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STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF WILLIAM HENRY DAVIES'S POEM

“LEISURE”

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Abstract

This research article aims to analyse the concepts of Davies's poem Leisure from a stylistic point of view and to explore four levels of stylistic analysis: graphological, syntactical, semantic, and phonological. The analysis of this poem will help analyse and judge the concepts of modern man's life who passes his life under the tensions and troubles of materialism, neglecting the charm and beauty of nature.

Keywords: *Style, Stylistics, Leisure, Phonological level, Graphological level, Morphological level, Lexico-syntactic level.*

Introduction to the Poem

W. H. Davies, who belongs to Wales in England, realised mankind's rapid transformation from quaint little farmers to massive cities of industrialisation in the year 1911 with his eye-opening poem “Leisure”. It is about materialism, and its structure is very simple, and it is easy to catch ideas and best sources for readers for interpretations and is a thought-provoking poem and solid proof of naturalistic knowledge and a legend of modern man who always indulges in modernisation and the material world.

Theme of the Poem

The poet laments and criticizes the life of modern man who is the tuft of dull and drab routine work, and he has no leisure time to enjoy the elements of nature which are reconciliation and powerful sources for interpretation and observation. The poet criticizes the modern man due to his materialistic nature and permanent aloofness from nature. The gist of the poem is that we should abandon our material pursuits and generate a new contact with naturalism. The poet uses rhetorical language at the outset of the poem and generates new sums for his readers.

Structure of the poem

The poem is written in the couplet of two and there are seven couplets or stanzas in the entire poem and each last word of the poem is rhymes.



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Point of view

The poem is written in the first person plural and the poet includes himself with the people around him.

Setting of the poem

The poem is set in the day time and relates to the nature.

Tone and Mood

The tone of the poem is gentle and encouraging and suggests a relaxing and positive attitude towards life. The mood of the poem expresses concern about the present condition, the way the poem is written puts the reader in the calm mood and encourages him to appreciate the benefits of relaxing.

Moral values

We should learn to relax and appreciate life. If we don't relax more, we will have stress-filled lives. Appreciation of nature is vital in this context.

Moral lessons

- Take time to relax even though we are too busy.
- Appreciate the wonderful nature.
- Be grateful to God, the creator of the beautiful nature.
- God is Almighty because His creations are the greatest.
- **Elements of Nature**
- Boughs
- Sheep
- Cows
- Squirrel
- Nuts
- Grass
- Daylight



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- Stars
- Night

Research Objectives

- To explore the contribution of Graphology Level in the poem.
- To investigate the poem at a Morphological level.
- To examine the poem at a Phonological level.
- To evaluate Lexico-Syntactic Level in the poem.
- To evaluate how language devices has been integrated in the poem.

Research Questions

- In what way does Davies try to explore materialism?
- What are major approaches of Davies towards life?
- Why does Davies explore the natural world?

Literature Review

Style is a broader term and has several meanings, and it is a specific method by which something is done, a manner or a way is style. In a broad appearance of everything is style. The way of living and doing something is also a style. According to Leech (1969), the basic purpose of achieving lucidity in diction and formality is to change the structure of the word. Style, in our view, is the language which is used in a given background and by a specific person for a particular purpose. Leech and Short (1981) describe that style is the cover of our imagination and feelings. This is applicable to the written and spoken, and literary and non-literary principles.

The term style is used occasionally in literary criticism, and it is defined according to one's own field of study. So, there are many interpretations of word style. In Leech and Short (1981), style is the cover of our feelings, and it is the tool of the writer to transfer the message to readers. Here is Carter (1989) view about style: that it is based on linguistic levels. That's why style is the primary thing which gives newness to every writer. Birch (1989) says that language and style cannot move beyond a boundary on the greatness of words. He believes that words have specific meanings which distinguish it from ordinary language.

Davy and Crystal (1969) points out that stylistics is the one part of applied linguistics which presents scientific study of style by applying linguistic principles and theories. Stylistics, however, mainly concerns with the literary variety, mainly writing. Stylistics as we understand it today with its being armed with the qualities of linguistics. Galperin (1971) puts that the structure of mutual



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language which is used in communication. In Widdowson's (1975) opinion style is the study of literary texts from linguistic perspective. He puts his view as that the connection between literary criticism and linguistics is style.

Stylistics is a critical approach which uses the findings of science of linguistics in the study of literary discourse. British linguist in 1930's presented a different type of tradition but with similar concept and is known to be as British Contextualism. According to Roger Fowler, linguistic stylistics or new stylistics thus provides for the first time a technical base for the study of style. Without a sound theory, the fundamental concepts and categories cannot be established. Before the 20th century stylistics dealt with literary text. But from 20th century it started to deal writer literary text. The very first aim of Stylistics is to understand the intentions of author or writer. Stylistics involves the study of grammar, lexis, semantics, as well as phonological attributes and discursive devices. It is more in the importance of intention and purpose.

