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**THE RHETORIC OF RESILIENCE: A STYLISTIC STUDY OF  
MILTON'S ON HIS BLINDNESS**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The paper is an ambitious qualitative study of stylistic features of one of John Milton's most popular poems, the sonnet On His Blindness (1665). As part of this study which adopts an interpretivist paradigm, the poem is analyzed based on its 'phonological, graphological, grammatical and semantic' patterns. Utilizing Paul Simpson's (2004) stylistic framework, this study reveals how these features collectively convey the poem's central theme: the act of surrender, in which one being's will is in harmony with the will of another being regarded as divine. Hence, the following study contributes to a complex analysis of Milton's spiritual concerns and poetic craftsmanship on a linguistic and literary level.*

**Keywords:** *stylistics analysis, On His Blindness, qualitative, interpretivist paradigm, Simpson's*

**Introduction**

Literary work is self-expression which is a world that captures 'words as the root to' fashion a picture with an idea. 'According to Moddy (1984)', 'literary works have four functions:' enhance language skills, enrich knowledge about the life experience, cultures and etc, help in character building of readers or audience and for character building support. Among the various subgenres in literary work creative writing stands out. 'Examples of creative writing are; Novels, Short stories, and poems.' Creative writing generally depicts the author's opinion of the creation event. For the same reason that creative writing is not restricted (Anggdewi, 2020). In the literary text, the idea that stylistics offers the information about how the language style builds meaning (Isti'anah 2017) ensures that appreciation of the scholars' work is not conclusion based on assumption only. Thus, 'stylistic analysis' is used in relation to literature. Stylistics is the study of particular approach or manner of expressing and communicating, and its aim and impact concerning this aspect has been described by Verdonk (2002). Stylistics thus be simply defined as, the scientifically analytical approach to style. And it is supplemented: "Style leads to structure, patterns and arrangement of word to form a sentence in oral or written form"

(Leech, 1989). This research seeks to identify and explain ‘phonological level, Graphological level, grammatical level, and Semantic level’ of poem; and determine their features that expound the meaning of the poem. The poem reflected in this study is *On His Blindness* (1665) penned down by John Milton.

That is, it is a Petrarchan sonnet, a lyrical poem with a total of fourteen lines. This type of sonnet together with poems is attributed to the Italian priest Francesco Petrarch and has a rhyme of ABBA, ABBA, CDE and CDE. The poem was written by John Milton in 1665 English Civil War. *On His Blindness* (1665) is among Milton’s best sonnets, and has an autobiographical (a story about the writer’s life) appeal. Milton cooperated with the Puritan Party in the Civil War: he worked until the eyesight left him and he became partially blind. Milton thought he could help the Lord create a fantastic epic in the English language. And now in this sonnet he does not seem too sure of himself to carry out his work and be useful to God being blind. There is some measure of dissatisfaction (the feeling of having a right to complain) and almost of complaint in the earlier part when the man has gone blind. However it does have a great (wonderful) ending. The poet is resigned to his last when he realizes that the Lord Almighty is so big that He does not require any man’s services. There is nothing wrong with waiting on the Lord’s instruction and following whatever He says without question. The one quality stands out most obviously: Milton’s poetry is dignified and musical. They are seen in this poem as well.

### **Research Questions**

What language features are used in John Milton’s *On His Blindness* (1665)? How is the use of language features revealed in the meaning of the poem?

### **Literature Review**

Wales (1989) opined that the word style presents enormous challenges in terms of definition. The reason behind this difficulty is related to realize the way, the reader can focus on it. This might impact a feature or subtopic contained in linguistics known as stylistics. Furthermore, she has pinpointed the main elements distinguishing the term style according to its features most common among users. Poetry style for a poet means a way s/he approaches ‘poems to differentiate him/her from other poets’. The style can be identified through the choice of words, rhythmic structures they employ, choice of punctuation, the use of for instance figures of speech among others. Thus, stylistics studies literature from linguistics perspectives. As Widdowson (1915) defines stylistics “as the study of literary language from the point of view of linguistics.” Speakers and writers use it as a way of describing how and why people use distinctive vocal and written patterns in language (Verdonk, 2002). Thus, it is possible to conclude “that stylistics is linguistic study of the literary discourse in language and its functions linguistically.”

