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## **A Stylistic Analysis of John Habwe's Pendo La Karaha**

**Dr. James Nyachae Michira**

Senior Lecturer, University of Nairobi, Kenya

Visiting Professor, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, South Korea

### **Abstract**

*This article conducts a stylistic analysis of John Habwe's Swahili novel Pendo la Karaha (Distasteful Desire). Grounded on the core stylistic principles of choice, variation and deviation (from the norm), the objectives of the study are to investigate linguistic choices made by the author, assess the aesthetic value of salient deviant choices and discuss their functional significance in the text. The key stylistic elements that are analyzed include diction, schemes and syntactic deviations as well as figures of speech including imagery, allegory, metaphor, irony among others.*

**Keywords:** *Style, stylistics, literary devices, schemes, tropes, Pendo la Karaha*

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1. Style and Stylistics**

Broadly defined, style refers to the manner in which a writer (or speaker) uses language that distinguishes him or her from other writers (or speakers). This can be applied in general terms or to a specific text, speech or utterance. Crystal and Davy (1969) state that "style may refer to some or all of the language habits of one person – as when we talk of Shakespeare's style (or styles)..." (p. 9). Other than style being an identity of a writer, other key principles of style include choice, variation and deviation. Traugott and Pratt (1980) argue that "style refers to patterned choice, whether at the phonological, lexical, syntactic, or pragmatic level" (p. 409). Given the whole repertoire of linguistic resources available, a writer makes deliberate and creative choices and utilizes them in writing. Essentially, therefore, style as a choice allows a writer or speaker to select from several possible alternative expressions.

The principle of variation simply means that no two users of the same language can use that language similarly. Accordingly, the varied uses of language by different writers constitute different styles. Hockett (1958:556) argues that "two utterances in the same language which convey approximately the same information, but which are different in their linguistic structure, can be said to differ in style". Leech and Short (1981) also distinguished content and form (style) as "what one has to say" and "how one says it". Accordingly, two different people can say the same thing using different expressions.

Style as deviating from the norm focus on how a writers' use of language has foregrounded linguistic features that deviate from ordinary use of language. There are several levels of deviation including phonological (sound patterns), lexical, syntactic deviations like sentence length and structure, parallelism and rhetorical questions. Figures of speech entail the usage of tropes that use words and phrases in non-literal senses for emphasis or aesthetical purposes; and schemes which utilize unusual syntactic deviations for rhetorical effect.

Stylistics is thus understood as the study of style using linguistic criteria to discuss language choices that a writer makes and the impact of those choices to the reader. In stylistic analysis, great emphasis is placed on the aesthetic and functional values of deviant and foregrounded features. Wales (2001) states that:

The goal of most stylistics is not simply to describe the formal features of texts for their own sake, but in order to show their functional significance for the interpretation of the text; or in order to relate literary effect to linguistic "causes" where these are felt to be relevant. (as cited by McRae & Clark, 2005: 331).

This is the approach that will be utilized in this study.

### **1.2. Context of Novel**

Pendo la Karaha is a sociological novel written in Swahili by Kenyan novelist John Habwe and published by Moran Publishers (East Africa) in 2014. The novel tackles a critical yet under-acknowledged emerging problem in contemporary sub-Saharan African societies – the issue of modern day slavery. The novel shows how poverty, unemployment, poor and corrupt leadership all conspire to drive youth into drug addiction, crime, disease and destitution. This forces some of them so escape their home countries in pursuit of jobs and opportunities in more prosperous but oppressive societies in the Middle East where they end up being enslaved, tortured and even killed.

John Hamu Habwe is a Swahili scholar and writer from Kenya whose literary and non-literary works include children readers, short stories, novellas, novels as well as linguistic and academic texts. Other than *Pendo la Karaha*, Habwe's other novels are *Kovu Moyoni* (2014), *Pamba* (2011), *Safari ya Lamu* (2011), *Fumbo la Maisha* (2009), *Cheche za Moto* (2008), *Paradiso* (2005), *Maisha Kitendawili* (2000), and *Maumbile si Huja* (1995).

## 2. Analysis of Style in *Pendo La Karaha*

### 2.1. Diction

Diction refers to word choice in general; whether the vocabulary is formal or informal; concrete or abstract as well as choices that are dialectal and those that add "local color" and enhance verisimilitude. The novel is written entirely in Standard Swahili with the exception of code-mixing and code-switching involving English, Swahili and Sheng as well as restricted phonetic deviations in direct dialogues for purposes of establishing character idiosyncrasies. A substantial part of the story is set in Mombasa which is predominantly inhabited by native Swahili people. Therefore, the writer's choice to use words that reflect Swahili culture effectively establishes the contexts and the relevant cultural features such as food and religious beliefs. In terms of food, for instance, there is mention of food items like *pili pili manga* (black pepper), *mahamri* (doughnuts), *vitumbua* (fritters), *wali* (rice), *mdalasin* (cinnamon), *iliki* (cardamom), among others.

