

A Stylistic Analysis of Dylan Thomas’ “A Refusal to Mourn the Death, By Fire, of A Child in London”

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Abstract: The current paper investigates the stylistic features of Dylan Thomas’ "A Refusal to Mourn the Death, by Fire, of a Child in London" based on the theory of foregrounding and the checklist of Leech and Short (2007, pp. 60–72). The aim is to find out how he employs deviant structures and parallel patterns to contribute to the prominent features and sense of the poem. The approach of stylistic analysis helps reader comprehension as the literary devices carry the theme and support the meaning of the poem; they also embrace tone, style, and structure, which ultimately might have a direct impact on readers. The paper ends with a conclusion and a list of references.

Keywords: Analysis, Dylan, Foregrounding, Mourn, Refusal, Stylistic

1. Introduction

Literary writers make use of language in their creation of literary texts; therefore, language and literature are inseparable parts of the realm of studying literary texts because both of them together enhance comprehension. Poetic language deviates and violates normal linguistic codes in a variety of ways (Leech, 1991, p. 5). This enables the poet to seek freedom from any language rules and constraints in order to gain poetic creativity. In order to explicate implied meaning and arrive at interpretative effects, insights from the structures of language can be applied to analyze them. According to Thorne (2006, P. 48), selected words and diction in general carry mood, situation, and character. Moreover, they are organized to create images and are used with certain structures and rhetorical devices to make them an integral part of a literary text.

The general objective of this study is to make a stylistic analysis of Dylan Thomas’ poem "A Refusal to Mourn the Death, by Fire, of a Child in London." It also aims to manifest and analyze the poem from a stylistic perspective. Also, it attempts to show how and why various linguistic features are systematically manipulated to form the quality and value of the work. More to the point, as the general objective, it probes

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into the foregrounding features and their significance. These features contribute to meaning-making and raise the aesthetic or artistic value of the selected poems. And in doing so, this paper has the following specific objectives:

- to investigate the unique stylistic features within the selected poem of Dylan Thomas.
- to show how Thomas uses graphology, deviation, parallelism, and other formal aspects of stylistics in order to contribute to foregrounding, and to the significance of the whole.
- What are the dominant stylistic features that are foregrounded in Thomas' selected poem?
- In what way does the stylistic analysis contribute to the study of selected work?
- Does the use of a stylistic analysis approach give the reader a clear understanding of his poetry?
- How do the themes and meanings of the poem come across through the use of certain literary devices?
- How do these features take part in supporting meaning and enriching the aesthetic value or artistic function of the selected poem?
- How are the various levels of linguistic deviation integrated together?

In order to reach these objectives and answer the research questions, the researcher uses the selected poem as the data and adopts a qualitative approach by means of applying the theory of foregrounding supplemented with the checklist of Leech and Short (2007, pp. 60–72) for identifying the linguistic features used by the poet because, according to them, the checklist "enables us to collect data on a fairly systematic basis." Foregrounding is typically dominant in literary works, particularly poetry, and that might be regarded as the foundation stone of stylistic analysis and a main characteristic of poetic style because poetry is the genre that apparently exemplifies this characteristic (Jeffries & McIntyre, 2010, P. 31). Thus, this research study will help readers understand the stylistic choices made by the poet. This work not only paves the way for better comprehension and appreciation of Thomas' works by readers, but it could also offer motivation for others to try it with other approaches and methods. In addition, it could serve as a springboard for others to carry out in-depth and thorough investigations on this subject. In addition, relating linguistic description to interpretation is essential for good criticism because it can be used as a support for a particular view, or to argue for one interpretation against another. The study is limited to the selected poem by Dylan Thomas. In the analysis of his poem, the notions of stylistics, the checklist of Leech and Short (2007), and the theory of foregrounding, including aspects of deviation, parallelism, and repetition, are utilized. One reason for choosing stylistics is the way it incorporates its possibilities into literary works through language. Compared to other literary theories and cultural studies, it is considered a more manageable method of accessing literature. As Verdonk (2013, p. 5) puts it, "having a strong background in language and linguistics was also a push to study literature."

