EMPHASIS AND FOCUS IN SHAKESPEARE'S PLAY (HAMLET): A SYNTACTICO-STYLISTIC STUDY

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Abstract

Any literary text requires many techniques and/ or tools that are added to the vocabulary used on its pages to facilitate its understanding by readers, highly show the relationship among characters, and clarify the environments related to it. Some of these techniques are focus and emphasis, which are the core of the current study. It is an attempt to shed the light on those above mentioned concepts, their roles, types, and the touch they add to the play under investigation. The challenge is where many tools gather to finally shape the almost final meaning of the play through the chain of vocabs , punctuation marks, and repetition of some. The study is divided into three parts: perspectives, treatment of the concepts, and data analysis.

Keywords: Vocabs, Emphasis, Literary Text, Concepts, Characters.

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1. Perspectives

This study deals with the strategies of focus and emphasis in a famous play by Shakespeare which is known as Hamlet. In this play, there are several types of devices which can refer to the concepts of focus and emphasis like: repetition, the place of the word in the phrase, bold and italic, and colon.

This study attempts to investigate how these devices play an essential part in drawing the attention of the readers to certain sentences or paragraphs and in revealing how the writer is able to accomplish his aims by using such devices.

Section two of the current study deals with the definitions of focus and emphasis, the strategies of expressing these two concepts and the main types of emphasis while in section three; there is an analysis of selected parts of Shakespeare's play.

2. Focus and Emphasis

According to Lambrecht (1994, p.206) the term 'focus' can be defined as "the complement of topic. The complementary of the two notions is suggested e.g. by the alternative concept pair theme/rhyme, whose members are often seen as complementing each other". So, the focus of a sentence is the new information hitched to the topic post, i.e., the new information conveyed about the topic which is supplied via the context.

On the other hand, the term 'emphasis' is known as "a force of voice laid upon some word or words, to intensify their meaning" (Bancroft, 1874, p. 20).

Investigating the work by Ostman and Verschueren (2011, p.130), emphasis is "a complex phenomenon. Historically, it has its roots in ancient rhetoric, where it refers to the exceptional force, intensity or otherwise unusual form of expression on the part of speakers or writers which serves to indicate or attract attention to special meaning".

The fact that emphasis works as an interaction between the speaker's intention to communicate additional meaning and the audience's recovery of that meaning has a number of consequences:

1- Emphasis continually works by stressing something relative to a hidden set of background norms. Producers have to estimate properly their audiences' background knowledge, attitudes and value systems in order for the intended inferential process to be triggered and completed as intended.

2- Since emphasis can be done by employing features from unlike levels of linguistic and nonlinguistic association, all of these resources should absolutely be given an account of their possible combinations. This would sum to an inventory from a product perspective. But since emphasis is something that is done in interaction, the related signaling strategies and practices must also be described from a process perspective.

3- By drawing attention to and suggesting indirect meanings, thereby highlighting definite aspects and hiding others, producers differentiate a particular perspective on the state of affairs presented and invite the audience's complicity in sharing this point of view.

4- Finally, emphasis is in fact an object for interdisciplinary analysis: rhetoric and argumentation theory, linguistic anthropology, literary and linguistic

stylistics, formal, functional and cognitive linguistics, pragmatics, conversation analysis, as well as discourse analysis are all involved (Ostman and Verschueren, 2011, p.130).

2.1. Types of Emphasis

1. Absolute Emphasis: It is that "stress of voice which is placed upon some word or words, unconnected with contrast or where the contrast is not expressed or plainly implied" (Town, 1847, p.18).

This is obvious and contended, that in all cases where words are emphatic there is contrast, either spoken or understood by others and much the larger number, it is maintained that there is a number of examples in which the emphatic force laid upon is absolute, in the most literal sense of the term, because the thought expressed by it is effective in itself, without any support from comparison or contrast (Town, 1847, p.18).

Absolute or necessary emphasis is "the emphasis demanded by the force and meaning of words in relation to the context" (Vandenhoff, 1878, p.83).

This kind of emphasis is objective in its force, lying outside the motivation or emotion of the reader or speaker, and going entirely to make stronger meaning (Vandenhoff, 1878, p.83).

2. Relative Emphasis has always an exact opposite, either expressed or implied: absolute emphasis takes place, when the unusual importance of the consideration is solely- singly measured (Knowles, 1948)

The relative emphasis is given to financial growth, social justice, and environmental defense. Moreover, the questions over meaning and explanation are generally constitutive process. Thus, that sustainability is a communal constructed notion and subject to mediation through contrast and speculates, should be taken as given and not regarded with surprise (Bowler, Bryant and Cocklin, 2002).

From both academic and policy perspective, the duty then shifts from the unproductive search for widespread meaning, to one of understanding the several and often competing perspectives on sustainability and to understanding how these challenges play out in social space- the role of actors, the numerous constructions of meaning, power relationship, the authority of competing knowledge and discourses, and the implications- social, economic and environmental- of the many and varied sustainability pathways. In short, the focus moves to 'process' (Bowler, Bryant and Cocklin, 2002).

