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STYLISTIC STUDY OF ROBERT FROST'S POEM *THE ONSET*

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Abstract:

The aim of the present study is analyse the poem The Onset on the basis of stylistic analysis. The poem has multi layered meaning which study different tools of stylistics. The poem Onset is interpreted imaginary diction and sound system to judge the theme. This present study or attempt helps to comprehend the main theme that struggle between good and bad, glumness and hopefulness, and lastly life and death.

Keywords: *Style, Stylistics, Glumness and hopefulness conflicts, Imagery, Diction, Sound System, etc.*

The word style derived from the Latin word 'stylus' it means that "anything to write with". Style is a scientific way to present the authors language, his words power, structure of sentences, use of the different devices to present the own thought to the readers. Style also focuses on the author's personality. The writing style of Robert Frost is plain and narrative but he explains the deep philosophy of life.

Style:

The word "Style" is derived from the Latin word "elocution" it means style and lexis. The term style is very broader which has a different meaning. All appearance is a style. The way of doing or living in style. The style is associated personality of a person. Style is a reflection of the thoughts of a person's mind. It portrays the way of persons speaking and writings. Style is a set of linguistics variations with social meaning. Variations can occur lexically, phonologically, graphologically.

Stylistics:

Stylistics is a branch of linguistics which related to the study of style in texts, especially literary work. It is a systematic study of the language used by the author. A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics has the following interpretation: "A branch of Linguistics which studies the features of Situationally distinctive uses (Varieties) of Language, and tries to establish principles capable of accounting for the particular choices made by individual and social groups in their use of language..... The term 'stylistics' is occasionally used in a very broad sense, to include all situationally distinctive language – that is, including the variations of regional, social and historical dialects. It is more common, however, to see style used in a highly restricted sense – though the extremely broad and ambiguous reference of the term in everyday use has not made its status as a technical linguistic term very appealing." According to Wikipedia, "Stylistics, a branch of applied linguistics, is the study and interpretation of texts of all types and/or spoken language regarding their linguistic and tonal style, where style is the particular variety of language used by different individuals and/or in different situations or settings."



According to Lesley Jeffries and Dan McIntyre, “Stylistics has been defined as a sub-discipline of linguistics that is concerned with the systematic analysis of style in language and how this can vary according to such factors....”

The poet Robert Frost was born in San Francisco, California. He is famous modern poet. He is poet, teacher and man of the wisdom. He had very deep knowledge of literature, history, and science and life philosophy. Therefore is known as high order classicist in his time. Poet had not narrated the situation of modern life, political, and economics problem of his age. Robert Frost does not indifferent himself from the contemporary society. He has speared from social actions to intellectual problems of his contemporary time. Robert Frost is philosophical poet from the beginning. The purpose of his writing is not only composing the poems but also the philosophical anxiety, stoical sadness. The philosophical poems deals with question banks about human life, death and destiny of man in the universe. Poet Robert Frost also creates such question though his answer are very vague. The poet does not display the coherent and very systematic philosophy that is reason that the philosophy is very ambiguous. It is clear that his philosophy is not able to solve the problem of universe. The poet believes that universe has three order of being first is man, second is Nature and third one is God. The man builds a wall. The nature created zones and seasons. The almighty God creates cosmos. Robert Frost does not believe on nature and it's benevolent. Nature provides which is indifferent to human being. Double features of nature are found in Robert Frost's poetry. The poet was a working farmer. He took to farming activities as a vocation. As such he had to struggle with several adversity and obstacles. Therefore, he cannot be expected to be romantic

It is taken from the “New Hampshire” volume no. fourth and published in 1923. The volume was a prize winner the poet first time got the Pulitzer Prize. This volume included famous poems like *The Road Not taken*, *The Stopping by Woods on Snowy evening*, *Ice and Fire* and *New Hampshire*. The subject matter of the poems is depth and subtleness. This work shows poets maturity. Robert Frost does not indulge owns feelings. The poem, *The Onset* is lyrical poems of Robert Frost. It is the sequel part of *The Stopping by woods on Snowy Evening*, the conflict is represented between guarantees of life and quietness of death so one cannot decide whether to go to fulfill abilities or to stop among woods and result is uncertainty and miserable, other side of the poem *The Onset* presents happiness of Robert Frost about the realities of life and death. Here the poet is positive about the life though it has depressions and difficulties. The idea is hidden through the cycle of nature. The Roberts Frost describes his feelings about winter seasons and changing feelings about spring. There mention that how winter origins of demolition and spring comes for renovation and spring. The poem *The Onset* has various themes and interpretation.

