



تحليل أسلوبى معجمى لمقتطفات مختارة من رواية "صورة دوريان"

لأوسكار وايلد

تحليل أسلوبى معجمى لمقتطفات مختارة من رواية "صورة دوريان" لأوسكار وايلد

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A Lexical Stylistic Analysis to Selected Extracts from Oscar Wilde's
The Picture of Dorian

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Abstract

The research paper combines language and literature through a detailed lexical stylistic analysis to three extracts from Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. This connection is exhibited through the authors' use of language and style, including the choice of words which is analysed according to the theory of Foregrounding and Charles Bally's stylistic approach to language. The aim is to reflect Wilde's lexical choices, which have been done very carefully. This step makes Wilde's novel a profound, pure, work of art that is read, studied, analysed repeatedly. One of the conclusions arrived at is that Wilde engages multiple senses emphasising his focus on sensory richness and surface detail. The power of Wilde's stylistic skills to give a beautiful and elegant image to a normal and ordinary scene through the words.

ملخص

يجمع هذا البحث بين اللغة والأدب من خلال تحليل أسلوبى معجمى معمق لثلاثة مقتطفات من رواية "صورة دوريان غراي" لأوسكار وايلد. ويتجلى هذا الترابط من خلال استخدام المؤلفين



تحليل أسلوبى معجمى لمقتطفات مختارة من رواية "صورة دوريان"

لأوسكار وايلد

اللغة والأسلوب، بما في ذلك اختيارهم للكلمات التي خلّلت وفقاً لنظرية التقديم والنهج الأسلوبى لتشارلز بالي في اللغة. ويهدف البحث إلى عكس اختيارات وايلد المعجمية، والتي نُفذت بعناية فائقة. هذه الخطوة تجعل من رواية وايلد عملاً فنياً عميقاً ونقياً يُقرأ ويُدرس ويُحلل مراراً وتكراراً. ومن الاستنتاجات التي توصل إليها البحث أن وايلد يُشرك حواساً متعددة، مُركزاً على الثراء الحسى والتفاصيل السطحية. وتُبرز هذه النتائج قدرة وايلد الأسلوبية على إضفاء صورة جميلة وأنيقة على مشهد عادي من خلال الكلمات.

Style and Stylistics

Stylistics is a branch of linguistics that deals with the study of styles used in literary and non-literary language. Different scholars attempt to define stylistics in various ways. According to Leech and Short, stylistics is "the study of the use of language in literature, and the effect of this use on the reader" (1981, p. 13). Widdowson recognizes stylistics as "the study of literary discourse from a linguistic orientation" (2013, p. 3). Similarly, Carter (1995) defines stylistics as "a bridge discipline between linguistics and literary criticism" (p. 1). In the above definitions, the interdisciplinary nature of stylistics is highlighted. Stylistics is that area of study where linguistics and literature meet. Definitions of stylistics may vary slightly, nonetheless all scholars agree on that stylistics examines how specific linguistic choices influence the meaning and its interpretation and response by the readers.

Style is the object of study of stylistics. It refers to the choices that a writer makes in terms of vocabulary, sentence structure, tone, and other elements of language. These linguistic choices determine how a text is perceived and interpreted by the audiences or readers. However, the definition of the term "style" is not that simple as it seems.

Leech and Short (1981, p. 10) define style as "the particular way language is used in a text, which sets it apart from other texts". While they highlight that every writer uses language in a unique way, Crystal defines style according to the context: "the style of language is often adapted to the purpose and audience of the text" (1997, p. 136). This definition claims that people in general try to adjust their style according to whom they are speaking or writing to and what the purpose is.

Further, style for Wales is more than individual linguistic choices: "style refers to variations in language use, whether in speech or writing, that reflect individual or group identity" (2011, p. 435). Hence style reflects a person or a group identity, therefore, people from different backgrounds or social groups usually have their own styles of speaking or writing. Wales adds "Speakers will adjust their language to suit the size and/or social role of their audiences. So, Allan Bell (1984) puts the audience at the centre of stylistic production (audience design)" (2011, p.



37). She believes that style is not an inherent quality of the text, but it occurs when both textual features and reader interpretation interact. Hence, to Wales, style is subjective rather than be objective because it depends on readers' cultural backgrounds, and linguistic competence. Thus, style is the unique way in which language is used in different contexts. Whether in everyday conversation or in literature, the linguistic choices create a distinct style that form meaning and affect interpretation by the audiences.

