MT. KENYA UNIVERSITY

SEMESTER______________ ACADEMIC YEAR_______________

LIT 221: STYLISTICS AND LITERARY TECHNIQUES

LECTURER: CHRISTOPHER MUGAMBI

PURPOSE

To motivate students acquire aesthetic literal theories and values as propounded by Pierre Andre, Shaftesbury, Tolstoy Hegel and Gates etc.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students should be able to

i) Explain aesthetic literal theories and values as propounded by Pierre Andre, Shaftesbury, Tolstoy Hegel and Gates etc.

ii) Discuss literary techniques and criticism of literature

iii) Describe imaginative use of language in literature and varieties of creative experiments

COURSE CONTENT

STYLISTICS

i. Style

ii. Stylistics

iii. The Evolution of Stylistics

iv. Virtues of Stylistics
v. Importance of Stylistics
vi. Stylistics and Literature

OBJECTIVES OF STYLE

i. Form

ii. Content

IMAGINATIVE USE OF LANGUAGE IN LITERATURE

i. Deviation

ii. Types of Deviation

iii. Significance of Deviation

iv. Syntactic Deviation

v. Lexical Deviation

vi. Semantic Deviation

vii. Phonological Deviation

viii. Title Deviation

ix. Structural (Generic) Deviation

IMAGINATIVE USE OF LANGUAGE IN LITERATURE

i. Conformity

ii. Syntactic Parallelism

iii. Antithesis

EVALUATION OF CURRENT THEORIES IN STYLISTICS

i. Cognitive Stylistics
ii. Feminist Stylistics

iii. Pedagogical Stylistics

iv. Pragmatic Stylistics

v. Formalist Stylistics

**FIGURES OF SPEECH**

i. Simile

ii. Metaphor

iii. Synecdoche

iv. Metonymy

v. Irony

vi. Satire

vii. The Criticism of Literature

**SOCIAL–DYNAMIC ASPECTS OF STYLE**

i. Register

ii. Diction

**TEACHING / LEARNING METHODOLOGIES**

Lectures, Tutorials, Class discussion

**INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT**

Handouts, Chalk board

**COURSE ASSESSMENT**

Examination - 70%; Continuous Assessments (Exercises and Tests) - 30%; Total - 100%
RECOMMENDED TEXT BOOKS


4. Imbuga, F. *Betrayal in the City*.


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LECTURE 1 - STYLISTICS

Introduction

In this lecture, we are going to discuss the basics of Stylistics.

Objectives

By the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

1. Explain the concept ‘Style’
2. Explain the concept ‘Stylistics’
3. Describe the evolution of stylistics

STYLE

This is a systematic study of language initiated by Charles Bally. He was a pupil of Ferdinand De Saussure.

Style refers to the manner of expression in writing and speaking, just as there is a manner of doing things, like playing squash or painting. We might talk of someone writing in an ornate style, or speaking in a comic style. For some people, style has evaluative connotations: style can be good or bad. Style may vary not only from situation to situation but according to medium and degree of formality: what is sometimes termed style-shifting.

Richard Olmann ‘Style is words in their proper places that convey our thoughts.’ From this definition, language is used to convey the same thought.
Goethe’s “Style is a high-active principle of composition by which the writer penetrates and reveals the inner forms of his/her subject. Here, style is opposed to a passive imitation.”

A style is a general manner of doing something which is typical or representative of a writer or writers. For example, Shakespearean writing, medieval writing (general explanation).

Linguists’ “style is a function of the aggregate of the contextual probabilities of ratios between the frequencies of the text syntactic, phonological, semantic and lexical items.

Valerie Kibera ‘The writer’s own language under unique features of the style can only be determined against a background of the expressive resources at his disposal.’ This means that style is how a writer manipulates language in his or her unique fashion to reveal him/herself through the choices of styles to the end product.

A writer chooses images mainly for personal experiences especially those that have held his attention or those that have had the strongest impressions.

Mugubi J. (2005)’ literary style is a personal and creative fashioning of the resources of language and extra lingual aspects which the writer chosen dialect or language, period, genre and his purpose within the genre offers him.

Geoffrey Rich and Michael Shaw, ‘Style is the way in which language is employed in a particular context, by a particular person for a particular purpose. In this definition, focus and over-emphasize is given to language.

**STYLISTICS**

Stylistics is the study of style. Just as style can be viewed in several ways, so there are several different stylistic approaches. This variety in stylistics is due to the main influences of Linguistics and Literary Criticism.

Widdowson (1975) says that stylistics is the study of literary discourse from a literary discourse from a linguistic orientation. Hence, stylistics is a branch of applied linguistics which deals with language use in literature. It is therefore the study of literary style. It is good to note that
stylistics, practical criticism or literary criticism and literary theory are all linked and drawn from each other.

Stylistics is close to literary criticism and practical criticism. By far the most common kind of material studied is literary, and attention is text-centered. The goal of most stylistic studies is not simply to describe the formal features of texts for their own sake, but to show their functional significance for the interpretation of the text; or to relate literary effects to linguistic causes where these are felt to be relevant.

Below is a summary of style and stylistics:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEFINITIONS OF STYLE</th>
<th>APPROACHES IN THE STUDY OF STYLISTICS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Style can be seen as</strong></td>
<td><strong>In the 19th century Rhetoric was replaced by</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ the <strong>manner of expression</strong> in writing and speaking</td>
<td>➢ Linguistic/emotionally expressive stylistics in the Romance countries (Ch. Bally)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ from the point of view of ‘language in use’ as a <strong>variation</strong>, i.e. speakers use different styles in different <strong>situations</strong>, literary vs non-literary (<strong>register</strong> - systemic variations in non-literary situations: advertising, legal language, sports commentary, etc.). Styles may vary also according to <strong>medium</strong> (spoken, written) and <strong>degree of formality</strong> (termed also <strong>style-shifting</strong>)</td>
<td>➢ Individualistic, neo-idealistic, psycho-analytical approach in Germany (Croce, Vossler, Spitzer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ the <strong>set or sum</strong> of linguistic features</td>
<td>➢ Formalism in Russia (1920-1923)</td>
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<td>➢ a <strong>choice</strong> of items</td>
<td>➢ Structuralism in Czechoslovakia (The Prague Linguistic Circle, 1926), Denmark (J. Hjelmslev), USA (E. Sapir, L. Bloomfield)</td>
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<td>➢ <strong>deviation</strong> from a norm (e.g. marked poetic idiolects, common approach in the 1960s)</td>
<td>➢ The New Criticism in Great Britain (Cambridge University, Richards, Empson) and USA (Brooks, Blackmur, Warren).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Functionalists: Generative Grammar 1960s Discourse Analysis 1970s Pragmatics and Social Semiotics 1980s</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ <strong>British Stylistics and Linguistic Criticism</strong> reached its most influential point at the end of the 70s.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ General stylistics (non-literary varieties)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Sociostylistics (close to sociolinguistics)</td>
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Three things determine the style to use:

**Language**

Language changes with time. A good writer uses language of present time. For example, we do not expect today’s writers to use Shakespearean times.

**Motives**

These are the writers’ intentions in using one style and not another. He may aim at satirizing the politics of the day, creating laughter. For example, The Government Inspector employs a comic mood to communicate.

**Genre**

This is the category of writing chosen by the writer. Each type of writing has its own specifications depending on its nature like a poem, a novel, a play are all fashioned differently.

**THE EVOLUTION OF STYLISTICS**

Stylistics is an old discipline which began in the form of Rhetoric. Stylistics started in Athens in 465 B.C. People manipulated the oratory (rhetoric) in law courts.

Rhetoric is the faculty of finding in a situation all available means of persuasion. One sways the audience by eloquent speech. In rhetoric, one effectively communicates.

