Stylistic Analysis of the Poem "Humanity i love you" By E.E. Cummings

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Abstract

This study deals with stylistic analysis of E.E Cummings's poem "Humanity i love you". This study is dealt under the level of lexicology, graphology and the parallelism in stylistics. Qualitative method has been applied in the analysis of the poem in which the data are collected from primary, secondary and tertiary sources. The analysis of these features is helpful to comprehend the basic theme of the poem that is completely sarcasm and irony. The first free clause "Humanity i love you" repeats several times ironically in the poem but at the end of the poem this structural repetition is being juxtaposed and parallelized with what the poet actually wants to say "Humanity i hate you".

Keywords: stylistics, levels, parallelism, irony, theme

1 Introduction

1.1 Style

Style is derived from Latin word *stilus* which means "the particular way in which something is done" (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary: 2011)**.** It holds way of living, personality of a person, his thought and his way of speaking and writing. In everyday talk we use the term style for expressing the shape and colour of building, dress, painting, sculpture, furniture. For example, this house has a unique style. Similarly, when we talk about the manner of speaking or writing, we say 'the essays of Bacon have epigrammatic style'. In literature, style reflects the choice of words, sentence structure and tone of ideas by the writer in order to "show" the reader what the writer intends.

1.2 Stylistics

Stylistics, the branch of applied linguistics, studies the style of a literary text. It is the study of style in spoken and written language at all levels such as phonology, morphology, syntax and lexicology.

Moti (2010) says, "The message or thought what we communicate in language does not have only one function. It has diverse functions, and it is also diverse in expression or manner (style)". Stylistics studies literary effects caused by linguistics. Stylistics bridges Linguistics with Literature. Stylistician uses linguistic data while analysing literary text. Stylistic analysis investigates how literary text creates meaning, how readers construct meaning from the language of text and make the text understandable by applying specific techniques of Stylistics such as deviation (semantic, grammatical, phonological), pun, foregrounding and parallelism.

1.3 Levels
1.3.1 Lexical Analysis
The stylistic use of words may produce denotative, connotative, collocative, affective, thematic, or stylistic meanings based on the intention of speaker or writer. Certain characteristic use of words may help us to identify the context of a text, its genre, its communicative purposes, and its author. At this level of analysis, lexis of the poem is studied as a theory of semantic field. The notion of semantic field is to study words which are similar in meaning and analyses the relationship among them.

New words and vocabulary (neology) and affixation (prefix and suffix) and compounding are examples of word-formation most commonly practiced in English language to be studied at lexical level. In affixation, prefix and suffix are added to a word while in compounding, two different words are joined together in order to make a new word.

1.3.2 Graphological Analysis
Leech (1969:39) claims, "graphology exceeds orthography. It refers to the whole writing system: punctuation and paragraphing as well as spacing". Punctuation is a system of using the punctuation marks in writing for the purpose to split sentences, phrases and words. These marks contain full stop, colon, semicolon, comma, exclamation mark, question mark, quotation mark, apostrophe, ellipsis, hyphen, brackets, and parenthesis. It also includes paragraphing which separates parts containing information that usually consist of several sentences or lines. Every text has an individual layout which reflects the characteristics of that particular period of genres. Generally texts are divided into distinct paragraphs and parts and sub parts from the beginning to the end and these units are separated from one another according to the kind of information, idea and concept. Every paragraph starts with a new line. Leech and short (2007:131) say, "Graphological variation is a relatively minor and superficial part of style, concerning such matters as spelling, capitalisation, hyphenation, italicisation and paragraphing".

Due to these features, Stylistician can rationally explore and provide descriptions of the manifestation of the literary texts. Graphology as a system of writing can also show the type of language used. For example, American English writes the words 'meter' and 'color' which are different in spelling from the British English in which they write 'metre' and 'colour' for similar reason.

3.4 Parallelism Parallelism is an example of linguistic foregrounding through which the writers take words, phrases and discourse from the ground into the foreground in order to emphasize or attract the attention of the readers and scholars. Parallelism is a type of foregrounding in which the

meaning or shape of words and phrases change their position in a parallel structure. There is either antonymical or synonymical relationship of meaning among the parallel expressions. It either joins similar ideas to show their connection or juxtaposes contrasting ideas and images so as to show their stark variance. The antonymical or synonymical relationships of meaning among the expressions paralleled may also be strengthened by phonological, grammatical and morphological features.

