

A LITERARY STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE STYLE. IN THE SHORT STORY “THE LITTLE MATCH GIRL” BY HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

Muhammad Faheem*

Lecturer, NUML Peshawar
m.faheem@numl.edu.pk

Tariq Mahmood

Assistant Professor, NUML Peshawar
tqmahmood@numl.edu.pk

Syed Sajjad Ali

Lecturer, NUML Peshawar
ssali@numl.edu.pk

ABSTRACT

*This research paper aims at analyzing the short story *The Little Match Girl* by Hans Christian Andersen from a literary stylistic perspective. The nature of this very research is descriptive qualitative. The researcher uses observation and documentation to gather the data, researching the chosen text in-depth before categorizing it according to Laurence Perrine's theory of figurative language. Perrine classifies figures of speech into three categories: figures of speech by comparison, contrast and association on the basis of their functions. The results show that among the four selected figures of speech, as compared to other figures of speech, the simile is utilized more frequently in the text.*

Key Words: Literary stylistics, Figurative language, Perrine's classification of figures of speech

INTRODUCTION/ BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In our everyday life, we use a variety of language. Literature has its own distinct language. Language in literature is the product of the author's processing and expression. A short story is one type of literature. It is the author who overloads his works with figures of speech by utilizing the figurative language style. Figurative language is used for conveying thoughts, sentiments and perceptions which could not be properly expressed in literal language. Literal language could be translated word for word whereas figures of speech fail to do so. It is, indeed, figurative language of the writer which bamboozle the readers for the writers use the words in a non-literal sense and readers comprehend them in a literal sense which creates a dilemma for the readers in understanding the intended meaning of the authors.

As figurative language has a different meaning and aims to create imaginative effects for the readers, the analysis of figurative language is appertained to the stylistic study. The application of figurative language can be found in different forms of writings such as poetry, drama and prose. One form of prose is a short story which is sometimes overloaded with figurative language that is a deliberate departure from the conventional meaning, order or formation of words.

This is the first saddest short story written by Hans Christian about the fate of a very young girl who sells matches at cold nights. It is dense with figurative language, which is used to convey her sentiments, and thoughts that cannot be portrayed in literal language. Andersen uses figurative language to make the substance and story more fascinating to readers who want to learn more about the author's meaning. She tends to use language that deviates from the daily language used to communicate.

According to Perrine (1969), figurative language is the unusual way in expressing something, which can be referred to another meaning rather than the literal meaning. In other words, figurative language concern with the uniqueness of words or expressions used in communication to convey the planned meaning. By using figurative language, the meaning of an expression is usually different from the literal interpretation.

* Corresponding Author

This study uses Laurence Perrine theory (1977) of figurative language. Perrine classifies figures of speech into three categories: 'figures of speech by comparison, contrast and association' on the basis of their functions which are four: "to give imaginative pleasure, to bring additional intensity, to add emotional intensity and to create meaning in a brief compass". As an illustration, each category has four figures of speech: by association; 'metonymy, synecdoche, symbols, allegory'; by comparison, 'metaphor, simile, personification, apostrophe'; by contrast, 'paradox, irony, hyperbole, litotes'.

Problem Statement

Figurative language in the short story offers multifarious semantic issues which hinder the intended interpretation of the author. Linguistic complications in diction of the short story invites the researcher's intention to explore how the author has deviated linguistic chunks to communicate her stream of thoughts in creating the short story plot.

Research Objectives

1. To identify figures of speech employed in *The Little Match Girl* by Christian Andersen
2. To find out the intended meaning of phrases and sentences having figures of speech in the selected text

Research Questions

1. What kind of figurative language is employed in *The Little Match Girl* by Christian Andersen?
2. Which figures of speech are dominantly used in the selected text as compared to other figures of speech?

Significance of the Study

Since stylistics is a bridge between literature and linguistics, this research could be found useful by pupils of both literature and linguistics for it provides academic contribution and enrich knowledge regarding the study of stylistics. The main goal of this very research study is to explore research figurative use of language through language choice in order to comprehend its impact on readers. In addition, it also broadens the concept of learners towards figures of speech as writers of literature heavily put heed on the figures of speech to bring life into their texts, especially in literary texts.

