

ANALYZE THE SEMANTIC PATTERNS ASSOCIATED WITH DESIRE,  
BETRAYAL, AND INFIDELITY IN THE DARK LADY SONNETS WRITTEN BY  
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

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Abstract

Shakespeare's poem sequence is considered one of the most notable poems ever. His poetry exposes that poetry can be an excellent technique to express feelings from complex aspects and points of attention that range from dissatisfaction to lust. While going through the 6 selected sonnets out of the 126 from part II of Shakespeare, the researcher found a physical shade of love and a spiritual side. Four characters in Shakespeare's sonnets are: The Speaker (this is the sound that describes the sonnets, often seen as Shakespeare himself), The Fair Youth (A handsome young man who is liable for admiration and affection in the first 126 sonnets. The Rival Poet (This is a type of character who competes with the narrator for the fair youth's attention, appearing in sonnets 78-86. The Dark Lady. For examining, understanding, and analyzing the text, the study of meaning plays a crucial function/role. This study focuses on understanding and analyzing William Shakespeare's 6 selected sonnets of Dark Lady. It aims to analyze the sonnets by using Geoffrey Leech's theory of the seven types of meaning. By using it, the research provides the hidden meaning of the lines used by Shakespeare in his sonnets about the dark lady.

**Key words:** Dark lady, semantic meaning, beauty, and black

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## INTRODUCTION

Semantics is the study of meaning in a language (Ahmad et al., 2021). In linguistics, meaning is the information or concept that a sender intends to convey in communication. In other words, it can be described as the philosophical or scientific enquiry/study of meaning that focuses on the relationship between words and their referents (signifier and signified concept in language).

Geoffrey Leech, a well-known linguist, gave a theory of semantics which emphasizes the importance/significance of meaning in language. His theories have had a forceful impact on the field of linguistics and continue to influence the research in semantics and pragmatics. The current study seeks to analyze Shakespeare's sonnets for the Dark Lady, from 127 to 132, semantically. William Shakespeare (1564-1616) was one of the most prominent literary figures in English literature. He received an excellent education with a heavy focus on grammar and literature. Along with being a writer, poet, and dramatist, he also lived as an actor and worked with the lord chamberlain's Company of players, later known as the King's Men. It is generally considered/ believed that he wrote 38 plays, but he is well known for his sonnets and roundabout he wrote 154 sonnets in his life. All his sonnets are famous for their elegant language, rich imagery, and examination of themes such as love, beauty, and mortality.

## OBJECTIVES

- To investigate the meaning of 6 selected sonnets of William Shakespeare through semantic analysis
- To examine the semantic light (seven layers) of meanings and complexities in Shakespeare's poetic expression through the views of Leech's model of semantics (Leech 1981).

## SIGNIFICANCE

The research keeps significant scholarly importance, as it focuses and seeks to build the understanding of Shakespeare's selected sonnets by applying Leech's model of semantics (1981). This study contributes to the field of semantics, granting layers of meaning embedded in Shakespeare's iconic poems. By focusing on the conceptual meaning, affected meaning, connotative meaning, stylistic meaning, reflective meaning, collocative meaning & thematic meanings.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature Review pays a fleeting glance at what semantics is and the role of semantics through different researchers' ideas, Maitlo et al., (2025; 2024). Then, it views Leach's seven layers of meaning in his book *Semantics* (1981), and at the end, it provides the results by applying Leach's model as a theoretical framework. Semantics is considered the investigation of meaning in language. While in linguistics it is a technique/procedure that joins syntactic constructions from clauses, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs, forming an independent language. It deals with the objectives and general meaning of a single word or sentence, rather than the subjective and limited meaning of the speaker. As per Kearns (2000), semantics refers to a field of analysis of how meaning is conveyed and encoded in human language & it consists of the meaning of words, phrases, sentences, and clauses of any piece of writing (Cheema et al., 2023). Newmark (1988) states that semantics is attached to linguistics and it is the investigation of the whole meaning and its interpretation.

