



STYLISTICS: A CRITICAL APPROACH TO COMPREHEND LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Chandu Ganta

Lecturer in English, Vikas Degree College, Nidadavole, Andhra Pradesh, India,

ABSTRACT

Language must be considered a social phenomenon, a structured system that can be viewed synchronically (as it exists at any particular time) and diachronically (as it changes over time) - Ferdinand de Saussure. As we all know, language is an essential and preeminent tool for human communication; with the aid of language, knowledge is transferred, meaning is created and comprehended, and the scientific enhancement of society. It is true not only for speech but also in writing, and both are the most potential language uses. After the 1960s, literary critics accused and targeted linguists of being too dry when analysing a piece of writing. Moreover, linguists have accused literary scholars of being too subjective and imaginative. In order to bridge the differences or gaps between the two, stylistics, a branch of applied linguistics, functions to analyse the use of language in literary texts. The object of this paper is to create exposure and explore the link between language and its most creative use, that is, literature. Through this attempt, the researcher aims to show the characteristics of language and creative uses under which these forms are put to visualise the human senses and make a piece of literature alive (whatever the genre is).

KEYWORDS: linguistics, stylistics, speech, writing, language

INTRODUCTION

Linguistics is the scientific study of language. Linguistics is learning about a language rather than learning a language. Moreover, every piece of literature exists in language. Any literary text can be comprehended and exposed to various activities by understanding the language in which it is being attempted. Language and literature have to be studied in the light of one another because linguists have been mistaken for an inadequacy of the linguistic science itself. We all realise that a linguist deaf to the poetic function of language and a literary scholar in different linguistic problems unacquainted with linguistic methods are equally ignorant. Stylistics is a discipline within the field of linguistics. It is defined as the process of analysing the literary texts or interpretation of a literary text that is linguistically oriented in nature.

Affinity between language and literature

Language works as a channel for the systematic teaching of linguistics and literature. Since language is vital in the construction of literature, stylistics is a branch of linguistics that serves as a link between the two disciplines of linguistics and literature. Analysing a text becomes more accessible within the linguistic framework. When we adopt the process or stylistic analysis, it offers the development of critical appreciation and interpretative skills as well as reading comprehension. Through literature, it is possible to know the use of language in various cultural contexts. The analytical study of literature through the scientific lens of language refers to stylistics.

Stylistics

Stylistics is the study of the devices in languages, such as rhetorical figures and syntactical patterns that are considered to produce an expressive or literary style. Style has been an object of study from ancient times. Aristotle, Cicero, and Demetrius treated style as the proper adornment of thought. Stylistics is a tool for scientific investigation. An ordinary term of language can be used for literary purposes in the 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. "According to Ellis (1970), "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". We always make choices about the words we use and the order in which we use them consciously and unconsciously. These choices are from a particular style, and changing the choices changes the style. This is what stylistics explores: how the author creates the effect through their linguistic styles and how readers interpret those effects.

Stylisticians believe there is no fundamental difference between literature and any other kind of text, even spoken conversations, because all writings are made up of language. Stylistics inherited something else from the rhetorical tradition, too. Two words might be synonyms, replaceable and might even refer to the same thing, but at the same time, they might have distinct meanings. So, the difference is marked by the difference in attitude on the speaker's part and the different classifications of the phenomenon. One of the examples used by Ellis is the phrases "You can go



now" and "Get out." Both the phrases convey 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. So, the expressions used by the writer or author are driven by the unique context of purpose, not because of their identity of meaning.

Ellis (1970) further compares literary text to speech by saying that " literary texts are not limited to 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. Another definition of style refers to it as an elusive phenomenon in literature, and that is a concept which is widely used. This is because style is an abstract concept as 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 as it consists of many aspects of concepts rather than style. It is individuality that a literary text acquires that is referred to as style. Style is also modified by language because literature is a creative product, but accurate use of language can not be denied. One has to look beyond the literature. The fact that language is the medium of literature is not confined to literature alone. Moreover, it is the channel which carries the whole of the culture of which literature is one aspect. Hence, while conducting stylistic analysis, the language used, and language functions should be considered along with the literary texts.

Literary Texts and Stylistics

Comprehending the science of linguistics allows the reader to find the meaning of the text he or she is reading. Structures of language assist in understanding literature through language. Hence, language provides a structure, organisation, and pattern to a text, whereas literature gives a creative meaning. So, the content and art of the author flow smoothly through language. Stylistics is comprehensive and interdisciplinary and creates a way between the study of features and rules of the text analysis between aesthetics, linguistics, psychology and literature. It could be defined as the style of the expression, a method of making things in a definite way while keeping a definite purpose in mind. It can also serve as a method to master or understand linguistic concepts.

The facets of style, namely syntax, phonology, graphology, semantics and others, are essential during text analysis as they display various emotional states of mind on paper. These facets give the reader the potential to view a literary piece through the lens of objectivity. While appearing to their subjective senses, the subjective analysis directs to the evaluative and illative study that is reading between and beyond the line to comprehend a text, such as the author's intention, theme, or moral behind the literary piece. This method of studying a text is called stylistic analysis. The stylistic approach intends to locate linguistic features of a literary piece of text and identify the meaning through these features. In the ray of this approach, the selection of vocabulary, grammatical features, structural aspects and other rhetorical elements are studied to decode a text's meaning.

Hence, in the linguistic study of literature, a linguistic structure has to be studied concerning its combination with other linguistic features and references to the entire text. Scientific study can be understood as the study of forms and vocabulary of a language in addition to the structural analysis of texts. The primary one is concerned with the form and functions of structural elements of language and is directed to 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 analysed linguistically, then its structures and text itself should be analysed in both ways, in combination and isolation. Therefore, the study of literature becomes a part of synthetic linguistics. While evaluating a piece of literature, the critic should not be driven, convinced or frustrated by its fallacies.

FEATURES OF STYLISTICALLY ANALYSING A TEXT

Rhetoric

It is a grammatical style which brings out the clarity in a text, and then rhetoric or word craft effects make writing persuasive, vivid and clear. Figures of speech like metaphor, personification, metonymy, simile, irony and so on provide a soul meaning to the text with aesthetic and psychological implications. While rhetorically analysing a text, the reader should scrupulously analyse the discourse structure and rhetorical devices expected in the text.

Syntax

Readers can understand the thought process, nature and feelings of the characters through the sentence constructions found in a text like phrases, clauses, and other types of sentences, which helps to get an idea about the character and also the writer's thinking, his or her experience displayed in a text-based on functions. There are types of sentences in the English language according to the functional aspect, such as declarative, imperative, exclamatory and interrogative. Apart from the types of phrases like noun phrase over phrase are also a part of the stylistic effect found in a text. In analysing the text stylistically, the reader or the author should carefully go through the entire text to locate the most frequent sentence types based on function and structure, phrases and vocabulary.

CONCLUSION

Literary language is attractive because it works as a tool to manifest the thinker's mind on paper through words and sentences. Stylistics works as a link that connects the author's mind to the readers' minds. So, it is a phenomenal method which helps the students to look beyond the text. Stylistics also serves as an effective instrument to teach language and literature by enhancing the learner's or reader's sensitivity and creating awareness to identify specific linguistic patterns and literary devices used in the text.



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