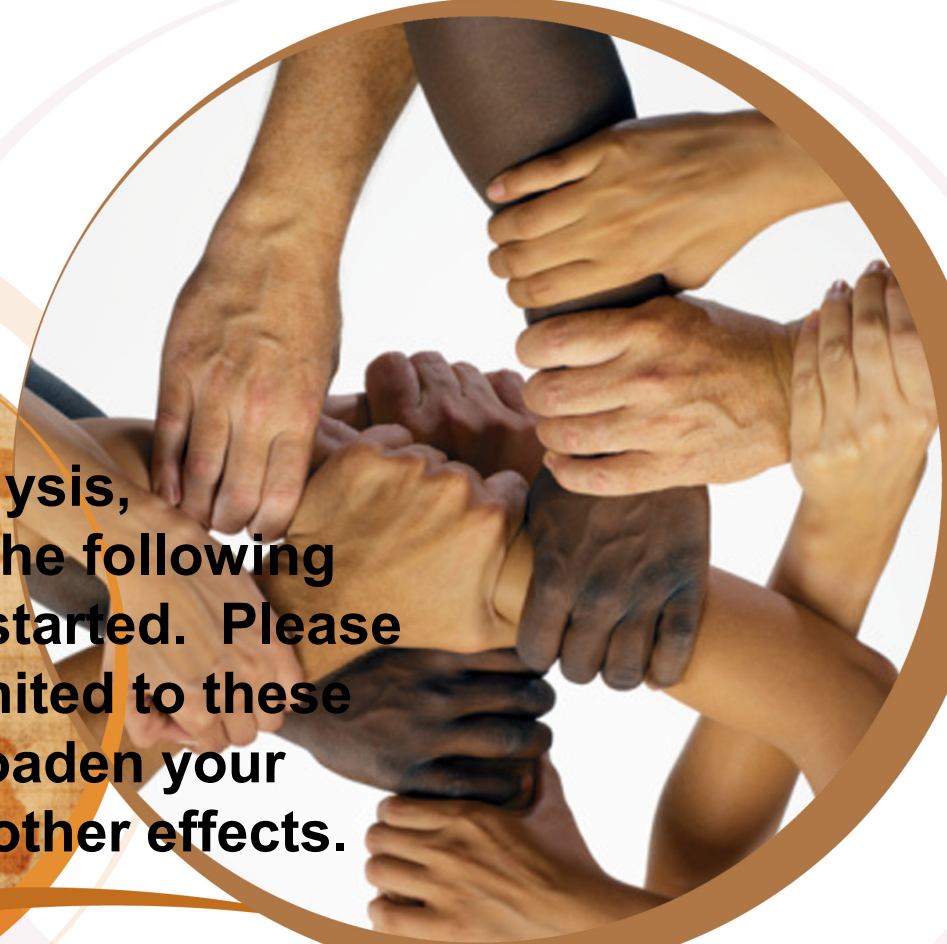


The 7 effects of language

Part 1

If you have been struggling with analysis, especially in your English Modules, the following may be of assistance in getting you started. Please note that language effects are not limited to these few, but understanding these will broaden your thinking into a critical awareness of other effects.



The Triangle Key

Identify (What)

Explain (How)

Effect/Purpose
(Why)

These are some effects of language

- Create an image
- Draw attention / highlight
- Reiterate
- Emphasise
- Create an atmosphere
- Evoke emotions
- Give an idea

Create an Image

- All poetic devices that have an element of comparison always create an image in the reader's mind.

- **Simile**

- “My hand like a starved snake rears my pockets”(City Johannesburg Line 6 by Wally Serote)

An image of a 'starved snake' immediately comes to mind.

Think of the qualities of a starved snake. (Quick movement / determination etc.)

Comparing the **hand to a snake**, gives an image which clarifies how quickly the hand moves, with determination in search of the wallet.

Metaphor

- “When your neon flowers flaunt their way through the falling darkness/ On you cement trees.” (City Johannesburg Line 26&27)
 - Images of flowers and trees are already in your mind.
 - The adjectives “neon” and “cement” that have been used to describe the two, immediately **replace the natural image** you may have had and you see the **bright lights** that **make the evening beautiful** like **flowers** do to any landscape by day and **skyscrapers** that rise into the sky like **tall trees**. This definitely **gives an image of the city at dusk** when the street and traffic lights are on.

Personification

- “Through your thick iron breath that you inhale/ At six in the morning and exhale from five noon.” (City Johannesburg Lines 20&21)
 - Can you picture this giant breathing iron?
 - Replace the giant with the City Johannesburg and you will ‘see’ the traffic (cars and busses/trains made of iron)

The Discussion

- It is not sufficient to simply say a poetic device creates an image.
- Responses should be specific as to **what image** is created, **how it has been done** through that device and **what effect it has on meaning**.
 - e.g. The **personification** used where **the city is compared to someone breathing iron, creates a vivid image** of the heavy morning and evening traffic that enters and leaves Johannesburg like someone inhaling and exhaling. Through this **the poet is protesting against the Act that forbade black people from living in town** (city), hence the heavy traffic as they leave the city only to return in the morning, endlessly like breathing that never stops.

Thank you

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