STYLO LINGUISTICS IN THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH POETRY AT UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL IN INDIA

ABSTRACT

THESIS
SUBMITTED FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF
Doctor of Philosophy
IN
ENGLISH

BY
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UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF
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DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
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ABSTRACT

The origin of ELT in India can be traced back to the British Colonial rule, but the credit for introducing English as the medium of instruction (in 1835) goes to Lord Macaulay. Initially it was introduced as a subject at the school level, but only the elite class was allowed to benefit from it after which it passed through many stages to acquire the position that it holds today. Teaching of English as a Second Language went on unhindered till independence. But only great classics in prose and poetry were taught to introduce and sensitise the students towards English Literature which was considered to be the most accomplished one. The formula of Macaulay had provided for rejecting the vernacular as the medium of instruction.

Later, the report of UNESCO, accorded the right place to the Vernacular. But in a multilingual country like India this would pose innumerable problems. Finally, a number of commissions from 1949 to 1992 reached a consensus that:

1. For the completion of the first degree course a student should possess an adequate command of English. He should be able to express himself with reasonable correctness and felicity, understand lectures and respond. Hence it should be given due importance right from the school stage.
2. It should be the most useful library language; higher education and our most significant window on the world.

The framers of the constitution, however, faced opposition from the southern states which saw a danger of Hindi being declared as the official language. There were various demonstrations against this move and linguistic riots broke out in Madras in 1965. But the students who were misguided by ignorant nationalists realized that they were unwanted as far as jobs were concerned. Then there was an about turn in the situation and focus was directed towards the importance of English as the language of international contact and wider opportunities.

With the growth of ELT, exercises for drills and practice material began to be manufactured. When that became monotonous, prose pieces were used to teach language items.

But use of poetry for language teaching was still not in vogue. In the present work our main concern is to use poetry for language teaching at undergraduate level in India.

For this we need to know the components of ELT in our higher education system. Some of them are mentioned below:

2. Curriculum restructuring.
3. Teaching materials.
4. Trained faculty.
5. Sound and Maximally effective teaching methodology.

But lack of infrastructure at a mass level may hinder the growth of ELT in India.

This work has been divided into five Chapters including the Introduction (Chapter One).

Chapter Two entitled 'Stylo-Linguistics: A Theoretical Framework' gives an overview of stylo-linguistic theories and devices which a teacher of ELT should master.

This chapter deals with the scope of style in literacy artefacts. It gives a clear view of the different theories regarding 'style' and 'stylistics' and their apostles. These theories can be presented under three heads.

1. Dualism, takes style as the dress of thought and believes in the dichotomy of style (form) and content (meaning). Richard Ohmann in "Generative Grammar and the concept of Literary Style" and C.F. Hockett in A Course in Modern Linguistics strongly support it. It is basically founded on the concept of Paraphrase i.e. same meaning in a different form.
2. Monism rejected the form-meaning dichotomy. Here devices such as metaphor, irony and ambiguity give multi-valued meaning and paraphrase loses its importance. It was the tenet of New Criticism and was supported by great critics like Cleanth Brooks, William Empson and W.K. Wimsatt.

3. Pluralism proposes to analyse style in terms of function. Some of the familiar functions are:

   a) Referential (Newspaper reports)
   b) Directive and Persuasive (advertising)
   c) Social interaction or emotive (casual conversations)

   I.A. Richards, Jakobson and Halliday have talked about these functions in detail.

   While talking about 'Style' of language we musn't forget that style also depends on the sociological, cultural and political background of the author. This has been called the 'Context of Situation' by J.R. Firth and discussed in detail in *Papers in Linguistics, 1934-51*.

   In Chapter Three titled 'Stylo-Linguistic Methodology of Teaching Poetry' different aspects of Methodology of teaching poetry which comprise both literary and linguistic tenets and tools have been dealt with. Some of these aspects are as follows:
1. Selection of the poem

2. Presentation of the poem in the actual classroom teaching situation.

3. Language competence of the students, and

4. Linguistic equipment and training of the teacher.

As part of teaching a methodology of analysis has also been presented. There are two broad categories under which poems can be analysed.

They are:

1. Pragmatic aesthetic categories

2. Linguistic categories

Pragmatic-aesthetic categories include:

a) Intuition or response

b) Extra-textual information

c) Intra-textual context of situation

d) Internal organisation of the poem

e) Form of the poem

The following sub-categories have been discussed under 'Linguistic Categories'.

a) Phonological

b) Lexical
c) Grammatical

d) Contextual

Moreover, it is for the teacher to sensitise the students to understand the 'Foregrounded' items. It is, therefore important, that the teacher should be suitably trained so that he/she is able to respond intuitively to the language.

Chapter Four entitled, 'Stylo-Linguistic Analysis of Selected Poems' deals with the actual analysis of 6 poems, to demonstrate how they should be taught in the classroom making use of the techniques of Stylo-Linguistics. Poems have been very carefully selected, analysed, keeping the level of the students in mind, moving from the easier to the complex ones i.e. from 'The Solitary Reaper' to 'The Second Coming'. The teacher has to ensure that the students get involved in the poem so that heuristic learning is encouraged.

The following procedure has been followed:

The first step is the reading out of the poem by the teacher. This will take care of the pronunciation, and other phonological features like the stress, rhythm, intonation etc. The teacher will simultaneously discuss the title, coherence, theme, extra-textual information, form of the poem etc. The next step is to 'paraphrase' the poem which is a very useful strategy. But it is suggested that too much attention should not be attached to it. The third step is to analyse the
'Syntactic Pattern' i.e. to understand the poem line by line so that it finally emerges as a 'whole'. Then we look into the various linguistic and figurative devices and the foregrounded items. Here, it is necessary to explain the concept of deviance. Having done this, the students will give their own statement of observation by making their own guesses about the possible meaning of the poem. Lastly, questions may be asked related to literary as well as linguistic items and the understanding of the students may by judged.

Chapter Five entitled, 'Conclusion' gives a gist of the four preceding chapters and establishes that literary and linguistic criticism go hand in hand. Here it has been re-emphasised that in teaching poetry in India, the teacher should be well equipped with the knowledge of the descriptive linguistic analyses of the English language. At the undergraduate level the student is expected to develop a sensitivity towards language and understanding of English grammar.

But the fact is that most of the teachers and students are not well equipped with their tools. However, an attempt has been made to evolve a methodology of teaching poetry in a language class at undergraduate level in India.
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Dedicated

to my

Parents
Certificate

Certified that Ms. Huma Zaidi has completed her Ph. D. thesis under my supervision.

To the best of my knowledge it is a product of her own hard-work in the field of Stylo-Linguistics and language/literature pedagogy.

The thesis is worthy of submission for the award of Ph. D. degree in English.

Prof. Farhat Ullah Khan
Supervisor
Acknowledgement

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Huma Zaidi
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PREFACE

The present study aims at working out a set of suggested tools for the analysis of English poetry which is generally taught at the undergraduate level in Indian Universities. It has been observed that students avoid reading poetry on their own because they feel unsure about their responding to the proper meaning of a particular poetic piece. They normally respond to poetry as they would respond to writings in various other registers. The study emphasises the fact, that poetry uses a sophisticated and specialised form of language. Though poetic compositions by and large conform to the system of the language, they take liberty with the established systems of the language, both lexical and grammatical. This has come to be designated as poetic license either to condescendingly approve of a poet's deviation from the system of the language or his deliberate distortion of the linguistic system to meet his creative needs in poetic creations. Poetic intentions, which are not explicitly stated to the reader and which are a sine-qua-non for getting at the deeper meaning of a poem, can be discovered very often through the poet's deliberate deviance.
from the established system of the language that he uses. It is these deviances which students should be trained to discover on their own and try to connect them with the deeper meaning or the complexity of ideas in a particular piece of poetry. In the present study an attempt has been made to bridge the gulf between what is known as purely literary approach and the linguistic approach. Our conclusion has been that the linguistic and the literary critic should merge in one personality in training students in the analysis of poetry so that student's motivation is augmented and his competence in advanced expression is consolidated and further expanded.

The study has been divided into five sections. Chapter I of the study gives an overview of the historical details leading to the permanent entrenchment of the English language into the conglomeration of scores of major and hundreds of minor languages in India. Chapter II briefly describes the major tenets of literary and linguistic perspectives on literary study and sets out a set of formulas for approaching the teaching of poetry to the young undergraduates in our country. Chapter III deals with a pragmatic methodology, which comprises both literary and linguistic tenets and tools. Chapter IV contains a detailed
presentation of half a dozen poems of various types demonstrating the efficacy of the findings in Chapters II & III. The exercises framed after the poem relate only to comprehension. But it is expected that the teachers will supplement them with language oriented exercises depending upon the needs of the classes and the teaching situations in their institution. Finally a short chapter has been added as Conclusion which summarizes the main argument of the thesis. For ready reference, the text of the poems has been printed in the relevant places.
CHAPTER - 1

INTRODUCTION
Introduction

I

History of ELT in India is as old as the British colonial rule itself. Its growth and consolidation have gone on concurrently with those of the British rule in India. It is common knowledge that its systematic introduction in the Indian educational system was initiated and monitored by Lord Macaulay and approved on 2nd February 1835 by Lord Bentinck. Macaulay’s Minutes states a twofold reason for introducing the study of English literature and language in India; one was a utilitarian reason i.e. of preparing the administrative and clerical task force to support the governance of the country by the British and the second reason was a holistic one, i.e. to acculturate the semi-educated Indians occupying the higher strata of society, so that they could come out of the allegedly degenerated state of their own native values - moral, ethical, religious, social, political and literary by being exposed to a superior culture through its literature. It is not relevant here to debate Macaulay’s second reason just stated above.
English was introduced as a subject at the school level only in selected regions like the Presidency of Calcutta and Madras where missionaries\(^1\) had already done solid foundation work for imparting Christian religious instruction. It is relevant to recall here that only those people were allowed to receive education in these privileged schools who came from the upper strata of the society. The ulterior purpose was not to cater for the eradication of wide spread illiteracy among the masses but only to better the linguistic behaviour and social conduct of the young people from the socially uppish class and materially affluent families. These people, through their education in English, were expected to gain social respectability and be in a better position to be employed in positions of power and comfort. The sociological impact of this type of educational system had disastrous consequences of vertically splitting the Indian masses into two social groups – the elitist and the illiterates or those semi-educated in Patshalas, Madarsas and Maktabs. This situation got absorbed in the societal structure and has persisted until the present time. But

fluency in English, besides ensuring prosperous careers came to acquire the value of insignia of status, both social and intellectual. Therefore, during the 1930s a demand for English language studies arose from a small group of Indians too. Raja Ram Mohan Roy's name becomes prominent here. He wrote to Lord Amherst in a letter dated 11th Dec. 1823 that "......that the Sanskrit system of education would be best calculated to keep this country in darkness."²

The takers of courses in English studies were not many because they were to belong to a particular social ladder in the hierarchy of power. Their motivational level was pretty high and their linguistic equipment in English was already adequate enough to allow them to study English literature with ease at the degree level of their higher education. But the teaching materials and methodology used were mostly those, which were popular in the 19th century. It was the use of selected anthologies of prose and poetry, which had already acquired the status of great classics. For example, in prose, essays from Bacon through the 18th & 19th century

essayists to the modern samples up to the time of independence of India were used. In poetry the favourite poets were the Metaphysicals, the poets of the Transition, the Romantic and the Victorian poets from Wordsworth to Rossetti. Georgians were taught very selectively and the difficult modern ones were kept aside. The reason was that the designers of curriculum believed that the purpose of teaching foreign literature was to train, liberate and sensitise the minds of the youth to respond to the liberal values of humanity contained in the most accomplished literature of the last millennium, i.e. English literature.

Like the selection of literary material, there were certain defects in the teaching methodology as well i.e.

a) In teaching literature, the emphasis was laid on presenting the content out of the text for the betterment of learner's mind.

b) In teaching poetry psychological and sociological approaches were applied and concentration on the text was avoided.
c) The students and teachers believed that study and teaching of literature was to cater to the liberal cause of education.

Textual or New Criticism came as a corrective. Reaction to the pedagogical crisis was precipitated by the directionless use of the biological and sociological approaches to the study of literature. During the early 20\textsuperscript{th} century a definite change in approach to teaching literature in the west appeared in the wake of increased scholarly interest in the art of rhetoric and the development of linguistic sciences. The importance of medium or vehicle along the side of the traditional components of literary creations drew the attention of researchers as well as teachers.

II

After the introduction of English as per the monistic design of Macaulay the learning of English as a second language got fully entrenched among the elitist stratum of the society and went on unhindered until independence of India in 1947. The formula of Macaulay had provided for rejecting the Vernaculars as medium of instruction and using
a heavy dose of British literature for purposes of acculturation and intellectual improvement. The teaching of English continued to be limited and the materials and methodologies of ELT to yield quick results were not considered necessary.

Right from the time of the framing of the Indian Constitution a debate has gone on about the Lingua Franca of India and the official inter state language to be adopted. The framers of the Constitution were fully aware of the unpatriotic continuance of English as the official language as well as the sensitive issue of declaring Hindi as the official language at the national level because of the opposition from the southern states. There were various political stunts and violent demonstrations like the linguistics riots in Madras in 1965. The framers of the Constitution were convinced that a sovereign country like India should have its own national language, which could be only Hindi because of the numerical strength of its users. But the southern states saw a danger in any move of this type. The result was the Official Language (Amendment) Act of 1967. It specifies that "Not withstanding the expiration of the period of fifteen years from the commencement of the
constitution, the English language may, as from the appointed day, continue to be used, in addition to Hindi, for all the purpose of the Union...."3. Nehru was compelled to assure the people of non Hindi-speaking areas in his speech of 7th August 1959 in the Indian Parliament that English would continue to be an alternative language so long as the non Hindi-speaking people wanted. But Nehru died in 1964 and 26th January 1965, when this lease allowed to English would expire, was close at hand. Hesitation started and violence in the south was let loose on a large scale against Hindi while similar destructive situations prevailed in the northern states against English. The matter was to be attended by the government by closely looking at the educational system prevalent in India at that time where the issues involved in both the teaching of English as well as of the vernaculars were to be examined carefully. The government in 1967 was, thus compelled to bring out an official Language Amendment Bill to allow the continuance of English as an alternative language in addition to Hindi without any restriction of time.

3 Indianisation of English, op. cit., p.90.
The situation at the political level could be controlled by a suitable amendment in the Constitution. But the real confusion and crisis continued in the educational system of the country from the primary school level to that of the university. The mindset established by Macaulay continued and a section of people believed that the medium of instruction should be English and this language should be taught even at the cost of the teaching of the vernaculars. Certain right-minded people were still baffled by the Saddler Commission Report of 1872 where it was regretted that there was something unsound in a system of education where young people remained unable to use their mother tongue fluently and correctly even after several years of initial schooling. This view of according the right place to the Vernacular as a medium of instruction was also endorsed by the report of the UNESCO, 1953 which was based on sound psychological and sociological principles. It is needless to emphasise that to switch over to the Vernaculars as media of instruction in a multilingual country like India would open up the Pandora's box of several imponderables.

regarding teaching materials and other infra-structural facilities, especially for subjects like science and technology.

A number of commissions in post-independence India were appointed from 1949 (University Education Commission) through 1986 (National Policy on Education), to Rammurthy Review Committee, 1990 and Revised National Policy on Education, 1992. There has been a consensus in all the reports of the various commissions (numbering over 15) on the place of English in the educational system in India: For the successful completion of the first degree course, a student should possess an adequate command of the English language, and be able to express himself with reasonable correctness and felicity, understand lectures in it, and respond to its creative writings on his own. Therefore adequate emphasis will have to be laid on its study as a language right from the school stage. English should be the most useful 'library language' in higher education and our most significant window on the world (Report of the Education Commission, 1966: 15).
The association of English with the colonial past of India was de-emphasised. Focus was directed towards the importance of English as the language of international contact and wider opportunities. The agitation against English in the northern states gradually subsided when it was made an optional course at the undergraduate level. Within a few years from 1965 Hindi speaking students, who were earlier misguided by ignorant nationalist zealots, realised that without English their graduate degrees were of lesser value and importance and that more lucrative jobs in the private sector could not be grabbed without an adequate command of the English language. However, this situation was confined only to the Faculties of Arts and Social Sciences. Professional courses like Medicine and Engineering continued to be taught all over India through the medium of English. For this, the reasons are not difficult to locate. This was because textbooks and other teaching materials were available only in English and qualified teachers could handle their lectures only through the medium of English.

The most unfortunate situation was related to the medium of instruction in the aftermath of the Angrezi Hatao
Movement. The use of the vernaculars was generally adopted as the media of instruction at the undergraduate level. This situation, which turned out unwanted graduates so far as the job market was concerned, could not continue for long. There has been a sudden about-turn in the situation and the demand for English as a foreign language became suddenly fashionable. This demand cut across all academic disciplines and was even noticed at the pre-graduate, tertiary level.

It will be relevant to pause here to ponder over the possible reasons for a revolutionary change in the attitude of Indian students, including those who were earlier inclined to damn it as an insignia of slavery, towards this language from 1965 up to the present day. Broadly speaking, the shrinking of the international space into a smaller village because of increased means of transport and communication, and globalization of economy, are the two major factors which have lent urgency to the learning of English as a foreign language. Besides these two factors, we find a variety of specialized approaches to the various intellectual and industrial activities globally. This has entailed tailored courses for various activities, both interactional as well as
professional. Courses where competition is at the all India level admissions can be given only if the prospective learners have already had adequate command of English. Hindi has a long way to go before it acquires this status. The trainees in their professional courses are for international consumption, also in the wake of the recently opened up economy in India, liberalization of economy and globalization of information technology recently have given a tremendous impetus for effectively designed and executed training programmes in ESL. Different courses in English for trade, commerce, management, computer, information technology, management of various corporate organisations, such as Hospital Management and Tourism, etc., are advertised in the national and international media quite widely.

The old controversy over literature vis-a-vis language courses has now subsided and in the context of the fast changing global scenario ELT has come to acquire special significance and thrust. This is evidenced in the increasing number of private teaching centres in almost all the urban areas of India. There has been a mushroom growth in these teaching shops to which students are rushing not so much to
acquire competence in English for social value as for practical needs of material advancement. Unfortunately the private institutions catering for the needs of the ever-increasing demand among students for ESP are ill-equipped in infrastructure. Most of them do not have adequately qualified and trained teachers and the courses used are ill designed and unsuitable.

Until the early 60's of the last century Departments of English in Indian Universities were manned and dominated by experts and lovers of British literature. They were responsible for devising the syllabi of courses in English and asserted that there cannot be a systematic training like Methodology of teaching English, in regard to courses in literature, because every teacher is an artist in himself and devises his own creative methodology suitable to a particular teaching situation. The syllabi included only those literary pieces which had the quality of "Ennobling and instructing" the readers (Therefore, Shakespeare, to the Romantic were the most likely choices). The methods followed were biographical and sociological interpretation because of the long persisting belief that literature, which was the product of a particular place and clime, at a
particular time, therefore, the extra-textual factors should be given due importance. This continued till the adoption of New Criticism, which culminated in Ronald Barthes' specific proclamation of the "Death of the Author".

The pattern in almost all the departments of English in India, so far as the curriculum designing is concerned, is as follows: there are two courses in English studies: one, an Elective one and the other Non-Elective or compulsory one. The first type of courses contain literary items, mostly keeping the development of English literature in its historical sequence; the second one consists of items of language teaching as well as carefully selected literary pieces, which could be an aid to language teaching. The first types of courses were offered to those who have already sufficient grounding in the competence and performance of the English language. Such students are not our concern in the present study. But students who are majoring in other subjects offer the second types of courses. Such courses are either compulsory in the curriculum, or as in the case of many universities in northern India, as a self-imposed elective by

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the students themselves. They feel that this will add to the respectability of their under-graduate degrees and to the practical viability of their educational attainment.

With the sudden growth of English language teaching programmes in India during the last few decades and more urgently towards the last decade of the past millennium, the role of linguistics came to be quite often over emphasized in ELT. The linguists became the obiter dicta in all aspects relating to ELT from curriculum designing to evaluating the terminal and expected achievement results. These linguistic experts went in the other extreme directions as the experts of literature had done earlier. The literary experts had looked with disdain at teaching language items taught separately from literary text and strongly disfavoured language drills at the under-graduate level. The teaching of grammar, independent of literary text, was considered almost anathema. Where the situation favoured, the linguists tended to go in the direction where only language items could be taught without any aid from literary text. A whole industry started to manufacture materials on ELT, prepare exercises for drills and practice to learn that variety of ELT programmes, which they need for their career. However,
when these linguistic enthusiasts realized that drill-oriented classes, especially with adult learners, could be monotonous and eventually counter productive, they conceded to use prose pieces for teaching language items.