Trauth and Kazzazi(2006:858) define parallelism, 'A figure of speech of repetition for syntactically similar constructions of co-ordinated sentences or phrases, e.g. *Time is passing, Johnny Walker is coming'* .Parallelism is a broad term and it is not limited to the extra repetition of words and phrases in a text. Poets use different techniques of parallelism while constructing poetic language. Those techniques are: rhyme, phonemic transcription, syllabic structure, pun, anaphora, apostrophe, consonance, assonance and alliterative pattern in texts. All these levels of language categories-words, phrases, sentences, units of meaning and sound - may be tied up for the purpose to create parallelism and these parallel constructions are aimed to achieve the effect of foregrounding in a literary passage.

2 Review of Literature

2.1 Stylistics

Stylistics, the branch of applied linguistics, deals with the style in which literary text is studied. Aslam et al. (2014) say that in the last quarter of 19th century, stylistics was only limited to literary texts. But in 20th century, it began to analyse nonliterary texts stylistically. For example: religion, laws, newspaper, and advertisement. Different authors define and explain the term *stylistics* differently. Leech and Short (2007:11) define that stylistics is the linguistic study of style which does not take it for its own sake but an exercise in which we describe the different use of language. Crystal (2008:460) states that stylistics as a branch of language, studies the situational features of the language used by authors in different contexts distinctly. It establishes principles for exploring the particular choices of language made by the individual.

According to Nørgaard, Montoro and Busse (2010:01), stylistics takes theories, models and frameworks as an analytical tool for explaining and describing why and how text on page works. It tells us the way we come from the words on page to their meanings. The analysis focuses on different features of the text such as semantic, grammatical, lexical, phonological, discoursal or pragmatic features. Some Stylisticians give importance to the author and analyse the text from the author point of view. While other stylistic approaches give importance to the text itself. They say that we need text on page, instead of author for the analysis. There are other who claim that it is all about readers to construct meaning while analyzing a text. They consider the readers' role in analysis. According to Watts (1981:25), in stylistic analyses, the job of stylistician is not to interpret the text but to find out the linguistic structures within the text particularly in literary text. Some stylistic analysis also tends to justify the methods and principles of the model, not only to interpret the text.

Wales (2001:437), in the first edition of her *Dictionary of Stylistics* offers that we can view style in several different ways. There are a lot of stylistics approaches to literary text which are mainly influenced by linguistics and literary criticism. Though we study literary materials but attention is mainly given to the text. In most stylistics analysis, we do not simply analyse the formal

characteristics of text but to show the functional significance of the literary text studied in a specific context.

While Simpson (2004) says that stylistics is a process of interpreting text in which the importance is given to language. He says:

> The reason why language is so important to stylisticians is because the various forms, patterns and levels that constitute linguistic structure are an important index of the function of the text. The text's functional significance as discourse acts in turn as a gateway to its interpretation. While linguistic features do not of themselves constitute a text's 'meaning', an account of linguistic features nonetheless serves to ground a stylistic interpretation and to help explain why, for the analyst, certain types of meaning are possible. (p. 2)

Burke (2014:2) says, 'Stylistics nowadays is a field of study that confidently has one foot in language studies and the other in literary studies'. Stylistics bridges Linguistics with Literature. Stylistician uses linguistic data while analysing literary text.

