



A COGNITIVE STYLISTIC ANALYSIS TO AMITAV GHOSH'S FICTIONAL NARRATIVES

U. Nageswara Rao *

Ph. D Research Scholar,
Department of English,
Acharya Nagarjuna University

Prof. G, Chenna Reddy**

Professor in English,
Department of English,
Acharya Nagarjuna University

Abstract:

The Cognitive Stylistics is a study of context in the fiction or any text within the story. Its focus ever laid on the social and cultural factors of the readers which were imbibed or created in the form of mental images while reading a text. It connects readers beyond the text world to the personal world or personal world to the text world based on the depth and elegant cognitive styles used by the writer to adore his style of narration in the story presentation. Such type of style could be found who peeps into Amitav Ghosh's fictional narratives from *Sea of Poppies* and *River of Smoke*. Hence, this paper is going to study his elegant cognitive stylistics in narration to grab the attention of readers with point-of-view styles.

Keywords: Context, Point of View, Schema, Cognitive Effects and Readers Perception.

Introduction:

Mind Stylistics is another name for Cognitive Stylistics. Cognitive stylistics has been heavily impacted by the most recent developments of current stylistics in the 21st century. It guides the mental, social, and psychological contexts of speech that propels into new territory. According to Boase Beier (2006), cognitive stylistics treats context as a cognitive object "involves a concern with social and cultural factors". According to Culpeper (2001), the process of drawing conclusions character from a text is entirely dependent on the cognitive inferential processes where readers had previously formed in their brains as a result of the text (Simpson, 2004). All these focus on cognitive aspects' textual interpretations in stylistics represent a current stylistics movement known as cognitive stylistics.

Amitav Ghosh's historic fictional narratives *Sea of Poppies* and *River of Smoke* have the cognitive stylistic methods that combine models that allow readers to credit their accounts with stores of information to play with when reading these two novels, as well as how this knowledge causes adjustments and alterations to enhance the reading experience. Among those ton numbers of stylistic tools, "point of view" mostly gives the scope for the cognitive stylistic shifts to emphasise the text and analytical models. These demonstrate the connections between the mind and the process of reading. Indeed, cognitive stylistics

allows conceptual, social, historical, and psychological elements of pragmatic language and style to be integrated. In Fish's "Affective Stylistics" and Iser and others' "Reader Response Theory" (1971, 1974), reading is a mental operations process which "transforms minds" (Fish, 1980). Based on the above considerations, it can be concluded that cognitive stylistics is a novel approach to the study, unquestionably an interpretation of discourse and literary in discourse. And it confirms that any paradigm of stylistic analysis must start with the intellect.

Point of View:

This paper analyses two novels *Sea of Poppies* and *River of Smoke* with point of view tools suggested by Mick Short (1996). There are eight kinds of viewpoints that really impact the cognitive mind of the reader while reading Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies* and *River of Smoke*. The fastest pool of viewpoint styles is examined in this fiction schema-oriented language viewpoint. Amitav Ghosh used this schema-oriented viewpoint to influence the reader's cognitive thought at textual and story levels to decorate his style of narration. Schema viewpoint in *Sea of Poppies* brings cognitive effect in the minds of readers at the very beginning of the chapter with the main character Deeti's vision, "The vision of a tall-masted ship." (03) In the immediate chapter, she recollects her past of marriage, "The new thatch had been paid for by her own father, as a part of her dowry." (30) The fourth chapter recollects Deeti's travelling to Ghazipur in Kalua's ox-cart and her daughter, Kabutri also guesses what is going on her "Wasn't that the kind of ship you saw? The one like a bird? Strange that it showed itself to you." (73) And in this chapter, Benjamin Burnham's past life "As a child, the pilot said, young Ben was a 'right shaytan': a brawler, troublemaker" (74) and in the same chapter Raja's past with Raskhali estate and his relationship with bruisers moves back "Some twenty-five years before." (83) In chapter six rethinks Paulette's schooling and life with her father with a flashback within a flashback style of narration. The court scene between Neel and Judge in chapter eleven reels the flashback of Neel and a flashback of Paulette where she reveals to Zachary Reid and how Mr. Burnham forced the chastisement lesson in chapter thirteen. Chapter seventeen recalls Neel's past life at Raskhali, Canton as the past of Ah Fatt and finally Paulette's past life in Sundarbans. Again, the nineteen chapter repeats Neel's past, how he wanted to be trained as an English man from his father's wish, "What was it?" said Neel. 'Rat' Neel said: 'I don't understand how you can catch it with your bare hands.'"

