

Teaching Students to Discern Basic Elements of English Poetry

Lok Raj Sharma

Reader and Head

Faculty of Education

Makawanpur Multiple Campus, Hetauda, Nepal

Email: lokraj043@gmail.com

Abstract

Poetry, in spite of sharing some common elements of other genres of literature, is different from them owing to its intensifying emotional effect, copious musicality and imaginative hue. Diction of poetry is experienced to be deviated to make the familiar things unfamiliar and literary. The layout of poetry seems to be odd, absurd and incongruous for average readers. Sentence structures do not normally follow the grammatical rules of syntax. The deeper meanings it reveals are more prominent than its surface meanings. Sometimes what it says is not what it means because of its ironical tinge. It is necessary to all of us to have sound knowledge of elements of English poetry for understanding it in a better way. The focal objective of this article is to enable the bachelor and master level students to discern basic elements of English poetry. This article is also significant to those who are involved in studying and teaching English poetry.

Key words: Elements, genre, language, poetry.

1. Introduction

Poetry is a very widely read, talked, discussed, taught, analyzed and commented genre of literature. Poetry is tinted with the diversity of stuffs, flexibility of forms, multiplicity of structures, variety of sound devices and playfulness of diction. Elements refer to the constituents that can be noticed and experienced in the poems. The article writer has attempted to take the instances

that function as elements from different poems composed by various poets.

Teaching poetry is a difficult and tough task. The teachers who are teaching poetry at the college or university levels must have sound knowledge in linguistics and prosody. They must be well familiar with the elements of poetry for analyzing, explaining and evaluating poetry sensibly and fairly. They need to familiarize their students with the elements of poetry before teaching a particular poem. The article writer assumes that students should also have knowledge of the elements of poetry for understanding any poem properly. Therefore, the writer has attempted to point out some basic elements of poetry for facilitating both teachers and students through demonstration and analysis. This article may also be significant to the persons who desire to study poems well.

1.1 Objective of the Article

The chief objective of this article is to enable the students to discern basic elements of English poetry.

2. Review of Basic Elements of Poetry

This review includes title, stanza, music in poetry, figures of speech, tone, diction, speaker, form, setting, theme, syntax, punctuation, epigraph and epitaph as elements of poetry.

2.1. Title

The title is the first thing a reader sees in the beginning, so it's important to get to it in a right way. With some poems, the title functions as the first line of the poem; but it is not so with others. A good title can add depth to the poem. It helps illuminate the meanings for the reader. A title can be explicit, implicit, satiric or suggestive. This small element deserves more thought

of the reader than it usually gets. Poems can retain a thematic title, an explanatory title, a contextual title, a lead-in title, a

refrain title, a sensory title, a symbolic title and so on.

Demonstration: 1

The Sick Rose

“O Rose thou art sick.
The invisible worm,
That flies in the night
In the howling storm:

Has found out thy bed
Of crimson joy:
And his dark secret love
Does thy life destroy”.

William Blake: The Sick Rose

Analysis:

“The Sick Rose” is a symbolic title which presents suggestive meanings. In this poem, “Rose” symbolizes beauty, innocence, feminine quality, virginity etc. “Worm” symbolizes ugliness, experience, masculine quality and so on. We can also assert that the poet has personified “Rose” as an innocent beautiful lady who is destroyed by an experienced man.

2. 2 Stanza

A stanza is a unit of a poem. It has a fixed number of lines of verse forming a single unit of a poem. A poem is usually composed of multiple stanzas that are separated from each other with a blank space between them. Abraham (1993) defines a stanza as “a grouping of the verse line in a poem, set off by a space in the printed text” (p.198). Cuddon (1999) views a stanza as “a group of verse” (p.863). He further adds that “a stanza pattern is determined by the number of lines, the number of feet in each line and the metrical and rhyming schemes”. The stanza is the unit of structure in a poem.

Demonstration: 2

“He clasps the crag with crooked hands; Close to the sun in lonely lands, Ringed with the azure world, he stands. The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls; He watches from his mountain walls, And like a thunderbolt he falls”.	} } First stanza } Second stanza
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Tennyson: The Eagle

Analysis:

This poem is composed of two stanzas. Each stanza has three rhymed. It is called triplet. A poem may have different numbers of verse lines. We can name the stanzas according to the number of verse lines found in a stanza.

Number of verse lines in a stanza	Name of the stanza
2 (Rhymed)	Couplet
3 (Unrhymed)	Tercet
3 (Rhymed)	Triplet
4 (Rhymed or unrhymed)	Quatrain
5 (Rhymed or unrhymed)	Pentain / Quintain / Quintet
6 (Rhymed or unrhymed)	Sestet / Sexain / Sixain /Sextain
7 (Rhymed or unrhymed)	Heptastich / Heptet / Septet
8 (Rhymed or unrhymed)	Octet / octave
9 (Rhymed or unrhymed)	Nonette
10 (Rhymed or unrhymed)	Dizain
11 (Rhymed or unrhymed)	Roundel
12 (Rhymed or unrhymed)	Douzaine / Dozen

2.3 Music

Music is one of the salient elements of poetry. Poetry is rich in musical quality. Comley (1999) considers poetry as “a kind of sound word game that we value because of its expressive qualities” (p.528). Music in English poetry can be realized through alliteration, assonance, consonance, accent, cacophony, euphony, onomatopoeia, meter / rhythm, repetition and rhyme. These poetic elements are called sound devices or musical devices that make poetry a special art form different from other literary genres.

