicate its intended message. It explores Bassiouney's use of various experiences and ideologies to voice her beliefs, ideas, and thoughts and how she manages to express them all via language. To the researcher's knowledge, there are no stylistic studies conducted on this novel before. In this study, the researcher provides sample extracts that best present the linguistic phenomena under investigation derived from the screens of *AntConc*. The quantitative analysis provides the statistics related to the frequency of collocation patterns and phrasal patterns in the corpus. The qualitative analysis discusses how this can be related to interpretative issues. The corpus of the study is treated in five steps as follows:

1. Examine the sentences and word length and extract a word list of the highest frequent words using the keyword list tool from the text.
2. Identify the most frequently used part of speech and choose the highest frequent words according to Leech and Short's list.
3. Categorise the words according to their semantic field and create a wordlist to specific word classes in each corpus, the content words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs), and the pronouns used in the corpus.
4. Analyse these word lists using Leech and Short's (2007) checklist categories.
5. Perform a keyword analysis and interpret and explain each category as shown in the Analysis and Discussion section.
6. Elicit the study results.

**Step 1.** The data were first dealt with using *TagAnt* software to mark every word with its part of speech. The annotated data have

been sorted into different wordlists; each one includes items that belong to a particular word class with its frequency of occurring in the study corpus. A main word list of the highest frequent words was extracted using the keyword list tool in *AntConc* version 4.0.10 (2018) as shown in (Figure 1).

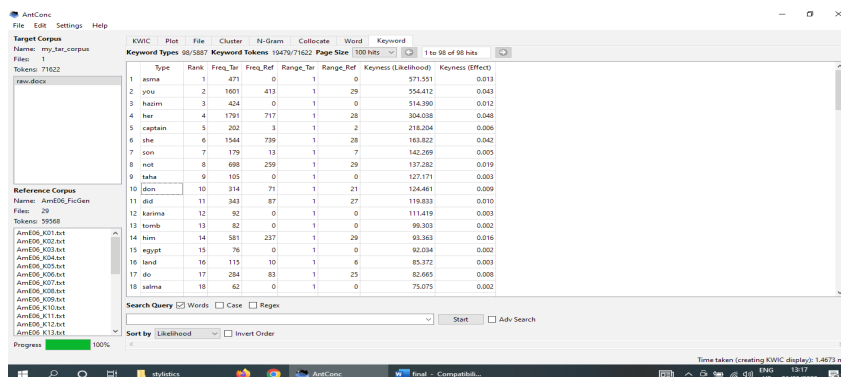


Fig (1): screen of wordlist from the program

**Step 2.** A word list of all total words is created using the word list tool in *AntConc* version 4.0.10 (2018) as shown in (Figure 2).

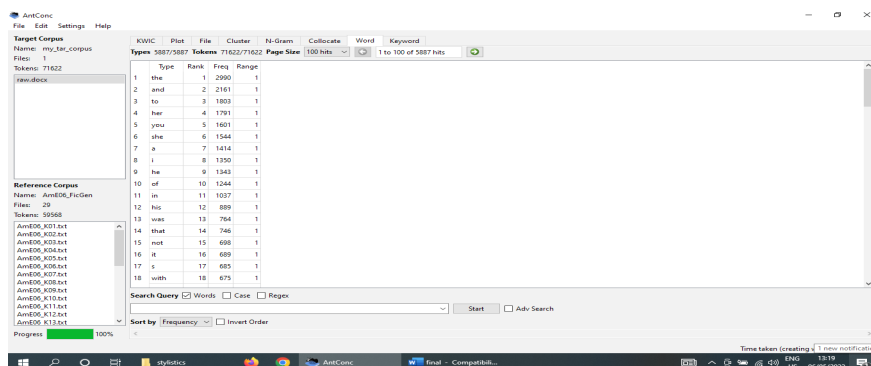


Fig (2): screen of wordlist from the program

The content word list is analysed using cluster and concordance tools according to Leech and Short's list, which will be discussed in Analysis and Discussion.

**Step 3.** The keyword list is categorised into two main word types using an Excel sheet: functional and content words. The content words or open-ended words, including nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, are also classified as the most frequently repeated ones. The functional words, including articles, prepositions, and linking words, are also classified as the most frequently repeated ones. The four categories are indicated in Analysis and Discussion.

**Steps 4 and 5.** The highest frequent words are used with the clustering and concordance tool to carry out steps (4) and (5) to interpret and explain each category and elicit the study results, as shown in the Analysis and Discussion section according to Leech and Short's list of style markers indicated in Table 1.

Table 1: A checklist of linguistic and stylistic categories (Leech and Short, 1981: 75-80)

<i>Leech and Short's checklist of style markers</i>	
Lexical categories	General, nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs
Grammatical categories	Sentence types, sentence complexity, clause types, clause structure, noun phrases, verb phrases, other phrase types, word classes, and general
Figures of speech	Grammatical and lexical schemes, phonological schemes, and tropes
Context and cohesion	Context and cohesion

In this study, both the quantitative and qualitative methods are employed to examine the linguistic features of the data and selected stylistic categories have been chosen from the checklist presented by Leech and Short (2007) to perform the stylistic analysis. This checklist includes four major categories, as illustrated in Figure 1. Furthermore, selected subcategories from the lexical and grammatical categories are used in this study.

## Analysis and Discussion

*Stylistics* investigates “the relation between the writer’s artistic achievement, and how it is achieved through language... It studies the relation between the significance of a text, and the linguistic characteristics in which they are manifest” (Leech and Short, 2007, pp. 55-56). According to Leech and Short, it is classified into four categories. The selection of these features to trace their significance in each text is a difficult task if it is intuitive. Therefore, they prefer to have a “checklist to potential style markers... so that a reader may carry out a linguistic survey of the text, searching for significant features” (p. 56). The checklist of linguistic features, proposed by Leech and Short (2007), functions as an analytic tool used to discuss and examine the author’s linguistic choices (lexical, grammatical, and syntactic choices) and how they effectively convey the intended meanings of the text, interpret its artistic message, and enhance the aesthetic value of its thematic significance. In this paper, the researcher is concerned with elaborating the lexical features, which are divided into general features, nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. Through language, the content of a text finds its fullest expression. Thus, when a text is analysed, its linguistic features are of prime importance. One of the most obvious features of a writer’s individual style is his fondness for certain words or types of words, which provides a clue to the predominant attitude of the writer. The analysis involves dividing a text into its multifarious components to discover each part’s function and pinpointing how the author puts it all together to create an aesthetic whole. This promotes a deeper understanding and fuller appreciation of the literary text. Additionally, it shows how resources of language—images, the essential process of meaning-making—are utilised to create works of literature. As a result, the reader acquires greater awareness of recognising

and using narrative devices, tools, and techniques present in the text. Let us see who these are working together in the novel. The four broad categories are as follows.

### Lexical Categories

Lexical categories include general words, nouns, verbs, and adjectives. They are mainly associated with the morphological and syntactic behaviour of the linguistic elements that are components of the lexicography of a language. A lexical category is recognised as a word class or part of speech. Most of the vocabularies in the text are simple and easy to understand. However, it is obvious that the author also employs many complicated and abstract words, especially the nouns, belief/wisdom, to create the complex atmosphere in the story. Complex words are made up of “simpler words” that structurally undergo some sort of “morphological modification” (e.g., adding affixes, prefixes, or suffixes to the main form of the word to change its meaning or its part of speech). According to Wales (2001: 176), pronouns involve “generic reference,” for example, “You\one never can tell” because they indicate “people in general.”

Pronouns are the most repeated words, which indicate the generalization of ideas and thoughts (Table 2). All types of pronouns are represented, but the highest one is “her,” which indicates the author’s preference for her gender and ideas about female equality. The second one is “you,” which indicates that the direction of talk is to the listener or reader. Concentration will be more on content open-ended words.