In this study, authors employ the groundwork outlined by Simpson (2004) for the poem analysis. According to Simpson (2004), four levels of language features can be applied in stylistic study: There exist four levels of reading to a certain extent, namely phonological level, graphological level, grammatical level and semantic level.

## 2.1 Phonological level

Simpson (2004) defined phonology as covering the meaning potential of the sound of spoken language. Phonology is the scientific analysis of the phoneme and the acoustic item and its roles in the acoustic phonemic system of the language in analysis. In the poem, there is meaning in the sound that words make. It can be seen at work in alliteration, assonance, consonance, and phonological rhymes that are of study at the phonological levels.

### 2.1.1 Alliteration

Alliteration in the art of poetry is that which concerns the onset reiteration of a consonant in the line of poetry (Hashmi, 2019). Examples of alliterations in poem *On His Blindness* (1665) by John Milton are:

“In line 02 Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,”

“ In line 03 and that one talent which is death to hide,”

“In line 04 Lodg’d with me useless, though my soul more bent.”

“In line 05 to serve therewith my Maker, and present.”

“In line 07 Doth God exact day-labour, light deny’d?”

“In line 08 I fondly ask; but patience to prevent.”

“In line 11 Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state”

“In line 14 they also serve who only stand and wait.”

Where alliteration appears in the poem

“Line 02” “d”, “d”, “w”, “w”

“Line 04” “m”, “m”, “m”

“Line 05” “m”, “M”

“Line 07” “d”, “I”, “I”, “d”

“Line 08” “p”, “p”

“Line 10” “b”

“Line 11” “B”, “s” “b”, “s”

“Line 12” “s”

“Line 14” “s”, “s”

### 2.1.2 Assonance

As identified by Bradford (2005), ‘assonance can be defined as the process of coupling various similar vowels to the lines of a poem and between stanzas of consecutive lines. In the stanza, repetition of the vowel sound is referred to as assonance. From the poem *On His Blindness* (1665) by John Milton the examples of assonance are mentioned below.

“In line 01 When I consider how my light is spent,”

“In line 02 Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,”

“In line 03 and that one talent which is death to hide,”  
 “In line 04 Lodg’d with me useless, though my soul more bent,”  
 “In line 05 to serve therewith my maker, and present”

Where assonance appears in the poem

“Line 01” “I”, “i”, “i”, “i”  
 “Line 02” “i”, “i”, “i”  
 “Line 03” “A”, “a”, “a”, “i”, “i”, “i”  
 “Line 06” “e”, “e”, “i”  
 “Line 07” “o”, “o”, “a”, “a”, “ou”, “i”, “i”  
 “Line 08” “o”, “e”, “e”, “e”  
 “Line 09” “u”, “u”, “o”, “o”, “o”  
 “Line 10” “o”, “o”  
 “Line 11” “i”  
 “Line 12” “I”, “i”, “i”  
 “Line 13” “o”, “o”, “a”, “a”, “O”  
 “Line 14” “a”, “a”, “a”

### 2.1.3 Consonance

Cuddon (2013) asserted that consonance is the repetition of same consonants but at different vowels. In the line “Doth God exact day-Labour, light deny’d?” ut[at] “day- labour”, and “deny’d” the repetition of the /d/ sound creates consonance. This literary device underlines the huge religious disorientation of the speaker and gives the audience understanding that the sight, perception of God, the expected stories are intertwined. d/ sound in "God", "day-labour", and "deny'd" creates a sense of consonance. This literary device underscores the speaker's profound religious confusion, highlighting the inextricable link between their perception of God, the expected narratives, and the loss of sight.

In “line 12 Is kingly: thousands at his bidding speed,”

Here the clipped /d/sound imitates the swift motion of God’s servants as the ‘post’ themselves all over the world. While a Sesame Street approach to alliteration and assonance is possibly tolerable in any given classroom and indeed is possibly used by the speaker of the poem, consonance is used sparingly, yet in a disturbingly more versatile way in the later part of the poem as the argument is being made. The examples of consonance in the poem *On His Blindness* (1665) written by John Milton are as follows.