Aristotle gave three types of rhetoric:

a. **Deliberative Rhetoric**

It was aimed at moving an audience. For example, a legislature to endorse policies in matters of public policies

b. **Forensic Rhetoric**

It was used mainly in law courts to achieve like in a trial, condemnation or approval of a person’s actions.
c. **Epideictic Rhetoric**

It was used in ceremonial occasions to mainly showcase one’s command of the rhetoric act.

**VIRTUES OF STYLISTICS**

a) **Ornamentation**

This is adornment and is very essential. A writer should ensure that he/she communicates so many meanings by a single symbol.

b) **Propriety**

Every writer should use a clean language and completely steer clear of obscenities and profanities. He should ensure to use a language that appeals to the general populace and a respectable language.

c) **Correctness**

The writer should ensure maintenance of basic truths in his recreation of the story.

d) **Clarity**

Every writer should enhance clarity of the text and nothing is very complex.

**IMPORTANCE OF STYLISTICS**

It provides the means for relating a piece of literary writing with one’s own experience of language and extend that experience. It is also a necessary stage to literary appreciation.
STYLISTICS AND LITERATURE

De Saussure defines language as the faculty of human speech in general. He defines langue as a particular language system.

Parole is an act of speech by an individual user of a system of language. Parole is observed so as to collect information about langue in dictionaries, grammar books, and pronunciation books.

Activity

- Define Style
- Explain Stylistics
- State any four virtues of Stylistics
- Give the rationale of studying stylistics
- Describe the evolution of Stylistics

Summary

In this lecture we have:

- Described style and stylistics
- Explained the evolution of stylistics
- Stated the virtues of stylistics
- Given the rationale of studying stylistics
LECTURE 2 - OBJECTIVES OF STYLE

Introduction

This chapter will deal with the two objectives of style: Form and Content.

Objectives

By the end of the lecture, you should be able to:

1. Describe form in stylistics and its entailments
2. Explain content in style and its entailments

Form and content are two inseparable entities. They are opposites which interpenetrate at the sphere or level of semantics.

1. FORM

It consists of:

i. Structure
ii. Plot
iii. Characterization
iv. Mode
v. Language
i. **Structure**

This is the planned physical and internal framework of a literary work. Structure can be internal or external. The external structure alludes to the actual visible shape or pattern while the internal structure looks at how the ideas at hand are developed from stanza to stanza in a poem, or from sentence to sentence, paragraph to paragraph, chapter to chapter in prose.

*In ‘Hard Times’ the book has three sections: Sowing, reaping, garnering*

*‘Native Son’ the sections start with ‘F’*

*F (fear) guiding principle of Black Americans*

*F (flight) Blacks born criminal, hence always on the move*

*F (fate) blacks’ fate is sealed. Hang (optimistic tragedy)*

The title is part of the structure. We can have grammatical title that are sufficient in content or ungrammatical titles that are puzzles to be unriddled so as to understand the content.

For example, ‘The River Between’ and ‘A Grain of Wheat’ by Ngugi WA Thion’o are ungrammatical titles.

We also have epistolary titles like ‘So Long a Letter’ by Mariama Ba. It is a letter written by Ramatoulaye to her bosom friend Aisattou, who is a divorcée. Another epistolary structure is found in ‘Colour Purple’ by Alice Walker. It is about a subhumanised woman who had no rights. She is a victim of rape, a drop-out and two pregnancies by her step father forcefully married off. Such structures are important since they allow the sharing of personal intimate secrets, helps avoid incrimination, and allows the characters to speak as honestly as possible.

In some other works, we can have an illogical structure which are at times deliberate.

In ‘Betrayal of the City’ and ‘Aminata’ we have mental disposition of ‘Jusper’ and ‘Agege’ respectively which is deliberate so as to create an absurd mood.
ii. Plot

It is a sequence of events arranged in a time chain from the beginning to the end. The events have a casual relationship with one another. For example,

The rat was trapped and then the cat ate it. (This is a story)

The rat was eaten by the cat because it was trapped. (This is a plot)

There is an evident element of causality that is what causes what. One event leads to and determines another.

The plot consists of character’s performing actions that interconnect to embrace a single whole and complete action. The interconnection involves a struggle between two opposing forces. These conflicts joins one incident to another, dictating the causal relationship which reveals the struggle. Through the chronological flow of events, plot gives a literary work unity and cohesion and rhythm.

iii. Characterization

It is the very foundation of any literary composition. This is because literature is about imagined deeds, exploits and happenings with regard to certain characters, mainly persons. These are the participants who interact with each other or with themselves in the actions of the text. The writer employs these participants as agents in her/his communicative utterance. The characters one employs in a literary text ought to appear so credible that they exist for the leader as real within the limits of the creative work. For example, Shakespearean plays uses high stationed characterized to show power, kingship.

Fundamental methods of characterization

- Direct description/ exposition by narrator
- Actions towards others and what they say about others and themselves
- What others say about them and do to them
iv. Mode

It is the format in which a writer chooses to use in writing a text. Mode is determined by the nature of the message a writer wants to communicate and subsequently, the convenience of a certain genre.

Play- it gives a sense of immediacy in enactment

Poem- captures the crucial emotion arising from an incident, a thought, an action

Novel- sees to give a clear elaboration of detail in order to convince

v. Language

It is the medium through which literary act is communicated. Language is creatively manipulated and employed in literature. It is a key aspect of form. It is in this regard that nonfictional prose form can also be studied as literature. Literary writers endeavor to produce new, exciting and stimulating ideas through imaginative use of language.

The writer makes original use of the established possibilities of the language or transcends the boundaries creating new and gratifying communicative possibilities. In the imaginative manipulation, creative writers set out to communicate effectively by employing language that elicits specific responses from the audience.

Since content is meant to be expressed by the writer through sheer linguistic and paralinguistic devices, a literary writer must choose appropriate language ensure that what he wants to put across is effectively done.

This will bring unity between content and form and hence ensure meaning is clear because it is only through establishment of meaning in a work of art that audience responds accordingly.

A Grain of Wheat – pp. 3

‘The blanket was hard and worn out, its bristles pricked his face, his neck, in fact all the unclothed parts of the body. He did not know whether to jump out or not’. This is powerful language employed in description of Mugo, to show the Poverty of Africans.
Francis Imbuga in ‘Betrayal in the City’ uses metaphorical expressions (pp 21.)

Jere says ‘Has it ever occurred to you that the inside of this cell may well be the outside of another?’

2. CONTENT

i. Thought (Subject Matter and Theme)
This is the subject matter (broader idea and the theme (specific idea). ‘A Grain of Wheat’ has its subject matter as colonialism and other themes under subject matter include: invasion of the white man, betrayal, love and violence

ii. Attitude
This is the narrator’s position regarding the on-goings in his or her fictional world
In ‘Aminata’ we see Imbuga’s stand on gender issues. He presents women charitably and as positive people who have a say in the society ‘women can do better what a man can do’

Mariama Ba – female author, Senegalese educated; member of several associations, interested in enhancing female position in a predominantly Muslim and male oriented society

iii. Feelings
These are the sentiments/emotions that a writer wishes to arouse in a reader. They are deduced from the author’s point of view and mood. The mood created through manipulation of language will tell whether the writer is being satirical or otherwise and; consequently, what the author wants us to feel about the ongoing actions.
The presentation of characters will therefore help foreground writers views and also help elicit various types of emotions from the audience.

iv. Intentions
These are the objectives of a piece of work. They could be:

a) To give a clear explanation of how to do something
b) To give a detailed expression of life in a certain way  
c) To explain a motive behind a person’s action  
d) To ridicule something unworthy or undesirable in a person or society  
e) To share with his/ her readers certain very precious feelings  
f) To cause us to admire or emulate something good  
g) To evoke pity in unfortunate circumstances  

Activity

- Explain the form and content of ‘betrayal in the city’  
- Describe the form and content of ‘A grain of Wheat’
Summary

In this lecture, we have dealt with:

- Form: structure, plot, characterization, mode, language
- Content: thought, attitude, feelings, intentions
LECTURE 3 - IMAGINATIVE USE OF LANGUAGE
IN LITERATURE

Introduction

In this lecture, we are going to discuss the two main methods of imaginative use of language in literature: deviation and conformity.

