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Unveiling the Linguistic Artistry of Pablo Neruda: A Stylistic Analysis of 'Every Day You Play'

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ABSTRACT

This stylistic analysis examines Pablo Neruda's poem "Every Day You Play" across phonological, graphological, morphological, and lexico-syntactic dimensions. Utilizing a descriptive approach, the study explores how Neruda employs various linguistic techniques to enhance the poem's thematic exploration and emotional resonance. The methodology involves rigorous analysis at each linguistic level to uncover the nuances of Neruda's style and its impact on the poem's interpretation. The analysis reveals the intricate manner in which Neruda utilizes phonological devices such as rhyme, alliteration, assonance, and consonance to create auditory effects and reinforce thematic elements. Graphological analysis highlights the visual presentation of the poem, including punctuation, lineation, and spatial organization, which contribute to its aesthetic appeal and structural cohesion. Morphological analysis delves into the formation of words and their internal structure, shedding light on Neruda's lexical choices and their contribution to the poem's meaning. Additionally, lexico-syntactic analysis examines the vocabulary choices and sentence structures employed by Neruda to convey his message effectively. Overall, this study concludes that "Every Day You Play" is a profound exploration of love, nature, and eternity, characterized by vivid imagery, metaphorical language, and thematic depth. Neruda's lyrical and evocative style captivates readers and invites them to ponder the complexities of human emotions and relationships.

Keywords: Stylistic analysis, Pablo Neruda, phonological analysis, graphological analysis, morphological analysis, lexico-syntactic analysis, poetry, literary techniques, thematic exploration.

1. INTRODUCTION

Style is used by writers to convey their thoughts and ideas in a unique and creative way. It includes elements such as tone, choice of words, syntax, and many more. Style adds spice to literary pieces and sometimes serves as the brand of a particular writer. We even encounter literary pieces that, once we read them, we will have an idea of their writer. William Shakespeare's literary works are great examples, as they also influenced other writers in the Shakespearean era. Style is also used by the writer to express emotions.

As stated by Abrams and Harpham (2014), style is the manner of linguistic expression or how the writers convey whatever it is that they want to say. They also stated that style is specific to a particular writer or a particular work, characterized by diction, sentence structure, and the use of figurative language, which help readers establish moods, images, and meanings of the text. Leech and Short (2007) further emphasize that stylistics is the linguistic study of style, focusing on how the writer uses language or the particular application of knowledge about language. On the other hand, Lawal (1997) stated that stylistics involves the choice of diction, phrases, sentences, and linguistic materials that are consistent and harmonious with the subject matter.

Stylistic analysis in linguistics involves the analysis of various styles used in a particular text or literary piece. According to Simpson (2004), there are three basic principles in stylistic analysis: it should be rigorous, retrievable, and replicable. Rigorous means that it should be based on an explicit framework of analysis. Retrievable means that the analysis is organized through explicit terms and criteria, the meanings of which are agreed upon by other students of stylistics. Replicable means that the methods should be sufficiently transparent as to allow other stylisticians to verify them, either by testing them on the same text or by applying them beyond that text.

Neruda's poetic style has been the subject of numerous studies. Jose (2022) examined the semantic expansion in literary texts and how it applies to biblical texts, revealing the depth and complexity that similar techniques can bring to secular poetry. Jose and Jose (2024) dissected the linguistic tapestry of modernism in T.S. Eliot's works, showing how stylistic analysis can reveal the underlying themes and stylistic nuances in poetry. These studies provide a framework for understanding how poets like Neruda employ various linguistic techniques to enhance the thematic depth and emotional impact of their work.

The poem "Every Day You Play" was written by Chilean poet Pablo Neruda and was published in 1924. It is an eight-stanza poem that talks about the overwhelming love of the writer for his lover. The writer also praises his lover for accepting him with his flaws. The poet himself is aware of his negative traits that tarnish his love for his beloved. Despite all the flaws, the writer seeks to nurture his lover until all uncertainty is gone. The thematic exploration of love, acceptance, and vulnerability in this poem is a testament to Neruda's mastery of stylistic elements, which invite readers to delve deeper into the complexities of human emotions and relationships.

