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SYNTACTIC MEANS OF LANGUAGE PLAY IN THE WORKS OF 20TH-CENTURY CHILDREN'S WRITERS

Zaribbayeva Zarnigor Rustamovna

Teacher of the Department of Russian Language and Literature

Urgench state pedagogical institute

zarnigorr11@icloud.com

Abstract. The article examines the syntactic means of language play in the works of 20th-century Russian and Uzbek children's writers. Particular attention is paid to such techniques as syntactic repetition, parallelism, inversion, ellipsis, dialogization, question-and-answer form, comic enumeration, exclamatory constructions, and the intentional violation of the logic of utterance. Based on the works of K. I. Chukovsky, S. Ya. Marshak, A. L. Barto, S. V. Mikhalkov, G. Gulyam, Khudayberdi Tukhtabaev, Anvar Abidjan, and other authors, it is revealed that syntax in children's literature performs not only a grammatical but also an artistic-game function. It becomes a means of conveying children's logic, comic effect, action dynamics, colloquial intonation, and the national-cultural specificity of artistic speech. It is concluded that syntactic language play is an important component of the poetics of 20th-century children's literature.

Keywords: language game, syntax, children's literature, comic effect, dialogue, repetition, ellipsis, Russian language, Uzbek language.

20th-century children's literature represents a special field of fiction in which language is oriented toward the perception of the child. A child perceives a work not only through content but also through speech movement, intonation, repetition, and the emotionality of phrases. Therefore, syntax in children's literature is of particular importance. It does not merely connect words into sentences, but creates rhythm, play, comedy, liveliness, and the dynamics of the artistic world.

Language play, in a broad sense, is understood as the creative use of linguistic means based on the intentional violation of habitual norms, expectations, or standard ways of expression. If phonetic language play acts primarily through sound, and lexical play through word meaning, then syntactic play is revealed at the level of phrase construction. It arises when the author intentionally uses an unusual word order, repeats the same constructions, constructs comic dialogues, breaks the expected logic of the utterance, creates chains of identical actions, or conveys the character's speech through short, fragmentary, emotional remarks.

The specificity of syntactic language play lies in the fact that it often conveys not a single funny image, but the very course of the character's thinking. In children's literature, this is especially important, as children's thinking is characterized by directness, emotionality, a tendency for unexpected associations, and a literal understanding of the situation. Therefore, the syntactic organization of the text helps the writer show how the child sees the world, how they reason, make mistakes, wonder, argue, and fantasize.

The purpose of this work is to identify the main syntactic means of language play in the works of Russian and Uzbek children's writers of the 20th century and to determine their role in creating a comic and artistic-expressive effect.

To achieve the goal, the following tasks were set: to identify the main types of syntactic language games; to examine their functions in works for children; to identify the features of the syntactic organization of Russian and Uzbek children's texts; and to demonstrate the connection between syntactic games and children's thinking, the comic effect, and national speech tradition.

The research material was the works of K. I. Chukovsky, S. Ya. Marshak, A. L. Barto, S. V. Mikhalkov, G. Gulyam, Khudayberdi Tukhtabaev, Anvar Abidjan, Pulat Mumin, and other authors. Works dedicated to language play, children's speech, and the poetics of literary text were used as a theoretical basis.

One of the main syntactic means of language play is repetition. In Russian children's literature, repetition is particularly evident in the works of K. I. Chukovsky and S. Ya. Marshak. In Chukovsky's work, repeated constructions create a sense of rapid movement. The heroes run, shout, call, get scared, and return. Syntax becomes dynamic and almost theatrical. Repetition here functions as a motor of action. It creates an increasing effect: each new repetition increases tension or comedy.

In S. Ya. Marshak, repetition is often associated with the creation of a stable comic image. In the poem "That's so absent-minded," the repeated characterization of the hero becomes the foundation of the entire composition. Comedy arises not only from individual character mistakes but also from their sequential accumulation. Each new situation is syntactically correlated with the previous one, and as a result, an image of a person is created in whom the very logic of behavior is disrupted (Marshak, 1984). Repetition here performs not a mechanical, but a meaning-forming function.

In Uzbek children's literature, repetition also occupies a significant place, but its nature is somewhat different. It is closely linked to oral folk tradition. In Uzbek fairy tales, poems, and humorous stories, repetition helps create melodiousness, colloquialism, and emotional expressiveness. It resembles the lively speech of a narrator who addresses the listener, holds their attention, and gradually unfolds the event. Therefore, syntactic repetition in Uzbek children's literature often performs not only a comic but also a narrative-communicative function.

