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A COGNITIVE STYLISTIC STUDY OF EPITHET SYSTEM IN COLSON WHITEHEAD'S FANTASY

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Abstract

Attempts by cognitive stylists to explain readers' comprehension of literary texts face a significant challenge in bridging the author's and reader's worlds. Attempting to clarify the conceptual space that links the different discourse realms to the author-reader levels of interpretation is something that Werth (1999) does. This method offers a fresh perspective on how we think about writing and reading. When it comes to interpreting literature using language models, cognitive stylistics goes farther than conventional stylistic accounting. It examines reading experiences, both comparable and different, by applying concepts from cognitive science regarding the mind, language, and the world. The purpose of this research is to examine Colson Whitehead's chosen novel through the lens of cognitive stylistic devices, with a focus on the impact of mental spaces on meaning interpretation. The poet's worldview can be better conceptualized through the use of these mental spaces in the construction of grammars. Not only are they utilized to model dynamic mapping in language and mind, but they also interact and aid in the integration of concepts throughout production. The study utilizes a descriptive qualitative method with the model of Text World Theory by Werth (1999). The study concludes that Text World Theory is used in a novel to describe the characters' lives in various locations, such as subways, kill fields, refuges, colleges, and streets. The protagonist's solitude, paralysis, and senseless state are depicted through the use of pronouns like 'he', 'they/routes', and 'it/gray'. The characters' world is described as tedious, paralyzed, and a gloomy environment. The epithets, which are adjectives and nouns, describe the protagonist's life in a dark, gloomy environment filled with corpses, bad smells, and crazy activities. These epithets help to convey the complexities of the characters' lives and the complexities of their world.

Keywords Cognitive stylistics, epithet, text world theory, time, location, entity, objects.

INTRODUCTION

Thinking, seeing, and reasoning are all examples of cognitive processes. Understanding, learning, and knowing are important to it. The field of research known as "cognitive psychology" focuses on the

mental operations that underlie thinking, seeing, and reasoning. Cognitive functions include paying attention, perceiving, remembering, expressing verbally, solving problems, and reasoning. Esfehani

(2012) says that, "the product of general cognitive processes that enable the human mind to conceptualize experience called embodied understanding, rather than of a separate structural system within the brain" is what the cognitive approach claims about language. Nevertheless, her research shows that interest in the human brain, mind, and body has increased, leading to a rise in cognitive science and cognitive psychology. This field of stylistics is concerned with mental processes and cognition, as the name "cognitive" implies (Callejas et al., 2021).

Stylistics examines how writers present themselves in written works. The study of the aesthetic features of written and spoken language is central to the field of stylistics. Literary works, speeches, legal documents, news articles, commercials, jokes, and countless other forms of language stretching are all studied in stylistics (Ghazala, 2018). "Stylistics is the study of the style which can be applied in both literary and non-literary texts," state Asad & Batool (2020). Historically, stylistics has solely focused on literary texts; however, beginning in the 20th century, it expanded its scope to include non-literary works as well. Law, religion, advertising, journalism, and the like are only a few examples.

By applying principles from cognitive psychology and linguistics to literary works, the emerging field of cognitive stylistics offers a fresh perspective on literature. The main goal of cognitive stylistics is to mechanically and non-evaluative describe all linguistic elements present in a text. People, according to cognitive stylistics, are cognitive beings who use their experiences and knowledge to make sense of literature. Both the text and the mind's role in reading are connected in a comparable way to cognitive style. Cognitive style, then, delves into the ways in which the reader's prior knowledge, ideas, and assumptions are crucial to making sense of certain metaphorical

pictures.

The study tries to answer the following questions:

1. What are the main cognitive tools utilized in the selected novel?
2. What is the structure and function of the epithet in the selected novel?

The study consists of an introduction of the study and two sections. Section one consists of a general overview of cognitive stylistics, the main concept of the study which is 'epithet', the two main theories within cognitive stylistics which are; schema theory and text world theory. Section two consists of the research methodology and the adopted framework of analysis, data analysis and the conclusions.