Teaching of poetry for learning English or augmenting the already acquired expressive power of the learner was still not widely favoured. Experts in curriculum designing and materials production believed that poetry made the most sophisticated and complex use of the language, which required a high standard of competence among students to respond to its linguistic subtleties. On the other hand, a curious situation prevailed throughout this period of pedagogical crisis in ELT in India which roughly covered almost the later half of the last century and continues in considerable measure even today. Teaching of poetry is considered to accord recognition to the expertise of the teacher concerned in English literature who should be opposed to the linguistic camp, comprising pedestrian teacher with only a peripheral role to play in the academic affairs of a Department of English. Any debate about restructuring the syllabus to include selected pieces of poetry for the purposes of skill acquisition in language was
disfavoured. During the closing decades of the last century there has been a sudden, phenomenal increase in the student population at the under-graduate level which had received great encouragement by the policy of the late Rajiv Gandhi government – “Higher education at everybody’s doorstep.” In keeping with this, new colleges and universities came into existence in almost a geometrical progression every year, reaching the fantastic number of now over 11,089 colleges and 227 universities all over the country. It's a matter of common knowledge that because of the successive governments' not-very-honest commitment to the promotion of general higher education in the country, most of these colleges and universities remained without the minimum infrastructure facilities. This resulted in a farcical situation of teaching communicative skill by ill-equipped teachers to inordinately large classes held, in many places, under the open sky. Our concern in the present study is not to focus so much on the general state of affairs resulting from the paucity of funds and the recent cry for privatization. Our concern is primarily to examine the relevance and extent of the use of literature, especially poetry, to augment our

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\(^{7}\text{CSR Year Book 2002, p.660.}\)
teaching strategies at the undergraduate level in Indian universities and colleges.

III

It is a known fact that students pay the least heed to their language classes, which are either compulsory or selected by students of their own choice. The analysis of this lack of motivation among adult learners of English language has become almost urgent because students want quick, effective and useful command of the target language to be able to cope with the demands of the competitive era of globalization of almost every intellectual activity. In order to fully understand the confusion underlying the present dismal situations it is necessary to have a brief look at the different components of ELT in our higher educational system. These components are:

1. Clear statement of objectives
2. Curriculum restructuring
3. Teaching materials
4. Trained faculty
5. Sound and maximally effective teaching methodology

6. Use of Audio-Visual devices

**Clear Statement of Objectives:**

The sine-qua-non of any programming of ELT is a clear statement of the objectives of the courses designed. In ELT we all know that the emphasis ought to be on the acquisition of skills to such an extent of perfection that the learners can use it effortlessly: to express in the target language (L₂) what he can do in his mother tongue (L₁) and that too when it has been adequately cultivated. At the undergraduate level programme, therefore, a clear statement should be made about whether the programme aims at improving the skill of reading advance materials written in L₂ or whether the learner is to acquire an internationally acceptable standard of oral communication, i.e. spoken English with its characteristic rhythm and intonation. Selection of the texts and preparation of teaching materials and determination of methodology of teaching cannot be discussed unless the objectives are clear at the back of the mind of the curriculum framers.
Curriculum Restructuring:

The most glaring issue involved in devising a programme of English language teaching at the undergraduate level is a wide gap between assumption and reality. We assume that students have done at least seven to ten years of learning English at the primary, post primary and tertiary levels. Hence they must have mastered the communicative skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) within "a limited vocabulary and has made the structural devices (the basic arrangement of utterances) matters of automatic habit."\(^8\) Peter Hag Boldd has asserted "we have a mastery of language when our comprehension by ear is spontaneous, our reading effortless and fluent, our use of words, idioms, and sentences in speech and writing habitual and skillful."\(^9\)

These two writers, i.e. Fries and Peter Hag Boldd were concerned more with oral interaction as the objective of ELT, which after the middle of last century has considerably shifted its focus. English was declared in India as a library

language and hence the emphasis came to be laid on the skills of reading and writing rather than on listening and speaking. But now with personal interaction at the international level having acquired great utilitarian value, aural-oral emphasis has been duly recognized.

It is important that in devising any ELT Programme the objectives of the programme should be clearly defined. This definition of the objectives should first take into consideration the primacy of the skills to be included in the teaching system of English. This problem relates more to the learning of English language from the initial levels to the entry point into the under graduate programme at the university level. Realistically speaking all the four skills should be taught in an integrated manner, with varying degrees of emphasis on the skills, keeping in view the need of the particular group of students.

The scenario in India is something like this: with the democratization of higher education and reservation of seats in educational institutions for students who have had inadequate achievement in the language equipment, the system sustaining ELT has almost collapsed. The reason is
large classes, consisting of students drawn from heterogeneous background—socially, economically, intellectually and linguistically. The result is that a teacher has to teach a class of students with amorphous abilities and competence. Theoretically speaking it may seem an impossible task to device a curriculum which may be effectively used in a classroom where students consist of almost zero levels (coming from patshallas & madarsas) to an excellent level (coming from elitist public schools & established private institutions where medium of instruction is invariably English). It would be ideal to prepare separate courses for these students at three levels – beginners, intermediate and advanced. But the practical problem, which will eventually arise, would be how to award a single degree based on the teaching of three different levels of the same course.

Curriculum designers have played safe by taking recourse to the philosophy of grading in a single course where all the three levels mentioned above are taken care of. How far will such a philosophy carry a creditable weight is a matter of debate for which we do not have space in the present study. Leaving aside these thorny issues with
politically explosive hues, we can continue our discussion about the literary material to be used for ELT at the undergraduate level. As mentioned earlier in the present chapter, besides isolated sentences made up for drill practices in the classroom, prose extracts are the favourite of curriculum designers. These extracts include prose essays, short stories and complete situations from a novel. The focus is mostly on comprehension and practising stray language items for the different skills, the instances of which appear in the texts. The repeated use of prose extracts, to the complete exclusion of poetry from the language curriculum at the undergraduate level, has at least a twofold negative consequences:

1. It breeds monotony

2. It is likely to breed intellectual resentment among the learners for being considered less privileged and under equipped in being deprived of a form of literature, which other students may boast of studying because of their higher linguistic and intellectual equipment.

It is needless to emphasise that poetic composition has traditionally been considered to be a higher creative
achievement than those in the prose form. Besides the above emotive and superstitious argument in favour of including poetry in undergraduate ELT curriculum we will agree that it will bring variety and improve learner's motivation. We will see to what extent poetry can be used for language teaching when we come to stylo-linguistic analysis of a few selected poems in a later chapter of the present study.

It is important for the curriculum designers to keep in mind the Firthian principle of 'context of situation' in the selection of poems for the UG learners of the English language. Such a contextual framework will include the learner's age, level of literacy, social maturity, experiential range, broad social and familiar background, a real exposure to the alien culture of the foreign language: one should not forget the fact that language is rooted in a culture and cannot be said to have been adequately mastered if we ignore the cultural aspect of the language. This relates not only to poetry but to all forms of literary discourse in any language.

The anti poetry stance of the ELT pedagogues in the past has been due to the ELT curriculum's being averse to the use of literary materials, specially poetry. This has been so because poems in the pre-independence era of English studies were selected for teaching not with an eye on their utility for acquisitions of communicative skills but for their value of cultural content and richness in moral and spiritual edification, besides aesthetic pleasure. The principle of selecting the poems for the analysis, has been that:

1. The poems should be carefully selected considering the content and language of the different pieces. The content should not be loaded with provincial cultural elements.

2. They should be interesting.

3. Their length should be as short as possible.

4. They should be a complete whole in the Aristotelian sense\(^{11}\). Lyric, narrative pieces, ballads, sonnets, and such other poems, which are not too much

foregrounded with rhetorical and prosodic features, should be preferred.

**Teaching Materials:**

The syllabus designers can select poems, which are easily available in print. There are anthologies and critical books where the difficult words, phrases, images, tropes etc. occurring in a particular poem are explained as help to students. But still the preparation of ancillary teaching materials by individual teachers suitable to a particular teaching context should be regarded as an essential component of the teaching strategy. The teaching materials should be prepared on the basis of the two pronged approaches to the analysis of poetry, i.e. literary as well as linguistic. This will take care of the recent developments in the study of languages in general and of English in particular in the writings of such linguists as Naom Chomsky and M.A.K. Halliday (Chomsky's Theory of the surface and deep structures for pedagogical purposes roughly parallels Halliday's Theory of the cognitive function of language and
the deeper underlying meaning of poetry). This will also consolidate and expand the already acquired linguistic competence and performance of the students as well as act as an impetus to augmenting students' motivation in responding to the various components of aesthetic and linguistic items in exploring the total significance of a poem. The nature of the teaching materials will depend upon the requirement of a particular group of students in a specific teaching context. Properly selected poems, if presented to the students through stylo-linguistic explication of the various functional components of language and rhetorical devices can be more effective and interesting than the usually prescribed use of prose passages. But if a poem is taught through the traditional methodology of comprehending the meaning with the help of biographical, and sociological factors, it will serve no purpose of either motivating the students or brining them any intellectual excitement for keeping their interest lively. But if we point out to our students in a systematic manner how poetic language functions with foregrounded items and multiple rhetorical

devices, there will always be an element of pleasant surprise and joy in learning.

Trained Faculty:

The teacher is at the centre of any ELT or English studies programme at all levels. Even if the curriculum is defectively designed, a qualified and trained teacher can achieve the desired result by virtue of his own mental resources. If we go back again into the history of ELT in India we find that there was no dearth of qualified teachers to teach English. But with the phenomenal increase in the number of learners of English the problem of trained teachers was acutely felt from the 50's of the last century onwards. The government of India, in collaboration of the British council and the Ford Foundation of America, established the Central Institute of English at Hyderabad. The main objective of the Institute was to train personnel drawn from all over India who would train groups of teachers in their region, thus starting a chain action. This was expected to combat the problem of the shortage of trained teachers. Short duration summer institutes were organised by the UGC with the academic collaboration of the CIE
(Central Institute of English), the British Council and different nodal University Centres in India to impart crash training to teachers at the University and College levels. Since the problem was of such a colossal magnitude i.e. to cater for the needs of millions of students, satisfactory achievements at the training front was not forthcoming.

Students coming to the university are already ill taught by ill-equipped teachers, whose own command of English language is questionable. They have formed wrong linguistic habits, which are required to be remedied at the under-graduate level. But these teachers at the under-graduate level, who are required to do mostly remedial teaching, should be trained in the basic principles of stylo-linguistics so that they can make the students aware of the language mechanism, the operation of which is different from other modes of discourses and communication. Unfortunately there is a dearth of such teachers at the university and college levels. Hence the use of literature, where the greatest casualty is poetry, is sacrificed on the altar of the traditional language teaching through drills, memorization of prescriptive grammatical rules and translation from L₁ to L₂ and vice-versa. Quite a good number of teachers, besides
being ill at ease with the mechanics of stylo-linguistics, are generally deficient in their first-hand acquaintance with the culture of the L₂. This deficiency in our ELT system is one of the imponderables about which not much can be done in the present set up where the government is not favourably inclined to take the responsibility of higher education, particularly in regard to the courses in Arts and Social Sciences.

**Sound and Maximally Effective Teaching Methodology:**

It has been customary with ESL experts to discuss various methods suitable to a particular group of students at a particular level of learning. Aural-oral method, linguistic method, grammar-translation method, structural approach, visual, kinesthetic and aural-oral approaches have been quite often discussed for selecting suitable methodology for a group of students, considering the context of situations which has been mentioned while discussing curriculum restructuring. Very little thought has been paid to the use of a suitable methodology at the under-graduate level for teaching English literary pieces to develop and consolidate the communicative competence and performance of the
students. Teachers of English have quite often believed that at the university level no formalized methodology can be used. Every teacher is an artist in himself and can devise his own methodology of teaching students. The method usually followed by majority of the teachers is:

1. Explaining the text, so that the students understand the content of the particular extract being taught.

2. It is mostly a one way traffic i.e. the teacher speaks and the students listen.

3. The teacher passing on information about the biographical details, the socio-cultural environment of the age in which a particular literary piece was written and then finally relating these two factors to the content element of the text in hand.

4. No effort is made to select linguistic items for practice in (a) spoken English (articulation of sounds, stress, rhythms and intonation), (b) vocabulary (with differentiation between active and passive vocabulary.

14 It is a common knowledge that CIEFL and the Language Training Centre at Allahabad made efforts to train teachers in the methodology of ELT. But it didn't prove to be very beneficial because of population factor.
items) and (c) sentence patterns with involved syntactic elements to convey complex thoughts or to achieve economy, precision and incisiveness in expression with the help of rhetorical devices, which enhance the significance of meaning.

The teaching of poetry requires a methodology different from that of prose. For example, at the very beginning of a prose lesson the teacher can ask the students to read the passage either silently or loudly to give practice in articulation of sounds, stress, correct pauses, intonation etc. Students can comprehend the content of the passage to a satisfactory extent on their own and the teacher can only add whatever has escaped their attention. Selecting active vocabulary and useful language pattern for special attention and practice by the students can be done with no great difficulty. But with a poem it is not so. Hence here the teacher should read out the poem to the students with proper attention to the phonemic, prosodic and other technical features like run on lines, caesura and rhyming. It is after this reading out exercise that the teacher should proceed with the poem in a way where there is interactive teaching and learning and ever increasing motivation of the
students. The students should be got involved in the poem concerned and try to follow the development of the idea presented by the poet. The teacher can select only those useful items for practicing pronunciation, vocabulary, and language patterns, which are obviously discernable on the text pages. The drill in language items should not be overdone so that students' enjoyment of the subtle use of language in the poem is not marred. The teacher, despite claiming complete autonomy of a self-styled player, has to keep in mind certain principles of teaching in general, irrespective of the level or background of the students. For example, he should be clear about his aim, lesson development, presentation and device for a feedback to check his achievements at the end of a lesson. It is a well-known fact that there are no good or bad methods of teaching but only good or bad teachers. A truly effective teacher can make a maximal use of even a deficient curriculum.

Use of Audio-Visual Devices:

There is no consensus of opinion among teachers of English in India whether the use of audio-visuals can be
adequately emphasized as an important component of our methodology. It is a common experience that majority of teachers of English literature towing the line of traditional teaching methodology believe in a rhetorical haranguing of the subjective impression of a particular poetic piece with such a gusto as if they love to hear their own voices. This methodology may bring satisfaction to the aesthetic sensibility of the teacher but will not help the students much. For example, presenting the boat-stealing scene in *The Prelude* the teacher's straining his imaginative power of making the students visualise the situation is likely to fail. But even the cheapest device of using a picture post-card of the Lake Districts will make the students see how the hillock inside the lake can rise as the boat reaches nearer to reprimand as it were, the rowers for the moral deviation, while teaching nature poetry visual devices can be of great help. But too much reliance on visual devices as teaching methodology supplement should be made with great caution. For example, it has no relevance in teaching contemplative, meditative type of poetry where the themes are of profound spiritual or emotional significance. In a poem where the cognitive elements are predominant audio-visual devices can
be more effective. Moreover in a scenario of mass teaching in India, where we are at the blackboard operation level, equipping an English teaching section with even reasonably adequate infrastructure perhaps may still appear a dream unrealised.

In Chapter 2 we propose to give a brief overview of stylo-linguistic theories and point out the chief stylo-linguistic devices which a teacher of English should master for a truly meaningful teaching of poetry for developing the linguistic competence of the students at the under-graduate level in Indian universities and colleges.
CHAPTER - 2

STYLO-LINGUISTICS: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
Stylo-Linguistics: A Theoretical Framework

The term style, stylistics, linguistic application, literary application, aesthetic application, conventional application, innovative application, etc. have been the trademark labels of formulating various theoretical constructs to analyse literature in general. To this list of terms, prosodic, rhetorical and figurative elements and their use have been added when we come to the analysis of poetry. The bewildering variety of technical terms used by various followers of theoretical postulates have quite often blurred the edges of the field of literary analysis. Many linguistic enthusiasts have tried to approach literature in complete defiance of the hitherto established norms of literary theoretical concepts. Before we proceed to summarise the present state of affairs of literary studies vis-à-vis the critical or linguistic theoretical terms of reference it would be relevant to define or at least describe the nature and scope of style in literary artefacts.
In simplistic terms stylistics is the study of style of a literary or non-literary discourse (text). It is, therefore, necessary to define style so that the various components of this aspect of a text can be studied. "Style is a highly complex phenomenon, which can be viewed from many different points of view." Enkvist has examined the diversity of definitions of style in order to find the common elements in the various viewpoints. Enkvist has argued in detail the various elements of style in both the camps of literary critics and linguists. Spencer has remarked in a lively manner which deserves to be quoted in some detail:

"--- Until recently no real dichotomy between linguistic and literary studies existed, and that scholars in both branches traditionally collaborated in an atmosphere of accord, to the extent that their interests and problems are overlapped. In the field of English studies with which we are concerned, this mutuality of interest seems to be confirmed by the work of many great scholars, such as R.W. Chambers or C.S. Lewis,

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\footnote{Enkvist, "On Defining Style, "a monograph published in Spencer edited Linguistics and Style, (OUP), p.X.}
who were at home in both philology and literary studies, and in whose work the one supports and nourishes the other. This prelapsarian picture of English studies in the past would suggest that it was the development of modern descriptive linguistic into an autonomous discipline – a discipline perhaps often less grateful to its parent philology than a thriving son should be which induced the tensions inescapable, so romantic writers tell us, in any triangular relationship, especially one in which rejection of the father may imply Freudian complications. 2

Because of increased scholarly activities in the field of applied linguistics there has been a plethora of materials published in books and journals on the theory and application of stylistic and linguistic approaches and methods to literary artefact. One tends to believe that this boom started with Bloomfield and diversified into various points of view and approaches from De Saussure, through the European Structuralists, Transformational-Generative

2 Linguistics & Style, op. cit, p. vii.
grammarians to Halliday, Enkvist, Spencer, David Crystal, etc. It will be cumbersome to enumerate the names of scholars across the Atlantic, on the British Isles, as well as in Europe who have been engaged in the various issues involved in stylistics, in literary stylistics and linguistic stylistics. India has not lagged behind in an increased spurt of scholarly investigations into this recently quite fashionable and useful academic pursuit.

If we have a look at the recorded history of literary studies, including theories, we can authoritatively argue that the problem of the study of style is as old as the theory of literature itself. We find that Plato discusses it in the context of the persuasive power of poetry and the inseparability of form and content in literature while he is discussing the immediacy and profundity of the effect of imaginative literature, especially dramatic literature involving empathy and impersonation. Aristotle discusses the issue of style in a more formal and direct manner in his Poetics\(^3\). Infact while talking about the three types of style – low, middle and high in his Poetics – Aristotle is clearly emphasizing the inseparability of style (form & content), which in later times

\(^3\) Aristotle, Poetics, Tr. S.H. Butcher, (Kalyani Publishers, New Delhi, 1998), p. 134
became a matter of controversy. Critics from Horace, Longinus, Sidney, Dryden, Johnson, Wordsworth, Coleridge down to those in our own age have given serious thought to the consideration of style in a literary text. Some of them have considered 'Style' as an integral element in a literary discourse while some others have approached it as external cover to content, the real stuff we may call a literary composition. When Aristotle was talking about the three types of style he was ambiguous in asserting that content was embedded in style and the two could not be separated. When Sidney says that "it is no more a gown that maketh a lawyer than verse that maketh a poet", he was advocating the inseparability of form (style as external) and content (the subject mater of the literary discourse). Longinus’ concept of the sublime\(^4\) is based on his according full recognition to style as integral to a literary text, which subscribes to the blending of the creator, the artefact (form & content) and the reader. We will take up the other issues relating to the study of style later in the chapter and try to explain what critics have quite often avoided, the meaning of style. Seymour

Chatman says that Style is an ambiguous term and he goes on to elaborate its meaning in varied senses as follows:

Among other things, it has been used to refer to the idiosyncratic manner of an individual or group; to a small scale formal property of texts (in the language alone, or additionally in other attendant systems like meter); or to a kind of extra or heightened expressiveness, present in non literary language as well; or to a decorum based on social or cultural context; or to any one of a number of other concepts.

Linguistically, style has been seen either as a ‘deviation from a norm’ within and across the sentence structure or as a density of certain linguistic ‘features’ of a given text as opposed to those texts which set the norm. In both the situations one has to invoke the notion of ‘norm’ and a process of ‘comparison’ or ‘matching process’.

But then we have to decide what the norm is. Enkvist says that since the choice is made from the ‘norm’ it is necessary that we are clear in our mind about the notion of
norm itself. Enkvist, who elaborates the concept of "deviation from a norm", says, "The norm may be chosen from a wide field. One portion of a text may be matched against other portions or the whole of the same text. One text may be compared to other texts. Or the text may be set against an imaginary norm that only exists in a critics' mind."

Whatever the approaches to style through the ages, the aspect of formal property of a text has not been ignored. This formal property, again, has been expounded differently by different critics as well as linguists. It has been given an expanded dimension by Cleanth Brooks, one of the pioneers of New Criticism thus: "This term (style) is usually used with reference to the poet's manner of choosing, ordering and arranging his words. But, of course, when one asks on what grounds certain words are chosen and ordered, one is raising the whole problem of form. Style, in its larger sense, is essentially the same thing as form." For a literary critic style may include structure, like plot, character, narrator, listener, the whole discoursal situation, as well as the

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rhetorical or figurative and prosodic devices to convey the author's experience or vision of the world. For a linguist, whatever the experience or vision of the author, the terminal artefact requires a medium which needs to operate in such an organized way that it suits the requirements of communicating what the text contains. Further, whatever the text contains, it does so in a system of language. This concept of the system of language has raised controversial debates about the nature of language.

