

The Fictions of Nilkamal Brahma: A Stylistics Analysis

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ABSTRACT: *Stylistics is a branch of linguistics. It is the study of style in literature. It has a close relationship with language and literary criticism. It studies the language used in literature. Stylistics scrutinizes the beauty of language used by the author. Nilkamal Brahma is a famous short story writer in Bodo literature. He composed five short story books namely, Hagra Gudumi Mwi (Deer of deep forest), Silingkhar (Devastation), Sirinai Mandar (The fallen Modar), Sakhondra (Child lifter) and Mam Daodwi (Egg Madam). He uses some techniques to make his story more effective and efficient. These techniques are known as stylistics. The techniques may be linguistics or non-linguistics. In this paper it is going to be discussed about the use of stylistics in the short story of Nilkamal Brahma.*

KEYWORDS: *Stylistics, Linguistics, Literature, Techniques, Short story.*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Stylistics is the study of style in literature. It has a close relationship with linguistics and literary criticism. It studies the language used in literature. Stylistics is a branch of linguistics. In the Galperian Stylistics edited by Moscow Higher School it has been mentioned as- Stylistics, sometimes called Linguo-Stylistics, is a branch or general linguistics¹. Stylistics scrutinizes the beauty of language used by the author. It persuades us to investigate the various features of language systematically. Thus, stylistic studies both literature and linguistics simultaneously. The main aim of stylistics is to make us understand the intention of the author in the manner the information has been passed across by the writer or speaker. It may be a spoken or a written text or document. A writer uses some techniques to make his writings attractive and effective. These techniques are known as stylistics. These techniques may be linguistic or non-linguistic. Linguistic techniques such as uses of language, Phonological Properties (Patterns of speech or sounds), Lexical (abstract vs. concrete words, the relative frequency of nouns, verbs, and adjectives), Syntax (types of sentence structure, phrase, clause, idioms) and Semantics (the study of the meaning of words) are studied in stylistics. On the other hand non linguistic techniques such as Rhetorical or Figurative language (use of simile, metaphor, oxymoron etc.) are also studied in stylistics.

Stylistics is a broad term that has assumed different meanings from different linguistic scholars. But it can simply be said to be the study of style.

1. According to Oxford Advance Learner's Dictionary stylistics is "the study of style and the methods used in written language."²
2. National Open University of Nigeria defines "Stylistics as a study of the different styles that are present in either a given utterance or a written text or document".

Again, Stylistics is concerned with the study of the language of literature or the study of the language habits of particular authors and their writing patterns. From the foregoing, stylistics can be said to be the techniques of explication which allows us to define objectively what an author has done, (linguistic or non-linguistic), in his use of language"³.

¹ Moscow Higher School, Galperin Stylistics, Second Edition, 1977, Page-8

² Oxford Advance Learner's Dictionary, University Press, New Delhi, Page-1540

³ National Open University of Nizeria, Literary Stylistics, P-3

1.1 Nilkamal Brahma and his contribution in Bodo literature

Nilkamal Brahma was born on 27th August, 1944 in a village called Chatta Adabari in the District of Kokrajhar. His father's name was Mahendra Nath Brahma and mother's name was Maneswari Brahma. In the year 1965 he passed Higher Secondary exam from Kokrajhar Govt. H.S. School. In 1968 and 1971 he passed B.A and M.A exams respectively from Gauhati University. Nilkamal Brahma is a Polestar in the Bodo Literature. He is the greatest short story writer in Bodo literature for which he is called the emperor of Bodo short stories. He composed five short story books. Apart from writing short stories he also wrote novel, drama, poem, prose and grammar. He composed poems by pseudonym 'Bikram'. His 'Ang dabw Adam Eveni Roje' poetry collection consists of twelve poems. He wrote two novels namely 'Sandw Baodiya' and 'Maoriya'. He also wrote drama for Radio. The story of 'Alaiaron', first full length feature film in Bodo and 'Dahal' and 'Songali' are also composed by him. He translated valuable prose, fictions from Assamese and English languages. 'Adwi Tomni Dera' is one of such translated novel of Nilkamal Brahma. He also translated short stories by name 'Swabni Solo'. Though he wrote many such prose, poetry or essays, he is popular as the short story writer. The short story book 'Hagra Guduni Mwi' (Deer of the deep forest) was published in 1972. Another famous short story book 'Silingkhar' (Devastation) was also published in the same year. In 1998 he was conferred 'Rangsar Literary Award' by Bodo Sahitya Sabha for that short story book. 'Sirinai Mandar' (The fallen Modar), 'Sakhondra' (Child-lifter) and 'Mem Daodwi' (Egg Madam) were published in 1984, 1987 and 1995 respectively. He composed five short story books during his lifetime. Besides publishing short story books he also wrote short stories in Magazines which are not published as a book till today.

