



A Cognitive Semantic Analysis of Construal Operations in Donne's 'Go, and Catch a Falling Star'

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Abstract

For long philosophers, literati and linguists have held the view that poetic language is artistic proper, and that it is by no means open to analysis in terms of the modern theories of language. The aim of this paper is to apply construal theory, a very renowned cognitive semantic model, to poetry. Thus, the researchers analyze one of the well-known poems by Donne, titled 'Go, and Catch a Falling Star', in the light of Langacker's construal theory. It is hypothesized that the theory is applicable to the analysis of meaning construction in the poetic texts as it is in the non-poetic ones. This paper also backs the cognitive principle that equates meaning to conceptualization. It also practically proves that the meaning of the linguistic expressions does not only reside in the semantic contents; the ways the conceptualizers construe the scenes heavily participate to the meaning construction of the single expressions and the whole text as well. Almost all the lines of the poem have been investigated in accordance with the four mechanisms of Langacker's construal theory. Through the practical analysis of the poem, it has been concluded that poetic language like the ordinary non-poetic language makes use of the cognitive processes and highly depends on the construal mechanisms or operations in meaning making. Thus, in addition to the dictionary meaning of the words, phrases and sentences in the poem, construal makes up a principal element in constructing the meaning of the poem.

Keywords: cognitive semantics, conceptualization, Langacker's construal theory, poetic language, John Donne

1. Introduction

1.1. Cognitive semantics: An overview

Semantics, as a branch of linguistics, is a systematic study of meaning in language. One of the most important reasons why we study language or linguistic phenomena is to better grasp the meaning and intention of the interlocutors' uses of language and linguistic expressions in different linguistic media. In traditional schools of linguistics meaning was not given that heed. In Chomsky's generative grammar, for instance, the issue of meaning is peripheral. In generative grammar, the focus is on structure. On the contrary, in cognitive linguistics the golden purpose of linguistic studies is meaning and meaning has received the central attention in this regard.

The emergence of Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) *Metaphors We Live By* and Langacker's (1987) *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar* set up the cornerstone for cognitive linguistics. Cognitive linguistics is totally different from its previous schools of linguistics in that: (i) it focuses much on the meaning than on structure; (ii) it sees meaning as a matter of conceptualization, and meaning is flexible, that is, one scene or situation can be conceptualized from different perspectives. The second **point** opens a wide horizon in front of us occupies the bulk of this paper. Some followers of this school of linguistics divide the cognitive linguistics into two main branches: cognitive semantics and cognitive grammar (see, e.g., Evans & Green, 2006, p. 50).

Cognitive semantics investigates two important aspects of meaning: *conceptual structure* and *conceptualization*. The former pertains to the knowledge representation in the human conceptual system; and the latter talks about meaning making (Evans & Green, 2006, p. 48). In the present paper our utmost attention is on the second aspect of meaning.

According to cognitive semantics, meaning is tantamount to conceptualization. However, in formal or truth conditional semantics, there is no room for human perception; it only shows the relation between the words and the external world. Cognitive semantics refutes the traditional distinctions drawn between dichotomies such as, denotational meaning vs. encyclopedic meaning, pragmatics vs. semantics, context dependent vs. context independent meaning (see Evans & Green, 2006. p. 774; Murphy & Koskela, 2010, p. 33). The role of human perception is very active in the process of meaning construction. There is enough evidence showing that human mind has the ability to conceptualize one situation or scene in alternative modes. In cognitive semantics this conceptual ability is known as *construal*.

1.2. Construal operations: Theoretical background

In the present paper, the researchers first introduce the notion of construal then illuminate the construal operations discussed in Langacker's (2008) model.

Human mind has the ability to conceptualize or construe things or events from different perspectives. This ability is a property of human mind, that is, construal is a facet of the cognition and it is well reflected in language (cf. Verhagen, 2007, p. 76; Casad, 1995, pp. 23-49). So, meaning construction is based on the way the language users look at the things and actions they want to express rather than the objectivist truth conditions. To the cognitive linguists, linguistic meaning is made up of conceptual contents plus the ways the language users look at these conceptual contents. In a truth conditional semantics perspective, both (1) and (2) have one single proposition (based on Evans & Green, 2006, p. 467):

- (1) John pinched Jack.
- (2) Jack was pinched by John.

As mentioned, in formal/truth-conditional semantics, (1) and (2) encode the same proposition and thus they give the same meaning. But in cognitive semantics, they are treated differently. In (1), the active voice construction, the focus is on the agent, *John*, while in (2), the passive voice construction, the focus of our attention is on the patient, *Jack*. This is because each of (1) and (2) is construed in a different fashion (Evans & Green, 2006, p. 478; cf. Hamawand, 2009, p. 16).

Construal is a cognitive operation and it is encoded and reflected through language (see Hamawand, 2009, pp. 123 ff.). Construal is based on language users 'visual perception' (Radden and Dirven, 2007, p. 22). As Langacker (1987, p.116) maintains, 'linguistic expressions pertain to conceived situations or "scenes".' Langacker admits that it is impossible to resist visual metaphor when talking about construal. Accordingly, when we talk about a scene, for instance, if there is a bottle of water, like what is shown in Figure 1, and half of its water has been consumed, one person can express the bottle and its content via each of *a* and *b* in (3) (cf. Dirven & Verspoor, 2004, pp. 14-15; Radden & Dirven, 2007, p. 22).

- (3) a. The bottle is half empty/ the half empty bottle
- b. The bottle is half full/ the half full bottle.

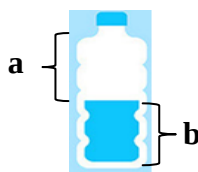


Figure 1. Half Full or Half Empty Bottle



When the speaker chooses the expressions in (3a.), s/he looks at the consumed water and neglects the remainder of the water; while when s/he describes the scene in Figure 1 with one of the expressions in (3b.), s/he looks at the water which is left in the bottle. So, one single speaker can choose any of the expressions in (3) to describe the same situation from different perspectives: from the perspective of a full bottle or from an empty bottle perspective (Radden & Dirven, 2007, p. 22).

Cruse (2006, pp. 33-4) defines construal as:

A cognitive act of imposing some sort of structure on a body of conceptual content, such as profiling a portion of domain, or viewing something from a particular perspective. The meaning of a linguistic expression indicates...a domain to be activated and ... how the domain is to be construed.

