Repetition in Children Stories: A Dynamic Aspect of a Persuasive Strategy

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Abstract

The patterning of repetitions, such a persuasive strategy, proposes the involvement of author's emotion. *Therefore*, it potentially stimulates children's emotion and imagination to explore their own thoughts and to learn to understand their world while reading. By investigating interpersonal relation involved, repetitions show participants' attitudes. Thus, this study concentrates on how they work on children's emotion and imagination, using pragma-stylistic approach. The focus itself is managed to answer the creation of meaning. In order to challenge the objective, this study was applied analytic descriptive qualitative method to 36 data of repetitions. By reviewing empirical indications, this study claims that repetitions reach emphatic prominence involving logical emphasis and emotional state. Both of them invest accumulation of ideas to promote emotion and expectation; leading to imagination in evaluating appropriateness to behave in the society. Consequently, repetitions are debatable as a rhetorical device to persuade children to adapt social values.

Keywords: Persuasive strategy, Repetition

1. Introduction

Although technology has served innovative ways to teach children in perceiving the world, children's stories engage unchangeable method to explore children's thoughts and imagination. Stories provide children with experiences to evaluate certain events critically and to imagine the world in the level of their moral reasoning (Hissan, 2012: 85). In accumulating all information required for their mature development, the children often perform a specific grammar of a language, that is, repetition.

The repetition remarks a relationship. Tannen (2007: 47) has debated that it underlies the coherence of a participant's move to a preceding information in communication situation. In other words, it creates a discourse with a relationship and a world. Furthermore, in the creation, it conveys logical and reasonable motives of individual's experiences. At some point, it involves individual's attitudes. Kemertelidze and Manjavidze (2013) observe that, since repetition indicates individual's attitude, it brings emotional state to the highest tension.

Initially, this study claims that repetition enhances coherence and interpersonal involvement. It challenges the way in which repetition plays as a persuasive strategy to awaken children's emotion and imagination while reading. Exploring the evidences, it considers a range of ways where repetition may contribute to stylistic analysis; making imagery on children's mind which leads to their mature attitudes. Thus, the aim of this study is to describe repetition as an aspect of a strategy persuasive which stimulates a feeling of involvement; applying pragma-stylistics approach. Furthermore, the study describes structural stylistic of repetition and its functions in children's stories. How repetition stirs emotion and imagination may become a focus.

2. Framework of Theories

2.1 Repetition and Pragma-stylistics

As treated as syntactic stylistic device, repetition offers a range of various possible linguistic structures. It imparts certain expressive, evaluative and emotional to meaning. In this case, the patterning of repetition shows individual's choice of language considering his attitudes toward a certain situation. It concerns with how language in use in a situation given, and the meaning results in interpretation of individuals.

This aspect of language-use, Hickey (1993) proposes under pragma-stylistics as a scientific approach. According to his point of view, pragma-stylistics covers all language aspects allowing producing a text capable of causing specific internal changes in the individual's state of mind or knowledge (1993: 578). Adding to Hickey's concept of pragma-stylistics, Clark (2009:8) suggests that pragma-stylistics considers meaning as a result in interpretation of linguistic and non-linguistic features.

Considered in this light, this study applies pragma-stylistics to describe repetition argued to be a cause of changing individual's attitude. Repetition is seen as a stylistic structure having its origin in the emotive language, as stated by Kemertelidze and Manjavidze (2013).

2.2 Repetition and Its Functions in Children's Stories as a Discourse

A number of researchers note repetition is the nature of language with a certain degree of freely "generated" and "repeated". Freiderich in Tannen (2007: 46) remarks on the "intensely poetic" nature of the child's learning experience. Children use repetition to learn to understand their world.

In the account of language in use, repetition conveys specific functions. Tannen (2007) categories repetition into production, comprehension, connection and interaction as its functions. In production category, it links new information to the preceding one. Tannen (2007: 48) has illustrated through this example, "*And he knows Spanish, and he know French, and he knows English, and he knows German, and HE is a GENtleman.* Here repetition carries information with relatively less effort just as verbalizing before continuing to the next. Adding to production, repetition introduces new information in light dense. Consequently, it may help comprehension process. Next, in the level of connection, Halliday and Hasan (1976) note repetition serves referential and tying function. It is explained that repetition shows how new information are linked to earlier. However, in certain extent, repetition indicates writer's attitude. As Labov in Tannen (2007:50) point out, repetition serves evaluative, that is, to contribute to the point. In the previous example, Tannen has explained that "*and HE*" is tied to the first four, indicating the same person referred. "*and HE knows*" indicates the same person knows all languages mentioned. Beyond to the tying function, Tannen describes that the repetition gives an impression that languages which this person knows involves a long list, even longer. More crucially, Tannen remarks that evaluative effect of the list is to show writer's impressive attitude – and it is suggested to the readers. Moreover, the impact of the last clause, "*and HE is a GENtleman*" shows the admiration. Finally, notifying the last repetition category of Tannen, repetition achieves communicative interaction goal. Persuasion, as one of the goal, serves presentation as proof (Koch, 1983; Tannen, 2007). Beyond its tying function, repetition makes participants be involved in the discourse, linking to the relationship and the world (Tannen, 2007: 52). As summary of Tannen's proposal, repetition facilitates a creation of meaning and interpersonal involvement.

