" The cohesion of foregrounding in Gwendolyn Brook's

"Michael is Afraid of the Storm" and "Martin Luther King Jr."

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Abstract:

This paper deals with cohesion of **foregrounding in of foregrounding in Gwendolyn Brook's ''Michael is Afraid of the Storm'' and ''Martin Luther King Jr.''.**This linguistic phenomenon is inevitable: it almost exists in every literary text. Foregrounding can be achieved by two ways either deviating from the norm or confining one' self to the same norm. **Gwendolyn Brook is a well- known Black African poet.** The paper studies two poems written by Brook: **''Michael is Afraid of the Storm''** and ''Martin **Luther King Jr.''.**The poems are rich in foregrounding features: parallelism, similes, metaphors and alliteration. At the same time, they have many cohesive devices such as reference, and conjunctions.

Key words:

foregrounding, deviation, simile, metaphor, cohesion, reference, conjunction, African literature

ظاهرة الإبراز في قصيدة "مايكل خائف من العاصفة" وقصيدة "مارتن لوثر الملك" للشاعرة جوندلين بروكس

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يتناول البحث الإبراز كظاهرة لغوية هامة جدا، تلك التي لا يخلو أي عمل أدبي منها تقريبا، وهي توجد بطريقتين : إما عن طريق التكرار؛ حيث يكرر الكاتب النمط نفســـه في كتابته بدلا من أن ينوع أنماطه . ورغم وجود العديد من الأنماط للكتابة إلا أن الكاتب يحصـــر اختياراته في نمط واحد أو نمطين ويكررهما. والطريقة الأخرى هي أن يحيد أو ينحرف الكاتب عن الأنماط المعروفة والمألوفة ويســتخدم أو يخلق لنفســه نمطا جديدا غير مألوف في اللغة. وهذا الانحراف يأخذ عدة مستويات: على مستوى الصوت والفونولوجي، أو مستوى المورفولوجي والكلمة والعبارة والجملة، وأيضا على مستوى الدلالة وطريقة كتابة الكلمة نفسها.

ونوعت الشـــاعرة في تناولها للإبراز في قصـــائدها على مســتويات مختلفة والتكرار وغيرها لتعبر عن أهدافها .

الكلمات المفتاحية:

ظاهرة الإبراز / التماسك / التشبيه / الاستعارة / أدوات الربط / الأدب الأفريقي.

Introduction:

Language is used effectively to convey one's feelings, ideas, moods and ideologies. The domain of stylistics is studying linguistic patterns which are employed by a writer to achieve his/her communicative effects and to convey his/her message. The field of stylistics is such diverse to include sub-fields like linguistic stylistics, literary stylistics, cognitive stylistics, forensic stylistics, general stylistics and computational stylistics. According to Katie Wales , in interpreting and understanding the text, most of stylistic studies aim to not only describe the formal features of a text but to discover the functions and the significance of them as well. To achieve this aim, Stylistics applies the linguistic findings to literary texts.

Foregrounding:

As a term, foregrounding is used in art as an opposite to background. According to Leech, it is a deviation from the norm. In stylistics, the term was borrowed from the Prague school of Linguistics, Leech and Short used the term to refer to "artistically motivated deviation".

The origin of this term goes back to the Czech theorist Jan Mukarovsky who used it as term to refer stylistic effects that are existent in the literary text. Foregrounding also means highlighting. One can find it in everyday language as well as in literary text. But there is a very essential difference. In everyday language, it is unstructured, unpurp oseful and insignificant. In literary work, it is structured, systematic and hierarchical.

Miall and Kuiken use foregrounding to refer stylistic variation which arouses feelings. It needs long time in reading. In other words, foregrounding makes defamaliarization. While Verdonk defines it as the psychological effect that the reader has in reading the literary work. It captures the attention of the reader, as it is "unpredictable from the norm".

It is a stylistic strategy that is weaved in the textual organization and it has a literary motivated aesthetic purpose. According to Leech, it is a "model of de-automatization or defamilarization of the linguistic code in textual patterning" . (Leech,).

The writer or the author highlights certain elements in the text. Those elements are called fore grounded elements or features. By doing this, s/he aims to help the reader understanding and appreciating his/her message. S/he does this by exploiting the possibilities of the linguistic resources of the language.

Linguistic foregrounding comes in two main forms: foregrounding as a deviation from the norm, breaking the ordinary linguistic rules, and foregrounding as "more of the same" (Simpson, 2004, p. 50).in the latter case, it called parallelism and repetition. Deviation, parallelism and repetition are also called style markers.

