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Research paper



Stylistic analysis of William wordsworth's poem 'daffodils'

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Abstract

Present study is based on stylistic analysis of the poem 'Daffodils" written by a very famous romantic poet William Wordsworth. This analysis is made on the graphological, phonological, morphological and semantic level to analyze what the poet wants to convey by mentioning the memories of a very small, yet important cure for human beings in the form of gifted memories of lovely past. Stylistic techniques and methods are used to unfold the hidden beauty of the poet's thoughts. Since stylistic is the study of different devices used in language that gives expressive or literary style to any writing so, keeping in view, this article aims to figure out the secret jewels of these beautiful lines. This analysis is helpful in understanding the basic concept that Nature can bring peace of mind to a dejected soul. The stylistic devices used in this poem are the setting of the poem along with the figures of speech. Through this analysis the researcher wants to explore how the social and cultural background of a poet affects on the usage of Nature in the poetry. The researcher will explore how the use of figurative speech enhances the impact of the poetry at the readers mind.

Keywords: *Stylistic; Analysis; Graphological; Semantic; Morphological.*

1. Introduction

1.1. Style

Style is any specific procedure by which we do something, a manner or a way of doing something is a style. Generally speaking, the way everything appears is style. The personality of any person depicts some particular style. The thoughts of a person are also reflected in his style. It describes the way a person speaks, walks, talks or writes. Basically the word 'style' is generated from the Latin word 'elocution'.

1.2. Stylistics

A branch of applied linguistics that deals with style and analyze style of any material related to any genre is called stylistic. Stylistic is a study of different styles in writing or speech. It tells us how appropriately the words or language are used in any piece of writing. Stylistic analysis of any piece of writing is different from literary text as stylistic analysis is much more based on facts and is objective in its nature. Our sole purpose of doing stylistic analysis is to identify how does the impact of words and feelings expressed through words make us feel when we read them. This poem 'Daffodils' is written by world's renowned Romantic poet William Wordsworth. The researcher will present here how such an analysis might be structured, how can meaning be related to linguistic elements and how can it provide an objective account of analysis.

1.3. Levels of stylistic analysis

To analyze any text the following levels of stylistic are considered important:

1) Phonetic level: Examining the sounds of a language comes under the level of phonetics. We study the characteristics and how are the sounds utilized at phonetic level.
2) Phonological level: Studying the sound system of any given language and formal rules of pronunciation is called phonological level.
3) Graphological level: It is the study of a language's writing system (graphology); the rules of spellings, use of punctuation, capitalization, font style, paragraphing and line spacing.
4) Grammatical level: In this level both the syntactic and morphological levels are analyzed. The aim is to analyze the internal structure of sentences in a language and in what sequence they function in it. Clauses, phrases, words, nouns, verbs, in a sentence of any language need to be distinguished and put through in 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 phrases come together in different pattern in different linguistic context.

The author's stylistic analysis will be started with initial feelings and thoughts about the poem. In fact, this analysis will help the researcher analyzing whether her initial interpretation of the poem was right or wrong, as sometimes the deeper thought in actual analysis gives you a different insight that one might not have in the beginning. This is why stylistic is useful method of rendering texts of different genres.

2. Biography of the poet

William Wordsworth was born in Cockermouth, Cumbria, England on 7 April, 1770. His mother died when he was eight- this experience shapes much of his later work [1]. William Wordsworth is very well known for his poetry about Nature and love for Nature. According to him, man can be satisfied better in the company of nature as it strengthens man's inner soul through its purity. Man gets real satisfaction, knowledge and pleasure through nature as nature is the sincere friend of man, it shows its love for

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him when everyone else disregards him. He composed this beautiful poem when he was having a visit to that area near the lake with his sister Dorothy and a friend. The beautiful imagery of dancing daffodils made him feel like a part of that entire scene where he found himself wandering like a cloud and enjoying the beauty of that valley and daffodils. Nature has always been an inspiring character of Wordsworth's poetry. There is a deep description of vast land, gushing rivers, high mountains, colourful flowers and chirping birds in his Nature poetry which is full of beauty, colours and imaginations. His Nature poems also tell us about his strong feelings of happiness and thoughts when he visualizes the natural scenery. One can very clearly observe two important aspects of Wordsworth's poetry; romanticism and nature, in this very poem "Daffodils". In his preface to Lyrical Ballads, Wordsworth has defined poetry as ―the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings arising from ―emotions recollected in tranquility.

