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بررسی برجسته سازی در نمایشنامه ی در انتظار گودو اثر سا
مئل بکت و کاربرد آن در تدریس نمایشنامه

توسط:

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پایان نامه

ارائه شده به مدیریت تحصیلات تکمیلی به عنوان بخشی از فعالیت های
تحصیلی لازم برای اخذ درجه کارشناسی ارشد
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بررسی برجسته سازی در نمایشنامه ی در انتظار گودو اثر ساموئل بکت و کاربرد آن در تدریس نمایشنامه
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چکیده

برجسته سازی به عنوان یکی از تئوری های زبانشناسی در حیطه ی سبک شناسی ، برای اولین بار توسط مکاروسکی (1964/1932) در دنیای ادبیات و نقد ادبی مطرح گردید. بر اساس گفته ی هیکمالدرو ون پیر (2006) ، برجسته سازی دارای معنا های متفاوتی است، از آن جمله می توان به این موارد اشاره کرد: فرایند های روانشناسی زبان که طی آن برجستگی ایجاد می شود، شیوه های زبانی خاص که خود نویسنده در متن ادبی اش استفاده می کند، تأثیر شاعرانه ی شیوه های ادبی بر خواننده و یا به عنوان یک روش نقد و بررسی متون ادبی و در آخر وجه تمایز زبان ادبی از زبان غیر ادبی. دائویت (2000) نیز بر اساس گفته ی مکاروسکی برجسته سازی را یکی از روش های می داند که منجر به آشنایی زدایی در متون ادبی می شود. تا کنون مفهوم برجسته سازی در شعر و تأثیر آن بر نوع درک خواننده مورد بررسی قرار گرفته ، در بعضی موارد نیز برجسته سازی در ارتباط با نثر داستانی به ویژه داستان کوتاه مطرح گردیده است، اما در این میان متون نمایشی نادیده گرفته شده اند. در این تحقیق سعی بر آن است تا برجسته سازی در متون نمایشی و زبان نمایش بررسی شود. از آنجا که یکی از جنبش های ادبی در دنیای نمایشنامه نویسی تئاتر پوچی است که از آن به عنوان انقلابی در دنیای تئاتر و نمایش یاد می شود، نمایشنامه ی در انتظار گودو اثر ساموئل بکت که یکی از آثار برجسته در حوزه ی تئاتر پوچی می باشد برای این تحلیل انتخاب شده است. هنجار گریزی آوایی، نگارشی، واژگانی، باستان گرایی ، هنجار گریزی گفتمان، قاعده افزایی آوایی و تکرار واژگان از جمله شیوه های برجسته سازی است که در این نمایش بررسی و مورد بحث قرار گرفت. نتایج گویای آن است که متون نمایشی نیز مستثنی نبوده و شیوه های برجسته سازی مورد نظر در نمایشنامه ی در انتظار گودو بکت استفاده شده است . نتایج این بررسی نه تنها در حوزه ی آموزش ادبیات و نمایشنامه مورد استفاده قرار خواهد گرفت بلکه در آموزش و یادگیری زبان نیز کاربرد خواهد داشت. این تئوری می تواند به عنوان یک شیوه ی تدریس (نحوه ی ارائه ی مطالب درسی) در کلاس های مختلف یادگیری زبان و ادبیات انگلیسی مورد استفاده قرار گیرد و کاربرد آن در تحلیل و بررسی متون مختلف ادبی، توانایی زبانی و ارتباطی دانشجویان ادبیات انگلیسی را افزایش می دهد. همچنین در تدوین کتب درسی می تواند ارائه دهنده ی پیشنهادات نوینی باشد.

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We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time

T. S. Eliot, Four Quartets, Little Gidding

*This thesis is dedicated to **my wonderful parents** who have raised me to be the person I am today. You have been with me every step of the way, through good times and bad.*

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1. General Overview

Stylistics is seen as the companionship of linguists and literary critics. It uses linguistics as a means of looking at the literary text objectively. It helps literary critics to have an acceptable interpretation, and support their views. According to Verdonk (2002), “stylistics in no way replaces literary appreciation, but simply serves to bring it into clearer focus” (p. 65). Likewise, Simpson (1997) argues that it is an impersonal device of literary criticism, which is presented to replace the “subjectivity” and “impressionism” of standard literary criticism.

