

Literary Stylistics: A Study of Foregrounding in Rita Ogochukwu's "Sea Side"

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Abstract

Since language had been an oil to drive stylistics into the inner most part of humans. Therefore, "To what or to whom do we attributed style?. Style from linguistic point of view is used to describe the way or choice that language makes available to its poets. This means that there exist natural linguistic conventions that users of language select which can be identified in all forms of text spoken or written, technical or non-technical, professional or popularized Literarily, there are some elements still to unfold either in written form or inform of a poem or orally to expose ones' foregrounding. This study examines the writing in genres of literature in Rita Ogochukwu's poem titled: "SEA SIDE" and it's used qualitative descriptive approach It identifies that the common factors in the poem are predominately for setting an atmosphere of mystery. The study establishes different ways to understand and interpret the mysteries behind the sea side. The study concludes that one's consciousness can easily be exposed through writing also warns the young to be careful because we know that it is a dream for all lovers, seekers of new born and prophetic eye for all sorcerer. Our goal here is to explain how literary meanings are created by specific language choices and patterning, the linguistic foregrounding, in the text. While stylistics has periodically claimed to be objective, replicable, inspectable, falsifiable and rigorous, and thus quasi-scientific, subjective interpretation is an ineradicable element of such textual analysis.

Key words: Stylistics, foregrounding, iconicity, Genres/setting and ones' thought.

Introduction Style

The concept of style has variety of meanings in and outside the literary text.

It is commonly an issue that we use the term style without knowing its meaning.

Based on Abrams (1993, p.203) he defines style as "the manner of linguistic expression in prose or verse it is how speakers or writers say whatever it is that they say". Here how which is emphasized by Abrams refers to the technique or craft of writing. Crystal & Davy (1997, p. 9) they distinguish "at least four commonly occurring senses" of the term:

1. Style may refer to some or all of the language habits of one person-as when we talk of Shakespeare's style (or styles), or the style of James Joyce, or when we discuss questions of disputed authorship...more often, it refers in this way to a selection of language habits, the occasional linguistic idiosyncrasies which characterize an individual's uniqueness....

2. In a similar way, style may refer to some or all of the habits shared by a group of people at one time, or over a period of time, as when we talk about the style of Augustan poets, the style of Old English "heroic" poetry, the style in which civil service forms are written, or styles of public-speaking....

3. Style is given a more restricted meaning when it is used in an evaluative sense, referring to the effectiveness of a mode of expression. This is implied by such popular definitions of style as "saying the right thing in the most effective way" or as "good manners"....

4. Partly overlapping with the three senses just outlined is the wide spread use of the word "style" to refer solely to literary language David Crystal observes that, in practice, most stylistic analysis has attempted to deal with the complex and 'valued' language within literature, i.e. 'literary stylistics'. He goes on to say that in such examination the scope is sometimes narrowed to concentrate on the more striking features of literary language, for instance, its 'deviant' and abnormal features, rather than the broader structures that are found in whole texts or discourses. For example, the compact language of poetry is more likely to reveal the secrets of its construction to the stylistician than the language of plays and novels. (Crystal. 1987: 71).

From Crystal point of view, in practice, many have tried to practicalize the mystery of language by the sea side. On the process of doing this, so many seekers gave up while others were translated from good to better. The poet also says that some questions were later answered, see stanza one for more detail.

Dream of all lovers, evils, turmoil and agreement,
A hill of all prophetic seers, joy grow for baby seekers,
Learning field for all learners, Masculine and feminine land
Singular and plural for all beginners', seekers Where all
questions were answered.

In the above stanza, the poet uses enjambment, personification, assonance and so on, to compliment language within literature. Our problem now is that people see poem as assumptions. But, according to Pilkington, he says: 'there is no clear cutoff point between assumptions which the speaker certainly endorses and assumptions derived purely on the hearer's responsibility.' (Pilkington 1991, 53) In addition, the stylistic qualities of poetry can be seen as an accompaniment to Pilkington's poetic effects in understanding poem's meaning.