Section One

Cognitive Stylistics

Typical of the stylistic tradition, cognitive stylistics involves a thorough examination of literary works in conjunction with an examination of the theoretical underpinnings of language production and reception (Semino & Culpeper, 2003, p.1). Stylistic analysis, in its quest for understanding and interpretation prediction, sometimes makes use of frameworks or theories of language. Cognitive stylistics is novel in that it consistently employs ideas that connect linguistic choices to mental processes and structures. Because of this, the relationship between texts and responses/interpretation may be more clearly and methodically described (Semino & Culpeper, 2003).

Cognitive stylistics seeks to move the emphasis from text and composition models to models that make explicit the links between the human mind and the process of reading (Simpson, 2004, p.39), however it is not meant to replace existing methods of analysis but rather to augment them.

Stockwell (2015, p.233) argues that stylists define "style" by pointing to the textual pattern that results from writers' decisions. This perspective

causes stylists to see the text as the location of meanings and forms, which readers then understand as the location of psychological and emotional effects. He goes on to claim that language is not made up but rather evolved from something that is intrinsic to the human condition; in other words, it is not separate from the human experience. Because language shows that we are all human and share the same shape, condition, and experiences, it is not surprising to find metaphors and similar grammatical patterns in languages all over the world. Language encompasses all aspect of cognition, from visual perception and thinking to memory and anticipation, and even meaning and emotion. It is important to consider a language's regular patterns as well as its creative and adaptive imagination while characterizing it (2015, p.220).

The Concept of Epithet

Greek "epithetos" (meaning "added" or "credited") and Latin "epitheton" (meaning "to add to") + "tithena" (meaning "to place") are the etymological roots of the English term epithet (American Heritage Dictionary, 2003, p.7). Due to the fact that epithet is one of the more ancient terminology, various scholars have offered varying definitions of this phenomena. As an example, "the haunted house" is a grammatical epithet that describes a noun and is often used in conjunction with it (Crystal, 2003, p. 163). When it comes to style, epithet is all about the interplay between rational and emotional interpretations. Similar to the expression "heart burning smile," it expresses the speaker's or writer's subjective emotional reaction to the item described (Gill, 2011, p.15). Epithets, like titles and monikers, are created through a process of substitution. Although they are not proper names, epithets can be used interchangeably with proper names. The word "Lackland" is used instead of King John's actual name (Harper, 2010, p.4).

Sometimes epithets are used as derogatory or defamatory terms or phrases, including "Filthy Human" (Maddox, 2011, p.1). While Nordquist (2010) notes that epithets appear to be nearly exclusively synonyms for "derogation" or "smear words," Leo (2011) claims that epithets are synonyms for "delineation" or "characterization". Originally a term of insult, epithet is now used to characterize political slander.

Epithets can be categorized according to several criteria: Two categories of epithets can be distinguished semantically by Galperin (1971, p.32): those connected to the noun following and those unrelated to the word following them.

Associated epithets are those that allude to a characteristic that is necessary for the object being described. To some extent the concept of the item contains the idea conveyed in the epithet. As in "dark forest" and "fantastic terrors," the related epithet instantly transports the imagination to the idea in the thing it is tied to (Hairs, 2010, p.1). Unassociated epithets are qualities that are added to an object to characterize it; they may be so unexpected as to startle the reader with their originality, such "voiceless sands" and "bootless cries". Here the adjectives do not stand for a characteristic of the things in issue. They force onto them, in a sense, a quality appropriate solely for the specific situation. It could appear strange, odd, or maybe unintentional. Alberta, n.d., 385.

SCHEMA THEORY

Schema theory "applies both the processing of sensory data and the processing of language" (Cook, 1994, p.9). It was originally developed in the 1920s as a part of gestalt psychology. It all comes down to this: our minds store every experience we've ever had in a database called memory. Whenever we need to understand anything new, our brains pull up this database.