Equally important is the choice and use of lexical items that reflect the Islamic faith that is dominant both in Mombasa and Dubai where the novel is set – *Koran*, *msikiti* (mosque), *Maulana*, *Yarabi*, *Mola* (some of the many names for God), *kudura* (destiny), *sala* (prayer), *kadhi* (Islamic judge), *hakimu* (magistrate), *shekhe* (chief, ruler), *mwadini* (muezzin), are used. Closely related to this, there are words, phrases and even names that suggest or promote the fatalistic ideology that permeates the novel – *kudura* (fate, destiny), *faradhi* (obligation), *Subira* (patience), *Riziki* (providence), among others.

Code-mixing and code-switching techniques are widely used in the novel, especially the mixing of English words and utterances with Swahili. This is meant to reflect the sociolinguistic choices available in the various contexts that this occurs. Furthermore, it underscores the language habits of people living in places where both languages are commonly used and sometimes to show competence in both languages. Code-mixing can also be used to add emphasis in a statement where the emphasized idea is worded or uttered in English within a Swahili statement. The internal monologue between Kudra and her inner 'Self' on the working conditions in Dubai illustrates this kind of usage:

'Huo ndio utumwa, dadangu. Utumwa uliotaka wewe,' Nafsi ilisema.

'Utumwa?' Kudra aliuliza kwa mshangao.

'Eeh utumwa. Modern slavery,' Nafsi ilipambana kumfafanulia.

Sometimes, the use of English vocabulary or utterances can be used to denote prestige especially with a restricted enunciation associated with higher social class or the wealthy:

"Una housegel mzuri" (p. 99)

"Nenda ukalale wewe. Lazy woman!" (p. 106)

Urban youth typically display linguistic movement between Swahili, English and Sheng<sup>1</sup> and the conversations among the youth in Baghdad slums demonstrate this sociolinguistic reality. Lindo and Jannete demonstrate the code-switching and code-mixing (Swahili and English) in their conversations while engaged in their illicit drug activities in Baghdad:

"Mimi siogopi polisi. Kwani polisi watanifanya nini? Eeh! Watanifanya jambo gani nislolijua? Eeh! Stupid police," (p. 35)

"Nimesambaza ration yangu" (p. 34)

"Ni fun tu" (p. 33)

Other than serving restricted communication needs among the urban youth, Sheng also serves as an identity maker and a tool of youth resistance to dominant linguistic norms.

"Usiingie, maze" ("Do not get in, man!")

"Unasikiaje hiyo widi?" (What do you think of that weed - marijuana)?

Another lexical technique used by the writer of *Pendo la Karaha* is the adaptation of English words to give them Swahili structure even where equivalents of those words already exist in the Swahili lexicon. This is meant to enhance originality and bring about novelty in the novel. Examples include *tamata* (tomato), *kontena* (container), *ranchi* (ranch), *bosi* (boss), *intaneti* (Internet), *koleji* (college), *ajenda* (agenda), *lensi* (lense), *kokuteli* (cocktail), *presha* (pressure) and *mochari* (mortuary).

### 2.2. Schemes and Rhetorical Devices

#### 2.2.1. Proverbs

Proverbs are some of the common devices that fiction writers use to enhance the aesthetics of a work of art while at the same time adding local color in terms of the sociocultural context of a literary work. Proverbs are short and pithy maxims

<sup>1</sup> Sheng is a hybrid language that is prevalent among urban youth in Kenya's major cities and it is based on Swahili grammar with morphological and lexical borrowings from English, Swahili and indigenous languages

that are used to express some universal truth, wisdom or advice in a given society using language that is indirect, symbolic or metaphorical. Proverbs usually contain and express the collective or specific wisdom and values of a given society.

In Pendo la Karaha, the writer has widely used proverbs as stylistic tools to add artistic appeal but also to effectively express meaning in narration, dialogue and descriptions. Sometimes, the writer uses the proverbs in creative and novel ways of integrating them with other rhetorical devices like statements, similes, rhetorical questions and metaphors. Examples include the following:

“Huwezi kufanya lolote kwa nguvu zako; ndio maana wakasema, jitihada haiondoi kudura,” Nafsi ikasema. (p. 4)

You cannot achieve anything by your own power; that why it’s said, effort cannot supersede destiny,” ‘Self’ said.

Usually, proverbs have a conventional formulaic structure that does not change. However, the writer of Pendo la Karaha deviates from this normative form by expressing the same proverb above interrogatively:

Lakini wapi, jitihada imefaulu kuondoa kudura? (But when did effort supersede destiny? (p. 133).

Similarly, the conventional proverb ‘Subira huvuta heri’ (Patience attracts good fortune) is expressed imaginatively as ‘Subira iletayo heri hapa ikaleta uchungu’ (Patient that is supposed to attract good fortune brought pain in this case) (p. 149). But still a lot of proverbs in the novel are articulated within other utterances and expressions.

