5.1. Chapter Preview

In this chapter, we move from textualist stylistic practices to contextualist stylistic activities. Functionalist stylistics bridges the gap. Functionalist stylistics is the practice where text level analysis incorporates context. While practicing formalist and functionalist stylistic activities in the previous chapter, the focuses were on sentences and texts respectively. In functionalist stylistic activities, contexts were considered in the determination of meaning. In this chapter, however, the roles of contextualist stylistic activities on creative writing, pragmatic and sociolinguistic competencies of the students in EFL contexts were experimented. The contextualist stylistic practices chosen include: 1) cognitive stylistics, 2) pragmatic stylistics and 3) feminist stylistics.

In this chapter, the interpretation of six poems is presented in three major sections. First, a cognitive stylistic experiment on Solomon Deressa’s “Ring the Child” and Tekola Hagos’s “Born to Die” was conducted. The experiment was carried out to investigate the student’s ability in identifying and using the roles of verbal irony, cognitive metaphor, figure and ground. Second, a pragmatic stylistic analysis of Tsegaye Gebremedhin’s “Home Coming-Son” and Fekade Azeze’s “MERRY X-MAS” was carried out and presented to find out and evaluate the pedagogical relevance of pragmatic stylistics to the pragmatic competence of the learners in an EFL context. A brief description of pragmatic stylistic model, the role of context, addressee relation, deixis and speech act verbs was presented to the experimental class. Finally, feminist stylistic experimentation of Lulit Kebede’s “New Generation” and Wossen Mulatu’s “Tonight” was presented. Here the experiment focused on the functions of language, context, image of women, reader address and figures of speech. A distinction was also drawn between sexist and gender free
language use. While practicing and experimenting contextualist stylistic tasks in the class, active learning methods such as mind map, thought shower, pair discussion, spider diagram, creative writing, independent work, story telling and thought bubbles were integrated.

5.2. Cognitive Stylistic Practices and Creative Writing

This section deals with the cognitive stylistic experimentation of Solomon Deressa’s “Ring the Child Alive” and Tekola Hagos’s “Born to Live”. The classroom experimentation followed three stages. In the first stage, the analysis of verbal irony was followed by the analysis of cognitive metaphor. Then, figures and grounds were investigated. Lastly, the experimentation and interpretation were chiefly geared towards the contribution of cognitive stylistics to creative writing and creative thinking capabilities of the learners in EFL context.

5.2.1. A Cognitive Stylistic Analysis of Solomon’s "Ring the Child Alive"

5.2.1.1. Verbal Irony in "Ring the Child Alive"

While reading “Ring the Child Alive”, contextual effects are created. These effects are related to thinking, remembering and knowing. The reader is made to stop and think and remember the past. How is that contextual effect created? Does the effect change the assumption and belief of the reader? Does the contextual effect suggest disapproval? Reading a poem must evoke a certain kind of attitude and must have relevance with a minimal processing effort. With a common understanding that reading a poem can create contextual effects and has relevance, the following thought bubbling questions were given to the students:

**TASK:**

1. Give examples of ironic statements in “Ring the Child Alive”.
2. What is the relevance of each ironic statement in the poem?
3. Do these ironic statements produce contextual effects?
4. Give examples of ironic statements from your own culture. Why do people in your culture use ironic statements?
5. Is there any significant relation between the use of ironic statements and simile or metaphor in your culture?
6. Do you think that ironic statements develop your own creative writing and creative thinking skills?

A first impression of reading “Ring the Child Alive” produces several contextual meanings each of which requires various kinds of processing efforts. Students were asked to list the ideas in the form of thought bubbles and analyze the meanings of the word “Ring” in the title. Thoughts like engagement ring, telephone box, bell, marriage ceremony, waking someone up, church wedding and a priest were listed. It was the idea of waking a child up who lost proper life style which the contextual meaning of the word “Ring” in the title implied. Awakening is recommended in the poem to bring the child back to normal life style. With this understanding of the title of the poem, students were told to identify examples of ironic statements.

In the following context, the understatement “A child is a child alive or dead” is an ironic statement:

A child is a child alive or dead,
He told himself, and years do not count
So much as the colour of shells
They are foot-prints on the sand.

The speaker of the statement very much knows that a child who is alive and a child who is dead are not the same. The implication and the comparison are made on the basis of the thinking capacity of the child. The child of the poem lost his way and the ability to think. Although the years or the age of the child matters, the poet presents it ironically. It is the opposite of what the poet (speaker) has said that is true. When we find out the implication of the statements, we change our attitude towards the child. We consider as if the child were dead because the child is a total wastrel.
Secondly, as the title of the poem implies, the advice is to ring the child alive. Ringing the child will bring him back to the normal life of the society. However, the opposite is communicated in the lines below:

And make bells of shells
Turn the sea into a gong
To ring the child alive
Disturbing his innocent slumber
And lull him back to sleep

The entire context of the lines above presents a situational irony. As indicated earlier, the child is a waif and lost his thinking ability. Attempt should not be made to "lull him back to sleep." Instead, efforts must be made to "ring him alive". This is another situational irony in the poem.

**TASK**

Students were asked to give examples of ironic statements from their own culture. The exercises were designed to help them develop their descriptive writing and creative thinking skills. The students wrote the following statements:

1. She is the most ‘beautiful’ girl in our village.
2. “Drive ‘slowly’! I’m in a hurry!”
3. She is as ‘tall’ as a hen. She can’t marry our son.
4. Her hair can tie our ‘horse’. I know her hair is kinky.
5. “My ‘clever’ son! You failed in all your exams.”
6. Your ‘melodious and sonorous’ songs brought all the birds of the sky to our beloved land.
7. Red fox said, “When the hunter began shooting, I stopped ‘flying’.”
8. A woman told her neighbor, “This small child of yours is bigger than an ‘elephant’.”
9. Life is ‘cheaper’ in the city than in our village.
10. When her mother died, she cried like a ‘crocodile’.
11. We ‘thank’ you for ‘littering’ the village!
12. She is as fast as a ‘tortoise’.
13. Getachew is always as busy and fast as ‘bee’. He likes procrastination of work all the time.

14. The ‘chair’ has changed the chairperson.

15. I have never eaten such a ‘delicious’ meal in my life.

16. My son has ‘grown up’ and started breaking the glass.

17. “Great ‘job’ done, my son! Tear your shirt if you want me buy you a new one tomorrow.”

18. His support to Ethiopia is as ‘small’ as Nile River.

19. The bride and the groom had ‘bright night’ yesterday. It was a complete black out in the city.

20. “Do not ever ‘use’ stick if you want to spoil your son!” the teacher said.

21. “If you find education irrelevant, try ‘ignorance’”, the teacher advised his student.

Students reported the existence of significant link between ironic statement and simile/metaphor as exemplified above. They commented that traditional people use simile and metaphor to make ironic comments.

5.2.1.2. Metaphor in "Ring the Child Alive"

In "Ring the Child Alive", the poet chiefly employs "LINK" and "PATH" schemas as sources of cognitive metaphor. The “LINK” schema which springs from kinship relations is realized through the addressor (possibly the father) and addressee, that is, the child in the poem. The addressor is presented as a caring parent searching for a lost child. The child, on the other hand, is a waif and lost his kinship roots. As expressed in the lines below the addressor compares the child with the dead:

His temper it is, he thought
Though it's his mind he lost
Gathering waif ends and shells
Combing a cold deserted beach
For a child a thousand years dead
To bring the child alive, attempts such as ringing him up, raising a cathedral, making bells of shells and lulling him back to sleep are recommended. The child combs and gathers waif-ends and shells. It is the parental love and concern that force the addressee to continue the search for the lost child.

The 'PATH' schema is realized through the child's journey in the waste land. The gerunds "gathering" and "combing" show his lost journey. He is a scoundrel and wastrel. He gathers oddments and shells for a living. The ebb and the foot-print on the sand are indications of "PATH" as expressed in the lines below:

So much as the colour of shells  
They are foot-prints on the sand  
And the ebb will wash them out  
And if the flow falls stubbornly short  
Why then we shall raise a cathedral

Metaphorically all the qualities of the children are given to the foot prints on the sand. Ebb will wash them out. The attributes of the sea and gong, beach and human being, telephone and the child, the flow of the sea and the child are also compared.

**TASK**

Having discussed irony and metaphor, students were asked to think about the metaphors of their culture and to give at least five examples. The following examples of metaphor were given by the students:

1. The father is the bread of life.
2. The horse is riding a horse.
3. Experience is a university.
4. A husband is an umbrella for his wife.
5. Thought is an ocean.
6. I saw stone sitting on another stone. (Stone and a fool are one and the same.)
7. Knowledge is light.
8. A great book is a great friend.
9. Loneliness is a prison.
10. She is a rat.
11. She is a parrot.
12. He is a spider.