2.3.1 Alliteration

Wales (2001) opines that alliteration is “the repetition of the initial consonant in two or more words” (p.14). Alliteration makes the sound emphatic and emotive.

Demonstration: 3

“And the balls like pulses beat;
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky
Lay like a load on my weary eye”.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge: The Rime of the Ancient Mariner

Analysis:

We can observe a repetition of the consonant sounds /b/ in the words “balls” and “beat” , /s / in the words “sky” and “sea” , and / l/ in “lay”, “like” and “load”. Such words are known as alliterative words.

2.3.2 Consonance

Cuddon (1999) defines consonance is “the close repetition of identical consonant sounds before and after different vowels” (p.176).

Demonstration: 4

“The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;”

Gerard Manley Hopkins: God’s Grandeur

Analysis:

The poem retains the repetition of the consonant sounds / d / in “world”, “charged”, “grandeur” and “ God” with different vowel sounds before the consonance. Similarly, there is the repetition of the consonant sound / l / in “will”, “flame” and “foil”; and / k / in “like” and “shook”.

2.3.3 Assonance

Abrams (1993) asserts that assonance is the repetition of identical or similar vowel sounds, especially in “stressed syllable in a sequence of nearby words” (p.7). It produces a particular effect of euphony.

Demonstration: 5

“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...”

William Wordsworth: Daffodils

Analysis:

This stanza contains the repetition of the vowel sounds / əʊ / in “lonely”, “floats”, “o’er”, “host”, “golden” and “daffodils”; and / i: / in the words “beneath”, “trees,” and “breeze”.

2.3.4 Rhyme

Harmon (2009) views rhyme as “the identity of terminal sound between accented syllables, usually occupying corresponding positions in two or more lines of verse” (p.449).

Demonstration: 6

“Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow”.

Robert Frost: Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

Analysis:

This stanza involves the repetition of the same vowel sound / əʊ / in the words “know”, “though” and “snow” which begin with different consonant sounds /n/ , / ð / and / s /. The rhyme scheme of this stanza is aaba.

2.3.5 Repetition

Harmon (2009) considers repetition as the “reiteration of a word, sound, phrase, or idea” (p.442). Repetition can be used to appeal to our emotions, create mood, and to emphasize important ideas. It means repetition is the purposeful re-use of words, phrases, clauses and sometimes sentences for a special effect.

Demonstration: 7

“O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;
Rise up — for you the flag is flung — for you the bugle trills...”

Walt Whitman: O Captain! My Captain

Analysis:

The poet uses refrain throughout this poem to emphasize the mournful theme. See the repetition of the words “captain,” “rise up,” and “for you” in just these two lines. This theme continues throughout the poem. Such a repetition provokes emotive mood in the readers.

2.3.6 Rhythm

Wales (2001) considers rhythm as “the perceptual pattern of accented and unaccented syllables in a language” (p.348).

Demonstration: 8

Pattern of stressed / unstressed syllables:

U — U — U — U —

“She walks in beauty like the night”.

John Keats: She Walks in Beauty Like the Night

Analysis:

This verse line has 8 syllables. It consists of 4 disyllabic feet. An unstressed syllable is followed by a stressed syllable in a foot. Such a foot is called an iambic foot. If a verse line has 4 iambic feet, the verse line is said to be written in iambic tetrameter.

2.3.7 Meter

The pattern of recurrence of feet in a line of verse is called meter. According to Abrams (1993), meter is determined by the “pattern of stronger and weaker stresses in the syllables composing the words in the verse-line” (p.112). A foot is a unit of meter.

Demonstration: 9

— U — U — U — U

“Tell me not in mournful numbers”

Longfellow: A Psalm of Life

Analysis:

This verse line has 8 syllables. It consists of 4 disyllabic feet. A stressed syllable is followed by an unstressed syllable in a foot. Such a foot is called a trochaic foot. If a verse line has 4 trochaic feet, the verse line is said to be written in trochaic tetrameter. Meter is based on the nature and number of foot in the lines of poems.

There are 4 disyllabic feet and 8 trisyllabic feet that form meters. There are 12 meters in English poetry which follows **accentual-syllabic meter**. In this metrical system, each line has the same number of stressed and non-stressed syllables in a fixed order. This is by far the most common metrical system in English verse.