There are linguistic levels which could be analysed stylistically. The concern of this research paper is the lexical level. The analysis shows the unique and clever choices made by Oscar Wilde to reach his only novel's states to the standard of perfection.

Lexical Level

Stylistic analysis in this level looks at word choice and vocabulary. "A literary author is seen to select features from the whole resources of the language at his or her disposal; a choice also partly governed presumably by the demands of genre; form; theme; etc" (Wales, 2011, p. 55). Hence, this level examines how the author uses lexical categories such as nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, conjunctions, pronouns in different contexts to add artistic value to the text.

According to Short (2013, p. 18), lexical stylistic approach looks for instances of lexical repetition where words or phrases are repeated in sequence in the same sentence and then grouping the lexical according to their categorization. Further, he adds in theory of foregrounding lexical level in stylistic analysis is an interesting point "another way in which writers can produce foregrounding through lexical deviation is by taking words associated with one variety of English and inserting them in a variety where they do not normally belong" (ibid, p.46). So, lexical level gives room for creativity to authors to show their artistic skills. Lexical deviation is one of the ways whereby author decides to make unusual choices to make a certain word to stand out.

Foregrounding

Foregrounding is the English version of the Czech word *aktualisace*. The term means the use of some linguistic devices and techniques that 'push' the act of expression into the foreground. Using foregrounding techniques enable language to draw attention to itself (Cuddon, 2013, p.284).

Moreover, the notion of foregrounding has its roots in the work of the Russian Formalists. Viktor Sklovskij is a formalist whose name most often associated with foregrounding asserts that "The function of art is to make people aware of the world in a fresh way. The device whereby this





is achieved is defamiliarization, or 'making strange'" (Van Peer, 1986 p.1).

According to Van Peer, the essence of poetic language lies in the deviation from the standard language norms and rules. He adds that this violation results in forming a two-way relationship: "this relationship is seen as essential for the very existence of poetry while at the same time the violations of the standard found in poetry enrich the standard language itself" (1986, P.6). This means the systematic violation is what makes the poetic use of language possible. Similarly, Leech points out that language deviation is what makes up the poetic language as he states "linguistic deviation which is essential to a linguistic account of literary language. It is a commonplace that poets and other creative writers use language in unorthodox ways: that they are by convention allowed 'poetic licence'" (Leech, 2013, p. 14). As a result, poetic language is not defined in term of literary features alone. what truly defines it is its function which is to create an aesthetic effect. Following Van Peer, these aesthetic effects "results from the fact that attention is concentrated on the linguistic sign itself, and not, as in ordinary language, on the communicative result" (1986, P.6).

In addition to that, Leech uses the term 'unique deviation' to refer to 'foregrounding' which was used by the pre-war Prague School of linguistics. What is interesting is that the Prague Circle followers emphasize that deliberate linguistic 'foregrounding' is not limited to creative writing and literature. It is, however, can be found in other contexts, for example, in joking speech and children's language games (2008, p.18).

Roman Jakobson one of the prominent figures in this field, proposed two main concepts under the general framework of foregrounding: deviation and parallelism. parallelism is "a pattern of equivalences and/or contrasts that are superimposed on the normal patterns of language organization". Hence, while deviations result from violations of the rules and norms, parallelism is the opposite process in the sense that author repeatedly makes similar choices where the normal user of language would tend to choose variation. It is worth mentioning that both devices of foregrounding, may occur on different levels of linguistic: phonology, lexical, grammar, and semantics (Van Peer, 1986, P.23).

Moreover, Short believes that "Parallelism is an important tool for the writer in exercising control over the reader" (2013, p. 67). The reason for this claim is summarized in three points: First, parallelism helps readers to focus more on certain ideas which the writer wants to stress



while hiding the less important ones. Second, it makes readers to get familiar to new semantic relations between words even if there would not be any link between them in normal language use. Lastly, parallelism improves cohesion of a text by linking its parts together. With this, it supports foregrounding and draws attention to key parts of the text (ibid, Pp. 67,68)

Another perspective on foregrounding is its pragmatic characteristic. foregrounding as a pragmatic aspect refers to dynamic interaction between authors (literary) text and reader. This combination "will guide the reader in his interpretation and evaluation of the text; on the other hand, the reader will look for such devices in order to satisfy his aesthetic need in reading a literary text" (Van Peer, 1986, p.20). thus, the foregrounding devices help readers to understand the meaning of the text. At the same time, these features will make the reading of a literary text an enjoyable experience.

