The Syntactic and Semantic Parallelism in Selected C.T. Msimang's Poetry

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ABSTRACT This study seeks to conduct a syntactic and semantic analysis of parallelism in selected poetry. Parallelism concentrates on the repetition of words, phrase and clauses in a more artistic and appealing manner to retain the narrative in balance by affirming something new. The carefully chosen words and phrases are recurrent to develop and improve the narrative. The chain-linking of thoughts used repetition to improve retention. Parallelism is built up in successive layers of insight and meaning around the central theme. It manifests the unity and development in the poem. It brings about balance in rhythmic, rhyme and euphonic effects. It is a principle which advocates the ideas of equal significance within a poem. This scheme candidly emphasizes the specific thought in a required manner, whether major or minor, idealistic or materialistic, fictitious or true, planned or ornamented. It heightens the secondary or poetic imagination and promotes breath and open-mindedness. The schemes of repetition are displayed in various conspicuous ways and achieved mainly by considering the position of words or phrases in successive lines.

INTRODUCTION

The structural set-up of words has a wide-ranging meaning, as it is the grouping of the parts into entire poem. Cuddon (1976: 277) gave his contentions about the poetic form as follows:

...the form of a literary work we refer to its shape, structure and the manner in which it is made as opposed to its substance or what it is about.

The external form is examined in a condition where a poet employs connotative language to communicate his or her message to the recipient or reader. Structuralism explicates the association and correlation between the components that are shared to form the whole.

Cope discussed a type of lexical and syntactical repetition called parallelism, which is one of the significant features of poetry. Cope (1968: 41) referred to perfect parallelism and parallelism by linking and asserts that:

A comparison between these two types of parallelism shows that a perfect parallelism repeats the idea with different words, whereas parallelism by linking advances the idea by means of an identical word or stem or root.

Parallelism in poetry is defined as syntactic, morphological and semantic similarities perceived between successive poetic verses. It forms an integral part of traditional poetry and it is effectively in modern poems to create aesthetic effects.

In Kunene's (1971: 68) discussion of parallelism in poetry, he subdivides this information as follows:

- The reiteration of selected words, phrases and lines.
- The repetition of meanings, ideals and ideas by synonyms, antonyms, hyponyms, direct and indirect references.
- The reappearance of lexical, semantic views and syntactic slots.

An important function of parallelism in poetry is to cause regular rhythmic conditions. This is done by repeating the similar words or phrases in a single line or successive lines. The repetition of these rhythmic units immediately creates the rhythmic pattern found in the poem. In some cases, a whole verse is repeated to create regular rhythmic conditions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This empirical study is qualitative in nature and aims to provide an in-depth description and analysis of structural units. The research has adopted the empirical method suggested by Bak (2004: 26) and Hofstee (2006: 108), whose function is to give the details about where, when and who the method will involve; verify finding; make logic arrangements to obtain information and data. This empirical method seeks to include interviews with individuals and focus groups, participant's observation, as well as evaluating the existing literature documentary sources as a way of achieving the goal of examining the challenges of analyzing the structure of poetry. Poetry is a form of communication which has the sender, a poet, the receiver, reader or listener and the message. McClain and Romaine (2007: 133) asserted the following:

Communication is regarded as the ability of a person, the sender the message, to express him or her so that the person (the receiver) understands both words and intentions.

However, the study will focus on documentary sources using the textual and contextual approaches.

Syntactic Organization

This is a repetition of lines or parts of lines which are not phonologically identified, but have the same syntactical structure. It occurs in successive or non-successive verse lines. This verse technique is sometimes called syntactical parallelism.

