

RHETORICAL TROPES IN FAIRY TALE NARRATIVE (WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO HYPERBOLE)

Language is not a neutral means of communication, rhetorical tropes are deeply and necessarily involved in the forming of realities. The investigation of the rhetorical features of the fairy tale shows that certain tropes appear often and repeatedly, while others are rather infrequent. Hyperbole is ranked among the widespread specific fairy tale tropes aimed at obvious and intentional exaggeration. Fairy tale genre is hyperbolic by its nature.

An important stylistic feature of the fairy tale hyperbole is its tendency to animating. Neutralized hyperbole, like other neutralized rhetorical tropes requires literal interpretation, in case of alternative, i.e. metaphoric interpretation, the following narration can be under threat of logical and semantic collapse.

Keywords: rhetorical trope, stylistic device, hyperbole, fairy tale, narrative, exaggeration, emphasis, animation, neutralization.

Rhetoric (comes from the Greek word for “speech” or “spoken”) studies the efficacy of language extensively, including its emotional effect, as much as its propositional content. The origin of rhetorical tropes goes back to the early Greek rhetoric, as they were first identified by rhetorical philosophers such as Aristotle, Quintillion and Cicero; the study of tropes was of great significance in classical rhetoric.

R. Nordquist reveals three main purposes of rhetorical figures of speech: to train and amuse people through the play of language, to convince people of the truth or value of the message that a figure expresses, to help people to have in mind both the meaning of the message and its figurative expression (Nordquist 2015: 115).

On the one hand, rhetoric has often been discounted as something only concerned with style or appearances, on the other hand most contemporary semioticians regard rhetoric as falling within the domain of semiotics (Nöth 1990: 338).

Tropes convey meanings of words that vary from their direct literal meanings. There is an obvious shift to figurative, non-literal meanings in tropes. The trope, in fact, is a figurative expression intended to create artistic effects. Its main purpose is to give new meaning to the texts. Using tropes people intensify their feelings, emotions and passions (<https://literarydevices.net/trope/>).

The importance of rhetorical tropes was discussed by D. Chandler in his “Semiotics for Beginners”: language is not a neutral means, rhetorical forms are deeply and necessarily involved in the forming of realities. “All discourse is unavoidably rhetorical, though academic writers often deny its presence in their writing. Rhetoric does not merely shows how thoughts are presented but it is an influence on ways of thinking which deserves serious attention” (Chandler 1995: 95).

According to T. Hawkes “figurative language is a language which doesn’t mean what it says in contrast to literal language which is at least intended to be, or taken as, purely denotative” (Hawkes 1972: 1).

Rhetorical tropes can be regarded as providing us with a diversity of ways of expressing “this is (or is like) that”. Trope may be significant to comprehension if we describe it as a means of delivering the unfamiliar more familiar. Moreover, however they are defined, the conventions of transferred language constitute a rhetorical code, and understanding this code is part of the culture in which it is employed. It is a code which refers to how things are represented rather than to what is represented (Chandler 1995: 97).

Tropes originate “imagery” with connotations over and above any “literal” meaning. When we use a trope, our statement becomes part of a much wider system of associations which is beyond our control. Yet the use of tropes is inevitable. Rhetorical tropes permit us to see one thing in terms of another. Tropes “orchestrate the interactions of signifiers and signifieds” in discourse (Silverman 1983: 87).

In their landmark work “General Rhetoric”, the Belgian theorists of style argue that what is renounced by logic is of interest for rhetoric (Dubois 1986: 236). In such an approach “the fairy tale text with its remarkable disregard for norms of logic and the creation of an alternative one should be a most appropriate subject for rhetorical study” (Jivanyan 2007: 44).

The significance of a rhetorical approach to the investigation of the folk tale was mentioned by V. Propp and M. Lüthi. In his structural analysis of the Russian fairy tale, V. Propp states: “It is possible to accurately demarcate those areas in which the folk narrator never creates, and areas in which he creates more or less freely... The storyteller is free in his choice of linguistic means. This highly rich area is not subject to the morphologist’s study. The style of a tale is a phenomenon which must be studied separately” (Propp 2001: 112-113).

