



## A Stylistic Analysis of Foregrounding in *Sonnet 18*

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### ABSTRACT

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This paper provides a stylistic analysis of William Shakespeare's *Sonnet 18*, focusing on the concept of foregrounding. The analysis is divided into two main parts: graphological deviation and semantic deviation. Graphological deviation examines the use of punctuation marks such as colons, semicolons, and question marks to create visual and syntactic emphasis. Semantic deviation explores rhetorical devices like personification, rhyme scheme, repetition, and the specific choice of verbs and adjectives to uncover the thematic resonance and layered meanings in the sonnet. The study highlights how these deviations collectively enhance the thematic impact of *Sonnet 18*, showcasing Shakespeare's mastery in using stylistic elements to convey the enduring beauty and timeless nature of love. The paper concludes by discussing the broader implications of these findings for understanding Shakespearean poetry and suggests directions for future research in this field.

### KEYWORDS:

William Shakespeare, Stylistic Analysis, *Sonnet 18*, Foregrounding, Deviation

### INTRODUCTION

This paper offers a stylistic analysis of William Shakespeare's *Sonnet 18*, commonly known as *Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?* Focusing on foregrounding techniques, the study delves into linguistic and lexical choices, punctuations, repetition and the nuanced depiction of time and beauty of this sonnet. Special attention is given to foregrounding, particularly in the context of love and admiration.

The analysis pays attention to Shakespeare's use of foregrounding, aiming to enrich the reader's appreciation of the enduring beauty and timeless nature of love in *Sonnet 18*. The paper introduces the significance of Shakespeare as a literary figure and provides an overview of his sonnets.

Chapter 1 introduces William Shakespeare, highlighting his significance in English literature and focusing on his collection of 154 sonnets. The second section provides an overview of the sonnet form, detailing its structure, rhyme scheme, and thematic characteristics. The third part is a brief introduction to foregrounding. The fourth part is a

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literature review.

Chapter 2 of this study delves into the realm of foregrounding within William Shakespeare's *Sonnet 18*. The analysis is meticulously divided into two major components: Graphological Deviation and Semantic Deviation.

In exploring Graphological Deviation, the study dissects the use of specific punctuation marks, namely Colon (:), Semicolons (;), and Question Mark (?). Each punctuation mark is examined for its role in creating visual and syntactic emphasis within the sonnet. The detailed scrutiny of these graphological elements provides a nuanced understanding of how punctuation contributes to the overall structure and impact of the poem.

Semantic Deviation, the second principal component, unfolds through a comprehensive examination of rhetorical devices and Shakespeare's careful choice of words. Rhetorical devices such as personification, rhyme scheme, and repetition are scrutinized for their contribution to the poem's thematic resonance. Furthermore, the meticulous analysis extends to the choice of verbs and adjectives, unravelling the semantic nuances of the poet's lexical choices.

The exploration of personification sheds light on the vivid imagery and anthropomorphic qualities bestowed upon nature in *Sonnet 18*. The examination of the rhyme scheme elucidates

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the structural beauty that underlies the poem's lyrical composition. Additionally, the study scrutinizes the intentional use of repetition as a stylistic device, uncovering its role in reinforcing key themes and sentiments.

The semantic analysis further dissects the choice of verbs, revealing the dynamic and purposeful actions attributed to elements within the sonnet. Examining adjectives unravels the layers of descriptive richness, contributing to the poem's aesthetic and emotional impact. Each facet of semantic deviation is explored to unveil the intricate tapestry of meaning woven by Shakespeare.

Finally, Chapter 3 concludes this paper. In conclusion, this study highlights how various stylistic elements collectively shape the thematic impact of *Sonnet 18*, contributing to a deeper understanding of Shakespeare's artistic mastery. The deliberate deviations in both graphological and semantic dimensions serve as the poet's palette, creating a rich and emotive masterpiece. This analysis sets the stage for a more profound exploration of how foregrounding enhances the enduring beauty and significance of *Sonnet 18*.

### 1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

#### 1.1 An Introduction of William Shakespeare

William Shakespeare, an iconic figure in English literature, is celebrated for his renowned plays and 154 sonnets. These sonnets, collectively known as the *Sonnets*, offer a profound glimpse into the intricacies of human emotion and experience. Comprising 154 poems, they delve into many themes, ranging from the complexities of love and beauty to the inexorable passage of time and the contemplation of mortality.