He wrote daffodils after getting inspired by the beauty of those dancing flowers spreading all along the bay of the lake. He recollects his feelings long after that experience and writes another stanza to describe the love that is still there in his imagination. The poem tells that the impression and the beauty of nature in the form of Daffodils were so strong that even after many years just the memory of those was more than enough to lighten his mood and gave him company if he felt alone even in his own room. He describes the clear and beautiful picture of mountains, vales, clouds, lake, daffodils, shining waves, dancing flowers that show the harmony between man and nature. In fact, it is the use of language and imagery by Wordsworth that has created rhythm and harmony in this poem in the form of ''spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings".

2.1. Introduction of the poem

The initial version of the poem Daffodils was published in 1807 but the second version along with fourth stanza that was about the memory of those daffodils emerged in 1815. According to Spark Notes [2] the poem follows a quatrain-couplet rhyme scheme in four stanzas of six lines. The rhyming scheme is ABABCC. Iambic tetrameter is used in each line of the poem. Daffodils is a simple but beautiful poem, one of the loveliest and most famous poems of Wordsworth that reminds us of the familiar subjects of Wordsworth's poetry that is nature and memory. The imagery, symbolism, personification, simile and choice of words have given this poem a particular musicality and rhythm. The plot of this poem is very simple. The poet is describing how he found a beautiful scene while wandering aimlessly in a valley. The background knowledge of the poem tells us that Wordsworth's sister Dorothy was with him but in this poem he has used the pronoun "I". He does not like to mention the presence of anyone else even as he wants to enjoy that image or scenery all alone. That scene created such an impression on him that after a few years he recalled that scene and wrote an additional stanza that is the final stanza of the poem. After many years, the memory of beautiful dancing flowers made him feel happy and provided him with company in his loneliness.

The figurative language has added to the beauty of the poet's thought. He personified the cloud with a man wandering aimlessly. On another place he personified Daffodils as dancing human beings tossing their heads in excitement and it provides unity between man and nature. It is Wordsworth's very famous technique to make reader feel the part of all that's happening in the poem. The poet instills in reader, the feeling, the poet so often describes himself as experiencing being the nature lover poet.

2.2. Theme of the poem

The overall theme of this poem is to understand the beauty of nature and its value. Nature is pure in its elements, one should not be afraid of wandering in the company of nature just by the fear of getting lost. Nature itself is a great healer. If we spare sometime and listen carefully, nature whispers divine secrets to us, the secrets of love, purity and sincerity. It revitalizes our inner souls; no dejection is felt in the company of nature. In short nature is soul-cleansing. William Wordsworth's poetry provides an especially intriguing range of techniques that gives a broad idea to readers to understand what is in between the lines and what does the poet want to show by using such range of techniques. According to Scott Hess, Earlham College, ''William Wordsworth's "I wandered lonely as a cloud" offers a short, memorable text in the male canonical Romanticism of the imagination''. [3].

Wordsworth has used the word "I" and repeated it again in the poem; he has never used the third-person "we." although his sister was accompanying him when he experienced that beautiful scene. By using the pronoun "I" Wordsworth removes all social contexts as he wants to present the experience of Daffodils as his solitary experience. The poet happens to encounter the daffodils in a valley, where he is wandering aimlessly. His aimless wandering shows that he is detached from any social context. The simile of the narrator as a cloud indicates the sense of detachment from the landscape and it seems as the poet is literally floating free from his environment like a cloud floats here and there. Another reference of poet's detachment is when he is alone in his room and he recollects the daffodils when he is in a bad or sad mood. Even indoors, the poet remains detached from any social context or relationship, he is alone there and just the memory of daffodils is enough to lighten his mood and make him feel happy and fresh.

3. Methodology

In this section the researcher will provide a stylistic analysis of the poem 'Daffodils' written by Wordsworth. The lexico-syntactic choices, phonological, semantic and graphological levels of analysis are the basis of this analysis. The researcher's initial interpretation of 'Daffodils' came about solely as a consequence of looking at the words in the poem. The researcher did not think particularly about the grammatical and graphological elements that have deviation at the beginning of analysis of this poem. The researcher started with an examination of the lexical features considering it a good place to start with a more detailed linguistic analysis for Daffodils.

3.2. Lexical features

First of all the researcher will consider the open class words in this poem. Open class words carry the majority of meaning in a language as compared to closed class (grammatical) words such as determiners (e.g. this, that, the) and prepositions (e.g. in, at, on). Closed class words can be called as sentence 'connectors' and they join together open class words in meaningful arrangements in sentences. Below the given table shows how are the open class words distributed throughout the poem. Open class words include all the nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs in the poem.