The meaning (or predication, in a cognitive semantic term) of an expression is not only in the conceptual content it evokes but it is also integrated in the way we look at and portray that conceptual content (Langacker, 1991, p.4). As mentioned, construal is a very fundamental notion in cognitive semantics. Langacker refers to this notion as an epistemic ability that humans have and he also calls it 'imagery' (1991, p. 549).

In cognitive linguistics, there are different, but overlapping versions of the construal operations, thus, the cognitivists developed various models of construal. First, Langacker (1987, pp. 116-137) developed a theory of construal under the name of 'focal adjustment'. Second, Talmy (1988, pp. 194-5) proposed a model of construal under the rubric of 'Four Imaging systems'. Third, Croft and Cruse (2004, Ch. 3) made some modifications to the two previous models with some additions. For example, they added conceptual metaphors, image schemas and some psychological, phenomenological and artificial intelligence aspects as the basis for construal-based meaning construction. Fourth, Radden and Dirven (2007, pp. 21-31) adopted another model in which they proposed nine dimensions of construal that are pertinent to grammar. In a developed version of his model, Langacker (2008/2013) reshaped his construal model. This will be our topic for the next section.

1.3. Langacker's Construal Operations

In a recent revision to his classification, Langacker (2008 and 2013) re-classifies construal mechanisms or operations into the classes outlined in table 1 below.

Table 1. Langacker's Construal Operations

Construal Operations	Specificity	Specific Expressions	
		Schematic Expressions	
	Focusing	Foreground vs. Background	
		Composition	
		Scope	
	Prominence	Profiling	Profile
			Base
		Trajector/Landmark Alignment	Trajector
			Landmark
	Perspective	Viewing Arrangement	Vantage point
			Subjectivity
			Objectivity
		The Temporal Dimension	Processing Time
			Conceived Time
		Mental Scanning	Sequential Scanning
			Summary Scanning
			Reference Point Relations



Space does not allow us to elaborate each item of the construal operations but avid readers are invited to have a thorough look on the detailed account of these four operations and their branches in Langacker's (2008, pp. 55-85). The rest of the paper will be about these operations in the conceptualization of the scenes and situations in Donne's 'Go, and Catch a Falling Star'.

1.4. Literature Review

Cognitive linguistic or semantic studies are regarded as the up-to-date widely followed approach to linguistic studies. In addition, it is one of the most interdisciplinary branches of knowledge. Since its emergence in the 1980s many studies in different fields have been conducted (for a neat survey about interdisciplinarity of cognitive semantics, see the Afterward of Lakoff and Johnson, 1980/2003).

Construal model is one of the most widely adopted models in the majority of the cognitive semantic studies. Recently two studies about it were conducted. Here we briefly refer to them. Albayati (2012) analyzed some neoclassical poems in the light of Croft and Cruse's (2004) construal model. The other study was conducted by Qadir (2015). Qadir, like Lutfi, adopted Croft and Cruse's model for analyzing the language of drama, namely two plays by Bernard Shaw.

So, to the best of our knowledge, no previous study has been conducted attempting to examine the applicability of Langacker's (2008/2013) to the poetic language of metaphysical poetry in general and to the selected poem by Donne, in particular. This is why, in addition to giving validity to the applicability of cognitive semantic models in poetry or in literature, the present paper can be considered a breakthrough in applying Langacker's construal model to a cognitive analysis of Donne's poems and the metaphysical school of poetry in general.

1.5. Research Questions

Langacker's construal model first proposed for the meaning construction in the word up to sentence levels. In the present paper, the researchers will attempt to provide an answer to the following questions: (1) Do construal operations help us better understand the making of meaning on the level of discourse/text? (2) 'Is this model applicable to the poetic language in general and the context of the metaphysical poem by Donne? (3) Can construal theory be used as a cognitive semantic tool for analyzing and better understanding the stylistic aspects of the poetic language (i.e., Can literary students make use of the insights of construal theory for understanding the poetic language?)

2. Data and Methodology

The present research is a qualitative study which analyses one poem by the leading metaphysical poet, John Donne (b. 1571- d. 1631) in the light of a cognitive semantic model, known as construal. Different accounts exist for the construal operations. We only explicate the principal of Langacker's (2008/2013) construal operations. The poem which is under scrutiny is titled 'Go and Catch a Falling Star'. The book from which the text of the poem has been taken is the well-known anthology of metaphysical poetry edited by Negri (2002, pp. 2-3) (for the poem's full text, see the Appendix).

3. Results and Discussions

3.1. Construal Operations in Donne's 'Go, and Catch a Falling Star'

In addition to 'Go, and Catch a Falling Star', this poem has another title. Its second title is 'Song'. The main theme of this poem is the impossibility of finding a woman who is both beautiful and loyal at the same time. To prove this proposition, the speaker in the poem compares this impossibility to other impossibilities, such as *catching a shooting star*, *impregnating the root of a mandrake*, *telling about the place of the past years*, etc. In the following subsections we go through analyzing the poem in the light of the four layered theory of Langacker's (2008) construal operations.



3.1.1. Specificity

Generally speaking, specificity is found in every linguistic unit or in all expressions (see Harrison et al, 2014, p. 6); and this poem is not an exception. For instance, in lines 1-6, each of *go*, *catch*, *get*, *teach*, *cleft*, *keep off*, etc. instantiates the verb schema. The notion of the verb is very schematic (i.e., general) while each of the verbs mentioned above is a specific instance of the notion of the verb.

- (4) 1 **Go and catch a falling star,**
 2 **Get with child a mandrake root,**
 3 **Tell me where all past years are.**
 4 **Or who cleft the Devil's foot**
 5 **Teach me to hear the mermaids singing,**
 6 **Or to keep off envy's stinging,**

In the same manner, *a falling star*, *a mandrake root*, *all past years*, *the devil's foot*, *mermaids singing*, and *envy's stinging* are also specific as they are instances of nouns or noun phrases. So, in comparison to the schematic term *noun* these phrases are specific. This sort of specificity is found in every line in the poem, for every linguistic item can be an instance of a schematic grammatical class it designates.

More specifically, we can say that *a falling star*, in line 1, is more specific than a THING; PHYSICAL OBJECT; or even a STAR. Thus, the expression *a falling star* invokes a more finely-grained conceptualization of the object which the poet asks the reader to grasp falling in the sky that hits the atmosphere and makes a series of light.

