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A STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF SENTENCE STRUCTURE IN MICAIAH JOHNSON'S *THE SPACE BETWEEN WORLDS* AND KRISTIN HANNAH'S *THE FOUR WINDS*

[1]Victor Kelechi Ashiegbu
[2]Nwaugo Goodseed Ochulor
[3]Adeleke A. Fakoya
Department of Languages and Literary Studies,
Babcock University IIisan-Remo, Ogun State
fadavictor38@gmail.com[1]
Ochulorn@babcock.edu.ng[2]
adeleke.fakoya@lasu.edu.ng[3]

Abstract
The paper examines functional sentence structures in *The Space Between Worlds* by Micaiah Johnson (2020) and *The Four Winds* by Kristin Hannah (2021) and how they help develop themes and meaning stylistically. The paper examines how imperative, exclamatory, declarative and interrogative sentences are used to support ideology, character development and story development. This work adopts the theoretical framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). This study explores how linguistic choices implement ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions in order to shape discourse in terms of determinism, survival and power relations. A qualitative approach and purposive sampling were employed to select the types of sentences that most adequately represented several functional roles for examination. The findings indicate that interrogatives, of course, raise philosophical and ethically significant questions of agency and power, and declaratives fix thematic concerns, such as social oppression and scientific determinism. The stories have greater drama and are more involving because of the use of exclamatives, which elevate emotions and imperatives, which emphasize that something should change and an individual has to be assertive. The studies signify that sentence structure is an intentional stylistic device, and not merely a form of grammar. Both authors, Johnson and Hannah, employ various sentence structures to lead the readers through the complex world of the story and to reinforce its philosophical and socio-political message. Such an approach provokes greater engagement with readers, clarifies ideas through stances, and improves understanding of the plight of characters in opposition to environmental and systemic problems.

Keywords: Systemic Functional Linguistics, sentence structures, determinism, narrative style, stylistics

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1. Introduction

Language is influential in literary narratives and shapes readers' interpretations. It sheds light on how writers use imperatives, exclamations, declaratives, and interrogatives to generate tension, convey meaning, and develop characters. The paper explores the influence of these sentence types on the styles of historical fiction and science fiction, using *The Four Winds* (Hannah, 2021) and *The Space Between Worlds* (Johnson, 2020).

Creating a story involves presenting facts or assertions as declarative sentences (Quirk et al., 1985). In *The Space Between Worlds*, these sentences enable Johnson to convey complex ideas succinctly, such as “This is one world where I am dead and another where I am alive” (Johnson, 2020, p. 15), which establishes the novel's multiversal setting and explores its existentialist themes. Hannah in *The Four Winds* also uses declarative sentences to set the scene and mood during the Great Depression. Rhetorical questions serve to suggest uncertainty, provoke thought, or build tension (Biber et al., 1999). For example, Cara, the protagonist, asks, "Who am I when I am alive here and dead elsewhere? " (Johnson, 2020, p. 76), emphasising the novel's focus on identity.

Thus, Hannah reflects social and personal struggles through dialogue that employs interrogatives. According to Huddleston and Pullum (2002), imperatives convey authority, urgency, or emotional intensity. In *The Space Between Worlds*, we have imperatives such as, “Do not be afraid to stay where you are. Do not cross the threshold” (Johnson, 2020, p. 102) that reflects power dynamics and control. Hannah uses similar structures to express perseverance, as in “Hold on. Move on. Do not give up” (Hannah, 2021, p. 189), which illustrates familial resilience. Although less common, exclamatory sentences convey greater emotion (Quirk et al., 1985). Cara's exclamation, “I’m alive, but I shouldn’t be!” (Johnson, 2020, p. 47), illustrates psychological conflict. The words, “We have to leave now!” (Hannah, 2021, p. 319) capture urgency and despair. This study shows how functional sentence types improve reader engagement, thematic resonance, and narrative voice by contrasting these two novels. The analysis, which is based on Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), emphasises how closely language form and narrative are related in modern fiction.