**Table 2: Pronouns frequencies in the novel as part of lexical category.**

S. no.	Type	Freq_Tar	Freq_Ref	Norm-Freq_Tar	NormFreq_Ref	Keyness (likelihood)	Keyness (effect)
1	Her	1775	717	24332.735	12036.664	279.973	0.047

2	You	1561	413	21399.098	6933.253	506.118	0.042
3	She	1544	739	21166.052	12405.99	152.889	0.041
4	He	1354	776	18561.421	13027.129	64.564	0.036
5	His	892	503	12228.056	8444.131	45.875	0.024

According to Mandell and Kirsznar (2012: 194), general or generic words indicate “entire classes or groups,” while specific words denote “particular persons, items, or events.” This text contains many open class words in the novel. Open class words are those which carry the majority of meaning in a language, as opposed to closed class (grammatical) words such as determiners (e.g., the/3023 hits) and prepositions (e.g., in/1064 hits and of/1260 hits). Closed class words like (but/317 hits, for/596 hits, so/172 hits, because/76 hits, after/92, and then before/88) link sentences together. Open class words in meaningful arrangements (sentences) are content words that express meaning and add more information. Table (3) shows how the open class words are distributed throughout the text and whether they are nouns, verbs, adjectives, or adverbs, and the frequency rates of the lexical categories according to the total number of the words and the total number of the content words. According to Wales (2001: 100-123), words, in general, have emotive meanings and referential meanings. The emotive meaning, referred to as the occasional, affective, or associative meaning that a vocabulary can acquire in a specific context, indicates “the effect that a word might have on the emotions of the reader/listener.” The referential meaning refers to “the basic or central conceptual meaning of words or signs, without the associations or metaphoric meanings which they can acquire in particular contexts.” The meaning of words is the one on which definitions of words are established upon and derived from in lexicons.

Regarding verbs, as seen in Table 3, tenses and aspects are represented in the novel as follows. Both time and aspect are very significant in any text. Tense is the grammaticalization of location in time that establishes a relation and indicates the time of an event, whereas aspect is a grammatical category of a verb that indicates completion, duration, and repetition of an action. The most frequently repeated verbs are presented in table (3) and past continuous is represented by 88 hits.

**Table 3: Verb frequencies in the novel as part of lexical category.**

S. no.	Type	Freq_Tar	Freq_Ref	NormFreq_Tar	NormFreq_Ref	Keyness (likelihood)	Keyness (effect)
1	Are	211	83	2892.511	1393.366	34.789	0.006
2	Know	208	86	2851.385	1443.728	30.548	0.006
3	Looked	173	67	2371.585	1124.765	29.505	0.005
4	Want	192	54	2632.048	906.527	56.751	0.005
5	Will	198	50	2714.299	839.377	67.166	0.005

Verbs are used in the novel in different types. Some of them are physical (e.g., smiled/77 times and looked/173 times), mental (e.g., understand/75, believe/48, and know/208), and social (e.g., smile/77 hate/19), which are repeated in different contexts. The verbs vary between stative, such as “know”, “be”, and “love”, and dynamic, such as “work”, “drink”, “walk”, and “say”, and other verbs can be both according to the context, such as have indicating ownness, eating, or drinking something. Some stative verbs are progressive, such as “saying”, “smiling”, and the highest repeated one is “going” with 80 hits, and the less repeated one is “gathering” with only 4 hits. Most of the text contains verb phrases that are in the present simple tense that is used to express daily habitual actions and state of being. The progressive tense is used to express an ongoing action at the time of speaking, and the past tense or modal auxiliary verbs are used to express anticipated action. Auxiliary modal



verbs are always followed by infinitive or pronouns in positive or negative situations, as shown in Figure (3). The variety of tenses in the text reflects and exposes the situations in the Egyptian society during this time.

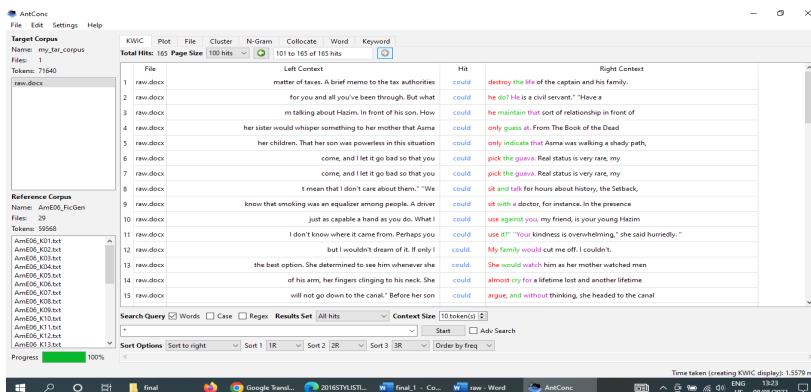


Fig (3): screen of modal verbs from the program

Table 4: Verb frequencies in the novel as a part of lexical category of verb form with “ing.”

S. no.	Type	Freq	NormFreq
1	Going	80	1116.975
2	Saying	67	935.467
3	Looking	42	586.412
4	Talking	38	530.563
5	Living	32	446.79

To express the general context of the society, the author used the verb going to share the concept in life and work too, saying, “The sense of distrust between her and the other villagers was entirely mutual. She faced them in all her steadfast pride, **going** about her work and **urging** her children to succeed. “as shown in figure (4)

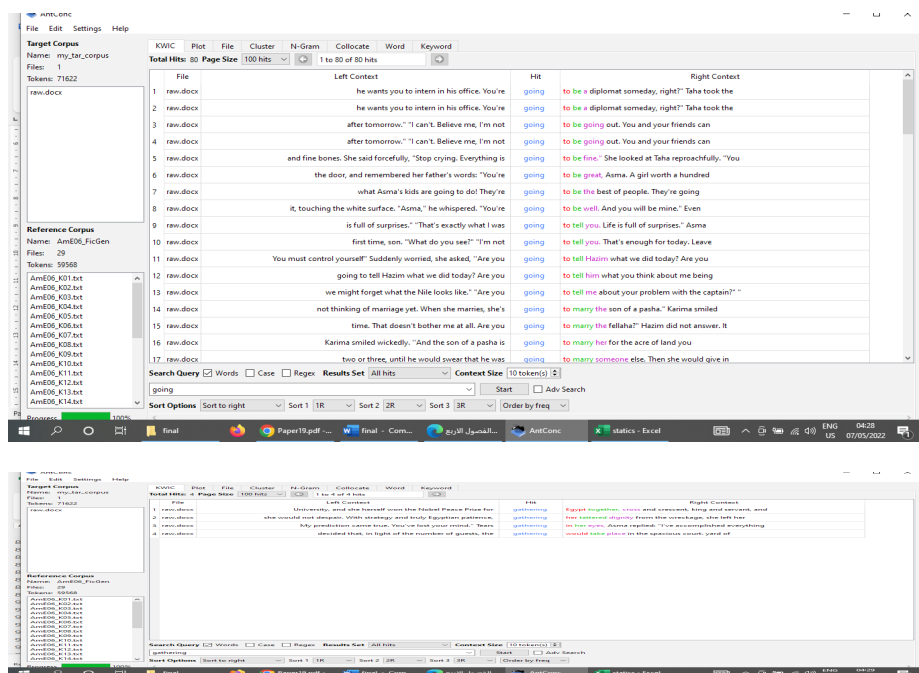


Fig (4): screen of “ing” use from the program

The first sentence to express Asma’s beliefs is “and she herself won the Nobel Peace Prize for **gathering** Egypt together, cross and crescent, king and servant, and all classes,” where she won the Noble Prize for gathering the people in her country. She loves freedom and social life. One of the great stylistic expressions is when Asma left her home and went to Cairo, “With strategy and truly Egyptian patience, **gathering** her tattered dignity from the wreckage.” Another category of verbs is the factive and non-factive verbs. Crystal (2008: 184) defines a factive verb as “a verb which takes a complement clause, and where the speaker presupposes the truth of the proposition expressed in that clause,” such as “realise,” “know,” and “regret.” Huang (2012: 114) contends that not only verbs but also any “adjective or even NP that takes complement clause” can be factive. The author used some of these verbs too in the novel. The

verb regret is used only once when Asma felt unusualness in her relationship with Hazim, "She began to **regret** her visit to him. Even though she had shown great hospitality in the past, and would do so again, she did not want to lose her dignity entirely in his presence." Table 5 shows the use of the past tense.