While writing metaphor examples, several wild life examples such as: snake, eagle, hyena, lion, horse, tiger, bull, donkey, elephant, frog, dog and pig were given by the students. They were informed that they can use these models to write their own examples of metaphors while writing poems of their own. The interpretation and writing of these examples were assumed to help students think about specific details which lay the foundation for creative writing.

5.2.1.3. Figure and Ground in "Ring the Child Alive"

Students were asked to think about the figures and grounds in the poem. The relevance and contextual effects of the figure and ground were discussed. In "Ring the Child Alive", images are coherently organized so as to make the child an attracting and prominent figure. When students first read the title, it called for their attention to ring the child alive. The child is presented as a new, moving, focused, attracting and timely figure. He gathers waif-ends and shells. Physically emaciated, the child breaks away from the traditional life style of the society. The figure is foregrounded. It is better focused and brighter than the ground. Students reported that in the poem, the cold and deserted beach is presented as a colorful but deserted ground. Other figures such as sand, cathedral, sea, ebbs, shells, sand and gong give life to the deserted ground. They are coherent while beautifying the scenic beauty of the land near the sea.

5.2.2. A Cognitive Stylistic Analysis of Tekola Hagos's "Born to Die"

In this section, the analysis focuses on situational irony, cognitive metaphor, simile, figures, grounds and contextual effects. After practicing the exercises and carrying out a descriptive writing practice, ample time was given to the students to think creatively and write a short poem on "Born to Live" following Tekola Hagos's "Born to Die" as a model poem.
5.2.2.1. Situational Irony in Tekola’s "Born to Die"

A comprehensive understanding of all the elements of poetry in Tekola Hagos’s "Born to Die" challenged the students to question the meaning of life and death in general. Contextual effects were recreated so that students could stop and think, remember and realize the momentary existence of life. Life lessons were learnt. The basic question is: does the poem change the assumption of the students towards death? Does the student continue to suspend his/her disbelief of death? The students were given the following tasks:

TASK

1. Form a group of three to locate examples of situational irony in the poem. Use active learning methods such as thought bubbles, pyramiding and spider diagram while describing situational irony.
2. Do the situational irony and the group debate have any relevance in changing your attitude towards life and death?
3. Do the situational irony exercises help you think and write creatively? How?

It can be vividly observed that "Born to Die" presents the three stages of life: birth, growth and death. The co-existence of birth, growth and death makes the major figure clear. The poem implies that human beings often do not make any border between the time of life and death. Once they come into existence, life presents the sources of pleasure which often make them temporarily suspend death.

In the poem, life is grace, beauty and love. Human beings are endowed with sense organs to experience the sensual luxuries, life has to offer. Sense organs allow lovers to experience pleasure. It is this ecstatic experience which exhumes the idea of death. The disparity between luxurious experience and unavoidable death places human beings in the situational irony.

The second stage presents death as a journey which is often suspended:
These men. that move back and fro
Know not their goal, no where they go
But like actors who do play their part
Vanish like mirage and become the past

The situational irony appears to be more dramatic in these lines. At the young age, people including the poet, engrossed in the pleasures of life, temporarily suspend the thought of death. Even if the poet reminds the reader to stop and think about death, the readers are completely consumed by the pleasures of life that people are thinking. They are not only suspending the idea, they live under an illusion of its non-existence to the extent that it’s difficult to command their attention for anything but pleasure.

The poet presents a piece of advice to the reader which implies a situational irony:

    But to man I have a word
    Live your way and change not for good
    Lovers sucking each others tongue
    Are not aware of death's approach

This situational irony helps us stop and think about death’s approach. Is it possible for the lovers to stop kissing and begin thinking of death? Does the situation allow the process of thinking about death? The ultimate realization of death might even lead to the termination of the pleasures of life. It is this disparity which is implied through out the poem. In the last stage, the poet presents the arrival of death which none can avoid. Collocation of the arrival of death makes the process more frustrating. Words like 'vanish', 'past', 'dust', 'rust', 'tombstone', 'decay', 'regret' and 'eat away' describe and define the meaning of death. Death is inevitable:

    Nothing is unusual, but a natural course
    Lips that once kissed, heart that once loved,
    Like the tombstone will forever be cold.

Human biological organs such as lips, tongues and hearts, which were once the channels of pleasure and were once sensitive enough to feel, have been reduced to numbness of a tombstone. They become cold through natural processes of fermentation, rust, dust and decay. Living in ecstasy leads us to change the life style.
and we fail in coming to terms with DEATH courageously. The ultimate effect of this situational irony is to suspend death temporarily.

5.2.2.2. Simile in "Born to Die"

In the same manner human beings are kept in ironic world and challenged to question the disparity between life and death, several objects and images are built so that people can compare themselves. The comparison intensifies the contextual effects so that the reader can realize the difference between inanimate objects and human organs. What is the difference between heart and stone? Is there any difference between dust and lips? Can we differentiate tongue from rust? With these leading questions in mind, students identified the following examples of similes from the poem:

1. Men like actors play their parts.
2. Men vanish like mirage.
3. Grace, beauty and love fermented like rust.
4. Hearts once loved will be cold like tombstone.

Human organs are compared with inanimate objects because through the process of death they will be changed into dust and rust. They become one and the same through time. The people are actors on the stage. Time merges life with lifeless.

TASK

After the analysis of the contextual effects of simile, students were asked to give examples of similes which were often used to speak about life, growth and death in their own culture. Accordingly, the following were given:

1. Mature girls and boys are like ripen fruits.
2. Life is like an egg; you have to handle it with care.
3. Young children are like trees.
4. You have to swim like a swan to live successfully.
5. He died like a lion in the forest.
7. Death ate him like a pig.
8. Death is as near as Nile River.
9. She has lived like a dog.
10. She died like a hyena.

While practicing writing examples of similes from their own culture, students were informed that the exercises above aimed at creative thinking and writing. Later on they will be composing their own poems using figurative language abundantly.

5.2.2.3. Cognitive Metaphor in "Born To Die" for Creative Writing

In "Born to Die", Tekola Hagos chiefly executes "LIFE IS A JOURNEY" schema as the main source of cognitive metaphor. This schematized "PATH" is made vivid through travel words such as 'move', 'go', 'approach', 'way', 'back', 'fro', 'vanish', 'where' and "free". As expressed in the lines below, life is a journey:

These men, that move back and fro
Know not their goal, no where they go
But like actors who do play their part
Vanish like mirage and become the past

These lines also imply a ‘source - path- goal’ schema as unavoidable bodily experience and become the source of cognitive metaphor. This schema follows Birth → Growth → Death as the major route. In the poem, a metaphorical expression is used when the poet brings his entire struggle to nothingness:

When I reflect, all my struggles were nought.
Regret and sorrow eat away my heart

In the lines above, regrets and sorrows are given human attributes. All the qualities of his struggle are compared with nothingness.

5.2.2.4. Figure and Ground for Teaching Descriptive Writing

It was indicated that the analysis of situational irony, simile and cognitive metaphor helped the students to find ideas for describing the major figure and ground of the
These figures of speech created dependable situations so as to see the prominent figure of the poem.

**TASK:** Students were asked to describe the qualities of the figure and ground in the poem.

The prominent figure of the poem is the man. Passing through three stages of life, the man assumes various qualities in each stage. In the first stage, the man moves, loves and attracts. In this stage, the man walks aimlessly in search of the worldly pleasures of life. In the second stage, the man who has been acting actively in the world of life vanishes like a mirage. The beauty, grace and love disappear completely. In the last stage, the man undergoes death. Through the processes of aging, the various organs of the man change into dust, rust and decay. “Like the tombstone forever be cold.” The ground is the land in which people undergo changes. As is presented in the poem, while they are alive: joy, movement, grace, beauty and love prevail in the land, but when they die: regret, sorrow, dust, rust, and decay overtake the same land. It is against this background that men are freed to move on earth and die on earth. Generally, the poem presents man suspending death temporarily. This temporary suspension stops when the unification of the figure with the ground becomes a reality.

**5.3. Pragmatic Stylistics and Pragmatic Competence**

This section deals with a pragmatic stylistic presentation of poetry. A pragmatic stylistic model was designed so as to avail a platform for the application of communicative language teaching tasks so that intriguing environment is created in ELT classroom for the students to develop their pragmatic competence. In this pragmatic stylistic model, pragmalinguistic features such as speech act verbs, deixis, modal verbs and hedging expressions have been interlaced with sociopragmatic principles of politeness and cooperativeness. Interpretation of these pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic factors was conceptualized to equip the learners of poetry with pragmatic competence. A pragmatic stylistic interpretation of contexts, addressee and
addressee relations in a poetic text can be a transferable skill so that students can analyze other poems independently.