Lisilobudi hutendwa ati (p. 5). (It is said whatever needs to be done must be done)

Amekubali ukweli kuwa la kuvunda halina ubani. (p. 56). (S(h)e has agreed that there is no incense for a rotten thing)

Aliyesema wakati ni dawa alifuzu si haba (p. 65). (Whoever said that time heals was extremely correct).

Mapenzi ni kikohozi, hayafichiki (p.133). (Love is like a cough, you cannot hide it).

Ni kweli wasemao ‘Asiyekuwapo na lake halipo’ (p. 141). (It is true when they say that out of sight, out of mind).

### 2.2.2. Parallelism

Broadly defined, parallelism is the deliberate symmetric construction of a sentence or phrase so as to create a certain pattern, rhythm, balance or effective comparison. When there are two or more parts of a sentence that are equivalent in structure, length and rhythm, they are referred to as isocolon. Depending on the number of those parts; they are further categorized as bicolon (two), tricolon (three) and tetracolon (four). In describing the kinds of illicit drugs and alcoholic drinks found in Baghdad slum; the narrator uses the following bicolon structure:

Kama si pombe, ni mairungi. Kama si unga, in bangi. Kama si kokeini, ni sonyo (p. 40)

Not only was there alcohol, but also khat. Not only was there heroin, but marijuana also. Not only was there cocaine, but also sonyo<sup>2</sup>.

While fantasizing how she will go to Dubai, work and make money, Kudra’s dream was to buy big car called Harrier so that she can go wherever she wanted with ease and comfort:

“..Nikitaka kwenda Diani, niende. Nikitaka kwenda Bamburi, niende. Nikitaka kwenda Tudor, niende” ((p. 61).

“..When I want to go to Diani, I go. When I want to get to Bamburi, I go. When I want to go to Tudor, I go”.

Kudra was reflecting on the issue of slavery and how Africans were forcefully taken to go and work in foreign lands without pay, the narrator says:

Walifanya kazi bila kuchoka, bila kupumzika, bila kulipwa. (p. 177).

They worked without tiring, without resting, without pay.

This was meant to contrast to the new “voluntary” slavery where girls go to Middle East to work under self-imposed servitude.

### 2.2.3. Anaphora

This is a rhetorical technique whereby a word or a sequence of words is repeated at the beginning of consecutive sentences, clauses or phrases therefore creating rhythmic pattern and emphasis at the same time. In the example below, there is simultaneous use of anaphora and parallelism as evidenced by the near-equivalence of syntactic structure and repetition of same words at the beginning of sentences.

Hakuendi mtu wa jina na maana. Hakuendi polisi. Biashara nayo ilijaa. Kama si kuuza kaimati ni biashara ya pombe. Kama si pombe, ni biashara ya nguo mbovu. Kama si biashara ya kuuza mitura ya walevi, ni biashara ya mchuzi. (p. 40)

Nobody with a name or status goes there. The police do not go there. All kinds of trade went on there. Not only were dumplings on sale, but also alcohol. Not only alcohol but also old clothes. Not only were they selling mitura (traditional sausage) for drunkards, but also soup.

Another example is that narration of Janette after she was released after a brief arrest due to drug addiction and distribution.

Alionekana Changamwe. Alionekana Spaki. Alionekana Kisauni na kwingine akizungusha dawa...(p. 42)

She was seen in Changamwe. She was seen in Spaki. She was seen in Kisauni and elsewhere distributing drugs...

Upon her return from Dubai, Kudra’s mother explained to her how many young people in Mombasa had become drug addicts:

Wengine wameishi katika kambi za ushauri. Wengine wangali barabarani wakitoka udenda. Wengine wamejidunga sindano za kokeini nakubaki na mabaka meusi mikononi...(p. 178).

<sup>2</sup> Sonyo is a type of illicit drug

Others are living in rehabilitation camps. Others are still drooling while sleeping on the streets. Others have injected themselves with so many cocaine jabs that have left dark scars on their arms...

Anaphorical expressions are used to indicate emphasis by exploiting the repetition of similar sound patterns at the beginning of sentences to create rhythm and balance.

#### 2.2.4. Rhetorical Questions

Rhetorical questions are commonly used in literary compositions. Instead of seeking answers, these questions are posed in order to express shock, disbelief, surprise and at the same time provoke thought and reflection. There is always a deeper meaning of the question than it appears on the surface level. This device is also widely used in the novel *Pendo la Karaha* to perform such functions and help express meaning more emphatically.

One time, Kudra was reflecting on how one of the foreign girls working in Dubai had to endure physical and mental torture to the extent of losing one eye. The writer, through the protagonist, uses a sequence of rhetorical questions to wonder why African governments do not intervene on behalf of these victims:

'Kwa nini serikali haikulazimisha nchi kama hizi kuwalipa wasichana hawa kama walivyokubaliana? Hivi serikali haikujali kama tunaishi au la? Mbona serikali ilikuwa inasema jukumu la kulinda haki za raia ni lao?' (p. 176).