**Table 5: Verb frequencies in the novel as a part of lexical category of verb form with "ed."**

S. no.	Type	Freq	NormFreq
1	Looked	172	2401.497
2	Asked	112	1563.765
3	Smiled	77	1075.089
4	Wanted	74	1033.202
5	Replied	57	795.845

Adjectives are semantically classified into physical, psychological, visual, auditory, referential, emotive, and evaluative. This systematic categorisation is based on the kind of attribute that these adjectives represent. They denote some quality or property attributed to nouns. Physical and visual adjectives represent physical features like colour, shape, and so on. Four adjectives are used to describe the physical environment, body parts, or colours like "green," "large," "heavy," and "tall." As shown in figure (5).



Fig (5): screen of "adjectives" from the program

Psychological adjectives describe the mental, intellectual, and emotional state of someone. Most of the emotional adjectives focus

on fear of marriage (30 hits), fear of joy, fear of death, or expressing happiness (15 hits), or being sad (4 hits), but the adjective dark is used (21 hits) when describing the tomb or death when saying “We all fear **the dark**. It will come whether we like it or not.” The author used the word beautiful (21 hits) with different collocations, such as time, body features, or environment; however, the best use of it is when Hazim described Asma: “You’re not a woman I know. You’re the woman I love, and **the most beautiful woman** to me.” Auditory adjectives cover auditory properties, including loudness, absolute pitch, relative pitch, and harmony or melody. Colour adjectives indicate brightness or colour. Referential adjectives work to classify or specify entities. Emotive adjectives are used to describe emotions and feelings, both positive and negative, or neutral emotions. As shown in figure (6).

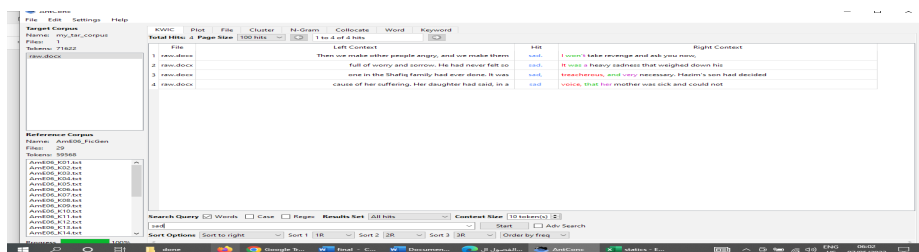


Fig (6): screen of “adjectives” from the program

Finally, evaluative adjectives signify subjective judgments of desirability along physical or social dimensions to either inherent traits or temporary states (Leech et al., 1982; Givón: 2001; Lieber & Stekauer, 2014). Adjectives are gradable and non-gradable. The gradable adjectives are those referring to qualities that can vary along a continuous scale, like size, age, weight, and so on. Non-gradable adjectives are those referring to “all or none” qualities, like sex and nationality. The main distinction between gradable and non-gradable adjectives is that gradable adjectives can be modified

by degree adverbs, like very, extremely, and so on. They can also have comparative and superlative forms. Adjectives can also be attributive and predicative. This systematic classification of adjectives is based on their function in the sentence. Attributive adjectives appear between the determiner and the head of a noun phrase (Quirk et al., 1985, 402) or postmodify the head of the noun phrase, and in this case, they are called postposed attributives (Nida, 1964: 89).

## Nouns

Nouns are highly used in the text with different types like abstract and concrete singular or plural countable and uncountable. Mandell & Kirsznier (2012: 194) showed that they are general words or generic words that indicate “entire classes or groups” or specific words that denote “particular persons, items, or events.” The search results show that the grammatical category of general nouns achieves the highest frequency, as indicated in Table 6.

**Table 6: General nouns frequencies in the novel as part of lexical category.**

S. no.	Type	Freq_Tar	Freq_Ref	NormFreq_Tar	NormFreq_Ref	Keyness (likelihood)	Keyness (effect)
1	Captain	194	3	2659.465	50.363	205.581	0.005
2	Eyes	191	81	2618.339	1359.79	26.336	0.005
3	Mother	186	69	2549.796	1158.34	34.715	0.005
4	Son	179	13	2453.836	218.238	139.56	0.005
5	Day	137	50	1878.076	839.377	26.403	0.004

Abstract nouns are used. The general tags used for searching are (ness/139) and (ment/129), like “Asma began her plan for growth, **happiness**, and **advancement** through Egyptian society.” Indicating Asma’s believes about social life and improvement; she is planning to have in her society. The nouns ending with (ation/165) and (ity/150) are used in a long sentence like “Because Asma was ambi-

tious and wanted to climb the Egyptian social ladder, taking a hundred steps a day; and because Asma wanted to advocate for equality and workers' **liberation**; and because Asma dared to dream of a better future for her children," expressing the manner of Asma to achieve her dreams in her life and also describing Hazim's life in "Hazim needed to spend his time in complete **concentration** to work seriously like his father and grandfather." Nouns with (ism/14) and (ance/55) are used in "For then he had given her the **chance** to love him" when talking about Asma's ex-husband. This is shown in figure (7).

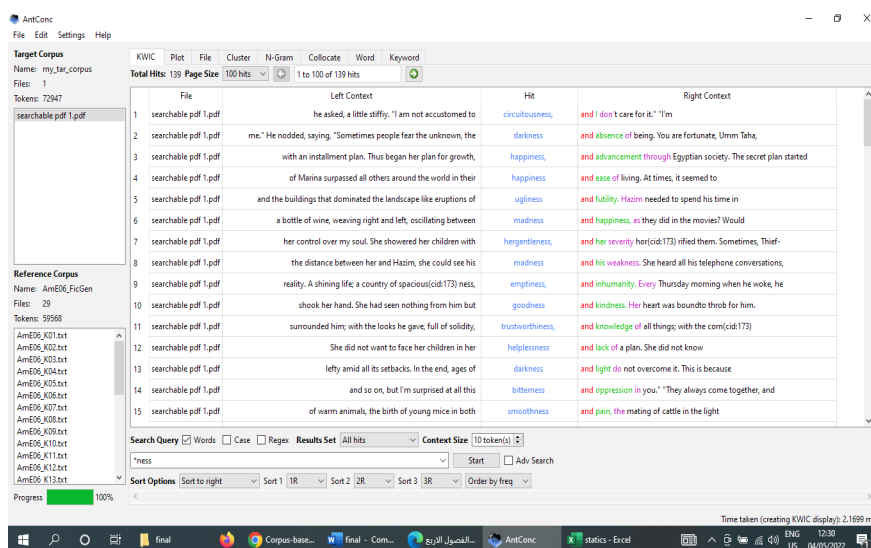


Fig (5): screen of nouns from the program

## Specific Nouns (Names)

The writer does not select these fictional names arbitrarily, and all are well known to the Egyptian society. Authors sometimes use proper names metaphorically to function as symbols of certain ideas or features that they intend to convey to the audience. Concrete nouns indicate lexical items that name things that the

readers can see, hear, taste, smell, or touch, such as bed, rice, and window (Mandell & Kirsznar, 2012: 467). This means that concrete nouns are real objects associated with the physical world as shown in table (7).

**Table (7): concrete nouns in the novel.**

S. no.	Type	Freq_Tar	Freq_Ref	NormFreq_Tar	Keyness (likeli-hood)	Key-ness (effect)
1	Egypt	88	0	1206.355	105.113	0.002
2	Cairo	44	0	603.178	52.545	0.001
3	Fawziya	21	0	287.88	25.075	0.001
4	Khalid	42	0	575.76	50.156	0.001
5	Marina	25	0	342.715	29.852	0.001
6	Murad	23	0	315.297	27.464	0.001
7	Nile	21	0	287.88	25.075	0.001

### Adverbs

Generally, adverbs can modify any grammatical category of words other than nouns, for example, adjectives, adverbs, verbs, phrases, clauses, or sentences. Adverbs can be semantically classified into three main types: circumstantial adverbs that add circumstantial information like time, place, and manner to the main idea communicated by the other elements of the sentence. She uses the circumstantial adverb (then/235 hits) that indicates time sequence and reflections on the novel action. It is mostly followed by a noun phrase like "She examined his face. **Then** she began to dust the couch and said, 'Lousy! As usual, just like everyone,'" which is very important to the narrativity sequence of the story. Additionally, it is always followed by a noun phrase. This is shown in figure (8).

