# FOREGROUNDING AND COHESION: THEORETICAL LINGUISTICS APPLIED TO THE STUDY OF STYLE IN POETRY

by

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ABSTRACT

Two features of language use are examined in terms of the relations they establish in poetry, a class of messages where the dominant communicative function is said to be that of calling attention to the message itself, as opposed to a referential subject other than the message.

The features are (a) foregrounding, or emphasis through deviation from normal patterning of the sign-system, and (b) cohesion, or the unifying of a text by inter-sentence linkage. In poetry, these features do not occur at random in substance and form; their constituents are arranged to produce relational networks at both levels, designed to sustain interest in the poem as a construct as well as in the poem's contextual significance.

Examples are given at the level of form (grammar and lexis, with brief mention of the formal poetic schemes of metre and rhyme), and at two interlevels: phonology, relating form to substance, and context, relating form to situation of reference. Style is seen as the nature of the encoder's selection from a range of techniques establishing contrasts and equivalences in form and (simultaneously) at one or both of the interlevels. An outlined descriptive method is applied to two poems, Dylan Thomas's 'Ballad of the Long-legged Bait' and Gerard Manley Hopkins's 'The Wreck of the Deutschland.'

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## PREFACE: NOTES ON FORMAT

The following typographic devices are used in the text of this thesis:

single quotation marks, to indicate (a) the title of a poem, (b) the use, in a context restricted to that of linguistic analysis, of a word that is normally of broader referential significance, or (c) the naming of a category for the purpose of abstract description;

double quotation marks, to indicate (a) the title of an article from a journal or other collection of articles, or (b) material quoted from other sources;

underlining, to indicate the citation of a word or word-group as a lexical item;

a slash mark (/), to indicate a line-end in a brief quotation from a poem;

paired slash marks (/.../), to indicate phonemic transcription.

Footnotes are placed at the end of each chapter.

The source of a poem quoted in the text is listed in the bibliography only in cases where (a) more than one version of a poem appears in editions of the poet's collected works, or (b) no edition of collected works exists.

# CHAPTER I

## STYLE IN POETRY: DEVIATION AND CONVERGENCE

'Style', like 'language', is a badly battered coin that circulates in at least three different markets. Referential use of the term varies in abstraction or etherialization. Between pure aesthetics and raw statistics, the extremes on this axis, lies a concept of style as the network of relations established by a writer from optional features offered by the resources of language. This chapter will use the intermediate concept to suggest how certain features may be said to be stylistically significant in poetry. Techniques exploiting these features will be discussed in later chapters, mainly at the level of form (that is, grammar and lexis) in a scales-and-categories mode of analysis.[1]

Michael Riffaterre states that "if stylistic phenomena occurred at random, . . . they would not be perceived."[2] If they occurred at random, they would not be stylistic, either; the point seems worth making, despite its distracting Berkeleian overtones, as a means of calling attention to what I consider to be a flaw in his theory of style: namely, his assumption that stylistic features differ from those of the structure of standard referential language simply by accretion.

Riffaterre appears to define style as a form of rhetorical ornamentation--"an emphasis (expressive, affective,

or aesthetic) added to the information . . . without alteration of meaning"[3]--rather than a set of features integral to both the poem-as-poem and the poem-as-message. These features, I suggest, are not added to the code-components that carry the message; they are part of that message, and their interrelations should be analyzed in that light.

For example, stock neo-classical epithets carry a low amount of 'information', in the Firthian sense,[4] in most English prose works of the mid-eighteenth century; there is a high probability of occurrence in some contexts. In contrast, while one could carve out an adjective from almost every line of Gray's 'Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard' and present the remainder with little rearrangement as a poem in iambic tetrameter, the exercise would produce a new message as well as a new poem ("The curfew tolls the knell of day,/The herd wind slowly o'er the lea . . ."). Language in its poetic function presents what Roman Jakobson describes as a "set (Einstellung) toward the message as such,"[5] whereby other communicative functions are subordinated to that of focussing attention upon the message itself.

The language used in poetry turns back upon itself, establishing contrasts and correspondences within the work. These broad sequential relations may be traced at least lexically, syntactically, and phonologically, linking units that occur where a choice may be said to have been made

in the referential chain. Jakobson describes the indispensable feature of poetry as a special form of interpenetration of the "two basic modes used in verbal behavior, selection and combination."[6] Non-poetic language (that is, language dominated by communicative functions other than "set toward the message") entails a choice on the encoder's part from the members of a closely linked paradigmatic class; a chosen item acquires significance through contiguity, by its syntagmatic position on the chain. Poetic encoding involves projection of "the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection into the axis of combination";[7] items are selected that will cohere within the message by virtue of lexical 'sympathy', syntactic parallelism, or phonological similarity (An absence of any of these links, where expectation of their presence has been induced by other patterning, would also be significant.).

The opening stanza of Gray's 'Elegy' may be reconsidered from this viewpoint. Removal of the adjective from each of the first three lines does not affect the referential coherence of the message, but density of cohesion is thinned.

At the phonological level, lowing coheres with tolls and slowly as the central term in an AB-BA-ABA figure; 'A' here represents a low back vowel and 'B' a 'dark' lateral. Both are appropriate in tempo and coloration to an excursion into melancholy, and both continue to be permuted throughout the stage-setting stanzas.

Syntactically, lowing and parting cohere with each

other as present-participle forms acting as modifiers. Something is happening (be it ever so slow) during the description of process in the first three lines, which include five verbal exponents. In contrast, the structure of the following line slackens the 'process' tension. The line is the environment of the poem's first two 'concatenated' units (that is, units that are conjoined with others but not mutually co-ordinate), one of clausal and one of phrasal rank, each starting with a co-ordinating conjunction and terminating at the end of the stanza/sentence. The common terminal word, me, serves referentially to introduce an observer of the scene being described. With this introduction, the "glimmering landscape" not only "fades", it freezes. Process becomes state; the frame for philosophical brooding by the observer has been established.

(Still under the syntactic heading, some mention should be made of the functionally equivalent conclusions that result from a transformational-generative approach to the same stanza. An analysis of what are essentially three co-ordinated sentences, the last of which is similarly tripartite, reveals a deep structure[8] that yields the kernel sentences I receive the world and Darkness receives the world. According to this analysis,[9] the head NP, generated as an element in an intermediary string leading to the derivation of the stanza's last two lines, has an agentive function in deep structure. Syntactic parallelism in the surface struc-

ture of the first two lines gives the same function to the other two head NPs. Hence the stanza's referential content may be paraphrased, at the risk of over-simplification and question-begging, as 'I am alone in darkness, as all things have forsaken me.' A universalization ("all things") seems justified by the poet's N-selection for elements dominated by successive head NPs. His choices form what might be termed a synecdochic scale: $N_{\bar{a}}$, $N_{a,\bar{h}}$, $N_{h}$, where 'a' represents 'animate', 'h' represents 'human', and a barred sub-script indicates a negative proposition.

Lexically, parting day is echoed by leaves the world to darkness; weary, co-occurring with slowly and plods, tips all three formal items into an emotive paradigm shared with such extratextual items as effort and exhaustion. lowing belongs to the same referential paradigm, that of 'mournful sounds,' as (curfew) tolls.

From the above disquisition, it may be deduced that more than the reader's 'body set' toward the genre's metric structure would be disrupted if Gray's three stock epithets were kept out of the elegy and put back in stock. Each of the adjectives serves a multiplicity of functions that operate at several descriptive levels. The substance (whether phonic or graphic) of each can be said to mark the place of a linguistic event where various things 'happen' simultaneously. The number of 'happenings' at any one place is limited at the level of substance, but in structure it is

open-ended; structurally, an event occurs (in the terms that I am using) in relation to others at more than one level of description. To a greater or lesser degree, depending on the variety of relations existing between them, convergence may be traced between two formal items or sequences.

'Convergence', in one sense of the word as Samuel R. Levin uses it, is present in every linguistic event, as "the linguistic sign itself is at the centre of a convergence between the relations it contracts with other signs in its syntagm and the correlations it contracts with other signs in its paradigm."[10] Convergence of this type, though, is no more than a condition that must be met by any information-carrying segment of a stretch of speech or writing. Such a segment is defined by the fact that there is a place on the chain for it (Halliday's "structure"[11]) and the fact that the segment, rather than zero or another segment, was chosen to fill it (Halliday's "system"[12]). Levin suggests that poetic language is distinguished by the systematic relations that it sets up between items with basic positional equivalence, such that "the two convergences comprise naturally equivalent forms (i.e., equivalent as to sound or meaning, or both) occurring in equivalent positions."[13] Adding to this, I would venture my own gloss: that many of the ambiguities and elusive associations of poetry can be ascribed to the fact that a single item often marks the place of several instances of convergence, each depending on different parameters that project

different pairs of items (in Levin's terminology, different couplings) with the original item at the centre.

Examples of couplings are found in Edwin Muir's 'The Horses,'[14] where the poet speculates on what might happen if the world's silent radios were to return to life after a latter-day Armageddon:

> . . . But now if they should speak,
> If on a sudden they should speak again,
> If on the stroke of noon a voice should speak,
> We would not listen . . . . (lines 15-18)

At one level of abstraction, the structure of the above may be described as CCCM, where 'C' represents 'conditional clause' and 'M' represents 'main clause.' Each C generates forms that are "naturally equivalent" (as defined by Levin) to forms in both other Cs; the phrases occurring in "equivalent positions" relative to the repeated subordinating conjunction are also linked in meaning within a referential paradigm of 'temporality', and in sound by the incidence of low back vowels. The first and last hemistich, grouped as one structural unit, forms a coupling with an earlier line, "By then we had made our covenant with silence" (line 4). In other lines, through syntactic position and antonymy, a coupling is formed between <u>old</u> and <u>new</u>, effecting a contrast between "that old bad world" (line 19) and the world after the arrival of descendants of almost-forgotten horses, "new as if they had come from their own Eden " (line 50). By collocation, the good-bad polarity is reversed in other

occurrences from the adjectival set: tractors (lines 24 and 38) is a collocate of new and sea-monsters; shield (line 39) is a collocate of ancient.

The presence of coupling in poetry helps to explain a poem's memorability of form, and the reader's grasp of that form as unitary. As many linguists have pointed out, a poem may be regarded as a microlanguage; no matter what its length and internal punctuation, it may also be regarded as a macrosentence (One of the above examples of coupling bridges a 30-line span.). Structure and system operate in one combined burst throughout the 'poetic utterance,' and instances drawn from fragments can be misleading and incomplete. For that reason, I shall draw examples wherever possible from a limited corpus of poetry: Dylan Thomas's 'Ballad of the Long-legged Bait' and Gerard Manley Hopkins's 'The Wreck of the Deutschland.'

A few more fragments will first be shored against my ruin. Convergence can give rise to coupling several times within a relatively short string, creating a 'field' against which any aberration is foregrounded as a 'figure'.[15] For example, vocalic and syntactic correspondences abound in the structure of Archibald MacLeish's lines,

> . . . there has come
> To the door of her tomb at noon a woman buried!
> . . . . . .
> No one doubts that she will come:
> No one doubts that she will speak too . . . .

(The Fall of the City, lines 15-16, 59-60)[16]

The line-pairs are linked with each other by the phonological shape of their components (as explained below), by line-end occurrences of come, and by an anaphoric relation between she and woman; the woman in question, by the way, is not directly mentioned in the 43 lines that separate the pairs. The range of phonological selection, in syllables carrying the ictus, is strikingly narrow. Line 16 forms an environment that is virtually homogenized[17] by the systemic pressure of sonorous back vowels and nasals (/dowr/-/tuwm/-/nuwn/-/wuwm/), against which the fronted and simple vowel-nucleus of the first syllable of /birʒyd/ is a distinct aberration. In line 60, the item speak is foregrounded phonologically by the same scheme. As the first item not duplicated from the sequence of the preceding 'line-chain', it is also foregrounded lexically. Each of the foregrounded items incorporates a bilabial stop and a high front vowel, a combination that produces, in performance, a satisfyingly appropriate gasp.