1.1 Science

Science is rooted in empirical evidence, relying on observation and experimentation. According to Foster (2023, p. 1), “It is a systematic and logical approach to gaining knowledge about various phenomena and processes.” Scientists form hypotheses, which, through testing, might pave the way for theories, strong explanations supported by evidence. Science values replicability, ensuring findings can be reproduced by others, and falsifiability, meaning claims must be testable and disprovable. Research credibility and quality are maintained through the peer review process. Science also draws from a variety of disciplines, including biology, physics, and the social sciences, and is cumulative, expanding on previously acquired knowledge. At its core, it is a critical, dynamic investigation of nature.

In contrast, fiction is a type of narrative that involves made-up people, places, and events. It has fictional components and is frequently organised around a storyline that includes character growth and conflict. Motifs are also common in fiction, where the meaning is reinforced as works explore questions such as identity, morality, and love. It contains many genres with their own conventions, including historical fiction, fantasy, and science fiction. Aesthetics helps the author express truths in philosophy or emotion. To experience complicated human experiences, the readers allow fiction to be true. Therefore, fiction is a great revelation to humanity at large, as well as entertaining and educating the readers.

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1.2. Fiction

Fiction is narrative literature with greater scope for creativity than nonfiction and includes invented characters, events, and settings. Well-organized plot line (exposition-resolution) and fiction are essential. Although themes such as love, identity, and morality are also explored through motifs, the main characters often change. Fiction is diverse in its subcategories, such as period-based fiction (storytelling), fantasy, speculative science, and suspenseful mystery stories, and particular traditions and stylistic rules condition each. It permits emotional appeal and creative sense, and nudges the reader towards the suspension of disbelief and getting over one's involvement in the fictional world. The ultimate effect of fiction, however, is that it makes people reflective through inspired storytelling and offers profound insights into the human condition.

1.3 Fictions Science

Science fiction, or sci-fi, is the speculative fiction that explores imaginative ideas concerning science, technology and the future of humanity. It is founded on scientific concepts from fields such as physics, biology, or computer science, and it often describes futuristic settings/scenarios, space, time travel, or alien life. Science fiction addresses themes such as consciousness, artificial intelligence, and climate change, and reflects on the moral and social consequences of scientific progress. Some subgenres include space opera, cyberpunk, dystopian fiction, soft science fiction (social science), and hard science fiction (technical precision). Great world-building and creative situations in which to explore the role of humanity in the universe are a must for science fiction. It is interdisciplinary by nature, drawing on politics, sociology and philosophy. The impact of prominent authors such as Wells (1895), Asimov (1950), Clarke (1968), Dick (1968), and Le Guin (1968) has made the genre a powerhouse of critical thinking and imagination, capable of shaping the future.

1.4 History Fiction

Historical fiction is a literary genre that merges fictional writing with real historical events, characters and locations. The primary purpose of it is to take the readers on a literary time-travelling journey, amalgamating creative and fiction storytelling with historical details. It is through the union of these elements that authors can explore this state of the human world within specific periods of history and elucidate the attitudes, sentiments, and challenges of that epoch. Outstanding features are:

i. Historical Context: The novel is also set in a particular time in history, and often refers to real-life people or events.
ii. Fiction is usually used to create characters, dialogue, and some plots, although they are based on truth.
iii. Studies: To accurately represent the places, culture, words, clothing, and societal problems, writers undertake extensive research.
iv. Themes: Love, conflict, identity, and survival are also common themes that are set in the historical backdrop.
v. Emotional Resonance: Great historical fiction finds a way to express the events of the past to a present-day reader on an emotional level.

Major point attractions include such novels as *Wolf Hall* (Hilary Mantel), *All the Light We Cannot See* (Anthony Doerr), and *The Book Thief* (Markus Zusak). Storytelling helps to illustrate history in those books and makes it more accessible and emotional.

1.5 What is American Science Fiction?

American science fiction is a dynamic and powerful genre which deals with futuristic ideas, technological innovation and the effects of those phenomena on society and human beings.

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It usually takes an imaginative look at potential futures (caused by technology, societal changes, or space exploration). It even prompts the reader to meditate on how humanity will evolve (Asimov, 1993). The key feature of the genre is the analysis of technological advances, such as artificial intelligence, genetic engineering, and virtual reality, sometimes with ethical worries tied to it (Chiang, 2019).

