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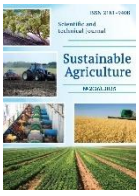

Techniques of Foregrounding in the Analysis of Agricultural Text

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a r t i c l e i n f o

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a b s t r a c t

This article discusses the significance and application of foregrounding techniques in the analysis of agricultural texts, emphasizing the role of specific linguistic features such as parallelism, deviation, and symbols in creating emphasis and enhancing meaning. Foregrounding is a key tool for interpreting the subtle nuances within agricultural discourse, shedding light on how linguistic techniques are employed to shape readers' perceptions of the subject matter. By investigating the interaction between form and content, this research also offers insights into the ways in which foregrounding contributes to a deeper understanding of agricultural practices and terminologies.

1. INTRODUCTION

Foregrounding, as a central concept in literary and linguistic theory, refers to the technique of drawing attention to particular elements within a text. These elements stand out due to their deviation from the expected linguistic or thematic patterns, which could be linguistic features such as words, sounds, or structures, or even visual components in graphical texts. Foregrounding often serves to defamiliarize the reader, prompting them to reconsider the meaning or significance of familiar ideas, symbols, or practices. In agricultural texts, foregrounding is particularly useful for highlighting key themes such as environmental challenges, sustainable practices, and the evolution of farming methods.

The theory of foregrounding, initially proposed by scholars like Viktor Shklovsky and Jan Mukarovsky, stresses the importance of stylistic techniques that disrupt standard patterns. Through the repetition of certain words, metaphors, or structures, these techniques compel the reader to pay attention to specific elements, whether they be environmental symbols, technical terminology, or human experiences associated with agricultural practices.

This article explores how foregrounding techniques such as **parallelism** and **deviation** are employed within agricultural texts to bring important ideas into sharp relief. These methods can enhance the reader's understanding of agriculture as not just a practical endeavor but also a socially and culturally significant activity, deeply intertwined with human history and ecological well-being.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Literature review. Foregrounding, a concept rooted in literary and linguistic theory, plays a crucial role in the stylistic analysis of texts, particularly in revealing how language shapes readers' perception and understanding. In agricultural discourse, where terminology is often technical and utilitarian, foregrounding techniques can enhance the expressive and interpretive value of texts, drawing attention to key ideas and thematic nuances.

Foregrounding involves the deliberate deviation from linguistic norms to create stylistic emphasis. As defined by Mukarovsky and later developed by the Prague Linguistic Circle, foregrounding is the artistic manipulation of language through devices such as parallelism, anaphora, antithesis, and lexical deviation (Gavranek, 1967; Peer & Hakemulder, 2006). These techniques disrupt readers' expectations and guide their attention to critical semantic or conceptual elements.

For instance, parallelism—a repetition of syntactic structures—can emphasize the repetitive nature of agricultural cycles, labor, or natural patterns. Anaphora and epistrophe, through the repetition of words at the beginning or end of successive clauses, can evoke emotional resonance or stress recurring issues such as environmental degradation or crop failure (Douthwaite, 2000). Antithesis, on the other hand, serves to highlight the contrast between traditional and modern agricultural practices, reinforcing the tension between innovation and sustainability.

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The use of deviation, both syntactic and semantic, is also prominent in agricultural writing. As Abrams and Harpham (2012) point out, deviation draws attention to specific expressions or structures that differ from standard usage, thereby foregrounding key thematic concerns. In agricultural texts, this might manifest as the poeticization of plant growth or the metaphorical depiction of soil and weather, enhancing both cognitive and emotional engagement (Evans, 2007; Zubkova, 2000).

Foregrounding does not merely serve aesthetic functions—it also contributes to cognitive processing. According to cognitive stylistics, when readers encounter unexpected or marked forms, their interpretative faculties are stimulated, resulting in deeper comprehension and memorability (Dyer, 1995; Arnold, 1999). This is particularly relevant for educational or promotional agricultural materials, where the goal is to both inform and persuade.

