

**5. Our Chosen Stylistic Approach ‘that of Walter Nash on
a Passage from *Odour of Chrysanthemums* by D.H
Lawrence’**

The approach chosen is that of Walter Nash. His article is extracted from *Language and Literature* by Ronald Carter (1982). His analysis is divided into several parts:

- 1- A sample text.
- 2- Setting: Symmetry and Perspective.
- 3- The Development of the Scene: Phases and Modes of Narrative.
- 4- The Actors (i) Identity and Relationship.
- 5- The Actors (ii) The Woman.
- 6- The Actors (iii) The Boy
- 7- The Environment
- 8- Conclusion

In the following lines, we are reporting his article in full and we shall be commenting on the procedures adopted just after:

On a passage from Lawrence’s ‘Odour of Chrysanthemums

WALTER NASH

I A Sample Text

Intuitive response to D.H Lawrence's classic story *Odour of Chrysanthemums* suggests that its theme might be defined in the one word *alienation*. A woman is alienated from her husband, and this is the major issue; but it includes or is contingent upon other alienations- family relationships are strained, a housewife is uneasy among her neighbours, man is a mere tenant in his industrial environment. These paradigmatic variants of the general theme are explored cumulatively in a series of episodes any one of which would provide a representative stylistic sample.

One such sample text, perfectly defined and self-contained, occurs shortly after the beginning of the narrative. The following notes take into account the general patterning of the text as a narrative framework, the structuring of its content, and the relevance of stylistic device to structural intention. My metalanguage, except where otherwise indicated (and apart from *ad hoc* terms) is based on Quirk et al. (1972). The text is that of the Penguin (1968) edition of *The Prussian Officer and Other Stories*. Lines are numbered for convenience of subsequent reference:

- 1- *The engine whistled as it came into the wide bay of*
- 2- *railway lines beside the colliery, where rows of trucks*
- 3- *stood in harbour.*
- 4- *Miners, single, trailing and in groups, passed like*
- 5- *shadows diverging home. At the edge of the ribbed*

6- *level of sidings squats a low cottage, three steps down*

7- *from the cinder track. A large bony vine clutched at*

8- *the house, as if to claw down the tiled roof. Round*

9- *the bricked yard grew a few wintry primroses. Beyond,*

10- *the long garden sloped down to a bush-covered brook*

11- *Course. There were some twiggy apple-trees, winter*

12- *Crack trees, and ragged cabbages. Beside the path*

13- *hung dishevelled pink chrysanthemums, like pink cloths*

14- *hung on bushes. A woman came stooping out of the*

15- *felt-covered fowl-house, then drew herself erect,*

16- *having brushed some bits from her white apron.*

17- *She was a tall woman of imperious mien, handsome,*

18- *with definite black eyebrows. Her smooth black hair*

19- *was parted exactly. For a few moments she stood*

20- *steadily watching the miners as they passed along the*

21- *railway; then she turned towards the brook course.*

22- *Her face was calm and set, her mouth was closed with*

23- *disillusionment. After a moment she called:*

24- *'John!' There was no answer. She waited and*

25- *then said distinctly:*

26- *'Where are you?'*

27- *'Here!' replied a child's sulky voice from among*

28- *the bushes. The woman looked piercingly through the*

29- *dusk.*

30- *'Are you at that book?' she asked sternly.*

31- *For answer the child showed himself before the*

32- *raspberry-canes that rose like whips. He was a*

33- *small, sturdy boy of five. He stood quite still,*

34- *defiantly.*

35- *'Oh! said the mother, conciliated. 'I thought*

36- *you were down at that wet brook-and you remember*

37- *what I told you' —*

38- *The boy did not move or answer*

39- *'Come, come on in,' she said more gently, 'it's*

40- *getting dark. There's your grandfather's engine*

41- *coming down the line!'*

42- *The lad advanced slowly, with resentful, taciturn*

43- *movement. He was dressed in trousers and waistcoat*

44- *of cloth that was too thick and hard for the size of*
45- *the garments. They were evidently cut down from a*
46- *man's clothes.*

47- *As they went towards the house he tore at the*
48- *ragged wisps of chrysanthemums and dropped the petals*
49- *in handfuls along the path.*

50- *'Don't do that – it does look nasty,' said his*
51- *mother. He refrained, and she, suddenly pitiful,*
52- *broke off a twig with three or four wan flowers and*
53- *held them against her face. When mother and son*
54- *reached the yard her hand hesitated, and instead of*
55- *laying the flower aside, she pushed it in her apron-*
56- *band. The mother and son stood at the foot of the*
57- *three steps looking across the bay of lines at the*
58- *passing home of the miners. The trundle of the small*
59- *train was imminent. Suddenly the engine loomed past*
60- *the house and came to a stop opposite the gate.*

II Setting: Symmetry and Perspective

An eminent feature of this passage is the symmetry of its scenic arrangement; it begins and ends with the lively bustle of the little engine and the silent, shadowy 'passing' of the miners. The engine appears first in 1, the miners following in 4-5, while at the end of the text the miners reappear in 58 and the engine in 59. The inversion (*engine-miners/miners-engine*) seems to suggest that industry has the first and last word; machines have greater vitality than human beings. (The engine is of course mentioned at one other point – in 40-1- but the reference is made in direct speech, and is not an element in the general pattern of scenic description.)

