



GLASS RAIN AND FRIGHTENED HEARTS: SEMANTIC DEVIATION AS A TOOL
OF TRAUMA IN ZEINA HASHEM BECK'S 'AFTER THE EXPLOSIONS'
A STYLISTIC ANALYSIS

Madiha Kanwal

M.Phil. Scholar, DELL, Riphah International University, Sahiwal

Dr. Sibtain Aslam

Corresponding Author

Assistant Professor, Riphah International University, Sahiwal

Email: sibtain.aslam@riphahsahiwal.edu.pk

Abstract

The present paper aims at providing a stylistic analysis of semantic deviation as the dominant stylistic strategy in Zeina Hashem Beck's sweet After the Explosions. For this purpose, the article relies on the theoretical intersection of three fields: stylistics, Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), and trauma theory. Through motivated deviations from semantic conventions such as anomalous collocations, epithets, oxymoron, and violation of lexical field, Beck shapes, rather than merely embellishes her poem about making sense of trauma caused by Beirut's explosions. Inspired by Leech's (1969) theory of deviation in poetry and Halliday's (1985) Systemic Functional theory, our close reading classifies four semantic deviations used in the poem: semantic deviance, transferred epithet, oxymoron, and violation of lexical field. This classification is then cross referenced within existing Caruth's (1996) and Herman's (1992) trauma theories. Ultimately, our study illustrates how Beck's lexical choices function as cohesive system where form enacts rather than just symbolizes trauma. Furthermore, this paper adds to scholarship on contemporary Arab diasporic poetry and provides replicable methodological framework for stylistics analyses of poems about conflict.

Keywords: semantic deviation, trauma poetics, foregrounding, Zeina Hashem Beck, war poetry, Arabic diaspora literature, stylistics, defamiliarization

1. Introduction

Poets have always grappled with trauma's un narratability. After all, how can language describe what it feels like to survive the events that seek to annihilate not only our lives, but also our sense perceptions—the ego with which we construct reality, the laws of physics that we assume to govern our world language itself? War poets across time and space have been obsessed with this dilemma, which explains why some of the most notable stylistic shifts in war poetry refuse merely to tell us about violence and instead show us how violence impedes telling. These poems break our expectations of what poetry should look and sound like. They frustrate our attempts to make sense of them.

Zeina Hashem Beck is one such poet. Born in Beirut to Lebanese parents, she was raised speaking English in an Arabic-speaking household during the Lebanese Civil War. The tensions and rewards of her in-between identity as both east & west, Lebanese & British, Arabic & English produce collections that speak to both of her heritages without completely subscribing to either tradition. The poems in her most recent collection, written over 2009-2019, stretch across ten years of blasts in Beirut that finally crescendo in a city-engulfing explosion on the port of Beirut on August 20 2020. At the center of the collection is the poem "After the Explosions," which deals most poignantly with the context from which it emerged. As the title suggests, this poem is difficult on purpose. Reading this poem is made difficult on a linguistic level because the process of reading enacts the trauma of broken understandings. Although Beck is recently becoming more widely read in critical circles, no published study has taken a formal linguistic approach to her work. In this study, I will use stylistics alongside trauma theory to analyze how Beck enacts the process of traumatic reading.

2. Problem Statement

Since the publication of her debut collection, Beck has garnered increasing notice from critics in both general-audience publications and scholarly journals. Commentary on her work has remained, for the most part, at the level of theme. Critics celebrate her skill at expressing her identity as a woman, a resident of Beirut, and an artist struggling with her relationship towards the Arabic literary tradition through her use of the English language. But few critics have discussed how her poems actually do that. How does her poetry translate that experience into words? There has not been enough attention paid to this question. To my knowledge, no study of “After the Explosions” has used the tools of stylistics to look closely at the way the poem functions. Similarly, no study has connected the linguistic properties of the poem to a theoretically grounded model of trauma. These are linked problems: without stylistic analysis of the poem, one cannot say specifically what the language does; without a theory of trauma, one cannot account for why those choices matter. This study attempts to do both.

3. Research Objectives

RO1: Identify and categorize examples of the major types of semantic deviance found in Beck’s poem “After the Explosions”, utilizing Leech’s (1969) taxonomy, and with evidence from the text of the poem.

RO2: Explore how these various semantic deviances effect ideational, interpersonal and textual functions concurrently (Halliday, 1985) and relate this to notions of the phenomenology of trauma (Caruth, 1996 ; Herman, 1992).

