



A Comparative Stylistic Study of W.B. Yeats' "Easter, 1916" and Subramaniya Bharathi's "Indian Republic"

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Abstract

The comparative stylistic study involves analyzing and comparing the stylistic features of different literary works within a specific period or genre. This abstract explores a comparative analysis of two poems, "Easter, 1916" by W.B. Yeats and the "Indian Republic" by Subramaniya Bharathi. The study examines their graphological, morphological, phonological, and semantic aspects to understand the unique stylistic choices employed by the poets. The analysis reveals the contrasting styles and themes of the poems, highlighting the diverse ways in which poets use stylistic techniques to convey their messages effectively. "Easter, 1916" captures the rebellious spirit and struggle for Irish independence, while "Indian Republic" celebrates unity, equality, and national pride. The study underscores the significance of form and content in poetry and emphasizes the power of poetic techniques in conveying emotions, historical moments, and social reflections.

Keywords: Comparative Stylistic Study, W.B. Yeats, "Easter, 1916", Subramaniya Bharathi, "Indian Republic"

Introduction

Stylistics, a branch of linguistics, focuses on the study of style and its impact on language use. It explores how language choices and structures contribute to the overall meaning and effect of a text. By analyzing the linguistic features of texts, stylistic analysis uncovers the underlying patterns, techniques, and strategies employed by writers to convey their intended messages. This introduction provides an overview of stylistics, highlighting its key concepts and theories, and presents a review of literature on the subject. Stylistics examines various aspects of language, including vocabulary, grammar, syntax, phonetics, and discourse, to understand how they shape the stylistic characteristics of a text. It investigates the ways in which authors make deliberate linguistic choices to create specific effects and evoke particular responses from their readers. These choices may involve the use of figures of speech, rhetorical devices, narrative techniques, or specific linguistic features such as metaphor, alliteration, rhyme, and word order. One prominent approach in stylistic analysis is the concept of foregrounding, proposed by Roman Jakobson (1960). Foregrounding refers to the manipulation of linguistic elements to deviate from ordinary or expected patterns, drawing attention to specific features of a text. It can be achieved through various means, such as phonological deviations, lexical choices, syntactic structures, or semantic shifts. Foregrounding allows authors to emphasize certain ideas or evoke particular emotions, making their texts more memorable and impactful. Stylistic analysis also encompasses the study of literary devices, which are techniques employed to enhance the aesthetic and artistic qualities of a text. Devices such as similes, metaphors, personifications, and irony add depth and complexity to the language, enabling writers to create vivid imagery and convey abstract



concepts effectively. These devices contribute to the overall style and tone of a text, shaping the reader interpretation and experience.

Literature on stylistics spans several topics, exploring both theoretical frameworks and practical applications. Some studies focus on the analysis of specific genres, such as poetry, drama, or prose fiction, examining the unique stylistic features employed within each genre. Others investigate stylistic variations across different periods, regions, or literary movements, providing insights into the historical and cultural contexts that influence language use.

Review of Literature

Stylistics: According to Leech and Short (1981), stylistics is concerned with the study of the linguistic features of literary texts. It focuses on analyzing the ways in which language is used in literature to create various effects.

Comparative stylistics: In their study on comparative stylistics, Carter and Simpson (1989) compare the linguistic features and structures of different languages and genres. They argue that this approach can provide insights into the ways in which language is used to convey meaning across different cultures.

Graphology: According to Poulson and Richardson (2011), graphology is the study of handwriting as a means of analyzing personality, emotions, and behavior. It involves analyzing the strokes and shapes of letters to make inferences about the writer.

Morphology: In their seminal work on morphology, Matthews and Yip (1994) argue that it is concerned with the study of the structure of words, including their inflexional and derivational forms. It examines the ways in which words are formed and how meanings can be altered through different morphological processes.

Phonology: According to Hayes (2011), phonology is the study of the sound patterns of language. It involves analyzing the ways in which phonemes (the smallest units of sound in language) are combined to create words and how these patterns vary across languages.

Semantics: In their study on the role of semantics in language learning, Ellis and Shintani (2014) argue that semantics is concerned with the study of meaning in language. It involves analyzing the ways in which words and phrases convey meaning and how these meanings can be interpreted in different contexts.

Researchers have also explored the relationship between stylistics and other disciplines, such as psychology, sociology, and cognitive science. These interdisciplinary approaches shed light on how stylistic choice impact readers' cognitive processes, emotional responses, and social perceptions. By combining linguistic analysis with insights from these fields, scholars have developed a more comprehensive understanding of the intricate relationship between style, language, and human communication.

What is a Comparative Stylistic Study?

The comparative stylistic study involves analyzing and comparing the stylistic features of different literary works within a specific period or genre. This helps to identify the unique features of each author writing style and to understand how they are similar or different to others in the same literary tradition. Poems can be useful for teaching as they are relatively short and can be easily analyzed in a classroom setting. They also often employ literary techniques such as metaphors, similes, and imagery, which can be used to teach English development and critical thinking skills. The comparative stylistic study can be useful in developing English skills as it requires students to:

- Analyze and compare literary works to identify patterns and differences in writing styles.