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 Style

There may be some conscious and unconscious meaning and significance behind the external features of style. Thus, a style is considered the creatively exchangeable interplay between noticeable form and imperceptible content (Verdonk, 2013, pp. 136-7). "Style is seen as the making of conscious and

unconscious choices of certain linguistic forms and structures in preference to others that could have been chosen but were not." Obviously, every linguistic choice that is made is co-determined by a wide variety of contextual considerations, such as the genre of the text, time, place, and the nature of the communicative context." These choices, probably regarded as stylistic markers, are thought to be chosen on specific levels of language in relation to the contextual and communicative situation (Verdonk, 2013, pp. 148–9).

Furthermore, Leech and Short (2007, p. 9) define style as "the way in which language is used in a given context, by a given person, for a given purpose, and so on." That is to say, the notion of style is not restricted to the style of a particular author, but it can also be regarded as a characteristic of a situation, a character, a particular text, or a specific linguistic element that is examined over time. Henceforth, style can be defined as a particular way of writing and speaking.

2.2 Stylistics

Stylists, as a new trend, share the viewpoint of language-based scrutiny of literary materials. In this respect, Leech states, "Literature cannot be examined in any depth apart from the language" (1969, p. 1). Therefore, recently, stylistics has been defined as a way in which meaning is built by the use of language in literature and other kinds of text. Stylists may use linguistic models, theories, and frameworks as analytical tools to describe and explain how and why a text operates as it does, as well as how we derive meaning from words (Nrgaard et al., 2010, p. 1). Stylistics is regarded as a branch of applied linguistics offering a linguistic analysis of texts and relies on a linguistic toolkit relevant to the description, interpretation, and evaluation of literary and non-literary texts (Short, 1996, p. 3). Since the aim of the evaluation depends on linguistic facts, the analysis can either support or refuse literary analysis conducted by critics. Stylistic analysis puts the focus on foregrounding and aspects of foregrounding such as parallelism and deviation, which affect the reader's and hearer's psychology. Short (1996, p. 68) defines parallelism as, "when readers come across parallel structures, they try to find an appropriate semantic relationship between the parallel parts." As a result, parallel structures encourage the reader to search for meaning associations between various elements.

In terms of phonology, different sound patterns such as alliteration, assonance, consonance, rhyme, and internal rhyme are added to poetry. When first single consonants or consonant clusters occur in a long series of words, e.g., "me" and "my" the sound pattern is known as alliteration. Whereas assonance is built when syllables share the same vowel sound, such as "come" and "love" In terms of phonology, vowels and consonants differ because vowels usually have a fundamental syllabic function while consonants are marginal (Gimson, 1070, as cited in Ahmad, 2016, pp. 3–4). Another example of such forms of sound patterning is consonance, where the final consonants of words are similar, e.g., "will" and "all". Internal rhyme arises between rhyming words in the same line of poetry, like "me" and "be".

Therefore, it is believed that foregrounding might be created out of simple repetition and parallelism and likewise through deviation as an aspect of foregrounding, which can also occur at various linguistic levels of grammar, graphology, morphology, lexis, semantics, and phonology. Grammatical deviations are set up when the poet violates linguistic rules like word order or resequencing (Short, 1996, p. 48). Graphological abnormalities occur when a writer alters the way words appear on the page. It might also include cases like the splitting up of the words into single identifiable syllables and the absence of normal spacing, capitalization, and punctuation (Short, 1996, p. 56). Another instance of irregular patterning is

morphological deviation, which can either be achieved by adding suffixes to a word to which they wouldn't normally be added, by separating morphemes off as quasi-separate words, or by running more than one word together as if they were one (Short, 1996, p. 51).

Semantic deviation is another level of language unusualness. Meaning is expressed with words and sentences in specific contexts. "... as meanings relations that are logically inconsistent or paradoxical in some way," writes Short (1996, p. 43). Generally, metaphors show this feature of strangeness, and the elements of a metaphor that are linked together but do not belong to each other in the real sense of meaning are called "nonsense." Nonetheless, with this type of deviation, poetry exhibits foregrounding, and the reader makes the apparently nonsense features sensible. It is reasonable to interpret semantic deviation as nonsense or absurdity if the meaning is used in this situation in an overly literal manner. In poetry, metaphor, or meaning transference in its broadest sense, is regarded as the process through which literal absurdity causes the mind to understate a figurative plane (Leech, 1969, pp. 48–49).

