

Parallelism in William Wordsworth's Selected Short Poems

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Abstract

Sometimes people are able to memorize easily some lines of short poems or songs that they have studied or listened to a long time ago, for example, in their childhood. This is because of the structures of these lines which are characterized by being parallel. Using the parallel structures is known linguistically as parallelism. It simply means putting sentences or parts of sentences in similar structures. The reason for doing this is either to create a connection among sentences within a text or to make them be easily memorized. It is also used to avoid repetition. This research concentrates on studying the use of parallelism in William Wordsworth's selected short poems. It first presents a theoretical background of parallelism in English, then it indicates the types of parallelism used by the poet in the poems chosen.

Key words: Parallelism, Grammatical Parallelism, Semantic Parallelism, and Sound Parallelism

الخلاصة

يتمكن الناس بعض الاحيان من تذكر بعض المقاطع من القصائد القصيرة او الاغاني التي درسوها او استمعوا اليها منذ وقت طويل، في طفولتهم مثلا. والسبب يعود الى تركيب هذه المقاطع والتي تتسم بكونها متوازية. استخدام التراكيب المتوازية يعرف لغويا بالتوازي. ويعني ببساطة استخدام جمل او عناصر الجمل في تراكيب متشابهة. والسبب من وراء ذلك هو لإتشاء ترابط بين الجمل ضمن النص او لجعلها سهلة الحفظ. وتستخدم ايضا لتجنب التكرار. يركز البحث الحالي على دراسة التوازي في بعض القصائد القصيرة للشاعر ويليام وردسورث. يقدم البحث اولا دراسة نظرية عن التوازي في اللغة الانكليزية ومن ثم يعتمد الى دراسة انواع التوازي المستخدمة في القصائد التي تم اختيارها.

• Introduction

' One, two, three, four'

' Mary at the cottage door'

' Five, six, seven, eight'

' Eating cherries of the plate'

' Nine, ten , say it again'

The lines above have a big effect on people than other lines and they are easy to be memorized even by those who are unable to read if they are repeated once or twice due to their structures which is basically characterized by being parallel. The mechanism of using such structures is known as parallelism. This research aims at establishing a theoretical base and a framework of parallelism which is one of the cohesive devices. It starts with illustrating what the term parallelism refers to in English by presenting a number of definitions. Then, it moves to deal with the different types of parallelism and the rules which must be followed to construct parallel structures. This research tries also to shed light on the forms and the purposes of using parallelism in speech or writing. After that, the research studies the use of parallelism in some selected short poems of William Wordsworth. It analyzes the poems chosen to show the types of parallelism used and indicate which type is used more than the others and also states the structures used within the poems.

Parallelism in English

2.1.Definitions of Parallelism

There are many definitions of the term “parallelism” which try to answer the question “What is parallelism?”.

The first definition is of Crystal (2003:466) who states that parallelism is simply “The use of paired sounds, words or constructions.” As in:

1- The first two students are too clever.

The two words ‘two and too’ in the previous sentence have similar pronunciation “paired sounds”.

Short (1996:14), on the other hand, claims that parallelism is achieved when (some features are held constant (usually structural features) while others (usually lexical items, e.g. words, idioms) are varied."

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities.(ibid)

For him "parallelism is one of the mechanism which writers have at their disposal for controlling the connections which readers make." He (ibid) adds that "it is an essential device for poetic control." As in the two lines bellow from T.S. Eliot's The Hollow Men:

2- This is the dead land

This is the cactus land...(ibid:16)

Depending on Short's definition ,these two lines have parallelism which helps readers understand the connection between ideas.

A similar definition to is presented by Cook (1989:15) who illustrates that parallelism is "a device which suggests a connection ,simply because the form of one sentence or clause repeats the form of another." as in:

3- John likes football ,but his brother likes basketball.(ibid)

The two contrasted parts of the sentence above which are joined by 'but' have a similar construction which establishes the connection between them.

Mathews (2007:286) looks at parallelism as "the use of stylistic effect of sentences or other units that are parallel in form." As in the example below:

4- Before, the English lecture was taught by grammar

translation method, but now it is taught by communicative method.(ibid)

The forms of the two parts of the sentence above have stylistic effect that they will not have if there structures are not parallel.

