Methods, Models, And Strategies for Studying Lyrical Text

By

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Abstract

The aim of this article is to explain and categorize the most viable approaches and techniques used in lyrical text analysis. To attain this, numerous types of methods are considered, among which, the formalist, structuralist, biographical, psychoanalytical as well as social and ideological methods. This is accomplished through the investigation and illustration of examples that are taken from lyrical poems of Albanian literature and authors of foreign literature. The collected data is analysed to arrive at the overall findings and conclusions of the study, where the selected poems are used for the theoretical interpretation, primarily focused on the theoretical aspect of the lyrical text analysis and the ways it approaches discourse analysis. In this regard, we can explain it through a variety of questions that are subject to defining the analysis; for example: can the structure of these models be composed, or what is the best way to approach a lyrical text? Consequently, dozens of illustrations and examples are provided as an answer to that inquiry. As a result, there are numerous methods investigated for analysing a lyrical text, as well as different components are found for a more complete and accurate analysis.

Keywords: Literary genre, interpretation, tittle, context, poetic structure, narrator, theme, etc.

1. Introduction

Lyrical poetry is a short poem that communicates the speaker's personal emotions and feelings. It generally has songlike aspects. A lyric, which was originally intended to be sung and accompanied by musical instruments, now refers to a large category of non-narrative poetry that includes elegies, odes, and sonnets. Lyrical poetry, as opposed to narrative poetry, does not have to tell a story.

A lyrical poem is a single speaker's intimate expression of emotion. These poems were usually sung to other instruments or read while being accompanied by the lyre, a harp-like instrument from which lyric poetry gets its name. In analysing lyrical poetry, we should consider at least two fundamental features: a) A lyrical poem is an individual speaker's expression of feeling; b) A lyric poem is extremely musical and might use poetic devices such as rhyme and meter. Literary critics should divide lyric poetry into three types: lyrics of vision, lyrics of thought, and lyrics of emotion. However, this classication is not juniversally accepted.

Therefore, the paper aims at explaining and classifying some of the methods and elements of lyrical text analysis, a process that will be accompanied by concrete analysis and examples from fragments and lyrical poems in Albanian and foreign literature. So, in this study, we don`t aim to give a historical explanation of the birth and development of poetry, nor its differentiation from other poetic texts, but we will give some models and ways of analysing lyrical texts, or poetry. Therefore, in our opinion, this short scientific paper is a modest effort, but it can be of great use, especially to researchers and students who are in the first steps of their path in science.

2. Methods

The methods that we will use for the realization of research, analysis and interpretation will be mainly qualitative and comparative methods, accompanied and used according to the need and appropriateness with other processes and methods to achieve the realization of synthesis, such as; descriptive, abstraction, etc. With the help of theoretical literature, research, and necessary materials related to this topic, we will be able to make a presentation of the issue in terms of classification, naming, analysis, and interpretation of lyrical texts.

This paper also aims to present some forms and models that can be used to perform lyrical text analysis. Of course, there will also be processes such as: sources, literature consultation, data collection, analysis of lyrical texts, interpretation of the results found, extraction of meaning, and realization of possible analysis models.

3. Discussion and Interpretation

Lyrical texts are texts in which an inner world of emotions, feelings are created and felt, and the display of the inner world through verses prevails. Somehow, as J. Culler asserts, starting from G.W.F. Hegel, who says that "*The lyrical poet absorbs the external world, stamps it with inner consciousness, and gives expression to this enriched poetic inner life, this subjectivity." But this subjectivity is "not the expression of personal affect nor the articulation of individual experience* " (Culler, 2015). So, to understand and analyse the lyric text, we must enter its world, not only start from surface elements but also enter them accompanying, as Culler points out: "*We must focus on the ritualistic elements of the lyric,"* (Culler, 2015), which can explain and make clearer that inner world which the lyric text presents to us.