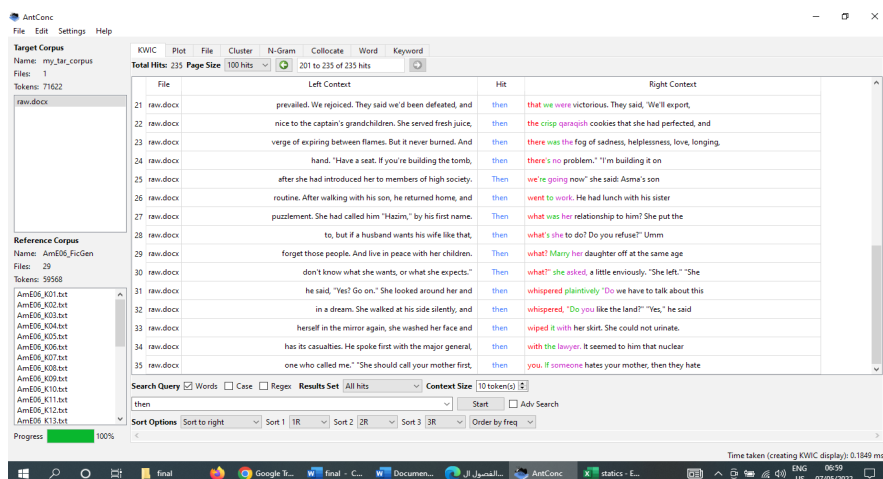


Fig (8): screen of adverbs from the program

The style stance adverbs are mostly used in the novel telling the speaker's attitude like "shook it **warmly** and said, 'I hope to see you often, and hear all your news,'" to express emotions and positive attitude from Taha towards Hazim and willing to see him again. Many adverbs are used to comment on the manner of speaking like "**shyly, sorrowfully, and calmly**" or others focusing on viewpoint like when the captain expresses his will after dying saying, "I don't want any woman buried next to me-**especially** not my wives." Degree adverbs like very (44 hits) are also used like in "Because Hazim's life was **very** difficult." The adverb "just" is used to express the meaning, which is often context-dependent like expressing "closeness in time" like in "That day she hired a maid **just** for the Friday lunch." Furthermore, many adverbs are used in the same manner depending on the context they are used in. this is shown in figure (9)



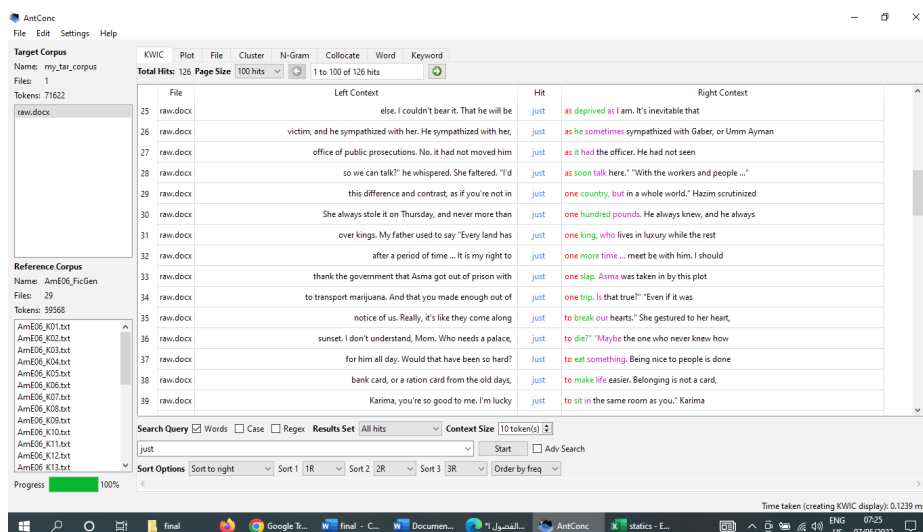


Fig (9): screen of style stance adverbs from the program

In terms of gradeability, the degree adverbs modify adjectives and other words. The sentence adverbs that apply to the whole clause of the sentence express an attitude to it or a connective between it and another clause or sentence (Leech et al., 1982, 48). Searching the novel about the adverbs that end with (ly), it is found that she used 310 hits with different purposes. This is shown in table (8).

Table (8): degree adverbs

S. no.	Type	Freq	NormFreq
1	Only	82	1144.9
2	Quickly	46	642.261
3	Really	39	544.525
4	Angrily	30	418.866
5	Suddenly	19	265.282

Lexical grouping through repetition helps people notice that almost all the repeated words belong to a series of conceptual groups in the text. Many prepositional phrases are repeated (of emotion and belief). Collocation that indicates the "habitual occurrence of indi-

vidual lexical items" (Crystal, 2008, 87) contributes to the cohesion of a text through the selection of vocabulary (Al-Pachachi, & Nase, 2016, p. 36). The use of the verbs (replied, said, and whispered) and adding some adverbs to them send messages to the reader and add more to the meaning like "Asma **whispered** imploringly, 'I just want to meet with her, the maid sighed in exasperation, and went to call Karima.'" She wanted to add a degree of willingness to her request to meet the lady. However, lexical cohesion contributes significantly to the interpretation process of the analysed text. Giannossa (2012) comments that an author chooses his/her lexis having a specific purpose and readership in mind. Through word choice, she/he aims to evoke a particular emotion or reaction on the reader's part (Giannossa, 2012, p. 3).

### Conjunctions

Coordinating conjunctions are widely deployed in the novel, where they are used to link two or more independent clauses (and/2628 hits, but/317 hits, and or/269 hits). Thus, the prominent use of the coordinator "and" promoted the string of thoughts of the writer as it has a special function on the sequence of the novel's action and the writer's thoughts. This is shown in figure (10)

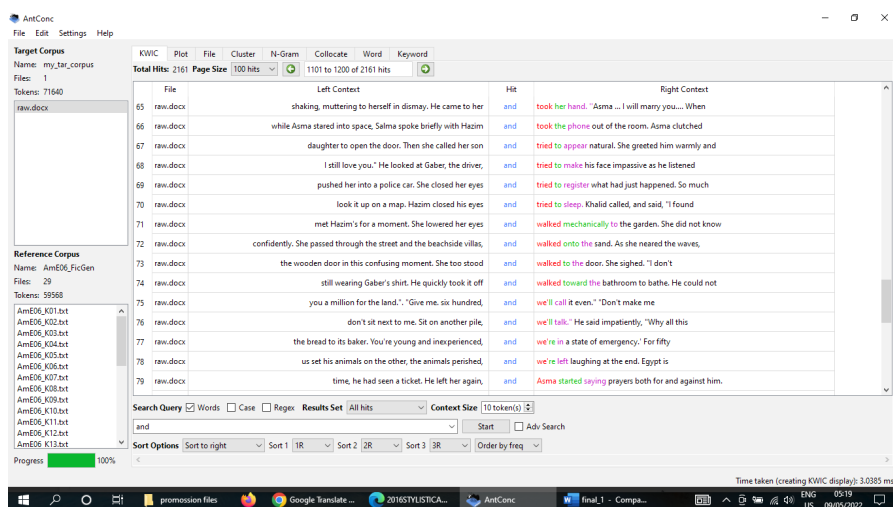


Fig (10): screen of conjunctions from the program

## Contractions

A contraction is a shortened form of a word (or group of words) that omits certain letters or sounds. In most contractions, an apostrophe represents the missing letters. The most common contractions are made up of verbs, auxiliaries, or modals attached to other words. It mostly occurs between the noun phrase and the auxiliary verb, as seen in the screenshot. Different contractions are used like "don't, doesn't, can't, and couldn't." Among them, "don't" is the most used contraction (314 hits). Using contractions made the text simpler and easier to read. This is shown in figure (11).