The question is whether one should accept the Chomskian system of the abstract linguistic competence of the average native user of the language as the acceptable system. Transformative Generative grammarians hold that linguistics should be a 'hard' science, whose theories and procedures must be open to 'strong verification'. Spencer asserts that such views "are particularly to be regarded with suspicion. The predictive certainty they seek can be obtained only at the cost of neglecting the situational aspect of language – an aspect of prime importance in the study of style."

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8 Linguistics & Style, op. cit., p.63.
Here we must remember two significant facts about (1) language use and (2) language variation, which determine the status of style of a particular discourse: (1) The range of choice available to a user is dependent upon the nature and structure of a given language and (2) any opted choice conveys some information in addition to the referential meaning. Both the facts operate simultaneously otherwise a ludicrous situation like 'colourless green ideas sleep furiously' cannot be avoided. The relevance of Transformational Grammar to the study of style has already been questioned on many scores such as the validity of the notion of 'competence' of the average user as model and the neglect of the situational aspect of language which, as Spencer has opined, can hardly be ignored in any meaningful analysis of a literary text.

However, the concept, which found greater acceptability, was De Saussure’s notion of ‘langue’ and ‘parole’. ‘Langue’ is the code or system of rules common to speakers of a language, such as English, for instance, ‘Parole’ is the particular uses of this system, or selections

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9 Ibid.
from this system that speakers or writers make on this or that occasion. In simplistic terms 'Parole' is the actual language used by real people in all sorts of interactional contexts and situations. Style pertains to 'parole'. It is a selection from the total linguistic repertoire that constitutes a style. This will be discussed in detail when we come to the controversy whether the language of poetry can be the language of people of a particular age or whether there is something called 'poetic diction'; a made up language for special use in poetry.

Literary text is one way of communicating through the verbal medium as several other arts used other media for communication, such as colour for painting, gestures and movements for dance, etc. Sol Saporta has observed that "language is to poetry as stone is to sculpture" to underscore the point we have made above. But he warns that "all poetry is language but not all language is poetry". Hence the verbal medium, where the writer makes choices at different linguistic levels – lexical and syntactical – need to be studied to see how meaning emerges from these choices.

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and their arrangement in the system of the language. This is why Hockett defines style in terms of “optional features.”

In an aesthetic approach to a literary text we primarily base our interpretation on our intuition and personal judgement and then proceed to see how this intuition or judgement is validated or refuted by the criteria of literary stylistic principles. In linguistic stylistics we proceed from the linguistic items, their choice, relevance and relation to the literary function which can be objectively established by linguistic evidence, i.e. choice and use of the linguistic forms and items. But as Geoffrey N. Leech has asserted, “In both the literary and linguistic spheres much rests on the intuition and personal judgement of the reader for which a system, however good, is an aid rather than a substitute.”

Douglas Thomas echoes the same view when he says, “There will always remain the mystery of having been moved by words.”

In recent years there have been important developments in the linguistic study of literary text. We can

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14 Ibid.
notice new ways of looking at language in psychological, sociological and philosophical terms and their application to the analysis of literary text. Various linguistic viewpoints can be isolated which had dominated the spheres of literary study during the latter half of the last century. We have already mentioned the model of Transformational Grammar, which had dominated linguistic thinking about four decades ago. This model uses language primarily as a capability of the human mind and therefore highlights the formal and cognitive aspects of language. But Transformational Grammar has been superceded by other models such as those which emphasise the social role of language. Halliday's functional model\(^\text{15}\), for example, sees language as a 'socio-semiotic,' and so directs attention to the communicative and socially expressive functions of the language. Then the European Structuralists saw the same structural principles of contrast and pattern which underlined various forms of human activity. Leech and Short have summed up the situation thus:

"If there is a single characteristic which unites these diverse enterprises in linguistics today, it is a tendency to explore for pattern and system below the surface forms of language; to search for the principles of meaning and language use which activate and control the code. In this, the linguist's concerns have moved in directions, which are likely to bring closer to those of the critic. If a text is regarded in objective simplicity as a sequence of symbols on paper, then the modern linguist's scrutiny is not just a matter of looking at the text but looking through the text to its significance."

Literary stylistics had looked askance at the terminal goal of linguistic analysis aiming at mechanical objectivity, in which it is quite likely to miss the wood in counting the trees. But Stylo-Linguistics, in, fact, aims at checking or validating intuitions and hunches by detailed analysis. "Linguistic analysis does not replace the reader's intuition.... but it may prompt, direct and shape it into an understanding." Thus

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16 Style in Fiction, op. cit, p.4.
17 Ibid.
approached, a 'New Stylistics' (a term used by Roger Fowler) is needed where language is not treated as an 'instrument', but is regarded "virtually as the medium" in which man, 'the speaking animal' exists, defining for him his relations to his fellow human beings, his culture, even his own identity. No one can ignore the role language has in our day to day life as well as in our life of creativity or literary composing. Leech and Short have rightly observed that "literary expression is an enhancement, or a creative liberation of the resources of language which we use from day to day. Correspondingly, Stylistics builds on linguistics and in return, it challenges our frameworks, events, their deficiencies and urges us to refine them. In this stylistics is an adventure of discovery for both the critic and the linguist."

Stylistics in its simplistic sense can be defined as the study of style. But then the question, which arises is "To what or whom do we attribute style?". In the broader sense Style can be applied to both spoken and written, literary and non-literary variety of language. The term sometimes has been used for the linguistic habit of a particular writer, or

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18 Ibid.
19 Ibid.
the way language is used in a particular genre, period, school of writing etc. e.g. style of Pope, Epistolary style, style of Victorian fiction etc. This problem of the use of the term 'style' brings us to the central issue and that is the domain of style. The text as the domain is the commonly agreed upon concept because here we can study in a systematic manner the different properties and their inter-relationships in communication, because our working definition of style is that it is the linguistic characteristic of a particular text. Stylistics is concerned with the study of these characteristics, but not for the sake of merely describing them but to explore and explain the relation between language and artistic functions, to see why the author chooses to express himself in one way rather than another in matters of linguistic choices he makes. The chief aim of the study of a linguistic text is its appreciation. From the critic's point of view the important concern is to explore how such-and-such an aesthetic effect is achieved through language. The linguist's concern is to describe the linguistic characteristics of the language used in the text to confirm the aesthetic critic's response. Thus linguistics is complimentary to aesthetic stylistics while aesthetic
The question often asked is what should be the starting point in literary appreciation? Spitzer argues, "There is a cyclic motion whereby linguistic observation stimulates or modifies literary insight and whereby literary insight in its turn stimulates further linguistic observation. This motion is something like the cycle of theory formulation and theory testing which underlies scientific method". The truth is that there cannot be a logical starting point, "since we bring to literary text simultaneously two faculties, however imperfectly developed: or ability to respond to it as a literary work and our ability to observe its language".

Before we proceed further with the strategy of analysing aesthetic response with linguistic explanation of the choices of language items, it will be useful to briefly glance over a few main controversial theories relating to style and stylistics which have gone on since antiquity and which we have only in passing referred to earlier in this

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20 As quoted in Style in Fiction, op. cit, p.13.
21 Ibid.
chapter. This will make our perspective and presentation of the theory of stylistics more comprehensive and unorthodox. These theories can be presented under three heads: Dualism, Monism, and Pluralism.

The Dualists, the modern apostle of which is Richard Ohmann, takes style as the dress of thought and believes in the dichotomy between form or style and content or subject matter. Style is considered to be an adornment or covering of thought. This concept is based on the independent existence of thought and form. Here thought, idea, or subject matter exists prior to the choice of form or style or medium. This view had its currency during the Renaissance and was favoured by the Rationalists of the later epoch. It is contained in Alexander Pope’s famous definition of “Wit” in his *An Essay on Criticism*:

> True wit is nature to advantage dressed,

> What oft was thought but ne’er so well expressed.

This view of the embellishment theory was quite popular with Renaissance thinkers and practitioners of artificial styles, like Sidney and Lily in their creative prose.
writings. This theory leans heavily on style as additive or optional extra and hence has no useful purpose for our scrutiny of style.

There is another kind of dualism. When we consider the view that style is a manner of expression, which is individualistic so far as the author is concerned. Every writer makes choices of expression, says things in a particular way and style which can be said to reside in that manner. The writer makes choices of content and choices of expressions. The dualists hold that there can be different ways of conveying the same content. For example, for them, "It was raining heavily" and "It was raining cats and dogs" would have the same meaning. Obviously the subtle nuances containing the two utterances, which contribute to the total meaning in a particular context, have not been paid any attention to. We here feel inclined to agree with the Monists that any alteration in form entails a change in content. The Monists rightly believed that choices of expression equal choices of content.
Ohmann has been quite influential in upholding the Dualists point of view. It would do well to quote him at some length in this regard:

"A Style is a way of writing— that is what the word means.... In general, [style] applies to human action that is partly invariant and partly variable......Now this picture leads to few complications if the action is playing the piano or playing tennis...... But the relevant division between fixed and variable components in literature is by no means so obvious. What is content and what is form, or style? The attack on a dichotomy of form and content has been persistent in modern criticism; to change, so much as a word, the argument runs, is to change the meaning as well. This austere doctrine has a certain theoretical appeal..... Yet at the same time this doctrine leads to the altogether counter-intuitive conclusion that there can be no such
thing as style, or that style is simply a part of the content.\textsuperscript{22}

C.F. Hockett chimes in with Ohman when he asserts that “two utterances in the same language which convey approximately the same information but which are different in their linguistic structure can be said to differ in style\textsuperscript{23}.” Dualism, in fact, is founded on the concept of paraphrase (i.e. same meaning in different form), and depends on the agreed conception of ‘meaning’ or ‘content’, two terms often used loosely and interchangeably. A student of Modern Literary Theory is well aware of the New Critics’ opposition to the question of the validity of paraphrase so strongly stated by Cleanth Brooks\textsuperscript{24}. We will have occasion to discuss the New Critics’ point of view in the next chapter. Leech and Short have suggested that the ambiguity between ‘meaning’ or ‘content’ can be avoided by replacing these two terms by ‘Sense’ and ‘Significance’, where the former would “refer to the basic logical, conceptual, paraphrasable meaning” and the latter to “the total of what is communicated to the world.


\textsuperscript{23} A Course in Modern Linguistics, op. cit., p. 556.

by a given text\textsuperscript{25a}, Short and Leech continue to say that "Dualism assumes that no one can paraphrase the sense of the text, that there is a valid separation of Sense from Significance. Dualists do not in general treat stylistic choices as devoid of significance; if they did they would scarcely find style worth studying ....... Rather, an enlightened Dualist will search for some Significance, which we may call Stylistic Value in a writer's choice to express his sense in this rather than that way. This view may be formalised in the equation: Sense + Stylistic value = (total) Significance\textsuperscript{26}.

The Dualists' notion of paraphrase rests on the assumption that there is some basic sense that can be preserved in different renderings. This possibility is not likely to be challenged in workaday uses of language. But in literature, especially in poetry paraphrase becomes problematic, Every metaphor for instance, confronts us with a paraphrase problem. We can take the following lines from Shakespeare to see whether the hidden metaphorical

\textsuperscript{25} Style in Fiction, op. cit, p.23. \\
\textsuperscript{26} Ibid.
meaning or the surface literal meaning or both can be expounded if we were asked to paraphrase them:

Come, Seeling night,

Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day

_(Macbeth, III, ii, 46-47)_

We can give numerous examples from Eliot's _The Wasteland_, such as the concluding lines of the Hyacinth girls' encounter with her lover in the Hyacinth garden, sexual depravity in the modern world contained in "Jug Jug to dirty ears" and a host of lines where metaphorical meanings defy paraphrasing. Terence Hawkes has said, "Metaphor is not fanciful embroidery of facts. It is a way of experiencing the facts". Metaphor, alone is the language of poetry for the New Critics. Metaphor denies us a literal sense, and so induces us to make sense, i.e. to find interpretations beyond the truth. Paraphrase captures only the functional meaning.

Monism finds its strongest evidence ground in poetry. Here the devices such as metaphor, irony and ambiguity give 'multivalued' meaning, and sense, the consequence of

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paraphrase, loses its primacy. Monism, which rejected the form-meaning dichotomy of the Dualists, was also the tenet of New Criticism. Cleanth Brookes' 'Paradox' and William Empson’s 'ambiguity' are well known to the students of English literature. The New Critics, unlike the Dualists, did not believe that a poem conveys some message. They believed that a poem was an autonomous organism existing per se. The most emphatic assertion in this respect came from Archibald MacLeish who said, "A poem should not mean but be." This concept had dominated critical thinking during the forties and fifties of the last century which is confirmed by a strong assertion by no less a critic than W.K. Wimsatt in the following statement:

"It is hardly necessary to adduce proof that the doctrine of identity of style and meaning is today firmly established. The doctrine is, I take it, one from which a modern theorist can hardly escape or hardly wishes to."

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It was argued by Ohmann that Dualism was desirable when we study prose where ‘underlying meanings’, derived from figurative devices as in poetry, are not so frequent. Refuting his argument, a recent critic, David Lodge, has argued against Ohmann’s stand in declaring that

.... there is no essential difference between poetry and prose in so far as the following tenets apply to both:

(i) It is impossible to paraphrase literary writing;

(ii) It is impossible to translate a literary work;

(iii) It is impossible to divorce the general appreciation of a literary work from the appreciation of its style.\(^{30}\)

Monism, thus, rejects both paraphrase and translation and valid critical methods to explore meaning of a literary text, particularly a poem. Dualism, as we have averred to above has based its tenets and the validity of both these methods. Inspite of David Lodge’s argument that there is no

essential difference between the language of prose and poetry, we believe that the linguistic exploitation in poetry is characterised by greater sophistication, precision, indirectness and multiplicity of the levels of meaning. It is distinguished from that of prose especially in matter of what the Prague School of Poetics calls 'Foregrounding' and 'Deautomisation' of the linguistic code. In poetry, the medium with its figurative infusion and elements of surprise resulting from various 'violations' of lexical and grammatical categories, (e.g. collocations, inversions etc.) attracts greater critical attention than the usual 'transparent' qualities of prose. The Prague School of Poetics, which became popular with those interested in the textual study of literary text, would, therefore permit the conclusion that "To be truly creative an artist must be destructive: destructive of rules, conventions, and expectations". The Prague School of Poetics has distinguished the 'Poetic function' of language by its 'Forgrounding' or 'Deautomisation' of the linguistic code. This means that the aesthetic exploitation of language takes the form of "surprising the reader into a fresh awareness of, and sensitivity to, the linguistic medium,

31 Style in Fiction op. cit., p.29.
which is normally taken for granted as an 'automatised' background of communication.\(^{32}\)

Stylistic Pluralism offers itself as an alternative to both Monism and Dualism. It considerably widens the scope and role of Stylistics or Stylo Linguistics. It proposes to analyse style in terms of function. It is because of the variety and multiplicity of language functions that various linguistic choices on different functional levels are necessitated. Some of the generally familiar functions are referential (such as newspaper reports); directive and persuasive (such as advertising); social interaction or emotive function (such as casual conversations; and multilevel functions of the same utterance). For example, "Is your father feeling better?" may simultaneously be referential, directive (because demanding reply), and social or even emotive (maintaining a bond of sympathy between the speaker and the hearer). From this point of view the dualist is wrong in assuming that there is some unitary conceptual 'content' in every piece of language.

\(^{32}\) Ibid. p 28.
At the theoretical level three classes of language functions can be isolated in chronological order. They are (1) I.A. Richards, *Practical Criticism*, 1929, who has mentioned four types of functions and four kinds of meaning\(^{33}\): Sense, Feeling, Tone and Intensity. (2) Jakobson (1961) mentions six functions\(^{34}\), Referential, Emotive, Conative, Phatic, Poetic, Metalinguistic — each corresponding to one essential aspect of the discourse situation. (3) Halliday talks of three types of functions\(^{35}\). They are Ideational, Interpersonal and Textual. This model of Halliday is preferred because it has been worked out in considerable detail and is convincingly illustrated by his analysis of William Goldings's novel, *The Inheritors*.

Halliday's view is that all linguistic choices are meaningful as well as stylistic. In this respect his Pluralism can be regarded as a more sophisticated version of Monism. "The flaw of monism," argue Leech and Short, is that it tends to view a text as an undifferentiated whole, so that examination of linguistic choices cannot be made except on

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35 *The Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching*, op. cit., ch. 4.
some adhoc principle. One might even argue that the Monist if he followed the logic of his position would not be able to discuss language at all: if meaning is inseparable from form, one cannot discuss meaning except by repeating the very words in which it is expressed and one cannot discuss form except by saying that it approximately expresses even its meaning. But the pluralist is in a happier position. He can show how choices of language are interrelated to one another within a network of functional choices.

Halliday talks of linguistic categories of the textual function of literary text and asserts that 'extra textual' elements cannot be ignored in the investigation of a literary text. This point has been very lucidly explained by Enkvist while talking about the narrowing of the earlier existing barrier between literary scholars and linguists in the wake of the popularity of New Criticism during the later first half of the last century. The New Critics like the linguists emphasized textual reading rather than background studies. Enkvist has summed up the situation thus:

36 Style in Fiction, op. cit., p. 33.
To the former (linguists) the investigation of style is essentially a scientific description of certain types and sets of linguistic structures that occur in a particular text and of their distribution. On the contrary, the literary scholar must be more preoccupied with matters outside the text. Thus he will study the reader's responses and his linking of given textual stimuli with features that lie beyond the text itself but are a part of his past experience recalled by stimuli in the text. (e.g. only the literary scholar can tell us all that is implied in Milton's making Comus the son of Circe by Bacchus)\(^\text{37}\).

In literature, style is a unique use of language. Hence the language as a whole needs to be taken into consideration. In doing so socio-cultural factors which come under, what Enkvist has called, extra-linguistic elements cannot be ignored. Here Halliday's theory of the social function of language, which emphasises the Neo-Firthian concept of the 'Context of Situation', comes in for

\(^{37}\) Linguistics and Style, op. cit., p. 4.
consideration automatically. The situation and context of the language event includes the various sociological, cultural, biological factors. In a literary composition we have three broad components: ‘Author’, ‘Text’ and ‘Reader’ — a pattern which operates in interpersonal interaction in a specific socio-cultural context. The schematic framework of Firth’s theory of the Context of Situation is given below in some detail where we have more than one factors involved in speech event besides the personal, relational and attitudinal features of a particular dyad:

A key concept in the technique of the London group is the concept of context of situation. The phrase ‘Context of Situation’ was first used widely in England by Malinowski....... Malinowski’s context of situation is a bit of the social process, which can be considered apart and in which a speech event is central and makes all the difference, such as the drill sergeant’s welcome utterance on the square, “stand at ease.” The context of situation of Malinowski is an ordered series of events considered ‘in rebus’. My view was, and still is that ‘context of situation’
is best used as a suitable schematic construct to apply to language events, and that it is a group of related categories at a different level from grammatical categories, but rather of the same abstract nature. A context of situation of linguistic work brings into relation of following categories:

A. The relevant features of participants: persons, personalities.

   (i) The verbal action of the participants.

   (ii) The non-verbal action of the participants

B. The relevant objects

C. The effect of the verbal action\(^3\).

   Firth's notion which was adopted by descriptive linguists like Halliday was quite popular in British linguistic thinking during the 60's of the last century and was instrumental in encouraging socio-linguistic researches in literary studies. In fact socio-linguistic aspect of stylistics cannot be undermined even though we may lay the greatest

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emphasis exclusively on the text. John Spencer has rightly summed up the situation as follows:

.... language is part of human social behavior. Language events do not take place in isolation from other events; Rather they operate within a wider framework of human activity. Any piece of language is therefore part of situation, and so has a context, a relationship with that situation. Indeed, it relationship between the substance and form of a piece of language on the one hand and the extra-linguistic circumstances in which it occurs on the other, which gives what is normally called 'meaning' to utterances.

The importance attached to the context of situation or the extra-linguistic circumstances will include both oral and written language under Stylistic or Stylo-linguistic investigation. However, Spencer voices the general agreement of both aesthetic and stylo-linguistic theorists

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39 Linguistics and Style, op. cit., p.68.
when he says, "Stylistic studies are primarily concerned with written language."\footnote{40}{Ibid. p. 69.}

The above narrative about Style, Stylistics, and Stylo-linguistics, relates primarily to the use of language from the author's point of view. When we approach language for stylistic study from the reader's point of view then concepts of style as recurrence, pattern, frequency as determining it come in for discussion. When a single occurrence of choice is repeated in preference for alternatively available choices it is a feature of style. The same thing can be said of pattern and frequency. Bernard Bloch has defined the 'Style' of a text as, "The message carried by the frequency distributions and transitional probabilities of its linguistic features especially as they differ from those of the same features in the language as a whole."\footnote{41}{Bloch, B. "Linguistic Structure and Language Analysis, in A.A. Hill, ed., Report of the Fourth Annual Round Table Meeting on Linguistic and Language Study (Georgetown Univ. Press, Washington DC, 1953), p. 40.} The definition of style by Bloch suggests the notion of quantification based on frequency for objectivity. Without entering into any argument about this we can say that such a task, in practice, would really be a difficult one. This is not to reject the value of Quantitative

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Stylistics which can provide greater objectivity in the confirmation of the reader's hunches and insights which are quite often in aesthetic terms conveyed by such expressions as 'urbane', 'curt', 'exuberant', 'florid', 'lucid', 'plain', etc. These aesthetic responses conveyed in the words mentioned above need to be justified by linguistic evidence to confirm the reader's intuition or hunch. It is here that Stylo-linguistics comes in handy.