A mandrake root, in line 2, is more specific than another noun like *root*; however, *a mandrake root* is schematic in comparison to other possible expressions such as, *the/this mandrake root*. So, there is no specific *mandrake root* in the mind of the poet ('s speaker). We should also not forget the fact that mandrake root was believed to have magical power and can be used as a narcotic drug like heroin. Another fact about the root of mandrake plant is that its shape looks like the shape of a man or a woman (see Figure 2 in the following few pages). This is why in line 2 the poet says 'make it pregnant'. This tells us that *a mandrake root* is construed as it has been provided with the human specification of being able to give birth to a child.

All past years, in line 3, evokes a grossly-grained (i.e., schematic) conceptualization of the past years. It would have been more specific if the poet had said, for instance, *one 100 past years*, and so on.

The Devil's foot, in line 4, is also specific to which the term *foot* is a schematic conceptualization. The concept *Devil* is specific in the sense that it instantiates a *supernatural* or *non-physical being*. The grammatical clue for this specificity is the poet's use of the definite article *the*.

There are other points that can be raised regarding specificity in this poem, but we will only refer to two other important ones:

- (5) 11 **Ride ten thousand days and nights,**
 12 **Till Age snow white hairs on thee;**

In the above lines in example (5), the speaker commands the hearer to travel for 10,000 days and nights till his hair turns white because of being advanced in age. The duration of the journey the poet is asking the reader or the addressee to take is very specific: 27 years and about 40 days. *The ten thousand days and nights* and *till Age snow white hairs on thee* provide a finely-grained (i.e., specific) construal with a high degree of resolution. More schematic alternatives would be '*a long time* and *till you become aged*'.

Other specificity examples are found in the following excerpt:



- (6) 17 **Nowhere**
 18 **Lives a woman true and fair.**
 19 **If thou find'st one, let me know;**
 20 **Such a pilgrimage were sweet.**

The expression *nowhere* is very schematic; and it lacks specificity. Though in this context it may have a sort of specificity if we interpret it as referring to the places the addressee has taken during his 27-year journey seeking to find a fair and true woman for the poet. The modifying elements in line 18 *true* and *fair* give specificity to the noun *woman*, thus, it becomes specific. The concept of *woman* in itself has specificity against other schematic terms such as, *living animals* or *human*.

Another example of specificity is found in the concept of *pilgrimage* in line 20. In line 11, mentioned in example (5) above, the poet uses a schematic verb 'ride' to refer to the action of sitting and traveling on the back of an animal like horse, of course, for Donne's time. The verb *ride* does not specify the purpose of the journey, while in line 20 in example (6) we have a very specific name for the journey in the search of finding a true and fair woman. Here, the poet construes that journey as a *pilgrimage* which refers to a journey for the purpose of visiting a holy place.

In lines 17-18 example (6), the poet says that a true and fair woman lives nowhere, which is schematic; however, in line 22, the poet shifts to a very specific place in the world *next door* when he says *Though at next door we might meet*. So, *at next door* is very specific with respect to generic expression *nowhere*.

3.1.2. Focusing

Like looking at a scene, when construing a situation, human mind tends to select some significant points to focus on and overlook the peripheral ones. This mental focus is reflected and encoded in linguistic expressions. Linguistically focusing construal can be attained via one of the following operations:

3.1.2.1. Foreground vs. Background

As we said earlier, the speaker in this poem states that it is impossible to find a fair and an honest woman as it is impossible to: catch a shooting star; impregnate a root of a mandrake; tell about the place of the past years and the person who cleft the devil's foot; enable the speaker to hear the mermaids' songs and to cure the envy's stinging or discover the role of the wind in developing the mind of the intellectual people; and so on.

According to Langacker's model of construal, all the impossibilities Donne mentions in line 1-16 prior to his major theme of the poem, *there is no true and fair woman*, (see the appendix) make up the background for what is foregrounded in the poem, i.e., lines 17-18 (Nowhere/Lives a woman true and fair).

In similar fashion, lines 19-27 reinforce the same proposition expressed by lines 17-18. Accordingly, these final 9 lines serve as the background of the poem as they reiterate the general theme of the whole poem.

So far, the notions of foreground and background have been discussed very generally. In the rest of this section the two will be examined in some deeper vein.

The impossibilities mentioned in this poem are not clearly described as being impossible to do or occur. Rather, an English speaker or anyone else knows by intuition or by his general knowledge about the physical world or space science, classical mythology, psychology, religion, etc. knows the things mentioned between lines 1-16 are impossible. Thus, to conceptualize these impossibilities, human mind exploits these pieces of knowledge as the background and based on them each of the impossibilities is apprehended and even encoded linguistically. That is, our experience and knowledge about these impossibilities make up a background for understanding the foreground, what is highlighted and expressed verbally or



written. In this way, we say that the experience and knowledge, which are implicit, are the background and what is expressed explicitly is the foreground.

For instance, as the classic myths narrate the mermaids were special sea creatures whose upper parts of their bodies were of women and their hips downward were of fish, aka sirens (see Coleman, 2007, pp. 693, 869). The stories tell that whoever from the sailors listened to the mermaids couldn't survive because the voice of the mermaids lured the sailors to sleep then to devour them up. We can deduce, by analogy, that as it is impossible to teach **the** reader to be able to listen to the sirens, it is similarly impossible to find a woman who is at the same time fair and loyal to men. Though this knowledge has not been stated in the poem, thus it makes the background, it is very crucial for the conceptualization or the making of the meaning of the text.

In another interpretation, the comparison between the impossibility of finding a true and beautiful woman and the rest of the other more impossibilities is a metaphor, about which it can be said that each of impossibilities the poet counts before lines 17-18 can be regarded as the source domain for understanding the target domain, impossibility of finding a loyal and beautiful woman. The source domains are the background, the target is the foreground (for a detailed account about the source domain and target domain in conceptual metaphor theory, see Lakoff and John, 1980).

The poet's description of the search for finding a true and beautiful lady as a pilgrimage, in line 20, is also an issue of THE SEARCH FOR A BEAUTIFUL AND TRUE WOMAN IS A JOURNEY metaphor. In this case, the pilgrimage is the background for understanding the holiness of traveling for the sake of finding a lovely and trustworthy woman. Thus the latter is the foreground, and the former, of course becomes the background.

Another example of metaphor is found in line 13, when the poet compares the image of getting aged and having white hairs on your head to the image of man who is standing in the snow and his head is covered with snow. More technically, the comparison between these two scenes is an example of conceptual image metaphors (for Conceptual Image Metaphors, see Lakoff, 1989). Accordingly, the source mental image (i.e., the image of the snow on one's head) provides the background for understanding the foregrounded image of a white-haired man.

