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STUDY OF POETIC LANGUAGE IN THE LIGHT OF LITERATURE AND LINGUISTICS

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Abstract: The study and analysis of poetic language is equivalent to the study of poetry in itself. The study regarding the language of poetry coincided with the beginning of deliberation on poetry at a global level. However, this deliberation based study and analysis relied more on various forms and formations of poetry instead of a proper analysis of poetic language. In other words it can be stated, that there is a long tradition and history regarding the study of poetic forms but the actual realisation of poetic language as an independent object of study was realized much later. The poetic language demands attention as a completely unique discipline in itself. An independent study regarding poetic language is believed to have taken its origin from the New Criticism and Formalism Schools of Criticism but a systematic study of poetry in respect to its special and unique nature and its meanings was established by the Indian Poetic Study Model and the Greek School of thought which put into practice the use of other techniques of poetry through its uniqueness and its difference from layman's language in comparison to the scientific and discourse based studies.

Keywords: Poetic Language, Poetic Study Model, Greek School of Thought

The Indian poetic science's phonetic lineage includes the three achieved powers of a word named 'Abhidha', 'Lakshana' and 'Viyanjana' which further point to various meaningful facets of a particular word. Out of these three powers the 'Viyanjana' power of word is directly connected to the poetic language but this particular power was not able to move much further than the literal meaning of poetic words although the phonetic principle was able to make a distinction between the language of masses from the poetic interpretations and in doing so created a distinction among the two.

In the Greek model of philosophy and tradition, Aristotle is credited with the realising literature in its traditional and basic structural form. Aristotle presented various valuable theories regarding the unique and independent existence of literature. He maintained that the poetic language and the prose language are equally as different as the poetic language and the language of the masses. Aristotle was of the opinion that the poetic picks and chooses selective words from the possibilities of the received word which transform *'poetic'* into *'the poetic'*. According to him, this process of selecting words is the main basis for poetic language formation.

In the first and second decades of the 20th century, various literary figures, philosophers and language scientists presented their wide range of theories and perceptions concerning poetic language study. Language was the common thread that bounded the Literary and language studies as the common base regarding research studies with the only difference being the main point of perception. The poetic language derives its basic ingredients and word sources from the language spoken by the masses. This shows its connections with the language and its scientific study. On the other hand, the poetic language despite deriving its ingredients from basic language becomes an independent existence in itself on the basis of the creative process. This enables its due presence in literary criticism, study and discussions.

In literary criticism and studies, the arrival of poetic language as a regulatory study theme coincided with the arrival of American New criticism and Russian Formalism. The leading figures in this particular phase of Criticism include John Crowe Ransom, Cleanthe Brooks, Allen Tate, William Wimsatt, Jan Mukarovsky, Viktor Shkolvsky, Boris Viktorovich Tomashevsky etc. These critics and thinkers accepted the poetic language as the basic independent ingredient behind literary existence. They also played a key role in realising the various differences between the art and science whilst also exploring the same difference the poetic and prose language. These theorists also give away various concepts and theories such as *foregrounding, contradiction, defamiliarization (or making strange), Multiplicity of meaning, tension, irony etc.* which hold an important place in the study of poetic language. Russian Formalism based its language difference principle on the assumption that the poet makes uses of almost the same language which is used by the other native speakers of the same language but the poetic language, its use and its expression is completely different to the use put into practice by the former. In poetry, the language is almost the same and very much recognisable but here its role and its work

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are completely different. According to Mukarovsky, the poetic language and the common language are two extensions forms of one same language. A poetic language has all the forms of its basic language. In addition to that, the poetic language also carries the reference factors of the basic language spoken in various areas and regions. In the process of poetic formation, these forms of a language are easily accessible and identifiable. As per Mukarovsky, the poetic language carries its own unique vocabulary, unique semiotics and grammatical forms which make it truly poetic.

In his research paper, 'Standard Language and Poetic Language', Mukarovsky has discussed the concept of foregrounding in detail. The basics of his ideology are reliant upon the rules which connect elevated language and the language of the poetic. However, if analysed and observed closely then it can easily be found that the language deviation commonly occurs in a narrative prose and even the same can be observed in routine conversations. Though Mukarovsky signals towards such deviation but according to him, this deviation always acts under the communication process. He also maintains that such deviation aims to attract the attention of the reader to the actual theme of the subject. He goes on to establish that the poetic language deviation takes into background, the concept of foregrounding communication. His statement adds another dimension into poetic language criticism.

