

Analytical Study of Symbolism in Literary Texts: A Pragma-Stylistic Approach

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Abstract : We may find multiple functions that are required to exist in order for meaning, in any certain context, to manifest and act accordingly. Pragmatic function and symbolic function need to be contributing in a combined effort towards that manifestation in order for meaning to be acquired or achieved from within a structure too complex to detect meaning in it by employing any other means. This paper inspects symbolism pragma-stylistically in literary texts. Thus, it principally aims at showing the ways writers utilize symbolism to contribute to the themes of their works and, consequently, pinpointing the most frequently flouted maxim involved in symbolic interpretations in addition to the reason(s) behind the writer's exploitation of that maxim in the literary work. E. E. Cummings' play *Him* constitutes rich data for the present study. Thus, to achieve its aims, the present study hypothesizes that the descriptions of scenes, the playwright's remarks, and the characters' references are all manipulated symbolically to contribute to the themes of the play. It is also hypothesized that the maxim of manner is the most frequently flouted maxim involved in symbolic interpretations in the play, which comes as a result of the intended ambiguity and obscurity manipulated in the descriptions of the scenes, the playwright's remarks and the characters' references. In order to achieve the aims of the study and test its hypotheses, a theoretical background about symbolism in general and symbolism from pragma-stylistic points of view is presented. Then, (six) extracts of *Him* according to Eco's (1984) model Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language are analyzed. The findings of the analysis verify the above-mentioned hypotheses.

Keywords : pragmatic function, stylistic function, Symbolism, pragma-stylistics, Cummings

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