The second important means is syntactic parallelism. It manifests in the construction of several sentences or phrases according to a single model. In children's literature, parallelism is particularly effective because the child easily perceives repetitive structures. However, the comic effect arises when an unexpected content appears within the same syntactic form. In other words, the form remains familiar, but the meaning changes every time.

In Russian children's poetry, parallel constructions are often used to depict a chain of absurd actions. The hero repeatedly makes a mistake, and each mistake is expressed by a similar syntactic pattern. As a result, a comic pattern emerges: the reader understands that the hero did not accidentally make a mistake once, but exists in a special "upside-down" logic.

In Uzbek literature, syntactic parallelism is often associated with folklore poetics. Repetitive constructions lend rhythm to the text and make it resemble oral narration. This is especially noticeable in works where the speaker's intonation is preserved. In such cases, the syntactic game does not destroy the text, but rather organizes it, creating a sense of natural oral speech.

The dialogization of the text holds a special place. Dialogue in children's literature is not just an exchange of remarks. This is a space where different types of thinking clash: adult and childlike, serious and playful, normative and free. It is precisely in dialogue that a comic effect often arises, because one character expects a normal response, while another responds unexpectedly, literally, or illogically.

In Russian children's literature, dialogization often brings the text closer to the stage action. In Chukovsky's work, characters are not simply described—they speak, argue, shout, command, and complain. Thanks to this, the text becomes lively and mobile. The syntax in such dialogues is built on short remarks, exclamations, questions, and repetitions. This creates a sense of play where the child becomes a participant in what is happening.

In A. L. Barto's works, dialogicity manifests itself differently. Her texts often convey children's speech in a domestic situation. Comedy arises from the simplicity and recognizability of syntax.Short sentences, incomplete remarks, and emotional reactions create the effect of a child's natural conversation. The child recognizes themselves, their intonations, and their reactions in such a text.

In Uzbek children's prose, dialogization holds a special artistic significance. In G. Gulyam's "The Naughty One" and Khudayberdi Tukhtabaev's "Mounted on a Yellow Dev," the hero's speech becomes the primary means of revealing the character. Comedy is born not only from events but also from how the hero narrates them. Its syntax is mobile, emotional, and close to colloquial speech. Remarks can be brief, cunning, or unexpected. Through such speech organization, the image of a resourceful, playful, and lively child is revealed (Ghulam, 2018; Tukhtabayev, 2013).

An important means of syntactic play is ellipsis, that is, incompleteness of the sentence. In children's speech, incomplete sentences are natural: the child often speaks quickly, emotionally, and omits what is clear from the situation. Writers use ellipsis to convey the immediacy and vividness of speech. Short phrases make the text dynamic and bring it closer to oral communication.

Ellipsis is especially important in comic situations. A full, grammatically expanded phrase would often sound too calm and rational. An incomplete remark conveys suddenness, surprise, fear, or joy. As a result, syntactic incompleteness becomes an artistic device. It shows not the lack of speech, but its emotional saturation.

In Russian children's literature, ellipsis is often used in poems and dialogues. In Barto, it helps convey childish directness, in Chukovsky, the swiftness of action, and in Marshak, the comedy of the situation. In Uzbek literature, elliptical constructions are associated with a lively colloquial manner. They help convey the oral nature of the narrative, especially in works where the narrator speaks in the first person.

Another significant technique is the question-and-answer form. It is close to the very nature of children's thinking, as the child learns about the world through questions. In children's literature, the question often serves not only an informative but also a playful function. The question may be naive, unexpected, absurd, or provocative. The response, in turn, can shatter expectations and create comedy.

The question-and-answer form is especially important because it engages the reader. When a question appears in the text, the child involuntarily tries to answer it. This is how the effect of complicity arises. The author does not merely convey information, but constructs a communication situation. In this sense, syntactic play performs a communicative function.

In Uzbek children's literature, question-answer constructions are closely linked to the tradition of oral communication. They often resemble a conversation, a riddle, a lesson, or a humorous dialogue. Through questions and answers, a kinship is established between the narrator and the reader. Comedy can arise from an unexpected answer, from a character's cunning, or from the mismatch between the question and the situation.

Comic enumeration plays a special role in the syntactic language game. The enumeration in children's literature is often built on the principle of accumulation. The author sequentially names objects, actions, mistakes, or events, and each new link enhances the comic effect. Such a listing

can be logically ordered, but it can also be deliberately chaotic. It is precisely chaos that often creates humor.

For Chukovsky, enumerations help convey the movement and disorder of the artistic world. Objects come to life, characters appear one after another, and events unfold rapidly. Syntax becomes like a chain of game actions. In Marshak's work, the enumeration is often associated with the hero's repeated mistakes. The more errors accumulate, the more the comic image manifests itself.

