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LINGUISTIC EXPLORATION OF MODERN POETRY IN AN ESL CLASSROOM

FOR THE TEACHER

A THESIS PRESENTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
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PART I

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

At a time of wide-ranging debate about the teaching of English Literature and English Language, particularly in the broader contexts of educational principles and policies, the force and authority of Professor Widdowson's advocacy of approaching literature as discourse has appealed to me. This approach to literature teaching is interested in the ways the elements of the language system are used to create meanings and effects. And it has important pedagogical links, especially at advanced levels. By showing how language works in literary works, we can draw students' attention to the language use as such, as well as to its communicative functions. Such drawing of attention can be useful as an alternative learning strategy while the analytic skills acquired can indirectly lead to greater language skills. I am convinced of these pedagogical advantages and maintain that this linguistic-based approach could well be adopted, especially in ESL situations like those in Singapore.

In other words, the central proposition of this thesis follows the same line of argument as my extended essay for BA Hons (39.499). That is, with the pedagogical implications, the reasons for the study of poetry using a stylistic approach, the criteria governing my selection of texts, and the key linguistic concepts as set up in my 39.499, this thesis is designed to complement the essay and to further substantiate my claims for the place of poetry in the Singapore ESL classrooms (specifically at the college/pre-university level). However, I should point out that references to syntax and related formal features of language do presuppose at least some general acquaintance with the kind of linguistic concepts introduced and discussed in my 39.499. I do not, however, discount the possibility of this thesis being used as samples of lesson plans in

their own right, and hope that each chapter is sufficiently self-contained to allow this.

As a whole, this thesis is designed to cover a good assortment of linguistic concepts for teachers/beginning "practitioners" as sample lesson plans. I have attempted to include texts of wide-ranging themes and interests by both male and female poets across different cultures. This thesis is, however, not designed to be a complete coursebook in itself, as linguistic patternings are dynamic and always changing. The analyses and findings of my selected texts are themselves progressively structured, and ordered according to increasing level of difficulties (from the perspective of my classroom experience) and their inter-textual relatedness. These linguistic analyses and findings could no doubt be improved upon and other poems added. I would like to emphasize that the analysis of each poem is not to be regarded as an end in itself, but as a means of devising a classroom practice and pedagogical awareness of the importance of a linguistic-based reading of texts.

My main objective for this thesis is to suggest a substantial number of poems showing distinctive linguistic features that might be devised to draw the students' attention to how the English Language is used to convey communicative effects in literary work such as poetry. I am not trying to specify a precise set of procedures for the teaching of poetry, as most experienced teachers would readily acknowledge the fact that classroom practices very often do not operate rigidly within prescribed lesson-plans. Above all, it is hoped that my illustrations of how the linguistic approach to poetry might be worked out in practice will give some indication of the potential inherent in the approach, and will motivate the reader to consider how the potential might be more effectively realized in his/her particular classroom setting, bearing in mind other contributing teaching-learning factors for his/her unique audience.

CHAPTER 2

2.1 CLASSROOM PRACTICE: Problems and Difficulties

From my personal experience, although some problems were encountered in my exploration and also the presentation of my findings (this is especially true given the fact that I am a beginning practitioner myself), I am still convinced of the values of a stylistic approach to the study of poetry: at its most fundamental level, the study has helped me to develop a sharper awareness to the efficacy and communicative functions of the English Language.

My conviction has motivated me to try out the findings as proposed in my 39.499 in a Singapore classroom. The targeted audience was the average eighteen year-old college students who in one way or another have been acquainted with the traditional cultural approach to the teaching of literature, since English Literature is a compulsory subject at the lower secondary level. Most significantly, these students have been exposed to, and conditioned by (to a certain extent) the long-standing practice of English Language and English Literature being taught by different teachers and examined as separate subjects in the school curriculum.

Several major problems and difficulties were encountered in the course of my classroom practice using the stylistic approach to poetry as proposed in my 39.499. It is a pity that I could only administer the approach over a rather limited period of time and do not have sufficient data to validate the claim that the intrinsic values and immense advantages of such an approach far outweigh all the initial "teething" problems. Nevertheless, I have identified the problematic areas and hope that these would provide insights for further research in the area of educational theory and

pedagogical implications, particularly in relation to the Singapore context.

Students' Conservative Attitudes

Because of the structure of the Singapore education system and due emphasis placed on certain set texts as recommended by the Cambridge Examinations Syndicate, students generally have come to associate English Literature with the "Grand Canon", and to study Literature for the sake of literature. Given the examination- and achievement-oriented Singapore education system, any teaching approach that involves digression from the set texts/topics for examinations is often viewed with suspicion by the students. In this respect, first and foremost, the major difficulty that I had to overcome was the students' "conservative" attitude and approach to literature. There was thus the difficult task for me to convince them that the reading-interpretative skills acquired through the linguistic-based approach are not confined to a particular text, but may be extrapolated and serve as a kind of "weaponry" whenever they are confronted with pieces of literary work and even non-literary work in their everyday living.

Students' Lack of Intuition

The second major problem revolved around the students' lack of genuine intuition. And this problem was compounded by the lack of a set/standard way into a particular text that characterizes the linguistic approach. Each poem itself dictates the starting point. In order to find a "way into" a given text, what is essentially needed is the students' real intuition. This criterion of real intuition fundamental to the linguistic approach posed an acute problem for the great majority of ESL learners. In consequence, they did not have enough confidence right off the cuff to handle a given text. They had to be convinced that there is no one sure way of reading a particular text, but of course any interpretation that they presented must be clearly validated by

linguistic evidence found in the given texts.

Students' Inadequate Linguistic Knowledge

The third crucial problem resulted from the students' lack of knowledge of the various linguistic concepts and terminology. Because Linguistics is not a subject that has a place in its own right in the school curriculum, the students were not adequately prepared with the linguistic concepts and terminology necessary for this approach. In addition, the emphasis on certain set texts for examination had given the students a narrowly-based experience of literature. Very often, these set texts are formidably difficult for the majority of the average students. And the difficulties encountered with the prescribed texts had caused these students to develop negative attitudes towards literary texts in general. Such negativism was rather disabling for the pedagogical process. The challenge set before me was clearly to select texts which were reasonably within the grasp of the average students, yet these selected texts should convey interesting and relevant themes at the same time. Also, it was a challenge for me to make the lessons interesting and to incorporate as much student-participation as possible. This, of course, is related to the whole pedagogical issue of classroom motivation.

Non-availability of a Basic Text

The fourth major problem was that there was no single comprehensive text available for the students to consult in addition to the classroom teaching. From my personal exploration of the texts written/edited by the various key figures in the field of stylistics/linguistics and literary criticism, I have discovered that Carter's texts are not appropriate for my targeted school audience: *Literary Text and Language Study*, *Language and Literature* and *Language, Discourse and Literature* comprise collections of linguistic analyses of literary texts which are not well co-ordinated; *The*

Web of Words serves as a moderately good workbook only for certain linguistic concepts for the students but not for them to consult concerning their major difficulties. Widdowson's samples demonstrate what teachers could do with pieces of literary work. That is, these are more appropriate as models for teachers to consider as part of their teaching methodology, and not so for the students' exploration. *The Language of Literature*, even though Cummings and Simmons approach the English Language within the framework of the **systemic** school of modern linguistics, is not without technical sophistication. The technicalities involved could be quite daunting for some students, especially the weaker ones. Though Traugott and Pratt's *Linguistics for Students of Literature* has a minimum of technical terminology, it is unfortunately rather inconclusive and not always clearly focused on literary examples. Leech's *A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry* has the most extensive coverage of linguistic concepts specifically applicable to poetry, but the analyses only focused on "fragments" of poetry. In a way, this undermines the importance of "the text as a whole" to the overall interpretation of meanings. Quirk's *A University Grammar of English* was not recommended to the students because although it may be a very helpful reference for the teacher, it is certainly too convoluted and abstruse for the students.

In short, I was faced with the difficulty of selecting a comprehensive and an adequate reference text among those available at present for the students to consult concerning their major learning problems, bearing in mind the students' mixed ability and diverse background, class size (average of 35 students per class), classroom contact time (6 X 40 min. per week for what is called the "General Paper") and other factors. So, eventually I had to draw up a list of references comprising the above-mentioned texts. Both the strengths and limitations of each text were made known to the students. For each lesson, the students were directed to refer to different text on the list as a follow-

up of the major linguistic concepts taught. In passing, we may note that at the college/pre-university level in Singapore, the "General Paper" is a compulsory subject in the curriculum. In addition to teaching students the understanding and use of the English Language, this paper also aims at promoting cognitive development in order that students will attain a degree of maturity of thought equivalent to that of a matriculation student. Clearly, these basic objectives of the "General Paper" further strengthen my proposition to incorporate the linguistic approach to literature into the Singapore classroom, instead of the traditional cultural approach.

The Complexity of Bilingual Education

To engage the students in a linguistic exploration of literary texts is to require them to have a skill with understanding grammatical structures, a skill with words and meanings, and a skill with literary effects. That is, such a multi-levelled analysis and a simultaneous convergence of effects at various levels of language organization requires the students to execute skills at a relatively higher cognitive level compared to the traditional cultural approach. Thus, another significant problem that confronted the majority of the students was that they simply lacked these essential skills. I would identify this problematic area as attributable to the much discussed and debated issue of linguistic and literary competence. Also, this problem was compounded for my targeted ESL learners because in most instances, the linguistic features exhibited by the given texts are not present in their native languages. For example, neither Mandarin nor Malay has linguistic features like tense, aspect, concord, articles, gender, etc. These features are marked by semantic elements present in both the languages and are context-bound.

Consider the following schematic representations of Mandarin:

- | | |
|---|--|
| (a) i) nán hái [✓] zi

male child
"boy" | ii) nǚ hái [✓] zi

female child
"girl" |
|---|--|

- (b) i) tā qù kàn diànyǐng[✓]
- | | | |
- s/he go watch movie
- "S/he go[es] [to] watch [a/the] movie."
- "S/he [went] [to] watch [a/the] movie."
- "S/he [is] go[ing] [to] watch [a/the] movie."

- ii) wómen qù kàn diànyǐng[✓]
- | | | |
- we go watch movie
- "We go [to] watch [a/the] movie."
- "We [went] [to] watch [a/the] movie."
- "We [are] go[ing] [to] watch [a/the] movie."

The examples in (a) show that in order to distinguish the gender, the lexical items denoting "male" and "female" are pre-posed to the common noun. Those in (b) show that in Mandarin, there are no articles, markers for tense and infinitive, and distinction between masculine and feminine pronouns on the surface structure. In addition, a comparison between b(i) and b(ii) reveals that there is no rule governing subject-verb agreement in Mandarin: the verb "qu" (= "go") takes the same form regardless of whether the subject is singular/plural. With respect to tense, a single expression in

Mandarin, taken in isolation, can have several equivalent meanings in English. However, it is very often the situational contexts that help to convey the meanings.

If, for instance, one wishes to emphasize the time element in a particular situation, the corresponding semantic item is

either (a) pre-posed to the verb:

i) wómen zuótiān qù kàn diànyǐng
 | | | | |
 we yesterday go watch movie
 "We went [to] watch [the] movie yesterday."

ii) wómen xiànzài qù kàn diànyǐng
 | | | | |
 we now go watch movie
 "We are going [to] watch [a/the] movie now."

or (b) theme-marked:

i) zuótiān wómen qù kàn diànyǐng
 | | | | |
 yesterday we go watch movie
 "Yesterday we went [to] watch [the] movie."

ii) xianzai wómen qù kàn diànyǐng
 | | | | |
 now we go watch movie
 "Now we are going [to] watch [a/the] movie."

The Malay Language exhibits a different word order from English at both the phrasal and clausal levels. For example,

(a) i) phrase:

bunga itu merah
 | | |
 flower that red
 "that red flower"

ii) clause:

Nama saya Ahmad
 | | |
 name my Ahmad
 "My name is Ahmad."

In essence, the following schematic representations of the Malay Language point to the absence of articles, feminine and masculine pronouns, verb inflection marking tense, aspect, subject-verb agreement, etc. Like Mandarin, such linguistic features are context-bound, and the time element is indicated by the semantic features that characterize the language. That is,

- (a) i) dia membaca buku
 | | |
 s/he read book
 "S/he read[s] [the] book."
 "S/he read [the] book."
 "S/he [is] read[ing] [a/the] book."
- ii) mereka membaca buku
 | | |
 they read book
 "They read [the] book." (both present and past)
 "They are reading [the] book."
- (b) i) dia sedang membaca buku
 | | | |
 s/he currently read buku
 "S/he [is] currently reading [a/the] book."
- ii) mereka membaca buku semalam
 | | | |
 they read book yesterday
 "They read [the] book yesterday."

The whole issue here is that the complexity of bilingualism and the interference of "interlanguage" were some of the contributing factors that render the learning task a challenging one for the better students but an intimidating one for the weaker learners. To overcome the students' feeling of intimidation, I had attempted to incorporate pair-work/group-work into my classroom practice; and to ensure that the classroom

atmosphere was one where the students were not worried about embarrassing themselves when they made mistakes. These strategies have important pedagogical implications which are, however, not my primary focus at this juncture.

It must be pointed out that the term "bilingualism" is not understood in the same sense by everybody. In the Singapore context, the bilingual education policy means that all students in the school system from pre-primary to pre-university level must learn two languages: the mother tongue (i.e. one of the official languages in Singapore--Malay, Mandarin or Tamil) and English (the other one of the four official languages). Within the broad aims of the education policy, bilingualism is the rule rather than the exception among the culturally and linguistically heterogeneous people. Also, used in the Singapore context, the terms "English as a First Language" (EL 1) and "English as a Second Language" (EL 2) do not signify the status, degree of proficiency or order of acquisition of the languages. They are simply labels for the English language taught in English medium schools and non-English medium schools (which are fast disappearing) respectively. In both cases, English is a foreign language for the vast majority of students.

In conjunction with the problematic area related to the complexity of bilingualism, it is worthwhile for us to take note of the two different theories of language learning: the **Behaviourist** view and the **Cognitive** view (Crystal, 1987: 372). The Behaviourist view sees foreign language learning as a process of imitation and reinforcement. Properties of the first language (L 1) are thought to exercise an influence on the process of the second language (L 2) learning: learners "transfer" linguistic features from one language to the other. Similarities between the two languages cause "positive transfer"--it proves acceptable to use the L 1 features in the L 2 setting. For example, the assumption that the grammatical subject precedes a verb in the unmarked

construction satisfactorily transfers from Mandarin to English. Differences cause "negative transfer", generally known as "interference"--the transfer of L 1 features to the L 2 causes errors. For example, the assumption about the similar verb form for both singular and plural subjects does not satisfactorily transfer from Mandarin to English. This view sees negative transfers as a major source of foreign language learning difficulty.

The Cognitive view emphasizes the role of cognitive factors in language learning. Learners are credited with using their cognitive abilities in a creative way to work out hypotheses about a structure of the foreign language. They construct rules, experiment with them, and modify them if the rules prove to be inadequate. This view sees the process of language learning as a series of transitional stages. At each stage, the learners are in control of a language system that is equivalent to neither the L 1 nor the L 2--an "interlanguage".

The pedagogical approach which is based on the Behaviourist view aims at forming new, correct linguistic habits through intensive practice. At the core of this approach is a procedure known as **contrastive analysis**, the systematic comparison of L 1 and L 2 in order to predict areas of greatest learning difficulty. With respect to the Cognitive view, **error analysis** plays a central role in the pedagogical approach. This approach sees the errors as vital for providing positive evidence about the nature of the learning process, as the learner gradually works out what the foreign language system is.

To understand the ways languages come to be learned in the "mixed" setting of the Singapore context, it is necessary to devise more sophisticated models which focus on the relationship between the processes of natural acquisition and those of formal learning, and which pay adequate attention to the needs and aims of the students, and

to the nature of the social settings in which foreign language interaction takes place. Problems of language learning/teaching in the culturally and linguistically heterogeneous context of Singapore are complex, and solutions are never simple. Though it is challenging for us to explore the complexity of language learning and the implications for English Language teaching in Singapore, it is certainly beyond the scope of this thesis.

Evaluation and Suggestions

In retrospect, evaluation of my classroom experience in the Singapore context points to the fact that there were some elements of failure when a linguistic-based approach to poetry was put into practice. This is because of the multiple problems and difficulties encountered. Thus, I can confidently claim that only a qualified success was achieved when my extended essay (39.499) was put to the test. Even so, nevertheless, I still believe in the theory as proposed by Widdowson et al., but this time by incorporating other teaching techniques. Here, I propose carefully designed worksheets at the various linguistic levels (at least at the initial stage) for each lesson to be a possible solution. To facilitate active learning among students, we need to engage them in the discovery of meanings through purposeful worksheets, active questioning and appropriate feedback. Of course, this entails a whole area of educational theory and ESL methodology which is again not the pivotal focus of my thesis.

It is important that the instructional approach should be structured on a progressive basis: it should proceed from concepts which are concrete to those which are abstract, from simple to complex, from known to unknown. Although there is no one definitive instructional procedure for a particular poem/concept, I have devised the "mini-syllabus" in the following section to illustrate how the selected poems and the related linguistic concepts may be organized and implemented for my targeted ESL learners.

2.2 SUGGESTED MINI-SYLLABUS

One possible option of ordering the selected poems is to group them according to the various linguistic levels: phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic, discoursal, etc. However, my exploration of the selected poems and a corpus of others has convinced me that the different linguistic levels often overlap. That is, to a certain extent, the linguistic levels are arbitrary. Besides, my exploration also reveals that analysis and interpretation are inextricably intertwined. It is therefore artificial for us to separate the various linguistic levels. But I have done so within the analysis of each individual poem. The purpose for this is to establish a systematic recording of features to point the way to the reader.

The design of the following mini-syllabus is based on a structure in which the inter-related linguistic concepts are systematically organized in a principled and progressive way. It is hoped that such a structure provides for control in that teaching can be conducted in an ordered manner, and thus becomes easier and more efficient. However, it must be pointed out that in some analyses, there is no clear-cut division between the major/minor linguistic concepts as proposed; they complement one another. The units and concepts are designed to provide an integrated and a progressive study programme, although it is inevitable that some readers will find some units more complex than the sequence might suggest. I have tried to incorporate a built-in flexibility which allows cross-reference to texts and analytical strategies used in other units.

The chief criterion governing my proposed set-up here is that each lesson should provide students with the opportunity for revising concepts taught in previous lessons while new concepts are being introduced. In this way, students can be meaningfully

engaged in practising their reading-interpretative skills acquired from previous lessons while acquiring new strategies from the new lesson at the same time. So, I would assert that unlike the traditional cultural approach to poetry, each linguistic-based lesson can never be a mundane task but can only be a challenging and a revealing one for both teacher and learners alike.

UNIT	POEMS	KEY FEATURES STUDIED	LINGUISTIC CONCEPTS FOR CLASSROOM EXPLORATION		SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR REVISION
			MAJOR	MINOR	
1.	"Noise"	Parallel Structure	--Articles --Sound Effects: the sibilants & onomatopoeia	--Rankshifting --Lexis: dichotomy of semantic features	--
2.	"Mending Wall"	Lexical & Semantic Repetition	--Lexical & Semantic Cohesion	--VPs: non-finite & finite (trans./intrans.) --Deviant Word Order	--Repetition: Structural [see Unit 1] Lexical Semantic
3.	"The Main-Deep"	Syntactic Deviation	--Sound Cohesion --Collocation --VPs: progressive & perfective aspect	--Graphology --Pre- & Post-modification of NPs	--Collocation: Natural [see Unit 2] Unnatural --VPs: Finite & Non-finite
4.	"Up-hill"	Interrogatives	--Modal Auxiliaries --Pronouns	--Verbals --Lexical Sets	--Graphology: Regular [see Unit 3] Irregular
5.	"Song XXX"	Imperatives	--Verb + Particle --Verb + Preposition	--Deixis --Lexical Sets	--Deictic Features: Articles [see Unit 1] Pronouns [see Unit 4]
6.	"Christian Cemetery"	Topicalization	--Passivization --Past Tense vs. Past Participles	--Perfective Aspect --Analytic Mood	--Verb Phrases: especially participles [see Unit 3] also tense and mood [see Unit 4]

UNIT	POEMS	KEY FEATURES STUDIED	LINGUISTIC CONCEPTS FOR CLASSROOM EXPLORATION		SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR REVISION
			MAJOR	MINOR	
7.	"Valley Song"	Clause Structures	--Pronominalization --Role-relations --Semantic Features: Componential Analysis	--Lexical Deviance & Unnatural Collocates	--Active/Passive Voice [see unit 6] --Lexis: Dichotomy of Semantic features [see Unit 1]
8.	"A Death to Us"	Syntactic Ambiguity	--Types of Phrases & Clauses --Word Order	--VPs: Trans/Intrans. --Premodification of NPs	--Verb Phrases: Trans./Intrans. [see Unit 2] --Noun Phrases: Pre- & Post-modification [see Unit3]
9.	"I'm Apt To Be Surly Getting Up Early"	Types of Sentences	--Co-ordination & Subordination --Rankshifting & Recursion	--Theme/Focus --Postmodification	--Clause Structures [see Unit 8] --Rankshifting [see Unit 1]
10.	"Still Shines when You Think of It"	Mixed Registers	--Colloquial/Poetic Registers --Lexical Sets	--Neologism	--Lexical Sets [see Unit 4] --Neologism [see Unit 3]
11.	"Mother Tongue to Childrens' Lip"	Oppositional Discourse	--Formal/Informal Registers	--Lexical Sets	--Colloquial VPs: Verb + Particle Verb + Preposition [see Unit 5] --Contractions [see Unit 10]

PART II

Student: "I pray you tell me what you meant by that."

William Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*
V. ii. 27

UNIT 1

PARALLELISM AND REPETITION: References and Articles

We begin our exploration by studying what is obvious--the repetition of syntactic structure. Our main focus in this first unit is on the three different types of articles which constitute part of the basic English grammar. This strategy serves to orientate students and initiate them into this progressive "language and literature" programme because articles, especially the definite article, are the most commonly used words in English. They are grammatically classed as determiners; they modify nouns to indicate their definiteness/indefiniteness. In addition, as part of the orientation, this unit is designed to help students explore how writers can exploit sounds for expressive purposes (a unique feature of most poetry). In particular, this unit focuses on the onomatopoeic sound effect and the sibilants. So, to begin with, reading the text aloud is certainly a meaningful activity for the students.

In this poem, the poet sets up a system of regularities through obvious syntactic parallelism and repetition. A recognition of these foregrounded regularities, as well as the irregularities, contributes to our interpretation of the poem. The regular listing constructions and the repeated definite article help to condition meanings. It is through the syntactic parallelism and manipulation of the sibilant /s/ that the poet's essential vision is expressed: what seems to be implied is that each human individual is only but a child amidst the multitude of forms and noises in the universe. In the poem's

context, the irregularities, however, enable the poet to say two things subtly at the same time:

(I like noise !

(I like silence !

NOISE**Jessie Pope**

I like noise.

The whoop of a boy, the thud of a hoof,

The rattle of rain on a galvanized roof,

The hubbub of traffic, the roar of a train,

The throb of machinery numbing the brain, 5

The switching of wires in an overhead tram,

The rush of the wind, a door on the slam,

The boom of the thunder, the crash of the waves,

The din of a river that races and raves,

The crack of a rifle, the clank of a pail, 10

The strident tattoo of a swift-slapping sail --

From any old sound that the silence destroys

Arises a gamut of soul-stirring joys.

I like noise.

INTRODUCTION

A first reading of the poem gives the impression of simplicity and spontaneity. It is this simplicity that makes the poem charming and appealing. Yet at the same time, the richness of the auditory images suggests that there is some special significance in the recitation of these "noisy" events in the poem. Because of the simplicity and obvious parallelism which result from the listing constructions, I suggest that a good "way into" the poem is at the syntactic level.

1. SYNTACTIC FEATURES

The poem comprises 14 lines and six pairs of end-rhymes. It begins and ends with the same simple sentence:

I like noise.

S P C

Enclosed by these 2 simple sentences is the recitation of events which has the structure of a list (except *l.* 12 - 13). Tabulation of the listing constructions reveals the following structure:

Nominal Groups					
Article	Noun head	Prep.	Art.	Noun	Adjuncts
The	whoop	of	a	boy	
the	thud	"	"	hoof	
The	rattle	"	-	rain	on a galvanized roof
"	hubbub	"	a	train	
"	throb	"	-	machinery	numbing the brain
"	switching	"	-	wires	in an overhead tram
"	rush	"	the	wind	
⇒ {	(a door	on	the	slam)	
	(the slam	of	a	door)	
The	boom	of	the	thunder	
the	crash	"	the	waves	
"	din	"	a	river	that races and raves
"	crack	"	"	rifle	
"	clank	"	"	pail	
The ...	tattoo	"	" ...	sail	

1.1 ARTICLES

From the table constructed, the following pattern of article usage in the poem can be deduced:

- (a) the definite article precedes
 - i) the Noun head of each nominal group consisting of post-modification by an "of" phrase.
 - ii) aspects of unique experience common to mankind as a whole
(the wind, the thunder, the waves).

(b) the indefinite article precedes singular count nouns

(a boy, a hoof, a galvanized roof, an overhead tram, a door,
a river, a rifle, a pail, a sail)

(c) zero article precedes

i) non-count nouns (\emptyset rain [drops], \emptyset traffic, \emptyset machinery, \emptyset joys)

ii) plural nouns (\emptyset wires)

It can be observed that the nominal groups preceded by the definite article are all **exophoric references** (Carter, 1982(a): 74). Such references establish a familiar and stereotypical world within the poem. This sense of familiarity and stereotype is reinforced by the structural parallelism and repetition of the definite article preceding each noun head. With the use of the indefinite and zero articles in the poem, however, the reference is generic. These linguistic features have been exploited by the poet to motivate the reader to construct the context of situation.

1.2 STRUCTURAL PARALLELISM

From the table, structural parallelism among the nominal groups is clearly evident. In addition, the nominal group-adjunct constructions of lines 3, 6 and 9 in the poem proper, together with their regular three-line intervals, establish structural parallelism within structural parallelism. The effect of this structuring into parallel grammatical units is to produce a block of text which gives the impression of order and regularity. At the same time, the imaginative energy of the auditory images is tightly confined within the parallel structure. From the above observations, the reader may infer that the microcosm of the poet's moral universe is one which can contain a variety of phenomena, some of which are inter-related (conveyed by the nominal group-adjunct

construction), and yet remain highly unified in its overall design.

The addition of adjuncts to the nominal groups in lines 3, 6 and 9 helps to prolong the unit-length. This, together with the series of commas, contributes to the feeling of onward movement, of climax. The climax is a delayed goal (*l.* 12-13), the outcome of the syntactic regularity. It is interesting to note that the structure of premodified Noun Phrases (NPs) in lines 3 and 6 parallels that in lines 11, and the climactic lines 12-13:

<i>l.</i> 3	a	galvanized	roof
<i>l.</i> 6	an	overhead	tram
<i>l.</i> 11	a	swift-slapping	sail
<i>l.</i> 12	any	old	sound
<i>l.</i> 13		soul-stirring	joys

It is thus evident that the poet has skilfully exploited these structural devices early in the poem in *l.* 3 and 6 to prepare the reader for the climax. The intrusion of the syntactic break (the dash at the end of *l.* 11) delays the climax, making it the more satisfying for the reader.

1.3 WORD ORDER

The abrupt break signified by the dash in line 11 demands our attention. This syntactic and graphological foregrounding serves to highlight the **anacoluthon** which occurs in the succeeding climactic lines 12-13. First, in *l.* 12, the clause "that the silence destroys" is ambiguous: that is, it is plausible for us to read "silence" as subject of "destroys"; such a "destroyed" sound would, in a different sense be "old" (i.e., past, vanished). Inversion is so deviant in English that the "unwanted" meaning is bound to be heard. So is the speaker caught in a linguistic slippage, where simultaneously s/he

is saying, "I like noise!" and "I like silence!". Second, a re-ordering and an analysis (here I would adopt Cummings' and Simmons' terminology) of the grammatical units in lines 12-13 give the following:

l. 12 From any old sound that the silence destroys

l. 13 Arises a gamut of soul-stirring joys.

=> A gamut of soul-stirring joys arises from any old sound

<-----Sentence----->

<-----independent clause-complex----->

<-----S-----><--P--><-----C----->

that destroys the silence.

----->

<-dependent clause complex-->

<-A--><----P----><----C---->

The structure of CACPPS in lines 12-13 obscures the subject which is "a gamut of soul-stirring joys", but stresses the complement "From any old sound". In other words, by shifting the conventional order of the grammatical units in this complex sentence, the poet specifically draws our attention to the "theme-marked" element:

i.e. From any old sound that the silence destroys...soul-stirring joys.

<-----**theme**-----> <-----**rheme**----->

The marked "From any old sound" is semantically different from the unmarked complement because of its thematic emphasis and positional prominence. This

thematic emphasis is semantically congruous with the title "Noise". The manifold foregrounding exploited by the poet helps to convey the climax of the accumulation of noise and at the same time introduces the new information (conveyed by the "rheme") in the poem--"soul-stirring joys".

1.4 RANK-SHIFTING

My earlier observation that lines 3 & 6 are structural devices exploited by the poet to prepare the reader for the poem's climax is reinforced by the depth of recursion achieved through rank-shifting of grammatical units. (This topic on "rank-shifting" will be explored in greater details in Unit 9.) Here, I would again adopt Cummings' and Simmons' terminology in my analysis, and gloss the key as follows:

KEY:

Sentence	Unit-complexes	nominal groups
S = Subject	\propto = parallel or independent	h = head element
P = Predicate	simple units	m = modifier element
C = Complement	β = subordinate or	q = qualifier element
A = Adjunct	dependent units	p = preposition
		c = completeive

The following pattern of rankshifting can be observed in:

(i) the nominal groups

The	whoop	of	a	boy		
the	thud	of	"	hoof		
"	rattle	"	-	rain		
"	hubbub	"	-	traffic		
"	roar	"	a	train		
"	throb	"	-	machinery		
"	rush	"	the	wind		
"	switching	"	-	wires		
*"	slam	"	a	door		
"	boom	"	the	thunder		
"	crash	"	the	waves		
"	din	"	a	river		
"	crack	"	a	rifle		
"	clank	"	a	pail		
"	strident	tattoo	"	"	swift-slapping	sail

<----- α group complex ----->

m | (m) | h |<----- q ----->

| p |<----- c ----->

| m | (m) (m) h

m (m) h p m (m) (m) h

(ii) the nominal groups post-modified by adjuncts:

a) 1. 5 The throb of - machinery numbing the brain
 1. 9 The din " a river that races and raves

<-----α-----> <-----q----->
 m h <-----q----->
 p <-----c----->
 m h

b) 1. 3 The rattle of - rain on a galvanized roof
 1. 6 The switching of - wires in an overhead tram

<-----α----->
 m h <-----q----->
 p <-----c----->
 h <-----q----->
 p <-----c----->
 m m h

(iii) the climactic lines:

A gamut of soul-stirring joys arises from any old sound

<-----sentence----->
 <-----α independent clause-complex----->
 <-----S-----> P <-----C----->
 <-----α group complex-----> <-----α----->
 m h <-----q-----> p <-----c----->
 p <-----c-----> m m h
 m m h

that destroys the silence.

----->

<-- β dept clause complex->

A P <--- C --->

 <--- \propto --->

 m h

The crucial point here is that the poet uses rank-shifted grammatical structures to achieve great depth of recursion. This is especially true of those lines (*l.* 3, 6 & 9) foreshadowing the climax and even more so in the climactic lines. The increase in depth parallels the build-up of emotion and the accumulation of "noise" in the context of the poem. The whole poem rises to a climax which is both conceptual and structural. At the same time, the ordering of grammatical units into the main and subordinate clauses indicates a sense of hierarchy and value.

The analysis reveals that "a gamut of soul-stirring joys" is of the greatest depth in the poem. By breaking the conventional word order and postposing this subject, the deviant word order of CACPPS delays the release of emotion so that the impact of the climax is stronger and more satisfying.

2. PHONOLOGICAL FEATURES

The impact of the climax is further intensified by the sudden outburst of /s/ in lines 11-13, especially in word-initial positions:

The strident tattoo of a swift-slapping sail--
From any old sound that the silence destroys
Arises a gamut of soul-stirring joys.

A study of "Noise" shows that eight words with initial /s/ are prominent here whereas only 2 words ("switching" and "slam" in l. 6 and 7 respectively) of this phonemic feature are present in the first 10 lines of the poem. It is interesting that these two earlier occurrences are within the clusters /sw/ and /sl/, which then reappear in line 11 ("swift-slapping"). That is, "switching" and "slam" are foregrounded; they add to the phonological patterning and in a way decrease any suggestion of randomness. The overall phonemic patterning has the effect of holding back the initial /s/ in the preliminary recitation of events. Clearly the initial /s/ has been reserved for the climax to intensify the depth of experience and the crescendo effect.

3. LEXICAL FEATURES

A categorization of the Noun heads and qualifying Nouns reveals the following patterns:

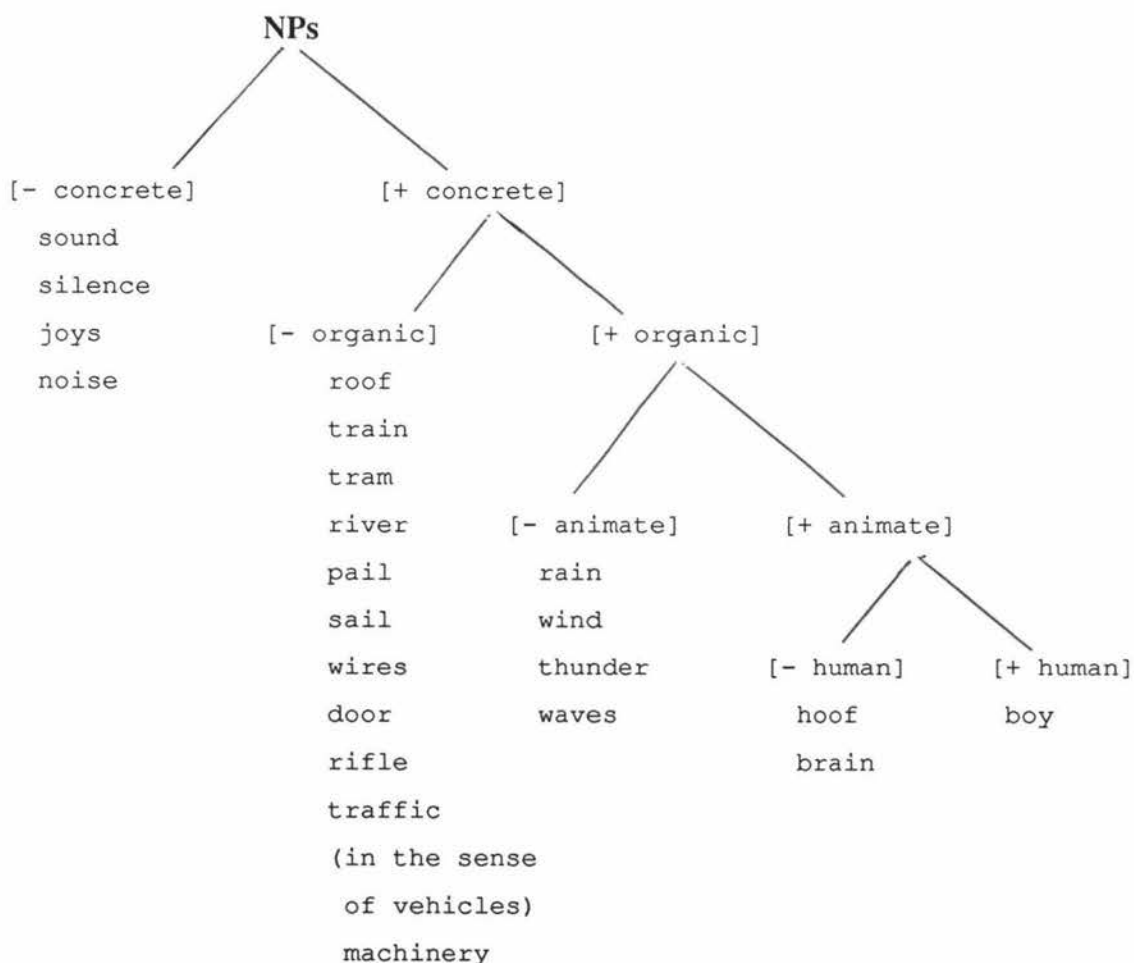
(i) Noun Heads

Onomatopoeic	Intermediate	Non-onomatopoeic
whoop	rattle	din
thud	slam	gamut
hubbub		switching
roar		
throb		
rush		
boom		
crash		
crack		
clank		
tattoo		

There are opposed conceptions about "onomatopoeic". For my analysis above, I have adopted Cummings' and Simmons' definition: "Onomatopoeia is actually the mutual reinforcement of sense by sound and sound by sense" (1983:14). Except for "hubbub" and "gamut" which can only be noun phrases, the majority of these noun heads take the same grammatical form for both noun and verb. This linguistic feature is exploited to evoke the various sounds and to intensify the onomatopoeic effect.