In the millennia culture where technology has made ‘soft-touch’ communication a breakthrough, language should be devoid of its ‘tough and rough’ war lexicon to cope with this progress. Softness in language communication can be made through developing the pragmatic competence of the learner. Can pragmatic stylistics create the situation for the development of pragmatic competence of the learner in EFL context?

To create pragmatic awareness, a pragmatic stylistic interpretation was made using Tsegaye Gebremedhin’s ‘Home-Coming Son’ and Fekade Azeze’s “Merry X-Mas”. These poems by Ethiopian poets were selected with the objective of creating situations in ELT classroom so that EFL learners can test and develop their pragmatic competence. The poems were selected considering the theme, length, cultural context and stylistic relevance. It is not only what the poets are saying but also how they are saying which is relevant.

5.3.1. A Pragmatic Stylistic Analysis of Fekade Azeze's "Merry X-Mas"

In an EFL context, one of the challenges is the students’ failure to use context dependent language properly. Good knowledge of grammar and great command of vocabulary are still dependent on good knowledge of context. One of the major challenges faced by the EFL learners is to choose suitable language in different contexts. Pragmatics helps us to match the language with its context. Though research shows that pragmatic competence is not teachable, classroom awareness can be facilitated so that students can be empowered to use context dependent language properly. To create pragmatic awareness, an experiment was conducted at the levels of context, addressor and addressee relations, deixis and speech act verbs. The experiment is to test and empower the pragmatic competence of EFL learners.
5.3.1.1. Analysis of Context in "Merry X-Mas"

A pragmatic stylistic analysis of context cannot depend only on spatial and temporal locations of the participants. It must include awareness of role and status, formality levels, choice of style, subject matter and wider physical environment. With this concept of context in pragmatics, the following questions were made clear to the experimental class:

**TASK**

1. Do the addressor and addressee in "Merry X-Mas" know their role and status?
2. Is there any story line in the poem? When and where does the story take place?
3. Comment on the formality level of the language and choice of style in the poem.
4. Do the participants know the subject matter? Do they know each other?
5. Do they use language properly?

**A. Knowledge of Role and Status**

Fekade Azeze's "Merry X-Mas" presents the views of an African child towards the European children in modern civilization. The African child sends X-Mas and New Year best wishes card written in his blood to the European children. His best wish card states his status. His major roles include 'frolicking in his African village', 'playing with real war weapons' and 'traversing in the African hilly and mountainous terrain'. His hardship experiences in the hilly land of Africa place him in less modern society and under an inferior social, economic and technological status compared to the modern European children. With great respect, the child sends a New Year and Christmas card. Clearly, the child is cognizant of the time, role and status.

**B. Knowledge of Spatial and Temporal Setting in "Merry X-Mas"**

Knowledge of time and place in which the participants are in can aid the placement of proper words in their proper contexts. The African child has chosen appropriate time to send his best wishes. Best wish vocabularies for the occasion are selected. The
spatial location of the European children is also made vivid as the poet refers to ‘snow’, ‘festive season’, ‘warmth’, ‘gardens’, ‘saloons’ and ‘toys’. Reference is also made to the African village which is hilly and mountainous and describes the spatial location of the African child. As the child unfolds in the lines below, he plays with real guns:

As I traverse mountains
Leap over the hills
With TANKS and MACHINE-GUNS
And write these best wishes to you
In BLOOD

C. Knowledge of Choice of Style

The poet’s command of diction is visible in his description of the African as well as the European child. Describing the African child and his struggle for survival and presenting the European children in their festive occasion, the poet has demonstrated his knowledge of choosing best words and placing them in their best places. Lexical items such as ‘merry’, ‘enjoy’, ‘gambol’, ‘play’, ‘prance’, ‘hope up’ and ‘dance’ describe the festivity European children experience. On the other side, linguistic items such as ‘leap’, ‘tanks’, ‘blood’, ‘machine guns’, ‘mountains’ and ‘hill’ are properly selected and placed to describe the economic and the social context of the African child. Best wish words are chosen which express the poet’s knowledge of style.

D. Knowledge of Subject Matter and Province

The poet contrasts the lives of the African and European children. The African child knows the war games of the European children. They play with ‘toy-guns’, ‘toy-tanks’, ‘water-pistols’ and ‘water-bullets’. The poet also knows that the African child plays with real guns and tanks. The African land is hilly and mountainous. In the wider African and European contexts, the African child knows the difference in
modernization. All in all, knowledge of role and status, style, and subject matter can facilitate proper usage of language pertaining to the context.

5.3.1.2. Addresser and Addressee Relations in "Merry X-Mas"

The relationship between the African child (the addressor) and the European children (the addressees) can be explained following pragmatic indicators which include deixis, speech act verb, addressor and addressee relations. On the other side, sociopragmatic indicators in the poem explain politeness and cooperativeness between the African child and the European children. The following is a sociopragmatic interpretation of politeness and cooperativeness:

A. Politeness in "Merry X-Mass"

The table below presents the interpretation of politeness in the poem following Leech’s politeness maxims:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POLITENESS MAXIM</th>
<th>REASONS FOR POLITENESS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Generosity</td>
<td>As the child bleeds, he minimizes his benefit. He covers the expenses for buying and sending the card.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approbation</td>
<td>The African child praises the greatness of the European civilization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modesty</td>
<td>The child exposes the difficulties of life to the African child. Minimizes self praise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreement</td>
<td>The African child seems jealous of the European. There is no response from the European side.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sympathy</td>
<td>The European children do not respond to the best wishes. No sympathy is shown in the poem.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The interpretation of politeness maxims above shows that the African child is extremely polite and respectful. Analysis of politeness is also believed to help the interpretation of the poem.
B. Cooperativeness in "Merry X-Mas"

The table below presents a brief interpretation of cooperativeness principle which sustains conversation in the poem:

Table-11: Cooperativeness Principle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COOPERATIVENESS MAXIM</th>
<th>REASONS FOR COOPERATIVENESS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>The African child tells the truth. War machines, guns, mountains and hills signify the African reality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantity</td>
<td>The African child cooperates and provides sufficient information about the situation of the African children in general.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relation</td>
<td>The European children do not respond promptly to the best wishes of the African child. His situation requires immediacy of their moral and material support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manner</td>
<td>The African child is direct while describing his situation. He sends the wishes with due respect.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interpretation of cooperativeness, as exemplified in the table above, during conversation situation can prove critical in understanding the meaning of the poem.

C. Analysis of Deixis in "Merry X-Mas"

The table below shows some examples of indexicals in the poem and their functions.

Table-12: Indexicals in “Merry X-Mas”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF DEIXIS</th>
<th>EXAMPLE</th>
<th>FUNCTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Person Deixis</td>
<td>You</td>
<td>Refers to the European children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>They</td>
<td>Refers to the African children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Represents the child.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Your</td>
<td>The European Children's</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place</td>
<td>Up and down</td>
<td>Refers to the African hills, mountains and terrains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discourse/Text</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>Your (mother)</td>
<td>Shows polite address and belongingness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Your (parents)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphatic</td>
<td>Those</td>
<td>Gives great emphasis to the best wishes the child sends</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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As indicated in the table above, context is made clear through person, place, social and emphatic indexical. The interpretation should support the student while describing the characters involved the place and the time of conversation.

5.3.1.3. Speech Act Verbs in "Merry X-Mas"

After explaining the difference between locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary verbs, students were asked to classify the verbs in the poem. The table below shows the classification:

**Table-13: Speech Act Verbs in “Merry X-Mas”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF SPEECH ACT VERB</th>
<th>EXAMPLE</th>
<th>FUNCTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Locutionary</td>
<td>- merry</td>
<td>• perform the act of saying something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• transmit message</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illocutionary</td>
<td>- summon</td>
<td>• perform an act in saying something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- write</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perlocutionary</td>
<td>- enjoy - dance - play - prance - hop</td>
<td>• perform an act by saying something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- dance - leap - frolic - hop</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interpretation of speech act verbs is done to understand the doer of the action, the actions in poetic conversation. Understanding the doer and the actions clears the understating of the meaning. With classroom experimentation of context, addressee relations, deixis and speech act verbs, students formed a group of two to practice making and responding to formal requests. The following situations were given to them:

**TASK**

1. Ask your friend to lend you Emily Bronte's “Wuthering Heights”.
2. Request your class mate to lend you some money.
3. Ask your classmate to give you a lift to Nazareth Town.
4. Ask your faculty dean to give you a letter of recommendation.
5. Ask your poetry teacher to have coffee break with you.