'Why doesn't government force these countries to pay the girls according to their contracts? Does it mean the government doesn't care if we live or die? Why does the government claim that it is its duty to protect the rights of its citizens?'

A similar sequence of rhetorical questions (blended with anaphoric sentences) is used to emphasize the deceptive notion of prosperity that African girls came to pursue in the Middle East. The narrator, through the protagonist, says:

Kumbe walikuwa wakiuzwa utumwani? Kumbe hawakuja kufanya kazi? Kumbe ilikuwa hadaa ya ulimwengu? (p. 89).

So, they were being sold into slavery? So, they were not coming to work? So, all this was a deception of the world?

When Kudra discovered that Salim had a romantic relationship with his own daughter Hanawi, she expressed her shock using successive rhetorical questions:

Mtu kama Salim na hizo pesa zote alikosa nini? Kwa nini asingetafuta mwanamke akafanya mapenzi naye? (p. 131).

Someone like Salim who had all that money, what was he missing? Why couldn't he look for a woman and have a romantic relationship with her?

Equally, Kudra wondered why Hanawi was not married:

Kwa nini hakuolewa? (p. 131).

Why was she not married?

These questions perform rhetorical functions of emphasis rather than seeking answers.

#### 2.2.5. Anti-Thesis

Anti-thesis is the deliberate placement of directly contrasting words, grammatical structures (phrases, clauses or sentences) or ideas to show or emphasize the incongruities inherent in life. The writer of *Pendo la Karaha* has exploited this scheme to express the absurdities and dilemmas facing various characters, especially the protagonist, Kudra.

In describing the dramatic transformation of a character, the narrator the narrator draws contrasting images of when Rehema was healthy, wealthy and arrogant with Rehema who became sick, humble and religious:

Rehema wa leo pia hakuwa Rehema wa jana. Alikuwa ni mcha Mungu. Kila siku, alikwa akivuta uradi. Zamani, redio lake lilitapika muziki wa kidunia, leo amerekebisha; linatoka vipindi vya mafunzo ya kidini (p. 139).

Rehema of today is not the same as Rehema of yesterday. She is God fearing. Everyday, she was reciting prayers. Previously, her radio boomed with secular music, today she is reformed; the radio plays religious programs.

The highlighted words show binary contrasts that are used to express the transformation of Rehema. The narrator uses Rehema's conversion to underscore the contradictions and unpredictability of life in general:

Ndivyo dunia ilivyo, bahari ilivyo inajaa na kukupwa, wakati mwingine ni usiku, wakati mwingine ni mchana. Leo unakwenda juu, kesho unateremka. Leo ni mtu wa dunia, kesho ni mcha Mungu (p. 140).

That is how the world is, like the sea, one time the tide is high, another time it is low, one time it is night, another time it is day. Today you will go up, tomorrow you come down. Today you are a non-believer, tomorrow you become God-fearing.

Similarly, the accentuated words are used to describe Rehema's situation and how it applies to human beings in general.

When she ended up working in a mortuary in Dubai, Kudra started to regret why she left her home despite the fact that it was poor.

Aliona heri umaskini wa nyumbani kwao kuliko utajiri wa ugenini (p. 152).

She saw it better to be poor in her own home than to be rich in a foreign land.

Ultimately, this marked the climax of the plot and Kudra decided to return to Kenya.

In one of her many reflections, Kudra remembered how Lindo became a drug addict in pursuit of becoming rich as a drug distributor:

Lindo alikamia faida lakini akapata hasara. Mpaka baina ya faida na hasara ni mdogo; si mkubwa vile (p. 69).

Lindo aimed at gaining but he ended up losing. The boundary between benefit and loss is small; it is not that big.

### 2.2.6. Repetition

Literary writers often repeat sounds, words, phrases or even sentences in close proximity as a technique of adding emphasis, clarity and memorability. Although more common in poetry, lexical repetition is also found in prose fiction, especially novels. In *Pendo la Karaha*, the writer employs this rhetorical device extensively. For instance, after Subira got the news of the death of her daughter, Rukia, in Dubai, the narrator says that 'Subira aliomboleza na kuomboleza' (p. 53) to mean that she mourned with deep anguish and sorrow thus emphasizing the mood that transpired at that time.

One time, Kudra remembered a conversation she had with Lindo before he died:

"..Huu ni utumwa. Dadangu, amini usiamini, huu ni utumwa. Tena utumwa uliosheheni kebehi" (p. 32)

"This is slavery. Believe it or not, this is slavery, my sister. Moreover, it is disgraceful slavery".

During Rukia's burial, her mother Subira cursed everything in disbelief after that misfortune.

