EROTIC, VERNACULAR AND FIGURATIVE LANGUAGES IN D.H. LAWRENCE’ LADY CHATTERLEY’S LOVER

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ABSTRACT
This study analyzes the use of erotic, vernacular and figurative languages in D.H. Lawrenre’s Lady Chatterley’s Lover. As part of stylistic, this study focuses to find out how Lawrence used the erotic, vernacular and figurative language as the distinctive expression in the text, and to find out the purposes and the effects of such expressions. It is found out that the erotic language in this novel can be seen from the usage of taboos, direct, and the use of concrete and abstract nouns. It is also found out that he used some conceptual metaphors and irony to describe the eroticism of the novel.

Keywords; erotic, vernacular, figurative, taboos, adulterous

ABSTRAK
Artikel ini menganalisa penggunaan bahasa erotis dalam karya D.H. Lawrence yang berjudul Lady Chatterley’s Lover. Merupakan bagian dari studi tentang stilistik, artikel ini memfokuskan pada penggunaan bahasa erotis, vernacular dan figuratif serta untuk menemukan tujuan dan efek dari penggunaan gaya bahasa tersebut. Ditemukan bahwa Lawrence dalam karya tersebut menggunakan gaya bahasa erotis yang bisa dilihat dari penggunaan kata-kata tabu, langsung dan juga menggunakan gaya bahasa metapora dan ironi dalam novelnya.

Kata kunci: erotis, vernacular, figuratif, tabu, perselingkuhan

A.BACKGROUND
Verdonk (2002:4) defines stylistics as “the analysis of distinctive expression in language and the description of its purpose and effect”. The notion of such definition is in the word ‘distinctive’. Therefore, this paper might concern his study with the distinctive expression applied in a text, and tries to describe and find out the purposes and the effects of such expression. D.H. Lawrence’s Lady Chatterley's Lover lies in a paradox: it is simultaneously progressive and reactionary, modern and Victorian. It looks backwards towards a Victorian stylistic formality, and it seems to anticipate the social morality of the late 20th century in its frank engagement with explicit subject matter and profanity. One might say of the novel that it is formally and thematically conservative, but methodologically radical. It is a novel that liberally employs profanity, that more- or-less graphically--graphically, that is, for the 1920s: it is important not to evaluate the novel by the standards of profanity and graphic sexuality that have become prevalent at the turn of the 21st century--describes sex and orgasm, and whose
central message is the idea that sexual freedom and sensuality are far more important, more authentic and meaningful, than the intellectual life.

The novel's protagonists, Mellors and Connie, is a quite conventional marriage, and a sex life in which it is clear that Mellors is the aggressor and the dominant partner, in which Connie plays the receptive part; all who would argue that *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is a radical novel would do well to remember the vilification that the novel heaps upon Mellors' first wife, a sexually aggressive woman. Rather than mere sexual radicalism, this novel's chief concern--although it is also concerned, to a far greater extent than most modernist fiction, with the pitfalls of technology and the barriers of class--is with what Lawrence understands to be the inability of the modern self to unite the mind and the body. D.H. Lawrence believed that without a realization of sex and the body, the mind wanders aimlessly in the wasteland of modern industrial technology. An important recognition in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is the extent to which the modern relationship between men and women comes to resemble the relationship between men and machines.

This paper analyzes D.H. Lawrence’s *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* in usage of erotic, vernacular, and figurative languages.

**B. FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

1 The Erotic Language of *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*

The erotic language of Lady Chatterley’s lover can be seen in usage of taboos, direct languages in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, the use of concrete and abstract nouns.

a. Taboos in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*

*Lady Chatterley’s Lover* is a novel about marriage, sex and adultery. Sova said that it presented the forbidden acts in forbidden detail, and described them in forbidden language since the author, D.H. Lawrence described his story openly, detailly and directly using some words or styles that most of people or writers/authors avoid. He used some taboos or four-letter word in describing the characters and the acts done by them. His language is an erotic rather than pornographic one.

