

## Linguopoetic analysis of John Steinbeck's novels

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**Annotation.** *Linguopoetics deals with the poetic meaning of words and phrases in the literary works. It focuses on stylistic devices and expressive means utilized by the writer. The author analyzed the linguopoetical features of John Steinbeck's novels and identified the typical features of the writer. The examples extracted from the novel played an important role in proving the theoretical findings of the author.*

**Key words:** *linguopoetics, stylistic devices, expressive means, literary device;*

### Introduction

Linguopoetics, the study of poetic and stylistic elements in literature, plays a pivotal role in understanding the language of literary works. It integrates linguistics with literature, emphasizing the stylistic devices and expressive means used by writers to enhance their narrative and emotional impact. Among the writers who exemplify the power of linguopoetics is John Steinbeck, whose novels are rich with stylistic devices that reflect the complexity of his characters, settings, and social contexts.

Despite the significance of linguopoetics in literary studies, there remains a gap in comprehensive analyses of how Steinbeck employs linguistic features to create emotional and poetic imagery. While various studies have explored his use of symbolism, dialects, and colloquial speech, there is a need for a detailed investigation into the range of stylistic devices he uses to convey his narrative's emotional depth and poetic resonance.

This study aims to fill this gap by conducting a linguopoetical analysis of Steinbeck's novels, focusing on his stylistic devices and how these contribute to the overall thematic and aesthetic quality of his works. By examining key elements such as metaphor, exaggeration, personification, and the use of regional dialects, the research will highlight the distinct linguistic techniques Steinbeck uses to enhance the emotional and social depth of his stories. The findings of this study will not only shed light on the artistic qualities of Steinbeck's prose but also contribute to broader discussions on the intersection of language and literature in the field of linguopoetics.

### Methodology

One of the renowned researchers Megan L. Dwyer studies the language of Steinbeck's works in terms of emotional and poetic imagery.

Another linguistic research devoted to the use of different stylistic devices was conducted by Susan Shillinglaw and analyzed the repetition, parallel structure, and symbolism in his works.

Robert DeMott scrutinizes the symbolism in Steinbeck's literary legacy. The essential point of his linguopoetics is utilization of dialects and oral speech patterns and it was the object for many scientific articles. David Wyatt looked into the linguistic peculiarities of regional dialects used by the author.

## Results

First of all, it is essential to state the typical feature of giving the information about the history, geography and nature of the country in J. Steinbeck's works. For example, in this example, one can read the novel and also get the knowledge on the different spheres of life.

*To the red country and part of the gray country of Oklahoma, the rains came gently, and they did not cut the scarred earth.*

*From Sallisaw to Gore is twenty-one miles and the Hudson was doing thirty-four miles.*

*Paden to Meeker is thirteen miles; Meeker to Harrah is fourteen miles;*

*Oklahoma City to Bethany is fourteen miles.*

We looked into the functions of stylistic devices used by the writer and acknowledged how artistically he used them. For instance, exaggeration is far more used in his novels to color the speech and intensify the meaning.

*But-you see, a bank or a company can't do that, because those creatures don't breathe air, don't eat side-meat. They breathe profits; they eat the interest on money. If they don't get it, they die the way you die without air, without side-meat.*

By the means of exaggeration, the author describes the dominance of the banks over ordinary people and shows how they are overdebt at that time.

*Get enough wars and cotton'll hit the ceiling.*

Another example conveys the meaning by this stylistic meaning to depict the life of that time.

The interesting point of his writing style is seen in utilizing the stylistic devices in a mixed form. In this juncture, mostly metaphor comes together with exaggeration, personification with exaggeration or simile with metaphor and so on.

*The wind grew stronger, whisked under stones, carried up straws and old leaves, and even little clods, marking its course as it sailed across the fields.*

*During a night the wind raced faster over the land, dug cunningly among the rootlets of the corn were freed by the prying wind and then each stalk settled wearily sideways toward the earth and pointed the direction of the wind.*

In these sentences personification and exaggeration are utilized in one sentence. The writer intends to express the strength of the wind giving the human features.

