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Semantic Deviation in W. Wordsworth's Selected Poems

Inst. Dhuha Ahmed Hamadi (M.A)*

Ministry of Education /General Directorate of Education in Anbar

Open Educational Collage/ Fallujah Centre

dhuaahmedh74@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

The study investigates and analyzes W. Wordsworth's four selected poems on the basis of G. Leech's taxonomy of semantic deviation (1969). The significance of the analysis is to disclose to what extent the poet uses such deviation in his literary texts and how semantic deviation serves the meaning of the poems. The analysis samples are 'The Daffodils', 'My Heart Leaps Up', 'The Solitary Reaper' and 'Composed upon Westminster Bridge', respectively. Leech's classification of semantic deviation (1969), as the model of the study, is utilized to analyze them. The procedures of the study, that are utilized to conduct the current study analysis, starts with reading and investigating the semantic deviation in these selected poems. Then, the step of analysis is conducted in the light of the study model, Leech's classification of semantic deviation (1969). Finally, the findings of the data analysis are discussed and it is followed by the study conclusion. The results have revealed that semantic deviation is highly utilized in these selected poems so as to serve and diversify their meanings and to be more attractive on the part of the readers. Transference of meaning, a type of semantic deviation, is the most dominant type that is used in these poems in comparison with the others.

Key words: foregrounding, linguistic deviation, semantic deviation.

* **Corresponding Author:** Inst. Dhuha Ahmed Hamadi, **Email:** dhuaahmedh74@gmail.com

Affiliation: Ministry of Education /General Directorate of Education in Anbar

Open Educational Collage/ Fallujah Centre - Iraq

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الانحراف الدلالي في قصائد مختارة لدبليو وردزورث

م. ضحى أحمد حمادي

وزارة التربية/ المديرية العامة لتربية الانبار

الكلية التربوية المفتوحة / مركز الفلوجة

المستخلص

تبحث الدراسة في قصائد أربع مختارة لدبليو وتحللها على أساس تصنيف جي. ليتش للانحراف الدلالي (1969). وتكمن أهمية التحليل في الكشف عن مدى استخدام الشاعر لهذا الانحراف في نصوصه الأدبية، وكيف يخدم الانحراف الدلالي معنى القصائد. عينات التحليل هي "أزهار النرجس البري"، و"قلبي يقفز للأعلى"، و"الحاصد المنفرد"، و"المؤلف على جسر وستمنستر"، على التوالي. وقد تم استخدام تصنيف ليتش للانحراف الدلالي (1969) كنموذج للدراسة لتحليلها. تبدأ إجراءات الدراسة المستخدمة لإجراء تحليل الدراسة الحالية بالقراءة والتحقيق في الانحراف الدلالي في هذه القصائد المختارة. ومن ثم تتم خطوة التحليل في ضوء أنموذج الدراسة تصنيف ليتش للانحراف الدلالي (1969). وأخيراً تمت مناقشة نتائج تحليل البيانات وتليها خاتمة الدراسة. وأظهرت النتائج أن الانحراف الدلالي يكثر في هذه القصائد المختارة بما يخدم وتنويع معانيها ويكون أكثر جاذبية لدى القراء. ويعتبر نقل المعنى، وهو نوع من الانحراف الدلالي، هو النوع السائد في هذه القصائد مقارنة بغيرها.

الكلمات الدالة: المقدمة، الانحراف اللغوي، الانحراف الدلالي.

1. INTRODUCTION

Language, written or spoken, is a means of communication by which people can communicate and interact with each other in a particular society. Thus, the interest in language and the way in addressing people are significant for both speakers and writers to perform what they aim at. Speakers as well as writers follow specific techniques to reach their strategies. In written language, writers tend to be creative and inventive in using their techniques to present their literary work in a magnificent form to their readers. One of these techniques is linguistic deviation, which is part of foregrounding, which is identified as a way of stylistic creativity that the writer follows to serve his/her strategies in literary texts, particularly in poetry. One of these intentions is to draw the readers' attention to his/her literary work. Leech (1969) states that all deviations are practically important "when it (i. e. the deviation) communicates something", "when it

communicates what was intended by its author" and "when it is judged or felt by the reader to be significant" (59- 60). Additionally, deviation means deviating from the rules of the language, but certain boundaries are occurred for it. Leech identifies deviation by making a boundary between deviation and additional rules (Khasraw & Salaih, 2024:56).