Within this frame other symmetries are incorporated. Thus, in 6 the cottage 'squats' *three steps down from the cinder track*, while in 56-7 a woman and a boy (two of the inhabitants of the cottage) are seen standing *at the foot of the three steps*. There is another striking example of symmetrical recursion in the *dishevelled pink chrysanthemums* of 13-14, which reappear as *the ragged wisps of chrysanthemums* in 48. These two phrases occur at almost exactly correspondent points in relationship to the beginning and end of the text. By line 14, indeed the scene is set, and we return to it, after the presentation of the actors, in 47ff. Its elements, and their placing in the text, may be recapitulated thus: *engine* (1) – *miners* (4-5) – *steps* (6) - *chrysanthemums* (13-14)/ *chrysanthemums* (48) - *steps* (57) - *miners* (58) - *engine* (59).

The layout plots a simple scheme of movement, from the railway line to the house to the garden, where the central encounter between the woman and the boy takes place, and so from the garden back to the house and the railway line; a tour in the course of which attention is carefully drawn to the chrysanthemums that figure in the

title and symbolise the theme of the narrative. Throughout the text, shifts in perspective are marked by the occurrence of constructions (mainly adjuncts) indicating a position or direction. Some place adjuncts – for example, *past the house* (59), *opposite the gate* (60) – look forward to another scene, but the majority relate to the staging of the current action: *At the edge of the ribbed level of sidings* (5), *Round the bricked yard* (8), *Beyond* (9), *Beside the path* (12), *towards the brook course* (21), *before the raspberry canes* (31), *towards the house* (47), *at the foot of the three steps* (56).

The position of these elements in their respective sentences is of some relevance to the structure of the text as a whole. The first four of the quoted instances make a well-defined group; as their typography indicates, each of them occurs at the beginning of a sentence. The second paragraph, in which these examples occur, is in effect a set of stage directions- a register in which the ‘fronted’ place adjunct is not uncommon. There is, however, a further stylistic point. The effect of this positioning is to create a powerful end-focus on the scenic elements in the sentences concerned- for example, on *the low cottage, the few wintry primroses, the dishevelled pink chrysanthemums*. The adjuncts thus point to features of landscape which constitute not only a background imagery but also a source of feeling, in that they condition the reader’s responses to the text.

In the remaining examples the place adjuncts have receded to a post-verbal position where as a rule they merely specify the location or direction of a movement on the part of one or other of the actors. The focus is now on people, on humanity depressed and struggling, rather than on the vegetation that so compellingly symbolises the depression and the struggle. The place adjuncts lose something of their dynamic

importance and become mere labels of position. In one instance (*and dropped the petals in handfuls along the path*, 48-9) this softening of emphasis is particularly noticeable; the place adjunct *along the path* occurs after, and is in a sense subordinate to, the process adjunct *in handfuls*. The latter is involved in the emotive energy of *tore at* and *dropped* in a way that the former is not. These differences in the positioning and semantic implication of the place adjuncts are by no means fortuitous. They are symptomatic of a deliberate shift of emphasis, further discussed below, from environmental colouring to human response.

III The Development of the Scene: Phases and Modes of Narrative

The scene develops through passages of description and direct speech which intermesh, gradually constructing the pattern of relationships between the human figures and their environment. Though they are not typographically signposted, it is possible to discern the phases of development with some degree of certainty. The text appears to be constructed on the following frame:

Phase

I from: The engine whistled as it came into the wide bay of railway lines beside the colliery, where rows of trucks stood in harbour.(1-3)

To: Beside the path hung dishevelled pink chrysanthemums, like pink cloths hung on bushes. (12-14)

II from: A woman came stooping out of the felt-covered fowl-house... (14-15)

To: Her face was calm and set, her mouth was closed with
disillusionment. (22-3)

III from: After a moment she called: (23)

To: They were evidently cut down from a man's clothes. (45-6)

IV from: As they went towards the house he tore at the ragged wisps of
chrysanthemums... (47-8)

to: Suddenly the engine loomed past the house and came to a stop
opposite the gate. (59-60)

Of these phases I and II present a clear descriptive unity; in I an environment is described, while II shifts to a description of the woman. Phase IV begins as Phase I ends, with an allusion to the chrysanthemums, and returns to 'environmental' description; thus, in formal marking and in content it, too, is fairly well defined. Only Phase III is irregular, not so obviously devoted to a single purpose (e.g. describing a background or a personality), shifting back and forth between speech and description, leaving unanswered certain questions of character and behaviour. In this very lack of closure it is the vital centre of the text, a seed of narration rather than a descriptive ground.