- Use literary vocabulary to discuss the effects of the various literary techniques used in each work.
- Develop critical thinking skills by making connections between different works and identifying themes common across them.

Overall, the comparative stylistic study of poems can be an effective tool in teaching and developing English skills and fostering a deeper appreciation of literature.

Introduction to the Authors

William Butler Yeats and Subramaniya Bharathi are two prominent poets who have marked their legacy in the realm of patriotic poetry. They both expressed their love and concern towards their respective countries, Ireland and India, through their poignant poems. Their works have become a cornerstone of their nation's cultural heritage, representing their struggles and achievements in the pursuit of freedom and independence.

W.B. Yeats was a leading figure of the Irish Literary Revival, a literary movement that sought to re-establish Irish identity through cultural revivalism. Yeats' patriotic poems are rooted in the rich history and myth of Ireland. His poems like "Easter, 1916" and "September 1913" reflect his love and concern for Ireland, in the wake of the country's struggles for independence. Yeats' poetry is deeply philosophical and symbolic, in which he explores the eternal themes of failure, conflict, and the passage of time. Subramaniya Bharathi was a stalwart of Indian literature and was at the forefront of India's freedom struggle. He wrote extensively on social and political issues, emphasising on the need for a free, unified India. Bharathi's poems affirmed his grit and determination and his unwavering belief in the cause of Indian nationalism. His poems like "Vandemataram" and "Nalladhori Veenai Seithe" became the anthems of the Indian independence movement, inspiring millions to join the struggle.

Indeed, W.B. Yeats and Subramaniya Bharathi are both irreplaceable in the world of literature, who carved a niche for themselves as patriotic poets. They were not only poets but also visionaries who fought for their nation rights and freedom. Their poems affirm their love for their respective countries and their commitment to the cause of nationalism. Their works continue to inspire generations of readers and will undoubtedly be remembered as literary jewels of the patriotic genre.

Introduction to the Poems

Two poems were selected for the study. One is "Easter, 1916" written by W.B. Yeats and the "Indian Republic" written by Subramanya Bharathi. "Easter, 1916" is a poem written by the prominent Irish poet and playwright W.B. Yeats in response to the Easter Rising, a rebellion against British rule in Ireland, which occurred in 1916. The poem was published in 1921, shortly after the Irish War of Independence. In it, Yeats expresses his complex feelings about the Rising, which he initially opposed but came to determine as a transformative moment in Irish history. The poem is notable for its use of powerful imagery and metaphor to explore the themes of sacrifice, heroism, and the struggle for Irish independence. The "Indian Republic" is a patriotic poem written by Subramaniya Bharathi and translated into English by S. Prema. The poem celebrates the spirit and ideals of the Republic of Bharat (India) and emphasizes the unity, equality and determination of its people. In this stylistic analysis, we examine the poem from four perspectives: Graphological, Morphological, Phonological, and Semantics. For the comparative study of the poems, graphological, morphological, phonological, and semantic analyses have been employed.

Graphological Analysis

The poem "Easter, 1916" by WB Yeats is written in free verse and consists of four



stanzas, each consisting of sixteen lines. The poem is punctuated with a dash after every third line, creating a pause and emphasizing the importance of each line. The poet also uses enjambment, which adds to the flow of the poem and creates a sense of continuity. The poem is written in lowercase with no capitalization, which reflects the poet's rejection of the conventional rules of poetry and adds to the informal tone of the poem. The poem "Indian Republic" consists of six stanzas, each containing four lines. The consistent structure of the poem creates a sense of rhythm and balance. The poem starts and ends with the refrain "Long live the Republic," emphasizing the central theme. The use of exclamation marks in the opening lines intensifies patriotic fervour and serves as a call to action.'

Morphological Analysis

The poem "Easter, 1916" consists of 64 lines, and the poet uses a range of morphological techniques to convey his message. One of the most prominent techniques employed is repetition, where the poet repeats certain words and phrases, such as "polite meaningless words" and "terrible beauty," which create a sense of emphasis and intensify the impact of the poem. The poet also uses a range of suffixes and prefixes, such as "un" in "unconquerable," "dis" in "disfigured," and "re" in "re-passionate," which adds to the depth and complexity of the language used in the poem. The poem "Indian Republic" employs a concise and direct language, using simple words and phrases to convey its message effectively. The poet's choice of words reflects patriotic sentiments such as "victory," "marvel," "spacious," and "mighty." The repetition of words and phrases, like "Republic of Bharat" and "Long live the Republic," enhances the poem's rhetorical impact and creates a sense of unity and solidarity among the people.

