

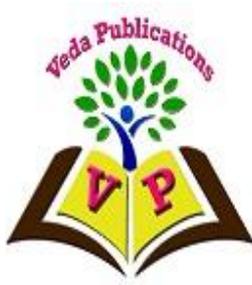


STYLISTICS IN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT



Language as we all know is an important or should I say an indispensable tool for human communication as it is through language that knowledge is transferred, meaning is created and understood ensuring social as well as scientific development of human society. It's true not only for speech but also in writing, both being two of the most potential uses of language. After becoming a university subject in 1960s English language has been the target of literary critics. They have accused the linguists for being too dry when it comes to analysis of a piece of writing. And the linguists have accused the literary scholars for being too subjective, imaginative unambiguous for the same task.

To bridge the differences or the gap between the two, stylistics a branch of applied linguistics, functions to analyse the use of language in literary texts. However it's not limited to the study of literature alone but is also stretched to the varieties of writings like texts related to media and journalism, the advertisements etc. This paper is an attempt to explore the link between language and its most creative use that is Literature. Through this paper I aim to show the features of language and creative uses under which these forms are put to appeal to human senses and make a piece of literature alive whether it's romance, tragedy or comedy.

Keywords: Style, Language, Literature, Linguistics, Stylistic Analysis.

**INTRODUCTION**

Linguistics is the scientific study of language and all the literature exists in language. Any literary text can be used, dealt with, worked upon, understood or taught and can be exposed to various activities through an understanding of the language in which it is written. There is a need to emphasize the urgency of studying language and literature in the light of one another because "..... linguists have been mistaken for an inadequacy of the linguistic science itself. All of us... definitely realize that a linguist deaf to the poetic function of language and literary scholar in different to linguistic problems and unacquainted with linguistic methods are equally flagrant [Jakobson 337]

Stylistics, on the other hand then can be defined as the process of the analysis of the literary texts that begins with the assumption that the processes involved in the interpretation of a literary text are linguistically oriented in nature.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LANGUAGE AND - LITERATURE

Language serves as a pathway for the "systematic teaching" (Widdowson .82) of linguistics and literature. Since literature is constructed through language, stylistics a branch of linguistics, acts as a link between the two complementary disciplines of linguistics and literature. Through the process of stylistically analysing a text it becomes easier to analyse the text within linguistic framework. It facilitates the development of critical appreciation and interpretative skills as well as reading comprehension.

Language use in various cultural contexts can be understood through literature. On the other hand preacher serves as a creative canvas on which diverse and colourful uses, aspects of language can be painted. The analytical study of literature through the scientific lens of language refers to stylistics. Its disciplinary boundaries fall between the ones of linguistics and literature.

STYLISTICS

J.M Ellis puts forward that the concept of stylistics finds its origin in what is considered as "... ordinary

and unreflective language "(67). Elaborating further he has emphasized the urgency of treating this ordinary in time so that it could be "tightened up " and made suitable for a scientific investigation. He exemplifies this by the term "*madness*" which in medical science is also referred to as "*mental illness*" (69). The two terms are quite interchangeable in ordinary use but what make them different is the attitude and the tone behind each one of them. An ordinary term of language can be used for literary (scholarly) purpose when in case of "... strict dualism in which the word indicates a split off meaning and manner or that... in which meaning is split into two separable kinds of meanings " [69]. According to J.M Ellis " Style is in fact in ordinary language a way of avoiding those areas of the meaning of a word which are not considered essential to the speaker's dominant purpose" [73]. To put it clearly, two words might be synonyms, replaceable and might even refer to the same thing but at the same time might have different meanings. This difference is marked by the "... the difference of attitude on the part of the speaker and by the different classification of the phenomenon..." [70]. One of the examples used by Ellis is the use of phrases "*you can go now*" and "*get out*" (72) both the phrases are asking the listener to leave but the choice of words has changed what the listener should understand about the mood, intention of the speaker and his or her position in the context. The expressions used by the writer or author are driven by the "... unique context of purpose, not because of their identity of meaning..." [72]. Ellis further compares literary texts to speech by saying that "... Literary texts are not limited speech acts with a crude purpose; they are notoriously complex in their verbal structure and are not able to have ascribed to them any simple statement of their purpose... The concept of style then becomes more and more inappropriate as we move from ordinary discourse to the study of language and finally to the study of literature; it is precisely it's limited appropriateness in ordinary discourse which demonstrates its complete inappropriateness and literary study "[73].