As he stated in *A Propos of Lady Chatterley’s Lover* (1981a), he would like to pursue his readers of the necessity of speaking openly and honestly about sex. The way he wrote his novel made it considered by the authority as a pornographic novel and made the novel was banned for many years, but the illegal copies were distributed to some readers.

When we read the novel, we can find the taboo words such as ‘cunt’, ‘penis’, ‘buttock’, ‘breast’, ‘fuck’ and some other words. These words are used to describe the story and to relate to the
feeling and emotion of the characters. For him, sex is a great mystery, the mystery of the coming together of two people, of the union of two consciousness in the privacy of a relationship. To free sex from taboos, Lawrence describes the actions of the characters explicitly. Here some examples how he used such words.

'I wasn’t talking about knowledge...I was talking about the mental life,’ laughed Dukes. ‘Real knowledge comes out of the whole corpus of the consciousness; out of your belly and your penis as much as out of your brain and mind... (LCL 52).

After reading the novel, we can find that Lawrence used the words ‘penis’ for 22 times, as well as ‘breast’ for 22 times, ‘cunt’ for 4 times, ‘fuck’ for 10 times, ‘loins’ for 19 times, and ‘orgasm’ for 4 times.

‘To her it meant nothing except that she gave herself to him. And at length he ceased to quiver any more, and lay quite still, quite still. Then, with dim, compassionate fingers, she stroked his head, that lay on her breast. (LCL 35).

...What is cunt but machine-fucking!—It’s all alike. Pay ‘em money to cut off the world’s cock. (LCL 320). I believe if men could fuck with warm hearts, and the women take it warm-heartedy, everything would come all right. It’s all this cold-hearted fucking that is death and idiocy.’ ‘But you don’t fuck me cold-heartedy,’ she protested.

'I don’t want to fuck you at all. My heart’s as cold as cold potatoes just now.’

Perhaps the use of these words in his novel was one of the reasons why the authority banned it and brought it into trial. But for Lawrence, these taboos were not pornographic since he used them with their real meaning and they were used to describe the mystery of sex.

b. Direct Language in Lady Chatterley’s Lover

Lawrence in narrating or describing his story in the novel, especially the acts done by the characters, Connie and Mellor, when they are making love, use a direct language. He was convinced of the need to talk about love and sex without taboo in which he described every body organ and action of the characters in a direct way. We can see how he described the human body, Connie when she was naked in front of her mirror in her room.

When Connie went up to her bedroom she did what she had not done for a long time; took off her clothes, and looked at herself naked in the huge mirror. (...) Her breasts were rather small, and dropping pear-shaped, they were unripe, a little bitter, without meaning hanging there. And her belly had lost the fresh...Now it was going slack, and a little flat, thinner... Her thighs, too, they used to look so quick and glimpsy, in their female roundness...(LCL 75).

And in describing the intercourse, Lawrence did it in a direct way without trying to find any other ways to make it sound politely. It is his style in describing sex as he stated in A Propos of Lady Chatterley’s Lover. This is how he described the first intercourse done by Connie and Mellors in his hut in the wood.

...He laid his hand on her shoulder, and softly, gently, it began to travel down the
**curve of her back**, blindly, with a blind stroking motion, to **the curve of her crouching loins**. And there his hand softly, softly, stroked the curve of her flank, in the blind instinctive caress. (...) his hand softly on **her upper arm**, he drew her up and led her slowly to the hut, not letting go of her till she was inside. “You lie there,” he said softly, and he shut the door, so that it was dark, quite dark. (LCL 121)

Here we can see how he describe the action in detail, from the first act of the movement of the body organ, such hand, arm, shoulders, back and so on.

