Performance Devices in Hatim's Tales

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Performance structure in Hatim's Tales is used to effect a kind of collaborative engagement from a non-vocal audience in what is essentially a monologic act of communication. It is put in place in various different ways, all of which draw attention to, and strategically utilize, information the hearer already knows. I will describe three distinct ways in which hearer-given information is used to generate story-types evoking well-differentiated kinds of audience appeal.

1 Introduction

Hatim's Tales (Stein, 1923) are widely acknowledged as making a significant contribution to the considerable body of Kashmiri oral literature, and yet have remained largely unstudied by scholars with interest in linguistic approaches to the assessment of narrative. The stories were recited by Hatim Tilawon, a professional storyteller, and recorded by Aurel Stein in 1896. They are fables, with plotlines which, in general, speak of good versus evil, and characters that are personas rather than individuals, so that the message is addressed to every man/woman. All of them are also told by the same common external narrator, 'wustad' (the teacher), and each one is used to effect a specific appeal to a listening audience.

According to the audience-directed appeal they make, the tales can be categorized into three distinct types. All but three are used to argue for a point: "The Tale of a Parrot", "The Tale of a Merchant", "The Tale of a Goldsmith", "The Tale of a King", "The Tale of Raja Vikramaditya", and "The Tale of Akhun". One story is used to call on people to sing praise to, to adulate, a person of exceptional character and unique achievement: "The Tale of Yusuf and Zulaikha". The remaining two stories are used to lament wrongs suffered, in order to seek audience sympathy: "The Tale of the Reed Flute", and "The Farmer's Wife and the Honey-Bee".

To effect a mode of plot-presentation suitable for one or the other of these three distinct audience-directed appeals calls for a well-defined manipulation of the storytelling;

it is engineered in one way when the intent is to make a point, in another to appeal to the audience to adulate someone, and in a third to lament and seek sympathy for victimization.

The level of system that configures the storytelling for one or another of these objectives is properly looked upon as a part of a broader 'performance' design-systematicity, which is in general an audience-directed, audience-involving mechanism. The structural features that facilitate audience involvement are exploited specifically to make narrative a less monologic, more mutually constructed, discoursal interaction than it normatively is. This is done primarily by introducing, and giving focus to, high levels of hearer-given information (on the concept of given-new cf. Chafe, 1976; Clark and Haviland, 1977; Halliday, 1967; Halliday and Hasan, 1976; Horn, 1978; Kuno, 1972, 1974, 1978, 1979; Prince, 1979, 1981) to create and enhance his/her sense of prior knowledge of the developing narrative. There are, actually, a number of audience-directed, audience-involving performance features used in the tales, serving this broad intent in different ways. But the dimension of performance-design that serves to effect point-making, adulation and lamentation is highly significant in generating the three core sub-genres of narrative in Hatim's Tales. I will describe this most compelling component of the performance design-system in Hatim's Tales.

2 Performance and Point-Making, Adulation and Lamentation

Detailed assessment of performance systematicity is motivated by recognition of the fact that narrative prose is not, in and of itself, audience focused in the way that discourse in conversational exchange typically is. In conversational exchange, the speaker's orientation is bi-dimensional and bi-directional, in that one point of attention is on the content of the message, and the other on the hearer. The inherent dialogic nature of discourse actually means that focus on the message and on the hearer happen concurrently; speaker's contribution is necessarily framed with acknowledgement of, and in response to, the interlocutor and the interlocutor's utterance. This is not the case with narrative. Narrative, by comparison, is singularly insular. To be re-invented as a less monologic form of communication, it, therefore, needs to overcome this marked insularity. This is where story performance finds its place.

"Performance" is a term that was traditionally used by folklorists to speak of a particular retelling of a commonly known and often told story, and by sociolinguists, particularly by Wolfson (1982), with reference to conversational storytelling, to suggest the tellers "experiential involvement in their storytellings as dramatized re-enactment" (Toolan, 1988, p. 165). Bauman (1986) states "I understand performance as a mode of communication, a way of speaking, the essence of which resides in the assumption of responsibility to an audience for a display of communicative skill, highlighting the way in which communication is carried out, above and beyond its referential content" (p. 3).