Berlin (1985:3) argues that "parallelism is these linguistic equivalences that we wish to examine in greater depth for they constitute the phenomenon." As in the following example:

5- The English language student has to master speaking, reading and writing English.(ibid)

The equivalences in the previous sentence 'speaking, reading and writing' constitute parallelism.

Rozakis (2003:137) writes that "parallelism is the expression of two or more sentence elements in the same grammatical form. It keeps a sentence balanced because these basics are grammatically equal." As in:

6- The mother smiles at her baby then touches his hand.(ibid)

The two verbs in the above sentence 'smiles, touches' are paralleled as they are both expressed in the same grammatical structure.

A similar definition is provided by Folly and Hall (2005:339) who explain that parallelism is " the use of similar grammatical structure in different sentences like similar tense and similar word order." As in the sentence below:

7- The students memorize the poem. The teacher analyzes it.(ibid)

The two sentences in the above example share the same tense, present and the same word order (NVN), i.e. the same grammatical pattern (SVO).

According to Georgakopoulou and Goutsos (1997:118) parallelism is "different words in the same syntactic and rhythmic paradigm, frequently by repetition." As in the two lines bellow from T.S. Eliot's The Hollow Men:

8- We are the hollow men

We are the stuffed men...

These two different words ' hollow and stuffed' are in the same syntactic and rhythmic paradigm.

Malmkjar (1991:625) confirms the above definition as he states that parallelism is "the reuse of structures with different material in them."

Oshima and Hogue (1999:2) claim that Parallelism is "an important device in English writing, particularly in listing contrasted or compared items or ideas." As in the sentence below:

- 9- The linguistic syllabus of the students in the morning study
is the same as the linguistic syllabus of the students in the
evening study.(ibid)

The above sentence compares two similar things which are the linguistic syllabus of the students in the morning study with the linguistic syllabus of the students in the evening study. This comparison is achieved by using parallelism.

2.2.Types of Parallelism

Cook (1989:15) mentions that there are three types of parallelism. These types are:

- **Grammatical parallelism** which is simply achieved when "the form of one sentence or clause repeats the form of another. This type is used in speeches, prayers, poetry, and advertisement." (ibid)

See the example below which is part of Christian prayer:

16-"teach us, Good Lord, to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest,....." (ibid)

The repeated grammatical structure in the example above is 'to X and not to Y the/ for Z. '

- **Sound (phonetic) Parallelism** is that kind which suggests a connection of meaning through an echo of form". It appears "in the rhyme, rhythm and



other sound effect of verse.”(ibid:16) In the two lines below from Philip Freneau's poem 'On the Great Western Canal of the State of New York' the end words have the same final sound /s/, so they show sound parallelism. :

- 10- Her powerful voice, at length, awakes,
Imprisoned seas and bounded lakes.

Short (1996:107,111,113) adds that this type of parallelism is represented by alliteration, assonance, and rhyme. He (ibid:107,111,113) states that "alliteration primarily involves the repetition of the same or similar consonants." As in (Mistry when **m**ild, but **c**old when **c**lear). While "assonance is the term traditionally reserved for patterns of repetition between vowel sounds." As in (Nipped by the frost, and shivering in the wind). And" rhyme is usually reserved to refer to the final syllables of different lines of poetry when the vowel and syllable- final consonants (if any) of the words in question are identical." As in the above lines where rhyme is represented by the final syllable of the two words (awakes and lakes)

• **Semantic Parallelism** is achieved “when two sentences are linked because they mean the same thing. Comic duos often exploit this for humorous effect. The first comedian says something in high- flown style, and the other repeats the same information in a colloquial one.”(ibid) As in the example below:

- 11- A. The Good Lord, in his wisdom, has taken her away from us.
B. You mean the old girl's snuffed it.(ibid)

The meaning of the first sentence is the same as the meaning of the second one, so both sentences are semantically parallel.

Quirk and Greenbaum (1989:308) refer to grammatical parallelism, which is explained above by Cook, as Structural Parallelism. For them it is achieved when two or more sentences or phrases are alike structurally and lexically. As in the example below:



12- George prefers fish. Mary likes chicken.(ibid)

The connection between the above two sentences is fortified as they both have a similar structure (SVO) and similar lexical items (NVN).