A detailed analysis of some common forms of expressions used by the experimental class while practicing formal requests on the contexts listed from 1-5 above will be presented in chapter six.

5.3.2. A Pragmatic Stylistic Interpretation of Tsegaye’s ‘Home - Coming Son’

On the basis of its cultural content, theme, relevance and length, Tsegaye Gebremedhin’s “Home- Coming Son” was selected for the explanation of the pragmatic stylistic model. Like most negritude poetry, Tsegaye’s ‘Home- Coming Son’ has ‘exile’ and ‘return’ as its major message. In this poem, an unholy and prodigal son returns to Africa to the land of harmony, spirits and natural beauty, rhythm, naked beauty, songs of nature and birds. The son is acquainted with the culture and the norms of the land. The land is administered by rituals. To make the prodigal son’s home-coming joyous, the spirits of the dead, the gentle blowing of winds and birds with rich sonorous songs of nature receive him boisterously. As the voyageur comes to the friends galore, he is no more a fringe of civilization. To fit into the community, however, his movement should not be gawky. He should be ready to live a frugal life. He asks the son to belong rather than be a stranger. He should be able to own up his culture. His future home will be sturdy, cozy and comfortable if he cooperates in respecting the local culture and wisdom.

“Home-Coming Son” is interpreted following four components of pragmatic stylistic model which includes the interpretation of context, addressee and addressee relations, deixis and speech act verbs. Interpretation is made so as to increase the learning opportunities of EFL learners of poetry.
5.3.2.1. Context in “Home-Coming Son”

Context in poetry can be interpreted looking into factors such as knowledge of role and status, spatial and temporal location, formality level, medium (code or style), appropriate subject matter and appropriate province. In “Home-Coming Son”, a physical location is presented through the lexical collocation of “nature” which includes ‘land’, ‘rainbow’, ‘moon’, ‘mother land’, ‘valleys’, ‘mountains’, ‘jungles’, ‘soil’, ‘home’, ‘fresh breeze’ ‘dust’ and ‘motherland’. Since it is a poem of return and exile, the physical location is made clear using this collocation of nature. These words glorify Mother Nature which is ready to give the voyager a motherly comfort and protection. Nature here is described as benevolent and munificent. A frolic movement towards the land makes the son’s resettlement less difficult. While presenting nature, the poet avoids fulsome lexical items. The lexical item “walk” reiterates several times so that the reader can imagine the contexts of the son’s journey to his native country from abroad. The son is walking all the way through the poem. He is told to walk rhythmically not to transgress the harmony of the land. Walking rhythmically, he has to build totemic relations with his ancestral kins and brothers. The land is also made colorful using lexical collocation of color which includes words such as ‘rainbow’, ‘black’, ‘dark’ and ‘ebony’. It is the land of the rainbow and ebony.

Context is presented using the lexical collocation referring to kinship words such as ‘your father’, ‘prodigal son’, ‘brother’, ‘lost-son’, ‘family’, ‘spirits’, ‘stranger’, ‘unholy stranger’, ‘forgotten stranger’, ‘ancestral spirits’ and ‘tribal warriors’. The prodigal son travels home to his own people. Included are not only the living but also the dead. Reference is not only made to the parents, family and ancestors but also to the body parts. The collocation referring to body parts includes: ‘heart’, ‘bare foot’, ‘naked body’, ‘naked skin’, ‘bodies’, ‘nostrils’, ‘bones’ and ‘body’. The collocation of these words glorifies the image of the people in this ritualistic culture.

There are some formality levels for the son to qualify for reintegrating smoothly with the culture. The son has to walk rhythmically and safely in this totemic and ritualistic
land. He requires the ability to live in indigenous culture and nature. At a superficial level he should be able to merge with the tribal surroundings. This will lead to a conflict as he has to step down from the elevated culture of civilized society and be one with nature. It is only a deep understanding which can allow a person to find comfort in being natural as opposed to being cultural. Knowledge of the culture enables the son to address his people with reverence. Knowledge of province is essential to communicate effectively in this tribal community. The son is told to observe these rules of the community. Knowledge of subject matter is an element of context in this poem. The poem works on the various levels which show its complexity. Dominantly, the poem celebrates the beauty of Africa, ‘the land of eight harmony’, ‘the canvas of God’s master stroke’ where even birds and winds are born with the capability to speak. Like a committed lover, the gentle breeze caresses the naked body. The poem endeavors to build confidence in blackness and a sense of pride in black beauty. To this effect, the poet advises the prodigal son to ‘walk tall’, ‘walk naked’, ‘walk proud’, ‘feel part of the work of art’ and ‘let the roots of your mother land caress you’. Precaution should be taken not to break the rhythm of the land. Mild instructions are given to the returnee because the ‘silence of the valleys’ can trigger off great fear in him and the ‘chest of the jungles’ and the ‘colossus bodies of mountains’ may place him in conflict with the rhythm of nature.

Accordingly, the unholy son should prepare himself psychologically and physically not to make even a minor gaffe. He should look carefully where he walks to avoid any impending danger, let himself to be caressed by the motherland, let Africa kiss his naked body and should listen to the spirits of the dead/ancestors. If the rhythm is not followed, finding a root becomes fruitless:

But watch, watch where you walk forgotten stranger
This is the very depth of your roots: Black
Where the tom-tom of your father vibrated...
Let the roots of your motherland caress your body
Let the naked skin absorb the home-skin and shine ebony.
In the poem, Africa is delineated as the land of rituals: ‘the land of the eight harmony’ , ‘spirits’, ‘tom-toms’, ‘mountains’ and ‘jungle’. A clear understanding of the culture, the geography and the mystical language of birds and winds is essential for easy settlement in the mystic land. The bare infinitives used to address the stranger create an informal tone and a friendly, positive attitude in the poem besides producing an informal context of conversation between the poet and the new comer. The voyager, though unheard, is warmly received and cordially requested to build an unshakable pride in blackness and race. Pride in blackness, the major concept in Negritude poetry, is the land mark of the poem. Generally, context in the poem is made vivid with the collocation of kinship words, color, parts of body and nature. The persona also has knowledge of role and status, spatial and temporal location, formality level and appropriate subject matter. The son gains appropriate knowledge of the local culture at the end.

5.3.2.2. Addresser and Addressee Relation in “Home-Coming Son”

The relationship between the addressor who is the poet in this poem and the addressee, the son is analyzed following Leech’s “Politeness Principle” and Grice’s “Cooperative Principle”. For the analysis of the first part of the poem, “Politeness Principle” is used and for the second part, “Cooperative Principle” appears to be more relevant in understanding the relationship between the poet and the son.

A. ‘Politeness Principle’ in “Home-Coming Son”

In the opening part of the poem, the addressor and addressee do not have close relationship. In the beginning, the poet addresses the son as ‘unholy’, ‘forgotten’ and ‘stranger’. Since the rules of the land are many and only after observing these rules, the new comer can move freely. As presented in the table below, all politeness maxims are not maintained so as to sustain effective communication between the participants of the discourse:
### Table -14: Addressor and Addressee Relation in “Home Coming Son”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Maxim</th>
<th>Sub Maxim(s in Leech 132)</th>
<th>Addressor and Addressee relations in the first part of the poem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Tact Maxim</td>
<td>(A) Minimize Cost To Other: [B]Maximize Benefit To Other</td>
<td>Cost to the son is maximized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Generosity</td>
<td>(A) Minimize Benefit To Self: [B]Maximize Cost To Self</td>
<td>Benefit to the son is reduced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maxim</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Approbation Maxim</td>
<td>(A) Minimize Dispraise Of Other: [B]Maximize Praise Of Other</td>
<td>Praise of the local culture is maximized. The son is described as ‘unholy’, ‘forgotten’ and ‘stranger’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Modesty Maxim</td>
<td>(A) Minimize Praise Of Self: [B]Maximize Dispraise Of Self</td>
<td>The son is not praised in the first part of the poem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Agreement Maxim</td>
<td>(A) Minimize Disagreement Between Self And Other: [B]Maximize Agreement Between Self And Other</td>
<td>Disagreement is created at the outset.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Sympathy Maxim</td>
<td>(A) Minimize Antipathy Between Self And Other: [B]Maximize Sympathy Between Self And Other</td>
<td>The addressor is not sympathetic to the son. The addressor tells the son to behave as per the local culture.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Disagreement is created because the son doesn’t know the law of the land and the local culture in the first part of the poem. He is emphatically advised to “look where you walk unholy stranger... watch, watch where you walk forgotten stranger/Out of your foreign outfit”. These are pieces of strong advice in imperatives given to the son because the land has its own rhythms. The son has to observe all these principles of the land to assimilate in the culture. To respect the law, the son is strongly advised: “This is the land of the eight harmony/ This is the canvas of God’s master stroke/ This is the very depth of your roots: Black.” Initially the addressor is not sympathetic and advises the son that the rules of the land should be respected to move and live freely in the community. In fact, the son is told twelve times to walk observing the rules.