Similarly, Cleanthe Brooks has also laid emphasis on the fact that you poem acquires its mean strength from a contradictory situation from wherein it takes its birth. According to her, contradiction in a particular poem arises out of a poet's language like a natural stream of water with an autonomous origin. She also uses the denotative language used by a scientist and the connotative language of a poet to explain and clarify the same concept.

The concept of *defamiliarization (or making strange)* propounded by Russian Formalist Viktor Shklovsky is another theory that demands great attention in terms of poetic language study. Shklovsky claims that the main errand of a poetic language is to attract the attention of the reader or the audience in a new-fangled manner. This task of attracting their attention is performed by the strangeness of a poetic language and it does not allow our perception to be *automatizational* in nature. According to this theory, the main purpose of a poetic creation is to dissolve the ordinary and make them stranger whilst also discarding the mundane interests of humans which have taken their essence from ordinary methodologies. A poet is the one who breaks the process of observing things in an ordinary manner and presents them with a new magnetism. Converting the ordinary into strains is totally dependent upon the poetic language. The ability of a poet enables the poetic creation and poetic action goes beyond the realms of time. The concept of *making strange* propounded by the Russian Formalists is very similar to the concept of deviation propounded by Charles Bailey as he had also spoken about the need to think and act differently from the accepted and recognised notions of the past.

There is no doubt that the formalist and new critics have contributed many valuable theories and concepts to the study of poetic language. These thinkers and critics were the first ones to recognise an independent existing methodology for poetic language and accepted the inspirational power held by poetry and its language. When the formalists were trying to identify the unique form of poetic language, Saussure was determining 'autonomy' as a compulsory element of language. He explained the autonomous nature of the 'signifier' and 'signified' through the concept of 'sign' to validate his statement. However he does not directly connect it with literature but his concept of sign would later on become the main basis for the scientific study of languages.

Criticism and analysis of poetic language gained new grounds with the advent of structuralism. This concept of structuralism surpassed the boundaries of Formalism and instead of a merely form based study; it went on to reach the levels of an organised meaning based study and analysis. Roman Jakobson presented a phenomenological principal regarding language study. According to him, the sound is the basic unit of a language. It can further be divided into many short elements which he also goes on to describe as the distinctive features. These distinctive features are concerned with the unravelling of various layers of nature and role of meanings in a language. The poetic study at the time was greatly influenced by his statements regarding poetic language. He also laid emphasis on this signified nature of a language and defined sign as double structure which is lucid and illusive at the same time just like two sides of a coin. For instance, in any given word the actual sound and its meaning are respectively considered as the signifier and the signified. Jakobson laid emphasis on this double dimensional structure of a sign. This assumption of Jakobson is totally in contrast to the one made by Sausssure or where in associated self regulatory nature of sign and signifier. On other words, Jakobson finds every movement associated with human communication as meaningful. In his research paper, Poetry of Grammar and Grammar of Poetry Jakobson goes on to take the basic fact that the phenomenological and grammatical aspect of a poem act as visual and delusional aspects of the poetic theme. This particular schematic statement provides many useful tools for an efficient study of poetic language and lessons where in the pattern of sounds and phonemes play important roles in the study of poetic language, which also takes into account, the phonetic pattern of a poetry as an important aspect of study. This forms a complete harmony among the syllables, the meter and the line/ rhyme pattern of a poem ensuring that all structures are constructed with full connections. This is what he defines as the poetry of grammar. He makes it clear that poetry presents various types of grammatical tendencies.

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The concept of *metaphor* and *metonymy* by Jakobson also provides a comprehensive look into the poetic language study. According to him, no useful productivity can be created without achieving the harmony of metaphor and metonymy. This particular concept put forth by Jakobson is very similar to the Formalists' concept of *foregrounding* and *backgrounding* where in, they both go on to lay the basis for poetic creation just like *metaphor* and *metonymy* do for Jakobson. The world of objects and the world of creative are equally contributing to the poetic language. Roman Jakobson, thus, turns out to be an extremely efficient critic and thinker when it comes to the study of poetic language study.