Composed during the late 16th century, these sonnets are a testament to Shakespeare's enduring influence and his exploration of timeless themes. *Sonnet 18* is an emblematic example of his poetic prowess in this collection. It is among the series' most recognizable and widely studied works, encapsulating Shakespeare's ability to convey profound ideas and emotions through poetry.

In this paper, we delve into the use of foregrounding techniques within *Sonnet 18* to uncover Shakespeare's linguistic prowess and heighten the reader's appreciation of his work's enduring themes and timeless beauty.

#### 1.2 An Introduction to the Sonnet

A sonnet is a poem consisting of 14 lines, typically in iambic pentameter and following a strict rhyme scheme. It is structured into three quatrains (four-line stanzas) and a final rhymed couplet (two lines). The traditional rhyme scheme for

English sonnets is "abab cdcd efef gg".

The form of English sonnets often revolves around presenting an argument or idea while employing vivid natural imagery throughout the poem. This imagery is then cleverly summarized or illustrated in the concluding couplet, ideally suited for delivering a concise statement or a clever twist after the issue has been examined in the preceding quatrains.

Shakespeare's sonnets are distinctive in several ways. Notably, he deviates from the conventions of his time by focusing his praise, love, and idealizing devotion on a beautiful young man, as opposed to the more common themes of romantic love and courtly admiration.

In *Sonnet 18*, Shakespeare begins by comparing the beauty of his young friend to a summer's day in lines 1 to 8. However, in lines 9 to 14, the sonnet shifts its argument to assert that "thee" (referring to the young friend) will attain immortality through the enduring power of the poem itself. This unique combination of themes and perspectives sets Shakespeare's sonnets apart from the sonnet sequences of his era.

#### 1.3 An Introduction of Foregrounding

Foregrounding, a fundamental concept in literary analysis, is pivotal in illuminating the intricacies of poetic expression. In his seminal work *Poetics*, Aristotle underscored the importance of linguistic deviation and ornamental language in elevating poetry above common vernacular. He asserted that the strategic use of foreign words, metaphorical expressions, and ornamental language transcends the mundane and imparts clarity to the text (Aristotle, 1912).

When we talk about foregrounding, we have to mention deviation. Deviation, a concept ingrained in linguistics and stylistics, is crucial in understanding how language can be manipulated for expressive purposes. It refers to the intentional divergence from the norm or standard language usage. It involves the use of linguistic elements in a manner that deviates from the expected or conventional patterns, thereby drawing attention to specific aspects of the communication. This concept is closely linked to foregrounding, as both highlight the deliberate departure from linguistic norms for communicative or artistic effect. "Literary language generally may be seen to be characteristically estranging, foregrounding the features of ordinary language by repetition or deviation, and consequently forcing our renewed attention to the meaning." (Wales, 2011, 144)

Moving beyond linguistic deviation, foregrounding in contemporary literary analysis encompasses a broader spectrum of stylistic devices that extend beyond vocabulary.

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Researchers delve into the strategic manipulation of punctuation, rhythm, and syntax to emphasize certain elements within a literary work. The selection and arrangement of words, punctuations, and structural elements play a pivotal role in foregrounding, contributing to a poem's overall texture, tone, and interpretation. As noted by Leech, in foregrounding, the linguistic deviation becomes the foregrounded figure, while the background represents the language system taken for granted in any talk of 'deviation' (1994).

This research explores the application of foregrounding techniques, encompassing elements like punctuation and vocabulary usage in William Shakespeare's *Sonnet 18*. By dissecting these nuanced elements in *Sonnet 18*, this study aims to unveil how foregrounding enriches the poetic experience and enhances the thematic resonance of this sonnet. The exploration of foregrounding provides a comprehensive understanding of the interplay between linguistic choices and poetic expression in literary analysis.

### 1.4 Literature Review

Previous Books and studies examining the stylistic analysis of *Sonnet 18* by William Shakespeare are relatively scarce but offer valuable insights into the poem's literary and stylistic significance.

In 1969, Geoffrey Leech's *A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry* sought to demonstrate that the insights of modern linguistic analysis enrich the study of English poetry. This work emphasized the complementary nature of linguistic and critical disciplines, examining various aspects of poetic style, including the language of past and present, creative language, poetic license, repetition, sound, meter, context, and ambiguity.

