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**THE UZBEK STATE WORLD LANGUAGES UNIVERSITY
I ENGLISH PHILOLOGY FACULTY
ENGLISH STYLISTICS DEPARTMENT**

COURSE PAPER

on

THE NATURE AND FUNCTION OF RHETORICAL QUESTION

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INTRODUCTION

Uzbekistan education is given prior importance in the nation equally for every child irrespective of gender. Education in Uzbekistan is supervised by two national agencies, namely the Ministry of People's Education who looks after the primary, secondary, and vocational education; and the Ministry of Higher Education, supervising the post secondary education.

The president of the Republic of the Uzbekistan Islam Abduganiyevich Karimov speaking about the future of Uzbekistan underlines that “Harmonious generation is the future guarantee of prosperity”.

It is our task, to prepare teach professionally component and energetic personal real patriots to see them in the world depository of science and culture. In this plan the national program about training personnel was worked out on the formation of new generation of specialists with the high common and professionally culture, creative and social activity, with the ability to orientate in the social and political life independently, capable to raise and solve the problems to the perspective.¹

First of all there is confusion between the terms style and stylistics. The first concept is so broad that it is hardly possible to regard it as a term. We speak of style in architecture, literature, behaviour, linguistics, dress and other fields of human activity.

The subject of stylistics can be outlined as the study of the nature, functions and structure of stylistic devices, on the one hand, and, on the other, the study of each style of language as classified above, i, e, its aim, its structure, its characteristic features and the effect it produces, as well as its interrelation with

¹ I. Karimov “Kadrlar tayyorlash milliy dasturi” Toshkent 1997.

other styles of language. The task we set before ourselves is to make an attempt to single out such problems as are typically stylistic and cannot be treated in any other branch of linguistic science.

In linguistics there are different terms to denote those particular means by which a writer obtains his effect. Expressive means, stylistic means, stylistic devices and other terms are all used indiscriminately. For our purposes it is necessary to make a distinction between expressive means and stylistic devices. All stylistic means of a language can be divided into expressive means, which are used in some specific way, and special devices called stylistic devices. The expressive means of a language are those phonetic means, morphological forms, means of word-building, and lexical, phraseological and syntactical forms, all of which function in the language for emotional or logical intensification of the utterance.

These intensifying forms of the language have been fixed in grammars and dictionaries. Some of them are normalized, and good dictionaries label them as intensifiers. In most cases they have corresponding neutral synonymous forms.

A **rhetorical question** is a figure of speech in the form of a question posed for its persuasive effect without the expectation of a reply

e. g.: "Why me, Lord?"²

Rhetorical questions encourage the listener to reflect on what the implied answer to the question must be. When a speaker states,

"How much longer must our people endure this injustice?",

no formal answer is expected.

Rather, it is a device used by the speaker to assert or deny something.

² Алефиренко Н.Ф. Теория языка. Вводный курс М., 2004

The subject of the course paper is the study of syntactical stylistic device rhetorical question English and Uzbek one which is considered to be one of the syntactical devices.

The object of the course paper is to study the peculiarities of syntactical stylistic device rhetorical question in Modern English.

The actuality of this course paper is the study of the syntactical stylistic device rhetorical question widely in different view points of the linguists.

The theoretical and practical value of the qualification paper is that the results can be used in the seminars on Stylistics and text interpretation.

The sources of the qualification paper. While investigating the given qualification work we have widely used the following works and internet web sites: Ahmanova O. S; Arnold U. B. “Stylistic of Modern English”; Galperin I.R. “Stylistics”; Wellek R., Warren A. “A Theory of Literature”; W.K. Muller “English-Russian Dictionary” ; Crystal D., David D. “Investigating English Style”; Boboxonova M Y. “Ingliz tili stilistikasi”; Internet searchings.

CHAPTER I THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS OF RESEARCH PAPER

1.1 STYLISTICS AS A BRANCH OF GENERAL LINGUISTICS

Many linguists do not like the term ‘stylistics’. The word ‘style’, itself, has several connotations that make it difficult for the term to be defined accurately.