Julia Kristeva has also offered a unique point of view regarding poetic language. In her famous book, *Revolution in Poetic Language*, she goes on to explore various established and establishing structures which have affected the meanings of words. She has also used *feno-text and geno-text* as representatives for the text and the textual interpretation. She claims that every text is a result of a preceding text and no one can ever claim to be purely creative in itself in terms of complete originality. She explains the statement through the concept of *intertextuality*. This is a very valuable theory regarding poetic language because it explains that every text is a fruit of the prevailing social culture. The language in every text owes a lot to the language of the previous texts. The poet in a poetic language is as creative the predecessor was.

In Semiotics of Poetry, Michael Riffaterre proposes a surprising, yet simple, alternative to mimesis in poetry. Poetic discourse, he argues, represents nothing but itself. The meaning of a poem depends not on the semantic grid of language but on a semiotic system determined by the text's own structures. "poetry expresses concepts and things by indirection. To put it simply, a poem says one thing and means another"¹. He has studied the process of word formation to the formation of meaning in a poetic language. He also goes on to differentiate meaning structures and non-poetic texts. According to him, the poetic language derives its vocabulary from the language of the masses but at the same time it reaches beyond the language and grammatical methodologies and regulations. It has its own set of grammatical regulations enabling a poem to present one thing and convey other multiple meanings through the same. According to him, poetry is such a genre which through its unique methodology presents objects and actions in a completely surreal way. He also identifies this facet of poetic language on three different levels. "under this twofold restriction, there are three possible ways for semantic indirection to occur. indirection is produced by displacing, distorting, or creating meaning. displacing, when the sign shifts from one meaning to another, when one word "stands for" another, as happens with metaphor and metonymy. Distorting when there is ambiguity, contradiction, or nonsense. creating, when textual space serves as a principal of organization for making signs out of lingustic items that may not be meaningful otherwise(for instance, symmetry, rhyme, or semantic equivalences between positional homologues in a stanza)"². He argues that poetry with such aforementioned features has the abilities to act as a signifying unit and can be differentiated from the forms of imitation/simulation. He goes on to establish that this poetic language ability of a poem is what ensures that the reader is not able to comprehend everything in his very first reading of the text. He views the language of poetry as a progressive journey from one signifier to another instead of the journey from the signifier to the signified.

One common view from the Formalists to the Structuralists, supports the acceptance of poetic language as an integral part of pure literary expanse and also supports its study according to the other prevalent methodologies of literary studies. Although most of these thinkers and critics advocate the use of linguistic models for the study of poetic language but they are also inclined towards the literariness in poetic language instead of the use of linguistics on the basis of its direct connection to the language. Linguists have no doubt achieved and presented many valuable viewpoints and theories in terms of the analysis of poetic language but the linguistic study often limits the study of poetic language to one single minute unit of a language especially the early phase of linguistic studies was somewhat one-dimensional confining itself only to finding basic semiotic properties and units in a poem.

The most prominent name in such one dimensional study of poetic language is M.K Halliday. In this particular context, all his views are firmly based on the argument that 'all literary texts classified under the definition of literature can be brought under the light of Linguistic models and techniques for the study purpose.' No doubt, all such texts can be studied and analyzed in the light of linguistic techniques but can they provide a solid direction regarding the structure of the poetic, remains a big question unresolved. He considers poetry as a mere language unit and by doing so he has also raised a question mark on his very own model of study. Sometimes, he is found to be measuring various forms and actions in a text and at other times he seems to be confined to the textual meanings only. He does not seem to be making an effort to find a common link between various units of a text or trying to explore the various layers inside a text or other poetic structures. This leads to the absence of the actual poetic emotion and sensibility in this particular model of study. Such a study can be classified as accurate in terms of statistics but these statistics are not valid for literary studies. Halliday also repeatedly uses the word 'differences' in his study. Also, in the context of poetic language the word 'differences' provides some contrast in terms of literariness and linguistics but Halliday did not move towards establishing the same contrast

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between the literary and linguistic structures. Not only that, nowhere does he seem to be signalling towards any structure other than the linguistic structure. The study process of Halliday is very similar to a certain process of human studies where in the study is meant to be complete only on the basis of counting the number of bones and muscles in a body. In such a scenario, the numbers and figures can be correct but they cannot act as a basis for any further understanding or explanation.