The most striking element of the social commentary is that, in speculative fiction disguised as imaginary sci-fi settings, writers engage in criticism of the problems of race, gender, class, and the environment (Butler, 1979; Le Guin, 2001). More women, people of colour, and LGBTQ+ writers have participated in American science fiction in recent years, and it has become more diverse (Jemisin, 2017).

Genre often presents dystopian and utopian visions and serves as a warning about the future, whether due to climate change or authoritarianism (Dick, 1982). Travel between the stars is routine and, at times, reverberates with colonial tropes. Moreover, American sci-fi also extends its narration by combining the elements of mystery, horror, and fantasy. Furthermore, it contains societal fears related to events such as the Space Race and the Cold War. Despite it all, American science fiction remains an important aid to imaginative narration and social criticism.

1.6 What is Historical Fiction?

Historical fiction integrates imagination with historical authenticity to transport readers to a specific time and narrate an engaging story. The genre has a balance of factual accuracy and imagination. Authors have to research extensively to describe events, customs, language, and scenery accurately; conversely, fictional characters and plots offer a new perspective on real-life events. Immersive backgrounds help readers through the use of their feelings and senses of smell and feel, allowing them to improve their understanding of history.

In addition to entertainment, the themes of moral action, love, dispute, and surviving in the historical environments are ever-present in historical fiction; these themes are universal to humanity. It examines past events, and it challenges existing narratives, often presenting obscure stories. Moreover, the genre addresses such eternal problems of gender, identity, class, and dominant power, inviting readers to think about contemporary society.

Through well-built protagonists, readers are guided through ethical dilemmas and inner growth as they are guided through the disappointments and treasures of the time. A hallmark of the genre is cultural critique, which renews assumptions held within culture and social conventions. Some works even use means of non-fiction as the separation of fact and fiction by attributes of historical notes or footnotes. Historical fiction offers rich and varied storytelling with subgenres including romance, alternate history and biographical novels. With history being made more human and closer, more subjective, even intimate, it ends up informative and even didactic, allowing for a sense of how the then affects now and tomorrow

2.0 Review of Related Literature

Literary analysis stems from the study of the stylistic and linguistic functioning of sentence structure in texts. It has a theoretical foundation known as Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), developed by Halliday in 1994. SFL does not consider language a set of grammatical or syntactic rules; it is the source of meaning. SFL is important in declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentence types, since narrative discourse is structured in this way. The descriptive and expository nature of declarative sentences makes narrative fiction

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dominated by them. They give background and understanding such that they form the foremost element of telling the story (Leech and Short, 2007). Johnson employs declaratives, *The Space Between in Worlds* to logically organise her hypothetical universe. They also enhance historical realism in Hannah's The Four Winds by conjuring up strong images of the Dust Bowl (Mey, 2018; Simpson, 2004).

Interrogatives are used in rhetorical strategy, dialogue, and introspection. Biber et al. (1999) highlight how they draw readers in and provide insight into character cognition. Echoing Toolan's (2012) research on cognitive empathy in first-person narratives, interrogatives in Johnson's book reflect existential ambiguity and introspection. Interrogatives in *The Four Winds* depict social criticism and internal conflict amid adversity.

Imperatives convey urgency and authority, often revealing power dynamics (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002; Simpson & Montgomery, 2010). In Johnson's novel, they reflect hierarchical conflict, while Hannah uses them to portray survival instincts and crisis responses (Fowler, 1996). Though less frequent, exclamatory sentences express heightened emotion. Quirk et al. (1985) explain their role in conveying surprise or distress. Cara's exclamation, "I'm alive, but I shouldn't be!" (*The Space Between Worlds,* Johnson, 2020, p. 47), highlights an existential crisis. In The Four Winds, "We have to leave, now!" (Hannah, 2021, p. 319) captures urgency and desperation, echoing Biber et al.'s (1999) emphasis on emotional intensity.