The study of style is not confined to the analysis of literature; it can be imposed to the expository prose, advertisement and political speeches. It shows that language of literature is not essential on the contrary; literary language can be studied like any other kind to reveal precisely how effects are created.

Research Methodology

This study is purely qualitative in nature. This research is a stylistics analysis of the poem "Leisure" by Davies. The nature of this study is analytical. The researchers have analyzed the poem Graph logical, phonological and morphological levels. The text of the poem is analyzed from the methods of stylistic analysis given by Leech (1985).

Data Analysis

It is not enough to translate the words rather understanding the basic concepts has a great fun. It is naked truth that Stylistic analysis has an eminent role to trace the basic ideas and meanings of any genre because Stylistics is a critical approach which uses the findings of science of linguistics in the study of literary discourse. Lawal describes the features that deal with choices of diction, phrases, sentences and linguistic substance that are consistent with the subject matter. Lawal also adds that the narrative skill that the author uses in the matter of choice and in the division of words and characters.

Levels of Stylistics

Stylistics analysis is divided into four levels like:



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- Graphology Level
- Phonological Level
- Morphological Level
- Lexico- Syntactic Level

Graphology Level

It refers to the entire writing scheme: Punctuation, spacing and paragraphing. It deals all the writing method such as Capitalizations, Hyphen, semicolon, full stop, the comma, the colon, question mark, dash, italicized letters and spacing variation etc.

Punctuation

When we find out punctuation in sentence we have three aspects about punctuation. Either the speaker of the poem uses punctuation in middle lines or ends of the lines or runs the lines without spacing. If he or she uses punctuation in the middle lines we say **Caesura**. If the poet writes a line without using punctuation we call it **Run on line** and if the poet uses punctuation in the end of line we say it **End stopped line**. Punctuation marks provide visual clues to readers, telling them how they should read the sentence. Some punctuation marks tell you that you are reading a list of items while other marks tell you that a sentence contains two independent ideas. Punctuation marks tell you not only when a sentence ends but also what kind of sentence you have read. This chapter covers different types of punctuation and the meanings they convey.

Caesura

Everyone speaks, and everyone breathes while speaking. For instance, when you say, “Maria has taken a break,” you take breath before further saying, “But Adam did not.” Then again you take a little breath and say, “He fell on his ankle.” Such pauses come from natural rhythm of your speech. Poetry also uses pauses in its lines. One such pause is known as “caesura,” which is a rhythmical pause in a poetic line or a sentence. It often occurs in the middle of a line, or sometimes at the beginning and the end. In "**Leisure**" **Davies** caesura is used in three times:

Examples

Stanza 2:Line # 1 = No time to see, when woods we pass,

Stanza 3:Line # 5= No time to see, in broad daylight,



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Stanza6: Linee#1=A poor life this if, full of care,

End- stopped line technique

An end-stopped line is a poetic device in which a pause comes at the end of a syntactic unit (sentence, clause, or phrase). This pause can be expressed in writing as a punctuation mark, such as a colon, semi-colon, period, or full stop. According to A. C. Bradley, a line would be an end-stopped line, when the meter and sense both make a natural pause at its end. End-Stopped line technique is used in many times in the poem “**Leisure**” by **Davies**.

Examples

Lines no # (1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,12,13,14)

Run on Line Technique or Enjambment

Enjambment, derived from the French word *enjambment*, means to step over, or put legs across. In poetry it means moving over from one line to another without a terminating punctuation mark. It can be defined as a thought or sense, phrase or clause, in a line of poetry that does not come to an end at the line break, but moves over to the next line. In simple words, it is the running on of a sense from one couplet or line to the next without a major pause or syntactical break. Run on line technique is also used twice in the poem "Leisure" by Davies. Examples: Lines no # (3,11)

Comma

A **comma** (,) is a punctuation mark that is frequently used in sentences. Commas separate ideas, add pauses, and help you to list things clearly. They also let us connect words, phrases, and clauses together to make longer sentences. In fact, the comma is one of the most important and commonly used types of punctuation. Without them, sentences would just be messy! It is used eleven times in this poem. The frequent use of comma reflects the sense of wandering. They emphasize the pauses for thought and reflection.

Lines no # (1,5,7,8,9,10,13)

Full stop

Full stop (.), also called ‘period’, is used to mark the end of a declarative sentence or an imperative sentence. It essentially marks a pause greater than the one marked by a comma and is also used to suggest that there is nothing more to say on a topic, for instance, ‘I like playing



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football.’ The places where full stop is used can be easily remembered through practice. Full stop is also punctuation mark that is used at the end of the sentences. It is used to suggest that there is nothing more to say on this topic. The speaker of the poem has mentioned this technique in two times. It is used seven times in this poem. Each full stop shows the completion of one sense. **Line no # (2,4,6,8,10,12,14)**

Apostrophe

This is used only one time in this poem in the second last couplet. The capital B of Beauty shows the focusing message of the poet to modern man to turn towards nature.

