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***Pentadic Analysis of Paul Kalanithi's When Breath Becomes Air and Islamic Teachings about Dramatic Structure of Life***

Muhammad Farooq\*

**ABSTRACT**

*This paper studies the memoir "When Breath Becomes Air" with the lens of Pedantic Analysis. It studies the dialogues and narratives of the characters by dissecting each of them through the Pedantic Analysis. It covers the tools of Pedant and analyse the novel accordingly. The Pedantic Analysis helps the readers to study the text delicately and understand the narratives.*

**Keywords:** *Burke's Pedant, Pedantic Analysis, Tools, Paul Kalanithi, "When Breath Becomes Air"*

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**INTRODUCTION(BACKGROUND)**

*“When Breath Becomes Air” is written by an Indian- American neurosurgeon Paul Kalanithi and is published in 2016. The Pedant Analysis by Kelennethe Burke came on surface in 1960. In this paper the memoir of Paul Kalanithi is studied through Kelennethe Burke’s Pedant Analysis and sense is carried out of the narratives.*

**OVERVIEW**

**WHEN BREATH BECOMES AIR**

*When Breath Becomes Air* is written by an Indian-American neurosurgeon, Paul Kalanithi. He narrated his story of illness and then combating the deadly disease through his will power. The story flashes back to his teen age when he was keen about literature and the curiosity which forced him to be a vivid reader of literature which was flamed up by his mother and the classical reading choice of his brother. He started exploring literature at Stanford but later on, finding meaning in life he became skeptical about literature, and neuroscience caught his interest which ended him up in a medical school at Yale. He met his wife Lucy there and moved to California with her. He diagnosed with stage IV lungs cancer at very young age, which made him depressed and meaningless initially. The writer of the story met the deadly disease in his thirties when he was on the peak of his career success but met by misfortune suddenly. In the long story, he has showed to his readers that how to see own self dying when there is actual demand of life. In the novel he says that, “Even if I’m dying, until I actually die, I’m still living”. The story met a tragic ending that is the death of Paul but he remained a true hero of life in the face of death and is remembered for his courage, determination and resilience which he showed throughout the illness and kept battling with the disease and continued his profession as a neurosurgeon without making his illness an excuse to quit. This memoir is written in the last year of his life, through the process, he was blessed with a daughter who rejuvenated his life even more and he started living for her to see her alive. He proceeded his movement of meaning and purpose in life by accepting his deteriorating health as well as his responsibility as a surgeon. He continued his profession and kept treating his patients in that unpretentious situation. Through the stages, he studied mortality through completely different angles. His courage and determination and search for meaning in his remaining life made him immortal in spite of being buried under the mortal pile of soil.

**PEDANTIC ANALYSIS**

Kelennethe Burk 1960 a literary theorist, coined the idea of Pedant analysis. The idea of Pedant analysis revolves around the prominent terms present in a narrative. Pedantic analysis studies the statement by dissecting the act, the scene, the agent, the agency and the purpose. It helps in understanding the motivation behind the narrative. Pedantic Analysis is a tool from the world of rhetoric. It allows us to make sense of motivation in a dramatic situation. We have five terms to unchain any statement.

These terms include “what is happening?” (the act), “When and Where it is happening?” (the scene), “Who is doing it?” (the agent), “How it is happening?” (the agency) and “Why it is happening?” (the purpose). These terms give us clue to describe a sentence, a situation, a picture, a painting and make sense what is happening and what is motivating the situation to happen. Pedantic Analysis makes readers able to get motivated to persuade to statement legally. The tool which is used to persuade is called heuristic tool which helps readers as ladder. Heuristic tool helps readers thought process, to get them somewhere to the point concerned. As it gets to the point concerned, it’s not considered anymore.

Pedantic analysis does not study one term in isolation but it is much more about the relationship between terms, tensions and the ambiguity in terms of accounting for motivation. It is like grammar for in grammar, we take sentence and studies its parts of speech but here we consider parts of sentence in order to reach out to its idea. Let’s discuss few examples.

**Example 1:**

This morning, the doctor opened operation theatre through key to operate tumor of a patient.

Let’s dissect the statement.

The Scene:	This	morning,		operation	theatre.
The Act:		opened	the	operation	theatre.
The Agent:				The	Doctor.
The Agency:				Through	Key.
The purpose: To operate tumor of a patient.					

In this scenario, we can be motivated to persuade that there is a patient who needs tumor surgery at early convenience in order to live a healthy life. Hence, the doctor made it possible by opening then theatre in morning to get the tumor removed. All five terms acted in a close relationship to produce sense of the statement.

**Example 2:**

I went to market to buy groceries.

Let’s open the statement to find the present terms.	The Scene:	Market.
The Act:	Went	to market
The Agent:		I.
The Agency:	Not	present.
The Purpose: To buy groceries.		

In this example, it can be seen that “the agency” is missing. Hence, it is clear that presence of all the terms is not mandatory. Any of the two or three terms can convey whole meaning until and unless it is written transparently.

**Example 3:**

She needed to win to race that's why she increased her practice.

Let's open the sentence to get the sense.

The Scene: Not present

The Act: Increased her practice

The Agent: She-her

The Agency: that's why she increased her practice.

The Purpose: Needed to win the race.

In the above example, the statement discloses that "She" is an agent who needs to win the race this time and for the reason she increased her practice hours to reach the milestone. Here in this example, it can be viewed that no "scene" is present, conveys that the place of race is not mentioned.

After studying all the cases successfully, we can conclude that with absence of any of the tool does not slow down the process of analysis. Some ideas circulate around three tools and needs to be explored only while some need all the five tools in order to make sense out of the sentence.

