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ICONIC FEATURES OF THE SYNTAX OF WORDSWORTH'S POETRY

By

Keith William Slater

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ABSTRACT

ICONIC FEATURES OF THE SYNTAX OF WORDSWORTH'S POETRY

By

Keith William Slater

This thesis addresses issues of iconic coding in natural language syntax, within a functional theoretical perspective. It first presents data arguing for the viability of iconic principles as explanations for some observed features of syntax. Next, an attempt is made to utilize some of the principles proposed to help explain specific features of the syntax of William Wordsworth's poetry. In so doing, it seeks both to provide further evidence in favor of the existence of iconic motivations in human language and to show that identifiable syntactic principles contribute to some of the impressionistic effects of Wordsworth's art. Finally, some initial implications of this investigation for description of the contribution of purely linguistic phenomena to literary works are discussed.

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"One of the reasons linguists have suffered justified attacks in the past is that we have often assumed that vowel and consonant counting is the way to show that linguistics is relevant to literature."

-- Archibald A. Hill (1976:45)

1. INTRODUCTION AND GOALS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the development of linguistic investigations, the description of linguistic systems has often been pursued without much interest in any potential significance in discourse of the internal arrangements of those systems. Although there have been exceptions, such as Tagmemics, Systemics and others, linguistic theories have generally considered linguistic systems independent entities, capable of being described in terms of potential utterances, essentially without reference to the situational contexts in which such utterances might occur. It has, for example, usually been considered beyond the scope of syntactic investigations to pursue an understanding of any interplay between the observable constructions in a text and the structure of the text itself. The grammar of sentences and the structure of discourse have been treated as essentially autonomous.

It is possible, however, that there exists some discoverable set of relationships between the structure of discourse and the patterns observable at lower levels (e.g. syntactic) of linguistic coding, if one adopts an approach to language which admits the possibility that language is but one of many functions of human cognition, and thus, that general principles of human cognition may conceivably affect observable linguistic structures in identifiable ways.

Such an approach, of course, could only be justified by convincing demonstration of such cognitive influences upon

linguistic systems; on the other hand, demonstration requires prior, purposeful investigation, and the latter has been largely lacking in theoretical quarters.

This lack has not been complete, however. In particular, some linguists working within a functional approach to language have sought to demonstrate effects of principles of iconicity on natural language syntax, and it is with this subject that the present study will be concerned.

One specific result of the general lack of interest in investigating the relationship between text and syntax has been that linguists have generally had little to say about literature. Of course, if the linguistic system is truly autonomous, this should be no great surprise. Language proper should be considered simply the stuff to be used in the communication of ideas, but not at all related to the ideas themselves. Thus, studies of linguistic structures really should reveal very little about discourse context, and Hill is wrong in suggesting (as quoted above) that linguistics ought to contribute more to the study of literature than simple "vowel and consonant counting" (1976:45).

If, however, linguistic systems are influenced by the same sorts of cognitive constraints that help to structure other human behavior, then we should expect a greater contribution by linguists to the understanding of literature. Specifically, we should hope that analysis of linguistic

structures occurring in literary contexts (as well as any other identifiable contexts) would provide insights into the way in which particular literary effects are achieved. Such fairly impressionistic categories as style, register, poetry, and prose could legitimately be expected to be at least partially characterizable by reference to specific syntactic patterns.

The task of this thesis is to undertake just such a characterization. The idea of syntactic iconicity is presented and defended in Chapter 2. Thereafter, Chapter 3 attempts to apply the concepts already discussed to a specific body of literature: the poetic works of William Wordsworth. This will not only provide further evidence for the existence of iconic principles in syntax, but also will demonstrate that some specific effects of Wordsworth's work can be partially explained with reference to purely syntactic features found therein. Thus, a better understanding both of syntax in general and of Wordsworth's poetry will be sought.

1.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework for this investigation will be what is termed a "functional" approach. Such approaches concern themselves with the relationship between the observable forms in human linguistic systems and the functions for which those forms are employed. Language is not considered an independent entity, to be studied and

understood apart from other human behavior; rather, the assumption is made "that language and its notional/functional and structural organization is intimately bound up with and motivated by the structure of human cognition, perception, and neuro-psychology" (Givón 1984:11). Linguistic structures are seen as an area for investigating the claims of cognitive psychology regarding the operation of the mind, and the cross-linguistic generalizations observed by the linguist are, in turn, expected to help in explaining and/or predicting the experimentally justifiable claims of the cognitive psychologist. Such an approach has in fact been said to view "data of language use, variation, development, behavior, discourse processing and experimental cognitive psychology as part and parcel of one empirical complex" (Givón 1984:10).

In looking for explanations relating to the functions performed by linguistic systems, theorists must emphasize motivations for observable structures which are non-arbitrary. This is necessitated by the desire to demonstrate that various functions are not haphazardly performed, but that general cognitive principles motivate the creation, modification, and/or preservation of structures which, in essence, are better than other logically possible variations at performing the communicative tasks for which they are employed, either in a specific language or cross-linguistically, as the individual case may be. The

better-ness of any one structure over another must then presumably be defined in terms of human cognitive strategies and their reflection in the linguistic structures in question.

Such a view presumes an ability of languages to adapt at all levels, selecting functionally advantageous structures over others. Adaptation would most often involve diachronic change, but could also be relevant to the conscious, situational choices of a language user, such as we will explore in Wordsworth's poetry.

The functionalist seeks to explain linguistic structures both with regard to cross-linguistic generalizations and with regard to language-specific structures. He attempts to explain sentence-internal structures with relevant functional motivations, and then moves on to "the next stage of syntactic investigation -- the study of texts, and the study of the functional distribution of various morpho-syntactic structures within the text" (Givón 1984:10-11). It is at these two levels that the investigations of this work will be carried out.

1.2 ICONIC CODING

In this study, we will be concerned with iconic coding in natural languages. This Section will briefly describe iconicity as a relationship of replication, utilizing images and diagrams to help in coding some extralinguistic domain.

1.2.1 REPLICATION

Any claim that some particular representational system operates, in whole or in part, on iconic principles is, essentially, a claim that "variation in the code replicates variation in the coded domain" (Payne 1988:4). For the purpose of this investigation, the "code" to be examined is the linguistic code, and the replicative behaviors that will be of interest are generally those which involve morphosyntactic -- rather than, say, lexical -- phenomena.

This is not to say that iconic principles could only operate in syntax, however. In fact, if iconicity is determined to exist at the level of syntax, then a theorist hoping to present a unified account of linguistic structures and behavior will naturally expect to find such principles at other levels, as well. If some motivation is present at all, then we would hope to find it ubiquitously present, rather than localized at a particular level.

Taken to a logical extreme, the identification of iconicity as replication could allow us to modify Payne's formulation, above, to state: any variation in the code replicates variation in the coded domain. Such a step is in fact taken by Haiman, who defends "a language-learning strategy which [Haiman] will call the 'isomorphism hypothesis:' Different forms will always entail a different communicative function" (1985a:19). At several points in this thesis, we will invoke this sort of idea in claiming

that certain syntactic constructions, in comparison with one another, iconically indicate differences in meaning simply by exhibiting differences in form.

1.2.2 IMAGES AND DIAGRAMS

Pierce (1932) distinguished two types of iconicity: that which involves some image and that which involves some sort of diagram. The former, briefly, utilizes a single sign (a photograph, a statue, an onomatopoeic word) to represent its referent, while the latter employs a systematic arrangement of signs in such a way that the relationships between them (and not the individual signs themselves) resemble their referent. Examples of iconic diagrams might include stick figures, stratificational trace diagrams, or John Madden's CBS Chalkboard elucidations of particularly interesting football plays. Further discussion of this can be found in Haiman (1980).

Givón (1983) and Haiman (1985a) have suggested that diagrammatic and imagic iconicity should not be considered distinct categories, but should rather be viewed as opposite ends on a continuum of icons. Between the two poles, icons would be seen as varying in the degree to which they rely on diagrammatic vs. imagic features, or vice-versa. Presumably, constructions could also vary in the extent to which they could be deemed iconic at all -- an idea which will doubtless become increasingly meaningful to the reader throughout the rest of this thesis.

1.2.3 THE CODED DOMAIN

Opinions have differed as to what, exactly, the "domain" being iconically coded in language may be. Haiman has claimed that languages utilize iconicity in their representation of "reality" (1980:537), at least to a great extent. On this basis, he proposes that universals of syntax may ultimately be relatable to "properties of the world, rather than of the mind." This view, however, seems to be motivated by a rather violent reaction against transformationalist claims about the mind's mechanisms for handling language, and it is not strongly supported.

A more cognitively-based view is espoused by Givón (1985:191): linguistic structures mirror our perceptions of reality. This, of course, allows for some amount of distortion to take place in the linguistic representation of external reality, but this seems a rather sensible allowance to make when dealing with human processing and representation of the world.

1.3 ICONICITY AND LEVELS OF LANGUAGE

As we have already suggested, iconicity may manifest itself at various levels of linguistic coding. Givón (1985:189) mentions specifically the "lexical... propositional... and discourse-pragmatic functional domains" as potential areas of such manifestations.

Obviously, these domains will be difficult to compare

with one another, given their relative size and complexity. Generalizations, however, are possible. Payne (1988:6) suggests: "as the level of analysis moves from lexical semantics, through morphology, syntax, and discourse structure, the nature of the relationships between form and function tends to become more iconic and less conventionalized." A natural implication of this stance, and one which Payne goes on to draw, is that it explains the fact that languages vary most widely on the lexical level, and progressively less at higher levels. Thus, while similarities among lexical items are often strong indications of genetic relationships among languages, similarities at higher levels, which are more likely to be due to general iconic (or other cognitive) principles, are less useful for drawing such conclusions.

