



RHETORICAL STYLE IN LONGING EXPRESSION FOUND IN WILLIAM SAROYAN'S GOING HOME

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Abstract

This study is about rhetorical style as a means of longing expression in William Saroyan's short story. The problems of this study are what kinds of rhetoric which are used to express longing and why the author uses rhetorical style in his work. The objectives of this study are to find, describe, and explain the rhetorical style used in Saroyan's story. Rhetorical features that are found in Saroyan's story entitled Going Home are asyndeton, hyperbole, commoratio, anaphora, parison, polysyndeton, climax, simile, personification, and antithesis. In conducting the research, I read the short story and then identified the rhetorical features which are found in every word, phrase, and sentence in the text. I listed them in a table and then classified the collected data into their classification. In analyzing the data, I explain the definition of rhetorical features. Next I interpreted the data using my own words. The result of this study shows that there are 17 expressions that contain rhetorical features. By using rhetorical style, Saroyan wants to convey and emphasize about his concept of longing and also to give ornament in his short story.

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INTRODUCTION

Many people assume that literature is a complicated thing. They think that understanding literature requires special skills. Perhaps some people are talented to understand literary works better than others. In fact, every people all over the world can understand literature by their own idea because of the flexibility of literature itself.

There are many notions given by experts about literature. Rees (1973:9) explains that literature is a permanent expression in the word of some thought or feeling or idea about life and the world. Literature may be broadly divided into two major categories, fiction and non fiction. Fiction means literary works based on the imagination. It includes novels, short stories, poetry, and drama. Non fiction conventionally means literary works based on facts that can be verified. It includes personal essays, travel writing, history, biography, and autobiography.

Lombardi (2012) defines literature as a term used to describe written or spoken material. Broadly speaking, literature is used to describe anything from creative writing to more technical or scientific works, but the term is most commonly used to refer to works of the creative imaginations, including works of poetry, drama, fiction, and non fiction.

In short story, the authors use their own style to show their character in writing. Style is the way of doing something. In this case, style refers to how the writers try to convey the point of their works to the audiences or readers. It results from things like word choice, tone, and syntax.

A style reveals both the writer's personality and voice, but it also shows how he or she perceives the audience, and chooses conceptual writing style which reveal those choices by which the writer may change the conceptual world of the overall character of the work. This might be done by a simple change of words, a syntactical

structure, parsing prose, adding diction, and organizing figures of speech. The style itself shows the originality of the literary works.

Between literary works and style, there is a thing which a writer wants to convey, that is idea. As a conclusion, between literary work, style, and idea have a relationship and it gives strong influences to each other. Style is not only used to create literary works, but also to convey the writer's idea. In short, style shows the author's way to deliver their idea to the audiences. Style becomes the supporting element to convince and to attract the audiences about what the author wants to say their works.

According to Wiehardt (2012) style to a fiction writers is basically the way they write, as opposed to what they write about. Naturally, their writing style will change depending on their subject matter and the point of view. However, when we talk about style, it means the voice that is uniquely ours.

One of style that usually used by authors is rhetorical style. It uses kinds of figures of speech where the choice of words becomes the focus of rhetorical style. The usage of it is likely to be more conscious, more artistic, and much more subtle.

Rhetorical style usually used not in daily conversation, but it often used in literary works. In literary works, rhetorical style is used to convey the author's feeling. It contains the writer's taste and purpose to make their works more interesting for the readers. It has a power to call up vivid imagination of the readers.

Rhetorical style itself is often used to express someone's feeling, for example longing. When someone needs to say his longing, he needs a beautiful language rather than a common language or simple language. It will make the sentence sounds interesting and more expressive. In this study, the writer wants to take a view on the rhetorical style that is used in short story entitled *Going Home* to deliver the author's longing toward his hometown. This study

exposes how the writer of the short story conveys his idea about longing by using rhetorical style.

DISCUSSION

Rhetorical Features Used in Short Story

Asyndeton

Asyndeton is the absence of conjunctions in a series of coordinated words or phrases. Let see asyndeton expression that is found in Saroyan's *Going Home*.