Table 1: Disyllabic Feet

S.N.	Nature of Foot (Two Syllables)	Name of Foot (Noun)	Name of Foot (Adjective)	Nature of Melody
1.	Stressed+ Stressed	Spondee	Spondaic	DUM_DUM
2.	Unstressed+ Unstressed	Pyrrhic	Pyrrhic	da_da
3.	Stressed + Unstressed	Trochee	Trochaic	DUM_da
4.	Unstressed + Stressed	Iamb	Iambic	da_DUM

If a foot is made up of three syllables, it is called a **trisyllabic foot**. There are eight trisyllabic feet in English poetry:

Table 2: Trisyllabic Feet

S.N.	Nature of Foot (Three Syllables)	Name of Foot (Noun)	Name of Foot (Adjective)	Nature of Melody
1.	Stressed + Stressed + Stressed	Molossus	Molossic	DUM-DUM-DUM
2.	Unstressed +Unstressed + Unstressed	Tribrach	Tribrachic	da-da-da
3.	Stressed + Stressed + Unstressed	Antibacchius	Antibacchaic	DUM-DUM-da
4.	Unstressed +Unstressed +Stressed	Anapest	Anapestic	da-da-DUM
5.	Stressed +Unstressed + Unstressed	Dactyl	Dactylic	DUM-da-da
6.	Unstressed + Stressed + Stressed	Bacchius	Bacchaic	da- DUM-DUM
7.	Stressed +Unstressed + Stressed	Amphimacer/ Cretic	Cretic	DUM-da-DUM
8.	Unstressed +Stressed + Unstressed	Amphibrach	Amphibrachic	da-DUM-da

Note: DUM→ Loudness & da →Softness

2.3.8 Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeia is a figure of speech in which the sounds reflect the sense. The words which imitate the sounds are called onomatopoeic words. Simpson (2004) asserts that onomatopoeia is “a feature of sound patterning which is often thought to form a bridge between style and content” (p.67).

Demonstration: 10

ARIEL:
 “Hark, hark!
 Bow-wow.
 The watch-dogs bark!
 Bow-wow.
 Hark, hark! I hear
 The strain of strutting chanticleer
 Cry, ‘cock-a-diddle-dow!’”

William Shakespeare: The Tempest

Analysis:

The character of Ariel in this play uses several examples of onomatopoeia. The dogs “bark” and say “bow-wow” while the chanticleer cries “cock-a-diddle-dow.” Shakespeare uses the onomatopoeias of animal noises to produce melodic sound in the poem.

2. 4 Exploitation of Figurative Language in English Poetry

Language which uses figures of speech is known as figurative language. A figure of speech refers to a certain conventional literary device that has been used by the writer to create a special meaning and unique form. Simile, metaphor, pun etc are common figures of speech. Wren and Martin (1981) state that figure of speech is “a departure from the ordinary form of expression or the ordinary course of ideas in order to produce a greater effect” (p.488). Similar concept of figures of speech is conveyed by

Corbett (1990) who asserts that figures of speech are “a form of speech artfully varied from common usage” (p.424). The use of figures of speech widens the horizon of meanings. Ogbulogo (2005) views that figures of speech help writers “to extend the meaning of concepts or phenomena, resulting in polysemy or transfer of senses” (p.45).

2.4.1 Simile

Wales (2001) considers simile as “a figure of speech whereby two concepts are imaginatively and descriptively compared”(p.358).

Simile is a figure of speech in which an explicit comparison is made between two unlike things by employing the syntactic words “like” or “as”.

Demonstration: 11

“ O my love is like a red, red rose
That’s newly sprung in June:
O my love’s like the melodie
That’s sweetly play’d in tune”.
Robert Burns: My Love

Analysis:

The poet has compared his love with a red red rose and the melody by using a syntactic marker “like.” The linguistic function of this comparison is to express his love that is pleasing to behold and pleasing to hear. It focuses on the freshness and mellifluousness of love.

Demonstration: 12

“I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats over vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils”.
- Wordsworth : Daffodils

Analysis:

In this piece of poem, the speaker compares himself with a cloud by using a linking word “as”. This comparison depicts the loneliness and wandering nature of the speaker.

2.4.2 Metaphor

Cuddon (1999) opines metaphor as “a figure of speech in which one thing is described in terms of another. A comparison is usually implicit; whereas in simile it is explicit” (p.507). Metaphor is a figure of speech which involves an implicit comparison of two dissimilar things with some common quality without using “as” or “like”.

Demonstration: 13

“ I’m a riddle in nine syllables

An elephant, a ponderous house,

A melon strolling on two tendrils

O red fruit ivory; fine timbers!”

Sylvia Plath: Metaphors

Analysis:

The speaker compares herself with a riddle, an elephant, a ponderous house, a melon, red fruit, ivory and fine timbers. The aim of this comparison is to show her heavy physical condition. Perhaps she is pregnant and feeling uncomfortable.

2.4.3 Hyperbole

Abrams (1993) says that figure of speech or trope, called hyperbole is “a bold overstatement, or the extravagant exaggeration of fact or of possibility; it may be used either for serious or ironic or comic effect”(p.85). It is an overstatement or an extravagant exaggeration of fact or of possibility.