### B. ‘Cooperative Principle’ in “Home-Coming Son”

In the last stanza of the poem, the relationship between the poet and the son has changed positively. The tone accompanies this positive change. The son in the second
half of the poem is addressed respectfully as ‘son’ and ‘brother’. At the end of the discourse, the new comer who has been addressed as ‘unholy’ and ‘forgotten stranger’ is addressed as a ‘brother’:

    Watch, and out of your foreign outfit brother
    Feel part of the work of art
    Walk in laughter, walk in rhythm, walk tall
    Walk free, walk naked.
    Let the roots of your motherland caress your body
    Let the naked skin absorb the home-skin and shine ebony.

The addressee is not an unholy, lost and forgotten son. His home coming is appreciated. It is because the poet has provided the son with genuine information about what is expected of him in the local culture. Nakedness, openness, integrity, laughter and carefulness are expected of the son. In this part of the poem, the poet has become more informative, relevant and direct. It is the poet’s adherence to the ‘Cooperative Principle’ which qualifies quality, quantity, relation and manner that the assimilation of the son in the culture has become possible at the end of the poem. True assimilation of the son has resulted due to the son’s cooperation in accepting the rules of the culture. Like a wise son of Africa, the son has changed himself to enter the culture. He is wise because he does not attempt to change the culture.

5.3.2.3. Deixis in ‘Homing-Coming Son’

Deixis makes the context in the poem understandable and participants interpretable in the poem. A teacher can help students form a group of five and ask them to locate all indexicals in the poem. Each student can refer to the poem and find out the relevance of each indexical. Following is an example of such an interpretation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Deixis</th>
<th>Function of the Deixis</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1 Person Deixis | Determine the role of the prodigal son who is coming home from exile.                 | 1. 1st person = 0  
2. 2nd person = you (4), (you) look, (you) feel (2), (you) walk (12), (you) let (4), (you) caress, watch (you); listen (you), 26 times repeated  
3. 3rd person = it  
4. Vocative = 0 |
| 2 Time Deixis | Measure and reckon time, locate events and refer to participants                      | Time markers = 0  
Tense markers = present tense (all imperative verbs); past tense (brought, vibrated, hummed, suspended; future (0)). |
| 3 Place Deixis | Specify locations in relation to speech event. Place reference is made to land, rainbow, moon, motherland(2), valleys, mountains, jungles, soil, home, dust motherland | Demonstrative = proximal (This (3 times)) and distal (0)  
Adverbs = Where (3) |
| 4 Discourse/Text Deixis | Refer to some portion of discourse                                                   | • Utterance initial = 0  
• Time deictic = 0  
• Place = this, where, out of, out, in (3), to |
| 5 Social Deixis | Reflect, establish and determine social relations including kinship, totemic, clan relations, rank and respect.  
Kinship reference is made to your father, prodigal son, brother, their lost-son, family, tribal warriors, spirits, stranger, unholy stranger, forgotten stranger, ancestral spirits | 1. Referent honorifics = 0  
2. Addressee Honorifics = Your (foreign outfit(2), motherland, bare foot, naked body, roots, father, suspended family name, tribal warriors, nostrils, motherland, body), unholy stranger(2), home-coming son, forgotten stranger and prodigal son  
3. Bystander honorifics = they, their  
4. Formality honorifics = 0 |
| 6 Emphatic Deixis | Show empathy and exhibit emotional distance. It is used to give advice emphatically. | This = 1. This is the land of the eight harmony.  
2. This is the very depth of your roots; Black  
3. This is the canvas of God’s master stroke.  
That = 0 |
The indexicals in the table above can be used back and forth to describe addressor and addressee relations and interpret the context of the poem.

5.3.2.4. Speech Act Verbs in the Poem

In order to grasp speech act verbs in the poem, students were told to form groups and locate and clarify all speech act verbs and their relevance in the poem. As the poem is the return of the native, a speech act verb ‘walk’ reiterates 12 times in the poem. In this return, the prodigal son is advised to ‘walk’ cautiously to adapt to the rhythmic beauty of the African land. His gait, outgoing and gregarious manner will enable him to live in the land. He is requested to ‘walk in peace, walk in laughter and walk in rhythm’. Expressing advice, the verb “walk” collocates with *freedom*, *nakedness*, *pride* and *being tall*. Major reference is also made to the voyager’s three sense organs: 1) *hearing* through speech act verbs like ‘hear’, ‘whisper’ and ‘listen’, 2) *feeling* through ‘feel’, ‘caress’, ‘kiss’, ‘floats’ and ‘absorb’, 3) *seeing* as in ‘look’, and ‘watch’. The other two illocutionary verbs are ‘let’, a rogative verb, which appears four times and ‘welcome’, a commissive verb, which occurs twice. The addressor uses the verb ‘let’ to make an offer of pieces of advice to the son. Compared to the collocation of reasoning, the verbs of emotion are many as it is the land of ritualistic culture.

Tsegaye’s statements are loaded and charged with a strong feeling for his native land. Most of his statements, with which he makes germane remarks, are short, simple and plain. Pieces of advice are given to the unholy voyager to walk with a proud gait. The germane remarks and the advice are made in imperative verbs:

- Out of your foreign outfit unholy stranger
- Feel part of the great work of art
- Walk in peace, walk alone, walk tall,
- Walk free, walk naked
- Let the feelers of your mother land
- Caress your bare foot
Let Her breath kiss your naked body. These imperative verbs, devoid of the pronoun ‘you’, act as the subjects of the statements and are not loaded with command and restrictions but with freedom of movement. As long as he adheres to the rules of the land, the returnee is free to walk on the bounteous mother land, which is foregrounded by a capital letter –‘Her’, assuming a godly position. In many of the statements, the psychological subject remains personal pronoun in most places of the poem. At times, however, the poem employs inanimate objects with human attributes of speech as in:

They welcome you home, home. In the song of birds
You hear your suspended family name
The winds whisper the golden names of
Your tribal warriors

Nature here is endowed with spoken words: ‘the winds can whisper/the golden names of your tribal warriors’.

Tasks

After brainstorming exercises in small groups are over, students are given the following tasks to attempt independently as a home work:

1. Describe the relationship between the addressor and addressee in the poem in terms of politeness principle.
2. Describe the relationship between the addressor and addressee in the poem in terms of cooperative principle.
3. Analyze the relevance of context in the poem.
4. Explain the poet’s choice of action verbs in the poem.
5. Describe the poet’s use of hedging expressions in the poem.
6. Interpret the relevance of modal verbs in the poem.
7. How did you use context during group discussion?

These communicative tasks are recommended so that an enabling environment can be created for the development of the pragmatic competence of EFL learners of poetry.
As is shown, one prime objective of teaching and learning poetry can be the creation of options and venues for the development of the pragmatic competence (PC) of EFL learners of poetry. A pragmatic stylistic model of teaching poetry coupled with CLT tasks creates intriguing and enabling environment in EFL classrooms for the students to develop pragmatic competence. EFL settings provide negligible avenues for pragmatic competence awareness. To maximize these avenues, using pragmatic stylistic model, pragmalinguistic features such as the speech act verbs, deixis, modal verbs and hedging expressions can be entwined with sociopragmatic features such as politeness and cooperativeness in EFL poetry classroom settings. Interpretation of these pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic factors is conceptualized to equip the learners of poetry with PC. Pragmatic stylistic interpretation of contexts and addressee relations in a poetic text can be a transferable skill so that students can analyze other poems independently. Safely, pragmatic stylistics can create the contexts and maximize learning venues for the development of pragmatic competence of the learner in EFL context.

5.4. Feminist Stylistics and Gender Free Language Use in EFL Context

This section presents a feminist stylistic analysis and a classroom presentation of two poems: "New Generation" and "Tonight". The poems were selected because they were written by women. They exemplify gender problems and how sexist language is used. The classroom presentation was conducted focusing on four interrelated levels: a) context analysis, b) lexical analysis, c) syntactic analysis and d) a critical discourse analysis (CDA). The classroom experimentation and the analysis of the poems were conducted with the following major objectives:

- create classroom context through poetry for the ELT students to reexamine poetic language in light of sexist language use;
- change the structure and ways of thinking towards sexist language use;
- raise the consciousness of EFL students towards using gender free language use;
- test and develop the sociolinguistic competence of EFL learners of poetry.
Lulit and Wossen published "The Ribbon of the Heart", a collection of poems, in the context where the educational qualification, experience and cost of publication do not favor woman writers. The country also has a handful of women writers who are experimenting with poetry in English. The changing situation of Ethiopia has allowed the growth of these flowers in desert. Lulit's "New Generation", a poem in this publication, is a reflection of the changing ideological, educational and economic landscape of an impoverished nation. Written in the context of a changing patriarchal society, the context of the poem, lexical choice, syntactic structures and its discoursal elements are interpreted and presented to the ELT classes.