In the shift from phase to phase, the mode of narration alters in relationship to the content. A rough account of these changes is presented in the following table:

Phase	Lines	Mode	Content
I	1-14	Description	An environment

II	14-16 17-23	Description	A woman placed in the environments: her relationship to it by implication discordant
III	24-6	Direct speech, with some descriptive intrusions	The woman and a child in confrontation
IV	47-60	Descriptions, with one brief intrusion of direct speech	Woman and child together confronting the environment.

This requires some amplificatory comment. Phase II consists in effect of two separate passages of description (11-14, 15-21), in the first of which the woman makes a ‘dynamic’ entry into the scene, while in the second she holds something of a ‘static’ pose. This shift is reflected in stylistic details to be discussed presently. Another feature which is necessarily overlooked in the tabular account is the role, in Phase III, of what are called ‘descriptive intrusions’ (31-4, 38, 42-6). It is in fact through these, and not through speech, that the boy is presented. He speaks only one word; otherwise it is the woman whose voice is heard in this bleak setting, and whose character is reflected in the reporting tags or style adjuncts – *said distinctly* (25), *asked sternly* (30), *said more gently* (39).

The salient point of this development is the involvement of the human figures

with each other and with their shiftily animated surroundings. (By 'human figures' I mean of course the woman and the boy; the miners are neutralised figures, mere shadows in the dusk of industry.) The environment has a suppressive power which is hinted at in the figurative language of Phase I (e.g. *clutched at the house, as if to claw down the tiled roof*, 7-8), and which is quiet strongly established for the reader by the time he reaches Phase IV. In the responses of the woman her surroundings we sense both antagonism and a helpless resignation; while the boy appears as the victim of an anxious parental concern that expresses itself in fruitlessly punitive gestures (cf. *Raspberry canes that rose like whips* (32), where the environmental detail indirectly suggests the threat of punishment for disobedience). Woman and boy alike are engaged in a struggle to exert an individual will, against each other and against the conditions that overwhelm them.

IV The Actors: (I) Identity and Relationship

The relationship of the two actors is ingeniously plotted in the grammar and lexis of Phases II and III. A series of minor shifts in syntax or vocabulary brings the characters closer to each other and also to the reader; by almost insensible degrees they are 'established' for him as figures with an identity – not yet complete, not yet so fully realised that they are actually mentioned by name, but certain enough for them to be accepted as textual acquaintances, as 'the woman and the boy in our story'

In 14 *a woman* (note the indefinite article) is introduced; in 17 she is described quiet fully as *a tall woman of imperious mien*, etc...; in 28 she is *the woman*; in 35 her

role is specified and she is the mother; in 50 there is a further change of determiner - *his mother*- fully establishing her relationship to the boy.

The son first appears as a disembodied voice (a child's sulky voice, 27) and then as *the child* in 31. In 33 a descriptive phrase specifies his sex and age – he is *a small and sturdy boy of five*. At his next appearance in 38, he is *the boy*, a designation that shifts to a 'warmer' synonym in 42, with *the lad*. The establishment of the actors as a pair, or corporate unit, conforms to the general pattern of movement from general to particular identity; thus *mother and son* in 53 is followed by *the mother and son* in 56.

The tactics of establishment are remarkably consistent. Determiners (*a, the, his*) lead from an unmarked or 'inchoate' preliminary identification (*e.g. a woman*) towards the firmer base of an anaphoric reference (*e.g. the woman*), or yet further towards the endophoric allusion that makes the textual connection between one figure and another (*e.g. his mother*). Synonymic and hyponymic variants (*child, boy, lad, son, woman, mother*) are also of obvious importance in the progressive familiarising of the two characters. We may note further how in two places an expanded description of the actor (*a tall woman of imperious mien, etc...*, 17, *a small sturdy boy of five*, 33) is the precursor of the anaphoric reference with definite article + noun denoting sex and age (*the woman*, 28, *the boy*, 38) the process of identification can be summarised thus:

A The Woman

Designation	Comment
(i) A woman, 14	Indefinite article: preliminary

	‘inchoate’ identification
(ii) a tall woman of imperious mien, handsome, with definite black eyebrows, 17	Indefinite article: pre- and elaborate post-modification figure described
(iii) the woman, 28	Definite article: figure now ‘anaphorically based’ in the text
(iv) the mother, 35	Definite article: hyponymic variation of noun: the woman’s social role textually established
(v) his mother	Shift of determiner to possessive Pronoun connection with other figure textually established

B The Boy

Designation	Comment
(i) a child’s sulky Voice, 27	Pre-modifying genitive makes preliminary identification; denotes age, not sex
(ii) the child, 31	Definite article: anaphoric references gives figure some base in text, but sex still unspecified
(iii) a small sturdy boy of five, 33	Indefinite article: pre- and post-modification: age and sex

specified

(iv) the boy, 38

Definite article: figure now
'anaphorically based' in text

(v) the lad, 42

Definite article: synonymic
variation; warmer, more intimate
response suggested, the reader's
sympathy invited- cf. the effect
of pathos in the description of
trousers and waistcoat 'cut down
from a man's clothes'