2.3 Literary Background

The twentieth century witnessed an advancement in technological warfare, which triggered people's worries about the collapse of civilization. The two world wars heightened people's fear and made them wonder if the existence of a Christian god was even relevant. Consequently, this notion also affected authors and poets and forced them to employ religious ideas, imagery, and language into their works. Dylan Marlais Thomas (1914–1953) was an Anglo-Welsh poet who sought to trace his roots in a bewildering literary and spiritual landscape. The face of Europe saw a change during the period of World War Two. Some aspects of Thomas' personal life also changed, and that even extended to the change of his poetic style. Thomas entered married life, and he became a father. In his poetry, he used to communicate religion through dense symbolism. Poems from 1944 and 1945 were considered war and nostalgia poems. Therefore, the theme of the futility of war is seen in his *Death and Entrance* collection and is quite clearly displayed in his poem "A Refusal to Mourn" (Vattøy, 2013 pp. 2–14). This poem, like other poems in this collection, picks up the theme of lost childhood and makes a contrast with other poems in which the poet recollects his childhood memories. Another major motif in this poem and other poems in this collection is the metaphor of the sea, and the poems are still making provision for returning to their origins. The sea has now been extended to become a place of mourning (Vattøy, 2013 pp. 14–15).

3. A Stylistic Analysis of "A Refusal to Mourn the Death, by Fire, of a Child in London."

3.1 General Overview

The poem was probably composed in October or November 1944 as a partial draft entitled "A Refusal for An Elegy." It was revised and written in the early part of 1945 and published in the same year in *The New Republic* (14 May 1945) and *Horizon* (October 1945), and later published and collected in Thomas' *Death and Entrances* collection in 1946 (Goodby, 2014). The poem is about a refusal to mourn the death of a child in London during WWII due to air raids. The title of the poem is in a long, paradoxical structure that begins with a contradictory remark. In the poem, the poet refuses to mourn the death of a child. Yet, in the first stanza, he talks about the loss of the child. Therefore, the poem is not regarded as a conventional elegy but as a critical elegy or anti-elegy. In the poem, the writer indicates that he will never mourn because he

does not want to minimize the greatness and glory of her death. The poem is structured in an unusual way in which he laments, though he expressly states that he will not mourn until the end of creation, until he himself dies and merges with nature, grain, sand, and water. The poet celebrates the heroism and majesty of her death, saying that for him it was a noble death and that his grief is too deep for tears. Thus, the poet is actually remembering all the dead, particularly those who lost their lives in war.

The poem is written from the perspective of a first-person pronoun speaker, "I". It has four stanzas; each of which consists of six lines. The rhyme scheme of the poem is roughly ABCABC. It is made up of a variation of iambic-trochaic meter. The first sentence starts from line one to line thirteen; therefore, it is the longest sentence in which the three dependent clauses are made out of the first nine lines. The main theme is centered around death. In the first part of the poem, the poet employs a number of religious metaphors to elevate the concept of death. For the poet, death is regarded as a process that helps a soul leave its earthly burden because it turns into a divine soul after physical death. That is why the child is physically dead but not spiritually. According to Thomas, death is visualized as a circle of life in which death does not terminate this cycle but rather forces the creation of a new one. Moreover, the poem also tackles themes of life and death, mourning, and loss.

3.2 Lexical Features

The majority of the vocabularies in the poem are simple, with the exception of words ending in "-ing" and "-e" affixes. The text contains both general and specific words. In the beginning, the poet starts with generic examples of words to symbolize his message, as in the use of words "water," "flower," and "bird." Later, he employs more specific words such as "the synagogue," "the ear of corn," "the last light," and "the still hour" to elevate and glorify her death in terms of religion, and uses words like "London's daughter" to identify the girl who was killed. The poet has made extensive use of these words' connotative meanings, which are directly related to the overall effect of the poem. For instance, the writer has inserted "water," "salt seed," "darkness," "water bead," "stations of breath," "mother," and several others for the sake of figurative and metaphorical language. The text contains notable examples of sacramental images and collocations that are used for poetic purposes, emotional and associative meanings, and allusions, which in literature are regarded as a brief explicit or implicit reference to a place, person, event, or any other literary work (Abrams, 1999, as cited in Sabah, 2016, P. 22). The words generally belong to several semantic fields. These words are either death-related items, nature-relevant words, or they refer to the field of religion. The following table illustrates the division of these semantic fields.