Although this investigation will be primarily concerned with syntactic structures in its pursuit of iconic motivations in Wordsworth's poetry, one of the secondary goals will be to show that iconicity may be found at numerous levels of linguistic coding. In particular, Chapter 2 will present several analyses suggesting the presence of iconic motivations at levels of morphological and suprasentential (discourse) coding, in addition to the purely syntactic level. Additionally, Chapter 4 will discuss the significance of iconicity in terms of how it relates to the conveyance of semantic information by the structures within lower levels.

1.4 ICONICITY AS A COGNITIVE PRINCIPLE

Claims such as those advanced in 1.3, above, hinge on the assumption that iconicity is somehow a general principle of human cognition; otherwise, its presence in widespread levels of linguistic coding would be a rather curious thing. One attempt to describe a cognitive basis for this is found in Givón's (1985) formulation of an "iconicity meta-principle" which states: "All other things being equal, a coded experience is easier to store, retrieve and communicate if it is maximally similar to the experience" (p. 189). This formulation implicitly claims that iconic principles operate to help meet the cognitive "need to facilitate processing within real time" (p. 198). In the definition quoted at the beginning of Section 1.2.1, Payne also implicitly recognizes cognitive principles at work when he asserts that the linguistic system (along with those who manipulate it) is somehow sensitive to replication of experiences.

A further step along the road down which this line of thinking leads is taken by Hopper and Thompson (1985). Examining the categories Noun and Verb cross-linguistically, they reach the conclusion that "linguistic forms actually lack categoriality" when viewed simply as forms, outside of any discourse context. It is only within particular discourse contexts that realization within a particular grammatical category (e.g. Noun or Verb) is "IMPOSED ON the

form" (p. 179). Here, the authors are arguing for a "perceptual basis of the cognitive strategies underlying grammars" (p. 179). Cognitive strategies such as iconicity would then become links between linguistic form and discourse function -- which is precisely what other theorists have been implicitly (or explicitly) claiming.

If iconicity is a general principle of human cognition, then of course it must be valid for all humans. Further, we should expect that claims about how cognition works can be substantiated with supporting data, clearly demonstrating the effects of whatever mechanism has been proposed.

All of the studies presented in Chapter 2, below, will be relevant to this issue, since all claim to demonstrate iconic influences in human language. Three studies, however, will be of particular interest: Slobin (1985, Section 2.5 below) describes iconic principles in the speech of children; Greenberg (1985, Section 2.6) deals with iconic motivation for diachronic linguistic developments; and Prideaux (1987, Section 2.7) characterizes strategies for information arrangement. If the claims of these three studies in particular are found to be valid, they will help in establishing what Slobin (1985:229) calls "a deeply-rooted ontogenetic basis" for iconicity in human language, since they show independent and broad-ranging evidence that iconicity affects language learning, language change, and the syntactic presentation of information synchronically. One

could hardly accept all (or any) of these claims without then admitting that some principle of iconicity must be a part of the human processing ability generally.

1.5 THE ANALYSIS OF WRITTEN LANGUAGE

One area in which some theoretical remarks should be made is that of synchronic analysis of written, rather than spoken, language. This is of particular interest, due to the literary nature of the works which will be examined here. It must certainly be recognized that a great deal of intentionality and premeditation (not to mention revision) lies behind poetry of any literary value; how, then, will our synchronic linguistic interpretation be affected?

There can be no question that written language generally exhibits any number of differences from spoken expression. Planning and revision probably allow for some different types of organizational structure than does extemporaneous discourse. Additionally, the lack of interlocutors as active creators of discourse when it occurs in written form has obvious implications for the structure of discourse; turn-taking, for example, is extremely uncommon in Wordsworth's poetry, which consists mostly of self-revelatory monologues.

At the level of syntax -- with which we are primarily concerned -- it is common to find constructions in written discourse that might be deemed archaic in normal speech; this

is traditionally especially true of poetry. Furthermore, the use of meter and rhyme often limits the choices which a poet may make, syntactically, so that further syntactic peculiarities might be expected.

All of these points might serve to convince us that some phenomena commonly found in spoken language could prove elusive in written discourse -- and especially so in poetry. Several considerations, however, may serve to preserve hope of discovering in Wordsworth's compositions the same sort of cognitive motivations (specifically, iconicity) as have been posited for other types of discourse.

First, we should consider the fact that Wordsworth himself desired to write in a language accessible to the common man. As we will see in Section 3.0, the poet had in mind to utilize the everyday expressions of everyday men, rather than the stylized traditional language of poetry in his day. Thus, his language is probably lacking some of the conventions and archaisms often typical of poetry.

Furthermore, in all but a few instances, Wordsworth chooses not to rhyme in his poetry. One motivation for this is "to obtain greater syntactic freedom" (Rehder 1981:83). Again, this will mitigate the amount of deviation in his poetry from the forms of the spoken language.

More important, perhaps, is the role of iconicity in the general framework which has been adopted here. We have accepted iconicity as a cognitive principle, and have

proposed that cognitive principles play a major role in establishing a framework within which human language operates. If this is truly the case, (as will, it is hoped, be demonstrated in Chapter 2), then as a matter of course we will find iconic principles somehow operating at every level, and in every mode, of linguistic expression. Within this framework, the real surprise would be to fail to identify such influences in some area of inquiry.

In fact, given iconicity as a principle which helps to delineate the structures of human language, we may even hope to identify areas in which iconic principles are characteristic of written language; such an area will be proposed in Section 3.2, where we will see how iconic syntactic features may help readers to identify grammatical relations within a sentence exhibiting atypical word order.

The premeditated, artistic nature of Wordsworth's poetry, then, need not deter our search for iconicity in its syntax.

1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THIS THESIS

The linguistic study of poetry naturally gives rise to the desire to provide some sort of definition of the subject: perhaps even just a partial list of defining characteristics. Further, a study of iconic features of syntax may lead us to expect a proposal for describing all of syntax with motivations that are either iconic or that derive from some

other cognitive pressure.

Neither of these will be attempted here. The first is simply beyond the scope of this investigation; the second is, in all probability, impossible. However, general comments will certainly be made bearing on both issues, insofar as the current study suggests points relevant to either.

2. ARGUMENTS FOR ICONICITY

2.0 INTRODUCTION

In this Chapter, we will examine data from a variety of studies, all of which help to illustrate the operation of iconic principles in linguistic structures. Most of these examples will be confined to syntactic constructions, but some will also be included to indicate how iconicity may make itself felt at other levels as well.

2.1 SEQUENTIAL ORDERING

One of the most obvious areas in which principles of iconicity may operate is that of describing events in their original sequence. This is by no means limited to syntactic constructions, although it may certainly occur there, as well as elsewhere. In English, for example, the order of the sentences in (1) will probably be assumed to mirror the real-life sequence being described:

(1) John hit Harry. Harry hit John.

In order to evoke some other sequence, one would usually have to indicate it by lexical addition or the use of alternate syntax: by the addition of after or by reversing the order of the two sentences, for example.

Essentially, this type of iconicity involves a parallelism between the stream of speech and the flow of time; both are linear, and thus sequential. Most naturally in human experience, time moves forward. Likewise, the

stream of speech advances. It is natural, then, for the mind to associate the advancing of speech with the advancing of time, and this yields an iconicity of sequence.

Haiman claims that this sort of iconicity is "by far the most widespread" (1980:533) among natural languages. He notes, however, that even this kind of iconicity is not universal, since a native Burmese speaker, for example, will interpret instructions given with no grammatical sequence indicators as simultaneous (c.f. Becker (1975)).

Nonetheless, sequential iconicity is quite common. Thus, it is likely that no one has ever taken the order of "vēnī, vīdī, vīcī" ("I came, I saw, I conquered") as anything but an iconic model of the sequential ordering of the original events described.

2.2 SIMILAR FORM CORRESPONDS TO SIMILAR FUNCTION

Another iconic principle which may be seen to operate widely within natural languages is that similar form generally corresponds to similar function. This principle is one of the fundamental enablers of human language, and its influences may be found at nearly all levels of linguistic coding.

Most importantly, this principle helps to account for systematicity in language at any level. Only on the basis of an assumption such as this one, for example, can speakers of a language agree that meaning X will always be indicated by a

particular morpheme Y, rather than by any of the extremely large set of other possible morphemes they could theoretically choose. This seems perhaps trivial, but it is a fundamental assumption, necessary to prevent the arbitrary linguistic sign from being additionally synchronically inconsistent -- and thus useless for communication. Givón (1984:33) puts it this way: "It is only because the coding relation between structure and function in syntax is non-arbitrary, or in some sense iconic, that one could proceed to infer common function from common structure.

At higher levels, of course, this principle accounts for the fact that patterning exists in various systems: e.g. that different verbs exhibit paradigmatic morphological markings across a range of tense, aspect, number, gender, etc. categories, and that semantic information can be inferred by a listener on the basis of, say, the relative positions of verb and subject in an English interrogative.

The "similar form/similar function" principle is, in fact, an important basis for human cognition, as has been demonstrated by, for example, Labov (1973) with regard to human classificatory behavior. Thus, operations of this principle in human language may be seen as iconic indicators of cognitive processing, manifested within the linguistic system.

2.3 LINGUISTIC AND CONCEPTUAL DISTANCE

Perhaps the most interesting defense of the existence of iconic motivations for morphosyntactic phenomena is the correlation, suggested by Haiman (1983, 1985a) between conceptual distance and linguistic distance. The former term is an impressionistic one, used to express how closely concepts are related to one another in mental representation -- either conscious or unconscious. Haiman suggests that greater conceptual separation ("distance") may be iconically mirrored by greater linguistic separation. A scale of "diminishing linguistic distance" is employed to help in determining correlations (1985a:105):

(2) Diminishing linguistic distance between X and Y

a. X # A # B # Y
b. X # A # Y
c. X + A # Y
d. X # Y (analysis)
e. X + Y (agglutination)
f. Z (synthesis)

Essentially, this scale seeks to represent the significance of the intervention of various linguistic units between any two meaningful units X and Y. The intervening units may be morpheme or word boundaries (+ and #, respectively), or other morphemes or morpheme clusters (A or B). If more units, or

units of greater significance (compare d and e) intervene between X and Y, the linguistic distance between them is then greater by definition, according to scale (2).