The norm from which deviation occurs may be established for the nonce, as in the previous example, or consist of the standard expectation-inducing patterns of the sign system. An example of the latter situation occurs in Hopkins where the poet foregrounds a verbal function by filling a standard verbal position with a member of a restricted class of nouns in "Let him easter in us" ('The Wreck of the Deutschland,' stanza 35, line 5). Geoffrey Leech classifies such selectional features, where an item is shifted in function

without a change in form, as lexical deviation,[18] but I believe that a description of them should indicate that they straddle the indefinable boundary between grammar and lexis at the generalized level of form. Reverting to Levin's terms, I should say that convergence at easter fuses an 'action' association, contracted syntagmatically, with paradigmatic associations of the item in its customary use, which include festivity and spiritual rebirth. The line's remaining constituents, manifested in substance (or 'realized'[19]) at clause rank as be a dayspring to the dimness of us and be a crimson-cressetted east, interlock with easter in us and with each other through a variety of couplings based on position, form, and meaning. Couplings link not only the primary constituents, but certain units of lower rank as well. To give only one example, easter and east are linked by phonological identity at the first and last stressed syllables of the line.

In poetry, the rhythmicality of metre, and (where used) of rhyme and other phonologically based patterns, serves in interaction with standard referential patterns to foreground components of the message. This thesis will concentrate on grammatically based phenomena, without offering a detailed theory of metrics (or, for that matter, of 'referentiality'); accordingly, the following example of interaction is no more than sketched.

John Donne, by recourse to metrical interference in his message through expectations induced by the typical

poetic structures of his time, couples and foregrounds two imperatives (italics added):

> At the round earths imagin'd corners, *blow*
> Your trumpets, Angells, and arise, *arise*
> From earth, you numberless infinities
> Of soules, . . .
> . . . . . .
> . . . and you whose eyes,
> Shall behold God . . . .
>
> (*Holy Sonnets*, II, vii, lines 1-4, 7-8)

Though end-stopped lines predominate in his work and in other poetry of his period, Donne uses enjambement at all of his first three lines; he end-stops ten out of eleven lines thereafter. Enjambement is not itself the principal foregrounding device as I understand their metrical and grammatical shape, but it is one of the means by which he achieves a complex pattern of intonation and stress through "the result on metrical stress of the imposition of the stresses produced by the grammar."[20] Briefly, *arise* and *infinities* may both be 'performed' as if pauses normal to the grammar succeed them, an assumption induced by their having been selected from subsets in their respective form-classes that need not be followed by other structural elements within the sentence, and reinforced by an assumption that a line-end metrical norm is being observed in practice. Thus the 'grammatical pause' falls unexpectedly on the first stressed syllable of the next line in each case, which adds to the natural metric pause and also exaggerates the natural rise in pitch. In the first line of the poem, *blow* is

syllabically isolated by the preceding grammatical pause; in the second, the foot of arise is similarly isolated, and a reduplicative feature is added. These factors affect the poetically 'normal' intonation contour of the line-end in such a way that the next 'normally' stressed syllable is given greater prominence than usual within the pattern. Hence, the items given primary foregrounding within the quoted lines are said here to be trumpets, earth, and souls, referentially an appropriate grouping for a vision of the Last Judgment.

Insightful recognition of convergences depends on consistency in the basic, or 'automatized', textual patterning, in order that figures may be perceived as recurring against a common ground. Geoffrey Leech has revived the terminology of rhetoric to classify such figures as either 'schemes' ("foregrounded repetitions of expression") or 'tropes' ("foregrounded irregularities of content").[21] Donne's use of the line-end position reinforces a scheme based on the sameness, at one stage of grammatical analysis, of his imperatives. The scheme has little to do with statistical predominances within the text: in fact, within the 'verse paragraph' of the sonnet's octet, enjambement rather than end-stop could be viewed as the line-end norm. Within the octet, three unstopped lines are followed by three stopped lines. The seventh line, part of which was included in the excerpt quoted from the poem, is end-stopped by punctuation as shown, but not by syntax (at least, I am not aware of any diachronic change in this area),

and the 'last' line may be considered end-stopped only because it is the last. Hence a case can be made, at the cost of dismembering the poem, that expectations are set up during the first three lines and frustrated for the next three, after which the 'norm' is again observed. The norm in these circumstances is intratextually created, statistically determined, and aesthetically less pleasing in its effects; any new figures perceived against this as a ground are accidental, like their inter-relations.

Redundancies built into language patterns permit much distortion in the patterns themselves, and in the referential expectations they create, without impairment of the message's intelligibility. The encoder performing an aesthetic function exploits the irregularities allowed by these patterns, seeking to focus the decoder's attention on components that have structural resonance. Such encoding is done on occasion by writers other than poets, producing works other than poetry, but they maintain a stance that subordinates the message to the goals of the message. The poet, on the other hand, strives to superimpose a new form of internal order within his verbal Gestalt. The medium is the message, and the message is the goal.

FOOTNOTES

1. This mode of analysis is described by Michael A. K. Halliday in "Categories of the Theory of Grammar," Word, XVII (1961), pages 241-292.

2. Michael Riffaterre, "Criteria for Style Analysis," Word, XV (1959), page 155.

3. Ibid.

4. J. R. Firth, in "A Synopsis of Linguistic Theory, 1930-1955" (in Studies in Linguistic Analysis, Blackwell, 1962, page 12), describes the informational content of a word's collocate as being in inverse proportion to the degree of mutual expectancy involved. If each occurrence of crags in neo-Augustan poetry were to be accompanied by an occurrence of beetling, the adjective would have no informational content as an independent constituent of the message.

5. Roman Jakobson, "Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics," in Style in Language, ed. T. A. Sebeok (Technology Press and Wiley, 1960), page 356.

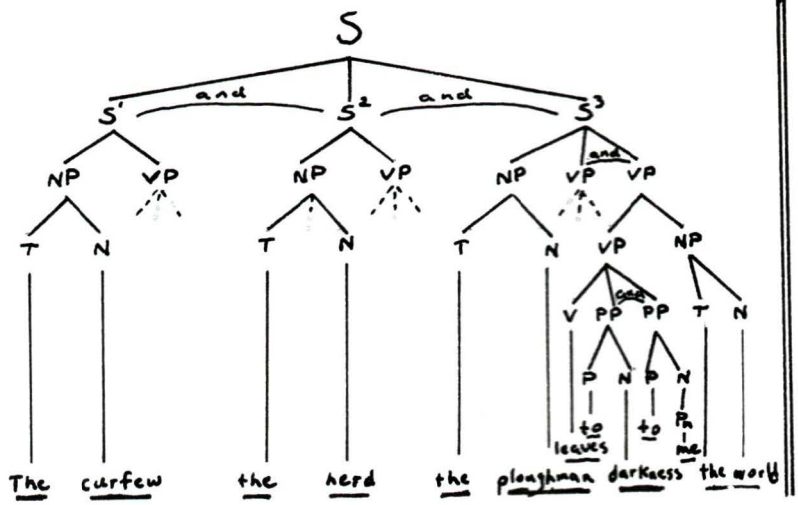
6. Ibid., page 358.

7. Ibid.

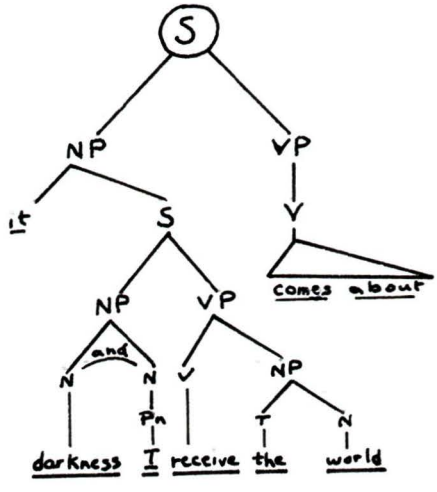
8. Noam Chomsky, in Aspects of the Theory of Syntax (M.I.T. Press, 1965, pages 16-18), relates the "deep structure" of a sentence to the way in which the sentence's meaning is reflected, and "surface structure" to the way in which the sentence is uttered.

9. The tree-diagrams that follow, showing a derivation of relevant features of the deep and surface structures of the first stanza of Gray's 'Elegy', are based on theory expounded by Lila R. Gleitman in "Coordinating Conjunctions in English" and by George Lakoff and Stanley Peters in "Phrasal Conjunction and Symmetric Predicates" (in Modern Studies in English, eds. D. A. Reibel and S. A. Schane, Prentice-Hall, 1969, pages 80-112 and 113-142 respectively).

surface structure:




deep structure:



10. Samuel R. Levin, Linguistic Structures in Poetry, Janua Linguarum No. 23 (Mouton, 1962), page 30.

11. Halliday, op. cit., page 254.

12. Ibid., page 263.

13. Levin, op. cit., page 33.

14. Edwin Muir, One Foot in Eden (Grove Press, 1956), pages 73-74.

15. For the moment, this description may be considered simply as an analogy drawn from the graphic arts. The concept of foregrounding in language, in the terms used by the Prague School, is the basis of the next chapter.

16. Archibald MacLeish, The Fall of the City, in Radio's Best Plays, ed. Joseph Liss (Greenberg, 1947), pages 8-9.

17. In Prague School terms, "automatized".

18. Geoffrey N. Leech, A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry (Longmans, 1969), page 43.

19. In my text, 'realization' will refer to the expression in substance of the constituents of a structure. The resultant formal item, or items in sequence, is the 'realizate'. 'Exponence' and 'exponent' will refer to the downward analysis of structure by rank.

20. Roger Fowler, "'Prose Rhythm' and Metre," in Essays on Style and Language (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966), page 85.

21. Leech, op. cit., page 74.

## CHAPTER II

## FOREGROUNDING

The opening lines of 'Ballad of the Long-legged Bait' exemplify systematic foregrounding: consistency of structural relations among certain items 'constellated' against an automatized background. (My choice of the word *constellated* as a descriptive term is prompted by Howard Nemerov's insightful reference to the "controlled relations" that "constantly direct the mind from place to place within [a poem], establishing the web of oneness among many separated points, much as the imagination makes constellations by drawing invisible lines among separate stars."[1])

Deviation in this case takes the form of inclusion of unexpectedly paired items in the syntagm, a selectional technique that remains controlled by drawing upon only two paradigmatic sets. Items are constellated in the first three stanzas, and elsewhere throughout the poem, by a repeated "collocative clash,"[2] or a series of instances of violation of a standard constraint on lexical co-occurrence. The clash lies in the association of certain inanimate nouns (italicized in the excerpt that follows) with volitional verbs:

> The bows glided down, and the *coast*
> Blackened with birds took a last look
> At his thrashing hair and whale-blue eye;
> The trodden *town* rang its cobbles for luck.

Then good-bye to the fishermanned
Boat . . .
. . . . . .
Whispered the affectionate sand
And the bulwarks of the dazzled quay.
For my sake sail, and never look back,
Said the looking land. (lines 1-6, 9-12)

Canonically, the stanzas are automatized through form and tenor as balladic, meeting an expectation induced by the poem's title. Referentially, they are automatized as 'the leave-taking before a quest'; the context seems to have been drawn from saga,[3] an inference reinforced by Beowulfian alliteration and attributive compounds (blackened with birds, whale-blue). Anything can 'happen' in poetry, in terms of collocation and narrative, but certain sequences are more likely to occur in certain genres than in others. For a genre-oriented reader of Thomas's poem, the background indicated above delimits a fairly narrow range of expectations that undergoes disruption by collocative clash. Occurrences have a common base, systemically and structurally: that is, along the paradigmatic axis as instances of conflation of two noun-classes, and along the syntagmatic axis as instances of a single grammatical relation. Each pair of collocates serves a personifying function, and manifests this function at the subject-predicator interface of a main clause.

The sameness of the pairs suggests that they have a place in a foregrounded poetic syntax. Their differences may illustrate the rhythmic nature of that syntax--'rhythmic'

as defined by Alfred North Whitehead, namely, exhibiting "the fusion of sameness and novelty, so that the whole never loses the essential unity of the pattern, while the parts exhibit the contrast arising from the novelty of their detail."[4]

Primary contrasts exist in structures at clause rank; serially and without regard to sentence boundaries, the structures are SP (unmarked by clash), SPC, SPCA, CAPS, CPS, where 'S' stands for 'subject', 'P' for 'predicator', 'C' for 'complement', and 'A' for 'adjunct' as labels identifying the constituents of a clause.[5] The realizate of each S includes a headword or co-ordinated words of the noun-class 'inanimate', a feature that produces an interesting rhythm in P-relations. After the first clause, the only one unmarked by clash, choices of P suggest more and more overtly that a single abstract relation exists within all the clauses of the marked series, until a collocation in the last clause resolves the entire complex, and confirms that it is a complex, by revealing the 'sameness' that holds the network together.