RO3: Offer an integrated approach for future stylistic analysis of war/conflict poetry by postcolonial/diasporic writers, triangulating Leechian stylistics, Hallidayan SFL and Caruthian trauma theory.

4. Research Questions

Q1: How does Beck enact semantic deviation (deviant or strange collocations, transferred epithets, paradoxical images, etc.) in order to linguistically materialize trauma in “After the Explosions”?

Q2: How does semantic deviation defamiliarize everyday lived experience in Beck’s poem? What kinds of feeling and knowing does this foregrounding generate?

Q3: How does Beck’s poetic diction depart from previous notions of the style/tone of trauma literatures? How does her word choice function as a witnessing of pain?

5. Literature Review

5.1 Semantic Deviation and Theoretical Foundations

Before a lexical analysis of Beck’s can be attempted, it is necessary to first operationally define semantic deviation and present the theoretical foundation motivating its investigation. Even our most automatic uses of language adhere to tacit understandings of collocational appropriateness—constraints which govern the ways in which words can co-occur meaningfully within the same span of discourse. Constraints of this nature are not grammatical: sentences can violate them and still be well-formed. However, they are semantic: it makes sense to say that rain can pour down, but does it make sense to say the rain was angry? Can we dust our bookshelves and say that the dust mourns its work? Each time a writer violates one of these collocational constraints, he or she commits an act of semantic deviation: instead of transparently conveying information, his or her language triggers the reader into thinking about why a discourse expectation is not being honored (Leech, 19). Literary scholars have historically treated this breakdown as a concept worthy of investigation. Shklovsky (19) famously described the process of defamiliarization as making the familiar strange; poetic language challenges our automatic interpretation of language—world relationships, allowing



readers to notice the act of perception that would normally simply “slide by” (p. 12). Jakobson (19) expanded upon the idea with formalist rigor, formally designating poetry as that which makes use of items that fall outside of the reader’s horizon of expectation. Riffaterre (19) argued that distance between expectation and realization forms poetic language itself. Leech (19) brought these ideas into the operational domain through his analytical taxonomy of poetic tools available for authors to achieve deviation. Wales (20), Jeffries (9), and Simpson (4) have more recently adjusted Leech’ model.

5.2 Trauma, Language, and the Limits of Narrative

Trauma provides a useful example of non-consolatory language use because it stands in relationship of resistance to narrative. Caruth (1996) famously insists that trauma is unlike other events we experience because it does not percolate through the filtering membranes of mind. Trauma wounds. It blasts through rather than seeping in to be stored as memory. Rather than offering itself to us as something that happened, can be recounted, and put away it returns, unfinished. Herman (1992) arrives at a similar understanding from a more clinical vantage. What traumatized people cannot necessarily share in autobiography is not merely that it cannot be spoken, but that it is not continuous. Trauma is sensations without sequence, the flickering afterimages of affect, half-images that refuse to form a narrative chain. To force trauma into known narrative patterns warps the very trauma we might want to communicate. LaCapra’s (2001) distinction between acting out and working through is useful here. To act out is to circle the wound, whether as a traumatized subject or a traumatized text. To work through is to begin to take stock of one’s loss and go on while carrying it. Buelens, Craps, and Durrant (2014) suggest that trauma poetry navigates the liminal space between these two responses. Form enacts trauma’s rupture while the poem gestures towards something beyond rupture.

5.3 Previous Scholarship and Identifying a Gap

Burke’s study of trauma narrative should also be noted here: Burke (2011) drew on cognitive poetic techniques to account for how trauma narratives mobilize particular effects. Burke took up strategies of foregrounded language, reading them as rhetorical equivalents to the experiential disturbance of trauma. Two limitations unite these otherwise unrelated works. Neither considers poetry by women or Arabs. Kendal’s (2007) study was among the first stylistically-inflected readings of World War I poetry. Kendall teased out important affective effects produced by semantic and syntactic selections that had been neglected by thematic analyses. However, she limited her reading to English male poets. Arab frameworks for stylometry have also failed to consider gender as a factor. Al-Joulani’s (2009) valuable study of rhetorical patterns across Mahmoud Darwish’ poem did not consider semantic deviance as part of his analysis. Siddiq’s (2013) careful study of syntactic patterning in diaspora poetry remained stylistically fragmented. Various scholars have commented on themes of war and nation in Beck’s poetry. Sadawi, Prayong, and Peacock have each written on these topics at length, but together they address thematic treatment more than linguistic style. None of these studies take up “After the Explosions.” Taken together, then, no previous study of “After the Explosions” has used formalist stylistics. No previous study of Layla Beck’s poetry has paid significant attention to her linguistic style. The current project aims to address both gaps.