Haiman demonstrates correlations between decreases along this scale (in the direction from a to f) and decreasing conceptual distance in several areas. Of these, we will now briefly examine three: causation, transitivity, and possession.

Causation is often expressed in more than one way in a given language, and where forms differ in linguistic distance along the scale (2a-f), conceptual distance varies correspondingly. In Amharic, for example (after Hetzron (1976)), we find:

(3) a. Abbat lə̆gun sə̆ga AS-bă̈lla
father boy meat CAUS-eat
"The father forced the boy to eat the meat."

b. Abbat lə̆gun sə̆ga A-bă̈lla
father boy meat CAUS-eat
"The father fed the boy the meat."

Here, we see a phonologically reduced form used to indicate direct causation (3b), and the corresponding full form used for indirect causation (3a). Since indirect causation implies greater conceptual separation between the causative action and the event caused (essentially making them two

separate events), we would in fact expect the phonologically larger form to be correspondingly employed.

This is similar to the case in English, where (4a) generally allows for greater temporal separation between Herb's action and Les's death than does (4b):

(4) a. Herb caused Les to die.
b. Herb killed Les.

Example (4a) also allows for a wider range of scenarios than does (4b); Herb may have hired a hit man or turned Les (an escaped death row inmate) in to the police, rather than physically doing Les in himself. Haiman cites supporting data from several other languages, including Japanese and Korean (1983:784-86).

In many languages, it is possible to mark a semantic patient either with a direct case marker (accusative or absolutive, for example), or with an oblique one. In such cases, Haiman notes that the employment of an oblique case may allow for some type of intermediate agency, while a direct case usually does not. For example, we find in Hungarian (after Comrie (1980)):

(5) a. Köhög-tet-em a gyerek-kel
cough-CAUS-1sg the child -COMMIT

b. Köhög-tet-em a gyerek-et
cough-CAUS-1sg the child -ACC

Haiman notes that "both mean 'I make the child cough;' but the first suggests that I do so by asking him to cough, while the second suggests that I do so more directly, perhaps by hitting him on the back" (1983:792). A similar situation exists in French (taken from Hyman and Zimmer (1976:193)):

(6) a. Je lui ai fait préparer la mayonnaise.
"I had him prepare the mayonnaise."

b. Je l'ai fait préparer la mayonnaise.
"I made him prepare the mayonnaise."

Again, employment of a direct case -- accusative in (6b) -- implies a more immediate effect on the semantic patient than does employment of an oblique case -- dative in (6a). Furthermore, both (5) and (6) demonstrate further support for the linguistic distance hypothesis; in both examples, the phonologically smaller forms (5b and 6b) correspond to conceptual closeness.

With regard to possession, Greenberg has suggested (as quoted by Haiman (1983:793)): "in no language will the linguistic distance between X and Y be greater in signaling inalienable possession, in expressions like 'X's Y,' than it

is in signaling alienable possession." This, again, reflects the idea that items which are more closely associated (inalienable) will not be linguistically farther apart than are items which are less closely associated (alienable). Johnston (1981:217) provides relevant data from the Austronesian language Nakanai:

(7) a. luma taku
house my
b. lima-gu
hand-my

Other languages which offer such contrasts include Chiricahua Apache and Kpelle (Haiman 1983:794).

2.4 MARKEDNESS

Another area in which iconic principles are claimed to operate in morphosyntactic structures is that of markedness. Haiman (1980:528) notes that "categories that are marked morphologically and syntactically are also marked semantically." Presumably, there would be no reason to assign morphosyntactic complexity if it did not somehow mirror complexity at another level.

Generally speaking, for example, the positive, comparative and superlative degrees of adjectives in a given language show some increase in the number of phonemes they

contain: English big, bigger, biggest; corresponding Colloquial Japanese forms ookii, moto ookii, ichiban ookii; corresponding Tamil forms periya, mika periya, elāthilum periya.

Greenberg has also pointed out (as quoted in Haiman (1980:528)) that "there is no language in which the plural does not have some non-zero allomorphs, whereas there are languages in which the singular is expressed only by zero." Plurality then, is a marked category, and thus, one tending to involve greater morphosyntactic complexity.

We might note a potential danger of circularity in such arguments as these; it would certainly strengthen this case if we could somehow define "semantic complexity" before correlating it with "morphological complexity." As it stands, semantic complexity remains a rather impressionistic designation, although one which Haiman suggests has been "universally assumed" (1980:528). He cites Greenberg (see above) and Jakobson (1966) as examples of this assumption. Nonetheless, some sort of definition -- perhaps in terms of semantic distinctive features -- should be expected for this term.

2.5 THE SPEECH OF CHILDREN

Slobin (1985) presents data from the speech of children in various linguistic communities. He claims that children's placement of certain operators within syntactic constructions

indicates iconic modification of parental language. In particular, children seem to iconically model the scope of an operator by their placement of it.

In the case of negation, for example, the placement of negative markers is often modified, such that they appear outside of the main clause. Slobin believes "children indicate in their restructuring of parental languages that the scope of negation should be the proposition, as indicated by the verb as a whole, rather than any particular nonverbal lexical item within the clause" (p. 222). He cites the case, reported in Smoczyńska (1985) of a Polish child who exhibited "early sentence-external negation (e.g. Nie Basia śpi 'not Basia sleeps' for Basia nie śpi)." This was followed by a stage in which negation and verb were kept together, but placed in sentence-initial position: Nie śpi Basia. Other children are presumed to be indicating the same propositional negation when they exhibit sentence-final negative placement (e.g. mamusia kopać będzie nie 'mommy dig will not'). Slobin cites similar examples for children acquiring English, Turkish, Japanese, French and Hungarian (pp. 223-24). He points out that children's treatment of negation as a propositional phenomenon makes them reluctant to permit its presence to affect form or placement of other sentence elements. This is demonstrated by, for example, the relative slowness of children to acquire the obligatory genitive case marking of the direct object of a negated verb in Russian;

children tend to put such objects in the accusative. Again, data from several languages are cited to support the claim (pp. 224-26).

The marking of conditionality is another area in which Slobin suggests that iconic principles operate during acquisition. The only available data are from Hungarian, in which children tend to place the conditional morpheme outside the verbal person/number affix, substituting beszélek volna "speak+1sg COND" for beszélnék "speak+COND+1sg" (MacWhinney (1973)). Slobin believes that this, again, is an interpretation of a particular element (in this case, the conditional marker) as a propositional-level element, and an iconic indication of this interpretation in the element's placement.

In general, Slobin suggests that acquisition data from various languages indicate that children iconically mark on both nouns and verbs the categories which they deem most relevant to the information being communicated. The less relevant any particular bit of information is considered to be, the later it will be acquired (c.f. Bybee (1985). For example, children tend to acquire verbal tense and person affixes relatively early, but do not quickly adopt stem-changes associated with either. Where stem-changes are used to indicate aspect, however, children do "readily acquire alternate verb forms" (Slobin 1985:231) -- even overgeneralizing at times to use stem changes where

affixation is normal in the adult system. If the fact that children pay greater attention to morphological markings for one category than for others indicates that they consider that category more immediately relevant, then their employment of markings for that category may be termed iconic.

With regard to sentential valence, Slobin notes that children tend to give early attention to actual nominal participants represented in a proposition, rather than to any verbal morphology which might be used to indicate valence. This indicates, he concludes, that children treat "the entire configuration of noun and verb as the domain of valence, rather than the verb itself" (pp. 232-33). This seems to be a rather obvious example of diagrammatic iconicity as discussed in 1.2.2, above, and it is certainly not limited to the speech of children. The important consideration here, however, is that children manipulate this fairly obviously iconic strategy before they give attention to the less isomorphic verbal morphology. Iconic representation, then, is apparently more salient to the developing language-user.

Another interesting topic which Slobin addresses is a principle of analyticity, which children may make use of to express complicated notions by combinations of unitary forms, rather than by complex forms. He cites the tendency of children acquiring Romance languages to prefer analytic PREPOSITION+PRONOUN forms over those which conflate

possession with person, number and gender (e.g. in French the analytic de moi "of me" over the conflating forms mon/ma/mes "my"). Such usage moves towards a one-to-one correspondence of form and meaning (isomorphism), and is therefore deemed more iconic.

For Slobin, the importance of all these data is that they seem to indicate a tendency of children towards "making their language temporarily more iconic than that of the speech community" (p. 229). He interprets this tendency as evidence that "iconic principles have a deeply-rooted ontogenetic basis" (p. 229). Of course, if he is correct in asserting that children naturally tend to make their languages more iconic, then his data provide support for claims such as those of Payne (1988) regarding iconic principles and general cognitive human functions. The apparent tendency of adult languages to disregard these influences to any extent may then be seen as a result of traditionally recognized diachronic processes such as sound change and analogic change, which probably should be counted among forces which accidentally oppose iconic pressures in linguistic systems. Since such diachronic influences are prevalent, fairly wide divergence of adult languages from iconic coding relationships should not be overly surprising.

2.6 DEVELOPMENTS OVER DIACHRONY

In a paper that is "basically oriented towards

diachrony," (p. 278), Greenberg (1985) examines iconic phenomena arising from metaphorical extension of deictics. In particular, he is concerned with extension which involves the use of originally spatial deictics to indicate temporal relations, as well.

For example, a distant demonstrative may be metaphorically extended to refer to past time. The issue, it seems, is that both categories refer to that which is distant (far from the speaker), and often invisible, as well. Further support for this idea is provided by the fact that a third person pronoun or article may also be derived from a distant demonstrative; again, this is a category of entities normally thought of as far away or absent, from the point of view of a speaker.

