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1. Meaning of Stylistics

Stylistics refers to the study of the devices in languages (such as rhetorical figures and syntactical patterns) that are considered to create expressive or literary style. It is the study of style used in literary and verbal language or is more commonly the scientific study of 'style'. Style refers to those elements or features of a literary composition which produces a certain effect on the work of the authors and eventually on the readers. More technically, it is the study of the linguistic features of a literary text- phonological, lexical, and syntactical- which directly affect the meaning of an utterance.

2. History of Stylistics

The origins of stylistics go back to the *Poetics*, and especially to the rhetoric of the ancient classical world (Burke, 2014). The term *stilistik* has been in current use in Germany since the early nineteenth century, however the noun *stylistic* is found as early as 1864. In French, the first example of *stylistique* is from 1872. Charles Bally, the founding-father of linguistic

theories of style laid emphasis on the expressive value of language and visualized of a la stylistique as a study of effective content of the verbal structures that constitute the system.

He did not include the literary use of language in his theory. Further Marcel Cressot, in *Le Style et ses techniques* (Paris, 1947) employed literary as well as non-literary materials to survey the expressive possibilities of the French language. He unlike Bally included literary use of language. The 19th century had noticed the use of language in literature as an orientation towards the natural overflow of powerful feelings. The emphasis was on developing the expressive properties of language.

The credit for the development of modern stylistic theory goes to Roman Jakobson. According to Jakobson (1960), there are various factors involved in linguistic act and these factors are set towards: the addresser, the addressee, message, context, code, and contact. These factors correspond to the six communicative functions of language for any successful communicative act. Bally viewed style as the product of expressivity in language and Jakobson considered style as the study of verbal art.

3. Linguistic approach to Style

Linguists across schools have agreed on placing the concept of style at the centre of the linguistic study of literature. Style in literature is an identifiable but subtle phenomenon. It is concerned with frequencies of linguistic items in a given text. Quite a few experts have defined style linguistically. It is the result of more than one linguistic item.

In order to study a literary text from a stylistic perspective, one should start reading the text to understand the overall picture. Then, one should start dissecting the text by looking at peculiar and eye-catching peculiarities. Some of the points can be looked upon:

Textual Context

Linguistic frame

- Phonetic context (voice/quality, speech rate, etc.)
- Phonemic context
- Morphemic context
- Syntactic context (including sentence length)

- Lexical context
- Graphological context (punctuation, capitalization)

Compositional frame

- Period
- Type of speech, literary genre
- Speaker/writer
- Listener/reader
- Relationship between speaker/writer and listener/reader
- Context of situation environment
- Dialect and language

The discipline of Stylistics offers a wide variety of devices for creative writers for making their writing unique. Skilled writers incorporate stylistic devices into their writing to create a deep impact upon the readers. It enhances a piece of writing's aesthetic, emotional or intellectual appeal. It studies devices in a language producing expressive value of it.

References:

Print Source:

Burke, M. *The Routledge Handbook of Stylistics*: Routledge, 2014. Print.

Jeffries, L. And McIntyre. *Stylistics*: Cambridge University Press, 2010. Print.