In Hatim's Tales, it goes beyond 'dramatized re-enactment' and giving the audience a vicarious experience of the represented happenings. It effects a kind of collaborative engagement from a participant without actual verbal contribution, by drawing attention to, and strategically utilizing, what the hearer already knows and is familiar with. This principle of acknowledging and using hearer-given information, basic to dialogic exchange, is expressed in the tales in a number of different manifestations. In all its realizations, it is quite unique in the role it plays in the act of oral narration. As stated above, of the robust evidence of performance systematicity in Hatim's Tales, the most

compelling is the management of storytelling to facilitate the above-mentioned three distinct types of audience appeal: point making, adulation and lamentation. In the following section, I will describe how the event sequence is fashioned, using three distinctive ways of introducing and giving focus to hearer-given information, to effect these well-differentiated kinds of audience appeal.

2.1 The event sequence

The narrative event sequence plays a crucial role in carrying the narrative forward along the timeline. In literary narrative of the western tradition this core structure is designed to allow the audience a seemingly first-hand experience of the events as they come about. Barthes (1977) has described the structure of such a sequence as comprising a succession of events central to the plot development, represented in what he calls functions, appearing with interlaid indices, which serve to create the physical and psycho-affective backdrop in which this plot development takes shape. It is the inception of indices into the core sequence comprising functions that has the effect of giving the reader a vicarious experience of the coming about of the event sequence. As one constituent event gives way to another, both the spatio-temporal context and the psycho-affective character of the action-taking, or event-experiencing, individual also change. By providing these consonant changes, the descriptive component, introduced in the indices, serves to create a three-dimensional experience of the chain of events for the reader. That is, by putting in place a situational and psycho-affective back-drop for each successive event, the sequence gives the reader an, as it were, moment by moment experience of the coming about of the plot. Sample 1 (below), taken from Somerset Maugham's short story "Mackintosh", exemplifies this. The inter-event descriptive statements (indices) in sample 1 are highlighted.

(1)

He splashed about for a few minutes in the sea**; it was too shallow to swim in and for fear of sharks he could not go out of his depth**; then he got out and went in to the bath-house for a shower. **The coldness of the fresh water was grateful after the heavy stickiness of the salt Pacific, so warm, though it was only just after seven, that to bathe in it did not brace you but rather increased your languor**; and when he dried himself, slipping into a bath-gown, he called out to the Chinese cook that he would be ready for breakfast in five minutes. He walked barefoot across the patch of coarse **grass which Walker, the administrator, proudly thought was a lawn**, to his own quarters and dressed. **This did not take long, for he put on nothing but a shirt and a pair of duck trousers** and then went over to his chief's house on the other side of the compound. **The two men had their meals together**, but the Chinese cook told him that Walker had set out on horseback at five and would not be back for another hour.

(Somerset Maugham, 1975, "Mackintosh", p. 5).

A number of additional features are frequently used concurrently, to enhance the creation of the type of mimesis that results from the interlaying of indices into the succession of functions: The time span covered by such an event sequence is typically

kept small; this is true of sample 1 in which only a few minutes elapse between the start and finish of the sequence. At the same time, focus is given to the particular, rather than the general. That is, what is represented is not a panoramic view of things, but a honed-in-on perception of individual details; this is also evident in sample 1. Additionally, the focalizer (cf. Genette, 1980, 1988) is typically an invested character, someone who either experiences the represented events, or is personally affected by them. In sample 1, although the narrative is in third person, the focalizer is the main character, Mackintosh, as is evident, in particular, in the descriptive commentary: "The coldness of the fresh water was grateful after the heavy stickiness of the salt Pacific, so warm, though it was only just after seven, that to bathe in it did not brace you but rather increased your languor."

The total collection of these features work in consonance to create a moment-by-moment coming-about experience of events in their real-world three-dimensionality. Outside of direct speech, this seems to be the closest approximation to mimesis that prose can achieve.

The genre of fable, typically, does not have event sequences where the succession of functions are interlaid with indices and the characteristically mimetic sequence is, therefore, not evident in the tales. But the sequence is manipulated to effect another kind of audience engagement in a way that makes it if not mimetic certainly a less monologic act of communication.

