

An Analysis of Figures Of Speech in Two Selected Languages: English and Siswati

J.J Thwala, S.S Khoza, N.M Lusenga and J.J Mayisela

Abstract : The objectives of this article are to define and explicate figures of speech in English and Siswati for code-switching and code-mixing during teaching and learning and pursuit. Figures of speech, tropes or rhetorical devices are fundamental aspects of any language. The richness and the development of a language are measured through these aspects. Their classification as evident through comparisons, sound devices, contradictions, exaggeration and overstatement. They are defined according to their functions and formations. It is, however, difficult to directly translate them from the source language to the target language because of their implicit - explicit and vehicle-tenor dimensions. Only the speakers of the language feel comfortable during communication through these imaginative and figurative discourse. The interpretive and explanatory research skills are used to complement each other during this language practice.

Keywords: figurative discourse, target language, tropes, sound device, vehicle-tenor dimension.

I. Introduction

In general, figurative language departs from the language employed in the traditional, literal ways of describing a person or objects. Figures of speech are used for imaginative descriptions in fresh ways. In Siswati they are known as '*tinongo tenkhulumo*' or '*tinongonkhulumo*'. Specifically, we can define them as the use of words in an unusually way to denote conciseness, definiteness, emphasis and wisdom. They help to concretise abstract concepts and experiences. They may be used to describe such concepts and experiences as appearance, sound, manner, size, degree and number.

Joshi (2014:13) gives the following idea on a figure of speech:

An expression in which a word or phrase represents one thing in terms of something dissimilar (non-literal) to create a particular effect in somebody's mind, or in which an emphasis is produced by patterns of sounds.

Henry and Kames (2007:379) advance this view on tropes:

The using of a word in sense which is not proper to it. Two objectives presented the principal and the accessory. Aggrandizes its object. Prevents the familiar of proper names enriches and renders language more copious.

Simile (Sifaniso)

It is a figure of speech in which one thing is likened to another to clarify, intensify and enhance an image. It is an explicit comparison that is recognizable by the use of the following Siswati formatives: *njenga-*, *fana-*, *nganga-*, *kwa-* and *sa-*. Their equivalence in English are "as" and "like".

Altenberd and Lewis (1966:18) explain a simile as follows:

A figure of speech closely related to metaphor is a simile, in which similarity, rather than identity, is asserted. The figure of speech includes several words such as like, as, or than.

Van Rooyen's (1984:179) explanation is elaborate and is worth looking at how simile is applied:

Simile draws an explicit or direct comparison between two elements that belong to usually dissimilar categories. The elements consist of a tenor and a vehicle: the vehicle serves to emphasize, clarify and enhance the tenor. Simile is always introduced by explanatory conjunctives like, as, or than.

The examples of a simile are the following:

IMbabane yinkhulu ngangeManzini.

Mbabane is as big as Manzini.

IMbuluzi igeletisa kweMlumati.

Mbuluzi is flowing like Mlumati.

Metaphor (Sifanisongco)

It is a figure of speech in which one thing is described in terms of another. The comparison is usually implicit. It compares two things that share something in common.

Explaining metaphor, Murray (1978:83) elucidates the following on the figure of speech:

Metaphor is based on a combination of two Greek words meaning to carry over or to carry across. The term or expression is carried over from its common usage to another uncommon one, or some qualities or attributes of one object are carried over to another in such a way that the second object is then referred to as if it were the

first. All metaphors imply the recognition on the part of their user of some point of identity or comparison between normally unconnected objects.

Hendry (2001:179) advocates the following about the metaphor:

The figure of speech in which a direct comparison is drawn, without the use of word like or as, between two unlike things that share a single common quality. It consists of two elements: that which is being described (the tenor) and that which is used to describe it (the vehicle).

The figure of speech, metaphor is the author's mode of achieving concreteness, abstractness and vitality. It brings strength and clarity of impression. A vivid metaphor is usually more memorable and indelible. The examples of a metaphor are the following:

Inhlitiyo yaSihhehle litje.

Sihhehle's heart is a stone.

Lonhlanhla lilanga liphuma.

Lohlanhla is a rising sun.

Personification (*Kumuntfutisa/simuntfutiso*)

It is a figure of speech in which human qualities are attributed to an object, animal or idea. It is also known the humanizing or anthropomorphic metaphor.

Abrams (1981:65) explains as follows:

Another figure of speech related to metaphor is personification, or in the Greek term, prosopopeia, in which either an inanimate object or abstract concept is spoken of as though it were endowed with life or human attributes or feelings.

Cuddon (1979:501-502) defines personification as follows:

The impersonation or embodiment of some quality or abstraction, the attribution of human qualities to inanimate objects.

The example of a personification are the following:

Nyelela lilanga etindleleni takho.