Where the consonance appears in the poem

“Line 01” “n”, “n”, “t”, “s”, “s”, “n”  
 “Line 02” “d”, “d”, “r”, “w”, “r”, “d”, “d”, “w”, “d”  
 “Line 03” “d”, “t”, “t”, “n”, “T”, “n”, “t”, “d”, “t”, “d”  
 “Line 04” “d”, “d”, “s”, “ss”, “S”  
 “Line 05” “s”, “r”, “r”, “m”, “M”, “t”  
 “Line 06” “t”, “t”, “t”, “t”, “d”  
 “Line 07” “D”, “G”, “d”, “t”, “d”, “I”, “I”, “d”, “d”

- “Line 08” “d”, “I”, “t”, “p”, “t”, “p”, “t”
- “Line 09” “t”, “m”, “r”, “m”, “d”, “d”, “n”, “n”, “d”
- “Line 10” “ts”, “b”, “s”, “t”
- “Line 11” “B”, “s”, “b”, “st”, “s”, “st”, “t”
- “Line 12” “s”, “s”, “d”, “s”, “s”, “d”, “d”, “s”, “p”, “d”
- “Line 13” “p”, “st”, “nd”, “nd”, “t”, “st”
- “Line 14” “s”, “s”, “n”, “st”, “nd”, “nd”, “t”

### 2.3 The Use of Rhyme in “On His Blindness” (1665)

As a Petrarchan sonnet “On His Blindness” is in traditional octave and sestet division. This form of sonnet is associated with the lyrical type of poetry.

#### 2.3.1 Slant Rhyme

Slant rhyme is what involves the repetition of the initial and final consonants only. Slant rhyme is illustrated by the words “present”, “prevent.”

#### 2.3.2 Para Rhyme (Half-Rhyme)

Para rhyme or half rhyme mean the rhyming of words with the same ending consonants but with different vowels in between them. An example of a set of words using para rhyme is: /pent/ and /bent/.

#### 2.3.3 Internal Rhyme

Internal rhyme is used in one and the same line of verse. An example of internal rhyme is taken from the first line of Shelley's “The Cloud”: “I bring fresh /showers/ fore the thirsting /flowers/”

#### 2.3.4 End Rhyme

Wales (1989) defined end rhyme as one in which one or more consonants are allowed but stressed vowels must be matched again at the end of the various words in the line but with dissimilar first sounds. An example of end rhyme includes the use of “rose” and “toes”.

#### 2.3.5 Poetic Elements: Rhythm

The poem “On His Blindness” published in 1665 is composed of iambic pentameter. This octave is formed by five binary and aural feet and contains ten syllables in each of the lines. The first two lines of the poem illustrate this pattern:

“1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....”

“When I [] con SID [] er HOW. [] my LIGHT [] is SPENT”

“1.....2.....3.....4.....”

“Ere HALF [] my DAYS [] in THIS [] dark WORLD [] and WIDE”

#### 2.3.6 Poetic Elements: Voice

The poem’s speaker is a male, who articulates dissatisfaction and disappointment. He is also angry with blindness that prevents him from serving God as a business venture.

### 2.3.7 Poetic element **IMAGERY**

The poem centralizes the concepts of sight and the lack of sight, with the author questioning how blindness will affect his poetry. First, the voice gives the audience a clear description of a black and enormous world, loneliness and sadness. However, the last stanza of the poem differs greatly giving a rather grand view of God, angels and humans dancing some round Him and singing His praises. These two create a contrast between the crying speaker and the eventual acceptance; but the point remains that in darkness, there is a different level of dedication dark and vast world, evoking a sense of desolation and despair. However, in a striking contrast, the poem's conclusion presents a majestic image of God, surrounded by angels, with humans by His side, singing His praises. This juxtaposition highlights the speaker's transformation from lamentation to acceptance, underscoring the idea that even in darkness, there is still a deeper sense of purpose and devotion.

### 2.3.8 Poetic element **SOUND**

Since the poem is Petrarchan sonnet, it could be divided into two parts: the octave and the sestet. The octave follows a rhyming pattern of a/b/b/a/a/b/b/a while sestet follows the rhyming pattern of c/d/e/c/d/e.

### 2.3.9 Figurative Language

Milton uses figurative language to express his grievances and discontent. He reflects upon his life “how my light is spent”.