2.3.Parallelism Rules

Oshima and Hogue (1999:1) state that there are certain rules that should be paid attention to achieve Parallelism as it cannot be made in a random way. These rules are:

1."Parallelism is utilized in correspondence way. Each element in one sentence has its identical element in the other one." As in:

13- Belly studies in Oxford university. Jane studies in
Cambridge university.(ibid)

In these two sentences, each element in the first sentence has its identical in the second one ,i.e. the subject 'Belly' in the first sentence corresponds the subject 'Jane' in the second and the verb 'studies' corresponds the verb 'studies' and so on.

2. "The elements of the sentence which are matched by coordinating conjunction can achieve parallelism." As in the example below:

14- She cleans the tables and the chairs.(ibid)

The two noun phrases in the sentence 'the tables and the chairs' are matched by the conjunction 'and', as a result parallelism is achieved.

• "Parallelism components can be used in lists or in series." As in the sentence below:

15- The teacher asks the student to read the poem clearly, loudly, and politely.(ibid)



The three adverbs ' clearly, loudly, and politely' are used in the form of a list ad using them in this form create the effect of parallelism .

- Comparing elements that are similar with each in a sentence creates parallelism. An example is the proverb below:

16- The pen is mightier than the sword.(ibid)

In the above proverb, the pen and the sword which are both nouns are compared to each other and that leads to parallelism.

5. The components of parallelism can be connected by using the form of (to + base). As in:

17- To know is to read.(ibid)

In the above sentence the structure (to +base) is used to connect the elements of parallelism ' to know and to read'.

6.The linking words can be exploited to connect the components of parallelism. As in:

18- The boys are quiet whereas the girls are noisy.

The two elements of parallelism 'the boys are quiet ' and 'the girls are noisy' are matched by using the linking word 'whereas'.

2.4. Parallelism Forms

Parallelism may take the form of pairs or groups of individual words or series of phrases or clauses as stated below (Web source 1).

- Ideas in Pairs

The relationship between paired ideas is reinforced when the elements are presented in parallel balance. The three primary methods of connecting paired ideas are:

(1) Pairings with coordinating conjunctions. Coordinating conjunctions connect closely related or equivalent ideas. The relationship is made clearer when elements linked by one of the conjunctions (and, but, or, for, so, and yet). As in the example below:

19- The head asks the workers to work hard and to achieve their tasks.

(2) Pairings with correlative conjunctions. Correlative conjunctions such as: (both . . . and, just as . . . so, not only . . . but, also either . . . or, neither . . . nor, and whether . . . or) join equivalent elements and come in pairs. As in following examples:

20- She is both humble and intelligent.

21- Every day, either his father or his mother teaches him.

(3) Comparisons connected by 'than' or 'as'. Parallel balance should be maintained between elements linked in such comparisons. When two things are compared with each other by using one of these comparison words, parallelism is formed. As in the following example:

22- He loves his blue bird as he loves his son.

- `Ideas in series.

When three or more grammatical elements are presented in a series, the writer must take care to maintain parallel balance. The parallel construction can occur in the subject or the predicate of the sentence and can involve nouns, adjectives, verbs, infinitives, prepositional phrases, participial phrases, or subordinate clause, the following are examples of some of these parallel constructions which involve nouns, noun phrases, adjectives, adjective phrases, verbs, verb phrases, prepositional phrases, and clauses consequently:

30- There are flowers, trees, and grass in the garden.

31- Every manager, every teacher, every student, and every officer have a holiday day.

23. Our new house is big, high, and comfortable.33- She is very shy, very calm, and very innocent..

24 - The boy gets up early, washes his face and teeth, takes his light breakfast and goes to the school.

25- She is reading stories, listening to poems, and watching movies to develop her English language.

26- The children can play in the courtyard, in the seaside, in the garden and in the plaza.

27- The father teaches his boy, the mother suckles the baby and the old daughter prepared for her examination.

2.5.The Uses of Parallelism

Parallelism is used to achieve different effects and purposes as stated below:

Quirk, et al.(1985:1427) set that parallelism is used to indicate connection between sentences which have the same tense, aspect, clause or word order. As in the following example:

28- She cooks the food and cleans the rooms.