In terms of structure, we can say that the lyrics in antiquity were written in verse just like the other genres, but it is the only one that has preserved this way of constructing it. The other genders have changed over time; they are no longer written in verse. Although, according to Aristotle (2008), their differentiation and distinction were also made because of their fundamentally different natures. Ancient lyric poetry in the first stage of creation went through "*tendentious didactic*" (Xhaxhiu, 2004) poetry, to gradually take on its original features by developing in its various forms as *"lyrical, choral, monodic, elegy, iambic poetry*" (Xhaxhiu, 2004), etc.

Poetry (lyric text) is a diverse text with the richest forms, uses, and creations, which has led to a variety of approaches, methods, and analyses over time. However, each of them tries to highlight the value of the text and its essential meanings on which it is built and displays its world. Therefore, there are several ways to analyse a lyrical text, as well as the

components or elements that need to be included to have a more complete and accurate approach. In this regard we can consider numerous questions which helps us better define the analysis, however, one might be: Can the structure of these models be constructed, or what would be the best way to approach a lyrical text? And the answer to that question will be given through the following models and examples.

3.1 Context analysis

One of the essential elements that must be analysed in a poem is the context. Through it we understand the external elements that can help reveal the inner meanings of the lyrical text. For its complete study and analyses, the known methods are used which are called as extra literary methods, whose aim are by dealing with the external elements of the text, but not with the text itself. Consequently, the most appropriate would be the positivist ones pointed out by Abrutyn (2013), specifically, biographic ones studied by Wellek and Warren (1949) and historic ones, which are very important methods for the interpretation of literature through its connection with the biography, "*society and the context of its writing*" (Wellek and Warren, 1949).

But how can we discover and understand the context of a poem? To better understand the context of a poem we need to ask questions during the analysis such as; 1. Who wrote the poem / lyrical text? When we ask this question, we answer it with the information we have about the author and the authorial literary context is created. 2. Do biographical information about the author help us to perform a more accurate analysis? This fact during the analysis we must judge ourselves properly, always taking with a little reservation the connections of these two worlds, the artistic and the biographical of the author. 3. When was this poem written and in what place?

These are historical data which help us better understand the historical context of a literary work. So, the time when a work is written, the place and the moment, that is, the "*conditions in which literary works are born*" (Solar, 2001) which were practiced and appeared in the study of literature, as well as which would later focus on the author itself and the characteristics of the people to whom it belongs as it is said by Scherer (1886), or to race, environment, and moment which is a point of view that we find in Wellek (1959), which are in fact factors that may influence the meaning of literary works. Likewise, it must be acknowledged that the lyrical text and literature in themselves is not a world completely detached from the society in which it is created as long as "*the poet himself is a member of society.*" (Wellek and Warren, 1949). And as the history of literature has shown us, it often serves society for change, as it is noted by Wellek and Warren (1949). Literature also has a social function, or *"destination"* that cannot be merely individual. So, we have to look at it and judge it closely related to these elements. So, the next question might be; 4. Which literary works were written and published belongs the time of this work? If in the above question we discovered the historical context of poetry, with this question we can discover the literary context.

This element is also extra-literary, so it has nothing to do with the content of the text, but it can affect this content and help us to understand it. Because by investigating which works have been published simultaneously with the work we are analysing, and including other works by the same author, we understand the spirit of the time, we understand whether they belong to the same literary movement. We understand according to which poetics they were created, etc.

3.2 The study of title

The title in lyrical texts is important because the title has an orienting, symbolic, explanatory character and sometimes in the title we understand the essence of what is in the lyrical text. Therefore, to decompose the title, we must use textual, formalist and philological methods. So, we will read the lyrics / poem several times, then we can ask;

1. What does this title mean? Does it have a direct or metaphorical meaning? Metonymic or symbolic? Because based on the definition of its meaning we will be able to understand the poetry itself.
2. What is mentioned in it (environment, name, action, state, emotion) "*Orfeu*" (Tufa, 2007), "*Old Cinema*" (Kadare, 2005), "*The love song of J. Alfred Prufrock*" (Eliot, 1917), "*Drunk as Drunk*" (Neruda, 2011) etc. By discovering what is mentioned in it, we can understand the theme of poetry, which is very important to arrive at its meaning. We can understand the time or we can recognize the values and importance of the person whose title bears his name and associate with that name all the information we have about him, thus reaching the meaning of the lyrical text.
3. When it comes to the title, we should also have the ability to investigate what kind of title it is structurally. So, is it a noun title, indicative as i.e., "*Beauty*" (Frashëri, 1890) "*Raven*" (Poe, 2013) "*Landscape*" (Lorca, 2012) etc. Or is it explanatory that has a verb in it such as; "*When I read the book*" (Witman, 1971), "*Poem written at morning*" (Stevens, 2004). Or the third model figurative title; "*Cantico del sole*" (Pound, 2009), "*A broken melody*" (Migjeni, 2002).