Demonstration: 14

“An hundred years should go to praise
Thine eyes, and on thy forehead gaze;
Two hundred to adore each breast,
But thirty thousand to the rest”
Andrew Marvell: To His Coy Mistress

Analysis:

The lover is trying to win the heart of his beloved by saying that he will spend a great deal of time praising her parts of her body. It is exaggeration of time because nobody has such long years to survive to praise his beloved on the earth.

2.4.4 Paradox

A paradox is a statement which seems to be absurd or contradictory but it turns out to make a good sense. Abrams (1993) opines that a paradox is a “statement which seems on its face to be self-contradictory or absurd yet turns out to make good sense” (p. 140).

Demonstration: 15

“The child is father of the man”.

Wordsworth: My Heart Leaps Up When I Behold

Analysis:

This poetic line is absurd on the surface level, but it is actually right. A child becomes matured as time passes. He gets married and becomes father of another child. It shows the natural continuation of life through the time past, present and future.

Several figures of speech are found in English poems. Some of them are personification, symbol, imagery, irony, synecdoche, metonymy, euphemism and pun. The teachers should have sound knowledge of figures of speech to teach their students.

2.5 Tone

Tone is the author’s implicit attitude toward the reader, subject, and/or the people, places, and events in a work as revealed by the elements of the author’s style. Tone may be characterized as serious or ironic, sad or happy, private or public, angry or affectionate, bitter or nostalgic, or any other attitudes and feelings that human beings experience.

Demonstration: 16

“It was roses, roses, all the way,
With myrtle mixed in my path like mad.

The house-roofs seemed to heave and sway,
 The church-spires flamed, such flags they had,
 A year ago on this very day!"

Robert Browning: Patriot into Traitor

Analysis:

These are the opening lines from Robert Browning’ s famous poem “Patriot into Traitor,” which shows how nostalgic the king has become about his past, when he is given a heroic welcome. The people gather everywhere to have his glance. However, after a time span of a year, everything changes. The people, who were happy to welcome him at that time, are now eager to see him going to gallows. That is why he becomes nostalgic about the past.

2.6 Diction

Diction refers to the poet’s choice of words in a poem. Denotative diction refers to a poet’s use of dictionary definitions of words. Connotative diction refers to a poet’s use of words that have more personal or suggestive meanings. Poetic diction can be divided into three types: formal diction, middle diction and informal diction.

Formal diction refers to the dignified, impersonal and elevated use of language. Middle diction is used by most educated persons in their writing or speech. Informal diction refers to the language which is used in an informal situation.

It is the conversational language that includes colloquial, dialect, jargon and slang words. A poet has complete freedom of choice of lexical items for composing his poems. Poetic diction may involve formal words, informal words, abbreviations phrases, slangs, archaic words, colloquial words, jargon words, foreign words, idioms, and sometimes coined words.

2.6.1 Formal and Informal Words

Formal words are used in formal situations, whereas informal words are used in informal situations. We use informal words with friends, children, and relatives. The following list will help you to recognize the informal and formal ways of saying the same thing.

Demonstration: 17

Formal	Informal	Formal	Informal
Apologize	Say sorry	postpone, delay	Put off
Increase	Go up	Accumulate	Rack up

Analysis:

A poem may have several formal and informal words. Though it is difficult to distinguish them, the teachers should have sound knowledge about this. This demonstration is only for the example o f formal and informal words.

2.6.2 Phrase

Phrase is a group of words that stand together as a single unit, typically as a part of a clause or sentence. There are primarily five types of phrase: noun phrase, verb phrase, adjective phrase, adverbial phrase and preposition phrase.

Demonstration: 18

- ◆ Dolls
- ◆ A doll
- ◆ A beautiful doll
- ◆ A beautiful small doll
- ◆ A beautiful small thin doll
- ◆ A beautiful small thin new doll
- ◆ A beautiful small thin new red doll
- ◆ A beautiful small thin new red and blue doll
- ◆ A beautiful small thin new red and blue Japanese doll
- ◆ A beautiful small thin new red and blue Japanese plastic doll

Analysis:

This demonstration hints at the examples of noun phrase. In a noun phrase, a noun is a head word that occurs alone or at the end of the phrase with article / determiner and adjective(s). In the examples, “dolls” is a main word.

Demonstration: 19

- ◆ play
- ◆ is played (Passive)
- ◆ is playing
- ◆ is being played (Passive)
- ◆ has played
- ◆ has been playing
- ◆ has been played (Passive)
- ◆ may have been playing
- ◆ may have been played (Passive)

Analysis:

This demonstration hints at the examples of verb phrase. In a verb phrase, a main verb is a head word that occurs alone or at the end of the phrase with auxiliary verb(s). In the examples, “play” is a main word.

Demonstration: 20

- ◆ beautiful
- ◆ very beautiful
- ◆ extremely very beautiful
- ◆ so beautiful
- ◆ too beautiful

Analysis:

This demonstration hints at the examples of adjective phrase. In an adjective phrase, an adjective is a head word that occurs alone or at the end of the phrase with adverb(s) or intensifier(s). In the examples, “beautiful” is a main word.