Slink off sun in your paths.

Kufa uyatenta tiga.

Death, you are making wonders.

Euphemism (*Inhlonipho/sihlonipho*)

Euphemism is a substitution of a mild and pleasing expression for a harsh and blunt one. It is a figure of speech which is used to express something unpleasant in a pleasant manner in order to avoid embarrassment.

Schreiber (1969:134) defines euphemism as follows:

Unpleasant, embarrassing or frightening facts or words can be concealed behind euphemism: a word or phrase that less blunt, rude or terrifying.

Myers and Simms (1989:109) define it as:

Indirect reference to something distasteful, untoward, or indelicate-indirect in order to make the subject more acceptable.

The example of a euphemism are the following:

Babe ufik eadlile.

Our father arrived drunk.

Ingwenyama yesive yakhotsama.

The king of the nation passed on.

Hyperbole (*Sihabiso*)

In Greek, it is precisely known as 'overcasting.' It is the use of exaggerated terms for the sake of emphasis.

Ryken (2016:80) defines hyperbole as:

Conscious exaggeration for the sake of effect, is mother figure of speech that uses obvious poetic licence. It does so as a way of expressing strong feeling.

Fromkin and Rodman (1978:148) define it as follows:

Hyperbole is a textual feature of deliberate exaggeration used to emphasise. In short, this expression in which an exaggeration is made with no intention of deceiving, but simply heighten the effect.

The examples of a hyperbole are the following:

Mndvondvoshiya mudze ngangeticongo teMdzimba.

Mdvondvoshiya is as tall as Mdzimba's peaks.

Indlebe yaMavungwini ingangeyendlovu.

Mavungwini's ear is equal to that of an elephant.

Irony (*Siphukuto*)

It is the expression of the one's meaning by uttering something which is direct opposite of one's thoughts. However, it seems fairly clear that most forms of irony involve the awareness of a discrepancy, perception or incongruity between words and their respective meanings, actions and their outcomes or appearances and reality. Fowler (1987:128) defines irony as:

A mode of discourse for conveying meaning different from and usually opposite to the professed or ostensible ones.

DePryck (1993:96) contends the following:

In this figure of speech, the author seems to say something, but actually, he means something else. In this way, this figure of speech contains contradictory meanings out of which the student-reader must choose the right one and thus becomes more reflective.

The examples of an irony are the following:

Hitler kwakuligwala lelikhulu.

Hitler was a real coward.

Ufundze wagogodza ngobe ugcine ebangeni lesihlanu.

You are well-educated because you pursued your studies up to grade 5.

Paradox (*Indida*)

It is an apparently self-contradictory statement which, on closer introspection, is found to contain a truth and reconciling the conflicting opposite.

SweKhine (2013:45) defines paradox as follows:

This is a figure of speech which while at first glance appears not true and/or not feasible, a second reading can make it appear to the student-reader compatible with reality.

Josh (2014:98) gives this explanation on paradox:

An apparent self-contradictory statement one seems in conflict with logic.

The examples of a paradox are the following:

Unelicala lowo longamange abe nelicala.

The one who has never been found guilty, is found guilty.

Ubhudzile lowo longabhudzi

The one who does not dream, he dreamt.

Antithesis (*Kucatsanisa/sicatsaniso*)

It is the juxtaposing of a desperate ideas and images to heighten and clarify the concepts.

Hardy (2015:386) defines antithesis as follows:

This is when two different or opposing items or ideas are placed next to each other to emphasize their difference.

Lipson (2008:23) express this idea on antithesis:

A rhetorical contrast or apposing between ideas, often enacted through parallel structure. Antithesis is one of the favourite strategies of biblical poetry, as in this wisdom proverbs.

The examples of an antithesis are the following:

Lukhuni lutala umlota.

The fire wood breeds ash.

Ingwe itala umuntfu.

A tiger gives birth to a human being.

Climax (*Luvutfondzaba*)

It is a specific point of a greatest interest or intensity in any narrative. It is the high point of plot, sometimes referred to as a crisis or turning point. After the turning point, things are no longer exactly the same, and a new awareness grows.

Scheffler and Vosloo (2001:262) defines climax as follows:

A point in the plot in which the conflict or rising action is at the most intense.

Hendry (2001:174) gives this idea about the climax:

The part of a statement or progressive series of ideas which contains the greatest intensity of dramatic impact.

The examples of a climax are the following:

Wafundza eTiphembeleni, wendlulela eMasihambisane wagcina eSitintile.

He started schooling at Tiphembeleni, went to Masihambisane and completed his secondary level at Sitintile.
Wahlamba emfuleni Ligwa, wendlulela emfuleniSanguwagcinaelwandlekatii-Antilathiki.
He swam at Vaal River, went to Orange River and completed his swimming activities at Atlantic Ocean.