Table 1: The Distribution of semantic fields

Nature Related Items	Death Related Items	Religion Related Items
Bird, Beast, flower, sea, water, salt, seed and valley	Death, burning of a child, grave, murder, sackcloth to mourn, and first dead lies	Zion, water bead, synagogue, pray, shadow of sound, blaspheme, stations of the breath,

It is obvious that most of the words are used for connotative meanings and carry the poet's attitude towards the death of the child. For example, by observing the frequency of death related words and the intensity of its images, the theme of death can be observed. Furthermore, the concept of integration in nature, fertility, and infertility is carried through the use of nature-related items. The poem's diction also suggests some biblical constructions and words in order to celebrate the dead person and show the significance a dead girl may have to the living people, as well as how the living people may deal with the reality of the death of the other. By linking all these words together, the poet can create an environment that draws the reader's attention to the theme and meanings of the poem.

Most of the words composing the poem consist of nouns; they occupy the majority of the whole poem. The poet has made use of various types of nouns, including abstract, concrete, proper, common, and material nouns. An abstract noun such as "darkness" refers to the force performing actions involved in the creation of mankind and the natural life of "birds", "beast" and "flowers," and actions destroying and ending the "last light." In return, "mankind making," "bird, beast, and flower," and "fathering and humbling" are adjectives qualifying the noun "darkness." The states of the "sea" are described by "tumbling." Similarly, the glory of the child's death is elevated by "majesty" and "burning." Concrete nouns are extensively used in the poem; they refer to identifiable entities, places, and substances that establish a sense of reality and provide the reader with a visualized setting. In the title, the noun "fire" is introduced as the cause of the child's death. The poet has used identified entities such as "bird, beast, and flower" as substances in order to show the reader how darkness is present in their lives and beauty. So as to create images of particular places in the poem, the poet has put in "Zion," which refers to Jerusalem; "Synagogue," referring to a building of worship and religious instruction in the Jewish faith; "Sackcloth," a symbolic garment for mourning; "London," a capital of Britain; and "Thames," a river that is flowing through London to the North Sea.

A number of adjectives are employed in the poem to provide a detailed description of places such as earth, the small hill of Jerusalem, the public place of mourning, and the child's final lying place. Thomas also refers to other Londoners who died in the air raids as "the first dead," and uses the modifier "long friends" to refer to worms or others who died a long time ago. Also, the adjective "humbling" describes the humble appearance of the "darkness," and "unmourning" describes the unmourning or indifferent state of the river. Namely, the situation of the river Thames in the fourth line of the final stanza is defined by "unmourning." These modifiers help illustrate the attitude of the poet and stimulate the reader's emotions about the dead girl.

Verbs convey a large portion of meaning. In the title, the verb "mourn" states Thomas' psychological condition of refusing to mourn. This is also connected to the verb "tell," which gives justification to mourn when he is informed about his death and doomsday. The stative copula verb "is" with a deviated form of "come" is correlated with the stillness of his body originating from the "tumbling sea." The transitional condition for mourning is reinforced by the use of a dynamic verb such as "enter" in line one of the second stanza. In line four of the second stanza, by using the verb "let pray," the poet is reminding the reader of the value of prayer. The verb "sow" in the fifth line of the second stanza connotes the poet's psychological intention of the redundancy of shedding tears for a dead person. Through employing verbs such as "murder" in line two of the third stanza, the poet illustrates the fact of a child's death by fire, and by adding

"blaspheme down" in the fourth line of the same stanza, the poet doesn't want to blaspheme against the order by his elegy and lamentation, or he doesn't wish to pronounce a profane act or write about God and other sacred entities.