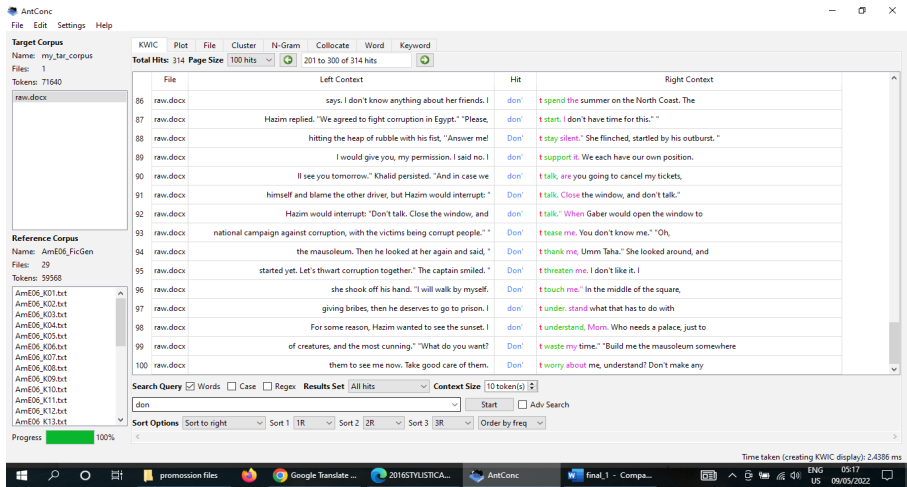


Fig (11): screen of contractions from the program

Non-lexical terms like determiners (Det.), auxiliaries (Aux.), conjunctions (Conj), and degree words (Deg) are also used, as shown in the following table. Determiners are used in front of nouns to indicate whether you refer to something specific or something of a particular type. The types of determiners include articles, ordinals, numbers, demonstratives, possessive adjectives, and quantifiers. This is shown in table (9)

Table (9): Determiners.

Type	Articles	Demonstratives	Ordinals	Numbers	Quantifiers	Possessive adj.
Word/frequencies	A (1415)	This (226)	First (80)	One (218)	Some (62)	My (372)
	An (168)	That (746)	Second (34)	Two (45)	Any (78)	Your (301)
	The (2992)	These (33)	Third (8)	Three (50)	Every (82)	His (889)
		Those (39)	Last (17)	Four (14)	More (103)	Her (1791)
			Next (26)	five (13)	Much (61)	Its (53)
				six (12)	Few (27)	Our (72)
				seven (9)	Little (65)	Their (82)
					Very (44)	

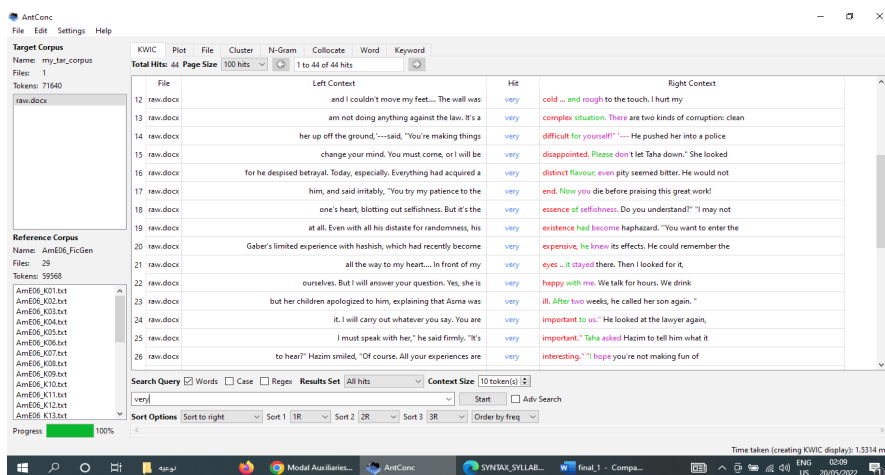


Fig (12): screen of determiners from the program

## Auxiliaries

Auxiliaries are mostly followed by verb to be to express a future wish to be in another case. For example, "The land *would* be in your name, so, no one *could* claim that it was your kid, leaving you to squander the money on a new husband." Another example is "Egypt *would* have been enabled to make political decisions freely and un-

encumbered.” Where the auxiliary is a part of the tense formulation, the negative form (not) is used with different auxiliaries like do, did, and be. This is shown in table (10)

**Table (10) frequencies of auxiliaries**

Word	would	Will	Could	Can	Must	Should	May	might	Ought to
frequency	373	199	165	138	77	39	31	23	1

uses the canal. Everyone is afraid. They are afraid of the water buffalo too,	not	trusting water in which their animals have perished.” “The water buffalo obviously died
to ask this of you.» He gave her a long look that she did	not	understand. Then he said suddenly, “I’m afraid I must return to Cairo
into nothingness; the trees remained, only to laugh at me and blame me. For	not	understanding, and for not knowing. Four LUCK PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE in the
to do there. He had asked Gaber to return in the morning. Gaber had	not	understood what Hazim was making-perhaps a subterranean vault in which to hide
and the crusher. She would accomplish that which America and the Arab world had	not,	uniting friends and foes. Preparation for traveling to Marina started a month in
again, she washed her face and then wiped it with her skirt. She could	not	urinate. The urine was trapped within her in anxiety and tension. She went
beautiful, though. Her clothes are more colourful than necessary, and all her gold is	not	very tasteful, but she has fine features and a well-proportioned body. She’
land, right?» to which I agreed.» «Isn’t that what we agreed? I’m	not	violating any contract “I’m sorry. I didn’t mean ...” He turned toward
flowers. It was two more years before he learned to drive, and he had	not	visited the traffic office to this day. Fate did not allow Hazim to
his arms and loved him. She whispered that he was her life. He could	not	wait for marriage. She did not wait, but dissolved in him in a
whispered that he was her life. He could not wait for marriage. She did	not	wait, but dissolved in him in a reckless, youthful outburst. When he married
He would build the tomb first, and then decide who deserved it. Immortality does	not	wait. Like life, it passes on as quickly as one can draw a
driver to take her instead to another place: Hazim’s office. His secretary was	not	waiting outside like he had been on other days. She was not sure
monthly pension. She put on her loose black dress and black headscarf: She did	not	wear any makeup, not even the eyeliner that was always in her bag.
her and sucked on her lips. It was clear to everyone that Asma was	not	well-that she had been through difficult times, flipped on both sides like

## Deixis

Deixis is a means of representing time, space, and society. The

author used deictic words to present time, space, and society. Deictic words are those whose meanings depend on the context in which they are used. They include words for place, time, tense, and person. They have two main functions: first, creating a “deictic projection” that enables readers to place themselves in the author’s position; second, helping the author occupy the “deictic centre” of the text. Moreover, it makes readers conscious of the temporal and spatial setting in the text they are reading.

### Grammatical Categories

The scope or the main concern of grammatical category is the syntactic structure of sentences created by the author via the essence, messages, thoughts, feelings, and ideas that can be expressed through a plethora of distinctive structures and various lexical items that are highly indicative. Grammatical categories include sentence types, sentence complexity, clause types, clause structure, noun phrases, verb phrases, and other phrase types and word classes. Regarding sentence types, the writer uses short sentences and long ones like *“After driving for a few minutes, Hazim arrived at the kind of test that makes a boy into a man and a girl into a woman, and makes every human grow up and face the difficulties of life with composure and bravery.”* However, the most used ones are the short sentences that form a simple way to express ideas and thoughts.

Regarding sentence complexity, all types of sentences are represented in the text. The use of too many simple sentences can make writing “choppy” and can prevent the writing from flowing smoothly. Simple sentences are the most frequent type like *“Did I choose to be a widow,”* indicating that she has nothing to do with her fate. A compound sentence refers to a sentence made up of two independent clauses (or complete sentences) connected to one

another with a coordinating conjunction. Compound sentences are those linked with conjunctions. The frequency of conjunctions used is shown in Table (11).