According to Leech and Short, there are two main types of foregrounding: quantitative foregrounding and qualitative foregrounding. Quantitative kind of foregrounding tries to find which linguistic feature is repeated more frequently than expected. This repetition makes that linguistic pattern to stand out within a given text. This can be in the form of repetition of certain words, sentence structures, or syntactic patterns. qualitative foregrounding, in contrast, deals with deviation from standard linguistic norms. The deviation is achieved through using non-standard grammar, metaphorical language, or unusual syntactic structures. This kind of foregrounding contributes highly to the unique stylistic identity of a text (Leech and Short, 2007, Pp. 112-113).

However, Leech and Short assert that despite all the advantages of foregrounding, it is a challenging concept. First, foregrounding is not a fixed concept as it is a context-dependent discipline. For instance, what is considered foregrounded in one text may be a standard feature in another. Additionally, foregrounding relies on reader perception. different readers may interpret foregrounded elements in different ways based on their linguistic background and familiarity with literary styles. Ultimately, foregrounding allows for more creativity and gives a sense of freedom and individuality in doing stylistic analysis (Leech and Short, 2007, p. 115)

Charles Bally's Stylistic Approach

Charles Bally is a leading figure in early 20th-century linguistic thought and a student of Ferdinand de Saussure. In 1909 he proposed a stylistic theory in his epic piece of work "Traité de stylistique française". Bally approaches stylistics from the perspective that stresses expressive





and affective dimensions of language rather than focusing alone on meaning as reference. His work introduced stylistics as field of linguistics that is researchable in the same as other areas within linguistics are. More interestingly, Bally's theory is the first theory to make a link between a text and its writer's psychological state. "Expressive Stylistics was concerned with the expression or revelation of the 'soul' or personality of a writer." (McArthur, 1992, p. 996). Thus, expressive stylistics considers writer's inner world. It looks at how language uncovers writer's feelings, thoughts and personality. In this sense, writing is a personal act, and stylistics becomes a way for the writer to express his individual voice.

Salgaro asserts that Bally believes that stylistics as a research field links between linguistics and psychology and the data for the analysis is "verbal expression". Therefore, even abstract meaning could be conveyed in different forms according to how the writer or the speaker feels towards what is been discussed. Further, Bally is interested in analysing language's "expressive resources" in various contexts instead of studying the grammatical rules (2023, Pp. 13,14). For Bally, "language expressed the emotions and thoughts of the speaker. Thus, he emphasized the affective use of language, its musical and rhythmic qualities, and the varieties of possible expression such as homonyms" (ibid, p. 13). The affective valence for Bally, means the emotional force in language is difficult to capture if a researcher only depends on the language itself without knowing the writer's intent.

Bally builds his theory on four major principles that connect language structure to emotional expression. First, language as mean of communication, though it follows the internal structural rules and patterns, it adopts those rules to serve its communication purpose. Second, for Bally, thought has two aspects: conceptual (objective and conventional) and non-conceptual (subjective and emotional). Third, language is a mean to communicate both kinds of the before mentioned thought. Thus, stylistics focuses on the subjective, affective and emotional loaded language to communicate thoughts, while linguistic focuses on how language conveys conceptual content. Finally, Bally applies the "bi-planar mode, dividing language into form and content". He believes that stylistics concerns with how linguistic forms relate to emotional effects (Taylor, 1980, Pp. 21.22).

Taylor expands his discussion on Bally's theory to stylistics and stresses that to study verbal interaction from the perspective of the bi-planar model of language which denotes cause and effect perspective, it is necessary to identify "what it is we 'get' in communication. If this is

accomplished, then the features of the expression-plane which are the cause of communicational effects may be identified” (1980. p.104). in other words, if it comes to the study of language of verbal communication scientifically, the first thing needs to be understood is the effect of language on the receiver and then trace this effect back to its cause in the linguistic form. Hence, if a speaker's words create a particular emotional or stylistic impact on the reader, then those features of the linguistic expression must be found that are responsible for producing that impact.

