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Research Paper English

The Perspectives of Stylistic Analysis of the Poem "Bereft" by Robert Frost

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ABSTRACT

This Research paper aims to analyze Robert Frost's poem "Bereft" from the perspective of stylistic analysis. The analysis is made under the aspects of Graphlogical, Grammatical, Syntactical, and Phonological patterns. We have also found tropes and schemes that are present in the poem. This research is helpful to analyze the structure and style of Robert Frost's poetry, and his themes, views, and treatment of nature.

KEYWORDS Style, stylistics, Robert Frost, loneliness, conflict, hostile nature, faith, phonological level, grammatical level, graphlogical level

INTRODUCTION

"Style" is a word derived from Latin word "elocution" which means style and means "lexis" in Greek. Style is a broader term. It has several meanings in and outside of the literary text. A particular procedure by which something is done, a manner or a way is style. Broadly, appearance of everything is style. The way of doing something or the way of living is also style. Style is also related to a personality of a person. A style reflects the thoughts of a person's mind. It describes the way of person's speaking and writing.

Stylistics

Stylistics is a branch of applied linguistics concerned with the study of style in texts. Before the 20th century stylistics only deals with literary text. But from 20th century it started to deal with non literary text. Example: law, religion, advertisement, newspaper etc. Katie Wales in A Dictionary of Stylistics writes: "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 interpretation of the text, or in order to relate literary effects to linguistics causes where there are felt to be relevant". Stylistics analysis provides a commentary which is objective and scientific based on a concrete quantifiable data and applied in a systematic way. It uses specialized technical terms and concepts which derive from the science of linguistics. Stylistics analysis is something different from literary criticism. Literary criticism continues to focus on interpretation and the field of linguistics had little to say about literature beyond the sentence level.

Levels of Stylistic Analysis

The following are the levels of stylistics. We analyze the text according to these levels.

1. **Phonetic level:** It is an examination of sounds; we study the characteristics and potential utility of sounds in phonetic level.
2. **Phonological level:** It is the study of the sound system of a given language; the Formal rules of pronunciation.
3. **Graphlogical level:** It is the analogous study of a language's writing system; the formalized rules of spellings.
4. **Grammatical level:** In this level both the syntactic and morphological levels are discussed.

The aim is to analyze the internal structure of sentences in a language and the way they function in sequences. Clauses, phrases, words, nouns, verbs, etc. need to be distinguished and put through an analysis to find out the foregrounding and the deviation.

5. The lexical level: It is the study of the way in which individual words and idioms tend to pattern in different linguistic context; on the semantic level in terms of stylistics. Introduction to the poem 'Bereft'

Robert Frost was a great American poet who writes a large number of great poems. Bereft is one of his famous poems. This poem has ominous tone and there are different interpretations of this poem. The body of the poem is not very clear but we interpret that the poet is alone in this world. Poet feels loneliness in his life but he has a great faith in God. The ending clearly states that the poet is all alone in the world but he is not pessimistic, he shows his believe in God.

This is a deep poem that brings out the loneliness of man living inside the manifestation of nature. The elements of nature at times gather in such a manner as to be totally and brutally hostile to man. It is at that sad and gloomy moment of isolation that man feels all, all alone standing naked against the bitter and fast realities of nature. Then and only then he looks inside himself and finds the presence of his creator therein and this spiritual companionship gives him hope for life.

Theme of the poem 'Bereft'

Isolation and loneliness is the main theme of the poem. Poet feels himself alone. His youth has passed and now due to his loneliness, he is even afraid of leaves. He considered nature very cruel towards him. We also feel a conflict in the mind of poet. He shows bereavement but also a strong hope. Throughout the poem the poet emphasizes on his loneliness and cruelty of nature. But at the end he shows his strong faith on God.

How theme is foregrounded: The theme is foregrounded through the vocabulary items.

Theme of loneliness is describes with the help of different words. For example: "Alone" The writer uses this word two times in a poem. "No one" writer uses these words to show his loneliness. Nature is hostile towards the poet. The hostility of nature is described through these words: Deeper roar, restive door, frothy shore, summer was past, sinister. The poet shows his strong faith on God. This is shown with the help of following phrase. The last word of the poem is "but God". This reverses the whole theme of the poem. It shows poet's mind capacity for courage. He can think only of God in his isolation and thus shows his strong faith in God.