With a queer obedience, she lay down on the blanket. .. Then she felt the soft, groping, helplessly desirous hand touching her body, feeling for her face. The hand stroked her face softly, softly...and at last there was the soft touch of a kiss on her cheek. She lay quite still, in a sort of sleep, in a sort of dream. Then she quivered as she felt his hand groping softly, yet with queer thwarted clumsiness, among her ‘clothing. Yet the hand knew, too, how to unclothe her where it wanted. He drew down the thin silk sheath, slowly, carefully, right down and over her feet. Then with a quiver of exquisite pleasure he touched the warm soft body, and touched her navel for a moment in a kiss. And he had to come in to her at once, to enter the peace on earth of her soft, quiescent body. It was the moment of pure peace for him, the entry into the body of the woman. She lay still, in a kind of sleep, always in a kind of sleep. The activity, the orgasm was his, all his; she could strive for herself no more. (LCL 121 – 122)

Lawrence was very clever in describing the feeling of the female protagonist, Connie, when she was making love with her lover. And the use of the repetition of the word ‘softly’ gives a great effect in telling the readers how the feeling of Connie’s. Here we can also see that the language of the novel moves back and forth between a realistic and the symbolic key. The realistic language used in the quotation above are ‘hand’, ‘arm’, shoulders’, and etc. while the symbolic one is to enter the peace on earth of her soft, quiescent body.

**c. The use of Concrete and Abstract Nouns**

Lady Chatterley’s Lover has four main erotic passages on pages ; 121, 122, 131, 139, and 181. Lawrence used concrete nouns when he talked about ‘human body’ and ‘clothes’, such as in;

...He laid his hand on her shoulder, and softly, gently, it began to travel down the curve of her back, blindly, with a blind stroking motion, to the curve of her crouching loins. And there his hand softly, softly, stroked the curve of her flank, in the blind instinctive caress. (...) his hand softly on her upper arm, he drew her up and led her slowly to the hut, not letting go of her till she was inside. (LCL 121)

The abstract nouns are used to describe the ‘erotic and sexual acts,’ ‘emotion’ or ‘state’ such as orgasm, kiss and nakedness. Lawrence also used some adjectives that relate to the sense of touch such as ‘soft’, ‘tender’, ‘warm’ etc.

**2. Vernacular Language in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover***

This paper analyzes how informal colloquial language is used in D. H. Lawrence’s novel *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* where vernacular language is excellently provided. The term vernacular refers to the popular untaught variety of a language found in colloquial speech. According to Yule (2006:212) vernacular is a general expression for
a kind of social dialect, typically spoken by a lower-status group, which is treated as non-standard because of marked differences from a socially prestigious variety treated as a standard language. This is means that the language forms in vernacular are signs of all-educated usage and should not act as a model for foreign learners of English. Furthermore, it mentions that vernacular is often identical to non-standard, informal. Consequently it is felt to be inappropriate to a higher prestige communication (meetings, serious public communications). However, it could be successfully used especially in literary style because it is sure to add color and vigor to the speech of the characters (2006:212).

Lawrence was a writer who grew up in a village where the majority of the population were colliers and the effects of such habitat are obvious throughout his literary works. In his work *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* he mention Mellor’s as a character that resembles the he himself as a collier son, a working-class representative in search of a quiet life but who is estranged from his background. The language he adopts is situational determined that is to say he shifts from one speech to another, not only when speaking to different persons but in the same conversation with the same person, too. From this perspective he has an advantaged position because we may understand his character better only by paying attention to the circumstances that causes the shifting in his speech.

Through Mellors, Lawrence had the opportunity to get in touch with his colliery roots succeeding in giving the reader a glimpse in the terminology he was used to, as well as an outlook of the way his contemporary community from that area expressed them in the specific Derbyshire dialect. According to Bolton and Chrystal, Lawrence has the incorrigible habit of using the language he needed to use disregarding social and stylistic amenities (1993). Lawrence was primarily concerned with the authenticity of the dialogues, with the true rendering in his novel of their reality.

Mellors is mentioned as a gamekeeper and he should talk accordingly, a condition reinforced by his class origin. However another, more important factor requires his use of *the vernacular*. He grew up in a family of hard workers and in a community of less privileged social group, a local community where physical and moral toughness were a way of living. Psychologically the exponents of this community, especially male ones remain loyal to the vernacular culture in which they grew up including their language.