The above discussion may appear of the omnibush type for Stylo-linguistic analysis of any literary text irrespective of their generic existence. They may apply well to fiction of all type, dramatic writings in prose, essays, to even travelogues. But as averred to earlier in the present chapter, poetry makes use of language where other criteria are also required. Poetry, as we know, has the license for linguistic violence in the sense that it transgresses the established rules and norms of the linguistic structure of a language, particularly its lexis and syntax. In this context we would pause briefly to discuss the concepts of Deviance, Prominence and Literary Relevance discussed by Halliday and the Prague School of Linguists. Besides this, a brief reference to Stephen Ullman's theory of stylistic resources
of a language\textsuperscript{42} will also be made to complete both the points of view, i.e. those of the author as well as of the reader.

We have already talked about the concept of ‘norm’ in a stylistic study. Deviance is related to the norm. It is purely a statistical notion of the difference in the normal frequency of a feature and its frequency in the text. But even if we ignore the quantitative concept of statistically measuring frequency as not a very feasible procedure, deviance would mean a sort of violation of a particular normal feature of the language either lexically or syntactically. This feature is quite significantly used in the language of poetry.

‘Prominence’ is the related psychological notion. Halliday defines it simply as “The general name for the phenomenon of linguistic highlighting, whereby some linguistic features stand out in some way\textsuperscript{43}.” Linguistic highlighting has been given another term by the Prague School of Linguists, which is ‘Foregrounding’, or artistically motivated deviation. This is what Halliday calls ‘Literary


relevance' which depends upon the notion of 'foregrounding'. Foregrounding can be either 'qualitative' or 'quantitative'. Qualitative foregrounding is a deviation from the language code (rules and convention) itself, whereas quantitative deviance is a deviance from some expected frequency. Again deviation may be 'external' e.g. with reference to a norm, or 'internal', which occurs mostly in poetry and stands out against the background of what the text has led us to expect. Here we can safely remark that literary and linguistic criteria converge in the concept of Foregrounding. If only we could train our students to select and identify this device in a poem we, as teachers, would have helped them (students) in the technique of Stylo-Linguistic analysis of a selected artefact. We will have occasion to talk about this concept again in the next chapter while discussing the Methodology of teaching poetry. Before we close this discussion of the various concepts and components of Stylo-Linguistics it is relevant to mention Ullmann's concept of stylistic resources of a language\(^4\), which he says, are 'expressive' and 'evocative' devices. Everything that transcends the purely referential and communicative side of language belongs to

\(^4\) *Language and Style*, op. cit., p 100.
the province of expressive devices. It includes the motive, overtones, emphasis, symmetry, euphony which place our style in a particular register (e.g. literary, colloquial, slangy, etc. are all associated with a particular milieu e.g. historical, foreign, provincial, professional). Charles Bailey had emphasised emotive elements. But this term was found to be too narrow and was replaced by Ullmann with 'expressive'.

Evocative devices involve, says Ullmann, three levels[^45]:

1. **Stylistics of sound** (phono stylistics): Onomatopoeia,
2. **Stylistics of word-formation**: synonym ambiguity, contrast between vague and precise, abstract and concrete, rare and common terms;
3. **Stylistics of Sentence**: Components of sentence, sentence structure, and higher units into which single sentences combine. Halliday has given a more systematic presentation of the three levels mentioned by Ullmann, which we will discuss in the next chapter.

[^45]: Ibid. p. 111.
What emerges from our long discussion of the various aesthetic and linguistic approaches and concept in the foregoing pages can be summed up as follows:

(1) The controversy between the aesthetic and the linguistic stylistics is unnecessary as both acknowledge that they deal with study and analysis of language in literature. They agree to the concept that style is the study of language in a literary text.

(2) Linguistic Stylistics cannot ignore the element of intuition and impressionistic response to literature. The aesthetic stylistics should be prepared to collaborate with linguistics to confirm by linguistic evidence the reader’s literary intuition, hunches, response, etc.

(3) Descriptive linguistics should be exploited for providing the framework for analysis of the language of literature whereas literary or aesthetic theories should be geared to collaborate with linguistics.
CHAPTER - 3

STYLO-LINGUISTIC METHODOLOGY OF TEACHING POETRY
Stylo-Linguistic Methodology of Teaching Poetry

The title of the present chapter explains the main thrust of argument in this section of the dissertation. The ELT methodology, mostly concentrating at the sentence level is quite useful for the beginners but at the advanced level where we are dealing with literary text as a complete discourse, this methodology will not be very useful. Nor will the earlier popular sociological and biographical approach to the analysis of poetry, leaning heavily on the concept of paraphrase, will be of much use in the present times where the gulf between the earlier controversy between language and literature, between literary stylistics and linguistics has narrowed down. As we have argued in the preceding chapter, the general opinion is that both criteria of aesthetics and descriptive linguistics ought to be used for the study and teaching of poetry at the undergraduate level. It is relevant to state here that Stylo-linguistics should not merely be taken as an approach, a sort of amalgamation of the selected theoretical aspects of aesthetics and descriptive linguistics. We, in fact, propose to use it as a technique of analysis with pedagogical exigencies in our mind. We have
already argued that both literary criticism and linguistics converge on language as the infra-structure of their approaches and methodology. We have also mentioned in the last chapter that in a literary text, especially in poetry, the author makes choices potentially available in the language. There is an intratextual variation of these choices which contributes to the implicit meaning of the poem. Hence Stylo-linguistic methodology would involve a judicious blending of the techniques of aesthetic analysis as well as those of linguistic description of the language items relevant to a particular poem.

A comprehensive view of methodology should concentrate on the following aspects of teaching poetry. 1. Selection of the poems and their grading; 2. Presentation of the poem in the actual classroom teaching situation; 3. Minimum requisite language competence of the students; 4. The linguistic equipment and training of the teacher: (a) His ability to prepare supplementary teaching materials, (b) devising tests and measuring terminal achievement. Of the above components the most significant is the teacher's ability to apply the socio-linguistic technique of analyzing a poem. We will briefly touch upon the other components
mentioned above before we embark upon the theory, selection and use of the various aspects of Stylo-linguistics comprising both aesthetic as well as linguistic elements.

1. Selection Approach:

We have both short and long poems in English. These poems are lyrical, narrative, descriptive or contemplative. The poem can be difficult, ideationally or because of the structural unusualness or it may be simple in content and conventional in structure such as a sonnet. Similarly, it may have multi layered poetic experiences and complicated emotions and thoughts or it may be a straightforward presentation of feeling or emotions. Some of the love songs of John Donne, for example, represent the first type whereas most of the Elizabethan lyrics, many of the poems of Robert Burns, and the Lucy poems and ballads of WordsWorth represent the latter type. Our purpose is not to enumerate, define or explain the various types of poems available in English but to assert that in selecting a poem for training our students in the Stylo-linguistic analysis of this literary variety the teacher should keep in mind the type of poems which would be most suitable in the teaching context where
he or she is placed. By the teaching context, I mean the linguistic as well as experiential background of the students. Those students, who are compelled to enroll for study in a remote rural college and come from the rural background of poor and educationally backward families, are bound to be different from others with remarkably different background and physical teaching situation. In order to respond to literature the students are required not only to possess the minimum needed linguistic competence but should also have a reasonable range of experience about life and the world. Some of the poems of John Donne, Herbert and Vaughan may appear incomprehensible to the students with limited experiential range of feelings and emotions in life, actually lived, observed or conceptualized through other sources of information. To prescribe poems which do not consider students' linguistic competence and experiential range will be defeatist in its expectation of terminal results. The concept of Cleopatra or Dido type coquettishness and guile treated by Shakespeare and Marlowe may sound strange and unusual to a teenage mind. What we want to propose is that the syllabus framers should keep in mind that the poem selected should be within the range of comprehension for
students at the first year level of the undergraduate programme. It should also ensure not to prescribe poems whose linguistic style may be heavily loaded with allusions and plethora of deviations from the lexical and syntactic norms and rules of the English language. Milton’s *Comus* and Eliot’s *The Wasteland*, thus, will not be considered a proper choice at the under-graduate level.

The poems thus to be selected should have content which may not be highly topical or rooted in the temporal dimension of the age. It should rather be of relatively neutral nature which could be conceptualised or perceptualised from the reader’s normal living context. It has been observed that students do not find long descriptive poems interesting. Hence it should be ensured that the poems selected should have preferably human element. Since if a poem to be taught, as we will argue below, should be taken as one unit (the principle of discourse), is not of the length which can be grasped by the young mind as one living unit, any training or practice in Stylo-linguistic analysis of the poetic text will remain unsatisfactory. The New Critics based their critical tenets on the principle of a poem existing per se, as a living organism (Coleridge’s Theory). Hence it should be
envisioned and responded to by the readers as one completed whole entity. For this the most suitable poems would be Sonnets, Lyrics or extracts from poetic narratives, which may be a complete whole in the Aristotelian sense, i.e. it should have a beginning, a middle and an end. It is an established principle of curriculum designing that the teaching items should be graded. Hence we will be stating the known concept of ELT that these poems should be graded on the principle of linguistic deviations as well as the ideational content.

2. Presentation:

Before we talk of the teacher's presentation of a poem in an actual classroom situation, we would like to point out that stylistic analysis of a literary text involves the concept of linguistic 'constants' and 'variables'. Linguistic constants are the rules governing a particular dialect at the phonological, lexical and grammatical levels. In English for example, at the phonological level we can say that \( z \) and \( ð \) do not occur initially and \( tl \) and \( rk \) do not occur initially, whereas pauses, rhythms, stress come under variables.

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1 Poetics, op. cit., p. 279.
because they are deviations from the normal. We can pile up examples at the lexical and grammatical levels. Variables are called by R. Fowler as 'optional or latent features' which are a part of the concept of choice we have already mentioned in the preceding chapter. What we intend to say is that the students should have a sound grounding in the traditional and descriptive linguistic description of the English language. Unless the students are aware of the 'norm', or 'normal' they cannot perceive the deviant items at any of the linguistic levels of a poem.

It has been observed in the actual classroom teaching situation in our colleges and universities at the first year under-graduate level that the teacher either aims at strengthening and consolidating the linguistic competence of the students, or talks to them about the poem, dealing mostly with extra-textual information. In the former case he selects a few vocabulary items for practising pronunciation and their use in sentences made by the teacher or students. Similarly, useful grammatical structures are also isolated for practice in the classroom. Their deviations, if only, from the

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norm are explained with casualness. This is neither teaching language nor poetry. The second methodology of dealing primarily with extra-textual information may keep the students interested if the information is to their liking. But students do not get into the poem. The teacher should ensure that he gets the students involved in the poem so that their motivation in heuristic learning is encouraged. For this, since poetry, of all forms of literary compositions, makes a maximal phonological exploitation of the language, a proper recitational rendering of the poem by the teacher should be the starting point before involving the students into the poem. The following schematic procedure can be usefully tried out in presenting a poem in a classroom:

1. **Reading aloud:**

   A proper reading out of the poem by the teacher. A poem does not consist only of graphological elements but also of phonological, supra-segmental features such as stress, rhythm, intonation etc. For example students' interest in *The Wasteland* can be properly created if the first five lines conveying the meditation of Tiresius is read out with the grave rhythm they employ, followed by the contrasted
colloquial and racy rhythm of the lines dealing with the German princess's banal pastimes.

If possible, because of the physical constraints of the classroom situation, selected students should be asked to read out the poem trying to imitate the way used by the teacher. This practice quite often induces a better discipline in the classroom as well.

1(a) Title:

If the poem has a title the teacher should make the students aware of the possible/probable implications of the meaning which the poem is going to unfold. The same method can be followed here also as indicated in (3) above, i.e. giving students alternative answers to leading questions such as

(a) Will it make any difference if spender uses 'An Express' in place of 'The Express' in his poem.

(b) What was the 'First Coming' implied in the little 'Second Coming' of W.B. Yeats; who was the first comer?; why should he come a second time?; what does he stand for?. After getting a
satisfactory reply arrived at heuristically by the students, the teacher may give some extra textual information like Yeats' concept of history and civilization, etc.

1(b) Theme:

By using the method of leading questions to encourage students' heuristic involvement in the poem and encouraging them to find linguistic clues, the teacher can proceed to identify the theme/s. We can then proceed to isolate the central theme around which other minor themes may be interwoven. For example, while teaching W.B.Yeats' "Second Coming" the teacher will find no difficulty in making the students see the central point of Christ, the enunciator of Christian Civilization, being reborn, i.e. a new civilization in the offing. But the minor themes of topical and temporal relevance culminating in the image, "Things fall apart, the centre cannot hold", and other minor themes of disruption, violence and awful fright are encapsulated in the multiple images that the poem uses.
2. **Paraphrase:**

The New Critics, like the linguists, insisting upon the close analysis of the language of the text, have denounced the practice of analysing a poem with initially paraphrasing it. It is now an agreed upon aesthetic cum linguistic stand that paraphrase does convey functional meaning. Since language is a cognitive phenomenon it has logical meaning conveyed by the systematized code (i.e. language), oral, or written. The theory of referential or denotative meaning, extending to a deeper or connotative meaning, has been explicitly stated by I. A. Richards. What we call cognitive or logical meaning conveyed by paraphrase has been supported by I.A. Richards in his statement about the scientific and emotive uses of language thus: "A statement may be used for the sake of the reference, true or false, which it causes. This is the scientific use of language. But it may also be used for the sake of the emotions and attitudes produced by the reference it occasions. This is the emotive use of language." Poetry makes an emotive use of language where the referential use functions as a foundation. It retains denotations and reference on the surface level but depends

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upon connotation for its deeper meaning. Hence we feel that paraphrase, as a component of the teaching methodology of poetry, is a useful strategy. After having paraphrased a poem the teacher finds it easier to make the students look for 'significance' which we have talked about in the preceding chapter. However, care needs to be taken to forewarn students against attaching too much significance to paraphrase. Paraphrase belongs to what Spencer would call the aspect of 'field', whereas significance would include what he calls 'tenor'.

3. Devices:

Once these central and minor themes are identified, the teacher can proceed to show how these themes are meaningfully interlocked to give a unified vision of a major facet of Yeats' poetic concern through linguistic and figurative devices. This point will be clarified by illustration when we come to the actual analysis of this poem in the next chapter.

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4 Linguistics and Style, op. cit., p. 86.
4. **Statement of Observation:**

We mentioned above that the students, when their intuition and response are goaded into operation by the teacher, make guesses at the possible meaning of the poem. After this we can proceed to analyse the linguistic as well as figurative devices used in the poem to confirm their guess, hunch intuition or initial response to the poem.

5. **Comprehension Questions:**

Leading questions by the teacher (regarding what the poem is about): This can be done either by isolating words, phrases clauses, images embodying the ideational core of the poem. This aspect will be elaborated when we come to the actual analysis of the poem in Chapter 4.

**Methodology of Analysis:**

A) Pragmatic aesthetic categories.

B) Linguistic categories.

A) **Pragmatic Categories**

In the light of this the students can modify and/or develop the original hypothesis. The objection of the
linguists to literary critics' approaches has been that the latter did not have a systematically formulated system of categories with reference to which they could analyse a poem. Linguistic categories now have been made available to us by the studies of descriptive linguists. However, we can formulate a tentative schema of categories which may not be as rigorous as those of descriptive linguistics. Nonetheless they can be used as a working and procedural framework for analysing a poem. We can list them as follows:

1. **Intuition or response:**

   This may be at first inchoate. In terms of the methodology of a scientific approach this initial hunch may work as a hypothesis which may be confirmed, refuted, or modified by further observation and testing. Hence the need of reading a poem several times before proceeding to draw any credible conclusion. The teacher may follow suitable strategies to suit his class in this respect depending upon his teaching, situation and context.
2. **Extra-textual information:**

We have already mentioned that literary critics have depended rather too heavily on extra-textural elements relevant to the explication of meaning in a poem. So to repeat what we have averred to earlier, such elements sometimes are extremely relevant while, with regard to certain poems, they are of peripheral importance. Yeats' relationship with Maud Gonne in the third stanza of "Among School Children" and Wordsworth's drawing consolation from the company of his sister (In the later books of "The Prelude") at the critical juncture when he found his faith in French Revolution to have collapsed, are the examples of the relevant type of extra-textual information, whereas Spender's leftist leanings and Auden's religious apostacy, while teaching their Nature poetry are examples of marginal utility as far as extratextual element is concerned. Similarly, social and cultural elements should also find place in proportion to their relevance in contributing to the exploration of meaning of a poem.
3. **Intra-textual Context of Situation:**

Extra-textual context need to be controlled and discreet. The most important aspect of the context of situation is the Intra-textual one. The poem creates its own context and situational framework within which its thematic concerns are initiated, developed and argued.

4. **Internal organisation of the poem:**

The poem's own internal organisation starting from the title to the conclusion should be the point of concentration. A poem may make a statement to be elaborated; it may introduce a dialectic to be debated and resolved; it may present a subjective observation of reality to be substantiated within the logical framework of its own organisation; it may project an image of reality, realistically or futuristically envisioned; it may present the poet's point of view to be argued; it may present a pure emotion or feeling aroused by a stimulus internally created or inferred from external circumstances, text, etc. The list can be enlarged depending upon the corpus in hand.
5. **The Function of Tropes and Deviance:**

Critics have been talking about the figurative use of language and its specialised use (deviance) in poetry. The controversy about the whole history of poetic diction is a pointer to this aspect of the poetic use of language in literary criticism. The Neo-classical poets believed that the language of poetry is specialised and embellished so that it is different from the language of the common speech. Thomas Gray went to the extent of asserting that "the language of the age can never be the language of poetry". The Romantics, especially Wordsworth, devoted considerable energy on arguing this point which we propose to desist from discussing because of the constraints of space and the common knowledge of people about this aspect of literary criticism. However, our concern is about the figurative use of language which contributes to the deeper meaning and precision of expression in a poem. Leech discusses figures of speech in poetry, the most important of which is metaphor, under a framework

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comprising 'tenor', 'vehicle' and 'ground'. Tenor is the object actually under discussion; vehicle is "the image or analogue in terms of which the tenor is represented" and ground is the quality of comparison. In a metaphoric expression "life is a walking shadow", life will be the tenor, walking shadow will be the vehicle, and a figurative meaning derived, i.e. transitoriness will be the ground. This framework can be applied not only to metaphor but to other figures of speech as well. Here our intention is not to discuss the meaning and implication of all the figures of speech (major or minor) but to point out how the figurative use of language is an essential component of the strategy of analysis of a poem. Deviance relates to Tropes, to lexical items and even to contexts. It can be said to mean some sort of violence on the normal linguistic pattern used in a poetic context. Deviance may be strictly speaking a subject to be dealt with under linguistic devices but it partakes of both the domains of the cultural context of a language, determining its usage, collocations, etc. as well as the linguistic components of the language especially those relating to the lexicon and grammar.
6. **Form of the Poem:**

Whether the poem is a lyric, a sonnet, or an elegy should be given considerable attention to. Where the form is a conventional one, it will be useful to point out the underlying features of such a form which will facilitate students' understanding of the poem as well as draw his attention to the importance of adequate grounding in the conventional forms of poetic composition. For example, we can make the student's job easier by telling him that a lyric treats of a single central feeling or emotion and is organized in a particular structural function.

