

**Longing and Loss in Words: Exploring the Attitudinal World through Text World Theory
in Farzana Aqib's *Where is My Farmer***

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ABSTRACT

*The present paper discusses the description of a person and a place through feelings in the poem *Where is My Farmer* (2021) by Farzana Aqib. It is discussed in the paper through the Text world Theory (TWT) as an attitudinal world concept that reveals the involvement of emotions in the presentation of a text. A qualitative approach and a textual analysis will be conducted to investigate how the descriptions of the speaker of feelings of longing, yearning, and melancholy fill the landscape. As the results show, the pastoral environment in the poem is changed into an emotional one where sadness and absence are connected to memory and beauty.*

Keywords: Text World Theory; Attitudinal World; Poetry Analysis; Emotions in Literature; Farzana Aqib.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The poetry, together with the outside world, also tends to describe the feelings and experiences of the speaker. In particular, the theory of Text World (TWT) leads to the analysis of how readers create worlds in their minds in reaction to texts, and how emotions are organised in reaction to the worlds (Werth, 1999; Gavins, 2007). The attitudinal world of TWT describes how the emotions of love, nostalgia, or grief might be applied to describe places and events (Giovannelli, 2016). Farzana Aqib applied TWT to comprehend how the sense of longing and sorrow affects the rural landscape and convert it into an emotional one in the poem *Where is My Farmer* (2021).

Statement of the Purpose

The purpose of the work is to examine the way Farzana Aqib perceives the people and the places in the poem *Where is My Farmer* (2021) through the lens of emotions. This article applies the Text Environment Theory (TWT) to explain how, the longing, yearning and melancholy of the speaker generate an attitudinal environment where the countryside, as a place, becomes an emotional terrain.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Text World Theory (TWT) provides a mental frame through which the reader can examine the creation of mental images of speech. This was initially developed by Werth (1999), and later on by Gavins (2007). The way in which language constructs worlds within the mind of the reader is defined, as do sub-worlds such as hypotheticals, attitudinal, deontic and epistemic. The attitudinal world is necessary to demonstrate how feelings of a narrator or a character, his/her beliefs, and personal worldview affect events and situations.

TWT was also found to be effective as a measure in prose, poetry and drama, in previous research. Gavins (2007) improved the model and stressed its relevance to literary texts, and Werth (1999) applied the theory, at length, to discourse and narrative structures. Whiteley (2011) undertook further studies on how TWT might integrate empathy and readers involvement in the process of literary discourse reading and processing. TWT and cognitive poetics can also provide the evidence of the connection between linguistic choices and affective responses that Stockwell (2002) demonstrated.

Moreover, Nuttall (2018) showed how the reader perceives literature as lived and experienced place through mapping geographical and emotional viewpoint in poetry using TWT. TWT has also been applied to emphasize the role of emotional posture in text reading by scholars including Harrison (2017) and Giovanelli (2016). These works indicate that the attitude is one of the main factors that affect the comprehension and the feelings of the reader towards poetry.

Nonetheless, in spite of these contributions, there are few studies that utilize Text World Theory in the study of attitudinal worlds specifically to contemporary Pakistani poetry. The majority of the literature available is devoted to canonical English literature or general discussion, and it is not covered by studies of how South Asian poets build emotional landscapes using evaluative language and imagery. A Stardust Drape (2021) by Farzana Aqib has not been critically analysed within the context of TWT and more precisely, the poem Where is My Farmer has not been analysed in the context of attitudinal construction of worlds.

This study thus attempted to address this gap by projecting Text World Theory and specifically the attitudinal world to the poem by Aqib. The paper underscores the impact of emotions like longing, nostalgia, and grief that affect how the reader views the rural landscape in the study, thus giving new perspectives on how cognitive stylistics intersects with modern Pakistani poetry.

METHODOLOGY

Research Type

This study is qualitative in nature. A qualitative approach has been adopted because the research focuses on the interpretation of language, emotions, and meanings in the selected poem rather than on statistical or numerical data. Qualitative research is suitable here as it allows for an in-depth understanding of the attitudinal world constructed in the poem through the lens of Text World Theory.

Data Collection Method

Data has been gathered using the documentation approach. The poem "Where is My Farmer" from Farzana Aqib's 2021 poetry book A Stardust Drape serves as the main source of information. Due to the imagery, emotive feelings, and evaluative language that enriches the poem with respect to the aim of the study on the attitudinal world, the poem was selected by intentional sampling.

Data Analysis Method

The data have been assessed by textual analysis through Text World Theory (TWT). The formation of the attitudinal world has been particularly examined, with a consideration of how the feelings of longing, nostalgia and desire that the speaker experiences affect the depiction of the countryside. That study involves identifying the emotive imagery, metaphors, and comparative language of the poem and investigating how all these come together to form the attitudinal cosmos.