Some people implicature may be divided into two categories: 'strong' and 'weak' implicature, yet between the two extremes there are a variety of other alternatives. The strongest implicature is what is emphatically implied by the speaker or writer; while weaker implicatures are the wider possibilities of meaning that the hearer or reader may conclude. The type of Literary Stylistics used in line three of the above poem is imaginative in nature. This shows that not only the lovers, seekers but also a learning field to all generations. Two problems with a stylistic analysis of poetry are noted by PM Wetherill in *Literary Text: an Examination of Critical Methods*. The first is that there may be an over-preoccupation with one particular feature that may well minimize the significance of others that are equally important (Wetherill. 1974:133). The second is that any attempt to see a text as simply a collection of stylistic elements will tend to ignore other ways whereby meaning is produced (Wetherill. 1974:133).

Resources, Tools and Methods

If corpus linguistics and stylistics are so suited to each other in these ways, why is there not more work on the interface of these fields? Why do we still only talk about the potential for this area? There are several reasons why the potential for the use of corpora in stylistics has not been exploited to any large extent. For historical and institutional reasons practitioners of stylistics, with training in more traditional methods of humanities research, may not be skilled or equipped to use computers in their research. Furthermore, there is a lack of good quality, usable electronic texts and it is difficult to find and evaluate what is available. Though many texts can be found somewhere in electronic form, there is enormous variation in editorial principles, file formats, text encoding practices, documentation and quality control. This means that it is difficult to have confidence in the quality, consistency and integrity of many electronic texts. Users often need a high level of familiarity with text encoding, tagging schemes, text processing and text analysis software, along with an ability to deal with often complex generic computer hardware and software, in order to do the simplest things with texts on a computer. There is a lot of scope to develop textual resources and software to make research easier.

Foregrounding Theory

The attempt to support foregrounding theory, based on real reader responses, started with Willie Van Peer in 1986, and since then, many studies have validated foregrounding theory's predictions. In 1994 Miall and Kuiken had participants read three short stories one sentence after the other – and rank each sentence for strikingness and affect. Sentences that had more foregrounding devices were found to be judged by readers as more striking, more emotional, and they also lead to slower reading times. These findings were independent of the reader previous experience with reading literature, but other experiments found foregrounding effects that seem to be connected to experience. Some evidence suggest there is a difference between experienced and inexperienced readers in second readings of a literary text that is rich with foregrounding devices: For experienced readers there is an improvement in evaluation between first and second readings. This effect was initially found by Dixon, Bortolussi, Twilley and Leung in 1993 for the story *Emma Zunz* by Jorge Luis Borges, and was later found by Hakemulder and his colleagues for other texts as well. However, recent replication attempts by

Kuijpers and Hakemulder did not get the same results. They found that the main reason for an improvement in evaluation between readings was a better understanding of the story. Another line of research suggests that experience affects the reader tendency to engage foregrounding. In an experiment that combines eye tracking and retrospective think aloud interviews Harash found that when inexperienced readers encounter a challenging stylistic device they are more prone to use shallow processing and not to start a foregrounding process, and that experienced readers have a higher tendency both to start a foregrounding process and to finish it successfully. Foregrounding also appears to play some role in increasing empathic understanding for people in similar situations as the characters in a story they just read. Koopman gave subjects to read 1 of 3 versions of an excerpt from a literary novel about the loss of a child, the original version, a manipulated version "without imagery" and a version "without foregrounding." Results showed that readers who had read the "original" version showed higher empathy for people who are grieving than those who had read the version "without foregrounding."

Before the full meaning of poem(s) can be fully produced, the reader will start reasoning from the point of view of the poet. The full meaning cannot only be produced from the writer alone. From the above stanza one, now starts to imagine how sea side can be "a hill of all prophetic seers, joy grow for baby seekers", and "Singular and plural for all beginners' seekers". The result of both lines will be differently interpreted or produced. Because of the different interpretations of the result, we have decided to apply other literary stylistics, which we thought that are more helpful to understand the mysteries behind the "*sea side*". These include: interpretative stylistics, evaluative stylistics, corpus stylistics, discourse stylistics, feminist stylistics, computational stylistics, and cognitive stylistics. We are not going into full detail of the above mentioned stylistics. These will be of help to nontutors/students to know and reason with writers' diction. There are other ways/genres of writing or expressing ones' choice of language use.