However, in *Linguistic Criticism*, Roger Fowler makes the point that, in non-theoretical usage, the word stylistics makes sense and is useful in referring to an enormous range of literary contexts, such as John Milton’s ‘grand style’, the ‘prose style’ of Henry James, the ‘epic’ and ‘ballad style’ of classical Greek literature, etc. (Fowler. 1996, 185). In addition, stylistics is a distinctive term that may be used to determine the connections between the form and effects within a particular variety of language. Therefore, stylistics looks at what is ‘going on’ within the language; what the linguistic associations are that the style of language reveals³.

Stylistics is the study of varieties of language whose properties position that language in context. For example, the language of advertising, politics, religion, individual authors, etc., or the language of a period in time, all belong in a particular situation. In other words, they all have ‘place’.

Stylistics also attempts to establish principles capable of explaining the particular choices made by individuals and social groups in their use of language, such as socialization, the production and reception of meaning, critical discourse analysis and literary criticism.⁴

³ www.wikipedia.com

⁴ www.homeenglish.ru

Other features of stylistics include the use of dialogue, including regional accents and people's dialects, descriptive language, the use of grammar, such as the active voice or passive voice, the distribution of sentence lengths, the use of particular language registers, etc.

In essence, the arguments stated that there was no way to link the empirically defined features of the text with the rest of the critical analysis except through the subjective, interpretive framework of the critic. In fact, the arguments declared, even the stylistic features described in the analysis were themselves subject to the interpretive choices of the reader/critic.

The question for stylistics became one of how to blend this increased desire for social, cultural, and contextual critical analyses with the discipline's foundation in formal linguistics.

1.2 DEFINITIONS AND SPECIFICATIONS OF STYLISTIC DEVICES

Style has been an object of study from ancient times. Aristotel, Cicero and Quintilian treated Style as the proper adornment of thought⁵.

An essayist or an orator is expected to frame his ideas with the help of sentences and choose figures suitable for his mode of discourse.

Arthur Schopenhauer's definition of Style as "the physiognomy of the mind" suggests that "no matter how calculatingly choices may be made, a writer's Style will bear the mark of his personality. An experienced writer is able to rely on the power of his habitual choices of sounds, words and syntactic patterns to convey his personality of fundamental outlook ."

In linguistics there are different terms to denote those particular means by which a writer obtains his effect. Expressive means, stylistic means, stylistic devices and other terms are all used indiscriminately.

For our purposes it is necessary to make a distinction between expressive means and stylistic devices. All stylistic means of a language can be divided into expressive means, which are used in some specific way, and special devices called stylistic devices.

The expressive means of a language are those phonetic means, morphological forms, means of word-building, and lexical, phraseological and syntactical forms, all of which function in the language for emotional or logical intensification of the utterance. These intensifying forms of the language have been fixed in grammars

⁵ www.style.com

and dictionaries. Some of them are normalized, and good dictionaries label them as intensifiers.

The expressive means of the language are studied respectively in manuals of phonetics, grammar, lexicology and stylistics. Stylistics, however, observes not only the nature of an expressive means, but also its potential capacity of becoming a stylistic device.

First of all let us determine what SD proper is. This term is suggested by I. Galperin who considers SD “a conscious and intentional literary use of some of the facts of the language (including expressive means) in which the most essential features (both structural and semantic) of the language forms are raised to a generalized level”⁶ .

Needless to say that most SD may be regarded as aiming at the further intensification of the emotional or logical emphasis.

This conscious transformation of language units into a Stylistic Device has been observed by certain linguists whose interest in scientific research have gone beyond the boundaries of grammar.

Thus A. Potebnja writes, “As far back as in Ancient Rome and Greece and with few exceptions up to the present time the definition of the figurative use of a word has been based on the contrast between ordinary speech used in its own, natural, primary meaning and transferred speech ” .