## **DISCUSSION**

The memoir "When Breath Becomes Air" was started by Paul Kalanithi and it was winded up by his wife Lucy Kalanithi after his death due to lungs cancer. The life of Kalanithi started with his joyful youth, his college days and penetrated through his life as a neurosurgeon, literary scholar, and seeker of spiritual and scientific answers to the questions. This memoir revolves around his life experiences being a neurosurgeon and then to live as a cancer patient. This memoir is great amalgamation of joys, emotions, success and fear of losing everything once and for all.

This emotions and experiences enriched text is studied through Kelennethe Burke's Pedantic Analysis. This magnified studied will not only explore the possible tools but it will also help the reader to explore the latent underlying meaning of the text. In order to read the text deeper we will need to pick up some of the references form the text.

*I studied literature and philosophy to understand what makes life meaningful.*  
(p.35)

<b>S.no</b>	<b>Tool</b>	<b>Statement Dissection.</b>
1.	The Act	Studied literature and philosophy.
2.	The Agent	I
3.	The Agency	Not mentioned.
4.	The Scene	Not mentioned.
5.	The Purpose	To understand what makes life meaningful.

In the above narrative, Paul shared his educational career. In the statement, it is said that he started exploring literature and philosophy in order to understand the secret of making life significant. It was his initial journey before getting into neurosciences. If the abovementioned statement is dissected into Burke’s tools, we will get three tools. The very first tool is “the act” which is “studied literature and philosophy”, the second tool found is “the agent” which is “I”, pointing to Paul Kalanithi himself. The third tool is “the purpose” which opens up the “why” part of the statement i.e. “To understand what makes life meaningful.”

*At Stanford, I had good fortune to study with Richard Rorty, perhaps the greatest living philosopher of his day. (p.39)*

<b>S.no</b>	<b>Tool</b>	<b>Statement Dissection.</b>
1.	The Act	I had good fortune
2.	The Agent	I
3.	The Scene	At Stanford
4.	The Agency	Good fortune- Study with Richard Rorty
5.	The Purpose	Not mentioned.

This reference is taken from the memoir ““When Breath Becomes Air””. In this statement the speaker (the writer himself) opens up about his experience of learning at Standford. He calls himself much fortunate that he learnt with a living philosopher of his day, Richard Rorty. Now, dissecting the statement in order to understand it with the help of tools. In the section of “the act” it can be seen as “I had good fortune” is mentioned, which shows that his good fortune was active during his stay at Standford. In the section of “the agent”, “I” is mentioned which shows this first person pronoun is used for the speaker that clearly indicates that narrator of the story has narrated his own experience. Moreover, in the session of “the scene”, “At Standford” is mentioned which indicates towards the place where his interaction with living philosopher Richard Rorty was experienced. “The Agency” points out the “how” part of the statement. How he had good fortune at Standford. The answer of “how/the agency” is mentioned that he had good fortune because he studied with Richard Rorty a living philosopher of his time. In the section of “the purpose”, no purpose of the study is mentioned. Hence, it concludes that a statement can give a complete sense without the tool of the purpose.

*I thought: Prosopagnosia is a neurological disorder wherein one loses the ability to see faces. (p.48)*

S.no	Tool	Statement Dissection.
1.	The Act	I thought
2.	The Agent	I
3.	The Agency	Not mentioned
4.	The Scene	Prosopagnosia
5.	The Purpose	Neurological disorder, one loses the ability to see faces.

This statement is written on p.48 of the book’s text. In this statement the narrator mentioned his anatomy experience of a corpse. His anatomy professor was reading a dead body’s history where he was examining the body steadfastly that made the narrator to blur view the professor’s face for his fast moving head was on his focus.

Analyzing the statement with the lens of Pedant analysis, “the act” is recorded as “I thought” where “I” is “the agent” as well. Tool of “the agency” is missing here while “the scene” is recorded as “Prosopagnosia”. It is not a physical place though, but according to the statement, it is a stage/ disorder where patients sees no faces. The reason of the less ability of recognizing faces is neurological disorder which is recorded under title of “the purpose.”

*The chairman, passing through the ward: “Always eat with your left hand. You’ve got to learn to be ambidextrous.” (p.73)*

S. no	Tool	Statement Dissection
1.	The Act	Passing through the ward
2.	The Agent	The chairman
3.	The Agency	Not mentioned
4.	The Scene	Ward
5.	The Purpose	Always.....be ambidextrous.

According to this statement on page 73, the narrator is in hospital learning about to be a good surgeon when he listens his chairman announcing him the benefits of eating with left hand. If the statement is dissected into fragments then in the first fragment “the act” will come which is “passing through the ward”, while “the agent” is “the chairman”. No “agency” is mentioned while “the scene” is “ward”. In the end of statement, the reason of the chairman passing through the ward was mentioned. “The purpose” is that chairman told the narrator to eat with left hand in order to be naturally able to eat and work with both left and right hands.

Pedantic analysis makes it vivid to study the text extensively and exclusively. The study of every fragment incarnates the text for more clear understanding through different angles.

## CONCLUSION.

The Pedantic study of the memoir ““When Breath Becomes Air”” is done. The study revealed that all the five tools proposed by Keleththe Burke are not necessary to be recorded in order to abstract sense of the text. Different references were taken from the text and Pedantic analysis was applied and all of them satisfied different tools in order to create sense of the statement. In some instances, agency was found missing, in some “purpose” was missing while some instances failed to show “the scene”, but to utmost surprise, it is proved that even, with the missing tools the sense and motivation of understanding the narrative is not affected. In nutshell, Pedantic analysis allows the readers to understand the text by ignoring some of the tools and counting some of them at the same time. All the tools maintained a well-versed relationship with each other and made the readers persuaded to understand the logic behind the statement. No tool worked isolated in order to construct sense of the narrative.

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