C Woman and Boy Together

Designation

Comment

(i) mother and son, 53

No determiner: preliminary
identification of the corporate unit:
further hyponymic shift (to son), in
line with already established shift
(see A (iv) to mother)

(ii) the mother and son, 56

Definite article: anaphoric
reference gives textual
underscoring to the relationship

As a footnote to this analysis of identities and relationships in the text, it may be

added that a further relationship is introduced in the woman's remark, *there's your grandfather's engine coming down the line!* (41-2). This has a twofold function. It makes a point of intersection between what we see of the environment and what we learn about the actors - we might say that the outer, descriptive phases I and IV here briefly intrude upon the inner phase III, secondly, it establishes a point of connection with the next episode (Penguin, 206-7), in which the engine-driver/grandfather is seen in conversation - or, rather, confrontation-with his daughter.

V The Actors: (ii) the Woman

As well as establishing the woman's social position, the text provides a number of effective indices to her character. A feature of obvious importance is the alternation of modifier and adjunct as carriers of evaluative description: *tall, imperious, handsome, definite, smooth, calm, set/exactly, steadily, piercingly, sternly*.

The adjuncts are particularly noteworthy, in that they relate or 'interlock' presentations of three different aspects of her being-physical appearance, activity and manner of speech. Thus, the manner adjunct in *her smooth 'black hair was parted exactly'* (18-19) defines an appearance or, to use a distinctive and convenient term, a pose; in the *woman looked piercingly* (28) the adjunct qualifies an *activity*; while in *she asked sternly* (30) a style adjunct denotes her manner of speech.

Pose, activity and speech-style are the three elements by means of which her nature is intimated to the reader, and in 17-23, a passage of extended description, these elements appear to be arranged in a patterned scheme, punctuated by time adjunct (*for a few moments, then, after a moment*). The scheme may be summarised: Pose - TA -

Activity - TA - Activity - Pose - TA - Speech. The elements of the pattern are diversely weighted, however, as a reading of the passage will show:

She was a tall woman of imperious mien, handsome, with definite black eyebrows. Her smooth black hair was parted exactly (POSE). For a few moments (TA) she stood steadily watching the miners as they passed along the railway (ACTIVITY). Then (TA) she turned towards the brook course (ACTIVITY). Her face was calm and set, her mouth was closed with disillusionment (POSE). After a moment (TA) she called (SPEECH):

Throughout the text generally, her 'activities' present a point of stylistic interest. There is some contrasting of transitive and intransitive patterning; more precisely, there is a contrasting of operative and static processes. At her first appearance, in 11-14 (the first part of Phase II), the woman is an agent with some volitional and operative power over her own person and the things around her (cf. *drew herself erect, having brushed some bits from her apron*, 15). In the remainder of Phase II, and throughout Phase III, however, all effective activity withers, and the agent makes no impress on her surroundings. Such phrases as *she stood steadily watching, she said distinctly, the woman looked piercingly, she asked sternly* denote no activity more positive than looking and speaking.

This recession into inoperativeness is introduced by a sequence of 'pose' elements (see above). The clauses presenting these are, as one might expect, structures in which the verb is a mere copula (*was*) and the subject is in most cases a noun

denoting a part of the body (*hair, face, mouth*). She becomes for a time a face, a voice, a *mien* - nothing more. It is only in the passage's last phase that the will to goal-directed activity is reasserted (*broke off a twig with three or four wan flowers and laid them against her face, 52-3, she pushed it in her apronband, 55-6*).

She is characterised by one fine stylistic touch in Phase IV, where instead of 'she hesitated' we read *her hand hesitated* (54). There is a shift of initiating agency from the whole person to a part, the hand, which is treated as though it had an independent will. This device expresses in a very telling way her division against herself, her alternations of voluntary act and involuntary response, and her reluctance to admit any feeling of tenderness about her marriage. It betrays a vulnerability which we might not suspect in *a tall woman of imperious mien...with definite black eyebrows*.

VI The Actors: (iii) the Boy

The boy is not so intensively portrayed and yet the presentation of this secondary figure is carefully structured. There are analogies between his introduction into the text and that of the woman. Of her, it is observed that she *drew herself erect, having brushed some bits from her white apron* (15-16), and then, in immediate continuation, *She was a tall woman of imperious mien* (17). Subsequently it is stated of her son that *the child showed himself before the raspberry canes that rose like whips* (31-2) and that *He was a small, sturdy boy of five* (32-3). Here are obvious parallels between the reflexive constructions (*drew herself erect, showed himself*) and between the descriptive statements (*She was a tall woman of imperious mien, He was a small, sturdy boy of five*). There is, moreover, a subtler functional parallel between the

participial clause *having brushed some bits etc.* (16) and the place adjunct *before the raspberry canes etc.* (31-2). Each of these in its own way projects a character: the woman's active and precise, the child's passive before the intimation of punishment.