Bally, like functionalists, argues that language has communicative function. therefore, it must be studied not only in term of its structure but also how language conveys subjective or emotional effects. Taylor supports this view and gives an example “if reading certain texts causes readers to testify to impressions of ‘terseness’ then the production of this impression must have its source in particular features of the expression-plane” (1980, p.92). Hence, if reading any texts causes the readers any kind of impression, this cannot be accidental, but it is the result of deliberate linguistic choices of the writer.

Moreover, Bally believes that language is not a neutral mean for conveying facts. In fact, he claims, language is tied to human subjectivity. This means every linguistic choice may reflect or evoke emotional states. As Taylor adds “Stylistics studies the elements of a language organized from the point of view of their affective content; that is, the expression of emotions by language as well as the effect of language on the emotions.” (1980. p.23). what is interesting here is that stylistics examines how language conveys feelings, moods, and attitudes from two perspectives: first from the speaker's side, it explores the way writers express emotion, and second from the listener's or reader's side to analyse how they are emotionally affected by the language used (ibid).

Correspondingly, thought in Bally's theory is described as something “too subjective, too private, too involved in the myriads of ways in which man, as an individual, asserts himself in the world” (Taylor,1980. p.25). in this sense, thought is not purely objective or even logic. It is rather governed by the individual's feelings, personality, and subjective experience. Taylor comments on Bally's view stating that the role of subjectivity, emotion, and individuality, in forming or presenting thought should not be neglected “if we are to avoid representing thought as a mere reflected image of the outside world. Instead, thoughts are to be characterized as more or less conceptual (and objective), affective (and subjective)” (1980. P.25). There is scale and thought lies somewhere there. It can be either more conceptual and objective, or more emotional





and subjective. Then, in the study of language, both logic and feeling are important.

Nevertheless, Bally in his first version of theory to stylistics excluded literary and poetic language from the scope of stylistics. He restricted stylistics to the analysis of everyday language that is spontaneous and natural. Later, his followers modified his theory. As Taylor explains "paradoxically, Linguistic Theory and Structural Stylistics literature, for the disciples of Bally, became the focal point of stylistic analysis for precisely the same reasons that had prompted Bally to exclude it from stylistics. That is, in literature, the use of the stylistic function of language is both conscious and voluntary" (1980, p.44). Bally's followers believed that if stylistics studies expressive language, then literature represents the highest and most refined form of expressive language. In this way, this shift paved the way for rising other stylistic theories, particularly the work of Roman Jakobson who proposed the theory of Foregrounding.

Subsequently, there is a link between Bally and Jakobson in their view to stylistics. As Taylor highlights "both theories carry the presupposition that a variety of aspects of communication, e.g. poeticity, expressivity, register, etc., may be explained in terms of an analysis of aspects of the language 'code'" (1980, p.44). Bally and Jakobson believe that meaning and emotional effect of language are not created out of nothing but come out from the way language is structured like vocabulary, grammar, and syntax.

Ultimately, Bally's theory to stylistics does not merely focus on what is said, but how it is said and why it is said that way. This framework views language from the functional perspective that is the way language is structured is a reflection of its expressive aim.

The Picture of Dorian Gray

The Picture of Dorian Gray is written by Oscar Wilde in 19th-century in England. It focuses on the title character as he passes from innocence and beauty to immorality and death. The novel begins with the artist Basil Hallward trying to paint a portrait of Dorian Gray who is a young man with extraordinary beauty. Afterwards, Dorian meets Lord Henry Wotton, an aristocratic character in the novel. He advises Gray to live a life of pleasure and indulgence. This means a life free from the constraints of morality and social expectations. Dorian seems to be convinced by Henry and becomes even more obsessed with his beauty and youth. Consequently, he makes a wish that his portrait will age while



he remains young and flawless. His wish comes true, while Dorian starts a life of excess, indulging in drugs and cruelty, his appearance remains unchanging, only the portrait shows physical reflection of his corrupted soul.