In order to make sense of what people say, our

brains construct many types of mental models, including codes, features, meanings, and structured sets of components. In order to gain a new perspective on reading, coherence, and cohesiveness, stylisticians and discourse analyzers turned to scheme theory.

Both pragmatics and style focus on the direct effects of reading and meaning on the reader. Text processing relies on schemas, which Cook says "can be both a possible barrier to knowledge and enable a richer understanding of a text" (1994, p.10). In relation to the reader's expectations and prior knowledge, literary language and literature inherently serve to either refresh or reinforce preexisting schemas. He argues that our vision of the universe might be influenced by certain language uses (p. 23).

One group of writers considers cohesiveness a subset of coherence (Van Dijk and Kintsch, 1983), whereas another group views the two concepts as linguistically distinct (Brown and Yule, 1983), as pointed out by Cook (1994). Coherence is created when the reader interacts with the text. The truth is that readers persevere with literature despite its incoherence, either by substituting their own schema for the missing information or by fighting the temptation to do so. In order to understand the text's effect on readers, Cook has focused on the text's cohesiveness and coherence at the discursive level. However, numerous stylists have broadened the application of cognitive stylistics within schema theory to gain new insights into the literary texts they've studied (Culpepper and Semino, 2003; Sperber and Willson, 1986). 2009, Walsh Researchers Culpepper and Semino (2003) looked at fictional mind styles to see how readers were affected and to gain new insights into character portrayal.

To illustrate how readers bring into play knowledge stores and how these information stores are changed or expanded as readers go,

consider the following example:

Could I perhaps get a pint of larger?

It is possible to decipher spoken words using either discourse structure or discourse strategy. Several comparable inferences could be formed on the pragmatic function of the sentence above. For instance, sticking to the strategic continuum and its frequently oblique form-to-function link, the statement opts for the 'I' variety. In addition, the illocutionary capacity of the particle "please" as a request is limited. All it takes is a single speaker in a bar or other public place to make this very obvious assumption, given that the utterance mentions an amount of alcohol (Simpson, 2004, p.39).

However, a discourse analysis would not clarify how one's mental image of a "pub" is stored and may be activated in order to understand this sentence in context. This mental image is created because you have been to these places before, either directly or indirectly. A mental picture can be formed that describes an object in terms of its function, look, etc., regardless of the precise nature of the initial input. A reduced representation based on several encounters into an idealized archetypal representation is called an idealized cognitive model (Simpson, 2004, p. 40).

Text World Theory

All discourses are distinguished, as Werth (1999) and Gaven (2007) put it, by the creation of a series of well-defined conceptualized locations called "worlds." As to them, there are three levels:

1. Discourse world: the spatial and temporal setting in which the discourse occurs; it consists of two discourse actors, namely the writer and reader or speaker and listener, and naturally occurring linguistic events like conversation. It is the immediate, higher level mental realm that a writer and a reader inhabit. The reader's comprehension of this environment is based on "real" outside

conditions and necessitates direct observation supported by understanding of the elements seen (Wreth, 1999, p.17).

2. The text world is described as a text-driven process wherein language signals activate relevant general or specific information, allowing for further inferences about the space's dimensions to be drawn. In contrast to function advancing proposals, which inform the reader of the text's actions, mental spaces, states, and attributes, world building proposals partially establish situational variables like time, location, entities, and interrelationships through deictic and referential information. If you want to understand a text world, you'll need to rely on your imagination and memory rather than your sense of sight. Allusions to the reality that the discourse portrays serve to anchor text world as conceptual spaces, according to deictical and referential definitions (Wreth, 1999, p.52).