Methodology:

Stylistics study will be used to explore the theme of the poem through the several devices to understand the poem. The analysis will examined the how the poet Robert Frost has conveyed the great philosophy by using the lucid language.

Theme:

Theme of the poem *The Onset* is death and life, good and bad, and human limitation, human being can't escape from the doom therefore there is no anyway only to accept it. Man power has limitation. He cannot understand the mysterious thing of the nature. The poem *The Onset* deals with the contrast life and death. The topics of the poem is suffering and comforts beauty and horror, pessimism and optimism.

Poetic Devices:



Symbolism:

Indirectly symbolism represents ideas, but meaning is not conveyed directly.

Always the same, when on a fated night

At last the gathered snow lets down as white (1-2)

In the poem night is symbolizes unhappiness due to fated doom.

As may be in dark woods, and with a song

It shall not make again all winter long (3-4)

The dark wood is symbolizes evil and mystery life, no one comprehend mysterious things of the world.

I know that winter death has never tried

The earth but it has failed: the snow may heap (13-14)

The winter and snow are represented of destruction and death.

And there a clump of houses with a church (23)

The church stands for hope and faith which exists in this imperfect world because every age is transient whether it is good or bad. It is represented of the seasonal cycle of winter and spring.

Imagery:

The image is symbolizes of sense experience by the particular language. It is human beings sense which creates specific description. Two types imaginary are appear in the poem. First is visual imaginary denotes through following lines.

At last the gathered snow lets down as white

As may be in *dark woods*, and with a song (2-3)

The earth but it has failed: the *snow may heap*

In long storms an undrifted *four feet deep* (14-15)

And there a clump of *houses with a church* (23)

The second type of imagery is auditory which are appeared in the poem following lines prove that.

As may be in *dark woods*, and with a song (3)

Of hissing on the yet uncovered ground (5)



Simile:

Simile is the comparison between two different things but have common characteristics. Following line are present into the poem.

And dead weeds, like a disappearing snake (21)

Melting snow is compared with the snake in the poem to create figure of speech simile.

Metaphor:

Metaphor is the comparison of two different things. In the poem implemented simile without the using word such as like and as or so. Following are few instances appeared in the poem.

It shall not make again all winter long

Of hissing on the yet uncovered ground (4-5)

Hyperbole:

Hyperbola is kind of figure of speech which is used to denote exaggeration of detail to render truth. The few instances are seen in poem.

The earth but it has failed: the snow may heap

In long storms an undrifted four feet deep (14-15)

Poet Robert Frost exact focus on the measurement of falling snow.

Sound Devices:

The following are the sound devices are seen in the poem *The Onset*

Alliteration:

The repetition of consonant sounds are known as alliteration. In the poem alliteration are seen.

As may be in dark *woods*, and *with* a song (3)

More than if life had never *been begun* (11)

In long storms an undrifted *four feet* deep (15)

And I shall *see the snow* all go down hill(16)`

Consonance:

Whenever the last consonant sounds creates the similar sound which is known as consonance.

It shall not make again all winter long (4)

Of hissing on the yet uncovered ground (5)

It cannot check the peeper's silver croak (17)



In water of a slender April rill (19)

And dead weeds, like a disappearing snake (21)

These consonant sounds are used by poet into the poem

Assonance:

Assonance is most important poetic device, which is the repetition of vowel sounds. The poem *Onset* presents very striking vowels sounds these are following.

Always the same, when on a fated night (01)

At last the gathered snow lets down as white (02)

In long storms an undrifted four feet deep

As measured against maple, birch, and oak, (15-16)

And I shall see the snow all go down hill (18).

Rhyme scheme:

The rhyming scheme of the poem consists of 23 line. Poem is divided into two stanza. Both stanza have a different rhyming scheme. The rhyming scheme of first stanza is AABBCDDDEEF. The second stanza has a rhyming scheme AABBCDDDEEFF.

To conclude, the poem *Onset* focus on the seasons but it is stylistically analysed and reveals the theme death and life. The central theme of the poem is fore grounded through poetic devices. Poet Robert Frost described the seasonal cycle of the nature. In this poem destructive side of it transformed into the creative form. It means that nature is supreme

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