



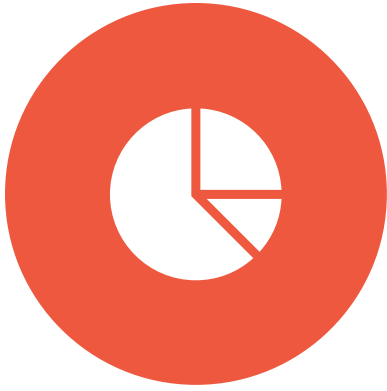
# LITERARY TRANSLATION

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A STYLISTICS TOOLKIT TO  
EXPLORE TEXTS [ST AND TT]

# TODAY'S AGENDA

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STYLISTICS



FOREGROUNDING



LITERARY TEXTS  
[POETRY, PROSE, DRAMA]



# Stylistics

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Stylistics: a working definition

- is a systematic way of exploring (primarily literary) texts. It looks at the language of texts and tries to explain how that language creates meaning, style and effect
- explores how readers interact with the language of (mainly literary) texts in order to explain how we understand, and how we are affected by texts when we read them

# Language levels

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Sounds

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Morphology

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Grammar/ syntax

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Semantics and Pragmatics

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Intertextuality

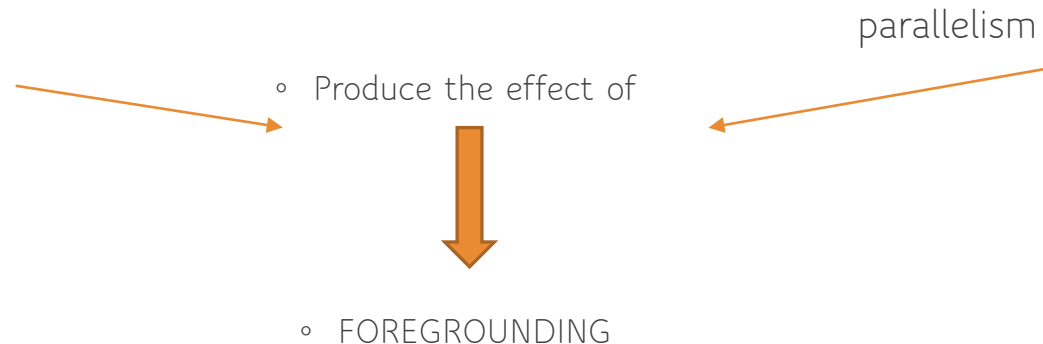
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# An important theory within stylistic analysis

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This topic is all about how and why writers *FOREGROUND* parts of their texts and what meanings and effects are associated with these foregroundings. The theory of *FOREGROUNDING* is probably the most important theory within Stylistic Analysis, and foregrounding analysis is arguably the most important part of the stylistic analysis of any text.

- Linguistic deviation





# Types of Foregrounding

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## Deviation

Deviation occurs when we have a set of rules or expectations which are broken in some way. This produces the effect of foregrounding, which attracts attention and aids memorability. Deviation can occur practically everywhere, but we are going to focus mostly on linguistic deviation. (e.g. names of pop groups, advertising slogans, literary texts etc.)

## Parallelism - Repetitions

Parallelism is another method of foregrounding. Repetition is one type of parallelism (words of the same meaning get repeated but sometimes words of opposite meaning are also presented as parallel to each other).



# Musée des Beaux Arts by W.H. Auden

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# Foregrounding in visual arts

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Musée des Beaux Arts W. H. Auden

In Breughel's Icarus, for instance: how everything turns away  
Quite leisurely from the disaster; the ploughman may  
Have heard the splash, the forsaken cry,  
But for him it was not an important failure; the sun shone  
As it had to on the white legs disappearing into the green  
Water, and the expensive delicate ship that must have seen  
Something amazing, a boy falling out of the sky,  
Had somewhere to get to and sailed calmly on.



# Deviation for Foregrounding purposes- A Universal Phenomenon

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**Deviation** occurs when we have a set of rules or expectations which are broken in some way. *Like the way this font has just changed.* This deviation from expectation produces the effect of foregrounding, which attracts attention and aids memorability. Deviation is by no means restricted just to language.