3. Subworld — results from modal or deictic movements away from the matrix world from whence they originate. Propositions that are moralized in accordance with the traditional division of deontic, boulomaic, and epistemic

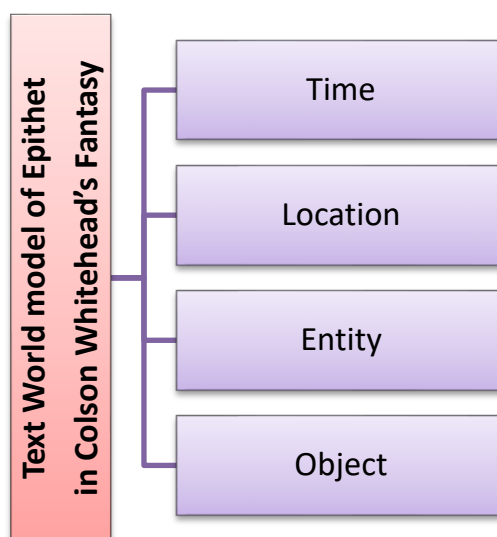
contexts cue modal world switches and explain things like beliefs, desire, and obligation.

When a character project ideas and reflections, maybe through a flashback or prolepsis, to create another conceptual space inside the text world, a sub-world is created. Since it establishes reality outside the bounds of the textual World as it is, this projection creates a unique scenario all its own (Simpson, 2004, p.91).

Section Two

Research Methodology

The research adopts a qualitative and descriptive method to analyze the collected data. This paper primarily aims to explore the practical applications of Text World theory by Paul Werth (1999) in literary analysis. With the growing fascination with interpretation and the ways in which readers' background knowledge and interpretation variability interact, applying text world theory to literature often forces readers to reevaluate their existing world. The data was collected from the novel of Colson Whitehead 'Zone One'. The adopted model of analysis is as follows:



Data Analysis

1. "The only unsettling thing about the dream was that he'd never taken a yoga class in his life" (Colson, Zone One, 2011, 94)

Time: the tense utilized in this extract is 'simple past' and 'past perfect' such as the use of the copula verb 'was' and 'had taken'. This demonstrates the temporal remoteness of the reader's discourse universe.

Location: the location of the scene is 'the subway'. The location indicates the life of the people they live in dark, gloomy, cramped and one directional.

Entity: the third person pronoun 'he' is used in this extract to indicate that the protagonist is caught in the subway alone in the dark with dead people.

Objects: the objects mentioned in this extract is 'unsettled thing' which is proceeded by the adjective 'unsettled' which in refers to the world that the protagonist lives in.

The epithet in this extract consists of an adjective + noun as in the following example 'unsettled thing'. According to the above-mentioned details the epithet depicts the world that the protagonist live in. the world is unsettled, dark, gloomy and in one direction

2. "The reports of the scattered kill fields emerged at the same time, suggesting (according to some) a time frame for the course of infection" (Colson, Zone One, 2011, 96).

Time: the tense utilized in this extract is 'simple past' such as the use of the main verb 'emerged'. This demonstrates the temporal remoteness of the reader's discourse universe.

Location: the location of the scene is 'kill fields. The location indicates the life of the people they live in full of killing and nothing else but killing.

Entity: the third person pronoun 'they/ reports' is used in this extract to indicate that nothing but reports on here-and-there killing.

Objects: the objects mentioned in this extract is 'scattered killing fields' which is proceeded by the adjective 'scattered' which refers to the way the killing is conducted in the world of protagonist. Killing is everywhere and scattered here and there.

The epithet in this extract is in the form of 'adjective + noun' as in the following example 'scattered kill fields'. The noun was described as 'scattered' to show that killing is everywhere and nothing to see but killing. This extract indicates the world which the protagonist lives in.

3. "This might be the final human being they'd see before they died. Both speaker and listener, sharer and receiver, wanted to be remembered" (Colson, Zone One, 2011, 98).

Time: the tense utilized in this extract is 'simple past' such as the use of the modal verb 'might' and 'had' and 'died'. This demonstrates the temporal remoteness of the reader's discourse universe.

Location: the location of the scene is 'refuge'. The location indicates the people live in a very miserable life. Homeless they look like. The protagonist wants to depict the world he lives in as a kind of prison which gather all scared citizens.

Entity: the third person pronoun 'they' is used in this extract to indicate that citizens see nothing but the dead people.

Objects: the objects mentioned in this extract is 'final human being' which is proceeded by the adjective 'final' which refers to the thoughts that haunt the protagonist. The word 'final' represents the final period in the life of people in this world. Accordingly, it depicts the

psychological status of the protagonist.