2.2 The Clausal Make-Up of the Event Sequence in Hatim's Tales

In the most frequently used and, therefore, what one can reasonably look upon as the standard sequence type in Hatim's Tales (HT standard event sequence, for future reference), the performance factor configures the information in the event sequence to effect audience anticipation of each successive event. By this means, it makes inevitable a participatory hearer, who experiences some aspect of insider knowledge of the emerging story specifically by anticipating each forthcoming event. This management of information presentation to effect hearer anticipation of the forthcoming sequenced-event gives the standard sequence in the tales its defining character.

To describe the structure of this standard HT event sequence in more detail, it is necessary to examine its clause-level constituency. It is necessary, that is, to assess the clauses used in the sequence in terms of how informationally given or new to the hearer they are (at the time of their representation), with acknowledgement also of how word order is used to mark their informational distinctiveness.

To do this I will first refer to some basic facts about Kashmiri word order and the functions it carries in marking the differentiated ways in which clausal information can be represented. Kashmiri is classified as a verb-final language with what is frequently referred to as a verb-second (V/2) rule. (The V/2 rule basically means that whatever is in clause-initial position must be followed by the tense-bearing verb.) The canonical word order, however, is SVO, and this is used to convey propositional information that is new, rather than given, to the hearer. Canonical order also gives the proposition the added distinction of a degree of informational saliency in its discourse context.

Marked word order, then, is used to signal two types of informationally given proposition: OVS is used to mark propositional information that is entirely given at the

time of its utterance, carrying a new component only at its focal point (cf. Tickoo 1992, 2005). This is illustrated in sample 2, below, which is taken from a recorded conversation.

(2)
1. *Asi chu soriy anun*
   To-us is all   to-buy
   We have to buy everything.
2. *Dod chu ni*
   Milk is not
   We don't have milk.
3. *Stot cha ni*
   Bread is not
   We don't have bread.
4. *Kah chiiz chu ni*
   Anything is not
   We don't have anything.

Once it is established that we have to buy everything, in sentence 1, then it is given information that we don't have anything. That is, only the focal constituents of the following OVS clauses, giving specific instantiations of the things we don't have, are new information, i.e., milk, in sentence 2, and bread, in sentence 3.

The other marked order that signals a given proposition carries the tensed verb in initial position V(S), where S is deletable and therefore represented in brackets (cf. Tickoo 1992, 2005). V(S) marks a proposition that is only partially given; that is, it is given in type and new in token. This means that since the hearer knows the type of the proposition at the time of its utterance, s/he anticipates the token. This is illustrated in sample 3, taken from "The Tale of a Merchant".

(3)
1. *dray sodagar-bay*
   Left the-merchant's-wife
   The merchant's wife left,
2. *wots panun gara*
   arrived her-own home
   arrived at her house,
3. *khuts hyor*
   went upstairs
   and went upstairs.

(Stein, 1923, "The Tale of a Merchant", p. 122)

In this sample, the merchant's wife has been told by her lover to go home and chop off her husband's head. The reader, therefore, knows that she either will or will not 1) set off for home, 2) get there, and 3) go upstairs to where her husband is asleep in bed. The reader, therefore, also anticipates that she will 1) set off for home (sentence 1), 2) get there (sentence 2), and 3) go up stairs to where her husband is asleep in his bed (sentence 3). These anticipated actions are in V(S) order.

Narrators also exploit the basic convention by which marked word order signals non-new information to manipulate audience perception of represented information as non-new, even when it would normally be assessed as new.

2.3 The Standard Hatim's Tales Sequence: A Detailed Assessment

The standard HT event sequence has a conventional developmental structure, and uses its constituent clauses to mark the major developmental components of this structure: It opens with clauses which serve to represent the orientation, and typically come with an adverb in initial position. As one would expect, they situate the events that follow. This orientation is followed by a key happening presented in a clause in canonical order to represent it as informationally new and salient. This happening itself precipitates a succession of following events, each of which, because it is anticipated in its context of occurrence, appears in V(S) order. This event-sequence unit is routinely followed by an evaluative commentary, sometimes stylistically set apart from the event-bearing unit that precedes it.

