Graphological Foregrounding in S. A. Mohamed's Babualipofufuka

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Abstract:
Writers employ various stylistic devices in their texts as a way of achieving thematic delivery and high aesthetic value of their texts. Stylistic devices are deployed in a novel way by different writers toward this end. For this reason, writers exploit the dynamic nature of language to construct sentences that serve particular contexts. In stylistics, graphological foregrounding has been used by writers since the beginning of the 20th century. Foregrounding has been used by Swahili writers. Many studies have been carried out about foregrounding and graphology in poetic works. A few studies have focused on foregrounding in prose writing especially English prose. Foregrounding in Kiswahili literature especially prose literature has not been given attention. This paper focuses on graphological foregrounding features in Said Ahmed Mohamed's Kiswahili novel, Babu Alipofufuka. It examines various levels of graphological foregrounding and the significance of this stylistic device in the text. Foregrounding features of graphological nature in the text have been analysed. The paper argues that foregrounding plays a central role in achieving thematic delivery and aesthetic presentation in S.A. Mohamed's Babu Alipofufuka.

Keywords: *Graphology, foregrounding, Style, language*

1. Introduction

Style is a key element of message delivery in fiction and non-fiction writings. Creative writers employ a variety of stylistic devices in their works as a way of enhancing textual language structure. This is done as a device of making their work more artistic and visually appealing, apart from achieving message delivery. Successful delivery of a writer's message demands language form which calls for a language structure that is artistic in nature. A writer who intends to make her/his writing innovative finds ways of employing novel stylistic features in the text. While discussing graphological features, Yeibo and Akerele (2014) rightly posit that the hallmark of a good writer, that is, what makes him to stand out from the crowd, is contingent both on the ideological content and propositions of his work as much as his stylistic peculiarities or distinctions and the extent to which both aspects (i.e. content and container) relate. In this context, content, refers to the message carried by a text while the container, is the language which carries the message within a text. This argument points out the importance of both language and style of literary works in realizing cohesion in creative works. Yeibo and Akerele (2014) further argue that writers employ various paralinguistic features to complement linguistic choices, make meaning more precise and graphical, as well as enhance the aesthetic texture and appeal of their texts.

Foregrounding is one of many stylistic devices used by writers as a way of enhancing aesthetic texture in texts so as to make them appeal to both sight and mind. The concept of foregrounding was first used by Garvin in 1964 to translate the Prague School's "aktualisace" (Wales, 1989). Wamitila (2002) says, foregrounding is a way of making a statement prominent as compared to other statements within the same text. Simpson (2007) says, foregrounding is a form of textual patterning which is motivated for literary aesthetic purpose. This means, foregrounding plays the role of achieving a text's beauty which attracts visual attention of the audience. Halliday (1994) says, foregrounding is prominence that is motivated. By this he means, some features in the text are highlighted so as to bring them to the fore as compared to the rest of the features that remain in the textual background. These definitions look at foregrounding from an aesthetic point of view. They insist on foregrounding as a way of using stylistic devices in order to achieve, not only thematic delivery, but also sight aesthetic value.

These definitions vary from Short (1996), Wales (2001) and Jeffries (2002) approach who look at foregrounding from a linguistic angle. Wales defines foregrounding as the throwing into relief of the linguistic sign against the background of the norms of ordinary while language Jeffries (2002) says, it is the highlight properties of language. He further says, it is achieved through manipulation of sounds, grammar and meaning. Short (1996) describes it as a linguistic phenomenon due to its psychological effect on readers. Simpson (2007) explains that foregrounding works in two ways: first, by distortion against a norm and secondly by imposing regularity in grammatical patterns over and above those designed by the language which can be called repetition or parallelism. Trangott and Pratt, (1980) posit that in foregrounding, sentences deviate from the rules of language in an intentional way. Foregrounding therefore is a stylistic

device used in literal works to catch the eye of the reader. This is done through construction of sentences in a way that violates grammatical rules. Writers employ linguistic deviation as a way of achieving prominence and as Timucin (2010) argues, in any literary text, if a part is deviant, it becomes especially noticeable or perceptually prominent.

Several devices are used in texts to achieve foregrounding. The features can be classified into various groups. Wales (1989) posits that there are two main types of foregrounding; "paradigmatic" (deviation from the normal language) and "syntagmantic" (repletion). Halliday (1994) argues that they are of two types: qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative foregrounding mentioned by Halliday refers to deviation from normal and acceptable language grammar while quantitative foregrounding refers to deviation from expected occurrence such as repetition of words in a text. Wamitila (2008) mentions repetition as a key feature in foregrounding and insists that repetition is the foundation of foregrounding and helps readers to recall themes in texts. Leech and Short (1981), Emott, Sanford and Morrow (2006) and Crystal and Davy (1969) mention sentence fragmentation as one way of achieving foregrounding. From the foregoing arguments, it can be concluded that foregrounding is the concept of making certain textual features stand out prominently as compared to others. It can also be concluded that foregrounding employs repetition and grammatical deviation as its two main approaches.

