



A Free Verbal Repetition in Bronte's Poetry

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Abstract

This paper attempts to analyze the use of free verbal repetition in Emily Bronte's poems by using Leech's classification. The aim of this linguistic analysis is to establish how different categories of verbal repetition contribute to the process of foregrounding of literary meanings and effects. To evaluate the functional value of these linguistic patterns, the approach of Fish (1980) and Toolan (1990) is also used. The study ends with the conclusion that the poet makes an extensive use of the device of free verbal repetition in two different kinds; both intermittent repetition and immediate repetition. The findings of this research reveal that Bronte uses more intermittent repetition than immediate ones. She uses these verbal repetitions to establish a threefold meaning, poetic, personal and symbolic of greater universal realities.

Keywords: Emily Bronte, Stylistics, Repetition, Epizeuxis, Polace, Lexical Level, Syntactical Level.

Introduction

Poetry is an artistic composition, propounds unique features which make it different from prose. The Victorian poetry also makes its distinctive place due to its adequate amount of linguistic and literary features. The poetry of Victorian poets like that of Tennyson, Bronte and Rossetti is thickly populated as far as the poetic features are concerned. Cronin states in the book *A Companion to Victorian Poetry* that the style of Victorian poets is florid and over decorated. It is dense and impenetrable (Cronin, 2002, p. 9). In this regard, 'Style' can be a verbal organization to form a poem either with deviant use of language at any level like phonological level, lexical level, syntactical level to create a distinctive style (Widdowson, 1975, Lodge, 1984, Carter, 1980, Nash, 1980, Freeman, 1996, Simpson, 2004, Leech & Short, 2007). Therefore, a style of a poet requires an in-depth study. The study of style imparts an understanding of the poems in terms of the figures of speech and in terms of its interpretation.

Emily Bronte is one of those famous poets of the Victorian era, who reflect their genius through poetry. The poetry of Bronte remained unappreciated during her life. She remained in the limelight because of her single novel *Wuthering Heights*. In the late twentieth century and at the beginning of the 21st century, the collection of her poetry gains impetus in the field of research. The research, previously conducted on her poems mainly focuses on the themes of nature, love, romance and childhood or on the devices like symbolism and imagery. Bronte's mystical influences from



Bataille has been discussed periodically. Some scattered discussion on gothic adventures are found but not in detail. In this regard, Gezari writes in her article *Last Things: Emily Bronte's Poems*: Her approaches are formalist, feminist, historical, cultural, thematic, biographical, and psychoanalytic; her sources range from the Stoics to Georges Bataille. No one else (and she cites her predecessors) has looked so closely at the craft of Brontë's poetry: the variety of her meters, the placement of the caesura, the deployment of masculine and feminine rhymes, and the fineness of her "musical ear", (Gezari, 2008, p. 548).

Therefore, the present research paper exclusively has been conducted on the style of Bronte in terms of free verbal repetition. Bronte makes the use of the device of repetition at different grammatical levels to underpin her yearnings for fixing and placing herself at conciliated cessation. Conciliated cessation is her idealized self in which she is unified in her thought and personality. It is a continuous, trouble free existence of her where she wants to stay forever without any change.

Stylistics

Stylistics provides the podium to the analyst for the investigation of devices used in any piece of work. It is a field in linguistics which gives platform to study, to analyze and to interpret any piece of writing (Leech & Short, 2007. p. 11). In this way, stylistics gives grounds to the readers to hunt the devices which a writer or a poet uses to foreground meanings and effects.

The concept of foregrounding is related to the deeper meanings and effects which are highlighted with the use of certain devices. Carter & Nash articulates in the book, *Seeing Through Language* that the idea of foregrounding lies in the fact that it makes the use of certain devices to appeal the reader in terms of meaning making and effects. It is an uncommon use of language which can be termed as deviant (Carter & Nash, 1990. p. 4).

The device of repetition provides a useful ground to see the structure in order to reach the underlined meaning. Okunowo states in the article, *Patterns Of Parallelism as Trope Of Meaning In Osundare's Poetry* that there is a relationship between the structure and the idea proposed in the form of repetition (Okunowo, 2012, p. 716). It is in this regard that the current study offers to study Brontë's poetry for the sake of understanding the connection between a structure and an idea.

Methodology

The present research focuses to analyze the style of Emily Bronte keeping in mind the notion of modern stylistics, which lies in the fact of foregrounding (Carter & Nash, 1990) in the light of the classification for the device of repetition as presented by Leech (1969). The analyst studies the model objectively in terms of the linguistic levels of phonology, lexis and syntax. In terms of the interpretation the researcher keeps the notion of Toolan (1990) and Fish (1980).