As mentioned above, stylistics can be used as a key analytical tool in reading and analyzing literary texts. Accordingly, students of literature are to be familiarized with this domain and its different devices and theories, for they are to read masterpieces of the world of literature and to understand great writers’ works. It is observed that more or less students of literature rely on others’ critical works and consequently put their own creativity in a prison constrained only to some special viewpoints taken from those works. In other words, they do not know the starting point. Thus, stylistics and its frameworks and devices are to be presented in literature classrooms to lead the students to reach their own evaluation of literary texts based on their own creativity and this procedure.

Foregrounding goes under the domain of stylistics and is generally regarded as one of the important models in this framework. It is borrowed from the world of art—painting—(Short, 1996) and introduced by Jan Mukarovsky (1964) as “*aktualisce*”, then rendered in English by P.L. Garvin (1964) as “foregrounding”. In Visual arts, the foregrounded is part of a painting which is “in the centre and towards the bottom of the canvas” (Short, 1996, p. 11); those parts that attract the attention of observers, because they are, in a way, strange. Leech (1969) and Fowler (1996) regard it as a key analytical tool in literary criticism and stylistics. Douthwaite (2000), as well, sees it as a strategy with its own devices and techniques through which defamiliarization could be achieved in a literary text.

Based on the literature of the study, it can be seen that the concept of foregrounding has been studied mostly in relation to poetry and in some cases to prose and rarely to drama. The

researchers have tried to know how foregrounding works in the world of literature and how it affects readers' perception, but for the most part their focus has been on poetry. Clearly, students in literature courses are to read different plays of great playwrights and evaluate play-texts. In addition, based on the fact that different genres – prose, poetry and play – have different and distinctive features, certainly, the concept of foregrounding will be treated in a different way in play-texts. *This study tries to examine in what ways foregrounding devices are treated in Beckett's Waiting for Godot and dramatic discourse.* Subsequently, the results may be applied to the domain of teaching literature in general and drama in particular.

1.1.1. The Concept of Foregrounding

Foregrounding is considered as one of the important models within stylistic analyses. Because, mostly, it is through different devices of foregrounding that writers and poets defamiliarize and make strange what has already been familiar for years. It creates the sense of “novelty” and “wonder” in literary texts, though the reader may be familiar with the concept or the image illustrated in literature.

The notion of **foregrounding** is associated with the concept of **defamiliarization** introduced by Victor Shklovsky (1965). He writes that the function of art is to “recover the sensation of life” and to make people to see the world in a fresh way (cited in Van peer, 1986, p. 2). It should be notified that this notion is not new and it reminds of Aristotle's *On Poetics* (350 B.C [1999]) when he wrote:

...the diction becomes distinguished and non-prosaic by the use of *unfamiliar terms, i.e. strange words, metaphors, lengthened forms, and everything that deviates from the ordinary modes of speech.* These, the strange word, the metaphor, the ornamental equivalent, will save the language from seeming mean and prosaic, while the ordinary words in it will secure the requisite clearness. What helps most, however, to render the Diction at once clear and non-prosaic is the use of the lengthened, curtailed and altered forms of words. Their deviation from the ordinary words will, by making the language unlike that in general use, give it a non-prosaic appearance; and their having much in common with the words in general use will give it the quality of clearness (my emphasis).

Later, the concept of defamiliarization, which was mainly defined in terms of deviance from the norms, led Mukarovsky (1964), who was a member of *The Prague School*, to introduce

foregrounding. He used foregrounding to refer to the range of stylistic effects that occur in literature, whether at the phonetic level, the grammatical level, or the semantic level (Cited in Miall and Kuiken,1994). Van peer (1986) calls it “the violation of the schematization of an act” (p. 7). In addition, Chapman (1973) asserts that the word foregrounding is used to explain the kind of deviation which brings some item into artistic emphasis in a way that it stands out from other items. van Peer & Hakemulder (2006) discuss that this term comes to have different meanings at once. It can refer to the “psycholinguistic processes by which something may be given special prominence”. It may also refer to the “specific devices that are produced and located by the author in the text itself”. It can indicate the “specific poetic affect on the reader” or “an analytic category” in order to “evaluate literary texts” and at last it can be used to differentiate between literary and non-literary language.