3.3 Grammatical Features

The sentence structure in the poem is a mix of declarative and interrogative. The first sentence incorporates thirteen lines and three dependent clauses, which are from the beginning to the end of the first line of the third stanza. The main clause is "Never until...shall I let pray..." which is between "never" and "shall I let pray...". In between them, Thomas inserted conditions that must be fulfilled before he can let himself mourn. These conditions actually are about the end of the world; hence, he is saying he will not mourn until the end of the world. This sentence creates a sense of drama in which the poet is the main character, using several first-person references that place too much emphasis on himself and focus on his reaction to the deceased child rather than the deceased child or the sadness of her family. The complexity varies from sentence to another. The complexity of the first sentence is due to the subordinate and interrogative sentences, which start on the fourth line of stanza two and end without a question mark. This graphological deviation and complex structure reflect the confusion of the poet's grief. The velocity of tumbling phrases over each other suggests desperation. The flurry of thoughts and Thomas' effort to take a clear picture out of them are reflecting a shock. On the contrary, the speaker, in the final two stanzas, looks as if he is trying to gather his thoughts and ideas into a slightly more straightforward elegiac result.

The adverbial clause beginning with the conjunction "until" signals the link of the three dependent clauses to the main clause "I shall never pray..." and adds information in terms of time and condition to his mourning for the child. In the third line of stanza three, the poet is using "shall" with the first-person speaker indicating the future with the simple adverb of negation "not," which affirms the adverb of frequency and negation of "never" in the first line of stanza one. In the third line of stanza two, the speaker consults the reader's wishes to either "pray" or "wear sackcloth," and thus moves from decision-making to an obligation of refusing the idea of elegy because religious and ritual ceremony can trivialize the majesty and glory of death, as death, for Thomas, is a return to the natural world and completing the life circle. This is affirmed by another use of "shall" with negation in the third stanza. Using commas at the end of declarative statements in stanza four indicates a less confused state of the poet, a slower rhythm, and a calmer tone.

This complicated grammatical structure is due to the complex phrases combined one after the other. The noun phrase "mankind making... all humbling darkness" and the prepositional phrase "with silence," which function as adverbials of instrument, are enjambed successively in the first stanza, along with other noun phrases such as "the still hour," "the round Zion of the water bead," "the synagogue of the ear of corn," the prepositional phrase "In the least valley of sackcloth to mourn," and the noun phrase In so doing, the poet has set the structure for rhyming purposes and created a quick rhythm that reflects his demanding tone, as if the poet is in a hurry to convince the reader to agree with him while giving his justification. Structurally, the poet has also inserted another adverb of instrument in the last two lines of stanza three to reiterate his purpose. Prepositional phrases such as "with the first dead" and "in the long friends" imply a link between the subject "dead child" and those she buried long ago. In the last line of the final stanza, the preposition "after" establishes a time or temporal relationship between the "first death" and "other." By

reading the first and final lines of the last stanza, Thomas elevates the child's death and creates a calm and serious tone again. From the beginning, Thomas is serious and emotive; he uses a number of rhetorical expressions so as to describe death. Through his lexical choices, he emotionally connects readers with his thoughts. The tone of the poem is changing into a glorifying one. And generally, there is a rejecting tone in his voice when he talks about her death, as she is considered part of nature, not dead.

3.4 Foregrounding Aspects and Figures of Speech

The poet exploits regularities in formal patterning and deviations from the linguistic code. In this respect, traditional figures of speech are useful to identify them. The poem is dominated by the poet's extensive use of phrases, which he presents sequentially to create images, describe his intention, and justify what he intends. The phrases are used to create images, which in turn create figurative language and other literary devices that facilitate the process of understanding.

There are examples of phonological patterns of alliteration and repetitions of similar sounds that build internal rhyming: For identifying alliteration, the number of poetry lines is counted rather than the number of stanza lines.