According to Baldwin (2019), Neruda's poetry is characterized by its vivid imagery and emotional intensity, often reflecting his deep connection with nature and personal experiences. This study aims to explore the stylistic elements of "Every Day You Play" across phonological, graphological, morphological, and lexico-syntactic dimensions. By examining these elements, we can uncover the nuances of Neruda's style and its impact on the poem's interpretation.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a descriptive analysis to explore the stylistic elements of Pablo Neruda's "Every Day You

Play." The methodology is divided into four different levels of linguistic analysis: phonological, graphological, morphological, and lexico-syntactic. Each level of linguistic analysis is applied to uncover and analyze how Neruda's choice of words affects the poem's theme, emotional depth, and impact on readers.

2.1. Phonological Analysis

Phonological analysis involves studying the phonetic patterns, pronunciation conventions, rhyming schemes, and word utterance in sentences within the poem. Phonological techniques such as rhyme schemes, alliteration, consonance, and assonance are examined to understand their role in enhancing the auditory effects and reinforcing thematic elements. In "Every Day You Play," the use of rhyme, alliteration, assonance, and consonance are carefully analyzed to highlight how they contribute to the poem's overall impact.

2.2. Graphological Analysis

Graphological analysis examines the visual appearance of the poem on the page, including aspects such as lineation, capitalization, punctuation, stanza form, and text spatial structure (Jose & Jose, 2024). This analysis explores how the graphic substance and arrangement of words based on their meaning affect the poem's aesthetic appeal and structural cohesion. According to Leech, graphology exceeds orthography and includes elements such as punctuation, paragraphing, and spacing, all of which are analyzed in Neruda's poem.

2.3. Morphological Analysis

Morphological analysis focuses on the formation of words and their internal structure, including how prefixes and suffixes are added to root words to create new words. This level of analysis involves studying and analyzing words, the internal organization of sentences, and sentence construction. The objective is to

distinguish between clauses, phrases, words, nouns, and verbs to determine foregrounding and deviation. The morphological analysis of "Every Day You Play" explores the use of word formation in the poem, including the choice of specific types of words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs) and their prefixes and suffixes (Jose & Jose, 2024).

2.4. Lexico-Syntactic Analysis

Lexico-syntactic analysis is the combination of lexical (vocabulary) and syntactic (sentence structure) studies. The lexico-syntactic analysis examines the poem's vocabulary choices and how words are structured into sentences (Jose & Jose, 2024). This level of analysis is concerned with the meaning of syntactic units larger than words and explores how Neruda's vocabulary choices and sentence structures effectively convey his message and enhance the thematic depth and emotional resonance of the poem.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Phonological Level

3.1.1. Rhyme

*While the sad wind goes slaughtering butterflies
kissing our eyes,
last night to the sky.
You will answer me to the last cry.*

Rhyme is the pattern of similar sounding words. The poem "Every Day You Play" by Pablo Neruda does not follow a structured rhyme pattern (Baldwin, 2019). Instead, the poem has moments where the words are half, full, or complete rhymes. For example, "butterflies" in line 26 and "eyes" in line 32 have similar sounds, making them rhyming words. Similarly, "sky" in line 19 and "cry" in line 21 also contain similar sounds.

3.1.2. Alliteration

My savage, solitary soul,

Alliteration is the repetition of initial consonant sounds. The words "solitary" and "soul" begin with the letter 's,' creating a musical quality that emphasizes the solitary nature of the soul.

3.1.3. Assonance

The rain takes off her clothes, loose all the boats that were moored

Assonance is the repetition of vowel sounds in a sentence that provides a pleasant tone to the poem. The words "rain" and "takes" in line 13 share a similar vowel sound "ai," while "loose" and "moored" in line 18 share a similar "oo" sound, adding to the musicality and fluidity of the poem.