Roman Jakobson's theories further support the role of foregrounding in communication, especially the poetic function of language that highlights the message for its own sake (Jakobson, 1987; Pushkina, 2008). By foregrounding language features, agricultural texts can transcend mere instruction and become vehicles of ideology, emotion, and cultural identity.

As Dzhusupov (n.d.) suggests, foregrounding in linguistic studies has evolved to encompass not only literary texts but also specialized discourse such as agriculture. This expansion reflects the growing recognition that all texts, regardless of genre, use stylistic resources to guide interpretation and impact.

In summary, foregrounding techniques offer a powerful toolkit for analyzing agricultural texts. Through parallelism, deviation, symbolic language, and other stylistic devices, such texts become more than repositories of information—they engage the reader cognitively and emotionally, enhancing the communicative effectiveness of agricultural discourse.

3. METHODOLOGY

The study of foregrounding in agricultural texts involves a detailed examination of stylistic devices that draw attention to particular aspects of the content. Key linguistic techniques include:

Deviation: Breaking from the norm to create emphasis, often leading to a sense of estrangement or recontextualization. This can involve grammatical, lexical, phonological, or even textual deviations that force the reader to confront the text in a new way.

Parallelism: The use of repetition and structure to underline thematic relations within the text. This device can highlight contrasts or reinforce connections between different aspects of agricultural discourse, such as the relationship between traditional and modern farming techniques.

In agricultural texts, these techniques are strategically used to foreground critical issues such as sustainability, biodiversity, and agricultural innovations. The reader is often invited to reflect not only on the content but also on the stylistic choices that shape their understanding of agricultural processes.

4. RESEARCH RESULTS.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

In analyzing agricultural texts, foregrounding techniques are closely tied to the context in which they are used. For instance, in environmental discourse within agricultural literature, terms like "biodiversity," "sustainability," and "climate change" often undergo foregrounding to emphasize their importance in contemporary agricultural practices.

Consider the following example from an agricultural policy document:

"The future of agriculture depends not only on the seeds we plant today but on the environment that sustains us tomorrow. Farmers must embrace sustainability as a way of life, not just a choice."

Here, **parallelism** is used through the repetition of "not only… but also" to emphasize the dual focus of the text: the present actions of farmers and the long-term environmental impact. The repetition of the idea of "future" and "sustainability" draws the reader's attention to the central issue of ecological responsibility in modern farming.

Moreover, **deviation** is employed when the phrase "farmers must embrace sustainability as a way of life" deviates from typical agricultural rhetoric. By framing sustainability as a "way of life," the text elevates the concept beyond a mere technical requirement, foregrounding it as a philosophical and cultural imperative.

5. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Foregrounding methods include any stylistic violations, "through the side of the text that deviates from the language norm, or alternatively, one side of the text is brought to the fore through repetition or parallelism" (Azam Esmaili. , 2013). Foregrounding in agricultural texts can be observed through the use of various stylistic devices that disrupt the regular flow of language. The techniques of **parallelism** and **deviation** are particularly effective in drawing attention to key concepts within the text.