As an isolated syntactic combination, coast and took a look at may be considered 'figurative' rather than specifically 'personifying', by analogy with usage in, say, His native coast saw the last of him in 1950. town and rang may combine in grammar either transitively (sometimes 'personifying', though not with a causative adjunct or some other elements) or intransitively (almost never 'personifying'); in the given environment a direct object and a purposive

adjunct (for luck) add a personifying thrust. sand and whispered may also combine transitively or intransitively, but even an intransitive relation would be considered at least figurative; here, still more compelling signals of personification are provided by a rank-shifted quotative clause and an 'animating' adjective (affectionate). Interpretive tensions remain within the stanzas until the very last formal item, land, is added to the chain as a collocate of the unequivocally animating said.

The environment of the last items recapitulates all the signals that have been mentioned; it includes an adjective (looking) that echoes a constituent of the initial verbal item in the marked series, a rank-shifted quotative clause that functions as a direct object, and a purposive adjunct (For my sake). Referentially, land recapitulates, by synecdoche, all the realizates of S that preceded it in the series. These correspondences aid the "retrospective redefinition"[6] that takes place when the nature of the last item confirms a unifying aspect of the abstracted pattern.

Each of the above instances of collocative clash is trivial in and by itself. The significance of each, as an example of foregrounding, lies in its relations with the others through the mediation of constituent formal items and recurrent structural features. More generally, I suggest that stylistics is concerned with the production of statements describing the existence of such relations within a text in

terms of co-occurrences and restraints. In Sol Saporta's words, "The aim of a stylistic analysis would seem to be a typology which would indicate the features shared by a particular class of messages as well as the features by which they may be further separated into sub-classes."[7] Thus identified, the aim contrasts with that of a general linguistic analysis, which I consider to be the production of predictive statements, typologically organized but valid only if they can be shown to apply to other utterances--that is, to utterances in the same language but beyond the original corpus--that a native speaker would categorize as well-formed. Such statements involve, in the testing, extrapolation into what Halliday calls the "contextual interlevel,"[8] whereby hypotheses can be checked for validity through performance. Does a proposed adjustment of language components reflect the assumed changes in the transactional situation? A native speaker's response to the adjustment will help to provide the answer in terms of contextual 'fit'. A poem is its own contextual interlevel; extrapolation appears to be as futile and ill-founded as a work that speculates on the girlhood of heroines in Shakespeare's plays.

Although I believe that Levin's coaxial method in his study of coupling is analytically useful, I do not agree that a transformational-generative mode of analysis is the means of employing it to best effect. Levin seeks to justify his use of this mode of analysis for poetry by regarding all

poetic works in a given language as part of his corpus, and requiring that they be generable by "at least certain extensions of analysis . . . introduced into the existing models"[9] of grammar. His models are predictive as well as characterizing: as Chomsky defines them, they are oriented to produce "a device that generates all of the grammatical sequences of [a language] and none of the ungrammatical ones."[10] Recognizing the dangers of complexity and heterogeneity, Levin suggests that a grammar incorporating only the language of poetry might be considered as a goal, and that it "would reveal, by a comparison with the grammar of the casual language, a great deal more about the difference between poetic language and ordinary language than would a mere list of deviants."[11] His apparent assumption here, made explicit in later work,[12] is that a neo-Firthian or 'structural' mode of analysis lacks the grammatical power to produce more than a virtually undifferentiated "list of deviants" because the methodological base yields only an either/or distinction with respect to grammaticality; in contrast, the Chomskeyan base yields a scale of grammaticality related to the stage in phrase structure at which an ordered rewrite rule must be amended to unblock the deviant realization.

As I have posited that stylistic analysis consists of typological statements about a text's internal features, I do not believe that the notion of scaled grammaticality is relevant to stylistics. Foregrounding occurs in poetry, as in

any series of linguistic events, through deviation from the expected intake of pattern-carrying elements. 'Intake', perhaps a term that unduly suggests passivity in this context, might be replaced by 'interiorization": the process, descriptively beyond the scope of this thesis, by which the receiver of the message relates its signata to 'real world' experience. In a transaction involving casual speech, foregrounding may be manifested at any or all of the three related levels of substance, form, and situation, its cause or intent being ascribed to phenomena at the situational level. Foregrounding as a transactional phenomenon may be perceived and interiorized even when no intent exists on the sender's part. Poetry, as an artifact, has no features corresponding to (for example) slips of the tongue in casual speech. Its "pattern-carrying elements" are configurated graphic or phonic substance. The reader or hearer must deduce aspects of situation from form alone, as this is the only level that retains its features as constants from one performance to the next, and he must assume that foregrounding occurs by intent (or, more accurately, that anything perceived as foregrounding was produced by choice).[13] A scale of grammaticality may be a useful concept in abstracting normative rules from many disparate utterances, but it appears to have no operational value in a situation where there is only one sender and only one message.

Advocating the use of such a scale, Chomsky describes the method of interpreting "semi-grammatical, deviant

utterances" as the exploitation of preserved features of grammatical structures and of "whatever analogies we can construct with perfectly well-formed utterances";[14] I suggest that in poetry the exploitation of grammatical structures is a function of transmission, not of interpretation, whereby the resources of language are employed to symbolize a chosen referential context inter-related at the levels of substance and form. Poetry is verse that works. A metrical composition that fails to provide sufficient resonance of association among its parts is only verse.

'Resonance of association' will remain undefined and unquantified, but I hope that the principle suggested by the term will be clear by example. To illustrate the formal differences claimed to exist between poetry and verse, I offer below an instance from each mode of discourse. Both passages demonstrate the same type of grammatical deviation, but only the first of them contains the polysystemic links that I am seeking to describe. The deviation is itself of a rare and interesting type: disruption of the 'morphology' of idiom by replacement of one of the words that constitute a single lexical item.

This deviation occurs at the close of the following two lines from 'Ballad of the Long-legged Bait,' which describe the first teasing evasion of assaults by the seab creatures

on the human bait mentioned in the poem's title, transfixed at the end of the fisherman's line:

> [She] fled their love in a weaving dip.
> . . . . . .
> She nipped and dived in the nick of love [.]
>
> (lines 53 and 55)

As well as sharing obvious grammatical and metrical features, the lines are linked with each other by a phonemic pattern based on the system of stops and organized around the constellation /dip/-/nipt/-/nik/. All stressed syllables have a consonantal ending, and all and only such endings are realized by a voiced labiodental fricative or a stop. Stops, described by point of articulation, occur in the sequence 'central, forward, central, central, back.'[15] The last event in the sequence marks the first invariant 'morpheme' of the idiom and signals the idiom's completion; the unexpected occurrence of love that follows is environmentally reinforced by echo from the caesura position of the linked line. Foregrounding elsewhere in the poem encourages the reader or hearer to interpret the deviation--in other words, to find a 'warranty' for it--by abstracting, against the ground of the narrative, an associative conceptual figure that joins love, time, and destruction in an equivalence class. love occurs throughout the poem in the context of violent sexual assaults; as referential compression, "in the nick of love" could be paraphrased in the context as 'just in time to avoid being raped.'

The associative complexity indicated above may be contrasted with the relations embodied in the following lines by William McGonagall:

> We must try and catch this monster of a whale,
> So come on, brave boys, and never say fail.
>
> ('The Famous Tay Whale,' lines 11-12)[16]

In this case, the set toward the message has become rigor mortis. Instead of establishing a network of relations within and between levels, the versifier seems to have exercised the dominant poetic function by excluding all usual parameters except the exigencies of rhyme. Expectancies frustrated by the occurrence of the last item instead of the predictable morpheme cannot be resolved by interpretive abstraction, for the thump of the syllable and the absence of any new concept by paradigmatic extension reveal the inadequacy of the vessel.

Examples drawn from idiom-disruption cannot be described in quantified probabilistic terms, nor can they be assigned to some intermediate level of grammaticality. Either the idiom is 'there', in the text being interpreted, or it is not. In the examples given above, the idiom is still 'there'; expectations are induced for its occurrence on the chain, and its potentiated significance is released by the use of a deviant 'morphemic form' that is syntactically equivalent to the expected form. More accurately, though more ponderously, the deviant item should be described as occupying a place in structure that is syntactically identical to the place that

would have been occupied by the expected form if it had occurred. This identity confirms that, in context, the idiom is 'there'. Potentiation disappears if McGonagall's mighty line is amended to ". . . and never say we'll fail."

Coincidentally, Halliday cites in the nick of time as an example of fixed collocation, "where one of the words thus collocated is never found except in association with the second."[17] As can be seen from the above, "never" is unduly restrictive in terms of the actual substance of the occurrence, though it seems reasonable to claim that 'time' is never absent in conceptual terms after all the words in, the, nick, and of have been manifested in that order. The idiom is a single lexical item, a bound form in its entirety; without the initial preposition, for example, all of its components revert independently to lexis, as in the nick of the axe.

Foregrounding is accomplished by replacement of the expected form, and interpreted through likeness and contrast between the expected and the actual form on the paradigmatic plane. In the poem, but not in the verse couplet, interpretation turns back on the environment of the deviation and illuminates the context. The poem, as a microlanguage, prompts the conflation of love and time in a paradigm of 'menace'. In same-line environments elsewhere, without bridging a clause boundary, love collocates with tussle (line 30), fled (53), and furious and ox-killing (200); time collocates with kill (153) and grip (175). Neither item occurs in other environments,

except in the paradigmatic fusion of love and time in line 55, as previously discussed. Paradigmatically related items occur in the following environments: "kissed her dead" (line 82), "the wanting flesh his enemy" (91), "Venus lies star-struck in her wound" (117), "the dead hand leads the past" (148). bed occurs twice: in "cruel bed" (84) and "deathbeds" (207). By paradigmatic means, love and time are identified as allied and wholly menacing forces.

In a sense, the establishment of more stringent paradigmatic constraints for a poetic text than those found in other texts may be described as 'going beyond the data,' and so may the easing of constraints. My isolation of a paradigm could be regarded in that sense as a grammatical rule: one that 'proves', for example, that the devised sentence He found good luck in love is not well-formed from the poetic 'grammar'. To counter such an interpretation, I would point out that any grammar, of a language or a microlanguage, describes relational features that are sufficient, at the time of description, to reflect what has to be said. A language may develop new referential needs and is equipped to meet them, but a textual microlanguage is frozen in the 'then'.

I agree with J. P. Thorne that Levin's effort to develop procedures for a unified grammar of poetic and non-poetic language leads to problems that are inescapable and intolerable, in that anyone engaging in that task "must accept a grammar capable of generating a vast number of 'unwanted'

sentences or . . . must accept a grammar containing statements so complex that they become virtually meaningless."[18] I do not agree that the use of classificatory criteria only, or staying within the data, cannot lead to a textual analysis that might usefully be applied to comparative studies in stylistics.[19] Analysis of a set of patterns into their constituent forms, leading to a description of relations among the forms and within the patterns, should reveal features that can be traced through equivalence and contrast in other texts; the procedure may also shed light on the manner of organizing and interpreting casual utterances.

Thorne illustrates his underlying theory in a study of Donne's 'A Nocturnall upon S. Lucie's Day,' and claims that the text postulates a gender system contrary to that of Standard English and based on the opposition 'animate-inanimate', such that "a grammar incorporating these rules would reject I laugh and I love as ungrammatical features."[20] I cannot accept Thorne's conclusion without accepting corollaries that seem absurd: for example, by this criterion a grammar of the standard language should apparently reject, as ungrammatical, such lines as Blake's

> When the stars threw down their spears,
> And water'd heaven with their tears . . . .
>
> ('The Tyger,' lines 17-18)[21]

Such occurrences may be considered referentially deviant, in that they are instances of personification, but they are not,

in my view, ungrammatical. Donne saw fit to avoid the deviance of 'thingification', but the resources of his micro-language permitted deviance within its grammar. Any natural language, and any nonce-language created for an aesthetic purpose, will permit the saying of what has to be said.