3.1.4. Consonance

Subtle visitor, you arrive in the flower and the water,

Consonance involves the repetition of consonant sounds to produce an auditory effect. The words "visitor," "flower," and "water" in line 2 share the consonant sound 'r,' creating a rhythmic effect that enhances the auditory experience of the poem.

3.1.5. Repetition

*Every day you play with the light of the universe.
Until I even believe that you own the universe.
Subtle visitor, you arrive in the flower and the water,
as a bunch of flowers, every day, between my hands.
I will bring you happy flowers from the mountains,
Suddenly the wind howls and bangs at my shut window.
Here all the winds let go sooner or later, all of them.
The wind. The wind.*

The repetition of the words "universe," "flowers," and "wind" emphasizes the central themes and emotions of the poem, reinforcing the significance of these elements in the narrator's experience.

3.2. Graphological Level

3.2.1. Period/Full-stop (.)

Every day you play with the light of the universe. (Line 1)

You are like nobody since I love you. (Line 5)

Let me spread you out among yellow garlands. (Line 6)

Oh, let me remember you as you were before you existed.

(Line 9)

The frequent use of periods or full stops indicates a sense of finality and emphasis, completing thoughts and giving the poem a rhythmic structure. This use of punctuation contributes to the poem's overall impact by providing clear breaks between ideas.

3.2.2. Comma (,)

Subtle visitor, you arrive in the flower and the water,
(Line 2)

I will bring you happy flowers from the mountains, (Line 38)

Commas are used to create pauses and separate ideas within a line without ending the thought. This use of punctuation allows the poem to flow smoothly and enhances its readability.

3.3. Morphological Level

3.3.1. Word Structure and Formation

Every day you play with the light of the universe.

*Subtle visitor, you arrive in the flower and the water,
You are more than this white head that I hold tightly
as a bunch of flowers, every day, between my hands.*

The poem "Every Day You Play" is structured in eight stanzas with varying line lengths. The morphological analysis reveals that Neruda uses a mix of simple and compound words, as well as prefixes and suffixes, to create rich imagery and convey complex emotions. For example, words like "subtle visitor" and "savage, solitary soul" show the poet's careful choice of vocabulary to enhance the poem's emotional depth.

3.4. Lexico-Syntactic Level

3.4.1. Personification

Personifying nature by imputing human traits or behaviors—for example, "*the rain takes off her clothes*" (3rd stanza), "*the sad wind goes slaughtering butterflies*" (6th stanza), or "my happiness bites the plum of your mouth" (6th stanza)—Neruda brings the natural elements to life, making them active participants in the emotional landscape of the poem.

3.4.2. Metaphor

"*You are more than this white head that I hold tightly as a cluster of fruit, every day, between my hands.*"

Neruda employs metaphors extensively to convey deeper meanings and abstract concepts. In the opening stanza, the comparison of the beloved to a "cluster of fruit" suggests both fragility and vitality, capturing the essence of the poet's affection.

"*The sky is a net crammed with shadowy fish*" (3rd stanza)

In the third stanza, the sky is metaphorically described as a "*net crammed with shadowy fish*," evoking a sense of entrapment and mystery. Such metaphors enhance the poem's thematic depth by encouraging readers to think abstractly and interpret the underlying meanings.

4. CONCLUSION

This stylistic analysis of Pablo Neruda's "Every Day You Play" across phonological, graphological, morphological, and lexico-syntactic dimensions illuminates the intricate manner in which Neruda employs linguistic techniques to enhance the poem's thematic exploration and emotional resonance. The poem reveals a profound exploration of love, nature, and eternity through vivid imagery, metaphors, and personification. The poem is structured in eight stanzas with different lengths, and the rhyme scheme has no consistency, allowing freedom

in expressing emotions. Neruda's use of language is lyrical and evocative. Overall, "Every Day You Play" is a beautiful and powerful expression of love that continues to inspire and captivate readers with its beauty, depth, and timeless themes.

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6. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors have declared that there is no conflict of interest.

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