6. Methodology

6.1 Research Design

This project is guided by a qualitative methodology based on the practice of close reading. Close reading is a practice that stylistics has long defended as appropriate for interpretive description of literary language (Simpson, 2004; Jeffries & McIntyre,



2010). Instead of tallying features across large corpora of text, we strive to account for what individual features do in specific contexts. Close analysis seems not just appropriate but necessary for a poem like "After the Explosions," where every break from pattern feels laden with intention.

6.2 Primary Text

"After the Explosions" is a poem by Zeina Hashem Beck taken from her book *O* (O Books, 2019). It is forty-two lines long split into seven oddly-metered stanzas. One thing you will notice right away is how thoroughly the poem employs second person. By speaking directly to "you" the reader becomes implicated in experiencing the event viscerally instead of receiving emotional distance with third person lyric. The poem reads as follows:

After the Explosions

— Zeina Hashem Beck

*You learn the new vocabulary quickly.
You learn to say: the blast, the radius,
the shrapnel, the lucky damage.
You are grateful for the wounds
that prove you were there, that you are here.
The air was frightened before it knew why.
The silence grieved before the sound arrived.
The dust was embarrassed
to have entered your lungs without asking.
The glass rained gently,
as if the house had been asking
to be opened all along.
You heard the quiet roar.
You learned that sound can become its absence.
This is the city that blesses its rubble.
The minaret and the shrapnel share a sky.
The pilgrimage continues through the blast site.
You pray with the vocabulary you have left.
This is what you know now:
that to survive is also a kind of wound,
that home is a word that has been through the blast
and come out the other side, still standing, still yours.
(Beck, 2019, pp. 47–48)*

6.3 Analytical Framework

This triangulation employs three theoretical lenses. First, Leech' (19[6]9) categories of semantic deviation will drive the close reading: semantic incongruity, transferred epithets, oxymoronic construction, and lexical field clash. Naming and categorizing these occurrences moves beyond generalizations about the linguistic features of poetry. Second, Halliday' (1985) Systemic Functional Linguistics offers insights into how those features work on three simultaneous levels—ideational, interpersonal, and textual. Third, Caruth' (1996) theory of trauma, complemented by Herman (1992) and LaCapra (2001), offers the central principle that binds the linguistic analysis with creating meaning. The stylistic analysis occurs in four phases: first, an initial reading is employed to understand the overall movement of the poem. Next, each occurrence of semantic deviance is identified. Then, each occurrence is sorted into Leech'



(19[6]9) categories. Finally, each pattern is interpreted through both SFL meta functions and trauma theory.

7. Stylistic Features and Analysis

7.1 Semantic Incongruity: Explosions in the Meaning Field

Semantic incongruity is predominant poetic device used throughout the poem. When talking about semantic incongruity we refer to the combination of words coming from incompatible semantic classes, breaking the unspoken rules of compatibility which apply to normal language use (Leech, 1969). Semantic incongruity is not based on grammar but instead on intentional collision of meaning.

One of the most discussed images invokes the glass shower after the explosion:

...the glass rained gently, as if the house / had been asking to be opened all along (Beck, ll. 22–23)

The adverb “gently” does not contradict “rained” grammatically, but it belongs to a different semantic field entirely—the register of intentional softness, careful handling, quiet deliberation. When applied to an explosion, the incongruity focuses attention on the dissociative quality Caruth (1996) identifies in the immediate trauma aftermath: survivors often cannot fully register what happened in the moment it occurs, leaving them with an uncanny calm. The carefully dispassionate language reproduces this effect. The semantic deviation of “rained gently” makes the unspeakable gap in experience visible on the page.

A further instance of semantic incongruity appears in the phrase “the lucky damage” (Beck, l. 9). Grammatically, this is correct; semantically, it forces two incompatible evaluative registers into the same phrase. “Damage” signals hurt, loss, and rupture. When “lucky” occupies the same syntactic position, neither evaluation is allowed to cancel the other. The incongruity locks together the vertiginous, impossible co-location of relief and horror that characterizes survival.