In other words, the main constituting feature of a SD is the opposition of two meanings of the applied unit, one of which is normatively fixed in the language and does not depend on the context while the other one originates in the certain context. I.Galperin calls this phenomenon Interaction as far as Lexical level is concerned. His typology runs as follows:

⁶ www.stylistics.com

1.3 SOME NOTES ON SYNTACTICAL, STYLISTIC DEVICES

There exists the following types of Syntactical Stylistic Devices:

Stylistic Inversion, Detached Construction, Parallel Construction, Chiasmus, Repetition, Enumeration, Suspense, Climax, Antithesis.

Asyndeton, Polysyndeton, The Gap-Sentence Link.

Ellipsis, Break-in-the-Narrative (Aposiopesis), Question-in-the-Narrative.

Rhetorical question⁷.

Stylistic Inversion. The English word order is fixed. Any change which doesn't influence the meaning but is only aimed at emphasis is called a stylistic inversion. Stylistic inversion aims at attaching logical stress or additional emotional colouring to the surface meaning of the utterance. Therefore a specific intonation pattern is the inevitable satellite of inversion.

The following patterns of stylistic inversion are most frequently met in both English prose and English poetry.

1. The object is placed at the beginning of the sentence.
2. The attribute is placed after the word it modifies,
e. g. With fingers weary and worn.
3. The predicate is placed before the subject,
e.g. A good generous prayer it was.
4. The adverbial modifier is placed at the beginning of the sentence.

⁷ stylistic devices.com

e.g. My dearest daughter, at your feet I fall.

5. Both modifier and predicate stand before the subject,

e. g. In went Mr. Pickwick⁸.

Detached constructions. Sometimes one of the secondary members of the sentence is placed so that it seems formally independent of the word it refers to. Being formally independent this secondary member acquires a greater degree of significance and is given prominence by intonation.

e.g. She was gone. For good.

Parallel construction is a device which may be encountered not so much in the sentence as in the macro - structures dealt with the syntactical whole and the paragraph. The necessary condition in parallel construction is identical or similar, syntactical structure in two or more sentences or parts of sentence.

Parallel construction is a device which may be encountered not so much in the sentence as in the macro-structures dealt with earlier, the SPU and the paragraph. The necessary condition in parallel construction is identical, or similar, syntactical structure in two or more sentences or parts of a sentence in close succession, as in: "There were, ..., real silver spoons to stir the tea with, and real china cups to drink it out of, and plates of the same to hold the cakes and toast in". (Dickens)

Parallel constructions are often backed up by repetition of words (lexical repetition) and conjunctions and prepositions (polysyndeton).

Pure parallel construction, however, does not depend on any other kind of repetition but the repetition of the syntactical design of the sentence.

Parallel constructions may be partial or complete. Partial parallel arrangement is the repetition of some parts of successive sentences or clauses, as in:

"It is the mob that labour in your fields and serve in your houses—that man your

⁸ Galperin I.R. Stylistics. M.: Higher School Publ. House, 1981.

navy and recruit your army,—that have enabled you to defy all the world, and can also defy you when neglect and calamity have driven them to despair." (Byron)

The attributive clauses here all begin with the subordinate conjunction that which is followed by a verb in the same form, except the last (have enabled).

The verbs, however, are followed either by adverbial modifiers of place (in your fields, in your houses) or by direct objects (your navy, your army).

The third attributive clause is not built on the pattern of the first two, although it preserves the parallel structure in general (that + verb+predicate + object), while the fourth has broken away entirely.

Complete parallel arrangement, also called balance, maintains the principle of identical structures throughout the corresponding sentences, as in:

"The seeds ye sow — another reaps,
The robes ye weave—another wears,
The arms ye forge—another bears." (P. B. Shelley)

Parallel construction is most frequently used in enumeration, antithesis and in climax, thus consolidating the general effect achieved by these stylistic devices. Parallel construction is used in different styles of writing with slightly different functions. When used in the matter-of-fact styles, it carries, in the main, the idea of semantic equality of the parts, as in scientific prose, where the logical principle of arranging ideas predominates. In the belles-lettres style parallel construction carries an emotive function. That is why it is mainly used as a technical means in building up other stylistic devices, thus securing their unity.