Focus of the study

The focus of this very research is on the figurative language utilized by the author. For instance, figurative language is often taken in literal sense which is non-literal indeed. Hence, it emphasizes on the figures of speech by association, contrast and comparison as classified by Perrine.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In order to ensure credibility, the researcher examined past research findings that had a comparable relationship to the topic under discussion. Sarah (2004) conducted a similar analysis in form of figurative language in *Romeo and Juliet* by Shakespeare. She used figurative language to explain linguistic style in her studies. In her thesis, she explained language style using figurative language. Her main goal was to explore meaning, types and the primary figurative language function in the cited work.

Puspita (2014) carried out his research on finding the figurative language style in *Les Miserable* movie. The researcher found out 11 out of 12 figures of speech used by the characters according to Perrine's theory. The findings state that two figures of speech were the dominant ones; personification and symbol. Personification was used to display if this world could execute anything and symbol was employed by the very author to display idea in the society. Researcher was successful in finding the figurative language and dominant ones using the aforementioned theory. Hence, the object of the study movie, a novel needs to be explored in order to understand the language of the characters in order to comprehend the intended meaning of the author.

The exact same version was utilised by Sihombing (2009) in her study on figurative language style found in the selected poems of Robert Frost. She identified various figures of speech that were described in Robert Frost's poem as well as the categories of figures of speech that predominated in it. According to his opinion, Robert Frost's poem uses metaphorical language for the stated purposes of beauty, power, and clarity.

Paul's (1998) carried out his research on figurative language in the context of conversational analysis. The researcher focuses on the denotative or connotative significance of figurative language of speech throughout the said discourse. The researcher's goal, meanwhile, clearly differs from Paul's study. He was found successful in utilizing the very theory; however, he carried out his research on

conversation but now a novel is needed to be explored in order to explicate meaning differs with figurative language in the text of novels from the common language.

However, the aim of this particular research is to focus on the types of figures of speech and the intended meaning that an author wishes to convey to the readers. As a result, the focus and purpose of this research paper is distinct from that of other researchers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is descriptive qualitative in nature. It is descriptive for it focuses on explaining figurative language style found in object of the study and interpreting intended meaning of the author which is normally taken in a literal sense whereas it should be taken as non-literal. Furthermore, the nature of this very research is qualitative. Through this very research study from a literary stylistics perspective, the researcher analyses the types of figurative language in object of the study, and classifies them into three different categories: 'figures of speech by comparison, association and contrast' as provided in theory of Perrine and then explains the non-literal meaning of the very sentences or phrases having figures of speech. The researcher further describes the types of figures of speech used in the very text, and follow certain steps to collect the data: reading the text, studying for deeper meaning, making data sheet, and categorizing the data.

Theoretical framework

Laurence Perrine's theory of figurative language is used as a framework for doing this research. Perrine divides the twelve types of figures of speech into three categories in his book *Sound and Sense: An Introduction to Poetry*, depending on their functions, i.e. 'figures of speech by comparison, association, and contrast', which are to give 'imaginative pleasure, additional information, emotional intensity, and concrete meaning in a condensed scope'. Perrine (1977:61-109) claims that there are over twelve types of figures of speech: "simile, metaphor, personification, apostrophe, synecdoche, metonymy, symbol, allegory, paradox, hyperbole, understatement, and irony" all of which can be found in the chosen text as well as the dominant figurative language types in the selected text.

DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

The Little Match Girl is a master piece overloaded with figurative language. The researcher highlights figures of speech, which are frequently used in this very object of the study. The figures of speech embedded in the text have been stylistically analyzed. The figures of speech used in *The Little Match Girl* are simile, apostrophe, personification and metaphor. One must carefully read the text, take note of the number of figures of speech, and determine how frequently each figure of speech appears in order to assess which one is used most frequently. Three groups may be made out of twelve types: comparison, association, and contrast figures of speech. The researcher only focuses on four figures of speech such as simile, apostrophe, personification and metaphor.

Simile

Perrine's model makes note of similes (1969). By contrast, it belongs to the category of speech figures. A simile is when two objects are compared, and the comparison is made using the conjunctions as, like, and than (Willis, 1969). A simile often compares two initially disparate items that are later demonstrated to be significantly similar or unlike in their sense. The definitions of a metaphor and a simile are really the same. Both of these compare two very unlike things. When two things are explicitly compared, it is called a simile and is denoted by a word or phrase such as like, as, than like (Perrine, 1969)

Examples

Following are the examples of simile from the text.

