A Stylistic Analysis of the poem "Pinterest" and its Relevance to Contemporary Scenario

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Abstract

The present paper renders structural and stylistic analysis to the poem "Pinterest", written by an anonymous writer. This poem was read by the author of the paper when she browsed the web and it caught her attention for its relevance of the hidden truth and unwound ideologies. Social Networks like facebook, twitter, orkut, pinterest have become part of modern life and most of the people identify themselves with one or more networks to stay connected with people whom they may or may not know. Stylistics is a way of analysing and interpreting texts with regard to their linguistic and tonal style. The stylistic analysis of this simple poem brings to light, the hidden pitfalls of social networking and alerts the readers before getting into it. The analysis warns the readers to use their social network without bringing harm on themselves and their familial ties.

Keywords: *Pinterest, Social Network, Stylistics*

I haven't seen my wife
She's been gone for many days
I've tried to send her messages
I have tried several ways
But now it seems she's lost
With her new found interest
Curse her friend,
Who invited her to Pinterest

The title of the poem suggests the readers that the poem is about a social network by name Pinterest. Pinterest - is a mobile and web application, started in 2010, which offers its users to upload, save, sort and manage images known as 'pins' and other media content like videos through collections known as 'pinboards'. Users can personalize their experience with Pinterest by pinning items, creating boards, and interacting with other members.

The first verse of the poem "I haven't seen my wife" immediately fixes the context of the poem. It is a poem of man-woman relationship that has gone awry. The sixth line "with her new found interest" explains the reason for the strained relation. It is "her new found interest". This relates the line to the title of the poem and its last line through the punning. PINTEREST - is a latest website, a discovery tool that you can use to find ideas for all your projects and interests.

Stylistic Analysis

'I' , referring to the male voice, his wife and an unknown friend are the participants in the discourse. The participants aren't given any particular name. So, the participants and the message becomes universal and the message is highly relevant in the modern world.

The words 'message', 'pinterest', 'invite' belong to the social networking jargon and they establish the setting of the poem in social media. The verb 'haven't seen', 'has been gone', 'have tried' are used by the poet in present perfect sense, indicates the relevance to the present of the experience i.e. very recent.

It is evident from the jargon used that the protagonist is a part of social networking or a regular follower of a social network online. The words 'tried', 'tried' which are used in the second and third lines of the poem shows that the protagonist has been continuously searching for his wife online but met with failure in his attempt.

The word 'lost' in the fifth line suggests more meanings:

'She lost' – This indicates that the wife is physically absent from the husband

'She has lost'- This indicates that the wife has lost herself and her attention in the social media.

'…she's lost' – This phrase indicates that the relationship between the husband and the wife is lost.

The phrase 'new found interest' implies that the woman is not familiar with 'PINTEREST' earlier; only after the invitation of a friend through online, she joined the network and lost herself, her husband and their relationship.

The friend's name is not given and is in common gender. In social networking, people can conceal their identity. So this friend may be a man or woman, who has invited the persona's wife to pinterest and grabbed her attention and trapped her mentally.

Another major reason for the failure or the husband's search for his wife is he couldn't locate his wife online. He is able to contact her only by sending messages for which

she doesn't reply. Online communication is a one way process, unlike real communication where we can understand the other person's response even by a gesture. Chatting online is an illusion. It only creates a virtual reality but it is not real. A wired communication fails to offer the true emotions and feelings of the other person.

The persona of the poem is aware of what is happening to him and to his wife. But he is helpless. He could only curse the unknown friend because he couldn't find him/her in the internet.

The poem brings to light, the pitfalls and shortcomings in social networking. The poem stands as a testimony to prove that social networking disturbs the social structure of a nation, by creating disturbance in the familial ties.

The poem exposes the truth that technology can improve man's life, but it cannot replace human beings. Virtual illusions like chatting, texting, sharing photos and videos can entertain but cannot become a reality, cannot substitute for human relationships.

The poem may be read intertextually with Yeats. W.B.Yeats gives his impression about the modern world, where only chaos and disobedience remains. The following lines from the poem, 'The Second Coming' reveals Yeats dilemma.
'Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold
Mere anarchy is loosened upon the world'

Wordsworth's poem 'THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US' can also be read intertextually. Man's material preoccupations. 'Getting and spending we lay waste our time' make him oblivious to other significant relations.

Interpellation:

Social networking sites make an impression that all people in the network are good and happy but in reality it is not so. The wife is interpellated by the social network 'PINTEREST' in which she loses herself and forgets her family life. The persona of the poem, on the other hand is interpellated to think that his wife has deserted him as she follows a friend on PINTEREST.

Cultural Hegemony:

As woman get economic independence, they are familiarized with social networking and they love the freedom it offers. The women deviate from the socially accepted roles. This cultural hegemony … the role of women. The present day women break away from all kinds of restrictions, good bad and indifferent. Interestingly, the poem is presented through the male voice, representative of the patriarchal cultural predilection.

The poem also stands for feminist ideologies. Women decide what they want, become liberals, unbound and abandon their family responsibilities.

Conclusion:

A simple narrative poem in eight lines deals with a current issue very subtly. The poem on superficial reading may seem to be an account of the personal experience by the persona. But the detailed structural analysis reveals the intensity of the problems involved in social networking. The poet may have used known words and expressions but when we place them in a new context and analyse stylistically, the readers experience a difference in content, meaning and expression. His use of the present perfect tense 'haven't seen', 'has been gone', suggests the immediacy of the experience and his confirmation of the information. 'But' fifth verse provides a check and his assurance gets reduced to 'it seems'. So, her new found interest does not sound so very apprehensive and it is more an attitude to an experience- a perspective.

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