5.4.1. Feminist Stylistic Analysis of Lulit’s "New Generation"

In the interpretation of context, feminist stylistics includes the context of production and reception. This allows the inclusion of the responses of students. With this common agreement, the following task was given:

**TASK**

1. Describe place and time in the poem.
2. Describe the cultural values cherished and criticized in the poem.
3. What is the main topic of the poem?
4. Describe the hidden motives of the writer. Have you made any inferences after reading the poem?

These leading questions were designed to lead the way for the discussion of the context of utterance, the context of culture, the context of reference and implicature.

**A. Context of Utterance**

In the interpretation of the context of utterance in the poem, students were advised to describe the physical environment, the location of the participants, the means of communication and time markers in the poem. Linguistic markers of time, place and
person were considered as indicators of the context of utterance in the poem. Time and place indexicals are less pervasively used compared with person indexicals in the poem. Students were, therefore, informed to rely clues in the poem to describe time and place of the poem.

The setting of the poem is contemporary Ethiopia. The poem presents a modern girl as the personal pronouns "she" and "her" exemplify several times. Elders are represented by "some" and "they". The conflict is between a modern girl with foreign values and elders who cherish traditional cultural norms.

B. The Context of Culture

Students were informed that the context of culture is the hallmark of social, cultural and economic conventions in the poem. The girl adopts foreign cultural practices breaking away from the indigenous cultural values:

- Lips like a red rose
- With an alluring fragrance
- Calling the butterflies
- from early spring fields
- Silk is her hair

The poet describes the artificial silk hair, lipstick and perfume which the girl uses to alter her natural and indigenous identity. The way the girl smiles, the colour of her lips and impure heart have been the butt of social criticism:

- Living in a world that has never been hers
- Adopting all foreign behaviors
- Habits cursed by her ancestors
- Abused beauty they say

Her lack of national sentiment and adoption of alien cultural values have not been accepted by the elders. As a result, she is criticized.
C. Context of Reference

The ‘context of reference’ deals with the topic of the poem. The poem is about cultural crisis that the country is facing. The young, devoid of traditional wisdom, follow foreign values. The old, ignoring foreign values, cherish the local culture. The following lines imply the views of the elders:

With a mind so empty
With a heart lacking purity
Her conscious fighting with its own
Identity
Imitating alien personality
Forgetting her nationality

To the dismay of the elders, the new generation of Ethiopia, represented by the girl in the poem, blindly adopts foreign behavior. Therefore, the poem describes the decline of traditional values cherished by the elders of the poem.

D. Implicature

Implicature refers to the knowledge and the hidden motives of the poet that the reader infers from the context of the poem. It can be inferred from the poem that the modern society has created the situation for the young lady to adopt foreign behavior. To the extreme disappointment of the elders, the contemporary modern society cherishes artificial behavior. It is the artificial silk hair, red lips, soft body and perfume that the modern society cherishes and lets them grow. There comes strong conflict between modernity and the expectations of the traditional society. The circumstances are compelling enough to disregard any concern the lady may have for the elders.

5.4.1.2. Lexical Analysis

This section deals with the analysis of pronouns, negative description, sexist collocation and world-view. The words in the poem reflect a world view maintained by the society. To guide the analysis, students were given the following task:
TASK

1. Give examples of words which perpetuate a particular world view.
2. How does the poet use pronouns?
3. Why doesn’t the poet use generic pronouns?
4. Discuss the lexical items which are chiefly employed to describe the girl negatively.

Often the pronoun "he" and the generic term "man" represent both sexes. It can be seen that such use of pronouns does not exist in this poem. However, students were advised to replace the pronouns "she" and "her" in the poem with "he" and "his". Students were asked to report their feelings of the poem and other observation. They reported that the entire flavor of the poem is lost when the feminine touch of the poem is changed. Even the girls in each experimental group felt that a description of the body parts of a boy as in the poem is not expected. They indicated that the lexical collocation referring to the body parts such as ‘heart’, ‘teeth’, ‘lips’, ‘hair’ and ‘eyes’ is not quite common way of describing a man. It is his masculinity, leadership qualities, courage and boyhood which are often described in their own culture. They have not read any work of literature even in the local language which describes the lips or the eyes of a man.

Though the poet does not use generic pronouns and address forms to imply sexism, there are examples of negative description of the girl in the poem. The girl is a” beauty queen.” The word “queen” is a sexist expression. Her body parts are compared with natural phenomenon. Her teeth are “snow” white. Her lips are compared with ‘red rose’. Her hair is ‘silk’. Her eyes look like a twinkling star. Most significant of all, the following description is sexually appealing:

Galloping like a wild horse
Blowing over her dancing eyes
That like twinkling stars
Her skin so soft
A complexion so perfect
Her beauty like a full moon
The poet describes the eyes of the girl which are dancing and her body which is soft. Every word expresses her sexual attractiveness not her power of reasoning or rationality. Therefore, wild horse, dancing eyes and twinkling stars are negative descriptions which exemplify only the sexual roles of a woman. Readers can also notice that this negative description is unconsciously chosen by the author.

5.4.1.3. Syntax and Gender Free Language Use

This section presents the syntactic structure of the poem and searches for the meaning of proverbs, metaphors, jokes, transitivity choices and passivization. The objective of the analysis and experimentation is to enable students see how sentences are inundated with figures of speech and proverbs which work against women. The stylistic practice helps them use language consciously in social contexts properly and see the impacts of sexist structures. Proper use of syntax in social context in English is also believed to improve their socio-linguistic competence of their mother tongue. To guide the discussion, the following questions were given to the experimental class:

**TASK**

1. Why does the poet use metaphorical expressions?
2. Why does the poet prefer syntactic structure inundated with simile?
3. Why doesn’t the poet use transitive and passive verbs pervasively in the poem?
4. Give examples of proverbs from your own culture which are often used to belittle the roles or the greatness of women.

**A. Metaphor in “New Generation”**

The beauty of the girl in the poem is made more conspicuous describing her against the background of other objects. Students reported that the following metaphors were used to glorify the glamorous image of the girl in the poem:

1. Every heart melts.
2. Silk is her hair.
3. Glittering in dark.
4. She is a beauty queen.
5. She is a fairy.

The qualities of the girl are made vivid through metaphorical expressions. She is compared with butter, silk, stars, moon and horse. All are negative and inherently sexist.

**B. Simile in “New Generation”**

Compared to sentences flooded with metaphorical ideas, the poet more pervasively employs sentences charged and loaded with simile. The simile also magnifies the beauty of the girl as in the following examples:

1. Lips like a red rose.
2. Galloping like a wild horse.
3. Eyes) that spark like twinkling stars.
4. Her beauty like a full moon.
5. Swimming like a swan.

The use of simile has reduced the use of transitive and passive verbs though the subject of many of the sentences is the girl.

**5.4.1.4 Transitivity Choices and Agency in “New Generation”**

In the poem, the pronoun "she" represents the girl who is the subject of all the sentences in the first part. None of the verbs are passive or active in this part of the poem. Instead, the poet pervasively uses sentences with complements. The complements are gerunds, for example, ‘galloping’, ‘blowing’, ‘calling’, ‘living’, ‘swimming’, imitating’ and ‘forgetting’. The gerunds are used to describe the activities of the girl. But the activities are subordinated. The poet has also found the gerunds in subordinating clauses more convenient to compare all the actions of the girl with butterflies, stars, foreign personality and dark night. The girl is the agent of her
bodily experiences not the world out side. She is not an active agent in the world. Whatever she does is referred to her beauty. The lines below are appropriate comments of elders:

Abused beauty they say
With no performed duty
Just a cover only pretty
Where is she to share her difference
To make it a better place.

According to the elders, she is not an agent in changing the situation of other fellow creatures “to make it a better place.”

5.4.1.5. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

This section deals with how language is used to describe women’s character, roles of the girl, fragmentation, focalization and schema. Language is not only a means of communication but an expression of hegemony, discrimination, inequality and domination. To investigate language use, the questions below were raised in the class:

**TASK**
1. How does the poet describe the girl in the poem?
2. What are the major roles of the female character in the poem? How about male characters?
3. How is the girl represented?
4. Who is the source of vision and culture? What is the position of the girl compared to the elders?
5. Is the girl a sexual object or a change agent? Who dominates who?