In addition to the use of a far demonstrative to indicate past, many languages employ a near demonstrative to indicate future events. Thus, Old Irish so, the near demonstrative, refers to what follows, while sin, the far demonstrative, refers to what precedes. Although it would be logically possible, and explanations of metaphorical motivation could certainly be constructed, Greenberg nonetheless knows of no system in which a contrary rule operates (i.e. use of far demonstrative for future, near for past) (p. 285).

A related phenomenon is the use of far and near demonstratives to indicate the equivalents of the English

"the former" and "the latter," respectively. In languages employing such systems, the nearer demonstrative always refers to the last-mentioned item, so that one gets the impression of moving backwards in time from the moment of speaking. This phenomenon occurs in German dieser/jener "this/that," as well as in French, Hindi, and numerous other languages (Greenberg 1985:285-86).

We might note that the iconicity involved in these cases is of the system-internal sort described by Givón (1985), in which the prior usage of a particular linguistic form within its own linguistic system is the characteristic which enables that form to iconically represent other referents. Thus, the only reason that jener may be iconically extended to serve as both far demonstrative and indicator of past statements is that, within the Modern Standard German system, speakers agree on that particular phonological form as the far demonstrative to begin with. However, the fact that both functions are performed by a single form is iconic, independent of the particular system in which this occurs. Viewed in this light, the phenomenon is another instance of projection of a cognitive principle of iconicity into the linguistic system.

There is a danger here, however, of so extending the term "iconicity" as to make it meaningless. Technical vocabulary is useful up to the point that it serves to differentiate; if a particular term comes to refer to

everything, it is no longer precise enough to be helpful. On this basis, we might object to Greenberg's broadening of "iconicity" to include metaphoric extensions.

On the other hand, Greenberg certainly has a point in noting the essential similarity of iconicity and metaphor -- the two phenomena do seem to involve similar representational principles. Thus, however we eventually choose to label them, these apparently related features of human language together point to the existence of underlying cognitive strategies which enable the operation of both.

2.7 PROCESSING STRATEGIES

In his (1987) article "Processing Strategies: A Psycholinguistic Neofunctionalism?" Gary Prideaux endeavors to show similarities between some cognitive strategies now posited by psycholinguists and earlier concepts advanced by the Prague School. Although he does not employ the term "iconicity," he is describing syntactic indications of conceptual strategies. Thus, his examples are of interest to us in this context. The three strategies which he deals with are labelled "Given-New, Closure, and Bracketing" (1987:300).

The Given-New strategy dictates that information which is assumed commonly available to speaker and listener in a particular context (Given) will be "systematically separated from New information (that known only to the speaker)" (p. 301). Furthermore, this strategy calls for Given information

to precede New, unless "special grammatical devices" are used to indicate that the expected pattern is not being conformed to. For example, Prideaux offers the sentence:

(8) I sent the flowers to Sue.

as an appropriate response to:

(9) Who did you send the flowers to?

but not as an appropriate response to:

(10) What did you send to Sue?

Example (9) treats "the flowers" as Given information, whereas (10) does not. Therefore, Prideaux claims that (8) can only be an appropriate response to (10) if it is specially marked; in this case, PHONOLOGICAL marking would result in:

(11) I sent the FLOWERS to Sue.

which would indicate that the normal Given-New strategy was being violated.

Prideaux formulates the Closure strategy as follows: "In processing a particular unit (phrase, clause, etc.) the

hearer attempts to gain closure on that unit at the earliest possible point" (p. 303). As an example, he notes that hearers must stop mid-stream and reanalyze when presented with a sentence like: "The guest expected to be absent arrived." The reason for this, he claims, is that hearers tend to project closure on the sentence before its end arrives. This conclusion is supported by various empirical studies, which Prideaux alludes to but does not explicitly cite.

The third processing strategy presented is that of Bracketing, which states that "the hearer expects that when a new unit for processing is encountered, it will be marked as such" (p. 305). Prideaux points out the obligatory use of the complementizer that in (12):

(12) That Sally has never eaten sushi is obvious.

and its optionality in (13):

(13) It is obvious (that) Sally has never eaten sushi.

The reason for the obligatory use of that in (12) is that the hearer will not expect an initial subordinate clause, and thus, the speaker will need to alert him of its presence.

If the ideas which Prideaux has presented are found to stand up cross-linguistically, (which, of course, can only be

demonstrated with further data), these principles may in fact prove to be useful exemplifications of how syntax may iconically reflect cognitive processing.

2.8 THE LEXICON

In the final section (pp. 535-37) of his 1980 paper, Haiman addresses the question of the relationship between the relative size of a language's lexicon and the degree of discoverable grammatical iconicity. Not only does a (relatively) lexically-restricted language generally require longer messages than does a more lexically-rich language, in order to express the same idea, but the former is likely to exhibit more iconic syntactic motivation, as well.

As an example, Haiman describes the situation which exists between the social dialects of Dyirbal: Dyalŋuy and Guwal (data taken from Dixon (1971)). Dyalŋuy is a taboo language, utilized in different social contexts than Guwal; Dyalŋuy has both a smaller inventory of lexical items and a higher incidence of iconic motivation. Whereas, for example, categories of repetition and distributivity may be indicated by suppletive forms in Guwal (buRan "look," guninʸu "search") these same categories are often indicated in Dyalŋuy by morphological devices such as reduplication (bunman "ask to accompany oneself," bunma+bunman "keep asking to accompany oneself") or aspectual suffixation (nʸuRiman "look," nʸuRima+rindʸanʸu "search").

Similarly, English translations of Eskimo words for "snow" such as "packed snow" or "drifting snow" demonstrate the same sort of phenomenon: "redressing a deficiency in the lexicon by a greater perspicuity in compounding" (Haiman, p. 537). Haiman suggests that one might also expect to find greater iconicity in pidgins, compared to the languages whose vocabularies they have "radically simplified" (p. 537).

2.9 DISCUSSION

The preceding sections have shown that various analysts have attempted to demonstrate the presence of iconic motivations in a variety of areas of morphological, syntactic, and discursive coding in natural languages. Some of these data seem, admittedly, less convincing than others. However, it is hoped that their combined weight -- if not each argument individually -- will serve as convincing evidence that the theorist must admit the possibility of iconic motivations for various linguistic constructions.

3. AN ANALYSIS OF ICONICITY IN WORDSWORTH'S POETIC SYNTAX

3.0 INTRODUCTION

William Wordsworth is numbered among the greatest of the English poets. His influence is such that it has been claimed "the history of the poetry of the last two hundred years seemed most easily comprehensible when considered as a whole and interpreted as beginning with Wordsworth" (Rehder, 1981:15). This poet attempted to achieve something new with his work, and his success has had a remarkable impact on poetic art.

In order to understand some of the syntactic effects which we will examine in this Chapter, we must first be aware of what Wordsworth was attempting to do with his verse. This Section will provide a brief introduction to the poet's goals.

Much of Wordsworth's artistic inspiration derived from Milton. In particular, Wordsworth was impressed with Milton's expressed desire "to be an interpreter and relator of the best and sagest things among mine own citizens throughout this island in the mother dialect" (Greenbie, 1977:17-18). As we shall see in Section 3.3, below, Wordsworth disagreed with his predecessor as to the nature of "the best and sagest things," but his desire to handle such "things," whatever they would turn out to be, certainly places him in Milton's company with respect to this common goal.

Of particular significance for the present study, however, is Wordsworth's desire to go beyond Milton in his

presentation of ideas "in the mother dialect." Where Milton had utilized an educated, stylistic language, Wordsworth desired "to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to describe them... in a selection of language really used by men," and, later, "to adopt the very language of men" (Wordsworth, 1896:Vol. V:192, 198).

The effects which these efforts achieved have been described as Wordsworth's "plain, pluralizing mode:" "plain," because the poetry lacks the traditional trappings of verse, including both archaic syntax and flowery vocabulary; "pluralizing," because the effect of this plainness is to make Wordsworth's art accessible to all who care to read it. In this Chapter, we will explore some iconic features of Wordsworth's syntax which help to explain these effects.

3.1 NOMINALS

Wordsworth's poetry is firmly grounded in the experience of the common man, and one important area in which this can be observed is that of his nominal constructions. The poet does not seek to create a world for his reader's imagination -- as does so much of literature. Rather, he attempts to help his reader to discover an already existing world -- the world of the familiar, the common, the world of everyday life. His goal in referring to various participants and props in the drama he lays out is that we should both

recognize them and incorporate them quickly into the experiences in which they play their roles; descriptions of the players and their surroundings are incidental, rather than central.

Thus, we find a proliferation of nominal words, without any accompanying proliferation of adjectival modifiers. The nouns themselves are familiar to all, and it is the experience of many common objects together, rather than the specific characteristics of any individual object, that the poet is concerned with. Ward (1984:55ff) deals extensively with what he calls Wordsworth's "plain nominals," characterizing them as "plain language" (p. 57) and "conventional, ordinary words" (p. 58).

In this section we will investigate some syntactic characteristics of these "plain nominals," and will suggest that iconic aspects of these characteristics may be found.

Givón (1987) describes a scale for correlating the predictability of reference to a particular participant in discourse with the type of nominal used to present it in a given instance. The claim which Givón makes is that a more predictable topic of discussion (that is, one which is more central to the discussion) often requires less description to be understood than does a topic which is unexpected or non-central to the discourse; that which is unexpected requires extra clarification. This, then, is an iconic relationship between syntactic coding and participants being

coded. The following scale (adapted from Givón's work) is proposed to demonstrate the correlation between the predictability of a topic and the type of nominal marker likely to be used for its presentation:

(14) Topic Predictability and Phonological Size

MOST PREDICTABLE TOPIC

a. zero anaphora (Omission)

b. pronoun

c. definite noun phrase

d. indefinite noun phrase

LEAST PREDICTABLE TOPIC

This scale is intended to express a universal hierarchy of coding devices, valid for any language which makes relevant coding distinctions.