Selectional rules (or 'standards') for subject-predicator realization in 'Ballad of the Long-Legged Bait' also specify reversed polarity. The pattern of the first three stanzas, indicated at the outset of this chapter, continues within the poem: inanimate nouns in the subject position are consistently associated with 'animate' verbs and functions, chiefly those involving action or implying speech. The fisherman, the only live human participant throughout the narrative, does not speak and initiates action only on command, "with no more desire than a ghost" (line 124). Grammar and lexis are organized to provide a referential setting analogous to that of a visual 'landscape with figure' where massed detail looms in the foreground and the solitary human figure is dwarfed.[22] The syntagmatic feature known as cohesion contributes to the effect, partly through severe limitation of the means of anaphoric reference to the fisherman and partly through a restricted set of dependency relations in linking quotative clauses to their environment. In my next chapter,[23] these techniques will be drawn from what is 'there' and described in terms of consistency and differentiation within a pattern and of the rhythmic reinforcement provided by intersection of

various analytic planes at certain points in structure. For the moment, I merely point out some of the effects that exist, before suggesting how they might be related formally.

The poem, like any poem, is unified by many means. As indicated above, the 'animating' pattern is a structural constant, though manifestations differ on the surface. For example, the fourth stanza begins, as the first does, with a clause that has no open-class adjuncts (Sails drank the wind), but this first reprise of the simplicity of The bows glided down is automatized; more interestingly, the clause is linked by common primary structure (SPC) and common function ('figurative') to the compound clause that begins the marked series. The second three-stanza grouping ends, as the first does, with a clause made up of a quotative complement, the verbal realizate said, and a noun phrase at S with the structure $de^{c}h$; [24] systemically (or in terms of choice from the classes available) in the clauses being compared, the sequences of exponents of S (definite article, participial adjective, inanimate noun) correspond at a delicate stage of class-differentiation. Systemic pressure--consistent employment of a restricted class in selecting items for positions--in the stanzas that follow is such that the last personifications in the poem (in "Good-bye, good luck, struck the sun and the moon") are clearly identifiable in spite of an overlaid verbal deviation, and both sun and moon are recognized as belonging to an established paradigm despite their differences in

function and referential significance from the other members of the paradigm.

An explanation of the theoretical basis for the preceding statement may serve to illustrate the nature of foregrounding as described by members of the Prague School of Linguistics. Jan Mukarovsky states that foregrounding, when employed as a technique in poetry, achieves its effects through consistency in its application and a hierarchic organization of its features:

> The foregrounding manifests itself in the fact that the reshaping of the foregrounded component within a given work occurs in a stable direction . . . . The systematic foregrounding of components in a work of poetry consists in the graduation of the interrelationships of these components, that is, in their mutual subordination and superordination.[23]

With these comments as a starting-point, the functions of the item struck in the last-quoted line of poetry will be examined in the context of its line-environment and of the entire poem.

Thomas shows consistency in selecting members from a noun-class that does not customarily have privilege of occurrence with the verb-class 'volitional'. This feature of selection is dominant in the poem, setting up an intra-textual norm that 'places' other features. Accordingly, its presence subordinates any other potential relations involving the item struck to the relations that the item enters into, in place, as a 'saying verb' associated with a quotative clause and nouns of the class 'inanimate'. The superordinate relations are drawn inferentially from the textual frame of

good luck, _____ the sun, just as they would be drawn from an extratextually based frame like good luck, _____ the boy. Even though the item selected in the poem is deviant in the poem's own terms, just as good luck, struck the boy would be considered deviant extratextually, the norm has been so firmly established that struck is identifiable as occupying the central place in a CPS structure. Its relations with the quotative exponent of C and the inanimate exponent of S are part of its "formal meaning," defined by Halliday as an item's "operation in the network of formal relations."[26] Any other implied relations provide added layers of meaning, not alternative interpretations.

As a verbal selection, the lexical item strike enters into two groupings of relations elsewhere in the poem. These relations contribute overlaid meanings to the formal item struck in its last occurrence, and must be considered part of the item's "contextual meaning," its relation to abstracted features of other situational observables or (in a poem) 'conceptuables'.[27] Each grouping can be isolated by syntactic and lexical parallelism that includes at least one feture linking it to the dominant scheme in the foreground, by intersection with the schematic components of the line that has been quoted.

One grouping comprises both other occurrences of the item strike where its phonological shape is affected by a tense-marker: in "the moonstruck boat" (line 38), and in

"Venus lies star-struck" (117). The line occupies the same grammatical place in both environments, that of the verbal constituent of a modifier. The agentive nominal selections completing the modifiers are linked paradigmatically to the personified subjects of "Good-bye, good luck, struck the sun and the moon," and again the context embodies menace.

The second grouping comprises all occurrences of strike without a tense-marker. These consist solely of imperatives: in "My mast is a bell-spire/Strike and smoothe" (lines 76-77), "Sing and strike his heavy haul" (137), and "Strike and sing his catch of fields" (181). The first instance, immediately preceded by "Clash out the . . . day," establishes one referential overlay of strike within the poem as 'mark the passage of time.' In the other two instances, the collocates haul and catch add an overlay of strike as 'trap (the prey) securely on the hook.' Thus the personified sun and moon, in striking, adopt a role as cosmic clocks trapping the fisherman in the destructive processes of time. Further, all three imperatives co-occur with sing (in the first instance, through the occurrence of sing in a metrically and grammatically equivalent position in the line that follows), which reinforces the ultimate interpretation of strike as a 'saying verb.' Syntactic function, metrical stress, and alliteration provide more reinforcement; they encourage the inference that the two verbs do not merely occur together, but belong together.

Relations within both groupings are subordinated to the dominant scheme, and suggest how one manifestation of that scheme is to be interpreted. Through their collocational features, essentially involving paradigmatic constraints, they help to reveal the nature of foregrounding in "good luck, struck the sun," essentially involving paradigmatic expansion.

Prague School theorists describe foregrounding as the distortion of "social norms of language behavior,"[28] and emphasize that the rules of the sign-system are not distorted. The language of poetry, they claim, stays within the range of selection and combination permitted by the rules, though it shifts the "stable and fixed relationships between the sign and its referent"[29] that exist in non-poetic language. Thomas's foregrounding matches the Prague School description. So does foregrounding based on the poetic device of shifted register: a change in the tenor of discourse. For example, Ezra Pound foregrounds a medical word in the setting of a lover's complaint:

> Like a skein of loose silk blown against a wall
> She walks by the railing of a path in Kensington
> Gardens,
> And she is dying piece-meal
> of a sort of emotional anæmia.
>
> ('The Garden,' lines 1-3)[30]

The clinical precision of <u>anæmia</u>, heightened by the use of a digraph,[31] is out of place--a copy of <u>Lancet</u> under the arm of Sir Launcelot. In another context (say, that of a lecture

by a psychiatrist to a lay audience), the item's being combined with emotional would not appear to distort the social norms of linguistic behavior. In the context of the poem, which seems to promise a portrait of a Bloomsbury Camille, its occurrence gives rise to a collocative clash that is all the more insistent on interpretation because of lowered register in a sort of a.

Analysis of texts through lexical co-occurrences and syntactic parallels suggest characteristics of the poetic style of an individual or school. Efforts to quantify the 'language of poetry' have been less successful, perhaps because they usually take the form of a study contrasting the language of a corpus of poems with a model of the standard language expressed in terms of "the cultural preference for, and statistical frequency of, [certain] allowable variations"[32] within the sign-system. Such efforts are based on what I consider to be a false dichotomy, one that divides the language-mass into poetic and non-poetic components based on surface distinctions within the sentence. I have tried to indicate that the degree of predictability of an item or a structure in a poem bears no mathematically determinate relation to the predictability of the item's occurrence in prose. In poetry, new equivalences are established by virtue of common shapes or structural positions, and the process is self-justifying.

In the course of linguistic description, the attributes of a text can sometimes be shown more clearly by

use of a contrastive technique involving a statement of structure for the 'same' message in a different mode. Such contrasts only establish the presence and (on occasion) suggest the nature of poetic organization, but they can do little more than quantify the respective language features in the two constitutes being compared. Poetic characteristics must be sought in the way in which relational features are gradated in a poem, and non-discrete factors of relation do not lend themselves to mathematical analysis. Tables of transitional probabilities do not help, for example, to explain or assess the poeticality of Dylan Thomas's lines,

> When the morning was waking over the war
> He put on his clothes and stepped out and he died [.]
>
> ('Among Those Killed in the Dawn Raid
> Was a Man Aged a Hundred,' lines 1-2)

Poeticality lies in the relational features that direct the mind to other places in a poem, registering equivalences and contrasts that would be irrelevant or even distracting in the referential chain of prose. It can be stated that, in the above lines, <u>died</u> is foregrounded by syntactic position and denotation: respectively, as the last realizate of three co-ordinated predicators, and as a lexical item that contrasts denotatively with the first two realizates. Its occurrence is, of course, unexpected in a listing of everyday activities, but the reason for its selection must be arrived at qualitatively. Statements of formal linguistic features in a poem

often seem ridiculously laboured and ad hoc; they may seem laboured because the simultaneity of relational effects must be parcelled out in a descriptive sequence, and ad hoc because the nature of associations varies with the perceiver. Both simultaneity of effects and idiosyncratic response are part of the nature of poetry. My qualitative judgment that died is foregrounded as an expression of indignation cannot be supported on the descriptive plane, but the fact that I am moved to make it is one of the reasons why the poem is a poem. So is the fact that the data are there to prompt my singling out, as a deliberate constellation, the verb forms associated with the poem's anonymous subject. The item initially foregrounded may be represented as the first term in a grouping, by substance, of all P-realizate forms: in "he died"-"he dropped"-"he stopped a sun." They begin and end with a stop or a consonantal cluster that includes a stop, in relations that may be symbolized as AA-AB-CB; as an item in substance, the culminating term differs only vocalically from stepped, the last 'everyday' item.

Syntactic position can produce a bathetic effect when the item thrown into high relief is not linked elsewhere by pattern as well as not being signalled by context. In the last line of the following passage from Wordsworth, foregrounding based on unpredictability is non-poetic:

> . . . It consoled him here
> To attend upon the orphan, and perform
> Obsequious service to the precious child,

Which, after a short time, by some mistake
Or indiscretion of the Father, died.

(from 'Vaudracour and Julia')[33]

The periodicity of the sentence, and its leisurely denotation of narrative events, does not prepare the reader for the final blunt word, which jars with the referential 'feed-forward' of mistake and indiscretion. The unexpected occurrence cannot be explained in qualitative terms; if it is intended to mark the suddenness of the event described, it fails in its purpose because of the verb's dependency on a non-defining relative pronoun in a parenthetical structure.

Deviation from norms of customary usage is apparent in the poetry of Wallace Stevens, who often achieves foregrounding by selecting items from closed sets to fill open-paradigm positions. One poem, 'The Man on the Dump,[34] ends with the words The the., graphically organized as shown. As a sentence, the combination would appear to be excluded from the Prague School's allowable variations. As part of the poem-as-utterance, though, it yields a formal meaning and a contextual meaning. The formal meaning is clear from its relations within the entire line, "Where was it one first heard of the truth? The the." The functions anaphorically, back-referencing an item that has (or, at this point in the chain, 'will have') structural and denotative characteristics in common with truth. the, the item back-referenced, functions metalinguistically in a nominal position. In the preceding lines, the usually serves one of two functions: homophoric,

At the level of substance, the above is an example of Hopkins's use of reiteration: ostensibly, a signal that he is temporizing in a state of exaltation while he gropes for words to express a transcendental concept. Such signals illustrate the poet's emphasis on what Jakobson describes as the emotive function of language, "a direct expression of the speaker's attitudestoward what he is talking about."[36] Other emotive signals are found in Hopkins's use of interjection and apostrophe to disrupt the normal sequence of elements in structure. These techniques may be grouped as variants of aposiopesis, where the 'speaker' falls silent or seemingly abandons one syntactic pattern for another, leaving the addressee to deduce the original intent.[37] The traditional term, drawn from rhetoric, applies precisely to the organization of the following lines from 'The Wreck of the Deutschland':

> But how shall I . . . make me room there:
> Reach me a . . . Fancy, come faster—
> Strike you the sight of it? look at it loom there,
> Thing that she . . . There then! the Master,
> . . . . . .
> He was to cure the extremity where he had cast her [. . .]