Moreover, it is described by Berger (1966) that the aspirations to a more standardized speech are lacking because the speakers generate antipathetic attitudes toward it and thus they encourage the vernacular forms of language as a form of loyalty.
toward their closed society. That is what happens with Mellors too. His frequent code-switching is used manipulatively in the relationship with the upper class Connie either to distance himself from her or to gain a temporary advantage”. Interesting to notice is that he speaks also vernacular when he engages in a sexual conversation or when he lets his feelings to come out regarding his relationship with Connie.

For example Mellor feels superior to others, nevertheless he is being disregarded by Connie at the beginning where she naively wandered how could he get the officer position “when he speaks broad Derbyshire” p.95.

Considering the passage when Connie first encounters her husband’s gamekeeper we can observe the code-switching of Mellors, following one grammatical element, the inflection -ing:

Lord Clifford ‘Thanks, then, for the help, Mellors,’ said Clifford casually, as he began to wheel down the passage to the servant’s quarters.

Mellors ‘Nothing else, Sir?’ came the neutral voice, like one in a dream.

Lord Clifford ‘Nothing, good morning!’

Mellors ‘Good morning, Sir.’

Connie ‘Good morning! It was kind of you to push the chair up that hill. I hope it wasn’t heavy for you,’ said Connie, looking back at the keeper outside door.

Mellors His eyes came to her in an instant, as if wakened up. He was aware of her. ‘Oh no, not heavy!’ he said quickly.

Then his voice dropped again into the broad sound of the vernacular: ‘Good mornin’ to your Ladyship!’

Lawrence tells us explicitly when Mellors is switching into a different part of his linguistic repertoire. Though he has used –ing in his “Good morning, Sir”, to Lord Clifford, suddenly drops into the “broad sound of the vernacular” as he says good morning to Lady Chatterley. This pattern is continued in the passage bellow, when Connie and Mellors meet next.

Connie ‘I wondered what the hammering was, ’she said, feeling weak and breathless, and a little afraid of him, as he looked so straight at her.

Mellors ‘Ah’m getting’ th’ coops ready for th’ young bods,’ he said,

Connie ‘I’m just going,’ she said.

Mellors ‘Was yer waitin’ to get in?’ he asked, looking at the hut, not at her.[…break in text…]

Mellors ‘I mean as ‘appen Ah can find anither place, as’ll du for rearin’ th’ pheasants. If yer want ter be ‘ere, yo’ll non want me messin’ abaht a’ th’ time.’

Connie She looked at him, getting his meaning through the fog of the dialect. ‘Why don’t you speak ordinary English?’ she said coldly.

Mellors ‘Me! Ah thowt it wor ordinary.’

Here the formality of his speech is closely linked to the grade of intimacy he feels inside. However he uses his vernacular without being engaged in an intimate conversation: “Ah’m gettin’
th’ coops ready for th’ young bods” this happens before Connie and Mellors start a more intimate relationship. He always drops g ‘s in informal dialogues so we find everywhere in the novel forms like: rearin’, messin’, waitin’, potterin’, seen’, settin’, tinkerin’, mornin’. Nearly all-English speakers drop g ‘s sometimes, but in a given speech community, the proportion varies systematically with class.

Wardhaugh (2002: 27) explains that while people do usually know what language they speak, they may not always lay claim to be fully qualified speakers of that language. They may experiences difficulty in deciding whether what they speak should be called a language proper or merely a dialect of some language. However formality also matters: members of a given social stratum drop g ‘s more often in less formal speech. Thus according to his social class Mellor’s also drops the final g but as we have seen only when formality is not required. Here the analogy is not relevant at all because he speaks according to his inner requirements. The use of –in’ instead of – ingi is a general vernacular feature usually found in the speech of men.

