

**A Stylistic Analysis of Philip Larkin's  
Selected Poems Wants and Days**



**Hairech Faiza**<sup>1</sup>

University of Mostaganem Abdelhamid Ibn Badis, [faiza.hairech@univ-mosta.dz](mailto:faiza.hairech@univ-mosta.dz)

**Abstract :**

In this study, the attempt is to stylistically analyse two of Philip Larkin's short poems, Wants (1964) and Days (1955), so as to demonstrate how significant the use of foregrounding is in creating meaning and addressing existential and complex themes in poetry. The analysis aims also aims at showing the different types and levels of foregrounding, mainly repetition and linguistic deviation, used by Larkin. Hence, the analysis endeavours to account for the semantic, graphological, phonological, morphological, and lexical deviations in the selected poems to explain how such deviations could impact and consolidate the overall meaning of the poem and help readers understand and interpret it accordingly. The scrutiny also seeks to uncover the reasons behind the use of repetition in Larkin's poems. The study reveals a strong and significant impact of foregrounding on comprehending and interpreting the two poems, which are short, linguistically accessible, yet thematically loaded and profound.

**Keywords:** Stylistic analysis; poem; Foregrounding; Repetition; deviation;

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Larkin's poems are characterized by their linguistic accessibility, for the poet is known for the use of ordinary and simple language in his poems. Yet, the themes that he addresses are complex and existential in nature. Themes such as life, fear, loneliness, and death, to list but a few are tackled subtly by

**Corresponding author:** Hairech Faiza, e-mail: [faiza.hairech@univ-mosta.dz](mailto:faiza.hairech@univ-mosta.dz)

Larkin, a poet of a high literary stature in Britain.

Though described as one of the most famous poets in Britain, Larkin do not use a complex language as stated before. On the contrary, he uses simple words and forms, a fact that may intrigue readers' curiosity to know what is behind such a stylistic choice. Larkin has written, among other literary productions, short and simple poems like the two poems I have selected in this study: *Wants* (1964) and *Days* (1955). The poems are both composed of two stanzas, and they both contain only ten lines. Yet, both poems are loaded with meaning, ideology and beliefs, things that, to one's sense, need to be explored and scrutinized.

To approach Larkin's poems, one should focus, first and foremost, on the way language is used to convey meaning and attract an optimal readership. Hence, stylistic methods could be the adequate way to scrutinize Larkin's works, for it helps figure out the relation between form and meaning. Another worth mentioning point is the reason behind the choice of foregrounding as a major stylistic device to be explored in this study. Because of the simplicity and accessibility of Larkin's language, it seems clear that literary tropes and imageries are not to be excessively found in the poems; hence, what should be explored may well be some linguistic deviations and word repetitions. Through this Stylistic methodology, the attempt is also to facilitate the understanding of the unsaid in Larkin's poems.

## **2. Stylistics**

Stylistics has revolutionized the field of literary studies since the twentieth century; it has brought new insights to the study of literary texts. Stylistics' concern is not to deduce or focus on normative and prescriptive patterns of language, but it is rather to attempt to emphasise and identify the functions of language and rhetoric as well as its characteristic uses (Dvalidze & Shavladze, 2013). In the same vein, Widdowson (1975) defines stylistics as follows:

By 'stylistics' I mean the study of literary discourse from a linguistic orientation and I shall take the view that what distinguishes stylistics from literary criticism on the one hand and linguistics on the other is that it is essentially a means of linking the two...stylistics, however, involves both literary criticism and linguistics, as its morphological make-up suggests: the style component relating it to the former and the 'istics' component to the latter. (p. 4)

According to Widdowson (1975), stylistics involves both the study of style and language; the study of style relates the discipline to literary criticism and the study of language relates it to linguistics. Hence, to define stylistics, one should first and foremost define style, a concept that has received a significant consideration from a myriad of scholars.

## **3. Style**

To define this abstract term, style, is not an easy task. Hosts of linguists have tried to give their definitions of the term. For instance, according to Buffon (1753), Style is the man himself. Another definition, by Dvalidze and Shavladze, is as follows:

Within the field of literary writing, there is again scope for varying definition and emphasis. Sometimes the term has been

applied to the linguistic habits of a particular writer (the style of Dickens, of Austen) at other times it has been applied to the way language is used in a particular genre, period, school of writing, or some combination of these: "epistolary style", "early eighteen-century style", "The style of Victorian novels" etc (p. 13)

From the quotation above, one may deduce that the language of literary works can be approached from more than one angle. For instance, a stylist can study the linguistic habits of a given writer like (the style of Joyce, of Woolf...). He can also approach it from the linguistic peculiarity of the work in terms of genre, trend of writing and literary period.

