CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 PRELIMINARIES

This research deals with the stylistic analysis of prefaces of well known books. Preface means ‘an introduction to a book, especially one that explains author’s aims.’ (Oxford 8th edition: 2010). The term preface is also known as foreword, introduction, prologue, preamble and translator’s preface. Each of them means a short introduction at the beginning of a book. For the purpose of this research, they are collectively termed as the Prefatory Matters.

Reading such a preface is to get a bird’s eye view of the book to which it belongs. It has given a great pleasure to the researcher to read prefaces of some of the world famous books. It is said that even the market value of a book mainly depends upon a preface apart from its content and the blurb. It is interesting to study the way the preface is constructed. It certainly is not written in a casual way though the tone may be reader-friendly. A preface often indicates the stance of the writer of a book and the way he/she looks at the book. If it is looked upon from the point of view of stylistics, a reader can derive a huge amount of pleasure that makes him get ready to set out to go through the book. Despite the variety of the prefaces, the main purpose of it is to tell the reader something about the book and make him/her understand the significance of the given book. In view of this significance, it is indeed
worth doing research about it from the viewpoint of stylistics—especially because a preface is often neglected by the readers in general, despite the fact that the preface does matter.

The prefatory matters intend to lay bear the threads of tapestry that follows in the book. Here, an attempt is made to define the chief categories of prefatory matters, though it is very difficult to clarify the thin boundaries that separate them. Being prefatory in nature it also discusses the plan and purpose of the research. The discussion is aimed at justifying the hypothesis of the research and will briefly elucidate the methodology that will be followed throughout the entire work.

1.2 PLAN AND PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

This research aims at analyzing prefaces of some of the world famous books selected from the point of view of their suitability to stylistic analysis. The researcher analyses the prefatory matters of seventeen prefaces of world famous books paying attention to the style, the way it reveals the subject matter of the book, the distance between the writer and reader maintained in it, the way the writer unfolds information or reveals the purpose. The purpose of the research is to present the stylistics of the preface and its importance and function for the readers in the book.

The researcher is aware of the fact that stylistics cannot exist for its own sake. However, a stylistic analysis has a definite utility. It provides insights which helps explore into the artistic motivation to the
literary artist in the creation of the given literary or non-literary text. To the researcher’s knowledge, so far, the study of this kind has not been carried out. The purpose is to attempt a stylistic analysis of a variety of texts—literary as well as non-literary.

1.3 HYPOTHESIS

It is believed that the preface is a mirror to the respective book. This is more or less true. However, there are many types of prefatory matters like prologue, preamble, preface, foreword, introduction to an edition etc. Obviously they are likely to have different function specified to each of them. General reading often overlooks these prefaces as if they do not matter. If that were the case there would be no need of them but they are there, in various forms as mentioned above - not only that, they have a function. The researcher has analyzed their function(s) as well as their significance to the book that follows them.

The hypotheses of this research are as follows:

1. A preface is an artistic creation.
2. Since it is artistically motivated its creation is not an accident neither is a reader supposed to read it in a casual way.
3. A preface is a well structured piece of writing with cohesion and coherence.
4. It also makes use of linguistic devices such as parallelisms, contrasts, figures of speech and draws on deviations, foregrounding and defamiliarisation.
5. The main aim of any preface is usually to highlight the substance of the book as well as its beauty spots for which a lot of care is taken using language.

1.4 DATA/SCOPE/LIMITATION

This research is based on stylistic analysis of prefaces of well-known books. Therefore the data is naturally the prefaces of the selected books themselves. About seventeen well known books have been selected from a variety of disciplines and their prefaces have been analyzed with reference to their content and structural design. For this reason, the present research has incorporated seventeen prefaces as data by way of limiting itself. The care, however, is taken to include maximum possible categories or types of prefaces. The following parameters were used for selecting the prefaces:

1. The book for which the preface is written has to be a well-known one or the best seller.

2. Prefaces for analysis are selected on the basis of their thematic gravity and linguistic strength irrespective of the length.

1.5 METHOD OF STUDY

The prefaces are selected from different disciplines like literature, criticism, ELT, mental and physical health, sports, human happiness, management etc.
This selection is based on the usefulness of the respective prefaces to the present research. The next part is the analysis of these on the basis of the triangular dialectic comprised of the language used, the content and the significance. The basis of all the analysis is the language. Thus it is analyzed stylistically.