Anticlimax (*Lupholavutfondzaba*)

It is a sentence in which the last part expresses something lower than the first. It is bathetic declension from a noble tone to one less exalted.

Eigler and Kord (1997:13) express the following idea on anti-climax:

The term is designed as a rhetoric device in which the intensity or meaning of a sequence of expression declines, often for humorous purposes. The humour is generated by replacing the expected increase or climax with a sudden decline of intensity meaning.

The examples of an anticlimax are the following:

Wafundza wagcina angaphumelelanga.

He studied and end up not succeeding.

Watama kubalikhholwa kepha wagcina angumhedeni.

He tried to be a Christian but ended up being a hidden.

In literature, an anti-climax is frequently realized as an unexpected twist in the plot, generally used in the dramatic and narrative genres. Its purpose is usually to force the narrative or drama in entirely unexpected direction, thereby deliberately disappointing the reader's or spectator's expectations.

Sarcasm (*Silutfo*)

It is a better remark that is intended to wound the feelings. It is the type of humour that contains ironic criticism. A sarcastic remark may seem complimentary, but is actually meant as criticism.

Rycroft (1974:55) contends that:

An ironic expression, which is used in order to be unkind or offensive or to make fun of someone.

Thwala (2017:17) Maintains that:

Sarcasm is a rhetoric devices which means precisely in sharp and better manner. Sarcasm is found in all types of poems and themes narration, explanation, vivid and clarification, explicit illustration and decorative impression.

The examples of a sarcasm are the following:

Emtini wakhe kuseligocweni.

His house is a pigsty.

Umtimba waMtimba wemvubu.

Mtimba's body is that of a hippopotamus.

Pun (*Luteku*)

It is a figure of speech which involves a play upon words. Pun is widespread in many literatures and gives rise to a fairly universal form of humour. The Greek term is *paronomasia*.

Turner (1990:156) gives this view on pun:

A play on words, which are identical or similar in sound in order to create humour.

Clark (2001) gives his functional view on pun as follows:

A figure of speech of repetition. A play on words through the coupling of words that sound similar but which are very different semantically and etymologically.

The examples of a pun are the following:

Lomafa ligugu laLaBhembe watsi uyangena endlini wahlangana neligugu lelikhulu etukwekhabethe.

LaBhembe's treasure, Lomafa, she entered the house and see a cockroach in the cupboard.

Ngitsenge sibindzi esilaheni ngemalangeneni lamanyenti ngenca yekuba nesibindzi.

I bought a liver at the butchery with an exorbitant amount due to bravery.

Alliteration (*Sifutamsindvo*)

It is a figure of speech in which consonants are repeated. The alteration that is brought by consonant to achieve a special effect is known as consonance.

Minkova (2003:43) defines alteration as follows:

Alliteration is the repetition of the initial consonant into or more words.

Berman and Presajo (2018:34) give the following opinion:

It is a repetition of the same consonant sounds of different vowel sounds at the beginning of the words or in stressed syllables.

The examples of an alliteration are the following:

Kudla kudla kakhulu kuyacumbisana.

To eat too much food leads to constipation.

Titfo takhe tinkhulu.

His body parts are big.

Assonance (*Sifanankhamisa/sifutankhamisa*)

It is repetition of similar vowel sounds to achieve a particular effect of euphony. It is also known as vocal rhyme.

Lipson (2008:340) maintains the following on the figure of speech:

Assonance in its narrower sense is the likeness of vowels without that of the consonants in the end syllables of words.

Mariasalvan (1988:239) presents the following idea on the figure of speech:

Assonance is a homophonous incidence in diction which emphasises meaning patterns conveyed by the words. It is a rime, external or internal without a formal rime-scheme.

The examples of an assonance are the following:

Halala babe Dlabane!

Applaud to Mr Dlabane!

Klebhu klebhu ingubo yebantfu bo!

Piecing up the people's blanket.

Metonymy (*kuhlaneketela/sihlaneketelo*)

A figure of speech in which the name of an attribute or a thing is substituted for the thing itself.

May (2008:79) gives the following explanation on metonymy:

A figure of speech in which the name of one object is put for some other object, the two being so related that the mention of one naturally suggest the other.

Hart (1997:64) defines metonymy as follows:

Metonymy is a trope that takes its expression from near and close things and by which we can comprehend a thing that is not dominated by its proper word.

The examples of a metonymy are the following:

Lonjabulo ngiphe inhliityo yakho. (lutsandvo)

Lonjabulo, give me your love.

Sibiya bamudle sibaya sonkhe. (imfuyo)

Sibiya is fined is fined with the whole cattle by.