B) **Linguistic Categories**

The following categories have been accepted for use in any stylistic analysis of literary text,

1. Phonological
2. Lexical
3. Grammatical
4. Contextual
1. **Phonological:**

It is a commonly agreed principle that language is primarily speech, i.e. sounds organised in a meaningful and recurrent pattern. Poetry yields considerable meaning through the phonological features of a language. We have already mentioned the importance of initial reading of a poem in the classroom. Under the phonological categories we can look for the features of alliteration, consonance, assonance, rhyme, para-rhyme, onomatopoeia, rhythm (including stress & intonation), meter, etc. The distribution and arrangement of phonemes, stress, rhythmic and intonational variations contribute, quite often, to the total significance of a poem. We can give the examples of the use of sibilants and gutturals in the concluding lines of the Prologue to Marlowe's Dr. Faustus, which in fact, forebode the finale of the protagonist's predicament, which is damnation. This has been conveyed by the associative connotation of the hissing sound of a snake (sibilants), evoking the terrible image of Satan's journey to the garden of Eden as an act of rebellion against God. The sound of fire (the gutturals) creates the image of the fire in hell where damned souls are tortured. We can give examples relating to
other phonological features from the same Prologue. For example, the metrical pattern of the opening lines with strong stresses on the iambic feet, denote a marshall movement of the lines narrating great heroic war, erotic and the like themes. Soon after this the metrical pattern changes to one which is close to free verse and the rhythmic movement is colloquial ("only this gentleman..."). This denotes the humble nature of the theme relating to an ordinary mortal. A deft distribution and organization of sounds and stresses by Hopkins is too well known to a student of English literature. We can give innumerable examples of how phonological features convey meanings, which could not be done by lexical or syntactical components of the language. The most glaring examples is to be found in Eliot's The Wasteland. It is true that phonological elements play a greater role in dramatic poetry than in other form of poetic composition. The love lyrics of John Donne are full of such features.
2. **Lexical:**

Under the lexical categories the most significant element for the purpose of present study is collocation. Spencer describes theoretical categories for the formal description of lexis in his *Linguistics & Style* as follows: He says these categories are fundamentally two—"Collocation" and "Set". Collocation, says Spencer, "is set up to account for the tendency of certain items in a language to occur close to each other, a tendency not completely explained by grammar." "Set" is the field to which the words (collocates) belong. For example, the term 'economy', affairs, policy, land, programme, disaster can occur with reference to one set which can be called the 'nodal item'. Lexical sets are 'open' as compared with 'the closed nature of grammatical system'. From this system of sets the poet chooses or collocates which, when unusual or new, become stylistically significant. We can give some examples of stylistically significant collocational variations or unusualness from Dylan Thomas’ poems, which abound in such collocational strangeness; “in the room/so loud to my own”, “the heart
print of man", "the inmost marrow of my heart bone", "A grief ago", "once below a time", "Happy as the heart was long", "All the sun long", "it was Adam and Maiden", etc. in Dylan Thomas' poem "Vision and Prayer". In these examples we find that the underlined words do not belong to the set in which they have been used. Another significant example of a lexical deviance is seen in the use of the word 'manifesto' in the first line of Spender's, "The Express", which is analyzed in Chapter 4, where this word, which came into existence in its modern political denotation during the Russian Revolution, is used in the context of the steaming off the railway engine and the gradual picking up of the speed. Another example is seen in Yeats' Leda and the Swan' which has also been analyzed in Chapter 4. The use of the word 'vague' in Yeats' line, "How can those terrified vague fingers push/The feathered glory from her loosening thighs?" can baffle a reader with its unusual collocation. Under lexical analysis the teacher should make the students aware of the vocabulary items and their functional features in the poem concerned. He should discuss whether the vocabulary is simple or complex formal colloquial, descriptive or
evaluative, general or specific, and how emotive or other associations of words change the meaning of the poem.

3. **Grammatical Category:**

   Besides lexical categories needed for presenting a poem in a classroom with emphasis on collocational deviance, the teacher will proceed to concentrate on the four grammatical categories (Unit, Structure, Class and System) which have been very systematically prescribed by M.A.K. Halliday\(^9\). The teacher should make students pay attention to:

   1. **Sentence Type** – declarative, interrogative, commands, exclamations etc.;

   2. **The Sentence Complexity** – Coordination, subordination, juxtaposition of clauses;

   3. **Clause Types** – dependent, relative, adverbial, nominal etc.;

   4. **Clause Structure** – transitive verb construction, initial adverb clauses, etc.;

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5. Noun Phrases

6. Verb Phrases

7. Other Phrase Types (preposition, adverb, adjective).

In English five units can be used for analysis which are sentence, clause, group, word, morpheme which are hierarchically organised in the system of the language.

4. Contextual:

Since the language has a social function to perform, 'context of situation' becomes a significant category. We have mentioned this concept in the last chapter (p. 58). Here it is relevant to point out that students should be made to identify the participants in the situation of the poem, the nature of the situation itself, their relationship etc. to understand the poem's total significance. For example, while teaching Donne's "The Flee" students must perceive that the participants here are a lover and his beloved; their relationship is warm, no doubt, but while the lover is impatient in his irreligious demand, the beloved is restrained, modest and righteous in matter of matrimonial or
sexual morality. The situation is that the lovers are not married and the male participant is arguing against the modesty of the beloved against surrendering herself to the sexual overtures of the lover on religious grounds. The nature of the debate is that the lover's impatience and attitude to love cannot be made clear to the students when the whole intra-textual context is grasped. It is after this that the lexical and grammatical meanings emanating from their extra ordinary use in the poem can be taken up to see how they contribute to the total significance of the poem.

Under grammatical categories we can pay attention to the deliberate preference of one form to the other. Let us have a look at the following lines by Philip Larkins:

The bottle is drunk out by one;
At two, the book is shut;
At three the lovers lie apart,
Love and its commerce done;

Here the first two and the last lines are in the passive voice, Only the third line is in the active voice with an agent. Here the monotony, mechanicalness and lack of any genuine warmth in the love relationship are conveyed by the choice
of a syntactic pattern. Similarly the personal involvement and subjective experience of pleasure is conveyed by the active voice such as in Wordsworth's "My heart leaps up...." Or Robert Burns' "My love is like a red red rose....". We can also give examples of a clause, consisting of a phrase only as a syntactic manipulation to underscore the deeper significance of the poetic experience, such as in Larkin's short poem, "Wants": "Beyond all this, the wish to be alone". These two phrases without verbs have been repeated, proving that repetition of syntactic patterns can also be meaningful. Examples like 'Hold your tongue and let me love', 'settle thy studies, Faustus' as examples of the use of imperatives can be added to what we have said above. Sometimes mixing of styles also become stylistically significant such as Eliot's use of banal lexical phrases and highly colloquial sentence patterns, which are interspersed through out The Wasteland. We find that poetic vigour and prosaic flatness in Eliot's case offers a daring use of significant deviations from the normally acceptable consistency of a poetic style. Literary critic's categories and those of the linguist's converge in the concept of
'Foregrounding', which is discussed briefly in the following paragraphs.

The teacher has to make students aware that poetic language is a specialized exploitation of the Phonological, Lexical and Syntactical Elements of the language. In normal communication or a scientific writing also these elements of the language are used but they are more or less on the automatic pattern. In poetry these elements are meant to augment reader's interest, depending mostly on surprises. These surprises result from deviation from linguistic or other socially acceptable norms. This phenomenon of deviations is called 'Foregrounding', which is a translation of the Czech term 'Aktualisace'. This term invokes the analogy of the figure seen against a background. "The artistic deviation 'sticks out' from its background, the automatic system, like a figure in the foreground of a visual field.... The foregrounded figure is the linguistic deviation, and the background is the language – the system taken for granted in any talk of 'deviation'".

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Students should note all types of deviations and see how they are significant in a poem. This deviation is not to be noticed only at the phonological, lexical, and grammatical levels but also at the level of the use of language in a particular poetic context. In this respect we can mention register burrowing as a significant 'Foregrounding', such as the Bar Parlour Monologue in "A Game of Chess" in Eliot's The Wasteland: “When Lil’s husband got demobbed, I said ….. etc.”. Leech has the following remark to make on this monologue,

The very fact that this passage occurs in a poem, in congruously rubbing shoulders with other, more respectably literary types of English, causes us to pay it the compliment of unusual scrutiny. Here it is foregrounded, where as if it had been overheard in a pub or on a bus, it would not have been. We find ourselves not paying heed to its meaning qua casual gossip, but rather asking what is the point of its inclusion at this place in the poem? What is its relevance to its context? What is its artistic significance, in the light of what we have understood of the rest of the poem?
This method of composition recalls the painter's technique of 'Collage'.

Students can start with the phonological 'foregrounding' in locating alliteration, assonance, variation in stress for rhythmic or metrical excegencies. He can also look for the distribution of soft and hard consonants (e.g. l, m, n, r—soft consonants; Pllssives as hard consonants; Fricatives as occupying the mid position between soft and hard), short and long vowels and onomatopoeic effects created by repetition, contrast and parallelism among the various phonological features.

The same practice should be adopted for lexical 'foregrounding' where the students can focus on unusual collocation, repetition or parallelism. Patterns of identity and contrast can also be found in phrases or clauses "To err is human, to forgive divine" (Pope, An Essay on Criticism) is the example which readily comes to our mind. Grammatical 'foregrounding' should also be brought to the notice of the students by pointing out the deliberate choice of a particular syntactic structure, tense form etc. For example, in the

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12 Ibid., p. 58.
famous Apostrophe to Helen in Marlowe’s Dr. Faustus we find a deliberate movement of the tense from the past, present to the future: “Was this the face….. that burnt the topless towers of illium”.... come Helen come/make me immortal with a kiss... I will be Paris...... etc. Here the use of past, present and future tense forms endows the image of Helen with the attribute of timelessness which has been ‘foregrounded’ clearly.

A particular poem may have ‘foregrounding’ of one linguistic aspect more than of others. But students have to be careful about sensing these ‘foregrounded’ items for which a specially refined sensitivity to language is a sine qua non in the analysis of a poem. The teacher’s job becomes more onerous in developing this faculty in the students. Needless to say that the teacher himself should be suitably trained in the detailed mechanism of the language and be able to follow the procedure of descriptive linguistics in analysing the language objectively. He should also possess subjective faculty resulting from his own sensitivity to respond intuitively to the language.
In chapter 4, which follows, we will analyse a variety of poems, to demonstrate how they should be taught in the classroom, exploiting the techniques of Stylo-linguistics.
CHAPTER - 4

STYLO-LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF SELECTED POEMS
Stylo-linguistic Analysis of Selected Poems

While selecting poems for this chapter the following criteria has been kept in mind:

We have left out longer poems because of the paucity of space and secondly because we wanted the students to visualize the poem as a unified piece. Here poems like elegy or longer odes or other narrative poems have not been taken up otherwise a reading of the whole poem could not be given by the teacher concerned at one go.

A variety of poems have been taken up to avoid monotony and increase students' interest. Apart from this, poems from different periods and movements of poetry from Milton in the 17th century to Moderns (Yeats, Bridges) have been included.

Presentation of the poem may not necessarily be in the chronological order of their composition but it will be starting with shorter poems and moving on to medium sized poems.

For convenience of reference the actual poem has been printed in the main body of the dissertation.
THE SOLITARY REAPER

BEHOLD her, single in the filed
Yon solitary Highland Lass!
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen! for the vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No nightingale did ever chant
More welcome notes to weary bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands:
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the cuckoo-bird
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no'one tell me what she sings?
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago:
Familiar matter of today?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again!

Whate're the theme, the maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending;
I listen'd, motionless and still;
And, as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.
1. **Reading aloud:**

The teacher should start by reading the poem loudly. With the help of the students, the various steps along which the poetic event progresses can be described i.e. the first step is the poet’s visit to some Highlands which have not been localised or given any geographical identity. It shows that the poet is not interested in the scenic details of the background. The second stage is identifying an activity, which the poet watches from a distance-taking place in some lonely field. It should be clear to the students that the poet is interested in the activity of singing rather than that of reaping.

1(a) **Title:**

During the loud reading, the teacher should first emphasise ‘coherence’ i.e., the relation between the title and the opening lines of the poem. Here, the use of the definite article “the” suggests the loneliness of the romantic “man” and the word “solitary” heightens it. Wordsworth’s idea of loneliness can also be seen in ‘The Daffodils’ where he starts by: “I wondered lonely as a cloud”
The entire line not only depicts the loneliness but also the rootlessness of the Romantic period.

1(b) Theme:

The 'theme' of the poem is how a simple situation, 'a familiar matter' can be a source of wonder and excitement.

The comparison between the impact created by the song of the human girl in the context of the immediate present with recalling the impact of the Nightingale and the cuckoo in the legendary past is a pointer to the poet's instinctively being drawn to the melancholy strain of the Highland girl.

The impact of the song logically makes the poet curious to comprehend the thematic content of the song. It is futile to make enquiries about the nature of the song because like a piece of profound poetic composition the song has a lot of scope for interpretation. Hence the question with which the third stanza begins is immediately dismissed, and relegated to the rank of a rhetorical enquiry, implying only wonder. One thing is certain that the song is "plaintive", narrating some sad past events of historical or legendary nature. It
may relate to "some familiar matter of today" or "some natural sorrow loss or pain" to which humans are destined. The two bits of the possible theme of the song are in a linguistically significant manner introduced by the syntactic device of using two rhetorical sentences in lines 17 and 21

"Will no one tell me what she sings"
and
"Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of today?"

In the last stanza the casual effect made at deciphering the song in the third stanza is brushed aside cryptically, signalled by clausal phrase "Whatever the theme".

This brushing aside enables the poet to resume his narrative more freely, which was temporarily obstructed by the curiosity about the nature of the theme of the song. The conclusion of the poem can be reached only by the poet's listening to the song motionless and still as if his corporal faculties were suspended (c.f. Wordsworth's own Theory of Poetic Imagination). This stillness may be extremely short-lived but it has been permanently implanted in the
storehouse of experiences to be recalled later in some tranquil moment of contemplation.

1(c) Silent Reading:

The students will now read the poem silently, on their own and understand the literal meaning. They will, by now, have understood that this is a simple, narrative poem, describing, perhaps, a single event in the poet's experience.

2. Paraphrase:

The first stanza does not give any clue whether it is the poet who is the traveller or any other persona accompanied with someone whose identity is entirely vague. The poem begins with a dramatic element 'Behold her'. The listener is attracted by a sad song being sung by a girl who is cutting and grinding the grains all alone. The thinks that the echo can be heard in the entire valley.

The second stanza can be ignored for the time being on the premise that nothing would be lost in the meaning of the poem which is concerned with giving an account of the situation and of the effect of a girl's song upon the traveller. But it draws a comparison between the singing girl and the
singing birds like the nightingale and the cuckoo, and thinks that the former sings more beautifully.

The third stanza, by the use of the single personal pronoun ‘me’ indicates that the traveller is no other person than the poet himself. This stanza makes the poet pause and decipher the theme of the song of the girl. He is unable to do so. Then, because of the sad tune, he thinks she might be singing about some unhappy incident of her life or about the death of a near one or about some contemporary issue.

In the last stanza the query about theme being unnecessary, the effect of the song upon the poet occupies the central core of the experience undergone by the poet. Now the second stanza that was ignored earlier will be given a significant status. The effect of the song was not an ordinary one, of an ephemeral nature but had gone into the storehouse of sensations and perceptions in his poetic mind. At this stage the teacher can give a brief hint at Wordsworth’s concept of the poetic mind which stores striking experiences in the form of sensations and perceptions. Later these are recreated into poetic visions when the faculty of imagination is put into operation. The
girl's song has not only effected him at the normal auditory level but has been implanted into his heart. Hence the uninhabited praise showered on the beauty of the singing birds' songs in the second stanza becomes highly relevant.

3. Syntactic Pattern / Cohesion:

The very first syntactic pattern introduces a dramatic element through its use of the command sentence - "Behold her". This is repeated twice in the fourth line in "stop here" or "gently pass". The use of the exclamation "Oh listen!" adds the element of surprise and wonder besides reinforcing the addresser - addressee presence to reinforce the dramatic structure with which the poem begins. The addresser obviously is the traveller who, we know is the poet himself as the poem progresses. But the addressee is undefined and like the "You" of the first line of Eliot's "Love song of J. Alfred Prufrock" turns out to be other persona.

In the second stanza, the syntactic pattern employing the emphatic auxiliary "did" (line 9) and using "was" (line 13) between the adverbial "never" and the full verb "heard" (line 13) collaborate with the free flowing narrative and the images of the "tired groups of travellers" in "some shady
haunt among "Arabian Sand" and the thrilling voice of the
cuckoo bird" breaking the silence of the seas among the
farthest Hebrides" to underscore the poets high praise of the
"melancholy strain" of the "Solitary Highland lass." The
impact of the soothing effect of the song of Nightingale and
the joyous impact of the song of the cuckoo bird on the
surrounding or a tribute to the two singing birds create the
effect of immediacy as well as endow them with the attribute
of timelessness. The timeless dimension is brought in by the
Hebrides being associated with several fairy and heroic tales
extolling the beauty of the song birds.

4. Images:

The poet is not interested in the biographical details of
the rustic girl because during the progression of the poetic
theme the girl acquires the status of an image, a memorable
experience to be retained forever and a vision of joy. This is
why it is the details about the song, its "plaintive note", its
concern being human and its effect being soothing and
healing—which are permanently organised into a poetic
composition.
5. Statement of Observation:

In this poem we can see how a simple situation or an actual occurrence can shape a new vision. It is in a sense throwing light on a familiar object, a light that was never on sea or land so we can say that there is strangeness added to beauty in this most simple poetic narrative. This poem contains almost all the features of Romanticism like awe, wonder, excitement, familiar experience and therefore it deserves to be called a poem rich in romantic content.

The linguistic markers are not foregrounded in a way that we can call them significant devices. But shapely easy flowing narrative with ordinarily encountered words, along with a colloquial rhythm are the linguistic features of a poem which make it eminently rhythmic.

6. Questions for comprehension:

The suggested questions for feedback are given below:

Q.1 Which is the linguistic marker that indicates that the poet also is a solitary traveller?

Q.2 Do you think the poem was composed at a different time and locale than those of the actual observation?
Q.3 In the first stanza the words "behold", "yon", "lass", "strain", "vale" can be said to be poetic words not used in the routine interpersonal interactions. Prepare a list of such words occurring in the remaining three stanzas.

Q.4 Is there an element of unexpectedness in the whole narrative? How is this element exploited in creating a unique experience in the mind of the poet?

Q.5 What difference will it make if the definite article 'The' in the title of the poem is replaced by the indefinite article 'A'?
THE NIGHTINGALES

BEAUTIFUL must be the mountains whence ye come,
And bright in the fruitful valleys the streams, where—
Ye learn your song: [from
Where are those starry woods? O might I wander there,
Among the flowers, which in that heavenly air
Bloom the year long!

Nay, barren are those mountains and spent the streams:
Our song is the voice of desire, that haunts our dreams,
A throe of the heart,
Whose pining visions dim, forbidden hopes profound,
No dying cadence nor long sigh can sound,
For all our art.

Alone, aloud in the raptured ear of men
We pour our dark nocturnal secret; and then,
As night is withdrawn [of May,
From these sweet-springing meads and bursting boughs
Dream, while the innumerable choir of day
Welcome the dawn.
1. Reading aloud:

The teaching will begin with loud reading of the poem in the class. While doing so, he/she will talk about the title (in detail), theme, (just hint at it, should be discussed in detail later), and the extra-textual information (in detail)

1(a) Title:

The students will at once notice the presence of 'coherence' i.e., title is related to the opening lines of the poem and has the plural form of the noun. This will immediately give rise to various questions in their minds e.g. Does it mean a group of song birds, all the song birds, or a species distinguished from other species. While the teacher is reading it will become absolutely clear that the poem is divided into two parts and is dramatic in structural form.

1(b) Theme:

After the loud reading and discussion about the title will emerge the theme — why has the poet chosen the 'nightingales' as the subject, why not the eagle, the sparrow or some other bird? The theme lies in the answer: because he wants to convey that deep suffering is purifying and
contributes to the birth of beauty and perfection. The reference to suffering will allow the teacher to give some extra textual information.

The first six lines comprise a question which has an element of wonder as well as an implied assumption. The speaker asking the question expresses his longing to be from where the Nightingales sing. The bird's reply to the question in the first stanza,

"............... and then,

As night is withdrawn",

is the story of suffering and pain, told in the second and third stanza. The birds dream of sufferings is followed by the "choir of the day" to welcome the dawn. The "barren mountains" and "spent streams" of the second stanza as background of the sad song is paradoxically replaced by "sweet springing meads and bursting boughs of May." This second paradox in the third stanza is a pointer to the fact the poet is more interested in shaping the Nightingales' song into an image rather than describing its impact upon his ears. The third stanza, thus presents the poetic statement of
the image the poet has been struggling throughout the text to create and establish.

That deep suffering is purificatory and contributes to the birth of beauty and perfection has been touched upon by T.S. Eliot in his *The Wasteland* where the pouring forth of the melancholy note by the song bird is not comprehended by the materialistic mind of the modern man. But pain and sorrow do not necessarily imply negation of happiness and desire rather than fulfillment is of a greater value so far as attainment of beauty is concerned. This beauty is not of the world of decay and mutability but belongs to the world of permanence and of static perfection. In the last line of the first stanza the poet's longing is not to wander among the flowers of the natural world but among those which breathe of "heavenly air" and "bloom the year long"—meaning other worldliness and permanence.

The second line of the second part gives as it were a definition of the concept of profound poetic themes, which can have a stirring effect upon the reader. The points mentioned are the frustration of desires, pining for profound
forbidden hopes which goes straight into the heart and press for expression.

The teacher should emphasise that though the poem is patently dramatic the locale and the occasion of the question and answer are deliberately left vague. This alerts the careful reader of the poem to the problem of the poetic intentions and tenor. The identity of the addresser is not immediately known inspite of the use of the first person personal pronoun, 'I'. The speaker of the poem may be the poet himself who is eager to assert his conviction about the source of poetic inspiration. The second part starts with the birds' answer which is an emphatic 'Nay' and very few words have been used about the surrounding of nature. The two adjectives 'barren' and 'spent' are considered sufficient to dismiss the possible poetic notion that the external surrounding can be a viable source of profound feelings which can be incorporated in the song.