(stanza 28, lines 1–4, 6)

Though structures may be completed later, the reader is given no reason to expect this will be done.

Fragmentation of normal syntactic patterns, by a breaking-off of the message, is the dominant scheme in the poem. Seeming incoherence is a function of linearity: that

is, the reader receives a rush of words (in temporal succession) that frequently diverges from organizational norms without signals that the predictable pattern will be resumed. As mentioned, the pattern may be resumed, after some strain on interpretive methods based on "the principle of sustained memory, [whereby] a certain number of elements following one another linearly . . . may remain unconnected and kept present, until an element or elements appearing in the utterance much later can be connected with them."[38] Hopkins's use of syntactic disruption will be examined in subsequent pages; for the moment, I would claim only that foregrounding in his work occurs typically on the syntagmatic plane, rather than (as in Thomas's work) the paradigmatic plane.

Phonological patterning and lexical selection are subordinated to the poem's dominant scheme, the presentation of a verbal mosaic. Syntax may be discontinuous, but the items foregrounded by their discontinuating function are given warranty by virtue of correspondences in substance with other items in the environment. In the following lines, relations of warranty depend on alliterative patterning, heightened by interaction with the incidence of stress (marked by '/'):

They fought with God's cold
And they could not and fell to the deck
(Crushed them) or water (and drowned them) or rolled
With the sea-romp over the wreck.

('The Wreck of the Deutschland,' stanza 17, lines 1-4)

The first two lines contain an alliterative figure that can be symbolized as ABBA, consisting of occurrences of the phonemes /f/ and /k/ at the onset of the first four stressed syllables. The item fell, given warranty in substance by the completion of the figure, marks the first discontinuating function in structure; preceding signals 'fix' its position as one to be filled by a verb-adjunct or a modal in a co-ordinated structure like that underlying, say, they could not and [certainly] did not prevail. fell is unexpected, as any non-modal verb form would be, but grammatical correspondences and lexical sympathy, as well as alliteration, link it to the item fought.

Relations of a similar nature can be described for the items that mark discontinuation on the third line: namely, crushed, drowned, and rolled. For example, the line relates to the preceding line, on the alliterative basis indicated above, through a new figure symbolized as AXBAXBC, where 'X' represents a stressed-syllable onset that does not enter into the immediate figure (This figure could, of course, be conflated with that described in the preceding paragraph, but for the purpose of my illustration such added complexity is needless.). 'C' represents the phoneme /r/, introduced in consonantal clusters associated with the second occurrence of both A and B. The same phoneme provides the alliterative link with the fourth line. Thus, it serves first as a feature that distinguishes between 'sames' within a figure (could:crushed

and deck:drowned) and then as a feature by which new 'sames' are established (rolled:romp:wreck).

Figural 'sames', and features by which they may be distinguished at a greater degree of delicacy, exist in poetry at the levels of form and situation as well as the level of substance. The existence of a relation of 'sameness' at more than one level simultaneously in the linear course of an utterance is an identifying characteristic of poetry; an occurrence of multi-level relations is a coupling, as I understand Levin's concept. A coupling occurs, for example, through the mediation of two past participles in the following lines from 'The Wreck of the Deutschland':

> Ah, touched in your bower of bone
> Are you! turned for an exquisite smart,
> Have you! make words break from me here all alone
> Do you! . . .
>
> (stanza 18, lines 1–4)

In substance, touched and turned alliterate consonantally and vocalically. At the level of form, they are linked through both grammar and lexis: grammatically, as v-realizates in an elliptical version of the tag-question structure SP(fv...f)AS where 'f' represents 'finite operator form' and bracketing indicates the exponence of P;[39] lexically, the items are linked as members of the class of 'affective' verbs. Situationally, they both reflect the poet's turning away from his narrative to comment on his own response to it. The third sentence in the stanza maintains the situational constant of

the first two sentences, and repeats some structural features as warranty for the addition of a third term to a distinctive series of line-openings. Constituents of the third sentence are not included in the coupling that has been described, but they enter into an extension of interlineal relations through the syntactic equivalent of an eye-rhyme.

Jakobson's description of the poetic function, quoted in my previous chapter (page 4), may be examined more closely in the light of the above comments. Selection of an item for inclusion in the speech chain, when non-poetic functions are dominant, is made from an equivalence class of items that have some referential features in common. Its use in place gives the item meaning; in isolation, it has none--a dictionary definition describes its function in place, if it is a member of a closed set, or delimits a range of possible meanings in place, if it is a member of an open set. Its 'place' in an utterance realizes the item's potential as a sign through combinative relations with contiguous signs in the sequence. The poetic function, in contrast, "by promoting the palpability of signs, deepens the fundamental dichotomy of signs and objects."[40] An item in place in a poetic context realizes its potential through combinative relations with other items that can be perceived to have features in common with it on any descriptive plane. The other items need not be contiguous to it, but distancing affects the perceptibility of relations. Contiguity, rather than being the basis for

combination, is a criterion for selection in order to optimize perceptibility of shared features. Equivalence, rather than being the basis for selection, is a criterion for the establishment of shared features in order that items occurring on the chain may be perceived as being associated. Equivalence, rather than contiguity, is the constitutive device.

Henry Higgins, in Bernard Shaw's Pygmalion, showed typically keen perception of linguistic matters when he judged that Alfred Doolittle had "a certain natural gift of rhetoric" on the basis of the remark "I'm willing to tell you. I'm wanting to tell you. I'm waiting to tell you."[41] Aided by Jakobson's insight, we can expand the assessment. Doolittle's plea--marked by alliteration, by structural parallelism, and by 'progression of intent' in situation--places strong emphasis on the poetic function, though the referential and emotive functions are dominant. Poeticality is not confined to poetry; in other messages, the "set toward the message" becomes a set toward other aspects of the transaction with a different hierarchical order of functions. The set may be toward the addresser, the addressee, or the referent, or toward the fact of contact or the nature of the code that is involved in making contact and producing the desired responses. Whenever attention is drawn to the patterns carried by the code, the poetic function is being exercised.

This chapter has concentrated on techniques used in poetry to exploit deviance that is permitted within the

sign-system of a language. By his patterning of variables, usually but not always within the limits of intelligibility, the poet foregrounds certain features and inter-relates them within his microsystem, or text. Further means of inter-relation of constituents will be discussed in the chapter that follows.

FOOTNOTES

1. Howard Nemerov, "The Generation of Violence," Kenyon Review, XV (1953), page 480.

2. Geoffrey N. Leech uses this phrase while discussing another Thomas poem in "'This Bread I Break'--Language and Interpretation" (in A Review of English Literature, VI, ii [April 1965], page 71).

3. Compare, for example, this description from The Nibelungenlied (trans. Margaret Armour, Dent [Everyman's], 1908, pages 36-37): "They carried down the shields of ruddy gold to the strand, . . . for they were eager to be gone. The women made muckle dole. Fair damsels stood at the windows. The fresh wind caught the sail . . . . So with stout hearts they left Burgundy . . . and they fell away from the shore."

4. Quoted from Whitehead's Principles of Natural Knowledge by Herbert Read in Annals of Innocence and Experience (Faber, 1946), page 227.

5. Descriptive labels for elements of structure at clause rank are discussed by Barbara M. H. Strang in Modern English Structure (2nd ed., Edward Arnold, 1968), page 76.

6. Winifred Nowottny, The Language Poets Use (Athlone Press, 1962), pages 80 and 132.

7. Sol Saporta, "Linguistic Approaches to Verbal Art," in Style in Language, ed. T. A. Sebeok (Technology Press and Wiley, 1960), page 86.

8. Michael A. K. Halliday, "Categories of the Theory of Grammar," Word, XVII (1961), pages 243-244.

9. Samuel R. Levin, Linguistic Structures in Poetry, Janua Linguarum No. 23 (Mouton, 1962), page 14.

10. Noam Chomsky, Syntactic Structures, Janua Linguarum No. 4 (Mouton, 1957), page 13.

11. Levin, op. cit., page 15.

12. Idem, "Two Grammatical Approaches to Poetic Syntax," College Composition and Communication, XVI (1965), page 259.

13. C. F. Voegelin, in "Casual and Noncasual Utterances within Unified Structure" (in Style in Language, ed. T. A. Sebeok [Technology Press and Wiley, 1960], page 60 [fn.]), defines 'literature' in terms of form and use: as "utterances or groups of utterances which are--or are likely to be--repeated in identical or nearly identical form." The definition is described as the substance of a personal communication from Martin Joos.

14. Noam Chomsky, "Some Methodological Remarks on Generative Grammar," Word, XVII (1961), page 234.

15. More precisely, the sequence may be described as Alveolar (vcd.), Bilabial (vlss.), Bilabial (vlss.)+Alveolar, Alveolar (vcd.), Velar (vlss.). Voicing is non-contrastive in this pattern. More extensive patterns may be described by including the incidence of /v/ in consonant-final position, the incidence of consonantal clusters, and a larger 'stop' pattern that brings in contiguous lines. The two lines described in the text are also interesting because of a regular alternation of a stressed syllable (co-extensive in every case with an open-class lexical item) and an unstressed 'function word.'

16. William McGonagall, Poetic Gems Selected from the Works of William McGonagall, Poet and Tragedian (David Winter & Son Ltd., 1934), page 37.

17. Michael A. K. Halliday, "General Linguistics and Its Application to Language Teaching (1960)," in Patterns of Language, eds. Halliday and Angus McIntosh (Longmans, 1966), page 21.

18. James Peter Thorne, "Stylistics and Generative Grammars," in Linguistics and Literary Style, ed. Donald C. Freeman (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), page 185.

19. Ibid., page 189.

20. Ibid., pages 194-195.

21. William Blake, Poetry and Prose, ed. Geoffrey Keynes (Nonesuch Press, 1927), page 72. My analogy drawn from Blake's lines appears to be valid, as many instances of personification occur in poems where such imagery is not prevalent. I do not believe that the analogy could be shown to be ill-founded on the grounds that the generating device for the Blake poem should be a 'grammar' of (a) the single poem, where only the cited instance of personification occurs and hence is the norm, or (b) the entire Blakeian canon, where mountains dance, sunflowers count the steps of the sun, and clods and pebbles sing. Argument (a) would presuppose that any poem may be internally grammatized in all its features, which I doubt. Argument (b) overextends the area within which a microlanguage is, for most poets, a valid concept. I cannot thinksof any purpose for a combined grammar of Tennyson's 'Idylls of the King' and 'Locksley Hall,' though separate contrastive grammars might be of interest.

22. The organization of the poem reminds me of the painting 'Landscape with the Fall of Icarus,' ascribed to Pieter Bruegel the Elder. Both works place the features of nature in a structurally dominant relation to other features, leaving the human subject a cipher.

23. Infra, pages 67-70.

24. Symbology is drawn from J. McH. Sinclair, A Course in Spoken English: 3 (Oxford University Press, 1965), pages 56, 59, and 63. 'de^h' represents 'deictic, adjectival outside the submodification system, headword' as places in structure of the noun group.

25. Jan Mukarovsky, "Standard Language and Poetic Language," in A Prague School Reader on Esthetics, Literary Structure, and Style, sel. and trans. Paul L. Garvin (Georgetown University Press, 1964), page 20.

26. Michael A. K. Halliday, "Categories . . .," page 245.

27. Ibid. My coinage, 'conceptuables', is intended to indicate 'those things that might be imagined as being present in the fictive situation,' as a counterpart of 'observables', perceived as being present in a real-world situation.

28. Lubomir Dolezel, "Statistical Theory of Poetic Language," in Prague Studies in Mathematical Linguistics: 2, eds. Dolezel et al.(University of Alabama Press, 1967), page 98.

29. Ibid.

30. Ezra Pound, Collected Shorter Poems (2nd ed., Faber, 1968), page 93. The lines are arranged typographically as shown, with the foregrounded demistich indented in a 'bob-and-wheel' configuration.

31. My parenthetical comment, like the observation in the immediately preceding footnote, relates to the effect of the poem as seen, rather than that of the poem as heard. Both typographic devices can be considered as performance signals, with a silent reading of the poem as an internalized performance. Analytical distinctions between the printed poem-as-type and the recited poem-as-token will not be discussed in this thesis.