He is presented through alternations of 'pose' and 'activity'. The 'activity' is at first merely existential (*He stood quite still*, 33, *the boy did not move*, 38), yielding to movement (*the lad advanced slowly*, 42) and then to suddenly positive (and destructive) action (*he tore at the ragged wisps of chrysanthemums*, 47-8). Thus, although he says practically nothing, he gradually emerges as an active 'wilful' personality – a development which, indeed, makes something of a counterpoise to the mother's recession from stern admonition into conciliation, gentleness and pitiful hesitancy. The earlier stages of his emergence are marked by the strategic use of manner adjuncts (*defiantly*, 34, *with resentful taciturn movement*, 42) as well as by the modifier (*sulky*, 27) that characterises his one utterance. The description of his clothing in 43-6 –the most extended 'pose'- is important in constituting a transition between the earlier, 'passive', and the later, 'active', stage of presentation. The actor is endowed - literally *invested*- with a presence.

VII The Environment

It is an essential feature of the text that the environment should not be a mere background, but should seem to be informed with a covert and in some respects hostile animation. The human actors encounter the dispiriting shapes of non-human presences.

The first phase of the text is largely devoted to the establishment of a sense of

the environment as a psychic shadow-partner to the human world – and here the descriptive modifier is a pervasive device: *the ribbed level* (5-6), *a large bony vine* (7), *ragged cabbages* (12), *dishevelled pink chrysanthemums* (13). There is a shadowy anthropomorphism in these constructions, a suggestion of the skeleton (*ribbed, bony*), of poor clothing (*ragged*), of neglected appearance (*dishevelled*). The environment lives a depressed and impoverished existence, like its occupants. A feeling of resignation is implicit in the very sentence-structure- e.g. in the ‘existential’ sentence *There were some twiggy apple-trees, etc.* (11) and in the sentences with ‘fronted’ place adjuncts and intransitive verbs (*grew, hung*) which suggest ‘state’ rather than ‘event’ (see Leech, 1971, p. 5). Only in one powerful instance (*A large bony vine clutched at the house, etc., 7*) do sentence-structure and verb-type project a sense of agency and volition.

A skilful feature of the style here is that the constructions quoted above, with their shifted, metaphor-making collocations, are set among other premodified noun-phrases where there is little or no metaphoric intent, e.g. *a low cottage* (6), *the bricked yard* (9), *a few wintry primroses* (9), *the long garden* (10), *a bush-covered brook course* (10), *some twiggy apple-trees* (11), *the felt-covered fowl-house* (15). These constructions are purely descriptive; the metaphor-bearing phrases lurk among them and in a way are natural extensions of them- there is, after all, a descriptive similarity between *bony vine* and *twiggy apple-tree*.

A related point is that the supremely symbolic chrysanthemums are also made to ‘lurk’ in the general hyponymy of vegetation which includes the wintry primroses, the bushes by the brook, the apple-trees, the winter-crack trees, the cabbages and, a little

later in the text, the raspberry cane. At a first encounter, the chrysanthemums are seemingly no more than neglected flowers in a straggly and soured garden. If it were not for the title of the story, we might pay no particular attention to them. There is, however, a further stylistic focus upon them, a device of presentation which they share with the vine and the raspberry canes. All three items (vine, chrysanthemums, raspberry canes) are marked in the text by subordinate or complementary construction with *like or as if*; *as if to claw down the tiled roof* (8), *like pink cloths hung on bushes* (13-14), *like whips* (32).

In the first and last of these instances, the focus is powerfully sharpened by the inclusion in the construction of verbs or nouns with antagonistic or punitive connotations ('clutched', 'claw', 'whips'). There are fairly obvious reasons for this heavy stylistic underscoring. The image of the bony, clutching vine marks the beginning of a description of the cottage, the garden, and the two actors; from the outset a note of hostility and struggle is sounded. The stylistic emphasis is thus related to the general structure of the text. Similarly, the allusion to the raspberry canes makes the point that the child lives against a background of hostility; to some extent the plants symbolise the environment he has to contend with, and to some extent they express the character of his relationship with his parents. It may be noted incidentally that this is another point in the text at which there is an 'intersection' of structural elements, that is of the description of the environment which mainly occupies the opening and closing phases of the passage, and the encounter of personalities which constitutes the central phase (cf. the allusion to the engine in 40, and my comment on this).

The initial reference to the chrysanthemums (*hung...like pink cloths hung on bushes*, 13-14) is not quite so emphatically underscored; indeed, there is a gesture of ineffectuality both in the simile itself and in the apparently flaccid repetition of *hung*. The reference is marked, if we are alert to it, but not so strongly marked that we cannot be distracted by other matters. Strength of allusion is postponed until the flowers are referred to a second time, after a human encounter, when the *ragged wisps of chrysanthemums* (47-8) assume something like a personality. Common collocations of *ragged* and *wisps*-‘ragged clothes’, ‘wisps of hair’- suggest these to the reader and perhaps suggest also a pathetic contrast with the earlier description of the woman, whose *smooth black hair was parted exactly* (18-19).