Value-laden viewpoint is another stylistic tool in point of view categories which helps the readers to understand a character's attitude towards the story whether positive or negative. In *Sea of Poppies*, it is used to project Deeti as the main character, "Even a powerful giant of a man could be humiliated and destroyed, in a way that far exceeded his body's capacity for pain?" (57) The omnipresent narrator uses a value-laden point of view to depict Neel's inner thoughts and feelings against the British judge as well as his outward gestures and body language. Zachary Reid's introduction in chapter one is "medium height and sturdy build, with skin the colour of old ivory and a mass of curly, lacquer-black hair that tumbled over his forehead and into his eyes." (10) and the details of 'Ghazepore Carcanna' in chapter five, from pages 90 to 99, imaged the opium factory through Deeti's eyes like "broken ghara", "stack of poppy-flowers", "iron roofed structure", "mound of raw opium gum", "mixing room", "bare bodied men", "troops of boys", "host of dark, legless torsos", "wetting shed", "poppy-leaf rotis", "poppy balls" and etc." (91-97). Among these characters' mental images, chapter twenty sees Deeti as "Bhauji" to address her greatness and character, "Who else but Bhauji? said Kalua, with a smile." (430)

Ghosh used another cognitive stylistic viewpoint, Given versus New information. Its task is to familiarise strange information to the addressee or bring into discussion the familiar one. The tenth chapter, which spans to 216–220 pages, discusses Neel's prolepsis court case. Suddenly, Elokeshi's affidavit is brought up in court, exposing Neel and turning him into a laughingstock for all to see. The narrator pauses to describe dinner at Burnham's house in chapter eleven, describing the events in exquisite detail from page 247 to page 267.

Further, the deixis viewpoint is another cognitive style, which orientates or 'anchors' our utterances in the context of the vicinity of space as *here v. there; this v. that*, and of time as *now v. then*, relative to the speaker's viewpoint'. In *Sea of Poppies*, place and time deixis show the conditions and treatments of Alipore Jail in 1838 under the rule of colonial power. The use of proximity deixis in "this vessel" indicates their closeness and ownership of the ship, which is described as "this vessel that was the Mother-Father of her new family," revealing the curious metaphoric relationship with the workers' dwelling place. In the book, Ibis serves as the place deixis where many characters' voices, viewpoints, beliefs, customs, cultures, and mentalities are displayed. The novel concludes in the same year 1838, maybe after the temporal deixis of a month dedicated to Diwali. Place setting a journey from 'Land' to 'Sea' through a river.

Social deixis is another important cognitive style in *Sea of Poppies*. Ghosh used social deixis as a point of view to present Neel's insult which is not acceptable in society. Here, the narrator presents Neel's new identity metaphorically using small letters, which are a reduction of huge, high-sounding terms like "Nawab" or "Raja," which stand for his former regal, hegemonic, and elevated status. The "we" and "us" tell the relationship between Deeti and Paulette as oneness and mutual moving together. He further gives a clear picture of their relationship "from now on, there are no differences between us", "we are *jahaz-bhais* and *jahaz-bahen* to each other", "we are *jahaz-bhais* and *jahaz-bahen* to each other" and "all of us children of the ship" phrases. Paulette and Mrs Burnham discuss Mr Kendalbushe's marriage proposal to Ms Paulette in chapter twelve, " 'Oh Puggly!' 'But what is it that has arrived, Madame?' said Paulette. 'Good heavens, no!' said Mrs Burnham. 'It's the best possible news, dear.'" (272) The relationship between Reid and Puttly in Chapter thirteen "He was interrupted by the sound of his own name, spoken in a woman's voice: 'Mr Reid.' 'It is I, Mr Reid.'" In chapter fourteen the relationship between Ah Fatt and Neel is narrated. Though Ah Fatt did not say even a single word, still Neel could understand him with his signs of body postures and signals that confirmed the proximal relationship between them.

The Psychological Sequencing viewpoint is one of the best styles of fictional writing. The order in which a character learns about the components of the fiction is detailed. In *Sea of Poppies*, Ghosh uses an Internal Psychological Sequencing viewpoint to describe the fear and threat of the living, with "all she knew, inhabited by demons and pishaches" and "How could he, Kalua, or anyone else, know, that it wasn't true that the recruits were being fattened for the slaughter?". When Ah Fatt tells Neel about his past life, the following comment by the omnipresent narrator indirectly presents Ghosh's views on the art of story-telling in External Psychological Sequencing. Ghosh's comments on the past life of Ah Fatt as an authorial expresses "It was not because of Ah Fatt's fluency that Neel's vision of Canton."