3.3 The study of style

When it comes to this element that we should definitely have as part of our analysis, we have gone inside of the text. We no longer have to deal with the external elements of the text, but with the text itself. The text is what gives us the meaning, through its form and content. Here are very suitable formalist methods, also presented by Eikhenbaum (1994) which see the form and through it derives the meaning, the stylistic ones as we found in Richard Bradford (1997) that stop at the author's style and deepen his characteristics and the psychoanalytic ones that decompose elements and details of the text and tends to interpret them from external elements, which are dealt more with elements of the author himself (details of life, allude and interpret the meaning of the text). Even in this element as in what we observed above it is very good to investigate the style we must ask some questions, such as;

1. Is the poem dedicated to anyone? (Girlfriend, a personality, colleague, friend, etc., whether it has personal, historical or national value, etc.). Here, through the methods of psychoanalytic presented also by Eagle (1987) criticism and psychoanalysis as it is studied by Grunbaum (1984) we can interpret and draw conclusions about the author's connection with the person who devoted it to him, and of course we derive meanings of the lyrical text that we are analysing.
2. Is it a lyrical poem or poetry? Here, too, we investigate features of the author's style. So, does it have a more lyrical, emotional, melancholic style or is it epic, satirical, ironic, impulsive and combative. Knowing these details, we also understand the symbolism or reasons for writing a certain lyrical text. Even this feature we can discover and hypothesize about it through psychoanalytic methods, trying to explain the presence of a certain style, based on the character and behaviour of the author himself. Other texts can be used to support arguments such as diaries, letters, conversations, feedback, speeches, etc.

3. What verses (4, 6, 8, 12 syllables) and stanzas are used? (distiki, tercina, katrena) etc. Here we enter the technical aspect and see concretely the construction of the text, we are in its form, so we must use rhetoric - metrics, which helps us for this part of the analysis. We can also ask whether the forms give a certain meaning? Why it is written in a certain verse and not in another etc. Here then we have to use formalist theories, to see the connection that forms and content have with each other in the poetry we have taken to analyse.

4. Is it narrative character - expression of feelings or is it impersonal? This question is very helpful to understand the nature of poetry, by reading it we understand which character prevails in that lyrical work. Do we simply have expressions of feelings or is it something more, that is, poetry gives us a message. We see the case of the poem "*Go Lovely Rose*". In his lyric poem the poet Edmund Waller speaks to the flower and through this, he tries to convey all the emotional effects to the speaker`s beloved person. The speaker tries to use the flower, as a symbol of beauty and love, to convey his love to the woman that does not seem to be replying. However, the speaker tries to remind her that it is worth loving and admiring as the time is very short. The appreciation of the beauty and pure love is evident. Surprisingly, the speaker at the end of the lyrical poem tells her to "die", after she speaks to him, which is the best thing how she could save from the time waste, that was the main point. The poem has a very consistent rhyme scheme of "ababb", with an iambic structure consisting of sets of unstressed and stressed syllable, Rose", where the lines of 1 and 3 in each stanza consists of four syllables, or two iambs, meanwhile lines 2, 4, and 5, consists of eight syllables and have four iambs.

> *"Go, lovely Rose-*
> *Tell her that wastes her time and me,*
> *That now she knows,*
> *When I resemble her to thee,*
> *How sweet and fair she seems to be.*
> *Tell her that's young,*
> *And shuns to have her graces spied,*
> *That hadst thou sprung*
> *In deserts where no men abide,*
> *Thou must have uncommended died."* (Waller, 2012)

The same emotion we see in the first two stanzas of the famous lyric poem written by Robert Burns, where he expresses deep emotions about his beloved person, in the poem "*O, Wert thou in the cauld blast*", where the musical quality of the poem makes it viable to be played by instruments.

