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## **A Stylistic Study of Graphological and Grammatical Deviation in Selected English Postmodern Poems**

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## **Abstract:**

Stylistics is a term that refers to the relation between linguistics and literature. One linguistic technique in stylistics to be applied in literature is a deviation, which means, put, neglecting some of the rules of a language in a piece of literary work. Such negligence, of course, aims at achieving a range of freedom for the writer to deal with the manoeuvring ideas he/she wants to put forward.

This paper attempts to study graphological and grammatical deviation in selected English postmodern poems. It hypothesizes that English postmodern poets use graphological and grammatical deviation in their poems to attract their audience. It, therefore, is an attempt to apply these particular types of deviation to the selected poems.

The topic is covered through eight sections. Section one presents the introduction concerning the difference between everyday and poetic language. The second section involves definitions of deviation. The third one is about deviation in the sense of poetry. Style and stylistics as two different terms are presented in section four. In the fifth one, graphological deviations are shown with examples. Grammatical deviation and examples are presented in section six. Section seven exhibits the plan of the research. Section eight concerns the analysis of the poems. The paper ends with the conclusions and the list of the references used.

**Keywords:** deviation, graphological, grammatical, poems, postmodern, negligence.

# **A Stylistic Study of Graphological and Grammatical Deviation in Selected English postmodern Poems**

## **1. Introduction**

Poetic language, at least in some theorizations, differs from the everyday, ordinary language. In ordinary usage, language is mostly automatic, and words are used in a way that does not attract attention, but in poetry, the language is used in such a special way that the reader notices a clear distinction between the two ways of using language.

Poetic language has its own characteristics, of which anyone who is engaged in the study of poetry must have a good understanding. It is known that poetry is not just a matter of rhyme and rhythm. 'Blank verse' is free from such aspects but has still its own poetic features, and one permitted way for the poets to be used to discriminate the poetic language from everyday communication is a deviation in all its types. Selected poems are analyzed in the study, to achieve the way postmodern English poets have used such a technique in their poems, and the frequency of these two types of deviation is shown. Finally, the average of them is presented.

## **2. Style and Stylistics**

The word style has a common use and people come across it in everyday life not only in literature. In literature, however, it takes a different and specific route. It is considered as an approach that uses the rules and results of linguistics in the study and analysis of literary pieces. That is why it is referred to as 'stylistics'.

This approach which burgeoned just in the twentieth century, as Peter Barry remarks, " is not confined to the analysis of

literature; it can be applied equally to expository prose, political speeches, advertisements, and so on" (181). It is by no means new, though its appearance as nomenclature goes back- as mentioned- to the twentieth century. In fact, its roots could be traced back to what has come to be known in ancient times and the Middle Ages as 'rhetoric'. This principle was widely used in religious texts, legal documents, and even political speeches. By the nineteenth century, it was gradually replaced by linguistics in its traditional meaning. But the first part of the twentieth century witnessed the development of this conventional linguistics into what we now label as stylistics through groups and characters like the Russian Formalists, the Prague School, and Roman Jakobson.

As for its definition, many critics tried to define it according to their personal understanding of its role and significance. George W. Turner, for example, refers to it as the way of expressions in speaking or writing (21). He further notices that "stylistics is that branch of linguistics which focuses on variation in the use of language, sometimes but not always, with particular concern to the uses of language in literature" (30). While according to Gabriela Missikova, style can be viewed either as linguistic variation features like the character of an author or as the selection of items and their patterning (18). On his part, David Crystal (440) believes that style can be defined in two senses, in its wide sense, it means 'situationally distinctive uses (varieties) of language'. While, in its restricted sense refers to the relations among participants in language communication, particularly the level of formality. The study of style is what is termed stylistics. Another opinion is provided by Widdowson (1979: 3) who defines stylistics as 'the study of literary discourse from a linguistic orientation'. It is a means of linking the two and has no independent domain at its

own. More definitions can easily be discerned and most of them revolve around the same ideas, simply speaking, of the inter-relationship between the two concepts.