In order to check the viability of these generalizations for a given text, we need a way to describe how predictable a given topic is in that text; Givón proposes a referential distance test, which assumes that topics central to a discussion are simply mentioned more often than others. To apply the test, one simply counts the number of clauses between references to particular participants, and then checks for correlations between number of clauses elapsed since the last mention of a participant and the type of device used to code that participant in that instance. An upper limit on counting of 20 clauses is arbitrarily assigned, largely to keep numbers managable. Givón points

out, however, that referential distance measurements for nominals characteristically employed to "return a topic into the register after a relatively long gap of absence" generally yield values of 15-17 clauses, and that "this value is already biased upwards by the arbitrarily-assigned 20 clause value" (1983:36:fn#6). Thus, the 20 clause limit may actually be too high, rather than too low.

Scale (14), presented above, is generally shown to be accurate, in that coding devices which are lower down on the scale tend to correlate with greater referential distances than do the higher devices. Givón (1983), for example, is a collection of papers presenting studies of these correlations for Japanese, Amharic, Ute, Biblical Hebrew, Spanish, written and spoken English, Hausa and Chamorro.

The referential distance test is primarily intended to be applied in narrative discourse. Thus, we might expect to encounter difficulties in finding consistent correlations if we apply it to Wordsworth's poetry, which is generally fairly meditative and introspective, and not very narrative in form. For the current study, however, the test has been applied to two different sections of Wordsworth's poetry, and the scale has been found to be generally accurate in both situations. The more predictable a given topic, the less coding material is needed to represent it in a given instance, apparently independent of how narrative the passage is in form. However, the results indicate that more than simple topic

predictability is at work. The remainder of this section presents findings for a relatively introspective and a relatively narrative passage, both from Wordsworth's work.

Table I presents referential distance values for a fairly meditative section of Wordsworth's work, where we might intuitively expect to find a large amount of interference from artistic freedom of expression. The section from which these data were taken is Book I, lines 340-56 of the introspective autobiography "The Prelude Or The Growth of a Poet's Mind." (Information about all poems cited in this thesis is provided in the Appendix.)

TABLE I

Referential Distances in a Meditative Section of Wordsworth's Work

Coding Type	No. Occurring	Ave. Ref. Dist.
a. zero anaphora	2	1.0
b. all pronouns	10	2.1
c. Def. NP	15	18.9
d. Indef. NP	14	18.6

These results do, in fact, generally correlate with those found by Brown (1983) for written English narrative. Brown's results are partially summarized in Table II for comparison with those presented above:

TABLE II

Referential Distances for Written English Narrative from Brown (1983)

Coding Type	Ave. Ref. Dist.
a. zero anaphora	1.00
b. unstressed pronouns	1.72
c. demonstratives alone	2.27
d. Def. Art. + NP	16.66
e. Indef. referential	19.17
f. generics	19.23

Brown's data and these data both show a marked increase in average referential distance between the larger devices (definite and indefinite NP's) and the smaller devices (pronouns and zero anaphora). It seems that these coding types naturally fall into two distinct categories, which may be called "full" and "reduced" nominals.

If we rework the data of Table I on the basis of just these two categories, we obtain the averages presented in Table III:

TABLE III

Referential Distances for Full and Reduced Nominals from Table II

Coding Type	No. Occurring	Ave. Ref. Dist.
a. Reduced NP	12	1.8
b. Full NP	29	18.8

A particularly interesting fact about these data is that the average referential distance for all full nominals so closely approaches the upper limit of 20 which was allowed in the original counting. This suggests that full nominals, whether definite or indefinite, are most typically used to introduce completely new topics -- at least in this meditative passage -- and that further reference to any topic, if further reference is made at all, will usually be assigned to a reduced nominal coding device.

The fact is that Wordsworth's most meditative verse is full of nominals which have virtually no topicality at the points where they are introduced; he is constantly introducing new background and participants, only to mention them once and let them fall from sight again immediately. These nominals refer to things which are known to every person -- things which are common to everyone's experience. They are seldom greatly elaborated -- adjectives are present, but not abundant -- because they are things which the poet

simply wants to call to mind, but not to describe. Here, then, we see quantitative evidence of some iconic syntactic features central to Wordsworth's "plain, pluralizing mode" (Ward 1984:63).

As we have already noted, the hierarchy of nominal coding devices proposed by Givón is intended primarily to apply to narrative discourse. The scale is expected to yield better correlations when participants are being introduced and dealt with in some logical flow of description. We have seen, however, that some measure of correspondence still exists, even when referential distances are compared within a rather "artistic" piece which hardly qualifies as narrative.

Some of Wordsworth's poetry, however, does take a more narrative approach to its description, albeit with some editorializing and a high degree of artistic stylization on the part of the author. One such poem is "The Idiot Boy," in which Wordsworth describes a mentally-impaired child's pony-ride to town to get a doctor late one night. Table IV presents referential distance figures for nominal coding devices in lines 1-100 of this poem.

TABLE IV

Referential Distances in Wordsworth's Poetic Narrative

Coding Type	No. Occurring	Ave. Ref. Dist.
a. zero anaphora	20	2.0
b. pronoun (all types)	48	3.1
c. proper name	24	3.4
d. Def. NP	65	15.4
e. Indef. NP	54	16.9

Here again we see a fundamental confirmation of the scale of correlations proposed by Givón. Smaller coding devices iconically indicate smaller intervals between references to a given participant, while larger devices signal that a participant is more unexpected, or less topical, in the discourse.

It is interesting to note that proper names, included as a separate category in Table IV because of their frequency in "The Idiot Boy," seem to fall much closer to pronouns than to other definite noun phrases. Perhaps various constraints such as metrics and rhyme are working together here to cause Wordsworth to treat proper names as simply alternate pronouns; the poet can choose either he or Johnny to refer to the idiot boy himself, and of course the former has only one syllable, while the latter has two. Thus, metrical considerations may have a strong influence here.

Additionally, Wordsworth often reintroduces a character by proper name at the first mention of that character within a stanza -- almost as if each stanza began a new story. Since each stanza is only five lines long, this produces a rather large number of proper name uses, within a relatively small area. Hence, there is a small referential distance for this category.

Table IV also reveals somewhat lower average referential distances for full nominals than were found in Table I. This is probably attributable to the fact that, in the more narrative passage, Wordsworth is concerned with following a plot line, rather than simply guiding the reader's thoughts to and fro. Thus, the participants are simply more continuous in the narrative verse, such that all types of nominals are relatively more likely to code predictable topics.

Of course, adopting such an argument leaves us with the question of why pronouns show an increase in referential distance in Table IV, if we predict a general decrease for narrative passages. Two possible explanations might be suggested: first, "The Idiot Boy" adheres to rather rigid metrical and rhyming patterns, which certainly have an impact on syntactic arrangements, as we noted in Section 1.5; additionally, the very small number of participants in the poem (essentially 3) makes it possible for pronouns to refer back over large distances without fear of creating confusion,

whereas the absence of central participants among the plethora of nominals in the more meditative passage first examined creates the need for pronouns to be utilized only in close proximity to their antecedents for the sake of clarity.

In general, we find that Wordsworth's nominals do seem to exhibit the sort of correlations predicted by Givón, in passages of both narrative and introspective character. Participants which are highly topical at any given point in the discourse are generally coded with small nominal coding devices, while less topical participants require larger, more explicit coding devices.

We have already observed that one of Wordsworth's goals in writing is to make his work easily accessible to the common man, and that he utilizes abundant references to commonplace things as one strategy for achieving this effect. We have suggested that such references involve background and participant nominals which have virtually no topicality at the points where they are introduced, and which thus tend to be coded by full nominals.

There is an apparent contradiction here. Such nominals are at once highly familiar to the reader and lacking in topicality in the discourse being presented. It seems that Wordsworth deliberately manipulates these two phenomena in a way that brings their theoretical conflict into a subjective harmony for the reader.

Ward (1984:58) has suggested that Wordsworth's verse

tends to contain many items, "of which none is central." This impression is apparently created by the juxtaposition of reduced nominals -- nominals which are high in topicality in the discourse at hand -- with full nominals -- nominals which are high in a different sort of topicality -- that of human experience. In his work, the poet makes them seem equivalent in importance, although their topicality derives from different sources.

3.2 PREVERBAL OBJECTS

In Wordsworth's work, one finds a number of instances in which the direct object of a transitive verb occurs in preverbal position. This is neither normal in English syntax nor particularly common in Wordsworth's work, so that the reader might expect to encounter some initial difficulty in recognizing the grammatical relations of preverbal objects within the sentences which contain them. Since preverbal position in English is normally reserved for grammatical subjects, we would naturally expect that preverbally positioned objects could be misperceived as subjects -- at least on first reading.

This, however, is generally not the case. In this section, we will examine several instances of preverbal occurrences of direct objects, and suggest that specific features of the syntactic constructions involved serve to indicate iconically the status of the preverbal nouns in

question as unambiguously objects.

It should initially be noted that English syntax (or at least, poetic license) allows for the placement of nominals with several types of grammatical relations in either preverbal or postverbal postion. Thus:

(15) To both I listened
(Prelude I:57)

(16) While upon the fancied scene I gazed
(Prelude I:76)

(17) In the castle he's pursuing
(Idiot Boy 229)

(18) ...and in a faltering voice,
Whose tone bespake reviving interests
Till then unfelt, he thanked me
(Prelude IV:463-65)

In examples (15)-(18), the preverbal nominals of interest occur within prepositional phrases. To in (15) and upon in (16) are particles which introduce phrases that co-occur with the verbs listen and gaze, respectively. Examples (17) and (18) demonstrate two different functions of

the prepostion in: to introduce a locative expression in the former and an adverbial of manner in the latter.

Of course, it is perfectly permissible in English grammar for these categories to be expressed preverbally; the point here is simply that their grammatical relations are clearly identified by the prepositional markers to, while, and in.