As time passes, the portrait changes and loses its beauty with every immoral act Dorian commit, while he himself appears ever more handsome and young to the world. Throughout the novel, Dorian struggles with the feeling of guilt as he sees the consequences of his actions on the portrait. However, his obsession with maintaining his perfect appearance makes him continue his immoral act. Eventually, after a series of tragic events, including the death of his lover, Dorian faces the portrait one last time. At the end he stabs his portrait, hoping to destroy the evidence of his immorality. But his action leads to his own death. As he dies, he returns to real version of himself, while the portrait returns to its original, innocent form (Studysmarter, 2022).

Lexical Analysis

In this section, several extracts from the novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray* are analysed in detail using both Bally' (1909) and Foregrounding theory.

Extract one:

"The studio was filled with the rich odour of roses, and when the light summer wind stirred amidst the trees of the garden, there came through the open door the heavy scent of the lilac, or the more delicate perfume of the pink flowering thorn. From the corner of the divan of Persian saddle-bags on which he was lying, smoking, as was his custom, innumerable cigarettes, Lord Henry Wotton could just catch the gleam of the honey-sweet and honey-coloured blossoms of a laburnum, whose tremulous branches seemed hardly able to bear the burden of a beauty so flamelike as theirs; and now and then the fantastic shadows of birds in flight flitted across the long tussore-silk curtains that were stretched in front of the huge window, producing a kind of momentary Japanese effect, and making him think of those pallid, jade-faced painters of Tokyo who, through the medium of an art that is necessarily immobile, seek to convey the sense of swiftness and motion. The sullen murmur of the bees shouldering their way through the long unmown grass, or circling with monotonous insistence round the dusty gilt horns of the straggling woodbine, seemed to make the stillness more oppressive"

(Wilde, 1931, p. 11)



The opening passage in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is more than a decorative introduction. It is full of rich and sensory detail that illustrates much about the novel and the author. Oscar Wilde, with his unique ability to use language, does not just describe the setting but he tries to create a world that is seen by external beauty. By his linguistic style, Wild engages multiple senses emphasising his focus on sensory richness and surface detail.

“Art exists for its own sake” is the key to understand both Wild’s life and his novel. He believes that beauty is more important than morality and this is clearly presented in this passage through the lexical choices. Nature is described not in simple terms, but in luxurious ones. This reflects the novel’s theme that beauty is powerful and even can be dangerous.

Applying Charles Bally’s theory of expressive stylistics explains how Wilde’s lexical choices show emotions, communicate mood, and determine reader’s perception. Bally believes that words are not neutral. They carry emotion beside meaning. The expressive language of Wild reveals his view and attitude towards themes discussed in the novel.

In this passage, Wild heavily depends on modifiers to describe nouns. Following Bally, certain words carry different layers of meaning containing emotional and subjective tone apart from the referential meaning. Wilde’s use of adjectives and modifiers do not merely describe the external world, but they also reflect a deep emotional response to it. For instance: “the rich odour of roses” the word “rich” conveys some elements of luxury and pleasure. This may suggest that the writer adores the scent and finds it pleasant and beautiful.

Another instance from the passage is “the heavy scent of the lilac or the more delicate perfume of the pink-flowering thorn”. The adjectives “heavy” and “delicate” express opposing emotional qualities. Heaviness gives the sense of force or even suffocation, while delicacy implies lightness, refinement, and fragility. Following Bally, this opposition is not objective. It reflects subjective and emotional stand of the writer towards scents as it is obvious that Wild prefers the delicate smell of the pink flower over the heavy smell of lilac. This is what Bally proposes as ‘subjective lexical colouring’ where the vocabularies are not chosen neutrally. Further, the nouns “perfume” and “scent” are used to refer to the same item. While the former implies something cultured and artificial, the latter gives more sense of naturality. Even the plant names “lilac” and “pink-flowering thorn” may add to the way how readers perceive the hidden layers of meaning. The pink-flowering thorn may refer to beauty

linked with pain which emphasises Wilde's view of beauty as both attractive and dangerous.