(ii) Qualifying NPs

Semantic Features



The preceding categorization reveals that the NPs which pervade "Noise" are of a great variety. They do not fall into one fixed category: they exhibit semantic features which are universal categories of meaning, reflecting the material and natural phenomena of the universe in which we live.

However, though the NPs are of great diversity, the three onomatopoeic words "boom", "crash" and "crack" are semantically cohesive. Besides, there are also other possible collocates in the poem:

thunder - rain - wind - sail - river - waves

traffic - train - tram - wires - machinery

In other words, the collocates reflect some kind of unity within the diversity in the universe.

On a different level of significance, we might notice that "boy" is the only [+ human] NP in the midst of the NP diversity in the poem's context. Furthermore, against the background of prominent end-rhymes (hoof-roof, train-brain, tram-slam, waves-raves, pail-sail, and destroys-joys), "Noise" and "boy" (in *l.* 1 and 2) constitute a "near-miss" rhyme, in the sense that it could easily be turned into a proper one, e.g.,

I like noise.

The whoop of boys ...

The foregrounding of "boy" serves to create the impression of the poem's listing constructions as part of the boy's (or more generally, a child's) recitation of events around him.

CONCLUSION

The beauty of this poem lies in the achievement of the whole poem being drawn

together by the common structural devices as well as by a common idea, noise. The long list of noises and the fullness of modification in the context generate richness of sheer accumulation. In addition, the simplicity of the simple sentence "I like noise" at the beginning and end of the poem gives the impression of a child reciting the events. The overall effect is to give the reader an impression of spontaneity and the excited, amateurish piling up of experience. This spontaneous piling up of experience is echoed by the interesting verb "like" which is very much of an emotional activity, registering a kind of intellectual and emotional preference and less of a physical activity. Here, we may note in passing that the verb "like" often presents interesting problems in role-relations (similarly "need", "have", "keep", etc.). This interesting concept of role-relations will be explored in greater depth in Unit 7.

On the whole, we may infer that with the spontaneity preserved in "Noise", the poet has skilfully exploited the poem to convey her world-view: that the human individual is a child in the universe and that there is some kind of unity/order within the diversity of this universe. At the same time, we also recognise another voice in the poem that does not like its brain being "numbed" and would find "joy" in a silence that destroyed noise. It is a repressed voice that is saying the opposite of the refrain "I like noise". Perhaps it is an adult voice, verbally against the child's voice. All in all, our linguistic analysis of "Noise" reveals the underlying layers of complexity with an overlay of simplicity.

UNIT 2

SAY IT AGAIN: Words and Connectivity

*This unit is linked to the preceding one by virtue of the observation that they both exhibit the linguistic feature of **repetition**, though at different levels. In this unit, repetition at the lexical and semantic levels helps to achieve **cohesion**. At the syntactic level, the various classes of verb phrases (finite/non-finite, transitive/intransitive) are of thematic significance; they are cohesive with the message conveyed in the poem. It must be emphasised that cohesion is one essential feature not only in the examined text, but also in other texts and the student's own writing. Thus, I have posited this poem and the central concept of **cohesion** in this early part of my proposed progressive programme.*

"Mending Wall" can be read in a fairly straight-forward manner because the language of the poem is simple and even "flat" (marked by the absence of complex imagery). The linguistic analysis here concentrates on what Halliday calls the **textual** function of language, i.e., the way the text relates to its environment. This is done by examining a range of cohesive devices: overt lexical repetition and collocation, conjunctions for semantic cohesion, as well as other subtle and intricate patterns like syntactic deviation as a device generating semantic and structural cohesion. In short, by studying the cohesive ties in the rhetoric of the text, we can unravel the underlying themes and meanings of "Mending Wall". In other words, this poem works essentially on the

assumption that poetic language is the means by which the "larger meaning" of the text is discovered.

MENDING WALL

Robert Frost

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
 That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,
 And spills the upper boulders in the sun;
 And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.
 The work of hunters is another thing: 5
 I have come after them and made repair
 Where they have left not one stone on a stone,
 But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,
 To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,
 No one has seen them made or heard them made, 10
 But at spring mending-time we find them there.
 I let my neighbor know beyond the hill;
 And on a day we meet to walk the line
 And set the wall between us once again.
 We keep the wall between us as we go. 15
 To each the boulders that have fallen to each.
 And some are loaves and some so nearly balls
 We have to use a spell to make them balance:
 'Stay where you are until our backs are turned!'
 We wear our fingers rough with handling them. 20
 Oh, just another kind of outdoor game,
 One on a side. It comes to little more:
 There where it is we do not need the wall:
 He is all pine and I am apple orchard.
 My apple trees will never get across 25

And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him,
 He only says, 'Good fences make good neighbors.'
 Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder
 If I could put a notion in his head:
 'Why do they make good neighbors? Isn't it 30
 Where there are cows? But here there are no cows.
 Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
 What I was walling in or walling out,
 And to whom I was like to give offense.
 Something there is that doesn't love a wall, 35
 That wants it down.' I could say 'Elves' to him,
 But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather
 He said it for himself. I see him there
 Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top
 In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed. 40
 He moves in darkness as it seems to me,
 Not of woods only and the shade of trees.
 He will not go behind his father's saying,
 And he likes having thought of it so well
 He says again, 'Good fences make good neighbors.' 45

INTRODUCTION

As a whole, the poem portrays how the narrator and his/her neighbour get together every spring to mend the wall that divides their apple orchard and pine plantation respectively. It also expresses conflicting viewpoints. At the same time, it gives us a sense that Frost is driving at some point, yet we are not quite able to grasp the message. This is especially so since the "wall" motif in the poem is symbolic at various levels.

In addition, the poem gives us the impression that its vocabulary is rather basic and repetitive. Primarily it is the simple vocabulary and repetitions that render the poem cohesive and meaningful. Thus, a good way into the poem is to study its lexical and semantic cohesion.

1. LEXICAL AND SEMANTIC COHESION

Here, I shall adopt the general concept of cohesion discussed by Halliday in *Cohesion in English*. An analysis of "Mending Wall" reveals the following patterns:

1.1 REITERATION

(a) Clausal repetition

Something there is that doesn't love a wall, (l. 1 and 35)

... 'Good fences make good neighbors.' (l. 27 and 45)

(b) Phrasal repetition

No one has seen them made or heard them made (l. 10)

And set the wall between us once again

We keep the wall between us as we go. (l. 14-15)

To each the boulders that have fallen to each. (l. 16)

And some are loaves and some so nearly balls (l. 17)

We have to use a spell to make them balance: (l. 18)

cf. normal/unmarked usage

l. 7 Where they have upset every stone, [non-repetition]

l. 10 No one has seen ~~or~~ or heard them made [ellipsis]

l. 15 We keep it between us as we go. [anaphoric ref.]

l. 16 Each of us picks up the boulders on [non-repetition,
opposite sides of the fence. non-symmetry]

l.17-18 Although some are loaf shaped and therefore
easy to balance, others are ball shaped
and we need to balance them. [non-repetition]

(c) Semantic repetition

{ Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
{ That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,
{ And spills the upper boulders in the sun; (l. 1-3)

{ Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
{ That wants it down. (l. 35-36)

{ darkness ... of woods
{ shade of trees (l. 41-42)

(d) Repetition of a single lexical item

wall : title, l. 1, 14, 15, 23, 32, 35

walling	: l. 33(2x)
stone	: l. 7(2x), 39, 40
boulders	: l. 3, 16
mending	: title, l. 11
gaps	: l. 4, 9
apple	: l. 24, 25
pine(s)	: l. 24, 26
cows	: l. 31(2x)
make(s)	: l. 14, 18, 27, 30, 45
made	: l. 6, 10(2x)
say(s)	: l. 27, 36, 45
said	: l. 38
saying	: l. 43
there	: l. 1, 11, 23, 31, 35, 38
elves	: l. 35, 36

We might note here that the lexical items "wall", "stone", "make" and "say" are part of the Anglo-Saxon language felt by native speakers to be the **simplest** form of the language. Indeed, this is true of much of the vocabulary of the poem. The deliberate repetition of these simple lexical items, therefore, serves to enhance the notion of simplicity inherent in the message/truth conveyed in the poem.

The intensive reiteration of "wall" and its unusual derivative "walling in" and "walling out" in l. 32,33 and 35, together with the exact clausal repetition of l. 1 in l. 34, forces us to observe the poet's deliberate attempt to assign positional prominence to "offense" and "wall" in l. 34 and 35 respectively:

Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
 What I was walling in or walling out,
 And to whom I was like to give offense.
 Something there is that doesn't love a wall, (l. 32-35)

In the poem's given context, there is the tendency for us to associate "wall" with "fence", both generally associated with the notion of "barrier". In effect, Frost attempts to connect the idea of "fence" and "offense"; he forces us to see the semantic link between these two at some level. We might note that "fence" and "offense" share the following semantic features:

[+ apartness + alienation + distance + aloofness]
---	--	---

The basic idea behind the word play of "fence" and "offense" here is that if we set up a fence between ourselves and others, then the fence/barrier becomes a kind of double-edged weapon: we are protecting ourselves with the fence but also at the same time offending others.

1.2 COLLOCATION

It is interesting for us to note that the following reiterated words are natural collocates:

wall - stone - boulders

Further exploration of the poem reveals the patterning of the following major sets of collocates:

back	--	fingers	--	head	--	hand	--	armed	[body parts]
(1.19)		(1. 20)		(1. 29)		(1. 40)		(1. 40)	

rabbit -- dogs -- cows

[domestic animals]

(l. 8) (l. 9) (l. 31)

seen - heard - find - know - wonder - thought

[verbs of perception]

(l.10) (l.10) (l.11) (l.12) (l.28) (l.44)

(l.32)

The first two sets of collocates are undoubtedly congruous with the poem's title and central theme, since "mending wall" is essentially a physical activity. The third set of domestic animals has the effect of creating the countryside setting in the poem and also characterizing the poet as a country person. However, the poet's exploitation of the range of verbs of perception leads us to speculate the possibility of the wall as also representative of a "mental wall/barrier".

1.3 CONJUNCTIONS

A preponderance of conjunctions can be observed in the poem:

- (i) a) "and" functioning as simple additive

And spills the upper boulders in the sun; (l. 3)

And makes gaps even two can pass abreast. (l. 4)

I have come after them and made repair (l. 6)

And on a day we meet to walk the line (l. 13)

And set the wall between us once again. (l. 14)

And some are loaves and some so nearly balls (l. 17)

And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him. (l. 26)

Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder (l. 28)

And to whom I was like to give offense. (l. 34)

But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather (l. 37)

Not of woods only and the shade of trees. (l. 42)

And he likes having thought of it so well (l. 44)

b) "and" functioning as simple contrastive

And some are loaves and some so nearly balls (l. 17)

He is all pine and I am apple orchard. (l. 24)

(ii) "but" as adversative

But they would have the rabbit out of hiding (l. 8)

But at spring mending-time we find them there. (l. 11)

Where there are cows? But here there are no cows (l. 31)

But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather (l. 37)

(iii) "or" as alternative

No one has seen them made or heard them made, (l. 10)

What I was walling in or walling out, (l. 33)

The primary function of conjunctions is to link sentences as well as clauses, and so they are an important means of cohesion. Besides, they serve to prolong the sentences so that we get a patterning of run-on lines (the majority of them) and sentences of varying lengths. The above three major types of conjunctions--"and", "or" and "but"--are commonly grouped into co-ordinating conjunctions. Co-ordination provides the simplest and most straightforward means of connectivity. It is a linguistic device that semantically links ideas which are not complex and are sequentially related. In terms of information processing and grammatical status, co-ordinated structures have equal weight, and the cumulative effect of co-ordination is monotonous.

The foregrounded reiteration at various levels, the collocation and conjunctions help to emphasize the relatedness of reference, the relatedness of forms and semantic connection respectively. Overall, the marked continuity of meanings makes the text extensively cohesive. More crucially, the interplay between the foregrounded cohesive features and the simple vocabulary has the effect of creating a special voice for the narrator in the poem. It is the voice of a rather verbose narrator who repeats him/herself to put his/her point across to the reader.

Another interesting feature which reinforces our preceding observation of the poem's simple vocabulary is the foregrounded simile "... like an old-stone savage armed." (l. 40). Here, the poet deliberately avoids a learned word like "neolithic". Thus, on another level of significance, we might argue that Frost attempts to put on the notion of a wise country philosopher--one who is self-taught and aims at expressing some profound but **simple** truths. And cohesion is one chief means of getting at that effect.

2. TYPOGRAPHICAL FOREGROUNDING

The complete sentences (graphetically indicated by full stop/question mark/exclamation mark) in the poem vary greatly in length: they can stretch over five lines, e.g.,

The work of hunters is another thing:
I have come after them and made repair
Where they have left not one stone on a stone,
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,
To please the yelping dogs. (l. 5-9)

or they only take up half a line, e.g.,

... But here there are no cows.(l. 31)

Fundamentally, the effect of the different sentential lengths is of a variation of pace: the shorter sentences convey a quickening of pace and urgency while the longer sentences in a way reflect the continuity/persistent nature of the state of affairs expressed in the poem.

Another related typographical feature is that the majority of the sentences in the poem are run-on lines. Thus, against the background of run-on lines, the following single lines which are graphetically and syntactically complete are foregrounded to demand our attention:

- (a) We keep the wall between us as we go. (l. 15)
- To each the boulders that have fallen to each. (l. 16)
- We wear our fingers rough with handling them. (l. 20)
- He only says, 'Good fences make good neighbors.' (l. 27)

Given the options open for the above constructions, the poet could have said respectively:

- (b) -We keep it between us as we go.
- or
- As we go, we keep it between us.
- (since there is the presupposition of "the wall" in l. 14.)
- Each of us picks up the boulders on opposite sides of the fence.
- Our fingers become rough with handling them.
- Good fences are essential for good neighbors, etc.

But these alternative constructions only ruin the cohesive effect (by virtue of mimesis

in l. 15 and 16) that marks the sentences in (a).

Parallel to our preceding observation is Milton's *Paradise Lost* (I),

l. 540 "Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds."

Hartman, in *Saving the Text*, talks about the literary meaning of the above quoted line: 'This is a line balanced by two adjective noun phrases either side of the "pivotal" verb. The syntactic pattern can be written 1212 "Sonorous" and "sounds" are separated by "metal blowing martial". This has the effect of keeping "Sonorous" and "sounds" apart for a while - it delays their coming together ... "metal" and "martial" are therefore filling a breach in the sentence. The breach, or "juncture", distances the immediacy of the redundancy of "sonorous sounds" It splits the key phrase and creates a tension which could not be expressed in words. The silence of the "juncture" is therefore its literary meaning.'

To a certain extent, the patterning of l. 15 and 16 in "Mending Wall" achieves considerable meaning like l. 540 in *PL* (I). In l. 15, "We keep" and "we go" are separated by "the wall between us" while in l. 16, the two similar prepositional phrases "to each" are kept apart by "the boulders that have fallen". That is, "the wall between us" and "the boulders that have fallen" serve to distance the two noun-verb phrases and the two prepositional phrases in l. 15 and 16 respectively. They have the effect of acting as a kind of barrier and creating a tension, one of the central elements that characterizes "Mending Wall".

We might notice that the device of cohesion renders both l. 15 and 16 symmetrical and mimetic. In l. 15, the prepositional phrase "between" is given positional prominence. It is right at the centre of the line and is visually (at least) acting as a wall dividing the sentence into two equal halves--four syllables on its left and right, and in this case four

distinct words. In *l.* 16, the phrase "To each" at both ends of the sentence is mimetic of the narrator and his/her neighbour on the opposite sides of the wall.

In *l.* 20, the peculiar transitivity of "wear" is foregrounded to demand our attention:

cf. We wear our fingers rough with handling them.

and Our fingers become rough with handling them.

The verb "wear" has the semantic features of [+transitivity] and [+volition]. These are clearly in contrast to those of the intensive verb "become". There is thus the implication that it is the choice of the narrator and his/her neighbour to handle the stones and mend the wall. In other words, the "outdoor game" of "mending wall" is an activity within the individual's choice, not imposed by natural forces.

Line 27 is foregrounded to convey the neighbour's point of view and deep-seated faith. At the same time, the simple vocabulary of his saying serves to convey his simple-mindedness. To a certain extent, this saying is again symmetrical and mimetic of the division created by the wall: two NPs separated by a single verb "make". We might argue here that the syntactic structure of the saying, together with the exploitation of the lexical verb "make", implies that the physical division between individuals is imposed by the individuals themselves.

3. SYNTACTIC FEATURES

3.1 VERB PHRASES

An exploration of the verb phrases in "Mending Wall" reveals the following:

FINITE VERBS

Transitive

S	V	O
(i)		
Something ...	doesn't love	a wall
[something]	sends	the frozen-ground-swell
["]	spills	the upper boulders
["]	makes	gaps ...
I ...	[have] made	repair
they	have left	not one stone ...
No one	has seen	them [= the gaps] made
[No one]	has heard	them [= the gaps] made
... we	find	them [= the gaps] there
[we]	set	the wall
we	keep	the wall
we	do not need	the wall
I	built	a wall
[Something] ...	wants	it [= the wall] down
(ii)		
I	let	my neighbor ...
I	tell	him
I	see	him
I'd rather he	said	it ...
(iii)		
he	likes	having thought of it so well
My apple trees ...[will never] eat		the cones ...
Good fences	make	good neighbors) curious
we	wear	our fingers ...) "transitivity"
(iv)		
(we	turned	our backs
(our backs	are turned	[Passivization]

Intransitive

S	V	A
I	have come	after them
we	*meet	to walk the line
the boulders...	have fallen	to each
[You]	stay	where you are ...
He	moves	in darkness
it	seems	to me
My apple trees	will never get	across ...
He	will not go	behind his father's saying

NON-FINITE VERBS

(i) I let my neighbor *know beyond the hill;

(ii) **Infinitive - V**

the rabbit ...	to	please	the yelping dogs
we meet	to	walk	the line
we have	to	use	a spell
	to	make	them balance.
I'd ask	to	know	what I was walling in or
			walling out
... I was like	to	give	offense.

A study of the patterning of the verb phrases in this poem shows the following interesting features:

(a) Transitive Verbs

i) What is of remarkable significance is the preponderance of finite transitive verbs patterning in with grammatical objects which are either referring to "the gaps" or "the wall", or their collocates. Semantically, these grammatical objects are of primary importance and they serve to reinforce one of the poem's central themes.

ii) Whenever both the first person pronoun and the third person pronoun (more specifically the narrator's neighbour in the poem's context) feature in the same clause, the narrator assumes the role of grammatical subject while the neighbour is accorded the role of grammatical object.

Linguistically, the grammatical subject is on a higher hierarchical level than the grammatical object. In a way, the grammatical subject-object role-relation in the simultaneous patterning of the first and third person pronouns subtly suggests the notion of social distinction that persists in human culture: we often do not perceive other individuals as our equals.

iii) Our observation in (ii) might lead us to speculate that " ... he likes having thought of it so well ..." --the only transitive clause in which "he" assumes the role of grammatical subject--is foregrounded to convey the neighbour's simple-mindedness. And his simplicity is further reinforced by the simple saying, "Good fences make good neighbors."

iv) The foregrounded passivization is l. 19 gives end-focus to "turned" which would otherwise be unmarked in the active construction:

cf. "Stay where you are until our backs are turned!"

and "Stay where you are until we turn our backs!"

In a way, the passivization here brings out the active and persistent force of nature (epitomized by the falling boulders) in juxtaposition to the deliberate human action.

(b) Intransitive Verbs

i) Theoretically, factual verbs (see Quirk, 1973: 360 on the classes of verbs) like "know"

- when used in declaratives, are followed by finite clauses
functioning as direct object,

e.g. my neighbour knew the rabbits made the gaps.

S V finite clause = O

- when used to convey an indirect question, are followed by
clauses with whether /if,

e.g. He didn't know whether they needed the fence.

S V whether-clause = O

In the poem's context, the absence of the finite clause after "know" in the surface structure motivates us to classify the verb as intransitive.

ii) The reciprocal verb "meet" is often used in a transitive sense,

e.g. I meet my neighbour to walk the line.

S V O A

The action of "meeting" is a reciprocal activity which involves the participants' decisions: we cannot meet someone who does not want to be met! But, here I have classified "meet" as intransitive because there is no overt grammatical object:

<u>We</u>	<u>meet</u>	<u>to walk the line.</u>
S	V	A

As for the intransitive clauses, when the neighbour assumes the role of grammatical subject, the narrator sees him as someone who is primitive and adheres to his father's saying without any questioning:

He moves in darkness as it seems to me, (l. 41)

He will not go behind his father's saying, (l. 43)

He says again, 'Good fences make good neighbors.' (l. 45)

That is, on one level of significance, the narrator characterizes his/her neighbour as a simple-minded fellow. On another level, the narrator's attitude and the different ways by which s/he characterizes her/himself and the neighbour (the aphorism in l. 25-26: "My apple trees will never get across / And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him" versus the simple saying in l. 27 & 45: "'Good fences make good neighbors'") marks the notion of social distinction, something which is inevitably essential in human culture but often segregates individuals. Furthermore, their different approaches to the same issue represent two different general attitudes to life--one which yields to the natural forces that draw individuals together, the other persists in maintaining the distinctions separating them.

3.2 DEVIANT WORD ORDER

The frequency of "there" in the poem and the grammatical deviation attributed to the unusual ordering of this place adverbial are of great significance. In both *l.* 23 and 31, the unusual word order results from the misplacing of "there". Line 23 is further foregrounded by the reiteration of colons that precede and succeed it while "But here there are no cows" in *l.* 31 is the only half line which is syntactically complete.

cf. l. 23 There where it is we do not need the wall:
 & normal usage: We do not need the wall where it is at present.

cf. l. 31 But here there are no cows.
 & normal usage: But there are no cows here.

Line 23 is right in the middle of the poem--exactly 22 lines preceding and 22 lines following it. This pivotal line serves to signal the narrator's shift of viewpoints. For the first half of the poem, the narrator is the one who is desperate about repairing the gaps left by hunters. And s/he is the one (not the neighbour) who initiates the fence-making. On the contrary, in the second half of "Mending Wall", s/he admits that they do not need the wall. Thus, the deviant word order is foregrounded to signal to us the narrator's response (preceding *l.* 23) and counter-response (after *l.* 23) to the issue of "Mending Wall". In the subsequent lines, the chiasmus which fundamentally is of aphoristic effect serves to intensify the conflicting viewpoints in the poem:

... It comes to little more:

There where it is we do not need the wall:
 He is all pine and I am apple orchard.
 My apple trees will never get across
 And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him. (*l.* 22-26)

In l. 31, "here" and "there" contrast semantically. The tension which results when these two opposing place adverbials are brought together has the effect of conveying the unresolvable conflicting viewpoints within the narrator him/herself. Overall, the patterning of the narrator's response and his/her own counter-response, as well as the neighbour's conflicting viewpoint, allows Frost to portray a particular social problem and explore the many different and paradoxical issues it involves.

CONCLUSION

In the context of the poem, the conflict of points of views between the narrator and his/her neighbour centres on the issue of whether it is worthwhile to maintain the wall between their properties, in defiance of natural forces which persist in destroying it. On one level of interpretation, perhaps we might argue that the opposition between natural forces and the human imposition of a physical wall suggests for Frost that freedom is contingent upon some degree of restriction. In other words, "Mending Wall" exhibits the reality of natural freedom in opposition to social constraints, human rights and obligations--a favourite theme in most of Frost's poems.

More significantly, the poem's interesting linguistic features and cohesive effect point to the fact that we should not overlook the problem portrayed in the poem as also relevant to other contexts of experience. This is especially true since "the wall" is of multiple symbolic meanings. It can suggest barriers like the division between different social classes, racial and religious groups, etc. So, though "Mending Wall" is of much real significance, eventually we are left to speculate: should individuals tear down the barriers which isolate them from one another, or should they acknowledge that distinctions are necessary and part of human culture? Consequently, for the reader to take on a particular stance is to a certain extent (like the characters portrayed in the

poem) for him/her to adopt a certain attitude to life.

UNIT 3

UNCONVENTIONAL SYNTAX: A Poem with No Finite Verb and Full Stop

*To complement the major linguistic concepts of lexical and semantic cohesion in Unit 2, this unit focuses primarily on **phonological cohesion**. While Unit 2 centres on natural collocation as one of the cohesive devices, Unit 3 shows how unnatural collocation can also be a salient linguistic feature. Furthermore, this unit extends the concept of the classification of verb phrases (VPs) discussed in Unit 2. It introduces another major linguistic concept of categorizing VPs--progressive/perfective. That is, VPs in English can also be used to convey **grammatical aspect**. Grammatical aspect is the manner in which the action of the VP is viewed or experienced: it can be presented as completed or still in progress.*

As the title suggests, the poem as a whole is deviant in a grammatical sense. We can account for its deviance by pointing out its unconventional grammatical feature: it lacks the obligatory category of the finite VP and the full stop. There is an apparent deliberate use of the progressive participle and all other graphetic features (commas, dashes, ellipses, hyphens, accent marks and colon) except the full stop. However, the linguistic deviations do not occur randomly. They pattern in with other linguistic features, the graphological and sound patternings in particular, to form a cohesive whole; and to convey the essential themes and meanings of the poem. In other words, this poem works on the idea that form and content in a poem are closely related.

THE MAIN-DEEP**James Stephens**

The long-rólling,
Steady-póuring,
Deep-trenchéd,
Green billów:

The wide-topped,
Unbróken,
Green-glacid,
Slow-sliding,

Cold-flushing,
---On---on---on---
Chill-rushing
Hush---hushing,

... Hush---hushing ...

INTRODUCTION

This is a visually striking and an aurally appealing poem--the vision of the wave and the audibility of the sea at large. It is visually striking because of its graphological features; aurally appealing because of its rich phonetic texture and what G M Hopkins called his "sprung rhythm".

The entire poem comprises 31 words (including the title) of which five are repeated twice ("the", "deep", "green", "hush" and "hushing") and "on" is repeated thrice within a single line. It is thus evident that the poet is exploiting repetition as a theme and cohesive link.

It would suffice for the poet to refer to the sea solely as "The Main" or "The Deep". However, the deliberate compounding of these two semantically similar lexical items, co-ordinated by the hyphen, serves to foreground the theme of repetition and by implication, the theme of continuity.

1. GRAPHOLOGICAL FEATURES

The entire poem comprises three verses and a single final line. A patterning of three-syllabic intermediate half lines runs through the poem. It can be observed that the conventional full-stop is absent while commas and hyphens (eight of each) are predominant. Though relatively fewer in occurrence, the dashes, accent marks, ellipses and colon are equally significant. These graphological features and the words in "The Main-Deep" are ordered in such a way that the poem's layout is fundamental to its meaning, i.e., this poem works essentially on the concept that "Form conveys meaning".

Functionally the hyphenated words in the poem proper are compound adjectives. However, there is not much natural association between the central adjective and the participle in each hyphenated word (I will discuss this later). The poet has exploited the hyphens to provide a link between each central adjective and participle.

The hyphens which are predominant in the first two verses are gradually replaced by the dashes in Verse 3 and the final line. Similarly, the commas which are prominent in the first two verses are gradually supplanted by the ellipses at the close of the poem. The interplay of these graphological features helps to prolong the thematic meaning of "The Main-Deep" and echoes the theme of continuity. This theme is visually further reinforced by the ellipses right at the end of the poem. The ellipses are symbolic of the "infinite" and the "boundless". There is thus the subtle hint that the phenomenon conveyed by the poem will unfold again and again, in an infinite pattern, beyond time, beyond space.

An interesting patterning of accent marks in the poem can be observed. In Verse 1, all the three participles ("rólling", "póuring" and "trenchéd") and the noun phrase "billów" carry the accent mark, in Verse 2 only one adjectival phrase "Unbróken" carries the accent mark, while in Verse 3 the accent mark is totally absent. It is striking here that the accent forces us to emphasize a syllable (-ow) that normally would carry only secondary stress. This tends to reinforce the slow delivery of the accentuated word. The status of the accent in -éd is different; normally we would have -èd, and in any case it is just an indication to pronounce "trenched" disyllabically, not /trentʃd/ (or similar). This point tends to reinforce our observation that the accents have a graphological role in the poem. Since the imposition of the foregrounded accent marks on vowels results in a delay of utterance, the rhythm of the poetry in Verse 1 is thus relatively and deliberately slow compared to that of Verse 3 which is relatively quick-

paced.

2. PHONOLOGICAL FEATURES

2.1 CONSONANTS

The concentration of certain sounds in the poem draws our attention to what is being said. An exploration of the poem reveals a preponderance of words having liquids, nasals and sibilants in their phonemic structure:

liquids:	nasals:	sibilants:
/l/, /r/	/m/, /n/, /ŋ/	/s/, /z/, /ʃ /, /tʃ/
long- <u>r</u> olling	<u>m</u> ain	<u>s</u> teady
pour <u>i</u> ng	long-rolling	tren <u>ch</u> ed
tr <u>e</u> nched	pour <u>i</u> ng	glac <u>i</u> d
gr <u>e</u> en billow	tr <u>e</u> nched	<u>s</u> low- <u>s</u> liding
unbr <u>o</u> ken	gr <u>e</u> en	fl <u>u</u> shing
gr <u>e</u> en-glac <u>i</u> d	unbr <u>o</u> ken	<u>ch</u> ill-r <u>u</u> shing
sl <u>o</u> w-sl <u>i</u> ding	gr <u>e</u> en sl <u>i</u> ding	h <u>u</u> sh-h <u>u</u> shing (2x)
col <u>d</u> -fl <u>u</u> shing	on (3x)	
chill-r <u>u</u> shing	fl <u>u</u> shing	
	r <u>u</u> shing	
	h <u>u</u> shing	

It is important for us to note that liquids, nasals and sibilants are all continuant sounds, i.e., they can be prolonged indefinitely--as in "hush, hiss, fizz" and other onomatopoeic words. Plosives, by contrast, are non-continuant: indeed, it is almost impossible to fix any duration for a plosive, however short (e.g. by "freeze framing" a tape-recording).

In the context of this poem, continuant sounds are obviously appropriate, as suggesting the infiniteness and continuity of the sea.

2.2 VOWELS

Vowels are of course also continuants and therefore, contextually and thematically appropriate. The foregrounding of accent marks on certain vowels in the poem demands our attention. A study of the vowels shows that the following three vowels occur most frequently throughout the poem:

/ʌ/	/ɔ:/	/ɒ/
unbróken	rólling	long
flúshing	billów	tópped
rúshing	unbróken	On (3x)
húsh (2x)	slów	
húshing (2x)	cóld	

These are either back vowels (/ɔ:/ and /ɒ/) or central vowel (/ʌ/), and their "sonorous" property can be felt to mimic the deep, booming noise often associated with the roar of the sea.

2.3 ALLITERATION

Besides the marked preferences for the above consonants and vowels discussed, another interesting patterning of sound repetition can be observed. The theme of repetition culminates in the final line which mirrors the last line of Verse 3:

Verse	Partial alliteration	alliteration	consonant cluster alliteration	minimal pairs	word repetition
1	<u>l</u> ong- <u>r</u> oll <u>ing</u>	-	-	-	-
2		<u>g</u> reen- <u>g</u> laci <u>d</u>	<u>s</u> low- <u>s</u> lidi <u>ng</u>	-	-
3	-	-	-	flushing) rushing) hushing)	On-on-on <u>hush--hush</u> ing
final line	-	-	-	-	<u>hush--hush</u> ing

The above pattern contributes to the overall observation that as the poem progresses, visual and aural repetition becomes more and more intensified and almost inevitable at the end. Such a pattern of repetition is mimetic of the manner in which the "green billow" gathers its momentum; and the inevitable repetition of this undulation.

Overall, the phonological patterns in "The Main-Deep" can be taken to represent not just the sounds of what they describe, but the natural activity and phenomena of the sea as a whole. The phonological patterns have effectively enacted the multi-faceted nature of the sea. Hence, we may say that in this poem, the graphological and phonological interaction enacts the sense.

3. LEXICAL FEATURES

3.1 LEXICAL AND SEMANTIC COHESION

Only one noun is present in the poem--"billow". This noun, which has the semantic features of [-animate] and [-concrete], is liberally **pre-modified** and **post-modified** by central adjectives compounded with participles. Tabulation of the lexical items in the

poem shows a meaningful pattern:

Verse	Articles	Adjectives	Semantic features	Participles		Noun
				-ing	-ed	
1	The	long	[spatial]	rolling		
		steady	[temporal]	pouring		
		Deep	[spatial]		trenched	
		Green	[colour]			billow
2	The	wide	[spatial]		topped	
		Unbroken	[continuity]			
		Green	[colour]	*glacid		
		Slow	[temporal]	sliding		
3		Cold	[sensation]	flushing		
		On	[continuity]			
		Chill	[sensation]	rushing		
		Hush	[sensation]	hushing		

The central adjectives exhibit much regular lexical and semantic cohesion. Generally, the central adjectives exploited by the poet fall into two main categories: those which are evaluative of colour/temporal/spatial dimensions and those which are evocative of extreme sensations. It is interesting to note that evaluative adjectives pervade the first two verses while evocative adjectives pervade the last verse and last line.

The stems of all the "-ing" participles--"roll", "pour", "slide", "flush", "rush", and "hush"--share the semantic element of [+ motion] and [+ vitality]; they belong to the class of dynamic verbs. More specifically, they are momentary verbs (Quirk, 1973:47) which have little duration. This feature, together with the progressive aspect,

powerfully reinforces the theme of continuity in the poem. As for the only two "-ed" participles used, "trenched" and "topped" share the semantic element of [+ spatial] and their link is reinforced by the alliterative /t/. The perfective aspect and lack of time-orientation conveyed by "trenched" and "topped" is congruous with the timeless aspect of the sea.

The foregrounding of "Unbroken", embodying three syllables at the heart of the poem, is of great significance. The two morphologically unbroken words "Unbroken" and "On" are graphologically, positionally and semantically equivalent. Together they reflect the theme of continuity and describe precisely the very nature of the "Green billow", another one of the three morphologically unbroken words in the poem.

3.3 LEXICAL COLLOCATIONS

There is a deliberate compounding of adjective-participle that involves collocates which are not quite regarded as a conventional fit by native speakers of English. Instead of "long-rolling", "steady-pouring", "Deep-trenched", "wide-topped", "slow-sliding", "Cold-flushing", and "Chill-rushing", it would be more natural to have the following collocates (as indicated in *The Oxford English Dictionary*):

long-combing/ descending/ growing/ lasting/ running/ standing/
 steady-fast/ going/ looking
 deep-buried/ coloured/ ditched/ rooted/ rutted/ seated/ sunken/ vaulted
 wide-apart/ arched/ branched/ expanded/ opened/ realmed/ spaced/ stretched
 slow-burning/ circling/ creeping/ going/ moving/ releasing/ reacting
 cold-bathing/ braving/ catching/ pausing/ rinsing
 chill-cold/ casting/ fit/ hardening/ looking/ etc.

In "The Main-Deep", what characterizes the choice of the participles is not determined by the preceding evaluative/evocative central adjectives. It appears to us that the poet has exploited the unnatural collocates to create certain expectations in the reader which are then denied. The overall effect is to remove the reader from the predictable world into uncertainty (Widdowson, 1975:45).

In Verse 3, "Cold-flushing" and "Chill-rushing" are not only unnatural collocates but they also embody the element of opposition. Both "flushing" and "rushing" share the common semantic feature of [+ heat]: "flushing" in the sense of "a glow of light or colour, especially the reddening in the face caused by a rush of blood"; "rushing" in the sense of "perspiring" as a result of "moving with great speed and force, hurriedly upon or on something". Thus, Stephens has exploited "cold-flushing" and "Chill-rushing" to express the reconciliation of opposites--that of cold and heat. In other words, using Eagleton's phrase, "a delicate equipoise of contending attitudes" (Eagleton, 1983:50) is achieved here. It is at this point of the poem that the vision of the "green billow" is almost complete and what T.S. Eliot calls the "still point"--a moment of energy, a centre--where "all opposites are reconciled--the complete vision perceived, complete reality experienced and complete being attained".

As revealed by the table, the deviant lexical item "glacid" breaks the "-ing" and "-ed" patterning in the poem. A check in the dictionary proves that "glacid" is not within the code of the English Language system. I suspect that this deviant lexical item is motivated by the context. It is a "blend" (Fromkin, 1978: 124) of two other lexical items in the code of the system to convey that icy cold and calm facet of the sea.

i.e. glacial + placid --> glacid

At the same time, this neologism could be the result of collocation: "acid" and "green" can be collocates (as in "acid-green"). In effect, this deviant and cryptic lexical item

conveys the elusive nature of the sea, beyond human perception.

4. SYNTACTIC FEATURES

As a whole, the poem is syntactically deviant as the obligatory category of finite verb phrases (VPs) does not feature at all. The majority of VPs or participles which constitute this poem are progressive ("rolling", "pouring", "sliding", "flushing", "rushing" and "hushing") while two are perfective ("trenched" and "topped"). All these VPs do not have any tense but only aspect. This syntactic feature emphasizes the process conveyed by each VP. The lack of time reference due to the lack of tenses in "The Main-Deep" implies that the whole phenomenon expressed by the poem is spatially and temporally infinite.