1(c) Extra textual information:

It will be profitable to tell the students the story of the pre-natal sufferings of the Nightingale. This will also contribute to the explication of the concepts of beauty
brightness and purity of the poetic product which is a consequence of the purifying effect of suffering.

The teacher can tell the students briefly the story about how Philomela was raped by her sister's (Procne's) husband (Tereus). Lest Philomela should narrate to her sister the brutal outrage of her modesty by Tereus, the latter cuts out her tongue and hands. Philomela manages to weave into a tapestry her story and sends it to her sister. Procne being infuriated at the beastly behaviour of her husband plans a revenge upon her husband in which she kills her own son and serves his flesh as food to her husband. The story thus narrated would have remained of historical importance only had its end not been presented in the form of Philomela being transformed into a Nightingale, Procne into a swallow and Tereus into a hawk as Tereus draws his sword to kill his wife and her sister.

1(d) Silent Reading:

Once the poem has been read aloud, the students will now read it silently so as to absorb the literal meaning and find answers to the questions arisen in their minds while the teacher read the poem.
While reading the poem silently many questions may come to the minds of the students about the phrases like "voice of desire", "haunts our dreams", "dark nocturnal secret" which will be explained by the teacher (as extratextual information) while talking about the images and allusions.

The students will naturally imitate the teacher’s pronunciation, stress and intonation etc.

2. Paraphrase:

The poem begins with the poet’s admiration of the place from where the nightingales come. He thinks that the mountains must be beautiful, the valleys bright and fruitful. Probably that’s the reason why the birds sing so beautifully. He also wants to go there, among the flowers which bloom throughout the year in the heavenly air.

The second stanza begins with the birds’ answer: "Nay". The birds tell the poet that the mountains are “barren” and the streams “dry”. They also tell the poet that their song is not a product of joy but of pain that haunts their dreams. It is the voice of unfulfilled desires.
The third stanza continues when the nightingales say that we sing aloud in the night telling the people about our secret of pain and suffering which has given birth to beauty and perfection. Then as night withdraws i.e. towards dawn, we dream about our hopes which could not be realised.

3. **Syntactic Pattern / Cohesion**:

The poem begins with a deliberate inversion of the normal order of words in a sentence. The pattern "The mountains, whence ye come, must be beautiful" is presented with the inverted form where the adjective followed by the main verb comes first. This is for obvious emphasis on the beauty of the mountains rather than the place itself (i.e. the mountains). The second line follows the same pattern though it is meant to be read in continuation of the first line and to be followed by the third line.

The second part starts with an emphatic "Nay" and very few words have been used about the surrounding of nature. The two adjectives "barren" and "spent" are considered sufficient to dismiss the poetic notion that the external surroundings can be a source of profound feelings which can be incorporated in the song.
The use of the term "throe" tries to remove the vagueness of the second stanza. This term has a metaphorical implication hinting at labour pain which has a blending of both pain and pleasure – pain at a physical plane of existence and pleasure at the bringing forth of new life into the world. The third stanza describes in a paradoxical manner the birds' pouring out her secret meaning in the song which has an exalting effect on the hearer contrary to the expected response of depression at the painful nature of the song. Here the meaning seems to be complicated because of the paradox of pain being conducive to the production of a pleasurable response. The other complication which needs to be disentangled is the meaning of the phrase "dark nocturnal secret." It may have more than one meaning, it may mean that the bird is singing in a hidden place at the time of night and not in an open place to be seen by people. The objective "dark" reinforces the implication of "nocturnal." It also hints at the possibility of the world not knowing the truth about how beauty and perfection are born out of struggle, suffering and pain as a result of hopelessness of desire and the ever haunting of dreams compelling in vain, materialization. The word "secret"
has the implication of the Greek mythical allusion the narration of which with its symbolic meaning will enrich the students' response.

4. **Symbols and allusions:**

The poetic expression has the ingredient of pain in order to be truly meaningful and capable of touching the deepest core of the hearer's heart. This can happen only if two conditions are fulfilled. One, the poet who conceives a poetic feeling should ensure that it is a product of an experienced past, and secondly, that it comes out spontaneously and not depends upon any artifice of expression. Here the allusions to the pre-natal experiences of the song bird naturally come to the mind. This allusion will be an extra-textual explanation of the various sufferings undergone by the song birds. However, the second stanza is of a general nature, containing well known maxim of the poetic process

(c.f. Our sweetest songs are those which tell of saddest thoughts)
The "Nightingales" serve the purpose of a symbol to express the poetic idea i.e. beauty and perfection in art can be attained only through undergoing felt experiences of struggle, suffering and pain. Frustration, despair, pain, hopeless longing and endless struggle - all entailing pain and suffering - have the effect of transforming the dross into gold. This idea could not be presented into the form of statement. Hence the poet's choice of the dramatic mode brings out desired artistic symmetry of the poem. The idea is made to develop into a debate so that its symbolic conclusion is of a deeper significance.

5. Foregrounding:

The place from where the Nightingales come does not hold a great importance for the poet is indirectly hinted at in the syntactical pattern of the first line. To say what we have already said just now in other words, the idea of brightness and duty has been highlighted. These qualities are perhaps nurtured by the caring touch of nature, represented by the mountains, fruitful valleys, streams and the starry woods. The poet does not give any detail or explanation about how the birds learn their sound because of the beauty and
brightness of nature. He immediately declares his longing to be there without stating the reason. Will the beautiful surrounding of the mountains teach the poet also to learn his song, or else the poet wants to be there just out of curiosity? Or is he deficient in the art which the birds possess. The answer to this is left vague because the question and the assumptions are brusquely rejected in the very beginning of the second stanza.

6. Statement of Observation:

The poem is an attempt at presenting an idea. Had the poet done that alone in the form of a statement, the artistic merit of the poem would have been considerably undermined. But he redeems the poem from the banality of a prosaic statement by taking recourse to the use of symbolism and mythical allusions, the latter reinforcing the former.

7. Questions for comprehension:

Q.1 Is the poet’s assumption in the first three lines valid? Does it sound convincing in the light of later development of the poem?
Q.2 Why doesn't the poet attribute divinity to the mountains and valleys and streams in the first part of the first stanza, as he does regarding his own longing to go to wander into the starry woods which are not subject to change and decay?

Q.3 Have the natural surroundings of the first two lines of the first stanza any significant connection with the first line of the second stanza?

Q.4 Is there any implied contrast between "decay" and "change" on one hand and 'permanent' and 'beauty' on the other?

Q.5 Identify the images drawn from nature in the first stanza and compare them with those in the last stanza.

Q.6 Prepare a list of syntactic and lexical Foregrounding in the poem and comment on how they contribute to the deeper meaning of the poem.

Q.7 What effect does the use of consonance in line 16 of the poem create?

Q.8 Comment on:
1. Fruitful valleys
2. Starry woods
3. Heavenly air
4. Barren mountains
5. Spent streams
6. A throe of the heart
7. Raptured ear
8. Dark nocturnal secret

Q.9 List the cases of inversions of the normal word order pattern in the poem and comment upon their importance.
ON HIS BLINDNESS

WHEN I consider how by light is spent
Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide,
Lodg'd with me useless, though my soul more bent

To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My turn account, lest he returning chide;
'Doth God exact day-labour, light deny'd?'
I fondly ask; but Patience to prevent

That murmur, soon replies, 'God doth not need
Either man's work or his own gifts. Who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state

Is kingly: thousands at his bidding speed
And post o'er land and ocean without rest:
They also serve who only stand and wait.'
1. Reading aloud:

The teacher will, as usual, start with reading the poem loudly. While doing so, he/she should discuss certain things before analysing the poem, the most important being the title, theme and extra-textual information.

1(a) Title:

The title "On His Blindness" – is it apt? Is there 'coherence' i.e. is it related to the opening lines? These are the things which need to be considered while discussing the title. Here, it can be clearly seen that there is a link of the poem:

"............... how my light is spent

Ere half my days in this dark world and wide"

The phrases "light is spent" and "dark world" in lines 1 and 2 respectively point to the fact that the poem is about blindness.

1(b) Theme:

In order to increase students participation in the interactive presentation of the poem we can ask them to list
the central thought and the allied ones in the first sight lines. The list may, through leading questions emerge to be something like the following:

1. The central thought is "to serve the Maker" by using the gift (poetic talent) God has endowed him with.

2. It is painful not to utilise the gift because of physical disability.

3. God may be angry if a person thus gifted, like the third servant in the Parable, does not utilise his talent.

4. The poet wonders whether God also can have expectation and criteria of judgement as the Master has in the Parable.

5. All the above feelings and ideas revolve around the background of the poet's blindness. Here the word 'fondly' is significant on which we will comment later.

1(c) Extra textual information:

Most of the poems exist in a "context of situation" without understanding which, the meaning of the literary piece remains vague.
In dealing with this poem the teacher can give some extra-textual information and tell the students that the poem is autobiographical in nature. Milton's blindness in his youth was a sad but real fact. The second allusion is the Parable of the Talents in 'The Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Mathew' (25:14-30) The central idea of the Parable is whether God expects all his creatures to serve his command even though one is disabled for no fault of his own, but because of the Creator's own design.

1(d) Form:

The next clue to the meaning results from the form of the poem. The poem is in the Sonnet form hence students need to be given the definition which will help them in looking for the core meaning of the poem. The dictionary meaning of the term 'sonnet' goes as: "a poem properly expressive of a single complete thought, idea or sentiment of 14 lines usually in iambic pentameter, with rhymes arranged according to one of certain definite schemes, being in the strict or Italian form divided into a major group of 8 lines (the octave) followed by a minor group of 6 lines, (the
sestet), and in a common English form into 3 quatrains followed by a couplet."

The form of the poem as well as the central message of the Parable both point to one significant fact that the poem does not have thematic complexity and that it deals with a single thought or feeling.

1(e) Silent Reading:

The biographical information given to the students will help them appreciate and comprehend most of the striking phrases in their silent reading viz. "light", "Ere half my day", "dark world and wide", "that one talent". Biographical and biblical allusions may also inspire them to raise certain questions which can be meaningfully resolved through a line by line analysis by the teacher in the later stages of the study of the poem.

2. Paraphrase:

The poet starts by saying that when he thinks how he lost his eyesight before half of the days of his life are over, the world appears to be dark and dismal. It seems to be
engulfed in despondency. He regrets that the talent given to him by God would remain unutilized up to the last breath.

He expresses his inclination to serve God by composing poems in His praise. He thinks it is his duty to describe God's qualities, lest God should be angry with him for not utilizing the talents given to him. But then he thinks if God would need his services as he has deprived him of his eye-sight. Immediately, he thinks it is a foolish question.

The poet then satisfies himself that God neither needs the performance of man's needs nor the use of his endowed talents. He thinks that those who submissively tolerate sufferings and hardships also serve God. Patience is the element most loved by God.

Finally the poet says that God's Kingdom is great and has thousands to serve Him. God commands all, some are active, but those who stand weekly also please God by their devotion by waiting on His pleasure.

3. Syntactic Pattern / Cohesion:

The first eight lines constitute one complex sentence. It begins with an adverbial clause followed by other
subordinate clauses and clausal phases till we reach the eighth line to the Principal clause. In his eagerness for comprehension the poet has taken recourse to manipulating syntactic patterns which are at glaring deviance from the normal patterns used in speech or in simpler poems. Students might feel a bit uneasy with the winding syntactic movement of the first eight lines. But if we make them aware of the basic grammar of clause analysis where a complex sentence has a Principal clause and one or more subordinate clauses, they would certainly favourably respond to the suggestion of reading the first eight lines from the Principal Clause—"I fondly ask"—backwards.

The reading of the poem from "But Patience ............. without rest is more straightforward. The lines of what would traditionally be called sestet or in uncomplicated syntactic forms, consisting of declarative sentences with pauses, and inversion of clauses which are commonly encountered to make colloquial rhythm of the English language. Students will find no difficulty in grasping the literal meaning of the sestet. The real problem of interpretation lies with the first eight lines because of the linguistic complexity of the syntactic patterns.
4. Foregrounding:

The foregrounding at the grammatical and syntactical level can be located as follows:

1. The involved and convoluted syntactic pattern from "When I...........I fondly ask" raises the question of the honesty of intra-textual poetic intention. We wonder whether the feelings expressed by the poet is sincere or merely a rhetorical device to draw a message contained in the last line. The possibility of God's 'chiding' the delinquent disabled creature is presented through a winding development of the various bits of the facts stated e.g. blindness, coming over the poet in the middle of his youth: the still fecund poetic talent struggling for an action; but a disability to use this talent. Keeping strictly to the intra-textual details of the contextual situation the rhetorical question, "fondly ask" sounds a false note. This response to the poem is borne out by the reply of Patience in the rest of the poem, because it has been conveyed in easily comprehensible sentence patterns creating a smooth narrative flow. The grammatical foregrounding is
observable in the contrasted syntactic patterns of the two halves of the poem. The significant point to note is that the suspected sincerity of the poetic thought in the first half of the poem is conveyed through a question—"Doth God......?"—which can have relevance only in the light of the extra-textual fact of Milton’s real blindness and cannot easily be connected by the other fact by the Parable mentioned earlier. The extra-textual blending of the thematic fibre in the present poem as an essential clue to the deeper meaning of the poem is a rebuff as it were to the New Critics who opposed consideration of such elements in the analysis of poem. Considered thus, the false note we talked about is changed to have been a deliberate poetic device for bringing dramatic depth to the poem. This is clear from the poetic confession that the poet’s apprehension is ill founded, explicitly conveyed through the ‘Foregrounding’ of “fondly” which obviously means ‘foolishly’.

2. The most significantly foregrounded lexical item is “Talent” which has a Genus faced richness of meaning (Genus faced because the word refers to the poetic
talent of the poet at the present time as well as alludes to the talents in the Biblical Parable). In both the cases the role of the Master, or God and His anger is relevant. The word "useless" gets connected with talent in the Parable and yields the meaning of inactivity, infertility and a static-growth-oriented situation.

3. The next lexical item is "murmur" which implies complaint ventilating some grievances. This grievances ridden state of the poet's mind is cleared of the fog of grudge when Patience is brought in to convince the poet of the true meaning of service to God in the Christian sense, i.e. "They also serve who only stand and wait."

Besides the grammatical Foregrounding pointed out above, the poem is simple in so far as the figurative use of language is concerned even the metaphors of "king" and "bearing of mild yoke" towards the end of the poem are uncomplicated figures.
5. **Statement of Observation:**

The poem is in fact a reversal of the meaning of the Parable where the erring servant, out of simple loyalty, is punished by the master. But if the story of the parable be expanded, the role of Patience would have been the same as it is in the case of the poet. The servant of the Parable would have learnt of the wider design of his master by simply waiting. Thus, the poem is both a development of and a reversal to, of the meaning of the Biblical Parable.


6. **Questions for comprehension:**

Q.1 What is meant by the one talent that is death to hide?

Q.2 Is the poem a development of, or a reversal of, the meaning of the Parable? Or both?

Q.3 Does Patience answer the question, or does Patience show that the question is badly framed?
Q.4 Is the poem sentimental?

Q.5 How important to you is the question of personal sincerity?

Q.6 Is the poem personally sincere?

Q.7 Does the poem make sense to you in its own terms?
THE EXPRESS

After the first powerful plain manifesto
The black statement of pistons, without more fuss
But gliding like a queen, she leaves the station.
Without bowing and with restrained unconcern
She passes the houses which humbly crowd outside,
The gasworks and at last the heavy page
Of death, printed by gravestones in the cemetery.
Beyond the town there lies the open country
Where, gathering speed, she acquires mystery,
The luminous self-possession of ships on ocean.
It is now she begins to sing – at first quite low
Then loud, and at last with a jazzy madness –
The song of her whistle screaming at curves,
Of deafening tunnels, brakes, innumerable bolts.
And always light, aerial, underneath
Goes the elate metre of her wheels.
Steaming through metal landscape on her lines
She plunges new ears of wild happiness
Where speed throws up strange shapes, broad curves
And parallels clean like the steel of guns.
At last, further than Edinburgh or Rome,
Beyond the crest of the world, she reaches night
Where only a low streamline brightness
Of phosphorus on the tossing hills is white.
Ah, like a comet through flame she moves entranced
Wrapt in her music no bird song, no, nor bough
Breaking with honey buds, shall ever equal.
1. **Reading aloud:**

The loud reading of the poem will present no problem with skinning the cognitive meaning of the whole piece. Students will identify that it is a poem which passes through various places and goes to far off places.

1(a) **Title:**

The title should give a clue to the intended meaning at a connotative level. Questions like – Why the poet used a definite article and not an indefinite one? Why is the specific locale of the starting of the train not mentioned? Does the train then stand for an idea, image or a symbol for something? Does the poet give details about the statement of idea, its development and conclusion? Is the idea presented through any dialectic and debated? etc. – come to the mind for immediate attention. One thing is sure that the title does not relate to a particular inert object but is endowed with human attributes of movement and joy of song.

1(b) **Theme:**

The teacher will tell the students that the word “manifesto” is a prominent collocational violence and brings
in a jarring effect. Students will immediately recognise that "manifesto" belongs to a clearly familiar register of politics and is used for a particular political ideology, i.e. communism. Today, it is often used in a much looser sense meaning programme, projects, political promises and such fields of social upliftments related to the domain of politics. Whatever extended sense the term has acquired, the meaning that it relates to an idea, ideology or a socio-political value system comes to our mind immediately. Thus there is a strong connection or "coherence" between the title and the very opening line of the poem.

1(c) Context of Situation / Extra Textual Information:  

The teacher may tell the students about two or three things regarding the context of situation in which the poem was born: the first thing, should be some details about Spender's own life, as a member of the Leftist group of poets headed by W.H. Auden who had profound sympathy for the miserable lot of the working class labour. His reaction to the Spanish Civil War and praise for the struggle of the working labour class against the exploiting capitalist class under the banner of Marxism and his pronounced sympathies
for the have-nots and the unemployed in the wake of the Great Depression during the thirties after World War I, will help the students to respond to the train as an embodiment of an ideology better.

1(d) Silent Reading:

The students' attention is now fixed on the fact that the poem is about the ideology of Communism. So, while reading the poem silently, the train will be depersonalised. They will envision the train in terms of a majestic human, a dignified woman. Normally we would use "it" for the train but the poet uses "she" and the movement is presented as a charming sight.

While reading the poem silently the students will try to find the connotative meanings of different linguistic items like "Manifesto", "black statements", "more fuss", "queen" which bring in explicit "Foregrounding"

2. Paraphrase:

The poem is a single long paragraph. If a person reads the poem without understanding the "context of situation" it would seem to be a simple poem written about a train. But
as extra-textual information has already been provided to the students, it is not relevant here to give all the details.

The poem begins when the train leaves the station but the words "statement" and "manifesto" seem to be out of place (this collocational violence has been discussed under the heading "syntactic patterns") the simile in line 3 "gliding like a queen" points to the grace of movement.

The attitude of the train "without bowing and with restrained unconcern" is very natural. Then the route — houses, gasworks, church, cemetery, the open country — has been described. All this seems to be very normal as these are the things a train usually passes through, but the reference may point to the fact that it is mostly concerned with the working class.

Once out of town, it increases its speed and the onlookers are stunned.

The train moves at a great speed and "begins to sing" i.e. it gives a whistle, at first low, then loud, and at last with a "Jazzy madness".
She whistles while passing through curves, tunnels and gives a brake, wherever necessary.

While going at a great speed the things outside seem to shine and change their shapes. She goes further than Edinburgh or Rome and wants to reach the peak of the world. At night it is shining so brightly as if it were a cornet.

The music that it creates is unparalleled it seems to be supernatural even nature (birds, bough) fails to produce such music.

3. Syntactic Pattern / Cohesion:

In the first three lines we find that there is a registral deviance in regard to images. "Manifesto" and "Statement" belong to the register of political discourse and the simile used in the third line,

"But gliding like a queen, she leaves the station."

belongs to the domain of royalty. Only two nouns i.e., "pistons" and "station" belong to the proper domain of the immediate subject, i.e. the train. "Fuss" belongs to the domain of colloquialism. This registral meaning achieves the goal of presenting the movement of the train with the dual
burden of the cognitive and connotative meanings in a vivid manner.

Line 4 onwards the syntactic pattern gets more complex with the addition of an adjectival clause in line 5.

"She passes the houses which humbly crowd outside,"

Line 6 and 7 are left without any verbal lexical item and the poet's intention is to elaborate his point of view by the visual images of the gas-works and a large cemetery which can be seen on the fringe of the metropolis out of which the train moves off. The gliding of the first vinyet progresses into passing with increasing speed denoted by the quick succession of the sight of houses, gasworks, and the cemetery. Besides the cognitive aspect of the meaning relating to the gradual picking up of the speed by the train, deeper meaning relating to the studying of the ideology is explicit. This ideological movement was formulated in the metropolis no doubt but is found in the sway outside the metropolis in the areas where labourers lived at the periphery of the town. The lexical items like “humbly”, “gasworks” and the epitaphs on the tombs in the cemetery
point to the fact that the people concerned here are the working class.