Objectives

By the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

1. Discuss how deviation helps to imaginatively employ language in literature
2. Describe the deviation types found in ‘A Grain of Wheat’ and ‘Betrayal in the City’

Language is used creatively by using two stylistic choices. These are:

1. Deviation
2. Conformity

1. DEVIATION

Deviation is a component of fore grounding (perceiving an aspect or a quality not in seclusion but in terms of association with other components.)
Todorov says that deviation is infraction or transgression of a norm (usual prescribed way of doing something) emphasis of norm to be followed.

**TYPES OF DEVIATION**

i. Statistical Deviation

ii. Grammatical Deviation

iii. Contextual Deviation

**i. Contextual Deviation**

Contextual deviation occurs when language is employed in terms of grammatical patterns but inappropriately in term of the situation or the immediate context e.g. calling ones parents madam and sir. Generic deviation is part of this contextual deviation.

**ii. Statistical Deviation**

Statistical deviation constitute a reality where a writer establishes a consistent pattern so that any pattern or item that is distinguishable as the infrequent item in the total will be isolated as the deviant feature. It entails Poetic license is the freedom given to a literary writer to manipulate the vast resources of language positively and negatively Statistical Deviation has its roots in the frequency of occurrence of a particular usage or pattern.

**iii. Grammatical Deviation**

The linguists concur that language consists of patterns that are rule regulated. Grammatical deviation therefore arises when the accepted norm of language structure are violated

**SIGNIFICANCE OF DEVIATION**

a) **Response**: It is the interpretation of that deviant feature linking a component to the meaning of a given text. Interpretation is not narrow, so long as you employ textual
evidence and intra – subjective validity (Measure your interpretation with other people’s interpretation to avoid going over-board)

b) Motive: this is the driving force behind the writer to employing the feature (certain deviant) at that particular place.

Deviation is seen at various levels of language starting from syntax, lexical (word level), semantic and even phonological levels:

1. SYNTACTIC DEVIATION

The word ‘syntax’ comes originally from Greek and literally means ‘a putting together’ or ‘arrangement’ (Yule 86). Syntax is the study of how words combine to form sentences. Syntax can also be defined as the way in which words are combined to form sentences (Quirk et al 43). It consists of a set of rules and a vocabulary list. For example, ‘The child cried.’ is a sentence guided by the following re-write rules:

\[
S \rightarrow NP + VP  \\
VP \rightarrow V
\]

Syntax is therefore a branch of a grammar that deals with word order and signaling of relationship between constructions. Of all element imperative to making a linguistic comparison sensible, the most compelling is syntax; controlling the order in which impression are appropriated and conveying the intellectual (mental) relationship “behind” sequences of words.

(S V O) He came home

(S O V) He home come (deviation in word order)
TYPES OF SYNTACTIC DEVIATION

i. Ellipsis

Ellipsis is derived from a Greek word meaning “leaving out”. It involves omission of a word or groups of words which are grammatically and structurally necessary but not semantically necessary (you can do without them) e.g.

Swift swallows sailing from Spanish Main

Oh! Rain-bird racing merrily away from rooftops

The functional words like conjunctions, auxiliary verb, preposition and determiners are omitted.

ii. Transposition (Inversion)

S-O-V to O-V-S

In transposition, the canonical word order is modified. The grammatical element is shifted from their normal position for a reason. Syntactically, subject – verb – object occurred in the English language in that order and any alternation of this element transforms the sentence into a malformed one.

In literature, this is considered a style. There are two types:-

Fronting inversion

Aesthetic inversion

➢ Front inversion

Front inversion occurs when a writer shift grammatical component from their normal post verbal position to the beginning of phrase, clauses or sentence. For example,

Ten thousand saw I at a glance

Strange fits of passion have I known
Aesthetic Inversion

Aesthetic inversion does not add value but just decorates and also maintains a rhythmical pattern or creates a metric order.

*Stand stable here*

*And silent be*

*That through the channel of the ear*

*May wonder like a river?*

*The swaying sound of the sea*

---

iii. Cataphora

In Grammar, we normally name the noun then subsequently name the noun using pronoun. This grammatical structure of referring back to the noun is called anaphora (backward reference). On the other hand, a literary writer may decide to begin with a pronoun before naming the noun later on. The technical term for this forward referencing in literature is cataphora. For example, in ‘A Grain of Wheat’

*They came for him at night* (prejudice – confides in you to win you)

*The writer and reader already know the subject and are merely sharing the knowledge*

Cataphora is grammatically deviant and may be used by literary writers to create suspense and befriend the reader.

2. LEXICAL DEVIATION

The term lexis is word which is the stock of a language and the available vocabulary in a language. Lexical deviation occurs when you violate principals governing the word stock by coming up with non-existent words, using obsolete word forms, borrowing from other languages or words considered inappropriate for a particular context.
Types of Lexical Deviation

i. Neologism

This is coining or creation of previously non-exciting word(s) there are two ways of coming up with new words

a. Affixation

A writer uses prefixes, infixes, suffixes that don’t go with a particular word.

For example

✓ puppies – dog-lets
✓ negritude = Negro + tude (quality of being a black person)
✓ Whitetude = white + Tude (attitude of being white)
✓ Wole Soyinka ‘A tiger doesn’t not shout its tigritude, it pounce an eats one up’
✓ Kingdom – helldom
✓ matricide parricide, lexico-graphicide (to murder words or use words inappropriately)
✓ Africanity - Polygamy as a function (of Africanly- act of being African)
✓ A raisin from the sun uses ‘ Ghettoitus’
✓ Washeteria, cafeteria

b. Compounding

Compounding involves blending or joining two or more independent words to form one word e.g.

✓ widow making – making a woman husbandless
✓ In ‘So Long a Letter’, Ramatoulaye call Binetou’s mother as a ‘daughter – hawking monster’
✓ Unputdownable
✓ Childishcited – excited as a child
(ii) Use of Foreign Words

Writers select media like French, English, Kiswahili or even mother tongues like Kikuyu consistently but they don’t normally write texts without using foreign words from a different media. For example, they may write a Kiswahili novel which has a lot English words. In this case, the English words are said to be foreign words.

✓ Grace Ogot uses foreign Luo words in writing English texts
✓ Okot P’ Bitek – uses Acoli words in texts like ‘song of Lawino
✓ Chinua Achebe – uses many Ibo words in texts like ‘A Man of the People’
✓ Ngugi Thiong’o – employs Gikuyu words and in texts like ‘The River Between’ like
  • Thahu – a bad omen
  • Gikuyu karing’a – a true Gikuyu
  • Proverb ‘’ Kagutui ka mucii gatihakagwo ageni’’- the oilskin of the homestead is not meant for the rubbing into the skin of strangers’

Importance of Foreign Words

i. To demonstrate alienation on some parts of characters who may be educated than others or even illiterate. In ‘Betrayal of the City’, Mulili is semi-illiterate talking improper English and is a deliberate choice of the playwright to distinguish that character.

ii. To insinuate the historical, social or cultural background of a literary text and give it a local favor

iii. When there’s no equivalent in the tradition of the owners of medium of delivery

iv. To give the audience a clue of the social or historical setting or both

iii) Archaicaism

This is the use of old form of words, obsolete and out of date words which don’t belong to modern period e.g. thy thou, thine

✓ Ngugi Thiong’o (A Grain of Wheat) – Quotes directly from the Bible so as remain authentic in quoting Bible
✓ Hard Times by Charles Dickens pp. 10- use archaism to satirize
✓ In the Shakespearean period, archaic was the language of their words like: ‘Books beget boredom’
✓ In ‘Floods’ Bwogo tells Nankya “The dumb speakeith”

iv. Taboo Words

Literature dictates that writers should observe language etiquette and steer clear of obscenities. An unwritten rule to observe obscenities of all cost

‘Cockroach dance’ pp. 364 in ‘Going Down River-Road’ by Meja Mwangi brings aspects of frustration in the slums in a euphemistic manner.

v. Big words

The grammatical rule about choice of words is that a speaker selects words that will communicate. Communication can only be achieved easily if a writer or a speaker utilizes ordinary clear cut concentrate words. However, literary writers may not always use language merely as an artistic rule of communication. At the level of words, they may select deep complicated or entangled language for purpose of ambiguity to satirize certain character e.g.