The ellipses in lines 19 and 27 in example (7) serve as the background:

(7) 19 If thou find'st one, let me know.

27 False, ere I come, to two or three.

The *true and fair woman* has been omitted from the phrase *one true and fair woman* in line 19. The current discourse context makes it clear that the ellipsis is understood from the preceding lines, lines 17-18, 'Nowhere/Lives a woman true and fair'. In 19, only the cardinal number modifier has remained as the foreground against the omitted background. The third person pronouns *she* and *her*, in lines 23 and 25 in example (8) refer back to the omitted part.

(8) 23 Though she were true when you met her

25 Yet she

In line 27, the word *other men* has been elided. We understand this from the context, as the poet is a man (and the first person pronoun *I* refers to Donne or Donne's speaker) who is seeking hard to find a true and beautiful woman. Like in 19, only the modifiers *two* and *three* survived as the foregrounded elements in the phrase *two or three other men*. Thus, the omission serves as the background. Accordingly, only the foregrounded parts are under the focus of the attention in both lines 19 and 27 while the backgrounds are, though important for understanding the foreground, are ignored in the linguistic surface, thus, unfocused or backgrounded.



The negations in line 21 evoke as their backgrounds the positive conceptions established in the previous lines, 19-20.

(9) 19 **If thou find'st one, let me know;**

20 **Such a pilgrimage were sweet.**

21 **Yet do not; I would not go,**

In the current discourse space (CDS) of line 19, the poet's speaker asks the addressee to inform him, in case s/he discovered one from the true and fair ladies. Furthermore, in line 20, the updated CDS gives information about the speaker's willingness to go for the journey of meeting the lady. All of a sudden, in line 21, the positive conceptions of informing the poet about the true and fair lady; and the speaker's readiness to go for the journey of meeting her are refuted by the negative concepts: *do not*, and *would not go*. In the CDS of line 21, the negations are foregrounded against the positive backgrounds in lines 19-20 (for CDS details, see Langacker, 2008, pp. 59 & 466).

Finally, we can also analyze many of these lines in terms of figure/ground alignment but we will postpone discussing them to the section allocated for the prominence, namely trajectory and landmark.

3.1.2.2. Composition

Composition, as a type of focusing construal, is highly related to foreground and background alignment. In this section we look at the inherent focusing found in the linguistic expressions.

In 'Go and Catch a Falling Star', we will explore some examples regarding their compositional structures. *Falling star*, which is both part of the title and the first line of the poem, is a complex composite structure. Thus, its meaning is complex too. Its meaning consists of the meaning of each of *fall*, *-ing*, and *star*.

Originally, the meaning of the composite structure *falling star* is inherited from the meaning of its constituent parts. But regarding focusing, the focus of attention is on the meaning of the last structure in the expression, the highest point in the hierarchy, that is, it is the foreground put in the background area because it carries the most important meaning in the complex structure. In addition, it is with this part that we know the identity of the final composite structure, *falling star*. That is, we identify of the grammatical class of the composite structure *falling star* with the help of the constituent part *star*, which makes it a noun. Traditionally, *star* is called the head of the noun phrase but in cognitive semantics it is known as profile determinant—this is because we determine the type of the profile according to the grammatical class of the head (see Evans & Green, 2006, p. 585).

The composite expressions, as Langacker (2008 p. 61) posits, show different degrees of analyzability. For instance, a common synonym for the *falling star* is *meteor*, but unlike the former, the latter is not analyzable into any other composing parts than *meteor* itself. Thus, because *falling star* and *meteor* show different degrees of analyzability, they are semantically not identical.

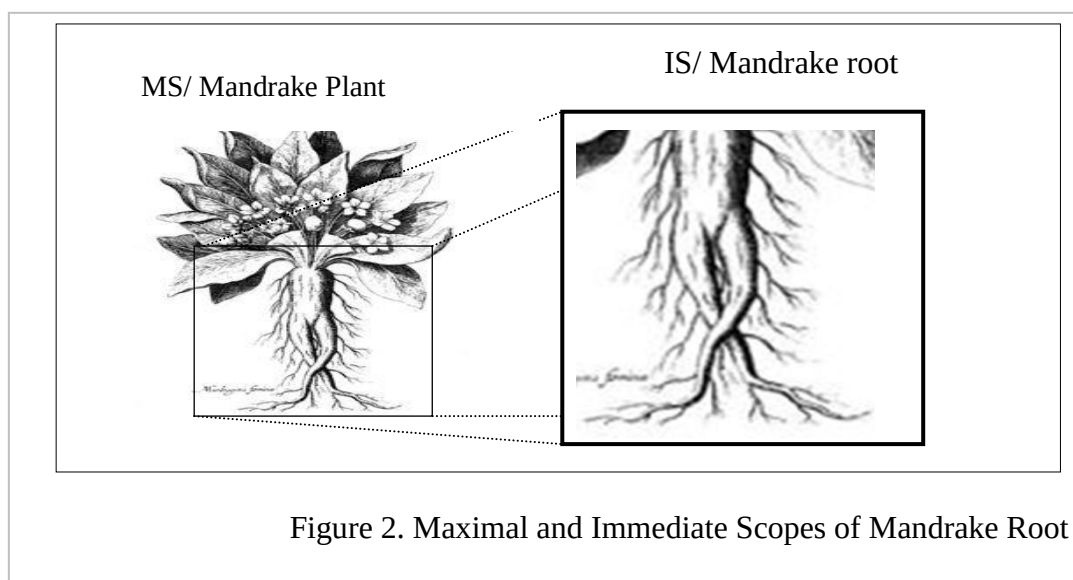
By the same token, the complex structure 'ten thousand days and night' in line 12, can be expressed with *27 years* but their meaning will be totally different as the two exhibit different degrees of analyzability.

In a similar fashion, each of *get with child*, *mandrake root*, *past years*, and *keep off* is a composite expression and shows varying degrees of analyzability. 'Get with child' in line 2, for example, is analyzed into *get*, *with*, *child*, while each of 'mandrake root' and *keep off* is only divided into *mandrake* and *root*; *keep* and *off*. The expression 'past years' has three composite structures: *past*, *year* and *-s*.