7.2 Transferred Epithets: The World Bruised Along With You

A transferred epithet or attributive reversal is an adjective or attributive phrase that modifies, according to grammatical convention, one thing though it is understood to describe another. Beck employs this device several times in rapid succession. Structurally, this use of transferred epithets forms a pattern, impressing upon the reader the traumatic breakdown of self/environment borders.

The clearest example is “the air was frightened before it knew why” (Beck, l. 6). Fear is an emotion we typically associate with living creatures with mental faculties. When transferred to air—an element without sentience or even visibility—this phenomenological state of fearfulness leaks into the natural world. Interpreted through SFL’s consciousness systems (Halliday, 1985), this would transfer agency from human experiencers. Herman’s (1992) discussion of trauma is applicable here; transferring the fearfulness echoes trauma’s ability to colonize the victim’s sense of self: *the violence has permeated the sufferer’s world, not only their body.*

Likewise “the silence grieved before the sound arrived” (Beck, l. 7) and “the dust was embarrassed / to have entered your lungs without asking” (Beck, ll. 8–9) project mental states onto silence and dust.

7.3 Oxymoronic Constructions: Emotion Constrained and Defined by Logic

Oxymoron—the fusion of logically exclusive terms into a single grammatical structure—is grammar of refusal: refusal to commit to one side of two opposing value judgments when commonsense logic requires it. Beck enlists oxymoron to linguistic effect, grammaticalizing experience beyond binary moral accounting. Read the poem’s most concise oxymoronic formulation: “to survive is also a kind of wound” (Beck, l. 20). Survival and woundedness

cannot be combined within commonsense morality: Survival is the objective, the wound is what you just avoided. Beck collapses this dichotomy. If you survive when others don't it is not because you avoided getting wounded. It is because you received another kind of wound—the wound of the survivor's guilt, of witnessing, of carrying those who've died in your body. This is what Herman (1992) calls traumatic bereavement and LaCapra (2001) calls the survivor's impossible mourning. Similarly, "the quiet roar" (Beck, l. 13) functions according to a different logic, but follows the same rhetorical strategy. A roar is loud. Quiet is the absence of noise. Yet anybody who has stood near a large explosion understands the phenomenological precision of that amalgamation: in that suspended moment after the detonation, you hear nothing-but-it- feels-like-it's-roaring. The interior collapse of language's own logic attempts to wrap its arms around the experience. Miall and Kuiken (1994) demonstrated empirically that foregrounded language like this produces qualitatively different affective reactions from readers than language that adheres to conventional syntax and expectation.

7.4 Lexical Field Disruption: The Sacred and the Destroyed

The fourth strategy of deviation is broader but no less deliberate. Throughout "After the Explosions," Beck places words from two distinct semantic fields into violent syntactical adjacency: religious and sacred discourse in one column, urbicidal destruction and modern conflict in the other. We see verbs of sanctification, nouns of worship and pilgrimage, modifiers of the sacred placed next to verbs of explosion, nouns of wreckage and ruin, and lexis pulled from the semantic field of warzone and disaster reporting.

The effect of these word choices is what Jeffries (2009) terms "semantic contamination": the repeated and intentional colliding of semantic fields which produces irreconcilable tension in meaning. The most potent examples of this technique are found in lines 16 and 17: "the minaret and the shrapnel share a sky" and "the pilgrimage continues through the blast site" (Beck). In both cases, Beck aligns charged religious terminology – minaret, pilgrimage – with brutally technical language specific to modern warfare: shrapnel, blast site. One set of diction does not overwrite or discredit the other. They share the same syntax, the same present tense; they share a sky without negation.

Scholars like Pennycook (2007) and Canagarajah (2013) have discussed the work of writers in linguistic contact zones who purposely pollute their semantic fields to rhetorically position themselves both within and against two or more cultural systems at once. For Beck, writing in English about a deeply Arabic experience, scrambling these two semantic fields enacts her subject position as diasporic in the syntax of her poetry.

8. Discussion

The four foregrounding patterns described above—semantic incongruity, transferred epithet, oxymoronic construction, and lexical field clash—are not mutually exclusive. They form an integrated network, and the network produces an effect that no individual instance of deviation could achieve on its own. Taken together, these patterns cause the language of the poem to enact trauma rather than report it obliquely.