Items of clothing on different occasions

# LINGUISTIC DEVIATION

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Deviation: pop group names

## "Velvet Underground"

This pop group name is semantically deviant. The noun phrase has 'velvet' as a modifier to the headword 'underground'. But 'velvet' can only literally be used to modify nouns referring to items made of velvet (e.g. 'velvet dress'). You could use it metaphorically in an appropriate way if it is used to refer to some domain we could think of as being reasonably analogical. So, for example, the singer Nat King Cole was often described as having 'a velvet voice'. But 'underground' does not connect to an appropriate analogical domain in any of its meanings.

# Deviation for Foregrounding Purposes - Literary examples

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## **'Of Mere Being'**

Below are the first two lines from a poem by a famous American poet, Wallace Stevens . The poem is called 'Of Mere Being' and begins by referring to a palm tree. Each of the lines below has a head noun missing from a noun phrase.

The palm at the end of the \_\_\_\_\_

Beyond the last \_\_\_\_\_

In normal circumstances you would expect the slots to be filled by nouns that are semantically appropriate in the context.

So you might well have written:

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**The palm at the end of the beach**

**Beyond the last hut**

or

**The palm at the end of the road**

**Beyond the last house**

The nouns chosen in the above examples are all concrete nouns, referring to relevant objects. Abstract nouns like 'love' or 'death' feel odd, even though they would satisfy the grammatical requirements for a well-formed noun phrase. Similarly, concrete nouns that refer to unlikely items in context (e.g. 'leg' or 'strawberry') will also seem odd. All the odd possible choices suggested in this paragraph would be semantically deviant.

# Deviation: literary examples

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Stevens actually wrote:

**The palm at the end of the mind  
Beyond the last thought . . .**

His choices are also semantically deviant (and so metaphorical and foregrounded), and these semantic deviations, when examined carefully, can be seen as a key to our understanding of the whole poem.



# Deviation: literary examples

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'A Grief Ago' by Dylan Thomas

This title is doubly foregrounded - it is grammatically and semantically deviant at the same time.

'Grief' is an uncountable noun. It is grammatically odd to say things like **\*'I had three griefs last week'**. Semantically the choice is also odd: 'grief' is not a TIME word, but an EMOTION word.

# Deviation: literary examples

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If we compare carefully Thomas's choice to the normal paradigm, the set of choices which are normal, we can see how the word 'grief' takes on *new meaning* in this linguistic context.

First of all, the semantic oddity suggests that in this poem time is being measured in terms of emotion. And, indeed, one of the things we could say of Thomas here is that he has captured an abiding fact about the nature of how human beings perceive the world. Although time ticks on with metronomic regularity, each second being exactly equal to the preceding second, our perception of time does vary according to how we feel. So, we often say that when we are happy time goes fast, and that when we are sad time goes slowly.

# Parallelism: non-literary examples

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We have seen that linguistic deviation foregrounds (makes prominent) particular parts of texts and helps us to infer new aspects of meaning for the deviant text-parts. Another way in which parts of texts can be foregrounded is by the use of local patterning. A good example of such patterning is when two or more structures are *parallel* to one another. In other words, they are structurally similar in some way, but not exact repetitions of one another.

## TOURISM TEXT

Ζεστό κλίμα, ανθισμένη φύση, ξεχωριστά έθιμα. Η άνοιξη στην Ελλάδα είναι μια εμπειρία που δεν πρέπει να χάσετε.

# Parallelism: literary examples

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- I kissed thee ere I killed thee'. (Shakespeare, *Othello*)
- Below are the first 4 lines of 'A Birthday' by the nineteenth century pre-Raphaelite poet, Christina Rossetti. You should work out what makes the lines parallel and what the meaning and effects associated with it are.