The present study will focus upon Leech's semantic deviation (1969) for several reasons: it is to grab the attention of the readers, who are unaware of a phenomenon, by displaying abnormal semantic norms of language, (i.e.) deviant from the usual ones, and it is to stimulate them to keep on reading the literary text in order to find how the writer manages to use such technique in his / her literary text and what such technique adds to the meaning of his/her text. The study investigates and analyzes W. Wordsworth's four selected poems on the basis of G. Leech's taxonomy of semantic deviation (1969). Thus, the data for analysis will be W. Wordsworth's four selected poems, namely '*The Daffodils*', '*My Heart Leaps Up*', '*The Solitary Reaper*' and '*Composed upon Westminster Bridge*'. Accordingly, it is necessary to know something about W. Wordsworth and the themes of his selected poems. **William Wordsworth**, (1770-1850) is a celebrated English poet. He is considered one of the major founders of English Romantic Movement in poetry. His contribution to poetry is succinctly stated as follows: at the beginning, he devised a new viewpoint about nature in his literary writings showing a new attitude about the organic relation that holds between man and the natural world, by using metaphors in them. Secondly, he "probed deeply into his own sensibility as he traced, in his poem, '*The Prelude*', the "growth of a poet's mind"". Finally, to him, poetry occurs at the human experience centre, he believed that poetry is the source of all knowledge and he depicted its immortality as the man's heart. In the late years of 20th century, a critical estimation was conducted by Coleridge and Arnold who put him next to W. Shakespeare and J. Milton (Parrish, 2022). The themes of the chosen poems can concisely be elaborated as follows: the theme of '*The Daffodils*' is about "nature and humanity", and "memory and imagination" (*Themes and Symbols in the Poem Daffodils*, 2022). '*My Heart Leaps Up*' talks about specific things: nature, childhood, beauty, and aging (Swope, 2015). '*The Solitary Reaper*' has a theme of everlasting beauty and sorrow represented by the girl's labore and her sorrow expression (Khan, 2023:1). Finally, '*Composed upon Westminster Bridge*' is about "peace and tranquility can be found just as much or more in contemplating a cityscape as in contemplating a landscape in the country" (Arrington, 2021: n. p.).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Deviation and Foregrounding

Deviation is a linguistic phenomenon that has a significant psychological effect on the reader/ hearer. Such effect is called foregrounding. Deviation of linguistic norms (or nonlinguistic ones) leads to foregrounding (exploring the language of poems, plays, and prose) (Short, 1996: 11-12). In other words, foregrounding can be defined as the perceptual prominence property demonstrating certain things against the other backdrop, being less noticeable things. It is manifested as an effect of psychology that is generated by specific aspects of images in order to draw the viewer's attention to them or part of them. An example can clarify this as one compares between bright colourful objects for being more noticeable in a particular environment and those in dim colouring (Gregoriou, 2014: 87). Deviation in connection with foregrounding seems as

one who wants to touch the importance and value of any artful work and focus upon the interest and surprise elements rather than upon the normal pattern. Hence, Such deviations, distorting the linguistic and acceptable norms, have been given the name of foregrounding (Leech, 1969: 57).

2.2 Linguistic Deviation

Linguistic deviation is a phenomenon that clearly appears in literary texts. It is possibly defined as the utilization of abnormal norms instead of the acceptable ones to achieve certain strategies. The term 'deviation' is a sentence or any other unit that does not follow the grammatical rules (i., e.) it is a matter of ill- formed sentence. An initial asterisk is the mark of such sentences (Crystal, 2008: 141). Deviation is related to both spelling and pronunciation of either a word or a sentence structure which does not belong to a regular norm (Richards, et al.,1985: 79) . In poetry, there are eight types of linguistic deviation: lexical deviation, grammatical deviation, phonological deviation, graphological deviation, semantic deviation, dialectical deviation, deviation of register, and deviation of historical period (Leech, 1969: 42- 51). The present study will centred on one of these deviations which is semantic deviation.