Text 1: *good old home town, simplicity, reality.* (Paragraph 1)

If we read the clause above, we will not find any conjunctions between them. The clause does not use conjunction to relate one word to another. The writer just put punctuation coma in every other word. The comas here are functioned as a tool of intonation. In the other word, the readers have to read it by slow intonation and try to feel the condition of the main character's hometown.

The man in the story tries to describe the condition of his hometown that is beautiful and simple, and also comfortable. This condition makes him wants to see his hometown even he had a decision to leave it. We can find the clause above in the first paragraph where usually there is an orientation about physical setting of the story. Then we can conclude the usage of asyndeton here is to give vivid description about his hometown.

Hyperbole

Hyperbole is an extravagant statement, used to express strong feeling, or produce a strong impression, and not intended to be understood literally. In *Going Home*, we can find five expressions use hyperbole to show the main character's longing. The expressions below are the quotation from *Going Home* which is use hyperbole:

Text 1: *He hadn't felt his senses reacting to the earth so cleanly and clearly for years; now it was a pleasure even to breathe.* (Paragraph 2)

This expression can be found in the second paragraph where the man as the main character in this story step on to his hometown for the first time after he left it for two years. He feels that he never tastes the air that very clear and clean before, but in his hometown it was such a pleasure for him even to breathe. It shows that his longing of being in his hometown is so deep, that everything he does is a pleasure.

Text 2: *The sweet rich taste of the water amazed him....* (Paragraph 7)

That expression appears in the sixth paragraph when the man is in valley to have a drink. He thinks that the water in his hometown is the finest water in the world. He feels very amazed with the taste of the water. He cannot find the tasty water as in his hometown in any other places. Moreover, the water in San Francisco does not have such a good taste that makes him sick.

Here, the hyperbole is used to describe the water in place where the man lives. He gives a compliment to the taste of water which is very amazing for him. He says like that because he did not drink fine water like in his hometown for a long time. Thus, the expression above reflects his longing for his hometown, especially its finest water.

Text 3: *I'm dying to see my brother Paul.* (Paragraph 24)

Hyperbole also used in expression above. When the man arrives in his hometown, he cannot wait to see his brother, Paul. His brother is one of his reasons why he comes back to Fulton Street. The word *dying* is to show how he misses his brother so much, and he hopes he could see him as soon as possible.

The quotation above shows the main character's longing toward his family. As we know, there are many people cannot leave their hometown because they cannot leave their family. But, when they have to leave it,

they would miss their family so much. What the main character feels is same with the other people feel when they are far away from their hometown. When they come back to their hometown, they are dying to see their family, as the main character said in the story.

Text 4: *He had been dreaming for months of eating another of his mother's meals...* (Paragraph 30)

Hyperbole expression above is signed by the word dreaming for months. The man misses the moment when he is eating his mother's meals. When he was living in Fulton Street, he wishes could eat another of his mother's meals.

Text 5: *His grief mounting in him.* (Paragraph 36)

The last hyperbole that we can find in Going Home is expression above. The writer shows the man's longing as a mounting grief. The man, even he has a great longing for his hometown, he cannot express it anyhow. He only keeps it in his mind without can do anything for releasing his longing. He feels so sad because he cannot see his family and talk to them. His longing becomes a grief when he decides not to see them.

When the writer uses the word 'mounting grief', it is clearly a hyperbole expression. The usage of hyperbole here is to tell the readers how the main character's feeling when he cannot see his family. This rhetorical feature tries to persuade the readers to imagine the man's longing toward his hometown.

Commoratio

Commoratio is a repetition of the same idea that dwelling on or returning to one's strongest argument. In this short story, there are two expressions that use commoratio. The usage of commoratio is to give strong argument about something.

Text 1: *This is splendid.* (Paragraph 7)

The water, splendid. (Paragraph 18)

The water; yes, it was good, it was splendid. (Paragraph 28)

The expression above includes to commoratio. There are repetitions of idea that shown by the main character, that is the water of San Joaquin Valley which splendid. For him, the water in his hometown is the lovable thing that makes him always wants to drink it.