2.2 Levels Of Analysis
2.2.1 Lexical Analysis

Shakoor (2015) says that the term lexical in 'lexical analysis' refers to the 'lexis' which means the vocabulary or words of a language. Every poet uses a choice of vocabulary in his or her writings. There are different kinds of lexical devices such as Apostrophe, Connotation, Analogy, Hyperbole, Irony, Personification, Pun, Metaphor, and simile. Analysis at lexical level also includes deviation from the routine choice of word and phrases in poetry. According to Khokhar, Khurshid and Kassim (2015) 'Lexical deviation refers to nonce-formation or neologism. In the analyses at lexical level (Li and Shi in 2015), include the study of neologism in which the stylistician explores the newly created words and phrases (Leech, 1969:42). Neologism is through nonce-formation and word-formation. In nonce-formation, poets invent new words just for a single and particular situation, not for the purpose of enhancing vocabulary. In word-formation, they form new words through affixation and compounding. The use of affixation (prefixation and suffixation) is the most productive and effective way of increasing vocabulary. In prefixation, poets attach prefixes such as 'un', 'dis', and 'en' to the beginning of a morpheme or word while in suffixation, they add suffixes such as 'ly', 'ness', and 'less' to the end of a word. Compounding is the process of combining two or more words together. In compounding, words are joined directly together from different parts of speech such as handpicked, honeymoon, and 'not-too-distant'. The stylistician job is to analyse and explore these elements in the language of poetry.

Simpson (1997: 34) states about open-class words and closed-class words while describing the English lexicon. According to him, open-class words are the lexical morphemes which carry the content of the meaning that the writers want to convey. It includes noun, verb, adverb and adjective part of the speech. In this class of words, more word or morphemes can be added to the English language. While closed-class words are all the functional morphemes that connect content words together. It includes articles, prepositions, pronouns and modal verbs. These functional morphemes are fixed, and further new morphemes cannot be added to the English language that is why they are called closed-class words. Lexical items from open-class words, according to Goodarzi (2009), are combined to form images in poetry and extend its meaning:

Every lexical item contributes to produce images in poetry, either directly or in an oblique manner. Once an image has been established in a poem, all lexical items in the poem may probably be applied to it by extending their meaning metaphorically. Even those lexical items which seem apparently unrelated to the established images can be attributed the role of creating more images for the purpose of making the experience of the poem more complex. In this regard, strings of related lexis in a poem can help the reader to understand how the poem creates and co-ordinates different levels of imagery, in order to convey the sense of an experience.

2.2.2 Graphological Analysis

Graphology refers to the layout or the appearance of text. The layout of the text contains a lot of graphological elements such as paragraphing, Jeffries and Maclntyre (1956:44) graphic choice, punctuation, capitalization, italization, bold-typing, underlining and spacing as well. Each element has its own particular function and creates meaning in the text. According to Crystal and Davy (1969:18) "Graphology is the analogous study of a languages writing system or orthography as seen in the various kinds of handwriting or topography". say that 'graphology is the equivalent in the written language to phonology and is conveyed through the visual medium rather than the aural'. In graphological analysis, stylisticians analyse the layout of literary text through graphological features. According to these features, stylisticians give meaning to a literary passage. They create the effect of foregrounding in the text and stress ideas through the use of italics, capital letters, and underlining in order to catch the attention. Leech (1969:47) claims that Cumming is best known for his graphological style in poetry. He says that his orthographic deviation discards punctuation and capital letters which seems very eccentric. For him, punctuation, capitalization and spacing are not just symbols to be put down but they become expressive devices.

With reference to the graphological elements in Cummings' poetry specially the poem "you no", Simpson (1997) comments that the poem contains all the stylistic characteristics of Cummings' poetry and so are contrary to the standard layout, orthography and punctuation. His well known technique is the use of lower case which tends to be normally printed in upper case such as the use of personal pronoun or the initial word the line. He says that he does not mention 'the spelling of the poet's own name'. Simpson further says,

> By contrast, when upper case is used, it is used in the most unlikely of environments: in this text it is restricted exclusively to comparative and superlative terms ('Less'; 'Most'; 'More').
>
> These terms thus become foregrounded in a text where lower case is the norm. (p.45)

Pishkar and Nasery (2013) state about the graphology of Cummings, 'He caused a great controversy with his insistence on the unorthodox spelling and punctuation , he refused to capitalize the personal pronoun (i) , let his lines wander all over the page and in general refused to bend to the recognized rules of poetic grammar'.