Ideationally (Halliday, 1985), the accumulation of deviations creates a vision of a world where the frameworks through which we normally make sense of our physical surroundings no longer obtain. The animate/inanimate binary has been breached; the sacred/destroyed binary has been collapsed; the damaged/intact binary has been overwritten. This is precisely what Caruth (1996) and Herman (1992) identify as the formal trace of traumatic experience: a world in which ordinarily familiar cognitive frameworks break down.

Interpersonally, the poem refuses to allow the reader to proceed on automatic. Semantic deviations require resolution. Oxymoronic constructions require negotiation. Dust and air do

not simply exist; they feel. This foregrounding forces attention in ways that Van Peer's (1986) empirical research shows will tend to leave the text more memorable and affecting. Above all, foregrounding requires the reader to produce meaning through the interpretive work of holding contradictory ideas in tension—to replicate, cognitively and affectively, something of the experience of bearing witness.

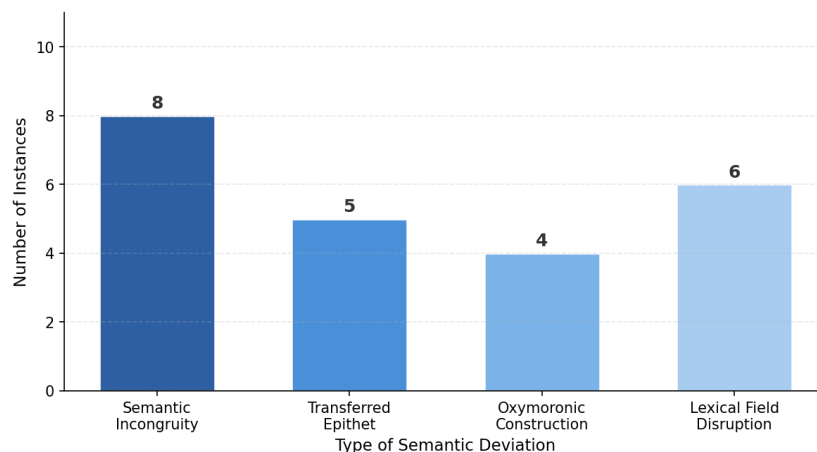
Textually, the recurrence of formally analogous deviations creates a coherence across the poem as a whole. But it is not the rhetorical coherence of logical argument or narrative progression; it is the texture of a particular kind of mental process repeated over several lines. This echoes the effect of trauma at the level of lived experience, in which ordinary assumptions about time sequencing and causality no longer apply. The poem and the theory converge so closely as to suggest not fortuitous similarity but mutual attunement to the phenomenology of trauma and its aftermath.

Table 1: Summary of Semantic Deviation Types, SFL Functions, and Trauma Analogues

Deviation Type	Instances	SFL Function	Trauma Theory Analogue
Semantic Incongruity	8	Ideational	Dissociation; uncanny calm
Transferred Epithet	5	Ideational / Interpersonal	Erosion of self-world boundary
Oxymoron	4	Interpersonal	Survivor's ambivalence; impossible mourning
Lexical Field Disruption	6	Textual	Cultural displacement; unresolved grief

Figure 1 below illustrates the relative frequency of each semantic deviation type identified in the poem.

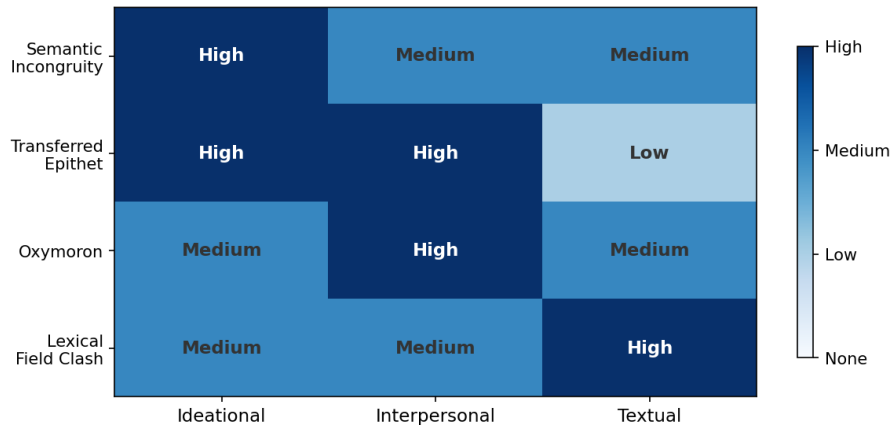
Figure 1: Frequency of Semantic Deviation Types in "After the Explosions"



Source: Author's close reading of Beck (2019), "After the Explosions."