English direct objects normally correlate with semantic patients, and of course, a means is provided by English grammar for patients to occur preverbally, as well. The typical vehicle for this is the passive construction, which is also found in Wordsworth, as in examples (19)-(21):

(19) The trees (her first-born child being then a babe)
Were planted by her husband and herself
(Grasmere 391-92)

(20) ...I feel
That an internal brightness is vouchsafed
(Grasmere 674-75)

(21) ...till choice was made
Of a known Vale
(Prelude I:71-72)

In these and all examples of English passive constructions, unique coding of the verbs and the optional by+agent constituent serve as iconic indications of unexpected semantic information.

Having dealt with preverbal occurrences of other nominals, we may now examine those nominals which occur preverbally, signify semantic patients, and are not coded as the subjects of passive constructions. One might expect that a reader could experience difficulty in recognizing the grammatical relations of such nominals, in a language fairly free of case markings, as is English. However, we will find several iconic indicators helpful in identifying the syntactic relations of these nominals.

Dillon (1978) suggests that, in reading literature, one may employ "four kinds of strategies for identifying [preverbal] Subjects and Objects: strategies based (1) on serial order, (2) on pronominal clues, (3) on semantic compatibility (enriched by context), and (4) on perception of theme" (p. 22, enumeration added). The third and fourth types are actually the most important, but they do not fall within the realm of what we are investigating here. However, we will see that syntactic clues contribute to our ability to use strategies of types 1 and 2 in correctly identifying the grammatical relations of preverbal objects.

Dillon's type 1 strategy applies to cases in which both subject and object in a sentence are preverbal, yielding a

construction of the form:

(22) NP - NP - V.

In such cases, strategy 1 (Dillon 1978:9) asks us to assume that the object will be expressed first, and the subject second:

(23) NP(O) - NP(S) - V.

This type of construction is not common in Wordsworth, but where an NP - NP string does occur preverbally, Dillon's rule generally seems to hold:

(24) When this Vale
We entered
(Grasmere 170-71)

(25) For peace they have
(Grasmere 282)

More often, however, we find that Wordsworth employs a construction of the form:

(26) NP - Aux - NP - V.

In these situations, we also find a serial order clue, which is that once again the grammatical direct object will be the first NP, and the subject will be the second. Such constructions occur in examples (27) and (28):

(27) Friends shall I have at dawn
(Grasmere 515)

(28) The owl that gives the name to Owlet-Crag
Have I heard whooping
(Grasmere 521-22)

The occurrence of either of the syntactic patterns discussed above serves as a fairly consistent indicator of preverbal object positioning. Thus, just as passive constructions iconically indicate semantic patient status of grammatical objects, so are these constructions employed by Wordsworth as iconic indicators of semantic patient status of preverbal nominals.

It should be noted that iconicity of the type being discussed here is not the sort in which syntactic patterns actually mirror semantic information, as was the case with the noun phrase phenomena described above. Rather, syntactic patterns are serving as indicators that the sentences in question are presenting information differently than what is normal and expected. No inherent quality of patterns (23)

In these matters
is that our
first VP
constructi

and (26) helps us to recognize the grammatical relations of their parts when we encounter them, but their consistent use within Wordsworth's work when objects occur preverbally makes them iconic indicators, within Wordsworth's system, of the semantic information we have been discussing.

Dillon's second type of strategy involves the case-marking of pronouns. Quite simply, an author may identify which noun phrase in a construction is the object by choosing a coding device for either subject or object or both which will receive morphological marking to identify its grammatical role unambiguously. This may be true regardless of whether the grammatical subject of a sentence also occurs preverbally -- as in (22) -- or not.

Actually, this strategy is relevant in virtually all examples of preverbal objects in Wordsworth's work; in addition to the examples given above, example (29) illustrates a case-marked preverbal object, while (30) and (31) illustrate case-marked subjects in different positions:

(29) but me hath Nature tamed
(Grasmere 726)

(30) cheap matter offered they
(Prelude I:529)

(31) No doubt too he the moon had seen.
(Idiot Boy 444)

This effect may be made even stronger by using a reflexive pronoun, which, unless it serves as an intensifier, will of necessity will be the object of the sentence anyway:

(32) While Earth herself is adorning
(Immortality 43)

Of course, case-markings on a subject, as in (30) and (31), do not immediately identify the object; they leave the reader to infer its role from the fact that the subject slot in the sentence is clearly filled by the overtly marked participant. But this is not much of an intuitive leap, and it seems doubtful that it will often be missed. These clues, then, may also be seen as iconic syntactic indicators of the grammatical relations of preverbal objects.

Although semantic clues are most certainly primary in our identification of preverbal objects, the syntactic and morphological features which have been presented here can be found to be of relevance in almost every occurrence of a preverbal object in Wordsworth's work. Here, then, is another area in which grammatical patterns correlate with semantic information in what may be called an iconic relationship.

3.3 SENTENCES

One of the characteristic features of Wordsworth's work -- and one major reason that his syntax provides interesting areas for linguistic study -- is that his sentences tend to be extremely long. One sometimes gets the feeling that the poet has, in fact, perhaps forgotten to utilize periods, or that he quite possibly simply doesn't like them. Instead, one finds multitudes of subordinate and modifying clauses, along with generous use of punctuation to extend sentences; colons, semi-colons and dashes abound.

The flow of Wordsworth's thought, however, is not hampered by his seeming abhorrence of complete stops. Rather, the punctuation seems to facilitate the flowing together of thoughts which somehow ought to be joined -- concepts which belong together, and which would suffer a loss of intensity if broken up and separated into unitary propositions.

This is all the design of the poet, of course. Not only are such devices common in literature of Wordsworth's time, but they seem to be employed by Wordsworth himself to achieve particular effects, which we will seek to identify here. Often, for example, Wordsworth seeks to link his thoughts together syntactically to express their essential unity in his own mind, and to allow the reader to pursue them in a natural flowing of his own thought process; essentially, Wordsworth is aiming to mimic the "stream of consciousness"

by means of his syntax.

Wordsworth alerts us to the fact that he will use his verse as a tool to examine the mind. He writes:

(33) Urania, I shall need
Thy guidance, or a greater Muse, if such
Descend to earth or dwell in highest heaven!
For I must tread on shadowy ground, must sink
Deep - and, aloft ascending, breathe in worlds
To which the heaven on heavens is but a veil.
...we look
Into our Minds, into the Mind of Man -
My haunt, and the main region of my song.
(Excursion 25-30, 39-41)

Here, Wordsworth warns that he intends to attempt to fathom "the Mind of Man," an attempt not yet made by poets in general. He joins the ranks of those who essentially cast away the reverences and fears of human history in turning inward upon themselves, and upon the internal workings of humanity.

Wordsworth's turn inward upon himself, then, is mirrored in the manner in which he constructs his sentences; he attempts to model the turning and twisting of his own thoughts in the complex syntax with which he presents his work. This may be seen, too, as another attempt to make his work more accessible to the common man; if the syntax really

mirrors the workings of human consciousness in any way, then his readers will certainly find it easy to process and fairly accessible, at least in terms of the syntactic aspects of the work.

Additionally, this may be seen as another area of iconicity in Wordsworth's grammar. Here, the poet's perception of the way the human mind deals with the world around it is reproduced in both syntactic arrangements and the grouping and linking of individual propositions into larger units within the total discourse.

In this discussion, we will suggest some ways in which Wordsworth's deliberately contrived syntactic patterns do seem to serve as iconic indicators of the flow of human consciousness.

Let us begin by looking at a fairly typical sentence from Wordsworth's extended autobiographical poem. This particular one comes from Book IX of the "Prelude," entitled "Residence in France:"

(34) Where silent Zephyrs sported with the dust
Of the Bastille, I sate in the open sun,
And from the rubbish gathered up a stone,
And pocketed the relic, in the guise
Of an enthusiast; yet, in honest truth,
I looked for something that I could not find,
Affecting more emotion than I felt;
For 'tis most certain, that these various sights,

> However potent their first shock, with me
> Appeared to recompense the traveller's pains
> Less than the painted Magdalene of Le Brun,
> A beauty exquisitely wrought, with hair
> Dishevelled, gleaming eyes, and rueful cheek
> Pale and bedropped with everflowing tears.
>
> (Prelude IX: 67-80)

This sentence is set off as a poetic stanza unto itself, and is actually probably a little bit longer than the average sentence in Wordsworth. However, there are many others as long or longer; here, one sentence spans 14 poetic lines, while its four immediate successors span 15, 11.5, 4, and 14.5 lines, respectively.

This sentence contains 14 clauses (i.e. main verbs, counting two which are ellipsed, in lines 75 and 77) -- six independent and nine dependent. Additionally, there are four conjunctions -- "and ...and ...yet ...for" -- and one lengthy appositive (the final three lines). At the outset, at least, the sentence appears to be more or less narrative in progression, and this gives it most of its logical structure. As the poet continues, however, things become increasingly contemplative, until the activity is gone entirely, and only meditation remains.

In the process, the poet has strung together so many clauses of such different focus that one would have rather

great difficulty explaining what the central proposition of the sentence is supposed to be; the sheer bulk of what is presented causes us to recognize none of the content as any more critical than the rest, but all as somehow of equivalent importance.

This is probably Wordsworth's intent. Just as we noted with regard to noun phrases that there often seems to be no central participant in Wordsworth's discourse, so we find here that the sentence contains no central proposition. Instead, a sentence consists of many propositions which coordinate with, or depend upon, one another, but none of which seems to command greatest attention. In this way, the poet relativizes the importance of each proposition expressed; none is essentially more important than the others, and all seem to share equal prominence in the poet's mind. Via his syntax, Wordsworth encourages his readers to share in this sort of unitary treatment of experience and thought.