The writer gives the nature and action of human into the lifeless objects by the help of exaggeration:

*The dusk slipped backward darkness, and the wind cried and whimpered over the fallen corn.*

According to the writer, the leaving of dusk is resembled to hide behind the darkness, the loud noise of the wind is described as it cried like a person.

*And dusk crept over the sky from the eastern horizon, and darkness crept over the land from the east.*

And this sentence shows the movement belongs to the human being is transferred to the dusk as everybody knows a baby or a person may creep, but not a dusk.

John Steinbeck is the master in terms of simile created on his own. Importantly, he used not only traditional simile which was the result of the folk wisdom.

*The jack was clean as a whistle-Jesus God, you got salt too?*

*I was mean like a wolf. Now I'm mean like a weasel.*

*His hands were hard, with broad fingers and nails as thick and ridged as little clam shells.*

*The sky was brilliant over the spot where it had gone, and a torn cloud, like a bloody rag.*

The author ideally coins the compound words, mostly adjectives to give poetic effect to the context. It means the writer is not satisfied with the current compounds.

*Their sunburned faces were dark, and their sun-whipped eyes were light.*

Steinbeck created the compound to depict the difficulty in looking at the sun when it shines and it coloured the speech.

*He led the way across the fine-dusted ground.*

*Then out of the broken sun-rotted mountains of Arizona to the Colorado, with green reeds on its banks, and that's the end of Arizona.*

*Snub-nosed monsters, raising the dust and sticking their snouts into it, straight down the country, across the country, through fences, through dooryards, in and out of gullies in straight lines.*

## Discussion

The essential point of his writing which provides the natural atmosphere of the characters is transforming the oral speech into the context. This phenomenon involves using dialects, contractions, colloquial words and writing the oral (pronounced) version together with other ungrammatical features.

*I hate to get pushed around. I lots rather take a sock at Willy.*

*He's a nice sort of a guy when he ain't stinko.*

*I heard somebody got killed or somepin.*

*"You're bound to get idears if you go thinkin' about stuff. You use ta give a good meetin'.*

John Steinbeck tries to be closer to the life of characters and never intends to make their speech artificial. As a consequence, he utilizes the words like Pa, Ma, Grampa and Grandpa instead of Mother, Father, Grandfather and Grandmother.

*"Pa'll be glad to see you."*

*Grampa says she was good the first five plowin's, while the wild grass was still in her."*

*What we going to do, Ma?*

*Maybe you better get a plate an' gimme back a couple rolls of wire.*

*Hey, Muley! How ya?*

*An' they says, 'If we put all our lan' in one piece we can jus' hardly make her pay.*

Another example for using informal words like “buck” in this novel as a meaning of money.

*At eighty bucks you got a buy.*

*“You just got a stomickache. You et too much. You crowd up ya stomick an' ya get a stomickache, ‘he says. Nex' noon she's outa her head, an' she dies at about four in the afternoon.”*

This speech is fully colloquial and shows the natural attitude of the character. Because the word “stomickache”, “et” and “outa” are spoken versions of the words: “stomachache”, ‘ate” and “out of”.

The writer inserts repetition in the works as they intensify the poetic meaning and involve the readers far more better than other linguistic devices.

*Listen to the motor. Listen to the wheels. Listen with your ears and with your hands on the steering wheel; listen with the palm of your hand on the gear-shift lever; listen with your feet on the floor boards.*

*If a man owns a little property, that property is him, it's part of him, and it's like him.*

*Big shots won't give you three dollars a day if you worry about anything but your three dollars a day.*

## Conclusion

Last but not least, notable feature of his writing is abundance of rhetorical questions and the questions without auxiliary verbs at the beginning of the sentence.

*“Ma, you scared a goin’? You scared a goin’ to a new place?” (rhet)*

*“Got any money?”*

*“Sure. Think we're beggin’?”*

*“Want another?”*

*“Know what's wrong?”*

*You hear anything?*

In conclusion, we state that, John Steinbeck contributed substantially to the development of the modern English literature with quintessential linguopoetical means in his literary legacy. They all serve to widespread of the works throughout the world as well as understand the peculiarities of English language.

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