The study of the fairy tale style is of great importance for providing necessary knowledge of its national spirit. This statement is viewed by B. Holbek:

...in the first place, folktales – and particularly fairy tales do not respect regional or national borders. Nothing essential in their contents has any relation to the language, culture, history, environment, social and religious institutions of any particular nation. If tales from several nations are translated into a language foreign to them all, only name and superficial details will remain to indicate their origin. The truly national characteristics are found at the level of language and style (Holbek 1987: 28).

M. Lüthi very often stressed the significance of taking into consideration the style of the fairy tale as essentially distinct from that of other genres. It is doubtful that each separate fairy tale has its own unique style. However, in “Once upon a Time: on the Nature of the Fairy Tales”, M. Lüthi mentioned: “The fairy-tale genre has its own style, which is clearly visible despite the individual and national characteristics of the narrative, from which a good portion of the fairy tale’s charm emanates” (Lüthi 1976: 48). The scholar prefers to “hold fast to what remains constant while disregarding the superficial differences that vary from one tale to another” (Lüthi 1986: 3).

A. Jivanyan states that M. Lüthi's observation concerning fairy tale tropes can be viewed as supporting the genre theory of tropes (Jivanyan 2007: 47).

The investigation of the rhetorical features of the fairy tale shows that certain tropes appear often and repeatedly, while others are rather infrequent.

Among the widely used rhetorical tropes hyperbole can be distinguished.

Hyperbole is a rhetorical trope aimed at obvious and intentional exaggeration in order to achieve emphasis or effect. Hyperbole comes from the Greek *hyper*, "over" and *bollein*, "to throw". Hyperbole has a long tradition; it passed through the ancient era and is found numerous times in Greek texts.

Aristotle defines the application of hyperbole through metaphors and similes. In his work "The 'Art' of Rhetoric" he writes: "There is something youthful about hyperboles; for they show vehemence. Wherefore those who are in a passion most frequently make use of them" (Aristotle 1926: 409).

The concept of hyperbole was further on commented by the Roman rhetoricians. In the first century Quintilian observed that hyperbole is "commonly used even by ignorant people and peasants, which is understandable, as all people are by nature inclined to magnify or to minimize things and nobody is content to stick to what is really the case. But such departure from the truth is pardoned, because we do not affirm what is false. In a word, the hyperbole is a beauty, when the thing itself, of which we have to speak, is in its nature extraordinary; for we are then allowed to say a little more than the truth, because the exact truth cannot be said; and language is more efficient when it goes beyond reality than when it stops short of it" (Quintilian 1977: 75). He introduces hyperbole as a kind of joke and offers an example about a man so tall he hit his head on the arch of Fabius (ibid: 67).

According to Seneca the purpose of any hyperbole is to arrive at the truth by falsehood. Some rules are overstated in order that in the end they may reach their true value, hyperbole never expects to attain all that it ventures, but asserts the incredible in order to arrive at the credible (Webb 1993: 10).

Hyperbole was widely spread throughout the Renaissance, though Erasmus and T. Wilson were against hyperbole's common usage, as it confused the truth and reality (Stanivukovic 2007: 9).

W. Safire in his book "How Not to Write: The Essential Misrules of Grammar" states that the trick to real hyperbole is to give a specific twist to evidently fantastic exaggeration (Safire 1990: 58).

In defense of hyperbole as a forceful rhetorical trope, we shall introduce the following definition: "Hyperbole is the polished mirror into which the black imagination gazes with every other rhyme, laughing as it sees itself refracted and distorted in a phantasmagorial kaleidoscope. The language of hyperbole amplifies reality by carrying us beyond the boundaries of rational thought, past the limits of the real into surreal, into a universe are literally far-fetched, unexpected, wild, extraordinary. Their impact is surprise, a function of their freshness and power. Hyperbole makes extraordinary demands on the imagination: the

lines start here, and before you know it they are out there, way out, pushed to their extremest possibility, beyond earth-sense into rare cosmic time-space” (Onwuchekwa 2003: 3-4).

In order to reveal essential role of hyperbole in fairy tale texts we shall consider some fairy tale features introduced by M. Luthi. The scientist characterizes fairy tale as a form of wish fulfillment where man’s last and eternal wish can be fulfilled. The folktale portrays world that is in order and believes that the world is truly the way it perceives and shows it to be (Luthi 1986: 89).