The study of style harks back to the ancient times. Aristotle, Cicero, Demetrius, and Quintilian have considered style as thought's adornment. From this perspective that emerged in the Renaissance era, one may catalogue style's devices; the orators or writers are expected to fashion their language according to the nature of the texts they write (poetry, prose...). (Dvalidze & Shavladze, 2013)

The idea of style, traditionally defined as something suitably attributed to thoughts differs from the ideas obtained from the Swiss philologist, Charles Bally (1865–1947), and the Austrian literary critic, Leo Spitzer (1887–1960). These scholars think that style, in language, emerges from the idea of possible choices present in the abundance of forms of linguistic expression. For instance, the possibility of alternating between words like children, youngsters, kids and youths affects differently the readers who hold various backgrounds. (Dvalidze & Shavladze, 2013) This idea which focuses on the strong relation between linguistics and style is similar to Edward Sapir's theory that describes literature as a discourse that is both Form-based and content-based. (Dvalidze & Shavladze, 2013)

Schopenhauer agrees upon the definition of style as a mark of one's personality even if the writer calculates his linguistic choices. The writer's experience enables him to powerfully and accurately choose his language (sounds, words, syntactic patterns...), a language that is loyal to his personality and view of the world.

As aforementioned, the study of style falls within the discipline of stylistics, a discipline that studies literary texts. One of the major devices that are considered in stylistics is foregrounding, a concept introduced by Russian Formalism. The concept of foregrounding has received a significant interest from linguists, critics and stylisticians who have endeavoured to define, explain, and use the new concept in the study of language and literature.

#### **4. Foregrounding**

Russian Formalists' thought gave birth to foregrounding though it was Prague structuralism that formulated the concept. In fact, the idea of foregrounding was inspired from the Russian formalists' concept of estrangement (defamiliarization) put by Viktor Shklovsky (Van Peer & Hakemulder, 2006). For Shklovsky, the objective behind an artifact is to create defamiliarized objects that can destabilize already fixed automatized schemes and consequently create a new perception in the beholder, a perception that is stimulated by the unfamiliar (Van Peer & Hakemulder, 2006).

Foregrounding, as a concept, is used in all the arts. It is the emphasis that an artist brings to a given part of his work, using focusing devices. For instance, in poetry, foregrounding is the way a poet uses language to reach the effect he wants from his readers. To do so, a poet may deviate from the normal use of language. Such deviation could be performed on any linguistic level, graphological, phonological, morphological, syntactical, etc. Van Peer and Hakemulder (2006) state, "The term 'foregrounding' refers to specific linguistic devices, i.e., deviation and parallelism that are used in literary texts in a functional and condensed way" (p. 246). In the same vein, Leech (1969) claims, "Such deviations from linguistic or other socially accepted norms are labelled foregrounding, which invokes the analogy of a figure seen against a background" (p. 57). Defined as a device of defamiliarization, foregrounding is manifested as follow:

#### **4.1. Deviation**

Deviation is a "term used to describe any pronunciation, word, or sentence structure which does not conform to a norm" (Richards et al., 1993, p. 105). For Leech (1969), it is necessary to use *linguistic deviation*, a phrase coined by him, in producing a literary work of art. According to Leech (1969), any deviation from the norms of language could be seen as linguistic deviation. Hence, any deliberate violation of the rules of language is considered as linguistic deviation. It can take place at different levels:

##### ❖ *Graphological Deviation*

Leech (2014) states, "graphology goes beyond orthography. It refers to the whole system of writing: punctuation, spacing as well as paragraphing" (p. 39). Graphological deviation could also be detected at the level of capitalization. In literature, poets are more likely to use graphological deviation to create a strong impact on their readers.

##### ❖ *Phonological Deviation*

It is the violation of phonological rules (Glaing and Espeland, 2005; Smith et al., 2005 cited in Granzotti et al., 2017). It is the use of sound clusters without respecting the English phonotactic constraints. This deviation is used in immigrants' writings in English. It is detected as the writers transliterate in their texts. For instance, in her collection of short stories entitled *Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits* (2005), Arab writer Laila Lalami deviates from the English phonological norms when she transliterates Arabic words into English like she does in the following phrase: *Hlib bhab rchad*. In this phrase, there are consonant-sound clusters that are phonologically not allowed like /hl/\_/bh/\_/rS/.