Demonstration: 21

- ◆ beautifully

- ◆ very beautifully
- ◆ extremely very beautifully
- ◆ so beautifully
- ◆ too beautifully
- ◆ extremely beautifully

Analysis:

This demonstration hints at the examples of adverbial phrase. In an adverbial phrase, an adverb is a head word that occurs alone or at the end of the phrase with adverb(s) or intensifier(s). In the examples, “beautifully” is a main word.

Demonstration: 22

- ◆ at home
- ◆ in the room
- ◆ with a tall boy
- ◆ on the large flat table
- ◆ between the two beautiful dolls

Analysis:

This demonstration hints at the examples of preposition phrase. In a preposition phrase, a preposition is a head word which is followed by a noun or noun phrase. In the examples, “at”, “in”, “with”, “on” and “between” are prepositions.

2.6.3 Slangs

Slangs are very informal words and expressions that are more common in spoken language. They are not thought to be suitable for formal situations.

Demonstration: 23

- ◆ Dough (money)
- ◆ dude (man)
- ◆ chuck (food)
- ◆ kick a bucket (die)
- ◆ canned (drunk) etc.

Analysis:

The poet may employ slangs in his poems, but they are not common. Such words create new tastes in the readers.

2.6.4 Archaic Words

Archaic words are very old fashioned words. They are out of date.

Demonstration: 24

Words	Meaning	Words	Meaning
Abroad	out of doors	Bane	Poison
Advertisement	a notice to readers in a book	Bedlam	an asylum

Ague	malaria or a similar illness	Behold	see or observe
Aliment	food; nourishment	Behoof	benefit or advantage
Animalcule	a microscopic animal	Beldam	an old woman

Analysis:

Such words are no longer in everyday use or have lost a particular meaning in current usage but are sometimes used to impart an old-fashioned flavor to historical poetry, or in standard conversation or writing just for a humorous effect.

2.6.5 Proverb

Proverb is a short well-known sentence or phrase that states a general truth about life or gives advice.

Demonstration: 25

- ◆ Two wrongs don't make a right. (When someone has done something bad to you, trying to get revenge will only make things worse.)
- ◆ The pen is mightier than the sword. (Trying to convince people with ideas and words is more effective than trying to force people to do what you want.)
- ◆ A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. (Things we already have are more valuable than what we hope to get.)
- ◆ All that glitters is not gold. (Things that look good outwardly may not be as valuable or good.)
- ◆ A rolling stone gathers no moss. (A person who is always changing jobs and places has the advantage of less responsibility, but also the disadvantage of no fixed place to live.)

Analysis:

Every culture has a collection of wise sayings that offer advice about how to live your life. These sayings are called "proverbs". They are based on experiences of the old ones.

2.6.6 Idiom

Idiom is the language or dialect of a group of people. It is a phrase or sentence whose meaning is not clear from the meaning of its individual words and which must be learnt as a whole unit.

Demonstration: 26

- ◆ a hue and cry (a loud protest)
- ◆ lose heart (to grow discouraged)
- ◆ a dark horse (a person whose ability is unknown) .
- ◆ a black sheep (a useless person)

Analysis:

The use of idioms in the poems makes the students feel difficult to grasp the meaning of the poem. The teachers should encourage their students to learn more idioms and phrases.

2.6.7 Cliché

Cliché is a phrase or an idea which is used so often that it is no longer interesting, effective or relevant. It is a word or expression that has lost much of its force through overexposure.

Demonstration: 27

- ◆ Every man jack (everyone)
- ◆ pound of flesh (revenge)
- ◆ high and dry (left in helpless state)
- ◆ under a cloud (depressed) etc.

Analysis:

It is a word or expression that has lost much of its force through overexposure. The teachers should point out the jargons in the poems and explain the poems.

2.6.8 Jargons

Jargons are technical words or expressions used by a particular profession or group of people.

Demonstration: 28

- ◆ Collage, oil paint (arts)
- ◆ antibody, uterus (Biology)
- ◆ capital, budget (business)
- ◆ electron, atom (chemistry)
- ◆ bug, refresh (computer)
- ◆ writ, jury (law)
- ◆ la, note (music)
- ◆ x-axis, vertex (mathematics)
- ◆ cyclone, equator (geography)
- ◆ coal, chalk (geology) etc

Analysis:

Jargons are difficult for average readers to understand their meanings because their meanings are based on their subjects or fields activities. Such words demands our multiple intelligences.

2.6.9 Foreign words

English language constantly borrows words or expressions from other languages. No language is foreign to poetry.

Demonstration: 29

- ◆ Arbitrium (Latin): power of decision
- ◆ De facto (Latin): in fact
- ◆ Cadre (French): a list of officers
- ◆ Leitmotif (German): a recurring theme in a musical composition
- ◆ Denouement (American): final solution
- ◆ Al fresco (Italian): in the open air
- ◆ El Dorado (Spanish): golden land of one's dream.