Repetition of Predicates

Repetition is primarily used for emphasis. However there are cases where the poet hammers away at the idea. There is a specific development which leads to suspense. Readers are introduced to the idea which is repeated. The following example is taken from the poem, *Ihlathi LaseNkandla* (Nkandla's forest):

Ihuntshuzele iyoshon' eNkunzana,
Ihuntshuzele yehlis' iNsuze,
Ihuntshuzele yehlis' uThukela,
Ihuntshuzele kudekude elwandlekazi ...
(*Enticed on a long course to Nkunzana,
Flowing through Nsuze,
Flowing through Thukela,*

Enticed through as far as the ocean ...)
(Msimang 1980: 25)

Nkandla forest is viewed as a spatial setting because of its denseness and heavy rainfall has no serious impact on it. Rain water flows from Nkunzana, Nsuze and Thukela to the ocean without causing any serious soil erosion. The poet hyponymically mentions the rivers around the forest. There are also streams within the forest that form a dendritic or tree-like shape and trellis. These are parallel streamlets with short tributaries. The flowing of the river water is emphasized by the series of rivers mentioned. Nkandla forest is always associated with Cetshwayo, the monarch who spent much of his time with his warriors, sharing their hardships. Cetshwayo was a distinctive historical figure and his personality is expressed by Somtsewu in Binns (1963: 67):

He is a man of considerable ability, much force of character and a dignified manner; in all my conversations with him he was remarkably frank and straightforward and he ranks in every respect far above any Native King I have ever had to do with. I do not think that his disposition is very warlike and even if it is, his obesity will impose prudence; but he is naturally proud of the military traditions of his family, especially the policy and deeds of his uncle and predecessor Shaka, to which he made frequent reference. His sagacity enables him however, to see by which he is surrounded and the necessity for so adjusting his policy as to suit them.

The repeated predicates are *ihuntshuzele* (enticed on long course), *iyoshona* (to pass) and *yehlise* (flowing through). They are repeatedly used to stress and emphasize the flowing through action. The above-mentioned rivers are looked at in relation to the historical and sacred forest.

Repetition of Nouns and Predicates

Repetition for emphasis is also prevalent in the same poem on iNkandla forest. The nominals and predicates are syntactically repeated in successive lines with a specific introduction of new ideas:

*USibamba - siyephula ngokwephul' ingonyama,
USibamba - siyephula ngokwephul' ingwe,
USibamba - siyephula ngokwephul' imamba,*

USibamba - siyephula ngokwephul' uhlanya...
(One who fiercely grabs and kills a lion,
One who fiercely grabs and kills a leopard,
One who strongly holds and kills a mamba,
One who fiercely grabs and kills a lunatic ...)
(Msimang 1990: 57)

The stanza depicts Shaka's physical ability. The emphasis is on his considerable ability and greatness. The focus is on the killing of various strong, aggressive and dangerous animals. Furthermore, he killed the most strongest and feared lunatic animals. The major emphasis is on a series of killings, with a specific development towards the climax. It is this repetition of the same nominal and predicate in successive lines which is syntactically known as normal discourse. Emphasis heightens the emotions of heroic feelings to become joyous and upwardly inflected with a regular rhythm. The animals mentioned are the lion, leopard and mamba. Shaka's strength is shown through his ability to kill these fearsome creatures.

Discontinuous Repetitions of Predicates and Nouns

These are repetition techniques which are interrupted and irregular as Kunene (1971: 80) observed as follows:

Situations however, where one or more lines intervene between an occurrence and a subsequent repetition thereof, giving what might be called broken or interrupted or discontinuous repetitions.

In the poem, *Ihlathi LaseNkandla* (Nkandla's forest) discontinuous repetition is patterned as follows:

*... Amanye **abewuka** amanye **abenyuka***
Ngazibona nezizukulwane zikaZulu,
*Ezinye **bezewuka** ezinye **bezenyuka** ...*
*(... Some were **descending** and some **ascending.***
I saw the Zulu generations,
*Some were **descending** and some **ascending** ...)*
(Msimang 1980: 24)

This is an interrupted repetition due to the intervention of a line in between. However, the flow of Nkunzana River water is emphasized through the downward and upward movement of Zulu generations. Discontinuous repetitions as cited above can be illustrated as follows:

a........b.........c.........d
e.... f.........g.........h
i.... b..........j.........d

It is an historical fact that some Zulu heroes died in hiding in Nkandla forest, as stressed in the following stanza:

*Ngimbonile **noZulu** omathambo,*
Izindela ezadel' imizimba
*Zaqom' ukufa kunokudel' **uZulu**.*
(I have seen the Zulu members' graves,
The patriots who surrendered their lives
They chose death (rather) than surrendering the Zulu nation.)
(Msimang 1980: 25)

Discontinuous repetition as cited above is exemplified as follows:

a..........b
d..........e
g..........h

Things went into disarray for King Cetshwayo when his enemies enforced colonization and socio-economic policies. The discontinuous use of the nominal *uZulu* is remarkable because of emphasis and syntactical organization with the connective conjunctive *na-* and further qualification to refer to the dead heroes of the nation, while the latter refers to the whole nation.