Phonological Analysis

The poet "Easter, 1916" uses a range of phonological techniques to create musicality and rhythm in his poem. The poem has a regular metre, with each line consist of eight or nine syllables, which contribute to its musical quality. The poet also uses alliterations such as "yellow" and "yawning" in the second stanza, which adds to the musical quality of the poem and creates a sense of harmony. The poet also employs irregular rhyme throughout the poem, even it adds music effects. The poem "Indian Republic" exhibits a rhythmic quality with its regular metre and rhyme scheme. The consistent use of an iambic tetrameter (four metrical feet per line) establishes musicality and helps to maintain the flow of the poems. The repetition of the refrain "Long live the Republic" serves as a rallying cry and creates a powerful auditory effect. Alliteration and consonance are also used in phrases such as "commonwealth of ours" and "revel in sensuality" to add emphasis and enhance the poetic quality.

Semantic Analysis

The poem "Easter, 1916" by WB Yeats deals with the Irish Easter Rising of 1916, and the poet explores the themes of sacrifice, rebellion, and the struggle for Irish independence. The poet expresses his admiration for the rebels who fought for their freedom, describing them as "terrible beauty." The poem also explores the political and social context of the time, with the poet criticizing the "polite meaningless words" of the British government and expressing his desire for a free and independent Ireland. The poem is filled with emotion, and the poet creates a sense of passion and intensity that reflects the spirit of rebellion and sacrifice that inspired the Irish during this time. The poem "Indian Republic" overarching theme is the celebration of the Indian Republic and its ideals. It highlights the unity and equality among the citizens, emphasizing the rejection of greed, selfishness, and indifference towards others' suffering. The poet evokes a sense of national pride and emphasizes the



nation's abundance and generosity. References to Lord Krishna's teachings and the concept of attaining the "Life Divine" imply the spiritual and moral aspirations of the Indians. The poem conveys a strong message of determination and sacrifice to protect and preserve the Republic at all costs.

Findings

The poems "Easter, 1916" by WB Yeats and "Indian Republic" present contrasting styles and themes, showcasing the diverse ways in which poets employ graphological, morphological, phonological, and semantic techniques to convey their messages. In terms of graphological analysis, "Easter, 1916" stands out with its unconventional structure and formatting. The use of free verse, lowercase letters, and dashes after every third line creates a distinct visual representation that rejects traditional poetic norms. On the other hand, the "Indian Republic" follows a more conventional structure with consistent stanzas and an emphatic refrain. The use of exclamation marks in the opening lines adds intensity and urgency to the patriotic theme.

Morphologically, "Easter, 1916" demonstrates a rich variety of techniques. Repetition plays a significant role in emphasizing certain words and phrases to enhance their impact. Additionally, the use of suffixes and prefixes adds depth and complexity to the language. In contrast, "Indian Republic" opts for a concise and direct language, focusing on simple words and phrases that embody patriotic sentiment. The repetition of key words and phrases reinforce the poem's rhetorical impact and fosters a sense of unity.

Phonologically, "Easter, 1916" utilizes musicality and rhythm through regular metre and rhyme. The use of alliteration and rhyme schemes contributes to the poem's harmonious quality. Conversely, "Indian Republic" also employs a regular metre and rhyme scheme, but its rhythmic quality is more driven by the repetition of the refrain and the use of alliteration and consonance for emphasis and poetic effect.

Semantically, "Easter, 1916" delves into the themes of sacrifice, rebellion, and Irish independence. The poet expresses admiration for the rebels and critiques the British government's empty rhetoric, capturing the intense emotions and fervour of the time. The "Indian Republic" celebrates the ideals of unity, equality, and national pride. It emphasizes rejecting greed and selfishness while aspiring for a spiritual and morally elevated society. The poem exudes determination and sacrifice to safeguard the Republic.

In conclusion, "Easter, 1916" and "Indian Republic" employ distinct stylistic choices and explore contrasting themes. "Easter, 1916" embraces unconventional graphological elements, morphological intricacies, and phonological musicality to capture the rebellious spirit and struggle for independence. The "Indian Republic," on the other hand, employs a more conventional structure, concise language, rhythmic qualities, and patriotic semantic elements to celebrate unity, equality, and national pride. These poems exemplify the diverse ways in which poets use stylistic techniques to convey their messages effectively.

Conclusion

"Easter, 1916" by WB Yeats is a powerful and emotive poem that explores the themes of sacrifice, rebellion, and the struggle for Irish independence. The poet uses a range of stylistic techniques to create a sense of musicality, rhythm, and passion, and the poem's structure, tone, and language all contribute to its impact and resonance with readers. The "Indian Republic" by Subramaniya Bharathi is a patriotic poem that uses various stylistic elements to evoke a sense of national unity, pride, and determination. Through its graphological, morphological, phonological, and semantic features, the poem captures the essence of the Indian Republic, celebrating its people and ideals. The repetition of the refrain,



the rhythmic structure, and the use of concise yet powerful language contribute to the poem's emotional impact and inspire a sense of devotion and commitment towards the nation. Overall, the comparative analysis of "Easter, 1916" and "Indian Republic" highlights the importance of form and content in poetry. The poets' stylistic choices reflect their respective messages and help to emphasize certain themes and emotions. The analysis also underscores the malleability of the poetic form, showing how different techniques can be used to a great effect in conveying different messages. Ultimately, both poems demonstrate the power of poetry to capture historical moments and offer critiques, celebrations, and reflections on society and human nature.

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