Analysis:

Some poets like to use foreign words in their poems. It may be that they desire to show their pedantry on language. It may be that such words reveal cultural significance and originality of meanings. Such words make the poem unfamiliar and eerie. T. S. Eliot uses different words of different languages in his poem "The Waste Land".

2.6.10 Colloquial language

Colloquial language is a variety of language commonly employed in conversation or other communication in informal situations. Colloquial language is distinct from formal speech or formal writing. It is the variety of language that speakers typically use when they are relaxed and not especially self-conscious.

Demonstration: 30

Give me a hand = assist me.
Give you hell= shout at you
I am on the street= I am homeless.

Analysis:

It is used to create a natural or realistic and to affect in characters' dialogue in dramatic poems. It shows that they're working class - or ordinary, or from a particular area. It's used to create a **conversational** feel. This shows that the emotions are everyday, not elevated formal language.

2.7 Speaker

A speaker is a person who is speaking and his voice is the voice of the poem. There may be one or more speakers in a poem. They express their emotions, feelings, opinions, situations, problems and so on. The readers come to know his characters through his speech. Sometimes the readers may know the other characters, their conditions and so on from his speech as in dramatic monologues.

Demonstration: 31

"The hot night makes us keep our bedroom windows open.
Our magnolia blossoms. Life begins to happen.
My hopped up husband drops his home disputes,
and hits the streets to cruise for prostitutes,

free-lancing out along the razor's edge.

This screwball might kill his wife, then take the pledge.

Oh the monotonous meanness of his lust. . .

It's the injustice . . . he is so unjust—

whiskey-blind, swaggering home at five.

My only thought is how to keep alive.

What makes him tick? Each night now I tie

ten dollars and his car key to my thigh. . . .

Gored by the climacteric of his want,

he stalls above me like an elephant.”

Robert Lowell: To Speak of Woe that is in Marriage

Analysis:

The speaker of the poem is a woman who is sad because of her husband's cruel manner. She asserts that the cause of her sorrow is because of the marriage.

2.8 Form

A poem may or may not have a specific number of lines, rhyme scheme and/or metrical pattern, but it can still be labeled according to its form or style. Common types of poetry are as follows:

2.8.1 Sonnet: It is derived from the Italian word “sonnetto” which means a little sound or strain. It is a lyrical poem composed of fourteen lines mostly written in iambic pentameter. It has a special arrangement of rhymes. Like a lyric, it is the concentrated expression of a single thought or feeling or situation. “My Mistress's Eyes are Nothing like the Sun” by Shakespeare is an example of sonnet.

2.8.2 Sestina: Sestina is a highly structured form of poetry consisting of six six-line stanzas and a three-line envoy. The end words of the first stanza are repeated in varied order as end words in the other stanzas and also recur in the envoy. Pam White's “The Concord Art Association Regrets” is an example of sestina.

2.8.3 Villanelle: Villanelle is a French verse form consisting of five three-line stanzas and a final quatrain, with the first and third lines of the first stanza repeating alternately in the following stanzas. These two refrain lines form the final couplet in the quatrain. Dylan Thomas's “Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night” is a good example of villanelle.

2.8.4 Canzone is a lyric poem originating in medieval Italy and France and usually consisting of hendecasyllabic lines with end-rhyme. The canzone resembles a sonnet in the way it

unveils its subjects, but there are several structural differences. The example of canzone is Cino da Pistoia's "His Lament for Selvaggia".

2.8.5 Pastoral: Pastoral is a form of poetry which deals with life style of shepherds herding livestock around open areas of land according to seasons and the changing availability of water and pasturage. It lends its name to a genre of literature, art and music that depicts such life in an idealized manner, typically for urban audiences. Christopher Marlowe's "The Passionate Shepherd to His Love" is a good pastoral.

2.8.6 Ballad: Ballad which is a story in verse originally intended to be sung to the audience, is one of the oldest forms of folk literature. It is a narrative poem in short stanzas narrating a popular story. It is a narrative about a single event which is presented in a straight forward manner with attention to action. "The Demon Lover" by an anonymous poet is an example of ballad.

2.8.7 Elegy: Elegy comes from the Greek word "elegos" which means "mournful poem". It has found its way into the English language in the 16th century. The elegy which belongs to the category of serious meditative poetry is a formal poem composed on the death of an individual or upon death itself. Alfred Lord Tennyson's "Break, Break, Break" is one of the best elegies.

2.8.8 Ode: Ode which is of Greek origin, means a poem written to be recited to the accompaniment of music. It is a serious and dignified composition almost always in rhyme. It is longer than the lyric proper. It is often in the form of an address. It is a long lyric serious in subject, elevated in style and elaborate in stanzaic structure. Percy Bysshe Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind" is an ode.

2.8.9 Lyric: Lyric is identified as a song rendered to the accompaniment of the lyre. The lyric is now the name for a short poem usually divided into stanzas expressing the poet's own feelings, ideas, or thoughts. The lyric is short poem about a feeling, an emotion or a single idea. William Blake's "The Tyger" is a nice lyric.