3.1.2.3. Scope

In addition to the foci achieved by foreground/background aligned and composition, the poet has gained focusing via the linguistic expressions which manifest different levels of scope. For instance, the phrase *mandrake root* in line 2 designates the lower part of a plant

known as mandrake. In this expression we have immediate and maximal scopes. The immediate scope is the lower part the plant which anchors that plant to the ground. The maximal scope is the mandrake plant itself. In this case we do not understand the exact meaning of the word *root* unless we understand its maximal scope, *mandrake*. So, the expression *mandrake root* wholly shows that our focus of attention is first on the anchoring part of the mandrake plant. We also say that our minds first zoom out our attention to the whole plant but later we zoom in to focus on the underground part of the plant, as shown in Figure 2, below.



Other expressions like *Devil's foot* in line 4; *mermaids singing* in line 5; *envy's stinging* in line 6, manifest the same conceptualization mechanism; we cannot understand the second part in each expression unless we understand the first ones. So, the first parts comprise the maximal scopes, the second the immediate scopes.

There is also the possibility to analyze other items in the poem with the help of scope of attention as a cognitive phenomenon, but as the notion of scope is highly integrated to other construal operations, namely profiling and reference point relation to which we will revert in the coming sections.

3.1.3. Prominence

3.1.3.1. Profiling

Technically speaking and as a cognitive linguistics principle, the words designate an entity and the entities in language either designate a thing or a relation. The nouns profile (i.e., designate) things. The rest of the lexical categories designate a relation. Accordingly, the verbs, adjectives, adverbs and prepositions are all relational. The finite verbs designate temporal relations. The rest of the other grammatical classes profile atemporal relations. When an expression profiles a thing only the profiled thing gets prominence while during profiling a relation two or more than two entities become prominent.

Accordingly, the noun phrase *falling star*, in line 1, profiles a thing. It also designates an extraterrestrial as its base. So, a falling star is a thing originally from the space. The concept of space is the base for the profile of *falling star*. That is, we cannot understand the concept of *falling star* unless we understand the concept of space or extraterrestrial. Here we have treated *falling star* altogether as one entity but in actuality it can be treated as *star* modified by the verbal adjective *falling*. In this case, *falling* profiles a relation, which has *star* as its trajector.



By the same token, in line 2, *child* is noun and it profiles a thing in the context of family network. To be more accurate, *child* invokes, as its base, a kinship or family network. So, to understand the meaning of the predicate *child* our mind evokes an array of abstract domains such as, *genealogy, gender, sexual intercourse, birth, parent/child relationship*. If we take the noun *child* in isolation, but, on the contrary, the *child* is part of a clause, ‘get with child a mandrake root’, in which the verb *get* profiles a relation that means *have a child from a mandrake root*; that is, *do a sexual intercourse with a mandrake root so that the mandrake root can give birth to a child!* As a result, we can also say that the clause profiles a relation that has the concept of parent as its trajector while the concept of *child* becomes landmark₂; the *mandrake root* the landmark₁, in the relation chain.

In line 3, the *foot* profiles a part in the lower limb of the devil’s body, i.e., the leg of the devil body. So, the expression *Devil’s foot* gives prominence to the concept of *foot* against the whole body of the Devil.

The concept of *Hairs*, in line 13, profiles a part of the head of human being. To understand the notion of hairs we need to understand the human head and eventually human body. So, the concept of *head* is the base for the profile *hairs*. ‘White hairs on thee’ in the same line contains a relational entity, *on*. The preposition *on* in line 13 shows a relation between *the white hair* (trajector) and *thee* (landmark).

Profiling has a role in understanding the metonymic predicates. In line 1, the verb *catch* takes the dropped subject *you* as its agent. The pronoun *you* refers to the second person or the reader or the addressee. We know that catching is done by the two *hands* but here instead *you* pronoun is used. According to Langacker, there is metonymy in this line, which has occurred by a shift from the profile of *hands* to the whole body or *you*, wholistically. Thus, we have a part-whole metonymy.

There is metonymy in example (10) lines 8-9:

(10) 8 What wind

9 Severs to advance honest mind.

The term *mind* has been used to stand for *person*. The mind/thought is the result or product of one’s brain’s product. As a result, there is a shift from the profile of the concept of *person* to the profile of the concept of *mind*. This is again a part-whole metonymy, or we can say it manifests a product-producer metonymy. That is, instead of making the notion of *person* prominent, the mind, which is highly related to the notion of *person*, has been given prominence.

The use of the personal pronoun *thee* in line 13 is metonymic; usually the white hairs are on the head which is part of the body, but here the pronoun designates the whole body of the addressee. Accordingly, there is whole-part metonymic profile—the *person* is used instead the *head*.

Metonymy is also found in the verbs *cleft* in line 4; *find’st* in line 19; *come* in line 27, shown in example (11), below.

(11) 4 ...who cleft Devil’s foot;

19 If thou find’st one,...

27 False, ere I come, to two, or three.

The process of cleaving the devil’s foot is part of a bigger process, the creation of devil. In the poem, the poet only highlights one phase in the process of shaping devil’s foot, i.e., its splitting only.

In similar fashion, the verb *find* highlights the final phase in long process of discovering the thing searched for. So, *find* profiles a short lasting scene out of a longer-lasting process. On the contrary, the verb *come*, in this context, can be replaced by *arrive*. But regarding profiling, the latter profiles the final state of the speaker’s moving from his whereabouts to the location of the addressee, while the former profiles the whole process. This is best explained in Figure



3. The circles represent the speaker, the trajector (tr), i.e., Donne. The arrow represents the event. The boldness of the arrow shows the profiled portions in the process. The square is to show the targeted location (LOC) towards which the trajector is moving.

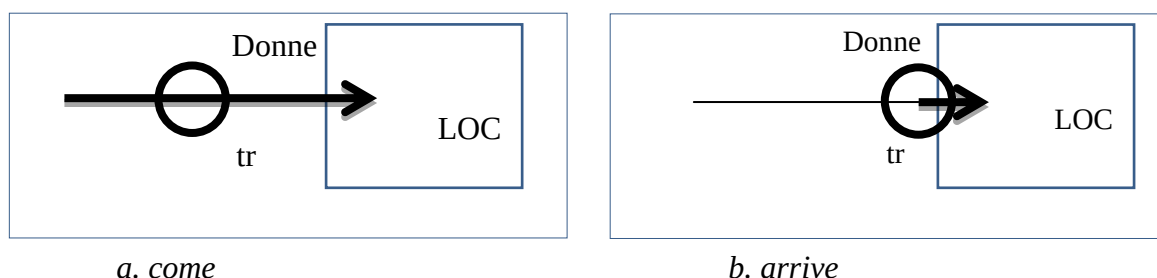


Figure 3. The profile of *come* and *arrive* in line 27 (...ere I come...) (cf. Langacker, 2008, p. 412).