Semantic Organization

Semantic organization plays a significant role in Msimang's poetry. Kock in Groenewald (1990: 94) defined semantic parallelism as follows:

... the use of words, word groups or expressions in the same or different verse lines of which the meaning is more or less the same.

This is a type of scheme which looks at balance in a corresponding opposing or antithetical way. This can be done in a complementary or synthetic, emblematic, step-like or medial fashion. The pattern of poetic diction carries a parallelism of the members or *parallelismus membrorum*. This is the ordering of the ideas or intentions expressed in the two lines. It is, however, stressed that parallelism creates regularity, rhythm and focuses on the main point.

Synonymous or Corresponding Parallelism

This is the type of parallelism where two words express the same truth in two different ways. In the poem, *iSandlwana* (Sandlwana Hill), the corresponding parallelism is seen in the verse:

*Baduke **nokuziphakamisa**,*
*Baduke **nokuzikhukhumeza**.*

(They got lost with pride,
They got lost with conceit.)
(Msimang 1980: 41)

The poet displays the antagonistic force in the historic incident which appears to be full of pride, conceit and arrogance. This was done with the aim of despising the protagonistic force which was committed to its rigid mode of operation.

In the poem, *Le mbali ... Le nyosi* (This flower ... This bee) the names of the Almighty are used synonymously or correspondingly for parallelism:

*Bathi kwalayeza u**Mvelinqangi**;*
*Bathi yisifiso sika**Somandla**; ...*
(They say God sent a message;
They say its Almighty's wish; ...)
(Msimang 1990: 16)

God is addressed using different names; for example, *uMvelinqangi* (The Supreme Being) and *Somandla* (Owner of power and strength). The other names that are regularly used are; *uMlenzemunye* (the One-legged One), *uNkulunkulu* (The Old, Old One) and *uMdali* (The Creator). These names are used synonymously for emphasis and retention. The occurrence of restatement without repetition that is joined linearly gives a structural pattern similar to repetition. Kunene (1971: 89) called this the restatement of ideas through synonyms where:

... thoughts or ideas, are repeated without at the same time repeating the words or phrases which conveyed them when they were first stated.

Opposing or Antithetic Parallelism

This is a parallelism, whereby the second word expresses the exact opposite of the first. An example is taken from the poem, *Ifu Elimnyama* (The Dark Cloud):

Ahlangana** amadoda abheka **phezulu
***Ahlukana** amakhanda abheka **phansi** ...*
*(The men **converged** and looked **up***
*The heads **diverged** and looked **down** ...)*
(Msimang 1990: 32)

The words "convergence" and "divergence" are contrastingly used as initial linking, while "upwards" and "downwards" are used as final linking, not simply to convey subtle music, but also to portray the idea of depression, melancholy and inhuman deeds. This is also known as a positive-negative parallelism.

In the epic poem, *uShaka KaSenzangakhona* (Shaka of Senzangakhona) antithetical parallelism in the following lines is seen:
*Wayisingisa **amanhla** eMfolozi,*
*Wayisingisa **amazansi** eNkandla ...*
He upwardly directed it to Mfolozi
And downwardly to Nkandla ...
(Msimang 1990: 65)

The two poetic and archaic words *amanhla* (upwards) and *amazansi* (downwards) are rarely used in our everyday speech and are therefore said to be obsolete. An antithetic parallelism in this context illustrates the degree to which Shaka unsettled Zwide, who was forcefully removed from his place of origin and made destitute. This is a type of parallelism which shows how affective antonyms are when used to emphasize a specific idea. Any two lines cited for this type of parallelism show the development of thought in a more sequential way. The archaic words are extra textually noted, as they are used in the following proverbial lore:

Thokolo themba amathunzi ayewukela figuratively means "do not despair or lose hope, because you are about to achieve something" or "your goals are due for accomplishment".