Moving forward to 2008, Geoffrey Leech's *Language in Literature: Style and Foregrounding* set the concept of "foregrounding" at the heart of the interplay between form and interpretation. Through practical and insightful examination of how poems, plays, and prose produce special meaning, Leech countered the "flight from the text" trend that characterized thinking about language and literature. This work provided a renewed focus on the characteristics and meaning potential of the text itself.

In 2019, Quackenbush Karen's "Stylistics Analysis of *Sonnet 18* by William Shakespeare" celebrated *Sonnet 18*'s depth and beauty. The study emphasized the distinctly Shakespearean style, characterized by vivid imagery, repetitive elements, and rhyme. It also highlighted the use of archaic words, contributing to the sonnet's sense of antiquity and

timelessness. However, it mostly explored the surface of stylistic elements without delving into the nuanced intricacies.

In a separate study by Angelina Joyce San Pedro, the poem *Sonnet 18* underwent a stylistic analysis, focusing on graphological, grammatical, syntactical, and phonological patterns. This research provided a comprehensive exploration of the poem's structure and style, shedding light on Shakespeare's themes, perspectives, and treatment of nature and his beloved. However, it primarily addressed structural elements and lacked a deeper examination of the poetic devices used.

Furthermore, Andrew Spacey's 2023 article "A Summary and Analysis of *Sonnet 18* by William Shakespeare" provides valuable insights into the poem's interpretation and analysis, bridging the gap between traditional scholarship and modern digital platforms. Additionally, Annie L's 2023 article "Punctuation in Poetry: Shaping Verses with Symbols" has inspired my research significantly. I started to explore the crucial role of punctuation in *Sonnet 18*.

In expanding the scope of my literature review, I have incorporated insights from additional works that enrich the understanding of stylistic analysis and literary interpretation. Mick Short's "Exploring the Language of Poems, Plays and Prose" (2013) comprehensively explores language in various literary forms, offering detailed explanations, visual aids, and abundant examples. This resource significantly contributes to the study of foregrounding techniques in literary works.

Katie Wales' "A Dictionary of Stylistics" (2011, 3rd edition) serves as a linguistic treasure trove, aiding in accumulating key language-related terms. With a focus on stylistics, Wales' dictionary provides an extensive guide to the terminology essential for a profound analysis of literary works.

The work of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, titled "Metaphors We Live By" (2011), adds a cognitive linguistic dimension to the exploration. This seminal work examines the pervasive influence of metaphor in shaping our understanding of the world. The insights from this book contribute to a deeper understanding of how metaphors can play a role in the stylistic choices made by poets, including Shakespeare.

Liu Bingshan's "A Short History of English Literature" (2014) holds significance for a historical context and foundational understanding of English literature. It is worth emphasizing that Liu Bingshan's book was instrumental during my preparation for entrance exams, providing insights into historical backgrounds and facilitating a better comprehension of Shakespearean poetry.

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The content richness of Wales' book, the detailed explanations in Short's work, and the foundational support from Liu Bingshan's historical perspective have significantly influenced my approach to the stylistic analysis of *Sonnet 18*. These works collectively contribute to the scholarly foundation upon which my research on foregrounding techniques in *Sonnet 18*

These studies, alongside recent web articles spanning different periods and mediums, offer valuable perspectives on the stylistic analysis of *Sonnet 18*, contributing significantly to a broader understanding of its literary and stylistic significance. In this context, my research aims to delve into the foregrounding techniques employed in *Sonnet 18*, thus addressing the need for a more nuanced analysis of this literary masterpiece.

## 2. FOREGROUNDING IN SONNET 18

### 2.1 Graphological Deviation

Examining the utilization of punctuation in William Shakespeare's *Sonnet 18* offers a profound exploration of the poem's foregrounding techniques, enriching its thematic resonance and emotional impact. This analysis delves into the specific and deliberate punctuation choices made within the poem, highlighting how these choices foreground essential elements, ultimately enhancing the overall significance of the sonnet.

The primary punctuation usage in *Sonnet 18* including question marks, commas, colons, semi-colons, and periods. Among these, commas are the most frequently used punctuation mark. They serve as end punctuation in 6 lines, contributing to the creation of drama, emphasis on feelings, and the addition of meaning. Commas allow readers to pause, encouraging reflection on the message or ideas conveyed by the poet (Quackenbush & Quackenbush, 2019).

In this chapter, the focus of the analysis will primarily be on colons, semi-colons, and question marks, exploring their roles and effects within the context of *Sonnet 18*.