##### ❖ *Morphological Deviation*

A morphological deviation is an unfamiliar word formation, for instance, the use of prefixes and suffixes that belong to other languages with English roots and vice versa. In this vein, crystal (2003) claims that morphological deviation is frequent in literary texts. It can be formed by the addition of affixes in places where they should not occur. It can also be constructed by adding affixes to a root that belongs to a different code. For instance, this type of deviation is commonly seen in immigrants' literary works. For instance, the word '*Koholed*' is a hybrid word that consists of an Arabic root '*Kohol*' and the English suffix 'ed'.

❖ *Syntactic Deviation*

This deviation is the outcome of not respecting the normal order of words in the English Language. In this regard, Seturaman and Peck (1995) state, "Poets tend to have their own grammar and resort to deviation whenever they have to express a meaning which the normal language cannot." (p. 236) For instance, English is a subject verb language, so if the writer decides to write a statement starting with a verb, this linguistic situation will be unfamiliar.

Consider the following examples:

- a. The colonial period is gone.
- b. Gone is the colonial period.

In 'a', the writer respects the normal order (subject, verb). Hence the meaning of the sentence is that colonialism has ended. No special effect is detected in the first sentence. However, in sentence 'b', the writer starts by a verb, and this is unfamiliar in English; hence, a reader of such a sentence may understand that the writer wants to draw his attention to the verb gone that is stressed in the sentence. The writer may be willing to say that countries or individuals should not be subjugated or ill-treated because the times of colonialism no longer exist.

❖ *Semantic Deviation*

This deviation happens when an ordinary word is loaded with new and unfamiliar meaning, notably meaning that is bound to the poet's personal and cultural life. In this respect, Leech (1976) claims that any poet, novelist, or writer can load an ordinary word with an extraordinary meaning, depending on his background. For instance, the words 'day and night' can refer to life and death respectively if a writer decides so by putting them in a context that orients and helps the readers to infer the wanted meaning.

4.2. *Repetition*

Excessive repetition of words, phrases or even sentences could be considered as a foregrounding device because over repeated forms is unfamiliar and may disturb the reader's schemata. Hence, writers and poets could use repetition as a literary foregrounding device to add strength to their writings and create an impact on their readers.

**5. Methodology**

In this paper, the attempt is to explore the aforementioned elements of foregrounding in two of Larkin's poems: *Wants* (1964) and *Days* (1955). Hence, a stylistic study is applied to account for the several deviations and repetitions detected in the selected poems. For this purpose, the author's word choice (diction), repetition and other linguistic deviations are to be considered in an attempt to figure out how a particular use of language could generate and consolidate meaning. Yet, before analysing the poems, a biography of the poet, is introduced.

**6. Biography of Philip Larkin (1922-198)**

Philip Arthur Larkin, born in 1922, in Coventry, was the only son, and the second child of Sydney and Eva Larkin. He studied in King Henry VIII School from 1930 to 1940. He contributed and helped in the editing of *The Coventrian*, a school magazine, between 1939 and 1940. After he had left King Henry VIII, Larkin graduated from

Oxford, St. John's College, with First Class Honours in English, in 1943. Kingsley Amis and Bruce Montgomery were Larkin's closest friends at St. John's College ( Orwin, 2021).

In 1940, Larkin published his first poem entitled *Ultimatum* in a national weekly. Later, in 1943, he published three other poems, *A Stone Church Damaged By A Bomb*, *Mythological Introduction*, and *I dreamed of an out-thrust arm of land*. In addition to poems, Larkin published two novels, *Jill* (1946) and *A Girl in Winter* (1947) (Orwin, 2021).

The poet took the position of assistant Librarian at the University College of Leicester in 1946. Larkin became an Associate of the Library Association after completing his professional studies in 1949. Then, in 1950, Queen's University, in Belfast, hired him as Sub-Librarian. In 1951, a hundred of XX Poems were printed privately. In 1954, five of Larkin's poems were published, in a pamphlet, by the Fantasy. Besides, the Marvell Press published *Toads* and *Poetry of departures* (Orwin, 2021).