Milton expresses the feeling of the “dark world and wide” of the blind as his introduction to his questions. He belong to question his writing that one death can take away (“one talent which is death to hide”), “lodged...useless” within him because of his. As a result Milton belongs to question God, “Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?” Milton wonders as to the meaning of his blindness; is God want him to continue to write, even with his blindness. Moreover Milton uses allegory in comparing his situation with the event in the Parable of talent with his being the third servant who buried his money and God as the Lord.

Furthermore, Milton uses personification to express the important of words and values. He personified “Patience” as if patience were a man who replies for him. Patience is his reasoning for accepting the fact that he is blind. It is used to introduce the answer towards his questioning.

### **Examples of figures of speech**

1. Alliteration: my days in the dark world and wide (line 02)
2. Metaphor: though my soul more bent/ to serve therewith my maker (line03-04). The author compares his soul to his mind.
3. Personification/Metaphor: But patience, to prevent / that murmur; soon replies..... (Line 08-09)
4. Paradox: They also serve who stand and wait.



## 2.4 Graphological Level

According to Gomez (2015), Graphology is a linguistics level of analysis that comprises the study of graphic aspects of language. Graphology deals with the analysis of physical characteristics and pattern of handwriting to identify the writer. Graphology in language text covers punctuation. The language text with intentional graphology can have more meaning and effect on the reader. Moreover, literary work especially poem has no boundaries. The writer has the freedom to make a poem by specifying graphology to create an effect of the particular interpretation.

### 2.4.1 Punctuation

According to Calhoun (2015), punctuation consider as one of the non-verbal tool of poetic expression available to the poet. Punctuation also functions to give certain meaning in the language text.

Punctuation allows the authors writing to be easy to read and understandable for the reader.

Types of punctuation

- |                      |                         |                  |
|----------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Period (.)        | 2. Comma (,)            | 3. Colon (:)     |
| 4. Question Mark (?) | 5. Quotation Marks ("") | 6. Semicolon (;) |
| 7. Dash/ Hyphen (-)  | 8. Apostrophe ('s)      |                  |

Period (.)

“Period or full stop is punctuation that is used to close a sentence and placed at the end of it.”

Rule: Use a full stop at the end of a complete sentence.

Example: They also serve who only stand and wait. (Line 14)

Rule: Use at the end of an indirect question. Example: He asked where the milk was.

If the last word in the sentence ends in a full stop, do not use another full stop after it.

#### 2.4.1.2 Comma (,)

Comma is used to make sentences particularly longer sentences-easier to read.

Examples:

1. “Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,” (Line 02)
2. “Lodg’d with me useless, though my soul more bent” (Line 04)
3. “To serve therewith my Maker, and present” (Line 05)
4. “My true account, lest he returning chide,” (Line 06)
5. “Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?” (Line 07)
6. “I fondly ask. But patience, to prevent” (Line 08)
7. “That murmur, soon replies: “God doth not need” (Line 09)
8. “Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state” (Line 11)

## 2.5 Grammatical Level

Grammatical level concerns with the structure of the sentences. As stated by Fromkin (2000), “If sequence of words forming a sentence is consistent with the rules of the grammar, the sentence is grammatical” (p. 90). In

English language, tense is one of the most important elements in grammatical. Tense indicate the time of particular action. Several noticeable tenses are shown in the poem *On His Blindness* by John Milton. The researcher analyzes the various tenses to see the relation between tenses and the meaning of the poem. The tense will be analyzing line per line. The tenses that will be analyzing are present tense (simple present tense and present perfect tense), past tense (simple past tense and past progressive tense).

#### 2.5.1 Simple present tense

According to Yule (1998), present tense is the most basic sentence, it is associated with the 'actual habitual' it present tense and illustrated with an expression of time. Simple present tense in general expresses facts (general truth), habitual events, and events that exist. Simple present tense deals with the event in the present usually will use time adjunct and frequency adjunct such as now, today, often, always, sometimes and so on.

Example of simple present tense:

"When I consider how my light is spent,  
Ere half my days in this dark word and wide,"

#### 2.5.2 Present perfect tense

From East wood (1994), he stated that present perfect tense is used in the situation at which the speaker is relating a story and the result of the action in the past and in the present. There are different situations when present perfect tense are used, including the scope for expressing the fact that a certain event took place before, at the moment when another event takes place. Present perfect tense which is shown by use of the auxiliary 'have' soon after the past participle. As said by Yule in the year 1998 that past tense is used for referring to the action in past time and conveying the accomplishments of that action in the past. Present perfect tense are used to express the idea that a certain event happens before another event occurs. Present perfect tense indicated with the auxiliary 'have' followed by past participle.