In the words of Leech (1981), he has mentioned seven layers of meaning in his book *Semantics*, and those layers are *conceptual meaning*, *connotative meaning*, *stylistic meaning*, *affective meaning*, *reflective meaning*, *collocative meaning*, & *thematic meanings*. In 2024, Iram Munawar Shaikh & Imtiaz Hussain semantically analyzed Sylvia Plath's poems "Ariel and Lady Lazarus" through Leach's model of semantics (1981).

They assert that Leach's model not only helps to analyze the layers of meaning but also shows the complex structure and psychological turmoil in Plath's poetic language and expressions.

Dinda Salsabilla and Muhammad Yusuf analyzed an article published in the *Jakarta Globe, an environmental news*, in 2023. They focused on finding the affective meaning of this article, and their findings suggest that 19 instances of affective meaning are used in this article, 11 instances of negative meaning, and 8 positive meaning.

In 2023, Muhammad Hussan Shaikh, along with two other authors named Rubina Arain and Sadia Naz, stylistically analysed the poem of Robert Frost *Nothing Gold Can Stay* 2023. They found multiple things, like the Garden of Eden, as a metaphor that shows the levels/stages of life and death. This poem also describes the basic difference between ordinary language and figurative language. Their findings suggest that Frost has skillfully passed his poetic message by using stylistic devices.

In 2020, Umar Umar did a semantic analysis of the lexicon membawa in Bimanese by applying a qualitative method. He analysed the data, using Leach's theory of meaning for describing the meaning of lexicon membawa in Bimanese. His findings suggest that *fourteen membawa lexicons* are used by the Mbojo ethnic group in daily communication in different contexts. From the University of the Punjab, Iram Sagheer, along with other researchers in 2024, did a pragmatic analysis of a Pakistani religious podcast (*Mufti Tariq Masood*). Based on a collection of data, these researchers found that Mufti Tariq Masood heavily uses direct speech acts than others for educating the Pakistani youth.

In 2021, Muhammad Amjad, along with two other researchers named *Dr Adnan Tahir & Attiya Bano*, stylistically analyzed Milton's Invocation of Paradise Lost, Book 1. They attempted to discover different levels of stylistic divinations, Milton's lexical choices from the bible and Quran, and his religious and historical references.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Methodical study of the process is known as the research method (Ahmad, A., Maitlo, S.K., & Rao, I.S., 2022). For the present research, researchers used a content analysis procedure to analyze these poems to explore which statistical devices are used by the great English Poet William Shakespeare in his famous "The Dark Lady Sonnets". The population of the study comprises 5 selected sonnets of Shakespeare for sampling. The research has utilized the qualitative method, which involves non-numeric data. This research has analyzed the selected sonnets of Shakespeare from 127 to 132, by applying Geoffrey Leach's semantics work as a theoretical framework.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Geoffrey Leech introduced seven types of meaning in his book *Semantics*, the enquiry/study of meaning. He recommended these types of meaning to analyze any text or multiple aspects of language. These types of meaning include conceptual meaning, connotative meaning, Social/stylistic meaning, Affective meaning, Reflected Meaning, collocated meaning, and thematic meaning. His theory is a theoretical framework for this study.

## CONCEPTUAL MEANING

Conceptual meaning is a type of meaning that indicates the only literal or dictionary meaning. It means what it means, it doesn't provide any other shade of meaning, for instance, boy = human = male =adult. Leech believed that conceptual meaning is a primary meaning. Furthermore, he provided the two principles for understanding conceptual meaning. The principle of contractions (which focuses on dividing/ sectional or choice aspects of linguistic structure). Second is the principle of constituent structure (which seeks the syntagmatic or combinatorial aspects of linguistics).

## CONNOTATIVE MEANING

Connotative meaning is generally combined with implied or emotional or culturally attached/linked with a word. For instance, rose =love; this type of meaning directly influences how the reader gets the overall message of what a speaker or writer is trying to convey. It offers

multiple associations beyond literal meaning. Connotative meaning is further divided into three types: positive, negative, and natural.

Positive connotation refers to conveying favorable emotional responses. It seeks the combination of emotional attachment that is positive or pleasant. Ex: love, free, and success, these words keep a positive connotation.