On another level of interpretation, such syntactic features suggest that the poet is physically removed from reality, detached from real time and aware only of a kind of timeless movement (Widdowson, 1975:57). His detachment from physical reality is further reinforced by the total absence of animate nouns and personal pronouns in the whole poem.

CONCLUSION

The inconclusive final line of the poem creates a kind of indefiniteness and unsettling effect for the reader. Just as the sea is of multi-faceted nature, the poem is of various interpretations. On one level of significance, the powerful evocation of the "sea" imagery through the poet's exploitation of the various linguistic devices may open up the interpretation of the whole poem as a metaphor for life--the surge of life. Indeed,

"The Main-Deep" is as rich and elusive as the sea can be.

UNIT 4

INTERROGATIVES: Modal Auxiliaries and Pronouns

In conjunction with the grammatical aspect examined in Unit 3, another factor that affects the composition of VP is mood. Mood conveys the speaker's attitudes to what is being uttered. Other moods, such as probability, moral obligation, insistence and permission, may be assigned to a sentence. The mood may be conveyed by other words apart from the VP, for example, by an adverb such as "possibly". But it is likely for the mood to be conveyed partly or entirely by the VP, either through its form (for e.g. the hypothetical "were" in "If I were you ...") or by a modal auxiliary (for e.g. "may", "ought", "must", "can", etc.). This unit examines how the moods conveyed by the modal auxiliaries pattern in with the pronouns, verbals and lexical sets to form a cohesive whole.

Fowler, who follows the Russian theorist Bakhtin, maintains that opposing voices in a text embody conflicting world-views/ideologies; and he is particularly interested in the interpersonal features of language. The most important interpersonal feature of language is modality, which is defined as follows:

Modality is the grammar of explicit comment, the means by which people express their degree of commitment to the truth of the propositions they utter, and their views on the desirability or otherwise of the states of affairs referred to (Fowler, 1982: 216).

In "Up-Hill", the co-presence of two distinct voices and the sequential aspects of communication motivate us to study the poem's interpersonal features, particularly the modal auxiliaries and pronouns. The analysis reveals an unusualness of the experience described. This curiously unsettling effect arises chiefly from Rossetti's exploitation of the collocational range of some lexical items which span more than one context. Some of these are core contexts, and some are marginal. Items in each lexical set reinforce each other and in consequence, the central context suggested in "Up-Hill" is one related to Christianity.

By comprehending the poem's many suggested contexts, we may enter Rossetti's poetic vision. However, poetic meanings are of their very nature unspecific and ambivalent. Thus, it is possible for the reader to adopt simultaneous meanings to his/her own personal vision. And of course, this is based on the way the lexis takes on particular value and associations in the poem for the individual reader.

Up-Hill

Christina Rossetti

Does the road wind up-hill all the way?

Yes, to the very end.

Will the day's journey take the whole long day?

From morn to night, my friend.

But is there for the night a resting-place?

5

A roof for when the slow, dark hours begin.

May not the darkness hide it from my face?

You cannot miss that inn.

Shall I meet other wayfarers at night?

Those who have gone before.

10

Then must I knock, or call when just in sight?

They will not keep you standing at that door.

Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak?

Of labor you shall find the sum.

Will there be beds for me and all who seek?

15

Yea, beds for all who come.

INTRODUCTION

On first reading, one might notice the general structure of the poem: four stanzas, each comprising two pairs of question-response. The conventional quotation marks accompanying direct speech are absent. Instead the responses are foregrounded by indentation and italics. A pattern of end rhyme with an *abab* scheme is established throughout the poem.

A first reading of "Up-Hill" leaves the impression that there is some mysteriousness going on in the poem. This sense of mysteriousness and the strong note of impersonality in the opening question-response is primarily the outcome of the interplay of pronouns and other interpersonal features in the poem. Thus, a good "way into" the poem is an exploration of the patterning of pronouns.

1. GRAMMATICAL FEATURES

1.1 PRONOUNS

A study of the pronouns reveals an interesting pattern:

Stanza	Pronouns	Type	Subject/object	Sing./Pl.
1. {Q	∅	-	-	-
a(R	∅	-	-	-
{Q	∅	-	-	-
b(R	<u>my</u> friend	possessive	-	singular
2. {Q	∅	-	-	-
c(R	∅	-	-	-
{Q	<u>my</u> face	possessive	-	singular
d(R	<u>You</u>	personal	S	singular
3. {Q	<u>I</u>	personal	S	singular
e(R	Those <u>who</u>	personal(relative)	S	plural
{Q	<u>I</u>	personal	S	singular
f(R	<u>They</u>	personal	S	plural
4. {Q	<u>I</u>	personal	S	singular
g(R	<u>you</u>	personal	S	singular
{Q	... <u>me</u> and all <u>who</u>	personal/pers(rel)	O	sing./pl.
h(R	... all <u>who</u> come	personal (relative)	O	plural

It can be observed that out of the eight questions posed, the first three (a-c) do not consist of any pronouns, the subsequent four (d-g) consist of the first person singular pronoun while the final question (h) comprises both singular and plural pronouns. As for the response, (b), (d) and (g) comprise singular pronouns while (e), (f) and (h) comprise plural pronouns. This pattern of singularity/plurality suggests that the traveller's predicament and search for meanings and answers may be singular but the

information supplied is something universal. All in all, the patterning of pronouns suggests shifts in point of view of the same participants, and a progression and widening of perspectives in the poem.

The absence of personal pronouns at the start of "Up-Hill" creates the atmosphere of impersonality. At the close of the poem, when the plural pronoun does feature in the final question, both the first person and personal relative pronouns are reduced to the status of "object". Cumulatively, this theme of impersonality implies human insignificance in the vast cosmos.

1.2 MODAL AUXILIARIES AND VERBALS

A close look at the modal auxiliaries and verbals reveals another kind of patterning:

		QUESTIONS		RESPONSES
Stanza	Connective	Operator	Verb	Verbals
1.	-	Does ...	wind	∅ (ellipsis)
	-	Will ...	take	∅ (ellipsis)
2.	But	is ...		begin
	-	May not ...	hide	cannot miss
3.	-	Shall ...	meet	have gone before
	Then	must ...	knock ... call	will not keep
4.	-	Shall ...	find	shall find
	-	Will ...	seek	... for all who <u>come</u>

The first question begins with "Does", the only operator which is not a modal auxiliary in the entire poem. Such foregrounding helps to focus on the declarative element present in the question. In speech, we can also ask with rising intonation as the interrogative marker, "The road | winds up-hill | all the way? |". With the question posed, the poem begins as if one is already in the middle of the situation, and it appears to presuppose a great deal that has gone before.

The patterning of modal auxiliaries deserves special mention. The use of "Shall", "Will" and "May" in interrogatives implicates the listener's will and authority in question while the use of "must" implicates the speaker's obligation to the listener in question. In other words, the modal verbs "shall" and "will" have some tincture of their original volitional and determinative force. In effect, the patterning of modal auxiliaries in the majority of the questions helps to create a special voice for the collective responses. It is the voice of authority. This voice of authority is remote, inscrutable, beyond the control of the individual and beyond human understanding. Hence, mystery and impersonality reverberate in the poem.

The verbals present in the responses (as listed in the table) have the semantic association of "the inevitable" and "the irretrievable". This notion of "the inevitable" is reinforced by the qualifier "for" in the conclusion. Such semantic associations suggest the subjection of man to that mysterious but all powerful voice of authority in question.

As a whole, the verbals used in both the questions and responses are unequivocally part of the common verbalization of experiences of a journey/quest for something. The operators of the first six questions do not repeat. This generates a sense of progression: in Stanza 1, the "traveller" is in the middle of his/her journey; in Stanza 2,

the destination is still hidden and in Stanza 3, s/he is anticipating the end of the journey and is almost there!

Stanza 2, which begins with "But", again presupposes a great deal that has gone before (like the opening of Stanza 1). At the end of Stanza 3, "Then" implies a kind of conclusion or destination achieved. However, there is a reversal of our expectations when Stanza 4 features, with the repetition of the modal auxiliaries "Shall" and "Will" used in Stanza 3 and 1 respectively. Such repetition serves to foreground the climax achieved in Stanza 4.

2. LEXICAL FEATURES

On one level of significance, the "Up-Hill" journey is representative of a physical journey. This is a plausible reading of the poem since the *Analytical Concordance to the Holy Bible* shows that "Up-Hill" is not within the code of the Bible.

On a different level of significance, we recognize that the "road" imagery pertinent to "Up-Hill" conventionally suggests a human being's spiritual journey while the "darkness/night" imagery is conventionally associated with the darkness of evils/sins. More so, the images of the quest/journey on foot and darkness/night are alluded to the Bible: **Isaiah 35:8** (*Joy of the Redeemed*) and **Genesis 1:4-5** respectively.

Isaiah 35:8	And a highway will be there; it will be called the way of Holiness. The unclean will not journey on it; it will be for those who walk in that Way; wicked fools will not go about on it.
--------------------	--

Genesis 1:4-5 God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light "day", and the darkness he called "night". And there was evening, and there was morning ...

We might recognize that the lexical verbs "seek", "knock" and "find" have strong biblical connotations (**Matthew 7:7**) while the "inn" motif reminds us of *The Parable of the Good Samaritan* (**Luke 10:34**) and *The Birth of Christ* (**Luke 2:7**).

Matthew 7:7 Ask and it will be given to you,
seek and you will find;
knock and the door will be opened to you.

Luke 10:34 ... Then he put the man on his own donkey,
brought him to an inn and took care of him.

Luke 2:7 ... and she gave birth to her first born, a son.
She wrapped him in clothes and placed him
in a manger, because there was no room
for them in the inn.

Furthermore, in the climactic Stanza 4, the end-focus prominence assigned to "weak" (l. 13), the lexis "comfort" (l. 13) and the foregrounded repetition of "beds" (l. 15 & 16) might motivate us to recall their use in **Matthew 26:41** (*Gethsemane*) and **Job 7:13** respectively:

Matthew 26:41 ... The spirit is willing but the body is weak.

Job 7:13 When I think my bed will comfort me
and my couch will ease my complaint.

However, in the poem's context, "beds" provides no comfort or relief for the traveller: the terrifying conventional association of sleep => night => darkness => death reverberates in the poem. And this is enhanced by the foregrounded word order:

Of labor you shall find the sum.

The curious word order here has the effect of creating an unsettling feeling for the reader. Because of the thematic significance assigned to "Of labor" and end-focus given to "the sum", this line seems to imply that "you will find all the labour (i.e. more labour) at the end of the journey". Instead of comfort, ironically the traveller will only find "the grand total of toil". And the irony is rendered melodramatic by the archaic "Yea" at the close of the poem. This typically Old English word, when used in modern times, is often within a Christian context. We might recall its use in **Revelation 14:13** (*The Three Angels*) :

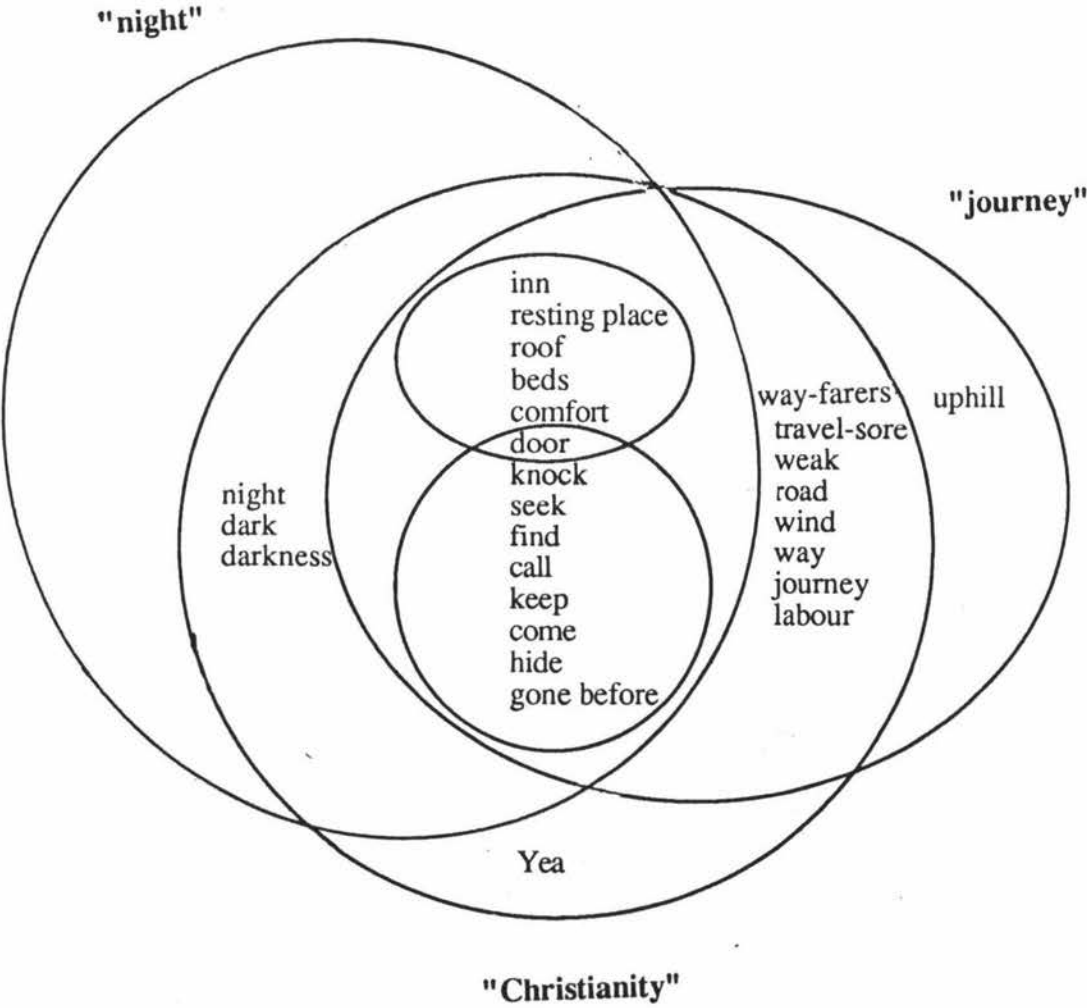
... Yea, saith the spirit, that they may
rest from their labour

In addition, "Yea" in the final response is semantically cohesive with "Yes" in the initial response. To a certain extent, such semantic cohesion (by virtue of the link with time) echoes the journey of time and by implication, the journey of life.

Because of the rich biblical associations inherent in many of the lexical items, we are justified to posit a "Christian" lexical set operating in the poem. Although there is no one standard means of classifying the lexical items, I have consulted the *Analytical Concordance to the Holy Bible* by R. Young to identify those terms which most

distinctively belong to the Christian framework. The basic criterion for my classification here is use of the lexical items in the more familiar parts of the Bible.

An exploration of the lexis, both situationally and collocationally, reveals the patterning of three major lexical sets. Yet, at the same time many of their lexical items overlap and there is also the patterning of subsets. It is this overlapping of the numerous lexical items belonging to word sets of different dimensions that creates complexity in the poem:



Overall, the interplay between the lexis and interpersonal features in the poem creates two special voices: the collective responses are representative of the voice of authority; while the collective interrogatives are representative of that of the Everyman. And these two voices embody two opposing world-views. One seems to suggest that the journey of life is an "up-hill" struggle but there will be comfort (I suppose this refers to eternity) at the end of the journey. The other is a pessimistic view suggesting that at the end of the journey of life, one will only find the inevitable death.

CONCLUSION

There is multi-dimensional complexity in the poem. The different levels of interpretation blend and there is a "spread" or overlapping of significance. Consequently, we simultaneously take in the mixed metaphor in the one reading of this poem: the poem could be read as the journey of life and the mystery of death; it could also be read as an "up-hill" journey both physically and spiritually.

Our linguistic exploration of the poem reveals that Rossetti has exploited the interpersonal features to create a common experience among the participants in the poem and the reader of the text: the poem clearly shifts from the singular "I" to the inclusive and conclusive "all who come". Above all, "Up-Hill" is not only the poet's reaction to the journey of life but also our human reaction to the question of life.

UNIT 5

COMMANDS: Impossibilia and Verb + Particle/Preposition

In Unit 4, we have seen that VPs in English could be made up of more than one word-- "modal auxiliary + verb" (for e.g. "cannot miss", "shall find" etc.)--to convey the mood. In this unit, we shall see that the English Language also possesses VPs which are composed of "verb + particle" and "verb + preposition" (for e.g. "cut off" and "come to" respectively). It is characteristic of English that its lexicon contains an enormous number of idioms comprising such verbal structures. In passing, we may note that VPs of the "verb + particle" form may be considered as relatively informal in certain societies. This linguistic feature of formality/ informality will be taken up and discussed in greater details in Unit 11.

In "Song XXX", by means of an extreme foregrounding of imperatives of which the majority are impossibilia, Auden creates not only the presence of a bold commanding voice, but also the impression of an unidentified addressee towards whom the voice is projected, and a sense of location and shift of perspectives.

Most of the lexis in this poem is for repeated and shared experiences, little for the extraordinary. However, the main thrust of this poem is Auden's idiosyncratic use of imperative verb phrases and noun phrases which do not make a conventional fit (e.g. Pack up the moon, Pour away the ocean, etc.). The majority of these imperative verb

phrases are of the form "verb + particle/ preposition", and what traditional grammarians call "phrasal verbs" and "prepositional verbs" respectively. The feature of unconventional fit/unnatural collocation characterizing most of the imperative verb phrases and noun phrases, augmented by the deictic and other interpersonal features of language, bespeaks the persona's indignation and conflict. The strong sense of negativity is so uniquely represented that we cannot help wondering what lies behind the world within the poem. In effect, we are left to speculate and construct the context of "Song XXX" with the help of linguistic evidences, chiefly the interpersonal features of language. Consequently, the constructed context of the poem may not only legitimize individual readers' response, but it may also reveal contradictory interpretations--this creates a sense of the true enigmatic contradictions of human experience and the complexity of reality, i.e., the true nature of life.

SONG XXX

W H Auden

Stop all the clocks, cut off the telephone,
Prevent the dog from barking with a juicy bone,
Silence the pianos and with muffled drum
Bring out the coffin, let the mourners come.

Let aeroplane circle moaning overhead
Scribbling on the sky the message He Is Dead,
Put crepe bows round the white necks of the public doves,
Let the traffic policemen wear black cotton gloves.

He was my North, my South, my East and West,
My working week and my Sunday rest,
My noon, my midnight, my talk, my song;
I thought that love would last for ever: I was wrong.

The stars are not wanted now; put out every one:
Pack up the moon and dismantle the sun;
Pour away the ocean and sweep up the woods:
For nothing now can ever come to any good.

INTRODUCTION

Most readers will readily recognize that there is something very odd about the "world within the poem" (Leech, 1969: 189). Nevertheless, the speaker's bold tone and negativity, which arise out of the extensive use of imperatives, are undeniable. The world within this poem strikes us because it does not seem related in a fairly direct way to the world in which we live our ordinary lives. There is thus an apparent deliberate exploitation of a different frame of reference by the poet, perhaps to express his world view, which may be idiosyncratic.

The poem comprises four stanzas, each with a rhyming scheme of *aabb*. Stanzas 1, 2 and 4 are structured on obvious imperatives while Stanza 3 is structured on declaratives. The general feeling of the poem's "out-of-ordinariness" is chiefly attributable to the form and peculiar nature of these imperatives. Consequently, our recognition of the unfamiliar human situation within "Song XXX" might motivate us to examine the situational implications of the deixis as a starting point in the text.

1. LEXICAL FEATURES

1.1 DEIXIS

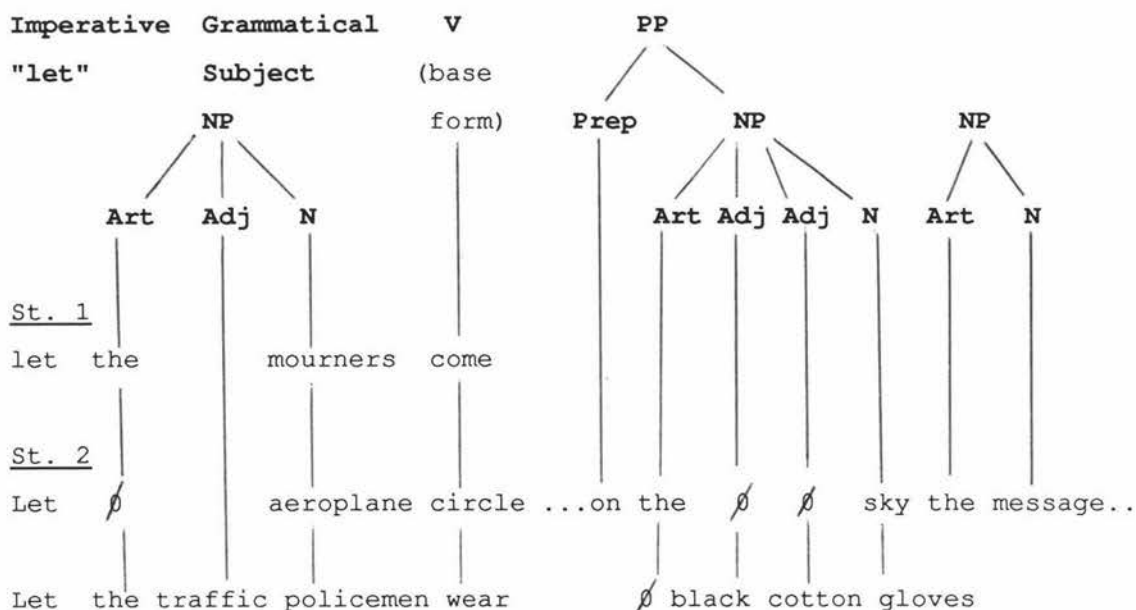
1.1.1 ARTICLES

There is the patterning of two subtypes of imperatives in the poem:

(a) the central and most frequent type of imperatives with an imperative finite verb (the base form of the verb). Such clauses have no overt grammatical subject, but it is plausible to say that "you" is understood as the subject.

e.g. Stop all the clocks,
 Silence the pianos, etc.

(b)



The analysis reveals that the majority of the noun phrases (NPs) that we find in association with imperative verbs have the definite article in their structure except "aeroplane", "crepe bows" and "black cotton gloves". The NPs premodified by the definite article are characterized by a high degree of specificity. In Stanzas 1 and 2, such specific NPs are first mentions of the things referred to, while in Stanza 4 they are all universal references. That is, these NPs are situational or **exophoric** in their referential functions. These exophoric references imply that the things they refer to are environmental data; features of the "given" situation in which the speaker is at that moment speaking, and therefore immediately present or at least familiar to both speaker and addressee (Rodger, 1982(a):125). In other words, these things referred to are part of the domain of the shared knowledge between the speaker and addressee.

In contrast to the numerous highly specific references, only three NPs in association with the imperative verbs are non-specific in their references:

" \emptyset aeroplane", " \emptyset crepe bows" & " \emptyset black cotton gloves" (St. 2, 1.1,3 & 4)

The absence of the definite article here creates a sense of the state of affairs continuing indefinitely into the future. This notion of continuity is reinforced by the continuative aspect of "moaning" and "scribbling" (the only two "-ing" participles in the entire poem) in the adverbial postmodification of "aeroplane". In addition, the respective imperative verbs of the two indefinite references--"Let ... circle ... " and "Put ... round ... "--share the semantic feature of [+ circularity] which undoubtedly implies continuity.

The absence of the definite article is also evident in the obligatory NPs of the preposition of accompaniment "with" in Stanza 1, l. 2 & 3:

... with a juicy bone
 ... with \emptyset muffled drum

Here, we might observe that the two NPs share the common semantic feature of [-animacy]. In a way, this foreshadows the message "He Is Dead" in Stanza 2, one of the underlying themes in the poem's context. And this "death" theme is further reinforced by "black cotton gloves" in Stanza 2: "black" is conventionally associated with death and mourning.

1.1.2 PRONOUNS

In contrast to the preponderance of the definite article in Stanzas 1, 2 and 4, no article features in Stanza 3 at all. Instead there is a preponderance of personal pronouns, particularly "my" in Stanza 3. It is interesting to note that "He" in Stanza 3 is syntactically both theme and subject. The effect of this is to provide the unidentified "He" with an independent reality, having attributes or values which are not attached to "He" by virtue of being possessed (Widdowson, 1980: 239).

In addition, the role/transitivity relationship is obscured by the S / V (copula) / C structure:

<u>He</u>	<u>was</u>	<u>my</u>	<u>North</u>	...
S	V		C	
...	<u>I</u>	<u>was</u>	<u>wrong</u>	.
	S	V	C	

In this Stanza, the nouns--"love", "talk" and "song"--are the closest we get to an indication of transitivity; and they are deverbals. Contrast these with "North", "South", "East", "West", "week", "noon", and "midnight", which cannot be deverbals.

While the third person pronoun is foregrounded by its thematic prominence, the first person pronoun on the contrary is foregrounded by its deliberate repetition. The intensive reiteration of the first person possessive pronoun in the parallel "my" phrases conveys the speaker's desperateness and anxiety to possess:

He was <u>my</u> North, <u>my</u> South, <u>my</u> East and West,) i.e.
<u>My</u> working week and <u>my</u> Sunday rest,) "He constituted
<u>My</u> noon, <u>my</u> midnight, <u>my</u> talk, <u>my</u> song;) my entire life."

As a matter of fact, possession bestows right of ownership. In this respect, the bold tone of the speaker's directives in Stanzas 1, 2 and 4 is justified. At the same time, there is an apparent hint by the poet that the speaker has in the past (indicated by the Simple Past Tense that characterizes this Stanza: "He was ...", "I thought ... I was wrong") acquired total rights over "He" only by virtue of possession.

We should note that the element of human possession is one of the intricacies of life and it does not guarantee a reciprocal relationship between the possessor and the possessed. Given the premises in the poem's context, it seems to us that the speaker's

past possession only amounts to a kind of obsessional pursuit and ineffectuality.

1.2 VERBALS

1.2.1 PHRASAL VERBS AND PREPOSITIONAL VERBS

The patterning of the imperatives shows that for the imperative verbs, there is a marked preference for the "verb + particle/ preposition" form:

cut off the telephone

Bring out the coffin

put out every one

Pack up the moon

Pour away the ocean

sweep up the woods

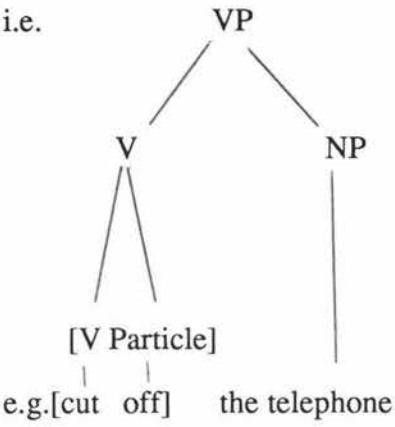
Because of the syntactic ambiguity that accompanies the written form of "verb + particle" (phrasal verb) and "verb + preposition" (prepositional verb), it is often difficult for us to distinguish the two. We might note that this verbal structure also features in "come to any good" in the poem's last line while "Put crepe bows round the white necks ..." in Stanza 2 may superficially appear as a variant of the verbal structure.

Although there are no absolute rules governing the categorization of phrasal verbs and prepositional verbs, I have proposed the following criteria as possible tests to distinguish the two. In order for a verb and its immediate lexical item to qualify for phrasal verb or prepositional verb, some/all of the following criteria must be satisfied:

V + Particle (Phrasal V)

(i) Constituent structure:

the V and the particle form a single constituent.



(ii) Synonym:

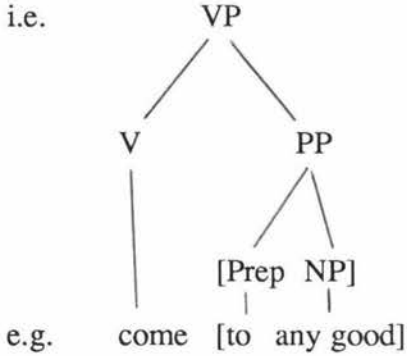
the resulting meaning is not derivable from the meaning of the V and particle in isolation. But the constituent may be replaced by a synonym.
e.g. [cut off] = disconnect

(iii) Word order:

- a) it is possible to reverse the order of the particle and its NP object.

V + Prep (Prepositional V)

the preposition and the obligatory NP form a single constituent; the preposition is the head of the prepositional phrase.



the preposition is fully determined by the V and it has no independent meaning. The V + PP is not replaceable by another lexical item (since they do not form a constituent).

it is not possible to reverse the order of the preposition and its NP complement.

i.e., the particle can be
post-posed to the NP object.
e.g. cut the telephone off

- b) particles can never be fronted
along with their NP objects.
e.g. *off the telephone cut

prepositions may accompany
their NP complements to the
front of relative clauses.

(iv) **Passivization:**

for transitive Vs, the NP object
can become subject through
passivization.
e.g. the telephone was cut off

if the NP complement is
syntactically an "oblique"
object, it may be passivized in
some cases only.

My attempt to test the listed V + Particle/Preposition with the proposed criteria gives
the following results:

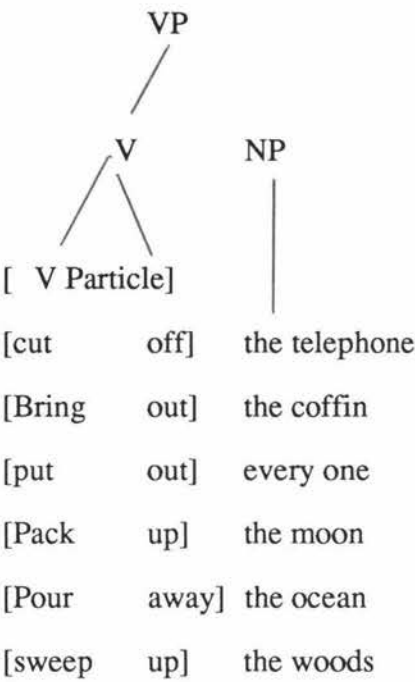
Key

* : ungrammatical

? : of questionable acceptability

Phrasal V

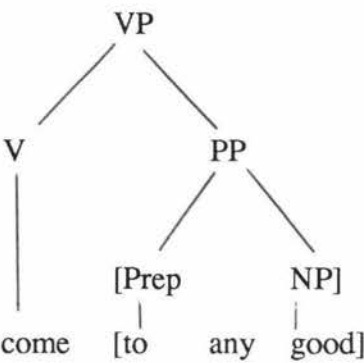
(i) **Constituent structure:**



(ii) **Synonym:**

[cut off]	= disconnect
[Bring out]	= produce
[put out]	= extinguish
[Pack up]	≈ store (away)
	(up)
[Pour (away)]	= empty
(out)	
[sweep up]	= eradicate/
	eliminate

Prepositional V



[to any good]: no equivalent
substitute

(iii) **Word order:**a) cut the telephone off*come any good toBring the coffin output every one outPack the moon upPour the ocean awaysweep the woods upb) *off the telephone cut?To what good can anything*out the coffin bringnow ever come?*out every one put

(The above, I think, like

*up the moon pack

sentence fragments such as

*away the ocean pour

"To what purpose?" and "To

*up the woods sweep

what extent?", is generally

acceptable, though a bit stilted.)

(iv) the telephone was cut off*any good was come tothe coffin was brought outevery one was put outthe moon was packed upthe ocean was poured awaythe woods were swept up

(the last two here are grammatically

acceptable although the unusual

collocation makes them sound odd;

cf. "the broken glass was swept up"

for a natural collocation.)

As for "Put crepe bows round the white necks ...", although the isolated structure "Put crepe bows round" satisfies criterion (iii) a) for phrasal verbs, it is ungrammatical. In addition, my attempt to reconstruct [put round] as a single constituent renders the whole clause ungrammatical:

*Put round crepe bows the white necks ...

Therefore, [Put ... round] is clearly not a phrasal verb. The lexical item "round" is syntactically a locative preposition. Another example of locative preposition in the poem is evident in the phrase "Scribbling on the sky".

In the context of my study, the tests devised have helped to identify the following constituents (which satisfy all the proposed criteria) as strictly phrasal verbs: "cut off", "Put out", "Bring out" and "sweep up". Test (ii) shows that the particle "away" is not tightly held by the verb "Pour"--we may substitute "out" for "away" without greatly changing the sense, though "away" perhaps sounds slightly more drastic than "out". The test also shows that "Pack up" has no exact equivalent but only a near-synonym. However, "pack" (as simplex) is very close semantically. As there are always exceptions to the rules, we may be justified in regarding these two constituents--"Pour away" and "Pack up"--as phrasal verbs by virtue of the observation that they satisfy the majority of the criteria for phrasal verbs.

The whole point here is that given the options open, Auden has exploited the patterning of "verb + particle/preposition" instead of their corresponding lexical substitutes. In Stanza 1, the imperatives, composed of imperative verb phrases and noun phrases associated with "house", are conceptually realistic for the reader. In other words, these imperatives are *possibilia*. In the course of events in the poem, what is of great significance is the oddity which arises when the colloquial verbs are collocated with nouns outside the "house-keeping" lexical set; for example, with "stars", "moon",

"sun", "ocean", etc. That is, the odd collocation of colloquial verbs and NPs in Stanza 4 gives rise to imperatives which are impossibilia. This element of oddity or "out-of-ordinariness" reinforces our earlier observation that the speaker's unusual sense of possession only amounts to a kind of obsessional pursuit and ineffectuality (as reflected in the impossibilia). Hence, his sense of indignation, disillusionment and emotional intensity reverberates in the bold imperatives. In short, through the manipulation of the imperatives, the speaker gives us the impression that s/he is "very angry with the whole world".

In Stanza 4, all the NPs in association with the imperative verbs are of a cosmological vein: the stars, the moon, the sun, the ocean and the woods. But their accompanying phrasal verbs or imperative verbs are some of those lexical items which we would normally associate with artifacts or the activities of moving house, for example,

put out <u>the fire</u>	cf.	put out <u>the star</u>
pack up <u>the clothes</u>		pack up <u>the moon</u>
dismantle <u>the pictures</u>		dismantle <u>the sun</u>
pour away <u>the water</u>		pour away <u>the ocean</u>
sweep up <u>the hall</u>		sweep up <u>the woods</u>

On the one hand, these imperative verbs help to generate thematic unity as they are congruous with the physical setting (a house and its surroundings) in Stanza 1. On the other hand, tension is set up within each imperative here as a result of the incongruity between each imperative verb and its NP. To a certain extent, such disjunction reflects the tension between the speaker's psychic reality and physical truth.

1.2.2 INDICATIVE VERB

Against the background of imperative VPs, only one indicative VP features in the entire poem: "thought" (St.3, l.4). An indicative verb is used if the adjective is "factual", that is, concerned with the truth-value of a complementation (Quirk, 1973: 355). In "Song XXX", there is inherent ambiguity in the foregrounded mental-process reporting verb or "factual verb" (for more details, see Quirk, 1973: 360):

I thought that love would last for ever: I was wrong.

Situationally, we might say that the speaker here seems to become totally identified and involved with his own activity--his thoughts/perception. But the indicative verb "thought" is also used in the poem's context to express an improbable proposition "that love would last for ever". That is, the indicative verb is used to convey an adjective complementation which has no truth-value at all. As soon as the indicative verb functions in such a manner, it assumes rhetorical function. And the rhetorical effect is further reinforced by the extraposition of "I was wrong" in which end-focus prominence is assigned to "wrong" which would not otherwise have been foregrounded in the unmarked construction.