32. Paul L. Garvin, introduction to A Prague School Reader . . ., page viii.

33. Quoted in The Stuffed Owl: An Anthology of Bad Verse, sel. and arr. D. B. Wyndham Lewis and Charles Lee (Dent [Aldine Paperback], 1963), page 152.

34. Wallace Stevens, Poems, sel. Samuel French Morse (Vintage Books, 1959), pages 95-96.

35. Gerard Manley Hopkins, Poems, revs. and eds. W. H. Gardner and N. H. MacKenzie (4th ed., Oxford University Press, 1970), page 100.

36. Roman Jakobson in Style in Language (op. cit.), page 354.

37. Ronald H. Carpenter lists aposeopesis among forms of schematic omission in "An Analysis of Rhetorical Theory's Recommendations for Uncommon Word Orders," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, LV, ii (April 1969).

38. E. M. Uhlenbeck, "An Appraisal of Transformational Theory," Lingua, XII (1963), page 13.

39. Barbara M. H. Strang discusses the structure of 'tag-questions' in Modern English Structure (2nd ed., Edward Arnold, 1968) pages 169-170.

40. Jakobson, op. cit., page 356.

41. George Bernard Shaw, Pygmalion: A Romance in Five Acts (Constable, 1953), page 233.

# CHAPTER III

## COHESION

The poetic function, that of focussing attention on the message as a construct, reveals itself most clearly in systematic foregrounding. This technique serves a dual purpose in encoding: to highlight certain linguistic events within a text by deviation from their environments, and to suggest by the nature of such deviation that the occurrences have a common referential warranty. The poet, through a judicious use of signals within the substance of language, enables the reader to synthesize perceptions by operating on the flow of substance just as man operates on the flow of general sense-impressions to form a conceptual synthesis of his world. The latter process has been described by Ernst Cassirer:

> All the intellectual labor whereby the mind forms general concepts out of specific impressions is directed towards breaking the isolation of the datum, wresting it from the "here and now" of its actual occurrence, relating it to other things and gathering it and them into some inclusive order, into the unity of a "system".[1]

Unlike the random phenomena that impinge on the senses, poems are 'pre-unified'; the process of interpreting them through abstraction and combination, a process that depends on ability to perceive equivalences and oppositions, is essentially reconstructive. When systematic foregrounding is employed in transmission, items are 'pre-clustered' associatively,

though individual items within a cluster will enter into further associations outside it. Without such associations, on both the paradigmatic and the syntagmatic axes, the items in the text would not cohere as a unified poetic whole. If components of a referential message lacked these associations on the syntagmatic axis, they would have no cohesion at all.

Techniques other than systematic foregrounding do not yield 'pre-clusters', but by less overt means they also require qualitative intratextual judgments by the reader. The "isolation of the datum" (to use Cassirer's phrase) in multisensory perception is an illusion fostered by the constraints of linearity in internalizing all data and attempting to describe them. Almost paradoxically, the more limited sensory channel (either auditory or visual) by which a poem is communicated eases the normal constraints; the channel is put into service for this purpose with paralinguistic signals--the 'body set' of a performer or the configuration of words on a page--that indicate to the hearer or reader that standard communicative expectations should not be applied to the forthcoming utterance. In their place, new expectations are demanded, whereby the constituents of the utterance must be internalized as objects in their own right, sharing similarities and exhibiting differences within their environments. The "here and now" of occurrence of any datum in poetry--any stretch of substance or a unit of any rank in structure--is the "here and now" of an entire poem.

Although semantic and psycholinguistic theory are not being discussed in detail in this thesis, some recourse must be made to them in my expanding upon the comments made above. This expansion is offered by way of analogy, with a revival of the moribund metaphor that introduced the chapter.

Returning to the introductory description of the poetic function as a matter of focus, I would suggest that an analogy may be drawn between the function of language in relation to concepts and the function of a grid in relation to spatial entities viewed through it. In both cases, it can be asserted that a predetermined network enables items to be placed, either referentially or spatially, in terms of their relations with points on the grid. The points are definable and, where a common code of definition exists, information about relational features is transferable. In real-world observations, the grid is useful only as a basis for placement or transferable description of what lies behind it. If stereoscopic vision brings the grid itself into focus, the perceptual adjustment is made at the expense of detail in what then becomes the background. In referential-language transactions, the grid is also no more than a relational frame; such questions by an addressee as "What are you talking about?" or "What's your point?" demonstrate the assumption that focus should be maintained on what lies behind the grid (The question "What are you saying?" is seldom asked except rhetorically, and implies a doubt that any grid exists.). Poetry, in contrast,

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flaunts the grid's existence by calling attention to the multiplicity of relations that can be traced within its own structure of language signals, created by successive choices from its system of options.

When the components of a referential speech-act display undue correspondences in substance, the encoder may break off the message for self-correction; his grid is showing, to the detriment of transmissive efficiency. Similar correspondences in written prose, as 'internally voiced' by the decoder, are classified by H. W. Fowler as "jingles, . . . the sort of carelessness that, in common courtesy to his readers, a writer should remove before printing."[2] As an example, Fowler cites from an unnamed newspaper "Hard-working folk should participate in the pleasures of leisure in goodly measure." These discourteous chimes may be compared with the more melodious construction of a couplet by John Milton:

> Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
> Whilst the landskip round it measures [ . ],
>
> ('L'Allegro,' lines 69-70)

Handel's musical setting of 'L'Allegro' and 'Il Penseroso,' in a combined "ode in the dramatic style,"[3] employs the metrical contrast between these lines and those surrounding them to emphasize the couplet's functional value in place: that of a bridge between a passage in iambic tetrameter describing cheerful pastoral sounds and a more stately passage in trochees

describing exaltive views of nature. Sense and sound combine to signal a change in theme: for example, the discursiveness of tertiary metrical stress of the line-openings ("And the . . . /And the . . ./And every . . ./ Under the . . .") contrasts with the directness and primary-secondary-primary pattern of stress that follows in "Straight mine eye . . . ." The feminine rhymes of the couplet are distinct deviations from the textual norm: only six feminine pairs appear in the poem's 152 lines. Exploitation of the masculine/feminine contrast marks a turning-point, simultaneously maintaining the unified structure at one level of abstraction--rhymed couplets are used throughout--and indicating divisions at another level. In the organization of passages, the contrast operates throughout as the phonological contrasts of rhyme operate in the organization of stanzaic poems:

> Rhyme introduces the expectation of surprise, e.g. the maximal type of similarity, and at the same time, the expectation of surprise, i.e. of dissimilarity. . . . Rhymes determine also the euphonic quality of entire lines and serve in addition as configurational devices: they signalize the end of the line and define the structure of a stanza. In the construction of the stanza they fulfill [sic] thus both a delimitative and integrating function.[4]

Phonological repetition may occur at such points, or in such density, in the message that the addressee is led to the conclusion that phonological components of the sign have prompted the choice of the signatum, a conclusion that is so flagrantly opposed to assumptions underlying standard

referential transactions that logic must be set aside. This conclusion is inescapable, for example, in Lewis Carroll's crew-list from 'The Hunting of the Snark': a banker, a butcher, a barrister, and others gravely introduced by function--but all identified with a capital 'B' as in a child's primer. Appropriately, the crew approves of the navigational map that the Bellman has supplied:

> "What's the good of Mercator's North Poles and Equators,
> Tropics, Zones, and Meridian Lines?"
> So the Bellman would cry: and the crew would reply
> "They are merely conventional signs!
>
> "Other maps are such shapes, with their islands and capes!
> But we've got our brave captain to thank!
> (So the crew would protest) "that he's bought us the best--
> A perfect and absolute blank!"
>
> ('The Hunting of the Snark,' Fit the Second, lines 8-16)

Carroll must provide the reader with "conventional signs" in order to communicate at all, but he uses them in an unconventional way; as poetic Bellman, he supplies a map that relates only to itself, and leaves his crew of readers to steer by it.

The cumulative effect of Carroll's list of hunters depends on strategic exploitation of phonology: labels are shown to cohere as members of a single alliterative set when identification is completed after some 60 lines.[5] Density of phonological repetition, a related means of promoting the palpability of signs, is found in Walt Kelly's verse:

> Gambolling on the gumbo with the gambits all in gear,
> I dapped upon a dilly who would be my dolly dear.
>
> ('Truly True,' lines 1-2)[6]

Playful exercises such as the above might be described as presenting a set toward the channel, rather than toward the message. Their function is phonoaesthetic, a term that raises evaluative questions that will not be discussed here. To avoid them, I would coin the term 'metaphatic': a phatic message ("Can you hear me?") establishes whether the channel is operative; a metaphatic message ("Can you put that more simply?") establishes awareness of the discrete components in substance that the channel must carry to be operative.[7]

Although Kelly's syntactic signals are impeccable, his lexical choices at places with metrical stress are given warranty only by their phonological shape. In suggesting the difference between verse and poetry, I indicated that poetic warranty lies in inter-relations between the situational level and the levels of substance and form.[8] My criterion of "sufficient resonance of association," while sketchily defined, does not appear to be met by the quoted lines. In other flights, Kelly meets the criterion:

> The notes for the does not will sound as the does;
> Today you can sing for the will be that was.
>
> ('A Song Not for Now,' lines 3-4)[9]

In these cummings-like lines, Kelly uses phonological and grammatical correspondences to support referential interpretation despite the flouting of form-class rules. Two pairs of referential oppositions--"the does not" and "the does," and (in temporality) "the will be that was"--are identifiable

in context. The pairs are linked as one grouping by line-end assonance. Links beyond the opposed items include assonance between note and not, and alliteration and collocational overlap between sound and sing. Such relations cannot be classed as foregrounding, as the components involved are not given special emphasis: they draw the substance together, and let its seams show.

Collocational overlap is similarly used in an interesting way in a recent poem by Ira Sadoff; he chooses lexical items that seem to be synonymous with, but are actually wider in collocational extension than, a preceding item. By this means, he bridges referential gaps or 'changes of subject' in the poem; each change depends on a pivotal word that is initially understood as being anaphoric in reference, but proves in context to be introducing a new subject. The technique is manifested in the first two lines of the excerpt below, followed by a second form of exploitation of lexical surprise, involving the use of cognates (italics added to indicate constituent items):

> I feel like a child in an old movie,
> Asking myself where have I been. A film
> Covers the eye, and I can only recount events
> Out of sequence, in a haze. This is not clear
>
> Enough. It is as though I were a doctor
> Looking into my eyes with a strange
> Light, chasing the pupil into an endless tunnel
> Which is not endless. The pupil shrinks
>
> Like a schoolchild who does not know
> The answer. . . .
>
> ('Disease of the Eye,' lines 5-14)[10]

In establishing categories for the study of lexis, Halliday points out that they are analogous to the categories of grammar in that "collocation, like structure, accounts for a syntagmatic relation; set, like class and system, for a paradigmatic one."[11] The analogy, applied to techniques used in Sadoff's lines, shows once again that poetic viability depends on the interaction of chain and choice.

As lexical items in extratextual collocations, movie and film can be grouped in the same paradigmatic set at a fairly advanced degree of delicacy, if the narrower collocational core of movie is the evaluative base; the two items are differentiable only at extremes on certain scales of register, such as the speaker's age and his attitudes toward the visual arts. In place, however, in the "here and now" of Sadoff's poem, the two items are not 'sames'; still, the linear nature of reception is such that their paradigmatic relation beyond the text is a cohesive factor within the text. Because of this cohesion--because film was chosen instead of cloud or any other item with appropriate referentiality in context--there is no break in syntagmatic relations between the first two sentences. There is surprise, but it is suddenly revealed within clause structure rather than being diffused during the intake of a 'change of subject' statement. The metrical pattern, in which the items under discussion are placed at successive and stressed line-ends, reinforces the poetic effect: a sudden shift in relations

between items still being held in the memory, causing interpretive tension followed by resolution. The set toward the message is revealed in the need for reassessment of referential values that had seemed fixed and stable.