Negative connotation is designed to define a person or thing unpleasantly. Ex: failure, or poverty, both have negative connotations

Neutral connotation refers to the way we remain neutral while describing anything that is known as neutral connotation. Ex: weather or chair

**Stylistic Meaning/ Social Meaning:** Stylistic meaning can be defined as the study of the style of different writers, different literature, and elements of language. For suppose, the study of what makes Shakespeare different from Chaucer is an example of stylistics. Stylistic meaning refers to the way you write, the manner of writing, and the way of expressing is known as the stylistic. For instance, he passed away, he died. As far as the social meaning is concerned, social meaning is attached to a particular situation in which an utterance is used. It focuses on social context and geographical status.

## **AFFECTIVE MEANING**

The affective meaning of a word is directly related to the emotion and mood of the speaker as well as the listeners. In other words, it can be described as the personal feelings expressed by a speaker or writer.

## **REFLECTIVE MEANING**

In semantics, reflected meaning is a type of phenomenon whereby a single word or phrase is linked with more than one sense or meaning. A single word or phrase can have layers of meaning, and it is also known as coloring and contagion.

## **COLLOCATIVE MEANING**

Collocative meaning refers to a group of words that are expected to be together because of their habitual use.

**Thematic Meaning:** It can be described as what is communicated by how a speaker or a writer organizes the message in terms of ordering focus and emphasis. In other words, thematic meaning is how you, as a speaker or writer, organise your thoughts. You may change the ordering focus; likewise, the same idea can be expressed through the active Form of the sentence or the passive form of the sentence.

## **ANALYSIS OF THE SONNET DARK LADY**

### *Analysis 1: Sonnet 127*

*In the old times, black was not considered fair,  
Or if it were, it bore not beauty's name;  
But now is black beauty's successive heir,  
And beauty slandered with a bastard shame:  
For since each hand hath put on nature's power,  
Fairing the foul with art's false borrowed face,  
Sweet beauty hath no name, no holy bower,  
But is profaned, if not lives in disgrace.  
Therefore, my mistress' eyes are raven black,  
Her eyes so suited, and the mourners seem  
At such who, not born fair, no beauty lack,  
Slandering creation with a false esteem:  
Yet so they mourn, becoming of their woe,  
That every tongue says beauty should look so.*

**Conceptual Meaning:** The initial part of the sonnet Dark Lady passes the thought about beauty standards that beauty standards have been updated/exchanged. In the present era, black is



considered beautiful. It also conveys the idea that in aged, black people were not considered good, or if they were, beauty was not mentioned.

**Connotative Meaning:** As for the connotative meaning of sonnet 127 is considered, in this sonnet black word conveys a favorable/positive connotation, highlighting beauty and attractiveness.

**Stylistic Meaning:** In this poem, Shakespeare uses metaphorical language to show the dark lady's beauty, evoking a sense of wonder and awe.

**Affective Meaning:** This poem raises the feelings of delighted approval and longing for Dark Lady's beauty, and is a tribute to Dark Lady.

**Reflective Meaning:** This poem flashes the writer's personal feelings and love about beauty, by pointing out their tribute to the Dark Lady.

**Collocative Meaning:** Different words are used in this poem by the writer, which creates a type of contrast and surprise. Words like beauty are used in association with other words, such as black and fair, that build a kind of controversy and surprise.

**Thematic Meaning:** Shakespeare organized his thoughts by focusing on the theme of beauty and its relation to social standards.

## *Analysis 2: Sonnet 128*

*How oft, when thou, my music, music play'st,  
Upon that blessed wood whose motion sounds  
With thy sweet fingers, when thou gently sway'st  
The weary concord that mine ear confounds,  
Do I envy those jacks that nimble leap  
To kiss the tender inward of thy hand,  
Whilst my poor lips, which should that harvest reap,  
At the wood's boldness by thee blushing stand!  
To be so tickled, they would change their state  
And the situation with those dancing chips,  
O'er whom thy fingers walk with gentle gait,  
Making dead wood more blest than living lips.  
Since Saucy Jacks are so happy in this,  
Give them thy fingers, me thy lips to kiss.*

**Conceptual Meaning:** As far as the conceptual meaning of this sonnet is concerned, it revolves around the speaker's affection for the person playing a musical instrument, likely a virgin, given the attachment to "jack" & "wood". The speaker showed his envy about the instrument's capability to be attached to the player's fingers and wishes to be in its space. It is a romantic observation of a speaker about his beloved at the keyboard and showing jealousy on the keys that get her touch.