Salih (2008) underscores the role of Functional Sentence Perspective (FSP) in discourse, distinguishing thematic (known) and rhematic (new) elements in structuring information. This model is central to understanding how sentence types contribute to theme development and reader engagement in both novels. Dini et al. (2022) apply theme-rheme analysis within SFL to ESL learners' texts, comparing them with native texts to highlight thematic structure and cohesion. This supports the present study's focus on how sentence types influence textual flow and meaning.

Janoš (1979) connects FSP to automatic text extraction, emphasising thematic progression over traditional grammar for coherence. His approach reinforces the relevance of sentence structure in narrative organization and information delivery. Ibbi (2010) compares Transformational Generative Grammar and SFL, proposing a complementary pedagogical approach. Her argument supports this study's use of an SFL-based stylistic framework to examine how sentence forms serve both grammatical and communicative functions in fiction. Kang (2016) analyses Theme as the starting point of messages, showing how thematic patterns shape textual coherence. His work aligns with this study's aim to explore how sentence structures drive meaning-making and narrative progression in science fiction and historical fiction.

2.1 The Stylistic Features of Scientific Discourse?

Scientific discourse employs stylistic features ensuring clarity, precision, objectivity, and coherence (Day & Gastel, 2012). Objectivity arises from evidence-based claims and avoidance of personal bias, while precision is achieved through technical terminology and unambiguous language. A formal tone and structured organisation, often the IMRaD format, guide comprehension. Passive constructions such as "The experiment was conducted" emphasise processes, and claims are supported by empirical data, visuals, and prior studies. Technical vocabulary ensures accuracy, with definitions for accessibility. Citations

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acknowledge intellectual lineage, and conditional language reflects the tentative nature of conclusions. Repetition reinforces key findings, enhancing retention and evaluative rigour.

2.2 The Stylistic Features of Historical Discourse

The way historians portray and analyse historical events is known as historical discourse. To increase reader engagement, it usually uses a narrative structure with a distinct beginning, middle, and end. Historical characters and settings are brought to life through descriptive language, and event sequencing is made clear through chronological arrangement. Factual accuracy and credibility are supported by a heavy reliance on evidence, such as letters, documents, and artefacts. Contextual analysis is frequently used by writers to place events within larger socio-political frameworks and to investigate various viewpoints, thereby presenting a range of voices. Examining sources critically and questioning prevailing narratives are made easier with a critical tone. Authority is increased by using discipline-specific terminology and formal academic language. To create links to current events, historical writing also explores themes such as power, identity, and conflict. Primary source quotations lend credibility, and interpretation enables writers to conduct analysis.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

This work adopts Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) to analyze the sentence structures and information placement in speculative fiction stories. As stated by Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), its central conceptualization is the idea that language is a social semiotic system that works with the three inseparable metafunctions: namely, ideational, interpersonal, and textual. SFL links structure and meaning by showing how sentence forms operate in context to make a character, a storyline and a theme make sense, without analysing grammar as a form in its own right, or as an additional grammar.

The pattern of SFL is applied in literary discourse by the functional stylistics model offered by Simpson (2004), whose argument centres on the fact that stylistic choices like mood, modality, and transitivity will determine whether a particular character has improved or worsened in terms of a cognitive worldview or a mind style (p.76). These patterns of language foster cognitive estrangement and prompt readers to re-evaluate reality, which is especially relevant to speculative fiction (Simpson, 2004; Fowler, 1986). This examination can also be advanced by Firbafff's (1992) Functional Sentence Perspective (FSP), which examines dynamism in the communication and theme-rheme development to illustrate how writers manage the rotation of information. Such management in speculative fiction facilitates world-building and narrative consistency. In sum, this synthesized approach makes it possible to conduct a sophisticated analysis of how realities are created on the sentence level, the contribution of the sentence level to meaning, and the ideological location of the readers.