In “Function and Significance of the Folktale” M. Luthi considers folktale as a dream of the powerless, the poor, and the oppressed, to whom the idea of mastering the world through action is alien. “And this dreamlike vision of the world, a vision that demands nothing of us, neither faith nor avowal, accepts itself so matter-of-factly and is given verbal expression so unerringly that we let ourselves be carried away by it in a state of bliss” (ibid: 85-87).

M. Luthi's characteristics permits to assume that fairy tale genre is hyperbolic by its nature. If we compare characteristic features of hyperbole and fairy tale narrative, an obvious similarity between them is undoubted. We shall consider the following examples: departure from the truth, magnification of things, fanciful overstatement, assertion of incredible in order to arrive at the credible, beyond reality, beyond the boundaries of rational thought, beyond the limits of the real into surreal, unexpected, extraordinary.

Therefore, it is natural that hyperbole is one of the specific widespread tropes in fairy tale narrative.

Below we shall give some examples of hyperbole from J. Jacob’s collection of English fairy tales. In the fairy tale “Jack and the Beanstalk” the beans grow and reach the sky in a night:

*“Ah! you don’t know what these beans are”, said the man; “if you plant them overnight, **by morning they grow right up to the sky.**”*

*...So Jack jumped up and dressed himself and went to the window. And what do you think he saw? Why, **the beans** his mother had thrown out of the window into the garden **had sprung up into a big beanstalk which went up and up and up till it reached the sky.***

So Jack climbed, and he climbed and he climbed and he climbed and he climbed and he climbed and he climbed till at last he reached the sky (Jacobs 1968: 54-55).

We meet a character “Know-it-all” in “The Master and His Pupil”:

*There was once a very learned man in the north country **who knew all the languages under the sun, and who was acquainted with all the mysteries of creation*** (ibid: 154).

In the fairy tale “Mr Fox” Lady Mary had more lovers than she could count:

*Lady Mary was young, and Lady Mary was fair. She had two brothers, and **more lovers than she could count*** (ibid: 109).

The hyperbole “streets paved with gold” makes a humorous effect in fairy tale “Whittington and his Cat”:

Now Dick had heard many, many very strange things about the great city called

*London; for the country people at that time thought that **folks in London were all fine gentlemen and ladies; and that there was singing and music there all day long; and that the streets were all paved with gold.***

*So Dick got safe to London, and was in such a hurry to see **the fine street paved all over with gold** that he did not even stay to thank the kind waggoner; but ran off as fast as his legs would carry him, through many of the streets, thinking every moment to come to those **that were paved with gold** (ibid: 122-123).*

Very often in fairy tales hyperbole is on the verge of fantasy. A passage from “Nix Nought Nothing” may serve as a bright example:

*The giant’s daughter said she would help him, and **she cried all the beasts in the field, and all the fowls in the air, and in a minute they all came, and carried away everything that was in the stable and made it all clean before the giant came home.***

...the giant’s daughter called on all the fish in the sea to come and drink the water, and very soon they drank it dry.

Nix Nought Nothing threw down the hair dagger and out of it grew as quick as lightning a thick hedge of sharp razors placed cuss-cross (ibid: 38-39).

Hyperbole is widely used in Armenian fairy tales. Below we shall introduce some examples from the Artsakh versions:

*Էտ Կքավա սարը Էնքան դաշանգյ սար ա, վեր ամսեն մին հղե քյնոդ ընդրա պեցուր քրերեն, թխպըմը կորած սրերեն **յըշիս ա, դորթ-դորթ վեր պըռըշեն ճուրը քյինիս ա** (ՀԺՀ հ. V, 1966: 469):*

*Վըեր կյարունըր յասամանին պենվում չա՛ր, **վըետը աշխարքըս յոր ար օնըս** (ՀԺՀ հ. V, 1966: 83):*

Ախճիգը տափան մինչև երգյինք ուրախացավ, աշխարքըս ուրանը տըռեավ, փըթաթվից Էտ տըղին վիզավը, կուլավըն ընգավ, պըչպըչորից (ՀԺՀ հ. V, 1966: 91):

The expressions *վեր յըշիս ա, պըռըշեն ճուրը քյինիս ա* (when they see it they are drooling), *վըետը աշխարքըս յոր ար օնըս* (the smell spreads all over the world), *տափան մինչև երգյինք* (from the earth to the sky), *աշխարքըս ուրանը տըռեավ* (he owned the world) are examples of hyperboles.