**Connotative Meaning:** The connotative meaning of Sonnet 128 is filled with sensory details, evoking the feelings of desire and longing. "Tender inward" & "the sweet fingers" of the players had drawn a sense of friendship and attachment. "Motion sounds"& "the wiry concord" pass the sense of musical harmony and loveliness. "Blessed wood" indicates the instrument, but symbolically contrasts the living with a weak piano, observing the speaker. "Nimble leap" and "kiss the tender inward of thy hand", arise the sensual imagery - building an advice of intimacy and wish.

"My poor lips... blushing stand" indicates longing or shame \_\_ probably sexual frustration. The sonnet is attached with lips, hands, and motion.

**Stylistic Meaning:** By using the courtly, respectful diction, the sonnet hints at intimacy and erotic subtext. Phrases like "Tender inward" & "harvest reap" are formal but convey a double meaning. Shakespeare conveys his thoughts in the Petrarchan tradition yet destroys it by

comparing the beloved to instrumental mechanics, instead of idealized nature. The style shows the beauty of Renaissance poetry, yet it's imputed with sensual realism.

**Affected Meaning:** The desire and envy describe the writer's/ speaker's emotional state. The speaker wishes to touch the player's fingers and shows deep attraction. Words like "blessing"& "envy "carry a sense of vulnerability and emotional depth.

**Reflective Meaning:** "kiss the tender inward of thy hand" (as respectful administration) and carries a double meaning, hinting at sexual tension beneath musical imagery. Some words of this sonnet also create a difference between romantic affection and physical contact, but even reflect on bodily longing. Shakespeare gives a chance of both sensual and modest readings by constantly using ambiguity in his work. The poem also pays a furtive glance at the theme of human experience and desire, describing the human emotion and complexities.

**Collocative Meaning:** for the sake of creating a sense of intimacy and musicality, Shakespeare uses phrases and words. The words used like "wood," "music", & fingers" create a sense of relation between the speaker, player & the instrument. When the words and cohesion grouped, words like "wiry concord," "kiss", "wood", tickled, & fingers", these words build a field of sensual, and acoustic relationships. Words that are often collocated with intimacy and love include "tender, blest, lips, harvest, and highlighting.

**Thematic Meaning:** As for the thematic meaning of this sonnet is concerned, it deals with the theme of beauty, human experience, and desire. The sonnet describes the human emotions and the path by which art can evoke feelings of intimacy and longing. The main theme is desire, which highlights the speaker's attraction to the player and the beauty of music.

### *Analysis 3: Sonnet 129*

*The expense of spirit in a waste of shame  
Is lust in action, and till action, lust  
Is perjured, murderous, bloody, full of blame,  
Savage, extreme, rude, cruel, not to trust;  
Enjoyed no sooner but despised straight;  
Past reason hunted; and no sooner had,  
Past reason hated, as a swallowed bait  
On purpose laid to make the taker mad:  
Mad in pursuit and possession so;  
Had, having, and in quest to have, extreme;  
A bliss in proof—and proved, a very woe;  
Before, a joy proposed; behind, a dream.  
All this the world knows well; yet none knows it well.  
To shun the heaven that leads men to this hell.*

**Conceptual Meaning:** This sonnet's conceptual meaning revolves around the concept of animalism and its reaction. According to the speaker's point of view, lust is a destructive and all-consuming force that leads individuals to engage in bad & harmful behaviors.

**Connotative Meaning:** this sonnet's connotative meaning is filled with negative connotations, arising feelings of dislike, regret & shame. Words like "cruel," perjured, murderous & shame" create a sense of moral outrage and condemnation.