3.1.3.2. Trajector –Landmark Alignment

In the majority of lines of this poem, there are relational entities. By relational entities we mean those words which show a relation between two other entities, or at least one entity being highlighted in a process or an event. In line 1, 'Go, and catch a falling star' has *go* as its relational entity which necessitates the existence of a noun as its trajector. This is because *go* is an intransitive verb which requires the agent as its trajector. In our case the addressee or the reader, i.e., YOU, plays the role of the agent. It is worth referring that the clause *go* in 'go and catch...' is subsidiary; the main event is the falling star catching not going (for a similar example, see Langacker, 2008, p. 412).

The verb *catch* is also a relational entity. But because it is a transitive verb, it has an additional prominent entity, a second noun, as its patient in the action chain. So, *you* is a trajector and *falling star* becomes its landmark, as it is perceived less prominently, i.e., it has secondary prominence. As the action is impossible to perform, the double shafted arrow has been represented with dashed lines in Figure 4. The trajector (tr) which is linguistically interpreted as an implicit 'you' or 'thou' in the historical context of the poem, is there but it is diagrammatically depicted with the normal light line to show that it is not present on the linguistic level. If we consider *falling star* alone as consisting of *falling* (as an adjective) and *star* (as a noun) then the adjective profiles a relation which has *star* as its trajector.

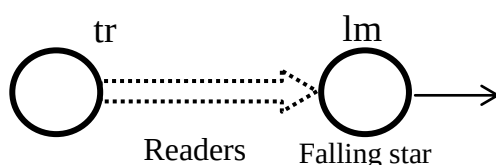


Figure 4. Trajector and Landmark in 'Catch a Falling Star'

The alignment of trajector-landmark in lines 3-4 incorporated in example (12).

(12) 3 Tell me where all past years are,
4 Or who cleft the Devil's foot;

Similar to line 1, lines 3-4 have *tell* as the relational word profiling a relationship between an implicit *thou* as the trajector and the two *where all past years are* and *me* (the poet), as



landmark₁ and landmark₂, respectively. Syntactically, *tell* requires an agent as its subject. Here the subject is *thou*. It also takes two objects. The nominal clause, *where all past years are*, is the direct object; it functions as a noun phrase. In addition, *me* is the direct object.

Like *go* in line 1 as explicated earlier, *tell me* carries no semantic import, as this imperative is already implied in the indirect question *where all past years are*. In the above explanation, it was said that landmark is coded in terms of a nominal clause which is again a part of the complex clause *tell me where all past years are*. The former also has a relational profile. *All past years* is a trajector; *where* (which stands for the *location*) is a landmark.

The phrase *all past years* is headed by the profile of all the periods of time each of which containing 365 or 366 days. In this same phrase we also have another relational entity, the adjective *past*. It has the *years* as its trajector.

The last example we take in 'Go, and Catch a Falling Star' is in the compound sentence in lines 25-27, in example (13):

- (13) 25...she
26 Will be
27 False, ere I come, to two or three.

She will be false to two or three is the independent clause. However, *ere I come* is the dependent clause. The former is considered more prominent than the latter. Thus, the former is the trajector and the latter is the landmark. In each of these two clauses there is at least another trajector and landmark.

3.1.4. Perspective

Construal theory is based on a metaphor according to which situations and events are considered like a play been acted on the stage of a theater. The audience watching or viewing the actors are compared to the speakers and hearers (or writers and reader in the written language). The actors and their acting process are compared to the actions or state of affairs the interlocutors talk about in their communications. So, the situations are perceived and conceptualized in a manner similar to this theater metaphor. Technically, the perceived situation is known as the **object** of conceptualization (=the scenes being acted), and the interlocutors and what is related to them is known as the **subject** of conceptualization (such as the place, time, etc. of speaking or writing). One can say construal is the relation between the subject of conceptualization and the object of conceptualization. The conceptualization is not something readymade; it is rather a process which occurs in time. Thus, time plays a vital role in this mental act. These two are the topics of the two final subsections.

3.1.4.1. Viewing Arrangement

In this subsection, the relation between the scenes construed, in 'Go, and Catch a Falling Star', and the perceiver(s) of the scenes is under scrutiny.

The overall tone of the poem tells us that the speaker and the listener (or the poet and the reader) are part of the events occurring in the text world. Thus, they are part of the scenes conceived. Accordingly, we have a non-canonical vantage point. In canonical vantage points, speakers and hearers talk about situations in which they are not part of the scenes.

In a cognitive semantic perspective, the poet, John Donne, and the readers, the current researchers, are part of the scenes and thus, the subject of conceptualization and the object of conceptualization are objectively construed.

The title which is also the first line, 'Go, and Catch a Falling Star', has an imperative construction. An imperative construction involves the speaker and second person, *you*, in the action ordained. This objective construal of the subject of conceptualization is reflected in all the other imperatives found in lines 2-9. The objective construal of the subject of conceptualization and the object of conceptualization is not only found in the imperative expressions; it also exists in the conditional clauses in lines 10 and 19 excerpted in example (14) below:

**(14) 10 If thou be'st born to strange sights,****19 If thou find'st one, let me know;**

In line 10 only the hearer (or reader) is profiled as the trajector in the profiled relation. However, in line 19, the speaker, Donne, as well as the listeners or the researchers, in our context, are objectively construed as they are part of the perceived scene. In the subordinate clause in line 10 only the reader has been put onstage as the trajector of the profiled relation, while in the main clause relation in that same line the reader is off-staged but the speaker, the poet (Donne) has been profiled as the landmark of the clausal relation.

The trajector in line 10 is the subject of the passive construction which is originally a landmark of its active counterpart. In English the birth of somebody is commonly expressed via passive construction: one says *he was born* not *his mother bore him*. In the active construction, *the mother* is the most salient participant in the action chain, thus, it is the trajector; while the *child* is the secondary salient element. The role of the trajector and landmark has been swapped in the passive construction. This is considered a cognitive phenomenon. This phenomenon is known as trajector-landmark reversal (see Evans, 2007, pp. 214-15; cf. Lemmens, 1998, p. 12).

The key lines in the poem, lines 17-18, re-quoted in example (15) below show that the scene is conceived of with maximal objectivity and the subject of conceptualization is maximally subjective.