Kafira- Afrika is an anagram used as the setting of ‘The Betrayal in the City’

Wole Soyinka’s text “Kongi’s Harvest” uses pompous expressions like ‘a professional theoretician’

3. SEMANTIC DEVIATION

It entails widening, extending, and stretching possibilities of language in terms of meaning. The grammatical rule about relaying meaning is that it should be clear, rationally intelligible consistence conclusive incontrovertible, precise and non repeaters. However, literally writers may choose to be paradoxical, indefinite, vague or wordy.
Types of Semantic Deviation

i. Redundancy

Good grammar emphasizes on conciseness in communication. Brevity and precision are regarded as the hallmark of an organized mind. Wordiness or redundancy usually makes the audience impatient and reveals a mind that is not organized and neat. In literature, redundancy does not create an impression of wastage but a sense of style.

Types of redundancy

   a) Tautology
   b) Pleonasm
   c) Periphrasis

a. Tautology

It is a statement that purports to define something without actually doing so. When it’s effective, it becomes an ironic reminder of what we ought to know. For example,

✓ The feminine girl
✓ Me I said to myself (Here, you are insisting on self-independence)
✓ Sane sanity
✓ Live life

b. Pleonasm

This is the collocation of synonymous words. It is a phrase that has words of the same meaning or words the meaning of which is contained elsewhere

✓ I heard with my own two ears (emphasis)
✓ Stupid fool
✓ A male husband

Tolstoy in his text ‘Death of Evan Ilych’
'The dead man lay dead, as dead man do lie; in a peculiarly heavy dead way: his stiffened limbs sunk in the padding of the coffin with his head bent back forever on the pillow.'

c. Periphrasis (circumlocution)

This is a literary expression that refers to the use of a longer expression in a place where it is possible to use shorter and explicit forms of expression. Hence, it the roundabout way of saying something. Normally it is used in a euphemistic way (courtesy)

✓ He has being promoted to glory – dead
✓ She has being put in the family way (pregnant)
✓ Aminata – Jumba says ‘ the mosquito disease’ instead of Malaria

d. Semantic Absurdity

The word absurd means illogical, irrational or non-sensible. In literary works, writers may employ expression that board on the non-sensible literal level however, it a deeper level such expression are loaded with hug semantic relevance. Indeed, the core concerns of a literary text may revolve around the absurdity. Semantically absurd statement or expressions are usually either contradictory or ambiguous.

It has three categories:

i. Oxymoron

ii. Paradox

iii. Ambiguity

i. Oxymoron

It is also called a concise paradox. An oxymoron is an expression that contains words that belong to opposite semantic category or incompatible elements e.g.

✓ Criminally frivolous (serious joke)
✓ Cruel kindness
✓ sweet pain
Laborious idleness
friendly enemy
Democratic tyrant
bitter honey
A Clever fool
eminently educated

ii. Paradox

This is a statement that contains semantically incompatible element. A statement is said to be a paradox if it is seemingly self contradictory and opposed to common sense and yet perhaps true in fact. It is not until the reader or listeners thinks deeply about the utterance that he or she is able to perceive the propound meaning inherent in the contradiction e.g.

Religion tries to satisfy man while essential purpose is to his dissatisfied
In Act 4, scene 4 ‘Hamlet’ – I must be cruel to be kind
(In a Poem) ‘the fool doth think he is wise both the wise man knows himself to be a fool’

iii. Ambiguity

Ambiguity refers to words whose meaning is indeterminant or ambiguous. A writer might use a word with two or more meanings. What is more, the experience he describes might make a multiple interpretation equally tenable. This kind of situation goes against the grammatical rule of occurrence or expertness or unmistakable straight forwardness in communication.

Flying plane is dangerous
Leave the meat in the kitchen (it is already there take it)
When my love swears that she is made of truth I do believe her though I know she is lying

4. PHONOLOGICAL DEVIATION

Phonet is the study of speech sound. Phonology is the sub-category of applied phonetics, also called linguistic phonetics. Phonology requires or recognizes that a language has a particular
(standard) number of phonemes. Phonological analysis also recognizes phonemes can occur only in certain places in certain languages. Hence, phonology appreciates that speech sounds occur only within the limit of language system so that certain sounds may or may not combine with others. In particular languages. The rule that determines sounds that may combine with others in a language are called phonotactic rules.

A literary writer is expected to abide to the phonotactic rule of language that he or she has chosen; to use the convey his/her ritually ideas. However, literary writers don’t always follow the laws.

a) Elision

A term derived from Latin that means the omission of syllables or letters from a word thus affecting the phonological presentation of words e.g.

\[
\begin{align*}
  & e\text{-}en (even) \\
  & ne\text{-}er (never) \\
  & e\text{-}er (ever)
\end{align*}
\]

It is used to establish and maintain a metric pattern in poetry and establishing and maintaining a rhyme scheme. There are three types of elision:

i. Aphesis

This is where the first syllable is omitted of the initial letter or syllable of a word e.g. scope

\[
\begin{align*}
  & -scape (escape) \\
  & - ganist (against) \\
  & - + was (it was)
\end{align*}
\]

ii. Syncope

This is omission of medial letter or syllable in a word e.g.

Ever – e\text{-}ver; ma\text{-}am (madam); o\text{-}er (over)
iii. **Apocope**

This is omission that entails of the last or conclusive syllable e.g.

\[ O' - of \]

\[ ol' – old \]

\[ an' – and \]

b. **Word Combination**

When one makes a phonological analysis of any language it will be observe that word naturally combine in a manner that makes speaking comfortable this is only natural since speech was design so that human may communicate with each other. It will be fully hardly if such a process was torturous and painful owing to distress occasioned by a difficult syntactic structure. However, use may deliberately choose to engage in such sound manipulation while syntactically may be considered deviant in the sense that the natural speech pattern behave differently:

i. **Alliteration:** The repetition of initial sounds in successive words e.g. often an occasional ornament

ii. **Consonance:** The repetition of a medial (final ending) consonants in successive word e.g. jackpot jumbled, murmuring

iii. **Assonance:** The repetition of identical vowels in medial or final ending in successive words

5. **TITLE DEVIATION**

The grammatical rule about title is that they must be sufficient descriptive of the contact; but literary writers ignoring this rule like:

*Cockroach Dance* (Meja Mwangi)

*Petals of Blood* (Ngugi wa Thiong’o)

*A Grain of Wheat* (Ngugi wa Thiong’o)
**I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings** (Meja Mwangi)

**Crick Crack Monkey** (Marie Hodges)

Literary titles are an aesthetic choice. A literary writer creates titles that not only encapsulate the primary concerns of a text but also a title that is powerful enough to enroll and subdue the reader, creating suspense to an extent that the reader feels obliged to read the text in order to liberate his or her mind. Indeed the literary writer selects an enigmatic title that necessitates the unriddled if he/she has to understand the context of the text.