**Affective Meaning:** As far as the affective meaning of this sonnet is concerned, it displays the speaker's emotional state. The speaker is suppressed by lust and its consequences, which suggests a deeper sense of moral conviction.

**Stylistic Meaning:** The sonnet 129 carries complex features of "metaphors, rhyme scheme, (e.g. lust in action)", & personification (e.g. lust in perjury. Stylistic meaning of this sonnet is characterized by Shakespeare's masterful use of language and poetic devices, which creates a sense of urgency and intimacy.

**Reflective Meaning:** The reflective meaning of this sonnet sparks the speaker's thoughts and feelings about morality and human desire. The speaker's state is critical of how animalism can lead individuals to engage in destructive behavior, suggesting a deep concern for moral values.

**Collocative Meaning:** for the creation of a sense of moral outrage and condemnation, Shakespeare uses words and phrases. The use of words like “hell, lust, and shame” reveals a sense of cohesion and relationship between the speaker's animalism and moral values.

**Thematic Meaning:** This sonnet explores the themes of morality, desire, and the human condition. The sonnet describes the complexities of human desire and how it can guide individuals to engage in destructive behavior. Morality is the main theme of this sonnet, showing the speaker's concern for lust and moral values.

## *Analysis 4: Sonnet 130*

*My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;  
Coral is far redder than her lips.  
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;  
If hairs were wires, black wires grow on her head.  
I have seen roses damasked, red and white,  
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;  
And in some perfumes, is there more delight  
Then in the breath that from my mistress reeks.  
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know  
That music has a far more pleasing sound;  
I grant I never saw a goddess go;  
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground.  
And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare  
As she believed in false comparison.*

**Conceptual Meaning:** Shakespeare uses direct and plain language. “My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun” means that her lenses/eyes don't shine or glow like the sun. “If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head” means her hair is dark & stuff, not soft and golden. These lines consistently turn down the idealized metaphors typically used in presenting a grounded, Petrarchan sonnet's literal clarification of the mistress.

**Connotative Meaning:** The line “coral is for more red than her lips red”, coral discovers discomfort that challenges traditional romantic idealism. The use of negative descriptions is a clever way to display their true and sincere feelings, rather than creating over-the-top flattery. This approach highlights the speaker's authenticity and honesty. The use of sonnet form and iambic pentameter, a formal poetic procedure, is linked with high art and love poetry. The unflattering diction (“black wires, reeks”) contrasts with the formal structure, creating a type of tension between the form and content. It highlights a satirical tone toward conventional poetic norms of the Elizabethan era.

**Affective Meaning:** Even discomfort due to its harsh comparisons, at the start, the poem may provoke surprise. In addition, the concluding couplet, “And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare as any she belied with false compare”, conveys an emotional turn the speaker sincerely values his mistress, despite not idealizing her. This shift evokes love for her, his genuine & appreciation for realistic administration.

**Social/stylistic Meaning:** As for the social/stylistic meaning of this sonnet is concerned, it doesn't accept the unrealistic elegance standards, favouring a genuine portrayal of his mistress. Through satire and irony, he mocks poetic cliches, showing sincere love over idealized illusions. Despite her ordinary traits, his affection stays rare and deeper. This sonnet values authenticity, indicating true love remains not in perfection, but in honesty, a grounded link.

**Reflective Meaning:** The word “reeks” may reflect both a metaphor for incompleteness and smell, raising the idea that love does not require perfection. “False compare” reflects both the

poetic tradition of exaggeration & false comparisons made by others, highlighting a critique of poetic dishonesty.

**Collocative Meaning:** “Roses” are typically linked with romance and beauty, yet the speaker denies that his mistress' cheeks resemble them. “Goddess” usually collocates with ideal divine grace and elegance, but the speaker prohibits this relation to affirm his mistress's humanity. The poem highlights clichés and emphasizes true love by taking sides from typical romantic clichés.