In addition, based on foregrounding theory, the above instance has lexical parallelism through parallel structure. Both halves follow a similar pattern "[adjective] [noun] of the [noun]". This repetition draws attention to the phrase's stylistic features. Likewise, words like "perfume" and "pink-flowering thorn" show another aspect of foregrounding through Lexical Deviation. "Perfume" is rarely used in description of gardens and smells of flowers. It is more expected in a commercial context. Further, the lexical choice of sensory vocabulary reflects Wilde's philosophy of 'aesthetic duality'. Also, while "heavy scent" hints at beauty associated with excess and corruption which to some extent can be uncomfortable, "delicate perfume" represents faded beauty, fragile and passing moments. Through this lexical deviation, Wilde seeks to contrast between the intense and short termed concepts, especially in exploration of youth and beauty.

In "... honey-sweet and honey-coloured blossoms of a laburnum, whose tremulous branches seemed hardly able to bear the burden of a beauty so flamelike as theirs" Wilde's language seems very evaluative. according to Bally the compounds words "honey-sweet" and "honey-coloured" are not neutral descriptions. They express pleasure, warmth, and luxury. Again applying 'subjective lexical colouring' concept shows that the writer emotionally reacts to the blossoms and describes them in a way that conveys personal admiration. "Honey-sweet" evokes both taste and affection which suggests comfort and intimacy. While "Honey-coloured" adds a visual quality of golden and glowing appearance. In addition, the phrase "tremulous branches" gives human qualities to the tree which is personification as it describes nervousness, delicacy, and fragility rather than physical movement. This according to Bally is an example of 'language used to express inner tension through outer description'.

More interestingly, "the burden of a beauty so flame-like as theirs" is a metaphor where beauty is imagined as a physical burden that causes the branches to tremble. In this phrase Wild reaches the climax of the description. The phrase "flame-like beauty" adds emotional layer to the meaning as flames express passion, danger, and breakdown. This aligns perfectly with Bally's principle of 'expressive intensification'. He proposes that the emotional tone is built progressively, it continues to reach at a kind of climax in the description. In addition, "honey-sweet and honey-coloured blossoms" presents a clear example of foregrounding through parallelism where by a phrase stands out stylistically. The above



phrase shows parallelism in both structure and lexicon. Repeating (honey-) is lexical parallelism and repeating the same pattern in two parallel phrases in structural one.

Moreover, "The sullen murmur of the bees shouldering their way through the long unmown grass or circling with monotonous insistence round the dusty gilt horns of the straggling woodbine, seemed to make the stillness more oppressive" is an example of 'emotional projection' according to Bally. The adjective "sullen" is typically used to describe a human gloomy mood or bad temper. Here it is applied to a natural sound which is not a neutral description. This fills the environment with emotional heaviness. Bally assumes that such language carries 'subjective lexical colouring' which reflects the speaker's internal psychological state rather than external objects.

Further, the verbs "shouldering" and "circling with monotonous insistence" show 'affective lexis' as they are emotionally charged verbs. "Shouldering" implies force and effort. This may mean that even the bees are struggling to find their way through the scene as if the environment resists their passage. And "monotonous insistence" gives a kind of feeling being irritated or having mental pressure. The writer does not use these terms just to describe the physical movements but he describes the mood that makes the readers sense the atmosphere of tension under the quietness. Wilde's word choice in the second half of the sentence "dusty gilt horns of the straggling woodbine" mixes beauty and decay reflecting his view of beauty being connected with deeper signs of decline. From the same sentence, "Gilt" and "dusty" bring together two opposing ideas. While the former refers to something covered in gold and has luxurious and artificial shine, the latter suggests neglect and confusion. This contrast symbolises the theme of surface beauty hiding inner corruption which is a central idea in the novel and in Wilde's aesthetic philosophy.

By the same token Foregrounding is achieved in the above sentence through deviation. Lexical deviation appears in the unusual combination "dusty gilt horns". Wild uses an elevated and poetic way to describe flower structures however, he uses "dusty" to weaken their charm and beauty. By using this contrast, Wilde draws attention to the poetic quality of his writing and makes the reader to explore the deeper meaning of the language. Similarly, "sullen murmur" is another instance of foregrounding. Wild gives human emotional quality to natural sound. This technique violates the normal association of words resulting in disrupting the reader's expectations and producing a figurative meaning.

The final part of the sentence, "seemed to make the stillness more oppressive," turns the usual meaning upside down. Nature and its



elements are normally linked with calmness and peace, but Wilde makes the scene feel heavy and tense. This may suggest that stillness is not always peaceful. This hints at that beauty and nature can sometimes be troubling.