2.3 Semantic Deviation

Semantic deviation stylistically is one of the significant levels of linguistic deviation since its figurative language is seen as the core of any literary text. It is mentally elaborated as 'non-sense' or 'absurdity' (Leech, 1969: 48). It is regarded as relations of meaning that logically sound incompatible and paradoxical in one way or another (Short, 1996: 43). As a stylistic phenomenon, the semantic deviation is widely used in modern criticism, especially in the rhetorical heritage of a particular society (Hamdi, 2019: 2)

Leech (1969) as the model of the present study, gives categories of semantic deviations which are as follows: semantic oddity, transference of meaning, and honest deception (48-49). Each one will be detailed below:

1. Semantic Oddity

Semantic oddity semantically indicates to bizarreness of expression and it contains five kinds as below (Leech, 1969:132):

- a. **Pleonasm** is semantically a redundant expression which repeats the preceding or the following meaning contained, e.g., 'my female grandmother'
- b. **Oxymoron** means two expressions whose meanings are diverging. They do not refer to reality when they combine, e.g., 'my male grandmother'.
- c. **Tautology** is a vacuous statement because its meaning expresses "self-evidently true", e.g., 'my grandmother is female'.
- d. **Paradox** is a contracted absurd statement because of its self- evidently false, e.g., 'my grandmother is male'.
- e. **Periphrasis** is an expression describing unnecessary length and the meaning, that it conveys, can be said/written briefly, eg., 'the female grandparent '→ 'my grandmother'.

2. Transference of Meaning

It means the use of four types of figurative language, especially those are related with meaning transference as illustrated below. They are not totally random since they

follow certain mechanism to interpret a word meaning from another. They are the following (Leech, 1969: 148-165):

- a. **Synecdoche** is a part standing for the whole or the whole standing for the part.
- b. **Metaphor** is a covert comparison between two things that are similar in certain qualities, without the use of 'such' or 'like'.
- c. **Metonymy** means using the name of one entity for another which is associated with it.
- d. **Simile** is an overt comparison between two things that have the same qualities. They are identified by using 'like' and 'as'.

3. Honest Deception

It is a matter of distortion of truth in a sense and it comprises three tropes. They are as follows (Leech, 1969: 166-178):

- a. **Hyperbole** is an over statement figure.
- b. **Litotes** is an understatement figure.
- c. **Irony** usually indicates to take the saying form to include "the opposite of what one feels to be the case".

2.4 Review of Recent Related Studies

Many researchers and scholars have adopted the analysis of semantic deviation that is applicable to various literary texts in their studies, in one way or another., in their studies. The following shows some of them :

The first study was carried out by Sadoon (2010). The researcher's aim was to analyze O'Neill's play 'Hairy Ape' in terms of G. Leech's grammatical deviation (1969) and giving justification for such deviation use. As a result to the data analysis, the study showed that grammatical deviation with its various types were existed with different rates in it to fulfill the writer's purposes.

The second study was presented by Sadoon and Al-Aassam (2011) who aimed to analyze Charles Dickens's novel entitled 'Hard Times' for exploring how the writer's language was deviated phonologically. After the data analysis, the results demonstrated that many examples of two phonological deviations were largely found in the novel to perform their aims.

The third study is written by Mansoor and Salman (2020). The aim of the study was to investigate and analyze stylistically all types of linguistic deviation in literary style on the basis of Leech's theory of linguistic deviation (1969). The data of the study was various samples which were taken from different English literature sources that belonged to three chief genres; poetry, drama, and prose. The findings were that many deviations occurred in poetry in comparison with the other types of literary genres and these were lexical, semantic, syntactic, phonological, morphological, graphological, historical, dialectal, and register deviations.

Herianah, et al.(2022) conducted a study about linguistic deviation in S. Gegge Mappangewa's novel ' Sayat-Sayat Sunyi'. The study was a descriptive qualitative one related with a library research. Hence, to implement the study, the researchers require an "inventory, reading-listening, and notes." The results revealed that the novel ' Sayat-Sayat Sunyi' contained a number of linguistic deviations, which were phonological, lexical, morphological, graphological, semantic, and dialectal deviations.

According to the above - mentioned studies, it is necessary to disclose how the current study is different from them. Actually, all the previous studies, including the present one, follow Leech's taxonomy of linguistic deviation (1969) partially or entirely but the current study is different from them in that it deals with poetry, specifically W. Wordsworth's selected poems which have not been tackled before as data analysis. Another point is that the study focuses upon semantic deviation only in order to detect how the poet managed and innovated in depicting his passion and attitudes towards nature and human's relations in his poetry throughout the form of the language.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Questions

This study is devoted to answer the following:

1. To what extent does W. Wordsworth utilize semantic deviation in his selected poems?
2. Does semantic deviation add a diverse meaning to these poems?
3. Does W. Wordsworth manage to use a variety of semantic deviation in these poems?
4. Which of the semantic deviation type is largely used in the selected poems?