A similar bridge-effect, using different principles, occurs later in the excerpt. As a sequence of lexical items, The pupil shrinks continues the referential chain established by the sentence that preceded it, but the simile following the line-end casts a new light on the sequence's referentiality. pupil and schoolchild share collocational overlap, but the overlap is not made overt by juxtaposition of the two items until pupil has been 'fixed' as a cognate that, in the context, does not share this overlap. pupil, in fact, occurs as two different lexical items, as I regard a single lexical item in description as one that may be tentatively identified through invariance of phonological shape, excluding affixes and function-markers, and confirmed as a single item through the existence of a broad overlap in its collocations (Hence, to use Halliday's example,[12] cut [verb] and cut [noun] are treated in the study of lexis as a single item, but bear [verb] and bear [noun] are not.).

Some of the links other than those described are also collocational, through absolute identity or through set. eye occurs twice, with unpleasant 'objectifying' associations that are paralleled at two later stages in the poem; all four

occurrences are in a referential environment of 'change of subject.' More generally, there is a markedly high frequency of the phonemic cluster /ay/, flanked by plus juncture. For the encoder, in terms of his dramatic persona at least, eye problems and 'I' problems are an obsession. Further, a relation involving collocational set links the beginning and the end of the excerpt, in that both child and schoolchild are drawn from the same paradigm. Both items appear in the same phonological environment, /layk$\partial$ + ___ /, and in the same rhetorical figure realized by parallel grammatical constructions (Another simile with a different construction lies between the two.). Links over a wider stretch of substance lead from the phrase "asking myself where have I been" (line 4), by way of the rank-shifted clause "who does not know/The answer" (lines 13-14), to the poem's concluding words, quoted below in their stanzaic environment:

> The doctor recommends the following:
> Cover the eyes with a cold compress of hands.
> The stranger will disappear. The lights
> Will dim, but you will know where you have been.
>
> ('Disease of the Eye,' lines 21-24)

Sadoff professes a childlike ignorance in his poem, creating a tension that is resolved when he reports a father-figure's advice. The formulation of a question, the reminders of that questioning unease, and the provision of an answer: all of these join in one cohesive scheme. Links are structurally akin to those traced by Charles T. Scott in a study

of Persian and Arabic riddles,[13] where the sentence is taken as the minimal unit of communicative intent. Scott's data are interpreted as showing a stimulus-and-response relation between constituents. The relations that he traces are only incidentally cohesive within a single text; as a constant feature in a number of texts, they serve to identify a genre. The sentence, given no downward analysis, enters into what William O. Hendricks characterizes as "notional relations"[14] with other sentences; it is an immediate constituent of one of the two obligatory ICs—proposition and answer—that constitute each riddle.[15]

Notional relations appear to be a useful tool in developing a typology of genres, but description of such relations is too close to the edge of linguistics for comfort. Vladimir Propp, for example, describes Russian fairy-tales in terms of invariant "functions of the dramatis personae"[16] in the narrative stream of all members of the genre. Joseph Campbell, in a study of the archetypal heroic adventure, gives a diagrammatic key to the quest-death-rebirth pattern that typifies the "monomyth."[17] Although both scholars discuss the importance of certain words and phrases in their data, they isolate such material from its grammatical environment. By this mode of description, functions from the level of language form to the level of situation appear to be discontinuous. Accordingly, I shall continue to stress the analytical mode that entails "a concern for the recurrence of

sub-sentence units in the series of sentences that constitute a single connected text,"[18] as opposed to a concern for the upward linking of sentences considered as notional units.

Within the preferred analytical mode, it can be pointed out that the Sadoff phrases that led to this excursion are linked by the antonymy of ask myself and know, and by the parallel structures of the complements dependent on the two verb-forms. It can also be pointed out that a similar embedded relation occurs between contiguous sentences in mid-stretch, in ". . . I ask my wife, 'Who is this man/You married?' She answers, 'He . . .'" (lines 18-19). The relation is not grammatically identical to that linking the extremes, as a quotative feature is introduced and antonymy is manifested as stimulus-and-response in a reported transactional exchange, but perceptible 'sames' operate within the four sentences.

The sentences, considered on another descriptive plane, illustrate further the basic principle of 'sameness with difference' that I have been discussing. The pronominal realizates of S in successive clause structures belong to different grammatical categories of 'person,' but in terms of 'theme' in Prague School usage[19] the anaphoric reference is a thematic constant--the 'I' of the poem. A rare use of he in a vocative context (line 19, already quoted) links with I throughout and with you (line 24) to provide an exhaustive set; it also links with the anaphoric this man (line 18) as a distancing device that reveals the depth of the speaker's

self-alienation. Thus, the same stretch of substance enters into formal intersentential relations and provides a signal of situational features.

I have avoided the term 'semantics' in description, because its range of use elsewhere is dismayingly broad and formally varied. Its application by David Crystal and Derek Davy is relevant here, though, in that they relate the term directly to the study of links between sentences in a text or, more generally, to the study of "the linguistic meaning of a text over and above the meaning of the lexical items taken singly."[20] As they point out, the relations of language items in connected discourse, rather than in arbitrary and disparate sentences, must be identified and described before a grammatical statement is complete.[21] The presence of such relational features gives cohesion to a text. The nature of their patterning contributes to its style.

Cohesion is described by Halliday as a stylistically motivated "grouping . . . of descriptive categories, through which the special properties of a text may be recognized [by the alignment of] various grammatical and lexical features."[22] The features may be drawn from different ranks in structure, or may cross sentence boundaries and have no functional value in themselves within usual concepts of grammar. Each sub-set is grouped by the analyst through his recognition that its members operate as functional sames within the text, and thus serve to unify it through the consistency of their

operations. For example, a prose author or poet may consistently select certain group features from the "system network" of "choices associated with a given constituent type"[23] in clause structure, or he may select anaphoric function-words from an idiosyncratically restricted sub-set of the full set available to him at certain places in the structure of the nominal group. Both of these instances depend on grammatical relations for the identification of participants in the link, but the link itself is based on sentence structure only in the first case; in the second case, it lies beyond the bounds of structure by their current definition. The cohesive relation is defined as existing between sentences, not within them: as Ruqaiya Hasan has pointed out, "the parts of a sentence 'cohere' in a different way, in that they are structurally related--by definition, since otherwise they would not be part of a sentence."[24] In both cases, delicacy of description increases as precision is added to the comparative base, to show how a writer's choices compare in frequency with occurrences of the same choices by another writer or in representative samples of the standard language. My technique here will be gross and intuitive, as I seek only to touch on the principles involved.

Lexical cohesion is non-probabilistic. It is provided by the occurrence of the same lexical item, or of items that may be considered to belong to the same lexical set, where occurrences are in close proximity on the chain.

Cohesion may be strong or weak, depending on variables that include the degree of linear proximity and, in 'set' relations, the degree of paradigmatic sympathy in terms of associative statistics drawn from general usage. In poetry, lexical or grammatical cohesion may be reinforced by the iterative patterns of metre and/or rhyme. As I indicated previously, I shall not try to attain a high degree of delicacy, but I hope to work at a stage where 'sames' can be differentiated from their environment with sufficient clarity to establish the existence of interrelated patterns in substance, form, and context. At the very lowest degree of delicacy, 'sames' are everywhere; all words are phonological clusters and all sentences are lexical clusters, but this observation does not take a description of cohesive patterning very far.

'Ballad of the Long-legged Bait' is marked by consistency of selection from the system network of options available at two places in clause structure: 'subject' (S) where the topic or theme is the man to whom things happen in the poem, and 'predicator' (P) where the new information or rheme is quotative (Q). Almost invariably, Thomas selects the pronoun <u>he</u> as the realizate of S, although the poem's surface structure manifests few features to which the personal pronoun can be related anaphorically. The SUBJECT of the poem (capital letters are used to distinguish a thematic element from a grammatical or other unit within the language system itself) remains unspecified or attributively dim by virtue of

this feature of selection. A standard-language narrative over a comparable stretch of substance would usually provide a wider range of S-realizates referring to the SUBJECT, drawing on such grammatical resources within the nominal group as modification, qualification (including, by rank-shift, apposition and defining relative clauses), and periphrasis. In the poem, the SUBJECT is introduced through a possessive personal pronoun, structurally and metrically unstressed, in the complement of the opening sentence ("his thrashing hair and whale-blue eye" [line 3]); the first attributive identification occurs with weak thematic stress, in a portmanteau adjective ("the fishermanned/Boat" [lines 4-5]). A qualifier related anaphorically to "the man" ("on the . . . deck" [18]) simply places the SUBJECT in a predictable LOCATION. It is not until line 123 that the SUBJECT is realized in S by means other than pronominal, and even then we are offered only redundant information ("the fisherman") linked syntagmatically to an adjunct that describes the SUBJECT's listless manner ("With no more desire than a ghost").

The pattern interacts with the Q-features mentioned above to produce the referential effect of a puppet-like figure completely at the mercy of circumstances. Q-features support this interpretation through consistency of grammatical and lexical choice; imperatives are frequent, and the ascribed source or SPEAKER is concealed.[25] Structure often suggests that reported comments and directions are being presented in

an apostrophic mode rather than being ascribed to a PARTICIPANT in the imagined SETTING, as the Q-information is presented at some length before the structural place P is reached; where S and P are realized before Q, the same effect is maintained lexically by selection at P from a verbal class that can operate intransitively as well as transitively, so the item does not immediately signal its contextual function as it occurs on the chain. Both techniques are reinforced by orthographic deviation: that is, quotative clauses are not marked by inverted commas.

An example of this cohesive feature in context, on the grammatical plane, is the following (italics added):

> Good-bye to the man on the sea-legged deck
> To the gold gut that sings on his reel
> To the bait that stalked out of the sack,
>
> For we saw him throw to the swift flood
> A girl alive with his hooks through her lips;
> All the fishes were rayed in blood,
> Said the dwindling ships.
>
> ('Ballad of the Long-legged Bait,' lines 18-24)

Lexically, an example of a typical verbal choice in a typical place is the italicized item on the second line that follows:

> The whirled boat in the burn of his blood
> Is crying from nets to knives,
> Oh the shearwater birds and their boatsized brood
> Oh the bulls of Biscay and their calves
>
> Are making under the green, laid veil
> The long-legged beautiful bait their wives.
> Break the black news and paint on a sail
> Huge weddings in the waves,

> Over the wakeward-flashing spray
> Over the gardens of the floor
> Clash out the mounting dolphin's day,
> My mast is a bell-spire [.] (lines 65-76)

In both cases, the occurrence of the italicized pronoun or pronoun-plus-headword is the first signal that interpretive inferences must be revised. Grammatically, the reader was offered a bait that he swallowed too soon.

A lexically cohesive feature, as opposed to a grammatically cohesive feature that is reinforced by lexis, is found in the repetition of <u>good-bye</u> and <u>good luck</u> (both of which, incidentally, have an ominous ring in context). Farewells and good wishes are ascribed first to the townscape the fisherman leaves behind him, then to the animal kingdom, and finally to the sun and the moon. Many items are drawn from the meteorologist's lexicon, and most of the referents are personified (Hurricanes and typhoons, personified in the meteorologist's professional register, do not appear in the narrative.). Items from the lexical set, 'sea-creatures,' include clipped forms that add associations of land and heaven: figuratively, the phrase "horses and angels" (line 33) has more resonance than the contextual paraphrase 'sea-horses and angel-fish.' These two items and others foreshadow the apocalyptic reversal that follows, when there is no more sea and "salty colts" (line 186) gallop from the land that had lain beneath it--a setting that Thomas, in a dazzling display of paronomastic compression, calls "the country tide" (line 192).

Thomas's narrative gallops, too, partly because of high incidence of co-ordination in his sentence structure. This is signalled by the frequency of the co-ordinating conjunction and, though other members of the closed set to which it belongs (usually or or but) also occur. An example of recurrent choice of a relation of co-ordination rather than dependence in the sentence structure of the poem is

> He who blew the great fire in
> And died in a hiss of flames
> Or walked on the earth in the evening
> Counting the denial of the grains
>
> Clings to her drifting hair, and climbs;
> And he who taught their lips to sing
> Weeps . . . . (lines 157-163)

Hopkins, on the other hand, chooses dependency relations:

> She to the black-about air, to the breaker, the thickly
> Falling flakes, to the throng that catches and quails
> Was calling 'O Christ, Christ, come quickly':
> The cross to her she calls Christ to her, christens her wild-
> worst Best.
>
> ('The Wreck of the Deutschland,' stanza 24, lines 5-8)

Even if the last line is construed as three co-ordinated clauses with relations obscured by ellipsis, a lexical and phonological 'dependency' is firmly established by the constellation cross-Christ-christens.