Mankind making (alliteration)	[1]
Bird beast (alliteration)	[2]
Flower fathering (alliteration)	[3-4]
Last light (alliteration)	[4]
Salt seed (alliteration)	[11]

The alliteration can have both a visual and aural function, as the repeated sounds amplify the syllable of each word and emphasize the decoration of language. It also gives the poem an alternative rhythm or meter. Moreover, internal rhyming occurs across multiple lines. For example, in line two, "flower" rhymes with "hour" in line five; in line three, "humbling darkness" rhymes with "tumbling harness" in line six; in line seven, "enter" rhymes with "water" in line eight, as well as "round" with "sound", "bead" with "seed", "corn" with "mourn", "death" with "breath", "murder" with "further", "truth" with "youth", "daughter" with "water", "friends" with "Thames" and "mother" with "other". These patterns function to intensify the effect of the poem and unify it with a rhyming aspect. These sound patterns help to divide the poem into sections that mark stages of thematic development.

The deviations guide the reader to have interpretations associated with figures of speech. In this sense, the poet uses a number of metaphors in order to qualify death. In the first stanza, through the use of the phrases "mankind making", "Bird beast and flower/Fathering", and "all humbling darkness", the poet describes death as the maker or creator of humankind and depicts it as it fathers every living being, such as birds, beasts, and flowers. In the fourth line of the first stanza, he personifies "darkness" by inserting "Tells with silence the last light breaking." This interpretation agrees with what Tindall (1962, P. 181) states: The words "mankind" and "humbling" compose an adjective modifying "darkness" as our origin and end, or as an image of making light and sea, implying our Genesis and Apocalypse, our first light and our last. The poet uses religious and biblical allusions to "Zion of the Water Bead," "Synagogue of the Ear of Corn,"

and "Valley of Sackcloth" as sacramental images in the second stanza to consider death as a sacred reality and make them as clues of the cycle of life and death. In this context, death is represented as going back to nature, with religious implication. According to Tindall (1962, p. 181), on the day of doom, Thomas, as a representative of mankind, should go back to the seed and water from which he came, and to which this girl, also as a representative of mankind, has preceded him. Furthermore, he states that "Zion," "synagogue," and "sackcloth" carry holiness from the Old Testament to natural water and seed.

Thomas uses images that appeal to all the senses and involve the reader emotionally in the subject matter. In stanza 2, line 10, "Shall I let pray be the shadow of a sound" the poet expresses his desire to remind readers of the importance of prayer. In line eleven of the same stanza, "sow my salt seed" is a complex structure because, on the one hand, seed and water are symbols of fertility, and salt is a symbol of sterility on the other hand. Thus, "salt seed" is a sort of paradox, implying the uselessness of weeping or the elegy he is writing while rejecting to do so. Additionally, Thomas uses this gustatory imagery to function as a paradox, complementing his demanding tone by refusing to mourn the death of a child. Likewise, Emery (1962, p. 173) believes that sowing seeds that will not grow is similar to weeping fruitless tears. To understand the first line of the third stanza, the reader should read the previous lines of the second stanza, which contribute to the sacredness of death, giving majesty and brightness to the reality of the girl's death, opposite to the idea of the banalization of life and death brought by war. Therefore, mourning the child's death would trivialize her death, and the poet refuses to mourn until the end of the world, and he himself becomes part of the cyclic nature of life and death. To justify this, Thomas uses "I shall not murder" as an allusion to the Ten Commandments in the Bible (Exodus 20). This is an obvious indication that there is a holy reason not to disturb the child's death (as cited in Cabral, 2005, p. 11). Figuratively, the word "murder" might describe the internal sensation the speaker feels when he or she wants to wipe out and erase the humaneness and significance of the child with the "grave truth," which refers to the child's final resting place.

Thomas adds "Nor blaspheme down the stations of the breath" to confirm his attitude and fix the seriousness and rejecting tone of mourning and glorifying death because her death is due to the divine order of nature and he does not want to blaspheme against the order through lamentation. According to Goodby (2014), the phrase "stations of the breath" is similar to the "cross stations," in which Jesus Christ placed his cross when he passed it to Calvary. As a variety of metaphor, Thomas might also use concretizing to depict the breath of a human as the station of a train or underground metro, which in turn implies stillness and death.