The epithet in this extract is in the form of 'adjective + noun' as in the following example 'final human being'. The name was described as 'final' to depict the final period of time in the life of people in this world. This extract indicates the world which the protagonist lives in.

4. "The pervasive, inexorable gray was a local atmospheric anomaly, and not what Buffalo had been thinking of when they devised their American Phoenix, but it suited. Up out of the ash, reborn" (Colson, Zone One, 2011, 98).

Time: the tense utilized in this extract is 'simple past' such as the use of the copula verb 'was' and past perfect continuous 'had been thinking'. This demonstrates the temporal remoteness of the reader's discourse universe.

Location: the location of the scene is 'the college'. The location supposes to be good for people and a place for education but the writer presents it as an irregular place which contains unusual activities.

Entity: the third person pronoun 'it/ gray' is used in this extract to indicate the pale color of people's life.

Objects: the objects mentioned in this extract is 'The pervasive, inexorable gray' which is proceeded by the adjectives 'pervasive' and 'inexorable' which refer to the common atmosphere of the place where the characters live in. the word 'inexorable' indicates the destiny of the characters and depicts the psychological status of the protagonists.

The epithet in this extract is in the form of 'adjective + noun' as in the following example 'The pervasive, inexorable gray'. The noun was described as 'pervasive' and 'inexorable' to depict the destiny of people in this world. This extract indicates the world which the protagonist lives in is inevitable and abnormal.

5. "The place never existed or was long overrun by the time of your arrival, a stink of corpses and smoldering fires. Or it was lunatics and the crazy new society they'd cooked up, with a fascist constitution" (Colson, Zone One, 2011, 108).

Time: the tense utilized in this extract is 'simple past' such as the use of the copula verb 'was' and past perfect 'had cooked'. This demonstrates the temporal remoteness of the reader's discourse universe.

Location: the location of the scene is 'military base'. The location indicates that the world people live in is a military prison. They are imprisoned in this base. This base presents the world of protagonists.

Entity: the third person pronoun 'it/ the place' is used in this extract to indicate that the place where they live is different from before. It becomes a place for the dead.

Objects: the objects mentioned in this extract are 'a stink of corpses' and 'the crazy new society' which is proceeded by the adjectives 'a stink' and 'crazy new' which refer to the common atmosphere of the place where the characters live in. the word 'stink' indicates the bad smell of the corpses all over the places which means that they live in a place like a killing field. The word crazy indicates that the new society and world they live in looks like a crazy thing which has lots of insanity.

The epithet in this extract is in the form of 'adjective + noun' as in the following example 'a stink of corpses' and 'the crazy new society'. The noun was described as 'stink' and 'crazy' to depict the image of this world. This extract indicates the world which the protagonist lives in is full of corpses bad smell and crazy activities.

6. "In the cinema of end-times, the roads

feeding the evacuated city are often clear, and the routes out of town clotted with paralyzed vehicles" (Colson, Zone One, 2011, 117).

Time: the tense utilized in this extract is 'simple present' such as the use of the copula verb 'are'. This demonstrates the factual life they live in as a regular occurrence.

Location: the location of the scene is 'downtown near the cinema'. The location indicates that the world people live in is a kind of movie theater. They are hardly to believe what they are seeing because everything is unbelievable.

Entity: the third person pronoun 'they/ the routes' is used in this extract to indicate routes exist but with paralyzed cars.

Objects: the objects mentioned in this extract are 'paralyzed vehicles' which is proceeded by the adjective 'paralyzed' which refers to the common atmosphere of the society the characters live in. the word 'paralyzed' indicates the psychological condition of people. They are paralyzed and senseless.

The epithet in this extract is in the form of 'adjective + noun' as in the following example 'a paralyzed vehicle'. The noun was described as 'paralyzed' to depict the image of this world and the psychological status of people.

7. "Frenetic honks came from the street: the driver of a jeep warning Sunday-night drunks out of the way" (Colson, Zone One, 2011, 135).

