

## Analysis of Metaphorical Representation in Wordsworth's Major Poems Sumargi Humagain<sup>1\*</sup>, Abhimanyu Humagain<sup>2</sup>, Suresh Regmi<sup>3</sup>, Ramchandra Phuyal<sup>4</sup>

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### Abstract

*This study focuses on similes and metaphors that turn a simple language into a special one, known as a figurative language. This article deals with similes and metaphors executed in the major poems by William Wordsworth, one of the most influential English Romantic poets. This type of figurative language is often used in his poems with an aim to express meaning with an emphasis on the impression the poet wants to convey. The purpose of this study is to identify similes and metaphors used in his major poems. The research is based on the qualitative research to explore similes and metaphors employed in his poems and the meaning contained in each of his poems. The study mainly gets information by focusing on his four poems and pinpoints the certain words or phrases which indicate the metaphors and similes in the poems. This research makes an effort to identify the similes and metaphors in the poems, interpret their different comparative and suggestive meanings as intended by the poet and finally turn out to be their implications. This study obviously eases the learners to gather the ideas of the figurative languages and provide them with the information to interpret the complex use of similes and metaphors. The learners will be able to define and identify metaphor and simile as the two prominent the poetic devices and write about their contribution to creating meanings in the poems.*

**Keywords:** Comparison, figurative language, implication, metaphors, simile

### 1. Introduction

Wordsworth was born on 7 April, 1770 in Cockermonth, in northwest England. He is the second son of his parents. Both of his parents passed away while he was a boy. William recalled an intimate friend telling him that his mother once said to her that “ the only one of her five children about whose future she was anxious was William ; and he, she said , would be remarkable , either for good or for evil( Rickett 307) . However, as a child, he flourished a great love of nature, spending many hours walking in the fells of the Lake District.

Tejvan reports about the prominence of Wordsworth that the romanticism was important for Wordsworth and also for the direction of English poetry. With Coleridge, Keats and Shelley, Wordsworth helped create a much more spontaneous and emotional poetry. It sought to depict the beauty of nature and the quintessential depth of human emotion. Tejvan

further says that his poems are frequently inspired by the beauty of nature. He also represented man in relation to Nature and his fellow-beings. Birjadish admires the trend of Wordsworth's poetry for nature that fascinated him most. His poems present the relation of human with nature.

The origin of his poem was a childhood memory. He settled in the West Country with his sister Dorothy and, in 1795, met Coleridge. There followed a period of extraordinary creativity for both poets leading to the publication in 1798 of 'Lyrical Ballads'. "One writer who is unquestionably an appropriate candidate for interdisciplinary memory study is William Wordsworth, whose poetry is preoccupied with the role of memory in individual life" (Lau 675). His contribution to poetry was eventually recognized in 1843 when he became Poet Laureate. Only seven years later he passed away from pleurisy on 23rd April 1850. He famously characterized poetry as emotion recollected in tranquility making clear that he believed memory to play an essential role in the creative process (Lau 676).

He has a free play of imagination and wide immersion into different experiences. Later, they represent the creative matters. Bishop asserts: Wordsworth's boyhood exploits as a snarer of woodcocks, a plunderer of bird's nests, a skater, a rider of horses, and such single events as the famous Stolen Boat episode, the Dedication to poetry, the Discharged Soldier, the Dream of the Arab-Quixote, the memory of the Winander Boy, the Drowned Man, Entering London, the Father and Child and the Blind Beggar, Simplon Pass, The Night in Paris, Robespierre's Death, and Snowden. (45)

Wordsworth's *The Prelude* is supposed to be the colossal achievement of English Romanticism. Daiches says, "A poet for Wordsworth was a man of unusual emotional variety whose perceptions of his fellow men and of the world of external nature yielded intuitions of the relation of one to the other and the psychological and moral truths underlying all existence" (875). He presents the link between the external world of nature and human.

His poems consist of figures of speech. The employment of the metaphors and similes is the limelight of his poetry. Metaphors are powerful components of the poetry that unfold our creativity, expose our inner worlds, and stand out in our writing and speech. A metaphor is a figure of speech that states that one thing *is* another thing. It is used to make a comparison between two objects or concepts that are not alike but have something in common.

Oxford Dictionary defines the word metaphors "a word or phrase used to describe somebody/something else, in a way that is different from its normal use, in order to show that the two things have the same qualities and to make the description more powerful, for example She has a heart of stone; the use of such words and phrases" (965). Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines the word simile "a word or phrase that compares something to something else, using the words like or as, for example a face like a mask or as white as snow; the use of such words and phrases" (1433).