The fourth stanza starts with a reference to the dead child as "London's daughter." This implies that the girl is from London, as the poet personified her as her mother. Thomas puts the emphasis on her death, saying that she is now buried with those who died a long time ago. In this respect, he employs "the first dead," referring either to Londoners who were killed by the war or as biblical imagery referring to Cain, Adam, and Eve. Tindall (1962, P. 182) likewise relates this phrase to those killed in the first raid and Adam and Eve themselves. Thomas structured the final stanza in such a way that he created a visual setting in line with a slower and calmer tone for the reader. For instance, "Robed in the long friends" visualizes how the child is robed and wrapped in a shroud ready for burial. Furthermore, the phrase "long friends" is either animizing the shroud, referring to the worms who form part of the decomposition process, or personifying the shroud, referring to those who died before her who are now lying around the dead girl in the cemetery.

Thus, the disintegrated body turns into particles of dust, which are ageless because they participate in the timeless cycle of nature. That is, the dead are merged in the immemorial macrocosm of water and seed. For this reason, the poet uses "Grains beyond age" to refer to the seeds that are beyond time. The phrase "the dark veins of her mother" is relevant to the personification of London, or it may be the earth, which is darkly veined with water, or the river Thames. Through these images, Thomas is showing that the particles of the disintegrated body of the girl are now deeply rooted in the veins of her mother. The poet is trying to set a quiet tone, and for this reason, he compares himself with the unmourning and uncaring river Thames flowing through London. In "unmourning water/Of the riding Thames," Thomas is personifying the river to state that the river does not mourn though it appears to ride its waves. This is just like Thomas, although he refuses to mourn, he writes an elegiac poem for her death. This infers the continuity of life even after death. The use of this kinesthetic imagery and sense of movement is perhaps to awaken and appeal to the senses of the audience and reader in order to convince them not to further mourn the death. Within this kinesthetic imagery, Thomas is also inserting auditory imagery to make the distinction that the sound of the riding waves of the river Thames is contrasted with the silence of the child's grave. This further indicates that nature and the river seem indifferent to the death of the child.

The final line is referring to an epigram or a concise summary of the whole poem. By "first death," the poet talks of the physical death caused by mankind's sin. According to Thomas, physical death stands for a passageway to another life. Therefore, after her first death, the girl is integrating into nature and becoming part of the cycle of life and death. This line further infers that the girl has not died at a spiritual level. Though her body is dead, her soul is free now in the divine world. Hence, "After the first death, there is no other." For this reason, mourning is fruitless. This is consistent with Goodby's (2017, p. 208) statement that this is apparently the reason for not mourning because the girl becomes a part of the eternal processual cycle of the cosmos.

The semantic deviation is intermingled with phonological, graphological, and syntactic deviations to contribute to the tone, rhythm, mood, and theme of the poem. The poem's run-on lines appear in the first three stanzas. For instance, the first thirteen lines are enjambed to form a single sentence to dim the pauses and speed up the rhythm of the poem, suggesting a rejective, serious, and assertive tone. The speed of these lines encourages the speaker and the reader to exceed the limits of a monotonous tone and become more emotionally and simultaneously involved in the meanings of the text. In the final stanza, the end-stopped lines and pauses create a different rhythm and push the reader to dwell on individual words and sounds. The breaks give a clear idea of each line, promote perception of the poem, and slow down the speed. The speaker seems to gather his thoughts into a more elegiac conclusion. A pause also occurs within lines. For example, the use of commas before and after the word "by fire" in the title of the poem emphasizes the word as the cause of the child's death, and it also contrasts and foregrounds it within the line.

In line with semantic deviations and for the sake of adapting the rhyme and the rhythm of the text, Thomas is shifting the word order to get emphasis, to intensify the connection between words, or to choose a particular implication. Additionally, the word order and the shift in its arrangement may convey emotional, spiritual, and psychological impact. It is noted that the adverb "deep" in the first line of the fourth stanza, which functions as an obligatory adjunct, is moved from its unmarked position to its initial position. The "deep" place is the given information. The poet has mentioned her death before, and everybody knows the

burial place is deep. Therefore, it is less important than the end focus, "London's daughter," which is new information revealing the identity of the girl for the first time. This line also expresses Thomas' emotions toward her and adjusts the rhyme scheme of the poem. The unmarked position of the deviant structure of the sentence would be as follows:

"London's daughter lies deep with the first dead robbed [wrapped, covered and coated] in the long friends, in the grains beyond age, in the dark veins of her mother [earth, London], and secret [hidden] by the unmourning water of the riding Thames."