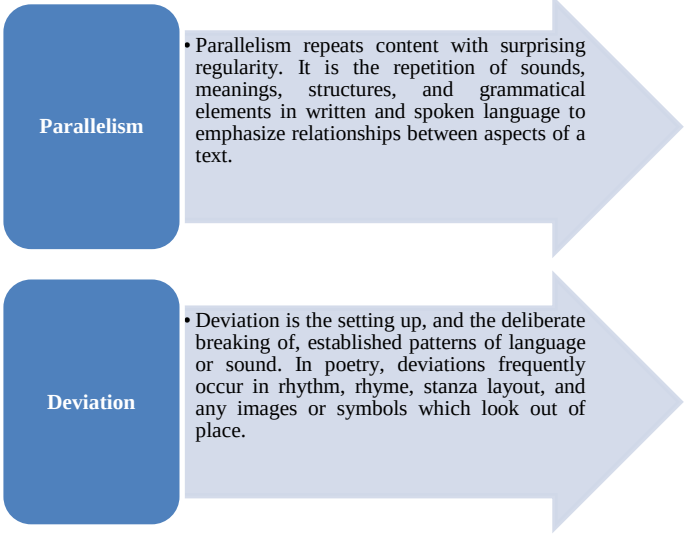

Figure 1. Methods of foregrounding

Parallelism repeats content with surprising regularity. It is the repetition of sounds, meanings, structures, and grammatical elements in written and spoken language to emphasize relationships between aspects of a text. Sometimes parallelism occurs in single words with little change in meaning, such as "bend" and "curve" or "ascent" and "ascent" for thematic emphasis. Other times it is a literary device that creates parallel positions between opposing ideas. Parallelism can be reversed to increase emphasis in sentences and plots.

Table 1. Examples of parallelism in Agricultural text

№	Type	Foregrounding	Example
1	Parallelism	In agricultural texts, parallelism helps reinforce relationships between different agricultural practices or between theory and practice. This technique often emphasizes the interconnectedness of various elements within the agricultural system, such as land, labor, technology, and the environment. By repeating certain words or structures, parallelism creates a rhythmic emphasis on these themes, making them more memorable and impactful for the reader.	"Agriculture is not just about growing crops; it is about preserving ecosystems, fostering community, and ensuring food security." In this example, parallel structures link together multiple aspects of agriculture that are critical to its sustainability.
2	Deviation	Deviation from linguistic norms can manifest in several ways, such as the creation of neologisms, unexpected word choices, or the disruption of syntactic patterns. These deviations often serve to challenge the reader's conventional understanding of agricultural topics, prompting a deeper reflection on the issues at hand.	"We stand at the crossroads of change, where the old ways of farming clash with the new, where soil health is no longer a matter of choice but a matter of survival." Here, the deviation is evident in the phrase "soil health is no longer a matter of choice but a matter of survival," which foregrounds the critical importance of environmental stewardship in agriculture, emphasizing the urgency of the issue.
		Lexical Deviation: The use of non-standard terms or the adaptation of words to fit a specific context in agricultural texts can also serve as a form of foregrounding.	For example, terms like "agroecology" or "permaculture" might be used in a way that deviates from traditional agricultural discourse, drawing attention to innovative approaches in farming practices.

Parallelism repeats content with unexpected regularity to emphasize relations. Parallelism is considered under the category of figures of speech. The technique takes forms such as:(see figure 1)

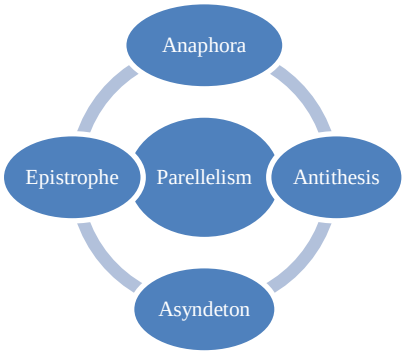

Figure 2. Techniques of parallelism

The Stylistic Role of Repetition and Deviation in Literary Texts with a Focus on Agricultural Themes

Repetition in poetry and prose is a powerful literary device that deepens the content by reusing phrases, whether identically or with subtle changes. This technique helps foreground the text, making the repeated structures more noticeable and thereby drawing attention to their evolving significance. Particularly in agricultural-themed literature, such as poetic reflections on rural labor or novels depicting farming life, repetition often echoes the cyclical nature of seasons, crop growth, and rural routines. For instance, the repetitive phrase “plough and sow” in pastoral poetry does more than describe physical labor — it emphasizes the recurring, almost ritualistic, experience of life tied to the soil.