> *On yonder lea, on yonder lea,*
> *My plaidie to the angry airt,*
> *I'd shelter thee, I'd shelter thee.*
> *Or did Misfortune's bitter storms*
> *Around thee blaw, around thee blaw,*
> *Thy bield should be my bosom,*
> *To share it a', to share it a'.* (Burns, 2001)

Another example that we can take is the poem "*Hymn of Pan*" by Shelley, which the repetitive and elliptical structure of the lyric, jointly with the rhythm and rhyme gives the

poem all elements of a lyrical song that time to time is meant to be sung. The emotional effect than becomes much stronger when it matches the rhymes and iterates the rhythms as in "highlands"- "islands", "come"- "dumb", etc.

> *"From the forests and highlands*
> *We come, we come;*
> *From the river-girt islands,*
> *Where loud waves are dumb*
> *Listening to my sweet pipings.*
> *The wind in the reeds and the rushes,*
> *The bees on the bells of thyme,*
> *The birds on the myrtle bushes,*
> *The cicale above in the lime,*
> *And the lizards below in the grass,*
> *Were as silent as ever old Tmolus was,*
> *Listening to my sweet pipings."* (Shelley, 2013)

3.3 Study of figures responsible for rhythm

Rhythm is an element, not only attractive, but also symbolic and meaningful in poetry, so during the analysis of the lyrical text this element should not be overlooked. To investigate it more accurately we must again use our metric knowledge. We need to know the rules of verse and structural construction of the lyrical text. So, in order to make it easier we could ask questions such as; 1) Why is x word repeated in this poem? And also, 2) What sound and semantic effect does the repetition of that word give? as in the present case:

> *"Pak dritë! Pak dritë! Pak dritë, o shok, o vlla.*
> *Të lutem, pak dritë në kët natë kur shpirti vuen,/*
> *kur të dhemb e s'di ç'të dhemb, e syni gjum nuk ka,*
> *urren nuk din ç'urren, don e s'din se ç'don."* (Migjeni, 2002)

3) Is the repetition more related to the meaning or sound of the poem, or to both at the same time? Then, after we have answered by analysing the text we must stop at the repetition because in order to be as accurate as possible in its investigation, we must be able to distinguish the stylistic figures of the sound and those that are realized through the repetition; Anaphora - the repetition of the same word at the beginning of verses. Epiphora - the repetition of the same word at the end of verses. Anadiplosis - the repetition of the same word at the beginning and end of a verse. Onomatopoeia - that is, the limitations. Apostrophe - exclamation point. Assonance - the repetition of sound sounds. Alliteration - the repetition of consonant sounds etc.

3.5 The study of time

Here you can guess about a time frame of poetry. So, you need to investigate the time details that that work gives, whatever it is. Details that speak to a particular season, weather or year. This element helps to get deeper into the meaning of poetry, i.e.

> *"One year after making love through the short midsummer night*
> *He walked home at dawn and noticed that the river Oi*
> *Had sunk two feet.* (Hass, 2009)

The element of time mentioned in the text, "alb: *menatë* - eng: *midnight*" not only helps in the direct meaning of the creation of a time flow, event or narrative, but can also have a symbolic function, so that it is of great importance for discovering the meaning and implications of the text, as in the following case.

Late October

Carefully
the leaves of autumn
sprinkle down the tinny
sound of little dyings (Angelou, 1994)

So, the element of time is of great importance for the decomposition of meanings and symbolism that hides the lyrical text (poetry / poem).

3.6 Study of the perspective and voice of the narrator

To discover this very important element we must use methods; textual, and psychoanalytic methods and narrative ones, to do that we can use Hühn and Sommer (2013). Therefore, even in this element of analysis, we should investigate by asking some questions related with the relationship between the narratology and the poetic works relation which is studied and presented by Müller (2011) and we can ask for example; Who is the narrator? Is it male or female? Does the voice he tells us reveal his internal world? According to Genette's terms, this phenomenon could be named as the coincidence of "*speaker's voice*" with "*internal focalization*" and in the same time "*simultaneous narration.*" (Genette, 1980).