2.2. Strategies of Focus and Emphasis

2.2.1. Repetition

Repetition is "a literary device that repeats the same words or phrases a few times to make an idea clearer, focused on, and more memorable. As a rhetorical device, it could be a word, or a full sentence, or a poetical line repeated to emphasize its significance in the entire text" https://literarydevices.net .

Types of Repetition

1) Anaphora: This term is taken from the Late Greek anaphora which means the act of carrying back. Anaphora can be defined as the "repetition of a word or words at the beginning of two or more successive clauses or verses especially for rhetorical or poetic effect". Anaphora (sometimes called epanaphora) is used most

efficiently for emphasis in quarrelsome prose and sermons and in poetry, as in the following lines derived from Shakespeare's Hamlet: "to die, to sleep / to sleep-perchance to dream" (Kuiper, 1995, p. 47).

2) Anadiplosis: It is the technique by which "starting a sentence or clause with the same word or phrase that ends the previous one" as in the following example:

O happy man that finde no lacke in Loue;

I Loue, and lacke what most I do desire.

But the word, when repeated, may have changed its meaning: "the battle was won not by engines but men, men who had vowed to die rather than yield." The first men is 'men as against machines' while the second is 'men of courage and resolution as compared with others' (Clifton, 1983, p. 102).

3) Diacope: It is the "repetition of a word with one or few words in between" as in: my heart is fixed, o God, my heart is fixed. This term is clearly not the relevant rhetorical figure, it is applies to forms like those described here, where interruptions follow the stress/syllabic rules that apply to infixing (Adams, 2009).

2.2.2. The Position of the Word or Phrase

Combining the end position with other strategies for emphasis:

By using the emphatic end position in combination with another strategy for emphasis, legal writers can accomplish even more emphasis (Oates and Enquist, 2014).

Here the end position, shared with punctuation, is used for dramatic effect: End position+ Colon for emphasis.

For example: The courtroom fell silent in anticipation of the jury's verdict: guilty.

In the following example, the end position, combined with the use of a phrase telling the reader what is essential, is used to suggest a climax: End position+ emphasizing phrase (Oates and Enquist, 2014).

Before awarding custody, the court must consider the mental and physical health of all individuals involved, the child's adjustment to home and school, the relationship of the child with his parents and siblings, the wishes of the parents, and, most important, the wishes of the child.

The end position can be combined with the technique of setting up a pattern and breaking it, is used to surprise the reader: Creating emphasis by breaking a pattern.

For example, Daneil Klein was loyal to his parents, loyal to his wife, loyal to his friends, and disloyal to the company that had employed him for thirty years (Oates and Enquist, 2014).

2.2.3. Bold and Italic

A bold font weight makes letters of a text thicker than the surrounding text. Bold strategy stands out from regular text, and is often used to draw attention to keyword important to the text's content and allowing such words to be visually scanned with no difficulty https://en.m.wikipedia.org>wiki.

To define ' italic' , it simply means a type style where the letters are slanted upward to the right, or something that relates to ancient Italy. An example of an

italic font is the font used to emphasize the name of a book. An example of italic is the ancient history of Italy. https://www.yourdictionary.com.

2.2.4. Using Colon for Emphasis

Colons link connected ideas or terms with emphasis on the last idea. As in:

The importance of service cannot be stressed too greatly: the customer has to come first.

In this example, the colon successfully draws attention to the stuff, following an affirming statement that follows the first part of the sentence.

The previous example, involving a colon to highlight the second part of the sentence, is typical. Emphasis is even stronger when the same idea is isolated to one word at the end of the sentence.

The need is emphasized to provide for the single most important part of the marketing equation: the customer (Thomsett, 2018).

3. Data Analysis

This study focuses on some techniques of focus and emphasis, and this section is devoted for the data analysis in order to investigate, and tackle to environments in which those two devices have been used and linked to apply the previous information. It has been found that Shakespeare's play 'Hamlet' is full of strategies of focus and emphasis already mentioned.

3.1. Repetition

3.1.1. Anaphora

The use of anaphora is very common in Shakespeare's works and 'Hamlet' is no exception. An example of its use can be found in the fifth scene of the first act, the lines 100 and 101:

And shall I couple hell? O fie! Hold, hold, my heart,

And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,

As well it can be found in the lines 112 and 113 within the same scene:

O most pernicious woman!

O villain, villain, smiling, damnèd villain!

In both examples, it seems like the speaker is trying to dramatize his speech, it is not a normal case for people to repeat words intentionally at the beginning of their sentences, by doing so, the speaker on the stage is causing the audience a kind of alienation, he is inviting them to leave reality for a period of time and be immersed into a more dramatic, heroic, and exciting world. It is the contrary of the modern epic theatre (Pavis, 1998) of Brecht who aims to break the wall between drama and reality and uses the theatre as a means to raise conciseness following a Marxist philosophical tradition.