In 1955, Larkin became Librarian at the University of Hull. In October of the same year, Larkin's collection entitled *The Less Deceived* was published. This very collection is what made of Larkin one of the most famous and brilliant poets of the twentieth century. After nine years, that is, in 1964, the poet's next collection was published. *The Whitsun Wedding*, as Larkin called it, was widely praised. In 1965, Larkin won the Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry (Orwin, 2021).

In 1974, *High Windows*, Larkin's last collection, was published. It was widely acclaimed, a fact that confirmed the poet's high stature in English Literary history. *Aubade* (1977) was Larkin's last poem. The latter received an unprecedented praise from literary critics. It was argued to be the greatest poem Larkin had ever written.

Larkin received a bunch of awards in recognition of his writing, notably at the end of his career. He won the CBE in 1975, and he was awarded the German Shakespeare-Prize. In 1977, he presented the Booker Prize jury. In 1984, he was granted an honorary D, Litt from Oxford. In addition, they elected him to the board of the British Library in 1984. In 1985, Philip Larkin died of cancer at 1.24 a.m. at the age of 63, leaving a tremendous literary legacy. ( Orwin, 2021)

## **7. Stylistic Analysis of *Wants***

Beyond all this, the wish to be alone:  
However the sky grows dark with invitation-cards  
However we follow the printed direction of sex  
However the family is photographed under the flagstaff-  
Beyond all this, the wish to be alone  
Beneath it all, desire of oblivion runs:  
Despite the artful tensions of the calendar,  
The life insurance, the tabled fertility rites,  
The costly aversion of the eyes from death-  
Beneath it all, desire of oblivion runs.

### **7.1. General Reading**

In his two-stanza poem, Larkin expresses man's deep desire to be alone despite the fact that the latter is overwhelmed with social activities. In fact, the poet starts his first stanza by stating the following: "Beyond all this, the wish to be alone:" In doing

so, Larkin shows that being alone is man's utmost desire in this socializing world. He claims that although our life is dense with social meetings: meetings with friends, meeting with family members, meeting with partners etc., it remains empty and hollow from its soul. It is empty in that one is stripped the time in which he wishes to be alone, far from a life devoted to so many social events. In the second stanza, he keeps on desiring to be alone, but this time, the poet seems to hint to death as the ultimate resort. Indeed, Larkin suggests that despite the endless social activities which prevent us from confronting our fate, death, the sub-conscious desire to it will remain forever. In the following sections, I intend to show how my interpretation could be backed up with formal devices. In the following part, the attempt is to depict the linguistic features that constitute a degree of foregrounding in the poem like deviation, repetition, and parallelism.

### **7.2. Graphological deviation**

In Larkin's short poem, a graphological deviation is detected in the first stanza. The speaker, deliberately, avoids punctuating the end of the second and third lines. In so doing, that is by omitting the period, and subsequently, by preventing the reader to breath and rest between the lines, the poet seems willing to show the restless and suffocating effect of social life on human's psyche. Another graphological deviation is seen at the end of the first and sixth lines where colons are put to announce explanations; however, what is written is nothing but complain and irritation.

### **7.3. Semantic Deviation**

(...) the sky grows dark with invitation-cards (2)

In the above line, the poet uses the metaphor: the sky grows dark with invitation-cards, which sounds weird because the normal expression would be something as 'the sky grows dark with clouds'. The deviation here shows the extent to which the speaker is overwhelmed by the amount of the social obligations.

(...) the printed directions of sex (3)

The phrase at hand sounds strange because the word sex is abstract; therefore, it cannot have printed directions unless the poet hints to something else. Indeed, the writer seems to be using ellipsis. He omits words like magazine, books, leaflets, and keeps the word sex alone. To put it differently, the poet writes 'the printed direction of sex' instead of writing 'the printed direction of sex books', for instance. By using an elliptical phrase, Larkin leaves more space for various interpretations, depending on the words the reader decides to add to the word sex.

The tabled fertility rites (8)

In this phrase, the poet seems to refer to sex once more, but this time he hints at contraceptive methods that help couples to know when they can make love in order to have babies, and when they should not do so in order to avoid having them. To the poet, all this is mechanical, a routine that man keeps on practicing, and that the writer seems to be fed up of such practices. Larkin appears to be tired of the number of mechanical practices in human's life, practices that he seems willing to get rid of by being alone.

(...) desire of oblivion runs (6,10)

Once more the writer uses weird compositions. Indeed, desire of oblivion cannot run. It is something abstract, contrary to words like river that can run. By attributing the action of running to the abstract phrase, the poet seems to be willing to show how unconsciously motivated is the strong desire to oblivion.