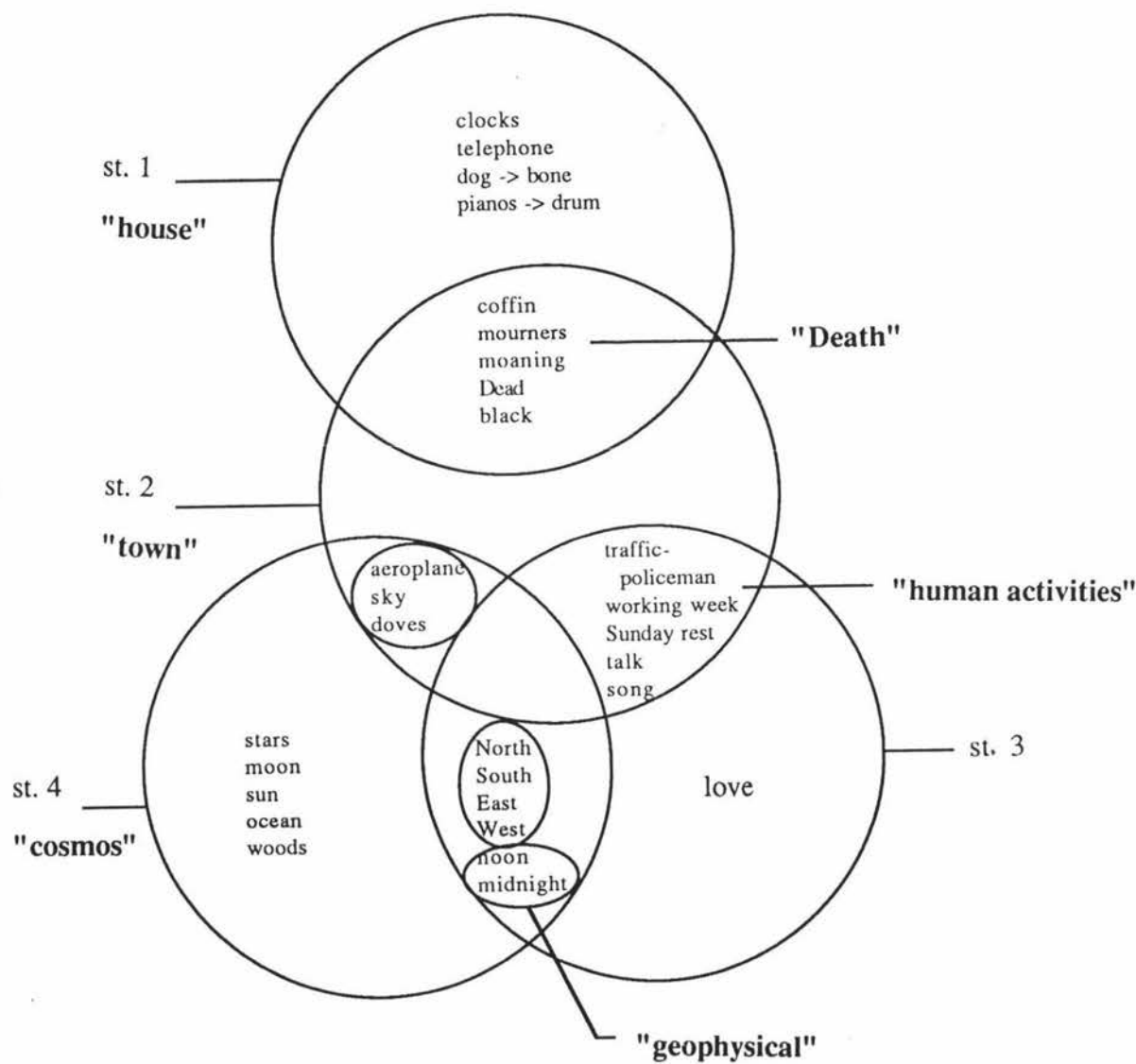
cf. I thought that love would last for ever: I was wrong.

& I was wrong to think that love would last for ever.

Thus, on one level of interpretation, we might infer that the poet has exploited linguistic devices in the poem in his attempt to explicate one of life's most profound mysteries: love. And he simultaneously expresses his world view: to attribute permanence to non-secular love is only another one of the multiple impossibilia that characterize the poem.

1.3 LEXICAL SETS

An exploration of the lexical items in the poem reveals an interesting patterning of lexical sets among the stanzas:



The interplay of the lexical items in Stanzas 1, 2 and 4 conjures up the images of the various physical settings: "house", "town" and the "cosmos" respectively. Each of these physical settings has a vividness that endows it with a special kind of reality specific to the poem's context. Yet the various physical settings are able to hang together as a whole. Such unity is achieved through the poet's exploitation of the lexical items shared by the different lexical sets (as illustrated by the regions of intersection in the diagrams).

With the three major lexical sets mentioned above, there is also the interplay of other subsets: "death", "human activities" and the "geophysical". The foregrounded isolation of the lexical item "love" in Stanza 3 demands our attention. It seems to suggest that the "love" portrayed in "Song XXX" is the unique, private and subjective experience of the speaker. It is not within the domain of shared experience with the unidentified "He" or even the implied addressee. Indeed, it is this unusual love, perhaps unrequited love, that is the central cause of the speaker's indignation and disillusionment.

On another level of significance, the theme of "death" in the poem cannot go unnoticed. At the same time, "white" and "doves" in "the white necks of the public doves" (Stanza 2, *l.* 3) are clearly symbolic of purity and peace/love, suggesting that the poem has a Christian undertone.

2. SYNTACTIC FEATURES

2.1 IMPERATIVES

In Stanza 1, the imperatives are defined for actions attributed to the physical setting of a "house". As directives to the addressee, they are within human capacity. However, as the poem progresses, the degree of human capacity inherent in the imperatives

gradually diminishes. In Stanza 2, it becomes difficult and almost impossible for someone to "put crepe bows round the white necks of the public doves". The diminution of human capacity ultimately achieves its finality in the last stanza in which all the imperatives are impossibilia. Underlying these impossibilia is the presumption that all the commands cannot be fulfilled. In other words, all the imperatives conveying the speaker's intention and authority amount to nothing. In a sense, this "disillusioned nothing" reflects the speaker's psyche; it expresses the state of things not realized and which cannot be realized, a wish unfulfilled, a hope frustrated--a familiar theme of humankind (Riffaterre, 1978: 12).

There is a kind of "reversal" patterning in the poem: the diminutive effect of human capacity operates against the telescopic effect of the speaker's shift of perspectives (house ==> town ==> the cosmos). Just as the diminutive effect demands our attention, so does the telescopic effect. We might notice that the telescopic effect parallels the speaker's emotional intensity and heightened feeling of indignation in the course of events in the poem. Eventually, as the speaker projects his/her feeling out into the cosmos, his/her cumulative negativity builds up to a climax:

"Fòr nòthing nòw can evèr còme tò àny gòod."

Here, the emphatic monosyllables, the thematic prominence of the qualifier "For", and the negative element denoted by "nothing", "ever" and "any" add force to the impact of the climax. Also, the dramatic effect of this utterance is heightened by the dramatic "now" and its alliterative association with "nothing". Ultimately, our perception of the speaker's negative feeling is so strong that we would be justified in referring to it as a feeling of total alienation for and bitter resentment against the whole world.

3. PHONOLOGICAL FEATURES

It can be observed that many of the imperative verbs and their NPs have either word-initial or word-final stops in their phonemic structures:

- St. 1 Stop ... clockk
 cut ... telephone
 preventt ... dog ... barking ... bone
 ... pianos ... drum
 Bring outt ... coffin
 lett ... come
- St. 2 Lett ... overheadd
 ... deadd
 Put crepe bows ... white ... public doves
 Let ... traffic policemen ... blak cotton gloves
- St. 4 ... not wantedd ... put out ...
 Pack up ... dismantle ...
 Pour away ... sweep up ...
 ... come to any goodd

There is also a marked preference for [+ short] vowels, which are either [+ central] or [+ back], specifically /ʌ/ and /ɒ/:

/ʌ/	/ɒ/
<u>c</u> ut	<u>t</u> op
dr <u>u</u> m	cl <u>o</u> ck
<u>c</u> ome (2x)	<u>d</u> og
d <u>o</u> ves	<u>c</u> offin
gl <u>o</u> ves	<u>c</u> otton
<u>u</u> p (2x)	<u>n</u> ot

The numerous stops, when combined with the [+ short] and [+ central]/[+ back] vowels, produce an abrupt effect. In a way, the interplay of this impressionistic abruptness and the imperatives echoes the speaker's anger as well as the uncompromising nature of the speaker's universe and the commands.

CONCLUSION

As a form of communication, the utterances in "Song XXX" may be considered in terms of speech acts. In this respect, there is a considerable lack of social and communicative preamble. The form and nature of the imperative generate much abruptness. Besides, they presuppose not only the addressee's immediate presence in the situation but also the speaker's presumption of his/her rights to dictate the commands.

Overall, at their very weakest, the speaker's speech acts signal his/her serious despair, disillusionment and indignation. His/Her present stance cannot in any way alter his/her bitter experience of the past. And his/her negative feeling and perverse logic (signified by the impossibilia in particular) will continue into the future. However, at their strongest, the speech acts sound like the triumph of self-integration over internal

psychological divisions, of rational and fierce courage over mere obsession and procrastination, of resolution over despondency.

In terms of their tone, the imperatives sound like commands of a thoroughly frightening kind, reinforced by the sinister blend of the "death" imagery into the context. On another level of interpretation, it is possible for us to regard the speaker's breaking out of ordinary everyday conversational constraint as symbolic of a helpless emotional outburst--a resort to expressive force as a way of articulating his/her emotional intensity.

UNIT 6

THE MISSING GRAMMATICAL AGENTS: Topicalization and Passivization

*We have seen that the grammatical aspect (Unit 3) and mood (Unit 4) conveyed by the VPs are characteristic of English. In association with these two grammatical categories is **tense**--another characteristic feature of English which often poses the greatest difficulty for the majority of ESL learners. In this unit, the text for examination comprises a variety of tenses. By tense, we mean the correspondence between the form of the verb and our concept of time. In fact, to a great extent these grammatical categories (tense, aspect and mood) impinge on one another: the expression of time present and past cannot be isolated from aspect, and the expression of the future is closely bound up with mood. Here, we shall attempt to make a distinction between tensed verbs which are adjectives and tensed verbs which are past participles. Our prime concern is to study how the VPs may be manipulated in clause constructions to transform the **active voice** into the **passive**, and vice versa. Of course, the choice between the active and passive constructions is primarily influenced by **thematic consideration**.*

One of the stylistic mechanisms by which a grammatical element is fronted for thematic emphasis is called **topicalization** or **thematization**. Topicalization may be defined as a syntactic device which isolates one of the constituents of a sentence as "topic" and shifts it to the sentence-initial position (Chomsky, 1964: 221). We often

approach an English sentence with certain expectations conditioned by our long experience with the basic, non-transformed syntactic structure: we expect a subject first, followed by a predicate. When our expectations are denied, we realize that the speaker/writer has foregrounded certain features or relegated them to the background to produce certain stylistic effects.

The English Language has several linguistic devices for identifying, highlighting or delaying the topic. The choice between these devices is topic-oriented and context-governed. The difference between the basic form (for example, construction with the "active voice") and the transformed structure (for example, construction with the "passive voice") is one of emphasis. Passivization, for example, is a special type of topicalization which shifts the grammatical object (= "patient" in case grammar) to the subject position and makes it thematic. In this way, passivization transforms the grammatical subject (= "agent") into a constituent of the "rheme" with unmarked focus or not to be specified at all.

We shall see in "Christian Cemetery" how the poet's manipulation of syntax by means of passivization to remove all vestiges of an agent from the surface structure corresponds to the world of the poem--one which is bureaucratized and absolutely impersonal.

INTRODUCTION

The general feeling conveyed in the poem is that of helpless individuals being uprooted by impersonal forces like urbanization. This negative feeling echoes the central paradox that often characterizes urbanization: the recognition of the urgent need for progress is not without the recognition of the consequent individual rootlessness and alienation.

In contrast to the undesirable consequence of urbanization, a positive note is present in the poem. Despite the fierce confrontation of social pressure and bureaucracy, individuals can still emerge triumphantly in the end, as the sacredness of human life comes to be preserved in memories. And this is especially true when memories are respected and valued by the sacred community, more specifically, the Catholic community in the poem's context.

On the whole, the general feeling conveyed in the poem is primarily the outcome of the interplay of the different types of verb phrases and the patterning of thematization. This gives us some indication that it is worthwhile to explore the verb phrases (VPs) exploited by the poet.

1. SYNTACTIC FEATURES

1.1 VERB PHRASES

The concepts for my analysis here are chiefly drawn from *Introduction to the Grammar of English* by Huddleston. For my analytical purposes, I shall direct attention only to those forms of VPs which are marked, though some of these VPs belong simultaneously to different grammatical systems. The following table is set up, and the criteria for my analysis of the VPs in the poem are subsequently proposed:

SYSTEM

TERMS AND CORRESPONDING VPs

	Past	Present
1. Tense--Simple :	Never <u>thought</u> I would see them thus. (l. 4) it seems the land <u>was</u> theirs for good (l. 6) which <u>needed</u> that plot for a park (l. 7) She <u>knew</u> room in our affections <u>was</u> all the space she <u>needed</u> . (l. 10-12) And so when she <u>had</u> to give up what space she <u>occupied</u> , she <u>left</u> us ... (l. 16-17)	it <u>seems</u> the land was theirs for good (l. 6) and therefore <u>fears</u> no renewal (l. 19)
Tense--Participles		
i) Adjectives:	<u>Chipped</u> madonnas and <u>broken</u> crosses, all <u>weathered</u> grey ... (l. 2-3)	--
ii) Verbs : (active & passive)		

	Past	Present
2.Voice--Passive		
i) Actional :	<p>My granny ... <u>was cremated</u> ... (l. 9)</p> <p>... <u>had</u> she <u>been buried</u> ... (l. 14)</p> <p>... [<u>would</u>] <u>be dislodged</u> (l. 15)</p>	<p>These tombstones <u>have been uprooted</u>. (l. 1)</p> <p>Chipped madonnas ... <u>are strewn</u> on grass. (l. 3)</p>
ii) Statal :	--	something that <u>cannot be lost</u> in stone. (l. 18)
Voice--Active :	<p>... the Urban Renewal Department</p> <p>which <u>needed</u> that plot for a park (l. 7-8)</p>	--
3.Aspect--Perfect :	<p>she'd <u>heard</u> all about urbanization (l. 13)</p> <p>... <u>had</u> she <u>been buried</u> (l. 14)</p> <p>And so when she <u>had</u> to give up (l. 16)</p>	These stones that <u>have been</u> here so long (l. 5)
4.Analytic--Modal :	<p>... I <u>would</u> see them thus (l. 4)</p> <p>how her stone, ... <u>would</u> wear away or</p> <p>[<u>would</u>] be dislodged (l. 14-15)</p>	something that <u>cannot</u> be lost in stone (l. 18)
Mood		

1.1.1 PAST TENSE vs PAST PARTICIPLES

The relatively large number of marked Past Tense and Passive Voice demands our attention. We might note that within the system of Tense, the finite Simple Past and the Past Participle of certain verbs take the same form:

"thought", "needed", "occupied", "left", "chipped" and weathered.

However, while some of these ("thought", "needed", "occupied" and "left") are undoubtedly verbs (as defined by the syntactic structure and context), some are problematic: "chipped", "weathered" and "broken" (even though this is clearly a past participle) are problematic because they can either be adjectives or tensed verbs.

Past participles may be considered as adjectives if they satisfy the majority or all of the following criteria proposed:

(i) they are gradable, generally modifiable by "very".

e.g.	<u>slightly</u> chipped	->	<u>very</u> chipped
	<u>a little</u> broken	->	<u>very</u> broken
	<u>quite</u> weathered	->	<u>very</u> weathered

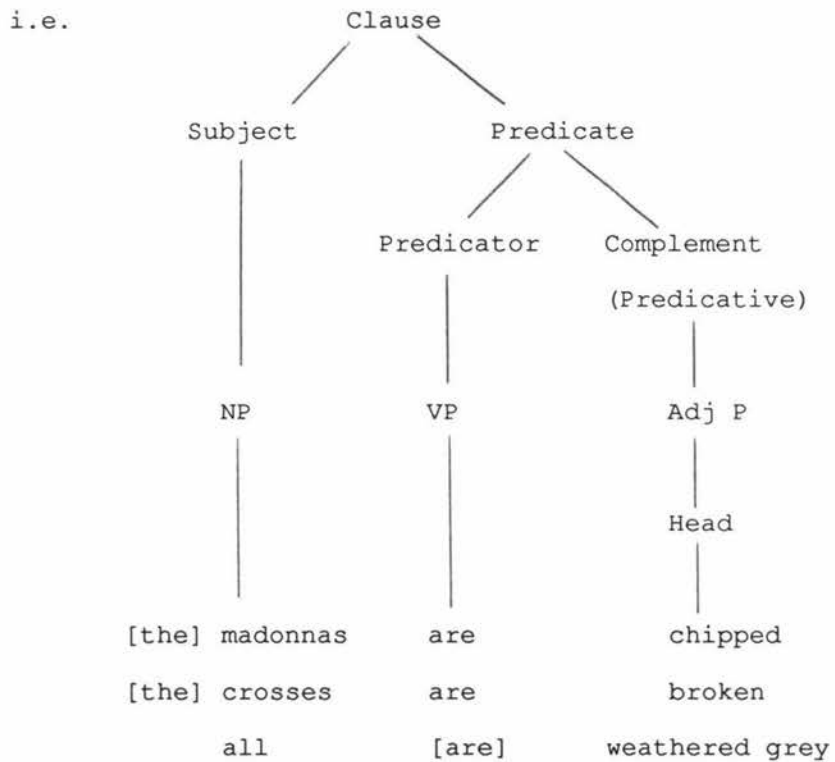
(ii) they can generally take the prefix *un-* meaning, essentially "not", which can be added to what are clearly adjectives but not verbs.

i.e.	<u>un</u> + chipped	->	unchipped
	<u>un</u> + broken	->	unbroken
	<u>un</u> + weathered	->	unweathered

cf.	<u>un</u> + kind (adj)	->	unkind) We might note here that
	<u>un</u> + happy (adj)	->	unhappy) there are exceptions to
	<u>un</u> + eat (verb)	->	*uneat) the rule, for e.g.,
	<u>un</u> + kick (verb)	->	*unkick) un + do (verb) -> undo.

(iii) they can be used both attributively and predicatively in the way in which adjectives are used, i.e., they function as head of the predicative complement. In other words, past participles functioning as attributive adjectives have much the same potential for expansion as predicative adjectives.

e.g. chipped madonnas => [the] madonnas are chipped
 broken crosses => [the] crosses are broken
 all weathered grey => all [are] weathered grey



1.2 PASSIVIZATION

What is marked in the passive constructions featuring in the poem is that they are all agentless passives in their surface structure:

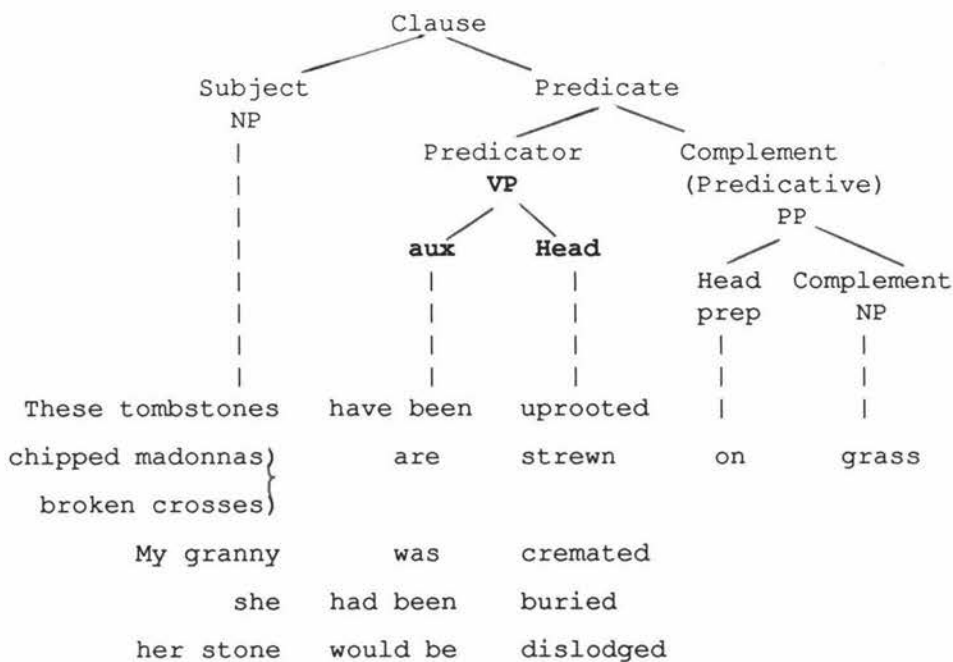
- (a) These tombstones have been uprooted [by the workmen].
 (b) Chipped madonnas ... are strewn on grass [by the workmen].

- (c) My granny ... was cremated ... [by the undertaker].
 (d) ... how her stone, had she been buried [by the sexton],
 (e) ... [would] be dislodged [by the water].
 (f) ... something that cannot be lost in stone.

In the above, except for (f), the recoverable agents (pragmatically inferable from the sentence and the poem's context) are indicated in the brackets. Although it is often difficult for us to make a distinction between actional and statal passives, I have set up the criteria for these two types of passives as follows:

Actional Passives

- (i) a) The operator "be" is an auxiliary.
 b) The past participle constitutes the head of the VP.
 i.e.



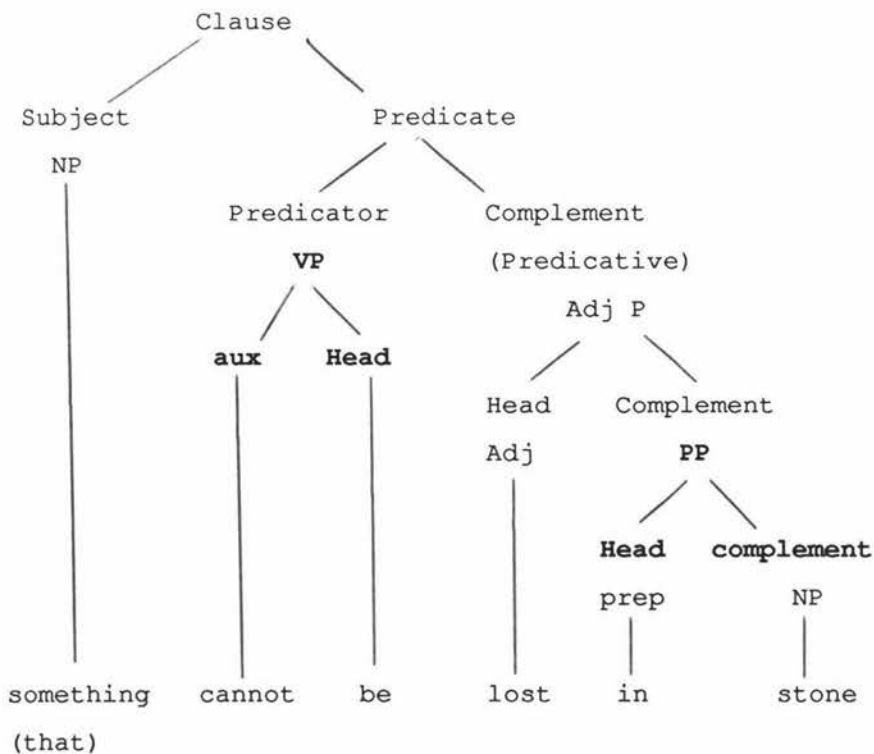
Note: had she been buried => if she had been buried

(ii) The equivalent active clauses can be derived by transformation.

- e.g. [The workmen] have uprooted these tombstones.
 [The workmen] strewn chipped madonnas ... on grass.
 [The undertaker] cremated my granny.
 ... if [the sexton] had buried her.
 ... [the water] would dislodge her stone.

Statal Passives

- (i) a) The operator "be" is a main verb, and in general other copulative verbs can replace it (e.g., it is lost -> it seems lost, it appears lost, etc.); it is the head of the VP predictor.
 b) The prepositional phrase is the head of a predicative complement.
 i.e.



(ii) No equivalent transformational derivation.

The above analysis reveals that the majority of the agentless passives are in fact actional passives; and their respective grammatical agents can be recovered from the poem's context. That is, the poet has exploited passive constructions in which the grammatical agents are deliberately deleted in the surface structure. The overall effect of such patterning of passivization is to give the impression of a world in which the power of the human will to influence the course of events is apparently diminished (Fowler, 1975: 20); and this enhances the strong sense of impersonality at the core of "Christian Cemetery".

In Verse 1, when the active constructions do occur,
in *l.* 4, on the surface structure, the human agent is deliberately deleted:

[I] never thought I would see them thus.

while in *l.* 7-8, the grammatical agent turns up to be the impersonal Urban Renewal Department: ...the Urban Renewal Department which needed that plot for a park.

Here, we might note that in any event, the subject of verbs of perception and thought is only dubiously an agent; it could even be classed as a goal. Functionally, the above-mentioned syntactic constructions serve to reinforce the theme of impersonality.

1.3 THEMATIC FRONTING

For the analytical purposes here, I shall refer to the various sentences in the poem which are graphetically separated by the full stop as follows:

- (a) These tombstones have been uprooted.
- (b) Chipped madonnas and broken crosses, all weathered grey, are strewn on grass.
- (c) Never thought I would see them thus.

- (d) These stones that have been here so long it seems the land was theirs for good--but for the Urban Renewal Department which needed that plot for a park. (syntactically incomplete)
- (e) My granny, though Catholic, was cremated according to her wish.
- (f) She knew room in our affections was all the space she needed.
- (g) Or perhaps she'd heard all about urbanization, how her stone, had she been buried, would wear away or be dislodged.
- (h) And so when she had to give up what space she occupied, she left us something that cannot be lost in stone and therefore fears no renewal.

In sentences (a) and (b), thematic fronting as a result of passivization has the effect of assigning thematic prominence to "These tombstones" and "Chipped madonnas and broken crosses", elements which would not have acquired the thematic prominence in the unmarked active construction. In (c), thematic fronting of the verb of perception with the negative ("Never thought"), together with the deletion of the human agent, serves to convey the helplessness of the observer in the face of the state of affairs. Furthermore, this feature also undermines the human element. The result of ellipsis of perhaps "I see" has rendered (d) syntactically incomplete. It is plausible for us to read it as follows:

[I see] these stones have been uprooted because the Urban Renewal Department needed that plot for a park, even though they have been here so long that it seems the land was theirs for good.

Here, the poet has deleted the human agent by means of grammatical ellipsis. And this is semantically congruous with the impersonal theme that pervades Verse 1.

In Verse 2, thematic fronting in (e) by means of passivization [like (a) and (b)] gives thematic prominence to "My granny". In the subsequent sentences, thematic fronting

primarily serves as a cohesive device, linking each clause to the preceding one. In (f) and (g), topicalization of "She" is to a certain extent obligatory because of the operation of the verb phrases of perception. This device has the effect of highlighting the contrastive mode of perception between the two clauses, reinforced by the contrastive conjunction "Or perhaps".

cf. (f) She knew room in our affections ...

& (g) Or perhaps, she'd heard all about urbanization ...

In (h), the cohesive effect is generally due to the implicitly anaphoric device of "And so".

Overall, the device of thematic fronting makes it plausible for us to interpret Verse 1 as being about tombstones and urbanization while Verse 2 is about the poet's Catholic granny. At the same time, the foregrounded deletion of the human agents in Verse 1 in contrast to the relatively predominant personal pronouns in Verse 2 echoes the impersonality and alienation that often characterize urbanization in contrast to the humane aspect and sacredness of human life valued by the Christian community portrayed in the poem. Moreover, such patterning suggests that Verse 1 is the poet's objective look at the Christian cemetery in contrast to his subjective thought of a loved one in Verse 2. As a whole, the poem echoes the effect of progress and urbanization on the material world in contrast to that on the minds and hearts of human beings.

1.4 PERFECT ASPECT AND ANALYTIC MOOD

From the table constructed, it is evident that the Past Perfect patterns in sentences where the grammatical subject is "she" while the Present Perfect patterns in with "The tombstones". These grammatical features reflect the reality within the poet's experience. The Past Perfect indicates a past time that is relative to another past time; it

expresses factual remoteness--this is undoubtedly true since the poet's granny is dead. On the contrary, the Present Perfect indicates that the state of affairs (particularly that which is related to urbanization) prevails continuously throughout a period beginning in the past and extending to the present. What matters most here is that the events expressed are of current relevance and within the poet's experience.

The modal "cannot" implies theoretical impossibility. The poet has exploited this modal in the foregrounded statal passive to strengthen his world view of the impossible erasure of the sacredness of human life in the memories of the sacred community portrayed in the poem.

CONCLUSION

The poem may at first appear morbid because of the subject of death generally associated with "Christian Cemetery" and "tombstones". However, the sacredness of human life which emerges triumphantly at the end of the poem undercuts the morbidity of death. In a way, one might argue that this is a didactic poem. It has a religious undertone and serves to drive home the subtle message of the unifying and transcendental power of religion in the midst of progress and urbanization.

On a different level of significance, there is sufficient evidence in the poem to suggest that "Christian Cemetery" marginalizes both human bureaucratic planning (Urban Renewal) and Divine planning (renewal in eternal life), instead it privileges ordinary individual human memories as a touchstone of authenticity and reality.

UNIT 7

THE PLAY OF LEXIS: Verbal Processes and Role-Relations

*In our exploration of the active-passive transformation in Unit 6, we have also considered the role-relation of the grammatical agent and patient. Indeed, we can consider the sentence as an expression of what we perceive in the interaction of things around us with each other and with ourselves. Our aim in this unit is to reconsider the concept of **role-relations** introduced in the preceding unit by looking more closely at the poet's choice of clause structures and vocabulary. We shall use a technique called "**componential analysis**" to extend the work on analysis of lexical items by the dichotomy of semantic features done in Unit 1, and see how the linguistic features have been exploited to convey a special kind of role-relation--that of human possession.*

According to Halliday, the semantic processes and participants expressed by particular verb phrases (VPs) and noun phrases (NPs) in a clause are the representations of what we take to be going on in the world. That is, we characterize our view of reality by means of choices from among limited sets of processes and participant roles, expressed in the grammar of the clause and, in particular, its VP. The whole issue of representing the processes and participants of reality is what he has termed the **ideational function** of language (Halliday, 1976: 19-25). In relation to this ideational function, the clause is the basic vehicle for representing patterns of experience.

An analysis of the clause structures and their corresponding verbal processes in "Valley Song" helps to provide insights into the poem's meanings and totality of experience. The analysis reveals the lack of causation/agency in the poem, and by implication, the idea of agent-patient role-relation is an illusion. This feature of "illusionary agency" is complemented by the patterning of pronominalization in several clauses. In effect, nominalization leaves the question of who is the agent of the action and who is affected by the action unanswered. Instead, the focus is on the possessive pronoun; this is correlated with the theme of possession which pervades the poem. A componential analysis shows that the poet's lexical choices also function to create and sustain the theme of possession, as well as other themes in "Valley Song".

VALLEY SONG**Carl Sandburg**

Your eyes and the valley are memories.

Your eyes fire and the valley a bowl.

It was here a moonrise crept over the timberline.

It was here we turned the coffee cups upside down.

And your eyes and the moon swept the valley.

I will see you again tomorrow.

I will see you again in a million years.

I will never know your dark eyes again.

These are three ghosts I keep.

These are three sumach-red dogs I run with.

All of it wraps and knots to a riddle:

I have the moon, the timberline, and you.

All three are gone--and I keep all three.

INTRODUCTION

"Valley Song" is written in the form of free verse. If the poem at first impresses us with its simplicity, it also strikes us with its enigma and "riddle". Although the words used are simple and general, the persona's mode of experience is impressionistically unique and paradoxical. More crucially, a first reading of the poem leaves us with the general feeling that there is some kind of unusual role-relations between the persona and other participants (both the "actor" and the "acted upon") in the realization of the various processes expressed in the poem's constructed world. Furthermore, we also get the impression that the strange role-relations seem to revolve around the problem of how we possess things in the real world. Thus, the study of role-relations is a good point of focus for this poem.

1. GRAMMATICAL FEATURES

1.1 PRONOMINALIZATION

The poem begins with "Your eyes and the valley are memories" instead of the prototypical S/V/O structure "I remember your eyes ...". The positional and thematic prominence accorded to the phrase "Your eyes" at the beginning of the poem might lead us to speculate that the theme of "Valley Song" as a whole has something to do with the notion of possession as well as something to do with "Your eyes". Our speculation is further strengthened by the repetition of "your eyes" in Verse 1, *l.* 2 and 5 in which "your eyes" again acquires the status of the theme in each of these lines. Moreover, the theme of possession in Verse 1 runs through the entire poem: the lexical verbs "keep" (Verse 2, *l.* 4 and Verse 3, *l.* 3) and "have" (Verse 3, *l.* 2) are undoubtedly associated with the notion of possession.

In Verse 1, a single human subject does feature, but it is only realized in a cleft

sentence:

It was here we turned the coffee cups upside down.

In this sentence, because the human subject is embedded in the cleft sentence, linguistically the status of the human subject is demoted and the focus rests upon "here" instead.

We might notice that in Verse 1, the genitive pronoun refers to the addressee's body part. In Verses 2 and 3, the addressee is no longer represented as body part but as a whole:

your eyes ---> you (Verse 2, l. 1 & 2 and Verse 3, l. 2)

However, as the addressee as a whole assumes the grammatical role of a patient in Verse 2, s/he simultaneously becomes an aspect of mysteriousness and unfathomability epitomized by "your dark eyes".

In Verses 2 and 3, there is a preponderance of the first person pronoun. This formulation in Verse 2, l. 1-3 is used in predictive statements in the future tense while in Verse 3 it is used with the lexical verbs of possession "have" and "keep". The nature and form of the verbs (I will discuss this later) used in these instances give the impression of the persona as one who situationally becomes totally identified with his/her own activity.

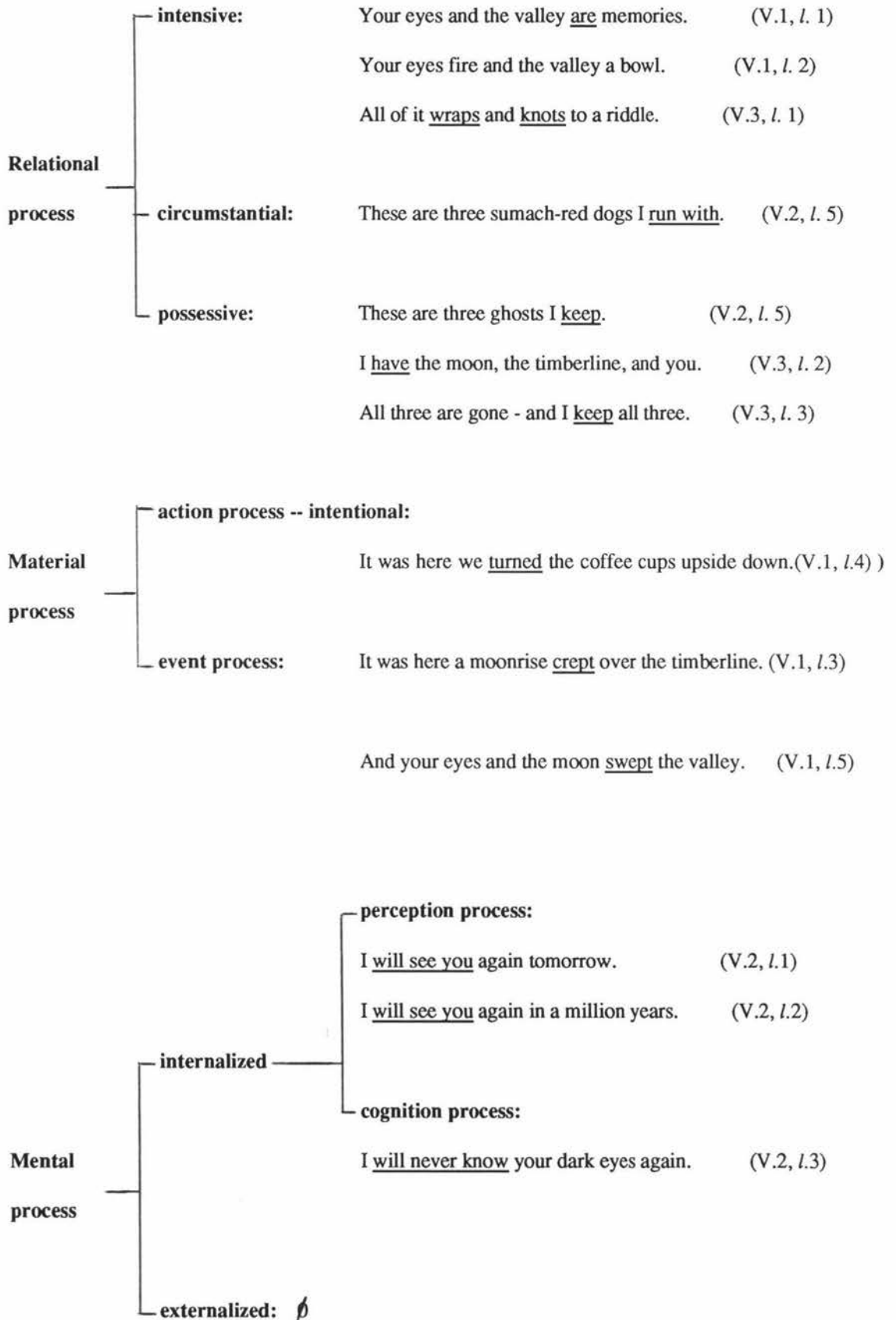
The overall effect of the pattern of pronominalization is that as readers of the poem, we are much less aware of the persona's situational role as the actor in a goal-directed action than we would have been if the poet had used the conventional S/V/O structure. In addition, the patternings of the pronouns and tenses in the poem imply that events are presented to us from the persona's viewpoint. We recognize that Verse 1 is his/her sentimental reminiscence of the past, Verse 2 is his/her mental journey into the future

and back to the present. In the course of events in the poem, s/he achieves some kind of self-awareness in Verse 3 in the realization of the central paradox that characterizes the entire poem:

All three are gone--and I keep all three.