1.2 Data for the Study

The main data for the proposed study are taken from the original text of N.K. Brahma. The present research seeks to examine the various Stylistics features used by the Bodo writer, N.K. Brahma in the following five short story books. From the below given selected books, we can visualise clear picture of the author.

- Hagra Guduni Mwi (1972)
- Silingkhar(1972)
- Sirinai Mandar (1984)
- Sakhondra (1987)
- Mem Daodwi (1995)

1.3 Hypothesis

The hypothesis of the proposed study is to bring into the light the use of stylistics in Bodo literature, how the writer uses style in his writings by using different types of linguistic and non-linguistic techniques such as simile, metaphor, phrases and idioms, syntax, affixes and suffixes etc. This study is expected to benefit the learners of the Bodo literature and language. It will also be helpful for the upcoming researchers to study the uses of stylistics in the short stories of Nilkamal Brahma in particular and Bodo literature in general.

1.4 Methodology

The descriptive analysis method will be adopted for this research. The main methodology lies in identifying and analysing the various linguistic features with respect to the context and content in the literature survey taken for the study. For the proposed study the data will be collected from both primary and secondary sources. The observation method will be used to collect the primary data. For the secondary data, any kind of printing documents such as books, published papers, monthly or annual magazines, journals, fictions etc. related to the topic will be used.

II. STYLE ADOPTED BY NILKAMAL BRAHMA IN HIS SHORT STORIES

As mentioned earlier Nilkamal Brahma is called the Emperor of Bodo short stories. His short stories can be put in the same level with the short stories of famous writers of the world. Therefore, in this topic I have chosen to study the style of his writings.

2.1 Abrupt beginning

Abrupt beginning is an important feature of short stories. Abrupt beginning and ending are seen in the short stories of Nilkamal Brahma which makes the readers enthusiastic enough to know about the short story as well as to feel that the story is not finished. When we read his short story we remember the famous line "Shesh hoyo hoilo na shesh" by Rabindra Nath Tagore. A few examples are given below.

The beginning of the short stories of Nilkamal Brahma is always impressive. He uses flash forward technique in the short story "Jwngha Nongablanba". The story begins from the middle part and with a single sentence.

'Nui Gindri p^ha nη halai taη ahumba?' (Hagra Guduni Mwi, 2014, pg.15)
(Eng. Trans: Hello Gindri, Wouldn't you go?)

Here abrupt beginning is seen while Mwnsing's wife Mwnbari enquires to Gindri about watching a drama in their village tonight.

“Driver garia bəhən, Surek^haha cəllegeni səm jabai.” (Silingkhar, 2017, pg.1)

(Eng. Trans: Driver get the car ready, it’s the college time for Surekha.

Here abrupt beginning is reflected while the main character of the story Bimlendu who is a driver of Electronics India private Limited is asked to get the car ready by his Master in the short story “Silingkhar”.

2.2 Uses of Poetic Language

Uses of poetic words and languages are seen in the writings of Nilkamal Brahma. When one’s thought go deep inside an idea or subject then the words come out unknowingly. Generally, those words bring melodies and vibrancy in the writings. This is also a part of stylistics which is to be analyzed. A few examples are given below.

“December Danni srw srw arənt^haibadi suhablainai bar. Pasig^hatni Siyaŋ dūima serni aŋ tat^həfūinai hotelni sideni ventilatorkūu bra bra urblaŋ nū najadawŋ . Baijūāo barnai barni hūu hūu sūdwāba Pasig^hatni market squareni imaratp^hrao sūugraonāni Siyaŋ ni ra ra sūdwābjawŋ gūrwābhūidawŋ .” (Sirinai Mandar, 2016, pg.1)

(Eng. Trans: It’s the frozen ice like cold wind of December month. The wind is trying to open the ventilator of the hotel nearby Pasighat’s Siyang River where I am halting. The sound of the wind has mixed with the sound of the Siyang River by striking at the Market Square’s building of Pasighat.)