The third statement about the further speeding up of the train is described in lines 8–10. The train moves beyond the town into the open country with greater speed which creates a sort of agreeable fascination and mystery. The non-clausal part of the syntactic pattern in line 10 which is also not marked by any figurative marker such as we have in a simile shows that the description now is picking up to move into a deeper poetic domain by invoking a vivid visual image.

Lines 15 and 16 follow the same syntactic pattern as the other complete sentences from the beginning of the poem, i.e. the Principal Clause following the adjuncts. This has been done in order to emphasise the idea contained in the phrases constituting the adjunct. The train now moves to the rural landscape smoothly with a shrill scream as it were to bring a new awareness among the people. The last part of the gaining of speed creates “strange shapes”, creating mysterious noise and image of movement.
4. Foregrounding:

We have already mentioned the collocational deviance in "Manifesto". The "black statement of pistons" at the literal denotative level means the starting of the train. The term "statement" is obviously connected with "manifesto", though to accept its meaning in the immediate context of the poem as "being put into operation" will not be difficult. It may pass for an idiomatic statement of something like 'to translate thoughts into action where the infinitive simply means 'to activate'. In "without more fuss" the words "more" is significant which denotes that something has gone on before the actual starting of the train. In terms of the connotative meaning, this "more fuss" might refer to discussions, debates, protests, etc before giving a green signal to the train – i.e. Communism – to move out of the urban circle of intellectual deliberations to the hitherto untravelled territory of different types. The word "black" remains intriguing. At the literal plane it relates to the colour of the pistons but at a deeper level it may mean an attack upon the domination of Capitalism for which the movement of the train – start of a revolution— would mean, in a common idiomatic parlance, a black day, meaning in other words a
prophetic forecast on the future of the present of the present political system.

We encounter another Foregrounded word, "queen" which may be called a contextual violence by the choice of the linguistic item made by the poet. In the context of Communism the presence of a queen majestically and graciously moving is likely to disturb the pattern of thought which has just begun to take shape. But the term "gliding" while supporting the surprising the inclusion of queen, for her grace of movement may recall the image of the queen bee. The train's leaving the station comes as a linguistic capping over the other preparatory activities conveyed by the words "manifesto", "statement of the pistons", "gliding like a queen". The end position of the Principal Clause in the syntactic pattern of the first statement relates to the definitiveness of the movement of the idea. (c.f. the train).

The word "mystery" is pronouncedly Foregrounded and may yield a multilayered semantic dimension. It may mean that they did not quite understand what was happening around, especially in the context of its sudden outburst in Russia where the uneducated masses were not mentally fully
prepared to comprehend the implications of the grand
revolution.

The train is endowed with more attributes of joy such
as singing which begins at a low pitch, then goes into
loudness and at last acquires a "jazzy madness." The
cognitive aspect of the meaning is quite clear and students
can easily grasp that it is the whistle of the train. But at the
deeper level it may mean that the movement starting at a
low key almost engulfed the whole of the human population
with a sort of intoxication which kept them away from
heeding to any other political ideology. The exclusiveness of
jazz music at its highest pitch keeps the ears of the listeners
shut off from any other noise.

5. Images:

The image of the "queen bee" has already established
the fact the queen (the political ideology) has a wide
following and no obstruction. As the train leaves the poetic
envisioning of its movement in terms of the graceful woman
with a sense of pride, commitment and determination recede
into the other details, or we can say is defused over other
territories of its spreading influence.
The vivid visual image, the "luminous self possession of ships on oceans" indicates the view of the interior of the train when the natural light of the day has ended. The image also reinforces the meaning already conveyed in the image of the queen with her "restrained unconcern" and "stately movement" (without bowing).

The last part of the gaining of speed creates "strange shapes", creating mysterious noise and image of movement. Up to this point the train has covered the territories adjoining the peripheral parts of the metropolis, and the wide lands of the rural habitation inside the country. Towards the concluding part of the poem the poet extends the boundary of influence of the ideology beyond the "crest of the world". The prophetic envisioning of the spread of the ideology is summed up in the reference to Edinburgh or Rome, where geographic specifically is not the poetic intention. The idea aimed at being communicated is the quick expansiveness of the political Movement across Europe where a large part of it had already come under the spell of the Revolution. The movement of the ideology is not so much directed to the urban territory as to the rural ones. It is represented by the image of the "stream-lined
brightness of Phosphorous" while the train crosses the "tossing hills" in the sweep of the fast movement.

The visual image presented in lines 22-24 is a familiar experience of any traveller by train. The fastness of the train's speed is achieved by as it were, the felt experience of the reader as a train traveller.

6. **Lyrical Quality:**

   While the descriptive narrative reaches its crescendo with the simple slow moving of the train, out of the station, gaining speed gradually and finally acquiring a tremendous high speed, the poet does not seem to be interested in giving other details of the movement of the train. The straightforward narrative ends in a stylistically significant manner in a lyrical outburst of the poet when his own fascination at the sight of the train breaks his narrative restrain. The train now is seen as moving in a trance with the shooting speed of a lighted comet.

   Besides the visual realisation of the final movement of the train where the train is connected with a cosmic power (c.f. the comet), a highly poetic dimension of it's universality
is seen in its unparalleled music of the song which endows the train with supernatural attributes. The lyrical outburst as a conclusion of the poem raises it immediately from the level of its being merely a poem of ideas. It appears as if the poet has been carefully and systematically working up the response of the reader towards the poetic perception in a way that the reader and the poet become one integral part of the speeding movement of the train. It the final three lines the syntactic pattern, though unambiguous, gets more involved than the other statements in the poem which implies an ecstasy like experience to describe which the verbal medium is accepted to be inadequate. Even nature fails in matching the effect of the train’s song.

7. Statement of Observation:

The close analysis of the poem will show how the poet is fascinated by machine which was considered to be a solution to the economic depression that had engulfed the western hemisphere during the 1930’s. However more extra textual information will take the mind of the reader away from the linguistic organisation of the poetic content. The emotional involvement of the poet in the content is one of
uninhibited administration for an idea without the least tinge of his inclination been propagandist. The whole poem follows a repetitive syntactic pattern consisting of 8 clearly shaped sentences with words we commonly encounter in our daily life. The images are strictly confined to the visual and auditory domains. This structural and linguistic organisation of the poem indicate that the deeper profundity of any further poetic ideas needn’t be looked for.

8. Questions for comprehension:

Q.1 How is the title of the poem connected in a coherent manner with the opening of the poem?

Q.2 The details of the territories through which the train passes are very selective. What does it indicate?

Q.3 Do you see any contradiction or impropriety in using the image contained in "gliding like a queen"?

Q.4 List all visual and auditory images to show whether they are merely decorative or have a greater intratextual relevance. Do you think the concluding lyrical outburst is in character in regard to the development of the poetic thought or does it stand out as an after thought?
THE SECOND COMING

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

Surely some revelation is at hand;
Surely the Second Coming is at hand.
The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out
When a vast image out of spiritus Mundi
Troubles my sight: somewhere in sands of the desert
A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds.

The darkness drops again; but now I know
That twenty centuries of stony sleep
Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,
And what rough beast; its hour come round at last,
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?
1. **Reading aloud:**

The teacher will, as usual, read the poem loudly. The reading should be such that the students get a feel of the possible tenor and thematic concern of the poem. The very first line has four long drawn vowels, and hence the words are to be read out with proper gravity of the rhythmic movement to demonstrate that the poem is of a contemplative visionary nature and not a narrative with dramatic situations.

Here perhaps, through a brief digression the teacher can explain the meaning of the term gyre, which he will find is a familiar experience of people, through the mother tongue (if feasible). This will get the students ready to be involved in the movement of the poem.

1(a) **Title:**

Students can be given hints about the implication of the title. Here the use of the definite article making the event of "Coming" a 'second time', can be explained to the class through their interactive participation. The definite article, the students will agree, indicates that the second
coming has already taken place and hence the allusive or metaphorical pointer will be to the civilisation of Christianity. Here the teacher should withhold for some time further explanation of the biblical myth or ‘Yeats’ concept of history and civilization. This will help the students to concentrate on extra-textual rubric of the poem rather than be diverted to extraneous information.

1(b) Theme:

After the teacher’s loud reading and their own silent reading students can be asked questions as to what the poem is about. They will surely come out with two answers

(i) The deterioration or disruption of a recurrent phenomenon which has resulted in a sorry state of affairs of a pervasive nature. The theme of recurrence or continuity can be easily drawn from the verbal pattern in the beginning of the poem where the image of gyration is created. Here the teacher can introduce to the students Yeats’ concept of civilization as a conical gyre, preferably through a geometrical drawing, to explain his concept of civilization. The conical gyre will look something like this:
Students can now perceive in the gyration of the growth of a new civilization the points where things have started falling apart and the centre cannot hold because this idea is embedded in the gyroal concept of Yeats' notions of the birth, growth and death of a civilization. Students can easily identify the civilization as that of Christianity starting with the birth of Jesus Christ.

(ii) The second thing which promises to lift the gloom of the first part is the vision of a hope unambiguously conveyed through the words "revelation". Students can identify that the
"the widening gyre" which has been "turning and turning" is going to start afresh at the points of its complete collapse as shown in the geometrical figure. After this the teacher can point out how the superficial meaning of the Christian civilization completing its span of life is to be replaced by a civilization the shape of which is envisioned by the poet without any apparent logic. Thus the students can discover at the superficial level that the poem is structured in a way that the central theme starting with a systematic and logical exposition concludes with a purely subjective solution for which there is no intratextual or extra textual reasoning provided. The poem may, therefore, give an impression of a subjective approach to a major problem concerning the genesis, development and end of a major civilization in any particular culture. The poem bears a deep colouring of the poet's sense of the lack of hope for a positive future of the human race.

1(c) Context of Situation / Extra textual information:

The students should be goaded into responding to the validity of the poet's futuristic vision in the context of the situation globally, where 'the rough beast' has increasingly
been destructive. This finds immediate reference to the struggle for independence in Ireland, which witnessed a lot of bloodshed and was a period of collapse of all values. The global scenario of blood dimmed panorama in which the virtuous or doomed is let loose all over the world during a period after the composition of the poem. This validation is well within the experiential range of the adults studying at the university levels.

1(d) Silent Reading:

The students will now read the poem silently, imitating the reading of the teacher. During the silent reading they will try to find answers to simple questions like: Into how many parts is the poem divided? Does the first part have any reference to the second coming? Is the second coming assured in the second part? Is “The second coming” an event, or is a return of values or what? Will the hope of the return or beginning of a new time bring any better conditions?
2. **Paraphrase:**

The poem begins with the image of falcon moving away from the falconer. The falcon (followers) can not hear the falconer (Church). The general condition is bad and things are getting out of control (of the Church). There is corruption and bloodshed everywhere and nobody can listen to the cries of the innocent. People have lost faith in everything good (including the Church) atmosphere of total despair and hopelessness pervades the society.

The second part begins with a version of hope and reassurance by the use of the words “surely”, “revelation” and “at hand”. It informs the readers about the second coming. But the vast image (of the second coming) that arises in the sands of the desert shapes the vision created in the first two lines. The image which has the head of a man and body of a lion has a blank gaze, as pitiless as the sun. It is seen moving, frightening away the desert birds. The coming of this awe-inspiring and terrifying image brings an end to the duration of the first coming. The new civilization, in its “rocking cradle” will be a “nightmarish” vision of a “rough beast” “slouching” towards Bethlehem to be born.
3. **Syntactic Pattern / Cohesion:**

That the poem is divided into two parts is clearly indicated by the graphological spacing. The students will became alert immediately at the repetition of the kinesthetic verbal form of "turn" denoting movement and progression invoking visual perception.

Special attention is to be paid to the middle pause in the third line where two sentences are used to give a picture of the situation which the poem is going to present.

In the 4\textsuperscript{th} and 5\textsuperscript{th} lines the reading should bring out the prominence of the hard consonants i.e. /d/ and the repetition of the verb "loosed".

"Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world

The blood dimmed tide is loosed and everywhere".

In the 6\textsuperscript{th}, 7\textsuperscript{th} and 8\textsuperscript{th} lines the dominance is of soft consonants and short vowels—/sl/, /ll/, /ls/.

"The ceremony of innocence is drowned;

The best lack all conviction while the worst

Are full of passionate intensity".

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The syntactic pattern of the third line i.e. the present indefinite denotes both the present and at the same time contains the idea of recurrence. This brings into a bold relief. The universality of the phenomenon of the history of a civilization is integrally connected with its immediate reference to the sorry state of affairs in Ireland in particular and the western hemisphere in general. The history of the Irish struggle of independence and the internecine war between the Republicans and the Free status immediately before Irene's independence in 1923 was a period of the collapse of all values. From the lexical points of view two words – "things" and "hold" stand out prominently for introducing the meaningful element of ambiguity. Even in common parlance we refer to "things" for a general state of affairs which is inclusive of all facets of a particular situation (e.g. "things were really bad" meaning general application rather than any specificity). In the same way the word "hold" may mean the centre not being capable of holding the things which were falling apart or the centre nor being able to stand on its own even, depending upon the use of the verb "hold" either transitively or intransitively. In fact both the meanings are simultaneously present. The resultant
scenario is one of pervasive anarchy conveyed through the passive construction of the sentence pattern. This syntactic pattern is continued in the two lines which follow where we have the verbs "is loosed" and is "drowned". The repetition of "loosed" reinforces the irretrievable. In the last two lines of the first part we return again to the syntactic pattern of a statement in the present tense. This syntactic pattern of the declarative sentence and the present tense in the first part thus convey the state of affairs towards the close of the 20th century, the theoretically stipulated period of the span of life of the Christian civilization.

This also hints at the general pattern of the history of any great civilization.

The first two lines of the second part heavily depend upon the device of repetition and the use of straightforward syntactic pattern. Again, the consonants are the soft ones and vowels are short which combine together with the other consonantal and assonant features along with the repetition of "surely" and "at hand" are reassuring in the context of the note of despair hinted at in the first part of the poem. The
word "revelation" (vision of hope) is quickly revealed to be the second coming.

Even at the stage of loud reading, the students are bound to ruminate over the implications of the second coming, the 3rd line breaks at an exclamation which threatens to shake the vision just created in the first two lines.

4. Foregrounding:

Under Foregrounding we can ask the students to identify the linguistic items which stand out prominently from their phonological, grammatical and collocational points of views.

In the first part of the poem students can point out the use of long vowels being used as a pointer to the expanse of the dominion of the civilization under reference, i.e. Christianity. The ever-expanding gyration of the civilization encompassing the ever-increasing territorial expansion of its control and influence has been enforced by the visual image and symbolism of the falcon not heeding the instructions of the falconer. Here the falcon is not any ordinary bird but the
very symbol of Christianity which propels the gyration of the
civilization and hence is known as gyro-falcon. The image of
this falcon not "hearing the falconer" implies the loss of
direction of Christianity, the institutionalised control of
which, through the strong church has lost its mooring. There
is a terrible ironical implication here about the sorry state of
affairs of the value of Christian dispensation for the needy
humanity. But this has not been explicitly conveyed through
the linguistic aspects of the first two lines. This is why it is
rightly said that the deeper meaning of the text lies
sometimes beyond the language.

But here both the aesthetic and linguistic
Foregrounding in the form of symbolism and imagery, as well
as phonological and grammatical markers, collaborate to
convey the meaning of a compulsive situation of
helplessness—conveyed by the use of the modal "cannot" in
retrieving the pristine strength and value system of
Christianity. If that is the situation then the inevitable
consequences are presented in the six lines which follows
the initial image. The various images in which the situation
is presented are conveyed in straightforward statements, in
short, declarative sentences, denoting a sense of finality.
Certain significant figurative and symbolic Foregrounding is to be noticed in the images of "anarchy", "tide", "drowning" and "passionate intensity". The tide is obliquely a pointer to the biblical deluge which is historically telescoped into the modern age with its conjunction with violence e.g., "blood dimmed" in the wave of unmindful violence, traditional value becomes merely ceremonious and looses all it's meaning and relevance (e.g. drowned).

"The ceremony of innocence is drowned"

There is no intellectual fibre left which can be said to be nourished by any strong conviction, while the petty humanity at the level of lower intellectuality is behaving like a mad man (e.g. the passionate intensity). Thus the literary and linguistic aspects of can help the students to grasp the meaning and the mood of the first part of the poem i.e. a total collapse of a great civilization, and a mood of resultant despair.

5. Images:

There seems to be a deliberate rhythmic pattern from the 1st to the 8th line, which encapsulates the narrative of
one image with implication of alarm, concern and anxiety to one of depression and hopelessness. This image has been created by the used of hard consonants /t/ and /d/, and phrases like "the falcon cannot hear the falconer", "things fall apart", "Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world", "The blood dimmed tide is loosed", "The ceremony of innocence is drowned". The middle pause in the third line, "things fall apart"; "the centre cannot hold" gives a clear picture of the situation.

The second part of the poem describes the envisioned image of the new civilization. The shape of the new civilization is presented through a terrifying image of a shape with "Lion body and head of a man". The image has a blank and pitiless gaze as contrasted with the image of Christ (i.e. mercy, love, sympathy, compassion etc,) in the first coming, the duration of which is going to come to close. Students can easily be made to perceive the conclusion of the poem that "20 centuries" of Christian civilization has been a "stony sleep", meaning futility and indifference to the service of humanity. The new civilization in its "rocking cradle" will be a "nightmarish" vision of a "rough beast" "slouching" to be born.
The above explanation can immediately arouse in the minds of the students the question whether the new civilization which will be born out of the centric point of the debris of the old one will hold out any happier state of existence for mankind. Such a curiosity is logical because by now the students have enough understanding of Yeats' concept of civilization. This curiosity connects the two parts of the poem on the principle of coherence.

The absence of linguistic markers for coherence is strongly realised when we notice the poet’s effort to lighten the weight of the mood of despair by emphatically holding out a hope of a new beginning, which is imminent. The repetition of the words “surely” and “at hand” reinforce the idea of the inevitable urgency of this new beginning. In the 3rd line the “second coming” is repeated with an exclamation mark. Exclamations usually convey the sense of surprise, reservation, excitement, skepticism, elation or mood of great satisfaction at achieving some long cherished goal or object etc. In the present context a mixed sense of skepticism and satisfaction seems to be the meaning. The sense of skepticism is evidenced in the image of the “revelation” appearing to be the one contrasted with that of the pristine
image of the preceding civilization. "The second coming" is going to be a terrifying phenomena. The innocent and delicate babe that Christ was, in his first cradle is replaced here by the "lion body and head of a man". Naturally the gaze of such a futuristic birth presents "blankness" and "pitilessness" like the desert sun providing no comfort to the "desert birds" which had hitherto been soothing themselves under the comforting shadows of the desert. The birds will naturally feel frightened and run away as the "shape" moves it's "thighs slowly". The image is not an ordinary one. It is "vast", coming out of the cosmic universe. When such an occurrence is envisioned to take place "The darkness drops again". Here the earlier mood of despair returns. It is joined by a sense of regret at the ineffectiveness, indifference and futility of the Christian civilization during its course of "20 centuries". Christianity failed to initiate a meaningful, constructive, worthwhile and humanistic new civilization. Hence the "rocking cradle" will be that of a "rough beast" which will be indifferent to the cause of humanity and fully devoid of love and sympathy. It will be both terrifying as well as strong.
6. Choice:

The most important factor in Foregrounding which is essential to both literary and linguistic criteria of analysis is choice—choice of lexical as well as grammatical components of the poem which are available within a system of the language. The most important criterion in this regard on the side of literary appreciation is the use of figurative and symbolic devices, which we have already talked about. The metaphorlic and mythical use of the symbolism of falcon, and deluge in the first part and of the shape "with lion body and the head of a man", the pitiless and blank gaze of the "shape" frightening birds away," the rocking cradle" and allusion to Bethlehem in the second part are all within in the system of the figurative exploitation of language in the larger sense. The element of surprise—an important aspect of Foregrounding can be seen in the emphatically asserted hope in the beginning of the second part which is followed soon by its terrifying frustration developed to the point of the vision of Bethlehem with a nightmarish rocking cradle. In the same way we can point out to the choice made at the lexical or the grammatical levels—pointed out earlier during
the analysis of the poem which collaborate and even validate the aesthetic response of the reader.

Thus the poem can be presented in the class-room with the teachers trying to assure himself/herself whether the poem has gone home to the student as a whole, by devising a list of comprehension questions.

7. **Statement of observation:**

Now we can say that the poem deals with some urgent issue of the 20th century and the socio-political culture of Ireland.

8. **Questions for comprehension:**

Q.1. What does 'The second coming' mean—is it the coming of an individual?

Q.2. In how many parts can you divide the poem from the point of view of its themes?

Q.3. What is the theme of the first part?

Q.4. What is the theme of the second part?
Q.5. Does the second part have only one theme or more than one? What are they?