2.8.10 Dramatic Monologue: Dramatic monologue is a kind of poetry which has the following features; a single speaker speaking out in a specific situation, presence of at least one silent interlocutor (addressee), conversational style of speech, speech more prominent than action, plot developed by monologue, psycho - analytical dimension etc. Robert Browning's poem "My Last Duchess" is one of the examples of dramatic monologue.

2.8.11 Free verse: Free Verse is an open form of poetry. It does not use consistent meter patterns, rhyme, or any other musical pattern. It thus tends to follow the rhythm of natural speech. "A Noiseless Patient Spider" by Walt Whitman is a free verse.

2.8.12 Blank verse: Blank Verse is poetry written in regular metrical but unrhymed lines, almost always iambic pentameters. It has been described as "probably the most common and influential form that English poetry has taken since the 16th century. Milton's "Paradise Lost" is written in blank verse.

2.9 Setting

Setting refers to the time and place of the poem's action. The setting can play a prominent role in shaping meanings of the poem and the moods of the speaker. The setting may also influence the readers. The setting in Robert Lowell's poem "To Speak of Woe that is in Marriage" is the speaker's home and night time.

2.10 Theme

Theme is a message, a point of view or a central idea of the poem. A poem may have one or more themes. There are various readers who explore varied meanings or themes from the same text. Here are some factors that contribute to the theme in poetry:

- The title of the poem
- Connection between the context and the text
- Social, psychological and economic factors dominating the poem
- The speaker's tone
- Tone of repetition, repetitive words, phrases or verse lines
- Use of literary devices
- Setting
- Knowledge and literary experience of the readers

Demonstration: 32

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up

like a raisin in the sun?

Or fester like a sore—

And then run?

Does it stink like rotten meat?

Or crust and sugar over—

like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags

like a heavy load.

Or does it explode?

Langston Hughes: Harlem

Analysis:

In the poem “Harlem”, the poet’s principal issue is “what happens to a dream deferred?” He employs rhetorical questions, simile, metaphor and images to suggest the answer. All these items reflect the negative and derogatory aspects that can be observed in life unless the dreams are fulfilled. Dry, fester, run, stink, crust, sags and explode are the major verbs which connote bad and bitter feelings African-American are experiencing in their lives. The last poetic line “or does it explode?” reflects one of the major themes of this poem that a deferred dream can lead to destruction: a deferred dream leading to destruction. Other themes may be frustration, dissatisfaction etc.

2.11 Syntax

Syntax means an ordering of words into meaningful grammatical verbal patterns. Without syntax words remain only words or alphabetical sequence in a dictionary. It also means the rules for constructing sentences that guarantee comprehensibility. Syntactical oddity and inversions are common in poetry. Energy of syntax becomes visible due to the powerful distortions and disruptions of normative syntax. Syntax may be clear or unclear, cogent or vague, verbose or spare etc. Varying from a normal word order, poems manipulate the syntax of a line or more to place emphasis on a word. Poetic syntax is even tougher. For a greater understanding, broad knowledge of linguistics is required.

Demonstration: 33

O sweet spontaneous
earth how often have
the
doting

fingers of
prurient philosophers pinched
and
poked

thee
, has the naughty thumb
of science prodded
thy
beauty, how
often have religions taken
thee upon their scraggy knees
squeezing and

buffeting thee that thou mightest conceive
gods
(but
true

to the incomparable
couch of death thy
rhythmic

lover
thou answerest
them only with
spring)

e. e. Cummings: O sweet spontaneous

Analysis:

“O Sweet Spontaneous” is written in an eccentric style by using radical poetic language and unique syntactic form. In this sense “O sweet spontaneous” is an experimental poem which is deviated from the normal trend of versification. This poem employs the incorrect use of punctuation and rejection of the rules of English Grammar. This poem which can be reckoned as artistic experimentalism is only for the sophisticated readers. This poem offers two major specific graphological features: the consistent use of the non-capital letters with the exception of the first letter “O” actually used as a word, and the use of deep spacing between stanzas. The poem exploits the enjambed (run-on) poetic lines. The poem retains some alliterative words such as “sweet/spontaneous”, “Prurient/-philosophers/pinched” etc. We can observe assonance /l/ in the words like finger, philosophers and pinch and /I: / in thee, knees conceive and squeezing. “thee”, “thou” and “thy” are archaic pronouns here used to relate to the earth. There are seventeen words “godsspring” placed in the parentheses used to engender conceptual separation, protection and intimacy. The poetic lines are irregular in their lengths. Some poetic lines have single words, some have two words and so on. The poem has an absurd form like the absurdity found in the activities of the mankind or the mankind in an absurd situation.

2.12 Punctuation

Poetry does not always follow the rules of capitalization and punctuation. Sometimes the poets employ heavy use of capitalization and punctuation, but sometimes do not use them even though they are necessary.