**Table (11): frequencies of simple conjunctions that link compound sentences.**

Word	For	And	Nor	But	Or	Yet	So
Frequency	605	1980	36	317	270	44	171

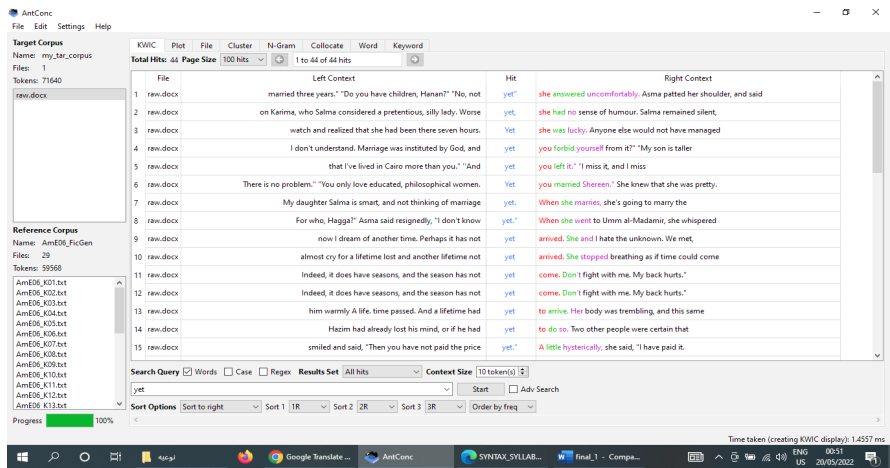


Fig (13): screen of compound sentences from the program

Examples of using the conjunction *and* that add two nouns are as follows: "He did not know what it was like *for* a child to drive a toy car around in a small, tight circle as fast as possible, *or* how to close his eyes to meet a crash, *or* how to prevent the car from flipping over. After driving for a few minutes, Hazim arrived at the kind of test that *makes a boy into a man and a girl into a woman, and makes every human grow up and face* the difficulties of life with *composure and bravery.*" A complex sentence is made up of an independent clause and one or more dependent clauses connected to it. A dependent clause is like an independent clause or complete sentence, but it lacks one of the elements that would make it a complete sen-



tence. They use dependent words like before, after, although, and while, for example, “*Even after he finished the whole container, the bitterness had not left his throat*”; “*Before she could say anything, he looked at Taha and said, ‘Wait for us outside, Taha’*”; “*She went to doctors to ask why she had not yet conceived, but they could find no reason.*” A compound-complex sentence is made from two independent clauses and one or more dependent clauses. Many other examples like “*She had graduated from college, but her husband did not want her to work because he wanted to support her*” indicate compound-complex sentences. Another example is “*Although Asma always wore her loose jilbab and black headscarf in the village, one\_day she put on a white blouse and a long black skirt.*” The dependent clauses can go first in the sentence, followed by the independent clause. This is shown in figure (14).

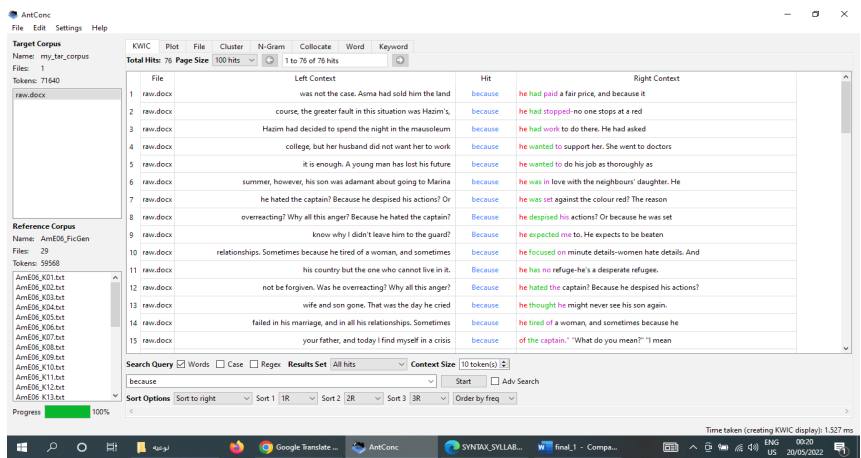


Fig (14): screen of complex sentences from the program

Table (12): examples of complex conjunctions

Word	When	As	If	After	Before	Because	Until
Frequency	231	437	290	90	88	76	42

Word	Since	While	Though	Although	When-ever	Whereas	Wherever
frequency	31	26	16	10	8	1	0

Complex sentences are often more effective than compound sentences because a complex sentence indicates clearer and more specific relationships between the main parts of the sentence. For instance, the word “before” tells readers that one thing occurs before another. A word such as “although” conveys a more complex relationship than that of a word such as “and.” Periodic sentences using “when or while” can be especially effective because the completed thought occurs at the end of it, so the first part of the sentence can build up to the meaning that comes at the end. The *that*-clauses are used only in formal styles in English. In everyday use, they are more acceptable if they are preceded by the fact. It is used 761 times in the whole novel text, which means that the writer prefers the daily lifestyle of words. The phrase structure rules indicated in the text are as follows {S ® NP + VP} , [VP ® V + NP], [V + PP], [V + NP + NP], [NP ® Art + N + (PP)], [Det + N] [Adj + N], [PP ® Pre + N]. all these types are represented in the text.

Nurgiyantoro (2005) urges that sentence structure tends to have a great impact on a literary text, whether it is utilised to elucidate a particular meaning or to emphasise it. In sentence type class, the stylistic researcher grammatically investigates statements such as question, command, exclamation, and verb clause in terms of the syntactic function of the verb clause. In clause types, the stylistic analysis concentrates on the frequent use of clause types: dependent clause, relative clause, adverbial clause, and so on. In the category of sentence complexity, independent clauses and sentence complexity can be analysed in accordance with subordination and coordination. In the case of clause structure, the most significant

matters about clause elements (e.g., frequency of objects, complements, adverbials of transitive or intransitive verbs, and any unusual orderings) can be stylistically examined. In the category of phrase types, particular features of types can be analysed, for example, adjective phrases, adverb phrases, and prepositional phrases. As per noun phrases, the stylistic analysis focuses on the simplicity or complexity of the noun involving the premodification by adjectives and post-modification by prepositional phrases or relative clauses. In the verb phrase, the grammatical analysis is concerned with instances of remarkable departures from using the simple past tense, for example, the reoccurrence and functions of progressive aspects, modal auxiliaries, present tense, and perfective aspects.

### Figures of Speech

Stanley (2007: 8) states that the impacts of figures of speech are to add force, vivid imagery, and stronger feeling and give additional detail that gives the sentence clearness and delight. They stimulate the reader's mind to visualise, create, and frame imagination through the text to transform ideas and thoughts. Figures of speech can add emotional intensity to informative statements by creating sentimental meanings to convey abstract things or ideas. Generally, figures of speech consolidate perception and decorative meanings more than literal ones to add an extra dimension to the writer's stylistic voice and the language used. Figures of speech are rhetorical devices that represent figurative language since they function as linguistic elements that are used out of their literal meanings. The stylistic analysis of figures of speech is principally concerned with identifying, from an aesthetic point of view, the areas and means of deviations from the linguistic norms to genuinely express a thought or idea depicted in a figurative image through words that convey richly imaginative meanings beyond their literal ones. As a rhetori-

cal device, anaphora stands for the deliberate repetition of the initial elements or words in a series of phrases or statements to achieve an artistic effect (Huang, 2000: 1). For example, the author mentioned at the end of the story when Asma returned from Haji that she is a wise woman through the few lines describing her status with the stick she has used:

*A staff endowed with knowledge of the unseen.*

*A staff endowed with the pain of days past and patience for the days ahead.*

*A staff endowed with honour maintained and wide-spread.*

*A staff endowed with the ability to spread curses or destroy graciousness....*

*A staff endowed with spirits from the graveyard, a darkness that could ....*

*A staff endowed with the longing that never leaves hearts, and the peace that ....*

*A staff she gripped gently and weighed on her like a heart beating endlessly.*

## **Metaphor**

Figures of speech can be categorised, based on the comparison, into metaphor, simile, personification, and apostrophe. Leech and Short (2007: 71) point out that *metaphor* can distinctly reveal the meaning of comparison or analogy in figurative expressions. Hence, metaphor is viewed as a type of comparison or analogy. Metaphor generates a relationship between two things to assert and underline specific similarities. For example, when "Hazim replied: 'If my words

are bullets, then you are the pistol itself,” he likened the words like the bullets that kill people for being tough.