Reading a literary text therefore becomes an endeavor to unravel the mysterious title. Literary titles are therefore a psychological choice. Hence title and meaning unburden his/her confined mind he/she has to read the whole text smoothly, pleasantly and effortlessly. Literary titles are therefore a good strategy for ensuring that a text is read fully. It should perplex and give a reading appetite.

6. STRUCTURAL (GENERIC) DEVIATION

Various genres of literature have their own rules of operation. A novel subsists on continuous prose made up of sentences, paragraphs and chapters.

A play ought to subsist on action and dialogue.

A poem ought to be written in stanzas. However, literary writers may deviate from the principles governing a particular genre. They may even borrow precepts of one genre and fragrantly use them on another. This is done in several ways:

a. Graphological - how something appears in print externally

b. Amalgamation (incorporation) – writer may choose to borrow aspects of one genre and incorporate in a genre that originally lacks such features;

Dead souls (Nicol Golgol) – not really a novel, metaphoric language

pp. 63. (Hard Times) alliteration to show monotony of urban life centre (mechanical)
c. **Partitioning** - the rule about play is that they ought to be divided into scene and act. Novels have chapters; literary writers don’t always obey these rules.

Floods – Ruganda (Waves to suit the island setting)

- first wave – introduction
- second wave - exposition conflict in its entirety
- third wave - “tsunami kind” washes the evil in the society

In ‘Jail Bugs’ – Wahome - his own experience of three years presented in diary form of the week.

d. **Plot Arrangement** – This is a grammatical plot begins at the very start, moves onto the middle and the ends. It doesn’t stop. A literary plot doesn’t always move systematically a writer manipulate in various ways for a specific reasons:

The writer may begin with the end or middle. A literary end may even end in the beginning. This is done to heighten suspense. For example,

In the fog of the seasons end – Alex la Guma and Petals of Blood

**Activity**

- Define deviation
- Explain three types of deviation
- Explain syntactic and semantic deviation using ‘A Grain of Wheat’ by Ngugi wa Thion’o
Summary

In this lecture we have discussed

- Deviation types: statistical, grammatical, contextual
- Deviation and language levels: syntactic, semantic, lexical, and phonological levels
LECTURE 4 - IMAGINATIVE USE OF LANGUAGE IN LITERATURE

Introduction
This lecture will continue with part two of imaginative use of language; specifically language conformity.

Objectives

By the end of this lecture you should be able to:

1. Discuss how conformity helps to imaginatively employ language in literature
2. Explain aspects of conformity used in 'Betrayal in the City'

CONFORMITY

This is a stylistic choice that adheres to the rules laid down. It is the opposite of deviation.

1. Syntactic Parallelism

a. Loose Paratactic Sentences

Here, we have the main clause followed by trailing constituents. It is a cumulative kind of a sentence. The structures are loosely attached to each other.

Death of Evan Illich

✓ *He wept at his own helplessness, at his terrible loneliness, at the cruelty of man, the cruelty of God, at the absence of God*
He looked about - at the benches, at the table supported by crystals, at his basket of tools, at the stove where the firmity had boiled – at the empty basin, at smashed grains of wheat, at the coaks which dotted the grassless floor

b. Periodic Sentence

In periodic sentences we begin with anticipatory clauses then main clause. This heightens our expectation. The main clause is also called the punch line. Such a punch line must justify the waiting because the sentence taxes the readers.

In the hardest working part of cork town: in the innermost fortification of that ugly citadel, where nature was as strongly bricked out as killing air and gasses where bricked in; at the heart of labyrinth of the narrow courts upon courts, and closed street upon street which had come into existence piecemeal. Every piece in a violent hurry for someone man’s purpose and the whole in unnatural family; soldering and trampling and pressing one together to death; in the last nook of the great exhausted receiver where the for want of air to make a draught, where built in an immense variety of situated and crooked shapes as though every house put out a sign of an kind people who might be expected to be born with it; among the multitude of coke town, generically called “the hands” a race would have found more flavor with some people if providence had seen them fit to make only hands or like the lower creatures of the shore only hands and stomachs -lived a certain Stephen Blackpool forty year of age.

2. Antithesis

This is a form of parallelism that entails juxtaposition of contrasting ideas, to produce a kind of balanced of opposition e.g. (structural equivalent)

Chinua Achebe “Girls at War” –short story

The Mad Man

He was drawn to markets and straight road. Not any tiny neighbor market where a handful of the garrulous women might gather at sunset gossip and by ugil (ogili) for the evening soup, but a
huge engulfing bizarre beckoning people familiar and strange from near and far. And not any
dust, old footpath beginning in this village and ending in that stream but broad, black mysterious
highways without beginning or end

Rhythm is created by: Not this- but that…

Alex la Guma “Time of Butcher Bird ‘ this was no land for ploughing and sowing; it was not
even good enough to be buried in (pp 1)

Ploughing and sowing (creation of means to life) ‘buried’ signifies death.

Underscore why blacks had to push for their lands as they had being pushed to dry, infertile land

**General Significance of Parallel Feature in Literature**

i. These syntactic forms do not appear accidentally. They are found usually in important
part of the story or exposition. They signal a crises or turning point in the narrative or
argument.

ii. They represent certain peaks or high point in the inspiration of the writer. This is why
critics would normally refer them as inspired lines

iii. In their different (distinction) often individual ways, these forms enhance the meaning of
the text

iv. Parallel structures can also be used to express matching ideas

v. They also reinforce grammatically equal elements

vi. They contribute to ease in reading while at the same time enhancing interestingness in a
text

vii. In addition to creating pleasurable aesthetic effect is this valuation in sentence structure
reinforces the memorability of the text. Indeed, we often see them as the most memorable
lines in literary texts.

viii. Parallel structures provide clarity and rhythm
In this lecture, we have looked at:

- Defined conformity
- Types of conformity: loose paratactic sentences, antithesis and periodic sentences
- Showed the significance of employing parallelism in literary texts

Activity

- Define conformity
- Distinguish between loose paratactic sentence and a periodic sentence
- Give the importance of employing parallelism in literary texts

Summary

In this lecture, we have looked at:

- Defined conformity
- Types of conformity: loose paratactic sentences, antithesis and periodic sentences
- Showed the significance of parallelism in literary works
LECTURE 5 - EVALUATION OF CURRENT THEORIES IN STYLISTICS

Introduction

There are many problems that have fascinated scholars working at the interface between language and literature: What is literature? How does literary discourse differ from other discourse types? What is style? What is the relationship between language, literature and society? Within the last 40 years scholars have introduced various approaches.

Objectives

By the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

1. explain the central idea in at least three current theories in stylistics
2. give the differences between traditional approaches and modern approaches in stylistics

COGNITIVE STYLISTICS

Cognitive poetics has evolved as part of the late twentieth century ‘cognitive turn’. Research within the fields of cognitive linguistics, artificial intelligence, and psycholinguistics has, since the 1970s, been providing empirically-based models of the perceptual categories and mental structures employed by the embodied human mind in the act of processing language.
These models have been appropriated within cognitive poetics to explore the mental processes behind interpretation of stylistic features.

Cognitive poetics goes beyond stylistic accounting for literary interpretation via linguistic models to investigate the commonalities and idiosyncrasies in reading experiences based on cognitive scientific insights into the relationships between the mind, language and the world.

**How to Practise Stylistics and Cognitive Poetics**

Most stylistic analyses will either focus on one specific linguistic feature or model, or be of the ‘eclectic’ kind, probing a range of features, according to what the reader feels is most interpretatively significant within a particular text. Begin by reading through the text, and note down your initial interpretative impressions. Then, try to account for your interpretation through analysis of the linguistic features of the text, by considering the following questions:

- What deviation occurs in the text? Is it internal or external? At what linguistic level does it occur? Are there any parallelisms, and at what level do they occur? How do these fore-grounded features work individually and together to influence your interpretation?