2.3 Parallelism

Mtumane (2010) says that parallelism is a stylistic technique in which words, phrases and sentences are arranged and ordered in a balanced way in the consecutive lines. He says that these phrases and sentences are structured along with their balanced meaning. Parallelism is a system of arranging an equal number of words in two or more than two consecutive lines and these words

correspond with one another in the lines. This effect creates beautiful rhythm in lines and feels pleasing to the ear when someone listens to them. Ntuli (1984: 190) refers to the perfect parallelism, when "correspondence is found between all the units" of consecutive lines. Cuddon (2013:511) states that parallelism is 'A very common device in poetry (especially Hebrew poetry) and not uncommon in the more incantatory types of prose. It consists of phrases or sentences of similar construction and meaning placed side by side, balancing each other…'

Gregoriou (2009: 37) also states that 'When words in a text are structurally parallel—whether by the same or similar sound, meaning, or position in a syntactic structure—there seemingly exists some sort of equivalence or opposition between the semantic relationship of the words'. Further he says that generally parallelism is adhered to the earlier case. It relies on the repetition of norms and unexpected regularities. These norms and regularities are either in the form of sameness or in the in the form of contrast to one another. According to Waugh (1980: 64), 'Parallelisms create and unify a network of symmetries, and via these symmetries—whether contrasting or equivalent—they construct the poem into one unified whole'. According to Okunowo (2012), the study of parallel linguistic structures creates ideas and links those parallel ideas in order to understand and convey the meaning of a literary text:

Parallelism is a linguistic phenomenon, which explains the relationship that may be understood between units of linguistic structures, which are constructed parallel to each other or related in some other ways. Literature exploits this relationship to create ideas in the units of language that are composed as parallels. Our understanding of the concept as a linguistic phenomenon enables us to interpret its heuristic uses in literature in which meanings are suggested in order to argue a point of view and convey a message.

According to Khokhar, Khurshid and Kassim (2015), parallelism is a planned repetition of words and phrases in order to make a text artistic (for artistic purpose). They have given the following three types of parallelism: Lexical Parallelism: refers to 'the repetition of a word, phrase, or a clause in a regular pattern'; Phonological Parallelism: the repetition of stressed and unstressed syllable; Syntactic Parallelism: the structural repetition of the sentence rather than repeating the same words. The present study is only concerned with lexical parallelism in which the repetition of phrases and sentences would be analysed.

2.4 Introduction Of The Poem

Li and Shi (2015) talk about irony in poetry and take example from E.E. Cummings' poem 'humanity i love you'. They say that irony is used to refer to the opposite side of actual surface or what is actually said. The interpretation of irony is like uncovering the mask. e.g. Humanity i love you because you are perpetually putting the secret of life in your pants and forgetting

it's there and sitting down on it   (Cummings: 1994:53) They comment about the stanza that:

 Although the poet reasserts his "love' for humanity, what is reckoned from the shameless behaviors in full display only intensifies in reader's mind his hatred for the cruelty and selfishness of mankind rather than love, the effect of which has been achieved by irony as expected.

The study in this poem is how the faults of humanity, repetitions, metaphorical language and ironic visual imagery and the contrast between the first and the last line create the theme of this poem by applying some specific stylistic techniques: Graphological analysis, lexical analysis and parallelism.

4. Methodology

Methodology includes the analysis of the poem. The poem is analysed at three levels: lexical level, graphological level and the use of parallelism. This study interprets the poem from a linguistic point of view in order to show the analysis of a literary text through linguistic approach and to find out why some particular literary text is observed so highly.

4.1 Lexical Level

In this poem, the words of two categories (Noun and Verb) are immensely used. Words of both the categories add meaning to the first noun word 'Humanity' of the poem. It has an important role in the poem due to which the first letter of it has been written in upper-case. This poem is all about the description of humanity in which the poet criticizes the contemporary society. In the start of every two stanzas, he repeats only one line 'Humanity i love you because'. He actually emphasizes and foregrounds it in order to attract the attention of the readers. In this line of the poem, the first person pronoun 'i' refers to the poet and the author addresses to the second person pronoun 'you' which refers to humanity. The verb 'love' in the line which the poet repeats before every two stanzas is irony. He says 'Humanity i love you', ironically. The author does not openly expose his true nature towards humanity. The words and expressions that he brings after the first line before every two stanzas contradict to the word 'love'. They do not relate to the semantic field of the word 'love'.