Theoretical Framework

The present paper relies on the Text World Theory (TWT) as one of the cognitive stylistic models developed by Werth (1999) and expounded by Gavins (2007). TWT explains how readers interpret the text in which they construct worlds, or mental representations. According to this paradigm, the sentimental and critical attitude which the narrators or speakers perceive the events is called the attitudinal world (Gavins, 2007; Giovanelli, 2016).

This paper analyses the impact of melancholy, longing, and nostalgia in the countryside description with TWT in the poem *Where is My Farmer* (Aqib, 2021) and how feelings can transform a geographical location into an emotional one.

Analysis & Discussion

According to Text World Theory, the attitudinal world is one of the approaches that the speaker uses to screen out places, events, and objects in the text using emotions.. The feelings of grief, desire and nostalgia that the narrator experiences in this poem prevail in his description of the countryside.. The reader does not just “see” the rural setting, they feel it through the speaker’s deep sense of loss and yearning for a person from the past, the “farmer” or “countryman.”

Attitude of Longing and Nostalgia

Where is my farmer

Where is my countryman

Where is my salt of the earth

These questions are not requests for factual information; they are emotional appeals. The repetition creates a tone of yearning and shows that the speaker’s focus is on someone deeply valued but now absent.

The phrase “my salt of the earth” adds a personal, affectionate evaluation, it is not just describing the man’s work, but his worth and purity in the speaker’s eyes.

Idealised, Affectionate Memories

The attitudinal world here is rich with sensory and emotional imagery. The speaker recalls the farmer’s promises in a romanticised way:

The salt of his corny fields

Sweetness of his ripening orchards

And a cold sip of his deep well waters

These are not neutral descriptions of farming, they are idealised memories, chosen for their taste, freshness, and comfort. The speaker is emotionally colouring the rural life as pure, nourishing, and deeply personal.

Emotional Contrast Between Past and Present

In the present moment, the speaker is surrounded by beauty:

There is a fresh evening breeze

There is a beautiful sunset vista

Everything in best place, But not thee.

Here, the attitudinal world shifts, the countryside remains beautiful, but the absence of the farmer turns beauty into loneliness. The line “But not thee” shows that all the physical perfection feels empty without the person. This is a clear example of emotional filtering: the same scene could be joyous to another viewer, but for this speaker, it is incomplete and bittersweet.

Sorrow and Emotional Pain

The speaker’s grief is openly shown:

My eyes are wet,

And my lips are pursed.

These physical reactions are part of the attitudinal world, they reveal how strongly the absence is felt. Even the countryside itself is described through this pain:

A chocolate-box view

Of the countryside hue,

Yet untouchable and not near

Just like your remembrance,

So vivid yet obscure.

The term “chocolate-box view” suggests beauty so perfect it feels staged, yet it is “untouchable,” reflecting the speaker’s emotional distance. The simile compares the vivid scenery to the memory of the farmer: clear in mind but unreachable in reality.

Intensified Emotional Imagery

Towards the end, the attitudinal world becomes more intense and almost violent in its imagery:

Today your reminiscence is hurting fast,

As if on my brain’s windscreen,

Few raindrops slap then smash,

Like a moth

Against a speeding vehicle.

The feelings of longing are now mixed with sharp emotional pain. The comparison to a moth hitting a car’s windscreen is visceral and shows strong physical emotions, it shows how sudden, harsh, and destructive the memories feel. The attitude here is not gentle nostalgia anymore but deep, almost physical hurt.

FINDINGS

Dominance of Emotional Filtering

The countryside in the poem is not presented neutrally; every image is shaped by the narrator's emotions. The rural setting is filtered through longing, nostalgia, and sorrow, creating an attitudinal world that blends external reality with inner feeling.

Idealisation of the Past

The farmer or "countryman" is remembered through sensory images (taste, touch, sight) that romanticise rural life. These details are carefully selected to highlight comfort, purity, and personal connection rather than agricultural reality.

Contrast Between Past and Present

Even when present scenes are beautiful, the absence of the farmer transforms them into symbols of incompleteness. This emotional contrast deepens the sense of loss.

Physical Manifestations of Emotion

In addition to verbal expressions, the narrator uses metaphors that amplify emotional suffering and physical depictions (moist eyes, pursed lips) to convey her anguish.

The picture shifts from tender nostalgia to violent analogies (such as a moth striking a speeding car), indicating that the absence is not only depressing but also invasive and startling to the mind.

CONCLUSION

The poem's attitudinal universe shows how the speaker's feelings and recollections influence how people and places are portrayed. The landscape turns into an idealized, melancholy, and yearning canvas where absence is inextricably linked to beauty. The change from gentle, loving language to strong, even violent metaphors demonstrates that the loss is a terrible, present reality rather than a faraway memory. The poem illustrates how one's emotions may turn a physical landscape into an emotional one, causing the environment to mirror the mind just as much as the outside world.

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