**Thematic Meaning:** As for the thematic meaning of this sonnet is concerned, it deals with love and beauty, by stating that authentic love does not rely on idealized elegance. Shakespeare's comparison emphasizes that love should be based on truth, not illusion. His final couplet affirms that his mistress is “rare” and deeply loved, instead of or because of her human flaws.

## *Analysis 5: Sonnet 131*

*Thou art as tyrannous, so as thou art,  
As those whose beauties proudly make them cruel;  
For well thou know'st to my dear dotting heart  
Thou art the fairest and most precious jewel.  
Yet, in good faith, some say that thee behold,  
Thy face hath not the power to make love groan;  
To say they err, I dare not be so bold,  
Although I swear it to myself alone.  
And to be sure that is not false, I swear,  
A thousand groans, but thinking on thy face,  
One on another's neck, do witness bear  
Thy black is fairest in my judgment's place.  
In nothing art thou black save in thy deeds,  
And thence this slander, as I think, proceeds.*

**Conceptual Meaning:** the meaning of these two lines “thou art as tyrannosaurus ...as those whose beauties probably make them cruel” literally makes a comparison between the beloved to the cruel tyrant, whose elegance provides her power over others. “The black as fairest in my judgement's place” \_ here he claims that her black features are, to him, the most elegant. The poem exposes the struggle between the speaker's personal desire and public thought, which looks at her less favorably.

**Connotative Meaning:** “Tyrannous” refers to/connotes emotional domination, expressing that the beloved has power over the speaker, probably teasing or manipulating him with her in difference.” Black” (in the period of Elizabethan) often denoted moral corruption or lack of beauty. However, the speaker reclaims this word, insisting her black is adorable. Thus, the poem attracts the tension/worries between personal desire and societal elegance, challenging colourist lenses of attractiveness.

**Affective Meaning:** the poem produces the speaker's sympathy, who focuses on the changes of doubt and emotions of love. The speaker's sincerity in telling both insecurity and devotion is admirable. The final lines of the poem evoke tension in complexity—“in nothing art thou black save in thy deeds”\_ showing both mild accusation & defense. This complexity of emotions is usually for the dark lady sonnets, where the love is painful and intense.

**Social/Stylistic Meaning:** Shakespeare challenges the social thoughts and social ideals of beauty, highlighting shifts from inner value to idealize outside beauty. The Sonnet tracks formal poetic diction and the sonnet structure, highlighting the respect/regard for the literary norms of Shakespeare's time. The speaker shows his humbleness and conflict, displaying a vulnerable emotional tone —“ I dare not be bold”. Suggests a lack of power dynamic between the beloved and him.

**Reflective Meaning:** The word Black has two meanings, moral and physical, her actions vs her appearance. The speaker describes that she is only black in her behaviour, not in elegance.



“Tyrannous” might depict both possibly erotic power and romantic domination, implying concession and struggle in love. These romantic reflections form moral ambiguity, highlighting that love is not always ideal or virtuous.

**Collocative Meaning:** “love” & Groans” suggest bearing in passion, often associated with unrequited or painful love. “Fairest & black” are typically oppositional in Elizabethan poetry. Here, the speaker constantly collapses the binary, stating that “black is fairest”. This strange pairing again describes beauty, holding subjective love above societal norms.

**Thematic Meaning:** This sonnet explores the conflict between private judgment and public opinion. The speaker secures his beloved against affirming or societal standards that elegance is personal, subjective, and beyond traditional ideals. Even if others claim she's not elegant, his love provides her worth and grace in his eyes.

## *Analysis 132: Sonnet 132*

*Thine eyes I love, and they, as pitying me,  
Knowing thy heart torments me with disdain,  
Have put on black, and loving mourners be,  
Looking with pretty ruth upon my pain.  
And truly not the morning sun of heaven  
Better becomes the gray cheeks of the east,  
Nor that full star that ushers in the evening  
Doth half that glory to the sober west  
As those two mourning eyes become thy face.  
O, let it then as well beseem thy heart  
To mourn for me, since mourning doth thee grace,  
And suit thy pity like in every part.  
Then will I swear beauty herself is black,  
And all they foul that thy complexion lacks.*

**Conceptual Meaning:** the subject's lenses show the speaker's love; those who look to be in grief, perhaps due to the speaker's suffering. The speaker compares the elegance of morning sun to the subject's dark eyes and the evening star, stating that the grief fits the subject best. In the last couplet, the speaker states that if mourning suits those very well, then authentic elegance must be black, in contrast to traditional ideals of fairness.