The final viewpoint in Cognitive stylistics is the Ideological viewpoint. In *Sea of Poppies*, Deeti's interior mind is illustrated Deeti's socio-political slant as the notion of account of *personal* attitudinal values, recollecting her past when Kalua was humiliated and tortured by the three landlords in past: "So it could happen to a man too? Even a powerful giant of a man could be humiliated and destroyed, in a way that far exceeded his body's capacity for pain?" (57) Most of the time there are summaries and commentaries by an omnipresent narrator while presenting the scenes like Kalua's exploitation by the Jamindars, the conversations among Mr Burnham, Mr Doughty and others about the opium trade in China, Neel's arrest, Deeti's escape from Sati's pyre, Neel's court case, the one-sided arguments and decision of the judge against Neel, Neel's changed circumstances, his insult, humiliation and life in jail with Ah Fatt, chastisement lessons forced on Paulette by Burnham (for his own chastisement). The first mate and Bhyro Singh were killed, and the captain, Shiladhars, demanded that Kalua be hanged. This terror and confusion on board led to some of the prisoners escaping Ibis. These are a few of the novel's key events that highlight the wrongdoings of those with hegemonic power and their own beliefs.

The second novel chosen for this study is *River of Smoke*. It discusses Amitav Ghosh's craftsmanship of cognitive style from a schema-oriented viewpoint. The time deixis is a historical narration that aims at the retrieval of the opium trade and the opium war period in China. The beginning chapter starts with the omnipresent narrator commences the narrative with Deeti's shrine through Schema-oriented point of view: "Deeti's shrine was hidden in a cliff, in a far corner of Mauritius ... Later, Deeti would insist that it wasn't chance but destiny that led her to it." (03) And Zachary Reid's past life with schema-oriented point of view in detail. The stories conceived in the first section of the novel include the personal histories of Deeti's life unfolding after the cyclone, Bahram's past life, his storm-tossed ship the *Anahita*, Ah Fatt's childhood, Paulette's struggle in life, Neel and Ah Fatt's relations in the past, Zadig and Bahram's friendship, Chinnery and Paulette's previous association and childhood relations, and the arrival of all these characters (except Deeti).

Ghosh presented the main protagonists of both novels from a Value-laden point of view, Deeti and Bahram Modi. In chapter three pages sixty-one to ninety-four, the chapter starts value-laden point of view of Bahram about Singapore, "For many years Bahram had regarded the fledgling township of Singapore as a jungle joke." (61) This tells his negative interest in the city with the past recollection. Chapter six starts with the Fitcher's fear of reaching Redruth to China safely from the pirates of the Ladrone Islands "Bad news, sir?", "Fitcher nodded", "very hard to procure", "become a tricky affair" (147). In chapter sixteen, the surrender to Lin against the death penalty to the eighteen merchants including Bahram. The situation is narrated on those lines of tension (478).

Given versus new information Point of view is more often visible in *River of Smoke* than in *Sea of Poppies*. The scenes from the *Anahita*, the *Redruth*, the Pearl River, Canton and also from the important meetings of officials and traders' discussions and strategies against the Chinese empire along with the pre-war scenarios. At the end of the novel again Ghosh presented pictures of the elements of mystery and suspense. Ghosh tries to give excessive details of the scenes to familiarize the discourse of the text with this viewpoint.

In *River of Smoke*, every meeting, debate, and exchange between traders and British authorities are depicted in person deixis as mimesis, giving the impression that the entire drama is being performed in front of the audience, although they are not in front of history. Ghosh created a cognitive effect in serious debates with the help of Time Deixis (now) and Social deixis (this man, this commissioner, our heads). Ghosh shifts his text worlds to different times and spaces with deictic viewpoints of style. The main place deixis of *River of Smoke* is in China. The novel's setting was shown or narrated to readers in Limited Account of Point-of-View Effects. Canton, an island, is only a part of history now and exists no more. Hence readers struggle to imagine where the scenes are in analepsis and prolepsis in the text or context though the storyline is straightforward. The novel begins in a place deixis called *medias res*. Regarding the Spatial Deixis in a constrained spatial context. The events mostly occur in Canton in the present; however, there are flashbacks where some of the events also occur in India and Mauritius in the past. The story is divided into three sections: Commissioner Lin, Canton, and Sea. The story's spatial location shifts from the two ships, the *Anahita* and the *Redruth*, to the Chinese city of Canton, which is home to Indian season traders and the centre of all activity, particularly the opium trade and opium warfare.