Roger Fowler considered it almost impossible to differentiate between the 'literary' and 'non literary' on such aforementioned basis. according to him " it is impossible to present all the 'facts about a literary text; the linguist who would study style must have some idea of what kinds of facts are likely to be significant before he begins his analysis. no form of literary study - not even one which uses the techniques of a scienice-can proceed in a vacuum."³

It is essential for a linguistic to use his model of study in the light of literary creation, features and working. Roger Fowler at the same time is also caught in a dilemma. He denounces the use of pure linguistic approach for literary studies but on the other hand is unable to suggest any other alternative useful method of study. According to him, a linguist must study a literary text in totality and the results achieved in this study must be used as the guiding light to move forward. However, his use of the word 'totality' is not directly pointing to the series of sentences in a text. He is also not totally sure about the contrast between linguistic structures from literary structures but he does not properly define the 'literary totality' or the 'literary whole'. Roger Fowler is not the only linguist going through such a dilemma. He is accompanied by many other linguists who claim to have studied poetic language just on the basis of applying their techniques in a mechanical manner on poetry which they take as a mere series of sentences. Such linguistic study models are henceforth nothing more than one dimensional grammatical analysis of poetry.

Literary critics, thinkers and linguists have not been able to identify a balanced approach in a unified manner regarding poetic language. Instead of a balanced approach, literary critics and linguists have often pointed towards poetry itself and sometimes have confined themselves only to its language aspect. Whereas, the literary critics have concentrated on finding pure literariness from the poetic language, the linguists have often viewed every aspect concerning language from a 'linguist reflection' and the same reflection based study methodology of poetic language has led to linguists believing it to be a genre of pure literary language. Edward Stankiewicz, in his research paper '*Poetic and non–Poetic Language*' has even went on to established the notion that each and every word formation and grammatical unit can be used as a poetic instrument. Similarly, when the literary critics transformed their study of poetic language into pure poetry or its literariness, it led to the grammatical aspects of poetry moving towards periphery. Literary criticism has often been used to recognize the unique grammatical structure of a language. In the same manner, when literary critics continued to understate the importance of language, it led to the Moscow Linguist Circle and Prague Linguist School establishing the balancing act by accepting language as a compulsory element of literature and thereby, initiating a discussion on its participation as an integral factor. On many occasions, Linguists have even presented more valuable theories than the literary figures of the time.

Study of the poetic language in reality is formed from a joint and balanced interdisciplinary approach of linguistics and literary science. The derivatives of poetic language study can only be considered to be useful in terms of its results, if it includes the various branches and processes of linguistic studies and also rejuvenates the various possibilities of literary science. Such a balanced study model can be considered appropriate for such a course of study concerning poetic language. Jacques Derrida has also mentioned a similar model in the concept of *'free play'* of a sign. He considers sign as an alive and active proposition instead of declaring it as a one dimensional form of a larger structure.

In Punjabi language, the history of poetic language study and research has not yet crossed the half way mark stage of one century. In Punjabi, origin of poetic language studies begins with the trend of recognizing synonyms, homonyms, antonyms and other types of words with multiple meaning facets. This is also identified as the mechanical approach to a categorical division of words. This approach, on one side is limited to the selection of few chosen words from the poem and on the other hand it is unable to recognise a poem in its totality. Such an approach seems more of an approach that is confined to fulfil examination requirements which has been the commonness review works as well in terms of poetic language studies. In this particular approach the discussion regarding language of a poem is often concluded within a few lines or one single paragraph. This approach pronounces poetry as a deeply rooted genre in pure version of Punjabi and also locates the number and selection of Arabic, Persion and Sanskrit words in its essence. This approach has remained aloof to the concept of studying poetry in its totality with special reference to its prose relations. In actual, the study of poetic language in relation to the poetic study was not recognised as an independent methodology in Punjabi literary reviews of the time. At that particular stage, Punjabi poetry and its language were considered to be two different propositions. The next phase in Punjabi poetic language studies and reviews points the difference of verse and prose but this process of differentiation was based on elements such as heart, mind, emotions, thoughts and other extrovert arguments.