- How do deixis, modality and transitivity contribute to your conceptual construction and interpretative impressions of the fictional world of the story, its characters and their interrelations?

- What aspects of literary pragmatics are at play, and how do they affect your interpretation of characters and their relationships?

- What other linguistic features of the text do you notice, and how do they shape your reading of the text?
Use the insights gained to augment and systematically account for your interpretation. Then, consider, which of the four linguistic foci was most useful in this account?

To move into cognitive poetic analysis, you could consider

- What figure and ground relations underlie any foregrounding effects in the text?

- What schema are evoked by the text, and in what ways are they affirmed or refreshed? How is your interpretation shaped by the use of schema in the text?

- What conceptual metaphors are employed, if any, and what properties of each domain are mapped into the newly blended concept by each particular linguistic construction of a metaphor?

- What kinds of deictic shifting are required by the deictic language of the text, and what effect does this have on your interpretation of the text?

- How many and what kind of sub-worlds are involved in the text, and how does your navigation of them influence your interpretation?

**FEMINIST STYLISTICS**

Using the transitivity model, one could evaluate this claim by looking at other texts by and/or about women. It is important to analyze if there are any novels or short stories that you have read which portray women through ‘disenabling’ patterns of language, whether metaphorical, lexical or grammatical in design. Where the topic of ‘women and literature’ is concerned, there are three immediate areas of thought and study that are being researched:

1. Images of women in literature written by males – particularly in relation to details of social history. This is, of course, work that draws upon, and contributes to,
a ‘new’ feminist version of that history

2. Images of women in literature written by feminist women. This may well involve finding them in the first place.

3. Images of women in literature by women who were not/are not feminists – either by ‘free’ choice, or because they were unaware that that choice was available to them.

PEDAGOGICAL STYLISTICS

This approach deals with the relationship between stylistics and teaching of literature in schools and colleges. Generally speaking, teachers tend to see the learning of literature as a natural phenomenon which does not need any theoretical concern or empirical testing. There is the argument that, like teaching language, it should be systematized and tested. In fact, some stylisticians have been quite aware of the need for a clear pedagogy and explain how students of English literature are not keen on studying the language of literary texts in the systematic, analytical and precise detail that stylistics requires, and so the stylisticians have been forced to think harder about how to engage their students with what they teach.

Rather than offering interpretations or dealing with facts both about and around the work of art, working with literary texts – from a critical stylistics perspective – has to do with providing tools that help students appreciate the verbal artistry at the same time that it promotes or amplifies their experience of it. The conservative position that most literature teachers take, however, is to naturalize teaching and claim that practices are so diverse, multiple and context-specific that a set of tenets widely accepted would be difficult to obtain. This viewpoint holds that conscientious professionals would know what their students need.

More often than not, teachers are not even aware of which paradigm informs their practice. They prefer to investigate texts, regardless of the contexts, the participants or the perspective which are part of their work. The argument here is that this assumption should be put to test by empirical research into what in fact results from the activities developed in the classroom. The existence of literature as a discipline does not depend on a decision about the relevance of the syllabus only. Both reading and responding to texts require an environment in
which not only individualities can thrive and students’ voices can be truly heard, but also where
learners can develop who they already are and what they bring to class. Today, besides the
contributions that linguistics has brought to the study of literary texts, some scholars have been
pointing out the need to investigate the role that feelings play in text processing.

Recent research has shown that the problem with much of pedagogical stylistics so far is
that it has concentrated for too long only on spotting and interpreting textual patterns with little
or no regard to the reader’s feelings. There is now also a need to focus on the role feelings play
in literary reading. Many reader response theories which developed after the 1970s did not
actually pertain to the role of feelings, tending rather to focus on cognitive aspects.

The challenge ahead is to see how to integrate stylistic analysis and readers’ emotional
responses, a perspective which has to take into account who they are and what really matters to
them. Based on the assumption that reading is a private activity which involves feelings and that
any literature course must deal at some point with the solitary experiencing of texts. The
suggestion is that action must be taken at the level of language sensitization. In order to put this
point more clearly, the experience of reading literary texts in a stylistics class should involve
awareness of students’ initial reactions, guided by feelings, through a process of understanding,
into formalizing their interpretation and production of their own texts.

PRAGMATIC STYLISTICS

Thanks to research in the field of pragmatics, even linguists have come to realize that
meaning is not stable and absolute, but depends as much upon the processes of interpretation
undertaken by a reader or listener as upon the actual linguistic structures that are used.

Consequently, account has to be taken of contextual factors, which had been ignored in
the past, such as the cultural background of the reader, the circumstances in which the particular
text is read and so forth. Rather than concern themselves exclusively with finding out what a text
means, stylisticians have become more interested in the systematic ways language is used to
create texts which are similar or different from one another and to link choices in texts to social
and cultural context. This is not to say that stylisticians are no longer concerned with discovering
meanings in a text, but that they have begun to take greater account of the relationship between
the text and the context in which it is both produced and received, and to consider the text as a
part of discourse, rather than apart from it.

The study of pragmatics demands that the act of interpretation takes into account the
structures of language actually in use. These issues are particularly important for an analysis of
the language of drama, and also when considering interactional and contextual aspects of
linguistic behaviour, including speech act theory and conversational analysis. Pragmatic-oriented
stylisticians look at everyday conversation as a means to understand literary discourse. This is
the tendency to consider the text from an interactive point of view.

At a more superficial end of linguistics, illocutionary or pragmatic theory leads us to
study explicitly manipulative constructions such as imperatives, interogatives, responses and so
forth. At a more abstract level, implicature, presupposition, and other assumptions are highly
promising for literary theory and analysis.

FORMALIST STYLISTICS

Formalism is a school of literary criticism and literary theory having mainly to do with
structural purposes of a particular text.

In literary theory, formalism refers to critical approaches that analyze, interpret, or
evaluate the inherent features of a text. These features include not only grammar and syntax but
also literary devices such as meter and tropes. The formalist approach reduces the importance of
a text’s historical, biographical, and cultural context.

Formalism rose to prominence in the early twentieth century as a reaction against
Romanticist theories of literature, which centered on the artist and individual creative genius, and
instead placed the text itself back into the spotlight, to show how the text was indebted to forms
and other works that had preceded it. Two schools of formalist literary criticism developed,
Russian formalism, and soon after Anglo-American New Criticism. Formalism was the dominant
mode of academic literary study in the US at least from the end of the Second World War
through the 1970s, especially as embodied in René Wellek and Austin Warren's Theory of
Literature.
Beginning in the late 1970s, formalism was substantially displaced by various approaches (often with political aims or assumptions) that were suspicious of the idea that a literary work could be separated from its origins or uses. The term has often had a pejorative cast and has been used by opponents to indicate either aridity or ideological deviance. Some recent trends in academic literary criticism suggest that formalism may be making a comeback.

**Russian Formalism**

Russian Formalism refers to the work of the Society for the Study of Poetic Language (OPOYAZ) founded in 1916 in St. Petersburg (then Petrograd) by Boris Eichenbaum, Viktor Shklovsky and Yury Tynyanov, and secondarily to the Moscow Linguistic Circle founded in 1914 by Roman Jakobson. (The folklorist Vladimir Propp is also often associated with the movement.) Eichenbaum's 1926 essay "The Theory of the 'Formal Method'" (translated in Lemon and Reis) provides an economical overview of the approach the Formalists advocated, which included the following basic ideas:

- The aim is to produce "a science of literature that would be both independent and factual," which is sometimes designated by the term poetics.
- Since literature is made of language, linguistics will be a foundational element of the science of literature.
- Literature is autonomous from external conditions in the sense that literary language is distinct from ordinary uses of language, not least because it is not (entirely) communicative.
- Literature has its own history, a history of innovation in formal structures, and is not determined (as some crude versions of Marxism have it) by external, material history.
- What a work of literature says cannot be separated from how the literary work says it, and therefore the form and structure of a work, far from being merely the decorative wrapping of an isolable content, is in fact part of the content of the work.