Time: the tense utilized in this extract is 'simple past' such as the use of the main verb 'came'. This demonstrates the temporal remoteness of the reader's discourse universe.

Location: the location of the scene is 'the street'. The location indicates that the world people live in is an open ended, free and looks like a wild.

Entity: the third person pronoun 'he/ the driver' is used in this extract to indicate that he warns

people while they are drunks. People are drunks as they want to forget their present life.

Objects: the objects mentioned in this extract are 'frenetic honks' which is proceeded by the adjective 'frenetic' which refers to the common atmosphere of the characters live in. the word 'frenetic' indicates the psychological condition of people. They are hydrophobic and mad.

The epithet in this extract is in the form of 'adjective + noun' as in the following example 'frenetic honks'. The noun was described as 'frenetic' to depict the image of this world and the psychological status of people.

8. "In the restaurant months later, after more contact with the creatures, grid after tedious grid, he wondered if they chose these places or if the places chose them" (Colson, Zone One, 2011, 136).

Time: the tense utilized in this extract is 'simple past' such as the use of the main verbs 'wondered' and 'chose'. This demonstrates the temporal remoteness of the reader's discourse universe.

Location: the location of the scene is 'the restaurant'. The location indicates that the world people live in is only a way to survive by eating.

Entity: the third person pronoun 'he' is used in this extract to indicate that the protagonist is standing alone in this area and wondering on the life he lives in.

Objects: the objects mentioned in this extract are 'tedious grid' which is proceeded by the adjective 'frenetic' which refers to the common atmosphere of the characters live in. the word 'tedious' indicates the psychological condition of people. They are exhausted and tired of being alive.

The epithet in this extract is in the form of

'adjective + noun' as in the following example 'tedious grid'. The noun was described as 'tedious' to depict the image of this world and the psychological status of people.

CONCLUSION

The study reaches the following conclusions:

1. Text World Theory's tools which are utilized in the selected novel are: (Time), past tense is mostly utilized to show the temporal remoteness of the reader's discourse universe. (Location), The text describes various locations, including subways, kill fields, refuges, colleges, military bases, downtown near the cinema, streets, and restaurants, that depict the lives of people in different ways. The subways are dark, cramped, and one-directional, while kill fields are filled with killing and nothing else. Refuges are miserable, homeless, and resemble a prison. Colleges are irregular and contain unusual activities, while streets are open-ended and wild. (Entity), The third person pronoun 'he' is used to describe the protagonist's solitude, warning people of their present life while they are drunk. The 'they/routes' indicate the existence of paralyzed cars, the place where they live is a place for the dead, and the 'it/gray' indicates the pale color of people's lives. The 'they/reports' indicate that citizens only see dead people, and the 'he' is caught alone in the subway with dead people. (Objects), This extract describes the common atmosphere of the characters' lives, characterized by exhaustion, madness, paralysis, and a senseless state. The characters live in a tedious grid, a frenzied honk, a paralyzed vehicle, a stink of corpses, and a crazy new society. The adjectives "pervasive" and "inexorable" describe the characters' destiny and psychological status. The final human being, "final" represents the protagonist's final period in life, while "scattered" refers to the way killing is

conducted. The unsettled thing, "unsettled thing," refers to the protagonist's world. These objects reflect the characters' psychological state, the world they live in, and the complexities of their lives.

2. The structure and function of the concept of 'epithet' are as follows: The epithet in this extract is an adjective and noun, describing the world and its psychological status. The nouns are tedious, frenetic, paralyzed, stink of corpses, crazy new society, pervasive, inexorable gray, final human being, scattered kill fields, and unsettled thing. These epithets depict the protagonist's world as tedious, paralyzed, a stink of corpses, inevitable, abnormal, final, scattered, and unsettled. The world is filled with corpses, bad smells, and crazy activities, indicating the protagonist's life in an unsettling, dark, and gloomy environment. The epithets are used to describe the protagonist's world and the psychological status of people in it.

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