A. Jivanyan states that an important stylistic feature of the fairy tale is its tendency to neutralize tropes by animating them. She considers the appearance of some distinctive fairy tale devices at the expense of the intentional enlivening of the worn semantics of some hackneyed tropes. Neutralized tropes require literal interpretation, in case of alternative, i.e. metaphoric interpretation, the following narration will be under threat of logical and semantic collapse (Jivanyan 2007: 49-50).

Similar phenomenon is true concerning fairy tale hyperbole. We shall consider the following passage from L. Carroll’s “Alice in Wonderland”:

Poor Alice! It was as much as she could do, lying down on one side, to look through into the garden with one eye; but to get through was more hopeless than ever: she

*sat down and began to cry again...shedding **gallons of tears**, until there was a large pool around her (Carroll 1982: 24).*

The trope “gallons of tears” is not to be interpreted figuratively, otherwise the succeeding text may be under threat of logical and semantic collapse. As a result of enlivening the hyperbole “gallons of tears”, the trope is neutralized and changed into a narrative device, making possible realization of the further narration:

...her foot slipped, and in another moment, splash! she was up to her chin in salt-water.

*Her first idea was that she had somehow fallen into the sea...However, she soon made out that she was in **the pool of tears** which she had wept when she was nine feet high. I shall be punished for it now by being drowned in my own tears! (Carroll 1982: 27).*

The hyperbole “pool of tears” should be also interpreted literally. Otherwise, the fact of swimming and being drowned in salt water, described in the passage, would be nonsense. By the way, the idea of being drowned in one’s own tears is also introduced by H. Toumanyan in his legend “Parvana”.

The hyperbole “rivers of tears” is also observed in numerous folk tales. As an example let us take “Tattercoats” included in J. Jacob’s collection on English fairy tale:

So he turned his back, and sat by his window looking out over the sea, and weeping great tears for his lost daughter, till his white hair and beard grew down over his shoulders and twined round his chair and crept into the chinks of the floor, and his tears, dropping on to the window-ledge, wore a channel through the stone, and ran away in a little river to the great sea (Jacobs 1968: 185).

In the article “Neutralization of Tropes in Armenian Fairy Tale Narrative” A. Jivanyan claims that “the phrase **his tears, dropping on to the window-ledge, wore a channel through the stone, and ran away in a little river to the great sea** emerges at the expense of the animation of a trope (either a simile, tears flew like a river, or a hyperbole, a river of tears). The window through which the river of tears flows towards the sea may stand as a masked metaphor for the eye shedding tears” (Jivanyan 2007: 2).

To provide a comparative analysis we shall consider an analogous hyperbole in the Artsakh tale “Grimalkin” (Չաք պառաւլը), told by a peasant woman Araksya Hambardsumian and recorded by Margarit Grigorian in 1949:

*Ախչիզըը ընգիս ա ծակնեն, լաց ինիլավ շոռ կյաս, վեր հացը ճարի: Շատ վեր լաց ա ընիս, **քրտսունքները մին կլետ ա տոնայս** ըսկսիս քյնալը: Էտ կլետետ ճուրը հսնիս ա մին չուրանու: Չորանը խմիս ա, տսնայս աղի: Էտ վեր տսնայս ա, գրմնայս ա: Եր ա կնայս էտ ճրիտ վարը յոր ունես քյիս... Շատ ա քյիս, իրեզյա քյիս, տսնայս ա մին ախչիզ իստած մուղուր, մուղուր կյալավ իւրըրվխարավ կյալավ լաց ա ինիս (ՀԺՀ հ. V, 1966: 616):*

Being persecuted by her wicked stepmother a girl cried so much that her tears turned into a river and flew to a shepherd. The trope “rivers of tears” should be taken literally, that is the

hyperbole is animated, neutralized. Only in this case it is evident that the shepherd tasted the salt water of the river and found the crying maiden.