2.3 Folk Belief

Folk Belief of Bodo society is a remarkable feature of Nilkamal Brahma’s Short stories. Here we can found so many folk believes of Bodo society. Such are given below-

“Nəŋ margūu Sənibara səni gūnāŋ baraimar. Maba mūnse jat^haōni jat^haidi jagūn bek^hūu aŋ hōmnū hak^hadūngmūn. Office aō t^haŋ nū wngk^harnai sōmāo Ashinini gabjrihōrnai, officeāo dūi lūŋ nai sōmāo mit^higunai befūrūw fūrman. Arūbāo bungnūstū bāodūng aŋ , p^hūŋ aō sik^hargrūmmūnā k^hantal dalai gūranāo daok^ha ga ga gabnai nudūngmūn aŋ .” (Silingkhar, 2017, pg.61)

(Eng. Trans: It is true; Saturday is the day of bad luck. Something unexpected would happen today, I came to know about it early. Ashini’s calling me from the back while I was proceeding for the office, blocking at the throat while drinking water in office are proof of that. I also forgot to mention, today in the early morning I saw a crow cawing on a dry branch of jackfruit tree).

2.4 Loan Words

Writers are always independent in using of language and words that forms the style of writings. Nilkamal Brahma used loan words to reveal some of his feelings and to make his writings more effective. To fulfil the need of some words not available in the concerned language he adopted the words from English, Assamese, Bengali, Hindi and Sanskrit. One can also find out the using of Hybrid words in his writings. It is to be mentioned here that it is not easy for anyone to find out the origin of a word from which that has been derived because in the earlier times people used to live together in the society and words were also exchanged among them unknowingly. A few examples are given below:

From Assamese

Nilkamal Brahma used many Assamese words in his short stories as he studied in Assamese medium and belonged to the state of Assam where Assamese is the basic medium of communication among different groups and communities. These are given below-

Tumi K^hub Bhal. (You are so good) (Sirinai Mandar, 2016, Pg.11)

Kai jane (Who Knows) (Mem Daodwi, 1995, pg.12)

Hinjāoa buŋ w- ‘hoi’ (The Woman says- ‘yes’)

Apart from the above we can also find Assamese words like nimakharam (Nonsense), Surāŋ (Illegal), Hōitu (May be) and more.

From English

Uses of English words at the middle of the conversation are also one of the important features of Nilkamal Brahma’s short stories. He also used so many English sentences in his short stories. In his writings English is used to show superiority and glamour of the speaker as well as when talking to other language speakers which deeply rooted in most of his short stories. English is seen more frequently used among the other languages’ words in his writings, e.g.

Wao: how fine you are Hamp^he! (Hagra Guduni Mwi, 2014, pg.1)

What nonsense who are you? (ibid, pg.50)

Come in Mrs. Nayar. (Sirinai Mandar, 2016, pg.1)

Uncle don’t be late (Sakhondra : 2017, pg.26)

She is quite fit for your society (ibid, pg.27)

It is a clear case of Suicide (Silingkhar, 2017, pg.5)

You reside in this house? (Mem Daodui, 1995, pg.5)

Besides the above, we can also see English words like Railway Level, dialogue, winter vacation, confidential, file, signature, life, duty, service and many more.

From Hindi

Hindi words are also seen in the short stories of Nilkamal Brahma. Such are given below:

Thik hain (Ok) (Hagra Guduni Mwi, 2014, pg.1)

Sabbash (Word expressing thanks, applause) (ibid, pg.1)

Badli (Change) (ibid, 40)

Badnam (Bad reputation) (Silingkhar 2017, pg.21)

Pasand (Like) (ibid, pg.18)

Apsōch (Regret) (ibid, pg.19)

Banao (Do it) (ibid, pg.46)

Suk^hriya (Thank You) (ibid, pg.50)

From Bengali

Nilkamal Brahma used many Bengali words in the middle of the conversation in his short stories. Nilkamal Brahma, who hails from Kokrajhar, an area having habitation of many Bengali speakers and in the middle of the Bodo words using of Bengali words are like the habit of the Bodo peoples of that area. Brahma was also not an exception to that, e.g.