### **3. Definitions of Deviation**

If a writer wants to make his language creative, he uses a different method from the conventional ones, and this abnormal or original treatment, can give the readers surprise and make a strong impression on their minds. Technically, this type of creative use of language is called linguistic deviation, by which the writer creates original (everyday) language deviated from the norms of literary convention or everyday speech (Leech:57).

Wales (2001: 103) also confirms that deviation refers to divergence in frequency from a norm or statistical average. Such divergence may depend on, for example, the breaking of normal rules of linguistic structure (whether semantic, grammatical, lexical or phonological) and so be statistically unusual in the sense of over frequent.

Sethuraman and Peck (1995: 236), on their part, believe that poets tend to have their own grammar and resort to deviation whenever they want to express a meaning which the normal language cannot. Crystal (2003:134) on the other hand, argues that deviation refers to a sentence that violates the rule which appears grammatically, phonologically, and even semantically. To him, deviation could be interpreted as the disruption of the standard communication process that causes difficulties in understanding the text.

But these notes should not deceive people into thinking that the concept is modern and up-to-date; rather, like stylistics, it stretches deep into history and draws the attention of the classics, notably Aristotle who tackled it in his Poetics. According to him, "the diction becomes distinguished and non- prosaic by the use of unfamiliar terms, i.e. strange words, metaphors, lengthened forms, and everything that deviates from the ordinary modes of speech. . . . Their deviation from the ordinary words will, by making the language unlike that in general use, give it a non-prosaic appearance; and their having much in common with the words in general use will give it the quality of clearness. (Qt in Ediciones: 22).

#### **Deviation and Poetry 4.**

The word 'deviation' is the noun for the verb deviate, which generally means to leave or depart from the normal and established rules and regulations followed in doing something. This general meaning is turned into a more specific description when it is related to literature. In principle and according to Shafii-Kadkani (1989:240), "poetry is nothing but breaking the norms of ordinary and logical language". Chamisa (2004:158) also believes that there is almost no literary work that does not involve a sort of deviation from ordinary language. He assumes that the subject of linguistic deviation should not be ignored because in some cases, all of the importance and influence of a literary work depends on it.

Russian formalists considered literature as a particular use of language which achieves its distinctness by deviating from and deform practical language (Selden et al.: 32). The proper study of literature, they declared, is literature itself. To Study literature, they asserted, is to study "poetics" which is "an analysis of works"

constituent parts- its linguistic and structural features- of its "form" (Bressler: 51). These ideas about what we nowadays call deviation came into existence again in the nineteenth century by the Prague School who commonly expressed it as 'foregrounding' which is still in the heart of any stylistic study of poetry.

## 5. Graphological Deviation

As one of the aspects of deviation in poetry, graphological deviation plays a significant role in directing the meaning of the words, phrases, and sentences in one way or another. This umbrella term includes, among other things, spelling, punctuation marks, typography (italics for example), and paragraphs. Some critics, however, reduce its definition to a state that can never be able to cover what is actually meant by it and what is its real role in disclosing the meaning behind certain literary texts. Leech (1969:49-52) for instance, introduces graphological deviation as a type of deviation that is related to the poet's disregard of the rules of writing. It is the line-by-line arrangement of the poem on the page with irregular margins. To him, the graphological deviation or the particular way of putting words and lines on the page could add a kind of another meaning to the original meaning of the verse, for instance. He uses the following extract from a poem by e.e.cummings to support his ideas:

seeker of truth

follow no path

all paths lead where

truth is here

(Cummings).

The ambiguity which is discerned clearly in these lines is caused by just one aspect in the graphological deviation, namely, punctuation. If a period is put after the word 'truth', the meaning would be that truth is in this place; while in its existing shape, the above purpose is hard to get.

