# Comparison Of The Use Of Formalist Terminology In Two Scholarly Articles And

Formalism, a prominent literary theory that emerged in the early 20th century, emphasizes the inherent structure, language, and style of literary texts. Formalist critics focus on the intrinsic qualities of a work, detaching it from historical, biographical, or psychological contexts. This approach has significantly influenced literary scholarship, providing a framework for analyzing and interpreting literary works.

This article aims to compare the use of formalist terminology in two scholarly articles: "The Structure of the Folktale" by Vladimir Propp and "Linguistics and Poetics" by Roman Jakobson. By analyzing the key terms and concepts employed by these influential formalist scholars, we can gain insights into the evolution and application of formalist principles in literary criticism.

## Formalist Terminology in "The Structure of the Folktale"

Vladimir Propp's groundbreaking work, "The Structure of the Folktale," examines the underlying structure of Russian folktales. Propp argues that folktales are composed of a finite number of narrative elements or "functions." These functions, which represent the actions and events that occur within the story, follow a consistent sequence.

**Russian Formalism: Comparison of the use of Formalist terminology in two scholarly articles and evaluation of Formalism's contribution to scholarship**

by ARX Reads

## Key Terms:

- **Function:** An abstract narrative element that represents an action or event within a folktale.

- **Dramatis Personae:** The set of character types that appear in folktales, each representing a specific function.

- **Sphere of Action:** The spatial and temporal setting of the folktale.

- **Narrative Morphology:** The study of the structure and patterns of folktales.

Propp's analysis demonstrates the structuralist approach of formalism, focusing on the underlying patterns and relationships within a literary text. By identifying and categorizing the functions that constitute folktales, Propp establishes a universal narrative framework that can be applied to a wide range of stories.

## Formalist Terminology in "Linguistics and Poetics"

Roman Jakobson's essay, "Linguistics and Poetics," explores the relationship between linguistics and literary analysis. Jakobson argues that

the principles of linguistics, particularly those related to language structure and communication, can be applied to the study of poetry.

**Key Terms:**

- **Poetic Language:** Language used in poetry that differs from ordinary language in its structure and function.

- **Equivalence:** The relationship between elements within a poetic text, such as rhyme, meter, and parallelism.

- **Metaphor and Metonymy:** Figurative devices that establish connections between words or concepts.

- **Code:** The system of rules and conventions that govern the structure and meaning of language.

Jakobson's analysis demonstrates the linguistic approach of formalism, emphasizing the role of language in shaping the meaning and structure of literary texts. By examining the distinctive features of poetic language, Jakobson provides a framework for analyzing the ways in which poetry communicates and evokes experiences.

## Comparative Analysis

### Structuralism vs. Linguistics:

Propp's "Structure of the Folktale" focuses on the structural elements of narrative, while Jakobson's "Linguistics and Poetics" examines the linguistic aspects of poetry. Both approaches share a focus on the internal properties of literary texts, but they differ in their specific areas of inquiry.

**Function vs. Equivalence:**

Propp's concept of "function" emphasizes the narrative sequence and actions within folktales, while Jakobson's concept of "equivalence" highlights the relationships between elements within poetic language. These terms reflect the different emphases of structuralist and linguistic approaches to formalism.

**Dramatis Personae vs. Code:**

Propp's "dramatis personae" describes the character types that embody narrative functions, while Jakobson's "code" refers to the linguistic conventions that govern the structure and meaning of poetry. Both concepts illustrate the importance of considering the interplay between characters and language in understanding literary texts.

The comparison of formalist terminology in Vladimir Propp's "The Structure of the Folktale" and Roman Jakobson's "Linguistics and Poetics" provides a valuable insight into the diversity of formalist approaches to literary analysis. Propp's structuralist focus on narrative elements and Jakobson's linguistic examination of poetic language demonstrate the range of perspectives that formalism encompasses.

By understanding the key terms and concepts employed by these influential scholars, we can appreciate the significant contributions of formalism to literary criticism. Formalism has provided a framework for analyzing the intrinsic qualities of literary texts, revealing the underlying patterns, linguistic complexities, and stylistic nuances that shape our understanding and appreciation of literature.
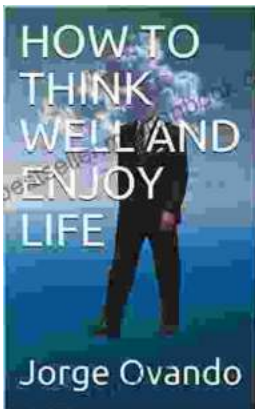
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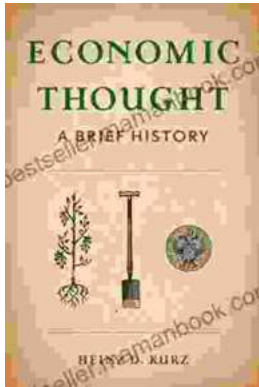
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