**A. Character Description**

The first impression of reading the poem helps us to see the beauty of the girl in the poem. The question is: Why does the poet describe the girl in that way? The girl is described to appear sexually attractive:
Every heart melts
When she smiles
Snow-white is her teeth
Lips like a red rose.

It is the perfume, silk hair and lipsticks which are foregrounded to glorify the artificial beauty of the girl. Her teeth, hearts and lips are negatively described. Her physical beauty is contrasted with the emptiness of her mind in the lines below:

With a mind so empty
With a heart lacking purity
Her consciences fighting with its own
Identity
Imitating alien personality

She is described as an artificial object who is imitating foreign behaviors. She does not own any Ethiopian feminine qualities at all.

B. Fragmentation

Fragmentation is seen from three perspectives: a) fragmentation of the girl into anatomical parts, b) comparison of the body parts of the girl with nature and c) presentation of the girl as a consumable good. At the outset, the description of the various anatomical parts of the girl looks attractive. However, the description of her teeth, lips, hair, eyes and skin does affect the wholeness of her personality. She is fragmented into parts. To our dissatisfaction, her body parts are not only fragmented but also compared to ‘rose’, ‘butterflies’, ‘spring fields’, ‘wild horse’, ‘twinkling stars’, ‘full moon’, ‘dark night’ and ‘swan’.

The fundamental question is that why does the poet fragment the girl and compare the body parts with nature or animals or natural occurrences. Culturally, the poet knows that this is the customary way to magnify the beauty of a woman. Deep inside the poem, however, comparison of the girl with a wild horse, swan and butterflies belittles the qualities and roles of the girl. Deep inside again, comparing the girl with rose, silk,
perfumes and makeup glorifies the artificial beauty of the girl. It is not her reasoning power and her social contributions which are described. The girl has to use various artificial makeup to enhance her beauty artificially. She has to be sexually appealing. However, this will bring her to the level of a consumable sex item. The elders do not acknowledge her attractiveness or her fertility roles:

With no performed duty
Just a cover only pretty
Where is she to share her difference?
To make a better place.

According to the elders, her contribution as an agent of change to make the country a better place is negligible. The elders are the sources of vision and resourcefulness. Her new maternity roles are not recognized. Her ideas are less acceptable than the old ideas of the elders. The syntax is inundated with roles, visions, ideas and values which glorify elders, a collection of old MEN. It is the hegemony, segregation, discrimination and patriarchal philosophy which inundate the day to day syntax. The syntax is full of ideas which magnify the greatness of men.

C. Proverbs

Often proverbs are used to open speeches in traditional cultures. In the words of Achebe, “Proverbs are palm wine with which words are eaten.” They are repositories of the wisdom of the society often compressed to justify one’s positions. Sometimes traditional people use proverbs to justify truth of their statements. The proverbs below were collected by the students who also believed that these proverbs demean the roles of women.

1. A man sent by a woman is never afraid of death.
2. To trust a woman is to hold fog.
3. Behind a successful man there is always a woman.
4. Empty vessels make the most noise.
5. A desperate man marries a pregnant woman.
6. He who has a wife has given hostage to his wealth.
7. A woman and a glass are always in danger.
8. A dog is wiser than a woman; it does not bark at its master.
9. A worthy woman is far more precious than jewels. strength and dignity are her clothing.
10. Women’s wisdom is as long as their nose.
11. Wise women ruin cattle deals.
12. A bow drawn by a woman won’t shoot.
13. The origin of women’s wisdom is greed.
14. Women know the ways of women.
15. Women have twelve horns.

These were proverbs collected by the students. Discussions were made on how traditional cultures belittle the roles of through sexist language though they try hard to change and contribute to the social and economic system.

5.4.2. Feminist Stylistic Analysis of Wossen Mulatu’s “Tonight”

“Tonight” presents prostitution as one of the most critical social problems. It has existed for decades in Ethiopia. As implied in the poem, prostitution which is pervasively disseminated in almost all cities of Ethiopia has become the last choice for many jobless young girls. It has also become the sources of other multiple social evils. An outstanding question is who should end prostitution? Are there options for women to work diligently to free themselves form prostitution? Has the society bestowed visionary and entrepreneurship qualities to women so as to free themselves? Wossen’s “Tonight” seeks solution to these critical problems. Composed in 2003, the poem also documents a social problem of many African countries. It also reflects how language reflects the beliefs of the society in solving social problems. In this section, analysis of context in the poem, lexical patterns, syntactic structures and discourse features are interpreted in the class. The objective of the experimentation is to test and develop student’s socio linguistic competence.
5.4.2.1. Context in Wossen’s “Tonight”

Written in the context of contemporary Ethiopia where the government strategically plans and uses literature to fight AIDS and prostitution, the poem suggests solution. In this context where the media covers social problems, students were familiar with the problems of prostitution. With the assumption that students could bring their background experience to the class room scenario, the following questions were raised. Active learning methods such as hot seating, thought bubbling and pyramiding were also used to generate ideas.

**TASK**

1. Is prostitution a critical social problem at all in Ethiopia? Does the context of the poem reflect the critical nature of the problem?
2. Describe the views of the society towards a prostitute in your culture. How do your people address a prostitute? What kind of language do they use?
3. How do you find the topic of the poem? Do you think the title reflects the message of the poem?
4. What have you inferred from the poem? Is there any hidden motive?
5. What should be done to advance gender-free language classroom and society?

To structure the discussion, students were informed about hot seating, pyramiding and thought bubbling. Then small groups were formed. Each group leaders were informed to include at least one female student in the group.

**A. Context of Utterance in "Tonight"**

While analyzing the context of utterance, students were instructed to describe the location of the addressor (the poet), the addressee (the man) and the subject (the prostitute). The title of the poem, time, place and person indexicals were considered as the linguistic indicators of the context of utterance.
In the poem, the pronouns “she” and “her” represent the prostitute who is the main subject of the conversation between the poet and the man. The prostitute is assumed to be in a cold street at that night. “Tonight”, the title of the poem, therefore, serves as a linguistic indicator of the time of the poem. It also shows the urgency of the problem. In the Ethiopian cultural context, conversation between a man and a prostitute about sexual affair with a prostitute is a private issue. It can be inferred from the personal nature of the topic of the discussion that the poet’s advice to the man has taken place in a very secluded environment. However, the future position and location of the man and the prostitute are suggested in the following lines:

Hope you’ll hold her hands
And feel her with bliss
Hope you’ll stand close by her side
And protect her from the cold

Warm and closer relations are suggested. It is warmth and love which can rescue the woman from life in cold streets. The place where she frequently goes is a cold street:

Hope make her forget the past
Hope she won’t be in the streets again
Selling herself to a stranger

It is during the night on the streets that the man is expected to meet the prostitute.

B. Context of Culture in “Tonight”

The context of culture deals with the social, cultural and economic interrelations between the man and the prostitute in the poem. It can be observed from the context of the poem that the very idea of prostitution signifies the absence of better economic options for women in Ethiopia. It is the last choice that the country can offer. Culturally, prostitution is not an acceptable job. Therefore, the prostitute faces social discrimination and economic subjugation. The lines below imply the fear of the poet:

Hope she won’t show up nude
And expose herself to the crowd
Neither her nudity nor her “profession” is acceptable in the society. Consequently, the rehabilitation of the woman to the socially and culturally acceptable practices can be the solution. Marriage, which is a culturally acceptable practice, can be the solution only if the man in the poem gives his consent.

C. Context of Reference in “Tonight

The context of reference refers to the major topic of the poem. The poem is all about the economic bondage of the woman under prostitution. The prostitute is the subject of the conversation between the poet and the man who are proposing solution. The man is advised to rescue the prostitute as the lines below signify:

Hope you’ll dry her tears fast
Hope make her forget the past
Hope she won’t be in the street again

The man is persistently advised to rescue the woman and let her forget the past because the woman is involved in a culturally and socially unacceptable practice. Finding a stable life and life partner is one of her greatest challenges.

D. Implicature

The analysis of the context of utterance, context of culture and context of reference can help us infer the hidden motive of the poet. Why does the poet advise the man to love a prostitute? The man is advised to hold the prostitute tight, kiss her cheeks and solve her puzzles. He is the one who makes her forget her past and gives her solace and protection. All these can be practical if the man marries the prostitute. Therefore, it is marriage, which is implied through out the poem, the major solution for prostitution in Ethiopia. It is the man who is still the solution. Man saves the woman. It is the message implied in the poem.
5.4.2.2. A Lexical Analysis of “Tonight”

The lexical analysis of the poem mainly focuses on the use of pronouns, reiteration, collocation and lexical cohesion. To achieve the objectives of this subsection, the following questions were given to the class:

**TASK**

1. Identify the lexical items which negatively describe the woman in the poem.
2. How does the poet use pronouns in the poem?
3. Does the lexical collocation referring to the body parts of the woman bring about any effect?
4. How does the poet organize the entire text?