My heart is like a singing bird  
Whose nest is in a watered shoot:  
My heart is like an apple-tree  
Whose boughs are bent with thick-set fruit;

# Parallelism: extended examples

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The first two lines and the second two lines contain two grammatically parallel main clauses which repeat 'My heart is' and are completed by a comparative structure beginning with 'like'. The head of the noun phrase within this comparative structure refers to a natural object ('bird', 'apple-tree') and is post-modified by a relative clause suggesting happy conditions (the bird's nest is in a good place, the apple tree is loaded with fruit) . Given that the poem's title is 'A Birthday' we can infer that the persona is very happy on her birthday. The ABCB rhyme scheme helps to tie the parallel couplets together, reinforcing the effects of the grammatical parallelism.



# Task 1: Become a poet!

	on		place
I stood	upon	a high	mountain
	in		hill

And saw, below, many devils

Running, leaping

	living	
And	indulging	in sin.
	carousing	

One looked up, grinning,

"Comrade! Brother!"

And said	"Join us!"
	"Help me!"

# *I stood upon a high place*

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I stood upon a high place,

And saw, below, many devils

Running, leaping,

and carousing in sin.

One looked up, grinning,

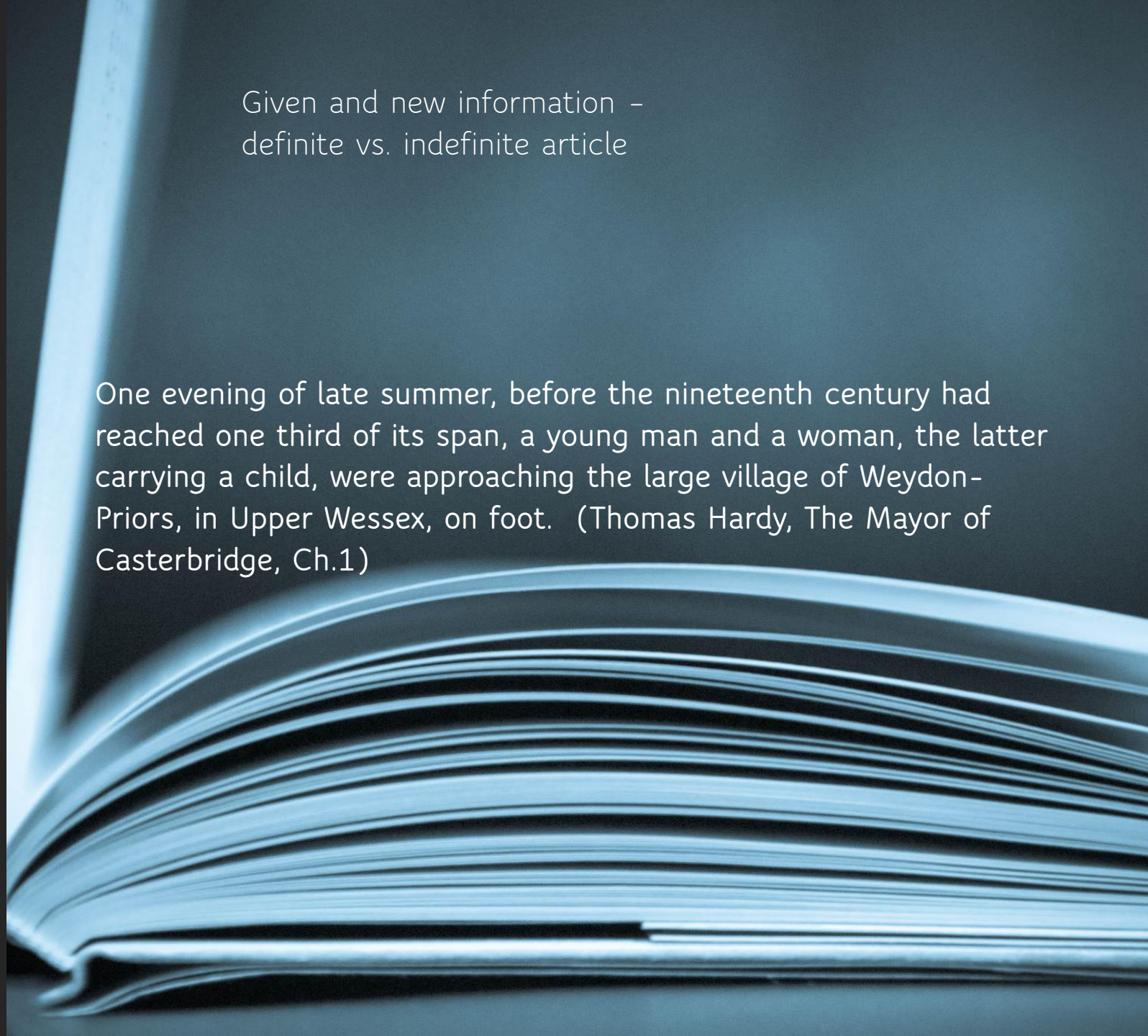
And said, "Comrade! Brother!"