### 2.6 Semantic Level

Simpson (2004) defines the semantic level of language analysis as the level of language analysis that deals with the meaning of the words and the sentences. This point of view is backed by Wales who points out that Semantics deals with meaning in language from philosophical and logical considerations. Semantics can be categorized into four primary types.

#### 2.6.1 Lexical Semantics

Lexical semantics focuses on the meanings of words and how the terms are interconnected, and such relations as synonym, hyponymy as well as the use of the phrases that have different meanings from the actual one.

#### 2.6.2 Sentence Semantics



Sentence semantics is concerned with the meanings that result from the relations between various elements of a sentence, the agent and the patient included.

### 2.6.3 Narrative Semantics

Narrative semantics deals with the issues and understanding of possible worlds mentioned in a piece of text based on philosophies.

### 2.6.4 Literary Semantics

Literary semantics involves the use of psychological, philosophic or theoretical methodologies to explain processes of literary text.

## ANALYSIS RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This paper aims at identifying the language features used by Milton in his poem, specifically "On His Blindness".

This section considers the various literary devices that have been used by John Milton in the poem "On His Blindness". To perform the analysis, Simpson's theoretical framework presented in the previous chapters is used. The language features are explored across four levels: The functional approaches used are phonological, graphological, grammatical, and semantic.

### 4.1 Segmental Sound Features

In "On His Blindness", John Milton employs various sound devices, including alliteration, consonance, and assonance. This section provides an in-depth analysis of these sound features to uncover the author's purpose.

#### 4.1.2 Alliteration

Starting the analysis, the researcher referees to the alliterative patterns in the poem. The instances of alliteration found in the poem are listed below:

"In line 02 Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,

In line 03 and that one talent which is death to hide,

In line 04 Lodg'd with me useless, though my soul more bent.

In line 05 to serve therewith my Maker, and present.

In line 07 Doth God exact day-labour, light deny'd?

In line 08 I fondly ask; but patience to prevent.

In line 11 Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state

In line 14 they also serve who only stand and wait."

Where alliteration appears in the poem	Alliteration	frequency
Line 02	"d", "d", "w", "w"	"4", "4"
Line 03	"t", "t"	"2"
Line 04	"m", "m", "m"	"5"
Line 05	"m", "M"	
Line 07	"d", "I", "I", "d"	"2"
Line 08	"p", "p"	"2"
Line 11	"B", "s", "b", "s"	"2", "4"
Line 14	"s", "w", "s", "w"	

In the poem "On His Blindness," the researcher analyses eight cases of alliteration, where the major consonants used are /m/, /d/, /w/, /s/, /t/, /b/, /p/, /l/. The most repeated alliteration is /m/ five times; voiced bilabial, for instance, "my," "Maker" in line 05.

The second most frequently used alliteration is /d/, which has instances of alveolar voiced sound; manifested in the word "days" in line 02, and "dark" in line of 02.

The /w/ alliteration also occurs four time with its phonetic features of bilabial/velar voiced glides, where "word" from line 02 and "wide" are two of words.

The remaining alliterations occur as follows:

/s/ occurs four times, being of alveolar voiceless fricative phonemes; 'serve' and 'state' in line 11.

/t/ is used two times and can be described as the blend of the phonetic features of the voiceless alveolar plosive, and that of the voiceless alveolar stop, oral, and the phonetic transcription of the word "that" as [ð æt] and of the word "talent" as [ta lent].

/b/ appears two times, with phonetic features of bilabial voiced stops, oral: /B/ present in the words Bear and best said at line 11.

/p/ is repeated, voiceless and bilabial: The word PATIENCE in the line 08 as well as PREVENT. /l/ is used two times, /l/ is voiced liquid and /l/: / {07 'We labour in the light of the facts which have now come into light' }/, /d/, /w/, /s/, /t/, /b/, /p/, and /l/. The most frequent alliteration is /m/, occurring five times, with phonetic features of voiced bilabials, as seen in the words "my" and "Maker" in line 05.

The second most frequent alliteration is /d/, occurring four times, with phonetic features of alveolar voiced sounds, as exemplified in the words "days" and "dark" in line 02.