(4)
1. *Doha-aki drav sonar, sona-siinz woj heth,*
   Day-one-of set-forth the-goldsmith, gold-of ring having-taken,
   One day the goldsmith set forth, taking a golden ring with him,
   patashaha-sanze-Kore-kits
   king's daughter-for
   for the king's daughter.
2. *Ami pasand kurasna*
   She like did-it-not
   She didn't like it.
3. *Dopnus "yith chey wad"*
   Said-she-to-him to-this is crookedness
   She said to him, "this is crooked".
4. *Av pot phirith*
   Came-he (home) back returning
   He returned home,
5. *wot panun gara*
   arrived-he his-own house
   arrived at his house,
6. *pev bemar*
   fell-he ill
   (and) fell ill.
7. *Amis osus patashaha-sanze-kore-hond ashkh gomot.*
   To-him   was king's daughter-of love happened
   He had fallen in love with the king's daughter.
8. *Patashah-kore os-gomot amis-sonara-sond ashkh*
   King's-daughter-to had-happened that-goldsmith-of love
   The king's daughter had fallen in love with the goldsmith

(Stein, 1923, "The Tale of a Goldsmith", pp. 134-135)

In sample 4, from "The Tale of the Goldsmith", we have an orienting clause (in sentence 1) which speaks of a routine event, namely, that the goldsmith went to show the princess a gold ring that he had made for her. The event of significance—that the princess did not like the ring (sentence 2)—follows this, and appears in canonical order, to indicate both that it is new to hearer and informationally salient. This is followed by a sequence of events in V(S) order—the goldsmith left (sentence 4), arrived home (sentence 5) and fell ill (sentence 6)—each represented as anticipated in the context in which it occurs. At the close of this succession of V(S) clauses, we have the evaluative commentary, which accounts for the events that have been represented before it by suggesting that the goldsmith has fallen in love with the princess and she, in turn, with him (sentences 7 and 8).

The absence of inter-event descriptive indices has a significant impact on this sequence. It results in creating a seemingly rapid passage from event to event, which culminates at its close in the evaluative commentary. This fast-paced movement to the evaluation, as point of culmination, gives informational focus to the evaluation, in a narrative which would otherwise be highly action-oriented. Hence, the deduction that this evaluation draws from evidence provided in the preceding action sequence becomes the core objective of this narrative, making it a characteristically point-making type of sequence.

2.4 Adulation and sequence features

Two other sequence types are created by the use of a significantly different management of information presentation: the sequence used for adulation and the sequence used for lamentation.

In the sequence used for adulation, the repackaging represents narrative happenings as a single, though complex occurrence, that is, without the internal step by step and moment to moment development that the standard sequence conveys. The reshaped sequence takes the following form: It opens with a happening or circumstance presented as a single complex unit, with constituent components occurring concurrently and in a relationship of mutual dependency (1a and b, in sample 5), a co-dependence also reflected in the rhyme and rhythmic consonance of these paired clauses (as in 1a and b of 5/). In 1a and b of 5, the parts are represented with one marked subordinate to the other by the use of word order; in 1a and b of 5/ one is subordinated by appearing in an infinitival clause. This complex happening is sometimes followed by the achieved consequential state or condition, in another rhymed and rhythmically consonant pair of clauses (2 a and b of 5). These are sometimes in the present historic (2 of 5), and at other times in OVS word order, to mark them informationally given, since there is no new information in this representation (2 of 5); all that is suggested is that the afore implemented condition is underway. This achieved state/condition is followed by a precipitated end result, which, because it is to be perceived as anticipated in the context in which it appears, is in V(S) order (3 of sample 5). The clause that represents the end result is followed by its rhyming and rhythmically consonant pair-part, which is always the appeal to listen (3b). The whole complex happening routinely culminates in this appeal to listen: "Yara bozakha-na" ("Friend, won't you listen?").