Halliday et al. (1964: 50) connected this aspect to spelling, punctuation, and any other matter related to graphic resources in language. Leech and Short, on their part, express nearly the same view:

A graphological deviation is a relatively minor and superficial part of the style, relating to spelling, capitalization, hyphenation, italicization, and paragraphing. Such matters are to a great extent determined conventionally by syntax and become noticeable expressing only when a writer makes a graphological choice which is to some degree marked or unconventional, such as a deliberate misspelling (13).

Despite such points and views, this kind of deviation plays a role in helping the writers to achieve their intended goals. The most straightforward examples would be the particular arrangement of the lines of poetry on a printed page or the very long lines of poetry written by the Beat poet Allen Ginsberg (1926-1997) that used to cover, in some cases, one and a half line of a page. Some critics even commented on his lines that readers need the lung of a bull to finish one line in a single breath.

## 6. Grammatical Deviation

It is clear from its name that it is a deviation in the field of grammar; that is why Geoffrey writes about it that "grammatical deviation is a kind of deviation in which the poet breaks the rules of a sentence or syntactic features" (49). He provides the following example among others to support the definition: Our heart's charity's health's fire, (Hopkins) (Ibid)

But the ample open a door for interpretation and even contradiction. The use of possessive (s) in fact is no violation of the rules of the language since this aspect is an original part of the English language; rather it can be labelled as an extension of an existing rule. What Hopkin did in that line is just to over-use the form to the extent that it renders the line abnormal.

Grammatical deviation, according to Budiharto, is "when a sentence or sentence breaks the rules of grammar (2018:86). Traditionally the types of grammatical deviations are drawn between morphology (the grammar of the words) and syntax (the grammar of how words pattern within sentences). The important feature of grammatical deviation is the case of ungrammaticality such as "I do not like him" (Leec:45).

Grammatical deviation illustrates the social classes of speakers. The differences in language among social classes can be shown by the following sentences: Speaker (A) I ain't done nothing Speaker (B) I haven't done anything. Speaker (A) I didn't it yesterday. Speaker (B) I did it yesterday. Speaker (A) I was me that done it. Speaker (B) I didn't do it Trudgill (2000:65). Any native speaker of English would immediately be able to decide that these speakers are of different social classes. The difference in the

grammar between the two examples of speech indicates that speaker (A) is from a lower social class while speaker (B) is from the middle one (ibid.). Other prominent examples of grammatical deviations are where a poet or a writer uses the double negative, the double comparative, and the double superlative. In Old and Middle English the idea of negation was often expressed several times in a single sentence, as in the following example: Grammatical Deviations in O'Neill's *Hairy Ape* "I will do nothing no more" (Brook, 1977:146). Also, writers or poets deviate from grammatical rules by combining two ways of shown comparison: the addition of suffixes and the use of the separate words (more) and (most). Thus Shakespeare, for example, combined "unkindest" and "most unkind" such as (This was the unkindest cut of all) (Brook: 146)

## 7. The Analysis

Line number (5) "They come to rest at any kerb" contains a grammatical deviation, sincerest means comfort. It, therefore, does not go along with "an ambulance" which is an apparent reference to worry, discomfort, and movement. Another grammatical deviation can be traced in line number (6) "All streets in time are visited" because the intransitive word "rest" is followed by the transitive verb "visited" to express the movement of an ambulance which stops for a moment and then leaves for the hospital and it usually is used for human beings. Its use with an ambulance is also a deviation. The compliment in time here precedes the verb which is a past participle verb in this sense thus is a grammatical deviation again.

It seems that Larkin in this poem uses deviation to be different from other poets in his writing to attract the readers' attention.

Like him, Thomas in his poem "Fern Hill" unconventionally uses adjectives, and of participles as adjectives, he uses the lilting house in line number 2 About the lilting house and happy as the grass was green, and it was air and playing inline ( 20-21) Fields high as the house, the tunes from the chimneys, it was air And playing, lovely and watery.