2.4 Methodology

To explore the linguistic and stylistic tendencies in the two novels, *The Space Between Worlds* by Micaiah Johnson (2020) and The Four Winds by Kristin Hannah (2021), a qualitative research design is adopted in this study. Dorjenie (2002) affirms that when one intends to derive meaning and patterns from the analysis of non-numerical data, interpretative methods are applied in qualitative research. The texts sampled using a purposive technique represented two distinct genres, historical fiction and science fiction, enabling a comparison of sentence functions. During important narrative moments such as thematic exposition and introspection, the main interest of the study is targeted towards declarative, interrogative, imperative and exclamatory sentences.

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This paper codes and analyses the qualitative content analysis (QCA) data, following the proposal of Schreiers (2012). Leech and Short (2007) include declaratives that are studied in terms of creating fictional worlds and a narrative coherence; interrogatives are studied to their impact on character min-dset and persuasiveness abilities, (Biber et al. (Quirk et al., 1999); imperatives are to the ability to establish an authority and sense of urgency (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002); and exclamatives to their potential to convey a powerful emotion (in 1985). Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) offers an analytical framework that connects the functions of sentences to the conventional uses of genres and to interaction with readers. By the joining of SFL and QCA, the study offers a context-sensitive and systematic treatment of the role sentence structures play in fostering the meaning and enhancing narrative into fiction today.

3.0 Data Presentation and Analysis

3.1 Stylistic Features of *The Space between Worlds* by Micaiah Johnson

Partially rooted in science fiction, *The Space Between Worlds* (2020) by Micaiah Johnson blends character-driven storytelling, identity exploration, and social commentary. The novel's thematic and narrative layers revolve around its style.

3.1.2 Layered Narrative Structure

The novel alternates between different realities, creating a layered structure that emphasizes the concept of the multiverse. Rather than relying on exposition, the reader experiences shifting worlds alongside Cara, the protagonist. This narrative device makes the complex multiverse tangible and emotionally resonant (Johnson, 2020, pp. 1–20, 50–250).

3.1.3 Character-Driven Prose

Johnson's prose centres on character development, particularly Cara's internal journey. Introspective passages explore her trauma, displacement, and survivor's guilt: "chosen to survive" while others perished (Johnson, 2020, pp. 21–23). This deepens reader empathy and enriches the emotional landscape.

3.1.4 Descriptive Imagery

The novel uses vivid imagery to contrast worlds. Johnson depicts the disparity between Wiley City and Ashtown through rich sensory detail, reinforcing class divisions and societal inequality. The desperate tone of Ashtown (Johnson, 2020, pp. 11–13) immerses readers in its harsh reality.

3.1.5 Themes of Identity and Belonging

Cara's identity is fluid across multiple worlds. Johnson's introspective prose reflects how race, class, and environment shape belonging. The shifting realities emphasise identity's contextual and unstable nature (Johnson, 2020, pp. 34–36).

3.1.6 Use of Dialogue

Dialogue is emotionally charged and character-revealing. Conversations, particularly between Dell and Cara, explore trust, loyalty, and betrayal (Johnson, 2020, pp.78–81). These exchanges are integral to character development and thematic progression.

3.1.7 Interrogation of Social Issues

Johnson uses speculative settings to critique privilege, exploitation, and systemic inequality. Cara's varied experiences across socio-political landscapes offer a lens on real-world injustice (Johnson, 2020, pp. 102–107). The novel becomes both an imaginative escape and a critique of modern society.

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3.1.8 Nonlinear Time and Perspective
Cara's travel across worlds introduces temporal fluidity. Events are not strictly chronological, emphasizing the interconnectedness of experience and the fragmented nature of identity in the multiverse.

3.1.9 Metaphorical Language
Johnson uses metaphors to deepen thematic meaning. The space between worlds represents vulnerability, uncertainty, and identity fragmentation (Johnson, 2020, p. 13). Symbolism adds emotional and philosophical resonance to abstract concepts.

3.1.10 Emotional Authenticity
Johnson conveys characters' inner conflicts with psychological depth. Cara's fear, hope, and anger are rendered with nuance, particularly in moments of tension and reflection (Johnson, 2020, pp. 90–92). The emotional stakes feel real, enhancing reader immersion.

3.1.11 Cultural Significance
The characters' diverse cultural backgrounds are integral to the world-building. Cara's marginalised origins provide authenticity and emphasise the novel's critique of systemic power. Cultural differences between worlds are explored meaningfully (Johnson, 2020, pp. 44–47).