Speaking about how interpersonal involvement is reached, Tannen (2007: 52) illustrates repetition as ensemble rhythmic pattern. Its meaning represents enlargement, juxtaposition and expansion. Adapting Jefferson's concept, once again, Tannen (2007: 53) claims that repeating same item, individuals re-interpret its meaning.

In summary, then, repetition is treated as structural stylistic devices with persuasive goal. That is accomplished through coherence and interpersonal involvement. While interaction function covers interpersonal involvement, production, comprehension and connection relate to the creation of meaning. The meaning itself considered to be a result in children interpretation invests their emotion and imagination. Consequently, repetition touches not only logical emphasis but also emotion state.

3. Methodology

This study applies an analytic descriptive to data analysis in the scope of qualitative method. As an object of analysis, the structural stylistic of repetition is analyzed based on 36 data taken from children's stories: Rey and Rey's Curious George and Dahl's Mathilda.

Along with various structures identified, a prior step of research is conducted through data collecting. The data are collected by conducting a library research: reading, analyzing and classifying. The classification itself is performed based on the forms of repetition. As a result, there are two major classes that are below the clause and above the clause. Furthermore, each class generates other sub-class. The statistics of data may be illustrated: (1) 27 data of below clauses with 22 data of repetition of verbal groups and 5 data of repetition of nominal groups; and (2) 9 data of above clauses with 5 data of anaphora, 1 data of epiphora, 2 data of anaphora-epiphora combination, and 1 data of chain repetition.

4. Result and Discussion

In analyzing repetition as a syntactic stylistic device in persuasive strategy, the first focus is the forms of repetition as a range of choices, defined as linguistic styles by Hickey. The analysis itself is begun with below the clauses and continued to above the clauses.

4.1 Repetition in Below the Clause

The first data illustrates repetition with verbal groups as a syntactic stylistic device. In narrating the story, repetition of ideas in verbal group of two is chosen to intensify individual's feeling for showing a particular attitude of individuals involved.

(1) *Up, up* he sailed, *higher* and *higher* (Curious George: 1 p. 47)

In production, the repetition links old information of *he* [George] to new information about the action of him doing, *sailed*. The direction of *sailed* is treated as repetition of *up, up* then followed by *higher and higher*. Repetition introduces new information slowly therefore the information load is slight. Implied readers, children as expected, learn the experience by exploring their thoughts and learn to understand the world. They may imagine that the action of *sailed* gradually increases in distance and space – *up, up, higher and higher*. In this level, emotional emphasis is constructed through participants' evaluation, both writer and implied readers, at a certain point. The writer performs his attitude toward the repetition to give a greater impressive that he wants the implied readers feel the same; the action *sailed* slowly goes up to the higher point in the sky. Here the implied readers are persuaded to adventure along with the character *George*. They can be acquainted with George's feeling while sailing up higher to the sky. They themselves imagine that they can fly to reach the sky closer and closer, and far away from the ground. In this case, the persuasive strategy of repetition is selected to create interpersonal involvement. The writer persuades implied readers through repetition of crucial ideas in a verbal group of two. By repetition, the implied readers interpret the meaning based on their exploration of thought and their experience in their world. Thus, repetition comes to logical emphasis and emotional state. The adventure offers them the development of their self-esteem. They may be confident to face the world because of being knowledgeable.

Although the second data remain verbal groups of two, the repetition takes a synonym to represent degree of intensifier.

(2) Once more the glass wobbled. She pushed harder still, willing her eyes to shoot out more power. And then, *very very slowly, so slowly she could hardly see it happening.* (Mathilda: 14 p. 166)

Linking to old information, verbal modifiers, *very very slowly, so slowly,* presents synonym indicating degree *so* for degree *very very,* that are repetition themselves. Semantically, repetition allows information being introduced slowly to gain slight information load. Implied readers have opportunity to swallow information slowly to feel the rate of information and to understand the words. As intensifying degree of manner *slowly*, the writer's attitude is represented; giving impression that the manner constitutes the greater tension of degree. By adding synonym *so* for *very very*, he finds the greater degree is expanded to a certain level, causing the speed more slowly that it can be imagined. At this rate, the writer persuades implied readers to feel the greater tension of degree in which they can imagine how slowly the following new information takes place. The emotion of character can be acknowledged by the implied readers. Thus, the interpersonal involvement is created through this repetition. The persuasive strategy with presentation as proof is also confirmed in data (2).

Adding to the previous data, data (3) presents repetition of ideas in nominal group of four.