3.2 Data of the Study

The data collection of the study is a number of W. Wordsworth's selected poems, namely *'The Daffodils'*, *'My Heart Leaps Up'*, *'Lucy Gray'* and *'Composed upon Westminster Bridge'*. These selected poems are chosen to be analyzed in terms of Leech's taxonomy of semantic deviation (1969).

3.3 Procedures of the Study

The procedures of the study are involved in the following:

1. Presenting the poem lines, the data analysis, which contains the semantic deviation.
2. Applying G. Leech's taxonomy of semantic deviation (1969), the modal adopted, to analyze the poem lines. Leech's taxonomy of semantic deviation (1969) comprises three divisions: semantic oddity, transference of meaning, and honest deception. Each one has its own schema and its types which are different from the rest.
3. After conducting the analysis of data, a table is drawn about the results of the data analysis showing to what extent W. Wordsworth utilizes semantic deviation in his selected poems, to state how the semantic deviation adds a diverse meaning to them, to reflect how Wordsworth manages to use a variety of semantic deviation in them, and finally to show what the most dominant type of the semantic deviation type is used in them among the others.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

'The Daffodils'

No.	Lines of the Poem	Type of Semantic Deviation	Its type of tropes	Interpretation
1.	"I wandered lonely as a cloud"	Transference of Meaning	Simile	The poet compares his wandering aimlessly like a cloud over the hills and valleys of the mountainous Lake

				District in England.
2.	"When all at once I saw a crowd"	Honest Deception	Hyperbole	In the first stanza, the poet uses 'crowd' as a hyperbolic word describing the great number of daffodils.
3.	"A host, of golden daffodils"	Transference of Meaning	Metaphor	'golden' is a metaphor. The poet makes a comparison between the yellow colour of daffodils to the gold referring to their brightness.
4.	"Continuous as the stars that shine"	Transference of Meaning	Simile	He also compares between flowers and stars that shine and twinkle in the Milky Way.
5.	"Ten thousand saw I at a glance"	Honest Deception	Hyperbole	The poet uses a hyperbolic language when he specifies the flowers' number 'ten thousand', in one sight. This type of language is utilized here by the poet because the flowers were everywhere without ending line alongside the shore-line of the bay.
6.	"They flash upon that inward eye"	Transference of Meaning	Metaphor	'inward eye' compares the sweet memory of the poet's happiness and joy in seeing the daffodils with the bliss of solitude.

'My Heart Leaps Up'

No.	Lines of the Poem	Type of Semantic Deviation	Its Type of Tropes	Interpretation
1.	"My heart leaps up when I behold".	Transference of Meaning	Synecdoche	In this line, the phrase "my heart", as a part of the body, is synecdoche that stands for the whole.
2.	"My heart leaps up when I behold".	Transference of Meaning	Metaphor	Plus, the poet gives a comparison between his feelings of joy to his leaping heart sensation.
3.	Or let me die"	Honest Deception	Hyperbole	The poet in this line exaggerates. He wishes to keep his childish alive as he grows old

				otherwise he prefers to die.
4.	"The child is the father of the man"	Semantic Oddity	Paradox	In this line, a paradoxical statement is used since it contradicts itself.

'The Solitary Reaper'

No.	Lines of the Poem	Type of Semantic Deviation	Its Type of Tropes	Interpretation
1.	"Behold her, single in the field," "Yon solitary Highland Lass! Reaping and singing by herself"	Semantic Oddity	Tautology	In the first three lines of the first stanza, the poet uses tautological words describing the highland lass and they are: 'single', 'solitary' and 'by herself'.
2.	"O listen! for the Vale profound" "Is overflowing with the sound"	Transference of Meaning	Metaphor	Wordsworth gives metaphor in this line in that the lass's singing is compared with a sea wave which is overflowing.
3.	"No Nightingale did ever chaunt"	Transference of Meaning	Metaphor	In the second stanza, the poet compares the lass's voice to a nightingale.
4.	"In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird,"	Transference of Meaning	Metaphor	Again, the poet makes a comparison between the lass's voice and cuckoo-bird.
5.	"Breaking the silence of the seas"	Transference of Meaning	Metaphor	The poet here compares the sea silence to something which can be easily broken as glass.
6.	" Breaking the silence of the seas Among the farthest Hebrides ".	Honest Deception	Hyperbole	The poet in these lines overstates the girl's song/ sound to reach the Hebrides (islands) which are far away.
7.	"as if her song could have no ending"	Honest Deception	Hyperbole	The poet exaggerates the lass's song that it fills the valley and there is a continuity in her song, without any ending.