In lexis, Hopkins often chooses items in what has been called "incremental repetition,"[26] where in effect he demonstrates the variety of contextual meanings that can adhere to a single item. The cohesive feature of the technique lies

in the sameness of each occurrence, rather than its difference from all other occurrences. The opening invocation of 'The Wreck of the Deutschland' introduces the item master in a form-class deviation: "Thou mastering me/God!" (stanza 1, lines 1-2). The item occurs again on seven occasions in contexts that constitute a gloss on the Christian concepts of subservience and devotional study, fused by the collocational range of master. God is at once "master of the tides" (32, 1) and the "martyr-master" (21, 7), at once asserting his domination and showing the way by example.

The urgency of the poet's questioning, marked in grammar by strings of attributive phrases dependent on a single preposition and by many other features, is reflected in another form of cohesion in metrical patterning. Hopkins causes lines to coalesce by using violent enjambement, where his rhyme-scheme demands the inclusion of the first phoneme of the following line: for example, in the line-ends "leeward" and 'drew her" and "endured" in stanza 14 of 'The Wreck of the Deutschland' (lines 1, 3, and 8). Phonemic transcription of the three endings, including the first phoneme of the fourth line, seems to require, for accuracy's sake, the removal of plus juncture: /luwərd/-/druwər +(?)d/-/duwərd/. The same phenomenon occurs in other stanzas, notably in "of them/" and 'bf the/M . . ." (stanza 31, lines 4, 6, and 7), and in "door/D" and "reward" (stanza 35, lines 1, 2, and 3). The cohesion in this case lies in the repetition of a particularly bizarre

means of adhering to the constraints of rhyme,[27] though the feature itself also has contextual significance.

The above are scattered and skimpy examples of relations that are made overt in poetry through the set toward the message. In other communicative functions, the sign has transactional value only by virtue of its signification; in poetry, where the sign is imbued with combinative power through the nature of its own substance, it also has presentational value as a component of 'something made' (a phrase that transliterates from its Greek equivalent as poiēma), and thus its capacity to enter into relations of 'sameness' is greatly increased. The added cohesive potential is a counterbalance to the potentially over-disruptive effect of foregrounding in poetry. The reality of the poetic message is the only reality that sustains communication--the poet cannot point or wave his arms, nor can he be asked to paraphrase a statement--and any demand for warranty within it must be shown to be worth the effort. Cohesion helps to provide the assurance that warranty exists in a referential continuum consisting of the poem as a whole.

FOOTNOTES

1. Ernst Cassirer, Language and Myth, trans. Susanne K. Langer (Harper and Brothers, 1946), page 25.

2. H. W. Fowler, A Dictionary of Modern English Usage (corr. ed., Oxford University Press, 1937), page 308. By describing this solecism as "the unintended repetition of similar sounds," even though his topic is written material, Fowler supports my claim that the perception of equivalences usually depends on an 'as if heard' relation on the auditory

channel. Incidence of homographic components of a message, as in The bough is not long enough, does not cause referential interference until the components are saturative in frequency. Interference through repetition on the visual channel is a rare occurrence involving interlineal correspondences--such a rare occurrence, in fact, that it may be ignored now that I have illustrated it in the lines immediately above.

3. Winter Dean, liner notes, Handel: L'Allegro ed Il Penseroso (London Records, Editions de l'Oiseau-Lyre, 1961).

4. Edward Stankiewicz, "Poetic and Non-Poetic Language in Their Interrelation," in Poetics: International Conference of Work-in-Progress, ed. D. Davie et al. (Polish Scientific Publishers, 1961), page 15.

5. Even the apparent exception, who had forgotten his name and almost everything else, is eventually linked with the others through the statement "He came as a Baker" (line 41). Not surprisingly, he could bake only Bridecake.

6. Walt Kelly, Songs of the Pogo (Quality Records, 1957).

7. A famous metaphatic line is T. S. Eliot's "I've gotta use words when I talk to you" ('Sweeney Agonistes,' part 2, line 147). Robert Burns makes a phatic statement when he turns from an apostrophic mode of address to the words "But to our tale: . . ." ('Tam o' Shanter,' line 37). The words also perform a conative function as they are oriented toward the addressee as well as the channel--in paraphrase, 'Attention, please! I am about to resume the referential message.'

8. Supra, page 25.

9. Kelly, op. cit.

10. Ira Sadoff, in New American Review 12 (Simon and Schuster, 1971), page 90.

11. Michael A. K. Halliday, "Categories of the Theory of Grammar," Word, XVII,(1961), page 276.

12. Ibid., page 277.

13. Charles T. Scott, Persian and Arabic Riddles: A Language-centred Approach to Genre Definition, Publications of the Research Center in Anthropology, Folklore, and Linguistics No. 39 (Indiana University, 1965).

14. William O. Hendricks, "On the Notion 'Beyond the Sentence'," Linguistics, XXXVII (December 1967), page 18.

15. Scott, op. cit., page 69.

16. Vladimir Propp, Morphology of the Folktale, 2nd ed., rev. and trans. Laurence Scott and Louis A. Wagner, Publications of the Indiana University Research Center in Anthropology, Folklore, and Linguistics No. 10 (University of Texas Press, 1968), page 20.

17. Joseph Campbell, The Hero with a Thousand Faces (Meridian Books, 1956), pages 30 and 245.

18. Hendricks, op. cit., page 21.

19. Prague School analysis of syntactic organization as a reflection of the 'theme' or (to oversimplify) the 'topic' of an utterance, and of its 'rheme' or 'comment', is discussed by Josef Vachek in The Linguistic School of Prague: An Introduction to Its Theory and Practice (Indiana University Press, 1966), pages 88-92.

20. David Crystal and Derek Davy, Investigating English Style (Indiana University Press, 1969), page 19.

21. Ibid., page 44.

22. Michael A. K. Halliday, "The Linguistic Study of Literary Texts," in Essays on the Language of Literature, eds. Seymour Chatman and Samuel R. Levin (Houghton Mifflin, 1967) page 218.

23. Idem, "Notes on Transitivity and Theme in English, Part I," Journal of Linguistics, III, i (April 1967), page 37.

24. Ruqaiya Hasan, Grammatical Cohesion in Spoken and Written English, Programme in Linguistics and Language Teaching, Paper No. 7 (Communication Research Centre of University College, London, and Longmans, 1968), page 18.

25. Dylan Thomas's performance of his poem, in Dylan Thomas: Reading, Volume 1 [sic] (Caedmon Records, 1954), makes this effect clear. His intonation patterns suggest direct badgering by the speaker, rather than the reporting of comments ascribed to participants in the narrative.

26. John E. Keating, 'The Wreck of the Deutschland': An Essay and Commentary, Kent State University Bulletin, LI, i (January 1963), page 49.

27. Roger Fowler, in "'Prose Rhythm' and Metre" (in Essays on Style and Language [Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966], page 88), suggests a correlation between metrical and grammatical breaks: the smaller the unit of structure, the greater its resistance to "being stretched over a metrical boundary."

# CHAPTER IV

## A DESCRIPTIVE APPROACH

If foregrounding is regarded as a centrifugal force that impels an item-in-place away from the assumed 'intake core' of the message, cohesion may be called the opposing centripetal force. Like deviation and convergence, discussed in my first chapter, the two forces interact in a poem to contribute to a dynamic equilibrium between the text as a display of word-choices and the text as a referential chain.

In summary, foregrounding and cohesion can be identified at the level of form ("the organization of the substance into meaningful events"[1] through grammar and lexis) and at the Hallidayan interlevels of phonology and context (the relation between linguistic form and, respectively, speech sounds and non-linguistic features of situation). Hence, because of the descriptive separation of grammar and lexis, a stretch of substance may be marked by the presence of as many as four features that are relevant to this discussion: foregrounding or cohesion may be present on any or all of four analytic planes (phonological, grammatical, lexical, and contextual). The 'dynamic equilibrium' in poetry can be attributed, in these terms, to the fact that a unit of any rank, as realized in form, may be subject to

both centrifugal and centripetal force on different planes, in a complex of interrelations that shift as new items in the message gain significance by contiguity.

Such interrelations may involve the same stretch of substance in different ways, depending on the rank--and the stage in linear progression--at which analysis is performed. Abstracted as typical phenomena within a text, shifts may be characterized as part of that text's description. The method lends itself to comparative studies; a brief example is given below, based on analysis at 'group' rank in 'Ballad of the Long-legged Bait' and 'The Wreck of the Deutschland.'

Thomas's "the praying windows of waves" (line 28) and Hopkins's "the widow-making unchilding unfathering deeps" (stanza 13, line 8) are unexceptionable in their syntax, and thus display neither foregrounding nor cohesion on the grammatical plane of description. Both conform to the structure of the nominal group in English--(m)h(q)--which permits recursiveness in the 'modifier' position before the headword and, in the 'qualifier' position after the headword, a zero realization or a preposition-and-completive. At constituent rank, however, grammatical contrasts are apparent between the two quoted groups.[2] Structure of individual words in Thomas is also unexceptionable, but Hopkins employs the negative prefix un- (in what Geoffrey Leech describes as a "privative use . . . paralleled in unhorse, unfrock, unleash, etc."[3]) in foregrounded association with the two lexical items child and

father. The same association, still on the plane of grammar, gains a cohesive aspect with the later occurrence of parallel structure in "unchancelling" (stanza 21, line 6).

Thomas provides cohesion in lexis, rather than in grammar, by the selection of church in a later environment at line 212; the item is linked paradigmatically to praying in the quoted group. The two occurrences are also cohesive at the level of context, as the fisherman's obliviousness to "the eyes of candles/In the praying windows of waves" on his departure is contrasted with his action on returning: the anchoring of his boat "through the floors of a church." Hopkins uses his group for cohesive purposes in context too, likening the sea's action in depriving parents of their children to the action of God's "unchancelling poising palms" (stanza 21, line 6) in depriving the martyred nuns of their sanctuary. Both forces, he seems to imply, are beyond man's control or comprehension, and even their cruelty may be a blessing. In other links, God is "sway of the sea" (stanza 1, line 3) and "stanching, quenching ocean of a motionable mind" (stanza 32, line 5).

As indicated above, Hopkins provides foregrounding on the grammatical plane within his nominal group. Thomas's foregrounding lies in lexis, through the co-occurrence of praying and windows, and of windows and waves. Lexis in the Hopkins group may be considered mildly cohesive (if the conceptual range of 'cohesion' is extended to include non-grammatical relations within a single sentence), in that a sequence of

kinship terms is realized. Both groups manifest phonological 'cohesion' through alliteration, supplemented in Hopkins by the recurrence of the present-participle marker.

Similar contrasting patterns recur at all ranks. I suggest that they typify their texts, and that they could be described in conjunction with the broad metrical and phonological schemes that provide a counterpoint to their rhythm. It would be absurdly mechanistic to claim that the poeticality of a poem can be explained or quantified by the use of a simple matrix such as this. I propose its application only as a first and tentative step towards linguistic description of individual poetic texts, with the hope that the approach may help to isolate features that distinguish a text or are common to a group of texts. It may also shed light on the process of diachronic change, and particularly on the contribution made to that process by the poets of earlier days.

Leo Spitzer, whose evaluative approach to textual analysis has been reluctantly ignored in this thesis, summed up his views on the importance of stylistic studies in the following statement (italics his): "Nihil est in grammatica quod non fuerit in stylo."[4] My translation includes some extraneous foregrounding to reflect my theme and my own conviction: 'Nothing exists as part of the constraints of grammar that was not previously one of the options of style.'

FOOTNOTES

1. Michael A. K. Halliday, "Categories of the Theory of Grammar," Word, XVII (1961), page 243.

2. Halliday combines syntax and morphology, usually treated as two separate levels of analysis, on the single descriptive plane of 'grammar'. He makes his approach clear in The Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching, eds. M.A.K. Halliday et al. (Longmans, 1964), pages 28-29.

3. Geoffrey N. Leech, A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry (Longmans, 1969), page 43.

4. Leo Spitzer, review of E. H. Sturtevant, An Introduction to Linguistic Science, in American Journal of Philology, LXXI (1950), page 94.

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