3.1.12 Exploration of Morality and Ethics
The novel raises ethical questions about power, technology, and consequence. Cara's ability to traverse worlds leads to moral dilemmas, especially concerning identity theft and survival. Johnson forces readers to confront uncomfortable choices within a speculative framework (Johnson, 2020, pp. 182–185).

3.1.13 Poetic Elements
Johnson's prose occasionally takes on a lyrical quality, using rhythm and imagery to enhance emotional impact. Her poetic phrasing deepens themes of connection and identity, elevating the narrative beyond genre conventions (Johnson, 2020, p. 21). This lyrical style adds a textured beauty to the storytelling.

Through these stylistic features, *The Space Between Worlds* becomes a rich, layered narrative that challenges notions of identity, morality, and belonging. Johnson's use of language, structure, and perspective invites readers to reflect on real-world issues through the lens of speculative fiction. Her innovative narrative techniques and emotional depth secure the novel's place as a significant contribution to contemporary science fiction.

3.2 The Stylistic Features of *The Four Winds* by Kristin Hannah
Kristin Hannah's *The Four Winds* (2021) is a historical fiction novel set during the Great Depression and Dust Bowl, blending lyrical prose with vivid historical realism (Business Insider, 2021). Hannah's evocative descriptions of landscapes, weather, and personal experiences enhance the novel's emotional tone (p. 5). Central to the work is Elsa Martinelli's rich characterisation, depicting resilience, vulnerability, and growth (p. 12). Vivid imagery captures both the devastation of the Dust Bowl and Texas's rugged beauty (p.21), while themes of survival and human endurance underscore the narrative (p. 35). Authentic dialogue reflects the era and deepens character relationships (p. 48). Historical detail grounds the story in its 1930s context (p.60), enriched by symbolism, with the land embodying both hope and hardship (p. 88). Flashbacks add emotional depth (p. 102), and family bonds, tested by adversity, emerge as central (p. 115). Internal monologue reveals Elsa's inner struggles (p. 130), culminating in a climactic resolution of earned emotional catharsis (p. 145).

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3.2.1 Declarative Sentences

Example 1: "Cassandra's abilities made her a target for those who sought to control the multiverse" (The Space Between Worlds, Johnson, 2020, p. 47).
Example 2: "Desperation had driven many to leave their homes" (The Four Winds by Kristin Hannah, p. 42).

Example 1
The ideational metafunction presents Cassandra as a capable yet vulnerable figure, her ability both a defining trait and cause for being targeted. The clause "who sought to control the multiverse" adds ambition and high stakes, with multiverse implying vast complexity. Interpersonally, calling her a target evokes sympathy and highlights the dual nature of her power, strength and exposure. "Sought to control" conveys agency, prompting reflection on power dynamics. Textually, the sentence links cause (ability) and effect (threat) with coherence, using the target as a focal point. Together, these metafunctions portray Cassandra as navigating ambition, danger, and influence on an expansive scale.

Example 2
The ideational metafunction represents human experience, here capturing a collective act, desperation prompting departure from home. The causative link between "desperation" and "leaving" underscores the gravity of conditions such as war, poverty, or natural disaster (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014, p. 30). The term "many" signals mass displacement, framing the issue as societal rather than individual. This construction reflects both the scale and severity of circumstances, portraying forced migration as a shared human reality rooted in profound hardship and collective struggle.

The interpersonal metafunction frames "desperation" as emotionally charged, evoking empathy and positioning readers to sympathise with those affected. By attributing action to desperation, it reduces perceived agency and fosters solidarity (Eggins, 2004, p. 147). Textually, the sentence is concise and coherent, foregrounding "desperation" as the theme (Thompson, 2014, p. 39). Through Halliday's metafunctions, it conveys lived reality, elicits emotional engagement, and sustains clarity in its discussion of displacement.