According to Fish, the reader is the central figure in context of deriving meaning from a text. The meanings and effects are created through the reader in response to the contact with the text. The



text analysis is the poems of Emily Bronte, *A Little while, A Little while*, and *Come Walk With Me* edited by Clement Shorter in 1908.

Objectives of the Study

1. To specify the style of Bronte's poems in terms of the device of repetition.
2. To interpret the device of repetition with respect to the functional value it holds in the selected poems.

Research Questions

1. What kinds of repetition, do operate in Bronte's poems?
2. What linguistic level, has the device of repetition been purposed?
3. What are the foregrounded effects of repetition?

Analysis

Free Repetition

Free Repetition is the reappearance of the words, structures or ideas. It is used for emphasis and special effects, according to the context of the poems. In rhetoric free repetition is further distinguished between immediate repetition or Epizeuxis and intermittent repetition or polace (Leech, 1969, p. 77).

Epizeuxis or Immediate Repetition

The term 'Epizeuxis', is originated from Greek 'epi' which stands for the meaning of 'upon' and the other joint of the term, 'zeugnunai' conveys the meaning of, 'to yoke'. In particular, Epizeuxis is the recurrence of the same word or structure without the intervention of any other word or structure. It has the possibility of occurrence at any linguistic level like at the level of phonology, at the level of lexis and at the level of syntax (Leech, 1969, p.78).

At the level of syntax

Immediate repetition or Epizeuxis at the level of syntax caters to the structure involved in the making of the poem as a whole. Emily Bronte implies this particular type of free repetition in the poem, *A Little while, A Little While*.

"A little while, a little while" (1) (Bronte, *A little while, a little while*, 1908, p. 51).

With the repetitive patterns, in the above mentioned structure, the poet determines the importance of the respite from the cumbersome burden of worldly commitments. The construction also gives another notion that 'a little 'pause causes an immense joy to the poet, but there lies a sad aspect along with the happy one. The poet wants that break to stay longer. In this way, the construction of free repetition highlights three aspects of the poet; that of sadness, happiness and desire to have a recess.

In the same stead, the kind of immediate repetitions used in the following example, which shows the poet taking rest in singing and in smiling. The immediacy of the structure also encompasses the immediacy of the desperate desire of having arrest in the delights of singing and smiling.



Likewise, the poet registers her ability repetitively by applying the auxiliary ‘can’, which again gives another meaning, that the poet has developed the quality of being patience with the circumstances. The use of ‘can’ also shows the hope of the poet. Here again the many folded desires of the poet are made to appear in the use of this specific construction, that of having positivity in life, the singularity of experience and continuous and never ending phenomenon of pleasures as the very conjunction ‘And’ gives an insight of that fact. The poet needs recess in progression.

“And I can sing and I can smile” (2)

(Bronte, *A little while, a little while*, 1908, p. 51).

Conversely, the use of the construction, like personal Pronoun+ verb (auxiliary) in the examples; ‘I can sing’(3), ‘I can smell’, (4) ‘I Have holidays’ (4), ‘I love them’ (20), ‘I mused’ (21), ‘I passed’ (24), ‘I knew’ (34), ‘I have Lingered’ (37), ‘I stood’, (41), tell the reader about her paradise regained. Therefore, here again threefold meanings are derived out of this construction, that of the poet’s faith in her, in action and the ability to take the challenges on her own.

Again in the poem, *Come Walk with Me*, there is an instance of immediate repetition in the following line; Come walk with me, come walk with me; (14) (Bronte, *Come walk with me*, 1908, p. 212).

The above given construction of immediate repetition exposes the desperate desire of the poet to culminate in the company of her companion. The construction of the line with the verbs ‘come’ and ‘walk’ also reveals the sizzling and scorching urge of fixing herself in some action. The immediacy of the repetitive structure shows how close, to her heart the desire of companionship is.

Polace or Intermittent Repetition

The polace is the type of repetition which exists in a poem sporadically and spasmodically. It is the irregular reiteration of lexis and syntax (Leech, 1969, p.77).

In the first stanza, the use of ‘while’ in line 4, is ‘intermittent; whereas in line 1, it is regular and immediate.

A little *while*, a little *while*,
The weary task is put away,
Alike, *while* I have holiday

\or alternatively ‘knew’ in the following stanza is yet another example of spasmodic repetition:
That was the scene, I *knew* it well;
I *knew* the turfy pathway's sweep



Similarly the use of ‘so’ in stanza 4, L 15 -16 is an example of immediate repetition whereas in the repetition of ‘so’ in L 29 becomes intermittent or polace. A fuller description of polace at the level of lexis and syntax is given below.

