

Stylistic Analysis of Alfred Tennyson's Poem Tears Idle Tears

Aqeela Batool
University of Lahore
aqsheerazi@gmail.com

Rukhsana Naheed
University of Lahore
ruknaheed@gmail.com

Anam Khalid
University of Lahore
anam.mphil@hotmail.com

Abdul Bari Khan
University of Lahore
barikhan47@yahoo.com

Abstract :

This research paper is about the stylistic analysis of Tennyson's poem "Tears, Idle Tears". For analysis of this poem the stylistics devices are used and analysis is made under the aspects of phonological, semantic and Lexical Pattern. The analysis would be helpful in understanding the basic concepts of the poem, which had some past memories, impact at the present. The purpose of this study is to find out the poetic techniques which poet used to enhance the emotions of the reader. This study is also helpful to analyse the structure and style of the Tennyson and his views.

Key Words : Stylistic analysis, Tennyson's poem, Tears, idle tears, Poetic Devices

Introduction :

The word stylistics is derived from style. Stylistics is a branch of linguistics that defines different styles and variations in Language(s). It refers to the study of level of appropriateness in the use of words or language in a sentence or writing. Widowson (1975, p:3) defines stylistics as —the study of literary discourse from a linguistic orientation. Style has different meanings for different people. Carter (1989, p 14) believes that style is generally depends on linguistic levels. Owing to these levels every text and writing is different from the other, hence every genre is different. Leech (1969) says; Style is the way in which something is spoken, written or performed. It refers to use of words, sentence structures and speaking style. Broadly, style provides the foundation to the personality of the person. Style reflects the thoughts of person's mind. Different scholars define stylistics in different ways. According to Short and Candlin (1989, p.183) Stylistics is a linguistic approach to the study of the literary texts. It thus embodies one essential part of the general course - philosophy; that of combining language and literary study.

Stylistics is the study of the devices in languages such as rhetorical terms and syntactical devices that are taken to produce expressive or literary style. Stylistics is, therefore, a study which conjoins both literary criticisms on the one hand and linguistics on the other as its morphological structure exists. Carter (1996: 5) argues on the relevance of stylistics for literature teaching stating that stylistic analysis helps to foster interpretative skills and to encourage reading between the lines. He further posits the advantages of stylistics stating that “stylistics provides students with a method of scrutinizing texts, ‘a way in’ to a text, opening up starting points for complete interpretation. The method is detailed and explicit, it shows how you reach or begin to reach an interpretation. From a teaching point of view, students learn to open a text not only by osmosis but explicitly and consciously. A pedagogically sensitive stylistics can give students increased confidence in reading and interpretation.”

Literature Review :

Alfred Tennyson was a great British poet. He was born in 1809. He began to compose poems when he was very young. He suffered the mental sickness but he recovered soon by seeking escape from his family crises. His friends paved his way for poetic career, in which the name of Hallen was prominent. He was his bossom friend, after his death he felt a great shock and composed most of his best poems. He received chancellor's award in 1829 for his poem TIMBUCTOO, which was fully romantic. In 1842 he got a civil list pension after writing

1842 successful poems. Tears Idle Tears is one of his famous poems which won much success for excessive use of poetic techniques. It is a symbolic poem in which tears have symbolic meanings. It is written in blank verse, unrhymed iambic pentameter. Blank verse is such type of poetry which has no rhyme but regular meter.

It is song with in the most famous poem THE PRINCE published in 1847. It consists of four stanzas of five lines, each is full of emotions. In first stanza, tears are presented as idle, they are not due to grief, the second stanza consists of memories, the past days which have gone have both association SAD and FRESH, it is full of connotation. The third stanza deals with the sad aspect of the memories; the association with the new day of a dying person is discussed. Fourth stanza has a string of adjectives which creates a great effect, repetition of word deep deals with the depth of divine despair.

In this verse, death has two aspects, it makes us happy and sad. When we see it as the end of life it brings sadness, but death also makes our life precious with the thinking that we have to go, the life has to be ended, this attitude towards life makes it meaningful.