Is the confession being made in the first, second or third person? Do we only have a presentation of the situation or do we have communication with a second person, in the form of a dialogue? What is the state of mind conveyed by the author? Is he happy or sad? What is the tone used? Satirical, ironic, serious, brutal etc. This element is very important to investigate the author's point of view, attitude and connection with poetry, but also to understand it as easily as possible. Moreover, it is also very complex and a little difficult to investigate, which is probably why different alternative answers have been given to the narrator's voice throughout the text. For example, according to Remo Cesariani, a first alternative is that: "*The poet and no one else wrote this poem*". (Ceserani, 2005). And he rightly points out that poetry theorists are right when they say that "*we should not mechanically associate the voice of one who speaks in a poetic (lyrical) text with that of the person who signed and wrote it.*" (Ceserani, 2005).

This attitude is more clearly understood if we approach the text through psychoanalytic methods, then we would join the group of critics and scholars of the lyrical / poetic text who say that "*l'incoscio del poeta ha scritto la poesia*". (Ceserani, 2005). If we say this, we have to argue with the signs that the text gives us and analyse the possible details, of course such interpretations are also aided by extra-literary elements related to vital facts and which analyse them by means of psychoanalytic methods relying on the theory of Freud (1997).

However, the problem does not end there, there are some interpretations regarding finding the voice of the narrator in poetry, where according to which poetry is written by some "superior, angelic or devilish power" (Ceserani, 2005). Yet these remain at the level of the mystery of creation, and as Ceserani puts it; "*Apparently, this answer, according to the ancient model, is the fruit of societies in which the relationship between man and the divine was intense and poets were considered prophets, magicians, followers of divine powers, who*

wrote their books under the dictation of some divine spirit." (Ceserani, 2005). Thoughts whose remnants have reached us even today, so it may happen that any critic to make his interpretation can rely on the words of poets when they say that they are influenced by their muse, that a divine spirit inspires, etc. But still, these remain elements outside the text and that do not give directly accurate and objective answers regarding the meaning and symbolism of the lyrical text.

Who else can be the voice in a poem? Who tells us the world that is appearing to us in the verses of a lyrical text? Another alternative according to Ceseran is "*the past poetic tradition".* (Ceserani, 2005). If we find this fact in our text, here we must operate by means of textual, formalistic, semiotic and philological methods, with all the methods that analyse the text and that reveal the connections and traces of other texts in the text that we have taken to analyse. This is because this theory connects the voice of the narrator in poetry with the theory of intertextuality, where according to Julia Kristeva, who is one of the most famous theorists of intertextuality (postmodernism), she expresses in her essay "*Word, Dialogue and Novel"* where the intertextuality is a mosaic of quotations;" any *text is the absorption and transformation of another ".* (Kristeva, 1986). So, to understand who is speaking in the text we are analysing we will have to consider this alternative as well, because poets often play with signs of other texts, integrate them in their texts, re-functionalize them and thus build a new text that is never entirely new, neither old, but it is a creation that connects and co-functions the different arts and times in its structure. There are two other alternatives to consider at this stage of lyric text analysis. One says that he who speaks in the text is the voice of time, its soul has written it, that is, the historical context. But this can only be said if we were to discover the strong connection of the context of the text, we have taken for analysis with an x context, perhaps this interpretive alternative would also apply to the narrator's voice. Because often the historical context has such a great influence on the creators that one can even think of this alternative, as an argument in this escape we have the literature of the National Renaissance. We can say with certainty that in a large part of the lyrical creations and poems of this period have been a fruit of this time. Time has forced writers and poets to write and speak in the voice of Renaissance romanticism, which sought freedom, not slavery, which sought development and independence. So, the context has a great influence and it can happen that the poet's voice is the voice of the time, such as the poem: *"The death of Scanderbeg"* (Kadare, 2005).