Another definition of style refers to it as an "elusive phenomenon " in literature and that "... it is



a concept which, the widely used and multifariously defined, yet evades precision..." [Enkvist et al. 59]. This is because style is an abstract concept because it is not a holistic identity of literature which means how literature can be solely defined. It is one of the many qualities of literature. Works of literature consist of so many aspects, concepts than style. It derives its abstractness in the sense that aspects of style and not literature as a whole consists of the experience, repertoire, choice, thought of the writer - the one who has designed that piece of literature. It is the individuality that a literary text acquires that is referred to as style.

Style is also influenced by language because the fact that literature is a product, a sum total of the creative but appropriate use of language cannot be denied. Since language used is influenced by social and cultural patterns of thought of rhetoric and that these patterns differ with time periods and societies. Therefore one has to look beyond literature. This is so because of "... the fact that language, the medium of literature, is not confined to literature alone. Indeed it is the medium which carries the whole of the culture of which the literature is one aspect" [60]. Therefore while conducting the stylistic analysis the language used and language functions should be considered along with the literary texts.

LITERARY TEXTS AND STYLISTICS

An understanding of the science of linguistics enables a reader to intuitively find the meaning of the text that he or she is reading. Structures of language aid in understanding literature through language. Language therefore give structure, organization, a pattern to a text whereas literature gives it creative meaning, substance and unusualness. So the content and art of the author flows smoothly through language.

Stylistics is comprehensive and interdisciplinary in nature and paves a way between the study of features substance and the rules of text analysis between aesthetics, linguistics, psychology and literature. It can be defined as the style of expression, a method of putting things in a certain way while keeping a certain purpose in mind. It can

be used to teach students the language features of literary text which would further facilitate teaching of English literature. It can also serve as a method to master or understand linguistic concepts.

The elements of style namely syntax, phonology, graphology, semantics and others are important during text analysis as they present various emotional states of mind on paper. These elements enable readers to view a literary piece through the lens of objectivity while appearing to their subjective senses. The subjective analysis refers to the evaluative and inferential study that is reading between and beyond the line to comprehend a text such as the purpose of the author, theme for moral behind the literary piece. This method of studying a text is called stylistic analysis. It enables a reader to refer to a text in a critical manner. The term stylistic approach refers to the method followed by educators to design activities involving stylistic analysis of a text [Fakeye & Temitayo 51]. A literary piece of text is viewed as a communicative discourse [Gonzales & Flores 3]. The stylistic approach aims to locate linguistic features of a literary piece of text and find the meaning through these features. In the light of this approach, the choice of vocabulary, grammatical features, structural aspects and other rhetorical aspects are studied to decode a text's meaning.

Therefore the stylistic effects are important for the study of literature and thus cannot be rejected. Style, a term which has its roots in ordinary language and whose function is to sideline other meanings of an expression so that the concerned or required meaning appropriate to the context could be emphasized, should then be investigated because the 'other meanings' of an expression highlight the significance of the meaning that is to be concerned through their negligence. This is referred to as a "sophisticated confusion" which is intensified by the ample number of definitions and statements attempting to explain what style really means [Ellis 4]. To this Ellis suggests "... We should not speak of the statistic function of a linguistic item but, instead of its precise function; nor of the style as a piece of language but instead of its precise meaning and



effect" [75]. Therefore in the linguistic study of literature a linguistic structure should be studied in relation to its combination with other linguistic features and in reference with the entire text. Such a process follows an investigative insight with in linguistic literary study of a text. The linguistic study therefore can be understood as the study of forms and vocabulary of a language as in addition to the structural analysis of texts. The first one is concerned with the form and functions of the structural aspects of language and is referred to as *analytic linguistics*. The second one is called *synthetic linguistics* as it deals with the textual meaning and language functions. If a text is to be analyzed linguistically then it structures and that text itself should be analyzed in both ways, that is, in combination and in isolation to each other. Hence the study of literature becomes a part of synthetic linguistics. Literary criticism is however does not mean analyzing the form and function of the linguistic structures of a text in isolation. This is so because "... isolation of linguistic features of a literary text is a pointless exercise in analytic linguistics... It is a strangely incomplete job of synthetic linguistics..." [Enkvist et al 77]