The content is a tricky part since it has no uniformity that can be pinned down to fix into any system for analyzing. However the study concentrates on the following points:

1. What is written?

2. Why is it written?

3. Why is it written in a particular way?

4. Is it sufficient?

5. Is the matter a self sufficient whole?

6. Is it more interesting than the book itself?

Answers to these questions with respect to each preface in turn gives the significance that is whether the respective preface is relevant and encourages the reader to read the book itself.

1.6 PREFACE: CONCEPT AND TYPES

The preface is a place in a book where the author can speak directly to the reader about the choices made in the project. A preface is a soul of the core of the book. This section presents the concept of the preface, its various forms and types.
1.6.1 CONCEPT OF A PREFACE

A preface is an introductory matter preceding the first chapter of a book. Prefatory matter to a book generally includes forewords, prefaces, introductions, acknowledgements and dedications. The author does not primarily consider the topic of the book so much as a kind of work he/she has done describing or clarifying the procedures. For this reason, new prefaces appear in new editions of a book, to explain the rationale behind the revision. Less common but still pertinent are discussions of how the writers became involved with the subject and the way the project evolved. These may also involve accounts of the work's origins, meetings or conferences. Many times, the previous context of the emergence of the writer's books is given.

A preface is a section or page of the front and back matter of a book that includes explanatory remarks about the book. Preface information can alternately be placed in the back of the book in a post face.

1.6.2 FEATURES OF A PREFACE

Here are some possible features of a preface:

1) The content and purpose of the book

2) The origin of the book, especially if it is local

3) The people for whom the book was printed

4) How many people speak the language?

5) Where the language is spoken?
1.6.3 CATEGORIES OF A PREFACE

Prefaces fall into two categories:

1. Material relating to the main topic and the author's intellectual position.
2. Rationales for the rhetorical choices made in the work. (audience, terminology, format etc.)

In the first category, prefaces clarify the main point of the work and explain the choice of topic. It may have emerged as a response to theoretical discussions or problems in a discipline. The author may have decided to limit it in certain ways, or to ignore certain theoretical angles. It may have originated in the context or evolution of the subject, in the ongoing broils among scholars or in the writer's own previous work. Some information fit for and introduction like historical background may appear. However, historical information in an introduction would be straight background for the subject and would launch the discussion proper. On the other hand, in a preface, historical information would be used to show how the author chose or handled the main point- how history generated a motive for the work. It would be used to clarify the relation of the author to the project and of the project to the reader. In some cases, writers use the preface to define more clearly the problem addressed by the book, as well as to underscore their current intentions.

A second major category found in prefaces discusses the rhetorical choices made in the work. Writers explain their stylistic strategies and they sometimes define their audience, especially if the
1.6.4 TYPES OF PREFACES

Prefatory matter to books includes forewords, prefaces, introductions, preambles, prologues, translator’s prefaces, acknowledgements, and dedications.

A) PREFACE

A preface (pronounced “preffus”) is an introduction to a book written by the author of the book. An introductory essay written by a different person is a foreword and precedes an author’s preface. The preface often closes with acknowledgements of those who assisted in the project. Sometimes, the two terms foreword and preface are used interchangeably.

A preface generally covers the story of how the book came into existence, or how the idea for the book was developed. This is often followed by thanks and acknowledgements to people who were helpful to the author during the time of writing. Not every book has to have a preface, but readers do enjoy learning more about how the book written came together. The preface includes a brief description of the book and why it was written. It also contains information on where and how you found your information and also the problems encountered along the way. A preface is usually signed. The term preface can also mean any preliminary or introductory statement. It is sometimes abbreviated as pref.
Preface comes from the Latin, meaning either "spoken before" (prae + fatia) or "made before" (prae + factum).

B) FOREWORD

A foreword is a short piece of writing often at the beginning of the book or other piece of literature. A foreword is placed before the introduction of a book or any other piece of writing and is written by someone who is not the author of the book. Often a foreword talks about some interaction between the writer of the foreword and the story or the writer of the story. A foreword to later editions of a work usually explains in what respects that edition differs from the previous one. If there is an author's preface as well, it follows the foreword. A foreword will always have the signature of the person who wrote it placed at the end of it. The foreword basically explains how the idea of the book came about and various other details about the book.

The writer's and artist's yearbook always has a foreword, which is usually an author explaining his or her experiences of writing and often includes the author explaining how the writer's and artists' yearbook helped them.