While repetition involves the reuse of words or phrases, **parallelism** modifies structure while maintaining thematic consistency. This distinction becomes evident in agrarian novels that depict generational farming families — a grandfather’s mantra may be echoed by the grandson with slight variations, illustrating both continuity and change in agricultural practice and philosophy.

Deviation, on the other hand, introduces unexpected irregularities in language or structure to create defamiliarization — a concept where the familiar becomes strange, prompting deeper reflection. In agricultural texts, this can appear in descriptions that intentionally break from expected diction. For example, using industrial metaphors for natural phenomena (“the wheat whispered like factory gears”) deviates from conventional bucolic imagery, forcing readers to reconsider the mechanization of modern agriculture.

Deviation is not random but a strategic departure from norms. It can be grammatical (as in dialect-infused dialogues in rural narratives), lexical (new coinages such as "earth-hunger" to express dependence on land), or phonological (like representing regional pronunciation through spelling: “furm” for “farm”). This is evident in novels like Thomas Hardy’s *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, where dialectal deviation foregrounds rural identity and social class distinctions.

Semantic deviation is especially prominent in poetry about farming. Take, for example, a line like "The soil breathes beneath our feet" — a metaphor that ascribes human qualities to earth, enhancing its emotional and symbolic weight. Similarly, **graphological deviation**, such as shaping lines to mimic furrows in a field or a growing plant, visually reinforces the agricultural theme, much like George Herbert’s “Easter Wings” did with religious imagery.

Table 2. Types of deviation and examples with Agricultural context

№	Type	Definition	Agricultural Application
1	Grammatical	Syntax changes or incorrect grammar	Use of local dialects in farmer speech
2	Lexical	New word creation	Coining "crop-sorrow" to describe a failed harvest
3	Phonological	Sound deviations or dialect spellings	“’Tis time t’harvest” in rural dialogue
4	Semantic	Altered meaning	“The plow dreams of spring” — attributing human traits to tools
5	Textual	Disruption of text flow	Disjointed narrative during a drought to reflect chaos
6	Graphological	Visual arrangement	Poem lines forming a corn stalk shape
7	Dialectal	Use of regional/social dialects	E.g., Uzbek rural vernacular in stories from cotton regions
8	Register	Use of specialized jargon	Mixing of farming terms with poetic language (“silted love”)
9	Historical	Mixing archaic/modern usage	Using ancient agricultural proverbs in a modern setting

Types of deviation also include:

External deviation in agriculture-related literature might involve a poem structured like planting rows to symbolize cultivation, or a sentence like "The earth weeps in rust" — a grammatically odd phrase that poetically laments soil degradation.

In contrast, **internal deviation** occurs when an author breaks a previously established stylistic pattern. For example, a novel written entirely in standard English may switch to raw regional dialect during a drought scene to heighten the emotional tension, indicating a psychological or societal rupture.

Ultimately, these stylistic tools — repetition and deviation — not only shape the aesthetic experience but also deepen thematic resonance in agricultural narratives. They reflect the repetitive cycles and occasional disruptions that define rural life, connecting literary form with lived agricultural reality.

6. CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, foregrounding serves as a powerful stylistic mechanism in the analysis of agricultural texts, enabling the reader to focus on significant concepts, terms, or symbolic meanings. It operates through techniques that break linguistic expectations—primarily **parallelism** and **deviation**—to create emphasis and enhance interpretative depth. Parallelism relies on the repetition of structures, such as **anaphora**, **antithesis**, **asyndeton**, and **epistrophe**, to highlight relationships and reinforce key ideas. Deviation, on the other hand, introduces irregularities that disrupt normative language patterns, thereby drawing attention to specific textual elements. These deviations may be **external**, differing from general language norms, or **internal**, differing from patterns established within the text itself. Collectively, these foregrounding techniques enrich agricultural discourse by deepening reader engagement and clarifying the thematic and stylistic layers of the text.

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