Extract Two:

"Lord Henry elevated his eyebrows and looked at him in amazement through the thin blue wreaths of smoke that curled up in such fanciful whorls from his heavy, opium-tainted cigarette. "Not send it anywhere? My dear fellow, why? Have you any reason? What odd chaps you painters are! You do anything in the world to gain a reputation. As soon as you have one, you seem to want to throw it away. It is silly of you, for there is only one thing in the world worse than being talked about, and that is not being talked about. A portrait like this would set you far above all the young men in England, and make the old men quite jealous, if old men are ever capable of any emotion."

(Wilde. 1931, p.12)

The above extract is an utterance by Lord Henry to his artist friend Basil. According to Charles Bally's stylistic theory, Wilde seems to express his opinion and attitude rather than describing facts through Henry's words. For instance, phrases like "opium-tainted cigarette" and "thin blue wreaths of smoke" by no means can be neutral. The modifiers used in these phrases create a strong image and mood. The word "opium-tainted" describes something unhealthy or dangerous. And "thin blue wreaths of smoke" on the other hand, draws an image of a smoke as if its particles dance and move in circle motion to add more artistic effects to the scene. Through these lexical choices, Wilde attempts to disturb readers' interpretation of Lord Henry's personality to seem both elegant and corrupt because after all the link between beauty and moral decay is one of the novel's main themes.

Further, phrases like "odd chaps you painters are" or "It is silly of you" show how Lord Henry thinks of Basil. It is obvious that he looks down on Basil's decision. Bally in his framework to stylistics recognizes this kind of language as expressive because it shows how the speaker feels, rather than just describing something in an objective way. What is interesting here is that Lord Henry's words are not meant to tease or belittle Basil, but also to influence his way of thinking by changing his mind about the decision of not selling the portrait. This mocking but still critical tone is part of Lord Henry's manipulating personality while pretending to be lovely and funny.





Following foregrounding theory, Wile's word choices are in some places unusual and clever. The sentence "There is only one thing in the world worse than being talked about, and that is not being talked about" is a good example. Besides having parallelism by repeating the same phrase "being talked about" in successive clauses, this is a paradoxical sentence. It seems contradictory because it surprises the reader by flipping normal thinking. This feature is known as lexical deviation which a technique that makes reader to stop and think about what being said because it reverses what one would expect to read. Wild succeeds in using ordinary words in a fresh and striking way that make the idea of the sentence to stand out. Because these words are said through Lord Henry's utterances, Wilde tries to make him sound smart, wit and sharp.

Moreover, "the thin blue wreaths of smoke that curled up in such fanciful whorls" illustrates metaphor. The smoke is personified and described as something alive that can move and fly in the air in a twisting motion. Adding the adjective "fanciful" to describe the scene makes the reader to imagine the smoke curling in a pretty and imaginative spiral shape. Here we see the power of Wild's stylistic skills to give a beautiful and elegant image to a normal and ordinary scene through the words.

Lastly, almost in every line in the novel words are found that remind the reader of the main themes. For instance, "silly", "odd", "jealous", and "reputation" show how people judge each other and to what extend characters care about what society would think about them. Though the topic of this conversation is supposed to be art and paintings, yet words are more related to one's fame, status and reputation. Again, Wild attempts to show that characters care much about their self-image and how world seed them rather than deep and important values in life.

Extract Three:

"I give the truths of to-morrow."

'I prefer the mistakes of to-day,' she answered.

'You disarm me, Gladys,' he cried, catching the wilfulness of her mood.

'Of your shield, Harry: not of your spear.'

'I never tilt against Beauty,' he said, with a wave of his hand.

'That is your error, Harry, believe me. You value beauty far too much.'



'How can you say that? I admit that I think that it is better to be beautiful than to be good. But on the other hand no one is more ready than I am to acknowledge that it is better to be good than to be ugly.'

'Ugliness is one of the seven deadly sins, then?' cried the Duchess.

'What becomes of your simile about the orchid?'

'Ugliness is one of the seven deadly virtues,'

(Wilde, 1931, p. 216)

This extract contains a part of a conversation between Lord Henry and Duchess. At the first reading, it seems as if the two characters are competing in choosing elevated and witty words. They show off their linguistic skills through the careful and clever word choices rather than conveying deep meaning or discussing serious topics. Bally in his theory to stylistics claims that the language one uses is not always informative, it is but sometimes filled with emotive and expressive words that hints at speaker's opinion and attitude.