Foregrounding is not specified only to literary texts, we can find it in non-literary and ordinary texts as well. But as said by Van peer (1986), foregrounding is seen as the “hallmark of literature in general” (p. 8). The difference between the notion of foregrounding in literary and non-literary texts is that in every day use of language – non-literary language- foregrounding happens but randomly and not regularly. On the other hand, in literature foregrounding happens systematically. Mukarovsky (1964) states that in every day language foregrounding devices are employed to attract attention to the subject-matter of the communicative situation, while in literary language they are geared towards themselves, i.e. in order to draw attention to the speech event itself. Moreover, Short (1996) believes that in language, the background is what is linguistically normal and the foregrounded are those parts of the text or talk which do not follow the expectations. He concludes that foregrounding happens in a literary text as a result of systematic deviations from linguistic and nonlinguistic norms. Furthermore, Simpson (2004) refers to foregrounding as "a form of textual patterning which is motivated specially for literary-aesthetic purposes". In other words, foregrounding in literary texts, mostly, deals with language style rather than communication. Not only is it used for "aesthetic purposes" but also it affects readers' interpretations and their "perception" (p. 50).

In addition, Douthwaite (2000), who considers foregrounding as a strategy, explains **the functions of foregrounding** as follows:

Since Foregrounding produces extra structuring, since there is no invariant relationship between form and meaning, and since the interpretation of any linguistic sign must come about within the global framework of communication ... then, clearly, foregrounding cannot be assigned a set of specific, pre-determined, catalogued functions (or effects), but only a mid-level general function, that of drawing attention to the sign that is foregrounded (p. 168).

Generally, foregrounding processes by two basic forms, that is, **deviation** and **parallelism**. Deviation means breaking the norms and rules, it is a kind of irregularity. On the other hand, according to Short (1996), parallelism means repetition; repetition of parallel structures. We have parallelism at various levels of phonology, morphology, etc. Short declares that if two structures are obviously parallel in linguistic form, they are also semantically related to each other. So, parallel structures not only have a persuasion effect on the reader or hearer but also they have some effects on readers or hearers' perceptions too. As stated by van Peer & Hakemulder (2006), "writer of literature is allowed to deviate from rules, maxims and conventions" or to use "repetitive structures" in order to bring some aspects of the text into the foreground of the readers' perception.

After all, it should be noted that foregrounding is seen as one of those models in the world of stylistics that is also investigated empirically with regard to readers' reaction to literary texts. Sopčak (2007) believes that these empirical approaches toward foregrounding provides insights in two directions: on the one hand, "it employs the tools of stylistic analysis" which definitely brings to light the close relation of linguistic features and literariness of a given text. on the other, "it allows for the validity of predictions concerning the effects of these features on real readers to be empirically tested" (p. 192). The first empirical study was conducted by van Peer in 1986 and the result of his study showed that there is a correlation between the degrees of foregrounding and readers' reactions to literary texts.

1.1.2. Foregrounding and Samuel Barclay Beckett (1906-1989)

In general, less has been said about drama in the field of stylistics. One reason for this, according to Thornborrow and Wareing (1998) is that "a play exists in two ways: on page and on the stage" (p. 116). Nevertheless, Mick Short (1996, p. 159, cited in Thornborrow and Wareing, 1998, p. 118) states that, texts in plays are very important and they should be analyzed, because:

- “Teachers and students have traditionally read plays without necessarily seeing them performed and have still managed to understand them and argue about them.”
- A dramatic producer “must be able to read and understand a play in order to decide how to produce it.”
- “There is a logical and terminological distinction between a play and a performance of it. Coming out of theatre, people can be heard making comments of the form ‘that was a good/bad production of a good/bad play’ ...”

Short asserts that all sorts of analysis can be used on any text we want to examine. For example, here, for drama, it can be treated as a poetry —like poetic dramas: Shakespeare’s (Short, 1996, p. 168) — or as a fiction and its characters and plot are analyzed or as an interaction between people. Since text-plays and dramas at first are in the written form that is supposed to be conveyed into a spoken discourse, and in fact they are like conversations among the characters, it can be said that the third approach —treating drama as an interaction —is a more appropriate one, and it is this aspect of drama which differentiates it from poetry and fiction. In other words, the kind of discourse analysis used for the analysis of spoken discourse can be used for the stylistic analysis of drama.