#### 2.1.1 Colon (:)

*Thou art more lovely and more temperate;*

This is the poem's second line, which employs a colon to emphasize the poet's praise of the beloved's beauty and temperance. The colon creates a brief pause, allowing the reader to contemplate and reflect on loveliness and temperance. This pause reinforces the separation between these qualities, making them more distinct in the reader's mind and underscoring their importance throughout the poem. This

foregrounding technique highlights these adjectives more prominently, emphasizing the poet's profound appreciation of the beloved beauty.

*When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st;*

The colon in this line holds a significant role in *Sonnet 18*, acting as a critical transition point in the poem's narrative. It serves as the bridge between the earlier exploration of transient beauty and the unveiling of a timeless solution. This punctuation mark introduces the central idea that the beloved's beauty can be immortalized through poetry. The two lines after this line: "So long as men can breathe or eyes can see, So long lives this, and this gives life to thee." further elaborate on this notion of everlasting beauty. They assert that as long as humanity endures and people continue to appreciate poetry, the beloved's beauty will persist. The colon effectively guides the reader from the problem—the fleeting nature of beauty—to the solution: poetry's capacity to confer immortality.

Colon is used to end two lines to draw attention to a series of ideas and introduce additional information suggested in the preceding line. (Quackenbush & Quackenbush, 2019) In essence, the colon in this context acts as a literary device that not only signals a thematic shift but also underlines the importance of the concept introduced. It accentuates the enduring power of poetry to bestow everlasting life upon the beloved's beauty, encapsulating the core theme of *Sonnet 18*.

#### 2.1.2 Semicolons (;)

In *Sonnet 18*, Shakespeare employs semicolons with precision, strategically placed in specific lines to enhance the poem's foregrounding techniques. Four instances of semicolon usage are particularly noteworthy and contribute significantly to the poem's impact:

*(1) And summer's lease hath all too short a date;*

In this line, the semicolon is a critical punctuation mark. It divides the idea of the brevity of summer's lease from the following clause, allowing the reader to pause and contemplate the fleeting nature of the season. This deliberate pause emphasizes the theme of transience, which is central to the poem.

*(2) And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;*

*And every fair from fair sometime declines,*

This line employs a semicolon to separate the concept of the sun's golden complexion from the ensuing clause. This punctuation choice creates a noticeable break in the flow, prompting the reader to reflect on the vulnerability of the sun's brilliance. The semicolon underscores the idea that even the most radiant aspects of nature are subject to change and decay.

(3) *And every fair from fair sometime declines,  
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd;*

Thirdly, the semicolon in “By chance or nature’s changing course untrimm’d;” creates a deliberate pause in the line, prompting the reader to contemplate the implications of these two alternatives. It invites reflection on the idea that chance events and time’s natural progression can alter or affect beauty.

(4) *Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st;  
Nor shall death brag thou wander'st in his shade,  
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st:*

This line uses a semicolon to separate the notion of not losing possession from the following explanation. This semicolon introduces a sense of certainty and security, contrasting with the earlier lines emphasising vulnerability. It underscores the enduring quality of the beloved’s beauty.

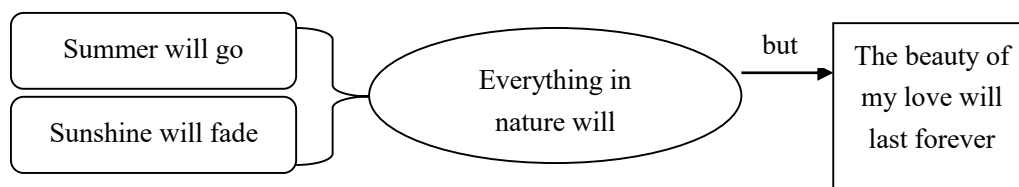


Figure 1: The logic of meanings separated by semicolons

By depicting the fleeting summer days and the vanishing sunlight, Shakespeare arrives at the conclusion of the transience of nature. Following this, Shakespeare pivots to address “you.” While nature is ephemeral, the beauty of “you” is portrayed as everlasting; you and I will forever remain in love.

In essence, the semicolons in these lines of *Sonnet 18* play a crucial role in foregrounding the structured exploration of the beloved’s beauty, creating deliberate pacing, and emphasizing the cumulative nature of the speaker’s argument. They contribute to the overall effectiveness of the sonnet in conveying the enduring power of the beloved’s beauty.