1.2 VERBALS: ROLE-RELATIONS

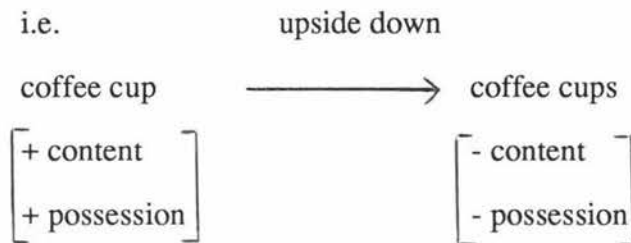
A study of the verbals in the poem shows that there is an exploitation of a variety of verbals denoting various processes. In my exploration of the processes and participants in the structure of clauses in "Valley Song", I shall draw upon ideas in the work of Halliday. The analysis proposed here may enable us to have a firmer grasp of the persona's experience as constructed in the clause structure of the text as a whole:



Our impression of the verbs used in this poem is that the majority of them are used in an interestingly unusual way. It would be useful for us to think linguistically and semantically about the processes denoted by the various verbs. The overwhelming fact revealed by the analysis is the relatively large number of clause structures conveying relational (intensive and possessive) processes. The analysis shows that only one verb in the entire poem features with a concrete deliberate action:

It was here we turned the coffee cups upside down. (V. 1, l. 4)

This material-action-intentional process is symbolically a negative action since by turning the coffee cups upside down, the outcome is one of negation.



This foregrounded action has the contextual implication of the lovers' dispossession of each other. We suspect that their negative relationship can no longer be rectified, just like the contents of the coffee cups. Furthermore, this sole material-action-intentional process is located away in the past, in mysterious circumstances--where "a moonrise crept over the timberline" and "your eyes and the moon swept the valley". We might note at this point that both "crept" and "swept" in Verse 1 have been exploited in an interesting way in the poem's context: more on this later.

In Verse 2, whenever the persona assumes the role of thematic subject in each of the first three sentences, s/he is only in control of his/her mental processes. Since these are mental-internalized processes, there is therefore no agent-patient role relationship in the physical world. In this same verse, l. 4-5, the S/V postponement gives end-focus to

the interesting verb phrases:

These are three ghosts I keep.

These are three sumach-red dogs I run with.

Here, when the persona features as a grammatical agent in *l. 4*, the grammatical patient turns out to be "three ghosts"! In the real sense of role-relation, the persona is clearly not an actor: possession is not realized in this instance since it is absolutely out of our frame of reference to keep "three ghosts" which have no physical existence at all.

We might note that dogs presumably run by themselves, i.e., they do not need any human agent for such volitional act. Thus, in *l. 5*, we are justified to remark that the persona is the agent of his own running, not the dog's running. In other words, there is no agent-patient relationship between the persona and the dogs. Instead, they are of equal grammatical status in terms of role-relation. This is reinforced by the end-focus accorded to the preposition of accompaniment "with", expressing complementary relationship, not hierarchical.

These enigmatic events may at first appear to be disjointed with the physical world. But our discussion reveals that they are congruous with the poem's constructed world in which the persona sees him/ herself as the agent in control of the various processes, that is, the sense of role-relations is realized in the persona's psychological constitution even though there is no true agency in the real world.

In Verse 3, as the poem culminates in a climax, all the processes are intensively relational. And these are curious relational processes. We notice that the theme of possession/ownership features intensively in all the three lines. In our real world of experience, it is within the scope of most cultures that in shops/department stores, sold goods are often wrapped up by sales assistants as an indication of the transfer of

ownership to the customers. Whenever someone knots a parcel, such symbolic action is again tied up with ownership either directly or indirectly. However, in the poem's context, the "actor" of "wraps" and "knots" is the ambiguous "All of it": it is both functionally **cataphoric** and **anaphoric**. In a way, this ambiguity contributes to the "riddle" at the heart of the poem. We are thus justified to say that there is again no true human-agent in these relational processes although the theme of ownership is well-sustained by the reflexive lexical verbs "wraps" and "knots" in the "preamble" of Verse 3.

In the subsequent lines, the lexical verbs "have" and "keep" demand our focus:

I have the moon, the timberline, and you.

All three are gone--and I keep all three.

Both "have" and "keep" are specified as "to possess, own" in the dictionary. Here, linguistically the persona appears to assume the role of a human-agent but semantically the whole process is unrealized, since in our real world of experience, it is utterly impossible for individuals to possess aspects of nature like "the moon" and "the timberline". In this respect, it is an illusion for the persona to claim ownership. Similarly, for the persona to "keep" three objects which are at the same time "gone" is again total illusion. The point here is that the unusual relational processes are presented to us only as part of the reality that the persona perceives and expresses; they are not realized in the physical world.

The foregoing discussion shows that in our attempt to define participant roles in the sense of the real world, there is no true agency in the various role-relations. However, the persona appears to be in control of these relational processes in the poem's context, i.e., s/he assumes the role of agency. We might argue that such manifestations could only be actualized in his/her psychological constitution. In other words, phenomena

presented to us by the poet which at first seem contradictory may be reconciled to give a virtual world, a semblance of the paradoxical and complex nature of human experience.

2. SEMANTIC FEATURES

2.1 COMPONENTIAL ANALYSIS

We might observe that there is a tendency for "your eyes" and "the valley" to feature in the same sentence (Verse 1, *l.* 1, 2 & 5). In *l.* 1 and 2, the coordinating conjunction "and" that links these two lexical items suggests that both "your eyes" and "the valley" acquire similar thematic importance. A componential analysis reveals the following semantic features common to "your eyes" and "the valley":

$$\begin{bmatrix} + \text{depth} \\ + \text{curvature} \\ + \text{definite} \end{bmatrix}$$

The semantic feature of [+ depth] connotes "mysteriousness"/"the unfathomable" while [+ curvature] means not linear. This implies "not restricted, free from restraint", yet it could also be [+ definite] at the same time. We might argue that these features are undoubtedly applicable to the imaginative faculty of the human mind--it is free from the restraints of human values, yet it is capable of creating/focusing on a specific entity/phenomenon.

In Verse 1, *l.* 2 "Your eyes fire and the valley a bowl" is visually deceptive for the reader at first sight, since we have the tendency to read "fire" as a verb following the grammatical subject. However, when *l.* 2 is taken in as a whole, we are aware that "fire" is the vehicle for "your eyes". Similarly, "a bowl" for "the valley". On the one

hand, the grammatical ellipsis foregrounded in the line suggests that there was some intimacy shared by the persona and the addressee in the past.

On the other hand, the visual foregrounding has the effect of temporarily suspending our interpretation of the metaphors. To arrive at an understanding of the metaphors, a componential analysis of the semantic features of the tenor and the vehicle might be specified as follows:

(i)	(Your) eyes	fire	(ii)	(the) valley	(a) bowl
	[+ animate]	[- animate]		[+ definite]	[- definite]
	+ human	- human		+ aspect of nature	- aspect of nature
	+ definite	- definite		+ depth	+ depth
	+ vision	- vision		+ receptacle	+ receptacle
	+ energy	+ energy		- manufactured	+ manufactured
	+ light	+ light		- indiv. possession	+ indiv. possession
	+ heat	+ heat			

In (i), for example, we note that selectional restrictions which "fire" imposes upon the feature system of "eyes" have been violated: a member of the class having the feature [+ animate] is being asserted to be a member of a class having the feature [- animate]. Besides, there are other associated violations which specify in greater detail just what is meant by [+ animate]/ [- animate] violation: [+ human]/ [- human], [+ definite]/ [- definite], [+ vision]/ [- vision], etc. It is this feature of selectional restriction violation that renders the metaphors deviant. The effect of such foregrounding is to de-emphasize the features which figure in these selectional restriction violations as well as those other features most closely associated with it.

In both the metaphors, our views are organized by the "fire"-system and the "bowl"-system respectively. What is most significant are those features common between the tenor and the vehicle: in particular, the feature of [+ light] between "your eyes" and "fire"; [+ depth] between "the valley" and "a bowl". These features suggest that there is a patterning of the "light" imagery and the theme of "the unfathomable" in the poem's constructed world. Moreover, the "fire" imagery enables the persona to convey his/her passion while the "bowl" imagery introduces the notion of [+ manufactured]. Thus, there is the subtle implication that "the valley" in the poem's constructed world is an artifact, not a cosmological entity after all.

3. LEXICAL FEATURES

3.1 DEVIANT LEXICAL ITEMS

It is normal for us to speak of "the sunrise" but not "a moonrise" (V. 1, l. 3). Thus, we are justified to claim that "a moonrise" is the most poetic lexical item in "Valley Song". We suspect that the poet has exploited "a moonrise" to emphasize the theme of illumination (its non-definite nature is foregrounded by the non-definite article in "a moonrise") associated with the moon.

cf. (i) the	moon	rose ...	&	(ii) a	moonrise	crept ...
		[+ concrete]				[- concrete]

In (i), the subject is grammatically a common noun and semantically a cosmic object; whereas in (ii), the subject is grammatically a deverbal but semantically a slow and natural process of illumination. This slow and natural phenomenon is reinforced by the intransitive verb "crept". The [- concrete] feature or abstractness of "moonrise" is reinforced by the abstractness of "the timberline" in end-focus position:

It was here a moonrise crept over the timberline.

3.2 UNNATURAL COLLOCATES

In Verse 1, what strikes us as unusual is that lexical items like "your eyes" and "the moon" which are not natural collocates are brought together into focus. Their peculiar relationship is further reinforced by the deviant use of the lexical verb "swept". An exploration of their semantic features reveals the following:

Your eyes	the moon
$\left[\begin{array}{l} + \text{animate} \\ + \text{volition} \\ + \text{energy} \\ + \text{reflection} \end{array} \right]$	$\left[\begin{array}{l} - \text{animate} \\ - \text{volition} \\ + \text{energy} \\ + \text{reflection} \end{array} \right]$

We might note that [+ energy] and [+ reflection] are features which we commonly attribute to "light". It is therefore semantically realistic to say:

"And your eyes and the moon swept the valley."

cf. "The floodlights swept the valley."

In effect, the semantic differences between "your eyes" and "the moon" serve to draw attention to their similarities. They are similar by virtue of the common semantic association with "light". This is undoubtedly congruous with our observation of the illumination/light imagery conveyed by "a moonrise".

Again, in Verse 3, the unusual co-existence of some lexical items demands our attention:

I have the moon, the timberline, and you. (l. 2)

A componential analysis of the semantic features of these lexical items might be specified as follows:

the moon

- animate
+ aspect of nature
- indiv. possession

the timberline

- animate
+ aspect of nature
- indiv. possession

you

+ animate
- aspect of nature
- indiv. possession

The oddity of the sentence arises because "the moon" and "the timberline" do not have the feature of [+ animacy] like "you". Besides, unlike "the moon" and "the timberline", "you" does not have the feature of [+ aspect of nature]. The three lexical items are therefore not semantically equivalent in the language code although they are linguistically of the same status. At this point, we might turn our attention to the rather striking verb "have", and taking the lexical items in isolation, the sentence means

I have the moon.

I have the timberline.

I have (=rely on) you.

Our experience in the real world might motivate us to remark that it is utterly deviant for someone to claim individual ownership of fundamental aspects of nature and another person. Even so, people do all the time lay claim to other people. Of course this is delusive, unless the person being claimed is a slave, perhaps. So, Sandburg is foregrounding here a feature of ordinary-language semantics. If we consider the foregrounded lexical item "have" in the above sense, then we are justified to infer that the poem exposes the illusory nature of such claims to possession.

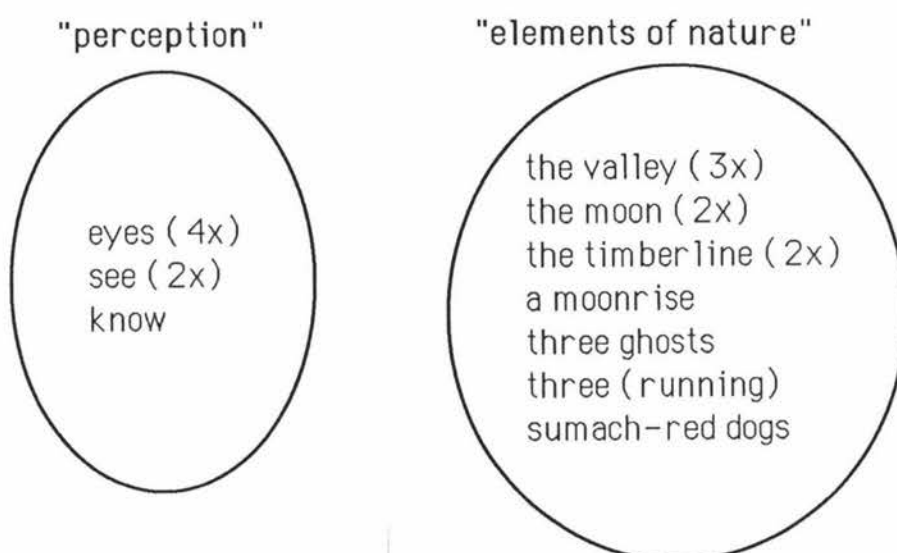
In the poem's context, however, there is a strong suggestion that "the moon", "the timberline" and "you" acquire the feature of [+ individual possession]. This is the result of the curious way in which the lexical verb of possession "have" is exploited. More crucially, we might recognize that for "the moon", "the timberline" and "you" to acquire the semantic feature of [+ individual possession], they must be artifacts. In

other words, the realization of this interesting relational process is purely an act of the mind. We are perhaps now in a better position to suggest why the first thing expressed at the beginning of the poem is "memories", foregrounded by both **end-focus** and **end-weight**.

The "light" imagery featuring subtly in the poem deserves our mention. In its fundamental aspect, light is the medium of visual perception. We often associate it with the power of vision. In a figurative sense, it is mental illumination/elucidation. It is a possession of the human mind. In our pure act of imagination, we know that the "light" is there, yet it is not quite there in the physical sense. This is a central paradoxical human experience.

3.3 LEXICAL SETS

In line with our foregoing discussion, we might notice that there is the patterning of two major lexical sets in the poem: one is associated with perception while the other is representative of a kind of elemental freedom from the kind of constraints/restraints that control human lives. And this elemental freedom is the reality of the natural freedom of "memories", of perception, of the human mind.



CONCLUSION

On a different plane of interpretation, in Freudian terminology, "the valley", "the bowl", "the timberline" and "the moon" are feminine sexual symbols. As a whole, the poem might be considered as the persona's reminiscence of his sexual experience with his lost lover, and his desperate attempt to cling on to past memories.

However, a psycholinguistic analysis (see Lunsford, 1980: 156-69 for details of such an approach) of the poem would claim that Sandburg's metaphor in Verse 1 is an attempt to attain a transcendent experience by getting as far away from human as possible:

your eyes	—————→	fire
[+ human]		[element of nature]

This experience is reinforced by the predominance of lexical items associated with nature: "the valley", "the moonrise", "the moon" and "the timberline". Viewed from this perspective, the oddity in the poem may be justified in the sense that as the poet experiences the unity of all the elements in nature, he is completely lost in the experience. It is almost as if he has given up his position in the physical world and thus is able to move freely among the elements of nature: a much celebrated poetic vision.

On the whole, this poem which at first impresses us with its simplicity is, however, not without richness and complexity of meanings. The poet has skilfully exploited linguistic devices to create an illusion of the persona's sense of ownership in the poem's constructed world. In this respect, the poem's syntax and lexis embody the paradox of memories. The effects are satisfying, so much so that in our reading experience of the text, there is the reverberation of the central paradox that

characterizes the entire poem:

All three are gone--and I keep all three.

This paradox mirrors the reality of a human situation. More specifically, it is the reality of the incompatible ideas of the human mind: in memory, we often perceive and feel very strongly that we can keep something but in actual fact we do not have that particular entity.

Thus, a linguistic exploration of the poem might empower us to claim that the persona's unique experience is within every individual's experience; and that "Valley Song" is a celebration of the recognition of that unique but universal paradoxical human experience.

UNIT 8

WORD ORDER AND ITS IMPACT: Ambivalence of Experience

*The technique of "componential analysis" used in Unit 7 reveals to us how the structure of English vocabulary may be exploited to create meanings. We shall move on from the examination of the structure of English vocabulary in the previous unit to the structures of clauses, and analyse some syntactic features of the grammatical organization. In this unit, by studying how the constituents of clauses may be sequenced and structured in English, we see how the **clause structures** or **syntax** can reflect an ambivalence in the extent to which the speaker identifies with the events he refers to.*

In every language, one can identify the normal/unmarked order of words. This order is that which often matches the native speaker's "intuitive feeling" for normal word order. In English, a S/V/O language, grammatical functions are defined positionally and this imposes constraints on the shuffling of word order. In this poem, we shall see that in an extremely intricate fashion the poem consists of a syntactic pattern whose main feature is that its clause structures are ambiguous and confusing to the extreme. As one reads this poem, getting more and more linguistic information, one must continuously analyze and then reanalyze yet again the syntactic structure at several key points. This is because of Silkin's manipulation of the syntactic forms and linguistic patterns like "arrest" and "extension" (Sinclair, 1982(a): 162-75). However, the

syntactic confusion that arises is integral to the poem's semantic content. That is, the poem's syntax mirrors its semantic thrust.

A DEATH TO US**Jon Silkin**

A tiny fly fell down on my page
 Shivered, lay down, and died on my page.

I threw his body onto the floor
 That had laid its frail life next to mine.

His death then became an intrusion on 5
 My action; he claimed himself as my victim

His speck of body accused me there
 Without an action, of his small brown death.

And I think now as I barely perceive him
 That his purpose became in dying, a demand 10

For a murderer of his casual body.
 So I must give his life a meaning

So I must carry his death about me
 Like a large fly, like a large frail purpose.

INTRODUCTION

The general impression of the poem is that a tiny fly's death is primarily the cause of the protagonist's predicament. Moreover, there is a strong note of elusiveness which arises from the incongruity of a "tiny fly" (not a much celebrated entity in poetry) and the protagonist's psychological realm.

The observation that the insignificance of a fly's death can be magnified into something of human significance seems to hint to us that we should not simply take the face value meaning of events; and by implication, the face value meaning of words through which events are mediated. Taking this cue, a good "way into" the poem is at the syntactic level.

1. SYNTACTIC FEATURES

The poem comprises fourteen lines of varying lengths and structures. The first two graphetically complete sentences in *l.* 1-4 present us with two different scenes. The first scene portrays the stages of a fly's death:

A tiny fly fell down on my page

Shivered, lay down, and died on my page.

In the second scene, the protagonist "threw" the dead fly "onto the floor". In the subsequent ten lines, the dramatic focus shifts from these two visible images without to the protagonist's predicament within. And, at times, particularly in *l.* 7-11, there is some kind of fusion of these two different dimensions. In a way, this element of fusion contributes to the interpretative difficulties for the reader.

1.1 SYNTACTIC AMBIGUITIES

Besides the fusion of experiences of different dimensions, it is chiefly the syntactic complexity in this poem that presents us with ambiguity and interpretative difficulty. I will attempt to unravel the poem's syntactic complexity by examining the word order and punctuation where appropriate. Generally, English is a S/V/O language and its basic clause structure can be summarized as follows:

S	V	O	C	(A) (optional)
NP	VP	NP/PP	NP/Adj P	Adv P/PP/NP
(N/Pro)				

This structure shows that the constituents of the English clause are phrases. In my exploration, I would adopt Jackson's terminology and gloss the following structures of the different types of phrases and clauses as normal:

- Key:
- () = optional
- + = obligatory

(a) Phrases

i) Noun phrase [NP]: (identifier) - (quantifier) - (adj) - N/Pro

a	tiny	fly
		I, me, etc.
my		page
his		body
the		floor
its	frail	life
his		death
an		intrusion
my		action

my		victim
his		purpose
a		demand
a		murderer
his	casual	body
his		life
a		meaning
a	large	fly

ii) Prepositional phrase [PP]: preposition + NP

on	my page
onto	the floor
next to	mine
on	my action
about	me

iii) Verb phrase [VP]: (auxiliary V_0^h) + lexical V

	fell (down)
	shivered
	lay (down)
	died
	threw
had	laid
	became
	claimed
	accused
	think
	perceive
must	give
must	carry

iv) Adjectival phrase [Adj P]: a) attributive function

[premodification of NP]

a tiny fly
 its frail life
 his casual body
 a large fly

b) predicative function

[occurs after the copula V]

e.g. the fly is tiny
 its life is frail

v) Adverbial phrase [Adv P]: (intensifying adv) - Adv

barely

(b) Clauses

i) Intransitive clause-type: A tiny fly fell down on my page.

S V (A)

S	V	A
NP	VP	PP

ii) Transitive clause-type: I threw his body onto the floor.

S V O (A)

S	V	O	A
NP	VP	NP	PP

iii) Intensive clause-type: He claimed himself as my victim.

S V C

S	V	C
NP	VP	NP-complex

iv)	Ditransitive clause-type:	<u>I</u>	<u>must give</u>	<u>his life</u>	<u>a meaning.</u>
	S V O O	S	V	O _r	O _d
		NP	VP	NP	NP

Lines 3 - 4

In the poem proper, *l.* 3, which is of the S/V/O/A order, is syntactically complete and semantically clear:

<u>I</u>	<u>threw</u>	<u>his body</u>	<u>onto the floor</u>
S	V	O	A

But the subsequent ordering of the dependent clause in *l.* 4 converts *l.* 3 & 4 into a complex sentence:

I threw his body onto the floor
That had laid its frail life next to mine.

On the one hand, because of the end-focus prominence given to "the floor" in *l.* 3, we are disposed to think of the that-clause as relative to "the floor". Our tendency to assign the that-clause to "the floor" is further motivated by the third impersonal pronoun ("its frail life") which is grammatically congruous with the inanimate floor. Our observation that "its" is the only third impersonal pronoun in the entire poem while all other pronouns attributed to the fly are of the third person type further strengthens our tendency to attribute the that-clause to "the floor".

On the other hand, the syntactic complexity also creates the possibility for the reader to attribute the that-clause to "his body", i.e.,

I threw his body [that had laid its frail life
next to mine] onto the floor.

In short, the word order in l. 3 & 4 inclines us to attribute the that-clause to "the floor" but the context inclines us to understand that it can also be attributed to the fly.

Lines 7 - 8

An examination of the clause structure of l. 7 & 8 reveals the following:

<u>His speck of body</u>	<u>accused</u>	<u>me</u>	<u>there</u>
S	V	O	A (Adv P of place)
<u>Without an action,</u>			
		<u>of his small brown death.</u>	
A (Adv P of manner)		A	

With the S/V/O structure and the nature of the transitive verb "accused", we expect the obligatory "of" phrase to appear promptly afterwards. However, this appearance is delayed by a prolonged elaboration of two Adjuncts and our expectation is dulled by this intervening elaboration which seems to increase in obscurity as we shift our focus from the definite to the abstract ("there" --> "without an action"). Then comes the adverbial "of" phrase to provide the syntactic completion. But it takes us by surprise because of the curious double adjectives premodifying "death". More precisely, the syntactic complexity in these lines is the result of the heavy arrest (double adjuncts, double adjectives).

The obscurity of these lines and the delaying syntax have the effect of making us reconsider the structure of the syntax and of directing our attention to what is actually being uttered in the preceding phrases. Consequently, we need to postpone our interpretation of one structure until another has been taken in, so that they ultimately make sense as a whole rather than in sequence. But the general sense generated by these lines as a whole is that of confusion to the extreme; it leaves us wondering whether the marked theme "Without an action" is attributed to "His speck of body" or

to the protagonist,

- i.e.(a) There, without an action, his speck of body
 accused me of his small brown death.
- or (b) Even though I had not killed him, his speck of
 body there accused me of his small brown death.

The confusion cannot be resolved; both interpretations (a) and (b) co-exist. In other words, the overall meaning of *l.* 7 - 8 depends on the ambiguity remaining unresolved (Widdowson, 1982(a): 19-25) or "syntax is statement" (Fowler, 1975: 29). That is, the poet has exploited the syntactic complexity to express precisely the protagonist's confusion of perception and involvement which could not be otherwise expressed.

Lines 9 - 11

The protagonist's confusion of thoughts, perception and involvement is again mediated through the syntactic complexity of *l.* 9 - 11 in which the idiomatic phrase "purpose in dying" gets out of order:

And I think now as I barely perceive him
That his purpose became in dying, a demand

For a murderer of his casual body.

These three lines constitute the longest sentence in the poem, so that the linguistic burden grows alongside the protagonist's psychological burden. Accompanying the increase in length, there is a progressive distancing from graspable reality, an increasing emphasis on what cannot be known or explained.

The structure of this complex sentence gives end-focus prominence to "his casual body". The effect is that the foregrounded deviant premodifier "casual" demands our

attention and it evokes the theme of "pure chance"--an intriguing phenomenon of which its nature cannot be explained. And this is one of the central themes in the poem. Indeed, it is by pure chance that the "tiny fly" fell down onto the protagonist's page.

In the main clause, we would expect the complement to succeed the verb ("think") indicating mental process, i.e.,

<u>And</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>think</u>	<u>his purpose</u> ...
conj	S	V	C

Instead, our expectation is denied because of the intervening embedded subordinate clauses. The simultaneous patterning of "think" and "perceive" in the respective main clause and subordinate clause creates structural complexity:

<u>And</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>think</u>	<u>now[,]</u>	<u>as</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>barely</u>	<u>perceive</u>	<u>him[,]</u>
conj	S	V	A	sub conj	[S	A	V	O]

<u>That</u>	<u>his purpose</u>	<u>became[,]</u>	<u>in dying,</u>	<u>a demand</u>	
that-cl	[S	V	A	C]

For a murderer of his casual body.

C-complex

The absence of commas (which I have inserted in []) on the one hand creates a sense of spontaneity in the protagonist's utterance. On the other hand, this graphetic irregularity contributes to the syntactic complexity and interpretative difficulties for the reader. Analysis of the clause structure as shown above reveals that the subordinate clause introduced by "as" is relatively more structured in comparison to the main clause as a whole. In a sense, the syntactic complexity and graphetic irregularity

exhibited by this sentence are of psychological realism and mirror a real human situation: our thoughts are often spontaneously and randomly structured but they inevitably encompass our perceptions which are relatively more structured.

Lines 12 - 14

The sentence moves to a peak of length in *l.* 9 - 11 and then slopes down to the brevity in *l.* 12:

<u>So</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>must give</u>	<u>his life</u>	<u>a meaning</u>
conj	S	V	O _r	O _d

Although the poet has deliberately omitted the punctuation mark here, the reader has the tendency to supply the full stop at the end of the line because of the sense of syntactic completion inherent in the line. The double object construction S/V/O/O creates the impression of fusion between the protagonist's and the fly's identity. This is reinforced by the ditransitive verb "give" which indicates reciprocal relationship.

Taken as a whole, *l.* 12 - 14 are syntactically deviant because of the absence of the obligatory main clause:

<u>So</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>must give</u>	<u>his life</u>	<u>a meaning</u>
conj	S	V	O	O
<u>So</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>must carry</u>	<u>his death</u>	<u>about me</u>
conj	S	V	O	A
<u>Like a large fly,</u>				
<u>like a large frail purpose.</u>				
A				

Such syntactic deviation invites us to reconsider the preceding clause structures and the punctuation marks exploited by the poet. Logically speaking, a semi-colon instead

of the full stop at the end of *l.* 11 would render *l.* 12 - 14 syntactically complete in conjunction to *l.* 9 - 11. The overall effect of the syntactic deviation and the irregularity of punctuation is to convey the feeling of the natural rhythm of things getting out of hand, and this is of course congruous with the protagonist's confusion.

The repetition of the structure of "So I must--V/O", reinforced by the two similes and the asyndeton in the final line, generates the protagonist's sense of urgency, obligation and fear to fulfill his/her "task". We notice that the latter simile which has an interesting juxtaposition of two adjectives is an extension of structure of the preceding one. Such foregrounding invites the reader to attach greater profundity to the simile, instead of merely taking its face value meaning. We may thus infer that underlying the interesting similes is the recognition that just as a fly is vulnerable to death, so are we, even though we may be "large" and think that we are relatively more important than the fly. Moreover, the protagonist's fear is the universal fear of facing our own mortality and there is no escape from it. The overall effect of the extension of structures is that we feel the vulnerability and fear of the protagonist in the poem in all its particularities.

2. LEXICAL FEATURES

2.1 VERBS

An exploration of the verbs in the poem reveals the following patterning:

INTRANSITIVE	
S	V
A tiny fly	fell (down)
"	shivered
"	lay (down)
"	died

TRANSITIVE		
S	V	O/C
I	threw	his body
?	laid	its frail life
His death ...	became	an intrusion (C)
he	claimed	himself (C)
His speck of body	accused	me
{ I	think ...	
{	... perceive	him
his purpose	became ...	a demand (C)
I	(must) give ...	a meaning
I	(must) carry	his death

It can be observed that the four verb phrases portraying the fly's death in the first scene are all intransitive and the subject of these verb phrases is "A tiny fly". In this sense, the death of the fly is not initiated by any human agent; it is a natural event and is inevitable: like a leaf that falls from a tree in autumn. Also, the fly's inevitable death is foreshadowed in the title "A Death to Us". The absence of the human agent in the title helps to give more force to the underlying message. The poet has exploited the directional preposition "to" and the inclusive personal pronoun to aim at humanity at large, not just the poem's participants.

Through the poet's exploitation of the intransitive verb phrases in the first scene, the protagonist is set apart from the scene. S/he is merely a detached observer of the fly's death. In the second scene, the protagonist is part of it and the prototypical verb "threw" is used to describe his/her action. His/her role then shifts from an onlooker to a participant in the consequence of the fly's death. Subsequently, in the course of events in the poem, all the other verb phrases (as shown in the table) conveying the

protagonist's psychological realm are of the transitive type.

Within the class of transitive verbs patterning in the poem, there is another sub-category of intensive verbs: "became" (2x) and "claimed". Whenever an intensive verb features in a sentence, the reader is disposed to attach the attribute following the verb back to the grammatical subject. In the poem's context, such "loopbacks" (Toolan, 1988: 264) are consistently associated with the fly. In a way, the poet has exploited the device to hint to the reader that the fly's death is to be attributed to itself, not the human participant in the poem's constructed world.

As detached observers of the course of events in the poem, we might notice that the dead fly diminishes from "his body" (*l.* 2) to "His speck of body" (*l.* 7) and finally to "his casual body" (*l.* 11) which can be taken to mean non-existent at times (since something which is "casual" can only result from pure chance, i.e., it is non-material). And this diminutive image is presented to us from the protagonist's perspective. By making reference to just the fly's body and with spectacular diminutive effect, instead of the dead fly as a whole, we get the impression that the protagonist attempts to play down the blame attributed to himself (Leech & Short, 1981: 190).

2.2 PREPOSITION

The poem has an unusually large number of prepositional phrases, particularly those involving (i) the prepositions of place and (ii) the "of" preposition:

(i) VP/NP	Prep	NP
fell down	on	my page
died	on	my page
its frail life	next to	mine
an intrusion	on	my action
his death	about	me
(ii) NP	"of"	NP
his speck	of	body
(accused) me ...	of	his small brown death
a murderer	of	his casual body

From (i), it can be observed that all the lexical items preceding the locative prepositions carry negative connotations while all the post-posed NPs consist of the first person pronoun. This patterning, together with the predominance of the first person pronoun in the entire poem (a total of 12), suggests that the experience portrayed is the protagonist's negative and painful introspection.

The role of "of" is to relate two NPs together. In (ii), "his speck of body" is the so-called "genitive of definition" (cf. "the city of Wellington"). It can be observed that the pre-posed NPs refer explicitly to the protagonist ("me", "a murderer") while the post-posed NPs refer to the fly ("his small brown death", "his casual body"). We may argue that the protagonist's perception and the fly are interwoven in the "of" phrases. In a sense, this patterning helps to establish the protagonist's psychological relatedness with the fly's death. At the same time, the poet has created the impression for the reader that the protagonist's central preoccupation is the obsession with a tiny fly's death.

2.3 PREMODIFIERS

The curious premodification of NPs as in "his small brown death" and "his casual body" might motivate us to explore the patterning of premodification in the poem. A study of the premodified NPs in the poem shows that the poet exploits adjectives not only through their emotive associations but also in the way he combines them:

Identifiers	Adjectives	Nouns	[+/- concrete]
a	tiny	fly	[+]
its	frail	life	[-]
his	small brown	death	[-]
his	casual	body	[+]
a	large	fly	[+]
a	large frail	purpose	[-]

There is semantic cohesion among these four adjectives: "tiny", "frail", "small" and "casual". They share the common association of "insignificance". In the juxtaposition of "small brown death" and "large frail purpose", the associations of adjectives seem to interact, so that, the attributes "brown" and "large" are given the "insignificant" overtone by "small" and "frail" respectively. In a way, these features of semantic cohesion and the interaction between adjectives have been exploited by the poet to illustrate the inter-relatedness of individual circumstances within a complex psychological whole.

We notice that at the beginning of the poem, thematic prominence is accorded to "A tiny fly". However, at the end of the poem, marked thematic prominence is accorded to "a large fly". This contrast helps to generate tension in the poem and it peaks up to a climax in the juxtaposition of "a large frail purpose". More crucially, it is this tension that characterizes the protagonist's psychological realm.

The three premodified NPs--"life", "death" and "purpose"--are semantically cohesive as they share the semantic feature of [- concrete] and their premodifiers have the overtone of "insignificance". Overall, there is an apparent hint by the poet that "life", "death", as well as "purpose" in life and death are all abstract but inter-related to a certain degree. These three phenomena shade into one another like the double adjectives premodifying the abstract nouns. All in all, the protagonist's predicament is the predicament of humanity but it is essentially a matter of individual experience and perception.

CONCLUSION

The foregoing discussion shows that word order is the external manifestation of the organization of constituents of experience. It seems reasonable then to view the semantic thrust of "A Death to Us" as the need to constantly reanalyze the word order of the clause structures in order to achieve an understanding of reality. Thus, it is chiefly through the exploitation of word order and other stylistic devices that Silkin is able to portray the civilized individual negotiating and experiencing a world of irreducible ambivalence and complexity.

Unit 9

RANKSHIFTING OF GRAMMATICAL UNITS:

Depth and Complexity of Experiences

Unit 8 documents particular difficulties in interpretation which readers are faced with when presented with ambiguous word order and syntactic complexity. This unit develops the idea of syntactic complexity further; it is linked to the preceding unit by virtue of the common feature that their clause structures parallel the thematic meanings. Here, it might be useful for us to recall the concepts of "rankshift" and "co-ordination" dealt with earlier on in Unit 1 and 2 respectively. Thereafter, we will proceed to study another alternative technique of sentence construction: subordination. We will also look at the ways by which the effects of "rankshifting" may be enhanced by "recursion". In particular, this unit brings us to the "deep end" of language use.

In this poem, the poet has "stretched" the ordinary forms of language to convey the uniqueness of what s/he has to say. Jennison deliberately uses a variety of sentences which appear very extended in their surface structure. The extended length is achieved largely by the interplay of graphetic features and extended clause-complexes, while syntactic depth in these sentences is achieved through the subdivision and rankshifting of the clauses.

By manipulating syntactic depth, Jennison is able to vary the syntax in this poem from simple to complex. Depth in sentences parallels internal complexity, the layers of articulation among grammatical units. It can be measured with the aid of a grammatical framework. The simplicity or complexity of style as suggested by the syntactic depth, of course, depends on the situation portrayed by the text. In general, syntactic depth has come to be associated with serious purposes. This is plausible since depth is intellectually demanding and hence slows down the progress of the communicative act. In this sense, depth helps to reinforce the considered and weighty nature of the utterance. However, we recognize that the situation suggested by "I'm Apt To Be Surly Getting Up Early" is rather trivial. Thus, the poet's exploitation of great syntactic depth here has the effect of ludicrous inappropriateness. In this respect, the poem is written in a comic vein.

I'm Apt To Be Surly Getting Up Early**C S Jennison**

Although it seems a trifling thing, a matter immaterial
I bear my malice toward the men who manufacture cereal.

I'm looking for a muffled meal, no wham, no pop, no swish,
That settles down inert and shy, relaxing in the dish.

The early hours are bleak and gray; the early news is drastic,
So why are all the breakfast foods so darned enthusiastic?

5

I feel in troubled times like these, somebody ought to quiet
The built-in boom and crackle of the current morning diet.

I'm not impressed by prizes, rings, or matching silver service.
I simply want some nourishment that doesn't make me nervous.

10

I'm weary of the cowboy and the package he endorses;
No doubt he'd rather eat the stuff than have it scare the horses.

I plan to burn each noisy box of vitamins and bulk
The happy day I run across a cereal that sulks.

INTRODUCTION

The pleasure and delight in the poem come from its interplay of end-rhymes, caesuras and contemporary allusion in particular. What is most interesting is that the world within the poem can be supplied by reader memory as contemporary norms like cereal packaging and advertising are within the experience of the majority of us--mostly as mediated via television commercials and situation comedies.

A first reading of the poem gives us the impression that the persona is expressing his/her sentiment, specifically his/her irritation over "the current morning diet". In addition, the poem is impressionistically repetitive and incantatory. This is chiefly attributable to the sentence structures in the poem. Thus, sentence complexity is a good aspect for analysis in this poem.