সভ^hya (Uncivilized) (Hagra Guduni Mwi, 2014, pg.5)

Sak^hor (Servant) (ibid, pg 39)

Koto Aram (So good) (ibid, pg 39)

K^hurma-Gusti (Relatives) (Silingkhar, 2017, pg.57)

G^hush (Bribe) (ibid, pg. 61)

Kibajani (may be) (Sakhondra, 2017 pg.59)

From Sanskrit

A few words of Sanskrit are also seen in the short stories of Nilkamal Brahma. This are-
St^han-kal-patr-ved” (Using of insensible words anywhere) (Hagra Guduni Mwi, 2014, pg.9)

Mantra (Mantra) (ibid, pg.23)

Ahuti (Oblation) (Poured into the fire in sacrifices) (ibid, pg.23)

Bes^hya (Prostitute) (ibid, pg.40)

From Perso-Arabic

Nilkamal Brahma also used a few Perso-Arabic words in his short stories. Such words are given below.

Hajir (Attend) (Hagra Guduni Mwi, 2014, pg.51)

Hukum (Order) (Sirinai Mandar, 2016, pg.32)

Andaz (Perception) (Sakhondra, 2017, pg.48)

2.5 Uses of Reduplication

Reduplication is a word formation process in which meaning is expressed by repeating all or a part of word. Simply, reduplication stands for repetition of a word or syllable. Generally, reduplication can broadly be divided into two-

a. Complete Reduplication

b. Partial Reduplication

Use of Complete or Partial Reduplication is found in Nilkamal Brahma’s Short story.

Complete Reduplication:

Complete reduplication is a repetition of root, stem or a single word. It occurs in all major grammatical categories such as Noun, Verbs, Adjective, Adverb, Wh-question types etc.

Example from the adjective reduplication used in the fiction, like:

“Lasui-lasui abo Durmaoni nōa jui ni munabilini adda janasui fuidui mun.” (Silingkhar, 2017, pg.28)

(Eng. Trans: In slow sister Durmao’s house became the place of our evening adda).

Example of Wh-question types, such as

“Ma ma bui k^hui hinjao?” (ibid, pg.71)

(Eng. Trans: What the lady has said?)

Partial Reduplication

Partial Reduplication is a repetition of only a part of the word. That part sometimes may be initial or final position of the reduplicated word. Nilkamal Brahma used partial reduplication in his short story.

Be sɔma Rahulni t^hakai baŋ sin bat^hao-t^hao aru gisint^hao. (Sirinai Mandar, 2016, pg.9)

(Eng. Trans: This time is very disgusting and dangerous for Rahul.)

Here ‘Bat^hao’ is a word meaning disgusting. t^hao, only a part of ‘bat^hao’ is reduplicated here.

2.6 Uses of Monosyllabic Words

Uses of monosyllabic words which convey full meaning are also one of the remarkable features of Nilkamal Brahma’s short stories. Examples are given below.

P^huŋ (Morning) (Hagra Guduni mwi, 2014, pg 5)

Gɔy (Battle nut) (ibid, pg.62)

ou (Yes) (ibid, pg.47)

Bar (wind) (Sirinai Mandar, 2106, pg1)

Aŋ (I) (ibid, pg. 1)

Nuuŋ (You) (ibid, pg. 5)

Nɔ (House) (Siliŋ k^har, 2017, pg.1)

San (day) (ibid, pg.31)

Raŋ (Money) (ibid, pg.66)

T^hui (Blood) (ibid, pg.33)

Juuŋ (We) (Sakhondra, 2017, pg.9)

Sɔm (Time) (ibid, pg.24)

Dui (Water) (ibid, pg.51)

2.7 Uses of Multi-Syllabic Words

A-t^hi-k^hal (Now a days) (Sakhondra, 2017, pg.12)

Dui-den-gi-ri-p^hur (ledears) (ibid, pg.12)

Mu-na-bi-li (Evening) (Sirinai Mandar, 2016, pg.36)

Bar-huŋ -k^ha (Storm) (ibid, pg.36)

K^hao-k^hlab-se (Half) (Hagra Guduni Mwi, 2014, pg.1)

Bar-glaŋ -p^hu-nai (Blooming) (ibid, pg.24)

2.8 Uses of Idioms

When two or more words represent different meaning whereas there should have represented another meaning then idioms are formed. Uses of such words or idioms are also seen in his short stories.