In the following example parallelism backs up repetition, alliteration and antithesis, making the whole sentence almost epigrammatic.

"And so, from hour to hour, we ripe and ripe,
And then, from hour to hour, we rot and rot." (Shakespeare)

In the example below, parallel construction backs up the rhetorical address and rhetorical questions. The emotional aspect is also enforced by the interjection 'Heaven!'

"Hear me, my mother Earth! Behold it, Heaven!—
Have I not had to wrestle with my lot?
Have I not suffered things to be forgiven?
Have I not had my brain seared, my heart riven,
Hopes, sapped, name blighted, Life's life lied away?" (Byron)

In some cases parallelism emphasizes the similarity and equates the significance of the parts, as, for example:

"Our senses perceive no extremes. Too much sound deafens us; too much light dazzles us; too great distance or proximity hinders our view."

In other cases parallel construction emphasizes diversity and contrast of ideas⁹.

As a final remark it must be stated that the device of parallelism always generates rhythm, inasmuch as similar syntactical structures repeat in close succession. Hence it is natural that parallel construction should very frequently be used in poetical structures. Alternation of similar units being the basic principle of verse, similarity in longer units—i.e. in the stanza, is to be expected.

Chiasmus (Reversed Parallel Construction) belongs to the group of stylistic devices based on the repetition of a syntactical pattern, but it has a cross order of words and phrases. The structure of two successive sentences or parts of a sentence may be described as reversed parallel construction, the word-order of one of the sentences being inverted as compared with that of the other, as in:

"As high as we have mounted in delight
In our dejection do we sink as low." (Wordsworth)
"Down dropped the breeze,

⁹ "Tale of Two Cities" by Dickens

The sails dropped down." (Coleridge)

Chiasmus is sometimes achieved by a sudden change from active voice to passive or vice versa, for example:

"The register of his burial was signed by the clergyman, the clerk, the undertaker and the chief mourner. Scrooge signed it. (Dickens)

This device is effective in that it helps to lay stress on the second part of the utterance, which is opposite in structure, as 'in our dejection'; 'Scrooge signed it'.

This is due to the sudden change in the structure which by its very unexpectedness linguistically requires a slight pause before it.

Enumeration is a SD by which separate things, objects, phenomena, properties, action are named one by one so that they produce a chain, the links of which, being syntactically in the same position (homogeneous parts of speech), are forced to display some kind of semantic homogeneity, remote though it may seem: "The principle production of these towns...appear to be soldiers, sailors, Jews, chalk, shrimps, officers and dock-yard men" (Dickens).

They include: stylistic inversion, detached constructions, parallel constructions , chiasmus, suspense, climax, antithesis.

Suspense - is a compositional device which is realized through the separation of the Predicate from the Subject by deliberate introduction between them of a clause or a sentence. Thus the reader's interest is held up. This device is typical of oratorical style¹⁰.

Antithesis is used to characterize a thing or phenomenon from a specific point of view, it may be necessary not to find points of resemblance or association between

¹⁰ www.homeenglish.ru

it and some other thing or phenomenon, but to find points of sharp contrast, that is, to set one against the other, for example:

"A saint abroad, and a devil at home." (Bunyan)

"Better to reign in hell than serve in heaven." (Milton)

A line of demarcation must be drawn between logical opposition and stylistic opposition. Any opposition will be based on the contrasting features of two objects. These contrasting features are represented in pairs of words which we call antonyms, provided that all the properties of the two objects in question may be set one against another, as 'saint' -'devil', 'reign'-'serve', 'hell'-'heaven'. Many word-combinations are built up by means of contrasting pairs, as up and down, inside and out, from top to bottom and the like. Stylistic opposition, which is given a special name, the term antithesis, is of a different linguistic nature: it is based on relative opposition which arises out of the context through the expansion of the literary contrasting pairs, as in:

"Youth is lovely, age is lonely, Youth is fiery, age is frosty;" (Longfellow)

Here the objectively contrasted pair is 'youth' and 'age'. 'Lovely' and 'lonely' cannot be regarded as objectively opposite concepts, but being drawn into the scheme contrasting 'youth' and 'age', they display certain features which may be counted as antonymical.