Smile can achieve descriptions that are vivid, clear, simple, and original. Simpson (2004: 43-44) defines simile as a figure of speech in which two terms are explicitly related using the “is like” formula.

Perrine Znamenskaya (2004: 34) states that *personification* is imputing human characteristics to lifeless objects. Similarly, Kovecses (2002: 35) considers personification as a figure of speech in which human qualities or features are conveyed to nonhuman entities. In personification, abstract terms are endued with human peculiarities and attributes. Hazim is talking about racism and how people are sorted in society saying to the captain, “*We all have our own class. Even the fisherman sorts his fish, the small ones from the big ones, the expensive from the cheap, the superior from the inferior. **People** are like fish.*” Another example is when Asma was talking to Maryam about Hazim, “*suddenly, I heard a sound ... **like** a chicken searching for food ... I looked in front of me, and he was standing! He was standing right before my eyes!*”

Metonymy is a figure of speech that involves using something closely associated with the thing really implied (Perrine, 1969: 69). Simpson (2004: 43) defines metonymy as a process in which meaning is transferred within an individual conceptual domain. Hence, the meaning transfer process takes place within the bounds of the same semantic field. In the sentence “A woman alone, with no support. They humiliate her and ***imprison her***.... They had threatened to take my children from me, ***to tear them from my arms***,” Asma was talking about the ill-treatment of the society not only towards her but also towards women in general. The prison here is not real; it is the prison of ethics and values of the society where a woman has nothing to do if they took her son from her. Her children are like

the arms of her blouse, and people may tear them from her arm.

A symbol can merely represent something that is insinuated by words. A symbol can be a character, object, word, or place which indicates, to a certain extent, something beyond what it literally means. The writer used "***The world has gone to the dogs!***" to express that the rich no longer have their rights in society, and equality is already there.

### Ellipsis

Ellipsis is another cohesive device. Wright & Hope (2005: 132-133) define *ellipsis* as a cohesive device involving the obscurity of a word or words that the listener or reader anticipates providing in. Thus, as a cohesive device link, ellipsis functions to recuperate the absent item (like in the pronominal reference). The writer used the daily writing lifestyle; she focused on ellipsis a lot, for example, "Who was he? "He." "Human or jinn? "I don't know." In the last response, the speaker means "I do not know who is he" in the previous question. Another example is as follows:

*One day, Asma reached out to her son,  
beckoning him to come closer. "Come here,  
Taha. I can't get up."*

*"You want a doctor, Mother?"*

*"No. There's no medicine for this. Tell me,  
how is the land?"*

*"Good." ...*

*"No. Don't call him. This headache has nearly  
destroyed my mind. Is your sister studying  
in her room?"*

*"Yes."*

*"And your brother? Did he go outside to play without my permission?"*

*"No. He's watching TV"*

*"And my mother?"*

*She's watching with him. Do you want to leave your room?"*

*"I won't leave this room until the day I die. Do you hear"*

Here is the dialogue between Taha and his mother Asma. She cannot move and want him to help her; then, he asks her, "do you want a doctor mother? She answered 'no.'" She meant no I do not want a doctor as this headache referred to by the determiner "this" cannot be treated by a doctor. Then, she asked him about their land saying, "how is the land?" The answer here is supposed to be the land is good, and he used only one word instead of saying "good." When she asks about whether his sister is in the room or not, he answered "yes" instead of saying the full answer "yes she is in her room studying." She continues asking Taha about his brother, saying "and your brother?" She is supposed to say what is he doing? He replies to her question using "no" instead of saying, "no he did not go outside." She continues asking about her mother and deletes "what is she doing" to have her son's answer about the question that she is watching "without adding the word "TV" as all the deleted words are already understood from the context and the sentence structure used in the dialogue.

### **Context and Cohesion**

Leech and Short (2007: 64) state that *cohesion* refers to the manner or means in which clauses are linked. They further elaborate that cohesion is the "internal organisation of a text." Every lexi-

calised noun phrase either begins with the definite article (the) or has a sequence of pronouns before it. The reason behind that is that the author is referring to specific situations around her, and she is talking about people's life in general. She uses "the people of the village, the people of the Nile, and the people of the area" to express general points of view about the society. This is shown in figure (15).

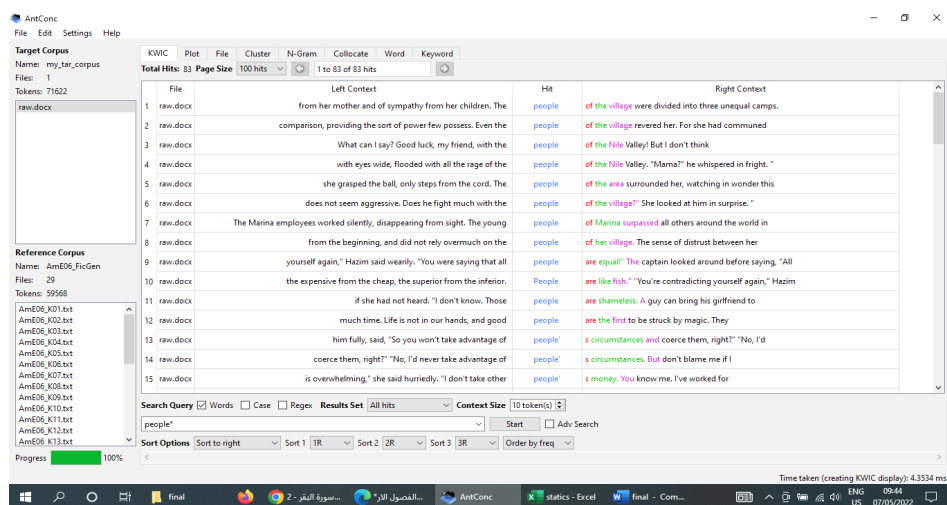


Figure (15): words used in describing the context.

The notion of *context* indicates the whole environment or situational circumstance in which a particular language is used, or a text is interpreted. The researcher thinks that Bassiouney uses the utterance (the people of) to express her life in general in different places such as Egypt or America. Then, she specifies the Egyptians by using "people of the Nile."

### The Use of Egyptian Colloquial Arabic (ECA)

The writer loaned some Arabic words that reflect the cultural side, like "As a respectable lady, a mother, and a *"hagga"* who never ceased uttering prayers, she wanted an honourable and decent friendship, perhaps with his wife or daughter, his sister, or a female



cousin." The word "*Hagga*" is a name given to the old lady that goes to Saudi Arabia and does the Hagj procedures. All the characters' names are Arabic and ordinary to the Arabic community, like Rasha, Asma, Hazim, Umm Taha, Fawziya, and so on. Some cities' names are used as it is like Cairo, Banha, and Al-Qalyubiya and even destinations like "Zamalek," villages like "Umm al-Madamir" or "King Maryut," and famous places like "Raml Station square." Other cultural items are used as it is like "qaraqish," "kunafa," and "harissa," which are only known to Egyptians. Also, Egyptian dishes like *mulukhiya* soup, *qulqas* stew, *mimbar* sausages, *kirsha* tripe, or stuffed pigeon are used as it is. "Asuer" or "fence" is used, which is an outer part of the house and has some trees to protect the house. One of the clothes is the village men and women's "gilbab." The writer used the real names of ladies like "fellaha." The concept of "urfi marriage" may not be known to the English reader, so it is used as it is in order not to be misunderstood as an illegal relationship.