No time to turn at Beauty’s glance, (Line 9)

Phonological Level

On this level this poem has a several qualities. It is one another level to measure the poem in the balance of stylistics. In this level any genre is analyzed through alliteration, consonance, assonance, onomatopoeia, couplet, rhythm and rhyming scheme. In this level two types of devices are include: literary devices and sound devices.

Rhyme

_The repetition of the same sound at the end of a line in poem is called rhyme. For example:

...full of care
...stand and stare

Rhyme scheme

The end rhyme scheme in the first couplet of the poem is “aa”. End rhyme scheme in the second couplet is “bb”. In the third couplet is “cc”. In the fourth is “dd”. In the fifth couplet is “ee” etc. This can be observed with examples from the poem.

- Care, stare
- Boughs, cows
- Light, night
- Glance, dance
- Can, began



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Alliteration

The same sound in the beginning of the words in a line is alliteration. The sound of 's' in the start of words produces a beautiful effect on readers.

Stand and stare The use of alliteration is in second couplet in the form of 'b' sound.

Beneath the boughs Other alliteration of 's', 'h', 'w' sounds in this poem are as under:

- Stare- sheep
- Her-how
- When-woods
- Enrich- eyes
- Streams- stars- skies
- Stand- stare

Assonance

The repetition of vowel sound in poetry is assonance. The assonance gives a rhythm to the poem. For example, what is this life, in this line 'I' sound is repeated as assonance.

Consonance

W'S'T are repeated consonants which shows the limitedness of the poet. Repetition: It is a literary device which shows the same words a few times to make a thought visible. There is repetition of No time to sound seven times. The poet again and again puts focus of the reader on particular word. There are seven couplets and all these have repetition of No time to sound.

Metrical Composition

The meter is iambic tetrameter i.e. most lines have four strong beats (tetra meter) and start with a weak (iambic) one. For example: And STARE as LONG as SHEEP or COWS

Metaphor / Simile

A comparison between two different things without using 'like' or 'as' Simile: A comparison between two different things which uses 'like' or 'as' for example,

Stream full of stars

...stare as long as sheep or cows

Personification

Non-living things are given human qualities. For example,



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No time to turn at Beauty's glance, And watch her feet, how they can dance.

Imagery

The words that help to generate mental pictures or perceptions is called imagery and the poets use this device to produce astonishing elements in the minds of the readers. For example,

No time to stand beneath the boughs

Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.

Morphological Level

In this level structure of the words are described. Through this level reader knows the features of the words: either word is monosyllabic or disyllabic. *Leisure* is very simple poem because its structure is very simple and mostly words are decorated in monosyllabic platform except four disyllabic words.

Monosyllabic words

Monosyllabic words refer to single syllable words. This, what, care, stare, sheep, dance, boughs, full, wait etc.

Disyllabic words

Words which have two or more syllable are called disyllabic words. Here, poem is decorated with few disyllabic words. Beneath, squirrels, daylight, beauty. What's more every line of the poem almost has the several numbers of words. It is: 8,8,7,8,8,7,7,8,7,8,8, in each line etc.

Prefixes in the poem

The only two prefixes words are used in the poem that is "enrich" and "daylight".

Suffixes in the poem

The ten suffixes words are used in the poem which are as follow:

- Boughs
- Cows
- Woods
- Squirrels



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- Nuts
- Eyes
- Stars
- Daylight
- Skies
- Glance's

Lexico- Syntactic Level

Lexico-syntactic patterns (LSP, cf. LSPs at ontologydesignpatterns.org) are generalized linguistic structures or schemas that indicate semantic relationships between terms and can be applied to the identification of formalized concepts and conceptual relations in natural language text. It refers to find out two things. One of them is to put out lexicon that which type of vocabulary is used in the target text. Another target is to know about the sentences either the writer or poet has used clause or sentence. First is called lexical and the second is called syntactic level.

Lexico- Syntactic Level

In this poem the speaker of the poem used different parts of speech but mostly he has arranged the words by using Noun, Verb, adjective and adverb.

Noun	Verb	Adjective
Life	Care	Full
Time	See	Broad
Boughs	Stand	Poor
Sheep	Stare	
Woods	Pass	Adverb
Cows		Beneath
		Where
		When

In most part of this poem are fragments, except two full sentences, and the middle four stanzas can be looked as the continuous parts of the continuous adverbial clause. So, in this way it can



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bring emphasis to this part, and also make a deep impression on readers of what we have lost if we care too much but do not stand and stare.

Conclusion

The poet depicts the hectic, drastic condition of the materialistic man in his short, thought-provoking poem “Leisure.” His efforts, like a machine, make him a meaningless hobo. He rejects nature and its natural beauty and is always indulged in materialism, which creates a lot of disturbance in his life and makes his life meaningless, chaotic, void and a hobo.

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