Hata yeye Subira alilaani hali yake ya kubadilikabadilika. Alilaani safari ya Dubai na kulaani Uarabuni. Hakujua angelaani nani na nini kingine! Yeye alijihisi kulaani tu (p. 54).

Even Subira herself cursed her life of ups and downs. She cursed the trip to Dubai and she cursed the Middle East. She did not know whom or what else to curse. She just felt like cursing.

This repetition stresses the feelings of regret and failure that as a parent, she let Rukia travel to the Middle East looking for better opportunities; only to die there.

When Rehema went to plead with his son, Kassim, to return home, he refused and told her mother she will be cursed for exploiting young girls whom she sent into slavery in the Middle East. Rehema reflected on that:

Rehema alifumba macho. Ulimwengu huu ukampitikia akilini, ulimwengu haramu. Ulimwengu wa kudunisha mtu ili upate wewe (p. 80).

Rehema shut her eyes. She thought about the world, the evil world. A world where you belittle someone so that you can benefit.

This repetition reveals that despite her expansive wealth, Rehema was not happy, especially since Kassim exposed her exploitation of poor girls.

## *2.3. Figures of Speech*

### 2.3.1. Allegorical Names

Writers sometimes give characters names that contain symbolic or even ironic meaning or significance. Those names can reflect or contradict the characters' traits, beliefs or behavior in the story. In *Pendo la Karaha*, many such names are used.

Kudra is an allegorical name that is derived from the noun 'kudura' which means 'destiny', 'fate' or 'God's will'. Accordingly, the challenges and misfortunes that happen to her in the story are supposedly "God's will". Ironically, however, Kudra herself does not believe in 'fate' or 'destiny' – indeed she believes in human power to change or shape their destiny.

Riziki is also an allegorical name that means 'God's blessings', 'providence' or 'sustenance'. Providence is defined as "the foreseeing care and guidance of God or nature over the creatures of the earth". Riziki is a consummate Muslim who is guided by the Koran and God's power over the life of people and this can be seen from her beliefs, attitudes and actions. Riziki believed in God's providence and destiny in whatever happens in the lives of human beings.

Another allegorical character name is Rehema and just like Kudra, it is used ironically. 'Rehema' being a Swahili female name that means 'compassion' and 'forgiveness' it is therefore directly contradicted by the character's exploitative and unscrupulous behavior. In the story, Rehema became very wealthy by connecting desperate young girls to employers abroad where they ended up being enslaved, exploited and abused.

### 2.3.2. Allusion

When a literary work makes indirect reference to a place, person or entity that is known from religion or religious texts, science, politics, history, sports or another subgenre of literature, this technique is called allusion. In *Pendo la Karaha*, allusion is applied in the naming and description of Baghdad slum where the illicit drugs business was entrenched. The intended image of Baghdad, the capital city of Iraq, especially after the war is that of lawlessness, chaos and anarchy. Indeed, the inability of law enforcement agencies to put an end to the drug menace points to this representation.

In the same vein, when the narrator refers to Baghdad as 'Gomora' (p. 40), it is an allusion of the Biblical city of Gomorrah which, alongside Sodom, was condemned for its wickedness and immorality. In another Biblical allusion, the protagonist argues with the 'Self' about her enslavement in Dubai. Kudra's inner 'Self' insists that Kudra is a slave but Kudra disagrees.

'Maisha yana hadaa mwanangu. Yameshinda watu wakuu kina Selemani na baba yake Daudi. Wewe utayaweza?' Nafsi ilieleza. (p. 120).

'Life is an illusion, my child. Great people like Solomon and his father David could not manage it. What about you?' Self explained (sic).

The notorious gang associated with illicit drug use and criminal activities in Likoni is called *Kuklax Klan*. This is a somewhat direct allusion to the Ku Klux Klan - the post-Civil War extremist group that advocated white supremacy in the southern parts of USA.

### 2.3.3. Imagery

Imagery is the use of words to paint a picture in a work of art or to elicit a concrete appeal to a reader's sensation of a person, object, place, thing or experience. It entails narration or description that evokes an emotional or sensory response that thus creates atmosphere or mood. Imagery can thus be categorized according to the impressions they make to various senses - visual (sight), auditory (hearing), gustatory (taste), olfactory (smell), tactile (touch), kinesthetic (movement) and organic (emotion or feeling).

In *Pendo la Karaha*, there are various images that are distinct while others are subtler. The description of the body builds and color of Riziki (p.2) creates a visual image of the character, even when the representation is also overstated. In the same vein, the depiction of Baghdad slum; the haven of drug dealers and addicts also creates an atmosphere of poverty, chaos, and lawlessness. The narrator describes this as a village of makeshift huts made of old iron sheets; muddy paths littered with all kinds of garbage, raw sewage flowing and emitting horrible smell, drunk people smoking all sorts of drugs and eating mitura. This representation of Baghdad simultaneously appeals to visual, olfactory, gustatory and even organic senses of a reader.