According to Eichenbaum, Shklovsky was the lead critic of the group, and Shklovsky contributed two of their most well-known concepts: defamiliarization, more literally, 'estrangement' and the plot/story distinction. "Defamiliarization" is one of the crucial ways in which literary language distinguishes itself from ordinary, communicative language, and is a
feature of how art in general works, namely by presenting the world in a strange and new way that allows us to see things differently. Innovation in literary history is, according to Shklovsky, partly a matter of finding new techniques of defamiliarization. The plot/story distinction separates out the sequence of events the work relates (the story) from the sequence in which those events are presented in the work (the plot). Both of these concepts are attempts to describe the significance of the form of a literary work in order to define its "literariness." For the Russian Formalists as a whole, form is what makes something art to begin with, so in order to understand a work of art as a work of art (rather than as an ornamented communicative act) one must focus on its form.

This emphasis on form, seemingly at the expense of thematic content, was not well-received after the Russian Revolution of 1917. One of the most sophisticated critiques of the Formalist project was Leon Trotsky's Literature and Revolution (1924). Trotsky does not wholly dismiss the Formalist approach, but insists that "the methods of formal analysis are necessary, but insufficient" because they neglect the social world with which the human beings who write and read literature are bound up: "The form of art is, to a certain and very large degree, independent, but the artist who creates this form, and the spectator who is enjoying it, are not empty machines, one for creating form and the other for appreciating it. They are living people, with a crystallized psychology representing a certain unity, even if not entirely harmonious. This psychology is the result of social conditions".

The Formalists were thus accused of being politically reactionary because of such unpatriotic remarks as Shklovsky's that "Art was always free of life, and its color never reflected the color of the flag which waved over the fortress of the City". The leaders of the movement suffered political persecution beginning in the 1920s, when Joseph Stalin came to power, which largely put an end to their inquiries. But their ideas continued to influence subsequent thinkers, partly due to Tzvetan Todorov's translations of their works in the 1960s and 1970s, including Todorov himself, Barthes, Genette and Jauss.

The Prague Circle and Structuralism

The Moscow Linguistic Circle founded by Jakobson was more directly concerned with recent developments in linguistics than Eichenbaum's group. Jakobson left Moscow for Prague in
1920 and in 1926 co-founded the Prague Linguistic Circle, which embodied similar interests, especially in the work of Ferdinand de Saussure.

Activity

- explain the central idea in at least three current theories in stylistics
- give the differences between traditional approaches and modern approaches in stylistics
- Research on critical stylistics, functionalist stylistics and affective stylistics

Summary

In this lecture, we have looked at current theories and approaches in the study of stylistics.
LECTURE 6 - FIGURES OF SPEECH

Introduction

In this lectures we shall focus on the stylistic devices used in literary works.

Objectives

By the end of the lecture, you should be able to:

1. Discuss the various figures of speech and their effects
2. Pick out the figures of speech used by Francis Imbuga in ‘Betrayal in the City’

FIGURES OF SPEECH

Figures of Speech are a semantic category involving transference of meaning. They operate on the principles of comparability and enhance the character of language. By comparing phenomena in nature, it becomes easier for us to recognize reality. In general, the process takes the form of comparing abstract qualities to physical entities.

Figures of speech can be regarded as a kind of semantic deviation; since they involve a change in the semantic structure of a linguistic sign. They are however language universals since they occur in all known languages. They have their origin in the expressive capacity in the human psyche and language. This is why figures of speech are so important in literature, literature being an expressive use of language.
Figures of speech are an integral part of imagery in literature. Imagery is a broader aspect than figures of speech; figures of speech are images but images are not necessarily figures of speech.

Figures of speech are of necessity realized at the linguistic level and they exist in and derive their meaning from linguistic context. Images, however, are however realized at the extra-linguistic level:

✓ As tall as a giraffe(correct)
✓ As tall as his father (comparing the comparable) *
✓ As intelligent as a monkey(not realistic)*

1. Simile

This is a figure of speech that entails overt or direct comparison. In simile, the grounds for comparison are verbalized by using words e.g. like, as

Brave like a lion; Brave as a lion

Because of their tendency to see similarities in the dissimilar, figures of speech are semantically open-ended and indeterminate e.g. metaphor. It is this open-endedness that in part gives a literary work its timelessness and expansiveness.

2. Metaphor

It entails indirect or implicit covert comparison (Heart of literature)-not limited ground of comparison. A metaphor has two parts:-

(i) Tenor – principle idea (aging)
(ii) Vehicle – figures (image) employed

Dead metaphors –metaphors which have a figurative association, but they have become common knowledge to the extent of losing their figurative value – called clichés or hackneyed statements as everybody knows them.
Functions of Metaphors

1. They contribute to clarity
2. Brevity: metaphors contribute to conciseness in literature. Many interpretations can be derived from single word. In this sense then, metaphors make also make literary works compact and cohesive since in interpreting a metaphor, the reader must interpret it within the context in which it has been used; without overstretching it.
3. Similes and metaphors make meaning more forceful (unlike use of ordinary speech language)
4. Similes and metaphors contribute to language etiquette (appropriateness of language) – helps steer clear from obscenities.
5. For ornamentation – to embellish language

3. Synecdoche
   This is a figure of speech that involves making a part represent the whole (or the whole represent the part).
   ✓ *Kenya was beaten by Guinea at football*
   ✓ *This house was constructed by forty hands*
   ✓ *K.U. has some of the best brains in the country*

4. Metonymy
   This is a figure of speech in which one thing is seen in terms of another with which it is associated; or an attribute of something is made to represent the thing itself
   ✓ *I love Shake spear (His works)*
   ✓ *This land belongs to the crown*
   ✓ *Kamau is so fond of the bottle*
   ✓ *Otieno was ogling at a skirt.*

5. Irony
This is a broad term that entails a reality that is inconsistent with the appearance. The assumption of the user of irony is that the audience will understand and recognize the inconsistency and therefore decipher the concealed meaning.

There are three:

(a) **Verbal Irony (Rhetoric Irony)**

This is the simplest form of irony. A speaker says something to mean the very opposite of his/her words.

Song of Lawino – uses ‘The beautiful One’ without meaning it to refer to the educated woman preferred by her husband. The description given does not agree with the title given to Clementina.

(b) **Situational Irony**

Irony that occurs not at the level of grammatical utterances, rather seen when there are certain discrepancies, inconsistencies in particular situations. Acting contrary to the expectations in a given context.

- A *dirge sang in a wedding*
- *Got inspector- Judge rears poultry in court chambers*
- *History teacher –smashes a chair to demonstrate.*

(c) **Dramatic Irony**

Dramatic irony is not figurative (grammatical). Initially, only it was confined to drama; it occurred when the audience was conscious of certain truths which the characters in the play did not know.

- *You know as an audience, what characters don’t*
- *King Oedipus – the son would kill the father and marry the mother.*
- *Hlestakov not really the govt inspector but is treated as one.*
(d) Tragic Irony
It occurs where a character expects to succeed and indeed all events point towards success. But the character fails e.g.

   In Things Fall Apart Okonkwo *dies just like the father; without ceremony*. He achieves a lot but ends tragically.

(e) Comic Irony:
   A character faces a lot of difficulties to an extent that he expects nothing but total failure. However, the character eventually succeeds.

6. Satire
It is not a figure of speech. Satire is the irony that entails recognizing the laughable or ridiculous. Satire ridicules human weakness and faults through laughter. It is cruel and kind at the same time. It ridicules with the ultimate noble aim of bringing about reform or keeping other human beings from falling into similar folly or vice.