Q.6. Why does the poet describe his visions in the first and second part through metaphors, myths, legends, images etc.?

Q.7. How does the poet telescope the past into the present?

Q.8. Would it make any difference in the meaning if the poet had used the present continuous verbal form in the first three lines?

Q.9. What effect would be created if the nominal phrase pattern of MHQ (Modifier + Headword + Qualifier) would have been used in line 15? (A gaze ........... sun)

Q.10. Why have the desert birds been described as indignant?
LEDA AND THE SWAN

A SUDDEN blow: the great wings beating still
Above the staggering girl, her thighs caressed
By the dark webs, her nape caught in his bill,
He holds her helpless breast upon his breast.

How can those terrified vague fingers push
The feathered glory from her loosening thighs?
And how can body, laid in that white rush,
But feel the strange heart beating where it lies?

A shudder in the lions engenders there
The broken wall, the burning roof and tower
And Agamemnon dead.

Being so caught up,
So mastered by the brute blood of the air,
Did she put on his knowledge with his power
Before the indifferent beak could let her drops?
1. **Reading aloud:**

The students have by now, already read "The Second Coming". This poem bears a striking contrast to the preceding one, thematically, structurally and linguistically in both content and form. The former dealt with a futuristic enunciation while the present one deals with the one which happened in the past. The first poem dealt with the enunciation which will be a successor to the one of Christian civilization while the present one deals with the enunciation of Hellenic civilization. The first poem did not have dramatic element in the strict sense of the term. The syntactic patterns are straightforward and simple with not many deviances either lexical or grammatical. But in the present poem there is the description of an event taking place, the deeper implication of which is the core of the total "significance" of the poem.

The reading aloud should emphasise the kinetic verbal elements like "beating", "staggering", "caressing", "catching", "holding", "loosening", etc. These verbs emphasise the ongoing happening which is a single event.
1(a) Title:

The title "Leda and the Swan" clearly hints that the poem is going to deal with something which will be a consequence of the joint participation of the divine and the human. An alternative title, "The Rape of Leda" would have been immediately connected with the poetic narrative which describes the act of rape vividly. But the poet's intention was to emphasise the concept of the history of a civilization conveyed through the symbolical act of procreativity in which the participants are both the divine and the human.

1(b) Theme:

The last stanza puts forward the central thematic concern of the poem, in the form of an interrogative pattern. The possible answer to the question raised is implicit in the entire narrative. The birth of Hellenic civilization is caused by a divine scheme where the god of lightening and thunderbolt of the old testament (Zeus) descends on the earth with the accompaniment of his brute power allied with divine wisdom. The civilization that grew understood only the brute power which was an ingredient in engendering this civilization but remained oblivious of or indifferent to the
element of wisdom which could have sustained the civilization under reference after it had reached its glorious perfection. The power was used in destroying the civilization which have been saved by the restraining power of wisdom alone.

1(c) Silent Reading:

Having discussed so much the students may now be asked to read the poem silently.

It should not be difficult for the students in grasping the cognitive and literal meaning of the poem, especially in the first two stanzas where the narrative is a "complete whole" in the Aristotelian sense, with a beginning, a middle and an end. However the third stanza where there is a sudden shift to other allied events – broken wall, broken road and tower, Agamemnon dead – may present a temporary confusion in the mind of the students about the continuity of the cognitive meaning. This is because of highly structured use of language.
But these confusions in the minds of the students may be cleared by providing them the relevant extra-textual information.

1(d) Extra-textual Information:

The teacher can ask the students whether they could have responded reasonably to the poem in the absence of any extra-textual information.

Except for the use of a proper name Agamemnon there is no other word in the whole poem which may be described difficult in its denotative meaning. An intelligent student will hardly have to look up a dictionary for the meaning of any of the words. However, the reference to Agamemnon may prove to be incomprehensible. Here the teacher will provide some extra-textual information about Agamemnon.

The teacher can narrate the story of the birth of Clytemnestra and her betrayal of her husband Agamemnon who was killed on his return from the Trojan war, with the help of her accomplice. This explanation of the extra-textual context will fully explain the meaning of the last two lines of the third stanza beginning with “The broken wall ........."
Here again, the information about the destruction of Troy can be given.

Troy stands for the pinnacle or perfection of a great ancient civilization which was completely ruined by the consequences of amorous entanglements. Both Agamemnon and Menelaus suffered because of their wives' violation of the sanctity of marriage and love bonds. The instruments of destruction of a civilization were Helen and Clytemnestra who were the product of the human and the divine.

2. Paraphrase:

Contrary to what the New Critics had objected to (Paraphrase and extra-textual information), for a comprehensive understanding of a poem.

The teacher can start like this:

There was a sudden blow which brought with it a kind of sweep of wind. This sudden assault was made by Zeus in the shape of a swan who was infatuated by Leda's beauty while she was bathing.
Leda’s power to resist the assault was gone. Her finger and been rendered inactive by a mixture of confusion and terror of this sudden attack.

The outcome of the breaking down of Leda’s resistance is the birth of Helen who is not only responsible for the destruction of Troy with its burning roof-tops but also for the death of Agamemnon.

The final question arises is whether any positive gains also came out of this act? Was Leda able to take on to herself part of the divine knowledge and power of Zeus before he dropped her from his indifferent beak?

This paraphrased version of the poem will definitely enable the students to penetrate deeper into the total significance of the act, involving physical violence, act of procreation, the birth of beauty symbolising perfection, lack of wisdom leading to destruction and the final collapse of all that has been accomplished by a civilization over a span of centuries of its life.
3. **Syntactic Pattern / Cohesion:**

Now the teacher can proceed with the analysis of the syntactic pattern line by line.

Line 1 begins with a sort of montage in a non-verbal clause, i.e. "a sudden blow", followed by a number of minor montages relating to the details of the act. The teacher can explain by giving other familiar examples that the act has been accomplished. The sexual assault by the powerful bird has been made. Here the word "still" is prominently significant,

"A sudden blow: the great wings beating still"

because it points to the continuity of the action started a while ago.

The vividness of the details of the act is to show the deliberate design of God, well thought out, planned and executed. This will make the vision of the enunciation of the new civilization more easily comprehensible.

In the first stanza the narrative is straight-forward, presented through significant snaps of a still camera which pulsate with profuse energies.
However the second stanza is arranged on the syntactic pattern of an interrogative sentence.

"How can those terrified vague fingers push the feathered glory from her loosening thighs?

And how can a body laid in that white rush, But feel the strange heart beating where it lies?

Here the rhythmic movement of the stanza disengages itself from the tension of the first stanza. It is not for nothing that a straight-forward narrative in the form of an interrogative statement is used. It is used to underscore the extra-ordinary emphasis on the absence of any doubt about the possibility of the outcome of this union of the divine and the human.

The third stanza points to the story of the death of Agamemnon.

The last and the fourth stanza again ends on interrogative note:

"Did she put on his knowledge with his power.

Before the indifferent beak could let her drop?"
The answer to this question is "probably not" because knowledge and power do not co-exist.

3. Foregrounding:

Foregrounding in the first line of the second stanza where there is an ambiguous meaning, emerges from collocational evidence.

"How can those terrified vague fingers push
The feathered glory from her loosening thighs?"

Obviously "vague" does not belong to the 'set' of either terror, fear or fingers. The possible meaning would be the humans inability to fully grasp the divine design in his administering human affairs.

The other lexical items stanza 3 which seem to be 'foreground' but are exactly not, are "the broken wall" the burning roof and tower" and Agamemnon dead" as they are all related to the life of Helen, the child of Leda and Zeus.

5. Statement of Observation:

While "The Second Coming" ended with a terrifying futuristic vision, this poem shows the poets concern in the
post was context where restraint, will have a restraining effect on future destruction by a mindless application of brute force. This poem can be the best example of precision, compactness and handling of mythology.

6. **Question for Comprehension:**

Q.1 What does the title with the conjunction “and” mean to you?

Q.2 Does the mythical allusion sound convincing? It is a pointer to the culture history of an ancient past?

Q.3 Does the poem have any clear cut development in regard to its cognitive meaning or its deeper implication?

Q.4 Does the concluding line of the poem show any reservation or emphatic doubt in the mind of the poet?

Q.5 What elements in the theme of the poem do you find to be of universal relevance?

Q.6 What does the poet gain by bringing in cumulative grammatical patterns in the first and the third stanzas?
Q.7 Why does the poet use the expression, "The brute blood of the heir" for the swan?

Q.8 Comment on the meaning of "The indifferent beak" referring to both the cognitive denotation and the deeper meaning.
CHAPTER - 5
CONCLUSION
Conclusion

In chapters 1-4 it has been amply established that the dichotomy between literary criticism and linguistic analysis is detrimental to each other. Poetry uses the verbal medium, which is the domain of consideration by both the aesthetic critic and the linguistic critic. We have discussed an approach to study poetry where analysis of linguistic elements should not merely be a complementary phenomenon but an integral part of the set of tools to be used for understanding the meaning of a particular poem. For the exigencies of discussion we can take up the various criteria and components of aesthetic criticism and linguistic analysis separately, but an ideal approach would be to analyse a poem with the application of both the sets of criteria (literary and linguistic) simultaneously as far as it is feasible with regard to a particular poem. The element of subjectivity, impressionism and intuitive response of an aesthetic critic is not to be rejected as an idiosyncratic aberration but it should be tested with the criteria provided by descriptive linguistics. In the light of the results of the linguistic validation or refutation the response may be
changed or modified. The same is true of the linguistic deviances from, or violence on the established system of the language with reference to the reader's hunch about the total meaning of a poem. Thus the cognitive aspect of language upheld by the descriptive linguist and the affective use of language relied upon by the literary critic can collaborate to determine the viability and the extent of the choice and use of a particular item of language, at the phonological, lexical and grammatical levels. Cleanth Brookes has rightly observed that we read poetry not so much for informational or practical purposes as for such elusive matters as feelings and attitudes¹ about the subject matter. But it is difficult to accept Brooks' concept of "The Heresy of paraphrase" which rejects the referential and cognitive aspects of language function.² But when Brooks comes to actually analyzing a poem in his Understanding Poetry he himself finds it difficult to do without extra-textual information which we feel is a part of the cognitive aspect of meaning to be skimmed through paraphrasing.

² The Well-Wrought Urn, op. cit., Ch. 2.
We have, in our analysis of the poems, demonstrated the usefulness of paraphrasing — a conventional teaching device followed by teachers. Before paraphrasing we had suggested that the teacher should ponder a bit on the title of the poem by asking various questions to the students. In fact asking questions either about literary devices or linguistic devices used in the poem promotes the heuristic interest of the students in discovering meaning for themselves. It also acts as an impetus to increasing their motivation and involvement in the act of interactive teaching. This fact has been recognized as a viable item of teaching methodology by Brooks also in his preface to the third edition of his Understanding Poetry: "Questions put to the student on individual poems is perhaps the most important part of the teaching process".

In our analysis of the poems we have kept in mind that the poem is not a group of mechanically combined elements - meter, rhyme, figurative language, idea, and so on - but something organic like a plant. A plant exists in a situation - spatial and temporal. Similarly a poem also has its 'context

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3 Brooks, *op. cit.*, p. XV
of situation where we have three major components, the poet with his background of socio-cultural contexts; the ideational aspect of the poetic artifact, with its intra and extra-textual contexts; and the reader with his own background - social, educational, intellectual, experiential etc. Intra-textual context of situation is provided by the poem itself where we have to analyze the poet's attitude to his subject-matter and his relationship with his reader. Here the linguistic items play a greater role and literary devices such as the use of symbols, myths and images also contribute to the living organism we call the poem. In our analysis of the poems we have been on our guards to introduce the extra-textual information both for the understanding of the referential and the emotive use of the language. For example, in Yeats' two poems we have analyzed, references to the biblical allusion of Christ (The Second Coming) and the classical myth of Leda (Leda and The Swan) become absolutely necessary otherwise the poem will appear baffling. But in a poem like 'The Solitary Reaper'

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it is not necessary to mention Wordsworth's sojourn to the Highlands in the Scottish territory.

We have laid, as mentioned above, a significant emphasis on students' heuristic effort to explore referential, affective and stylistic meaning of the title. Here it would be pertinent to add that the students should be made to see whether there is coherence- logical connection-between the title and the opening line/s of the poem. If this element of coherence is not patently discoverable then the title has not been selected artistically. The title in fact quite often conveys the central thematic thrust of the poem or provides a platform for debate of an idea. Like coherence students should also be made aware of the concept of cohesion in the development of argument in a poem. Sudden conclusions and deviations in syntactic patterns are not randomly used by a poet but are carefully selected. We can illustrate our point with an example from The Wasteland: In the third movement of the first section "What are the roots that clutch..........?" The use of the interrogative is a cohesive device to connect the dismal picture drawn by the protagonist of the poem in the opening lines and the futility of activities in the modern urban life, and the sense of
uprooted humanity in the lines which follow, where the drab materialistic and despiritualised pursuits in the life of the German princess are described.

We have already talked about the importance of paraphrase where the rational or ideational content of the poem, which is the foundation on which aesthetic experience is grounded, should be clearly grasped and understood by the students. After the paraphrase the most important element of grounding is Ambiguity. William Empson defines it as "more than one cognitive meaning for the same piece of language." He goes on to say "any verbal nuance however slight, which gives room for alternative reaction to the same piece of language" can be called ambiguous. Ambiguity, in fact can be used 'in two senses; one, operation of an expression in two or more ways at the same time, e.g. use of pun; two, an expression leading to indefinite thought, e.g. unconventional symbolism or imagery such as Yeats' use of 'vague' in collocation with 'trembling fingers' in 'Leda and the Swan'. Of the other devices of Foregrounding which we

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have tried to discover for getting at the meaning of the poem in the preceding chapter is the lexical one. There are some frequently used figurative devices, such as metaphor, paradox and hyperbole which are used as linguistico-aesthetic devices of 'Foregrounding'. We have called it linguistico-aesthetic because the use of such a figurative device contains both the emotive response to the subject matter as well as uses linguistic markers to convey both the cognitive and the affective meanings. Take, for example, the use of metaphor in Marlow’s Dr. Faustus’ Apostrophe to Helen which successfully conceals the protagonists’ act of demoniality under the garb of mythical and divine grandeur. Elizabethan and 17th Century poetry is replete with use of metaphor and hyperbole. Shakespeare’s of “Multitudinous sea incarnadine,” in the context of Lady Macbeth’s unfathomable remorse, or Hamlet’s declamation of his love for Ophelia in mathematical measures in the funeral scene, to ironically deflate the artificiality of Leartes’ ritualistic formality of expression of deep grief in conventional terms, are the two glaring examples quite familiar to students of English literature. Paradox is a figure of speech most favoured by Cleanth Brooks. In fact he calls the language of
poetry as the language of paradox, i.e. the language of 'indirection' as contrasted with the language of 'direction' in scientific discourse. The use of the "cold" sylvan historian narrating the unfulfilled but eternally warm love of the youthful lovers is an example of highly functional paradox in Keats' "Ode on a Grecian Urn". In fact, the simple fact that the Grecian Urn which is an inanimate object, is the speaking historian narrating events is paradoxical. The controversy about the concluding line of Yeats' "Sailing to Byzantium" where the golden bird on the golden bough contrary to the general argument of the poem stultifies the poetic stand. The poet who emphatically rejects the world of nature because of its inherent characteristic of transitoriness and decay decides to go to the world of art, i.e. the world of permanence and fixity. But in the last line of the poem the bird suddenly sings "of what is past, or passing or to come" – the world of flux and mutability which was summarily rejected in the first stanza of the poem. Here a mention can be made of the collaborative linguistic 'Foregrounding' as well. For example, the emphatic demonstrative – "that" - with which the poem opens shows the poet's rejection of and separation from the world of
birth, growth, decay and death. But the use of the parenthesis “those dying generations” is to bridle his creative proclivity to the world he so emphatically rejects but beautifully describes. This syntactic device hints at the early ambivalence in the poet’s relationship with the subject matter. The use of the lexical item “monument” to extol permanence contributes to this ambivalence which is accentuated by the use of “artifice of eternity” where artifice may mean both artifact as well as artificial. That the poet has a strong reservation about a clear cut dichotomy between the two worlds as constituting the subject matter of poetry—the world of phenomena and the world of art, where the one world lacks permanence of the other world and the other lacks the warmth and pleasure of its counterpart. The poet rejects the world of nature most emphatically in the last stanza. But the ambivalence which runs through out the poem shows up linguistically in the use of the passive grammatical phrases – “hammered gold and gold enameling set upon a golden bough” – to show his till towards the world of flux because of his disgust with the passivity, (passive grammatical pattern) the fixity (the device of repetition of ‘gold’) and lack of warmth. Hence the
justification for the unexpected conclusion of the poem in the last line which results from the inner logic of the text and is strongly supported by linguistic manipulation of the language. We lingered somewhat longer on this famous poem of W.B. Yeats because the controversy about the poem can be resolved to perceive the deeper meaning only by focussing on the collaborative use of the linguistic and literary devices. At the aesthetic level, the poem proceeds with a statement which is debated and concluded. Rationale for the point of view is given during the development of the poem. There is a linear movement in the structural pattern of the poem which turns out to be circular because of the concluding line of the poem where the very fact rejected in the beginning of the poem is accepted as the only desirable and acceptable object. But the development of the theme and the progression of the structure hinge heavily upon the consummate artistic use of linguistic items – both lexical and syntactic to sustain the artistic tension created because of the deliberate ambivalence. We can give another example of the masterly use of lexical Foregrounding by Milton in the use of the word “Talent” in line 3 of “On His Blindness”. It refers to both, the poetic talent of the poet at the present
time as well as alludes to the "Talents" in the Biblical parable. The grammatical Foregrounding has been mentioned in the choice of a particular syntactic pattern in a poetic context. The problem to be tackled with the whole issue of Foregrounding is, that the reader has to ask as to why the poet makes a particular choice and not the other one out of the available alternatives, permissible in the system of the language. For example, why should Faustus in his first soliloquy be made to use imperative syntactic patterns, or, why does the lover in Donne's poem uses the same pattern in "Go and catch a falling star" and not the normal declarative syntactic form. In the foregoing paragraphs, with the help of example drawn from poetry of the past and present we have tried to establish that a collaborative endeavour of the literary critic and the linguist-preferably both, in one person-will be helpful in understanding and teaching a poem properly. Leech observes:

It is artificial to draw a clean line between linguistic and critical exegesis: stylistics is indeed the area in which they overlap. Nevertheless, if such a line had to be drawn, I should draw it as follows: the linguist is the
man who identifies what features in a poem need interpretation (i.e. what features are foregrounded) and to some extent (e.g. by specifying rules of transference) what opportunities for interpretation are available; the literary critic is the man who weighs up the different possible interpretations.⁷

We have demonstrated clearly in the analysis of the poems in Chapter 4 that our approach is to discover total significance of a poem in terms of the reader's interpretation where only the linguistic competence is not required. This is because a number of other extra-textual (extra linguistic) kinds of knowledge also enter into the interpretation of poetry. Comprehension of a poem can sometimes lean heavily upon biographical elements—such as in Yeats—and on socio-political elements such as in "The Express" by Spender, which may become necessary to include in the interpretation of the total significance of the poem. This may be going against the claim of the phonetic linguist claiming exclusive authority on the poem because it consists of language, which is his domain. In this context we can close

our discussion by a quote from the most notable craftsman in handling the creative use of language, i.e. Dylan Thomas:

You can tear a poem apart to see what makes it technically tick and say to yourself, when the works are laid out before you, the vowels, the consonants, the rhymes and rhythms, yes, this is it. This is why the poem moves me so. It is because of craftsmanship. But you're back again where you began. You are back with the mystery of having been moved by words. The best craftsmanship always leaves holes and gaps in the works of the poet, so that something that is not in the poem can creep, crawl, flash or thunder in.®

In the teaching of poetry at the undergraduate level, the most important participants are the teacher and the students. It is our assumption that the teacher is well equipped with a thorough knowledge of the descriptive linguistic analysis of the English language. Besides this he

is expected to have a high degree of sensitivity to the various components of the English language in addition to the cultural fabric in which the language is inextricably interwoven. The student should have a reasonable quantum of sensitivity to language as well as a good grounding in the grammar of English and the cultural background required to fully explore the meaning of a piece of poetry. He should have the perceptivity to identify Foregrounded items literary as well as linguistic – on his own. The sorry state of affair of students' linguistic and literary equipment in majority of the teaching contexts in India is only too well known to need any elaboration. To pass a similar judgement on the situation of faculty in English sections may sound rather presumptuous. But here too, the truth is a matter of common knowledge in the academic circle. How this problem can be tackled will be going out of the preview of the present study. But crash programmes for teachers on how to teach poetry in a meaningful way in the realistic contexts of educational institutions can be a possible solution. In fact the heaviest onus lies on the head of the teacher. In the analysis of the poems an effort has been made to demonstrate how a poem can be put across in an undergraduate classroom, which can
serve the purpose of a model with or without modifications suitable to a specific teaching situation.
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Selected Bibliography


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