In drama as poetry, drama as a fiction and drama as a verbal interaction, foregrounding can be employed. When we consider drama as an interaction, pragmatics and discourse analyses are very helpful in analyzing the dramatic dialogue. Toolan (1992) argues, “foregrounding depends in part on a perceptible mismatch between the standard or normative application of a linguistic utterance, and the context of situation which is assumed to hold on a particular occasion of use of that utterance” (p. 257) Concerning what Toolan (1992) has mentioned about foregrounding, it can be inferred that foregrounding can possibly happen in drama.

Regarding the fact that most of the studies done so far in this field have investigated foregrounding and its effect on reader’s perception in poetry and other genres – prose and especially plays- are neglected, *this study focuses on foregrounding devices in play-texts and dramatic discourse*. The text that has been chosen here is one of the masterpieces through which Absurd Drama was fully known: *Samuel Beckett's waiting for Godot*.

The Theatre of Absurd, which is also called “anti-theatre”, in fact, openly rebelled against the conventional theatre. Culik (2000) in his description of Absurd Drama asserts that:

...absurd plays assumed a highly unusual, innovative form, directly aiming to startle the viewer, shaking him out of this comfortable, conventional life of everyday concerns. ...It was surreal, illogical, conflictless and plotless. The dialogue seemed total gobbledygook.

The emergence of this special kind of play, which openly deviates from different conventions and rules, surely underlines the search for innovative and new methods on behalf of writers. In fact, they felt a kind of necessity for defamiliarization within the domain of playwriting and acting. Let it be said that, however, the philosophical, social, and spiritual condition of the time also had their effects on the rise of Absurd Drama. Not only in themes and subject matter but also in form, Absurd plays are different from previous and well-made plays people had got used to. One of the important aspects of Absurd Drama, as Culik (2000) says, is its “distrust language.” In these plays, language has become “a vehicle of conventionalised, stereotyped, meaningless exchanges” which is considered as a “very unreliable and insufficient tool of communication”. In fact, these plays constitute an “onslaught on language.”

Among the playwrights of the Theatre of Absurd Samuel Beckett is a distinguished figure. He is the one who concerns himself with the meaninglessness of life, time and language in modern times but only expresses what he sees and does not argue about it. His *Waiting for Godot* is an early attempt in which Beckett expresses “the breakdown, the disintegration of language” where characters use every day words that have acquired a different status in the play (Esslin, 1968, p. 85). In other words, Beckett concerns with the lack of communication and uses language to show “man isolated in the world and unable to communicate because language is a barrier to communication” (Esslin, 1965, p. 8). As a result, with respect to the innovative nature of absurd plays on the one hand and the significance of language in such plays on the other, undoubtedly, foregrounding devices, which are the essence of innovation in language, are used to create such novelty in the world of drama. The objective of the present study is to investigate how Beckett has made use of foregrounding devices in his masterpiece *Waiting for Godot* in order to convey his meanings and as a consequence to propose a model for the stylistic analysis of such plays.

1.2. Research Assumptions

The assumptions of the study are as follows:

1. The concept of foregrounding, as a feature of literary language, can be found in different genres of literature: poetry, prose fiction, and **drama**.
2. All literary texts have innovative language. In Absurd Drama, the language also has become the focal point and it does not obey the general rules and conventions of plays and performance. In other words, it is considered to have a special and distinctive language compared to other plays.

This paper is supposed to investigate foregrounding in relation to dramatic language and discourse.

1.3. Statement of the Problem

The notion of foregrounding which is also considered as a key analytical tool in reading and analyzing literary texts is mainly employed in relation to poetry and prose. However, in Literature courses, one of the specifics for the students of literature is drama in which play-texts are to be read and analyzed by students. As far as I have studied, not only theoretically but also practically nothing has been done about the application of foregrounding to drama. Moreover, the models proposed so far for the investigation of foregrounding in literary texts are not appropriate enough to be applied to play-texts. *In this study, the attempt is to apply foregrounding to dramatic discourse and modifications will be applied to Short's (1996) model of foregrounding if it is required and foregrounding can be used as a basic tool of analysis in reading and analyzing play-texts.*

1.4. Significance of the Study

According to Miall and Kuiken (1994) and Hakemulder (2004), there is a relationship between foregrounding as a language style and readers' perceptions and responses to literary texts. They believe that the immediate effect of foregrounding is to strike readers' interests in order to achieve defamiliarization. Also, Bertens (2001) tells us that foregrounding draws the readers' attention to itself and obscures whatever else may be going on right beside it. Moreover, van Peer & Hakemulder (2006) refer to foregrounding as what differentiates between literary and non-literary

language. Therefore, it is necessary for literature students to become familiar with this notion and use it as one of the basic analysis tools in reading and analyzing literary texts in general.