Table 1: Distribution of Open Class Words in 'Daffodils'

Nouns/Pronouns	Adjectives	Verbs	Adverbs
I	High	Wandered	Lonely
Cloud	Vacant	Floats	Sprightly
Vales	Pensive	Saw	All at once
Hills	Inward	Fluttering	Oft
I	Solitude	Dancing	
Crowd	Bliss	Shine	
Host	Little	Twinkle	
Daffodils	Jocund	Stretched	
Lake	Gay	Saw	
Trees	Sparkling	Glance	
Breeze	Ten thousand	Tossing	
Stars	Never ending	Dance	
Way	Milky	Danced	
Line	Golden	Out did	
Margin	Continuous	Brought	
Bay		Gazed	
I		Gazed	
Their		Flash	
Heads		Fills	

Waves		Dances	
They			
Waves			
Glee			
Poet			
Company			
Thought			
Wealth			
Show			
Me			
My			
Couch			
I			
Mood			
They			
Eye			
My			
Heart			
Daffodils			
Pleasure			
39	15	20	04

This table tells us that the poem consists mainly of noun, pronouns and verbs. A good number of adjectives are also used in this poem. The nouns are mostly concrete - that is, they refer to physical objects, but a few are abstract nouns as well like 'thought, pleasure, mood, company, glee'.

3.3. Graphological level

This poem consists of four stanzas of six lines each. A six lines stanza is called Ststes. Most of the lines are in the form of complete sentences but no full stop is there at the end of each line. There is a full stop at the end of the last line of every stanza of the whole poem. The poet has used commas, semi colons and colon to give pauses as the whole stanza is in the form of a single complete sentence having more than one sub ordinate clauses. There is foregrounding as the poet has not written the complete spelling of two words like 'over' is written as 'o'er' and 'often' as 'oft'. Every line of the poem is started with the capital letter that is also an element of foregrounding. The rhyming scheme of the poem is as 'ABAB CC'. The stress pattern is as followed:

I wan/ dered lone/ ly as/ a cloud/
x…../ x …….. / x ……. / x …… /

Name of the foot used in this poem is 'iambic tetrameter as there are four feet in a line hence, the poem follows quatrain couplet rhyming scheme

3.4. Graphological parallelism

If we talk about the graphology of the poem, graphological parallelism can be found here. Each stanza has six lines and the complete stanza is in the form of a complete but longer sentence. The poet has used commas, semi colon, colon and apostrophe to make it a long sentence. The full stop in the stanzas is at the end of every last line of each stanza.

3.5. Deviation

Deviation is a type of foregrounding that describes unexpected irregularity [4]. According to researcher the poet has deviated from the normal norms of poetry. The poet has used double hyphen (-) in a single line in the third stanza. The verb 'gazed' is also used twice with the addition of conjunction 'and' also. The hyphen (-) and the conjunctions (connectors) 'and' and 'but' are used together in the same sentence 'I gazed - and gazed - but little thought'. Here researcher could not understand why the poet has used double hyphen with the addition of conjunction too in a single line. If the poet wanted to put emphasis on the continuity of his gaze for a long time he had used that verb 'gazed and gazed' twice with the conjunction 'and' but the use of hyphen here is the example of deviation on the poet's part as it's not common practice in poetry.

In the same stanza, in the last line, 'What wealth the show to me had brought'? The poet has used full stop although according to the researcher's analysis it should be an exclamatory sentence with a sign of exclamation at the end.

3.6. Phonological level

Alliteration: The poet has used alliteration at various places in the poem like in line 1 '**l**one**l**y **a**s **a** c**l**oud'. In line 2 '**h**igh o'er vales and **h**ills.' We can see an example of alliteration in line 3 as well like '**w**hen all at **o**nce', **w** and **o** have the same consonant sound in this phrase. In line 5 '**b**eside **th**e lake, **b**eneath **th**e trees'. In these words, the bold letters are the example of alliteration (assonance and consonance) in all these lines.

3.7. Poetic devices

William Wordsworth is famous for using poetic devices or figurative language. The following are the figures of speech used by William Wordsworth in this poem.

3.7.1. Consonance

The poet has used alliteration at various places in the poem like in line 1 '**l**one**l**y as a c**l**oud'. In line 2 '**h**igh o'er vales and **h**ills.' We can see example of alliteration in line 3 as well like '**w**hen all at **o**nce', **w** and **o** have the same consonant sound in this phrase. In line 5 '**b**eside **th**e lake, **b**eneath **th**e trees', the bold letters are the example of alliteration in all these lines.