(5)
    1a. *Hazarat Yusuph stol.*   1b.   *Pata ladyeyes Zalikha*

	Saint Yusuf fled.		After ran-to-him Zulaikha
	Saint Yusuf fled.		Zulaikha ran after him.
2.	*Yusuph tsalan*	2b.	*Zalikha laran*
	Yusuf fleeing,		Zulaikha running
	Yusuf is fleeing,		Zulaikha is running.
3.	*Dopnas, "yi pazya?"*	3b.	*Yara bozakh-na?*
	Said-she-to-him this is-it-proper?		Friend, won't you listen?
	She said to him "is this proper?"		Friend, won't you listen?

(Stein, 1923, "The Tale of Yusuf and Zulaikha", p. 154)

(5′)

1a.	*Nalas thaph karith,*	b. *nyun hatsha karith*
	Neck-to grabbing having-done,	took-him accusation having-made
	Grabbing him by the neck, she took him, having made an accusation

(Stein, 1923, "The Tale of Yusuf and Zulaikha", p. 155)

The two key differences from the HT standard sequence influence the quality of this sequence, and therefore, inevitably, the way the story is told, in very definite ways: The first major difference, the absence of the succession of clauses in V(S) in the core of each sequence, precludes the representation of an internal, moment by moment coming-about of events, each anticipated by the listening audience. There is an element of mimesis, in the representation of the condition that results from the opening happening (frequently, in the non-past; refer to 2, in sample 5), but the anticipation of successive events by the use of a sequence of V(S) clauses is not in place. The second major difference is the missing evaluative commentary. This prevents the represented happenings from serving to facilitate the deduction of a point. In consequence, key happenings are represented in holistic sound-bite fashion, to give attention to their newsworthiness and offer justification for the plea to listen. These come with their consequential state and inevitable result, both high in hearer-known information. Also hearer-known is the recycled concluding call to listen. Familiar, too, are the standard patterns of rhyme and rhythm, which bind the successive lines of this verse-like unit and highlight its informational unity. Terse and epigrammatic, it comes with its foregrounded novel informational point, the audience-involving, high in hearer-given consequential state and inevitable result, and in the familiar wrapping of its rhyme and rhythmic consonance. This well-coordinated unit leads to and informationally supports the ritual closing, the call to listen, itself made hearer-focused by the aural appeal of its direct-address mode.

It is pertinent to note that the entirely new component of information in this stanza is limited to the opening clausal pair, 1a and b, a limitation on new information in the unit that, again, serves to set the audience up as a more, rather than less, informed participant in the emerging unit.

This stanza, rather than sequence, is the standard in the story of adulation. Each such stanza represents a distinct happening in the developing plot of "The Tale of Yusuf and Zalaikha", and the first ten such stanzas build the plot to the pre-complication point. It is interesting to note that there are subtle but recognizable variations in its realization in these ten instantiations of it. But what is of greater interest is that this story allows for both

these smaller and far more significant deviations from the standard stanza, along with its repeated reinstatement.

There are, in fact, very distinct departures from the standard, and they appear to facilitate appropriate preparation for, and representation of, the complication. Both the complication and the pre-complication happenings of the story are in standard HT sequences. (Thus, the complicating sequence in "The Tale of Yusuf and Zalaikha" is a succession of events—that the king develops an insatiable hunger, dies from it, and that Yusuph becomes king—all represented in V(S) clauses.) Both the pre-complication and complication segments of the narrative, therefore, revert to normal storytelling mode to allow for audience anticipation of the step by step coming about of the major happenings of the story. At the end of the complicating event sequence, however, the standard stanza is once more reinstated and is then in place until the end of the story.

The way the standard adulatory stanza is put in place, and altered in both subtle and less subtle ways only to be reinstated, then, in prototype form is a point of considerable interest. This allowance for creative deviance from the prototype, with frequent reversion to it and repeated reinstatement of it, is akin to like practice in classical forms of Indian music, in which too a basic musical theme is put in place, departed from, to varying degrees and in interesting ways, and then reinstated. Such manipulation of the basic routine is also orchestrated at the level of the performance of a particular piece of music.

