

Critical Analysis of William Wordsworth's Poetic Diction

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Abstract

Abstract Poetic diction means selection of discourse which accommodates a rare style for distinct minstrel, how particular poet choose his/her own language, then how he/her plays around with them (language, lexicon and make use of phrases terminology, usually trope). Poetic diction means style of writing which is used by poet in poetry like the communication style, frame of reference, and use of tropical language-normally metaphors. This research aims to explore and find out the major and distinct features of William Wordsworth's poetic diction and see how far his theory of diction is applicable in present time. Research belonging to us is qualitative. The researcher will analyze William Wordsworth's poetic diction with reference to preface to the lyrical ballads. Researcher will also analyze variant poems written by William Wordsworth. This paper will help the people to understand that why Wordsworth used so natural, simple, attractive and daily life language in his works, and how he used conceits, images, impression, metaphors similes, initial rhyme etc. Results will also help the readers of the time to understand the theory of simple and rustic poetic diction used by William Wordsworth in his poetry. His singular style added the great beauty to his work, and his style became lofty to all the common people.

Keywords: William Wordsworth, poetic diction, preface to the lyrical ballads.

Research Objectives

- 1-To analyze salient characteristics of William words worth poetic diction.
- 2- To elaborate the prominent features of William words worth poetic diction.
- 3- To explain how a poet may get an appropriate diction from William words worth theory of poetic diction.

Research Questions

- 1-What are prominent qualities of William words worth poetic diction?
- 2-What is the applicability of William words worth theory of poetic diction in modern time?
- 3-How far the theory of poetic diction is effective for modern poet?

Introduction

William Words Worth was born at Cockermonth, Cumberland, on April 7, 1770. He got his education at Hawkshed grammar school and at Cambridge.

In 1790 he went France and Switzerland, and in November 1791 he comes back to France to study. Here he made love affair with a Frenchwomen and begot a daughter by her. He was a man of simple and strict temper, self-centered, a little stiff and hard. His excessive preoccupation with himself and his work narrowed his outlook. His solitude was element of his glory. He remained to the edge of simple and thoroughly transparent of soul, quietly indifferent to wealth and vulgar ambitions with a fine completeness of rusticity about him fresh as his own mountain breeze. Key note of his genetics was the absolute sincerity, and the simple living and high thinking was his rule of life. He was little bookman, he spent most of his days out-of-door and most of his poetry was collected outdoors. He believed in instructive power of poetry.

He stated that every outstanding poet is instructor: I wish either to be considered as instructor, or nothing. As a moralist poet he kept his concentration fixed only on his two great motifs Man and Nature as authenticated by his Recluse (1888)

“On Man, on Nature, and on Human life, Musing is solitude”

William Wordsworth, in his early life, was resolute to become a poet of Natural world in a unique and distinct sense. Of a description in his Evening Walk he writes: “I recollect the vary spot where this struck me.... The instant was valuable in my poetical history, for I date from it my consciousness of the life of the limitless variety of natural manifestation which had been unnoticed by the poets of any duration or country, so far as I was communicating with them, and I maggot a resolution to supply, in some degree, this deficiency.”

To this resolution he remained faithful, his poetry everywhere testifying to the minute care with which he watched and reflected over every detail of the landscape amid which his life was spent. His more sophisticated poetry is a new faith where the poet can excel Nature and the possible perspectives as kind of

divinity in I wandered lonely as a cloud.

As a youth He was whisk away by proponent promises of the Revolution. The fall of his early utopian faith was followed by the period of great mantel disturbance, and thought through the influence of his sister Dorothy and comforting power of nature he won back to confidence in God and men, he never returned to this radical creed. He was peerless writer, and gains by selection.

With all his limitations, therefore, he is securing very high and distinctive place among English poets. The place he owes in particular to his winning power as a exhibitor of beauty and happiness which above us and which himself in search for utopian fancies. He is the elegist of reality the interpreter of divine possibilities of democratic people and common things.