Other elements introduced by the author in Mellor’s broad vernacular speech are:

a. The loss of initial h as in (it is a constant feature): Sit ‘ere i’ th’ ut; Sir Clifford’ and ‘t got...or in the words ‘es(has), ‘ardly, ‘ead, ‘er(her), ‘im(him), ‘andlin’(handling).

b. The loss of initial t as in: Sit ‘ere; The loss of th-in the word them considered a general vernacular is present not only in Mellors’ speech but in Mrs. Bolton’s too. Mellors uses the form both when he speaks “proper English” and when he switches to dialect. This fact proves that the form is used as such extent by the lower classes that even for Mellors who was acquainted with both variants the word ceased to be considered as improper English.

c. Dunna is frequently used too with the meaning do not and it is specific to the same dialectal area of England. The word can be found in the phrases like:

Dunnagerrungooin’. (Don’t upset them);
Dunnawittle. (Don’t worry.)
Mellors use in his conversation with Connie as follows:
Dunnayer say that! (Do not say that!) or Well, dunna fret. (Don’t worry).

The word is one example of the many that prove a specific Derby dialect procedure of pronouncing a word usually a verb together with the following word usually a negation, a pronoun or a preposition. Other examples referring to this procedure are: canner (can not), gorallon (got all on), burrit (but it), gerra (get a), gerraht (get out), namor (no more), int (in the).

These are the examples by which D. H. Lawrence managed to give us an excellent proof that the vernacular language may be successfully used in literature and some of the characters in
Lady Chatterley’s Lover often choose to speak it, not only in order to prove their solidarity with the members of the community they belong to, but also as a challenge to the upper classes they get involved with.

3. Figurative Language

Figurative Language is any way of saying something other than the ordinary way (Perrine, 1974:610). Figurative language affords the reader with an imaginative pleasure (imaginative power). This imaginative pleasure can be processed by ability of mind that’s able to ‘picture’ or ‘image’ absent object as if they were presents. D.H. Lawrence writes the novel by using figurative language. They are metaphor, and irony. Metaphor is used as a means of comparing things that are essentially unlike. It is implied the figurative term that is substituted for or identified with the literal term (Perrine, 1974:610). Irony is a term with a range of meaning, all of them involving some sort of discrepancy or incongruity (Perrine, 1974:216).

a. The metaphors

Lawrence seemed to use some conceptual metaphors in his Lady Chatterley’s Lover to describe the eroticism of the novel, for example when he described the love between Connie and Mellors.

‘His body was urgent against her, and she hadn’t the heart any more to fight (LCL 138).

I got you a key made, my Lady!’ he said, saluting, and he offered her the key. always feared it, for it left her helpless; she feared it still, lest if she adored him too much, then she would lose herself become effaced, and she did not want to be effaced, a slave, like a savage woman. She must not become a slave. (141) We are a couple of battered warriors,’ said Connie. ’Are you battered too?’ he laughed. (213)

Lovers (before falling in love) are warriors. Love is the enemy. The process of falling in love is war or battle. Falling in love is losing the war. Lovers (after falling in love) are slaves. The conceptual metaphor “love is a war” is so closely related to our conceptualization of love that is often found in our everyday common language in expression such as the following, “I can not fight my feelings for him anymore “or” I am a slave of love. And here how he described the protagonist’s orgasm.

…she was like the sea, nothing but dark waves rising and heaving, heaving with a great swell, so that slowly her whole darkness was in motion, and she was ocean rolling its dark, dumb mass. Oh, and far down inside her the deeps parted and rolled asunder, in long, fair-travelling billows, and ever, at the quick of her, the depths parted and rolled asunder, from the centre of soft plunging, as the plunger went deeper and deeper, touching lower, and she was deeper and deeper and deeper disclosed, the heavier the billows of her rolled away to some shore, uncovering, and closer and closer plunged the palpable unknown, and further and further rolled the waves of herself away from herself leaving her, till suddenly, in a soft, shuddering convulsion, the quick of all her plasma was touched, she knew herself touched, the
consummation was upon her, and she was gone.(181).