The two clauses of the above sentence are of the same tense (present simple), the same structure (SVO) and being parallel indicates that they are connected .

Leech (1977: 67) states that parallelism indicate a connection of equivalence among the parallel elements which shows either similarity or contrast among them.

Gee (1999:147) states that parallelism is one of the devices which is used to connect logically clauses within sentences and sentences within paragraphs and subsequently paragraphs within a text.

James (1981:108) confirms Gee's above idea as he states that parallelism has the effect of connecting sentences in a meaningful way and these connected sentences are seen as one entity. As in:



29- Have you ever seen
a pig fly? Have you ever seen a
A fish walk?(ibid)

Both sentences are seen as one entity that provides the idea of 'impossibility' which is explained by both of them.

Georgakopoulou and Goutsos(1997: 69) mention that parallelism is used to link similar states or events. Parallelism may also be used to establish similarity.(ibid: 122)

Biber, et al. (1999:901) claim that structuring the clauses of a sentence in a parallel way helps to show clearly the contrast between them. As shown in the following example:

30- She helps people. He deceived people.

In this sentence putting the two clauses into a parallel way shows that they are contrasted.

Foley and Hall (2005:339) indicate that " a useful way of making a text cohesive is to use similar grammar in different sentences, for example the same tense or aspect, similar word order or repeating a particular grammar form" As in:

31. She's probably going to fail the exam, and she's probably going to blame her teacher.(ibid)

Parallelism is considered a great persuasive tool. Its repetitive quality makes the sentence or sentences symmetrical and therefore very memorable for the reader. Parallelism makes the idea easier for readers to process because they sense a pattern and know what to expect.(Web source 2)

Parallel structures help in ensuring clarity/readability, an economy of expression, and equality through logical connection within and between sentences. It also ensures that readers are able to grasp the right meaning of sentences, as a consequence of clarity. (Web source 3)

2.6. Parallelism in Wordsworth's Selected Poems.

Depending on the theoretical framework presented in the previous sections, This section aims to investigate the use of parallelism in some of Wordsworth's poems selected by the researcher and indicates which type of parallelism is exploited more than the other. It is important to mention that the poems chosen are the short ones. Within the poems, the types of parallelism are marked by bolding the structural, underling the semantic, and using the italic writing to mark the phonological. After that the marked parallelism are arranged within the timetable that follows the poems.

The First Poem: Composed upon Westminster Bridge

Earth has not anything to show more *fair*:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass *by*
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth, like a garment, *wear*
The beauty of the morning; silent, *bare*,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples *lie*
Open unto the fields, and to the *sky*;
All **bright and glittering** in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully *steep*
In his first splendour, **valley, rock, or hill**;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so *deep*!
The river glideth at his own sweet *will*:
Dear God! the very houses seem *asleep*;
And all that mighty heart is lying *still*! (Mukherjee,2008:326)



The Second Poem: To Milton (London, 1802)

Milton! thou shouldst be living at this *hour*:
England hath need of thee: she is a *fen*
Of stagnant waters: **altar, sword, and pen,**
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and *bower,*
Have forfeited their ancient English *dower*
Of inward happiness. We are selfish *men*;
Oh! **raise** us up, **return** to us *again*;
And **give** us **manners, virtue, freedom, power.**
Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt *apart*:
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the *sea*:
Pure as the naked heavens, **majestic, free,**
So didst thou travel on life's common *way,*
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy *heart*
The lowliest duties on herself did *lay.* (ibid:329)

The Third Poem: The World Is Too Much With Us

The world is too much with us; **late and soon,**
Getting and spending, we lay waste our *powers*;—
Little we see in Nature that is *ours*;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid *boon*!
This Sea that bares her bosom to the *moon*;
The winds that will be howling at all *hours,*
And are up-gathered now like sleeping *flowers*;
For this, for everything, we are out of *tune*;
It moves us not. Great God! I'd rather *be*
A Pagan suckled in a creed *outworn*;
So might I, standing on this pleasant *lea,*
Have glimpses that would make me less *forlorn*;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the *sea*;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed *horn.* (ibid:332)

The Fourth poem: It is a Beauteous Evening, Calm and Free

It is a beauteous evening, **calm and free**,
The holy time is quiet as a *Nun*
Breathless with adoration; the broad *sun*
Is sinking down in its tranquility;
The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the *Sea*;
Listen! the mighty Being is *awake*,
And doth with his eternal motion *make*
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.
Dear child! dear Girl! that walkest with me here,
If thou appear untouched by solemn thought,
Thy nature is not therefore less *divine*:
Thou **liest in Abraham's bosom** all the year;
And worshipp'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
God being with thee when we know it not. (ibid:339)

The Fifth Poem: The Daffodils

I wandered lonely as a *cloud*
That floats on high o'er **vales and hills**,
When all at once I saw a *crowd*,
A host, of golden *daffodils*;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the *breeze*.