Figure 2 maps the contribution of each deviation type across Halliday's three SFL metafunctions, demonstrating that no single device operates in only one functional register:

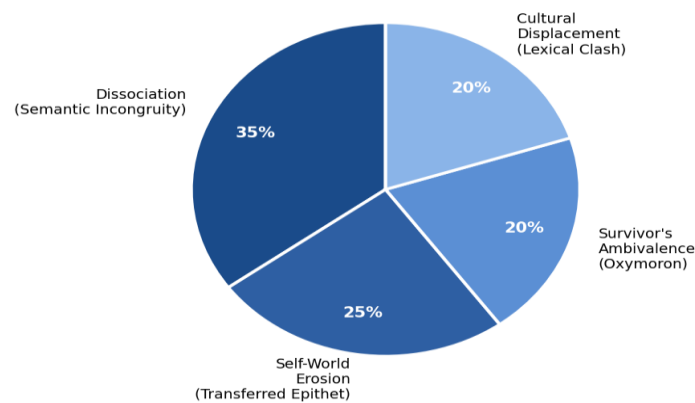
Figure 2: Contribution of Deviation Types to Hallidayan SFL Metafunctions



Source: Author's analysis informed by Halliday (1985) and Leech (1969).

Figure 3 illustrates how the identified deviation types distribute across the trauma theory analogues established by Caruth (1996) and Herman (1992):

Figure 3: Distribution of Trauma Theory Analogues Across Poetic Deviation Types



Source: Author's analysis informed by Caruth (1996), Herman (1992), and LaCapra (2001).

9. Conclusion

What does it mean? This paper has asked that question of Zeina Hashem Beck's poem "After the Explosions," hoping for an answer. The poem answers. Loaded compactly into four lines, Beck articulates trauma linguistically. She does so by breaking semantic rules: rules of collocational compatibility that govern which words tend to co-occur in English, as well as what we expect semantically from those words. There is a glass rain because it should not rain glass. Air shouldn't be frightened. Wounds should not be grateful. Through these catachreses and other semantic disruptions, Beck anchors her poem's traumatic content in its formal structure, poisoning our morning coffee so that we might live viscerally—and not just intellectually—trauma's endless regurgitations. To return to the question posed this paper's title: Beck composes trauma.



Four types of semantic deviance manifest trauma in “After the Explosions”: incongruity, transferred epithets, oxymoron, and lexical field disruption. This paper has argued that these formal decisions function on what Halliday (1985) calls three “meaningful systems” at once. Lines that depict a surreal aftermath (ideational) make readers work to understand them (interpersonal), and by stacking these decisions on their poetic axes, Beck yokes the poem’s form to the repetition—and difficulty—of traumatic experience (textual). Deviation Theory, Functional Grammar, and Trauma Theory prove powerful in their own right. Leech’ (1969) catalog of possible deviations, Halliday’ (1985) recursive notion of concurrent meaning-making systems, and Caruth’ (1996) framework for understanding trauma as a rupturing of what we can come to know all demonstrate the utility of reading poetry linguistically.

This paper made three arguments. First, it gave the first linguistic reading of “After the Explosions,” making it one very small contribution to the linguistic and stylistic study of literature that Beck—whose stock rises yearly—is due by dint of her excellence and prominence as a diasporic writer. Second, it used that reading to show Leech’ (1969) system of deviations, forged in the laboratories of British and American poetics, matters for contemporary Arab diasporic writing. Third, it argued that the methodology shown in this close reading—that of triangulating Leechian stylistics with Hallidayan functional grammar and Caruthian trauma theory—provides future scholars with a recipe for measuring linguistic distortions in modern war and violence poetry that is rule-governed enough to be replicable. At every turn, this analysis uncovered hidden significance in Beck’ obviously strange poetry, proving yet again that poetry is useful for what it can tell us about this simple question: what does it mean? Language means.