Linguistic Deviation or fore grounded irregularities:

Leech calls linguistic deviation foregrounded irregularities. He states that deviation is artistically motivated device or tool. It works as clue to the understanding and the interpretation of the literary work. It is an intended deviation from the norm so; it attracts the reader's attention.in addition, the foregrounded or highlighted linguistic features do not occur aimlessly in the literary text. They pattern with the other linguistic features which exist within the text. He argues that deviation in literary texts has three forms or occurs at three levels: *primary deviation* which occurs when the text deviates from the norms of the language as a whole; *secondary deviation*, at which the text deviates from the norms of the literary composition in particular (the literary genres) and *tertiary deviation* or *internal deviation*, where the text deviates from norms internal to the text itself.

The primary deviation has two forms: firstly, when the writer abandons the linguistic rules and conventions of the language. In other words, he does not follow the linguistic rules. Leech calls this sort of deviation, *qualitative deviation*. Secondly, when the writer denies the freedom of choice in the sense that he uses the same expressions more than once. Leech calls this "more rarely than usual" or "more often than usual". According to him (Leech), this is *quantitative deviation*. It is a deviance from the expected frequency; the writer limits himself to certain pattern (s)

Both of them (qualitative and quantitative deviations) can occur at different linguistic levels: phonetics, graphology, morphology, syntax, lexis, discourse, pragmatics (Short, 1996, p34).

Phonological deviation can be achieved through alliteration, elision, assonance and rhyme. Words which are pronounced or stressed differently are other examples of phonological deviation like wind and /waind/.

Morphological deviation occurs when one adds a derivational suffix to a base to which it is unexpected to be added, e.g.," perhapless mystery", "sunless", "sandaless feet", and "moonless" (Hamzah Abdurraheem: 97).

Lexical deviation can be done through neologism or invention of new words .it can also be done through zero affixation or functional inversion e.g., to give a word anew grammatical function without any change in the base itself as " the just man justices".

Grammatical deviation is any change in the word order i.e., inversion or fronting. For example, when an adjective appears after the noun it modifies, e.g., lucky man he is. Dispensing the commas and" and" in listing the linguistic units (nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs) is another example for grammatical deviation, e.g., young pretty tall girl.

Graphological deviation is using lower and upper cases, e.g., using or dispending capital letters. Also spacing linguistic units, clustering words, different usage of parentheses and punctuation are other examples for Graphological deviation.

Semantic deviation occurs in metaphors, paradox, oxymoron, tautology, personification and meaninglessness. In other words, the inconsistent or illogical use of selectional restriction rules is a semantic deviation.

Discourse deviation happens when a discourse does not follow the typical order (beginning—middle – end). If it begins at the

middle or at end and then goes back to the beginning, it makes a discourse violation. In addition, unnatural transition within the text organization at the inter sentence/ stanza/ paragraph level (Abdrraheem: 98) is another discourse violation.

Other foregrounding devices or tools are *parallelism and repetition.* They are the opposite of deviation in the sense they do not break the linguistic rules. They are the second sort of deviation (quantitative deviation), in which the writer uses more of the same. He restricts himself to the same linguistic pattern instead of using others.

Parallelism:

is the "structural repetition" according to widdson (widdowson:50). It is a similarity of the structures of sequent words, phrases, clauses or sentences. This means that parallelism can exist at phonological, or morphological, or syntactic or lexical level. It depends on the principle of equivalence. At the phonological level, it happens through alliteration (repetition of the initial sound), assonance (repetition of the same vowel) and rhyming (repetition of the last sound).at the morphological level, it occurs through the repetition of the morpheme e.g., boys and girls, the repetition

of the last morpheme (z). At the syntactic level, it happens through the repetition of words, phrases, clauses and a sentence, repeating the same grammatical structures e.g., to live is to learn. Parallelism is the contrary to deviation in the sense that the writer confines himself to the same linguistic choices instead of exploiting the infinite possibilities and choices of the language. This motivates the reader to look for implied meaning relations among those parallel structures. In other words, the reader, with the aid of parallel structures, infers the meaning of the words, phrases and clauses.

Parallel structures have two levels: syntactic and lexical. At the syntactic level, features of phrases and clauses are repeated. At the lexical, words and idioms are repeated or varied.in other words, we can say that it works at two axes: syntagmatic (combination) and paradigmatic (selection).the sentence is a combination of both axes.

Leech states that parallelism makes a sort of link or connection among parallel structures either of similarity or contrast (in meaning). Short calls this parallelism rule. According to them, (Leech and Short), it signals an emotive force.