We will now further examine Wordsworth's use of several devices -- punctuation, subordination, apposition, parallelism and ellipsis -- in order to see how these work together toward the overall effect which we have been describing.

3.3.1 PUNCTUATION

In order to get an initial feeling for how Wordsworth achieves these kinds of effects with his sentences, let us

look at Table V, which presents data concerning the punctuation used in the famous "Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood:"

TABLE V

Punctuation Marks of the Immortality Ode

TYPE OF MARK	NO. OCCURRING
Comma	137
Semi-colon	34
Colon	13
Dash	7
Exclamation Point	16
Period	12
Question Mark	3
TOTAL	222

This ode (hereafter "Immortality") has a total of 203 lines. From Table V, we find that sentence-ending punctuation marks (periods, exclamation points and question marks) occur 31 times, so that the poem averages 6.5 lines per sentence. (Actually, the average might be a bit higher, since the exclamation point is sometimes used after brief interjections which the poet doesn't seem to consider separate sentences, since he follows them with lower-case letters.) The poem is divided into ten sections of unequal length, so that each

section averages about 20 lines and 3 sentences.

Most importantly, we find that colons and semi-colons together comprise 47 of 222 total punctuation marks. This means that about 21% of Wordsworth's punctuation marks are of the type which deliberately prolong a sentence at points where it would almost always be possible to come to a complete stop. The poet extends the boundaries of the sentence to include multiple propositions.

3.3.2 SUBORDINATION

Example (34), above, is a good illustration of how Wordsworth often makes extensive use of subordination within a sentential unit. This allows him to present a great deal of background information within the normal flow of thought. Thus, we find adverbials of time, location, and manner, as well as parenthetical comments about the author's feelings, attitudes, and opinions.

Another example of this extensive presentation of background information through adverbials is found in "Michael: A Pastoral Poem:"

(35) And hence this tale, [while I was yet a Boy
Careless of books, yet having felt the power
Of Nature, by the gentle agency
Of natural objects,] led me on to feel
For passions [that were not my own] and think

(At random and imperfectly indeed)
On man, the heart of man, and human life.

(Michael 27-33)

The parentheses are Wordsworth's own, but the brackets have been inserted here to highlight the adverbial digression and the relative clause. This digression is of particular interest, since the poet chooses to employ it in a position where it separates the subject and verb of the main clause by three full lines. It is as if a thought of tangential importance struck him all at once, and he simply wrote it down, so as to keep from forgetting it, and then continued where he had left off.

And yet, that which seems syntactically to be background or less vital information is clearly just as central to the poet's message as is the main sentential matrix. If we were to remove the material in Wordsworth's parentheses and in the brackets, we would find that only 22 of the original 55 words remained. Perhaps the unmodified main clause is best considered a framework for supporting the poet's meditiations; clearly, each needs the other to complete a coherent presentation of the message.

3.3.3 APPOSITION

Another device which Wordsworth sometimes employs to increase the amount of material which a sentence can hold is apposition. Examples (36) and (37) demonstrate the use of

this device:

(36) ...this infant sensibility,
Great birthright of our being, was in me
Augmented and sustained.
(Prelude II: 270-72)

(37) Those fields, those hills...
...were to him
A pleasurable feeling of blind love,
The pleasure which there is in life itself.
(Michael 74-77)

Here, again, Wordsworth associates ideas by interspersing related thoughts within the framework of his main clauses. By the use of this device, the poet seems to attempt to mirror the mental process of constantly shifting his focus on what he is describing -- refocusing, rebalancing, refining the mental image he seeks to produce, all within the natural flow of thought.

3.3.4 PARALLELISM

At times, of course, all of Wordsworth's seeming digressions may cause the reader to lose the train of thought entirely. While this, too, may be a natural mental process (and therefore, one which Wordsworth might seek to reproduce) it is nonetheless not usually the poet's goal to confuse his

audience. Thus, he provides clues -- some syntactic -- to help in making the proper associations.

One such clue is provided by syntactic parallelism, when concepts which belong together are presented with similar syntactic devices. This, of course, is an iconic use of syntax to aid in semantic processing. For example:

(38) Well do I call to mind the very week
When I was first entrusted to the care
Of that sweet Valley; when its paths, its shores,
And brooks, were like a dream of novelty
To my half-infant thought; that very week,
While I was roving up and down alone,
Seeking I knew not what, I chanced across...
(Prelude V: 426-33)

Here, the poet has interjected yet another, four-line adverbial, and perhaps fears that the reader will lose the train of thought. In order to call attention back to the original idea, he returns to a syntactic pattern from earlier in the sentence: "the very week/ when I was first entrusted" is recalled by "that very week/ while I was roving."

In this same example, Wordsworth also helps us to identify background material by presenting it in consistent forms. Two adverbials describing temporal setting both begin with <u>when</u>, and two clauses describing the poet's activity

begin with the participles roving and seeking. Both pairings help us to classify these modifiers together accurately, and allow us to recognize more quickly that each presents background for the main clause. Similarly, when we encounter the verb chanced, we are likely to assume (correctly) that it once again takes up the action of the central sentential matrix, since it bears tense inflection matching that of the rest of the primary narrative and does not appear to be subordinated. All of these clues involve recognizing morphological parallelism inherent in the structures which Wordsworth has provided.

In this area of morphological and syntactic parallelism, we see a typical example of the iconic principle "similar form corresponds to similar function," which was discussed in Section 2.2. The phrases "the very week" and "that very week," however, go beyond the basic principle, in that they are the result of deliberate choice on the part of the poet to construct parallelism at a level higher than that of obligatory morphology. Whether Wordsworth ever consciously considered this principle or not, he seems to have made use of its effects here.

3.3.5 ELLIPSIS

The syntactic devices which we have examined so far have served two basic purposes -- the incorporating of multiple concepts or propositions within a single sentential framework, and the associating of those concepts with one

another. Now we will examine one more device -- ellipsis -- which Wordsworth sometimes employs to help perform the latter of these two basic tasks.

Dillon (1978:123) presents several examples of what he terms Wordsworth's "ellipsis of semantically rather empty main verbs." A typical case is example (39):

(39) [I] listen to the grave reports
Of dire enchantments faced and overcome
By the strong mind, and tales of warlike feats,
Where spear encountered spear, and sword with sword
Fought, as if conscious of the blazonry
That the shield bore, so glorious was the strife;
Whence inspiration for a song that winds
Through everchanging scenes of votive quest
Wrongs to redress, harmonious tribute paid,
To patient courage and unblemished truth,
To firm devotion, zeal unquenchable,
And Christian meekness hallowing faithful loves.
(Prelude I: 174-85)

Dillon suggests that we can best understand this passage by supplying a missing main verb comes or came following whence (1978:123). This does in fact make sense out of it all, but the sentence is far from easy to parse, even then.

We could explain such ellipses with some principle

governing omission of semantically redundant material: "information inferrable from context may be omitted." But this would be foolish, since we have already spent great effort showing that Wordsworth takes pains to include all sorts of redundant and/or inferrable information. If anything, he is normally overly explicit. So a few relatively isolated omissions must be due to some other consideration.

In fact, it seems likely that something related to Haiman's linguistic and conceptual distance correlations is taking place in such instances. By occasionally leaving out sentential elements which can be inferred from context, Wordsworth may be seeking to associate other parts of the sentence closely by placing them close together. By omitting the verb come in (39), Wordsworth places the "inspiration" and its source in closer proximity -- and leaves it for the reader to infer the exact relationship between the two. This is greater conceptual closeness, iconically signalled by proximity of the coding devices.

An even more interesting example of this phenomenon comes from earlier in the same book of Wordsworth's "Prelude:"

(40) But from this awful burthen I full soon
Take refuge and beguile myself with trust
That mellower years will bring a riper mind

And clearer insight. Thus my days are past
In contradiction; with no skill to part
Vague longing, haply bred by want of power,
From paramount impulse not to be withstood,
A timorous capacity from prudence,
From circumspection, infinite delay.
(Prelude I: 234-42)

The syntax of (40) is far from transparent, and it takes some thought to work out the relationships in the second sentence. Dillon suggests that we read it "part a from b, c from d, from e, f" (1978:123). This works nicely, with the following correspondences: a="vague longing, haply bred by want of power;" b="paramount impulse not to be withstood;" c="a timorous capacity;" d="prudence;" e="circumspection;" and f="infinite delay."

Having solved the syntactic puzzle, however, we discover that we have passed by the whole point of the passage. Just as the poet himself has "no skill to part" the elements from one another, so he has intertwined them for us. By omitting elements which would both semantically and syntactically clarify the relationships of the parts to one another, he has purposely brought together, graphically, nominals which belong conceptually together as well. Again, the syntax iconically mirrors the conceptual relationships.

3.3.6 DISCUSSION

Having examined a number of devices which Wordsworth employs within his sentences, we are in a position to make some general statements about the role of the sentence and its constituents in Wordsworth's work. Primary among these, of course, must be the two concepts which we have confronted in most of the previous five sections: that Wordsworth's sentence seeks to include a wide range of participants and propositions, and that none of these seems to take greater importance than the others. Permitting for a moment an overly poetic metaphor, we might say that Wordsworth's sentence is somewhat like the national cemetery at Gettysburg: thousands of unique, individual persons lie buried there together, and yet no one of them is of any greater importance than the others. And the sum total of all their deaths is but a single event in the course of the "great civil war" (Lincoln, 1863).