Spinning place and spellbound horses in line number (34) In the first, spinning place, the spellbound horses walking warm and whinnying green stables in line( 35). Out of the whinnying green stable finally, he uses tuneful turning in line43 In all his tuneful turning so few and such morning songs. To this poet, using such adjectives in the form of participles is a mechanism to affect the audiences a great effect and to draw their attention to the message aimed at.

E.E. Cummings, on the other hand, uses two types of deviation in his poem I carry your heart with me (i carry it in), because if his great fond in deviations. He uses such a technique even in the title of the poem. The first type of deviation that he has used in this poem is graphology and secondly grammatical deviation. In the graphological level in e.e. cummings poem, one can examine how the poem looks and how the stanza develops in considering how many lines it consists of and how the lines of each stanza start and end. Punctuation marks in the sense of deviation are also studied here; the comma has been used in the first and the second stanza, the semicolon in the first and the third one to affect the readers.

Generally speaking, Cumming does not use upper case letters when necessary, he does not use the capital letter (I) for example, when the subject is the first-person pronoun. There is also unusual

spacing and lack of periods, which are not set norms of grammar, and they are not seen normally in other poetics works.

Like Cummings, Joe Ushies, in his poem "mother's back" has used graphological and grammatical deviations to be discriminated in his poems in the sense of style and drawing the readers' attention. In this poem, one can easily find the use of the unusual arrangement of the stanzas which is the sign of graphological deviation, to elaborate this mechanism in his poem he also arranges the lines and even the words in an unusual way and this is considered as the graphological deviation in the poem. He also uses decapitalization and capitalization at the same time as to say to use capitalization where it is not required and vice versa and hence it is the point of regarding the existence of grammatical deviation mechanism in the poem again.

## Results and Conclusions

Poetic texts, unlike many other texts, are said to be in different ways more effective, this is because each poet has a different way of using words or the style of writing to express the thoughts or emotions wanted to be shown. Like other languages, English has its own syntactic structure and graphology, yet poets deviate from them for poetic purposes, including attracting their audience and sometimes even creating ambiguity. The research concluded first the fact that in these studied poems, there are linguistic deviations such as graphological and grammatical, used as tools to serve the poets to convey their ideas and thoughts effectively which at the end leads to the success of the messages they convey through their poems. Second, they use such tools differently: For example, Philip Larkin and Dylan Thomas use grammatical deviation in their analyzed poems but not graphological. Unlike them, E.E. Cummings and Joe Ushie used both types in their poems. Lastly, using these deviations results in multiple interpretations of the poems by different readers and consequently leads to a reasonable extent of interest in the poems.

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## پوخته:

شیوازگه‌ری زاراوه‌یه‌که ئاماژه به په‌یوه‌ندی نیوان ئه‌ده‌ب و زمان ده‌کات. یه‌کێک له‌و ته‌کنیکه‌ زمانه‌وانییانه‌ی که له‌ بواری ئه‌ده‌بدا جێبه‌جێ ده‌کریت پێی ده‌وتریت لادان که به‌ مانای پشتگوێ خستنی به‌شیک له‌ یاسا ریزمانیه‌کانه له‌ ناو ده‌قیکی ئه‌ده‌بیدا. بیگومان ئه‌م پشتگوێ خستنه‌ش به‌ ئامانجی وه‌ده‌ست هێنانی راده‌یه‌کی دیاریکراوه له‌ ئازادی بۆ نووسه‌ر بۆ ئه‌وه‌ی بتوانی بیروکه‌کانی به‌ شیوازیکی گونجاو بخاته‌ روو.

ئهم توێژینه‌وه‌یه‌ بریتیه له‌ هه‌ول‌دان بۆ خستنه‌ روو و شیکردنه‌وه‌ی ته‌کنیکی لادانی ریزمانی و گرافیکی له‌ چه‌ند ده‌قیکی شیعری پۆست مۆدێرندا. توێژینه‌وه‌ گریمانه‌ی ئه‌وه ده‌کات که شاعره‌ پۆست مۆدێرنه‌کانیش به‌ هه‌مان شیوه‌ی ئه‌وانه‌ی پیش خۆیان ئه‌و دوو جووره لادانه له‌ شیعره‌کانیان به‌کار دێنن به‌ مه‌به‌ستی راکێشانی سه‌رنجی خوێنه‌ران. هه‌ر بۆیه توێژینه‌وه‌که ئه‌و دوو جووره ته‌کنیکه به‌سه‌ر چه‌ند ده‌قه شیعریکی ئه‌و شاعیرانه‌دا جێبه‌جێ ده‌کات.