1. "It was a warm bright flame like a candle as she held her hands over it." (Fifth paragraph)
Simile is used in this statement. It was a warm, bright flame that resembled a candle in the phrase "it was a brilliant flame," which is another way of saying that it was a blaze of matches. It is a way to say that the matches are lighter.
2. "there the wall became transparent like a veil". (Sixth paragraph)
This statement is under the simile category. There, "the wall become translucent like a veil." Using the analogy of like, the veil is compared to the "wall became transparent."
3. "she saw them now as stars in heaven" (Seventh paragraph)

Simile is used in this statement. She described them like stars in paradise at this point. Using the relation as, the phrase "lights of the Christmas tree rose" is compared to "stars in heaven." It indicates how gorgeously lit Christmas trees are.

4. "The matches gave such a brilliant light that it was brighter than a noonday." (Eighth paragraph)

Simile is used in this statement. The conjunction than is used to compare "the matches provided such a beautiful light that it was brighter" with "a noonday". It denotes that the light was more intense than at noon.

5. "In a corner formed by two houses, of which one advanced more than the other" (Fourth paragraph)

It is a simile to use this phrase. The conjunction than is used to compare "In a corner created by two homes, of which one advanced more" to "the other." It implies that one house is more developed.

6. "You go away when the match burns out; you vanish like the warm stove, like the delicious roast goose, and like the magnificent Christmas tree!" (Sixth paragraph)

It is a simile to use this phrase. The connection like is used to compare "You go away when the match goes out; you vanish" to "the toasty fire," "the wonderful roast goose," and "the spectacular Christmas tree!"

7. "It was a wonderful light. It seemed really to the little maiden as though she were sitting before a large iron stove". (Sixth paragraph)

This statement is under the simile category. "It was a beautiful light," was the phrase used. The young lady thought it was really. Using the conjunction as, the "beautiful light" is contrasted with the "big iron stove."

Personification

Personification is another literary device used in The Little Match Girl. Giving abstract concepts, inanimate objects, and animals human characteristics is referred to as personification. Perrine (1969) defined personification as a figure of speech that relates human characteristics to those of an animal, plant, or object. Personification is metaphorical language that gives an animal, an object, or an idea human characteristics.

Example:

Following are the example of personification from the text.

1. "For above her she had only the roof through which the wind whistled". (Fourth paragraph)

This phrase made use of personification. By suggesting a person in the statement "through which the wind whistled," the wind a non-human object has been given the appearance of being alive.

2. "the roast goose hopped down from the dish, reeled about on the floor with knife and fork in its breast, till it came up to the poor little girl" (Sixth paragraph)

This is a personification like "the roast goose hopped down from the dish", the roast goose is interpreted as a human, jumped from the table to the ground on one leg. Although, roast goose is inanimate being and it makes the roast goose like alive by indicating a human.

3. "She crept along trembling with cold and hunger—a very picture of sorrow, the poor little thing!" (Second paragraph)

This sentence contains personification. The sentence "a very picture of sorrow", the "picture" is inanimate and is given human qualities.

Apostrophe

Apostrophes are employed to refer to inanimate objects or abstract concepts as though they were living things. Apostrophes are used to make direct addresses to people or things. A development of personification called an apostrophe makes the author address the thing or idea that needs to be personified. The apostrophe is the means through which the speaker gives the addressee speech, life, and human form. This makes the deceased, inanimate, or deceased entity addressed present and animate (Perrine, 1969).

Example:

Following are the examples of apostrophe from the text.

1. "From her father she would certainly get blows,"(Fourth paragraph)

This sentence belongs to apostrophe. The sentence implies that she is afraid of her father and his father is at home, mentioned here.

2. "Someone is just dead!" said the little girl; for her old grandmother"; (Seventh paragraph)

This sentence contains apostrophe. The sentence "someone is just dead!" means that her grandmother is dead, mentioned here.