When a text is referred to in terms of its "objective simplicity" of meaning as a mere chain of symbols on paper then a linguist not only reads the text which means what he or she says on printed paper but they also look "...through the text to its significance..." [Leech & Short 4]. Therefore stylistic analysis refers to seeping in through the text with one layer at a time. The analyst while critically looking at a text, should stylistically look for merits and demerits of the text in question. This is so because while evaluating a piece of literature the critic should not be driven, convinced or frustrated by its fallacies usually projected to highlight the effect and unusualness of a context.

FEATURES OF STYLISTICALLY ANALYZING A TEXT

DICTION

Words when used in a text become more than their dictionary and their literal meaning. There is always a consequent contextual meaning attached to the

words used. Stylistically analyzing a text refers to the exploration of this mutual relationship. While reading a text the reader should first try to know who the author of the text is. Who is the designer of the plot, theme and characters? Another important feature should be the theme of the text in the light of questions like is the theme specific or general ?, what grammatical features are used in the text ?, what kind of phrases or sentences are used ?, what is the level of language of the text ?, is the language local, standard, non - standard or rustic ?. All such answers in tale indications to the writer's writing style.

SYNTAX

Through the sentence constructions found in a text like phrases, clauses and other types of sentences the readers understand the thought process, nature and feelings of the characters. Not only we get an idea about the characters but also about the writer's thinking, his or her understanding of the various experiences portrayed in a text on the basis of functions. There are types of sentences in English language according to the functional aspect such as declarative, imperative, exclamatory and interrogative. On the basis of structure sentences can be compound, elliptical, complex and simple sentence. According to the significance of content sentences in English language can be divided into periodic, loose and parallel sentence. Other than that types of phrases like noun phrase over phrase are also a part of stylistic effect found in a text. While stylistically analyzing a text The Reader or the author himself should carefully go through the entire text to locate, record the most frequent sentence type on the basis of function and structure, phrases and vocabulary. Such activity not only gives information about the stylistic effect but also signal towards the writer's thinking process.

RHETORIC

A grammatical style brings out the clarity in a text then rhetoric effects make writing persuasive, vivid and clear. Figures of speech like metaphor, personification, metonymy, simile, irony and so on provide a connotative meaning to the text and events along with an aesthetic and psychological



implication. While rhetorically analyzing a text a reader should carefully analyse the discourse structure and rhetorical devices prevalent in the text. Discourse and rhetoric compliment each other therefore one should be studied and analyzed in the light of another.

CONCLUSION

Literary language is appealing in the sense that it serves as a tool to manifest the thinker's mind on paper through words and sentences. Stylistics then serves as link that connects the writer's mind to the minds of the reader. It is therefore a methodology that should be utilized to train the students to look beyond the text. It can also be used in the teaching of language, here English language through its literature. Stylistics also serves as an effective tool to teach language and literature by developing the learners' or readers' sensitivity, awareness to identify certain linguistic patterns, literary devices used in the text. Such activities enable the students to acquire language in a much more proficient manner and makes the readers to appreciate the text. The rhetoric of a culture, the philosophy behind it can also be understood by the study of literature and language in a way which compliments both of them. Stylistic analysis then becomes significant is it is useful in decoding certain socio-cultural codes. It also serves as a potential method to understand nuances of literature and the role of linguistics at various levels. Apart from providing an opportunity for aesthetic appreciation it can also be utilized as a great tool to learn the art of self-expression, especially in creative writing.

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