3.1.2. Anadiplosis

An example of anadiplosis in 'Hamlet' is to be noticed in the first scene of the third act, more specifically in the lines 72 and 73:

Devoutly to be wished. To die, to sleep—

To sleep, perchance to dream. Ay, there's the rub,

The last phrase of the 72nd line is repeated at the beginning of the 73rd line, through which a clear emphasis is given to it.

3.1.3. Diacope

There are many examples of Diacope in 'Hamlet', they can be found in the lines 393, 394, 395, and 396 in the second scene of the third act, in which the word 'you' is repeated many times:

Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing

you make of me! You would play upon me, you

would seem to know my stops, you would pluck

out the heart of my mystery, you would sound me

from my lowest note to the top of my compass;

Another prominent line which the whole play is most famous of is:

To be or not to be—that is the question.

In which the word 'be' is emphasized. This emphasis has a great value since it brings focus to the existential aspect of Hamlet's condition, in which he has to prove his being and existence by playing the active role of the revenger.

3.2. The End Position and the Colon

The strategy of the end position and the colon is widely used through the play of 'Hamlet'. In the third act, the second scene, the 430th line ends with the word 'hypocrites' followed by a colon as follows:

I will speak daggers to her, but use none.

My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites:

How in my words somever she be shent

In the third scene of the same act, the 80th line ends with 'scanned' followed by a colon too:

And so he goes to heaven,

And so am I revenged. That would be scanned:

A villain kills my father, and for that,

 I, his sole son, do this same villain send

To heaven.

If the context in which these last words and the colons after them is taken into consideration, it will be clear that they are used for emphasis. The colon in both examples (and in many others not to be mentioned) is not used to produce an example, nor a quotation; rather, it is used to bring the attention to what is about to be said, which adds an emotional value to the text. The emphasis given to Hamlet's complex condition with his mother in the first example, and to the fiery desire for revenge in the second one is assigned in the written form by the use of this strategy.

3.3. Italics

Many lines in 'Hamlet' are written in italics, the lines meant are not quotations, they are written that way to bring focus to what is being said, there could be some important foreshadowing, decisive declarations, or other things in those lines that the author wants to highlight. For instance, from the 205th to the 346th line (more than a page) in the second scene of the third act, the text is written in italics:

PLAYER QUEEN:

The instances that second marriage move

Are base respects of thrift, but none of love.

A second time I kill my husband dead
When second husband kisses me in bed.
PLAYER KING:
I do believe you think what now you speak,
But what we do determine oft we break.
Purpose is but the slave to memory,
Of violent birth, but poor validity,
Which now, the fruit unripe, sticks on the tree
But fall unshaken when they mellow be.
Most necessary 'tis that we forget
To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt.
What to ourselves in passion we propose,
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.
The violence of either grief or joy
Their own enactures with themselves destroy.
Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament;
Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident
 This world is not for aye, nor 'tis not strange
That even our loves should with our fortunes change;
For 'tis a question left us yet to prove
Whether love lead fortune or else fortune love.
The great man down, you mark his favorite flies;
The poor, advanced, makes friends of enemies.
And hitherto doth love on fortune tend,
For who not needs shall never lack a friend,
And who in want a hollow friend doth try
Directly seasons him his enemy.
But, orderly to end where I begun:
Our wills and fates do so contrary run That our devices still are overthrown;
 Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own.
So think thou wilt no second husband wed,
But die thy thoughts when thy first lord is dead.
PLAYER QUEEN:
Nor Earth to me give food, nor heaven light,
Sport and repose lock from me day and night,
 [To desperation turn my trust and hope,
An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope.]
Each opposite that blanks the face of joy
Meet what I would have well and it destroy.
Both here and hence pursue me lasting strife,
If, once a widow, ever I be wife

It is obvious for any serious, accurate, and keen reader for the play why would these lines in particular be emphasized, they are included within the part of the play in which Hamlet tests the reaction of Claudius towards a play (within the paly of 'Hamlet' itself) made by Hamlet himself. This event generates a lot of conflicts, opens the door for many secrets to be exposed- within the contexts of

the events in the play, and take the whole plot closer to the climax, and since all these lines are of such an importance, using the italics strategy would not be a bad choice for the author. Absolutely, it helps a lot to make the significant parts of the play prominent and serve the deep meaning intended to be conveyed by Shakespeare through the utterances and/or extracts from the play.

4. Conclusion

Through out his study, many remarks have been concluded:

1- There are several strategies and techniques that can be used to achieve focus and emphasis in a written text, as stated at the beginning of the study, but they would be repeated for their controlling and significant role; like: repetition, making use of the words' or the phrases' position, writing them in bold or italic, and using the colon.

2- Shakespeare's play 'The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark' includes many of these strategies by which the author manages to intensify the intended message or meaning he wants to convey and dramatize the speech of the characters.

3- He emphasizes a word, phrase, sentence, or even a whole page or more sometimes in a clever way to immerse the audience and readers into an epic world full of resolute characters, heroic deeds, and excitement.

4- Using the devices helps a lot in interpreting the events of any literary text, and it could be as an 'additional character' that shapes the stream of the story in a way or in another.

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