Ward (1984) describes Wordsworth's writing thus:

> Wordsworth is after all then expressing desire, that nature be really unified in experience, so much so that even literally disconnected things seem part of or close to each other... Wordsworth's invitation is that we share his longing to see, or make, a natural unity (pp. 70-71)

One way to formalize this use of the sentence as a construction for unifying concepts is to suggest that any two sentential constituents X and Y may be considered linguistically closer (and thus, iconically, conceptually closer) if they appear in a single sentential matrix, separated by A B C constituents, as in (41), than if they appear in separate sentences, as in (42):

(41) [X A B C Y]

(42) [X] [Y]

Numerous factors may mitigate the usefulness of such a correspondence. For example, if X and Y are coreferential noun phrases in (42), then they will certainly be extremely close conceptually. On the other hand, if the same situation exists in (41), then we may have apposition, and the possibility that X and Y express the same participant within the same proposition. This is conceivably "closer" than a coreferential relationship in (42), but such matters would probably always be highly context-dependent. In any case, the preceeding discussion of Wordsworth's sentences has served to establish some basis for positing (41) as corresponding to a generally "closer" conceptual relationship between X and Y than does (42), at least within Wordsworth's work. A great deal of textual analysis (utilizing procedures

as yet undiscovered) would presumably be necessary to validate this claim for linguistic systems in general. One would also want to ask whether such generalizations could apply to both written (premeditated) and oral (spontaneous) discourse -- but these questions are beyond the scope of the present work.

Having accepted at least partly the idea that X and Y in (41) are "closer" than in (42), we may naturally want to extend Haiman's (1985a) linguistic distance scale, presented in 2.3, above, to include this new distinction (here, we will use the typographical period symbol for a sentence break; # indicates a word boundary; + indicates a morpheme boundary):

(43) Diminishing linguistic distance between X and Y

a. X . Y

b. X # A # B # Y

c. X # A # Y

d. X + A # Y

e. X # Y

f. X + Y

g. Z

In (43), the transition from a to b seems to allow a rather large jump in the amount of material intervening between X and Y. We might ask if boundaries intermediate to those we have accounted for, such as those of phrases,

clauses, or even other marks of punctuation, such as commas, dashes or semi-colons, should in fact be included between items (43a) and (43b). And of course, we would predict that they should. Again, fuller expansion of (43) is beyond the scope of this investigation.

A similar question would be to ask if the same effect holds at higher levels, as well. Does, for example, inclusion in the same paragraph make two items likely to be semantically closely linked?

The likely answer to this, it would seem, is "yes." The paragraph is most certainly a thematic unit, and things included in a single paragraph are, almost by definition, somehow related to a single theme. Thus, it seems likely (but certainly not guaranteed) that the same relatively "close" relationship of X to Y will be implied by their inclusion in a single paragraph.

Taken to an even higher level, this would suggest that inclusion of X and Y within the same discourse (narrative, poem, sitcom episode, etc.) implies that they are more likely to be closely related than if they occur in totally different discourses.

This last point is perhaps trivial, but it serves to show an essential similarity between Haiman's idea of "conceptual distance" and the long-recognized idea of "theme." The two ideas are really not very different, in that both recognize that concepts which are mentally

associated tend to be associated in linguistic expression, as well. It is willingly admitted that this summary does justice to neither idea, but it shows what they have in common, which is really a great deal of what has made each of them independently noteworthy.

associated
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4. SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

4.0 SUMMARY

A functional view of natural languages presupposes the ability for adaptive change over diachrony. Likewise, adaptation presupposes some set of standards, internal or external, which serve to discriminate between linguistic structures, selecting, among possible forms, those which are better-suited than others for performing various communicative functions desired by language users. We have adopted the stance that these "standards" are cognitive strategies within the human mind.

Also presupposed by such a view is the idea that the relationship between linguistic form and external function is at least partially non-arbitrary. When observable form can be related to performed or desired function in any consistent way, we label the relationship between form and function "iconic."

We have shown that iconicity involves linguistic diagrams or images of mental concepts. We have further suggested that iconicity, as a general principle of human cognition, should be expected to be identifiable at all levels of linguistic coding.

An attempt has been made to demonstrate the presence of iconic principles in natural language syntax in a variety of areas. Sequential ordering in the linguistic system often corresponds to temporal sequential ordering. Likewise, the occurrence of similar linguistic forms generally corresponds to the performance of similar functions. Morphological

markedness may indicate semantic complexity. Children demonstrate several speech tendencies which involve iconic adaptation of adult language. Diachronic change may be iconically motivated in several areas. Some syntactic patterns demonstrate influence from cognitive information-processing strategies. Finally, a correlation may be identified between the size of a lexicon and the presence of iconically motivated syntax. Together, these arguments form a basis for believing that iconicity is widely present in natural languages.

Given the likelihood that iconic principles may be identified in human language, we have attempted to show their presence in a specific corpus of William Wordsworth's poetry. We have found that the phonological size of noun phrases iconically indicates how topical their referents are within the surrounding text. We have also seen that several iconic principles may be employed to help in identifying the grammatical relations of preverbally occurring objects. Finally, we have shown that several characteristic features of Wordsworth's sentences -- punctuation, subordination, apposition, parallelism and ellipsis -- may serve as iconic indicators of certain effects the poet is attempting to achieve.

The goal of this thesis has been twofold: to demonstrate the validity of iconic principles in linguistic description, and to show the relevance of such principles to

an understanding of Wordsworth's poetry. It is hoped that the reader will agree that progress has been made in both areas.

4.1 GENERAL COMMENTS

For the most part, the discussion presented in this thesis has been qualitative, although some quantitative study has been presented in Section 3.1. The goal has been to show that some of the rather impressionistic feelings a reader may have about the effectiveness of Wordsworth's poetry may be helpfully explained in terms of identifiable principles of iconicity.

Labov has criticized the "overestimation" of functional theorists who may argue strongly for a pervasive presence of functional motivations in language without "paying attention to all of the available data, rather than just those utterances that favor the ideas under consideration" (1987:314-15). In a study such as the present one, where examples have obviously been carefully selected from the corpus of data to demonstrate relevant points clearly, such a criticism might be justified. This could only be the case, however, if the purpose of the argumentation were to claim that the iconic motivations proposed for explaining the structures examined here could be found behind all (or even many) other constructions, as well.

But no such claim has been advanced here. Rather,

there has been an attempt to show that iconic motivations are clearly present in certain types of constructions, and that in the cases of those constructions, wherever they may be found across the entire corpus, iconic principles operate. Generalization of the explanations offered here, either to other constructions in Wordsworth's work or elsewhere in human language generally, is certainly to be encouraged, but caution is also advised; Labov's criticism may well be justified if iconicity is bandied about as a catch-all explanation for the observable forms of syntactic constructions.

4.2 SYNTAX AND MEANING

Hill (1976) presents a fairly traditional interpretation of the correlations between levels of language and their function within various levels of literature. The overlapping of "language proper" and "literature proper" includes discourse phenomena -- "the area of sentences and their relations to each other" (p.45) -- but not sub-sentential areas such as morphology and syntax, which are considered "non-literary." Table VI is reproduced from Hill:

TABLE VI
Levels of Language and Literature
from Hill (1976:47)

Level	Language	Literature	Level
Uppermost nonlanguage	Correspondence meaning	Cultural values Structural and most analogical meaning Correspondence meaning	Uppermost nonliterary
Language proper	Structure and function of sentences, Discourse structure or style	Content structures of literature Phonological structures of literature (rhyme, meter, etc.)	Literature proper
	Structure and function of words, syntax Structure and function of meaningful elements, morphology Structure and function of sounds, phonology	Language as material of literature	Lowest nonliterary
Lowest nonlanguage	Articulations and sounds	Irrelevant	

Chapter 3 has attempted to demonstrate identifiable correspondences between synactic constructions and the literary effects intended by Wordsworth. Such correspondences have some bearing on the relationships of elements of language to elements of literature.

Specifically, the identification of iconic constructions in Wordsworth's syntax allows us to conclude that the "levels of language" presented by Hill should not be considered rigidly separated. The structure of noun phrases, the identifiability of preverbal objects, and the expansive sentential matrices which we have examined all help to demonstrate how syntax may be used as a sort of "material of literature" which corresponds to a higher level than just the "lowest non-literary," as in Table VI. Rather, we have found syntax capable of contributing meaning directly to the discourse, by virtue of iconic relations it may bear to that which is being discussed, or to the way in which the discussion is presented or perceived. Thus, we should not confine syntax to the lowest realms of "language proper," but must recognize its potential direct interplay with semantic information (Hill's "Correspondence meaning"), and with specific literary effects which an author may seek, consciously or unconsciously, to achieve (Hill's "Content structures of literature").

We have seen only some initial ways in which such correspondences may be identified; it is hoped that future

investigations of the sort undertaken here will be able to increase our understanding of the role of syntax in literature, as well as that of iconicity in syntax.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX
NOTES ON THE CORPUS

The corpus of Wordsworth's poetry utilized for this study is somewhat eclectic, drawing on several periods and genres from the poet's work. Provided here is a list of all poems cited, with bibliographical references and brief notes concerning each poem's significance.

The Excursion. Found in Wordsworth (1940:Vol.5:1-312).
The longest of Wordsworth's poems. In the preface to its second edition, Wordsworth describes it as "a philosophical poem, containing views of Man, Nature and Society." It is introspective, with irregular meter. It does not rhyme.

Home at Grasmere. Found in Wordsworth (1896:Vol.VIII:235-57).
This work is in Wordsworth's meditative, introspective style. It describes the poet's life at his boyhood home.

The Idiot Boy. Found in Wordsworth (1940:Vol.2:67-80).
A narrative poem which utilizes both rhyme and fairly rigid meter.

Michael: A Pastoral Poem. Found in Wordsworth (1940:Vol.2:80-94).
Here, Wordsworth focuses specifically on a "pastoral" scene, telling a story of the common man in his common language.

Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood. Found in Wordsworth (1896:Vol.VIII:189-98).
One of Wordsworth's most famous poems. Here, he utilizes both rhyme and meter, in lines of unequal length. The focus is meditative.

The Prelude or Growth of a Poet's Mind. Wordsworth (1926).
This epic in fourteen books is Wordsworth's second longest, but greatest, work. It is entirely self-revelatory, without regular meter or rhyme. For this study, selections have been chosen from the original (1805) version, although the poet later revised it for publication in 1850.

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