In *River of Smoke*, chapter three pages from 75 to 83 deals with deals with the past life of memory of Fitcher, *Redruth* green ship and the relationship with it in Social Deixis point of view, "If ships could be built in the image of their owners, then there would be no question about whom this one belonged to – she was like an extension of Fitcher's very being. Like Fitcher, the *Redruth* was lean and angular, with sharply upcurved lines – her bowsprit even had a way of 'twitching and shaking' that was strangely reminiscent of her owner's brow." Chapter twelve starts with Robin's letter addressing the date December 9 at Markwick's Hotel to Paulette "Oh my dearest Puggly, there has been the *most* frightful to-do here and it

has led to such *extraordinary* happenings that I am all at sixes and sevens” (335).

In *River of Smoke*, internal psychological sequencing style, “And so, at last to the foreign enclave—or ‘Fanqui-town’ as I have already learnt to call it!” (181) “... And yet it is a *tiny* place!” (184) “the lads will swarm after him, with their hands outstretched, shouting: ‘Achha! Achha! Gimme Cumshaw!’” (185) Ghosh adopts the mindset of his characters, thinking and speaking like them, seeing and hearing like them. Internal psychological sequencing point of view style is what's meant by this. He makes a comparison in his stories between the process of psychological healing on an individual basis and the advancement of history and the country. The viewer is taken on a historical tour of the opium war through the omnipresent narrator, first-person dramatised narrator Robin Chinnery, and other character focalizers. Ghosh used an internal psychological point of view to tell the character Neel's lamented situation as character narrator/author-narrator. It is the history but Neel is telling as he is the direct testimony "It was burnt to the ground". Here, the author is giving full details of the situation with place deixis "the city" time deixis "One night" to grab the complete attention of the reader.

The omnipresent narrator initially provides a thorough precis of the characters before the individuals themselves disclose facts of their life, sometimes through recollection, recall, internal monologue, and stream of consciousness, as well as occasionally through schema and ideological points of view. Deeti's visit to the Ghazipur factory with her ideological point of view then Deeti's ideological point of view focuses on the reader's attention on the text world's than the story world. They forget their real world and move between *Sea of Poppies* and *River of Smoke* to fit in the shoes of the characters. This can be considered as the Intensity of Concentration of DST. In chapter sixteen, the ideological point of view is to recollect his past “Is this another puja? asked Paulette, and unlike the last time, Baburao was slow to answer. She had begun to regret having asked the question when he said, all of a sudden: Yes, it is a puja; but not like the last one. This is different. O? Why? Yes, this one is for my dada-bhai, my older brother, who died here.” (475) In chapter eighteen the ideological point of view on Lin's prayer to Goddess while destruction of opium in huge cargoes before he dumps, "Commissioner Lin to set in motion the process of its destruction. And on the eve of the ceremony, what does the Commissioner-elect to do? Why, he sits down to write a *poem* – it is a prayer addressed to the God of the Sea asking that all the animals of the water be protected from the poison that will soon be pouring in.” (534)

Conclusion

Ghosh crafted his two novels in an experienced and feel-tasting writer to target readers of any age with his well-dressed and elegant cognitive stylistic effects in these two novels' textual narrations. Ghosh's schematic narrative style mostly focuses on the characters' personal life which actually connects to the cognitive knowledge or past of the reader's own experience of knowledge. To project the magical mental representations of characters' images, he triggers with a value-laden viewpoint whereas an ideological viewpoint shows his strength and understanding of the history of his outstanding picturization. He grabs the attention of readers with his powerful deictic viewpoint style to jump into the scene of the text discourse. These cognitive stylistics demand the readers to have a complete involvement in text reading forgetting all the immediate surroundings the reader.

References:

- Boase Beier, J. *Stylistic Approaches to Translation*. Manchester-Kinderhook: St Jerome, 2006. ISBN 1-900650-98-3
- Culpeper, J. *Language and Characterisation : People in Plays and Other Texts*. Routledge, 2001.
- Fish, Stanley. "How to Recognize a Poem When You See One." *Is There a Text in this Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980. Pp.322-337.
- Ghosh, Amitav. *River of Smoke*. India: Hamish Hamilton, 2011. Print.
- Ghosh, Amitav. *Sea of Poppies*. New Delhi: Penguin, 2008, Print.
- Semino E. & Culpeper J. Eds., *Cognitive Stylistics: Language and Cognition in Text Analysis*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2002.
- Short, M. *Understanding the Language of Poems, Plays and Prose*. London: Longman, 1996.
- Short, M. *Understanding the language of poems, plays and prose*. Longman, London, 1996.
- Simpson, P. *Stylistics: A Resource Book for Students*. London: Routledge, 2004.