3. ““Grandmother!” cried the little one. ‘Oh, take me with you!’” (Eighth paragraph)
This has apostrophe, for instance, ““Grandmother!” cried the little one” her grandmother had died, mentioned here.
4. ““She took the little maiden, on her arm, and both flew in brightness”. (Eighth paragraph)
This sentence contains apostrophe. The sentence “She took the little maiden, on her arm, and both flew in brightness,” here she refer to grandmother and she had died, mentioned here.
5. ““Which her mother had hitherto worn; so large were they”. (First paragraph)
This sentence belongs to apostrophe. Her mother has mentioned here, but she is not present.

Metaphor

A metaphor, is one of the kinds of figures of speech in which where a word, or phrase is utilized to represent an activity which differs from its literal semantics. It is also regarded as a type of abstract representation. Because a name is given to an entity that does not actually belong to it, metaphor deviates from literal use. A metaphor establishes a mental link between the two things and typically emphasizes some significant similarities between them. Similes with an inferred metaphor treat two objects as if they were one.

Examples

Following are the examples of metaphor from the text.

1. ““And what was still more capital to behold was, the goose hopped down from the dish, reeled about on the floor with knife and fork in its breast, till it came up to the poor little girl””. (Sixth paragraph).
This is a metaphor for the author compares serving food on the table like a Christmas meal.
2. ““The lights of the Christmas tree rose higher and higher”” (Seventh paragraph).
It is a metaphor because the phrase rose higher and higher means shined brighter and brighter.
3. ““She crept along trembling with cold and hunger—a very picture of sorrow, the poor little thing!”” (Second paragraph)

This sentence contains metaphor. The author metaphorically depicted the small girl as picture of sorrow. Furthermore, he describes the small girl like a poor little thing

4. ““From all the windows, the candles were gleaming, and it smelt so deliciously of roast goose, for you know it was New Year’s Eve; yes, of that, she thought””.(Third paragraph)
This sentence contains metaphor. The whole occasion is compared with New Year’s Eve.
5. ““On the table was spread a snow-white tablecloth””. (Sixth paragraph).
This sentence contains metaphor. The white tablecloth is described as the white snow.

DATA ANALYSIS

The Little Match Girl has been studied from a stylistic perspective. The figure of speech has been analyzed. The text carefully studied to find out figure of speech. These figures of speech are embedded in the text. The story have nine paragraphs. These figures of speech is point out and researcher has manually counted total numbers of figures speech in the short story. The total number of figures of speech are count per paragraph separately and in the end, figures of speech are list in the table.

Table No. 1The total number of figures of speech in *The Little Match Girl*

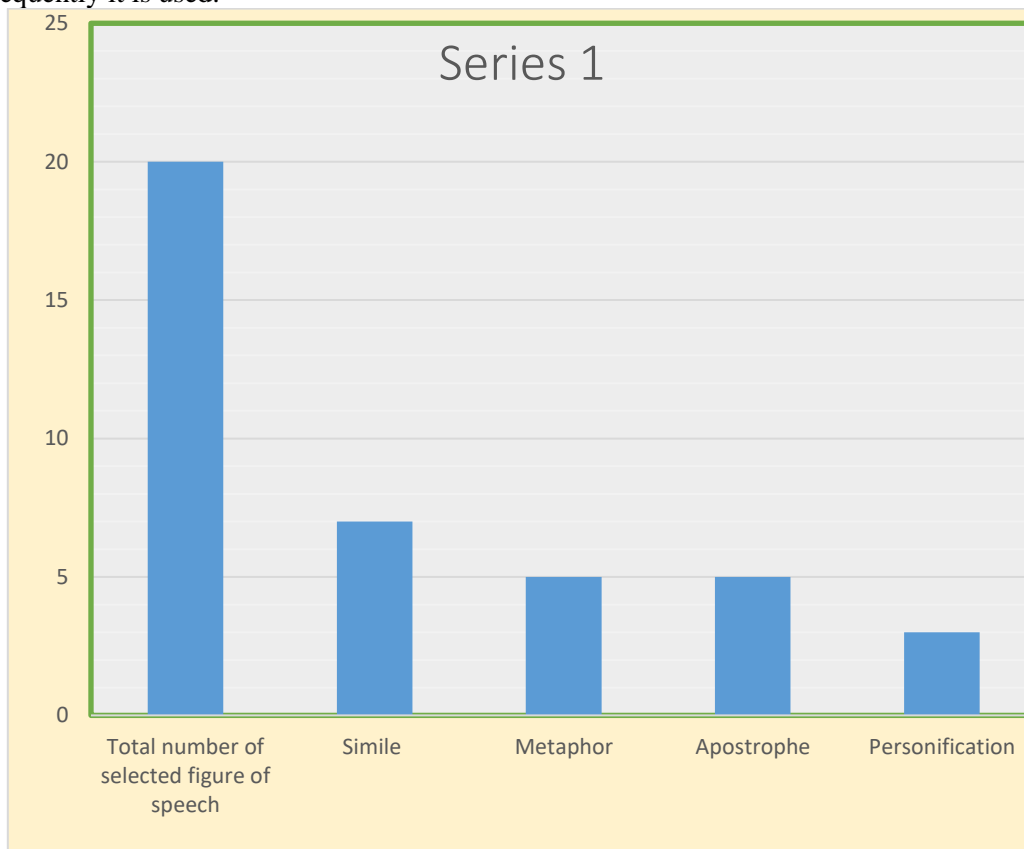
Paragrap h N0	Simile	Metaphor	Apostrophe	Personification	Total per paragraph
1	0	0	1	0	1
2	0	1	0	1	2
3	0	1	0	0	1
4	1	0	1	1	3
5	1	0	0	0	1