The third alliteration, /w/, also occurs four times, with phonetic features of bilabial/velar voiced glides, as seen in the words "word" and "wide" in line 02.

The remaining alliterations occur as follows:

- /s/ occurs four times, with phonetic features of alveolar voiceless fricatives, as seen in the words "serve" and "state" in line 11.

- /t/ occurs two times, with phonetic features of alveolar voiceless stops (oral), as seen in the words "that" and "talent" in line 03.

- /b/ occurs two times, with phonetic features of bilabial voiced stops (oral), as seen in the words "Bear" and "best" in line 11.

- /p/ occurs two times, with phonetic features of voiceless bilabials, as seen in the words "patience" and "prevent" in line 08.

- /l/ occurs two times, with phonetic features of voiced liquids, as seen in the words "labour" and "light" in line 07.

#### 4.1.2 Assonances

The repetition of vowel sounds can be found in the following lines:

“In line 01 When I consider how my light is spent,  
 In line 02 Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,  
 In line 03 and that one talent which is death to hide,  
 In line 04 Lodg’d with me useless, though my soul more bent,  
 In line 05 to serve therewith my maker, and present”

Where assonance appears in the poem	Assonance	Frequency
“Line 01”	“I”, “i”, “i”, “i”	/i/ 19
“Line 02”	“i”, “i”, “i”	/a/ 10
“Line 03”	“A”, “a”, “a”, “i”, “i”, “i”	/e/ 5
“Line 06”	“e”, “e”, “i”, “i”	/o/ 11
“Line 07”	“o”, “o”, “a”, “a”, “o”, “i”, “i”	/u/ 2
“Line 08”	“e”, “e”, “e”	
“Line 09”	“u”, “u”, “o”, “o”, “o”	
“Line 10”	“o”, “o”	
“Line 11”	“i”, “i”	
“Line 12”	“I”, “i”, “i”	
“Line 13”	“o”, “o”, “a”, “a”, “O”	
“Line 14”	“a”, “a”, “a”	

While analyzing the poem the researchers figure out five examples assonance.

The technique used in this poem is assonance which consists of the repetition of vowel sounds, such as: /i/, /o/, /a/, /e/, and /u/. Second, /u/ showed much lower courtesy and no metrical stress while /i/ being the most dominant has front high poetic characteristics. This sound used nineteen (19) times all through the poem. That means examples of assonance /i/ can be seen in the words:

“When I consider how my light is spent	(Line 01)
Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,	(Line 02)
and that one talent which is death to hide,	(Line 03)
My true account, lest he returning chide,	(Line 06)
Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?	(Line 07)
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state	(Line 11)
Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed”	(Line 12)

In the poem *On His Blindness* assonance /o/ is the second one. It occurs eleven (11) times in the poems. The phonetic features of assonance are central mid vowel. An example can be seen from the words.

“Doth God exact day-labour, light denied? (Line 07)”

“That murmur, soon replies: “God doth not need (Line 09)”

“Either man’s work or his own gifts: who best (Line 10)”

“And post o’er land and ocean without rest (Line 13)”

In the poem *On His Blindness* assonance /a/ is the third one. It occurs ten (10) times. The phonetic features of assonance /a/ are central mid vowel. An example can be seen from the words.

“And that one talent which is death to hide, (Line 03)

Doth God exact day-labour, light denied? (Line 07)

And post o’er land and ocean without rest (Line 13)

they also serve who only stand and wait.” (Line 14)

In the poem *On His Blindness* assonance /e/ is fourth one. It occurs five (5) times in the poem. The phonetic features of assonance /e/ are central mid. The example of assonance /e/ can be seen in following lines.

“My true account, lest he returning chide, (Line 06)”

“I fondly ask; but patience to preve, (Line 08)”

In the poem “*On His Blindness*” assonance /u/ is the fifth one. It occurs two times in the poem. The phonetic features of assonance /u/ are back high. The example of assonance /u/ can be seen in the following line.

“That murmur, soon replies: “God doth not need (Line 09)”

#### 4.1.3 Consonance

Consonance and alliteration are related in that they are two sounding techniques but they have specific differences as will be elaborated as follows. Alliteration for one can be described as the repetition of initial consonant sounds and consonance for the other as the repetition of consonant sounds in medial or final syllable of words. Consonance Cuddon (2013) describe it as the repetition of similar consonant sounds after different vowel sounds or at least one vowel.