(...) the artful tensions of the calendar (7)

The phrase at hand seems to be like the previous ones, in that it attributes something abstract to a physical one. A calendar does not have tensions; hence, to interpret this anomaly, one should think of all the conflicting social events that are scheduled in man's life. There seem to be permanent tensions between all those dates that appear to be cunningly designed, giving a sound excuse for anyone who does not want to take part in a social engagement.

#### 7.4. Lexical Repetition

In Larkin's poem, we notice that the first line of each stanza is repeated in the fifth line. Hence several words are repeated, as shown in the following table:

**Table1. Repeated words in Larkin's *Wants***

| Repeated content words                                    | Repeated prepositions |
|---|-----------------------|
| wish,<br>alone,<br>desire,<br>oblivion,<br>run<br>however | beyond<br><br>beneath |

From the table, we notice that there are conceptual groupings in the poem:

8. 'Wish and desire' are two synonymous words. They indicate a felt need like, in this case, a need to be alone. Adding to wish and desire, wants is another word that is nearly a synonym to the two equivalent nouns.

9. 'Alone and oblivion' are two words that denote a state of being solitary due to social distancing or to death.

10. 'Beyond and beneath' are two prepositions that share the syntactic and metrical positions. They express remoteness from the speaker's position.

11. 'However' is another word that is repeated thrice in the first stanza. It shows how social life goes in an opposite direction to the one desired by the writer, causing a feeling of frustration and melancholy.

#### 7.5. Phonological Repetition

**Table 2. Phonological repetition in *Wants***

| Alliteration  | Assonance   |
|---|---|
| However the family is photographed under the flagstaff-<br>(repetition of the consonant sound /f/)                      | However the sky grows dark with invitation-cards<br>(repetition of the vowel /i/) |
| However we follow the printed However we follow the printed direction of sex<br>(repetition of the consonant sound /w/) | However we follow the printed direction of sex<br>(repetition of the vowel /i/)   |



The poet uses phonological repetitions that are manifested in the form of alliterations and assonances. Such repeated sounds make of the poem an enjoyable piece of literature to be read. In addition, they lessen and soften the seriousness and soberness of the poem's mood.

### 8. Stylistic Analysis of *Days*

What are days for?  
 Days are where we live.  
 They come, they wake us  
 Time and time over.  
 They are to be happy in:  
 Where can we live but days?  
  
 Ah, solving that question  
 Brings the priest and the doctor  
 In their long coats  
 Running over the fields.

#### 8.1. General Reading

*Days* is one of Larkin's short poems, just like *Wants*. It contains two stanzas that are made of six lines in the first and four verses in the second. The poem is written in a free verse fashion, with no rhyme scheme. As most of Larkin's poems, *Days* addresses existential themes such as life and death in an accessible language, a fact that is typical of Larkin's writings. However, the simple words used in the poem are enigmatic in nature since they stimulate the readers' mind and incite them to answer the questions asked, both at the beginning and the end of the first stanza. Despite its short length and simple form, the poem is not free of some foregrounding devices that are discussed in the forthcoming section.

#### 8.2. Graphological Deviation

As stated before, the poem is divided into two asymmetrical stanzas, containing six lines in the first and four verses in the second. This division is a foregrounding device used to show that there are more questions than answers and more problems than solutions in life.

Another deviation is detected in the first and last lines of the first stanza; the speaker starts and ends his stanza with a question, a fact that may intrigue the readers' critical mind and curiosity about the message behind such questioning.

#### 8.3. Semantic Deviation

Unlike *Wants*, *Days* is a poem that is characterized by a straightforward style of writing. To put it otherwise, Larkin uses less metaphorical language in *Days*. His verses are more denotative in meaning, notably in the first stanza.

In the first stanza, the poet asks questions about days. He attempts to stimulate the readers' mind and incites them to think profoundly about what may seem shallow to some people. Larkin answers his first question (What are days for?) at the beginning of the first stanza, and then, he asks another question (Where can we live but days?) at the end of the same stanza.

In the second stanza, Larkin uses the metaphor of the priest and the doctor in their long coats, running over the fields, to hint at illnesses and death, two things that

are likely to visit Man in of his life. These two things are what can answer the second question: Graves, eternity...

To sum up, Larkin uses less semantic deviation in *Days* because he addresses the ordinary people who are all concerned with the themes tackled by the poet. Hence, one may deduce the reason behind such a simple and straightforward style of writing: the poet is more concerned with the thematic properties of his poems than he is with the form.