And the last alternative is that "*poetry can be written by language itself".* (Ceserani, 2005). This may seem like an extreme alternative, but it can be taken as an opportunity for interpretation, especially in cases where we are dealing with experimental literature, such as poetry and avant-garde creativity, (surrealists e.g.) or as is the case with hermetic poems. Why these two cases? Because in the first case poetry becomes a combination of words as in a dream, to write as it comes to mind, it seems as if the language here flows and writes the poetry itself without asking the creator, with this kind of approach and conviction surrealism was born. While in hermeticism much importance is given to the obscuration of meaning, difficult words are selected, symbols upon symbols, metaphors upon metaphors and meaning is blocked, it seems as if these types of poems are written only to test the abilities of complex linguistic combinations. So that is written for the sake of language more than for the sake of meaning or message. However, beyond the interpretation that language may have written poetry, it remains one of the most important elements that make a lyrical creation, so we must dwell a little longer on this element.

3.7 The study of language

Language is the basic material for the construction of poetry, and in poetry occurs the highest elaboration that can be done to a language. So, in poetry we have to look for and find the features of that language. *"As Hugo Friedrich puts it: poetic language is a language that has always been differentiated from the normal function of language, that is, from communication."* (Friedrich, 1959). Being a language of a different kind, we need to explore other elements that create it, such as musicality. We observe whether it is understandable, simple or complex and hermetic and of course why the author prefers such language. Is it written in any dialect or not? Has the author created new words? Has it reactivated old words? By finding the answers to these questions we go deeper into the linguistic and stylistic innovations of the author, by highlighting the values of linguistic and artistic importance of the work we have analysed, which enable us to also better understand the narrative structure of this lyrical text, as *"Lyrics do not exclude the narration, but on the contrary, it can include it, at least up to a certain point ... "*. (Bernardelli, 2002). Because there are poets who have their greatest value in language, they are distinguished for innovations and neologisms such as Lasgushi's case, as it is studied by Rugova and Hamiti (1979), or they are distinguished for dialectal poems and for internal sounding, as is the case of Migjeni.

For the discovery of these elements, of course, the philological methods help us the most, making it possible to investigate the versions of words within the creativity of the same author. By analysing this element, we are very close to the text and its values, but also much closer to an objective and accurate interpretation.

3.8 The study of subject

The study of subject is concerned with identifying what is spoken in poetry or poem. In a way the theme is also the essence of poetry. There are times when scholars can only deal with this issue within the creativity of a particular author. This is also one of the elements that can be discovered very easily, especially if we know how to direct questions such as; What is the theme of the poem? Nature? Love? Life? Death? Patriotism? Homeland? etc. Does it have one topic or more? Identification becomes easier even if we read the poem several times, because there are poems which are more difficult to understand, due to their philosophical, hermetic nature or even because they deal with certain topics. With the discovery of the subject, we then through sociological and ideological methods make possible interpretations of the text in the prism of what is treated there. Our interpretation should also emphasize the role of such treatment of that topic has, and the reasons that such topic may have caused if treated, etc.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion we can say that in this study we have managed to provide some of the elements that should be included in an analysis of a lyrical text. They are a total of eight. Each element can be observed and analysed by different methods combined with each other, such as; philological, sociological, biographical, formalist, and psychoanalytic, etc.

The analysis conducted in this format becomes clearer and more accurate. The elements included in the analysis of the lyrical text are internal and external literary elements, but not directly related to the lyrical text, that can affect the realization of the meaning and symbolism of the text.

The analyses and examples taken from different poets in English, Albanian and Spanish poems have been adapted to the theoretical submissions in order to make them more understandable.

5. Implication of The Study

This is a short study which aims at giving a clearer orientation to the elements to be included in an analysis of a lyrical text and the methods to be used, so in the future a wider study will make it possible for some issues to be addressed more broadly and to be accompanied by more examples. The lack of numerous illustrative examples is probably a shortcoming of this study, but in the future, we can expand it and continue it in the context of a broader and more demanding study. Therefore, we think that this study regarding the explanation, recognition and orientation for the ways how we should perform the analysis of lyrical texts is a modest help for all those students and researchers who in the future will perform analysis of lyrical / poetic texts.

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