(15) 17 Nowhere**18 Lives a woman true and fair.**

If we take this excerpt in isolation, this is the only clause in which the event is conceived of with maximal objectivity. The perceivers of this situation construe this event with maximal objectivity. None of the interlocutors (the speaker and writer) is present in construing the event. The only role of the poet is to remain as the subject of conceptualization.

Elucidation must be given regarding an important point related to the notion of vantage point. It was maintained that the interlocutors are in the same space and time in order that conceptualization of the scenes can be made. The poet, John Donne, lived in the 17th century while the present readers live in the 21st century. That is, Donne had a vantage point interwoven to his time and place, but the vantage point that the current **researchers adopt** is totally different from that of the poet's.

Accordingly, due to the change in the vantage points taken by each of the poet and the current researchers, the meaning of *all past years* in line 3; *ten thousand days and nights* in line 12; and *at next door* in line 22 changes. *All past years*, in line 3, in Donne's vantage point (time and place of composing this poem), means the years before the year in which he wrote or composed this poem. However, to the current researchers, *all past years* means the years prior to the current year, i.e., all the years before 2018. The latter vantage point also includes the years coming after the year of composing the poem, too.

In the same fashion, *ten thousand days*, in line 12, means over 27 years from the year the poet wrote this poem. However, in the present researchers' vantage point, it means over 27 years from the year of writing this article.

The different vantage points found in the above expressions have led to the different meanings of the same linguistic expressions. Thus, the vantage points we occupy for construing the events greatly touch the making of the meaning of the linguistic expressions.

3.1.4.2. The Temporal Dimension

The objective of this subsection is to analyze the temporal dimensions of the expressions (conceived vs. processing time; summary scanning vs. sequential scanning, and reference point relations) in 'Go, and Catch a Falling Star'. In his poem, there is direct reference to temporal words which make up the conceived time, i.e., time as an object of conception. The expressions *all past years* in line 3; and *ten thousand days and nights* in line 12 are examples



of conceived time. The real duration of each of these times is very long while to mentally comprehend them takes the conceptualizers a very short time (it is a matter of seconds). For instance, the poet links the latter time to the aging of the addressee—the duration the addressee travels in search of finding a true and beautiful lady (cf. line 13)

The processing time needed for apprehending this long duration in which a 25-30 years old man gets his hair whitened because of aging after more than 27 years of travelling is nothing in comparison to the real time needed to all the changes to happen to the addressee or reader during these years. So, there is no iconicity between these two times.

However, despite the non-iconic relations between the processing time and conceived time, we have temporal iconicity between the order of the events *riding for ten thousand days and nights* and *getting aged* in lines 12-13; between the rider's return and his narration of the strange happenings occurred to him during his journey in lines 14-15.

John Donne has utilized both modes of scanning (sequential and summary) when describing the scenes. In the opening lines of the poem he has used sequential scanning within the finite clauses via the finite verbs when ordering the reader to perform some undoable things.

Roughly speaking, the verbs *go*, and *catch* in line 1; *tell* in lines 2-3 (implied); *teach* in lines 5-6 (implied); and *find* in line 7 are examples of finite verbs. Thus, they profile a processual relation. According, each of them is an example sequential scanning. They exhibit the series of the phases through which each of the actions described by the verbs take place in time. For instance, *go* scans the successive phases of the process in which the addressee, or a trajector, is ordered to be moving from a landmark towards another landmark through time. In the same fashion, the rest of the finite verbs profile a processual relations

By the same token, the temporal relations profiling the processes designated by the finite verbs *serves* in line 9; *be'st* (the early modern English verb form of *be* for the second singular person= *are* in modern English) in line 10; *ride* in line 12; *snow* in line 13; and *return'st* in line 14 all manifest a mental sequential scanning.

Donne has also opted for the summary scanning in construing the scenes in his 'Go, and Catch a Falling Star'. The relational profile of the verbal adjective *falling* in the title and line 1 is a manifestation of a complex atemporal relation. It is complex because it involves a set of phases in which the falling of a star takes place. However, the phases are construed summarily since the event has been stripped off the time through which it happens and conceived of as a single gestalt (i.e., unified entity).

Each of the non-finite clauses *to hear* and *mermaids signing*, in line 3, is an example of summary scanning. In *to hear*, for example, the process of hearing has been condensed and construed simultaneously as one unit. This is why it functions as a noun as it has occupied an objective's slot in the bigger finite clause; *teach me to hear mermaids singing*. Cognitively semantically, this nonfinite clause designates a thing. The second non-finite verb *mermaids singing* is also another instance of summary scanning. The process of the chanting of the mermaids has been mentally scanned as a single and perceived of as one summarily. Syntactically speaking, the former non-finite verb *to hear* takes the latter non-finite clause *mermaids singing* as its object. Cognitively speaking, the infinitive non-finite verb *to hear* designates a relation and the implied *I* is its trajector and the other participle non-finite clause *mermaids singing* is its landmark.

An example of simple atemporal relation which is summarily scanned is found in the line 12, *white hairs on thee*. The preposition *on* profiles a relation between the nominal profiles of *white hair* and *thee*—to which the former is a trajector and the latter a landmark.

Finally, in the rest of this subsection, we will be discussing three examples of reference point relation in Donne's 'Song'. Generally, the poet starts his poem with a number of impossibilities (with different degrees of impossibilities) starting with the most impossible one, *catching a falling star*, moving down to a lesser impossible one, *impregnating a root of*



the mandrake plant; coming to other impossibilities with less tension of impossibility, *telling about the location of the past years* and *telling about the person who cleft the hoof of the devil*; and so forth. The poet has used these impossibilities as reference points for the target in dominion of impossibilities. We can say that the poet scans these events in a way that he moves from one event to another till we meet at the end of the chain of reference points with the target point which is *the impossibility of having an attractive as well as loyal woman simultaneously*.

For the making of the meaning of the *mandrake root* in line 2 and *devil's foot* in line 4, the conceptualizer establishes a mental contact from one concept (*mandrake* or *devil*) to another concept (*root* or *foot*). In Langacker's (2008, pp. 83-5) term, concepts like the former are known as reference points, and the latter ones are called the targets. All what is pertained to the notions of *mandrake* and *devil* makes up what Langacker calls dominion.