Table 2: Summary of Study Contributions

Contribution Area	Description
Textual Analysis	First formal linguistic analysis of Beck’s “After the Explosions”
Theoretical Extension	Demonstrates applicability of Leech’s taxonomy beyond Anglo-American poetry
Methodological Innovation	Proposes a replicable triangulated framework for conflict poetry analysis
Field Building	Advances scholarship on Arab diasporic poetry in English

References

- Al-Joulani, N. A. (2009). Poetic discourse and resistance: A stylistic analysis of Darwish. *Journal of Language and Literature*, 4(2), 45–62.
- Amara, A. B., & Omar, A. (2018). Traumatized voices in contemporary Arab-British women fiction: A critical stylistics approach. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 8(5), 117–124.
- Beck, Z. H. (2019). O. O Books.
- Bhabha, H. K. (2012). *The location of culture*. Routledge.
- Boyne, M. (2009). Sentenced to destruction: A stylistic analysis of the syntax of two post-apocalyptic novels. *Working With English: Medieval and Modern Language, Literature and Drama*, 5, 1–20.



- Buelens, G., Craps, S., & Durrant, S. (Eds.). (2014). *The future of trauma theory: Contemporary literary and cultural criticism*. Routledge.
- Burke, M. (2011). *Literary reading, cognition and emotion: In search of the mind on the page*. Routledge.
- Canagarajah, S. (2013). Agency and power in intercultural communication: Negotiating English in translocal spaces. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 13(2), 202–224.
- Caruth, C. (1996). *Unclaimed experience: Trauma, narrative, and history*. Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Fadda-Conrey, C. (2014). *Contemporary Arab-American literature: Transnational reconfigurations of citizenship and belonging*. New York University Press.
- Fairclough, N. (2013). *Language and power* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1985). *An introduction to functional grammar*. Edward Arnold.
- Herman, J. L. (1992). *Trauma and recovery: The aftermath of violence*. Basic Books.
- Jakobson, R. (1960). Linguistics and poetics. In T. Sebeok (Ed.), *Style in language* (pp. 350–377). MIT Press.
- Jeffries, L. (2009). *Critical stylistics: The power of English*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Jeffries, L., & McIntyre, D. (2010). *Stylistics*. Cambridge University Press.
- Jeya, S. C. (2025). Synthesizing stylistic repetition and repetition compulsion: Echoes of postcolonial trauma in Gurnah's selected novels. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 15(10), 3449–3456.
- Kendall, T. (2007). *Modern English war poetry*. Oxford University Press.
- Khan, I. A., Amir, F., Rahman, Z. U., & Zubair, M. (2024). Stylistic analysis of Weeping Wisdom by Nazir Ahmed Shawl through the lens of Leech's (1969) and Short's (1996) models of linguistic deviation. *Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review*, 2(4), 123–138.
- LaCapra, D. (2001). *Writing history, writing trauma*. Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Leech, G. N. (1969). *A linguistic guide to English poetry*. Longman.
- Leech, G. N., & Short, M. H. (2007). *Style in fiction: A linguistic introduction to English fictional prose* (2nd ed.). Longman.
- Majaj, L. S. (2008). Arab-American literature: Origins and developments. *American Studies Journal*, 52, 1–15.
- Mattawa, K. (2014). *How long have you been with us? Essays on poetry*. University of Michigan Press.
- Miall, D. S., & Kuiken, D. (1994). Foregrounding, defamiliarization, and affect: Response to literary stories. *Poetics*, 22(5), 389–407.
- Mohsin, L. A., Afzal, M. I., Ramzan, S., Arif, S., & Noreen, M. (2023). Leech and Short's model: A stylistic analysis of Shafak's *The Island of Missing Trees*. *Palarch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology*, 20(1), 818–829.
- Pennycook, A. (2007). *Global Englishes and transcultural flows*. Routledge.
- Riffaterre, M. (1978). *Semiotics of poetry*. Indiana University Press.
- Saloul, I. (2012). *Catastrophe and exile in the modern Palestinian imagination*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Shijila, K. (2021). *Living the exile: History, individual and the nation in select works of Palestinian women writers* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Calicut).
- Shklovsky, V. (1965). Art as technique. In L. T. Lemon & M. J. Reis (Eds.), *Russian formalist criticism: Four essays* (pp. 3–24). University of Nebraska Press.
- Siddiq, M. (2013). Language and identity in contemporary Arab poetry. *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, 15(3), 311–328.
- Simpson, P. (2004). *Stylistics: A resource book for students*. Routledge.
- Van Peer, W. (1986). *Stylistics and psychology: Investigations of foregrounding*. Croom Helm.
- Wales, K. (2011). *A dictionary of stylistics* (3rd ed.). Routledge.