The poem begins with the simple sentence structure of SVO {subject (s) verb (v) object (o)}. The first line of each stanza exhibits semantic juxtaposition with the rest of the lines, and this semantic incoherence is being indicated through the following subordinate clause beginning with the subordinator 'because' in each stanza. Humanity is loved for having the very detestable and abominable qualities. For example, doing things which are embarrassing for both the parties is not something loving and likeable; rather it is quite shocking and atrocious. Similarly to pawn one's intelligence for buying such petty, harmful, and trivial thing like 'drink' is worth pitying instead of loving.

The lexical item "love" of the first free clause is, in fact, disjointed and incoherent with what follows in the subordinate clauses, beginning with the subordinator 'because' in each of the three stanzas. The dispersed content in the subordinate clauses demonstrate lack of coherence with what is said in the first free clause. The first free clause in these three stanzas, having an SVO syntactic pattern {Humanity i (S) love (V) you (O)} does not correspond to the detail in the clauses immediately following it in the same construction. The detail after this clause does not present any plausible argument for the loving aspect of humanity. The poet gives description which seems nonsensical, incoherent, illogical and not in thematic link with the first free clause.

The poet adds through the conjunction 'because' merely surprising and shocking information of human folly, ignorance, hypocrisy, meanness etc. which are not loving at all. Generally such worthless and negative qualities do not seem to integrate well with the preceding line of

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personalized and very pure human emotion of love. How can one love a phenomenon with such negative, evil and detestable qualities; instead, phenomenon with such bad qualities deserves to be hated.   Thus, the readers are confronted with a mass of apparently disjointed sentences having no obvious relation with the thematic progression of the opening line in each stanza but the fact of the matter is that the author is completely sarcastic and ironic in his treatment of the subject matter. He has deliberately chosen to be so in order to get the desired effect of getting the attention of the readers by presenting such semantic juxtaposition. However, at the very end of the poem, through the very last line where unlikely all other preceding expressions, the choice 'love' is substituted by its exact antonym 'hate', the author has made it explicit what he actually meant by the earlier mentions of the apparently positive choice 'love'.

The choice of lexical items that follow in the subordinate clauses in each of the three stanzas is contradictory and unexpected which both surprise and perplex the readers. Passing from the highly personalized and positive emotion of 'love' in the opening line (human experienced/feeling oriented line), we encounter choices which are invariably negative, unwelcome, and undesirable. For example, to mention a few negative items that are not indeed worth loving we can refer to choices like "embarrassing the parties", "unflinchingly applaud", "to pawn one's intelligence in order to buy drink", "continually committing nuisances" etc. Human nature, in fact, universally hate these things and phenomena instead of loving them, and the poet has, off course, used the word love in ironic and sarcastic implications which is also evident from the last explicit use of word "hate" instead of "love".

There are no strange and unusual words or apparent deviation at lexical level of the poem – no neologisms, for example, and no unusual affixation, which Cummings often uses in his other poems. However, the arrangement of the words on the page is arranged in a strange way which makes the poem difficult to read.

4.2 Graphological Level
An analysis at graphological level, first of all, the poem has no formal title. The poem consists of six stanzas and each stanza contains four lines. The first stanza starts with a line 'Humanity i love you' and repeats the same line after the two stanzas in the poem. It carries a single and complete idea. There is no capital letters in the poem except the first letter of the word 'Humanity'. Leech (1969:47) says that "Cummings is well-known for his use of other types of orthographic deviation: discarding of capital letters and punctuation where convention calls for them". Throughout the poem, the poet E.E. Cummings has written the word 'Humanity' with capital first letter. This can signals that the poet has foregrounded and make the word 'humanity' visible and emphasized in the poem because the author has broken his own creative rules which is the use of 'lower case' in his poetry. The word 'Humanity' has an important concept in this poem. The whole poem is revolving round this particular concept. Throughout the poem, the poet has used lower-case especially the personal pronoun 'i' in the written language of the poem. Pishkar and Nasery (2013) say that E.E. Cummings refused to capitalize the personal pronoun (i). This is the most striking aspect of his deviation from the usual and routine writing.

