Informal Writing in Children's Literature

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Introduction

Children are in the process of learning language, and the main language that they must learn is the standard language. On the other hand, it is obvious that using the form of stories is an effective way for learning the standard language. The language used in a story is non-teaching, emotional, friendly and at times full of dialogues. The standard language is one of the factors for preserving national unity; meanwhile, local dialects guarantee the identity of various ethnic groups that have lived alongside one another and their diversity is considered a privilege. Dialogues are significant because they contribute to the characterization and help the distinction of different people in a story. The selection of words and tone of the people speaking in different situations familiarizes the readers with the inner states of the characters. But if a child is expected to learn dialogues and the informal language in addition to the standard language, he/she might face duality of some sort. Sometimes this duality can lead to multiplicity because some child readers who come from cities other than Tehran know a local dialect as well; therefore, in addition to the standard Persian language and the dialect of Tehran (which is not essentially richer than other dialects but has become more widespread as a result of the prevalence of audio and

visual media) these children are learning three types of language at the same time. We need to think about solving this issue in literature. It can be imagined that a child perceives all three on a communicative level and uses them, but once he/she is going to experience and understand these three on the reading level, he/she might face difficulties.

Methodology, Review of Literature and Purpose

The present research uses the paradigm of qualitative research, with an interpretative approach and by data analysis through the comparative inductive methodology. All the resources are gathered from libraries.

Regarding the background of this discussion, the researcher did not find any independent book or article in Persian on the topic of dialogue or informal writing in children's stories. The subject is very briefly discussed in three books.

The researcher's purpose is to offer a strategy for solving the inconsistency between informal writing and formal standard writing in story-writing for children. This is not an issue in academic and teaching texts because they use the standard language and do not enter the literary field which is closer to the variety of peoples' lives; however, informal writing is indeed an issue in story writing.

Discussion

We are facing a major paradox: if we adhere to the standard language completely, we would distort intimacy and naturalness of the characters in the story; on the other hand, if we use broken syntax, we have ignored the standard language. The present article suggests the following for solving such paradox: firstly, emphasizing Mahmood Kianoosh's

suggestion, which is "changing the order of words in the sentence" instead of using "informal words", and focusing on proper writing of the words and breaking the order of words (on a syntactic level) with the aim of making the sentences similar to everyday discourse and dialogue; secondly, selecting words from the set of synonyms which are not only suitable for the audience's level of understanding, but also consistent with the pleasure they experience by reading a story, in such a way that they feel and experience the diverse circumstances of the characters of the story; thirdly, paying attention to the geography and the linguistic conventions of the certain region in which the story is happening; fourthly, paying attention to the fact that formal words become informal in the audience's mind in a fictional situation and atmosphere without the need to write them in an informal way because they have been placed in a fictional context and situation. Basically, readers of fictional texts participate in the formation of the story and create their own exclusive world which might be different from other readers' imaginations. It is normal for the readers to create a particular image that belongs to their own lives. The atmosphere and the setting of the story, and the vitality and the spontaneity of the characters help us read the words as informal very easier. In addition, the readers receive a term through their visual memories, though they read it with their auditory memories. Fifthly, those formal words should be selected that are used by the majority of people in their everyday conversations. Sixthly, there are words that are present both in classic literature and in peoples' conversations. By using such words, the audience gets acquainted with classic literature, while making the work closer to everyday conversation. Actually, the author utilizes the concordance

between the ancient literature and peoples' daily dialogues. Seventhly, using attached possessive pronouns and excluding extra words can help the authors write sentences closer to the peoples' conversation. Eighthly, the authors should pay attention to the fact that in historical stories, changing the words into informal ones could invalidate the authenticity of the dialogue atmosphere and even make the reader laugh. In these texts, it is inappropriate to make the words informal, and it should be kept in mind that the selected formal words are not modern, though the modern reader can understand them easily. Ninthly, even if the author decides to use informal words, he/she had better not exaggerate in doing so. Furthermore, in certain cases in which people use both formal and informal forms of a word in their daily conversations, it is more recommendable to use the formal term. And lastly, attention should be paid to exceptions. Wherever formal writing appears artificial, using the informal word is preferred. This is also true about popular proverbs which are common among people in an informal expression; where using the formal words might seem artificial and rather absurd.

Conclusion

Generally, it seems that there should be a clear distinction between the literature written for children and that which is written for adults. Modern adult readers do not have any problem with informal words. However, in the field of children's literature, due to linguistic subtlety, the situation is different. For the younger children, informal words must be avoided and colloquial sentences should be used quite cautiously and carefully.

The researcher has evaluated and criticized the model of "reducing the syllables" suggested by Ali Solhjou and has offered "spontaneous prose" as an alternative. Based on this model, it is impossible to determine and delimit the essence and details of dialogue-writing by a set of rules and principles. For determining how to write dialogues, the author and the logic of his/her story are the major criteria. If we believe in the unity of the elements of the story, then the prose and its features cannot and should not have any incoherence with the other elements.

Keywords: Children's literature, children's story, informal writing, dialogue, dialect, standard language

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