Another complex use of imagery that evokes several sensual responses concurrently is the description of Lindo's body as viewed by Kudra.

Kudra aliurushia mwili wa Lindo macho hapo alipolazwa kwenye mkeka. Ulijaa mabaka meusi ya sindano. Meno yake karibu yote yalikuwa yameng'oka kwa ajili ya kupigana na marafiki zake na hata maadui. (p. 48)

Kudra stole a glance at Lindo's body as it lay there on the mat. It had dark scars all over from many injections. Almost all his teeth were missing due to his frequent fights with his friends and even enemies.

This image stimulates a visual mental picture of the body of Lindo. But at the same time, it conjures a feeling of sadness and a somber mood of sorrow that Kudra gets following the death of her friend, Lindo.

The narrator also presents a similarly intriguing mental picture of Kassim, the drug addict who ran away from her wealthy mother to go and live in the slum. But one day he came back home this way:

Siku moja Kassim alijikokota kurudi nyumbani. Fulana yake ilikuwa na mkono wa kushoto; mkono wa kulia haukuwa. Champali zake zilikuwa za rangi tofauti. Alivaa miwani ya kutisha. Mkono mmoja wa miwani ulivunjika, akatumia waya kushika lensi. Lensi zake zilitisha kwa ukubwa wake. Suruali yake aliifunga kwa kamba ya mkonge. (p. 83)

One day Kassim dragged himself back home. His sweater had only the left arm; the right one was missing. His sandals were of different colors. He wore scary spectacles. One arm of the spectacles frame had broken and so he used a piece of wire to hold the lenses in place. Those lenses were scary by their huge size. He supported his pants using a sisal rope.

This description, laden as it is with hyperbole, depicts a caricature image of Kassim to present the irony of his current poor state of addiction as opposed to the wealth and luxury that abounds in his home.

### 2.3.4. Metaphor

A metaphor compares two dissimilar things directly without the use of words of comparison (like or as) that are normally used in a simile. There are different types of metaphors including direct or simple, mixed, extended, conceptual, absolute and dead, among others. In the novel *Pendo la Karaha*, there are usages of both direct and extended metaphors.

Examples of an extended metaphor include the description given about Rukia. After her death in the hands of her employers in Dubai, friends and relatives went to condole with her mother, Subira, at her home in the Amsterdam neighborhood of Mombasa.

Walioweza, walifika Amsterdam kumpa mama Subira pole kwa msiba na kuomboleza huyu lulu; ua la waridi aliyezimia akiwa ametumbukia katika shimo refu la utumwa wa aina nyingine (p. 53).

Those who were able arrived at Subira's home at Amsterdam (estate) to condole with her and mourn this jewel; a rose flower that perished while sunken in a deep hole of a different kind of slavery.

In this example, Rukia is portrayed as a 'jewel' and a 'rose flower' while Dubai and other Middle East countries where young girls like Rukia go to work are the 'deep hole of slavery'. After her burial, another metaphorical representation of Rukia is given thus:

Nyota iliyokuwa ikiwaka Dubai ikazimika. Wingu jeusi likamfunika Subira na kesho yake, mng'aro uliokuwa katika uso wa Subira ukabadilika na kuwa msawajiko wa kutisha (p. 54).

The star that was shining in Dubai was extinguished. A dark cloud covered Subira, and the following day, the radiance that was on Subira's face was replaced by horrific desolation.

Another extended metaphor is used to describe how Aminii's desire for a romantic relationship with Kudra was growing by the day. Nayrat, Aminii's wife, did not notice this because she left her husband at home and went to work or shopping.

Shughuli zake hizo zilingubika wingu machoni asione matone ya mvua yakianza kujitokeza. Matone na matone yangeunga mvua kubwa bila shaka (p.111).

Her busy schedule became a cloud that covered her eyes so that she could not see that drops of rain were starting to form. One drop joined by another drop would certainly form heavy rain.

There are also several simple metaphors including the narrator's reference to the Koran as the pillar of Riziki's life (Ilikuwa mhimili wake wa maisha, p. 73) as a technique of emphasizing the importance of the Islamic faith in Riziki's life. Others are "Hadija alikuwa almasi kwa Kudra siku zote" (Hadija was always a diamond to Kudra, p.109) meaning that Hadija was valuable to Kudra. "Baina ya Hanawi na Kudra, palikuwa pamejengwa ukuta wa chuki" (Between Hanawi and Kudra, a wall of hostility had been erected, p.134) is a metaphor used to show the hostility that developed between these two characters.

### 2.3.5. Metonymy

Metonymy is a kind of metaphor that uses substitution by referring to a person, object or thing in terms of something else that is closely associated with that person, object or thing. An example from the novel is this reference to Mwamba:

*Ulimwengu ulipodhani anashughulika na ufundi na kuuza magazeti, kumbe akawa ndiye wa kuuza unga...*(p. 43)

When the world though he was an artisan and newspaper vendor, turns out he was the one selling cocaine...