Break-in-the-narrative is a device which, on the one hand, offers a number of variants in deciphering the implication and, on the other, is highly predictable. The problem of implication is, as it were, a crucial one in stylistics. What is implied sometimes outweighs what is expressed.

Aposiopesis is a stylistic device in which the role of the intonation implied cannot be over-estimated. The pause after the break is generally charged with meaning and it is the intonation only that will decode the communicative significance of the

utterance¹¹.

Question-in-the-Narrative

Questions, being both structurally and semantically one of the types of sentences, are asked by one person and expected to be answered by another. This is the main, and the most characteristic property of the question, i.e. it exists as a syntactical unit of language to bear this articular function in communication.

Essentially, questions belong to the spoken language and presuppose the presence of an interlocutor, that is, they are commonly encountered in dialogue. The questioner is presumed not to know the answer.

¹¹ www.wikipedia.com

CHAPTER II SPECIAL USAGE OF RHETORICAL QUESTION IN ENGLISH

2.1 RHETORICAL QUESTION IN MODERN ENGLISH

We have investigated the view points of well known scientists on rhetorical question. As V.A.Kukharenko says it is¹²:

A peculiar interrogative construction which semantically remains a statement;

- does not demand any information but
- serves to express the emotions of the speaker and also
- serves to call the attention of listeners;
- makes an indispensable part of oratoric speech for they very successfully

emphasise the orator's ideas.

If we address to investigations of I.R.Galperin it is¹³:

A special syntactical stylistic device the essence of which consists in reshaping the grammatical meaning of the interrogative sentence.

e.g.: Are these the remedies for a starving and desperate populace?

Rhetorical question is one of the stylistic devices based on the transposition of syntactical meaning.

Rhetorical questions are negative or affirmative statements rather than questions, possible answers being implied by the question itself,

e.g. Is the day of the supernatural over? (A.Christie).

Rhetorical questions can often be found in modern fiction in the descriptions of the

¹² Kukharenko V.A. "A book of practice in stylistics" M., 1986

¹³ Galperin I.R. Stylistics. M.: Higher School Publ. House, 1981.

character's inner state, his/her meditations and reflections,
e.g. And then, like a douche of cold water, came the horrible thought, was she right?
(A.Christie).

The rhetorical question is a special syntactical stylistic device the essence of which consists in reshaping the grammatical meaning of the interrogative sentence.

In other words, the question is no" longer a question but a statement expressed in the form of an interrogative sentence.

Thus there is an interplay of two structural meanings:

- 1) that of the question and
- 2) that of the statement (either affirmative or negative). Both are materialized simultaneously. For example:

"Are these the remedies for a starving and desperate populace?" "Is there not blood enough upon your penal code, that ignore must be poured forth to ascend to Heaven and testify against you?" (Byron)

One can agree with Prof. Popov who states: "...the rhetorical question is equal to a categorical pronouncement plus an exclamation."

Indeed, if we compare a pronouncement expressed as a statement with the same pronouncement expressed as a rhetorical question by means of transformational analysis, we will find ourselves compelled to assert that the interrogative form makes the pronouncement still more categorical, in that it excludes any interpretation beyond that contained in the rhetorical question.

From the examples given above, we can see that rhetorical questions are generally structurally embodied in complex sentences with the subordinate clause containing the pronouncement. Here is another example:

"...Shall the sons- of Chimary.

Who never forgive the fault of a friend?

Bid an enemy live?..." (Byron).

Without the attributive clause the rhetorical question would lose its specific

quality and might be regarded as an ordinary question. They subordinate clause, as it were, signalizes the rhetorical question.

The meaning of the above utterance can hardly fail to be understood:

e.g. The sons of Chimary will never bid an enemy live.