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Dr. Harbhaian Singh is the first name that comes up at the time of mentioning the first thoughtful study regarding poetic language in Punjabi. It can also be classified that there was no effort to recognise poetic language as the soul of poetry prior to the efforts of Dr. Harbhajan Singh. One major reason behind this can be attributed to the adherence level following of regulations set by the Indian poetic studies and the reviews made from the socialist point of view and these were common occurrences before the advent of Delhi School of criticism. The first type of studies based on the Indian poetic studies tradition took into account, propositions such as phonemes, figures of speech, oblique speech etc. for the study of poetic texts. Second type of approach connected poetry to the socialist perspective and analysed it in the same light of socialism and social motives thereby neglecting the independent existence of poetic language. The analysis put forth by Dr. Harbhajan Singh was the first of its own kind laying emphasis on the poetic language studies itself. His study was based on three basic factors. Firstly, it was aimed to connect the Western theories of American new criticism, formalism, structuralism, theory of sign to the Punjabi audience through a creative translation. Secondly, it proposed to present an original criticism and study model of the same subject and thirdly, a practical approach regarding the study of Punjabi poetry. In his concept of practical approach regarding Punjabi poetic texts, he has understood the uniqueness of the poetic language and he keeps the same in the back of his mind during the entire study process. He also relies on the thoughts of New Criticism and Formalism. He is credited with differentiating between the poetic and its language and also for introducing the unique stature of poetic language in Punjabi criticism. Another major feature of Dr. Harbhajan Singh's study model is the maintenance of the distinctive character of the poet under all circumstances. He has taken assistance from various linguistic models for his study but has not accepted poetic language as a component of linguistics instead supports it as having its own place in the middle of pure literary criticism circle. He has also introduced a new way of perceiving Puniabi poetic texts. In line with the theories of New Criticism and Formalism, he advocates the parameters of defamiliarisation, repetition, irony, tension, multiple meanings, foregrounding etc. for recognising poetic language.

The study model put forth by Dr. Harbhajan Singh regarding poetic language is original and interesting in equal measure for the readers. He has transformed the concepts of American New Criticism, Russian Formalism, Structuralism, Theory of Signs and Stylistics etc. into the simplest version of Punjabi language, making it easy to comprehend and also contributing to the cause of connecting Punjabi poetry to the mainstream study models of Punjabi literature. His study methodology may not be totally inventive but his innovations are concerned with the understanding of Punjabi poetic texts in the light of the theories from the western schools.

Dr. Aatamjeet Singh has taken over the mantle from his predecessor Dr. Harbhajan Singh by moving forward the study model based on New Criticism, Russian Formalism, Structuralism, Theory of Signs and Stylistics, extending them to the limit of linguistics. According to him, all the study methodologies following the Formalist School considered the poetic language as a harmony of various ingredients, instead of only focusing on the form. He recognizes poetic language through the concepts of langue, parole, text, commentary and deviation. Dr. Atamjeet Singh gained these concepts before the advent of the understanding regarding Structuralism and Stylistics and goes on to describe these concepts on the basis of Punjabi poetic text. The limitation of the practical based study model given by Dr Atamjeet Singh lies in the fact that he often reduces poetry to the level of technical measurements resulting out of the deviations in form and word formations. This is why he often talks about grammatical deviations in poetic sentences. In reality, a poem does not deviate in terms of grammar, but only changes the order of words in a sentence. A proper study model of poetic language will always go beyond the level of word deviations to the entire structure of a poem. The study models of Dr. Atamjeet and his successors have mostly revolved around the divisions of words and the grammatical aspects of poetic language as the basic parameters. There is no denying the fact that word deviations are important part of poetic language but to entirely shift the focus on them, would not give the appropriate attention to the other word structures and formations in a poetic language.

According to Dr. Harjeet Singh Gill, the language of masses is a concrete reality while the poetic language is an abstract phenomenon to the levels of pure imagination. The other phenomenons of knowledge science are empirically realistic but literature is conceived to be a conceptual reality. The language of the masses is interested in facts; where as the poetic language is more inclined towards elements. The context of a poetic language can be factual but it will never act as its true soul. The spoken language only provides a set of words to the poetic language but the transformation that occurs in the poetic language makes it attain a higher and philosophical form. According to him " The writer uses more or less, the same language as do the other speakers, but he neither uses it in the same way nor with the same intention: indentical material, different: function: this is exactly the inverse of what happens in a dialect."⁴ The difference between the language of the masses and the poetic language but its meaningful presentation on a different level is purely down to expression. A combined knowledge and understanding of the language and expression of a poetic text is imperative for the study of a poem. This proposition put forth by Dr. Harjit Singh Gill is extremely valuable in terms of poetic language studies.