The term *coupling*, introduced by Levin, is related to parallelism as it refers to equivalent forms which occur in

equivalent positions. For example, when describe a man as *tall*, *dark* and *handsome* man. These forms are related to each other either semantically or phonically (Levin: 35). In other words, coupling refers to equivalent forms which occur in equivalent positions. Levin considers it an important feature of poetic language as it unifies the poem. It includes parallelism, repetition, alliteration, rhyme, assonance and consonance (Levin: 35).

Repetition:

is an instance of parallelism, a limited one. Repetition conveys stronger feelings of the writer. Repetition types are alliteration, assonance, rhyme, anaphora and apostrophe.

Cohesion:

Any text is made up of sentences. The sentence can be examined in relation to its components (intra-relationship) and in relation to other sentences in the text (inter-relationship).sentences comes together to establish a network of sequential relation. The sentence study is a very significant field of stylistic analysis in text study. Halliday and Hasan presented a comprehensive study on cohesion (inter-sentential relationship), the syntactic relationships beyond the sentence.

Moreover, Dressler and De Beaugrand consider cohesion as one of the seven standards of textuality. Leech argues the cohesion is a unique property not only of poetry but of all text types (203) as well.

According to Leech and Short, there two main types of cohesion:" cross-reference" and" linkage" (203).cross-reference refers to the different terms and means which are used in the text to indicate that this thing is mentioned or referred to in part(s) within the text. While the term linkage refers to the use of connectors like coordinating and subordinating conjunctions or linking adverbial to link sentences. For example, the man went forth….he was a prose poem. His dream still wishes to… he and his refer to the man (examples of the cross reference and still is an example for the linkage (conjunction) .they present a comprehensive list of the most important cohesive devices included within the cross-reference and linkage:

Cross-reference includes:

1- Personal pronouns: he , she , it , they

2-the definite articles: the

3-deixis: this, that, these, here, there

4- Others: same, else, such, other

5- Ellipsis which means the deletion of words that can inferred from the text.

6-formal repetition which refers to the repetition of phonemes (alliteration, assonance) morphemes, words, phrases, clauses and sentences.

Linkage:

Coordinating conjunctions: and, or, for, both…both .and, neither…and, either…or.

Linking adverbial: for, so, yet, however, for example. (204-205).

Gwendolyn Brooks (19174-2000) is one of the most important African American poets of the twentieth-century. She was a much-honored poet. She was the first black poet to win the Pulitzer Prize. In addition, she was the first black woman to be the poetry consultant to the Library of Congress and the poet laureate of the State of Illinois.

She wrote poetry, novel, short stories, and autobiographies. Her writings reveal her political consciousness and independence. Many of her poems deal with political subjects and figures like Winnie Mandela, wife of Nelson Mandela, the great black

African leader and who became later the president of South Africa Republic.

We will deal with two poems of hers: "Martin Luther King Jr" and" Michael is Afraid of the Storm".

Martin Luther King Jr.

A man went forth with gifts

He was a prose poem

He was a tragic grace

He was warm music

He tried to heal the vivid volcanoes.

His ashes are reading the world.

His dreams still wishes to anoint

The barricades of faith and of control.

His word still burns the center of the sun,

Above the

 thousands and the hundred thousands.

The word was Justice. It was spoken.

So it shall be spoken.

So it shall be done.

The title of the poem is Martin Luther king Jr, the famous defender of civil rights and a prominent figure in black history. He was a leader of African American Civil Rights Leaders. In 1964, he won Nobel Peace prize. He was assassinated in 1968. In addition, after his death, he was awarded with the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1977 and Congressional Gold Medal in 2004.

Martin Luther king Jr fought oppression and injustice and racialism. He struggled to achieve social change in American society: equality (racial equality and racial harmony) and peace among the blacks and the whites. He called for civil rights for blacks and whites too.

He dreamt of unity and friendship among all Americans. His speech " I have a dream" is one of the most memorable ones in the history of the United States of America. He delivered this speech on occasion of the March (sometimes called the poor people's March) at which a quarter of a million black people gathered for jobs and freedom. The black wanted to stress their need to increase jobs and financial opportunities to realize equality. They wanted support from President John F. Kennedy. The king's speech stressed all of their needs. In addition, it expressed his vision and dream of society namely, racial

equality. His speech is widely known as a masterpiece of rhetoric and argumentation. He repeats, in his speech, many times, I have a dream. He said he did not lose hope in spite of all the difficulties he (and the black) faced and he had a dream that all people (black and white), Jews and gentiles, protestant and Catholic will be equal in everything. He dreamt of a nation where children can easily live in a nation where they are not judged by "color of skin" but by' 'character". He preached from the heart. So, he could recharge the crowd with emotion and enthusiasm. He touched the heart by repeating this sentence many times "I *have* a dream". The poet refers to his dream, his words, his charisma and his influence on people even after his assassination.