Graphology is a subset of foregrounding. The concept of graphology refers to the use of specific ortho graphic features such as italicization, capitalization, punctuation, indentation as some of the paralinguistic elements used by writers to achieve message delivery and aesthetic texture and appeal of their texts. By use of these features, writers are able to achieve foregrounding as a way of message delivery. Adegoju (2008) and Yeibo and Akerele (2014), while discussing graphological foregrounding, list features such as spelling, capitalization, hyphenation, a texts layout, lists, font choices, underlining, italicization, paragraphing, colour, etc. which can all create different kinds of impact, some of which will cause the reader to react differently. Ngara (1982) concurs with this argument and posits that foregrounding graphological features include layout of the text, colour, shape of the printed marks, punctuation, paragraphing and spacing. Graphological foregrounding is therefore, a prominent way of foregrounding in literary works.

2. Theoretical Framework
This study is guided by the functional theory of language by Halliday (1973), also expounded by Reagan(1992), Jwan (1997), Jwan & Ogechi (2004) and Moto (2004). The theory examines language structure and the use of language structure to deliver meaning. The theory elaborates several functions of language which are relevant to this study.

2.1. Informative Function
According to this function, language provides information of different types to a reader or listener. This function is accomplished by formulating and affirming or denying proposition (Copi and Cohen 2002). Language used to affirm or deny propositions or to present arguments, is said to be serving the informative function. In this case, Copi and Cohen (2002) argue that the word "information" is used to include misinformation: false as well as true propositions. Incorrect as well as correct arguments. Informative discourse is used to describe the words and the reason about it.

2.2. Language is Descriptive or Imperative
This function issues commands or orders. As Reagan (1992: 37) asserts, this function is "sometimes called the imperative function of language because it often involves the use of the imperative form of the verb."

2.3. Emotive or Expressive Function
Here, language serves to express feelings and emotions such as anger, love, likes and dislikes, attitudes, beliefs or opinion. Expression may be analysed into two components when one curses while alone, writes poems that are shown to no one, or prays in solitude, the language used functions to express the feelings of the speakers or the writer, but is not intended to evoke similar feelings in anyone else (Copi and Cohen 2001), on the other hand, when orators seek to move others, the language used not only expresses the feelings of its speakers but is intended to evoke similar feelings in the hearers.
- Evaluative function. This usually serves judgmental and ceremonial functions.
- The fifth function of language is the directive one, for example when one gives an order to another.

3. Features of Graphological Foregrounding In Babu Alipofufuka
Several graphological features have been used by S. A. Mohamed in his text, Babu Alipofufuka. The features have played several roles which have been discussed below.

3.1. Mini Paragraphs
Emott, Sanford and Morrow (2006) define mini paragraphs as any paragraph that is exceptionally short. In this case, one line or one-word sentences are used as complete paragraphs. This way of paragraphing deviates from normal and accepted way of paragraphing which does not allow one or two sentence paragraphs. Mini paragraphs are a prominent feature of foregrounding in S. A. Mohamed's Babu Amefufuka. Look at the following example.
- Example1: Kimya (pp 5, 83)

This example testifies to the use of mini paragraphs in Babu Amefufuka. In this example, S. A. Mohamed has used one word, *Kimya* (silence) to stand alone as a paragraph. So, this can be referred to as a one-word paragraph. It should be noted that the word, *kimya* is a noun whichcan also be used as an adverb. Therefore, it cannot be used to write a complete paragraph or sentence as a lone word. This means that the use of the word, *Kimya* to write a complete sentence leads to

sentence fragmentation. Fragmentation refers to the use of sentences that are not full. A normal Kiswahili sentence must have a verb. However, sentence fragmentation goes against this rule and adopts sentences that do not have a verb. In this case, non-verb phrases such as nominal phrases are used as sentences in texts.

3.2. Shortening of Words

Shortening of words is a popular foregrounding device in Kiswahili poetry. This style has not been popular in prose writing and plays. In poetry, it is mainly used to achieve metrical equivalence and rhyme. However, in *Babu Alipofufuka*, a prose fiction, shortening of words has been used as astylistic device. In this case, the device has not been used as a way of achieving metrical equivalence but as a way of attracting the attention of the reader. Look at the following example:

- Example 2:*N'najibidiisha*,

The word, n'najibidiisha (I am working hard) has been shortened by deleting the sound, [i] after the initial sound, [n]. The apostrophe has been used in the shortened word to indicate the position where the letter [i] has been deleted. This way of shortening words makes the words perceptually prominent. The foregrounded words in the text are of vital importance in conveying the writer's message. By foregrounding them, the words attract the attention and critical thinking of the readers.

