

# Linguistics



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Linguistics - Structure and Meaning in Literary Dis Thesis ment: In literary dis context and meaning are interconnected in the sense that the context has great significance to a complete interpretation of the literary piece's meaning and the poem " Abraham to Kill Him" by Emily Dickinson illustrates this relation, where the literary context of the poem interprets the biblical story of Abraham's sacrifice differently from the traditional meaning.

Linguistic and Literary Issues 1: In stylistics, " a discourse is a context-bound act of communication verbalized in a text, and waiting to be inferred from it" and there is immense relation between context and meaning in a literary discourse. (Verdonk, 22)

Linguistic and Literary Issues 2: The discourse inference process in literary texts, such as Dickinson's " Abraham to Kill Him," brings about an " interaction between the semantic meanings of the linguistic items of the text and the pragmatic meanings these items take on in a context of use." (Verdonk, 22)

Linguistic and Literary Issues 3: Unlike in the non-literary texts, the relationship between meaning and context in literary text " is self-enclosed" and the text itself contains the connection between meaning and context Dickinson's " Abraham to Kill Him."

Linguistic and Literary Issues 4: The ultimate meaning of the poem " Abraham to Kill Him" is revealed in an analysis of the relation between meaning and context of the poem and in the context of Dickinson's rebelliousness, the lyric achieves a distinct meaning to the traditional biblical interpretations where " she finds traces of a Father God she would unmask." (McIntosh, 82)

The Significance of Context to Meaning in the Poem " Abraham to Kill Him"

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The significance of context to the meaning of a literary piece is immense or meaning is context-bound. Unlike in the non-literary texts, the context-meaning relationship in a literary text is self-enclosed and the meaning is revealed through an interpretation of the literary context of the text itself. The poem "Abraham to Kill Him" by Emily Dickinson, obviously, provides one of the illuminating illustrations of this context-meaning relationship. Here, the ultimate meaning of the poem is revealed by the context of Dickinson's rebelliousness and, in such an interpretation, the lyric achieves a distinct meaning to the traditional biblical interpretations. In fact, all through her literary career Dickinson has identified, in the Old Testament, the traces of a Father God whom she could unmask to give a new meaning to biblical interpretations. The poem "Abraham to Kill Him" is a clear-cut exercise in rewriting biblical narratives and she "re-conceives the psychology of the Genesis account, casting Abraham as a vessel of unthinking obedience rather than a man of reverent fear." (McIntosh, 83) In the contextual reading of the poem, one finds that the poet does not mystify the divine power or God's phenomenal act of mercy. "With incisive skepticism," concludes McIntosh, "her speaker exposes the action of the episode in Genesis as typical of a familiar pattern in domestic and political psychology." (McIntosh, 83) It is through the illuminating background of the poet's rebellious context that a reader arrives at a perfect and commendable conclusion on the meaning of the poem. In short, the significance of context to meaning in the poem "Abraham to Kill Him" is immense and it illustrates the essential connection between context and meaning in literary discourses.

#### Works Cited

McIntosh, James. *Nimble Believing: Dickinson and the Unknown*. Michigan:  
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Verdonk, Peter. Stylistics. Oxford: Oxford University Press. P 22. 20 Oct. 2008. .