At the Level of Syntax

In the poem, *A Little while, a Little while*, the poet uses this type of repetition at the level of syntax, to express the idea of being impressed by the attraction of the things which pamper her senses of feel, sight, taste, hearing to the fullest, as seen in the following example;

‘So longed for’ (16)

‘so clear’ (29)

‘so calm’ (29)

‘so sweet’(30)

‘so soft’ (30)

‘so hushed’(30)

‘so deep’ (42)

(Bronte, *A little while, a little while*, 1908, p. 51).

Therefore the indulgence of her senses in the positivity which she undergoes satiates her soul in a great depth and in intermission as the use of ‘So’ with the intermittent repetition declares her state of emotions in his particular way. She breathes in the space provided to her by the positive experience. Here again the tripling of experience is showcased in terms of extreme enjoyment, the enchantment of her soul out of an extreme enjoyment and interruption of positive kind. The poet wants either to end in that experience or to end herself in it.

The use of ‘ing’ form shows the continuity of experience. Words like ‘sitting’ (17), ‘dripping’ (18), ‘circling’(28), ‘deepening’(31), ‘feeding’(32), ‘winding’(35), ‘wandering’(36), inform about the ongoing flow within the poet. Here again we see that the use of this particular type of repetition shows that the experience of the poet is never ending. She wants to take respite in some positive experience she undergoes.

At the Level of Lexis

In the poem, *A Little While, A Little While*, the use of ‘I’ is seen almost 10 times in line 3,4,20,21,24,33,34,37,41. This denotes the singularity of the experience undergoes by the poet.

The use of ‘the’ in the examples like ‘The weary task’ (2), ‘the dreary tempest’ (11), ‘The House’ (13), ‘the trees’ (13), ‘the hearth’ (16), ‘The mute’ (17), ‘the stone’ (17), ‘The dank moss’ (18), ‘the wall’ (18), ‘The thorn trees’(19), ‘the walks’ tell us about the uniqueness of the experience underwent by the poet. The word ‘weary’ in line 2 and 8 has been used in an intermittent way to tell us that this notion of tiresomeness is an overbearing emotional state in which the poet resides. The obsession of this weariness of that state is more dominant in the mind of the poet. The poet wants to take respite from it. The repetition of this particular kind describes that the poet is obsessed with it in recurrence and unable to get rid of it. This weariness has got stuck with her and



the poet experiences it time and again. The repetition of the lexis 'While' tells us another factor about the poet that for her, the zone of time is of greater importance. The repetitive use of 'knew' in line 33, 34 tells us about the surety of the fact that the poet has over the affairs of the world. Another factor that the poet is a seasoned and experienced person; is smelled out of this repetition. In the poem, *Come Walk with Me*, there is the intermittent repetition at the level of lexis as has been seen in the use of 'And' in line 10, 25 and 30;

And on the horizon rest at last

And then revive anew?

And surer than that dwelling dread,

The use of 'And', in the above-mentioned example, again reveals never ending burning desire of the poet to have the company.

Conclusion

The analysis shows that the poet makes the use of both types of free repetition for 'foregrounding' of meanings in different ways. She uses the intermittent kind more frequently than the immediate kind of repetition. Given the definition and description of 'foregrounding' in Carter & Nash (1990), 'Repetition'- and dominant forms of repetition 'foreground' special literary effects. However, as dominant form of repetition in Emily Bronte's poems is 'intermittent' - spread out across the entire poems instead of being clustered at any one point, it seems to form more of a 'background' rather than 'foreground' and, the few examples of immediate repetition, are more 'prominent' and visible. Immediate repetition of two examples foregrounds some meanings because of their position in the first line.

In fact, the occurrence of 'A little while' in the very first line makes it doubly prominent. On the other hand, intermittent repetitions are used more at the level of lexis. It is used almost 5 times. The instances of intermittent repetition at the level of syntax are 2. Still each one is significant in a different way. Repetitions of words seem to gather some bits and pieces of emotional details, whereas syntactic repetitions gather 'processes' of natural phenomenon watched and observed by the poet. Taken together they foreground the perceptions and state of mind of the poet. The intermittent repetition establishes a gentle current of emotions across the whole poems over which the immediate repetition adds occasional emphasis, insistence or outburst.

Finally, the analysis of the poems, *A Little while*, *A Little While* and *Come Walk With Mein* terms of free repetition, along with its kinds, also reveals threefold use of repetitions. Firstly, they are a poetic necessity. Secondly they help express the poet's personal emotions, perceptions. Thirdly, they become symbols of a greater poetic self-seeking connection with social natural world in the universe. They are 'Tripartite' in nature. This phenomenon of tripartitiy exists not only in terms of the use of linguistic items, but also in the making of the theme. She uses these verbal constructions to reveal the framework of her mind in three ways. She mainly shows her quest for mirth in the present moment or draws upon memories of past sorrows or joys to compare the present, or she hopes for future happiness ~~in the future~~. This phenomenon makes her style tripartite.



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