There is another structural pattern of rhetorical questions, which is based on negation. In this case the question may be a simple sentence, as in:

"Did not the Italian Mosico Cazzani

Sing at my heart six months at least in vain?" (Byron)

"Have I not had to wrestle with my lot?

Have I not suffered things to be forgiven?" (Byron)

Negative-interrogative sentences generally have a peculiar nature.

There is always an additional shade of meaning implied in them: sometimes doubt, sometimes assertion, sometimes suggestion. In other words, they are full of emotive meaning and modality.

We have already stated that rhetorical questions may be looked upon as a transference of grammatical meaning. But just as in the case of the transference of lexical meaning, the stylistic effect of the transference of grammatical meaning can only be achieved if there is a simultaneous realization of the two meanings: direct and transferred.

So it is with rhetorical questions. Both the question-meaning and the statement-meaning are materialized with an emotional charge, the weight of which can be judged by the intonation of the speaker.

The intonation of rhetorical questions, according to the most recent investigations, differs materially from the intonation of ordinary questions.

This is also an additional indirect proof of the double nature of this stylistic device.

In the question-sentence:

"Is the poor privilege to turn the key Upon the captive, freedom?" (Byron)
instead of a categorical pronouncement one can detect irony.

A more detailed analysis of the semantic aspect of different question-sentences leads to the conclusion that these structural models have various functions. Not only ordinary questions, not only categorical pronouncements are expressed in question form.

In fact there are various nuances of emotive meaning embodied in question-sentences.

We have already given an example of one of these meanings, viz. irony. In Shakespeare's

"Who is here so vile that will not love his country?"

there is a meaning of challenge openly and unequivocally declared.

It is impossible to regard it as a rhetorical question making a categorical pronouncement. In the rhetorical question from Byron's maiden speech given above ('Is there not blood...) there is a clear implication of scorn and contempt for Parliament and the laws it passes.

So rhetorical questions may also be defined as utterances in the form of questions which pronounce judgements and also express various kinds of modal shades of meaning, as doubt, challenge, scorn, irony and so on.

It has been stated elsewhere that questions are more emotional than statements.

When a question is repeated, as in these lines from Poe's "The Raven":

"—Is there—is there balm in Gilead?! Tell me— ' tell me—I implore!—"

the degree of emotiveness increases and the particular shade of meaning (in this case, despair) becomes more apparent.

The rhetorical question re-enforces this essential quality of interrogative sentences

and uses it to convey a stronger shade of emotive meaning.

Rhetorical questions, due to their power of expressing a variety of modal shades of meaning, are most often used in publicistic style and particularly in oratory, where the rousing of emotions is the effect generally aimed at.

While investigating the theme of our investigation we have come across to very interesting use of rhetorical question.

One common form is where a rhetorical question is used as a metaphor for a question already asked.

Examples may be found in the song Maria from the 1959 Rodgers and Hammerstein musical,

The Sound of Music, in which the

How do you solve a problem like Maria?

is repeatedly answered with another question:

How do you catch a cloud and pin it down?,

How do you keep a wave upon the sand? and

How do you hold a moonbeam in your hand?

These responses may be taken as asserting that "the problem of Maria" cannot be solved; and furthermore the choice of *cloud*, *wave* and *moonbeam* as metaphors for Maria give insight into her character and the nature of the problem.

In the vernacular, this form of rhetorical question is most often seen as *rhetorical affirmation*, where the certainty or obviousness of the answer to a question is expressed by asking another, often humorous, question for which the answer is equally obvious; popular examples include

Is the sky blue?,

Is the Pope Catholic? and

Does a bear shit in the woods?

Other forms

Sometimes the implied answer to a rhetorical question is

"Yes, but I wish it were not so" or *vice versa*:

O mighty Caesar! dost thou lie so low?

Are all thy conquests, glories, triumphs, spoils,

Shrunk to this little measure?

(Shakespeare, "Julius Caesar," Act 3, scene 1, 148)

Another common form is the expression of doubt by questioning a statement just made; for example, by appending *Or did he?*, *or is it?*, etcetera to a sentence.