3.7.2. Simile

The poet has used the simile of 'as a cloud". He has compared himself to a wandering cloud that is away from the landscape. It makes us feel as the poet is literally floating free like a cloud from his environment.

3.7.3. Personification

William Wordsworth has also used this figure of speech in this poem Daffodils. He has compared the cloud as lonely human in the very first line of the poem. At another place, the poet has compared the daffodils to a crowd of people. Comparison of Daffodils with dancing human is another example of a personification from this poem.

3.7.4. Metonymy

Metonymy is a figure of speech in which an important aspect or associated detail of an experience or object is used to represent the whole picture of that experience or object. This always represents a comparison between whole and part of it, not two different wholes. The comparison of the first three stanzas to the fourth and final stanza of the poem is the example of metonymy.

"For oft when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon the inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils."

The poet wrote this stanza of the poem after a few years from its publication of the first version that comprised of three stanzas. First three stanzas are in the past form of verb whether this last stanza is in the present form of verb. The poet is comparing his present situation with the experience of the past by mentioning the Daffodils.

3.7.5. Imagery

Imagery is the poet's use of language in such a way that appeals our senses. The poet creates a scene in such a way that it seems we can see that image, feel it, smell it. It is author's descriptive language use to add beauty and depth to his work and piece of writing. In this poem, the poet has personified daffodils as human beings 'I saw a crowd', 'fluttering and dancing.' The poet has created the imagery of dancing daffodils and sparkling waves in such a manner that the reader finds himself the part of that very experience.

3.7.6. Onomatopoeia

It is the effect that is produced when the words used to describe the sound contain similar sounds or noise like bees "buzz", the "gushing" river etc. In this poem the word 'fluttering' is an example of onomatopoeia as it is describing the similar sound to the noise it describes. When the pigeons fly they produce this noise so one can easily identify and relate it to the sound that this word describes. The feathers of this bird produce this sound when it starts flying.

3.8. Findings

This poem Daffodils is a very simple but a lovely and most famous poem in the Wordsworth panorama of poetry. It reminds us the familiar subjects of Wordsworth's poetry that are memory and nature. This time the poet has used a simple musicality to create eloquence in this poem. The plot of the poem is very simple. It depicts the poet's wandering and the result of this wandering emerges in the form of a beautiful cluster of dancing daffodils beside the lake. The memory of that whole picture pleases and comforts him when he is alone, gloomy and when restlessness tries to occupy him. The way the poet has characterized the occurrence of memory of the daffodils gives a strong feeling of inner satisfaction when one recalls the memory of any beloved person or any beloved object. The reverse personification of its early stanzas has the main brilliance of this poem. The speaker is compared to a natural object that is a cloud and it's the example of metaphor here as "I wandered lonely as a cloud / that floats on high..." The daffodils are continually personified as human beings, which are dancing and tossing and moving their heads in happiness. "A crowd'' and ''a host" are also the examples of personification. This technique creates an integral unity between man and nature, making it one of Wordsworth's most basic and effective methods to instill the same feeling in the reader as the poet himself is experiencing. The poet has used a good number of adjective to describe human and nature related nouns that create harmony between man and nature.

4. Conclusion

To make the reader feel the part of all experience, the writer has to choose the words in his writings in such a way that convey meaning appropriately and keep the rhythm and harmony of thoughts too. The choice of words helps the reader to understand the message the poet is trying to convey. Here in this poem the choice of words by Wordsworth has made us feel like we are there, witnessing Daffodils tossing their heads and dancing happily. We can see ten thousand flowers in a row along the bay with the gleaming waves. The imagery and the metaphors have made this poem a simple but an extraordinary poem.

5. Pedagogical implications

The main purpose of this work was to explore how the poet integrated the language use in this poem. Another aim is to analyze some specific characteristics that have made this poem great and has given its identity. Stylistic devices employed by the poet in this poem have given it this identity.

In short, this work will be concerned with the use of language by the poet and its ultimate effect on reader's mind. The imagery and language usage has enhanced effective transfer of message of the poet in this poem.

6. Limitations of the study

The researcher could not justify in the stylistic analysis of the great work of the great poet Wordsworth. The researcher could not analyze whether this poem has any anaphoric or cataphoric expression or not. She could not analyze why Wordsworth made changes in the words in the second version of the poem, what made him do so and what effect could the previously used words have?

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