Simile shows the direct comparison between two words and phrases to create a wonderful message with the use of 'like' and 'as'. Metaphors are used to convey the suggestive meanings of the words. They are the rudimentary power and charm of the poetry. The metaphor is a psychological and literary technique to help create understanding. Metaphor conveys vivid imagery that transcends literal meanings, creates images that are easier to understand and respond to than literal language.

## 2. Methodology

This study collected information from the primary sources that belonged to the poems of Wordsworth, and the secondary sources that were related books and journal articles. In

this research, the data were based upon his four poems, namely *She Was a Phantom of Delight*, *Composed Upon Westminster Bridge*, *She Dwelt Among the Untrodden Ways*, and *I wandered lonely as a Cloud*. Meanwhile, secondary sources of data are the related information, interpretations, studies and reviews obtained from other sources, such as books, the internet, theses, articles, journals, and other sources relevant to this research. The selected poems were analyzed mainly focusing on the similes and metaphors through the content analysis on the basis of construction of the figurative language employed by the poet in the certain lines.

### 3. Review of Simile and Metaphor

Metaphors and similes both make a comparison of two things. Poets employ metaphors and similes to compare two very different things that we would not normally think of together to devise new ideas.

#### 3.1 Simile

Simile is a recurrently used figure of speech in English poetry. Patel elucidates the concept of simile in such a way: The use of simile gives the reader a description of the author's imagination, enables them to imagine how an event has happened in the story carried in the poem. Simile also to a figure of speech in which a comparison is expressed by the specific use of a word or phrase such as: 'like' and 'as'. (653)

The poetry turns out to be poetic when the fundamentals of the figurative languages are created by simile and metaphors. Abrams defines simile as “a comparison between two distinctly different things is explicitly indicated by the word ‘like’ or ‘as’” (97). Simile makes a wonderful conjugation of two different things. Kennedy takes simile as “a comparison of two things, indicated by some connective, usually *like*, *as*, *than*, or *a verb such as resembles*” (Putri et.al 183). It is a literary device used to establish equivalency by asserting similarity using the language constructs like or as. A proper simile explicitly compares two things that are so dissimilar that their comparability appears unlikely

#### 3.2 Metaphor

Metaphorical language is defined as a certain literary device which is commonly applied by the author to gain strength and freshness of their literary work expression. It becomes useless if just read the poems without understanding what actually the poems wants to convey to the readers. That is why we need to analyze imagery and figurative language more deeply.

Regarding the definition of the metaphors, Patel defines metaphor as:

A figure of speech, in which a comparison is made between two things essentially unlike, goes on to the profoundest thinking that we have. Poetry provides the one permissible way of saying one thing and meaning another. Here in this line the metaphor is used to imply the sigh which is same like melody when it heard in yearning and long. (653)

Abrams explains that metaphor is a word or expression that in literal usage denotes one kind of thing is applied to a distinctly different kind of thing, without emphasizing a comparison. In the other words, metaphor is implied simile. According to Kennedy, “A metaphor is a statement that one thing is something else, which, in a literal sense, it is not” (Putri et.al 193). Metaphor provides a sweet conjugation between the two words, their comparative implications and suggestive concepts to the readers. Lakoff states about the implication of the metaphor with the remark that “the locus of metaphor is not in language at all, but in the way we conceptualize one mental domain in terms of another” (Al-Hajaj 3). We can discuss lots of things in a poem, but this article concentrates on the analysis of the figurative language used in the poem. The examples of the metaphors and similes are:

All worlds's a stage. (Metaphor by William Shakespeare)

She is a like a red red rose. (Simile by Robert Burns)

### 3.3. Analysis of Metaphors and Similes in the Major Poems of Wordsworth

The study basically gives emphasis on similes and metaphors employed by Wordsworth in his major four poems. From these poems, the particular lines are extracted below to make a study of the metaphors and the similes.

Her eyes as stars of twilight fair  
Like twilight's, too, her dusky hair (5-6)  
(Wordsworth: She Was the Phantom of Delight)

Agustini and Yadnya state that the figures in these lines explain how the poet admires his wife and how he feels fortunate to meet a woman who has beautiful eyes like stars in the evening. Light of stars is really bright and beautiful. Also her dusky hair was beautiful like twilight too. That phrase refers to his wife's a beautiful hair with color as that of an angel. Twilight falls all over the earth when the sun sinks down. The poet intends to suggest that her hair is black. Wordsworth is saying her eyes are twinkly and bright like the stars and her hair is similar to the view of the sky. He goes as far as calling it 'dusky'. It implies black colour.