From the quotation above we can conclude that Lawrence use a metaphor that orgasm is a wave on the sea or ocean. Women are seas. Men are divers or plungers.

And how he described that Connie was hot when she was making love with Mellor can be seen from this metaphor.

(... For suddenly he was aware of the old flame shooting and leaping up in his loins...(120). At the back of his loins the fire suddenly darted stronger. He glanced apprehensively at her. Her face was averted, and she was crying blindly, in all the anguish of her generation's forlornness. His heart melted suddenly, like a drop of fire,...(121).

The movement of the plunger in the sea is the movement of man making love. The waves caused by the movement of the plunger in the sea are the physical effects of an orgasm.

These are some metaphor in Lady Chatterley's Lover

'But why are you such a lonely bird?' Connie asked him; and again he looked at her, with his full, searching, hazel look.(page 23)

A lonely bird is description of Michaelis who is her husband’s friend that means he is lonely because he does not have wife but he makes relationship with her.

The desire rose again, his penis began to stir like a livebird.(P133)There's lots of good fish in thesea... maybe... but the vast masses seem to be mackerel or herring, andif you're not mackerel or herring yourself you are likely to find very few good fish in the sea.(29)Whilst all her womb was open and soft, and softly clamouring, like a sea-anemone under the tide, clamouring for him to come in again and make a fulfillment for her.(126)

From the quotation above we can conclude that Lawrence use a metaphor that orgasm is a wave on the sea or ocean. Women are seas. Men are divers or plungers.

'You angel boy! If only I had! If only I had! No; my heart's as numb as a potato, my penis droops and never lifts its head up,(37)' And now he's tiny, and soft like a little bud of life!' she said, taking the soft small penis in her hand. 'Isn't he somehow lovely! so on his own, so strange! And so innocent! And he comes so far into me! You must never insult him, you know. He's mine too. He's not only yours. He's mine! And so lovely and innocent!' And she held the penis soft in her hand. She softly rubbed her cheek on his belly, and gathered his balls in her hand. The penis stirred softly, with strange life, but did not rise up. The rain beat bruisingly outside.(207)

The angel boy is Mellor description from Connie because she feels happier with Mellor because her husband is impotent.

b.Irony

According to Perrine, Irony is a term with a range of meaning, all of them involving some sort of discrepancy or incongruity. Kinds of Irony (1974: 217). Verbal Irony is a figure of speech in which the opposite is said from what is intended. Dramatic Irony is between what a character says and what the readers knows to be true. Irony of Situation is the discrepancy that is between appearance and reality, or expectation
and fulfillment, what is and what would seem appropriate.

In D.H.Lawrence’s *Lady Chatterley’s lover* applies the irony of situation. It can be seen in this following quotation

Days after their honeymoon’s end Clifford leaves Connie for war. When he returns he is paralyzed. Before the war the couple’s ‘sex life’ is described, “…merely an accident, or an adjunct, one of the curios obsolete, organic processes which persisted in its own clumsiness, but was not really necessary.” Ironically when sex is not an option Connie becomes restless.

It describes that the irony of Clifford is being impotent. Connie needs love but Clifford can not do his job as her husband normally

**C.CONCLUSION**

The erotic language of Lady Chatterley’s lover can be seen in usage of taboos, direct languages in Lady Chatterley’s Lover, the use of concrete and abstract nouns. Lawrence was a writer who grew up in a village where the majority of the populations were colliers and the effects of such habitat are obvious throughout his literary works. In his work *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* he mention Mellor’s as a character that resembles the he himself as a collier son, a working-class representative in search of a quiet life but who is estranged from his background. The language he adopts is situational determined that is to say he shifts from one speech to another, not only when speaking to different persons but in the same conversation with the same person, too. Lawrence seemed to use some conceptual metaphors and irony in his Lady Chatterley’s Lover to describe the eroticism of the novel.

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