# Applications to literary texts and their translations: novel

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Given and new information –  
definite vs. indefinite article

One evening of late summer, before the nineteenth century had reached one third of its span, a young man and a woman, the latter carrying a child, were approaching the large village of Weydon-Priors, in Upper Wessex, on foot. (Thomas Hardy, *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, Ch.1)



# Ideological viewpoint – combination of linguistic indicators to manifest a mind set

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We were wanderers on prehistoric earth, on an earth that wore the aspect of an unknown planet. We could have fancied ourselves the first of men taking possession of an accursed inheritance, to be subdued at the cost of profound anguish and of excessive toil. But suddenly, as we struggled round a bend, there would be a glimpse of rush walls, of peaked grass-roofs, a burst of yells, a whirl of black limbs, a mass of hands clapping, of feet stamping, of bodies swaying, of eyes rolling, under the droop of heavy and motionless foliage. The steamer toiled along slowly on the edge of black and incomprehensible frenzy. The prehistoric man was cursing us, praying to us, welcoming us – who could tell?

(Joseph Conrad, Heart of Darkness)

# Applications to literary texts: drama

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Drama is the literary genre which is most like naturally occurring conversation.

Poems are most of the time authorial monologues.

Novels contain talk between characters, and so they are a bit more like conversation, but they also contain large stretches of narrative description.



# Applications to literary texts: drama

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Falstaff	God save thy Grace, King Hal; my royal Hal!
Pistol	The heavens thee guard and keep, most royal imp of fame!
Falstaff	God save thee my sweet boy!
King	My Lord Chief Justice, speak to that man in vain.
Chief Justice	Have you your wits? Know you what 'tis you speak?
Falstaff	My King! My Jove! I speak to thee, my heart!
King	I know thee not, old man. Fall to thy prayers. How ill white hairs become a fool and jester.

(Shakespeare, Henry IV, Part II: Act 5, scene 5, 42-9)

# Applications to literary texts: drama

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It is clear that the new King Henry V treats his old drinking friend with considerable harshness, signalling a very different relationship between them now that he has the power and responsibility of being the head of state.

Look carefully at the last three lines of this extract and try to describe in as much detail, and with as much precision as you can, how the two different attitudes of Falstaff and the new King are being indicated linguistically. What could we explain by using foregrounding theory, as dealt with in our introduction? What else do we need to account for if we are to come up with a precise characterisation of the meanings and effects in these three lines?



# Applications to literary texts and their translations: drama

## ➤What's in a name?'

Although the sentence appears to be a question, it is really an opinion masquerading as a question. To realise this, you need to know that it alludes to a speech in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*:

What's in a name? That which we call a rose  
By any other word would smell as sweet.  
So Romeo would, were he not Romeo called,  
Retain that dear perfection which he owes  
Without that title.

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(William Shakespeare *Romeo and Juliet*, II, ii, 43-7)

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<https://www.menti.com/5yoo8vwc2t> KEY NOTIONS OF LITERARY TRANSLATION &  
CHALLENGING PARTS OF 31 BC IN ALEXANDRIA

<https://padlet.com/adakordasavva/wsaotuhulupplhpt>

become a poet!