In fact, his longing is not only for his hometown, but also for everything which exist in his hometown. One of them is the splendid water. According to the main character, the water in his hometown is very good. To tell his argument to the readers, he said his opinion about the water three times in different sentences, but has same point. The repetitions then used to strength the man's opinion about the amazing water of his hometown.

Text 2: *good old hometown, simplicity, reality.* (Paragraph 1)

All the goodness and simplicity and reality. (Paragraph 10)

The repetition of idea about the man's hometown also appears on expression above. Commoratio above is used as a compliment for the man's hometown. The man always says that his hometown is a kind place by saying it as a good old hometown, simple, and real. All the goodness, simplicity, and reality can be found there. He is very proud of his hometown. That is why his hometown is proper to be loved.

Anaphora

Anaphora is the repetition of the same words at the beginning of successive phrases, clauses, or sentences. We find only one expression that use anaphora.

Text 1: *All the clarity,*

All the genuineness,

All the goodness. (Paragraph 10)

As we can see, there are repetitions of word *all the* in the beginning of each phrase. The writer describes his hometown as a place which is good, genuine, and has clarity. Actually, the writer has been explained what his hometown looks like in some sentences

before. The expression above is functioned to strong his argument about his hometown.

Parison

Parison is pairs of expression with the same grammatical structure but with different lexical words. For a while, it looks like anaphora, but it is different. Anaphora is the repetition of same word at the beginning of successive phrases, while parison is focused on the repetition of grammatical structure.

Text 1: *all the clarity,
all the genuineness,
all the goodness.* (Paragraph 10)

Those phrases above are one of parisons that we can find in this story. When we discuss it as anaphora, so we have to focus in the repetition of the word *all the*. However, now we discuss it as parison, then we focus on the repetition of grammatical structure. As we can see, after the word *all the*, is always followed by noun, they are *clarity, genuineness, and goodness*.

Text 2: *The air of the valley
the reality of the whole place,
the cleanliness of life in the valley,
the simplicity of the people.* (Paragraph 20)

Another parison which can be found in the story is the expression above. The structure in the first phrase is same with other phrases. The writer, again, gives the description of his hometown. The first and the third phrase tell about the air of the valley which he thinks as the finest water on the earth. The second and the fourth phrase is the repetition of his statement that every goodness he found in his hometown is a reality, even it full of simplicity, but every people can get happiness there.

Polysyndeton

Polysyndeton is the repetition of conjunctions in a series of coordinate words or phrases. This figures of speech is the vice versa of asyndeton which is not use any conjunctions. There is one expression that

uses polysyndeton which reflects the main character's longing.

Text 1: *All the goodness and simplicity and reality.* (Paragraph 10)

That expression includes to polysyndeton. As we can see, there are repetitions of conjunction *and*. The expression above is used to give imagination for the readers about the man's hometown. For the main character, his hometown is perfect. All the goodness can be found there. His hometown is simple, but it is real.

Climax

Climax is the arrangement of series in order to increase the importance, especially where more than two units stand in parallel relationship within a sentence, there is a chance to arrange them in rising order of importance, verbal length, or internal complexity. Usually, climax can be predicted by using long sentence which in every stage of clause there is an increasing importance, and usually the last clause or phrase is the most important thing. These quotations below are the example of climax expression.

Text 1: *It looked great from where he was, far away and nice and small, very genuine, a real quiet little town, the kind of place to live in, settle down in, marry in, have home, kids, a job, and all the rest of it.* (Paragraph 20)

The man shows the description of his house through the sentence above. More than a description, the man also tells his wishes about doing anything in his hometown. His description and his wishes are arranged in a series of clause where the importance is always increasing in every level of phrases. First, he says his hometown as a small nice place, comfort, and quiet. Then, the next phrase is telling about what he wants to do in his hometown. He wants to get married, has children, has a job, and has a home and many things more than he can say.