WORKS (principal publications)

VERSE

An Evening Walk (1793)

Lyrical Ballads (1798)

The Excursion (1814)

Descriptive Sketches (1793)

Poems (first collective eds., 1807 and 1815)

The White Doe of Rylstone (1815)

Peter Bell (1819)

The Waggoner (1819)

The River Duddon, a series of sonnets (1820)

Memorials of a Tour on the Continent (1822)

Ecclesiastical Sonnets (1822)

The Prelude (1850)

The Recluse (posthumous, 1888).

PROSE

Apology for the French Revolution, in a Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff (1793, posthumously published)

Concerning the Relations of Great Britain, Spain, and Portugal to each other, and to the common enemy, at this crisis, and specifically as affected by the Convention of Cintra (1809)

Two Addresses to the Freeholders of Westmoreland (1818)

A Description of the Scenery of the Lakes (1822, 5th ed., 1835, as *A Guide through the District of the Lakes*)

Kendal and Windermere Railway: Two Letters (1844).

It is said that William Wordsworth idea of poetic enunciation in a response against the criticism of “pseudo classical” theory of poetic diction. Is case to support his hypothesis of poetic diction he introduces a fresh speech which was completely partially related to the diction of common or countryside people.

He dealt in his epos with rustic and simple life and supported simplicity of theme. Being a poet he relies that a poet must use a language which is a language of common man and which is easily comprehend for ordinary people. According to pseudo classicists the communication style of poetry and prose is different from each other while the great bard William Wordsworth says at the place no essential difference between language of prose and poetry but on the component of rhyming scheme. The poet finds this way more coziness to communicate people by using their mother tongue. He denounces the simulated language. Thus he appoints the pronunciation method of common people. Wordsworth’s aims, as he tells in the Preface was, “to prefer occurrences and circumstances from common life”, and quite naturally, he also referred to use, “a selection of language, sincerely exploited by men”.

He was lover of embarrass and unsophisticated life and so he used the diction of the rustics, shepherds, farmers who were the principal subjects of his poetry. He was to use the speech of real men because the aim of author is to give delight and such language without selection will cause repulsion. The applicability of such a simple diction has lot of benefits. The rustic language in its simplicity is highly sentimental and zealous.

This is more so the case when these humble people are in a state of emotional stirs up. It is filled with the feelings of the human heart. Such a language is the native language of the storminess. It is the result of heartily passions, and thus point the way direct to the heart. In different words, through the utility of such diction essential truths about mankind life and sociality can be more essentially and clearly communicated.

It is more ‘philosophical’ language in as much as its use can result in a better and clearer understanding of the basic truths. But in city life emotions are not openly expressed. A choice of the real language in a state of vivid sensation. Coleridge also agreed with Wordsworth idea of plane poetic diction. Without selection of true language we cannot acquire true taste and feelings of poetry in real sense. The language of truly selected poet for poetry is alive with trope and synesthetic metaphor. Wordsworth demands that poetic diction be modeled on primitive, passionate and natural utterance, that is most spontaneous, the product of emotion. Wordsworth

always talks about the selection of the language of the lower classes. For the advertisement of lyrical ballads of 1798 he stated that his object in adopting a simpler language for his poems merely to assertion how for the diction of communication in the midriff and the lower groups of society was adapted to intention of poetic luxuriating. In his poem daffodils he uses similes, which are the rhetorical devices by utility the words **like** or **as are**.

Such as **“I wandered lonely as a cloud”**

Because the poet is lover of nature, so he walks around his surroundings to enjoy the creativity of nature like a drifting cloud. So by using simile masterly he relates himself to a wandering cloud passing over hills and valleys. In another stanza of same poem he uses simile for daffodils as such as, Daffodils are, **“Continuous as the stars that shine”**

He says that daffodils were as continuous and bright like as the stars on the Milky Way. They were twinkling and sparking like the stars. Wordsworth’s images and tropes mix natural scenery, religious symbolism (as in the sonnet “It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,” in which the evening is described as being “quiet as a nun”), and the relics of the poet’s rough childhood—cottages, hedgerows, orchards, and other places where mankind intersects gently and easily with nature.

Wordsworth dislikes **“teach and delight”** method in the classical sense.

