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Stylistic Analysis of the Poem 'The Patriot': A Semiolinguistic Approach

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Abstract

The research paper aims to analyze Nissim Ezekiel's Poem 'The Patriot' from the perspective of semiolinguistics. Semiolinguistics as the name implies, is just the result of the convergence of the two different areas called Linguistics and Semiotics. The lingua-stylistic approach attempts to study only the linguistic levels of the text and leaves out the aesthetic levels whereas the semiolinguistic approach which is a lingua-aesthetic approach tries to capture linguistics as well as aesthetic functions of a poem/text. This is done only through the semiotic linkages between linguistics and aesthetics. The poem 'The Patriot' has been taken up for analysis on two counts. First, it is a poem by major contemporary poet of India, Nissim Ezekiel and secondly for his use of 'Indianness' of English in the poem for ironic and humorous purposes. For the stylistic analysis of the poem from the perspective of Semiolinguistics, it follows Srivastava's (1980:63-64) semiolinguistic model of stylistic analysis of a poem which provides organically three integrated levels of analysis of a poem into (L1) Level of the sentence symbol, (L2) Level of the symbol in art, and (L3) Level of the art symbol. However, the stylistic analysis of the poem from semiolinguistic approach reveals not only the linguistic structure but also the aesthetic function of the poem, 'The Patriot' which somehow reflects style of Nissim Ezekiel's poetry.

Keywords: Stylistics Analysis, Semiolinguistic Approach, Nissim Ezekiel, The Patriot

1. Semiolinguistic Approach to the Study of Style

Semiolinguistics as the name implies, is just the result of the convergence of the two different areas called Linguistics and Semiotics. The linguistic approach attempts to study only the linguistic levels of the text and leaves out the aesthetic levels. On the other hand, the lingua-aesthetic approach aims at the relationship between language and literature. This approach through stylistic analysis tries to capture all the functions. This is done only through the semiotic linkages between linguistics and aesthetics.

These two perspectives come under a broad perspective called semiotic perspective, which through language deals with the matrix of sign. Three distinct approaches (generated in India) have been discussed to the study of literary texts. They are Kelkar's 'semiosis' approach, Gill's 'anthropological semiotic' approach, and Srivastava's 'semiolinguistic' approach.

Kelkar's (1987) view does not consider stylistics to be part of linguistics. He believes it to be part of literary criticism. On the other hand, Gill's (1976; 1980) approach is mainly centered upon the semantic analysis of legends, folk-tales, and literary works. This is keeping in mind that language is global in orientation and any language based approach has to be linguistic. For the analysis of a poem, we will adopt the 'Semiolinguistic' approach of Srivastava (1980). According to Srivastava (1986), the multi-leveled nature of a poem's signification is expressed through the layers of different kinds of sign systems. In fact, the poetic construction is the result of semiosis process which involves the transformation of one level into the other. Srivastava

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