3.2.2 Interrogative Sentences

Example 3: How could Cassandra use her powers to create a new reality? (Johnson, *The Space Between Worlds,* 2020, p. 143)

Ideational metafunction represents experience, depicting Cassandra's potential to create a new reality and evoking concepts of transformation and the multiverse. It shows cause and effect, linking her actions to possible reality shifts and raising ethical implications. Interpersonally, the interrogative engages readers directly, inviting critical reflection on her capabilities. The modal verb could convey possibility, fostering empowerment and emotional connection. Textually, the question structure beginning with "How could" focuses on methods, ensuring coherence. Together, these metafunctions present philosophical possibilities, emotional engagement, and clarity, enriching reader understanding (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014, pp. 30–33). Example 4: "Where do we find strength amid so much loss (Kristin Hannah, *The Four Winds,* 2021, p. 41).

The ideational metafunction represents experience, framing resilience amid hardship through the phrase "amid so much loss," which conveys emotional depth and links strength to grief. Interpersonally, the inclusive "Where do we find" creates shared experience and vulnerability, encouraging empathy and collective reflection. Textually, the concise, coherent structure introduces a philosophical inquiry, juxtaposing "strength" and "loss" to

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establish a thematic foundation. Together, these metafunctions craft a compelling, emotionally resonant question that prompts readers to reflect on survival, emotional resilience, and the communal search for support during adversity (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014, pp. 30–33).

3.2.3 Imperative Sentences

Example 5: Confront your fears and doubts and become a more confident version of yourself! (Johnson, *The Space Between Worlds,* 2020, p. 159)

The ideational metafunction represents experience by identifying psychological barriers in "Confront your fears and doubts" and linking them to transformation in "become a more confident version of yourself," forming a cause–and–effect sequence promoting growth (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014, p. 83). Interpersonally, the imperative "Confront" conveys authority and urgency, positioning the speaker as a motivator and fostering empowerment (Eggins, 2004, pp. 146–147). Textually, the conjunction "and" joins related ideas cohesively, reinforcing the link between challenge and transformation (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014, p.89). Combined, these metafunctions create a coherent, motivational directive encouraging resilience and self-improvement.

Example 6: "Remember where you come from" (Kristin Hannah, *The Four Winds,* p. 19).
The ideational metafunction represents experience, with "What an incredible ability Cassandra had!" highlighting her extraordinary skill. The adjective incredible underscores its significance, linking her power to potential character development and plot impact. Interpersonally, the exclamatory tone conveys admiration and excitement, drawing readers into the speaker's perspective and fostering an emotional connection to Cassandra. This reaction positions the speaker as knowledgeable, influencing how the audience values her abilities. Textually, the structure centres on Cassandra, with "What an incredible…" serving as an emphatic introduction that directs attention to her significance. The exclamation heightens impact, ensuring memorability and setting a thematic marker for further narrative exploration. Collectively, the metafunctions underscore Cassandra's importance, emotionally engage the audience, and present her abilities with clarity and focus, making them pivotal to the story's emotional and thematic resonance (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014, pp. 30–33; Eggins, 2004, pp. 146–147).

3.2.4 Exclamatory Sentence Analysis

Example 7: "What an incredible ability Cassandra had!" (*The Space Between Worlds*, p. 15)
Example 8: "How fierce the winds are!" (*The Four Winds*, p. 8)

The ideational metafunction represents experience, with "What an incredible ability Cassandra had!" emphasising her extraordinary skill. The adjective incredible conveys both value and rarity, linking her ability to potential character growth and plot significance. Interpersonally, the exclamatory tone expresses admiration and excitement, inviting readers to share the speaker's amazement. This engagement fosters an emotional connection and positions the speaker as someone who understands Cassandra's character. Textually, the sentence's structure centres on Cassandra, with "What an incredible…" serving as an emphatic introduction that directs focus to her significance. The exclamation heightens impact, ensuring memorability and thematic relevance. Together, these metafunctions highlight the exceptional nature of Cassandra's abilities, engage the audience emotionally, and maintain thematic clarity, making her powers a pivotal element in the narrative's emotional and structural design (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014, pp. 30–33; Eggins, 2004, pp. 146–147).