Text 2: *he knew this was what he had wanted to do for months, to knock at the door, embrace his mother and his sisters, walk across the*

floors of the house, sit in the old chairs, sleep in his bed, talk with his old man, eat at the table. (Paragraph 32)

The man's longing towards his home also presented in expression above. For long time, he hopes he can do anything in his mind. He wants to do again what had been his habit when he was living there. When he comes back to his house, actually he wants to go inside the house, sit in the old chair, sleep in his bed, talk to his father, and the last thing he wants to do is eat at the table with his family. He misses those moments so much, but he cannot do that because he does not brave enough to knock the door and go inside there.

Simile

Simile is a figure of speech which uses comparison to express a resemblance between two essentially unlike entities in one or more respects. It is a comparison of one thing with another, especially as an ornament in poetry. It is often linked by word 'like' or 'as'. In *Going Home*, actually there are some expression that use simile, but only one which shows longing expression.

Text 1: *It was like a meeting in a dream, strange, almost incredible.* (Paragraph 21)

Expression above shows the comparison between his meeting with his friend and a dream. The writer uses this comparison to convey his idea that the man cannot believe that he can meet his old friend, Tony. He compares the meeting and a dream because as he said that the meeting was strange and incredible. Most people think that it is difficult to believe something because they think that the reality they met is almost impossible, that is why they usually use comparison between reality and a dream.

Personification

Personification represents an animal or inanimate object as having human attributes such as form, character, feelings, behavior, and so on.

Text 1: *His heart began to jump.* (Paragraph 28)

The sentence above included to personification because there is a representation of non-living beings *heart* acting *jump* as an animate object. This sentence aims to tell the readers that the man in this story was surprised to see his home again. He was surprised about the place which does not change anything since he left it. Seeing his house, he could imagine again what his childhood looks like. He could feel again the hatred towards the place that makes him away from it.

Antithesis

Antithesis is an opposition or contrast of ideas. It expressed by using words which are the opposite of, or strongly contrasted with each other.

Text 1: *Crying bitterly in the darkness of the clear night.* (Paragraph 36)

That antithesis expression above can be found in the last paragraph. Actually, the man wants to see everything in his house including his family. However, he does not brave enough to meet them. Finally, he decides to go away from his house before he could see what he wants to see. The writer uses the word *darkness* and *clear night* to express the contrary of the man's feeling. He looks strong enough to keep his longing, but actually his heart was so sad that he cannot show his feeling toward everything in his hometown.

CONCLUSION

Literary works are used by many people to express their idea. They could show their feeling through literary works such as poem, song, short story, drama, and so on. However, it is difficult to make an interesting works which attract the audiences. Besides, it is also hard to make sure that the audiences could catch the meaning or the idea that we want to share.

Short story entitled *Going Home* which is written by William Saroyan is one of literary works that express the writer's feeling, which is longing toward his hometown. In his story, there are many figurative languages that he used to make his works interesting and sounds good. Although the plot of the story is simple, but he can make the readers feel the longing that the writer feels. He used many kinds of figures of speech to replace common words into beautiful words.

There are ten figures of speech that he used in his story. They are asyndeton, hyperbole, commoratio, anaphora, parison, polysyndeton, climax, simile, personification, and antithesis. All those figures of speech are used to make the short story become more expressive. The rhetorical style is used by the author in order to make the readers get interested to read the story and keep to read that until the end of the story without getting bored.

As the function of rhetorical style, that is to avoid 'low and vulgar language', and meanness of expression, the writer includes some rhetorical features in his story to make his story rich of expression. The readers can feel happiness, sadness, hatred, angry, and many other expression besides the longing itself. The writer wants to make the reader catch the main character's feeling toward his hometown which he misses so much.

The author puts some rhetorical features inside his story as ornaments to make his works more artistic and colorful. However, sometimes the readers find difficulties to interpret the implied meaning behind the rhetorical features. For that reason I do this study to help the readers know more about rhetorical style.

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