The use of poetic devices in this piece of writing, evokes the effect, the mastery of language enhances the complex emotions and mood. Tennyson is considered the best poet for the use of poetic devices.

Levels of stylistics :

The levels of stylistics analysis are as following:

Graphology: —It deals with the systematic formation, structure and punctuation in the sentence.

Phonology: —phonology is the study of linguistic systems. —phonology describes the ways in which speech sounds are organized in English into a system. Phonological devices are: rhyme elements, alliteration, consonance and assonance.

Morphology: —Morphology refers to the mental system involved in word formation or to the branch of linguistics that deals with words, their internal structure, and how they are formed.

Semantic Features: semantic deals with the meaning of words, phrases and sentences. It includes metaphor, simile, personification and other literary devices.

ELEMENTS IN STYLISTIC ANALYSIS:

The following elements of the levels of analysis are discussed briefly:

Graphological Devices Include:

i. Punctuation: Punctuation are the marks used in writing that divide sentences and phrases. It is the system of using the punctuation marks. These marks include full stop, comma, colon, semicolon, question mark, exclamation mark, apostrophe, hyphen, ellipsis, quotation marks, parentheses, brackets, etc.

ii. Paragraphing: Paragraph means a separate part which contains information, usually of several lines or sentences. The first sentence of a paragraph starts on a new line.

Phonological devices Include:

i. Rhyme elements: It consist patterns of rhymes: the stressed pattern, the rhyming scheme, which is followed in the poetry.

ii. Alliteration: It is the use of same letters or sounds at the beginning of words that are close together. It was used systematically in Old English poetry but in Modern English poetry is generally used for a particular effect.

iii. Assonance: It is the effect created when two syllables in words that are closed together have the same vowel sound but different consonants or the same consonants but different vowels.

iv. Onomatopoeia: It is the effect produced when the words used contain the similar sounds to the noises they describe: "murmuring of innumerable bees".

Morphological devices Include:

i. Affixes: It is a process of forming new words by putting morphemes before some words. It further divides into prefixes or suffixes. These are two popular types of morphological operations. Prefixes generally alter the meanings of the words and suffixes changes its part of speech.

ii. Coinages: It is the process of forming new words from the existing ones.

Introduction of the poem:

The poem “Tears, Idle Tears” was published by Edward Maxon in London in 1847. This poem is the part of Tenneyson’s longer work “The Princes”.

This poem begins by referring to tears that are “Idle” not in the physical sense of “motionlessness” that we usually use the word for (they do have motion) but in the broader sense.

Main Focus is on the way that past times and memories impact as in the present , even though these days “no more”.

Methodology :

For stylistic Analysis of this poem tears . Idle Tears” of Alford Lord Tenneysn the Semantic, Phonological and Lexical levels of analysis we are going to form the basis of this analysis “Tears, Idle tears”

Phonological Features

Verse format :

The predominant verse fromat of the poem is unrhymed iambic pentameter (blank verse) but several lines do not confirm Strictly to this pattern . The last two lines of the first Stanza demonstrate the meter the metric pattern of most of the lines

1	2	3	4	5	
In Looking	On	The happy	Autumn	fields	

1	2	3	4	5	
And think	Ing of	The days	The are	No more	

Example

However, the first line in to in iambic pentameter.

1	2	3	4	5	6	
Tears	Idle	Tears	I know	not	They mean	

Alliteration:

- know Not (Line 1)
- Depth of same Divine Despair (line 2)
- Fresh as the First Beam (Line 6)
- Friends up From (7)
- Which readens Over One (8)
- With all We Love Below the verge (9)
- So Sad , So fresh (10)
- Sad and Strange as in Dark
- Summer Dawns (11)

Semantic features :

The Semantic features of five this poem lie in devices
 Simile, Metaphor, Imagery
 Personification, paradox.