According to Charles Bally's stylistic theory, if language of a verbal exchange is full of emotive and expressive words and phrases, it will not necessarily tell ideas, but it echoes speaker's point of view. This is evident in the emotional tone that is conveyed through the connotative layer of word meaning and richness of the vocabulary. For instance, Lord Henry's statements like "Ugliness is one of the seven deadly virtues," and "it is better to be beautiful than to be good" do not claim any fact. All they do is to give emotionally loaded opinion and subjective evaluation.

"I give the truths of to-morrow." said by Lord Henry is stylistically very interesting, for, Bally claims that language reflects the speaker's inner world. Lord Henry's lexicon here gives an impression of a man who sees himself as a visionary and smart enough to state truths that others have not recognised yet. The language in this short line evokes provocation, irony and performance. That is exactly what Bally calls it as expressive language where words chosen not just for their referential meaning, but for the speaker's social posture.

Equally interesting is the Duchess reply saying, "I prefer the mistakes of to-day.". She follows the same sentence structure as Lord Henry to create case of lexical and syntactic parallelism. However, her word choices carry a quit different emotional tone. The nouns "mistakes" and "to-day" which give the meaning of human imperfection and realism show Duchess's preference for flawed reality of present time over future



ideals. Moreover, through the speakers' lexical choices readers may judge the characters by positioning the duchess as more emotionally grounded, realistic and sincere while Lord Henry as an arrogant and visionary. This contrast does not just reflect the personalities of the two characters but it goes beyond this to discuss the gap between performance and honesty which is one of the themes in the novel.

In addition to that, Wilde's use of figures of speech and unexpected combinations makes the language stand out. The Duchess's line "Of your shield, Harry: not of your spear" to reply to "You disarm me, Gladys." is a clear example of metaphorical foregrounding. The nouns "Shield" and "Spear" are military terminology but brought to a drawing-room conversation. The Duchess tells Lord Henry that she might have made him drop the defence, but he still has the weapons to continue attacking (verbally). This deviation from what is socially expected language makes the line be stylistically marked. By this, foregrounding is achieved through one of the methods which is lexical deviation.

Ultimately, the conversation ends with an outstanding lexical twist "Ugliness is one of the seven deadly virtues.". This can be analysed in a different way from the above case of foregrounding because it is a deliberate lexical deviation. The original phrase is "seven deadly sins" which a well-known religious phrase. By breaking the normal pattern of the phrase and changing the lexicons the writer makes the phrase to stand out. Wilde combines religious vocabulary with irony to create oxymoron that catches reader's attention. The line means in a world where everyone is obsessed with beauty, ugliness becomes a kind of virtue.



Conclusions

1. Oscar Wilde, with his unique ability to use language, does not just describe the setting but he tries to create a world that is seen by external beauty. By his linguistic style, Wild engages multiple senses emphasizing his focus on sensory richness and surface detail.
2. Wilde's lexical choices show emotions, communicate mood, and determine reader's perception. The expressive language of Wild reveals his view and attitude towards themes discussed in the novel.
3. Wilde's use of adjectives and modifiers do not merely describe the external world, but they also reflect a deep emotional response to it. Wild heavily depends on modifiers to describe nouns.
4. Through this lexical deviation, Wilde seeks to contrast between the intense and short termed concepts, especially in exploration of youth and beauty. This contrast symbolizes the theme of surface beauty hiding inner corruption which is a central idea in the novel and in Wilde's aesthetic philosophy.
5. Wild gives human emotional quality to natural sound. This technique violates the normal association of words resulting in disrupting the reader's expectations and producing a figurative meaning.
6. Wild succeeds in using ordinary words in a fresh and striking way that make the idea of the sentence to stand out. Because these words are said through Lord Henry's utterances, Wilde tries to make him sound smart, wit and sharp. Here we see the power of Wild's stylistic skills to give a beautiful and elegant image to a normal and ordinary scene through the words.
7. Wild uses expressive language where words chosen not just for their referential meaning, but for the speaker's social posture.
8. Wilde's use of figures of speech and unexpected combinations makes the language stand out.





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