DEFINITIONS OF FOREWORD


2. A foreword is a piece of writing often found at the beginning of a book or other piece of literature, before the introduction, and written by someone other than the author of the book.
3. An introductory piece written by the author or by an expert in the given field. A foreword by a celebrity or well-respected authority is a strong selling point for a prospective author or, after publication, for the book itself.

   A foreword (word that comes before or preface) is a way for an author to introduce the work to the audience. There may be some clarifying history, or perhaps an explanation of the inspirations that lead to the work. The foreword may act as an apologia, the author's broad concept in defense of his position or research findings.

C) PREAMBLE

   A preamble is an introductory and explanatory statement in a document that explains the document's purpose and underlying philosophy. When applied to the paragraphs of a statute, it may recite historical facts pertinent to the subject of the statute. It is distinct from the long title or enacting formula of a law.

D) PROLOGUE

   Prologue or prolog is a preferred piece of writing. The Greek prologues included the modern meaning of prologue, but were of wider significance, embracing any kind of preface, like the Latin praefatio. In a book, the prologue is a part of the front matter which is in the voice of a character in the book, rather than in the voice of the author.

E) INTRODUCTION

   In an essay, article or book, an introduction (also known as a prolegomenon) is a beginning section which states the purpose and goal
of the following writing. This is generally followed by the body and conclusion.

F) ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the creative arts and scientific literature, an acknowledgment (also spelled acknowledgement) is an expression of gratitude for assistance in creating a literary or artistic work.

Receiving credit by way of acknowledgment rather than authorship indicates that the person or organization did not have a direct hand in producing the work in question, but may have contributed funding, criticism, or encouragement to the author(s) various schemes exist for classifying acknowledgements. Giles and Council (2004) give the following six categories:

1. Moral support
2. Financial support
3. Editorial support
4. Presentational support
5. Instrumental/Technical support
6. Conceptual support, or Peer Interactive Communication (PIC)

Apart from citation, which is not usually considered to be an acknowledgement, acknowledgement of conceptual support is widely considered to be the most important for identifying intellectual debt. Some acknowledgements of financial support, on the other hand, may simply be legal formalities imposed by the granting institution.
G) EPIGRAPH

In literature, an epigraph is a phrase, quotation, or poem that is set at the beginning of a document or component. The epigraph may serve as a preface, as a summary, as a counter-example, or to link the work to a wider literary canon, either to invite comparison or to enlist a conventional context.

1.7 VALUE OF RESEARCH

It is hoped that this research will be useful particularly in the teaching of literary and non-literary texts with reference to their prefaces. This research will also show how preface is significant in the context of the book. This is so because a preface indicates:

1. The author’s attitude to the book
2. The content of the book in general
3. The structure of the book in general
4. The author’s philosophy and purpose for writing the book

In other words a preface is a book in miniature and offers glimpses of the book which inspire and mentally prepare the readers to enjoy the book. The researcher believes that it is necessary to highlight the fact that a preface is not an ‘appendage’ or something that is ‘added’ to the book but is an integral part of it. Looked at from this point of view, the researcher hopes to reveal how significant it is to read even the preface of a book before one embarks on reading it.
This research also indirectly suggests that any student, of literature or language must go through the preface before reading any book. An attempt has been made to insist on how preface, a mirror to a book, is a significant aspect of any book. In other words this research creates awareness among book-lovers about the significance of preface. So far, to the best of the researcher’s knowledge, there is no study of prefaces to books despite the fact that they are a very important component of any book. This research could well be the first attempt that seeks to approach prefatory matters as a form of literary text meant to be appreciated. Therefore this research highlights the significance of prefatory matters from the formal point of view as well as the functional point of view.

1.8 CHAPTERISATION

CHAPTER 1
The first chapter is introductory in nature. It discusses the plan and purpose of the research and lays out the statement of the problem, the basic assumptions behind this study, the way it is going to do the analysis of data and significance of it in the context of teaching and learning of English.

CHAPTER 2
The second chapter extensively discusses stylistics as a branch of linguistics which helps enhance our understanding, interpretation and
enjoyment of the given text. The chapter has also taken into consideration literary stylistics and non-literary stylistics. The chapter forms a theoretical framework within which prefaces are analyzed in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 3

The third chapter is about literature review. It contains the reviews of books related to stylistic analysis.

CHAPTER 4

This chapter analyses the prefaces under study from the point of view of stylistics. While doing the stylistic analysis the purpose for doing so has also been discussed.

CHAPTER 5

The last chapter contains conclusions, future possibilities of research and the pedagogical implications of the present research.