The butler did it... or did he?

2.2 THE USE OF RHETORICAL QUESTIONS IN THE BIBLE

As for the previous investigations of the linguists there are about 1,000 utterances which have question form in the original text of the New Testament.

It is estimated that about 300 of these are 'real' questions, i.e. they are questions which ask for information and which require an answer.

The remaining 700 'questions' do not ask for information and do not, in most cases, require any answer. Their function is rather to give information, including information about the speaker's attitudes and opinions. Sometimes they aim to stimulate a particular response in the hearer. Such questions are called 'rhetorical questions'.

FUNCTIONS OF RHETORICAL QUESTIONS IN THE BIBLE

Some common functions of rhetorical questions in the Bible are:

To emphasize a fact which is obviously true

Matthew 7:22

Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do mighty works in your name?

Mark 3:23

How can Satan cast out Satan?

1 Samuel 4:8

Woe to us! Who can deliver us from the power of these mighty gods?

1 Samuel 17:8

Am I not a Philistine, and are you not servants of Saul?

Notice that, in English, negative question form implies a positive statement, while positive question form implies a negative statement.

To specify a particular condition under which something applies

James 5:13

Is any one among you suffering? Let him pray

Romans 13:3

Would you have no fear of him who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval.

This type of rhetorical question can often be transformed into an ‘if’ clause without changing the meaning:

e.g., If any one is suffering, let him pray.

To introduce a new topic, a new aspect of a topic

Psalms 15:1, 2

O Lord, who shall sojourn in thy tent? Who shall dwell on thy holy hill? He who walks blamelessly, and does what is right...

Notice how the two questions introduce the topic of the psalm, providing the setting for the answer.

Mark 13:1, 2

...one of his disciples said to him, “Look, Teacher, what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings?” And Jesus said to him, “Do you see these great buildings? There will not be left here one stone upon another...”

Here Jesus focuses on the topic of the destruction of Jerusalem and of the Temple by using a question.

Luke 7:44

Then turning toward the woman he said to Simon, “Do you see this woman?...”

Study the total context of this passage, from 7:36—50, and notice how the question form is used to focus again on the woman, who has already been mentioned earlier in the passage.

Romans 9:30

What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it...

Notice how the expression “What shall we say then?” is used to indicate the conclusion of one phase of the argument and the beginning of a new point. Look for other places in the letter to the Romans where this expression or a similar form, is used in this way.

To express surprise

Mark 6:2 ... and many who heard him were astonished, saying, “Where did this man get all this? What is the wisdom given to him?”

To rebuke or exhort someone

Mark 4:40

Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?”

Mark 5:35

“Your daughter is dead, Why trouble the Teacher any further?”

To express uncertainty—

this type of question is often self-directed; it might be regarded as a genuine question. But any question to which the speaker himself supplies the answer is usually regarded as rhetorical.

Luke 12:17

... and he thought to himself, “What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?”

Luke 16:3

And the steward said to himself, “What shall I do, since my master is taking the stewardship away from me?”

This list of functions is not exhaustive, nor is each function exclusive of the others. One question may have more than one function at the same time. So each question must be studied carefully in its context in order to discover its function(s).

Notice that real questions may also carry overtones of associative meaning (e.g. surprise, rebuke), communicating the attitude of the speaker and sometimes suggesting what he expects the response to be.

So the stylistic function of rhetorical question in the Bible is rather to give information, including information about the speaker's attitudes and opinions. Sometimes they aim to stimulate a particular response in the hearer.

CONCLUSION

Stylistics attempts to establish principles capable of explaining the particular choices made by individuals and social groups in their use of language, such as socialization, the production and reception of meaning, critical discourse analysis and literary criticism.

We have investigated the view points of well known scientists on rhetorical question.

Have I not suffered things to be forgiven?" (Byron)

"Have I not had to wrestle with my lot?

As V.A.Kukharenko says it is¹⁴:

A peculiar interrogative construction which semantically remains a statement;

- does not demand any information but
- serves to express the emotions of the speaker and also
- serves to call the attention of listeners;
- makes an indispensable part of oratoric speech for they very successfully

emphasise the orator's ideas.