In “*On His Blindness*” by John Milton, rhyme is used to establish a relation between words, that is consonance is used. For example, in the line, “Doth God exact day-Labour, light deny’d?” the /d/ sound is drawn between the terms ‘God,’ ‘day-labour,’ and ‘deny’d.’ This rhyme also points out the profound religious disorientation of the speaker, the inability to distinguish God from the perceived requirements, and the loss of vision.

Another example of consonance can be seen in line 12, “Is kingly: hundred at his bidding speed.” The reiterated tone /d/ symbolizes the movement of the servants of God who work very fast in performing their assignments. Most importantly, it is noticed that the use of consonance does not remain

confined to any specific person, in this case the speaker, but abides by a certain pattern that changes over a phase or in this case as the speaker develops his argument. While alliteration and assonance are somewhat of supporting casts at best, consonance is of a more vast and layered substance in the poem. Consonance entails the repetition of consonant sounds in the middle or end of words. According to Cuddon (2013), consonance is characterized by the close repetition of identical consonant sounds after different vowels.

In John Milton's poem "On His Blindness," consonance is employed to convey meaningful connections between words. For instance, in line 07, "Doth God exact day-Labour, light deny'd?", the /d/ sound links the concepts of "God," "day-labour," and "deny'd." This consonance highlights the speaker's profound religious confusion, underscoring their inability to separate God from the perceived demands and the loss of sight.

Another example of consonance can be seen in line 12, "Is kingly: thousand at his bidding speed." The repeated /d/ sound mimics the rapid movement of God's servants as they swiftly carry out their duties. Notably, the speaker's use of consonance is flexible and adaptive, evolving in tandem with their argument. Unlike alliteration and assonance, which serve more limited roles in the poem, consonance plays a more dynamic and nuanced part in conveying the speaker's message.

Where the consonance appear in the poem	Consonance	Frequency
"Line 01"	"n", "n", "t", "s", "s", "n", "t"	/t/ 24
"Line 02"	"r", "r", "d", "d", "d"	/d/ 20
"Line 03"	"d", "t", "t", "n", "n", "t", "d",	/s/ 15
"Line 04"	"d", "d", "s", "s", "s",	/n/ 14
"Line 05"	"r", "r", "r", "r"	/r/ 13
"Line 06"	"t", "t", "t",	
"Line 07"	"d", "t", "t", "d"	
"Line 08"	"n", "t", "n", "n", "t"	
"Line 09"	"t", "r", "r", "d", "t", "d",	
"Line 10"	"r", "r", "s", "t", "s", "t"	
"Line 11"	"r", "s", "r", "t", "s", "t", "t"	
"Line 12"	"s", "s", "d", "s", "s", "d", "d", "d",	
"Line 13"	"n", "d", "s", "t", "n", "d", "n", "d", "t", "s", "t"	
"Line 14"	"n", "t", "n", "d", "n", "d", "t"	

In the poem "On His Blindness," the researchers discover five consonances. The consonances that undergo are /t/, /d/, /s/, /n/ and /r/.

In the poem "On His Blindness" consonance /t/ is dominant. The poetic features of consonance /t/ it occurs twenty four (24) times. Consonance/t/phonetic features are alveolar voiceless stop (oral). The example of consonance /t/ can be seen from the word "light" and "spent" in line 01. Consonance /t/ is repeated twenty four times in the poem.

The poem "On His Blindness" features five consonances:

1. /d/ (20 times): Vocal-voiceless in the alveoli, for example in "world", "and", "wide" (at 02).
2. /s/ (15 times): Plosive or Tense, for example, "gifts" and "bests" at line 11.
3. /n/ (14 times): Alveolar voiced sound, for instance, when, consider and spent (01) Voiced alveolar, for example, "Ere", "dark" and "world" (S02PE1028).
- 20 times): Alveolar voiced sound, e.g., "world", "and", "wide" (line 02)
2. /s/ (15 times): Alveolar voiceless fricative, e.g., "gifts" and "bests" (line 11)
3. /n/ (14 times): Alveolar voiced sound, e.g., "when", "consider", and "spent" (line 01)
4. /r/ (13 times): Alveolar voiced sound, e.g., "Ere", "dark", and "world" (line 02)

4.2 Supra segmental sound feature:

The poem "On His Blindness" by John Milton exhibits a notable supra-segmental sound feature: rhyme. Being a Petrarchan sonnet, the poem consists of an octave and sestet; the rhyme pattern is ABBA, ABBA, CDE, CDE.