Besides this general application, specifically this study is expected to show how foregrounding devices are employed in play-texts and dramatic discourse, which can be used in literature courses by teachers and students in discussing different plays by great playwrights.

In addition, since the language of play-texts explored closely and different kinds of linguistic and nonlinguistic features are dealt with in a text which is a spoken discourse, the results of this study may be insightful for the courses of literature especially Drama I, Drama II, Literary Criticism I, and Literary Criticism II in which different genres—prose, poetry and drama—are to be read and analyzed.

1.5. Research Question

The following question will be analyzed and answered in this study.

What are the foregrounding devices used in Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*?

1.6. Thesis Organization

After this introductory chapter, the study is divided into four chapters. Next chapter will be devoted to the review of literature and studies that have been carried out in relation to the notion of foregrounding, dramatic discourse and the link between the two. It presents where the bounds of knowledge about foregrounding and literary discourse lie. Firstly, the theoretical history of foregrounding will be discussed and then the gap between foregrounding and dramatic discourse is filled. At the end, theories and ideas with regard to Absurd Drama, Samuel Beckett and his masterpiece *Waiting for Godot* are reviewed. Afterwards, Chapter Three, methodology, describes the material selected for the study, the procedure as well as the model used for the analysis. Chapter Four is concerned with results of the study and discussions based on the findings. Chapter Five reaches overall conclusions of the work. In addition, implications of the study, Limitations as well as or suggestions for further research will be included in this part.

1.7. Definitions of Key Terms

In what follows, some of the key terms which are more dealt with in the presented study will be defined in the alphabetical orders:

- **Absurd Drama** is first coined by Martin Esslin (1965) and refers to the works and style of a group of playwrights who start writing plays during the late 1940s and 1950s. It is a kind of drama in which standard conventions of well-made plays are ignored or distorted in order to convey the irrational nature of reality and the isolation of humanity in a meaningless world.
- **Automatization** is the process of habitualization of a world with which we are familiar and in which our perceptions are automatized.
- **Background** is those parts of the texts which are linguistically normal. It is the ordinary use of language.
- **Defamiliarization** is first coined by Shklovsky (1965) which means diverting from the familiar and speaks of the ordinary as if it were new, unusual and unfamiliar.
- **Deviation** is simply defined as “the breaking of a rule” and “behaving abnormally” (Douthwaite, 2000, p. 179). Leech (1969, p. 61) defines it as “a disruption of the normal processes of communication” that “leaves a gap, as it were, in one's comprehension of the text”.
- **Discourse Analysis** means “the analysis of language in use”. In discourse analysis we “examine how humans use language to communicate and, in particular, how addressers construct linguistic messages for addressees and how addressees work on linguistic messages in order to interpret them”(Brown and Yule, 1983, pp. xi-1).
- **Foregrounding** means “to bring something into the highest prominence, to make it dominant in perception” (Abrams, 1999, p. 103). It may happen as a result of deviation from norms “ which we, as members of society, have learnt to expect in the medium used” (Leech, 1969, p. 56)
- **Parallelism** is “a pattern of equivalences and/or contrast that are superimposed on the normal pattern of language organization”. In contrast to deviance that is “the result of a choice the poet has made outside the permitted range of potential selection”, parallelism is the opposite process in which “the author has repeatedly made the same or similar

choices where the normal flux of language would tend to variation in selection” (van Peer, 1986, p. 23).

- ***Stylistics** is a method that “has been applied to critical procedures which undertake to replace what is said to be the subjectivity and impressionism of standard analyses with objective or scientific analysis of the style of literary texts” (Abrams, 1999, p. 305). In fact, it is a way of analyzing literature from a linguistic direction (Widdowson, 1975).*