If we address to investigations of I.R.Galperin it is¹⁵:

A special syntactical stylistic device the essence of which consists in reshaping the grammatical meaning of the interrogative sentence.

e.g.: Are these the remedies for a starving and desperate populace?

Rhetorical question is one of the stylistic devices based on the transposition of

¹⁴ Kukharenko V.A. "A book of practice in stylistics" M., 1986

¹⁵ Galperin I.R. Stylistics. M.: Higher School Publ. House, 1981.

syntactical meaning.

Rhetorical questions are negative or affirmative statements rather than questions, possible answers being implied by the question itself,

e.g. Is the day of the supernatural over? (A.Christie).

Rhetorical questions are negative or affirmative statements rather than questions, possible answers being implied by the question itself,

e.g. Is the day of the supernatural over? (A.Christie).

Rhetorical questions can often be found in modern fiction in the descriptions of the character's inner state, his/her meditations and reflections,

e.g. And then, like a douche of cold water, came the horrible thought, was she right? (A.Christie).

The rhetorical question is a special syntactical stylistic device the essence of which consists in reshaping the grammatical meaning of the interrogative sentence.

In other words, the question is no" longer a question but a statement expressed in the form of an interrogative sentence.

Thus there is an interplay of two structural meanings:

- 1) that of the question and
- 2) that of the statement (either affirmative or negative). Both are materialized simultaneously. For example:

"Are these the remedies for a starving and desperate populace?"

"Is there not blood enough upon your penal code, that ignore must be poured forth to ascend to Heaven and testify against you?" (Byron)

A **rhetorical question** is a figure of speech in the form of a question posed for its persuasive effect without the expectation of a reply

(ex: "Why me, Lord?")¹⁶

Rhetorical questions encourage the listener to reflect on what the implied answer to the question must be. When a speaker states,

¹⁶ Алефиренко Н.Ф. Теория языка. Вводный курс М., 2004

"How much longer must our people endure this injustice?»

no formal answer is expected.

Rather, it is a device used by the speaker to assert or deny something.

One common form is where a rhetorical question is used as a metaphor for a question already asked.

Examples may be found in the song Maria from the 1959 Rodgers and Hammerstein musical, The Sound of Music,

in which the *How do you solve a problem like Maria?*

is repeatedly answered with another question:

How do you catch a cloud and pin it down?, How do you keep a wave upon the sand? and How do you hold a moonbeam in your hand?

These responses may be taken as asserting that "the problem of Maria" cannot be solved; and furthermore the choice of *cloud*, *wave* and *moonbeam* as metaphors for Maria give insight into her character and the nature of the problem.

Rhetorical questions may be signaled by marker phrases; for example a question that begins with *after all* is usually intended as rhetorical.

In the 1580s, English printer Henry Denham invented a "rhetorical question mark" for use at the end of a rhetorical question; however, it died out of use in the 1600s.

It was the reverse of an ordinary question mark, so that instead of the main opening pointing back into the sentence, it opened away from it¹⁷.

While investigating the Bible we have come across to some interesting fact.

There are about 1,000 utterances which have question form in the original text of the New Testament.

It is estimated that about 300 of these are 'real' questions, i.e. they are questions which ask for information and which require an answer.

The remaining 700 'questions' do not ask for information and do not, in most cases, require any answer.

¹⁷ Амирова Т.А. Под ред.С.Ф.Гончаренко. История языкознания М., 2003

This list of functions is not exhaustive, nor is each function exclusive of the others. One question may have more than one function at the same time. So each question must be studied carefully in its context in order to discover its function(s). Notice that real questions may also carry overtones of associative meaning (e.g. surprise, rebuke), communicating the attitude of the speaker and sometimes suggesting what he expects the response to be.

So the stylistic function of rhetorical question in the Bible is rather to give information, including information about the speaker's attitudes and opinions. Sometimes they aim to stimulate a particular response in the hearer.

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