4. Conclusions

Through the theoretical background sections and the other sections of **the practical** analysis of the poem, it was reiterated that the meaning of the linguistic expressions do not only reside in the mere dictionary meaning of the linguistic elements; but rather, part of the meaning of the linguistic expressions rest on the ways the interlocutors perceive the situations and state of the affairs. It has also become apparent that human mind has the ability to construe the scenes and situations from different perspectives and thus yielding to various linguistic realizations. This is why we use various expressions for one single situation or state of affairs. It has also been reinforced that the insights proposed by Langacker's construal theory can contribute in formulation of a better understanding toward the semantics of the poems or poetry in general. The practical and line by line analysis of the poem proved and added to the applicability and feasibility of Langacker's construal model to the discourse level of language or more stereotypically the poetic language. Thus, Langacker's construal model can be used as a stylistic device for analyzing the poems' semantic construction within the general framework of cognitive semantics.

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تويژينه وه يكي واتاسازي دركي كرداره روانگه ييه كان له ناو هونراوه ي (پرو و نه يزه كيك بگره وه) شاعيري ئينگليزي جون دن

پوخته

بۇ ماوه يه كي دورو دريژ، فهيله سوف و نه ديب و زمانسان پياناوبو كه زماي شيعري زمانكي هونري رووته، نه مهش واده كات كه شيكرده وه ي نهو زمانه به يتي بيردوزه تازه كان زانستي زمانه واني شتيكي نهسته مه حال بن. ئامانج له م تويژينه وه ش بريته له وه لامدانه وه ي نهو چه مكه هه له به وسه لماندن هه له بوونه تي. بۇ نهو مه به سته تويژه ره وان تيوري روانگه ي (construal) واتاسازي زمانسي دركي (Langacker) يان بۇ شيكرده وه ي وانا له زماي شيعريدا به كاره يناوه. نه م تويژينه وه يه هه و ليكه بۇ شيكرده وه ي وانا و ماناله ناو يه كيك له هونراوه به ناو بانگه كان شاعيري ئينگليزي ميتافيزيكي (John Donne)، به ناو نيشاني 'Go, and Catch a Falling Star' (= پرو و نه يزه كيك بگره وه) به يتي تيوري روانگه ي (construal) زمانه واني دركي (Langacker). گريمانه ي نه م تويژينه وه يه ش بريته له وه ي كه نه م بيردوزه ي (Langacker)، كه خو ي له بنه رته دا بۇ شيكرده وه ي واتاي زماي قسه كردنه پيشياكراوه، ده شيت بۇ شيكرده وه و دروستكردني وانا له ناو ده ق شيعريشدا به كار به يترت. نه م تويژينه وه يه ش پالېستي نهو بيرۆكه به ي ريبازي واتاسازي دركي (cognitive semantics) ده كات كه ده ليت: وانا دروستده كريت و يه كسانه به ويناكردن يان چه مكاكندن (conceptualization). واتاش ته نها له واتاي فره رهنكي وشه و فره يز و رسته كانه وه سه رچاوه ناگريت، به لكو به شيكي وانا پشت ده به ستي به روانگه ي قسه كهر يان شاعيره وه به تويژينه وه كه نه وه ش ده سه لميتت كه شاعير هاوشيوه ي قسه كه راني ئاساي ميكانيزم و كرداري روانگه ي (construal operations) واتاسازي به كارده هيتت له ناو ده قه شيعريه كاندا. بۇيه هاوكات له گه ل واتاي فره رهنكي ده رپينه كانداروانگه (construal) روليكي سه ركه ي ده گيرت له بونيدان و دروستكردني وانا له ناو ده قه شيعريه كه دا.

تحليل الدلالي المعرفي للعمليات المناظرية في قصيدة (اذهب ، وامسك بالنجم الساقط) للشاعر الانكليزي دن

ملخص

لقد رأى الفلاسفة ، والأدباء واللغويون ، لفترة طويلة أن اللغة الشعرية هي لغة فنية ، وأنها ليست بأي حال قابلة للتحليل من حيث النظريات الحديثة للغة. الهدف من هذا البحث هو تطبيق نظرية (construal) ، وهي نظرية دلالة معرفية مشهورة جداً ، على بناء الدلالي في الشعر. وهكذا ، يقوم الباحثان بتحليل أحد القصائد المعروفة من قبل (Donne) ، بعنوان 'Go, and Catch a Falling Star' ، وامتسك بالنجم الساقط" ، في ضوء نظرية (construal) -ل اللغوي المعرفي (Langacker). ومن المفترض أن النظرية قابلة للتطبيق على تحليل بنية المعنى في النصوص الشعرية كما هي في النصوص غير الشعرية. تدعم هذا البحث أيضاً المبدأ المعرفي في علم الدلالي المعرفي (cognitive semantics) الذي يساوي معنى بالتصور أو بالمفهوم (conceptualization). كما أن البحث الحالي يثبت عملياً أن معنى التعبيرات اللغوية لا يكمن فقط في المحتويات الدلالية ؛ المناظر التي تشاهد فيها المشاهد تشارك بشكل كبير في بناء معنى تعبيرات. ولقد تم تحليل جميع آيات القصيدة تقريباً وفقاً لآليات الأربعة لنظرية (construal). خلال التحليل العملي للقصيدة ، استنتج الباحثان أن اللغة الشعرية مثل اللغة غير الشعرية العادية تستفيد من العمليات المعرفية وتعتمد بشكل كبير على الآليات أو عمليات (construal) في صنع المعنى. وهكذا ، بالإضافة إلى المعنى القاموسي أو المعجمي للكلمات والعبارات والجمل في القصيدة ، تشكل عمليات المناظر (construal operations) عنصراً أساسياً في بناء وإنشاء معنى القصيدة.

**Appendix****'Song' or 'Go, and Catch a Falling Star' by John Donne (1572- 1631)**

1. Go, and catch a falling star,
2. Get with child a mandrake root,
3. Tell me, where all past years are,
4. Or who cleft the devil's foot,
5. Teach me to hear mermaids singing,
6. Or to keep off envy's stinging,
7. And find
8. What wind
9. Serves to advance an honest mind.
10. If thou beest born to strange sights,
11. Things invisible to see,
12. Ride ten thousand days and nights,
13. Till age snow white hairs on thee,
14. Thou, when thou return'st, wilt tell me
15. All strange wonders that befell thee,
16. And swear
17. Nowhere
18. Lives a woman true, and fair.
19. If thou findest one, let me know,
20. Such a pilgrimage were sweet;
21. Yet do not, I would not go,
22. Though at next door we might meet,
23. Though she were true, when you met her,
24. And last, till you write your letter,
25. Yet she
26. Will be
27. False, ere I come, to two, or three.

(Negri, 2002, pp. 2-3)