1. 2. **POETIC DISCOURSE: FOREGROUNDING, DEVIATION AND PARALLELISM**

**a. Linguistic deviation**: If a part of a text is regarded as deviant, it becomes perceptually prominent.

1. “Gentlemen – oh and ladies, please forgive me!”
Where would you expect to read/listen this utterance?
Can you suggest a context of situation?

**b. Foregrounding** - The concept of foregrounding is that of contrast; and as applied to a text, the contrast is applied to the norms of a text. (Hasan, 1985:94).

Ex. 1
Move him into the sun -
Gently its touch awoke him once,
At home, whispering of the fields unsown.
Always it woke him, even in France,
Until this morning and this snow.
If anything might rouse him now
**The kind old sun** will know.

(Willfred Owen, “Futility”)

Ex. 2
Like a bundle of old rope and iron
Sleeps till blue dusk. **Then reappear**
**His eyes**, green as ringstones: he yawns wide red,
Fangs fine as a lady's needle and bright

(Ted Hughes, 'Esther's Tomcat')

c. **Parallelism**: The holding constant of some features (usually structural) while others (usually lexical) are varied.

Ex. 3

'The Hollow Men' (T.S. Eliot)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?hl=en&v=nwcP3NOCeIE&gl=US

(A penny for the Old Guy)

We are the hollow men
We are the stuffed men
[8 lines omitted]
Shape without form, shade without colour,
Paralysed force, gesture without motion;
[26 lines omitted]
This is the dead land
This is the cactus land...

**POETIC EFFECTS OF PARALLEL STRUCTURES:**
1. Parallelism contributes to create word and phrase associations in different texts.

2. If two structures are obviously parallel in linguistic form look for a semantic relation as well.

Exercise: "Midsummer, Tobago". (D. Walcott)

- Broad sun-stoned beaches.
- White heat.
- A green river.
- A bridge, scorched yellow palms
- from the summer-sleeping house
drowsing through August.

Days I have held,
days I have lost,
days that outgrow, like daughters,
my harbouring arms.

Poetic Discourse - PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENT – 1 (13/10/10)
Worksheet from Short (1995, 34-35)

- Stylistic analysis depends on the notion of choice. Meaning and effects are produced by writers
- Making a series of linguistic choices, as opposed to others they might have made. Often, to understand the choices writers make, we have to consider them in the abstract, for example, by comparing a word used with a synonym which might have been used (e.g. "shut" instead of "close"), or a construction actually used with an alternative which could have been used (e.g. a passive construction in place of its active equivalent). One tangible way of seeing linguistic choice in action is to compare possible different versions in a same text.
- Below is the poem “Old Tongue” by Jackie kay. Life Mask (Bloodaxe, 2005). Carefully, chart at least ten elements at any linguistic level (e.g. lexis, grammar etc) that might have caught your attention at a first reading. Then try to work out another optional element for that position. Then try to work out the differences in meaning an effect for each choice. /Question adapted from Short (199e:18)

When I was eight, I was forced south.
Not long after, when I opened
my mouth, a strange thing happened.
I lost my Scottish accent.
Words fell off my tongue:
Eedyit, dreich, wabbit, crabbit
Strummer, teuchter, heidbanger,
So you are, so am ur, see you, see ma ma,
Shut yer geggie or I’ll gie you the malkie!

My own vowels start to stretch like my bones
And I turn my back on Scotland.
Words disappeared like the dead of the night,
New words marched in: ghastly, awful,
Quite dreadful, scones said like stones.
Pokey hats into ice-cream cones.
Oh where did all my words go –
my old words, my lost words?
Did you ever feel sad when you lost a word,
did you ever try to call it back
Like calling in the sea?
If I could have found my words wandering,
I swear I would have taken them in,
Swallowed them whole, knocked them back.

Out in the English soil, my old words
buried themselves. It made my mother’s blood boil
I cried one day with the wrong sound in my mouth;
I wanted them back; I wanted my old accent back,
my old tongue. My dour soor Scottish tongue.
Sing-songy. I wanted to gie it laldie.

Bibliographical references:

Stockwell, Peter (2000), "(Sur)real stylistics: from text to contextualising", en Tony Bex, Michael Burke and Peter Stockwell, Contextualized Stylistics, Amsterdam: Rodopi.