He said **“Let Nature be your teacher.”**

His definition of poetry: spontaneous overflow of powerful emotions that recollected in calmness. Spontaneous here referred towards natural and non restricted feelings and emotions. Overflow is related to the flow of powerful emotions. Powerful emotions meaning that **“My subject has to assign with feelings over everything recollected in calmness meaning that if my feelings remain powerful after a while then I will write about it”**. Because only then the poem will be as powerful as I felt at the beginning. Wordsworth’s issue, essentially, related to his poetic diction is to create a difference between common man ordinary language and that of poetic language.

Given that the common man did not talk using exalt vocabulary and tropical language, Wordsworth believed, given he loved poetry to speak to all, that whole adherence to poetic language needed to be dropped. Perhaps the best way to demonstrate Wordsworth’s idea on the removal of poetic diction is to judge the 1802 preface of Lyrical Ballads: There will also be established in these publications little of what is commonly called poetic diction; I have taken as much feelings to escape it as others commonly take to produce it; this I have done for the contraindication already declared, to simulate my language near to the communication of men, and more, because the pleasure which I have suggested to myself to transmit is of a kind very distinctness from that which is alleged by many persons to be the suitable object of poetry.

He also describes in his (Preface to Lyrical Ballads)

Function of poetry: to produce pleasure (aesthetic pleasure)” Nor let this requisiteness of producing unmediated pleasure be reckoned as a debasing of the poet’s art....

It is acknowledgement of the beauty of the universe...”

The major aims of poetry are necessity feelings of the heart and **“the strong and plain affections”**.

(Preface to Lyrical Ballads) (2nd).

“All excellence poetry is the self-generated overspill of mightily feelings” (ibid)

According to William poetry is top quality energy of all knowledge. It is expression of poet full of impression and powerful feelings. It captures it origin from solitude and thoughts in pensive loneliness. When these thoughts are written in form of verses, it makes poetry. Then now these feelings are in their pure form. About poet, he assumes that a poet has greater knowledge of the world and nature. Poet is expressing his experience and knowledge to common men, writing for the men. He is registering not only for the poets and philosophers, but for the all men, so his language must be understandable for a common man and a countryside reader. According to him poet is a person talking to men, and his thoughts are the thoughts of a common man, and all his wording should be a language of a common man like clown, former and countryman, so that each and every one could read and get equal pleasure.

If we talk about poetry, according to him, there are five basic stages to make a poem helping to a poet to utter his feelings to reader effectively. Sensation (feelings and emotions) Contemplation (thinking about; meditation, deep thought) Recollection (memory, remembrance) Recreation (relaxing activity, amusement, leisure) Composition (make-up, constitution; something which has been composed) Here we assume that he gives basic importance to sensation or feelings. As he assumes that all poetry has abundance of strong feelings memorized in solitude. It indicates his importance given to the feelings. He also says that a poet is a man, but superior to other people by his god gifted quality of writing. He also disapproves the Aristotelian theory that plot and situation are the basic elements behind a good poetry.

According to him basic thing is poet’s feeling and sensation. There exist three main functions of poetry, To afford delight. To leads men to the virtue to enhance the range of thinking. If a poet wants to get all this

functions from his work, then he must use rural, a countryside and a language of common people. If the poetic diction is not simple and unsophisticated then the purpose of poetry can never be achieved. By using simple language the goal of poetry can easily be get. So we should say the theory of poetry and poetic diction given by William Wordsworth is applicable and helpful for the modern writer. By adopting this speculation, modern poets can make their work sublime and far lasting effects on the mind of reader. Poet of the time can also rescue and console the afflicted people and can enhance the thinking capacity of modern reader by using the language of the reader.

To sum up, it can be said that William Wordsworth's sentiments towards nature can be easily distinguished from other poets. He did not bring before the wild view point of nature. It was his exceptional quality to involve himself, not with the odd distant aspects of earth and sky, but nature in its common every day mood. He did not identify the bad sides of nature. He emphasized upon the moral impact of the nature and the requisiteness of human spiritual converse with the nature.

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