Just to say, there are elements from the poem, which reveals that the poem is in the context of lyrics; that is, it is lyrical in nature. The poem is written in three stanzas and has the final two lines in the form of a couplet which appeals weakness to classification of the poem as a lyric poem. e poem adheres to an octave-sestet structure, with a rhyme scheme of ABBA, ABBA, CDE, CDE.

The poem's rhyme scheme contributes to its lyrical quality, characteristic of lyric poetry. The poem's structure, comprising three stanzas and a concluding couplet, further reinforces its classification as a lyric poem.

#### 4.2.1 Rhyme

"Rhyme is the repetition of a similar sound in the same stanza. The poets intentionally rhyme in the poem. The type of rhyme that is found in the poem is shown below:"

"Rhyme in the poem "On His Blindness"

"Slant rhyme is used within the poem "On His Blindness."

#### 4.2.2 Slant rhyme:

Slant rhyme is the repetition of both initial and final consonants.

"1. To serve therewith my Maker, and present (Line 05)"

"2. I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent (Line 08)"

#### 4.3 Graphological level:

The graphological level of analysis concerns with the way a poem is formatted and punctuated including the poem "On His Blindness". This is



a poet of fourteen lines contained in three quatrains and two rhymed couplets.

One of the major aspects of graphological level, which can be distinguished in the poem is the use of apostrophes to mark contraction and direct speech. As claimed by Ahmad Murtaza (2015): it is Talent The apostrophes refer to the disposition of the words in the structure of a letter sent to an individual who never existed with words given an emotional content.

In the poem one of the primary graphological features identified is contraction. The contractions found in the poem are:

Contraction	Representation	Frequency	Example
“Lodg’d”	“Lodge would”	1	“Lodg’d with me useless,” “though my soul more bent”
“Man’s” his”	“man is”	1	“Either man’s work on “own gifts: who best”
“O’er”	“over”	1	“And post o’er land and ocean” “without rest”

## Conclusion

This chapter gives a summary of the findings from the previous chapters of the analysis. The research realizes that stylistic analysis plays a big part in showing the meaning of each part of the poem. Nonetheless, as to the poem consideration, readers may have different impressions, and actually the main focus made is to find out the author’s message.

This research described John Milton’s poem “On His Blindness”, which narrates the story of the poet’s life. Due to constant work with the Puritan Party through the Civil War, Milton died a blind man before his time. Milton was a blind man nonetheless he remained insistent to do the service of the lord through writing.

It traces Milton’s disillusionment and frustration when he let eyesight slip away from his paws. But it ends on a triumphant key a note as the poet accepts his fate and says that though he may not measure up to his God, the Lord is indeed Almighty and without measure. Perhaps one can serve God by just waiting for Him to speak and when He does, you must follow the command.

The research identified four language levels: At the level of classification there are phonological, graphological, grammatical, and semantic. All of them helped me to understand the meaning of the poem.

At this phonological level, various segmental sound features alliteration, assonance and consonance were observed. Alliteration was the most observable recurrent literary feature, and the poet used a variety of alliterations, eight in all. Assonance followed and so did consonance, with ten different consonants and vowels repeated. There are also such features

as slant rhyme in the poem; they enhanced this poem's visual appeal while contributing to the discovery of its meaning.

At the graphological level, the punctuation marks were employed in order to provide separation of the lines and to call attention to specific words. Even the composition of the poem was quite meaningful, as there are three stanzas and two couplets in the poem.

At the grammatical level three tenses were used and the task analysis showed that simple present tense was used most often.

Last but not least, I discovered that at the semantic level of analysis, the use of rhetorical devices', helped construct meaning in the poem. Each of the stylistic features highlighted in the poem helped to uncover its meaning.

Therefore, this study established how John Milton used the stylistic features in the poem to pass his message "On His Blindness". Every aspect of the poem, with its representation of the lesson of the Shakers submitting your will to Almighty God, the use of phonological/graphological/grammatical/semantic features, is appropriate.

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