بابه‌ته‌که له‌ دوو توێی هه‌شت به‌یشی کورتدا باس کراوه: به‌شی یه‌که‌م باسی جیاوازی نیوان زمانی رۆژانه و زمانی شیعری ده‌کات له‌ کاتێکدا به‌شی دووهم به‌ وردی پێناسه‌ی لادان ده‌کات. له‌ به‌شی سێیه‌مدا لادان به‌ مانا شیعرییه‌که‌ی خراوته‌ روو. به‌شی چوارهم ته‌رخان کراوه بۆ هه‌ردوو چه‌مکی شیواز و شیوازگه‌ری. به‌شی پێنجهم باسی لادانی گرافیکی به‌ نمونه‌وه ده‌کات، هه‌رچی به‌شی شه‌شه‌مه باس له‌ لادانی ریزمانی ده‌کات و نمونه‌شی بۆ ده‌هینیته‌وه. به‌شی هه‌وته‌م پلانی توێژینه‌وه‌که ده‌خاته‌ روو و کۆتا به‌شیش بریتیه له‌ هه‌لسه‌نگاندنی ره‌خنه‌یی ده‌قه شیعرییه‌کان. توێژینه‌وه‌که‌ش به‌ ده‌ره‌نجام و لیستی سه‌رچاوه‌کان کۆتایی پێ دێت.

وشه كليبيه كان: لادان، گرافيكى، ريژمانى، شيعر، پؤست مۆديرن،  
پشتگوئى خستن.

### ملخص:

الاسلوبيه مصطلح يراد به العلاقه بين الادب و اللغه, و يعتبر الانزياح اللغوى احدى التكنيكات اللغوية المستخدمة فى مجال الادب و التى تعني اهمال او تجاوز بعض القواعد اللغوية فى النصوص الادبية. و يهدف هذا التجاوز بلا شك الى حصول الشاعر او الكاتب على قدر معين من الحرية لكى يتمكن من طرح افكاره بشكل سلس و متناسب.

و هذا البحث عبارة عن محاولة لايضاح و تحليل تكنيك الانزياح اللغوى و الصورى فى عدد من النصوص الشعرية فى عهد ما بعد الحداثة. و يفترض البحث بان شعراء عهد ما بعد الحداثة حالهم حال اللذين سبقوهم, قد استخدموا هذين التكنيكين فى قصائدهم لغرض جذب انتباه قرائهم الى تلك القصائد, و لذلك يطبق البحث الكنيكين اعلاه فى عدد من النصوص الشعرية لهؤلاء الشعراء .

يحتوى البحث على ثمانية اجزاء موجزة: يدرس الجزء الاول الفارق بين اللغة الدارجة فى الحياة اليومية و اللغة الشعرية فيما يتطرق الجزء الثانى الى تعريف الانحياز بشكل دقيق. و يبحث الجزء الثالث الانحياز كمفهوم شعري. و قد خصص الجزء الرابع لمفهومي الاسلوب و الاسلوبية. و يدرس الجزئين الخامس و السادس الانحياز الصورى و الانحياز اللغوى مع الامثلة التوضيحية على التوالي. و قد خصص الجزء السابع لتوضيح خطة البحث فيما يدرس الجزء الاخير بالتفصيل و التحليل النصوص الشعرية المنتقاة. و يختتم البحث بالاستنتاجات و قائمة المصادر.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الانحياز, الصورى, اللغوى, الشعر. ما بعد الحداثة.  
اهمال او تجاوز.