1. SENTENCE TYPE

Traditional grammar classifies sentences as simple, compound or complex, for example,

<u>The early news is drastic.</u>	Simple
main clause	

<u>The early news is drastic</u>	<u>and</u>	<u>the early hours are bleak.</u>	Compound
main clause	conj	main clause	

<u>I simply want some nourishment</u>	<u>that doesn't make me nervous.</u>	Complex
main clause	subordinate clause	

We can explain this classification by reference to the distinction between subordinate and main clauses. A simple sentence contains only one clause, a main clause; a compound sentence contains two/more main clauses; a complex sentence contains two/more main clauses, at least one of which is subordinate. (Refer Unit 8: "A Death to Us" for the discussion on the 7 basic types of clauses in English.)

The classes of compound and complex sentences are, however, not mutually exclusive; the following example would belong to both:

"I'm weary of the cowboy and the package he endorses;

No doubt he'd rather eat the stuff than have it scare the horses." (l. 11-12)

Our prime concern here is the syntagmatic relations between the constituent clauses. For the functional purpose of our analysis, it would be useful for us to include a further term "compound-complex" for examples like the one above.

1.1 COORDINATION

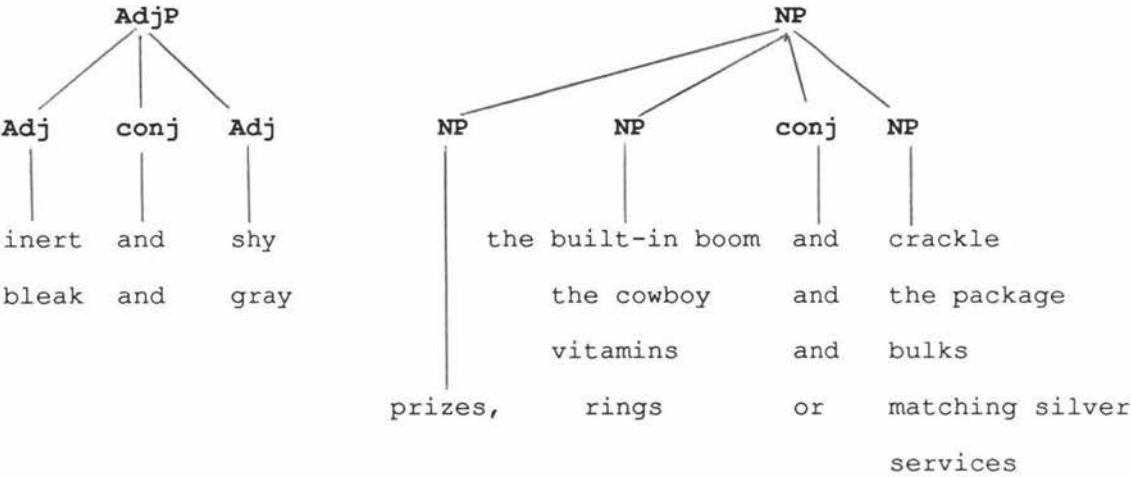
Although there are problems in the description of coordination construction, they are not the central concern of our exploration here. For the purpose of our analysis, we will deal with coordination more generally, rather than confining our attention to compound sentences. We will take the view that coordination is always marked by the presence of one or more coordinating conjunctions ("and", "or", "but", "so", etc.); and distinguish between syndetic coordination as in (1)--when coordinating conjunctions are used--and asyndetic coordination as in (2)--when coordinators are absent but could be supplied:

- The early hours are bleak and gray. (1)..... **syndetic coordination**
- The early hours are bleak, gray. (2) **asyndetic coordination**

Two types of coordination are marked in the poem. Coordination is achieved either by the use of coordinating conjunctions (i.e. syndetic coordination) or by graphetic features, specifically the comma and semi-colon (i.e. asyndetic coordination).

1.1.1 COORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS

The following patterns of phrasal coordination can be observed in the poem:



In terms of traditional grammar, those respective sentences incorporating the above coordinate constituents are not compound sentences since coordination is not at the clause-rank. What is of interest to us here is that the coordinate structures have the tendency to refer to the same thing, that is, each post-posed coordinate does not convey new information but merely repeats and reinforces the semantic element inherent in the preceding coordinate. Overall, this feature contributes to the key impression of excessive repetition in the poem.

1.1.2 GRAPHETIC FEATURES

A more subtle form of repetition in the poem is the tendency to join grammatical structures by (a) commas and (b) semi-colons, as shown in the following lines:

(a) commas

l. 1: Although it seems a trifling thing, a matter immaterial ...

cf. [Although it seems an unimportant subject ...]

l. 3-4: I'm looking for a muffled meal, no wham, no pop, no swish,
 That settles down inert and shy, relaxing in the dish.

cf. [I'm looking for a wholesome meal that settles down quietly.]

l. 9: I'm not impressed by prizes, rings, or matching silver service.

cf. [I'm not impressed by free gifts.]

(b) semi-colons

l.5- : The early hours are bleak and gray; the early news is drastic,

l.6 So why are all the breakfast foods so darned enthusiastic?

l.11: I'm weary of the cowboy and the package he endorses;

l.12 No doubt he'd rather eat the stuff than have it scare the horses.

In (a), we notice that the coordinate structures separated by the commas are identical in reference, and have an underlying intensive relationship. That is, these coordinate structures are appositives and traditional grammarians would describe their relationship as appositional coordination (Quirk, 1973: 178). A good test for appositional coordination is that we can summarize the semantically-related structures

without changing the meaning of the sentence--as indicated by the examples within the parentheses.

In (b), the clauses separated by the semi-colons are syntactically complete, that is, they are separate sentences in their own right. However, given the options available, the poet has exploited the semi-colons. This serves to compound the independent clauses and enhance the syntactic complexity and depth (I will discuss this in the following section). In a way, the syntactic compounding and complexity parallel the unique human experience at the heart of the poem.

The overall effect of the patternings of coordination in the poem is monotonous, hypnotic, incantatory and ritualistic. It fortifies the general situation of the poem where the persona is endeavouring to maintain a state of non-involvement in the fuss over "breakfast foods". Furthermore, the repetitive effects are exploited to convey the obsessive state of the persona's consciousness: his/her attempts and struggle to cling on to a slipping peacefulness.

1.2 SUBORDINATION

There are different frameworks that systematically distinguish between functions and classes of English clauses. However, for our exploration here, we want our classification to complement (not complicate) our functional analysis of the construction in which they occur, and our concern will accordingly be with their effects on the overall syntactic complexity.

Traditional grammar classifies finite subordinate clauses as "noun clauses", "adjectival clauses" and "adverbial clauses", as in the following examples, respectively:

(i) Noun clause

I feel ... (somebody ought to quiet the built-in boom and crackle of
the current morning diet).



transformation

(That somebody ought to quiet the built-in boom ...) is what I feel.

(ii) Adjectival clause

I bear my malice toward the men (who manufacture cereal).

(iii) Adverbial clause

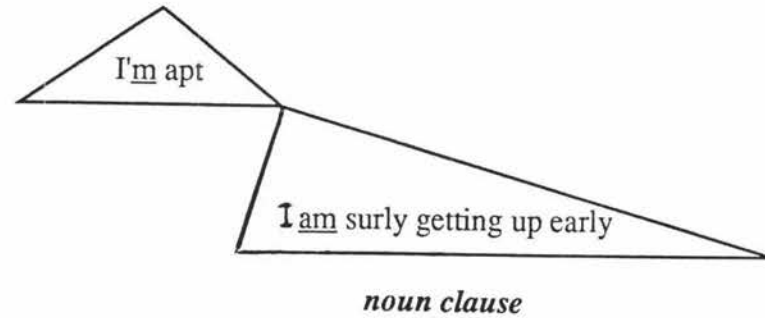
(Although it seems a trifling thing, a matter immaterial), I bear ...

In my analysis of sentence complexity in this poem, I will attempt to represent the constituent structure of the clauses schematically as follows:

SENTENCE TYPE

Title: **Complex** I'm apt to be surly getting up early.

main clause

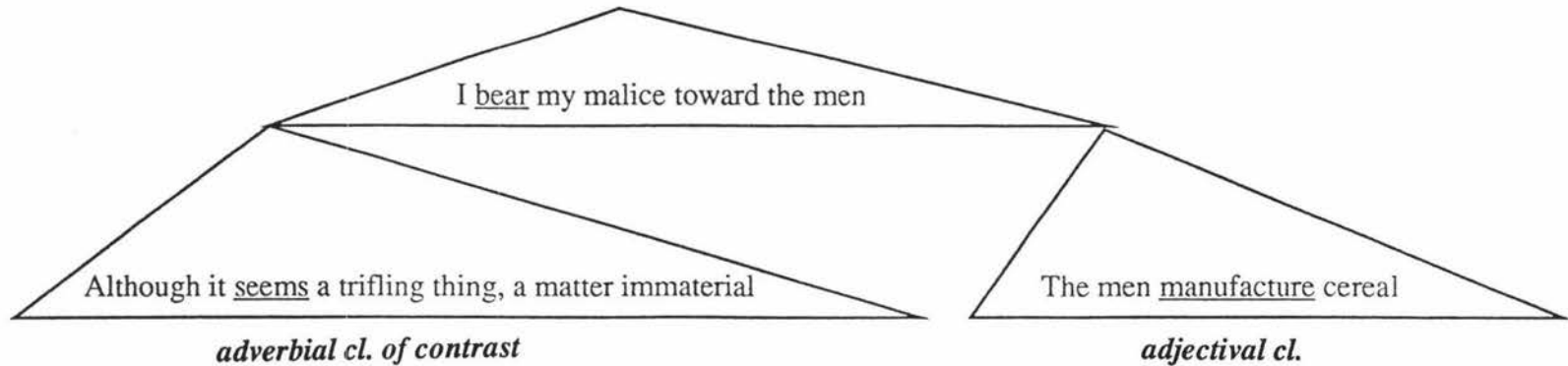


(a) l. 1-2: **Complex**

Although it seems a trifling thing, a matter immaterial

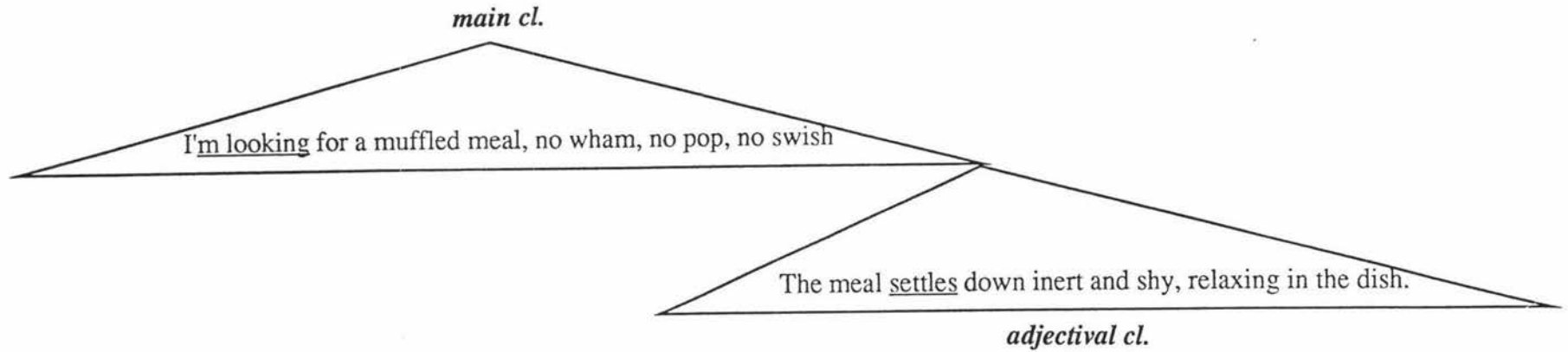
I bear my malice toward the men who manufacture cereal.

main cl.



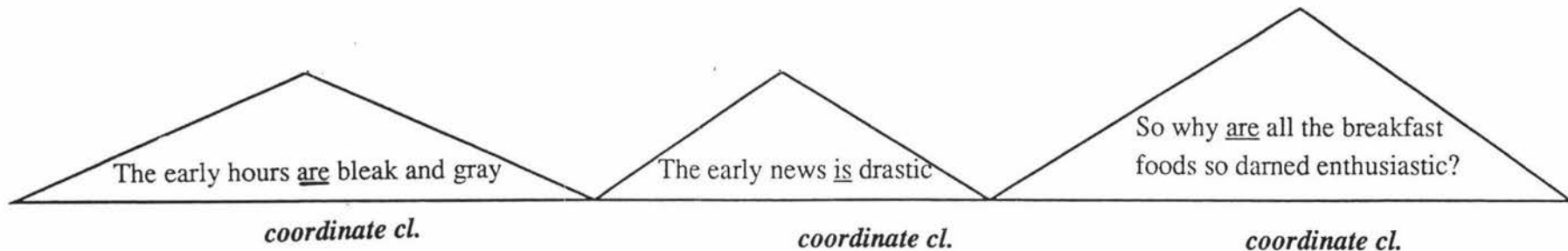
(b) l. 3-4: **Complex**

I'm looking for a muffled meal, no wham, no pop, no swish,
That settles down inert and shy, relaxing in the dish.



(c) l. 5-6: **Compound**

The early hours are bleak and gray; the early news is drastic,
So why are all the breakfast foods so darned enthusiastic?



(d) l. 7-8: **Complex**

I feel in troubled times like these, somebody ought to quiet

The built-in boom and crackle of the current morning diet.

main cl.

I feel in troubled times like these

somebody ought to quiet the built-in boom and crackle of the current morning diet

noun cl.

(e) l. 9: **Simple**

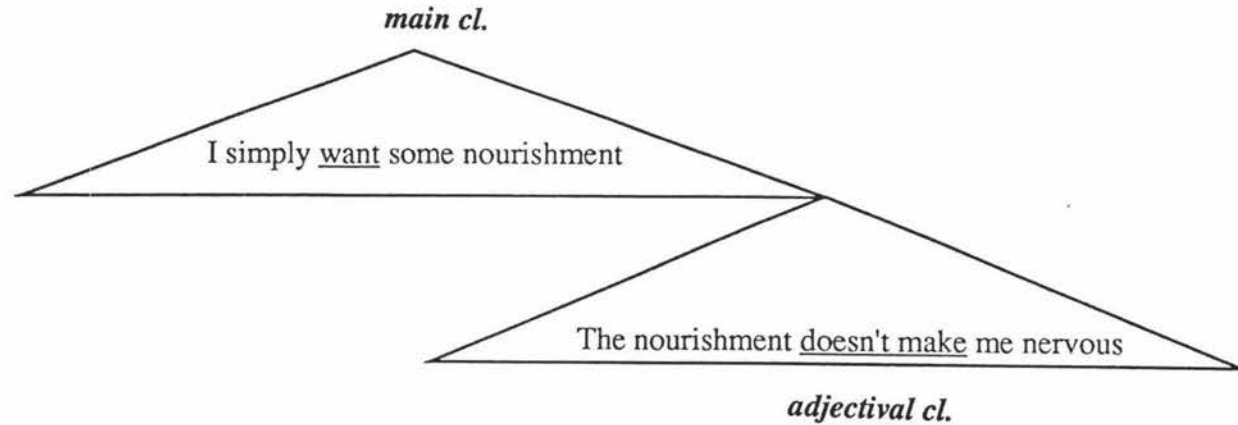
I'm not impressed by prizes, rings, or matching silver service.

main cl.

I'm not impressed by prizes, rings or matching silver scissors

(f) l. 10: **Complex**

I simply want some nourishment that doesn't make me nervous.

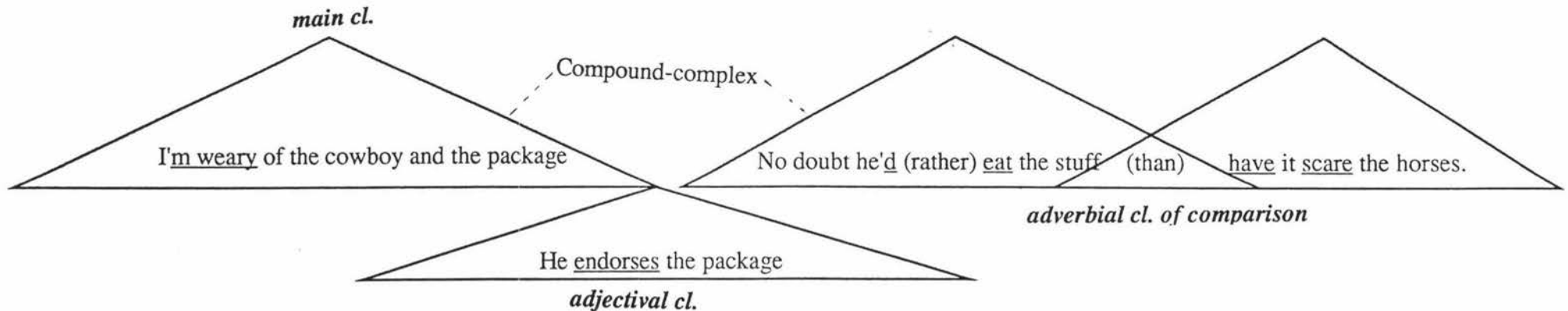


(g) l. 11-12

I'm weary of the cowboy and the package he endorses;

Compound-complex

No doubt he'd rather eat the stuff than have it scare the horses.



Note:

(i) Here, I have considered the structure of "have ... scare" as in

"I made him go."

"I let him go."

i.e. it is one VP (AUX + HEAD); and "have" "let" (causative)

(ii) Alternatively, the above-mentioned structure could be analysed as

two coordinated phrases, with the coordinator ellipsed.

i.e. ... have it [and] scare the horses

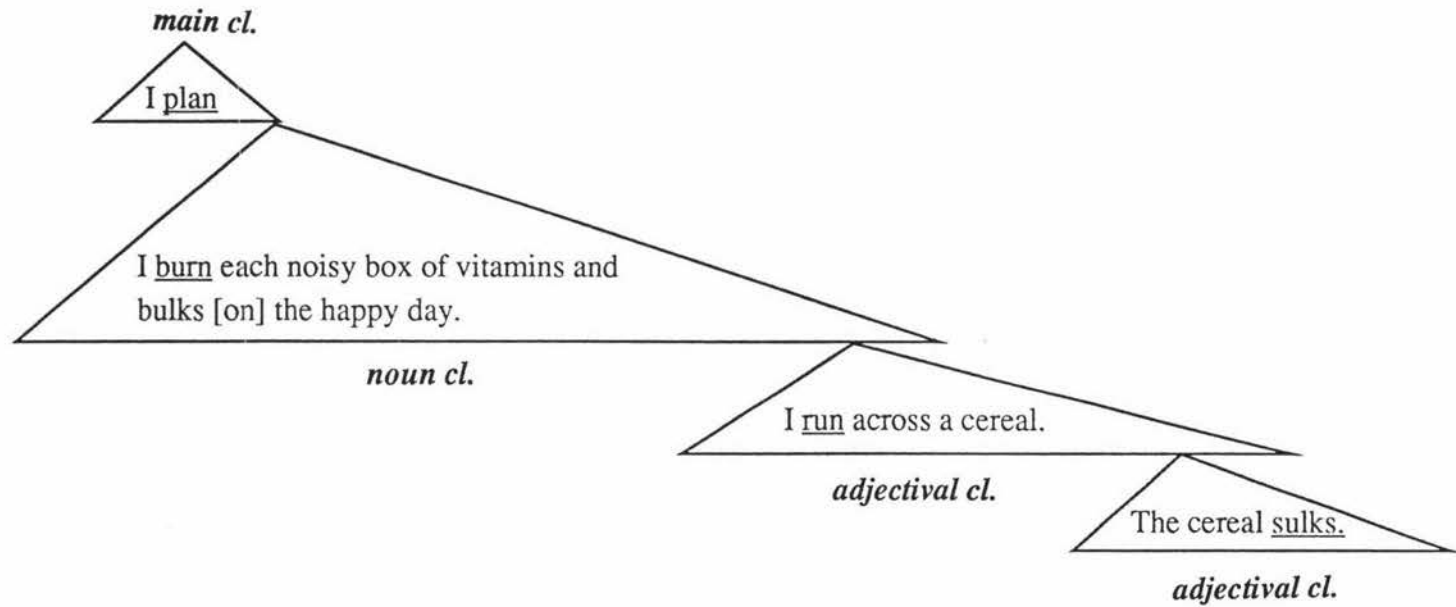
VP

VP

(h) l.13-14: **Complex**

I plan to burn each noisy box of vitamins and bulk [on]

The happy day [that/when] I run across a cereal that sulks.



In my analysis, the basic premise I make in the way a complete sentence (graphetically signalled by the full stop/question mark) works is that it develops linearly. It is common in English to have a more complex right-branching structure. Left-branching structures mean that it takes a relatively longer time for the reader to reach the main clause and the completed information in the sentence. In other words, information has to be "stored" and carried along before it is resolved. Right-branching structures develop from the independent/main clause, as a result, information is built up and developed rather than stored and carried along (Birch, 1986: 152).

The schematic representations show that except for sentence (a) in *l.* 1-2, the rest of the sentences have the Theme position usually in the leftmost part of the sentence and the Focus is usually in the rightmost part. The left-branching structure of sentence (a) serves to give thematic prominence to the subordinate clause of concession. Such syntactic foregrounding demands our attention. In a way this foregrounded left-branching structure expresses the persona's sudden emotional outburst, while the underlying concessive-result relationship between the clauses expresses his/her tendency "to be surly getting up early" conveyed by the title. Furthermore, the syntax of sentence (a) reflects the meaning: the persona's deliberate attempt to attribute thematic prominence to the subordinate clause implies his/her attempt to accord attention to something that is trivial. And it is this thematic element that marks the poem as one which is essentially comic and delightful for the reader.

In the title and sentences (b) - (h), the main tendency in focus prominence appears to be to elaborate on the information that has been developed in the main clauses. This is achieved by the addition of modifiers which are traditionally classified as "noun clause", "adjectival clause" and "adverbial clause". The elaboration of information through the exploitation of modifiers serves to enhance the visual and almost

onomatopoeic impact of the poem. Besides, the excessive repetition also suggests that the persona's utterance is impromptu/spontaneous. The overall effect of the linear development of the sentences is that the reader has the tendency not to look back over the information in the sentence, instead s/he moves along with the post-modifiers. In other words, the linear development of these sentences (as opposed to another sub-type of subordination which linguists would call "embedding") gives a sense of progression of time in the poem's context. At the same time, the interesting way in which these sentences are compounded and continued conveys a rather breathless manner, such as would happen if someone is anxious or "surly".

2. GRAMMATICAL UNITS

The preceding section shows that the poet exploits both the paratactic and hypotactic style simultaneously. This has the effect of conveying the compounding as well as the layers of thoughts and experience central to the poem. Syntactically, in coordination, the coordinates are of equal status. By contrast, the ordering of information into main and subordinate clauses indicates a hierarchical relationship and value among the grammatical units. In this section, I will attempt to show how the internal complexity and syntactic depth in the poem can be achieved through the phenomena of recursion and rankshifting, generally associated with coordination and subordination respectively.

In my analysis, I shall adopt mainly the grammatical framework of Cummings and Simmons and gloss the grammatical units as follows:

KEY: Unit Complexes

\propto : parallel/independent simple units

β : subordinate/dependent simple units

 \mathcal{L}' : appositive simple units

Group Elements

S = Subject (actor, or who or what is being talked about)

P = Predicate (the action, or the "talking about")

C = Complement (the object of action/identification with S)

A = Adjunct (manner, time, signals for hypotaxis/parataxis)

```
Z = "extra group"
```

Nominal groups

h = head element

m = modifier element

q = qualifier element

p = preposition

c = completive

Title: I [am] apt to be surly getting up early.

<-----Sentence----->

```
<-----  $\alpha$ -clause complex ----->
```

$$\leftarrow \text{---} \alpha \text{---} \rightarrow \leftarrow \text{---} \beta \text{---} \rightarrow$$

S | P | C | A

$$| \leftarrow \text{-----} \beta \text{-----} \rightarrow |$$
$$| \leftarrow \text{-----} (q) \text{-----} \rightarrow$$

| P | C | A

a) Although it seems a trifling thing, a matter immaterial,

<-----
 <----- β -clause----->|
 A | S | P | C | C |
 |<----- α' ----->|<----- α' ----->|
 | m | m | h | m | h | m |

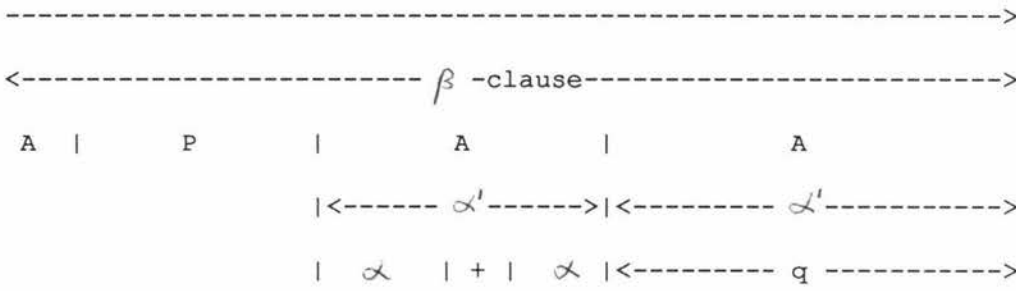
I bear my malice toward the men who manufacture cereal.

Sentence----->
 <----- α -clause complex----->
 <----- α clause----->|<----- β ----->
 S | P | C | A | A
 |<--- α --->|<----- α ----->|<----- (q) ----->
 | m | h | p | c | S | P | C
 | m | h |

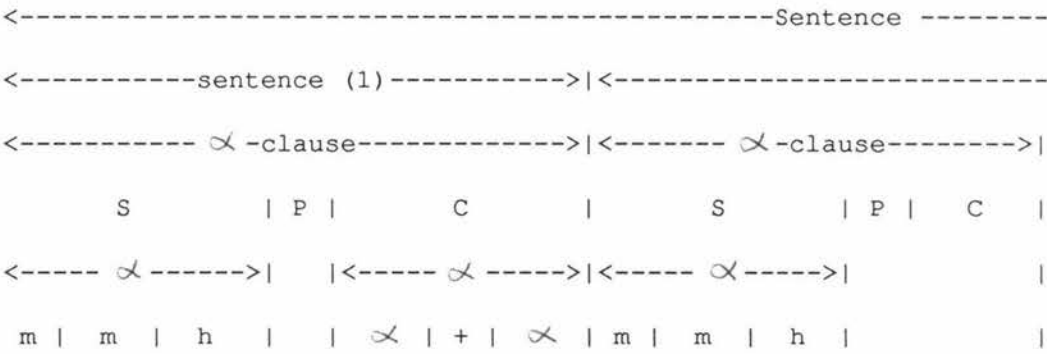
b) I [am] looking for a muffled meal, no wham, no pop, no swish,

<-----Sentence-----
 <----- α -clause----->|
 S | P | A |
α	<----- α' ----->	<--- α' --->	<--- α' --->	<--- α' --->				
p	<----- c ----->	<--- c --->	<--- c --->	<--- c --->				
m	m	h	m	h	m	h	m	h

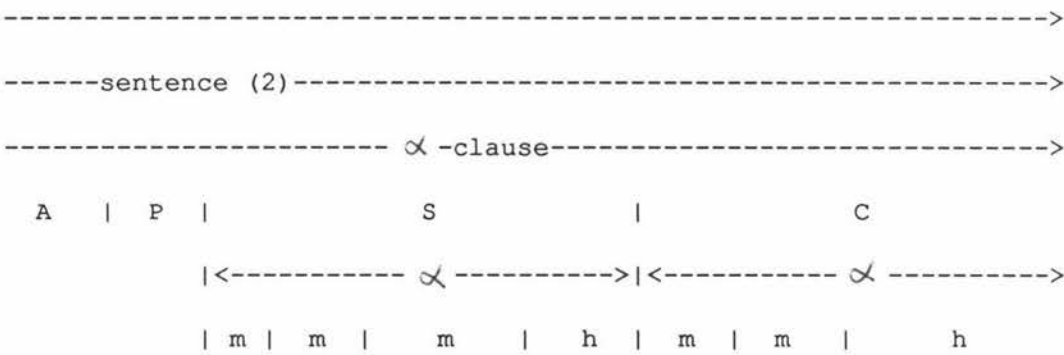
that settles down inert and shy, relaxing in the dish.



c) The early hours are bleak and gray; the early news is drastic,



so why are all the breakfast foods so darned enthusiastic?



d) I feel [that] in troubled times like these, somebody ought

<-----Sentence----->
 <-- α --> | <----- β -clause--->
 S | P | A | A | S | P
 | <----- α -----> |
 | p | <----- c -----> |
 | m | h | <--- q ---> |

to quiet the built-in boom and crackle of the current morning diet.

----->
 ----->
 | A
 | <----- α ----->
 | P | <----- c ----->
 | <----- α ----->
 | <----- α -----> | + | <-- α --> | <----- α ----->
 | m | m | h | | h | <----- q ----->
 | p | <----- c ----->
 | m | m | m | h

e) I [am] not impressed by prizes, rings, or matching silver service.

<-----Sentence----->
 <----- α -clause----->
 S | P | A
 | α | α' | α' | + | <----- α' ----->
 | p | c | c | | <----- c ----->
 | h | h | | m | m | h

f) I simply want some nourishment that doesn't make me nervous.

<-----Sentence----->
 <----- α -clause-----> | <----- β -clause----->
 S | A | P | C | A | P | C | A
 | <---- α -----> |
 | m | h |

g) I [am] weary of the cowboy and the package he endorses;

<-----Sentence----->
 <-----sentence (1)-----> |
 <----- α -clause complex-----> |
 <----- α -clause-----> | <----- β -clause-----> |
 S | P | A | A |
<---- α ----->	<----- α ----->		
p	<--- c --->	+	<----- c ----->
m	h		<----- β ----->
C	S	P	

no doubt he[would] rather eat the stuff than have it scare the horses.

----->
 -----sentence (2)----->
 ----- α -clause complex----->
 <----- α -clause-----> | <----- β -clause----->
 A | S | (P) | A | P | C | A | (P) | S | P | C

h) I plan to burn each noisy box of vitamins and bulks

<-----Sentence-
 <----- α -clause-complex ----->|
 <- α -cl->|<----- β -clause----->|
 S | P | A |
 |<----- (q) ----->|
P	C	A	
<----- α ----->	<----- α ----->		
m	m	h	<----- (q) ----->
p	<----- c ----->		
h	+	h	

[on] the happy day [when] I run across a cereal that sulks.

----->
 ----- β -clause ----->
 A | A
 <----- α ----->|<----- α ----->
 p |<----- c ----->| A | S | P | A
 | m | m | h | |<----- α ----->
 | p |<----- c ----->
 | m | h |<----- β ----->
 |<----- (q) ----->
 | A | P

2.1 RANK-SCALE

The hierarchical relationship among the English grammatical units may be represented by the following rank-scale:

Grammatical Units	Functional Categories
sentence	: simple / compound / complex
↑	
clause	: independent / dependent
↑	
group	: S / P / C / A / Z
↑	
word	
↑	
morpheme	

2.1.1 CLAUSES

At the clause-rank, members of a unit-complex can be related in two ways. Independent units are related paratactically: $\alpha\alpha$. Dependent units are related hypotactically: $\alpha\beta$ or $\alpha<<\beta>>\alpha$. The surface structure of the clauses in the poem may be schematically summarized as follows:

Title: $\alpha\beta$

(a) : $\beta\alpha$
 $\alpha\beta$

(e) : α

(b) : $\alpha\beta$

(f) : $\alpha\beta$

(c) : $\alpha\alpha\alpha$

(g) : $\alpha\alpha$
 $\alpha\beta\alpha\beta$

(d) : $\alpha\beta$

(h) : $\alpha\beta$
 $\alpha\beta\alpha\beta$

At the clause-rank, independent clauses may stand alone as sentence component as in (e). Independent clauses may be compounded graphetically by the semi-colon as in (c) and (g), though these are syntactically separate sentence components. Except for (a) and (e), in the rest of the sentences, the α -clause occurs as a complex with subsequent α -clause or β -clause.

Dependent clauses (β), by contrast, do not stand alone as sentence components. They add additional/conditional information. On the surface structure, they are set off by commas, precede [as in (a)] or succeed [as in (b), (d), (f) & (h)] an α -clause.

As revealed by the above analysis, the majority of the sentence components in the poem are unduly long and syntactically deep. Such feature renders the syntax mentally demanding for the reader. We might recognize that the ideas conveyed by these sentences can be expressed in simpler ways, but the poet has exploited syntactic depth and complexity.

2.1.2 GROUPS

The paratactic relationship of independent units and the hypotactic relationship of dependent units at clause-rank also pertain to group and word ranks. Independent groups can occur alone as single units realizing separate elements of clause structure, for example,

inert		and		shy
bleak		and		gray
the built-in boom		and		crackle
α		+		α

Each of the clauses so constituted by such groups is a multivariate structure.

Alternatively, independent groups can occur as a paratactic sequence. In this case, each successive group reinforces the preceding information or contributes new information to the univariate structure they constitute, for example,

a trifling thing,		a matter immaterial		
a muffled meal,		no wham,		no pop
				no swish
prizes,		rings,	(or)	matching
				silver service
α'		α'	(+)	α'
				α'

On the contrary, dependent groups cannot usually occur alone as single units realizing elements of the clause structure. It is interesting to note that dependent groups do not pattern in the poem at all. In other words, the non-use of an optional transformation helps to make special the scene presented. This is true since the exploitation of independent groups in both the multivariate and univariate structures facilitates recursion and rankshifting which are essential for creating meaning in the poem.

2.2 SYNTACTIC DEPTH

The analysis shows that syntactic depth in the poem is achieved by the recursion of units in unit-complexes and by rankshifting. At the clause-rank, the modification of main clauses by subordinate clauses increases the length of the sentences; while the sub-division of clause-complexes into further complexes deepens the syntax. This is achieved by the introduction of the additional nodes, for example, in (a), (g) and (h), we have

$$\beta \left| \begin{array}{c} \alpha \\ \alpha | \beta \end{array} \right| , \quad \left| \begin{array}{c} \alpha \\ \alpha | \beta \end{array} \right| \left| \begin{array}{c} \alpha \\ \alpha | \beta \end{array} \right| \quad \text{and} \quad \left| \begin{array}{c} \alpha \\ \alpha | \beta \end{array} \right| \left| \begin{array}{c} \beta \\ \alpha | \beta \end{array} \right| \quad \text{respectively.}$$

2.2.1 RANKSHIFTING

i) Clause --> Group

Rankshifting a clause anywhere on the rank-scale also increases syntactic depth by increasing the number of nodes. The degree of depth depends on the degree of rankshift and on the number of rank-shift recursions. In (a) for example, the clause "who manufacture cereal" contains groups carrying out their ordinary functions, i.e., S/P/C. But it itself is carrying out the role of a clausal element in the larger clause "I bear my malice toward the men". The clause "who manufacture cereal" is thus said to be rankshifted from clause status to group status because it helps to complete another clause. Clauses which are rankshifted to group status can be observed in the title, (a), (g) and (h).

The analysis shows that there is a tendency for clause rankshifts to occur at the A node (this observation complements our earlier discussion on the right-branching clause structure). When clauses are rankshifted to group rank, they then realize elements of some clauses. The noun clause and adjectival/relative clauses are used for this purpose in the title, (a), (g) and (h).

ii) Group --> word

When groups are rankshifted to word-rank, they then realize the elements of some groups. There is a tendency in the poem for the use of groups to realize the completive element in prepositional groups, for example,

toward | the men
in | troubled times
of | the current morning diet
by | prizes, rings, or matching silver service
of | the cowboy
of | vitamins and bulks
cross | a cereal
p | <----- c ----->

There is also a tendency for groups rankshifted to words to occur at the determiner and adjectival modifier element of the nominal group:

all | the | breakfast | foods
the | current | morning | diet
| each | noisy | box
| so | darned | enthusiastic
m | m | m | h

2.2.2 RECURSION

Another interesting syntactic feature in the poem is the tendency for nominal group-complexes to occur within other complexes in a recursive structure. "Recursive" means having parts similar in structure to the whole. The more recursive the complex, the greater the depth of recursion. We might notice that the majority of the sentences in the poem exhibit recursion in their deep structures. Even in the simple sentence (e), depth is achieved chiefly through recursion. In sentence (h), the intensive interplay of recursion and rankshifting serves to enhance the climactic impact.

As pointed out in the analysis, the poet uses rank-shifted clauses and clause-complexes, as well as group and group-complexes to achieve depth of recursion. And the depth of recursion is further compounded by his extensive use of conjoining conjunctions. Overall, the syntactic depth expresses layers of thoughts and feeling, and the all-embracingness of the experience.

CONCLUSION

The poem is about an individual's state of consciousness and perturbations in his/her attempts to maintain a state of non-involvement in the face of the demands of modern living. There is an essential cohesiveness to the whole experience, which is revealed by the variously modified underlying grammatical structures. Syntax, then, does a great deal to reinforce meanings, and at times even helps create them, especially when a sense of emotional intensity is at issue.