Metaphor

O Death in life the days that are no more (Line 20)
 Comparison of the days that are no more to death I life

Simile

The freshness of the days that are no more compares to the freshness of the first beam
 Sadness of the days to the
 Sadness of the last beams

Example

1. Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail
2. Sad as the last which reddens over one
3. Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns
4. Dear as remember'd kisses after death
5. And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feignd.
6. Deep as first love

Paradox.

A paradox is a statement seemingly self-contractory.

Example

Tennyson used this paradox in the poem Death in life

Personification

Personification is poetic device in which we personify human qualities to non living things.

Such as

Dear as remember'd kisses after death.

Lexical Level :

Tennyson in his poem Tears, Idle fears used different varieties of lexemes.

This variety of comprises of

16 Nouns 14 Adjectives and 12 Verbs. their description is as

Noun	Adjectives	Verb	
Tears	Idle Tears	Know	
Heart	Divine	Mean	
Eyes	Despair	Rise	
Autumn	Happy	Gainer	
Fields	Fresh	Looking	
Snail	Sad	Sinks	
Beam	Strange	Love	
Under worlds	Dark summer dawns	Remembered	
Friends	Half awakened	Glittering	
First	Dying stars	Brings	
Last	Dying eyes	Reddens	
Verge	Hopeless	Grows	
Days	Sweet		
Birds	Deep		
Lips			
Death			

Words pretending the nature:

Words like happy autumn fields, beam glittering on a snail, dark summer dawns, birds, are presenting true sense of nature in them

Words of terror:

These words reflect the terror, tears, divine despair, sad, sinks, dark summer dawns, divine ears, dying eyes, death, hapless,

11.3 Words of tenderness

Words like sweet, fresh, beam glittering, on snail, deep as love happy autumn fields are used in sense of affection and love

Inter junction used in this poem:

1 Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns

2 O Death in life

Conclusion of analysis:

stylistics analysis helps to understand this melancholy poem examines life from a perspective of life's end with memories affecting the speaker in some indefinable way Tennyson balances the sad part of the poem with sweetness, and love distant memories seem so real to the speaker that the past has a life of its own, and the poem suggests that this in the source of sadness that we get from "days that are no more" Thought out this poem he balances images of hope against images of depression. This poem begins by referring to tears that are "idle" not in the physical sense of "motionlessness" that we usually use the word for (they do have motion) but in the broader sense Idle here means useless , creating nothing, causing nothing to happen.

References:

Bradford, R. (1997). *Stylistics* . New York: Routledge London.

Carter. (1983). *What is stylistics and the teaching English?* London: Longman.

Hills, Rebert w., Jr., ed(1971). *Tennyson's poetry authoritative texts*.

Jurenilier and early responses, criticism,New York, w.w. Norton and company,ISBN-0-393-09953-9.

Killhan,John(ed)(1960)*critical essays on the poetry of Tennyson* London Routledge and Keyan paul OCLAC 368175.

Leech, G. N. (1969). *A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry*. London: Longman.

Leech, G. N. (2000). *A Linguistic guide to English poetry* Foreign Language Teaching and Research . North West

The IISTE is a pioneer in the Open-Access hosting service and academic event management. The aim of the firm is Accelerating Global Knowledge Sharing.

More information about the firm can be found on the homepage:

<http://www.iiste.org>

CALL FOR JOURNAL PAPERS

There are more than 30 peer-reviewed academic journals hosted under the hosting platform.

Prospective authors of journals can find the submission instruction on the following page: <http://www.iiste.org/journals/> All the journals articles are available online to the readers all over the world without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself. Paper version of the journals is also available upon request of readers and authors.

MORE RESOURCES

Book publication information: <http://www.iiste.org/book/>

Academic conference: <http://www.iiste.org/conference/upcoming-conferences-call-for-paper/>

IISTE Knowledge Sharing Partners

EBSCO, Index Copernicus, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory, JournalTOCS, PKP Open Archives Harvester, Bielefeld Academic Search Engine, Elektronische Zeitschriftenbibliothek EZB, Open J-Gate, OCLC WorldCat, Universe Digital Library, NewJour, Google Scholar