6	3	2	0	1	6
7	1	1	1	0	3
8	1	0	2	0	3
Total	7	5	5	3	20

The table 1 shows there are 20 figures of speech in *The Little Match Girl* in which seven are similes, five are Metaphors, five are apostrophes and three are personifications. Similes are the figures of speech that are used most frequently in the chosen group, according to a comparative examination of these figures of speech. The graph that follows serves as an illustration of this.

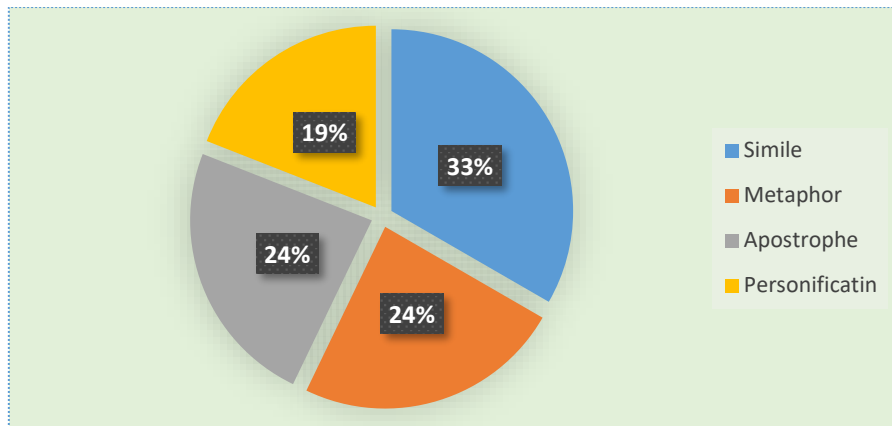
Chart 1

The vertical axis shows the specified figures of speech, while the horizontal axis shows the quantity of figures of speech. Comparing the simile to the other three figures of speech, this group demonstrates how frequently it is used.



The following pie chart displays the statistically determined proportion of figures of speech.

Chart (pie)



This pie shows that simile is used 33%, metaphor is used 24%, apostrophe is used 22%, and personification is used 19%. Simile is frequently used and appearing in paragraph 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8. The total number of similes employed in these paragraphs are displayed in the table 2.

Table 2

S.NO	Paragraph	Simile
1	4	1
2	5	1
3	6	3
4	7	1
5	8	1
	Total	7

CONCLUSION

There are different types of figures of speech employed in short story *The little match Girl* including metaphor, simile, apostrophe and personification. The short story has been studied on quantitative basis, which reveals some important information. The data Analysis section has been allocated for this information. The nine paragraphs give us statistical information about the selected figures of speech. The analysis shows that there are twenty selected figures of speech in the short story in which simile are used seven times, whereas there are five metaphor, five apostrophe, and three are personification. The simile covers 33% of total number of selected figure of speech. Whereas the metaphor is used 24%, apostrophe is used 24%; personification is used 19%. The result shows that the writer has focused more on simile, as compared to apostrophe, personification and metaphor.

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