Stylistic analysis of the poem Bereft Bereft as a lyrical

We can say that this poem is lyrical because it is fairly short and is between a dozen and thirty lines and it expresses feelings and thoughts of a single speaker in a personal and subjective fashion. And all these are the qualities of the lyrical poem.

Graphlogical level

i. There is no division of stanzas.
ii) The poem is written as a whole. It is lyrical.
iii) There is usual capitalization.
iv) We can see the use of punctuation in the poem.

For example: full stop, comma, colon and apostrophe is used in this poem. Lexical level:

Nouns	Pronouns	Common nouns	Collective noun	Proper noun
Wind, Hill, Summer, Day, Clouds, West, Shore, Door, Porch's, Floor, House, God.	I and Me.	Day, Hill, Cloud, Door, Porch, Floor, House,Shore, Leaves,Knee, Tone.	World.	God, Summer, West.

Verb	Adverb	Adjective
Heard, Standing, Looking, Massed, Hissed, Struck Missed, Change	Abroad, Blindly.	Deeper, Restive, Frothy, Somber, Ragging, Coil, Sinister, Alone, Left.

Grammatical level

Use of Punctuation, Use of question mark and Question mark is used in the poem and it shows that poet has a conflict in his mind. He is bewildered.

Use of colon: Colon is used where poet describes about his loneliness. He is alone not in house but in life.

Use of full stop: Poet uses full stop three times in the poem Each full stop shows the completion of one poet.

i. Firstly, poet describes about the transience of human life. Summer or the youth is passed and poet is in his old age that is winter.
ii. Secondly, the poet describes about the nature. Nature is not friendly with him. It is cruel towards him.
iii. Thirdly, he emphasizes about his loneliness but shows his great faith in God.

Phonological level

The sixteen lines poem has following rhyme scheme.
AAAAABBACCDDDEDE

We can see the use of alliteration in the poem. But there is no refrain. There are rhyming words in this poem. These are the following:

Before, Roar, For, Door, Shore, Flour Massed, Hissed, Missed Tone, Known, Alone Abroad, God.

Schemes and troops in the poem Bereft

Schemes and troupes are figure of speech used to create a particular style of writing.

Tropes: Tropes are figures of speech having meaning different from their literal meanings.

Scheme: Schemes are figures of speech that deal with letters, word order, syntax and sounds

rather than meaning of the word.

Anaphora: Scheme in which the same words or phrases is repeated at the beginning of

successive, clauses or sentences. For example,

i. World I was in the house alone.
i. World I was in my life alone.
ii) World I had no left but God.

"World I" is anaphora in this poem.

Antithesis: A scheme in which contrasting words, phrases, sentences, or ideas are used for

emphasis. For example: 'World I had no one left but God', "no one left" and "but God" are contrasting phrases used in the poem.

Epistrophe: A scheme in which the same words are repeated at the end of phrases, clauses or

sentences is called epistrophe. For example: 'World I was in the house alone' 'World I was in

my life alone'.The word "alone" is used repeatedly in the following sentences.

Metaphor: A troop in which a word or phrase is transfused from its literal meaning to stand

for something else. A metaphor compares two objects or things without using the words "like" or "as". For example: "Blindly struck at my knees and missed", "Leaves got up in coil and hissed"

Personification: Trope in which human qualities or abilities are assigned to abstraction or

inanimate object is called personification. For example: 'The leaves are personified as some sort of snake considering how coiled, hissing and striking'.

Imagery: It is an author's use of vivid and descriptive language to add depth to their work. It

appeals to human senses to deepen the reader's understanding of the work. In this poem the use of imagery emphasizes the overall personification of nature that the author wishes to create. For example: "restive door", "frothy shore", "sagging floor", and "coiled and hissed".

Tone: Tone is the poet's attitude towards his or her subject or readers. It is similar to tone of

voice but should not b confused with mood or atmosphere. An author's tone might be sarcastic, sincere, humorous melancholic etc. In this poem the author's tone is melancholic.

Rhetorical questions: A Trope in which the leading questions are asked is called rhetorical

question. For example "Where had I heard the wind before".

CONCLUSION

"Bereft" is a poem which describes the feeling of a lonely person. The person is alone not only in his house but also in the world. Everything even the nature seems hostile towards him but he has a strong faith on God. Poet uses metaphors and personification to show the cruelty of nature. There is also a ray of hope in this poem. This poem seems to imply that although the devil tempts you with fear and loneliness, if you have faith you cannot be tempted.

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