In Uzbek children's literature, enumeration is often associated with the liveliness of the story. The hero can list his adventures, excuses, observations, and impressions. At the same time, the syntax conveys his emotional state. Such a list brings the literary text closer to oral narration, where not only the events but also the narrator's intonation are important.

It is very important for children's literature to intentionally violate the logic of expression. In syntactic play, this manifests in unusual cause-and-effect relationships, unexpected transitions from one thought to another, and the connection of incompatible actions. This technique helps convey a child's perception of the world, in which the fantastic and the real are easily combined.

In Russian children's literature, the violation of logic is often associated with absurdity. For Chukovsky, the world can be upside down: objects act like people, animals behave like members of human society, the small becomes huge, the terrifying turns into the ridiculous, and vice versa. Syntax supports this poetics of absurdity: rapid phrases, repetitions, exclamations, and unexpected transitions create an effect of cheerful illogic.

In Uzbek children's literature, the violation of logic is more often associated with the character's subjective perspective. For example, in "The Mischievous One" or "Mounted on a Yellow Div," comedy arises from the hero explaining the events in his own way. He may justify his actions, exaggerate, be cunning, or draw unexpected conclusions. Here, the syntactic game reveals not so much the absurdities of the world as the characteristics of the narrator.

One should also highlight inversion, that is, an unusual word order. In children's poetry, inversion is often driven by rhythm and rhyme, but it can also have a playful function. Violation of the usual word order makes the phrase more expressive, emotional, and sometimes funny. Inversion allows for highlighting an important word and creating an unexpected effect.

In Russian, inversion is often used for emotional reinforcement. In Uzbek, where the usual word order differs from Russian, syntactic play can be built on moving a significant element forward, changing the habitual sequence of components, or on conversational restructuring of a phrase. This helps to convey the emotional state of the character and the liveliness of oral speech.

Interjectional constructions are also significant. They convey the emotionality of a child's speech and enhance the effect of direct experience. In children's literature, characters are often surprised, delighted, frightened, or indignant. Exclamatory sentences make speech lively and bring it closer to oral communication. In Russian texts, they often maintain fairy-tale dynamics and comic tension, while in Uzbek texts, they maintain colloquial intonation and emotional expressiveness of narration.

Thus, the syntactic means of language play in Russian and Uzbek children's literature have both common and distinctive features. Common are repetition, parallelism, dialogization, question-and-answer form, ellipsis, enumeration, exclamatory constructions, and the violation of the logic of utterance. These means are related to the universal characteristics of child perception: a child perceives speech better if it is rhythmic, emotional, repetitive, and dialogic.

The differences are linked to the characteristics of national literary traditions. In Russian children's literature, syntactic play is often aimed at creating dynamics, absurdity, rhythmic

expressiveness, and a comic violation of the norm. In Uzbek literature, it is more closely linked to oral speech, folk humor, narrative intonation, lively dialogue, and the image of a resourceful child.

The main conclusion is that syntax in children's literature is not a secondary grammatical level, but a crucial artistic mechanism. Through syntax, not only the form of the text is created, but also a special playful picture of the world. Repetitions set the rhythm, dialogues enliven the narrative, ellipsis conveys emotionality, enumerations create comedy, and a break in logic reveals a child's perception of reality.

Syntactic means of language play occupy an important place in the works of 20th-century children's writers. They manifest through repetition, parallelism, inversion, ellipsis, dialogization, question-and-answer constructions, comic enumeration, exclamatory sentences, and the violation of the logic of utterance.

In Russian children's literature, syntactic play is particularly evident in the works of K. I. Chukovsky, S. Ya. Marshak, A. L. Barto, and S. V. Mikhalkov. It helps to create action dynamism, rhythmic expressiveness, a comic effect, and an atmosphere of artistic play.

In Uzbek children's literature, syntactic play is realized in the works of G. Gulyam, Khudayberdi Tukhtabaev, Anvar Abidjan, Pulat Mumin, and other authors. Here, it is closely linked to the oral narrative tradition, colloquial speech, national humor, emotional dialogues, and the image of a mischievous, resourceful child.

Comparative analysis shows that the syntactic language game is a universal artistic tool, but its specific embodiment depends on the language structure, national tradition, and the writer's individual style. In Russian literature, it is more associated with absurdity, rhythmic dynamics, and the violation of habitual logic. In Uzbek literature, it relies more on oral speech, colloquial intonation, dialogue, and humorous narration.

Consequently, the syntactic language game can be considered an important component of the poetics of 20th-century children's literature. It helps convey children's logic, create a comic effect, enhance the emotionality of the text, and bring artistic speech closer to live communication with the child.

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