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Example 8
Ideational metafunction represents lived experience, with "How fierce the winds are!" vividly capturing the intensity and power of the winds. The adjective fierce denotes nature's relentless force, foreshadowing its influence on both setting and characters. Interpersonally, the exclamatory form conveys astonishment and urgency, emotionally engaging the reader and inviting them to share in the awe or apprehension such natural elements inspire. This choice of wording fosters a collective experiential link between the audience and the characters' struggles. Textually, the concise, emphatic structure ensures clarity while establishing a thematic focus on the environment's significance. The exclamation heightens memorability, positioning the winds as a recurring and symbolic force within the narrative. Together, these metafunctions emphasise nature as an active participant in the story, enhance emotional resonance, and frame environmental conditions as pivotal to the characters' journey (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014, pp. 30–33; Eggins, 2004, pp. 146–147).

4.0 Discussion and Findings

The analysis of declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentences in *The Space Between Worlds* (Johnson, 2020) and *The Four Winds* (Hannah, 2021) reveals how syntactic form, communicative function, and thematic development intersect. Drawing from Systemic Functional Linguistics (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014) and functional stylistics (Simpson, 1993, 2004), the study shows how sentence types enact ideational, interpersonal, and textual meanings tied to determinism, resilience, identity, and agency. Declaratives serve as vehicles of thematic assertion, often enacting material or relational processes. "Cassandra's abilities made her a target" (Johnson, 2020, p. 47) links identity to persecution under multiversal determinism. "Desperation had driven many to leave their homes" (Hannah, 2021, p. 42) asserts established outcomes of systemic forces. Such structures align with Simpson's (2004) modal grammar and Gurmin's (2016) claim that choices reflect broader deterministic systems.

Interrogatives introduce epistemic doubt and ontological questioning. "How could Cassandra use her powers to create a new reality?" (Johnson, 2020, p. 143) suggests possibility and limitation (Korteling et al., 2021), while "Where do we find strength amid so much loss?" (Hannah, 2021, p. 41) functions as an interactive appeal, engaging empathy (Menadue & Jacups, 2018). Imperatives build identity and assert moral responsibility. "Remember where you come from" (Hannah, 2021, p. 19) fosters solidarity, while "Confront your fears… and become a more confident version of yourself!" (Johnson, 2020, p. 159) affirms agency within deterministic limits (Gurmin, 2016). Such directives signal narrative modality (Simpson, 2004).

Exclamatives heighten emotion and foreground thematic contrasts. "What an incredible ability Cassandra had!" (Johnson, 2020, p. 15) critiques utilitarian appraisals (Korteling et al., 2021), while "How fierce the winds are!" (Hannah, 2021, p. 8) underscores enduring environmental adversity. Both function as textual foregrounding (Simpson, 2004). Collectively, these sentence types act as functional resources that shape reader interpretation, advance socio-political commentary, and reinforce core thematic concerns.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

This study has demonstrated how sentence structures: declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory, contribute significantly to meaning-making in Johnson's (2021) *The Space Between Worlds* and Hannah's (2020) *The Four Winds*. Declarative

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sentences establish key themes of determinism, resilience, and survival, while interrogatives highlight existential and ethical dilemmas. Imperatives reinforce agency and transformation, and exclamatory sentences amplify emotional intensity, deepening reader engagement. These stylistic choices align with broader literary and linguistic theories, affirming that sentence structure is not merely a grammatical feature but a powerful tool for thematic development and narrative immersion. By revealing how syntax shapes characterisation, tone, and ideological discourse, this analysis emphasises the intricate relationship between linguistic form and literary function in contemporary fiction. To ascertain whether comparable sentence-level techniques are used to convey ideological and thematic concerns, it is suggested that future research go beyond Johnson and Hannah's writings and incorporate comparative stylistic analyses of sentence structures across various genres, such as African, Asian, or Latin American literatures. In order to supplement the qualitative approach and provide more reliable statistics on the frequency and distribution of sentence forms, future research could potentially incorporate computational stylistics. Furthermore, by using reception studies to investigate how readers react to these stylistic decisions, we can better understand how sentence patterns influence narrative interpretation, engagement and emotional investment.

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