Ingqala ngobuhle igcina ngobubi figuratively means "the one who gains success at first and usually fails in his next endeavor".

The archaic words *thokolo* (to be happy) and *ingqala* (to begin) are used as a package in the above-mentioned short and pithy sayings, to describe the particular situations.

Complementary or Synthetic Parallelism

Complementary parallelism depicts the ordering of ideas in two lines, where the second complements the first. An example from the poem, *Insimbi Yesonto* (The Church Bell) illustrates this idea:
Mhla kukhuhle inkungu
Kwakumnyama esintwini ...
(When it was extremely misty
It was dark to humankind ...)
(Msimang 1980: 17)

The idea of widespread mist, which the poet idiomatically puts forth, *kukhuhle inkungu*, meaning "it was extremely dark", is complemented by a darkness which was seen by the entire nation. In both lines the ideas "extremely misty" and "darkness" refer to a lack of knowledge about the Christian faith. In the poem, *Isibaya*

Esikhulu Se-Afrika (African Bank) complementary parallelism is seen in the lines:

> *Halala sibay' esikhulu se-Afrika,*
> *Iyahalalisa yonk' i-Afrika ...*
> *(Hurrah! big cattle byre of Africa,*
> *The whole of Africa is cheering ...)*
> (Msimang 1990: 37)

The introductory line applauds the existence of the African Bank, while the following line complements the fact that the whole of Africa is applauding. The existence of the African Bank reveals an African bond, good leadership qualities, economic power and development among the indigenous people.

Emblematic Parallelism

This is a parallelism where the second line or member provides comparison on the basis of deeds, actions and involvements. In the poem, *Nge-Unisa Eminyakeni Elikhulu* (Centenary celebration) it is illustrated as follows:

> *UDlondlwane lwakithi eMzansini,*
> *Lwanga uDlondlwane loMbelebele ...*
> *(The young viper of the South,*
> *It is like a young viper of uMbelebele ...)*
> (Msimang 1980: 3)

In the first line, Unisa is likened to a viper which always appears in a great rage, then likened to Shaka in the second line. Its commitment to education, which is continuous, energetic and remarkable, is compared to that of King Shaka in his building of the Zulu nation. Unisa as a cultural, symbolic element, even though inanimate, is given human attributes because of its significance. Shaka was a great Zulu king who was committed to his national work. His industriousness as a hero and ability to orchestrate the regimental system brought him due honor. His skills in war, courage and humanness awarded him prominence and praise. Unisa's skills in imparting knowledge to its students are thus praised. Shaka's qualities are bestowed upon the prestigious institution. The second example on emblematic parallelism is from the poem, *Inkondlo kaMkabayi* (Mkabayi's poem):

> *Iminduze yahlabelela,*
> *Kwakusengathi yihubo likaNomkhubulwana.*
> *(The lilies sung*
> *As if it's Nomkhubulwana's song)*
> (Msimang 1990: 38)

The notion of singing is metaphorical. The singing of the lilies is compared to that of Nomkhubulwana, the Queen of Heaven, who is believed to have come out of earth on the same day as man. The melody and harmony of the song sung by the lilies is evocatively heard through regular rhythm which favours Mkabayi's marriage to her suitor, Lamula. Mkabayi's commitment to national work as a heroine and planner leads her to neglect the cultural trends by not giving Lamula, *ubuhlalu obumhlophe* (white beads). These beads signify love, happiness, goodness and purity. Mkabayi and Lamula remained far apart with no love bond between them.

Starlike or Step-like Parallelism

This is a step-like parallelism, where part of a line is repeated with an extension in the following line. It is aimed at unfolding the intended idea with greater ease, to stimulate imagination and to highlight the main point. The example below is from the poem, *Nezinyoni Ziyamdumisa* (Even the Birds are praising Him):

> *Nidumisa ukuphuma kwekhwezi;*
> *Nidumisa ukuphuma kwelanga ...*
> *(You praise the coming out of the morning star;*
> *You praise the sunrise ...)*
> (Msimang 1990: 35)