### 2.1.3 Question Mark (?)

In the opening line of *Sonnet 18*, Shakespeare poses a rhetorical question with profound implications: “Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?” While it may initially appear as a genuine question, a closer examination reveals that it serves a more complex purpose. The use of the question mark here creates an immediate foregrounding effect by engaging the reader’s attention and inviting contemplation. However, as the sonnet unfolds, it becomes apparent that the question is not meant to be answered in the conventional sense. Instead, it functions as a rhetorical device, conveying the poet’s intent to elevate the beloved above the comparison with a mere summer’s day. This subtle twist adds a layer of meaning,

The use of semicolons contributes to a sense of accumulation. It implies that each idea builds upon the previous one, intensifying the description and impact. The accumulation of ideas emphasizes the speaker’s attempt to comprehensively capture the beloved’s beauty. In addition, the semicolons also serve to foreground the unfolding argument of the sonnet. As the lines progress, the speaker presents a sequence of challenges or threats to the beloved’s beauty, such as the brevity of summer or the dimming of its gold complexion. This technique keeps the reader engaged in the evolving argument.

The four semicolons analyzed above divide Shakespeare’s intended message into four interconnected and causally related parts. I have created a schematic figure for reference:

suggesting that the beloved’s beauty surpasses the transient and conventional beauty of a summer’s day. Thus, the question mark in this line not only initiates reader engagement but also serves as a rhetorical tool that reinforces the central theme of the sonnet — the enduring and transcendent nature of the beloved’s beauty.

## 2.2 Semantic Deviation

### 2.2.1 Rhetorical Devices

#### (1) Metaphor

Metaphor is used in the first sentence of this sonnet: “Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?” (Line 1), this line sets the tone for the entire poem. This metaphor invites readers to contemplate the beloved’s beauty by equating it with the splendor of a summer’s day. The choice of this metaphor is pivotal as it foregrounds the idea that the beloved’s beauty is captivating and enduring, much like the best days of summer.

Throughout the sonnet, metaphors further establish the parallel between the beloved and nature’s elements. Lines such as “Thou art more lovely and more temperate” (Line 2) and “And summer’s lease hath all too short a date” (Line 4) employ metaphors to convey the idea that the beloved’s beauty surpasses the fleeting and occasionally harsh aspects of the natural world. These metaphors foreground the notion that the



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beloved's allure is transcendent and immune to the ravages of time.

Metaphors also serve to elevate the beloved's qualities. The comparison of the beloved to a "summer's day" and "gold complexion" in "And often is his gold complexion dimm'd" (Line 6) metaphorically illustrates the beloved's brilliance. This metaphorical elevation emphasizes the beloved's exceptional nature.

In addition, metaphors heighten the emotional resonance of the poem. The metaphorical connection between the beloved and nature's beauty evokes a profound sense of admiration and love. By equating the beloved to the best aspects of nature, the speaker foregrounds the depth of their emotional attachment.

In *Sonnet 18*, metaphors serve as vital foregrounding elements. These metaphors draw parallels between the beloved and nature's elements, emphasizing themes of beauty, transience, and immortality.

### (2) Personification

Shakespeare extends personification to the celestial body in the line "And often is his gold complexion dimm'd" (Line 6). The use of "his" to refer to the sun is a way of personifying the sun and suggesting that it has human-like qualities. This personification creates an image of the sun's light fading, further emphasizing the theme of transience.

Personification continues throughout the poem as nature is personified in various lines, such as "And summer's lease hath all too short a date" (Line 4) and "By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd" (Line 8). These instances of personification present nature as a living entity, subject to change and the passage of time. This reinforces the theme of transience and the contrast with the beloved's enduring beauty.

Personification is a central foregrounding technique in *Sonnet 18*, allowing Shakespeare to breathe life into elements of nature and elevate the beloved's beauty. The poem engages the reader's imagination and emotions through personification, creating a lasting impression of the beloved's timeless allure.

### (3) Rhyme Scheme

The rhyme scheme creates a musical quality in *Sonnet 18*, making it both sonorous and pleasing to the ear. The poem is strictly rhymed in sonnets, and the rhymes are neatly organized in ABAB CDCD EFEF GG style, which can be clearly seen. For example: day & may; temperate & date; shines & declines; dimm'd & untrimm'd; fade & shade; ow'st & grow'st; see & thee. This musicality draws readers into the poem, enhancing their emotional engagement.