She was phantom of delight  
A lovely apparition (1-3)  
The very pulse of the machine  
A traveler between life and death (2-4)  
(Wordsworth: She Was the Phantom of Delight)

He uses the words 'Phantom' and 'spirit' to show her tremendous beauty and charm that has left him spell-bound and happy. He provides a metaphysical touch to describe her by calling her an 'apparition'. He balances the poem by selecting words that would give a metaphysical touch to a human and a human touch to something heavenly. Similarly, Khairi states that organic imagery exists in this line by word phantom of delight. The word delight presents strength of the phantom that actually has a great pleasure which belongs to the woman. The woman here is reflected as a very happy woman who enjoys doing all things and regains satisfaction. The poet compares beats or rattles like machine. And the last 'a traveler between life and death'; the similarity of life and death, is not in terms of shaping, but in terms of the meaning. Life in pictures is spiritual and death in pictures is a worldly thing. A traveler is a symbol of woman.

I wandered lonely as a cloud ( 1 )  
Continuous as the stars that shine ( 7 )  
(Wordsworth: I Wandered lonely as a Cloud)

In the first stanza of *I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud*, Wordsworth mentions his one-day occasional aimless wandering. The speaker feels like a cloud, distant and separated from the world below. Patel in this regard asserts that "the poet compares his haphazard movement to that of a cloud that is floating on high over vales and hills" (892). The term "wandered" means walking free of their own accord. The poet is referring to himself as the "cloud" in a metaphorical sense of the word. Although the clouds mostly travel in groups, this cloud prefers singular hovering. However, he clearly mentions his passing through valleys and hills on a routine walk, simplifying the narrative.

The poet compares his haphazard movement to that of a cloud that is floating on high over vales and hills.

This City now doth, like a garment, wear  
The beauty of the morning (4-5)  
(Wordsworth: Composed upon the Westminster Bridge)

Wordsworth considers that London's beauty is unsophisticated but still amazing. There's only an appreciation for London's beauty in the morning not in the day. Sutaryana analyzes: London "wears" the morning like a nice coat or some other piece of clothing or a garment. These lines that hint at the morning, not London itself, is responsible for the stunning quality of the view. The garment could be so beautiful that it doesn't matter what the person wearing it looks like. (4)

In the poem, the poet likens London with a beautiful and colorful garment. As the garment is made out of different colours, London is also the city with various beauties like nature, calmness, smokeless, serene, etc.

And all that mighty heart is lying still! (14)

(Wordsworth: Composed upon the Westminster Bridge)

London is highlighted as the heart of Britain and perhaps the rest of the western world. In spite of the hectic life style, it seems to be calm and undisturbed early in the morning.

Fair as a star, when only one

Is shining in the sky. (7-8)

(Wordsworth: She Dwelt among the Untrodden Ways)

The poet compares his love with the star focusing on the charm and splendor. She has a unique identity which is unparalleled to others.

A violet by a mossy stone

Half hidden from the eye! (5-6)

(Wordsworth: She Dwelt among the Untrodden Ways)

The poet uses only one metaphor in the second stanza where he compares her to a violet. Putri states that Wordsworth tries to present the uniqueness of her beauty in these lines. He employs metaphors such as "violet" covered in mossy stone to impart the idea that she is latent and overlooked by most people, but she is very beautiful.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Figurative language is an essential component of poetry. The subtle study of simile and metaphor helps ponder into the depth of poetry. It replaces the traditional literal ways of describing persons or objects with the analytical conceptualization of the figurative language. Through the metaphors Wordsworth implies the themes like grandeur, sensibleness, honesty, beauty and love. The metaphors construct the theme. As a romantic poet, he emphasizes a union with nature. This conjugation frees the mind from the stir and thrust of its own dark emotions. He seems to feel whatever is entrenching in the composesures of the mind is the result of it being infatuated with nature. An embrace with nature and its aesthetics give man the required contentment and delight. Readers can enjoy the fantasy of returning to nature and a mystical life from his poems. This article is a valuable resource for students with an interest in the field of literature. It provides valuable information and insights that can aid in the understanding and appreciation of literary works.

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