## Results

One of the most fruitful areas of investigation is corpus stylistic analysis. This study shows how the lexical and syntactic devices are used by the writer as a package meaning and disseminate the messages of Reem Bassioney's "*Mortal Designs*", which is centred on the social life of Egypt. Using both *AntConc* software and *Microsoft Excel* program, the distribution of the content words is identified by calculating the frequency of occurrence of each type of content word (nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs). For further information about each type of the content words used in this corpus, they are analysed by the word lists based on the selected categories that have been chosen from Leech and Short's (2007) checklist. The results of such analysis indicate the following:

The pronouns are extraordinarily frequent in this corpus; since the style of the texts is narrative style, the most frequently used pronoun is "I." This pronoun represents 45.1% of the pronouns used and 4.7% of the total number of tokens. Roughly speaking, the frequent use of the pronouns "I" refers to the need of the speaker to be seen as an individual, assertive, and aware person responsible for his/her decision. The word "you" is the most key in the keywords list, which can strongly consider a way of sending messages to the reader. The second person pronoun "you" is usually used to refer to a particular person or people in general. This pronoun is mainly used to refer to people in general in the current data. This pronoun represents 1.06% of the words.

Concrete nouns function as the furnishings, the props, and the open places that create the semblance of the writer's reality. The author supplies vivid images that her readers can play out in their imaginations or at least evoke a mood or a place. Our minds eschew the abstract and favour the tangible.

Using concrete nouns in Bassiouney's *Mortal Designs* (2016) brings the readers closer to the multicultural world she has created where split identities, mimicry, and transculturalism dominate until they feel like they are living in such a complicated world where none is pure, and the society still has some social diseases like women treatment if they are not married. Additionally, the author's use of descriptive concrete nouns allows the reader to create a more vivid image with the help of more added adverbs and adjectives, whose usage added more to the meaning-making in the context of the story flow and enriched the readers' imagination and understanding of the social context.

The writer uses abstract nouns to vividly portray the sombre es-

sence and peevish picture of life in the eyes of Asma when she said, "this has no medicine," and she meant the disease in the society and her pain caused by the social vision of women. She uses abstract nouns, which help conceptualise the ideas and thoughts, more frequently than the concrete nouns.

Adjectives come to slacken and ease up the intensity of the actions in the novel. Additionally, they convey a vivid description and realistic picturesque depiction of the nouns in the novel that will be plain and ill-favoured without adjectives. They also give descriptive richness, and somehow impose prominent concentration and high intensity on details.

The author uses many dynamic verbs to signify actions that occurred in the novel. Additionally, she frequently uses verbs that indicate movement. Furthermore, many verbs show mental processes. The writer's frequent use of mental and material processes intensifies the idea that the physical state is predicated on the feelings and emotions. Moreover, verbal processes are enthrallingly utilised to express feelings. Obviously, many verbal processes mostly occur in the present and past tense. She also employed both transitive and nontransitive verbs in variant proportions, and these verbs carry an essential part in the meaning of the sentences. She also used non-factive verbs more frequently than the factive ones. Verbs like feel, think, remember, thought, look, and wish are frequently used in her writings. Furthermore, she employed a narrative writing style and focused more on describing women's feelings by frequently using stative verbs. As previously shown, the verbs are the most frequently used type of content word (6,603 freq.). Sorting the verbs list by the frequency of its items, verbs like "be," "have," "do," "want," "know," and "fell" get the highest numbers of frequency in the verbs' list.

Adverbs are mainly used to inform the reader more about verbs. They function to express a state of mind and attitudes. The author widely uses adverbs of manner. She employed different types of adverbs in different proportions. Adverbs are used to tell us more about the elements of the sentence, whether the verb, adjective, adverb, sentence, or paragraph. The most frequently used type of adverbs is the adverbs of times, followed by the additive/restrictive adverbs, then the linking adverbs, degree, manner, stance, and place adverbs, respectively. Since the author in this corpus has used a narrative style with simple and direct language, she tends to use adjectives to decorate her text to be more influential to the readers. She tends to use gradable adjectives rather than nongradable ones and attributive adjectives rather than predictive ones. The types of adjectives used are arranged according to their frequency in the data as follows: general description adjectives, personality, and emotion adjectives, emphasising adjectives, demonstrative adjectives, adjectives of age, and adjectives of degree.

Her use of simple sentences is highly significant in presenting what she wants to convey to her readers. She wants to simply unfold Asma's dilemma in keeping her life stable and her identity pure that is not pure anymore due to the challenges she faces in a stony society. She tried to be an ideal mother and refused to continue her life with someone else. She represents the strong woman who is fighting life hardness and social wrong beliefs.

Complex sentences are used to add depth to the information provided in the novel. Complex sentences give the prose the quality of being melodious. They also make the details, information, and figures more emphatic and remarkable. They make them not easily forgettable, giving the reader a full image and a full idea.

The author's use of complicated grammatical structures makes the sentence often lengthy and well-stocked with details. Compound-complex sentences are usually used to make emphasis, expressing more complicated thoughts with more components than other types of sentences.

To sum up, there is a prominent linguistic variation in the use of lexical items. While simple sentences are used to create simplicity and clarity to conveniently communicate the intended message, compound and complex sentences are frequently used to mainly concentrate on specific structural constituents of the sentence and for the sake of emphasis. The study also emphasises that the efficient selection of linguistic forms in a literary text is stimulated by identifying how Bassiouney felicitously utilises some specific stylistic features to effectively achieve thematic concerns to attain the aesthetic effect of the novel.

### Conclusion

Far from being a comprehensive stylistic analysis of a piece of writing, the original purpose was to show that *stylistics* and computational tools can walk hand in hand to help stylisticians do the job of text interpretation by resorting to textual evidence. Computer-aided tools can help establish roughly how the writer tends to use his lexis. This paper illustrates the usefulness of stylistic analysis to explore both literature and language. It also shows how intuitions about a text can be explored systematically and rigorously using a retrievable analysis procedure. From the results, one can conclude that the author prefers the use of concrete nouns to convey his message while abstract nouns are more to talk about emotions and thoughts or ideas. The results demonstrate that Bassiouney uses simple words and short sentences in the novel corpus. The reason

for this inclination might guarantee reflecting ideas about women's dreams in a brief direct way, especially during stress and grief, instead of using complicated long structured sentences that might hinder clear, straightforward meaning. Her text tends to be less lexically diverse, concentrating on one or two themes with a lower TTR (type-token ratio), which indicates that her words were relatively repetitive. Moreover, the usage of first-person singular pronouns is quite frequent and common in the corpus. Regarding the distribution of content words, verbs are the most frequently used part of speech, followed by nouns, adjectives, and adverbs. For the keywords analysis section, the findings reveal that she tends to use emotional words to express her attitude towards the social treatment for women.

Suggestions for future research are the study of male and female styles in social interaction. Another suggested area is to examine the representation of the ideologies of social class in Egypt during this time from a critical stylistic analysis perspective. Similar investigations can be conducted on the ideology of social class from a critical discourse analysis perspective or a pragmatic perspective. Studies may also focus on revealing Bassiouney's ideologies based on other concepts presented in her novels, such as socio-political issues. Finally, studies may compare the representation of ideologies by authors of other literary cross-cultural works. Doing *stylistics* by means of corpus analysis should be within reach of anyone who firmly believes in the elucidating power of the lexis, who has access to a good text mining program, and who sees any level of linguistic organisation as a contributor to the text's overall style and meaning. Accordingly, researchers can implement other techniques, theories, and tools offered by linguistics to be experimented on literary texts of different genres. The eclectic model of the

current research may be further applied to nonliterary texts for different objectives. Hence, other studies may extend this research by having a reference corpus of either adult literature or children literature for the keyword list. Moreover, the study of the semantic domains of the highest frequent words using other computational software programs such as the W matrix can be more helpful in locating recurrent themes. Further studies may have a pedagogical scope by studying how collocation can be used in EFL classes. In addition to that, the variation in register between dystopian fiction and young adult fiction can be examined for similarities and differences. Additionally, a pragmatic study of the text can be carried out to pragmatically analyse the nature of language use in context to better understand the text.

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