For instance, In the second line "Thou art more lovely and more temperate:", the two long monosyllabic "more" are followed by two polysyllabic words, "lovely" and "temperate", respectively, to increase the sense of rhythm. This rhyme scheme also emphasises the poet's fondness for his beloved.

The alternating rhyme scheme contributes to the structural organization of the poem. The structured pattern of rhymes mirrors the structured argument and exploration of themes within the sonnet. Each quatrain and the final couplet encapsulate distinct ideas and contribute to the overarching theme of the beloved's enduring beauty.

The final rhyming couplet holds particular significance as it delivers a summary statement or a twist in Shakespearean sonnets. In *Sonnet 18*, the couplet reinforces the idea that the poem will grant the beloved immortality, ensuring that their beauty remains eternal. This conclusion, made more impactful by the rhyme, foregrounds the enduring power of poetry and love.

### (4) Repetition

Within the poetic or literary text, features of literary language can themselves be foregrounded, or made prominent, for specific effects, by a variety of means, e.g. by deviation, by repetition, etc. (Wales, 2011, p. 41)

*And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;*

*And every fair from fair sometime declines,*

The repetition of the conjunction "And" in "And often is his gold complexion dimm'd; And every fair from fair sometime declines" (Lines 6-7) creates a rhythmic cadence and emphasizes the cyclical nature of beauty. This repetition unifies the lines, highlighting the inevitability of both the dimming of beauty and its occasional decline.

*Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st;*

*Nor shall death brag thou wander'st in his shade,*

The repetition of negation with "Nor" in "Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st; Nor shall death brag thou wander'st in his shade" (Lines 9-10) serves a dual purpose. Firstly, it intensifies the speaker's resolve to preserve the beloved's beauty against the ravages of time and death. Secondly, it creates a rhetorical contrast, reinforcing the everlasting nature of the beloved's allure.

*So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,*

*So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.*

Repetition of "So long": The repetition of "So long" in "So long as men can breathe or eyes can see, So long lives this, and this gives life to thee" (Lines 11-12) delivers a powerful

conclusion to the sonnet. This repetition emphasizes the timeless endurance of the poem itself and its ability to immortalize the beloved. The rhythmic repetition adds a sense of continuity, echoing the eternal nature of love and poetry.

Repetition suggests importance by directing attention to keywords or key phrases. (Quackenbush & Quackenbush, 2019) Repetition in *Sonnet 18* acts as a unifying force, emphasizing key themes, creating rhythm, and enhancing the overall impact of the poem.

### **2.2.2 Choice of Words**

Vocabulary in *Sonnet 18* is strategically selected to foreground the poem's core themes. Through precise word choices, Shakespeare guides readers into an exploration of beauty, transience, and immortality.

#### **(1) Verbs**

The poem commences with a question, "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?" (Line 1). The verb "compare" not only initiates the poem's central exploration but also serves as a focal point for the reader. It foregrounds the act of comparing the beloved to the transient beauty of a summer's day, setting the stage for the speaker's admiration.

As the poem progresses, the verbs employed continue to guide readers through the speaker's meditation. In the line "Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May" (Line 3), the verb "shake" vividly depicts the turbulence of nature's elements, highlighting the fragility of beauty. The verb "shine" in "And often is his gold complexion dimm'd" (Line 6) conveys the idea of the sun's brilliance fading, emphasizing the theme of impermanence. These verbs foreground the transitory nature of beauty.

The verbs also contribute to the emotional resonance of the poem. In the line "Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st" (Line 9), the verb "lose" carries emotional weight, underscoring the speaker's desire to ensure the preservation of the beloved's beauty. This verb foregrounds the depth of the speaker's emotion and commitment.

#### **(2) Adjectives**

Throughout the poem, adjectives are used to accentuate the qualities of the beloved. The adjective "lovely" in "Thou art more lovely and more temperate" (Line 2) serves as a pivotal descriptor, emphasizing not only the beloved's physical beauty but also their inner qualities. The adjective "temperate" suggests a sense of moderation, further highlighting the beloved's balanced and enduring nature.

The adjectives in *Sonnet 18* contribute significantly to the poem's theme of moderation. By describing the beloved as

"more temperate," Shakespeare foregrounds the idea that the beloved's beauty is not subject to nature's extremes. This emphasis on moderation underscores the beloved's exceptional qualities and lasting appeal.

