

Conversions and Diversions in the Poetry of Robert Frost

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This paper will address conversions and diversions in the poetry of Robert Frost. These are part of Frost's poetic tactics which can be described as manipulative and illusive. Frost, through his poetry, shows a skillful use of integrating metaphor and irony. This strategy takes place every time the situation presented becomes illogical or difficult. The reader comes in as a mediator in order to reconstruct the hypothetical situation and fill in the gaps to make sense of the presentation. By forcing the reader to get involved, diversions, at the end, convert to some understanding that are, nevertheless, remain open for further readings. In "Home Burial," for example, it is illogical to imagine that a marriage is collapsing because of the death of a child. However, it is only through metaphor that the situation presented in the poem diverts into another level of understanding that makes sense and allows for multiple other possibilities. This strategy is repeated through many of Frost poems such as "Death of the Hired Man," "After apple Picking," "Mending Wall," and many more.

Frost's views on metaphor preceded most recent works on metaphor such as Lackoff and Johnson's "Metaphors We Live By,"(1980), Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner "The Way We Think," (2002), and Fauconnier's "mental spaces,"(1985, 1997), and many more. During his lifetime, As much as he saw nature and cherished it, he realized that it is unpredictable. This unpredictability transpired to his poems and his views on metaphors. Early on Frost realized that metaphor is dominant of human thinking. In his poetry he showed in many ways how metaphors in poetry, are similar to nature, generating ambiguity and opening spaces. His views on nature become more complex that the illusive simplicity known to his poetry. This realization formulated Frost's poetic production.

This paper will examine Frost's metaphors and ironical uses of it that are an integral part of his tactics in creating diversions and conversions in order to show that human cognition and the felicity condition in language and communication would be impossible without a full understanding and more investigations of figurative language and its complexities.