Stream of Consciousness

There are different ways of analyzing ones' inner most taught. Some make uses of music, dances, anger, choice of words, crying, standing by the sea side, and so on. We have not abandoned the meaning of stylistics analysis. Stylistic analysis in linguistics refers to the identification of patterns of usage in speech and writing. Stylistic analysis in literary studies is usually made for the purpose of commenting on quality and meaning in a text. Stylistics, in other words, is the study of style used in literary and verbal language and the effect writer or speaker wishes to communicate to the reader or hearer. It attempts to establish principles capable of explaining the particular choices made by individual and social groups in their use of language, such as socialization, the production or reception of meaning, literary criticism and critical discourse analysis.

A literary genre can be seen as a set of style characteristics that is commonly recognized and agreed upon. For example, prose and poetry, the latter often involves rhyme while the former does not. Other aspects include the use of dialogue, the description of scenes, the use of active passive voice and the distribution of the sentence length etc. Stylistic analysis is a normal part of literary studies. It is practised as a part of understanding the possible meanings in a text. It is also generally assumed that the process of analysis will reveal the good qualities of the writing. Take, for example, the opening lines of Shakespeare's *Richard III* Now is the winter of our discontent. Made glorious summer by this sun of York;

A stylistic analysis might reveal the following points:

- i. the play is written in poetic blank verse
- ii. that is - unrhymed, iambic pentameters
- iii. the stresses fall as follows
- iv. Now **is** the **winter** of our **discontent**
- v. [notice that the stress falls on vowel sounds]
- vi. the first line is built on a metaphor
- vii. the condition of England is described in terms of the season 'winter'
- viii. the term 'our' is a form of the royal "we"
- ix. the seasonal metaphor is extended into the second line

x. ... where better conditions become 'summer' xi. the metaphor
is extended even further by the term 'sun' xii. it is the sun which appears,
'causing' the summer xiii. but 'sun' is here also a pun - on the term 'son'
xiv. ... which refers to the son of the King xv. 'York' is a metonymic
reference to the Duke of York

In a complete analysis, the significance of these stylistic details would be related to the events of the play itself, and to Shakespeare's presentation of them. Different interpretations may follow apart from the one listed above. It is not the way the first reader analysis a poem that the second person will look at it. Setting and atmosphere has a lot to contribute in writing. Now, let us briefly discuss language, literature and stylistics in writing.

Language, Literature and Stylistics

Language is perhaps the most important single characteristic that distinguishes human beings from other animal species. . . . Because of the different structure of the vocal apparatus in humans and chimpanzees, it is not possible for chimpanzees to imitate the sounds of human language, so they have been taught to use gestures or tokens in place of sounds . . . but chimpanzees never attain a level of linguistic complexity beyond the approximate level of a two-year-old child.

According to Stephen Matthews, Bernard Comrie, and Marcia Polinsky 1996:10.

But, language in poetry can be used in different ways with different meanings, rhyming scheme, and iambic. The poem below is a typical example of how language can be used to explore other literary terms. Therefore, literature evokes a concentrated imaginative awareness of experience or a specific emotional response through language chosen and arranged for its meaning, sound, and rhythm.

Normally, poetry is recognizable by its greater dependence on authors' choice of words. Therefore, Poetry is the other way of using language. But according to Bakhtin "language of the poetic genre is a unitary and singular Ptolemaic world outside of which nothing else exists and nothing is needed. The concept of many world of language, all equal in their ability to conceptualize and be expressive, is organically denied to poetic style" (Bakhtin 1981: 286). This simply means that, language in some cases lacks complete expression.

