

CHAPTER IV

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Though a number of stylisticians and linguists have defined stylistics there is no one adequate definition which covers the domain of stylistics. The definitions attempted so far are either partial or incomplete. The most rigorous of its definitions either shows some kind of conceptual looseness or allows some sort of flexibility in its use. However, if we put these definitions together we get a comprehensive idea of stylistics as a discipline which can be fruitfully used to interpret a literary text. Its use can be complementary to the critical approach to be adopted in the literary studies.

A number of critics and linguists have attempted stylistic analyses of literary texts to interpret them. However, such attempts are limited to single texts only where the concentration is on a variety of linguistic elements foregrounded in them. The 'models' used in such analyses again vary from analyst to analyst depending upon the school they are influenced by. Nevertheless, such attempts have proved to be very useful both for didactic and research purposes. They are also helpful for anyone who studies literature since such an approach enhances the reader's appreciation of literary works.

The stand I have taken in my dissertation is based on linguistic intuitions which I have derived from my study of Geoffrey Leech, Henry Widdowson and Michael Halliday. Of course, my reading of

other stylisticians' works have also influenced the methodology and terminology used in this dissertation. The approach I have taken is certainly eclectic in the sense it is based on the works of several linguists and its use varies from poem to poem depending upon the formal and linguistic structures of the text. The approach is open-ended and in a sense it is modifiable. The emphasis is more on objectivity of the analysis.

Nissim Ezekiel is a very significant Indian poet writing in English who has influenced many writers. He is unique both in the handling of the theme and in the use of language. The major themes of his poems are love, personal integration, the Indian contemporary scene, modern urban life, politics and spiritual values. For him, poetry is essentially universal in its appeal; therefore, he expresses the need for a literature of cultural contact on a global scale. He asserts that the greatness of poetry lies in its humanizing power.

Ezekiel has a specific passion for form and precision which is a very rare quality among the contemporary Indian poets. So, he experiments endlessly with form and craft. He has written poems in the traditional verse forms as well as in free verse. Some of his poems are in Indian English. He has proved his ability as an authentic poet where he has followed all the rules of prosody and written poems in traditional metre and form.

The effective use of the following stylistic features has

been noticed in Ezekiel's poems, where he follows conventional metrical form, in 'Morning Prayer', 'Marriage', and 'Poet, Lover, Birdwatcher':

- a) the connotative use of words through associations to create the desired structures of meaning,
- b) the use of rhyme and rhythm which create simple themes in a simple, natural and flowing manner,
- c) the use of the form and structure which are organic and which together convey the meaning,
- d) the effective use of syntactic parallelism to highlight the similarity or differences in the context of the poem.
- e) the use of nasals in 'Night of the Scorpion' to create the serious tone and incantatory rhythm,
- f) the use of a mode of human speech to create poetry devoid of metre, metaphor, symbol, image etc., which is seen in the two poems: 'The Railway Clerk' and 'Goodbye Party for Miss Pushpa T.S.', written in "Indian English",
- g) the use of "Indian English" to create realism which has its comic effects.

His experimentation with "Indian English" is very skillful. In this context, he highlights the peculiar syntactic structures

and diction usually noticed in the use of English language of the educated Indian speakers. In fact, the themes which are very popular are the pretext to demonstrate a comic manner of the Indian use of English language. Such poems are a critical and comic commentary on the use of the language in ESL situation in India.

I do not claim any finality about the methodology and procedure used in my analyses of the six chosen poems. However, I have made an attempt to substantiate the statements of meaning made by me by pointing out the relevance of certain structural devices to the total meaning of the poem, thus lending objectivity to the approach.