Continuous as the stars that *shine*
And twinkle on the *milky way*,
They stretched in never-ending *line*
Along the margin of a *bay*:
Ten thousand saw I at a *glance*,
Tossing their heads in *sprightly dance*.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in *glee*:

A poet could not but be *gay*,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little *thought*
What wealth the show to me had *brought*:

For oft, when on my couch I *lie*
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward *eye*
Which is the bliss of *solitude*;
And then my heart **with pleasure fills**,
And **dances with the daffodils**. (ibid:353)

No.of the poem	Semantic parallelism	Grammatical Parallelism	Sound Parallelism
1.		1. Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples 2. bright and glittering 3. valley, rock, or hill; 4. Ne'er saw I, never felt	Fair By wear bare lie sky steep hill deep! will asleep still!
2.	-	1. altar, sword, and pen 2. raise us up, return to us again; 3. give us manners, virtue, freedom, power. T4. Pure -----, majestic, free	Hour a fen pen, bower dower men again power apart sea free way heart lay
3.	-	1. late and soon, 2. Getting and spending	Soon powers



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		3. Have glimpses ----- Have sight	ours boon moon hours flowers tune be worn lea lorn sea horn
4.		1. calm and free, 2. Dear child! dear Girl! 3. liest in Abraham's bosom orshipp' st at the Temple's inner shrine,	free nun sun tranquility Sea awake make everlastingly divine shrine
5.	-	1. vales and hills, 2. beside the lake, beneath the trees, 3. Fluttering and dancing 4. In vacant or in pensive 5. with pleasure fills, dances with the daffodils	cloud hills crowd daffodils trees breeze Shine way line bay glance dance ey glee gay company thought brought lie mood eye solitude fills daffodils

Timetable (1) The distribution of the parallelism within the poems.

In the above poems selected and as shown in the timetable, it is obvious that there is no single use of semantic parallelism while the other two types, grammatical and phonetic, are used differently in the poems. Grammatical parallelism are used in the form of pairs of words as in ' **bright and glittering**' and '**vales and hills**' and also in the forms of series of individual words as in ' **Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples**' and '**manners, virtue, freedom, power**'. The structures of the parallel items employed in the poems are: noun phrase as in '**Dear child! dear Girl!**' , prepositional phrases as in '**In vacant or in pensive**' and '**Beside the lake, beneath the trees**', verb phrase as in '**liest in Abraham's bosom And worshipp'st at the Temple's inner shrine**' and '**Have glimpses ,Have sight**'. Parallelism in the previous examples are used to join the parallel elements. Phonetic parallelism used a lot in the poems, and they are all in the form of rhyme. It is also important to state that sound parallelism is used more than the grammatical one this can be assured simply by having a look at the time table as it is clear that the lines of the poems are connected by sound parallelism represented by the rhyme.

Parallelism in English: Conclusion

2. Parallelism simply means the use of parallel grammatical, semantic or phonetic structures.
3. Parallelism is of three main types: sound, semantic and structural .
4. There are some rules that should be applied to achieve parallelism.
5. Parallelism is of different forms. It can be in the form of ideas in pairs or idea in series.
6. Parallelism can be used for different reasons as it may be used to show connection among sentences and it makes writing forceful and interesting.
7. The types of parallelism used in the poems selected are grammatical and sound while there is no single use of semantic parallelism.
8. The forms of the structural parallelism exploited in the poems are: pairs of words and series of words. And the structures used are noun phrase, prepositional phrase, and verb phrase.
9. The form of sound parallelism used in the selected poems is the rhyme.
10. The poet exploit the sound parallelism more than the grammatical one.



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