In this poem, there is no single punctuation mark used in the poem. The poet has written the poem like a free verse in run-on lines in which the sentence does not stop at the end of line but it continues next-to-next lines, which is called enjambment. There is no full stop at the end of sentences, no

colon, semi-colon, quotation mark, exclamation mark, question mark or a single comma in this poem. e.g., in the second stanza, the poet has given three nouns 'country home and mother'. The conjunction 'and' is fine after the two nouns but there is nothing between the first two nouns. Comma or the conjunction 'and' should have been written between the first two nouns. There are no bold, italics and numeral letters in this poem. Most of the helping verbs are used in contract forms in the poem such as 'you're', 'it's'. There is an equal space among lineation and the stanzas.

4.3 Parallelism

The poet begins the poem with a verbal irony, 'Humanity i love you' and repeats it with a sarcastic tone while at the end of the poem the author has given more directly 'Humanity i hate you'. It really strikes the mind of the readers while going through text of the poem. It really invites attention of the readers when viewing two completely contrastive ideas. The poet actually foregrounds the ideas through the ironical use of the line 'Humanity i love you'. The author repeats the same idea three times respectively. He makes his arguments strong through repetitions. In the last line of the poem he reveals his true nature of what he actually intends and wants to say openly and leaving no confusion to the readers.

Since simple repetition is a restricted technique to produce foregrounding, poets use parallelism to achieve this effect. Parallelism holds some features contrast, especially the structural ones, while other such items as lexical items, idioms, words etc. change. According to Short (1994:5), sometimes even the phrase and the clause level parallelism may be limited as the poet may extend it the whole domain of a poem and thus nothing seems changed structurally and this is very much true in case of 'Humanity i love you'. All the stanzas got the same structure.

Each stanza begins with the same line followed by a similar pattern. In this poem, parallelism is use to show the stark contrast. What the poet loves, is not lovable so two contrastive ideas are juxtaposed in each stanza having the same structural features. The first line of each stanza with the following subordinator 'because' is repeated throughout the poem imprinting on the readers mind what horrible things and ideas the poet loves. However, we see a deviation at the very end line of the poem, not structural deviation instead, it is lexical. For this time, the lexical item 'love' of the recurring first line is substituted by its antonym 'hate' which startles the readers. Another feature is that it is not followed by the subordinator and the following description which would clarify the case. The readers are not provided with the detail why the author hates humanity, this left to their own description and common sense judgment.

5 Findings and Conclusion

The stylistic analysis reveals an ironic and sarcastic treatment of the subject matter and theme in the poem, initially implicitly stated through the use of negative and unpleasant lexeme, like 'embarrassing', 'unflinching', 'continually committing' (all intrinsically negative in their meaning) or revealed through verbs like 'black the boots', 'pawn the intelligence', 'buy the drink' (all verbs associated with something unpleasant) or suggested through nouns, 'old howard', 'pawn shop', 'nuisances', 'the secret of life in your pants', and 'poems in the lap of death'. Despite a shift from the sincerest emotion of love in the first free clause towards an averse and unexpected experience in the following subordinate clauses, we observe a subtle extension of the theme, not

through cohesive devices such as anaphoric, cataphoric references, ellipsis substitution and conjunction, or coherence but through the use of irony and sarcasm.

In parallelism, it can be concluded that the purpose of parallelism here is irony and sarcasm. The structural repetition here is not futile but the poet conveys his thoughts indirectly by saying "Humanity i love you". The poet repeats the same structural repetition through several stanzas in the poem. But this structural repetition is followed by some undesirable and detestable qualities after the subordinator 'because' which are not lovable.

Another striking feature of the parallelism is juxtaposition. In the poem, the poet juxtaposes two contrastive ideas which are completely opposite to each other. After the structural repetition "Humanity i love you" several time, the poet ends up the poem by saying "Humanity i hate you" which struck the readers' mind off while going through the text. To conclude, the poet does not actually love but hates the contemporary society for their disgusting and abominable qualities. That is why, the poet is more direct and expose his true nature by saying "Humanity i hate you" at the end of the poem.

Recommendations

In this study, three tools of stylistics i.e., lexicology, graphology and parallelism have been applied to the poem "Humanity i love you" for its analysis. The concept in the poem is very deep rooted. It is not the work of one study on the poem for the understanding. If someone wants to work again on the same lexical level of the poem, they can get the depth of the poem and reveals what the poet actually want to convey about the contemporary society. There are other levels such as phonological, grammatical and semantic level of analysis in stylistics which can be applied on the poem.

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