The use of the adjectives in "gold complexion dimm'd" (Line 6) creates a sensory experience for the reader. These adjectives paint vivid mental images and engage the senses, allowing readers to connect more deeply with the poem's portrayal of the beloved's beauty.

The vocabulary of *Sonnet 18* by William Shakespeare is characterized by the masterful use of verbs and adjectives that infuse the poem with vitality, movement, and a sense of action. These words serve as crucial foregrounding elements, guiding readers through the speaker's contemplation of beauty, transience, and immortality.

## **3. CONCLUSION**

### **3.1 Findings and Implications**

Being one of Shakespeare's most renowned sonnets, the stylistic analysis of *Sonnet 18* offers a crucial exploration, providing valuable insights into the literary characteristics and techniques employed within this poetic masterpiece.

In Graphological Deviation, the study examined punctuation marks—Colon (:), Semicolons (;), and Question Mark (?)—revealing their role in creating visual and syntactic emphasis within the sonnet. Punctuation emerged as a silent yet impactful force, shaping the poem's structure and impact. Semantic Deviation scrutinized rhetorical devices and Shakespeare's lexical choices. Personification, rhyme scheme, repetition, verbs, and adjectives were analyzed for their contribution to the poem's thematic resonance. Each element added layers of meaning to *Sonnet 18*.

In conclusion, the study highlighted the collective impact of these stylistic elements, showcasing how deviations in both graphological and semantic dimensions serve as Shakespeare's artistic palette. The analysis sets the stage for a deeper exploration of how foregrounding enhances the enduring beauty and significance of *Sonnet 18*, inviting continued inquiry into Shakespeare's sonnets.

As the analysis concludes, it is evident that foregrounding in *Sonnet 18* extends beyond surface-level observations. The deliberate deviations in both graphological and semantic dimensions serve as the poet's palette, allowing him create a rich and evocative masterpiece. This paper illuminates the specific techniques employed by Shakespeare and sets the stage for a deeper exploration of how foregrounding contributes to the enduring beauty and significance of *Sonnet 18*.

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These findings have broader implications for appreciating Shakespearean poetry and understanding how foregrounding contributes to the richness of literary expression. The study underscores the importance of exploring such stylistic devices to unveil layers of meaning and emotional resonance within poetic works.

### 3.2 Limitations and Possible Causes

While the study contributes significantly to understanding *Sonnet 18*, it is essential to acknowledge certain limitations. One limitation is the subjective nature of stylistic analysis, as interpretations of foregrounding can vary among readers. Furthermore, an additional limitation is the constraints by the author's capabilities and expertise. The depth and breadth of the stylistic analysis may be influenced by the author's familiarity with Shakespearean literature, linguistic theories, and stylistic analysis methodologies. Limitations in personal knowledge and could impact the study's comprehensiveness.

Another possible limitation could be the inherent constraints of a singular analytical approach. Different methodologies or perspectives may provide complementary insights, enhancing the overall understanding of the sonnet's stylistic intricacies.

In conclusion, while this study advances our comprehension of *Sonnet 18*, recognizing its limitations paves road for future research to build upon these foundations and further illuminate the intricate world of Shakespearean poetry and foregrounding techniques.

### 3.3 Directions for Future Studies

The study of *Sonnet 18* opens avenues for future research that can broaden our understanding of both Shakespearean poetry and foregrounding techniques. One direction is expanding the analytical scope to encompass a more extensive selection of Shakespeare's sonnets. A comparative exploration across multiple sonnets could unveil recurring stylistic patterns or variations, offering insights into Shakespeare's evolving use of foregrounding in his work.

Furthermore, integrating innovative analytical methodologies, such as computational linguistics or digital humanities approaches, could offer new dimensions for exploring stylistic intricacies. The fusion of traditional literary analysis with emerging technologies may provide fresh perspectives and deepen our understanding of the nuanced interplay between form and meaning in Shakespearean poetry.

In conclusion, future studies stand to benefit from a more expansive and interdisciplinary approach, allowing for a richer

exploration of foregrounding in Shakespeare's works and its broader implications for literary analysis.

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### APPENDIX

#### **Sonnet 18 by William Shakespeare**

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?  
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:  
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,  
And summer's lease hath all too short a date;  
  
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,  
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;  
And every fair from fair sometime declines,  
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd;  
  
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,  
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st;  
Nor shall death brag thou wander'st in his shade,  
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st:  
  
So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,  
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.