As in the tasks under “New Generation”, students were informed to replace all feminine pronouns in the poem with masculine pronouns. All groups were asked to reflect on their impression after replacing the pronouns. Almost all groups reflected that the replacement of pronouns does not work effectively. This is mainly because a man cannot be a prostitute in the contemporary Ethiopian culture. The replacement of the pronoun makes the man the object of almost all the sentences. This belittles the roles and practices of a man in the society. In traditional cultures, the man often becomes the solution for many cultural and economic problems of the woman, not vice versa.

Key content lexical items also are patterned to glorify the practices of the man. Content words such as ‘kiss’, ‘hold’, ‘embrace’, ‘love’, ‘feel’, ‘fell’ and ‘stand close’ in the first stanza are used as collocations referring to human emotions. These are verbs which magnify his roles in providing warmth, care and protection. This consistent use of transitive verbs also organically cohere the first portion of the poem.

Negative lexical items are also used to belittle the social roles of the woman in the poem. Lexical items such as ‘prostitute’, ‘nude’, ‘expose’, ‘streets’, ‘selling’ and
‘substitute’ are negative lexical items which destroy the positive image of the woman in the poem.

Lexical items “hope” and “you” reiterate in the poem again and again to glorify the benevolent practices of the man. His name is repeated like God in the prayer to give “hope” and ‘solace’ to the woman. This reiteration, however, is stylistically significant because it coheres the entire poem. The reiteration maintains unity of ideas.

5.4.2.3. Syntax and Gender Free Language Use

Unlike Lulit Kebede’s ‘New Generation’, Wossen Mulatu’s “Tonight” is not charged and flooded with figures of speech about women. Wossen in this poem finds metaphor and simile inappropriate to present the situation of a woman. Wosen’s aim is not comparison but action and agency which subjugate woman to inferior position. Therefore, the interpretation of transitivity, passivization, normalization, agency and thematization can expose the working of language against woman. Wosen’s syntax is ignited with ideas which glorify man as the doer of all good practices. Man is a savior. Man is a bread winner. The following ten lines of the poem are changed into passive constructions so that students can see how sentences reduce a woman to a passive position:

1. Hope you’ll hold her light. (Man is active.)
   Hoped she will be held tight. (Woman is passive.)
2. And tell her it’s alright. (Man is active)
   And she’s told it’s alright. (Passive – woman)
3. Hope you’ll kiss her cheeks. (Man is active.)
   Hoped her cheeks will be kissed. (Passive – woman)
4. And solve all her puzzles. (Man is active.)
   And all her puzzles [are] solved. (Passive – woman)
5. Hope you’ll hold her hand. (Man is active.)
   Hoped her hands will be held. (Passive – woman)
6. And feel her hands with bliss. (Man is active.)
And with bliss her hands [are] felt. (Passive – woman)
7. Hope you’ll stand close by her side. (Man is active.)
8. And protect her from the cold. (Man is active.)
And she’s protected from the cold. (Passive – woman)
9. Hope you’ll embrace her. (Man is active.)
Hoped she will be embraced. (Passive-woman)
10. And tell her that you love her. (Man is active.)
And she is told that she’s loved. (Woman- passive)

The first stanza of the poem contains ten sentences with the man as the subject and the woman or her body parts either as direct object or indirect object. Transitive verbs such as ‘hold’ , ‘tell’ , ‘kiss’ , ‘solve’, ‘feel’ and ‘embrace’ signify that he is the agent of all the actions. He is the actor. He is presented as a problem solver, a lover, an informer and as a savior. In all these sentences, the woman is the object of all the active sentences. She is the victim and the source of evil – prostitution. Neither the poet (who is a woman) nor the prostitutes are change agents. Even the poet takes no actions except advising the man to rescue the prostitute. Therefore, awareness of passivization and transitivity should contribute to the sociolinguistic competence so that EFL students use sentence structures properly.

5.4.2.4. A Critical Discourse Analysis of "Tonight"

Critical discourse analysis investigates how language is used to describe the woman, identify the social roles of woman, fragmentation, focalization and schema in the poem. The following questions were raised in the experimental class:

**TASK**

1. How does the poet describe the woman?
2. What are the major roles of the female character in the poem?
3. How does the poet present the female body?
4. Who is the source of information and vision?
5. How does the poet position the reader?
6. Who are the victims and the victors in the poem? Why?

A. Character Description

As in the "New Generation", the poet directly describes the physical and psychological appearance of the women in the poem. It is through the actions, we probe into the image of the woman. The physical environment and the socio-economic context help the reader build a different image of the woman. Her nudity and sources of income worry the poet:

Hope she won’t show up nude
And expose herself to the crowd.

As she does not like her source of income, she cries and needs to shroud her disastrous past. She is also negatively described as the one resorting to flesh trade for survival:

Hope make her forget the past
Hope she won’t be in the streets again
Selling herself to a stranger

This negative description not only presents a sexually appealing image of the woman but also the dark context in which the prostitute perseveres.

B. Fragmentation

Fragmentation investigates the presentation of female body parts and the representation of woman as a consumable and passive object. As indicated earlier, since the poem is not figurative like in Lulit Kebede’s “New Generation”, there are few references to the body parts of the woman in the poem. The lines below make direct reference to the body parts of the prostitute:

Hope you’ll hold her tight
And tell her it’s alright
Hope you’ll kiss her cheeks
And solve her puzzles
Hope you’ll hold her hands
However, indirect references are made to her crying eyes and nude body. Since nudity and flesh trade are not acceptable practices, she is socially discriminated. She is a victim of economic inequality and cultural practices.

**C. Focalization**

Focalization presents the position of the woman and the degree of her persistence in breaking away from her situation and the positioning of the reader. In the poem, man is presented as the sole source of information and vision. It is the man who can marry the prostitute and solve all her problems. It is male oriented process of looking and verbalizing. The woman suffers the consequences of economic inequality, cultural subjugation and ideological dominance.

We are positioned in the text as readers who believe that the man is the savior of the woman. Readers follow the syntax which is charged and inundated with ideas which reflect the economic and the cultural supremacy of the man. Language is used to hide the reality. Students are recommended to investigate the deep and surface structure of the sentences which are hegemonic and belittle the roles of woman.

Finally, a gender free presentation focusing on interrelated four levels: context analysis, lexical analysis, syntactic analysis and a critical discourse analysis (CDA) can aid the awareness of language use. Language should be used properly in classes especially while addressing girls. A teacher can create gender free English classroom with the objective of using language in light of sexist language use, changing the structure and ways of thinking towards gender free language use, raising the consciousness of EFL students towards gender difference, testing and developing the sociolinguistic competence of EFL learners of poetry. Gender free language classroom can create conducive atmosphere for girls’ education.
5.5. Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the roles of contextualist stylistic activities on creative writing, pragmatic competence and sociolinguistic competence of the students in EFL contexts were experimented. The contextualist stylistic practices chosen include: 1) cognitive stylistics, 2) pragmatic stylistics and 3) feminist stylistics. The interpretation of six poems was presented in three major sections. First, a cognitive stylistic interpretation of Solomon Deressa’s "Ring the Child" and Tekola Hagos’s "Born to Die" was made and experimented. Experimentation was carried out towards the investigation of the student’s ability in identifying and using the roles of verbal irony, cognitive metaphor, figure and ground. Second, a pragmatic stylistic analysis of Tsegaye Gebremedhin’s "Home Coming Son" and Fekade Azeze’s "MERRY X-MAS" was carried out and experimented to find out and evaluate the pedagogical relevance of pragmatic stylistics to the pragmatic competence of the learners in an EFL context. A brief description of pragmatic stylistic model, the role of context, addressee and addressee relation, deixis and speech act verbs was presented to the experimental class. Finally, feminist stylistic analysis of Lulit Kebede’s "New Generation" and Wossen Mulatu’s "Tonight" was also presented. Here the analysis focuses on the functions of language, context, and image of women, reader address and figures of speech. A distinction is also drawn between sexist and gender free language use. While practicing and experimenting contextualist stylistic tasks, active learning methods such as mind map, thought shower, pair discussion, spider diagram, creative writing, independent work, story telling and thought bubbles were integrated.

Chapter four and five presented the textualistic and contextualistic stylistic practices in developing the communicative competence of EFL learners of poetry. Before and after these experiments were carried out in the classes, pre and post tests were also given. The next chapter presents the results of the major findings of the experiment.