VIII Conclusion

These notes assume as indispensable three elements (if that is the right word) of procedure: an intuitive response to the text, a search for textual pattern, and an identification of the linguistic/stylistic features that support intuition and demonstrate the patterning. The assumption is possibly commonplace and applicable to any piece of stylistic analysis, but it implies footnotes which may well be worth writing.

The first of these concerns is the importance of *structure*. In the analysis of lyric poems (hitherto a major preoccupation of stylisticians) one important element of structure – the articulatory pattern, or ‘frame’ of the text – is manifested through the poem’s metre, stanzaic scheme, and so on. In prose the discursive framework is rarely manifested in this way, and so a structural interpretation at this primary level becomes an important preliminary to further observations on the text. Without such an

interpretation, remarks on language and style are necessarily random and unrelated. However, it is not simply a matter of determining a structure which then provides a framework of reference for stylistic features. The case is rather that linguistic *and other* promptings suggest a structural scheme which provides points of reference for stylistic features which then amplify and confirm the scheme.

It is important to realise that the reader's intimations of the patterning of a text may be guided by clues other than linguistic. A literary text has a total power of appeal which is to be described in terms of semiotics or aesthetics, *including some aspects of linguistics*, rather than of a strictly and exclusively linguistic model. In certain respects a text may be similar to a picture, in that it has an iconographic program (this could, indeed, be said of the Lawrence passage); or it may have something in common with music, say, in its repetitions of a *Leitmotiv*, or even with mathematics in its modelling of some principles such as that of binary alternation. All these things may be described in linguistic or quasi-linguistic terminology, but they are not in the strictest sense proper to linguistics. The point is perhaps obvious, yet it is one that linguistic stylisticians do not always readily concede.

A study of the Lawrence passage reveals the importance of two structural levels, or planes of analysis. The first of these is a *plane of articulation*, the scheme of cohesion and design in the text (described here mainly under the headings of 'setting and perspective' and 'development'); to describe this is to establish the ground upon which eminent stylistic features are mapped, and to provide for the prose text something roughly equivalent to the stanzaic or sectional scheme of a poem. The second level of structure is a *plane of information* (or possibly 'motif'), and involves

the superimposition on the articulatory plane of elements of characterisation, symbolism, etc. (In the foregoing account, analysis on this plane is represented by the sections on 'the actors' and 'the environment'.) Inevitably one uses words like 'superimposition' or 'intersection' in trying to describe the relationship of the two planes, but they are misleading. 'Interlocking' or 'intermeshing' would be more satisfactory. It is necessary to understand the scheme of articulation before we can respond fully to the contained pattern; but, on the other hand, we need to have some response to the pattern of character and symbolic motif before we can properly perceive the articulatory design.

The reading of such a text is, indeed, a process of intermeshing and mutually supportive responses. Intuition (literary sensitivity, a predisposition to find patterns of meaning) is vital but after the first impulses it does not continue to work unprompted. Further promptings come with the observation of linguistic/stylistic features which are perhaps marked by pairings, contrasts, gradations, or some other method of foregrounding. Intuition is thus strengthened or modified, and is equipped to begin the definition of structural levels in the text. The discovery of one level involves the perception of another; and meanwhile the detection of linguistic features continues, supporting or qualifying the structural interpretation, guiding the intuition to further discoveries. Figure 7.1 is an attempt to chart the process of interlinking