Jarimina juwud ɔnt^haibik^ha. (Silingkhar, 2017, pg.31)

(Eng. Trans: History is too stone-hearted/cruel.)

In the short story “Buli” (Sacrifice) the main character of the story, Khwrwmdao was shot dead by the C.R.P.F when he was going to hoist flag of Bodo Sahitya Sabha. According to the author, Khwrwmdao should have occupied a remarkable place in the history of the Bodos. However, due to our selfishness his name has not been written in the history. So, the author said that the history is stone-hearted.

Gɔt^honi bima Jak^haŋ naini unao gubun houajur megon k^heblainaikuu hinjaɔwura gaɔsurnu mujaŋ muana. (Sakhondra, 2017, pg.3)

(Eng. Trans: Women themselves don’t like falling in love with another man after becoming mother of child).

The word megon khebnai is used here as idiom to mean ‘falling in love’ in the short story “Gwjwn Nagirnanwi”(Searching for Peace). Raju’s mother doesn’t like Babul’s mother loving with the friend of Babul’s father.

“Munbariya k^hugakou mut^huyuu.” (Hagra Guduni mwi, 2014, pg.17)

(Eng. Trans: Mwnbari shuts her mouth).

In the story “Jwngba Nongablanba” Phedap, Mwnbari and Gindri while going to watch a village drama Gindri proudly tells that her husband would play an important role in the drama, but she didn’t know what the role of her husband was. When they saw Gindri’s husband taking away the dead body of the soldiers died in the war from stage then Phedap and Mwnbari were insulting Gindri which she became irritated. Mwnbari shuts her mouth seeing Gindri’s anger.

2.9 Uses of Proverbs

Using of proverbs is also one of the important features of Stylistics. Nilkamal Brahma was also not free from using such Proverbs.

“Mansia sanṭu raja janṭu, gṭsaia hṭua binanṭi janṭu” (Hagra Guduni mwi, 2014, pg.20)
(Eng. Trans: Man creates God destroys)

Here the proverb indicates that Anjima, who is the main character of the short story “Orni Begor” (Seeds of Fire), tries to establish herself as a good person in the society. She has so many dreams. So, she studies hard to pass the HSLC exam by securing good marks. On the other hand her parents try to make arrangement for her marriage which is against of her wish and prohibits her from study. To represent this sentence N.K Brahma used the proverb man creates God destroys.

“Biji k^handakou sal rojong k^halamnai.” (Sirinai Mandar, 2016, pg.43)
(Eng. Trans: Making a small needle equal to a big thorn of Sal tree)

Here the proverb “Biji khandakou sal rojong khalamnai” means “making a small incident a big one” has been taken from the short story “Mwdwi Arw Gwlwmdwi” (Tears and Sweat). In the story, the main character, Gwmbwr had to stay as servant in Mwnbaru’s house after the death of his father. Mwnbaru had two daughters named Hainasri and Hangmasri. Hainasri didn’t like Gwmbwr, but Hangma loved Gwmbwr from the childhood. Once in the Bwisagu celebration, friends throw jokes on Hangmasri regarding Gwmbwr that makes her elder sister Hainasri irritated and she tells to her father. Her father becomes angry and drives away Gwmbwr from their home

2.10 Uses of Simile

Simile is a figure of speech, in which a more or less realistic comparison is made, using ‘like’ or ‘as’. ‘Badi’ is used in Bodo Language to represent ‘like’ or ‘as’. Uses of similes are also seen in the fictions of Nilkamal Brahma.

“Galp^ha gṭunaṭ jibou badi katiyaṭ jaykou mṭunṭu bek^hounṭu sounṭu lubṭuiyṭu. (Hagra Guduni mwi, 2014, pg.4)
(Eng.trans: like the serpent having hood wants to bite anybody nearby)

In the short story “Hagra Guduni Mwi” (Deer of deep forest) Samila’s mind is compared with serpent. As the serpent bites anybody passing nearby Samila also wants to give her love and affection to somebody and wants to be satisfied.