**8.4. Diction and Lexical Repetition**

Larkin's choice of words is in itself a strong element of foregrounding in that he uses simple and monosyllabic words that could mostly be used in nursery rhymes and children's stories. In so doing, Larkin defies the norms of literariness adopted by most poets, and gives more importance to content than to form. Indeed, the poet's themes are highly complex and existential, hence needless is to add a complex style and diction to them. Another foregrounding technique is repetition that is used by Larkin to emphasize the existential thematic addressed in the poem. The repeated words "day, they and, time" sound as a rhyme that facilitates the reading of the poem and makes of it a more enjoyable task for ordinary readers.

**8.5. Phonological Repetition**

**Table 3. Phonological Repetition in Larkin's *Days***

| Alliteration   | Assonance   |
|--|---|
| Days are <b>w</b> here <b>w</b> e live.<br>(repetition of the consonant sound /w/<br>They <b>c</b> ome, they <b>w</b> ake us<br>(repetition of the consonant sound /k/ | They <b>e</b> come, they <b>e</b> wake us<br>(repetition of the vowel sound /ei/) |

Larkin's poem is written in a simple language to widen his readership. Besides, he makes use of alliteration and assonance which renders the poem's reading easier and more entertaining. In addition, the repetition of words like they and wake makes the poem sound like nursery songs: easy to read and enjoyable at the same time.

**8.6. Morphological Deviation**

**Table 4. Morphological Deviation in Philip Larkin's *Days***

| Monosyllabic Words  | Bisyllabic Words                                    |
|---|---|
| What- are- days- for<br>Where- we- live.<br>They- come- wake- us<br>Time -and -to- be- in<br>Where- can- we - but<br><br>Ah,-that<br>Brings- the- priest<br>Their- long- coats<br>fields. | Over- happy- solving-<br>question- doctor Running - |

As aforementioned, the overuse of mono-syllabic and bi-syllabic words reflects the author's deliberate choice of simple language, a fact that is typical of Larkin's style. The writer tackles complex and existentialist topics in a simple

language. In so doing, the poet hooks the readers and traps them in his simple yet complex poems, inciting them to think anew of existential topics like life and death.

## 9. CONCLUSION

From the stylistic analysis of the two poems, one could deduce that it is not important to write in a complex style to address complex themes. Larkin's poems, for instance, are written in simple style and simple words; however, the themes they tackle are existential and philosophical in nature. Furthermore, one may argue that the use of simple language, accompanied by foregrounding devices, such as repetition and deviation, may hook the readers and stimulate their curiosity to know more about what is behind such simple yet foregrounded language.

The use of stylistic devices, like repetition and deviation, as a foregrounding technique, is what characterizes Larkin's poems. The poet prefers simple language and straightforward style to guarantee the comprehension of his poems by ordinary people who are the target readership of Larkin since they are as concerned by the themes he tackles as intellectuals and literati are. Hence, Larkin usually opts for devices like repetition to emphasize and consolidate some significant elements in his poems. He also uses linguistic deviations to stimulate readers' curiosity and help them see and understand things in a new fashion. Thus, stylistics could constitute an effective methodology that may yield new insights into this literary genre, viz. Poetry.

Hence, the interpretation of poems is not evenly perceived by readers. Each reader could have a perspective that helps him attain a different interpretation, depending on his background and the reading method he uses. Therefore, there may be a myriad of possible interpretations for the same poem; however, a sound interpretation is the one that could be backed up by linguistic evidence. For this purpose, that is to back up an interpretation, stylistics may be the most practical method in analysing literary texts, from the linguistic viewpoint, and generating interpretations accordingly.

Overall, Larkin excels in simplifying the complex themes he addresses in his poetry. He could reach the ordinary readers through his accessible and easy language. Yet, he seems to trap those readers in his profound vision of the world and life. Through the use of foregrounding, as a stylistic device, he could help his readers to comprehend deeply what seems a shallow and senseless topic. He knows when to deviate from the norms to create a feeling of weirdness and ambiguity. He also knows when to repeat and over repeat words to invite his readers to think anew about ordinary topics. Larkin is a poet who targets ordinary people, giving them a sense of simplicity and complexity at once. In so doing, Larkin may be willing to show ordinary people and literati alike that literature is not about complex words and structures; it is rather about knowing how life is simple if we succeed to understand its simplicity and behave accordingly.

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