Literature and Stylistics

Literature represents a language or a person and exposes ones culture and tradition. While literary stylistics is described as the most convenient approach for non-native students of English literary composition. Stylistics, concentrated on literary composition, the element of 'literariness' explored or employed in writing poetry. As a matter of fact, literature does not only treat poetry or poetic usage of words but also other branches of literature – poetry, prose and drama. Generally, most people have their own ideas of what literature is. It has to do with letters, words, figures, and expressions, pattern of writing, emotions, argument and style. **Setting/Atmosphere**

According to William Golding in his novel called 'Lord of the Flies'. The Island that Ralph and Jack found themselves at the whole novel to have a complete bearing. And also helps the readers to channel their mind in one specific direction. Since the work of stylistics is to explore how readers interact with language of (mainly literary) texts in order to explain how we understand, and are affected by texts when we read them. The setting/atmosphere of Rita Ogochukwu's sea side makes the whole poem arouse the minds of the readers. Atmosphere and setting are vital components of a piece of fiction and non-fiction for both prose and drama. The atmosphere or setting of a story can be shown explicitly or implicitly.

Review of related studies

The writer reviews her analysis by taking the previous study from the one of graduate student's thesis in Faculty of The Humanities and Social Science College Louisiana State University, namely Safa Elnaili (2013) entitled "A Stylistic Analysis Of Libyan

Short Stories: The Connotation Of Adjectives” . She stated problem: how Libyan short story writers employ language effectively in order to pass their message to the reader. Her object centered on six Libyan short stories by six different writers. The stories are selected from the book *Translating Libya* by Ethan Chorin. The method of research, Safa used qualitative approach.

The stories investigated using a stylistic analysis approach. Her study focused on the lexico-semantic level of language, specifically adjectives. The result of the research, she found the lexical feature of the language focus on adjectives. She investigated how Libyan authors discuss socio-economic and political issues through the use of adjectives, discussed were mostly used to picture positive and negative images and to connote beautiful and evil signs and concepts in the stories, in addition to empowering and depowering the characters.

The second previous study conducted by graduate student’s thesis in Stikubank University, namely Wienny Ardriyati (2011) entitled *Stylistic Speech Analysis of Dr. H. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, the President of Indonesia, and Case: The India and Indonesia Business Forum*. She stated problem: how the President’s speech addresses the honor to the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India which has a forum of business community in terms of theme, plot structure, stylistic and linguistics categories. Her object is the speech’s script of the President of Indonesia, Dr. H. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, Case: *The India and Indonesia Business Forum*. The method of research Ardriyati used qualitative approach. Her study analyzed the content and the one of its forms. This analysis used Leech and Short’s theory (1984) in the form of linguistics and stylistic categories. The result of the research, she found the president’s speech repeated used of illocutionary act of assertive and commissives convinces his audience and fellow citizens that the condition of Indonesia and India enhance cooperation in Business. She found the used of passive sentences. The cohesion in speech is achieved by the used of cohesive devices such as co-reference pronouns and conjunctions throughout the speech, the President himself as a respectful citizen and addresses his audience as his inseparable colleagues in the use of the pronoun “we” and the possessive pronoun “our”. To better activate his audience’s interest more compound and complex sentences are used. The figures of speech used are metaphor, and very few in the forms of personification and anaphora.

From the two previous studies above the writer concluded that there are many differences between this study with its. The present study used qualitative descriptive approach and theory from (Simpson, 2004), the object is William Wordsworth’s poem *I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud*, it is find out the stylistics element and foregrounded on syntax, the result is some linguistics features that have stylistics effect like graphology, phonology, lexico-syntax, morphology, figurative language and foregrounded on syntax.

Mystery of language use/ The poem

The poem titled “**sea side**” is now presented below stanza by stanza.

SEA SIDE!