The hyperbole “gallons of tears” is widely spread in the corpus of Armenian fairy tales. In the tale “Otsamanuk and Arevaat” by Gh. Aghayan the captive girls shed gallons of tears:

Այդ խեղճ աղջկերբը այնպես էին հեծկլտում, որ տեսնողի մազերը փշաքաղվում էր....ու արտասուքի հեղեղ էր, որ թափում էին հեկեկալով (Աղայան 1956: 224):

In some Armenian fairy tales the wicked stepmothers make their stepdaughters cry so much to fill the trough with tears. Such examples can be found in the Armenian tales «Ոսկեմազիկը» (Goldilocks), «Խորթ ախճիկն ու հալալ ախճիկն» (Own Daughter and Stepdaughter), «Վարդիկ եզան հեքիաթը» (Tale of the Ox Vardik), «Խորթ մոր հեքիաթը» (Stepmother), «Թանջուման Խաթուն» (Tandguman Khatun).

Concluding the article we can state that rhetorical tropes constitute an integral part of any text, fairy tale texts in particular. Hyperbole is one of the widely recognized tropes in fairy tale narrative. Very often the nature of the “fairy tale” hyperbole varies, that is from stylistic device it turns into narrative one through animation or neutralization.

*ՀՌԵՏՈՐԱԿԱՆ ՀՆԱՐՔՆԵՐԸ ՀԵՔԻԱԹԻ ՊԱՏՈՒՄՈՒՄ (ՀԱՏՈՒԿ ՀՂՈՒՄՈՎ ՉԱՓԱԶԱՆՑՈՒԹՅԱՆԸ)- ԼՈՒՄԻՆԵ ԹՈՎՄԱՍՅԱՆ -*Լեզուն հաղորդակցության չեզոք միջոց չէ, իրականությունը ձևավորելու համար լայնորեն կիրառվում են հոետորական հնարքները: Հեքիաթի հոետորական առանձնահատկությունների ուսումնասիրությունը ցույց է տալիս, որ որոշ հնարքներ օգտագործվում են հաճախակի և բազմիցս, իսկ մյուսները՝ բավականին հազվադեպ: Չափազանցությունը հեքիաթի հնարքներից ամենատարածվածներից է, որն ուղղված է բացահայտ և կանխամտածված ուռճացմանը: Հեքիաթի ժանրն իր բնույթով հիպերբոլիկ է:

Հեքիաթի չափազանցության ոճական կարևոր առանձնահատկությունը նրա անիմացիոն հակումն է: Չեզոքացված չափազանցությունը, ինչպես և հոետորական չեզոքացված մյուս հնարքները, պահանջում է բառացի մեկնաբանություն, այլընտրանքային՝ այսինքն փոխաբերական մեկնաբանության դեպքում հետագա շարադրանքը կարող է տրամաբանական և իմաստաբանական առումով չհիմնավորված լինել:

Բանալի բառեր. հոետորական հնարք, ոճական հնարք, չափազանցություն, հեքիաթ, պատում, ուռճացում, շեշտադրում, անիմացիա, չեզոքացում:

РИТОРИЧЕСКИЕ ТРОПЫ В СКАЗОЧНОМ НАРРАТИВЕ (С ОСОБОЙ ССЫЛКОЙ НА ГИПЕРБОЛУ)- ЛУСИНЕ ТОВМАСЯН- Язык не является нейтральным средством коммуникации, для формирования реалий широко используются риторические тропы. Изучение риторических особенностей сказки показывает, что некоторые тропы используются часто и неоднократно, а другие довольно редко. Гипербола относится к числу широко распространенных сказочных тропов, направленных на явное и преднамеренное преувеличение. Жанр сказки по своей природе гиперболичен.

Важной стилистической особенностью сказочной гиперболы является ее склонность к анимации. Нейтрализованная гипербола, как и другие нейтрализованные риторические тропы, требует буквальной интерпретации, в случае альтернативной, то есть метафорической интерпретации, последующее повествование может быть логически и семантически необоснованным.

Ключевые слова: риторический троп, стилистический прием, гипербола, сказка, повествование, преувеличение, акцент, анимация, нейтрализация.