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A STUDY OF SOUND DEVICES IN POEMS OF TIGRIGNA FOCUSING ON CONSONANCE
[C-V-C]

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ABSTRACT

The article deals with a study of sound devices in selected Geramay Gebrus's Tigrigna poems taken from "wufal" (1993) focusing on consonance. The main aim of this study is to make out the consonance devices in the selected poems and to examine the role of this sound device in creating and achieving aesthetic effects. As a model, the revised method proposed by Leech (1969) in his book "A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry" has adopted for the study. Consequently, the result of the study shows the employment of a consonance device in the selected poems used for creating aesthetic effects and used to highlight the significance of certain words in a sentence.

Abrahams (1981:24) defines consonance as "repetition of consonant sounds at the ending of words placed near each other, usually on the same or adjacent lines." These should be in sounds that "are accented, or stressed, rather than in vowel sounds that are unaccented" (Leech: 1969:91). This kind of structure mainly designed in order to produce a pleasing kind of near-rhyme.

Poet's employs a number of stylistic devices to make any dialogue or discourse appear more striking and appealing and add certain amount of intensity and beauty to them. Consonance is one such rhetorical device employed to add aural appeal to any prose or poetry. It is very similar to assonance, which is another exciting literary trope. However, the only difference between the two is that a consonance repeats a consonant sound, while assonance stresses on the repetition of a vowel sound. To put in other words, consonance stresses on the repetition of consonant sounds, done in small pauses.

Markus (2006:2) in this regard, claims that "consonance occurs where a consonant sound repeated throughout a sentence without putting the sound only at the front of a word for rousing a more subtle effect." This kind of devices uses not only to create an effect but can also used to emphasize the importance of certain words in a sentence. In other words, consonance is the repetition of consonant sounds anywhere in words, not just at the beginning.

For example; the following analysis will show instances of consonance in the following lines of Geramay's poems taken from "wufal" (1993).

ሓቕፍካ ተባፅሕ ሓብሒብካ ተንብር
 ስንቁ ኮይንካ ዓቅሚ
 ባዕልኻ ወነ ንስኻ ማእገር
 ንስኻ ቅስሚ
 ባዕልኻ ወረጦ መዝሒቹካ ተውፅእ
 ስርሒት ዛዛሚ።

Extract one Germay (1993:18)

hæx'ufəkæ tɒbəs'əh hæbəhibəkæ tɒnəbər
sənək'i kolənəkæ 'xəmi
bæ'əbəkæ wɒnɒ nəsəkæ mæ'ægɒr
nəsəkæ k'əsəmi
bæ'əbəkæ wɒrɒt'o mɒzəhix'ukæ tɒwus'ə
sərəhitə zæzæmi

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ዓሚ ቅድሚ ዓሚ ምስ ቀየርኩ ውራይ
 ገደና ከሕዊ ከፍሪ ንዳሕራይ
 'æmi k'dəmi 'æmi məsə k'äyärəku wuræyə
 gädänæ k'əwi k'äfəri nədæhəæyə

Extract two Germay (1993:56)

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ምፍጣራ ዘጉህዩም ዓይኖም ደም ዝመልእ
 ሓሚ ምም ብእእ
 ሰራውር ምስዮም ጎኒኦም ከውድቕ
 በንቁሮም ንዓእ
 ጉረሮእ ዓፅዩም ዘርእ ከእጉምም
 ላሕ ኢሎም ዝረብረቡ
 ሕልምም ሕልሚ ኮይኑ ልክዕ ከም ናይ ሎሚ
 ሰብ ነይሩዎ ሻቡ።

Extract three, Germay (1993: 114, Line 10-14)

mǝfǝt'æræ zǝguhæyomǝ 'æyǝnomǝ dǝmǝ zǝmǝlǝ'ǝ
 hæmimomǝ bǝ'æ'æ
 sǝræwurǝ mǝhǝyomǝ goni'omǝ kǝwudǝx'u
 bǝnǝxǝromǝ
 gǝrǝro'æ 'æs'ǝyomǝ zǝrǝ'æ kǝ'ǝgumǝwo
 lǝhǝ 'ilomǝ zǝrǝbǝrǝbu
 hǝlǝmomǝ hǝlǝmi koyǝnu lǝkǝ'ǝ kǝmǝ nǝyǝ lomǝ
 sǝbǝ nǝyǝruæ šǝbu

ረሊኸም ከም ዘይርእኹም ከተ እናፈለጥኩም ኣይትጽንድንዋ

Extract four, Gernmay (1993: 116, Line 30)

rǝ'ǝximǝ kǝmǝ zǝyǝrǝ'æxumǝ kulu 'ǝnǝfǝlǝtǝkumǝ 'æyǝtǝdǝnǝdǝnǝwǝ

The above extract contains an instance of consonance which appears by the repetition of a consonant sound at the end of the words in same line. The writer used “h” consonant letter in the extract one or in the first line of the poem that produce [kǝ] sound. The repetition of this kind of device produces a pleasing kind of near-rhyme in between words and lends a unique rhythm to it, thereby bolstering up its acoustic appeal.

On the other hand, the above extract also contains the following consonant sounds which occur at the end of the words in the same line. For example;

ኸ [xǝ] sound which occurs (three) times in the second line extract one.

ሚ [mi] sound which occurs (three) times in the extract two, line one.

ም [mǝ] sound which occurs (four) times in the extract three, line one.

ም [mǝ] sound which occurs (three) times in the extract three, line two.

ም [mǝ] sound which occurs (two) times in the extract three, line three.

ም [mǝ] sound which occurs (two) times in the extract three, line four.

ሚ [mi] sound which occurs (two) times in the extract three, line four.

Besides, the creation of phonetic consonance repetition described above, consonance can also be used in poems to highlighting meaning and creating association between words or phrases that are identical or partially synonymous words and phrases. For example, the use of the phrases ሓቕፍካ ተባፅኦ [hǝx'ufǝkǝ tǝbǝs'ǝh, Fostered with embracing] and ሓብሒብካ ተንብረ [hǝbǝhǝbǝkǝ tǝnǝbǝr, dwelled by caring] shows the association of words in meaning. Semantically, the lexical items “hǝx'ufǝkǝ tǝbǝs'ǝh” and “hǝbǝhǝbǝkǝ tǝnǝbǝr” relates synonymously, having the same representation. Both phrases also share the same [kǝ] consonant sounds at the end of the words. The stylistic effect of such association is to empower the given items with the same value i.e. intra-textually; the items “hǝx'ufǝkǝ tǝbǝs'ǝh” and “hǝbǝhǝbǝkǝ tǝnǝbǝr” are the same in structure and sense.

From this point, we can describe that consonance in Tigrigna poems not only refers to the repetition of the same consonant sounds, rather it is also engrossing patterning of meaning. In addition to this, they also used to connect the words via the sound pattern for special emphases. As a result, we can merely recognize that, the above foregoing instances of consonance device used not only to create an effect, but also used to highlight the significance of certain words in a sentence.

Accordingly, it is possible to state that, consonance is among the most common employed rhetorical tools in Tigrigna poems, as already evident from the critical examples listed above. Not only does it help add certain cadence to the most regular sentences, but it can also be used to emphasize the importance of certain words in a line.

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