3.3. Neologism

Neologism is a form of lexical deviation, in which the writer creates entirely new words that do not exist in language. It involves making up of words which are not part of a language's lexical. Rey (2005) says, neologism involves words and phrases, and that sentences even if they are new cannot be counted under neologism. Neologism is a significant feature in S. A. Mohamed's *Babu Alipofufuka*. There are several levels of neologism in *Babu Alipofufuka*. First, is formation of words by adding prefixes and suffixes to existing word roots.

- Example **3**
- ➢ Kurongoywa
- ➢ Mduma

The word,Kurongoywahas been createdfrom the Kiswahili noun, urongowhich means, lies. In the case ofKurongoywa, the noun, urongo has been given the prefix {ku} and suffix {fwa} so as to create a verb. It should be noted that the writer has created the word, Kurongoywa despite the fact thatthere are Kiswahili words such as kudanganya (to lie) which could have been used instead.Mdumais another created word. The origin of the word is the Kiswahili word, duma which is used to refer to the cheetah. The word has been given the prefix, {m} so as to form an additional noun to refer to imaginary awful creatures.The second level of neologism is joining several word roots to form one root.In this case, two or more-word roots of existing words are joined to form one word.Example:

- Example 4:Wenyesingasizao

The word, Wenyesingasizao (pp32)has been created neologically by joining four words, wenye-singa-si-zao. The word is used in the text to refer to Africans who have turned the colour and shape of their hair so as to look like Europeans. By joining the four words to form one word, the writer intends to attract the attention of the reader to the functionality of the word.

3.4. Italicization

Italicization is a form of deviation from normal orthography. The writer uses letter shapes that are not usually used in creative writing.There are several levels of italicization in Babu Alipofufuka. They include italicization of words, word parts and sentences. Italicization of words affects single words in sentences. Particular words are singled out due to their significance in conveying a particular message as intended by the writer. Example:

- Example 5
- ➢ rubaa
- ➢ Neo-casino pp 32,
- ➢ ng'ande pp 33,
- ➢ unaovundumkia,
- ➢ jojoro,
- ➢ malai,
- ➢ mahasusi pp 32.

In BabuAlipofufuka, italicization is evident in words such as rubaa, Neo-casino pp 32, ng'ande pp 33, unaovundumkia, jojoro, malai, mahasusi pp 32. In these cases, whole words have been italicized to achieve visual appeal apart from realising message delivery. Italicized words and sentences attract the attention of readers who would like to find out reasons for their italicization.

The second level of italicization in Babu Alipofufuka mainly involves word prefixes. Two types of prefixes have been italicized. First, are pronominal prefixes. There are particular verbs whose pronominal prefixes have been italicized. Examples:

- Example *6*
- ➢ Alisimama (she/he stood up) pp 29,
- ➢ Kamtazame (look at her/him) pp 29 and
- ➢ Akilinganishwa (if she/he is compared to) pp 29.

These words above have their first syllables {a} (as in 6a), {ka} (as in 6b) and {a} (as in 6c)italicized. The effect is to draw the attention of the reader not just to the use of pronominal prefixes in the words but also to the meanings attached to the words. Not all pronominal prefixes in all words in the text have been italicized. This means that only particular words have been targeted due to their significance in conveying the writer's message.

Second prefixes that have been italicized are tenses. In Kiswahili words, tenses appear in form of prefixes that are attached to verbroots.Tenses also appear in words as the second prefix in verbs normally after the pronominal prefix.Look at the following examples:

- Example 7:
> Zi*na*songeana (they are moving towards each other),
> Zi*ta*songeana (they will move towards each other)
> Zi*li*lishana (they fed each other),

The second prefix in each word which represents time has been italicized while the remaining parts of each word have been written normally. For example, in the word, Zinasongeana (they are moving towards each other), the prefix, {na} which is the representative of the present tense has been italicized.The initial prefix, {zi} has been written normally. This is also the case with the verb root {song} and the two suffixes {ean} and {a}. Italicization of the tense prefixes makes them look unique and thereforeeasily noticeable. The italicized prefixes are also in words that have been used to convey significant message.

3.5. Capitalization

Capitalization is the inappropriate use of capital letters in the text. Capital letters are used without regard to rules of punctuation. This is one of the most prominent features of foregrounding in *Babu Alipofufuka*. The capitalized words prominently stand out in a way that can be described as screaming. It makes the words attractive and therefore easily noticed.

- Example 8: PROtEus

In Babu Alipofufuka, the word, Proteus has been written in different ways using capital letters, i.e.PROTEUS, prOTeus, pRoteus, PROtEus, (pp 11.) These examples indicate that the same word has been written in different ways with different capitalization formats. The main reason for capitalization is to make the word stand out as compared to the rest of the words in the same sentence and paragraph. The choice of the word, Proteus is due to the function of the word and its value in carrying the writer's message about an imaginary creature which cannot be understood.

