



RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Application of Stylistics Devices on the Poem: "Fire and Ice" by Robert Frost

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ABSTRACT

The article is basically dealt with an application of stylistics devices in Robert Frost's poem "Fire and Ice". The present investigation will focus on stylistics devices. This poem is about a question of how the world will come to an end, either by the fire or by the ice. Both forces are very damaging in nature and have equal but opposite features.

Key Words: Style, Stylistics, Analysis, Fire, Ice, Robert Frost.

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INTRODUCTION

Robert Frost (1874-1963) is one of the most important American poets of the 20th century. Although he wrote in traditional forms, his language and themes, such as doom or the solitude of humans in nature or society, were very innovative for his time. He was celebrated as an important American poet during his life, winning four Pulitzer Prizes. His poems, many of them focusing on his beloved New England, continue to be studied in classrooms more than 100 years after they were written.

Fire and Ice:

*Some say the world will end in fire,
Some say in ice.
From what I've tasted of desire
I hold with those who favor fire.
But if it had to perish twice,
I think I know enough of hate
To say that for destruction ice
Is also great
And would suffice.*

.....**Robert Frost: 1923**

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To investigate the importance of Stylistics in day to day life.
2. To evaluate the use of Stylistics devices in poetry.
3. To pave way for the new researchers in the field of Stylistics.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The method which is used to analyze the given piece of poetry is stylistics analysis. Stylistics devices are further categorized in the analysis of the poetry such as various figures of speech as for as sound devices are also investigated by the researchers.

FINDINGS

The researchers tried their best to provide quality of work. They did it with keen and utmost interest to flourish all mentioned devices so that new researchers can further get a

clear glimpse to the discipline. The following devices are analyzed in a beautiful way by the researchers.

RHYMING SCHEME

The rhyme scheme of "Fire and Ice" is an ABAABCBCB style, with the words "fire" and "ice" being rhymed with themselves within the poem. This scheme means the poem falls soundly within the category of open form, in which Frost did not follow any typical poem formation in regards to his structuring of "Fire and Ice." The rhyme scheme works to effectively create the necessary connections between words in the poem. For instance, with "desire" being rhymed with "fire," the two words are then related on a level that is deeper than what is explicitly stated by Frost, a necessary level that works to enhance the symbolism of the poem.

SOUND DEVICES

1. Alliteration:

Frost repeats the letter F at the beginning of his words, creating alliteration.

*From what I've tasted of desire
I hold with those who favor fire*

2. Assonance:

In the 4th line, the long O sound is repeated, creating assonance.

In 5th line, the short I sound is repeated.

*I hold with those who favor fire
But if it had to perish twice,*

3. Consonance:

Frost repeatedly uses the same consonants in a line to create consonance.

*I think I know enough of hate
To say that for destruction ice*

4. Meter:

The poem varies between two meter lengths (either eight syllables or four syllables) and uses three sets of interwoven rhymes, based on "-ire," "-ice," and "-ate."

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

1. Parallelism:

The poem starts off with parallelism. Line 1 and line 2 both have the same beginning, "some say..."

*Some say the world will end in fire
Some say in ice. (Parallelism)*

2. Symbolism:

Symbolism is the key of this poem. Symbols create a multidimensional complexity to the poem. Because of the deeper meaning that fire and ice take on, the application and understanding of the poem is altered. While the poem still is interpreted as a warning against these behaviors in the broad scheme of the world, in concordance with the war that was occurring, it also begins to take on a more personal level. Namely, this is due to the personal connection that is shared by the creation of these symbols, with fire and desire, ice and hate.

*Some say the world will end in fire
From what I've tasted of desire
I think I know enough of hate
To say that for destruction ice
Is also great.*

In the poem, Frost uses fire to represent desire and ice to represent hatred. He is trying to say that the desires of humans and their hatred towards one another could end the world.

3. Allusion:

When Frost is writing about fire, he is alluding to global warming. When he writes about ice, he is talking about ice age.

*Some say the world will end in fire
Some say in ice*

4. Imagery:

The concept of fire and ice carry with deep connotations that, in and of themselves, prompt the recollection of the sensations they embody. For example, fire elicits the feeling of heat and light, but also burning and pain. This particular image is well used by Frost to create a duality with both fire and ice that then draws attention to the nature of the warning he creates.⁴Frost utilizes imagery by appealing to his reader's senses.

From what I've tasted of desire

5. Word choice:

The selection of individual words to create specific effects. This poem has very easy and simple language.

6. Understatement:

One of the most effective tools used by frost to give this poem its essential meaning.

*Some say the world will end in fire
Some say in ice*

Frost says some say twice in the first two lines. On the surface, this represents a group of people who are of the opinion of the manner in which the world ends. However, by saying "some" he is minimizing the size of this group, making it seem insignificant, which stands in direct contrast to what frost, is creating on the surface, namely the downfall of humanity.

And would suffice

It gives a poem very abrupt ending leaving the reader with the sense that the poem has not entirely concluded.

7. Antithesis:

Fire is antithesis of ice and vice versa.

HANDLING OF THEME:

This poem, only nine lines long is a brilliant example of Frost literary style. The major theme for this poem is the human passion that is love and hatred like fire and ice. Robert Frost's brief poem "Fire and Ice" refers to two modes of ending the world: fire (metaphor for war, apocalypse, being swallowed up by a gigantic explosion of the sun into a supernova) and ice (metaphor for ice age, cooling, dying of the sun and the consequent extinction of all life).

The poem investigates the destructive power of human passion (metaphors of desire and hate) through the symbolism of cosmic destruction by fire or ice. Fire is linked with desire; ice with hatred. The speaker knows both, and knows that both are strong enough to end the world (i.e., the human race). One has to admire that final suffice; a magnificent understatement, it further shows the power of a rhyme to close a poem.

"Fire and Ice" bears many of the characteristics that represent the body of work for Robert Frost. It is written in a simple manner, using a language set and vernacular that is designed to be easily understood. As is also a trend with Frost in his poetry, the subject matter of the poem deals deeply with human nature, exploring the implicit human emotions of desire and hatred. This subject matter, too, has a large capacity to be relatable to the audience, as it shares in collective human experience, in feelings that are experienced by all. Also in concurrence to the habits of Frost, these darker, deeper themes are presented in contrast

to the simplicity and openness of the actual language of the poem, done intentionally to highlight the underlying theme. As a poem, this work also represents a significant break from the larger body of work of Robert Frost. While many of his poems are regionalist in nature, dealing with common aspects of life of New England, this poem does not exhibit the heavily regionalist nature, instead exhibiting a complete lack of it.

CONCLUSION

The poem "Fire and Ice" is the simple and unique poem that is written by Robert Frost. We can learn about the style of language as far as the author and deeper understanding about the aim and message of the poem by analysis. The writer considers an old question of the age through which he wants to prove that whether the world will end in fire or in ice. This is similar to another age old question: whether it would be preferable to freeze to death or burn to death. The speaker determines that either option would achieve its purpose sufficiently well.

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