8.	"I listened, motionless and still;"	Semantic Oddity	Tautology	" motionless" and "still" are tautological words (adjectives). They are similar in meanings.
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'Composed upon Westminster Bridge'

No.	Lines of the Poem	Type of Semantic Deviation	Its Type of Tropes	Interpretation
1.	"Earth has not anything to show more fair:"	Honest Deception	Hyperbole	Wordsworth exaggerates when he says that London in the morning is not similar to any city on the earth because of its beauty of natural scenes.
2.	"A sight so touching in its majesty:"	Semantic Oddity	Paradox	' touching in its majesty:' is a contradiction between a touching sight which is personal and majesty which is grand.
3.	"This City now doth, like a garment, wear"	Transference of Meaning	Simile	The morning beauty in London is adorned like a fine dress (garment).
4.	"The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,"	Semantic Oddity	Paradox	The contradiction occurs between London's city morning which is beautiful. It wears a dress as 'a garment' and the city morning which is naked or empty 'bare'
5.	"All bright and glittering in the smokeless air."	Honest Deception	Irony	London's morning is not 'silent' and 'smokeless' as the poet said.
6.	"Never did sun more	Honest	Hyperbole	He exaggerates in

	beautifully steep"	Deception		describing the city of London.
7.	"Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!"	Honest Deception	Hyperbole	In this line, the poet overstates in describing the city of London in the morning.
8.	"Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;"	Transference of Meaning	Metaphor	Metaphorically, he compares the asleep houses to most people who are asleep in the early morning.
9.	"And all that mighty heart is lying still!"	Transference of Meaning	Metaphor	The poet Compares human's heart with the city of London as the heart of England.

5. THE FINDINGS

After the data analysis, the results revealed certain facts: the poet greatly adopted semantic deviation in writing his selected poems to direct his readers' attention towards his intentions. The total utilization of the semantic deviation is (27) examples. Actually, he frequently utilizes transference of meaning, metaphor has (9) occurrences, simile is placed in (3) positions, and synecdoche scores only (1) example subsequently. Metonymy has no occurrence in these selected poems. In the second rank, honest deception comes with (9) examples, hyperbole scores (8) examples and irony is found with an example. No occurrence of litotes is noticed. Lastly, semantic oddity are used in them with (5) examples and they are tautology (2) and paradox (3) examples. All these explanations are explained in Table (1):

Table (1): The Frequency of Semantic Deviation Types

No.	Types of Semantic Deviation	Types of Tropes	Its Frequency	The Percentage
1.	Transference of Meaning	Synecdoche	1	8%
		Metaphor	9	69%
		Simile	3	23%
		Total	13	100%
2.	Honest Deception	Hyperbole	8	89%
		Irony	1	11%
		Total	9	100%

3.	Semantic Oddity	Tautology	2	40%
		Paradox	3	60%
		Total	5	100%

6. CONCLUSION

The current study concludes that W. Wordsworth considerably uses linguistic deviations, specifically semantic deviation in his selected poems but with different rates. Such deviation type actually adds a diverse meaning to his poems. The significance use of semantic deviation can be elaborated in twofold: the first one is that the frequent utilization of semantic deviation is the transference of meaning, honest deception and semantic oddity respectively. The second is that as a romantic poet, Wordsworth manages to express his innocence feelings and his deep thoughts to depict the sceneries of nature and ordinary human life. He adopts a simple and vivid language in order to appeal to his readers. A variety of tropes adorned his selected poems so as to serve the meanings of the poems and they assist the poetic thoughts to be more appealing to them. Furthermore, the readers can find these poems being more interesting and aesthetical ones with the utilization of such type of deviation because the deep meaning is clearly created.

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