“Kṭorok^hṭa sṭur sṭur daṭ anat^ha gidiṭ nai badi mṭundṭuṭ mṭun aṭ.”(Silingkhar, 2017, pg.25)
(Eng.trans: I felt dizziness like moving of Danganatha (a kind of weaving instrument)).

The above sentence is taken from the short story “Aina Gongse Mwkhang Gongnwi” (One mirror two faces). In the story, the author met Bijit when he was travelling to Darjeeling and they stayed in the same hotel after reaching thereby. Bijit’s wife was suffering from heart disease from one and half year of their marriage and was admitted in the Heart Sanatorium of Darjeeling. The author went to the hospital on the request of Bijit to see his wife. However, surprisingly, the woman was none other than Adelina Marak whom he used to love once. Therefore, he was shocked and felt dizziness like moving of Danganata (a kind of weaving instrument).

2.11 Uses of Metaphor

Metaphor is one of the Figurative Language in literature that an author uses to convey his message through the story. In a Metaphor, an implied comparison is made between two different things, ideas, actions and kinds. Using of Metaphor is one of the remarkable features of Nilkamal Brahma’s short stories. Such examples are:

“Sarmilayabṭu dahalagṭi foraik^haṭ bai janaṭ gṭaṭ sṭok^hṭa. Bit^hṭa magazineni emp^hṭot^har. (Hagra Guduni Mwi, 2014, pg. 8)

(Eng. Trans: Sarmila might have read the magazine by now. She is the insect of Magazine).

Here, Sarmila, the main female character of the story “Hagra Guduni Mwi” (Deer of the deep forest) is called the insect of magazine. Because, she can’t live without reading if she gets any new magazine. She sinks into it and forgets everything while she reads Magazines.

“Hṭrabṭu dlam Burṭibai” (Silingkhar, 2017, pg.12)

(Eng.trans: Midnight has become so old.)

In the short story “Hor Gejerni Tragi-Comedy” (Tragic-Comedy of midnight) midnight is compared with old woman. In the story it is seen that a rich man tries to make a maid (Swmbaosri) his second wife and establishes physical relationship with her. However, the first wife doesn’t allow him to do. Therefore, one night Swmbaosri leaves the house with a foetus inside her womb but she is found by the rich man accompanied by a few people of the village besides the author’s house. They tried to take back Swmbaosri and at last she also agrees to go back with them. At that time author realizes that it has become late night.

2.12 Uses of Hyperbole

Hyperbole is derived from Greek word meaning “excess”. It is a figure of speech which gives an exaggeration of ideas for the sake of emphasis. Nilkamal Brahma used the form of Hyperbole to stress and concentrated the real emotion of characters in his short stories. Some examples are given below:

“Arunani sṭona fit^hṭr rajak^hṭu lananṭi sṭurha mani esebarṭ mṭunsa.” (Sakhondra, 2017, pg.49)

(Eng. Trans: Who has so much jealous with Aruna's son Raja).

In the short story "Sakhondra" (Child-lifter) hyperbole is reflected when Aruna's son Raja is compared with Gold as her son is as valuable as Gold.

"Mulugni meṅ naia Samilani mūdumk^huū nak^hreb fūiyū." (Hagra Guduni Mwi, 2014, pg.7)

(Eng. Trans: The world's whole tiredness pressed Samila's entire body).

Here Hyperbole is reflected when the main character of the story "Gwswni akhol megonni mohor" samila sends a love letter to Nikolson Daimary through their servant Lalu's hand and the reply was not as she expected. She becomes very sad. To express Somila's feelings this line is used in the short story.

III. CONCLUSION

In the above, I have discussed Stylistics and the writing style of Nilkamal Brahma. Stylistics studies the use of language in literature. It analyzes how the speaker or writer so as to make their story or given utterance more fruitful and successful uses the techniques. Nilkamal Brahma is the emperor of the short story in Bodo literature. So, it is very important to study how he wrote the short stories, what language techniques he used or how he used stylistics as a whole. Therefore, attempt has been made in this paper to analyze the stylistics used by Nilkamal Brahma in his short stories.

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