(3)

From the kitchen shelf he got a big box of soap powder and poured all the powder over the ink. Then he pulled the garden hose through the window, opened the tap and sprayed water on the powder. Bubbles began to form, and then *some lather, and more lather and more lather AND MORE LATHER*. (Curious George: 4 p. 162-163)

In spite of efficient production and slight information load, the repetition of the last nominal group, *AND MORE LATHER*, shows that the form referred to is the same throughout. Furthermore the rhythm serves impression that the form that bubbles has shaped increases in number, greater and greater in amount. Speaking about evaluative effect of the greater amount, the writer thinks that the amount is impressive, and expects the implied readers think the same. The implied readers themselves, with a relatively dead space caused by repetition, are encouraged to explore their thoughts and learn the world to the experience. The adventure of George can be felt as their own adventure. The last repetition with its emphasis, *AND MORE LATHER*, is framed to reinforce the sense of admiration. This intensification creates interpersonal involvement. Imagination and emotion are created through this involvement.

4.2 Repetition in Above the Clause

Different from the previous three, the following data present repetition in complex clauses. Data (4) perform anaphoric repetition.

(4) Then George looked up.

Where was the bunny?
He could not see it.
Where was it?

Where had it gone?
George looked for it here, and he looked for it there.
He could not find it. (Curious George: 5 p. 220)

Of these seven lines, three are repetition and variations established by a combination of implied writer's question in line 2 with the verb *looked* in line 1. The selected crucial word as a key word, *looked* that is repeated by *where* and then framed by the last two lines *looked*, provides with presentation as a proof of persuasion. In the function of interaction, the implied writer challenges the implied readers, together, to find the bunny referred to. In other words, the implied readers emotionally involve in the activity of looking for the bunny. Accompanying the implied writer's attitude manifested through interrogative pronouns *where*, the implied readers manage themselves to find the bunny in the picture as extra-linguistic along with linguistic features. The experience of looking for the bunny is learned from the repetition. At some point, here the implied readers explore their emotion and imagination facilitated by logical emphasis and emotional state created by repetition. The interpretation of meaning from coherence as interpersonal involvement is accomplished by reinterpreting the meaning of words in light of juxtaposition. The dead space itself serves both participants, the implied writer and the implied readers, a time for doing what the crucial word says, *find* [the bunny]. The information introduces in the stories with a slight information load. The emotional emphasis of repetition achieves communication goal, persuasion.

Presenting different syntactic stylistic of repetition from data (4), here is a combination of epiphoric and anaphoric repetition.

> (5) "Read Nicholas Nickleby," Miss Honey, by Mr. Dickens. Read about Mr. Wackford Squeers, the admirable headmaster of Dotheboys Hall. *He knew how to* handle the little brutes, *didn't he*! *He knew how to* use the birch, *didn't he*! He kept their backsides so warm you could have fried eggs and bacon on them! A fine book, that."(Mathilda: 134 p. 156)

As seen in data (5), repetition comes at the beginning and at the end of consecutive sentences; *he knew how to* and *didn't he*. In creation of meaning, those repetitions bring a relationship and a certain world to Mathilda's story. Discussing communication goal in interaction function, persuasion is created through convincing with logical emphasis; the fact that he [Mr. Dickens] knew how to, is well-known. Question tag, *didn't he*, is chosen to give a rhetorical effect. The addresser, Miss Honey, is challenged to respond to show her attitude. In other words, she is persuaded to agree with what Mathilda has said about Mr. Dickens. Although data (5) presents logical emphasis, it also conveys emotional state in a certain level. The study argues, as a decision maker to her own attitude, Miss Honey is provoked by Mathilda's argumentation. Emotionally, Miss Honey is persuaded to agree if she wants to be considered as an intellectual educated person.

Relating to data (5), data (6) also performs strong logical emphasis with emotional state inert.

(6) ""You don't tear a book apart to find out what's in it," he said. "You READ it, George. Books are full of *stories*. *Stories* are made of *words*, and *words* are made of *letters*. If you want to read a story you first have to know the *letters* of the alphabet. Let me show you."
(Curious George: 6 p. 284)

Syntactically, repetition data (6) is constructed as a chain repetition. As Kemertelidze and Manjavidze (2013), this type of repetition smoothly develops logical reasoning through a sequence of anadiplosis, the repetition of the same word at the end of one and at the beginning of the following clauses. In interaction function, the repetition achieves persuasion through logical argumentation to touch a logical mind. Here addresser, George, is convinced by related meaning of stories, words and letters. The words semantically create George's world and allow him to have his own imagination of stories, words and letters. The sequence of arguments stir George's feeling to believe the argumentation. In other words, this repetition performs emotional state in a certain level. It provides with excitement, evaluation and emotion all together.

5. Conclusion

This study claims repetition, as a persuasive device, emphasizes linguistic features being repeated. It intensifies the individual's attitudes to show feeling, emotion and thoughts. Consequently, it initiates interpersonal involvement covering individual's emotion and imagination. Although performing more logical emphasis once, repetition, in a certain level, indicates the emotional state involves. Accomplishing individual's expectation, repetition may promote emotional and logical at the same time. Furthermore, related to communication function, repetition persuades individual to evaluate appropriate society values by exploring the thoughts and by learning to understand the world.

Acknowledgements

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