The poem is full of foregrounding devices or tools. It contains about nine personifications: he was a prose poem, he was tragic grace, he was warm music, heal vivid volcanoes, his ashes are reading the world (this line has two personifications: his ashes are reading and reading the world), barricades of faith and the word was justice. His word burns the center of the sun. The poet describes the man with gifts and likens him to prose poem, to tragic grace, and warm music. Instead of likening the nonhuman to human, she made the opposite. She gives the inanimate thing (volcanoes) an animate feature: having injuries

to be healed. The ashes of the man are reading the world, again the ashes (inanimate) has a human feature (reading). In addition, she likens the world to something that can be read like a newspaper or a book. The faith is treated as if it were a concrete noun and has barricades. The word represents justice. The word is personified as it if were a person who can burn the center of the sun which in turn the greatest fire that can burn the whole universe. The dreams are personified as well as" his dream still wishes'. The dream is likened to a human being who wishes. All of these personifications are lexical deviations.

The poet made grammatical deviation in' he was warm music ' instead of he was a warm music. The poet violates the phrase structure rules: NP—article-- ad j—N. other deviation occurs when the poet renders music the quality of being warm.

There is much alliteration in the poem in almost all lines. Went with, the repetition of w in the first line/prose   poem, the repetition of p/was warm, the repetition of w/ , repetition of h in he …heal….vivid volcanoes, the repetition of h and v/still…….center….sun, the repetition of s/so……..spoken, again repetition of s/.

 There are many parallel structures in the poem: the pattern of (n+be+n) is repeated four times: he was a prose poem/ he was

a tragic grace / he was warm music /the word was justice. The pattern of (n+transitive verb +n) is repeated four times he tried to heal the vivid volcanoes/ his dream still wishes to anoint ………../his word still burns the center …….../his ashes are reading the world. The poet uses the passive voice repeating the same pattern three times: it was spoken/ so it shall be spoken/ so it shall be done.

There are many cohesive devices in the poem: the poet begins the poem with a man with……then she describes this man using many references like he was…..(she uses this sentences many times). The poet after this continues her description of this man: his ashes, his dream and, his word. Moreover, the poet describes his word (the man's word): his word burns the earth, his word was justice and so forth. Again, she uses references, his word and it. Other cohesive devices are employed like so which is used twice. Finally, we can say the poem is very cohesive. This is due to the fact that the poet employs different types of repetition like alliteration, repetition of phonemes, and repetition of phrases and sentences patterns. Parallelism is one of the cohesive tools. The usage of personal pronouns is also one of the cohesive ties. All of these lead to a cohesive poem.

The second poem:

'' Michael is Afraid of The Storm''

Lightening is angry in the night

Thunder spanks our house.

Rain is hating our elm-

I punishes the bough.

Now, I am next to nine years old,

And crying's not for me.

But if I touch my mother's hand,

Perhaps no one will see.

;8

And if I keep herself in sight-

Follow her busy dress-

No one will notice my wild eyes.

No one will laugh, I guess.

The poem is full of foregrounding devices. There are many personifications: the first stanza, every line includes a personification: the lightening is rendered the human quality to get angry , the thunder is likened to a man who has hands and lifts the house with hands, again the house is something to be lift. The rain has the feeling of hatred, like human, it hates the tree. The poet uses the first person pronoun, I, she punishes the bough. The bough is again like human in being punished. The poet makes a grammatical and morphological deviation: she adds the morpheme –s to the verb in the present simple tense with the first person pronoun I. Another grammatical deviation is that of adding the morpheme –ing of present continuous to verb hate.

The last two stanzas structurally depend on the conditional sentence using ;8if.   In the second stanza, if I touch my mother's hand, perhaps no one will see. In the third stanza, And if I keep herself in sight- follow her busy dress- no one will notice my wild eyes/ no one will laugh, I guess. Similar structure is repeated in the two stanzas. The poet repeats not only the structure but the meaning is also repeated: no one will see and on one will notice, the same meaning, again perhaps

and guess have similar meanings. Parallelism is there in the last lines: no one will notice…. /n3o one will laugh.

There is alliteration in the poem: in the second stanza, the repetition of n in now……next…..nine….not. In the second line in the second stanza, the alliteration is in the repetition of m in my mother and the repetition of w in one will.in the third stanza, the repetition is of h in herself and her. Again, alliteration is in the repetition of n in no and notice and that of w in will and wild. The poet uses cohesive devices like and and but. She repeats them more than once. Moreover, she refers to all natural phenomena in the first stanza: lightening, thunder, rain and bough. She uses references as my mother and then her, herself, I and my. Finally, we can say that the poem is very cohesive: every line paves and leads to the other.

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