3.6. Bold Writing

Bold writing is mainly used in headlines, tittles and in labeling. In texts, it has been used to indicate whole paragraphs or sentences that are targeted for special message or review.Bold writing in Babu Alipofufukahas been used to cover, not just paragraphs and sentences, but also words that appear in the middle of sentences. Words and sentences have been written with heavy ink as a way of attracting the visual attention of the reader. Look at the following example.

- Example 9: (a) Neo-casino pp 32,
> limonsin pp27,
> Nani?
> Gani? Pp 19
> proteus pp 11

These examples show that entire words have been intentionally made bold so as to serve some literary purpose. The word, Neo-casino, for example has been made bold so as to boost its visibility. The bold writing also serves to decorate the text thus giving it a significantly unique appearance. Bold writing in such words such as limonsin (pp27), Nani, (pp 19) Gani (Pp 19) and proteus (pp 11) also plays the same role.

3.6.1. Repetition

Repetition is not a strange style in prose writing. However, the manner in which it has been used in Babu Alipofufuka makes the style look unique. Repetition of words makes them stand out against the rest in the sentence or text.In BabuAlipofufuka, a number of words have been repeated as a way of foregrounding them. The word, sahau, sahau, sahau...(forgetfulness) (pp11)has been repeated so as to stress its significance within the context of Babu's (grandfather's)soliloquy. Babu repeats the word as a way of showing disappointment towards forgetfulness shown by the living generation which includes his great grandson, K. Example:

- Example 10: Kinehe, kinehe, kinehe yalikuwa pp53.

The word, Kinehe has been repeated three times as a way of registering the significance of the word in carrying the writer's message to the reader. The words are also in bold writing and italicized.This points at triple foregrounding.

3.7. Hyphenation

Hyphenation involves the use of the hyphen in joining different words. It is mainly used to derive new words that are used to deliver different meaning from the mother words. Hyphenation is a feature that has been used extensively in Babu Alipofufuka. In this case of hyphenation, several words have been brought together but separated by the hyphen so as to form a new long word as shown in example 11 bellow.

- Example 11:
> Nakuona-wewe-mimi-hunioni, (I can-see-you-but-you-cannot-see-me)
> Watengeneza-utamaduni-mpya

> ➤ Waduhushi-mbwa-na-bustani

In these examples, words have been joined by use of hyphens so as to appear as one word. In example 11 (a), four words have been joined by use of hyphens. The words that are involved in the formation have different meanings. Therefore, the formed word does not appear to express one meaning. Rather it carries with it the different meanings of each mother word. However, it must be read as one word and the stress in pronunciation falls on the last syllable as it happens in all Swahili words. This means that although the product of joining of the words is a single word and must be read so, it expresses different meanings. The hyphenation makes the words convey the intended message in a strong way.

3.8. Joining Of Words

Joining of words is a stylistic device that involves putting together several words that are otherwise written independently. This is usually not done as a way of creating a new word as it happens in neologism. This style is not prominent in prose writings. Joining of words has been used by S. A. Mohamed in *Babu Alipofufuka.*The following example shows how the style has been used in the text.

- Example: 12
- ➤ Halijapatakutokea pp 14
- ➤ Stahilisalama pp29,

Example (a) shows two verbs that have been joined, not to form one new word but to express one meaning. Unlike in the hyphenation case, the words are not joined by use of hyphens. The new word is formed from two-word roots which play a complementary role to express one meaning. The joining of the words does not bring out a new meaning different from the one expressed by the two words when written independently. This shows that the writer did not intend to bring out a new meaning by joining the words but rather maintain their meanings and attract the reader to their significance by joining them.

3.9. Spelling Deviation

This is a style that allows the writer to contravene normal word spellings. Words are written with wrong spellings so as to capture the reader's attention. Spelling deviation has been used in *Babu Alipofufuka.* The following example shows how the style has been used.

- Example 13:
- hallahalla pp 41

In this example, the word, *halahala* (quickly) has been given different spellings. The letter, [l] which appears twice in the word has been made double twice. This makes the word

4. Conclusion

Style plays a fundamental role in message delivery in literary works. Different writers prefer different stylistic devices in their texts to enhance textual language structure. Writers choose style based of message intended to be delivered. This means that a writer's message is carried in style. In addition, style is chosen as a way of making their work visually artistic, apart from achieving message delivery. Different styles have been used by S. A. Mohamed in his novel, Babu Alipofufuka. In this analysis, we discussed various styles such as use of mini paragraphs, shortening of words, neologism, italicization, capitalization, hyphenation and repetition. It emerged in this study that S. A. Mohamed has employed these styles as a way of drawing readers attention to key words that have been used to carry and convey his message.

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