In this example, the word 'world' is used to refer to people or the community (and their misconception of Mwamba's true engagements).

### 2.3.6. Irony

Irony refers to a statement, action or appearance that in contrast to expectations, or reality. There are many types of irony including verbal, dramatic, situational, and structural. But we shall analyse the last two since they are more prevalent in the novel and illustrate them accordingly.

Situational irony occurs when what is supposed or expected to happen is different or even the opposite of what actually happens. There are several instances of such situations revealed in *Pendo la Karaha*, especially around the illicit drug business. The law enforcement officers are expected to arrest and prosecute people behind the illegal drugs business in Mombasa. However, whenever suspected distributors like Jannete are arrested, they are promptly released. Mwamba is a drug distributor who pretends to be a newspaper vendor and technician. But he is the one leading street demonstrations against drug dealers.

In the mean time, the real drug lords are never interrogated or arrested by the authorities. Some prominent businessmen in the town like Abdulla Khan, Maji Sayyid and Kajume Mlemavu who are drug kingpins are seen spearheading the activities of an association called NOOMA that seeks to educate and sensitize the youth on the importance of education, employment, sexuality and the effects of drug addiction. This is ironical as well.

Rehema who runs the agency that recruits young girls and sends them to the Middle East became very rich because of this business. She had several real estate properties in rich neighborhoods and many flashy cars. But she could not sustain relationships within her family. She chased away her husband, Mzee Choka and then their only son, Kassim, also ran away from home and became a drug addict. Later when Rehema became sick and could not enjoy her wealth, she had to go plead with them to come back home. It is ironical that her wealth could not guarantee her health or happiness.

Other representation of situational irony includes when the narrator depicts the protagonist, Kudra, admiring her employer's expensively furnished house:

*Katika nyumba hii, kila chumba kilukuwa na feni zilizofanya vyumba hivyo kuwa na hali tulivu ya hewa. Nyumba hiyo ilikuwa kama ahera na Kudra hakuwahi kuliona jumba kama hilo maishani mwake. Lilikwa kubwa na kila kitu alichokiona kilikuwa cha kustaaajabisha. Simu hazihesabiki. Ni chumba cha jiko tu ambacho hakikuwa na simu. (p. 116)*

In this house, every room had a fan that ensured the presence of cool atmosphere. That house was like heaven and Kudra had never seen such a beautiful house in her entire life. It was huge and everything she saw in there was fabulous. The telephones were literally uncountable. It's only the kitchen that did not have a telephone.

The ironical reality is that Kudra was not free in this house; she was not even allowed to leave that home of her employer. She was leading the life of a slave or a prisoner in the midst of all that extraordinary wealth, opulence and luxury.

Structural irony happens when a naïve protagonist espouses a belief, view or outlook that contrasts with what the author does. In *Ndoto ya Karaha*, the protagonist, Kudra projects a proactive stance and appears to believe that human beings have not only the power but also the obligation to take charge of their lives. She takes it upon herself to look for employment to escape the poverty and drugs of Likoni. But her mother insisted that every person has her luck and destiny and so Kudra should not compare herself with Rukia. She told Kudra that God is the provider of blessings and one cannot force it - Mungu ndiye mwenye riziki, tena ujue riziki hailazimishwi (p. 6).

More fundamentally, Kudra does not agree with her inner 'Self' on that conflict between human agency and self-determination versus God's providence and destiny.

"Lolote lifanyikalo ni kudura ya Maulana", ikasema Nafsi

"Ni Mungu gani huyu ambaye atapenda kudura yangu uiwe ni maisha ya kuhangaika?", Kudra akiuliza Nafsi

“Huwezi kufanya lolote kwa nguvu zako; ndio maana wakasema, jitihada haiondoi kudura,” Nafsi ikasema (p. 4)

“Whatever happens is God’s will and destiny”, her ‘Self’ said

“Which God is this that would like my destiny to be a life of problems?”, Kudra asked her ‘Self’

“You cannot do anything by your own power; that is why it is said effort cannot supplant destiny”, her ‘Self’ said.

Ultimately, after many tribulations and obstacles that she faced while working in Dubai including slavery, physical and sexual abuse, Kudra arrives at the realization that she was better off free and poor in her home country rather than rich and in confinement in a foreign country. She makes the decision to return home. It can thus be argued that the events that led to the climaxing and resolution of the plot of *Pendo la Karaha* were advocated and advanced by the author through two characters - Riziki and Kudra’s inner ‘Self’.

### 2.3.7. Satire

Satire is a style of writing whereby a writer uses humor, irony or exaggeration in a phrase, expression or even entire work in order to ridicule and expose the stupidity, weakness or wickedness of an individual, institution or society. Ultimately, the purpose of satirical writing is to make people think and seek to bring change in society. In the novel, satire is used to expose the follies and weaknesses of characters (and by extension humanity) in the face of the overwhelming obstacles and experiences they encounter as part of their destiny.