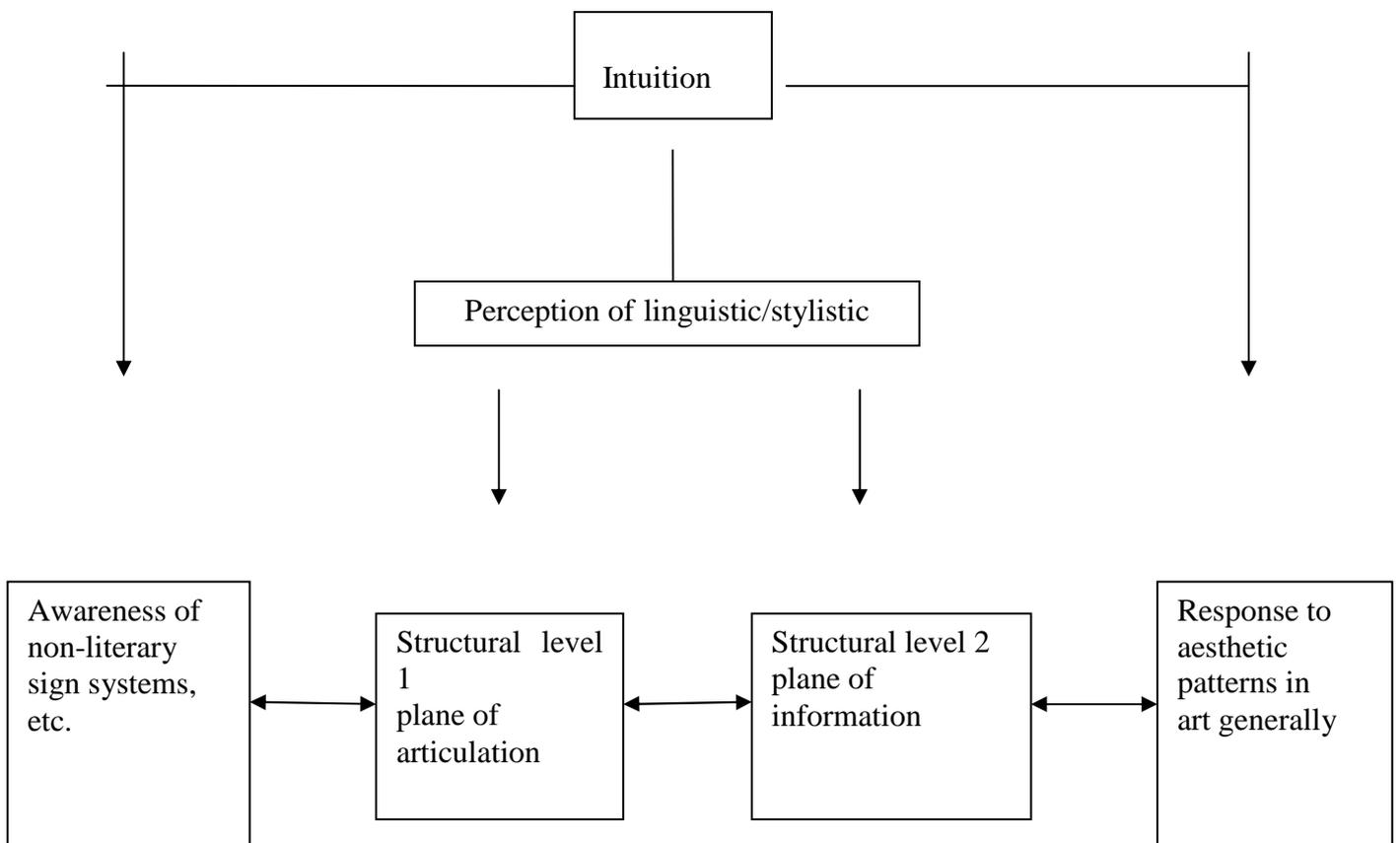


Figure 4: The Process of Interlinking Discoveries and Impulses.

discoveries and impulses. It is empirically derived from the study of one short passage and is quite certainly too simple in outline to serve as a hypothesis accounting for what happens when we attempt close reading of piece of prose fiction. Nevertheless, it

points to important elements in the reading process and may usefully draw attention to the fact that in many instances stylistic description is necessarily a complex of linguistic and extra- (or supra-) linguistic references.

In a sample text, Walter Nash presents the main theme of the passage and introduces his method of analysis taking into account the general patterning of the text, and how stylistic devices fit into the structural intention. The metalanguage is that of Quirk (1972), and he quotes the passage under study and numbers the lines for future references and mentions the edition from which the passage was extracted.

He continues by describing the setting, symmetry and perspective. He highlights that the words engine-miners and miners-engine occur at the beginning and end of the text forming a kind of framework putting us in the midst of the world of the miners and machines, the world of the mining industry, a world D.H Lawrence knew well. Other words are repeatedly referred to such as steps -chrysanthemums so that we have miners (45) – steps (6) – chrysanthemums (13-14) / chrysanthemums (48) – steps (57) – miners (58) engine (59) – The layout scene presents a movement from the railway line to the house to the garden, where the main meeting between the woman and the boy takes place and back again from the garden to the house and the railway line. As positions and directions are indicated, adjuncts are highly used: some point to a movement: *past the house, opposite the gate*, but most of them express the staging of the current action *Round the bricked yard, Beside the path, before the raspberry canes* etc.

Some are fronted – position adverbs and as such add a particular focus in so/far/as they not only constitute a background imagery, but also impart a despairing and sad feeling too. The others merely specify the location or direction of a movement

on the part of one of the actors.

In the second part of the text, it is no longer the vegetation which is described but people who are mere shadows, trailing like automatons and a sulky child responding defiantly to his mother. So here, the analyst tries to examine how the text is structured, which words are recurrent forming a loop and enclosing the mother and son inside the dispiriting world of the mining industry. Remarks are made concerning the adjuncts which emphasize setting and the modifiers which give a sad mood to it.

Walter Nash then divides and comments on the text according to how the scene develops alternating between description and direct speech and content (description of an environment first, then of a woman and of her dissonant relationship with it, of the same woman confronting her child, of them confronting the environment).

In part four, Walter Nash identifies the actors and their relationships according to the grammar and lexis of the first paragraphs showing the movement from general to particular identity : “a woman” (line 14) becomes “a tall woman of imperious mien” to “the woman” and to “mother” making clear the relationship between the woman and the boy.

As to the boy, he is presented first through his voice “a child”, “sulky voice” (line 27) to the child (line 31) to “a small sturdy boy of five” (line 33) to “the boy” and then to the “lad”.