The extension is seen in the introductory statement, with the coming out of the morning star, followed by sunrise. It is a religious poem which offers hope of supernatural intervention to help face all dimensions of life. The second example is from the epic poem, *UShaka KaSenzangakhona* (Shaka of Senzangakhona):

> *Izindlel' eziqond' eSiklebheni ziyaqonsa,*
> *Izindlel' eziqond' eSiklebheni zimankelenkele ...*
> *(The routes to eSiklebheni are steep,*
> *The routes to eSiklebheni are of precipitous ascent ...)*
> (Msimang 1990: 61)

The routes to eSiklebheni are both steep and hilly. The poet reveals that Shaka suffered in his youth at eSiklebheni. Nothing came easy for him. He struggled to acquire knowledge while still herding cattle. The steepness of the route symbolise the tough and rough life of his early years. Step-like parallelism is seen when the poet describes the routes as *ziyaqonsa* (steep in ascent) and *zimankelenkele* (very steep, hilly and
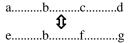
of precipitous ascent). The second line is an extension of the first line. What is introduced in the first line develops further in the second line.

Medial Parallelism

This is medial linking in two consecutive lines. Two same words are repeated in a medial position and convey the same meaning. The two lines which portray medial linking are extracted from the poem, *Ihlathi LaseNkandla* (Nkandla's forest):

> ... Ngoba **ubumnyama** bakho buyesabeka.
> Lobo **bumnyama** bungiyengile ...
> *(... Because your darkness is feared,*
> *That darkness deceived me ...)*
> (Msimang 1980: 23)

The darkness is depicted as a dense, dark forest. Darkness is emphasized in the poem. It was used as a shelter for animals and a refugee camp during Cetshwayo's era. The poet adopts flexible linking without stifling his poetry. Medial linking, like all other types, is a means of stirring the emotions, as it appeases, delights, and emphasizes a specific thought. It is demonstrated as follows:

> a.........b.........c.........d
> ⇕
> e.........b.........f...........g

Medial parallelism is also found in the poem, *Yimpi* (It is war) in the following lines:

> Nxulumakazi **elalilapha**, wangcwatshwaphi?
> Dolobhakazi **elalilapha**, wathuthelaphi?
> *(Large cattle byre which was here, where you were buried?*
> *Large city which was here where have you relocated to?)*
> (Msimang 1980: 30)

The negative impact of the war is revealed in the poem by questioning the whereabouts of the large cattle byre and city which are now non-existent. The word, *elalilapha* (which was here) depicts medial parallelism in two consecutive lines. It appears that the war had a devastating effect because it covered wide and varied spatial settings. Relocation, destruction and instability prevailed in both the cattle byre and city.

RESULTS

The study focused on syntactic and semantic parallelism as displayed in the following poems: *Ihlathi LaseNkandla* (Nkandla's forest),

Isandlwana (Sandlwana hill), *Le Mbali…Le Nyosi* (This flower… This bee), *Ifu Elimnyama* (The dark cloud), *Ushaka kaSenzangakhona* (Shaka, son of Senzangakhona), *Inkondlo Ka-Mkabayi* (Mkabayi's Poem) and *Yimpi* (It is war). The poems are selected on linguistic feature called parallelism. They are, however, displaying the repetition of predicates and nouns as syntactic or sentence groupings. Various semantic parallelism aspects such as synonyms, antithetic, synthetic, star like and medical concepts are given with relevant examples. Each parallelism is vividly illustrated to exhibits its structural set-up and functions in poetry.

The sentence constructions and the meaning of words are vital in this study. It is evident that parallelism cannot be achieved when it is used alone, but it needs other rhetoric devices such as antithesis, anaphora, apostrophe and asyndeton. Mgwenya (2014: 92) highlighted the following about parallelism:

> Luchumano lwehlukaniswe kanyenti, kukhona lolusekugcineni, lolwatiwa ngekutsi luchumanosigcino. Kukhona loluba sekhatsi nemigca lwatiwa ngekutsi luchumanomkhatsini.
> *(Parallelism is divided several times; there is parallelism by terminative linking. There is parallelism by initial linking. There is medical parallelism)*

It is noted that parallelism is defined, described and analysed in the study in relation to syntactical constructions and semantic variations. It is further highlighted that most poetic words are connotations that are explained by Scheffler (2015: 166) as follows:

> The range of associated, secondary or accompanying meanings implied by a word, phrase or statement. Additional, implied meaning is used to enrich text.