Through the use of stream of consciousness narrative technique, the main character, Kudra, disagrees with her inner Self, which insists that she is a slave.

‘Wewe ni mtumwa. Hii ndiyo sababu wafuta nyumba usilipwe mshahara ukufaa,’ Nafsi ilisema na ikacheka kicheko kikubwa cha kitashtiti.

‘Mimi?’ Kudra aliuliza.

‘Wewe’, Nafsi ilisema bila kusita.

‘Nitatoka,’ Kudra alisema.

‘Kutoka ni vigumu. Kwataka moyo,’ Nafsi ilisema.

‘Moyo ninao. Nguvu ninazo na mikakati ninayo,’ Kudra alisema.

‘Ndivyo anavyoamini kila mmoja wetu lakin si kweli’, Nafsi ilisema. (p. 120)

‘You are a slave. This is why you clean the house and you are not paid accordingly,’ ‘Self’ said and then let out a loud satirical laughter.

‘Me?’, Kudra asked.

‘You’, ‘Self’ answered without hesitation.

‘I will leave,’ Kudra said.

‘Leaving is difficult. It takes determination,’ ‘Self’ said.

‘I have the determination. I have the energy and the strategy,’ Kudra said.

‘That is what every one of us believes, but it is not true,’ ‘Self’ said.

This conversation underscores the weaknesses and follies that human beings have and their failures and abilities to take charge of their destinies. The laughter is used to ridicule Kudra’s failure to recognize the magnitude of the challenges she faced. However, the narrator’s overt characterization of the laughter as satirical is itself a naïve display of authorial intrusion. A similar use of laughter to ridicule the protagonist took place earlier in the plot when the ‘Self’ dismissed Kudra’s belief that she can influence the events in her life whereas the ‘Self’ insisted that “whatever happens is her destiny according to God” (p.4).

### 2.3.8. Hyperbole

Hyperbole is the overstatement of features, qualities and appearance of something or someone for dramatic or rhetorical effect. The language used is not intended to be taken literally, rather it is an exaggeration that is meant to emphasize a feeling, expression, image or quality. In *Pendo la Karaha*, the narrator paints a word picture of the character Riziki using a variety of overstatements:

Riziki alikuwa mwanamke mweusi tititi kama kaa la jikoni na mnene kwa jirimu lake. Akitembea, ilikuwa ni kama ardhi ililalamika kuuhimili uzito wake. Kifua chake kilitoka nje na kufanya sehemu ya nyuma ya shingo yake isiweze kuonekana vizuri. Jina lake la utani pale Likoni lilikuwa ‘kisiki’ (p. 2).

Riziki was an extremely black woman (like charcoal) with a huge body build. When she walked, it was as if the ground lamented due to her immense weight. Her chest bulged to the front so that it was a little difficult to see her nape. Because of her appearance, Riziki’s nickname in the Likoni area was ‘stump’.

In this example, the narrator overstates Riziki’s blackness, weight and appearance – including the metaphorical nickname of ‘stump’. To accentuate the hyperbole, the technique is blended with personification whereby the ground ‘laments’ of Riziki’s weight when she walks around.

When Kassim decided to come back home, his appearance is exaggerated to emphasize how drugs had made him lead a life of extreme hardship and despair. Apart from his torn clothes, broken glasses, using a rope instead of a belt to support his trousers; Kassim also carried with him a lot of mud due to the heavy rains that beat him.

Champali zake zilikuwa zimebeba tope la karne moja baada ya kupitia katika mvua iliyomlowesha (p. 83).



His sandals carried mud of a century after walking in the rain that drenched him.

Furthermore, the narrator says that from his appearance, Kassim had not combed his hair for all the years had been away from home (p. 83). It is evident that Kassim's image has been intentionally overstated for dramatic and rhetorical effect.

More examples of hyperbole include the state of Kassim after getting a dose of the illicit drugs; "Akibugia kokuteli, hata hicho kisiwa cha Mombasa alikiona kinazunguka kama santuri ya kinanda" (After imbibing a dose of cocktail drugs, he could even see the whole island of Mombasa spinning like gramophone disc, p. 84). When Kudra was fired from her second job, she found herself a small room in Dubai where she stayed while searching for another job. The room was so tiny that when she tried to stretch, her feet could hit the wall (p. 147). This was a small part of the many obstacles that Kudra encountered during her stay in Dubai.

### 3. Conclusion

This study conducted a stylistic analysis of John Habwe's novel *Pendo la Karaha* and revealed several literary devices, schemes and tropes which the writer has employed. The study also discussed the aesthetic value and functional significance of these stylistic devices as well as their contribution to making this novel a unique text. The writer's mastery of the Swahili language is displayed by the choice of words and creative use of a variety of rhetorical devices, schemes, tropes and figures of speech.

### 4. Acknowledgement

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