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The main feature of poetic language study carried out by Dr. Sukhwinder Singh Sangha, is its reliance on linguistic study models. The balance of this particular study model is more inclined towards linguistics instead of literary observations and studies. It is focused upon the identification of structuralism methodologies and patterns in a poem and its linguistic functions. He has also made an effort to differentiate poetic language from the language of Communications but this differentiation is based on the basic principles presented by Beaugrande and Halliday. This study model gives a preference to structure than aesthetics while performing a linguistic study of poetic action. This proposition is completely opposite to the one presented by Dr. Harbhajan Singh as this study methodology is based on the stylistic model of study while also keeping up to the models of deviation presented by Dr. Atamjeet Singh. The poetic language study model of Dr. Sukhwinder Singh is divided into three parts and in his own words these three parts are extremely valuable. These three parts are as follows:

- 1. Linguistic relations
- 2. Logical relations
- 3. Emotional relations

The speciality of this particular language study lies in going beyond word formations, common divisions and other minute level assumptions. This study model is based on linguistic study methodology and stylistics.

Dr Uminder Johal's study model is based on linguistics study methodology and this model also takes its basic lessons from the principles set forth by Beaugrande and Halliday while also taking inputs from the stylistics model of study. This study model however was not able to shed any light on the silence, emptiness or the emotional arrangement of poetry. This model is mainly concerned with the identification of visible word structure of a poem in contrast with the objective world using the concepts of opposition and relation. This study model is more inclined towards linguistic study than the study of literature. The authenticity of a linguistic model of study is determined when it moves head of the realisation of structures in a poem to the level of identifying its abstraction. However no critic or philosopher can claim to have reached the final phase of identifying this abstraction, yet this study is unique in itself in terms of its linguistic functions and formations especially when it comes to the study of Paash poetry. In this study, efforts have been made to identify pure poetic language as an independent object of research studies in line with the linguistic perceptions.

In Punjabi, development of scientific understanding regarding political language has been somewhat delayed. Punjabi linguists and literary thinkers have been relatively unable to provide any new or innovative study methodology or concepts to the world of literary studies. They have more or less engaged themselves in the study of Punjabi poetry as per the standards and perceptions given by the Western scholars. Following the footsteps of Western literary figures and linguists, Punjabi Scholars have also slowly and steadily realised the scope of innovations in Literature and linguistics. Dr. Harbhajan Singh and Gurbachan followed literary principles while Dr. Atamjeet Singh, followed the study models of linguistics. Apart from Dr. Harbhajan Singh, almost all of the studies of Punjabi poetic language studies are punctuated by the deviation of grammatical aspects in poetry however it is clear to be realised that in poetry every sentence is meaningful and complete in itself. Poetry does not deviate from semiotics or grammatical regulations, instead there is only a change in word order while a sentence is often an abstract phenomenon in a poem, the grammatical approach is correct in terms of study methodology but drawing conclusions on this particular basis cannot be the final or true realisation. Punjabi linguists are currently standing on the starting stage of word structures and are yet to move towards the concept of forms and philosophical explanations and interpretations. There is a need to identify the fluidity of form to visualise the totality of a poem. Dr. Sukhwinder Singh and Dr. Uminder Johal have initiated a textual based language study methodology but this model is still in its initial stages in terms of its literary contribution and outputs. This particular study methodology can be used for the study of poetic language by utilising all of its parts and sub parts while also keeping an active connection with the poetic. The basic principles of Indian poetic studies were not truly realised by the Punjabi Scholars and linguists of the first phase while the later class of scholars paid more attention towards the Western School of Criticism and adopted the same models for their concepts. The poetic language is connected to the literary world as well as the linguistic world at the same time. The literary regulations and the various linguistic study methodologies can play a very useful role in its study and analysis. Linguistic study methodologies have presented various valuable interdisciplinary concepts and models for the study of poetic language but they cannot be applied mechanically on the poetic language as this study model is not as straight forward as the concept of 2 + 2 being equal to 4. Only a proper collaboration of literary observation and linguistic study can justify the proper study of poetic language.

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