Taken as a whole, it may be argued that the syntactic depth and complexity in this poem parallels the degree of human consciousness, which is controlled by desire. And desire is the means through which life assaults us. Indeed, the desire that is at the centre of human consciousness, and that initiates the burning/destruction of "each noisy box of vitamins and bulks", is conversely the instigator of all the positive impulses in humankind, the "going-out" of one's self that Shelley speaks of.

UNIT 10

LANGUAGE VARIETIES: The Poetic and the Colloquial Register

Collectively, the preceding units enable us to establish the perspective and usefulness of a linguistic analysis of the selected poems. This unit and the subsequent one are designed to offer additional insight into the nature of written discourse: they demonstrate how stylistics extends linguistics beyond the sentence to features which span the whole text. Broadly speaking, "stylistics" is the study of the social function of language and is a branch of what has come to be called sociolinguistics (Widdowson, 1974: 203). Both Unit 10 and 11 illustrate how an analysis of discoursal patterns may enable us to comment on the broader sociolinguistic and socio-cultural situations, and to relate such observations to some underlying themes of the text. In the study of discoursal patterns, over the range of language use, certain major parameters for classifying domains can be considered: e.g. the parameters of formality (slang, informal, formal, literary, etc.). In this unit, our aim is to examine what is conventionally regarded as literary/poetic discourse or non-literary/ colloquial discourse; as well as the sociolinguistic and sociocultural implications in the NZ context.

"Variety" is a difficult concept in sociolinguistics because its extension is very diverse. However, for the purpose of my study here, I shall take a variety to mean a recognizable mode of discourse which arises from a systematic use of consistent

alternatives; and that a variety is marked by certain linguistic features which have some constant functions in relation to a given socio-economic community.

Different varieties of English fit different situations. Each variety has its specific norms, its specific set of expectations, and consequently, its own kind of stylistic effects. Linguistic varieties encode different semantic potentials: they mean differently and the sources of these meanings are social differences, principally class division and social categorization of the occasion of speaking (Fowler, 1981: 195).

This unit shows that a recognition of the co-existence and function of the two different linguistic varieties is a valuable tool in understanding what the poet is trying to achieve. He makes extensive use of the colloquial/ vernacular variety to portray the Butcher character and to indicate certain social meanings. And he simultaneously interweaves the poetic/literary variety into the poem to capture Butcher's epiphany. In other words, the relation between the colloquialism and "literariness" in this poem parallels the relation between the ordinariness of everyday life and spirituality in the NZ context. In short, the aesthetic function of "Still Shines when You Think of It" can be revealed in terms of varieties/registers of language.

Still Shines when You Think of It

Vincent O'Sullivan

Stood on the top of a spur once
the grunt before Sheila sharp beside him
a river shining like wire ten miles off
the sky clean as a dentist's mouth
jesus *Was* it lovely!

5

and the hills folded and folded
again and the white sky in the west
still part of the earth
there's not many days like that eh
when your own hand feels a kind of godsweat
fresh on things like they're just uncovered.

10

And not fifty feet from the spur
a hawk lifted

and for two turns turned like one wing
was tacked to the air

15

beak a glint as she's turning
so the grunt sighs like in church
and even Butcher

yes Butcher too

20

thinks *hawkarc curries the eye all right*
gives your blood that push
 while the mind corrupts as usual
 with 'proportion' 'accuracy' etcetera

those stones we lift with our tongues trying to say

25

ah! feathered guts!

And she's closing sweet on something,

death, that perfect hinge.

It still shines when you think of it,

like that river.

30

INTRODUCTION

What is significant in this poem is its interesting mixture of registers. Its poetry constantly switches from a variety of language which is essentially colloquial to one which is poetic. And these two varieties blend, so much so that the reader is not quite sure what to expect at several points in the poem. Also, mysticism in the poem results from several culture-specific and idiosyncratic expressions. Above all, the poem appeals to the reader because of its linguistic authenticity.

1. VERNACULAR/COLLOQUIAL FEATURES

The poet's highly original rhetoric, achieved through his quirky blend of the vernacular and the formal language, makes the poem appealing. O'Sullivan exploits a vernacular mask and works within the idioms which Butcher will use. He draws from these idiomatic expressions both the unexpected original meanings and the trite meanings.

For the reader to have a firmer grasp of the message in the poem, s/he needs to be aware that "Butcher" and "Sheila" refer to the ordinary average NZ male and female respectively. Through the portrayal of "Butcher" and "Sheila", in a way the poet is able to portray the ordinariness of NZ culture. The poet deliberately uses "Butcher" both as proper name and occupation. The effect of this is to create the sense of a character whom the readers would come to associate with the trade of butchery; and in consequence, the stereotype of manner--bluffness, coarseness and chattiness. Similarly, the poet has capitalized "Sheila" (which simply means "a young woman" in NZ speech) to create the sense of a female character. But she is only to be referred to as "the grunt" by Butcher. The expression, "the grunt", is certainly not without the grossness generally associated with the trade of butchery.

An exploration of the poem reveals the poet's skilful incorporation of the following vernacular/colloquial features in the formal structures of the poem:

1.1 Syntax:

(a) informal contractions

- l.* 9: there's not many days like that eh
- l.* 11: fresh on things like they're just uncovered.
- l.* 16: and then she's away
- l.* 17: beak a glint as she's turning
- l.* 27: And she's closing sweet on something,

(b) ellipsis--deletion of grammatical subject

- Title : [It] still shines when you think of it
- l.* 1 : [They] stood on the top of a spur once
- l.* 22 : [It] gives your blood that push

(c) ungrammatical concord between Verb and Complement

- l.* 9: there's not many days like that eh

*

1.2 Lexical Features

(a) informal use of "like"

- l.* 11: fresh on things like they're just uncovered
 - l.* 14: and for two turns turned like one wing
 - l.* 18: so the grunt sighs like in church
- cf. "as if"/"as though"/"as" respectively in formal usage.

(b) colloquial use of the feminine pronoun "she's"

l. 16: and then she's away

l. 17: beak a glint as she's turning

l. 27: And she's closing sweet on something,

In NZ speech, the feminine pronoun "she's" can refer to

(i) non-human object (e.g. "she's [the bird's] away.")

or (ii) the whole situation/activity (e.g. "she's finished.")

(c) the standard NZ/Australian emphatic phrase: all right

l. 21: thinks hawkarc curries the eye all right

(d) the demonstrative adjective "that" in NZ speech, together with the second person personal pronoun, assumes that the listener will respond:

l. 22: gives your blood that push

(e) the NZ English and Maori hybridization for agreement/ assertion/ confirmation: "eh"

l. 9: there's not many days like that eh

(f) obscene term which is associated with sexual activity: grunt

l. 2: the grunt before Sheila sharp before him

l. 18: so the grunt sighs like in church

Obscenity is often present in the term "grunt"; and the obscene imagery is normally unacceptable in ordinary conversation. Thus, for such a term to feature in poetry is even more shocking for the reader. In other words, the poet's use of the term partly shocks and partly amuses the reader, and simultaneously establishes something which

we would try to overcome with euphemism.

(g) unusual similes

l. 3: a river shining like wire ten miles off

l. 4: the sky clean as a dentist's mouth

Such phrases give the impression of being heard in the pub and they serve to convey the working class (particularly the butcher's) inventiveness.

(h) idiomatic phrases

l. 3: a river shining like wire ten miles off

cf. "ten miles away" in formal usage.

l. 18: so the grunt sighs like in church

(this is still within the idioms Butcher will use)

Title ... when you think of it

& *l.* 29: (nothing grammatically informal here but this has become a shorthand phrase in NZ speech)

Here, each idiomatic expression corresponds to a social tone, that is, O'Sullivan is working within the idioms which Butcher will use.

In effect, the poet has created a "variety" of language (characterized by its vernacular/colloquial features at various levels) in which the working class, particularly the butcher's, can be articulated by a single voice. Yet within this single variety of language, the transactions that take place are interesting and subtle; they entail a constant bargaining between the order imposed by conventions and the inventiveness of the working class.

2. TYPOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

What is of remarkable significance is that the poetry appears (at least visually) to break with the conventions of typography, yet at the same time each line presents us with a vivid image complete in itself. We might notice that whereas other poets might rely on the conventional punctuation marks, O'Sullivan has relied on the line pause to signal the sense groups for the reader. Thus, when the conventional typographical features do occur in the poem, they are foregrounded to demand our attention:

l. 5 : jesu Was it lovely!

l. 11 : fresh on things like they're just uncovered.

*l. 21-22 : ... hawkarc curries the eye all right
gives your blood that push*

l. 26-30 : ah! feathered guts!

And she's closing sweet on something,
death, that perfect hinge.

It still shines when you think of it,

like that river.

Although the poem starts from the casual and does not explicitly evoke religion, the unconventional "jesu" in *l. 5* points to a religious undertone in the poem. In this single line, the exclamation mark following the pivotal word "lovely" (which essentially means "beautiful" in NZ speech) is used to poignant effect in the description of the good company, the delightful view and the beautiful day. On a different level of interpretation, one might argue that by means of the poetry, O'Sullivan conveys the idea that beauty can be just as available to Butcher, an observer in carnal grossness, as to other observers in the aesthetics.

The full-stop at the end of *l. 11*, reinforced by the subsequent foregrounded spacing

between *l.* 11-12, serves to signal the most spectacular shift of images associated with Butcher's landscape experience to the hawk imagery. In terms of the poem's drama, *l.* 11 reinforces the code of symbolic generality, as expressed in the lexical items "fresh" and "uncovered". These lexical items, foregrounded by their positional prominence ("fresh"--thematic prominence and "uncovered"--end-focus), connote "God's creation" and "light" respectively; and these associations permeate the poem. With the shift of imagery, the foregrounded italicization in *l.* 21-22 brings our attention to the hawk's vitality which is of great significance in the poem.

In *l.* 26, the exclamation marks, together with the foregrounded italics, are used to poignant effect in conveying Butcher's materialistic outlook on life--often related to body senses in one way or another. The expression "*ah! feathered guts!*" is symbolic of a bird envisaged without the life force, only the material components.

In *l.* 28, the various typographical devices used to foreground "death" (the positional prominence, italicization and conventional punctuation mark) are significant. It might entice us to recognize that the poem builds on a feeling in NZ literature (e.g. Bruce Mason's *Blood of the Lamb*) that slaughter is the NZ livelihood, that is, the slaughter of livestock for consumption. A particular link is felt between this slaughter and NZ macho attitudes. At the same time, the manifold foregrounding of "death" helps to create a sense of the character of Butcher in the poem: he is one concerned with death and the clearing up of carcasses. The hawk, like Butcher, is a killer too. Besides, it is an embodiment of a mysterious, almost mystical life-force. In effect, the hawk in the poem, like Butcher, takes its vitality from constant awareness and involvement of death, the "perfect hinge" between life and eternity. However, the theme of death and its morbidity is undercut by the concluding statement in *l.* 29-30 which celebrates vitality, or more specifically, spiritual vitality:

It still shines when you think of it,
like that river.

There is comparatively more orthodox punctuation in *l.* 26-30 as the poem draws to a close. And in the concluding statement, the poet brings in the grammatical subject (which is deleted in the title) to create a sense of syntactic completion. The effect of this is to give a sense of rhetorical confidence and a degree of formality to the whole epiphany/circumstance as observed and recorded in the poem.

3. LEXICAL FEATURES

3.1 NEOLOGISMS

What is of particular interest to us is that the lexical items "godsweat" (*l.* 10) and "hawkar" (*l.* 21) are not within the code of the language. That is, they are neologisms. Such foregrounded device demands our attention. First, we might notice the parallel pattern between these two neologistic terms:

"Godsweat" = the sweat of God

"hawkar" = the arc of the hawk

Second, "Godsweat" and "hawkar" both result from the quirky blend of the spiritual and material dimensions: God and hawk (taken in the sense similar to Hopkin's "The Wind Hover") are both spiritual; sweat is particularly associated with the physical nature of Butcher's activities, and arc is associated with the hawk's flight in the poem's context.

Furthermore, the end-focus on "Godsweat" is further complemented by the thematic and positional prominence accorded to "fresh" in *l.* 11. The multiple foregrounding might lead us to surmise that the physical world within Butcher's experience--"a river

shining like wire ten miles off" (l. 3), "the sky clean as a dentist's mouth" (l. 4), "the hills folded and folded / again" (l. 6-7) and "the white sky in the west" (l. 7)--is freshly created by God, presented to us from Butcher's perspective. In other words, the delightful landscape experience is Butcher's unique epiphany.

Just as "fresh" subsequent to "Godsweat" demands our attention, similarly, the deviant usage of "curries" subsequent to "hawkarc" demands our attention. We might notice that both "fresh" and "curries" belong to the food lexical set, and food is generally associated with one of the central characteristics/ preoccupations of Butcher. In a way, the deviant usage of "curries" is foregrounded to convey the materialistic aspect of Butcher, a materialistic fellow who indulges in drinking and eating.

3.2 LEXICAL SETS

The patterning of neologisms in the poem might motivate us to suspect the interplay of the themes of "spirituality" and "materialism" in the poem. An exploration of the lexical items in the poem reveals the patterning of the following major lexical sets:

"God/spirituality"

"material world"

jesus

(as in Hopkin's
"The Wind Hover")

generally
associated
with God's
creation

associated with
God's invisible
forces

(the spiritual mind)
(the eye of God)
(the healing hand)
(speaking-in-tongues)
(the blood of Christ)

generally
attributable to
God's creation

+

godsweat

hawkarc

hawk

spur

river

white sky in the west

part of the earth

hills

days

stones

folded

push

tacked

turns

mind

eye

hand

tongues

blood

things

fresh

lovely

uncovered

sweet

white

grunt

wire

dentist's mouth

ten miles

fifty feet

one wing

air

beak

feathered guts

(bird envisaged
without the life-
force)

curries

proportion

accuracy

in

the

physical

sense

associated with
physical actions

considered

in the

physical sense

(clear Christian dimension)	church
(spiritual dimension)	death
(the pivot between death and eternity)	hinge

"Light"

often associated	{	shines	}	taken in the
with spirituality		shining		physical sense
		glint		
("purity", "virtue")			white	(in the material sense of "colour")
			sharp	(a "sharp image", a "sharp sensation")
			eye	(the human eye, the "eye" of a camera)
			covered	(in the sense "to see the light")

What is most striking in the above patterning of the lexical sets is that the majority of the lexical items have both "spiritual" and "materialistic" associations. Of equal importance to the overall interpretation of the poem is the patterning of the subset of "light". In effect, the blend of the spiritual and the material worlds (as evident in the majority of the lexical items) reflects the infiltration of the spiritual dimension into the ordinariness of everyday life. More precisely, in the midst of the ordinariness of the mundane everyday life, there can still be moments when the shaft of light is experienced. Thus, in the interplay of the two different frames of reference--the ordinary and the spiritual--throughout the poem, we may be able to recreate the state of O'Sullivan's visionary experience: the perception of extra significance in the ordinary.

In addition, the patterning of the similes and comparisons in the poem reinforces this sense of a blend of the spiritual and material worlds:

(i) similes

l. 3 a river shining like wire ten miles off

l. 4 the sky clean as a dentist's mouth

(ii) comparisons

l. 9 there's not many days like that eh

l. 18 so the grunt sighs like in church

l. 30 It still shines ... like that river.

In *l. 3 & 4*, the poet has exploited the vehicles ("wire" and "a dentist's mouth" respectively) which are clearly associated with the material practical world. In the course of the poem, the comparisons exploited by the poet have association with the material world as well as rich spiritual connotations:

- the demonstrative adjective "that" which implies "days" in the material sense of the time between sunrise - sunset, and the biblical sense of "the seven days of God's creation";
- "church" in the physical sense of a building, and the religious sense of a "church of God";
- "river" in the geological sense, and the biblical sense of "the river of life".

The interplay of the lexical sets, similes and comparisons in the poem cumulatively suggests that although Butcher's and Sheila's experience in the material world may be ordinary, materialistic, practical and even boring, there is nevertheless the possibility for the realization of epiphany on an ordinary occasion. Furthermore, they are capable of being lifted out of the ordinariness into eternity, as specifically conveyed by the progress of the patterning of similes and comparisons (material --> material + spiritual). When we consider the poem as a whole, our observations point to the

suggestion that although "Butcher" and "Sheila" are representative of the average male and female in the NZ context, they are also representative of the archetypal Man and Woman in an ordinary setting/occasion.

On a different level of interpretation, but congruous with the poem's linguistic features, the foregoing observations might encourage us to argue that the colloquial variety of language in the poem corresponds to everyday ordinariness while the formal/poetic variety of language corresponds to spirituality.

CONCLUSION

The two different varieties of language (i.e. literary/poetic versus non-literary/colloquial) in the poem have different expressive values for the poet. They define for him Butcher's shifting state of mood, mind and experience in which the reader is also involved. The image of the landscape nobly bodies forth the mood of solemnity, grandeur and mysticism while the image of the hawk bodies forth the mood of vitality and temerity.

What is more crucial is that the two varieties of language present two concurrent threads of experience: the referential treatment of the landscape and the hawk; and the connotational symbolization of thoughts and articulation it promotes in the mind of Butcher, who is dramatized as an unrefined ordinary figure. In short, the poem provides a special ground in which language varieties or registers which are normally mutually exclusive can be reconciled. In this respect, it is a utopian structure.

Poetry, or literature in general, is almost the only "context" where different language varieties can be mixed and still permitted. (For a more detailed discussion, see Brumfit

& Carter, 1986: 8-9.) In most other instances, for example, legal documents, any deviation of lexis and syntax from the legal language would render the documents inadmissible. But, in "Still Shines when You Think of It", the two different varieties of language co-exist and even blend because O'Sullivan judges such heterogeneity as appropriate to his purpose and message. The heterogeneity of language enables him to convey Butcher's vulgar vitality with calculated images.

UNIT 11

LANGUAGE CHANGE AND PEOPLE'S ATTITUDES:

What Is "In" and What Is "Out"

*While Unit 10 reveals how one type of discourse blends with another, this unit shows how one type of discourse can be embedded in another, even though they are oppositional discourses. Above all, this concluding unit points out that linguistic patterns are always **changing** and the direction of change is dictated by our needs and attitudes. To conclude our progressive "language and literature" programme, this unit is most appropriate in that it effectively highlights what is generally recognized as the unique feature of language: its creativity. And it is this essential element of creativity that helps to keep the human culture alive ...*

This unit illustrates briefly how a systematic study of lexis and word organization can lead to a consideration of the poet's attitudes to language. Rosemary Pearson-Chen's attitudes to language are fairly typically prescriptive. A prescriptive view is one which says what the language ought to be while a descriptive view describes what it finds without judgment. In fact, investigation of the attitudes to language shown by a poet/writer can reveal something of his/her characteristic attitudes (perhaps even social attitudes) or those of the group/generation to which s/he belongs. Or it might help define some of the characteristics of the period(s) in which s/he writes (Carter, 1982(b): 166).

In this poem, the salient feature is the variability and the mixed degree of formality/informality of the lexis within the two oppositional discourses. Our language experience enables us to recognize that the most "outrageous" words are often those which survive in the spoken language (or at the informal level) only. However, evidence points to the fact that all languages change over periods of time and from place to place, and that changes are frequently motivated by what becomes common currency in the spoken words. Words often take on their colour, intensity and vivacity from the contexts of utterance, culture and reference. A single word can be of several meanings and diverse implications even in one and the same sentence, for example, "going to pot" in this poem.

This unit also reveals that the speech/language use of the poet (by implication, any individual), far from being consistent, has the tendency to vary a great deal at many points according to contextual factors like degree of formality, identity of addressee, attitudes being conveyed and speech acts being performed. This unsystematic variation points to the issue that sociolinguistic studies of variation speak of tendencies and probabilities rather than the absence/presence of a particular feature.

Mother Tongue to Childrens' Lip**Rosemary Pearson-Chen***(First published in The Singapore American, August 1984)*

Verse

I lament the passing of an elegant age
 When English was a straight-forward language
 It's not that today's kids have become uncouth
 I simply can't fathom the language of youth.

1

Grass as I knew it was soft, wavy and green
 A *bird* was feathered, and a *chick* was seen
 Only on farms, and not on the street
 But now it seems *pigs and chicks walk their beat*.

2

Remember when clothes were your only *put on*
 And *tripping out* was falling over your foot on
 A *stone*; but that stone is now a *freak out*
 It's *groovy*, or *weird*; or *cool* if you *hang out*.

3

Remember when a *swinger* was one on a swing
 And a cat was a cuddly kittenish thing
 And your only *hang-up* was the telephone
 And the light was the only thing *turned off* or *switched on*.

4

Policemen were cops who answered alarms
Fuzz was unshaven beard, *pigs* lived on farms
Rock was for climbing, *roll* for eating
 Now it's a dance; and *the beat's* not a beating.

5

And if your children ask for more *bread* 6

Don't offer them food--give them money instead

If they *like your style*, and say *you're cool*

Don't say you feel hot, they'll think you're a fool.

Just when you think *you've got your act together* 7

They tell you you're *up-tight* or *under the weather*

In my time *LSD* was pounds, shillings and pence

Now it's a drug that's illegal to *fence*.

I remember when *pads* were for writing a letter 8

and a *fix* was a repair job for making things better

A car was for transport now known as *wheels*

(And without wheels the youngster, deprivation feels).

No longer can a happy man be called *gay* 9

(That description is libellous--in court you'll pay)

And the four-cornered object we used to call *square*

Is applied now to people who *aren't quite there*.

A pretty girl is now just a *bit of fluff* 10

If she *turns you on*, she's *really hot stuff*

A *bust* was desirable, something *put up front*

Now it means an arrest, not a pleasant stunt.

A *hippie* was a lass with rather wide hips 11

The *flame of desire* is now a case of *hot lips*

And a *love-in* describes a *real heavy scene*

But *bad vibes* will make you a *freaked-out has-been*.

A *trip* was a journey by road, air or sea, 12

Now it's a drug-induced fantasy

It's *groovy, man, groovy*; it *blows my mind*

This *heavy scene* is a *blur*, my feet I can't find.

When you're *zonked out*, or *stoned*, *smashed* or *strung out* 13

Remember the language barrier; there is no doubt

That those under thirty *know what you've got*

But the rest of us think you are *going to pot*.

This *generation gap*, it seems to me 14

Involves more than a hysterectomy

Alas it's a *weird time* for my mother tongue

It's a dirge to ye olde English that I have sung.

INTRODUCTION

One of the most striking features of this poem is its variability; it constantly switches in register and in contextual appropriateness. This significant feature clearly reveals first, the poet's attitude to language in poetry, second, her value judgment and attitude to language as a whole. Thus, in my exploration of this poem, I shall attempt to show how people's attitudes to language, in both literary and non-literary contexts, can be systematically investigated and much of the specifically social meanings conveyed by the words can be revealed.

We might observe that the poet has created the poem as a battlefield for contesting the meanings of some lexical items which are impressionistically associated with two different types of discourse: the discourse of the older generation versus that of the younger generation. The struggle between these two discourses entails a constant switch between the formality and slang/informality of the English Language imposed by the institutions of the world within the poem. If an authoritative voice for a preferred language variety does finally emerge for the reader, it is a voice which has won its status by virtue of pride associated with that particular language variety in our value judgment.

Each variety of language is characterized by its unique phonological, lexical and syntactic features. But, in the written form and particularly in this poem, the lexical features are more significantly marked than the other linguistic features. And this is especially true, given the graphological foregrounding of the prominent italics. We might notice the unconventional grammar exhibited by "Childrens' Lip" in the title instead of "Children's Lips". This could be just a printing error for "en's" (with apostrophe misplaced). It could also be an indication to us that one of the key issues in the poem is about unconventional grammar or language play.

1. LEXICAL FEATURES

The poem comprises fourteen verses, each of which is made up of four lines. A regular rhyming scheme of *aabb* is maintained throughout the fourteen verses. But within this simple structure, the cultural and social implications are rich and subtle. The poem is a narrative presented to the reader by the first person. In the first verse, the persona lays claim both to a highly individualized identity associated with "an elegant age" and to a judgmental over-view which is at the heart of the entire poem:

I lament the passing of an elegant age
When English was a straight-forward language
It's not that today's kids have become uncouth
I simply can't fathom the language of youth.

The poem begins with "I" and progresses to "the rest of us" in Verses 13 and 14. That is, it moves from possessive particularity into a communally shared experience. And with this broadening of experience is a slight but nagging tension congruent to the struggle between the two oppositional discourses in the poem.

1.1 LEXICAL SETS

An exploration of the poem reveals the patterning of the following four major lexical sets:

"Drugs"

	<u>mental state</u>	<u>general</u>
<u>formal</u> :	drug-induced fantasy	drug
<u>informal</u> :	put on (1855-60)	hang out (1850-55)
	under the weather	LSD
	you've got your act together	fence
	weird (1950-55)	
	know what you've got	
<u>slang</u> :	tripping out (1960-70)	grass
	trip	pads
	freak out (1965-70)	
	hang up (1955-60)	
	turned off	
	switched on	
	uptight (1960-65)	
	fix	
	turns you on	
	blows my mind	
	zonked out (1955-60)	
	stone	
	stoned (1950-55)	
	smashed (1955-60)	
	strung out	
	going to pot (1935-40)	
	cool	
	freaked out <u>has been</u> (1600-10)*	: a person that is no longer effective, popular, etc.
	blur (1540-50)*	: indistinctness
	groovy (1850-55)*	: highly stimulating or attractive; excellent

"Hippie Culture"

formal: hippie (1950-55)
 gay (1950-55)
 love-in (1965-70)
 pretty girl

informal: ...put up front (1965-70)

real heavy scene

slang : bird

chick

cat

pigs

swinger (1955-60)

hot

turns you on

bust

flame of desire

hot lips

bit of fluff (British)

real heavy scene

really hot stuff (1950-60)* :

"Music"

formal : dance
 feet
 dirge
 sung
 beat

informal: bad vibes (1965-70)
 beat (as for the beatnik:
 1955-60)

slang : ... walk their beat

rock (1950-55)

roll

hot

cool

square (1955-60)

a person who is erotically

stimulating or is easily aroused sexually

"Policemen"/"Law"

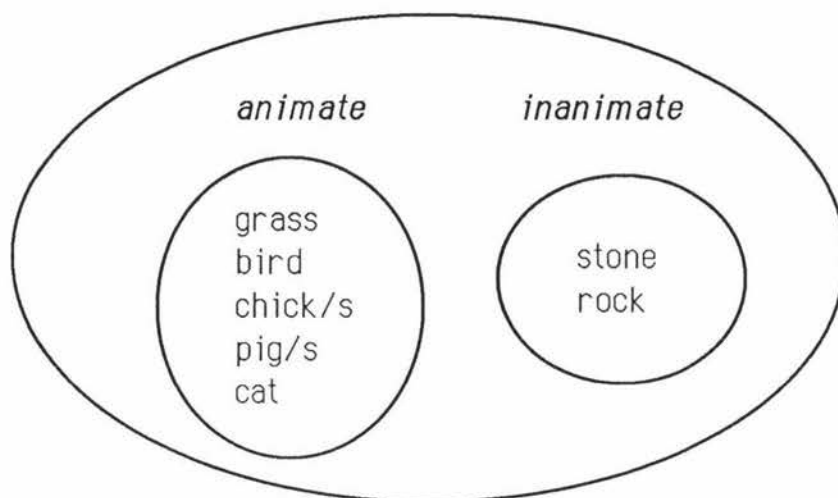
<u>formal</u> :	policemen	illegal
	alarms	libellous
	arrest	court
<u>informal</u> :	cops (1855-60)* : police officer	
<u>slang</u> :	fuzz (1925-30)	
	pigs	
	bust	
	fence	

The reference for my above analysis is *The Random House Dictionary of the English Language, 1987*. For some of the lexical items, particularly the slang terms, the periods during which they were the "in-words" are indicated in brackets. My purpose for this is to show that slang terms become dated in a relatively short period of time but some of them find their way into the standard language. However, some slang terms (marked by asterisks) retain this side of respectability for a long time, or they may be revived: "has been" (noun), "blur", "groovy", "hot stuff", and "cops", for example. These slang terms which were in circulation in a much earlier period (as indicated in the parentheses) still pass into circulation for different cultural/social groups of a later time. Slang reveals a remarkable expressiveness and creativity in its form; its prime motivation is a desire for novelty of expression for a particular group. Slang terms are used in speech and writing for special effects. For example, they are used in this particular poem to convey certain sociolinguistic and socio-cultural meanings.

The overwhelming fact revealed by the patterning of the four major lexical sets in the

poem is the preponderance of American slang. We might recognize another subset among the American slang. This subset is made up of lexical items which fundamentally denote things in nature:

"Nature"



The above observation might lead us to surmise that, according to the persona, the younger generation is not only fighting against the older generation in their language use but also against Nature itself. And this struggle is realized in the discourse employed by the two different generations. The youngster's discourse is compounded of words drawn specifically from "drugs", "music" ("rock and roll" in particular) and the "hippie" culture. These are essentially those elements which the older generation would object to as part of their discourse.

This force of opposition is again realized within the lexical set associated with "policemen"/"law". Here, there is a juxtaposition of two different registers: the American slang terms belonging to the youngsters' discourse as opposed to the lexical items formally identified with "law and order" belonging to the persona's discourse. There is thus the implication that the younger generation is rejecting and fighting against established social institutions and values.

On a different plane of experience, the poet's skilful exploitation and interplay of the various major lexical sets convey cultural and social meanings which are particularly associated with the American pop culture of the 1950's and the 1960's. It might be worthwhile for us to recall the American pop art movement which began in the 1950's and reached its peak of activity in the 1960's. With this movement is associated the emergence of the Hippie culture and "rock and roll" music, and the subsequent Beatnik culture. The hippies were youngsters who rejected established institutions and values. They sought spontaneity, direct personal relations expressing love and expanded consciousness. The beatniks, like the hippies, rejected conventional values, behaviour, dress, etc. These youngsters' rejection of the conventional, and their expression of love and expanded consciousness were realized through their promiscuity and drug abuse. At the same time, they created a variety of language compounded mainly of slang terms identified with the pop culture. This variety of language served to reinforce the boundaries of the community; keeping outsiders out, insiders in.

With the cultural and social implications present in the poem, it is therefore justifiable for us to argue that the poet is implying that the youngsters' deliberate avoidance of the conventional form of language is in consonance with their rejection of the established institutions, authority and rational system implicit in the traditional language system. In other words, what appears on the surface to be the poet's objection to some aspects of linguistic structure is fundamentally her reaction against the youngsters' cultural identity and social structure.

Our preceding discussion brings to light an interesting issue of socio-linguistics: during the process of socialization, different groups of people (or different generations) acquire knowledge of different discourses. This principle applies as we acquire experience and knowledge in the multitudes of discourse (or registers) which structure

the culture: the various language of "drugs", the media, the law, music, etc. What is fundamental about socialization is that as people grow into and are moulded into the society they inhabit, they acquire active/passive competence in a vast range of these linguistic varieties, each with its own distinct semantic possibilities. People's sociolinguistic repertoires differ considerably, according to the nature of their rules and relationship in society, and the details and the breadth of their experience and activities (Fowler, 1986:176).

1.2 VERB + PREPOSITION/PARTICLE

Our social experience and knowledge of different discourses acquired through socialization might lead us to observe that there is an abundance of lexical verb + preposition/particle in the lexicon of American English. (For a classification of such colloquial verb phrases, see Unit 5, § 1.2.1.) As the poem reveals, one of the features of the youngsters' discourse is to take that tendency further, creating new lexical items. Mental states associated with drugs are compressed into isolated but powerful metaphors:

"tripping out", "freak out", "hang up", "turned off", "switched on",
"uptight", "turns ... on", "zonked out" and "strung out".

But sometimes the new lexical items can be very neologistic, for example, "love-in", which is a neologistic extension of "sit-in" that marks American English. This highly lexicalized but neologistic feature might create bewilderment for others outside the discourse. Nevertheless, this linguistic feature serves to preserve group solidarity and cultural identity among its users.

The exploitation of the lexical verb + preposition/particle formation helps to generate large numbers of new lexical items. Since lexical verbs belong to the "open classes" of

the language system, this formation may help to explain how discourse can often expand rapidly to meet people's changing needs, for example, their perception/creation of new oppositions within society.

On another level of significance, the poet seems to imply that the large class of lexical verb + preposition/particle which characterizes American English is right at the end of the formality scale (formal--> informal--> colloquial--> slang) and almost deviant. As a result of these relatively deviant registers, she "simply can't fathom the language of youth". Here, the reader might note that the poet's underlying attitude and value judgment are primarily the outcomes of the convention in British English which regards VPs of the "lexical verb + preposition/particle" form as colloquial. In other words, the poet identifies with British English which itself, however, uses phrasal verbs heavily. Therefore, phrasal verbs cannot be used as a measure for formality/informality; these are false dichotomies.

In the real world, phrasal verbs constitute a grey area of language as far as formality/informality is concerned. However, as native speakers tend towards the formal scale of the English Language, they often have the tendency to phase out such lexical form. This practice is generally acceptable as it has been felt by native speakers that such forms are imperatively informal, and often with a certain degree of abruptness.

cf. the formal register used

--in the court : Please Be Silent.

--in an official
letter of complaint : I tolerated the noise.

& the informal register used

--when one is telling a child : Do shut up.

--when one is complaining to

a friend : I put up with the noise.

It is interesting for us to note that even "Silence!", marked by a rise in intonation, is not felt to be as imperatively abrupt as "Shut up." Perhaps we are justified in claiming that the persona is subtly hinting to us that "It's not that today's kids have become uncouth" but it is difficult to distinguish "the kids" from their language which is felt to be abrupt because of its prevalent phrasal/colloquial verb form.

We might also observe that what is felt to be informal in one society may not be so in another.

cf. British English : I rose.

& NZ English : I got up.

The NZ society, with its ideology of an egalitarian society, has the tendency to shift towards the relatively informal end of the formality scale. That is, in NZ, it is socially acceptable for one to use the "lexical verb + particle/preposition" form without being felt by others to be deliberately informal or even abrupt.

The foregoing discussion shows that the "lexical verb + preposition/particle" form has the tendency to slide along the formality scale. The essential point here is that the English Language has no definite predictable levels of formality. The degree of formality/informality conveyed by linguistic features varies with social attitude and value judgment; it is a matter of etiquette but inevitably culture-bound and context-bound.

1.3 CONTRACTIONS

It can be observed that there is a preponderance of a variety of contractions in the poem:

(i) pronoun/noun + primary auxiliary ==>	It's (8x)
(do, have, be)	you're (4x)
	you've (2x)
	that's
	she's
	beat's
(ii) pronoun + modal auxiliary ==>	they'll
	you'll
(iii) auxiliary + negative particle ==>	can't (2x)
	don't (2x)
	aren't

Out of the 24 contractions featuring in the poem, 21 of them belong to the poet's discourse. Only three are clearly components of the youngsters' discourse, and these are functionally part of the **Free Indirect Discourse**:

Verse 6, l. 3	: If they like your style, and say <i>you're cool</i>
Verse 9, l. 4	: Is applied now to people who <i>aren't quite there</i>
Verse 13, l.3	: That those under thirty <i>know what you've got</i>

By convention, contractions belong to the informal register for spoken English. The variety of contractions within the poet's own linguistic legislation serves to convey the poet's repertoire of experience. And the use of a particular register is related to the situational context; it is a matter of personal choice and attitude.

2. REGISTERS

2.1 FORMAL AND INFORMAL REGISTERS

Besides the predominant contractions that mark the poet's register as informal, there are also other informal lexical items evident in the poet's discourse:

Verse 1, l. 3 : It's not that today's kids ...

Verse 5, l. 1 : Policemen were cops ...

Verse 13, l. 4 : But the rest of us think you are going to pot.

Here, we might note that probably "go to pot" is obsolescent by now. Our previous discussion reveals the poet's objection to the youngsters' informal register and oppositional discourse. Yet in the above instances, the poet has cast herself into a role similar to that of the youngsters portrayed in the poem's constructed world. It is therefore ironical that she is using the informal register and by implication, the oppositional discourse of her generation.

This element of dramatic irony is especially intensified in Verse 12, l. 3-4. Here, in her exploitation of **Free Indirect Discourse** (in the sense of the co-presence of the poet's discourse and the youngsters' discourse, i.e., a linguistic combination of two voices),

the poet is right into "the language of youth", the language alien to her:

It's *groovy*, *man*, *groovy*; it *blows my mind*

This *heavy scene is a blur*, my feet I can't find.

2.2 REGISTER OF POETRY

(i) Archaic Words

In her use of archaic words like "Alas" and "ye olde English" (Verse 13); the poet tends to exaggerate the distance between generational discourses. We might recognize that these words belong to another variety of English, Middle English. Though such words have been preserved, they are a long way from contemporary spoken and written discourse. And they are what linguists would call the specialized domain or register of poetry.

Used in the climactic verse of the poem, these two archaic words have special effects. First, this "deviant" linguistic feature in the poet's discourse serves to give an ironic twist to the poem's central theme. Second, it brings to light that one linguistic feature can represent a whole language variety. Third, one discourse can encompass and interweave several varieties, a most important facility for language in the social complexity of an advanced industrial society and an important consideration for a sociolinguistic theory of modern Europe and American literature, which notoriously mixes and alludes to different varieties (Fowler, 1981: 193).