The phrase “mother and son” (line 53) becomes “the mother and the son” establishing an anaphorically-based reference from general to definite identity. We can conclude how the actors are identified first from the use of indefinite article and pre-and post- modification to the use of the definite article which gives both characters an

anaphoric based reference to the use of hyponymic variation of noun highlighting the social role of the woman (as “the mother”) and finally to the use of possessive pronoun establishing the family link between the woman and the boy in “his mother” (line 50). In part four, Walter Nash establishes the relationship between the mother and the child through textual cohesion: the use of the indefinite article to the anaphorically-based definite reference; he also uses lexical cohesion through hyponyms such as woman, mother, boy, lad.

In part five and six, focus on lexis and grammar is further emphasized by Walter Nash when he links the linguistic items with their meanings and purports : for example, the alternation of modifier and adjunct is expressive of an evaluative description in : “tall”, “imperious”, “handsome”, “definite”, “smooth”, “calm”, ‘set/exactly’, ‘steadily’, ‘piercingly’, ‘sternly’. The adjuncts reveal her strict physical appearance (‘her smooth black hair was parted exactly’), her activity (‘she looked piercingly’) and manner of speech (“she asked sternly”).

Concerning her activities, the analyst notes transitive and intransitive verbs, a contrasting of operative and static processes: ‘operative’ in “she drew herself erect”, “having brushed some bits from her apron” and static: “she stood steadily watching” “she said distinctly”. In the first part, parts of her body (hair, face, mouth) are followed by the copula (‘was’) expressing a static process, and then we face a more operative one towards the end with goal-directed verbs like *She broke off a twig*.

At the end of the text, we come back to the woman’s parts of the body which have a volitional will instead of her, as if she was divided against herself, as if there was an alternation between voluntary act and involuntary response. It shows a certain

weakness in this *Tall woman of imperious mien*.

Concerning the boy, W. Nash draws our attention to the same type of parallel structures D.H Lawrence uses to describe both the woman and the boy: The woman *drew herself* erect, having brushed some bits from her white apron” (15-16) and *the child showed himself before the raspberry canes that rose like whips* and between she was *a tall man of imperious mien* and he was *a small, sturdy boy of five*. Therefore, a parallelism is drawn between the reflexive constructions and the descriptive statements. The boy is shown in a ‘pose’ (*He stood quite still*) first and then acquires some activity (*the lad advanced slowly*) and then is seen as destructive (*He tore at the ragged wisps of chrysanthemums*). Therefore, the boy progressively appears as a wilful personality which contrasts to the mother’s early activity to her recession into conciliation. We may also notice the use of manner adjuncts (*defiantly*, 34, *with resentful, taciturn movement* 42) as well as the modifier (*sulky*, 27) which contributes to making up the boy a real presence in the text. Consequently, in part five and six, W. Nash again studies the lexis and the grammar to make a portrayal of the characters. He scrutinizes the use of modifiers and adjunct as carriers of evaluative appreciation on the woman’s physical appearance, activity and manner of speech.

He looks at the verbs noting a difference between transitive and intransitive verbs, between verbs of action and verbs of static process.

He makes a remark saying the woman and the boy are similarly depicted through reflexive and descriptive statements, but their attitudes are opposite: the woman from admonition to conciliation and the boy from stillness to destructiveness. A lot of concentration is focussed on adjuncts and modifiers too.

As to the environment (part seven), it is as dispiriting as the human figures acting in it. The main linguistic items through which this environment is conveyed is through the descriptive modifiers: “the ribbed level (5-6), a large bony vine (7), ragged cabbages (10), dishevelled pink chrysanthemums (13) , and these descriptive modifiers render the ideas of a skeleton (*bony, ribbed*), of poor clothing (*ragged*), of neglected appearance (*dishevelled*).

We may notice the emphasis on state rather than event suggested by the fronted-placed adjunct followed by the intransitive verbs (*grew, hung*). Only one sentence expresses a sense of volition and agency: *A large bony vine clutched at the house*. In brief, part seven puts a stress on the modifiers and their intended meanings. A reference to the early front-placed adjuncts followed by intransitive verbs suggests a state. Only one verb of action is used.

Finally, Walter Nash insists in his conclusion that whether we deal with poetry or prose, we should start with how the text is structured if we want to make any remarks on language and style. Without it, the sentences will be random and unrelated. More precisely than the structure, it is that linguistic and other promptings provide a structural scheme and references for stylistic features which then confirm the scheme.

We may also note that a literary text can be described in terms of semiotics and aesthetics including aspects of linguistics rather than depending on the latter. Moreover, what strikes us most in W. Nash’s dealing with D.H Lawrence’s passage is that he gives importance to two structural levels: the first is the plane of articulation, the scheme of cohesion and design in the text and the second is the plane of information which presupposes characterisation, symbolism etc... The conclusion fully propounds the

initial suggestion made in the first part that structure and content back up each other, that stylistic features inform the structure and confirm the scheme.