It is apparent to state that poetic structure complements poetic meaning, therefore, they must be identified, compared and analysed together in poetry.

DISCUSSION

Parallelism depicts the structural dimension of a poem. It follows structuralism as one of the fundamental approaches in the study of literature. This approach is primarily concerned with special emphasis on relations of harmony and agreement and conflict and disagreement between parts of the text and between parts and

the entire text. In other words, a literary text is viewed as a whole consisting of units which perform a unifying function of the structure that holds the literary work together. Hawkes (1977: 17) postulated the following:

Structuralism regards language as a system of signs which is used to express ideas. The elements or system of communication become meaningful when they are brought into a relationship with each other. These various structures cannot be studied in isolation.

According to Hawkes, every component in poetic discourse contributes sense, logic and rationality to the study. He considers meaning and content. A structural analysis examines the construction of units' elements and their interactions. Linguistic feature which are similar are called parallelism in poetry.

Guma (1968: 159) defined parallelism as follows:

… certain similarity between two parts or members of a sentence, whose words correspond to one another.

According to this definition, there should be two similar parts in a sentence to qualify for the necessities of parallelism. These segments or parts should be a repetition of similar linguistic units.

Parallelism by Means of Initial Linking

This parallelism means that at the beginning of each line some words and or phrases of two successive lines are repeated. Synonyms are sometimes used as parallelism in initial linking. Ntuli (1976: 45) has used this poetic device as follows:

Ngabona *izinyama ukushuqelana*
Ngabuka *amehlo ha anobubele*
(I saw the muscles bulging
I looked at its eyes alas! They are full of meekness)

Parallelism by Means of Final Linking

This type of parallelism refers to instances where the final words in successive lines are repeated and sometimes have the same meaning. Thwala (1984: 26) used the device as follows:

Lala qhawe lakithi
Phumula Vilakazi wakithi
(Sleep here our hero
Rest our Vilakazi)

Parallelism by Medical Linking

Medical linking is illustrated by Msimang (1980: 34) as follows:

Incuncu ephuze kwezinde
Ngoba uphuz amanz' aseFotheya
Waze wathunga isicoco sabelungu
Ingani oyise bebethung' ungiyane
(Honey bird that drank from the deep ones
Because he drank water from Fort Hare
He wove a head-ring of the whites
Whereas his fathers' made head-rings from mimosa gum

There are various types of parallelism that are used in poetry, but the coverage of this study is confined to the selected aspects for meaningful discussions.

CONCLUSION

Syntactical and semantic organizations are elicited through the repetition of syntactical and semantic elements. It is generally observed that Msimang's poetry is characterized by linking and parallelism techniques which create a special rhythm. This rhythm is brilliantly discernable in most of his poetry. The poetic techniques are glossily and brilliantly used to emphasize the concepts and thoughts, whether excellent or dull, complex or simple, obscure or clear. The poet thoughtfully expresses the central idea, which is brought about by the use of primary or constitutive and poetic imagination. The lines or verses minify and magnify, depress and inspire, blunt and sharpen the central idea of a poem with the use of properly selected poetic diction. It is apparent to note that parallelism is not solely confined to two selected organizational aspects, but it extends to phonology, morphology, rhetoric and pragmatics.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the usage of parallelism in poetry should reflect various types of imagery for poetic language. The emphasis on syntactic and semantic organizations should not supersede poetic language. The spontaneous use of parallelism for intended effect needs to be encouraged and emphasized to avoid a mere repetition. Rhythm is vital in this structural discourse. The movement created by the arrange-

ment of long and short stressed and unstressed syllables need to be looked at in line with poetic diction, structure and meanings. It may be regular or irregular, strong or weak to achieve effects. The concentration is on repetition of words, phrases or sentences to produce rhythmic movement. Repeating a line of a verse forms a refrain that reinforces the structural patterns and emotive language. Parallelism as a repetition technique should focus on emphasis of particular ideas, create a particular rhythm and promote unity in the poem.

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