(ii) Inversion

The unusual word order of Verse 8, l. 4, foregrounded by the brackets and the intrusive comma (not required in a S/O/V sequence), demands our attention:

effective if there are conventionally accepted ways of viewing the world. But, as people of a society accept a conventional representation of reality as a social convenience, they (like the poet) are also aware of reality beyond that (like those aspects of reality within the youngsters' unique experience) which their language represents.

CONCLUSION

Our observations and discussion of the poem have effectively revealed some very interesting sociolinguistic issues. The portrayal of language use in the world within "Mother Tongue to Childrens' Lip" implies that all societies are constantly changing their language to meet their immediate needs; and that different registers have different expressive values. The result of this movement is that there are always coexistent forms, the one relatively new, the other relatively old; and some members of a society will be temperamentally disposed to use the new (most likely by their youth) while others are comparably inclined to the old (most likely by their age) (Quirk, 1973: 9). But the majority of us (like the poet) will not be consistent either in our choice or in our temperamental disposition; and most of us tend to exaggerate our own consistency. Our language use, above all, is inevitably linked to our attitude and value judgment. More precisely, our attitudes to language reflect our social judgment.

Teacher: "And now you know my meaning."

William Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*
V. ii. 30

CONCLUSION

It will be recalled that the central proposition of this thesis is that a linguistic-based approach to poetry could well be adopted for ESL classroom practice because of its immense pedagogical advantages. My main aims have been to show how rich the textuality of the selected texts can be and that the linguistic features displayed can be exploited to teach linguistic concepts, the majority of which are not present in the other native languages of my targeted ESL learners. In other words, I maintain that a language-based approach to poetry teaching has a significant role in ESL methodology: it is a means of extending the learners' knowledge of the English Language and increasing their sense of appropriateness and sensitivity to language use.

Based on such a linguistic approach, my principal instructional objective is to enable students to develop the potential for individual response to language use and more specifically, to guide them to a realization of the way in which English poetry is used to express messages that are unique and beyond the expressive scope of the conventional language code (Widdowson, 1975: 76). My pedagogical aim then, is to teach the **communicative** function of poetry. That is, to discover how the language is exploited to convey the poet's vision and world views which make up the unique aspect of reality that is the poem, and its total effect--imaginative, aesthetic and linguistic.

It is argued that the learners' sensitivity and response to language use in poetry as a form of communication (both semantically and pragmatically) may be cultivated through the guided but direct and personal confrontation with the language-in-use. Therefore, it is crucial for the teacher to facilitate this independent engagement with poetry by teaching some form of analytic strategies, so that the students can eventually

arrive at their own appreciation and interpretations which are based on systematic exploration of linguistic evidence. With thorough preparation, meaningful and skilful questioning from the teacher, students may be guided to discovery of meanings; and this process of active discovery through linguistic analysis is certainly revealing and fulfilling.

In conclusion, as a whole, this thesis offers an insight into the wide-ranging area of ESL methodology; it serves as a document in opening up one possible direction that teachers could take in English literature/language teaching. However, this document is not an end in itself. We should view it as only part of the total language curriculum. The entire language programme comprises multiple levels: concept formation, administrative decision-making, syllabus planning, material design, classroom methodology and pupil evaluation (Mok, 1984: 242). The success of a language programme depends largely on the extent to which materials, methodology and examination are compatible with the training and abilities of teachers, and needs of students, as well as the cultural, social and political climate.

As already revealed by my classroom experience, there were and there will be difficulties in our attempts to teach poetic discourse, especially to ESL learners. However, given the complexity and intricacy of the education process itself, if we are convinced of our ideals as language teachers of developing our students' communicative awareness and competence, and something akin to the native speakers' intuitive conception of appropriateness, then we are compelled to try out an approach which is theoretically promising and nonetheless practically rewarding.

GLOSSARY: EXPLORATION OF KEY TERMINOLOGIES USED

This is a glossary of the central and most frequently used grammatical and linguistic terms in the thesis. I have made every attempt to discuss the terms as fully as possible. However, it must be pointed out that it is certainly beyond the scope of this thesis to give absolutely complete definitions. The cited sources should be consulted wherever possible. Although I have ordered the various key terminologies under the respective units, they are not confined to just that particular unit. Very often, in the study of the selected poems, cross-reference of these technical terms is essential and effective in describing certain linguistic patterns. The purpose of this glossary is to provide the reader with a handy starting-point to facilitate initial stylistic/linguistic analysis to be undertaken; and to clarify certain terms which have diverse definitions.

CHAPTER 2

SYSTEMIC GRAMMAR

Particularly associated with the work of Halliday from the late 1960s onwards, and is itself built on the ideas of J.R. Firth. Here Halliday established the major units of linguistic analysis (morpheme, word, group, clause, sentence) and theoretical categories (unit, structure, class, system) which enable the analyst to study thoroughly any text.

The key idea of **systemic grammar** is the notion of **system**, but seen as a network of options. Each major grammatical category can be analysed in terms of a set of options. Each option is dependent upon the context or environment. For example, the system of grammatical mood involves a basic choice of indicative, imperative or subjunctive; the indicative involves a further choice between declarative and interrogative; the interrogative involves a further choice between "closed" and "open", and so on.

The systemic approach to language allows for flexibility of subdivision; and the consequent breaking down of the boundary between grammar and meaning. This fairly exhaustive and semantically sensitive taxonomic and functional approach generates one major tripartite division: the ideational, interpersonal and textual functions of language. And this division has proved a particularly useful framework for stylistic analysis: see Burton, pp. 194-214 and Kennedy, pp. 83-99 in Carter, (1982)(a); as well as Unit 7 in particular.

UNIT 1

ANACOLUTHON

From Greek "inconsistent", **anacoluthon** refers to a grammatical sequence which begins in one way, but finishes in another,

e.g.: She was pleased to - had to interview me.

It is usually marked as above by a pause (or hyphen in writing). This linguistic feature is part of the habitual non-fluency of casual speech, arising from unclear formulation, heightened feeling, etc.; or, in syntactically complex sentences, from a failure to render the whole construction cohesive in mind.

RANKSHIFT

It is a term now used in **systemic grammar** to define the syntactic function of a grammatical structure at a level/rank lower than that at which it would normally operate. There are five significant ranks in English grammatical description: sentence, clause, group (or phrase), word, and morpheme. A sentence is made up of clauses; a clause is made up of groups, etc. It is sometimes possible for grammatical units at a certain rank to be rankshifted (or downgraded) to a function at a lower level. In English, relative clauses characteristically function at word level, embedded within a nominal group, equivalent to adjectival

modifiers:

cf. A gamut of joys, which was soul-stirring, arises from any old sound ...

& A gamut of soul-stirring joys arises from any old sound ...

There are various kinds of ranks involving shift from clause --> group, from group --> word, and so on. This concept is further elaborated with helpful examples in Unit 9.

THEME; THEMATIZATION; etc.

(1) In literary criticism, **theme** is the central idea which we infer from our interpretation of the plot, imagery and symbolism, etc. In this sense, theme carries most semantic importance, most commonly coinciding with the focus and with new information, i.e., "what is said about a topic" or comment.

(2) In linguistics, **theme** is one of a pair of terms (see also Rheme) particularly developed by the post-war Prague School of linguists. This pair of terms is chiefly concerned about the informational value of utterances. In contrast to (1), here, the theme carries least significance in content, commonly coincides with given information, and is also usually found in initial position, often coinciding with the grammatical subject of the utterance, i.e. the topic or thematic subject. Theme is considered by the Prague School to be the element with the lowest communicative value.

Outside the Prague School, for instance, as in the Systemic/Functional Grammar of Halliday (which is adopted by Cummings and Simmons), theme refers to any initial element. It can be a conjunction, a NP or an adverbial; and is not only the subject but also the complement, if placed initially. In this respect, the variation of normal word order is to motivate fronting or inversion for emphasis or prominence, and so to produce what other linguists (e.g. Quirk, 1973) would call a marked theme; or what others would call thematization or topicalization.

In Quirk, 1973, theme refers to the "point of initiation". It is opposed not to rheme but to focus, normally end-focus or the "point of completion". The end-focus usually carries the most informational interest or value, it coincides with the normal nucleus of the intonation in speech. With this juxtaposition between point of initiation and point of completion, theme is actually an element of some prominence.

All in all, the thematization of utterances or the distribution of elements according to degrees of prominence, plays a significant role in the patterning of discourse.

RHEME

(1) According to the post-war Prague School of linguists, the **rheme** carries most semantic importance in the utterance, most commonly coinciding with new information. In English, the rheme occurs in **Focus** position towards the end of the utterance. In effect, the rheme pushes the message forward. It is linked to the theme by transitional elements, usually verbs, e.g.

A gamut of soul-stirring joys (thematic) arises from (transitional)
any old sound (rhematic).

(2) Outside the Prague School, the terms "theme" and "rheme" refer to initial and non-initial elements respectively. They correspond to the grammatical subject and predicate respectively, and sometimes they are considered as topic and comment. That is, irrespective of informational values, the theme will always be at the beginning and the rheme (now incorporating "transitional" elements) will always simply be "the remainder": it loses its significance.

GIVEN INFORMATION V. NEW INFORMATION

A pair of terms commonly used in discourse analysis with reference to the informational content of utterances. **Given information** refers to information stated but already known to the participants. Pragmatically, it is either supplied in the co-text; or presupposed from the situational context, or inferred from the wider context of shared knowledge. It is contrasted with **new information**, which is not known, or not assumed to be known, to the addressee/reader etc.

Typically, in an extended discourse, opening sentences will contain new information; subsequent sentences will contain a distribution of both given and new information. Both the definite articles and subordinate clauses usually indicate given information; whereas indefinite reference is normally associated with new information.

Given and new information are often associated with the Prague School ideas of theme and rheme respectively. This association is attributed to the claim that theme and rheme are also aspects of text structure involving information, but theme and rheme are primarily concerned with informational value and importance rather than degree of newness. However, the theme in an utterance often coincides with given information; while the rheme, which is communicatively the most important part of an utterance, often coincides with new information.

UNIT 2

COHESION

Established by Halliday and Hasan (1976), **cohesion** refers to the means (phonological, grammatical, lexical, semantic) of linking sentences into larger units (paragraphs, chapters, etc.), i.e. of making them "cohere". More recently, another equivalent term of cohesion is **connectivity**.

There are several patterns of cohesive ties; they can be overt/explicit or covert/implicit:

(i) explicit lexical repetition:

Where they have left not one stone on a stone, (Unit 2)

(ii) Co-reference:

... The gaps I mean,

No one has seen them made or heard them made,

But at spring mending-time we find them there. (Unit 2)

(iii) Ellipsis as an implicit device:

[It] still shines when you think of it. (Unit 10)

(For a detailed discussion of cohesive strategies, see Halliday & Hasan, *Cohesion in English*. London: Longman, 1976.)

Certain registers are characterized by their specific kind of cohesive ties: rhymes, alliteration, etc. in poetry as patterns of phonological cohesion; ellipsis in casual speech; etc. One of the main pragmatic functions of cohesion is to avoid unnecessary exact repetition in the interests of fluency and economy of communication, unless it is rhetorically necessary, and therefore marked (as discussed in Unit 2).

COLLOCATION; LEXICAL SETS

(1) **Collocation** refers to the habitual or expected co-occurrence of words, testifying to the words' predictability and idiomaticity. Associations are most commonly made contiguously (e.g. Adj + N: "yelping dogs", "good neighbors"); or proximately in phrases (e.g. the cones under his pines), but they can also span over a text, and even beyond.

Statistically, given a corpus of material, it might be possible to predict the collocational range of an item, i.e. its collocates ranked in order of probability of

occurrence (e.g. wall: stones, boulders, bricks, etc.). Those words which exhibit similar ranges are considered to be members of the same **lexical set**.

Collocations may be habitual/natural or non-habitual/unnatural. Habitual collocations are a recognizable feature of different registers but poetic effects often depend more on the exploitation of the non-habitual type. It must be emphasized that lexical (in)congruity is dependent on semantic (in)compatibility; and the degree of dependence of collocations upon the senses of the lexical items themselves is something which is much debated upon.

UNIT 3

POSTMODIFICATION

The term describes all those constituents which occur after a NP or nominal group, and are subordinate to the noun functioning as head word. Structures which are functionally postmodifiers include

- (i) prepositional phrases: e.g. an intrusion on my action
- (ii) relative clauses: e.g. I simply want some nourishment that doesn't make me nervous.
- (iii) non-finite clauses: e.g. We have to use a spell to make them balance.

PREMODIFICATION

The term describes modification of the noun head by elements occurring directly before the NP/nominal group; and these elements are subordinate to the noun head. Determiners and adjectives (in that order) are the two main types of elements which function in this manner, e.g. the green billow. Nouns can also be commonly modified by other nouns, e.g. breakfast foods (Unit 8). Determiners can themselves be preceded by other predeterminers like "all" and "both" (e.g. all the breakfast foods); and followed by numerals (e.g. these three sumach-red

dogs). Heavy premodification can be achieved through the combination of several adjectives in the attributive position, e.g.:

The long-rolling, steady-pouring, deep-trenched, green billow ...

UNIT 4

DEIXIS; DEICTIC

From the Greek "pointing" or "showing", **deixis** comprises all those features of language which orientate an utterance in relation to a speaker's viewpoint, in the context of proximity of space (e.g. here/there; this/that), of time (e.g. now/then), and of interpersonal relations (e.g. we/you). The indicative elements themselves are called **deictics**. These include the first and second person pronouns (e.g. I, we and you); the demonstratives (e.g. this and that); adverbs of place and time; and tense (present v. past).

In dramatic discourse, such deictic elements are important devices that help to create the constructed world of the play, re-contextualizing real speech behaviour. In poetry, a situation can also be inferred and the reader is made to participate in it. Some grammarians (e.g. Halliday, 1985) extend the term **deictic(s)** to a class of "identifying" modifiers of the Noun, which are more commonly called **determiners**. In this sense, deictics would include the articles ("the" and "a"), as well as the possessives (his, her, etc.).

UNIT 5

EXOPHORA; EXOPHORIC REFERENCE; v. ENDOPHORA; ENDOPHORIC REFERENCE

This is a pair of terms developed by Halliday and Hasan (1976). Exophora refers to contextual or situational reference (exophoric); as distinct from textual reference (endophoric). Fundamentally, exophoric reference helps to establish

the situational dimensions of "the world within" a text, or the universe of discourse of a given text. Exophoric reference may be "specific" (i.e. referring to the immediate situational context in which the discourse occurs); or "homophoric" (i.e. referring to the larger cultural context or shared knowledge). Contrast the specific and generalized/ "homophoric" functions of the definite article in phrases like "pass me the book" and "the world today". The first and second person pronouns are typically exophoric in function, involving the participants in the discourse; whereas the third person pronouns are typically endophoric, pointing to NPs in the co-text.

SITUATION~CONTEXT

Situation is frequently synonymous with **context**, and is commonly evoked in sociolinguistics and pragmatics. It refers to the non-linguistic setting encompassing language use, and it can influence communicative acts. In our everyday experience, we encounter a range of social situations, and it is part of our communicative competence that we can constantly adjust our language use and degree of formality according to the social situations. Some situations seem to operate fairly consistently on a regular set of stylistic features, so that we have what are known as registers or discourse/situation types: e.g. sports' commentary, obituaries, etc.

A unique feature of literary language is that it can create its own context, what Leech (1969) calls the inferred situation. In this respect, "the world within" or the situation inside the poem/novel is more important than the extra-textual.

UNIT 6

FRONTING

Fronting refers to the syntactic movement of elements from their usual post-verbal position to the beginning of the utterance. This is usually done for highlighting purposes or emphasis. In terms of the informational structure of such utterances, fronting affects the normal pattern of prominence and communicative value of information, which normally builds up to a focus at the end of the utterance. In the case of the normal pattern, the centre of interest coincides with the nucleus, the last accented element of the final lexical item. The beginning of an utterance, however, is normally of relatively low informational value, or possibly comprises given information (see theme). Fronting of elements therefore gives them extra importance or emphasis. The coincidence of focus and theme is called marked theme or thematic fronting (Quirk, 1973); or thematization.

UNIT 7

ANAPHORA; ANAPHORIC REFERENCE; v. CATAPHORA; CATAPHORIC REFERENCE

(i) **Anaphora** denotes a kind of reference which is "backward-looking". This is distinct from cataphoric reference which is "forward-looking". Both these two types of references are important aspects of the cohesion or connectedness of discourse. The third person pronouns (she, he...) function typically with anaphoric reference, for nominals in the co-text:

My grandmother, though Catholic, was cremated according to her wish.

(Unit 6).

The definite article (the) and demonstratives (that, these, etc.) can also be anaphoric. Ellipsis can also be a kind of anaphora in contexts where the

"complete" structure precedes it. In stories, plays or poems, sometimes what at first sight appears to be anaphoric reference occurs right at the start, and yet technically there are no antecedents. Since anaphoric reference implies previous mention of the NPs, and therefore existence, it helps to create the illusion of a world into which the reader is dramatically thrust,

e.g. Your eyes and the valley are memories. (Unit 7)

(ii) **Cataphora**, which denotes a kind of "forward-looking" reference, is used commonly to refer to aspects of the discourse, rather than specific NPs. The pronoun "it" typically anticipates following clauses or sentences, as in:

All of it wraps and knots to a riddle:

[I have the moon, the timberline, and you.] (Unit 7)

Cataphora has the effect of delaying more precise information. In consequence, cataphora lends itself to stylistic exploitation in the interests of suspense; or with the pattern of (light) pronoun followed by (heavier) NP, providing a useful focussing device, as in the above quoted example.

COMPONENTIAL ANALYSIS

This technique is also less commonly known as "lexical decomposition". **Componential analysis** is an approach to meaning whereby lexical items are distinguished and identified by sets of inherent distinctive semantic features possibly common to all languages (i.e. these features are universal). The semantic features are usually analysed in terms of binary contrasts e.g. [+/- (concrete)]; [+/- (animate)]; etc. However, it is not always easy to define lexical items in this way, as there is no limit to the number of oppositions one might establish. Nevertheless, this technique might help to explain our intuitions about compatibility/incompatibility which lie, for example, behind metaphors.

END-FOCUS; END-WEIGHT

(1) The principle of **end-focus** is based on the assertion that different constituents of utterances have different communicative values, and that normally new/important information is reserved for the end, corresponding to the nucleus in speech:

e.g. Your eyes and the valley are memories.

End-focus is one of the important factors in the choice of active and passive constructions, for example: in

The workmen have uprooted these tombstones. (Unit 6)

the focus is on the physical object "tombstones"; in

These tombstones have been uprooted by the workmen.

the focus is on the human agent.

(2) End position is also important for the principle of end-weight. While end-focus illustrates the interrelations between syntax, intonation and text structure, end-weight is primarily concerned with syntax. In English, complex or "heavy" sentence constituents have the tendency to follow simpler or "lighter" ones. In this respect, potential left-branching structures are often avoided in favour of right-branching ones (what is sometimes called extraposition).

In the above quoted example, the subject is moved from its normal initial or pre-verbal position to the end of the sentence:

cf. Memories of your eyes and the valley are ...

& Your eyes and the valley are memories.

As this very example reveals, the principles of end-weight and end-focus are simultaneously at work, since "memories" is undoubtedly the most important part of the information.

IDEATIONAL: - meaning; - function

(1) In semantics, ideational is equivalent to terms like conceptual, propositional or referential. Ideational meaning refers to the basic meaning of words representing the external world around us.

(2) This representation of patterns of experience is one of the important functions of language. In Halliday's functional/systemic grammar, the ideational or referential function is one of three major functional components of language (see also interpersonal and textual). Included here is not only the representation of physical experiences, but also internal experiences, thoughts and feelings, etc. And in this case, the clause is the most significant grammatical unit because it is the clause that functions as the representation of processes. A process consists potentially of three basic components:

- (i) the process itself;
- (ii) participants in the process;
- (iii) circumstances associated with the process.

Within a speech community, no two speakers will have the similar conception of reality, the similar experiences, the similar world-views. In literature such experiences may be realised and even foregrounded; and analysis of ideational meaning is therefore prominent in literary appreciation.

(For a comprehensive discussion and examples of process types, see Halliday, *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*. London: Edward Arnold, 1985. Chpt. 5.)

INTERPERSONAL: - meaning; -function

In Halliday's grammatical theory, the interpersonal function or component is one of three major components of language (see also ideational and textual). This refers to the relations between addresser and addressee in the discourse situation.

Typical linguistic markers of interpersonal mode include the first and second person pronouns; terms of address; deictic elements; and speech acts such as questions and directives.

TEXTUAL: -function; -meaning

This is one of the three functional components of language in Halliday’s functional grammar. Textual function refers to the creating of **text** (in the case, text is language in use). That is, it basically refers to the way language is constructed as a text, achieving cohesion with itself and the constructed situation.

The relationship among the three functional components of Halliday’s functional grammar may be exemplified by the structural analysis of the clause below:

	a moonrise	was	creeping	over the timberline
Ideational:	Affected		Process	Locative
Interpersonal:	Modal		Proposition	
Textual:	Theme		Rheme	

UNIT 8

ARREST

This term is generally associated with Sinclair. In his analysis of poetry, **arrest** refers to the intervention of an optional element in a sentence at a juncture in its structure where the latter is syntactically incomplete. For example, the completion of a main clause may be unexpectedly delayed (or arrested) by one or more bound/dependent clauses, e.g.

Lambs/that learn to walk in snow
 When their bleating clouds the cloud/
 Meet a vast unwelcome ...

(Philip Larkin: "First Sight")

For a detailed analysis by Sinclair on the use and effect of arrest, see

- (i) "Taking a poem to pieces" in Fowler, R., ed. *Essays in style and language*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966.
- (ii) "Lines about 'Lines'" in Carter, R., ed. *Language and Literature*. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1982.

UNIT 9

HYPOTAXIS; HYPOTACTIC STYLE

Also commonly known as subordination in clauses. Hypotaxis refers to a kind of dependent/bound element which is explicitly connected to the independent/main clause by a subordinating conjunction,

e.g. I simply want some nourishment/ that doesn't make me nervous.

Heavy use of hypotaxis, often marked by complexity, is more likely to occur in writing than speech.

PARATAXIS; PARATACTIC STYLE

In traditional grammar, **parataxis** refers to the linking of clauses by juxtaposition rather than through explicit subordination (hypotaxis) or co-ordination. The connection between clauses may not have been made explicit but has thus to be inferred, as in

[They] stood on top of a spur once[,]
 the grunt before Sheila sharp beside him[,]
 a river shining like wire ten miles off
 [and] the sky clean as a dentist's mouth
 ... (Unit 10)

Parataxis is common in nursery rhymes, ballads, as well as ordinary speech. Some discussions, however, include co-ordination under parataxis (e.g. Fowler 1986). And in Halliday's grammatical theory, groups and phrases can be linked paratactically by apposition and by co-ordination. This is discussed with some helpful examples in Unit 9.

RECURSION

Popularized in generative grammar, and is best illustrated by the string of relative clauses that comprises the famous nursery rhyme "The House that Jack built":

This is the farmer sowing his corn,
 That kept the cock that crowed in the morn,
 That waked the priest all shaven and shorn ... etc.

Recursion is now widely used to describe the repetition of syntactic structures which are either embedded or juxtaposed in a sentence. In theory, at least, the repetition of syntactic structures can be repeated indefinitely. In practice, although extended recursion is acceptable, it is rare. Simple examples would be listings of co-ordinated items, e.g.

I'm looking for a muffled meal, no wham, no pop, no swish, ... ;
 or strings of adjectives as premodifiers, e.g.

The long-rolling, steady-pouring, deep-trenched, green billow ...

UNIT 10

NEOLOGISMS

To put it simply, **neologism** means "a newly invented word". The means of invention include a wide range of morphological processes in English: e.g. compounding, affixation, blends, acronyms, etc. Some neologisms may eventually find their way into dictionaries, if they become generally accepted by a speech community (e.g. "bionic", "Eurocrat" of the 1970s). Words coined in literature, however, are less likely to find their way into dictionaries or to be "borrowed" by others. This is because their motivation for invention comes from the context of the text, not from some large-scale pragmatic need.

REGISTER

In stylistics and sociolinguistics, **register** is a general term referring to a variety of language relative to the situation. First introduced in the 1950's, the term retains some of the connotations of the musical sense: it suggests a scale or differences of degrees of formality/informality appropriate to different social uses of language. In other words, different registers serve different social roles. And it is within the communicative competence of every speaker that s/he will constantly switch from one scale of language use to another, select certain stylistic features appropriate to the different situations of everyday life.

In particular, in the work of Halliday, three main variables which play significant roles in the choice of situational features are distinguished: field (subject matter); medium (mode); and tenor, (the relation between participants which influences degree of formality, etc.). However, it must at least be recognized that register is a general term, and that subregisters can be identified in some situations. In addition, different registers may overlap with each other in respect of function or medium or even field (e.g. a cricket commentary v. a

rugby commentary; a prayer v. a sermon), so that it is possible to have many linguistic features which are common to several registers.

Clearly, our recognition of register-switching and register-mixing in a particular context (as discussed in Unit 10) helps to confirm our awareness of the distinctive varieties of language and their distinctive linguistic features.

UNIT 11

DISCOURSE

This is an extremely complex terminology. The complexity arises from diverse uses of the term. Although there are other possible senses of discourse, the following few are of special interest to us:

(1) One prominent sense covers **all those aspects of communication** which involve not only a message or text but also the addresser and addressee, and their immediate context of situation. Leech & Short (1981), emphasize its interpersonal/transactional nature, as well as its social function. In this sense, discourse would refer not only to ordinary conversation and its context, but also to written forms of communication between writer and reader: hence terms like "literary discourse", "narrative discourse", "poetic discourse", etc. A poem/novel can engage in discourse or be part of a larger discourse, involving other texts in the tradition. If we consider "poetry as discourse" or "the novel as discourse", other discourses can be embedded: e.g. dialogue.

(2) With the emphasis on communicative function in speech or writing, discourse is simply equivalent to **variety or register**: literary v. non-literary discourse, legal, scientific, philosophical, etc. Thus, we can speak of the poetic and colloquial registers in Unit 10.

(3) With the emphasis on communication, or on mode of communication, discourse is sometimes used to refer to the representation of speech and thought;

hence terms like **free direct/indirect discourse**.

(4) Discourse can be used in a wider sense (as in the work of Fowler et al., 1979); it transmits as well as creates social and institutionalized values or ideologies. This sense of discourse enables us to speak of the discourse of the "hippie culture", of "rock and roll", of drug, of regulations, of the media, etc. in Unit 11.

(5) In the broad sense of (1), discourse includes text but the two terms are difficult to distinguish. For some linguists (see Coulthard, 1977), discourse is restricted to spoken communication, while text applies only to the written form of communication. And most of these linguists would emphasize the transactional nature of communication as in sense (1).

(6) A well-established definition of discourse sees it as a series of connected utterances, i.e., a unit larger than a sentence. Thus, if conversation is discourse in (1), then it is seen as a continuous stretch of speech preceded and succeeded by silence/pause or a change of speaker. This is particularly true in the recently established discipline of discourse analysis, which has exposed both the interactional and linguistic structures in stretches of conversation in particular. The analysis of written discourse, on the other hand, is often subsumed under text linguistics.

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

AUDEN, W(ystan) H(ugh). (York, England, 21 Feb 1907 - 28 Sept 1973). American. Emigrated to the United States in 1938; naturalized, 1946. Educated at St Edmund's School, Grayshott, Surrey; Gresham's School, Holt, Norfolk; Christ Church, Oxford (exhibitioner), 1925-28. Served with the Strategic Bombing Survey of the United States Army in Germany during World War II. Married Erika Mann in 1935. Schoolmaster, Larchfield Academy, Helensburgh, Scotland, and Downs School, Colwall, near Malvern, Worcestershire, 1930-35. Co-Founder of the Group Theatre, 1932; worked with the G.P.O. Film Unit, 1935. Travelled extensively in the 1930's, in Europe, Iceland, and China. Taught at St. Mark's School, Southborough, Massachusetts, 1939-40; American Writers League School, 1939; New School for Social Research, New York, 1940-41, 1946-47; University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1941-42; Swarthmore College, Pennsylvania, 1942-45; Bryn Mawr College, Pennsylvania, 1943-45; Bennington College, Vermont, 1946; Barnard College, New York, 1947; Neilson Research Professor, Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts, 1953; Professor of Poetry, Oxford University, 1956-61. Editor, Yale Series of Younger Poets, 1947-62. Member of the Editorial Board, *Decision magazine*, 1940-41, and *Delos magazine*, 1968; The Readers' Subscription book club, 1951-59, and The Mid-Century Book Club, 1959-62. Recipient: King's Gold Medal for Poetry, 1936; Guggenheim Fellowship, 1942; American Academy of Arts and Letters Award of Merit Medal, 1945, Gold Medal, 1968; Pulitzer Prize, 1948; Bollingen Prize, 1954; National Book Award, 1956; Feltrinelli Prize, 1957; Guinness Award, 1959; Poetry Society of America's Droutskey Gold Medal, 1959; National Endowment for the

Arts grant, 1966; National Book Committee's National Medal for Literature, 1967. D.Litt.: Swarthmore College, 1964. Member, American Academy of Arts and Letters, 1954; Honorary Student, Christ Church, 1962, and in residence, 1972-73.

Source: Vinson, James, ed. *Great Writers of the English Language. Poets*. London: Macmillan Press, 1979.

FROST, Robert (Lee). (San Francisco, California, 26 Mar 1874 - 29 Jan 1963).

American. Educated at Lawrence, Massachusetts, High School, graduated 1892; Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire, 1892; Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1897-99. Married Elinor Miriam White in 1895; one son, three daughters. Mill worker and teacher, Lawrence, 1892-97; farmer, Derry, New Hampshire, 1900-12; English Teacher, Pinkerton Academy, Derry, 1905-11; conducted course in psychology, State Normal School, Plymouth, New Hampshire, 1911-12; sold the farm, and lived in England, 1912-15; returned to America and settled on a farm near Franconia, New Hampshire, 1912; Poet-in-Residence, Amherst College, Massachusetts, 1916-20; subsequently Visiting Lecturer at Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut; University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1921-23, 1925-26; Dartmouth College; Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut; and Harvard University. A Founder, Bread Loaf School, Middlebury College, Vermont, 1920. Poetry Consultant to the Library Congress, Washington, D.C., 1958. Recipient: Pulitzer Prize, 1924, 1931, 1937, 1943; New England Poetry Club Golden Rose, 1928; Loines Award, 1931; American Academy of Arts and Letters Gold Medal, 1939; Academy of American Poets Fellowship, 1953; Sarah Josepha Hale Award, 1956; Emerson-Thoreau

Medal, 1959; U.S. Senate Citation of Honor, 1960; Poetry Society of America Gold Medal, 1962; MacDowell Medal, 1962; Bollingen Prize, 1963. Litt.D.: Cambridge University, 1957; D.Litt.: Oxford University, 1957. Member, American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Source: *Great Writers of the English Language. Poets.*

JENNISON, C. S. Information not available.

O'SULLIVAN, Vincent (Gerard). (Auckland, New Zealand, 28 Sept 1937 -).

New Zealander. Educated at the University of Auckland, M.A. 1959; Lincoln College, Oxford, B.Litt. 1962. Married. Formerly, Lecturer, Victoria University, Wellington, and Senior Lecturer, Waikato University, Hamilton. Editor, *Comment*, Wellington, 1963-66. Recipient: Commonwealth Scholarship, 1960; Macmillan Brown Prize, 1961; Jessie Mackay Award, 1965; Farmers Poetry Prize, Sydney, 1967. A poet, fiction-writer, and playwright. Currently Professor and Chairperson of the Department of English Language and Literature, Victoria University, Wellington.

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London: Macmillan Press, 1980.

PEARSON-CHEN, Rosemary. (Date of birth not available).

A language teacher from NZ. Mother of four multilingual children. Has lived in the East for 20 years. Was extra-mural student at Massey University from 1985 - ?.

Source: from the afterword of her book entitled

People Talk. Singapore: Federal, 1985.

POPE, Jessie. (Leicester, 1868 - 1941). British. Best known "war poetess". Wrote humorous fiction, verse and articles for leading popular newspaper and magazines. Her first war poem, "Play the Game", was published in the *Daily Mail* on 11 Sept 1914. Contributed no less than 170 poems to *Punch* between 1902 and 1922. Her last, "Noise", was published on 4 Oct 1922.

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ROSSETTI, Christina (Georgina). (London, 5 Dec 1830 - 29 Dec 1894). English. Sister of Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Educated privately. Contributed to the *Germ*, Publication of the Pre-Raphaelite, as Ellen Alleyne, 1850; assisted her mother in teaching at a day school in Camden Town, London, and subsequently at Frome; thereafter lived a retired life at home, caring for her mother and devoting herself to church work; wrote mainly devotional literature after 1872, and for most of her later life was an invalid.

Source: *Great Writers of the English Language. Poets.*

SANDBURG, Carl. (Galesburg, Illinois, 6 Jan 1878 - 22 July 1967). American. Educated at Lombard College, Galesburg, 1898-1902. Served as a Private in the 6th Illinois Volunteers during the Spanish American War, 1899. Married Lillian Steichen in 1908; three daughters, including the poet Helga Sandburg. Associate Editor, *The Lyceumite*, Chicago, 1907-08; District Organizer, Social-Democratic Party, Appleton, Wisconsin, 1908; City Hall Reporter for the *Milwaukee Journal*, 1909-10; Secretary to the Mayor of Milwaukee, 1910-12; worked for the *Milwaukee Leader* and *Chicago World*, 1912; worked for *Day Book*, Chicago, 1912-17, also Associate Editor, *System: The Magazine of Business*, Chicago, 1913;

Stockholm Correspondent, 1918, and Manager of the Chicago Office, 1919, Newspaper Enterprise Association; Reporter, Editorial Writer, and Motion Picture Editor, 1917-30, and Syndicated Columnist, 1930-32, *Chicago Daily News*; Lecturer, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, 1934; Walgreen Foundation Lecturer, University of Chicago, 1940; weekly columnist, syndicated by the *Chicago Daily Times*, from 1941. Recipient: Poetry Society of America Award, 1919, 1921; Friends of Literature Award, 1934; Roosevelt Memorial Association prize, for biography, 1939; Pulitzer Prize, for history, 1940, and for poetry, 1951; American Academy of Arts and Letters Gold Medal, 1952; National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Award, 1965. Litt.D.: Lombard College, 1928; Knox College, Galesburg, Illinois, 1929; Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, 1931; Harvard University, 1940; Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, 1940; New York University, 1940; Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, 1940; Lafayette College, Easton, Pennsylvania, 1940; Syracuse University, New York, 1941; Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire, 1941; University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1955; Uppsala College, New Jersey, 1959; LL.D.: Hollins College, Virginia, 1941; Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois, 1948; University of Illinois, Urbana, 1953. Commander, Order of the North Star, Sweden, 1953. Member, American Academy of Arts and Letters.

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SILKIN, Jon. (London, 2 Dec 1930 -). British. Educated at Wycliffe and Dulwich colleges; University of Leeds (Gregory Fellow, 1958-60), BA (Hons.) in English, 1962. Married to Lorna Tracy; three sons and one daughter (and one son deceased). Journalist, 1947; labourer, and teacher of English to foreign students, 1950 - 58. Served in the Army Education Corps, 1948-50. Formerly, Extramural Lecturer, University of Leeds, and University of Newcastle; Beck Visiting Lecturer of Writing, Denison University, Granville, Ohio; Visiting Lecturer, Writers Workshop, University of Iowa, Iowa City, 1968-69, Australian Arts Council & University of Sidney, 1974, and College of Idaho, Caldwell, 1978. Visiting writer, Mishkenot Sha'ananim, Jerusalem, 1980; Bingham Visiting Professor, University of Louisville, 1981; Elliston Visiting Poet, University of Cincinnati, 1983. Since 1952, Founding Co-Editor, *Stand*, Newcastle upon Tyne; since 1964, Co-founding Editor, Northern House, publishers, Newcastle upon Tyne. Recipient: Northern Arts Minor Award, 1965, 1984; Faber Memorial Prize, 1966; C. Day Lewis Fellowship, 1976.

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STEPHENS, James. (Dublin, 1882 - 1950). Irish. Worked as a solicitor's clerk; Registrar of the National Gallery of Ireland. Lived in Paris for a time; and in London, became a popular broadcaster. Wrote short stories, essays, poetry and criticism. His public popularity rests on one remarkable book, *The Crock of Gold*, part fantasy, part fairy story, part pamphlet in the eternal Irish war of the sexes. Spent most of his later years in good talk rather than writing, both privately and in broadcasts.

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YEO, Robert (Cheng Chuan). (Malaysia, 1940 -). Malaysian. Graduated from the University of Singapore, BA (Eng). Secondary school teacher for some years. Proceeded to obtain his M.A.(Edn), Institute of Education, London, 1968. Was an information officer at the SEAMEO, Bangkok. Has edited several volumes of Singapore short stories and written a number of plays. Currently a Lecturer in the English Studies Department at the Institute of Education, Singapore.

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