Because there is a sort of semantic homogeneity between the phrases that depict the final destination of the dead girl caused by air raids, Thomas uses enumeration and asyndeton as a stylistic device in the deviant structure of the above sentence to count phrases one by one and to generate a chain out of them having syntactically the same position.

3.5 Cohesion and Congruence of Foregrounding

The sentences are linked together, and the text is internally organized. The poem contains conjunctions such as "and" and "or". The linker "and" functions as a cohesive device to link phrases and clauses of equal importance. Likewise, the conjunction "or" is linking the two options of praying and weeping for the dead child in the second stanza. Other ways the poet has utilized to make the text hang together are the agreement of the present simple tense throughout the poem and the substitution of the repetition of "death" by "the other" in the final line. The phrase "London's daughter" is an expression that works as an antecedent, and it provides information about the pronoun "her" in the third line of the fourth stanza, which functions as an anaphor. On the other hand, the word "death" in the title of the poem is cataphoric because it refers to "London's daughter" in the text. The word "London" is a proper noun used as an antecedent. In this case, the poet has not mentioned any other proper nouns referring to the girl. Also, "London," which is personified as the girl's mother, is standing for the whole of humanity and the citizens of London. The poet is indirectly addressing the readers by telling them the reasons for refusing the girl's death by air raids. The use of the first-person pronoun "I" is intended to verify the relationship between the addresser and the addressee. Moreover, the word "London" also refers to the knowledge shared by the readers, and it implies a relation between the poet and the people of London or between the author and the readers.

There is a strong element of foregrounding in the poem. Various types of foregrounding occur at once, which helps the reader interpret the poem. Firstly, there is a semantic deviation in the first stanza, which creates images and personification. Secondly, in the second and third stanzas, the poet has resorted to Christian allusions to create sacramental images. In the final stanza, the poet has used syntactic deviation to unite the theme, rhyme, and tone of the poem. The fact that at this stage in the poem, the tone is getting normal while the poet is stressing the final destination of the girl and her integration into the cycle of life and death. Though there are phonological patterns of alliterations in the first and second stanzas, there is a lack of any such patterns in the third and final stanzas. The poem generally lags behind in making use of structural parallelism as Thomas wants to give different reasons by means of various foregrounding aspects for refusing to mourn, that is, he does not wish to reiterate his message by using similar structural patterns, which might not be very effective. The effect of all this is to make it easy for the reader to understand the poem through several senses. The final message is clear: the poet refuses to mourn the

child's death because he does not want to trivialize her death and because she is now a part of her mother earth.

4. Conclusion

Finally, the study demonstrates that stylistics can show readers how to specify the elements of the poem, allowing them to identify their functions in producing meanings of the poem. Henceforth, stylistic analysis is a convenient method for understanding poetic language. The complex language structure of the poem, as well as his diction of death, nature, and religion, reflect his exceptional stylistic features, which hint at the beginning of his changing style, where his connotative language holds war, religious relevance, and integrates nature motifs.

Thomas uses semantic deviations to make sacramental and death-related images in accordance with the flow of syntactic structures, which altogether carry a sort of elegiac and anti-elegiac tones. Semantic abnormalities are the dominant stylistic features throughout the poem. In this way, stylistics makes the study of literary texts through linguistic features a supportive means to explicate the poem. Images, allusions, metaphors, and personifications, for example, carry the holiness truth of death, leading the reader to expect it as a return to nature with religious implications. This figurative language, in turn, transmits tone and triggers the reader's mood and reaction towards the theme. With all the sense built inside the poem, internal rhymes and alliterations add more harmonious sound and aesthetic values suitable to elegiac poetry. Thus, various linguistic deviations, like semantic and syntactic deviations with associative and connotative meanings, are integrated. The poet used the words connotatively to create associative meanings and images and made syntactic structures adaptable to insert them in logical order even if they were in marked position.

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