Satire encourages people to embrace positive values in an enjoyable and entertaining manner. It must be emphasized that satire only qualifies to be called so if the utterances are uttered with literariness to the extent that it does not slide into either empty rudeness or mere clowning jesting.

The satirical ridicule must entail a fusion of aesthetic and moral for it to qualify as a satire. It is only the aesthetic relaying of the criticisms in a satire that makes the ridicule not only tolerable but also convinces the consumer to notice his/her weakness, understand effects of such weaknesses and hence the vices.

Satire is achieved through various literacy techniques purposely employed:-

- Irony
- Imagery
- Sarcasm
- Sardonic questions
- Caricature
- Apostrophe – talking to something that cannot respond e.g. stone corpse
- Hyperbole
- Parody – mimic what one does to ridicule one
- Lampoon – direct attack
- Burlesque
- Litote
- Allegory

(i) **Sarcasm**: A bitter or cutting expression intended to hurt/wound the feelings. Lawino towards her co-wife “The beautiful one”

(ii) **Hyperbole**: Extravagant exaggeration. In literature, when a speaker/writer overstates a point (exaggerate) he/she do so in order to confuse hearer/reader. Rather, it is employed for the sole purpose of emphasizing.

(iii) **Litote**: A pronouncement is made by denoting the negative. (It is a figure of speech). They are ironical statements which essentially use a negative to emphasize the positive.

\[
\text{It was not easy} \\
\text{It was difficult} \\
\text{He is not a bad player.}
\]

(iv) **Burlesque**: A literary technique that either trivializes something serious or glorifies something despicable (worthless)

“Lawino trivializes Christianity” in the Song of Lawino

**THE CRITICISM OF LITERATURE**

Criticism may be broadly and provisionally defined as the intelligent appreciation of any work of art, and by consequence the just estimate of its value and rank.

The purpose of criticism in literature is to interpret and evaluate literary writings as works of art. The primary concern of the critic is to explicate the original message of the writer in terms
which make its significance clear to writers. He expresses the meaning in more familiar terms and communal terms and hence provides a message with a more public relevance. Criticism concerns itself with the underlying message which an interpretation of the signs and codes used will reveal. The critic takes interpretation as his aim. He is interested to discover the message in the work of art and the language used in only a vehicle to this objective.

A literary critic seeks to know what the value and interest of this work in itself is as a piece of literature. It is the function of literary criticism to determine the essential or intrinsic virtues of literature, and to discuss these virtues as they appear in various kinds of literature. As thus defined it includes all attempts to discover what are the qualities that constitute literature, whether qualities of matter. It covers all discussion of the relation of these qualities to each other, their relative importance, and the ways in which they combine to produce literary effect.

Criticism deals primarily with the matter, with what a man has to say, and the effect it is fitted to produce on the reader.

**Activity**

- What are figures of speech
- Explain any four figures of speech used in ‘Betrayal in the City’
- Define: synecdoche, litote, irony and imagery
Summary

In this lesson, we have learned about the following figures of speech:

- Simile
- Metonymy
- Metaphor
- Hyperbole
- Irony
- Synecdoche
LECTURE 7 - SOCIAL–DYNAMIC ASPECTS OF STYLE

Introduction

In this lecture, we will focus on aspects of language variation; and their employment.

Objectives

By the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

1. Discuss jargon, register, diction and slang as social dynamics aspects of style
2. Pick out social dynamics aspects of style in ‘Betrayal in the City’

Language varies according to:

   i. Social situations or prevailing social circumstances
   ii. Field of discourse
   iii. Code switching: moving from one register to another; unconsciously

1. REGISTER

Let us use these short dialogues as examples:

Speech One

Anne says to the first character, “Know what Josh? That fool Maina gave me the sack yesterday because I refused his advances. Just imagine! I want my job back” (close relationship)
Speech Two

To the second person; Anne says, “Do you know my boss Mr. Kenneth Maina? Yesterday, he fired me in my job in circumstances that I do not understand. Don’t you think that is unfair?” (A bit of distance)

Speech Three

To the third, Anne says, “My name is Anne Bosire sir, who used to work in the printing department until yesterday sir. Sir, I am here to appeal to you to kindly to consider giving me back my job. Sir, I don’t really understand the circumstances under which my boss relieved me off my job. I am sorry sir, if I have failed in my obligations in any way. I am ready to make amends sir. Please give me a second chance sir.” (Very distant – formal)

Determinants of Register

1. Intimacy: This is relationship between addressee and addresser.
3. Age: of participants (speaker-addresssee)
4. Education: Educational levels of participants determine register.
5. Occupation: Different occupations have their own jargons. Talking-shop – talking using a peculiar language.

Register in language

Just in normal life register is important in literature as a reflection of reality. Literature is truthful to the registers employed in life. As a reflection of such realities therefore, literature can’t avoid reflecting on the registers used in communication.

They are connotatively communicative of truths beyond the literal utterances e.g. David Mulwa does not use religious register in his play redemption merely to be appropriate to the religious context that he’s collected. The irony inherent in the religious context comes out clearly in the register.
-one purporting to be holy yet evil inside.

The political register employed by Machore a construction site worker in Meja Mwangi’s ‘Going Down River Road’ serves to distinguish him as politically enlightened; and therefore marking him off from the other workers who came out as political imbeciles and don’t even know what a trade union is.

2. DICTION

This is the choice, patterning and application of words. In literature, diction refers to the aggregate or complete impression accorded by a writer’s employment of words. The meaning of any piece of writing will spring from the interplay amongst individual words.

Since language is the medium used by literary writer’s to communicate their thoughts, ideas and even feelings, proper selection and manipulation of words is necessary. Each word must be chosen with care; so that a sentence means precisely what a writer intends.

Diction has two broad categories:

(i) Standard diction

(ii) Non-standard diction

Examples of Standard Diction

(i) Formal Diction

Employs polished vocabulary. It is language used in professional journal and public speeches.

Things Fall Apart – fellow elders’ conversation

(ii) Informal Diction

While the vocabulary of informal diction is less dignified than formal diction, it is none the less more polished and careful than language used in free conversation- found in:
- General textbooks
- Most literary texts
- Journalism

(iii) Colloquial Diction

This is the use of an informal language. It is conversational. It is purely spontaneous characterized with use of current words, and contractions e.g. can’t.

(iv) Slang

This can also be termed as ‘faddish’ language. It is used for a while by a group of people and it often disappears. Slang vocabulary means something to a limited audience. It may be adopted by the wider public for a short while but often gets out of fashion (consciously created).

Wole Soyinka – his use of pidgin is deliberate

(v) Jargon

Used and generally understood by a particular professional group e.g. doctors, lawyers, biologists, teachers, to communicate with each other.

Achebe – researched political readers’ language.

Non-standard Diction

The vocabulary of non-standard diction is characterized by poor spelling, poor pronunciation and irregular usage. Such diction is ungrammatical and is generally expected of the uneducated, illiterate downright careless.

Diction is dictated by participants.
There are two main social-dynamic aspects: Diction and register.

Diction has two broad categories: Standard diction and non-Standard diction.

- Register
- Diction
- Slang
- Jargon

- There are two main social-dynamic aspects: Diction and register
- Diction has two broad categories: Standard diction and non-Standard diction
REFERENCES


Imbuga, F. *Betrayal in the City*.


1. Based on the 'Things Falls Apart' discuss at least five stylistic devices employed by Chinua Achebe. (10 marks)

2. Define the term stylistics. (5 marks)
3. Form and content are two inseparable entities. Discuss.(5 marks)

4. Describe the following terms (10 marks)
   
   i. Register

   ii. Imagery

   iii. Simile

   iv. Metaphor

   v. Punctuation