Demonstration: 34

“ in our backyard
we plant
tomatoes”

Francisco X. Alarcón: Laughing Tomatoes

Analysis:

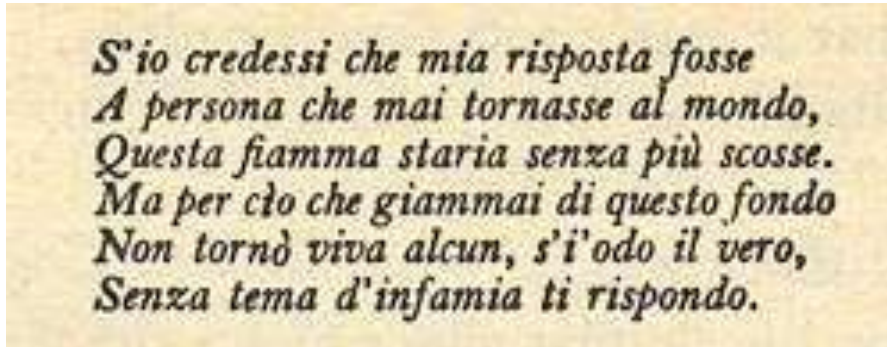
This is the first stanza of the poem in which we can notice the lack of capitalization and punctuation. The readers feel odd but curious to read such a poem.

2.13 Epigraph

An epigraph is a literary device in the form of a poem or quotation. It is usually placed at the beginning of a poem or text. It helps the readers understand the poem or it provides an extra but related issue to the readers about the subject matter of the poem.

Demonstration: 35

The Love-Song of J. Alfred Prufrock



Let us go then, you and I,
When the evening is spread out against the sky
Like a patient etherized upon a table;

.....
We have lingered in the chambers of the sea
By sea-girls wreathed with seaweed red and brown
Till human voices wake us, and we drown.

Poem

Analysis:

This Italian epigraph comes from Dante's Divine Comedy. It is part of a speech by Guido da Montefeltro, one of the damned souls in the Inferno. This epigraph means: "If I thought that my answer were to one who might ever go back to the world, this flame would shake no more. But since, if what I hear is true, no one ever returned alive from this pit, I answer you without fear of infamy." An epigraph is an optional element of poetry.

2.14 Epitaph

It is a brief written tribute in poetry or prose in memory of a deceased person or past event. It is the inscription on a tombstone. It is not an obligatory element of poetry. It generally occurs at the end of a poem or text to reinforce the poem's thematic and meditative intensity.

Demonstration: 36

Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard by Thomas Gray

“The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me”.

.....
.....

"The next with dirges due in sad array
Slow thro' the church-way path we saw him borne.
Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay,
Grav'd on the stone beneath yon aged thorn."

Poem

THE EPITAPH

“Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth
A youth to Fortune and to Fame unknown.
Fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy mark'd him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,
Heav'n did a recompense as largely send:
He gave to Mis'ry all he had, a tear,
He gain'd from Heav'n ('twas all he wish'd) a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they alike in trembling hope repose)
The bosom of his Father and his God”.

Analysis:

The general meaning In the three stanzas of the epitaph (lines 117 to 128) is: Here lies a man of humble birth who did not know fortune or fame but who did become a scholar. Although he was depressed at times, he had a good life, was sensitive to the needs of others, and followed God's laws. Don't try to find out more about his good points or bad points, which are now with him in heaven. The speaker seems to talk about his own epitaph. He explains that he has died, unknown to both fame and fortune, as in he never became famous and was not well-born. But at least he was full of knowledge—he was a scholar and a poet. Yet oftentimes, the speaker could become depressed. But he was big-hearted and sincere, so heaven paid him back for his good qualities by giving him a friend. His other good and bad qualities do not matter anymore, so he instructs people not to go looking for them since he hopes for a good life in heaven with God.

3. Methodology

Methodology in this article embraces research type, universe, sampling design, sample size, nature of data and suggested method of teaching. This article is based on the qualitative research, especially content analysis. The universe of the research study includes all the infinite English poems composed by different poets. The researcher uses the purposive sampling, selects 14 elements as a sample just from 33 poems and makes 36 demonstrations

to fulfill the objective. The data used in this research article are nominal, the name of the basic elements of poetry used to teach the bachelor and master level of students. The elements of poetry are considered as studying variables. The researcher recommends the teachers to apply group discussion method to teach elements of poetry to their students to make them creative, critical and eager to analyze any poems. The teacher should demonstrate each element of poetry using a verse line or stanza or single poem. Then students should be encouraged to take part in the discussion process. The teachers should note their students' views, opinions and remarks. Finally, the teachers should make clear about the elements of poetry to the students to satisfy them well.

4. Conclusion

This article writer assumes that we must have the knowledge of elements of poetry to study, enjoy and interpret, analyze and evaluate poetry accurately. The charm of studying English poetry lies in its diversity of titles, stanzas, musical devices, figures of speech, tones, diction, speakers, forms, settings, themes, syntaxes and punctuations which are the crucial elements, whereas epigraphs and epitaphs are the optional elements of English poetry. Teaching is hoped to bring a significant positive change in students' performances and achievements.

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