2.5 Lamentation: Sequence Design

In the third type of re-design of the basic sequence, the events are represented in statements that convey a defining affective reaction to them, addressed directly to the audience. Here, the emotive response to the event is not accommodated as indices interlaid between successive functions, as they would be in a standard mimetic sequence. Rather, it is a way of representing events through the emotive response from which they are experienced. The emotive response, too, is of a distinct kind, articulated as a lament for wrongs done to the speaker and consequential misfortunes endured by him/her.

Lament is not an insular act; it is audience directed, with the purpose of seeking sympathy from the hearer. For this reason it is not readily put in place by means of a simple succession of events serving to carry the plot-line forward, and hence the modification of the standard sequence.

The prototype lament-type sequence routinely opens with an introductory clause in which an external narrator, the teacher, reports the spoken appeal of the internal narrator, the lamenter, in direct speech. It is represented as a bi-clausal unit (as in 1 and 2 of 6). The core component of the standard HT sequence, characteristically in V(S) order, is replaced, therefore, by this bi-clausal unit, and in it both clauses are in OVS order. Since each clause is in OVS order, each clause is representing a given-to-hearer proposition, which is basically that I was wronged/violated/abused, with an informationally new focal point, which is an instantiation of this known violation. The new focal point in 1 of sample 6, below, is "vicious blows of the axe", and in 2 of sample 6 "a cloud of splinters of my flesh".

(6)
    1.   *Tsakhi-hot makh chum diwan*

Rage-struck an-axe he-is-to-me giving
He is giving me vicious blows with his axe.
2. *Phala byon byon chela mazas chum tulan*
Splinters separate seaparate pieces (of my) flesh he-is-of-me raising
He is raising a cloud of splinters of my flesh.

(Stein, 1923, "The Tale of the Reed Flute", p. 164)

In each such unit, one clause is typically further specified by the other (as in sample 6). But in both clauses of the unit, it is an emotive point that is the focal constituent.

The thematic progress through the story is effected by passage via these bi-clausal units, through which the inside narrator speaks of the succession of wrongs done to him/her. Some of these units serve to give internal detail to wrongs referred to in a preceding unit, and when the internal details of a broader occurrence are represented by a string of units, they often appear, as above, in the present historic.

The principal feature responsible for the audience-oriented character of this sequence is, again, the heavy use of hearer-given information. The audience knows from the opening of the story that acts of wrong doing have been perpetrated on the internal narrator, and that his/her intent is to lament these wrongs. Each act of lamentation, therefore, appears in an OVS clause, suggesting that victimization is known, and representing a specific act of abuse as a new instantiation of this known fact. In this way, the narrative is carried forward along largely given to hearer propositions, in which only the focal component is new information. This not only gives the hearer the sense of insider knowledge of the developing story, but also robust and sustained focus on the select new component of the proposition, which provides instantiation of wrongs done in graphic detail. Because the speaker elaborates the victimization, by giving detailed expression to a string of wrongs done to him/her, the narrative reads as a litany of speaker's expressed woes and audience-directed appeals. The audience-orientation is also effected by the fact that the individual acts of lamentation are represented in the form of direct speech and have the mimetic power that comes with this device. The frequent use of the present historic in segments that give a detailed representation to specific wrongs done to the speaker also serves to create mimesis.

3 Conclusion

The performance devices in Hatim's Tales all package the message to make the interlocutor more, rather than less, informed at the time of its presentation. The aim is to create an interlocutor who is participatory, in spite of being non-vocal, in a communicative act which in its essence rules out that possibility. The three distinct audience appeals effected by use of the different types of event sequence, put in place dissimilar types of audience knowledge of the developing plot. In the point-making sequence, anticipation is effected, as a means of creating a more knowing audience. In adulation, the stanza as a unit has a very limited new component—the opening happening. What follows is a consequential state and ultimately an inevitable result. The whole is also made less new by being held together as a standard and well-recognized unit of verse and by the closing repetition, in every stanza, of the same call to listen. The lamentation sequence is made less new by limiting the new information to the focal component of a known proposition, through which the known wrong-doing is given specific realizations. Its bi-clausal relation

is held together by one pair part serving to merely substantiate the point of the other and, again, by use of standard and well-recognized rhyming and rhythmical consonance.

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