Synecdoche (*Simeli*)

It is a figure of speech in which a part stands for the whole.

Minkova (2007:123) provides this information on a figure of speech:

Synecdoche is defined as the substitution of the part for the whole or the whole for its parts.

The examples of a synecdoche are the following:

iKaizer Chiefs yehlule iManzini Wanderes.

Kaizer Chiefs beat Manzini Wanderes.

Ingwenyama Zwelithini utawucoca nengwenyama Makhosetive.

King Zwelithini will speak to king Makhosetive.

Refrain (*Imphindvwa*)

It is a sonic device that comprises alliteration and assonance. It is a phrase, lines repeated at regular intervals especially at the gagging or end of a stanza in a poem or song.

The examples of a refrain are the following:

Vuka Mswati weMaswati!

Wake up Mswati of the Swati.

Vuk' ume ngetinyawo....

Wake up and stand firm.

Apostrophe (*Umbiti/khulumangco/sokhundla*)

A figure of speech in which a thing, a place, an abstract quality, an idea, a dead or absent person is addressed as if present and capable of understanding.

Hart (1997:234) gives this view on the figure of speech:

Apostrophe addresses an absent person as if present, or an inanimate object as intelligent.

Ihlen and Heath (2018:98) explain the following on a figure of speech:

Apostrophe is a speech uttered to an addressee who is a hearer, in the presence of other hearers who are not who are not addressees. But who intended to become recipients by orienting to the address.

The examples of an apostrophe are the following:

Kufa luphi lundvonsi lwakhona?

Death, where is your sting?

Mdzibi vuleka ngingene.

Hole, open so that I can enter.

Onomatopoeia (*Sifanamsindvo*)

It is a figure of speech in which the sound reflects the sense. It is the formation and the use of words to imitate sound. It is an auditory device which is the use of words whose sound matches the action described.

The examples of an onomatopoeia are the following:

Emtini weluhhohho buhhomuhhomu bodywa!

It is noisy in the bar.

Incola ihambe yatsi godlo, gwadla, godlo, gwadla.

The car exhibited a scrappily noise while it is driven.

Metanoia (*Kuhlutumcondvo/sihlutamcondvo*)

It is the figurative device in which a statement is made and then withdrawn or lessened in its impact. It is an afterthought or change of mind statement.

Butterfield (2002:350) defines metanoia as follows:

A fundamental change in character or outlook, especially repentance.

Clark (2011:58) explains metanoia as follows:

It is the state of mind after experience; the mental condition which has developed itself after an entirely new set of circumstances has encompassed and invaded the consciousness.

The examples of a metanoia are the following:

Ngitakubulala! Ngitakushaya!

I will kill you! I will beat you!

Bamgwebe intsambo, cedze bagucula sincumo bamgweba lishumi leminyaka ejele.

He was given a life sentence, thereafter, changed the decision to ten years.

Pleonasm (*Imphindzamcondvo/siphindzamcondvo*)

It is an expression which is semantically redundant in that it repeats the meaning contained in which precedes or follows it.

The examples of a pleonasm are the following:

Emanga ayakhohlisa.

Lies are deceiving.

Inhlambi ihlamba emfuleni.

The swimmer swims in the river.

Oxymoron (*Umcondvophika*)

The yoking together of two expressions which are semantically incomparable, so that in combination they have no conceivable literal reference to reality.

The examples of an oxymoron are the following:

Kuhle kabi kusebenta.

It is extremely good to work.

Inhlanhla lembi kungasebenti.

It is a bad luck not to work.

Tautology (*Imphindzaciniso/siphindzaciniso*)

It is a repetition of words or ideas in a phrase or sentence. It is a statement which is vacuous because it is self-evidently true. It is an assembling of synonyms in a discourse to re-emphasize the meaning.

The examples of a tautology are the following:

Umfana mdvuna.

A boy is a male.

Letsiwe yintfombatane.

Letsiwe is a girl.

Periphrasis (*Malandzakhashane/silandzakhashane*)

It is a roundabout speech, of unnecessary length. It is also known as circumlocution. Semi-literate people tend to be tempted to this sort of pomp and verbosity.

The examples of a periphrasis are the following:

Umtali wamake lomsikati. (Gogo)

My mother's female parent. (Grandmother).

Kwakhiwe indlu lenkhulu yekufundzela. (Sikolo)

The big house for the educational purpose has been built. (School)

II. Conclusion

After defining the selected figures of speech, it is evident that they are the use of words that diverge from their normal meanings. They provide clarity, emphasis, new ideas and freshness of expressions. They produce the artistic mixture of words and rhythms. They help during conversation to set a particular mood and further appeal to the reader-recipient's intellects and emotions. The beauty of the language is disclosed by tropes.

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