- Dream of all lovers, evils, turmoil and agreement,
A hill of all prophetic seers, baby seekers found joy,
Learning field for all learners, Masculine and feminine land
Singular and plural for all beginners’, seekers
- 5 Where all questions were answered.
- Races, dancers, ritualistic, palm wine all passed,
Kings, harvest and all mourners stay and say farewell
Stampling machine for disagreement and agreement
A pavilion, paucity, pavane and a land of peasantry,
- 10 Ominious side for settlers, bivouac and bequeath side,
Amateur dramatics side for actors/actresses,
A sea for alimentary canal and bulletin for all believers.
- Replica and relic for people,

- 15 Sea side, people are born, killed, buried and celebrants for birth day,
Road for all lovers which I has stepped into,
Lucky ones found favours, chances and cultivated.
Sea! Where all gun shout quench, wounds healed,
Sea! Space that covers multitude of evils and good,
Sea side! Like cocoa tree that gives joy and restoration,
- 20 Sea side! A home for homeless and a kitchen for all women,
Sea side! Where all farmers were rebirth and warming sun rises from there.

(Rita Ogochukwu)

The words *sea side!* Is a alliteration and has an apostrophic mark that makes this poem very interesting. The writer of this poem also arouse the mind of the audience by refering *sea side* as Christ by saying that is 'Where all questions were answered' see line 5 stanza one above. She equally said that *sea side!* are embodied with good and evil. She says:

Dream of all lovers, evils, turmoil and agreement,
A hill of all prophetic seers, baby seekers found joy,
Learning field for all learners, Masculine and feminine land
Singular and plural for all beginners', seekers Where all
questions were answered.

In stanza two, many other figures of speech are embodied and embedded in each lines. The *sea side!* here is seen as an alimentary canal and bulletin for all believers. The wods *sea side!* is now personified and making it an elerge.

Final stanza make(s) uses apostrophy and simile, telling us that in *sea side!* all problems are solved that is refering the sea as the creator.

Congruence of Foregrounding in the Final Stanza

As we have seen so far, there is a strong element of foregrounding in the final stanza of '(*sea side!*)'. This is what Leech (1969) describes as 'congruence' of foregrounding, which is where we get lots of different types of foregrounding occurring at once. This is obviously very important for our interpretation of the poem but before coming to any overall conclusion about meaning, let's consider again exactly what elements are foregrounded here.

First there is the internal deviation we noticed with the initial capitalisation of each word in the last line. Secondly, unlike in the other stanzas, there is a lack of any sort of phonological parallelism, and (disregarding the obvious lack of punctuation) the grammatical ordering of the stanza follows conventional rules of syntax. What is interesting about these foregrounded elements is that they are all the result of internal deviation, and are all foregrounded because they conform to our normal expectations of written language! In addition to the numerous deviant features of the poem in the other stanzas, what we have in the last stanza is a kind of 'reverse' deviation. The most strongly foregrounded features of '(listen)' are those which we would usually define as 'normal'.

The effect of all this is to make it unusually easy for us to understand the last stanza. There is no difficult interpretative work to do (in comparison to the rest of the poem) and so the final message of the poem is made extremely clear; nothing and nobody can stop the progress of Spring and the poet's love - the implication being, perhaps, that we should not struggle against these forces, but simply resign ourselves to accepting and becoming participants in them.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that all the three disciplines, stylistics, Discourse analysis and literary criticism in one way or other analyse literature. Stylistics focuses on texts and gives much attention to the devices, parts and figures of speech, for style in language. The study establishes different ways of understanding and interpreting the mysteries behind the sea side. According to the poetry, the poet makes us to believe that good, bad and ugly are found at sea sea. The study concludes that one's consciousness can easily be exposed through writing. Jakobson (1960: 377) indicates the relationship between linguistics and literary studies stating that:

“If there are some critics who still doubt the competence of linguistics to embrace the field of poetics, I privately believe that ... linguists have been mistaken for an inadequacy of the linguistic science itself. All of us here, however, definitely realize that a linguist deaf to the poetic function of language and a literary scholar indifferent to linguistic problems and unacquainted with linguistic methods are equally flagrant anachronisms”. We, therefore support the point of view of Jakobson’s argument and saying that the emphasis made using the words sea side should not be underlined.

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