**Connotative Meaning:** The word “Black” shows deepness of sorrow, mystery, and even beauty, contrasting with the common ideals of “fair” or light beauty. “Mourning” indicates grief, but in context, also elegance and emotional relationship. The speaker destroys the traditional connection between beauty and fairness by suggesting that elegance remains in darkness.

**Affective Meaning:** The tone that the speaker has adopted looks melancholic and tender, along with admiration. The speaker is hurt (“thy heart torment me with disdain”) but also has deep appreciation, probably even awe.

**Social/Stylistic Meaning:** The speaker pursued a respectful, almost reverential tone, highlighting a romantic tradition of courtly love. The use of “thine, thy, and poetic devices” argues a formal, literary register from the period of the Renaissance, along with the speaker's social milieu. It indicates gendered norms of the time: male speakers appreciating or admiring a female beloved, probably with racial subtext (if “black” is racialized).

**Reflective Meaning:** The Word “Black” shows both literal insight of colours and moral–emotional state (grief, and possibly race). “Mourning” describes both the aesthetic and the act of grieving or emotional resonance, imagines it conveys. Grace may depict both divine favor and aesthetic elegance.

**Collocative Meaning:**” mourning” collocates with Dark, grace, and pain, suggesting sorrowful elegance. Black and beauty are juxtaposed unexpectedly, making contrast and emphasizing the poet's subversive claim.

**Thematic Meaning:** The Sonnet redefines the elegance standards and questions. It enhances the emotional depth and grief (mourning) elegantly. It challenges elegance with the equation of fairness, making a bold statement: if mourning (blackness) suits you, the black is elegant itself.

## DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

After a careful study of William Shakespeare's selected poems/sonnets from 127 to 132, it was revealed that his poetry is sound with universality. The text is not tiresome and boring, but rather interesting and full of meaningful concepts. The words on which emphasis is placed attract readers' and listeners' attention. Through impressive poetic language, William Shakespeare shows us "how black beauty has changed the trend of choice, or how human behavior or actions can be darker, and how black beauty can suit a person, having great character. All research questions given in the section of literature review section have been logically addressed. Moreover, it was also acquired that his poetry also includes many pastoral elements.

## CONCLUSION

The research article concludes the seven layers of meaning highlighted in William Shakespeare's 6 selected sonnets, about the Dark Lady. The researchers disclosed the layers of meanings by using Leech's model of Semantics (1981). This model not only helps to analyze the seven layers of meaning but also reveals the complex structure and psychological turmoil in Shakespeare's poetic language and expression. Shakespeare's examination of beauty is skillfully experienced with themes of beauty, darkness, sorrow, and famine identity. Finally, the study addresses William Shakespeare's skill at utilizing emotions in poetic expression, expressing the beauty, discovering how his poetry displays at different levels, and provides readers with a new perspective on Beauty, darkness, morality, and suffering. Shakespeare has applied symbolism, imagery, and paradoxical language to show the actual essence of meaning, such as denotative, connotative, collocative, affective, social, reflected, and thematic. Shakespeare has used many symbols in his 154 sonnets, likewise flowers and trees, light & darkness, Stars, and weather & seasons. Particularly in the character of Dark Lady, he uses the symbol of Rose, which is a powerful symbol of love & beauty. It is used to contrast with the Dark Lady. The word rose is used in contrast to "dark lady," who is shown with black features and a more unconventional beauty. While it is frequently used to represent the physical and inner beauty of "fair Youth.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

This research article further suggests to the feature researchers that they can expand on this study by examining/ analyzing more of Shakespeare's sonnets with the help of Leech's semantic model of seven layers of meaning. Investigating the meaning of different sonnets can build a type of ease for the readers to understand them in a better way.

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