Backtracking Script in Agatha's Selected Crime Fiction: A Stylistic Study

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Abstract

Backtracking script is a mode of speech presentation, encompassing a domain of the text (sub)world where the writer manipulates receivers' (or readers') mind to handle the conceptual gaps he presumes for them, provoking a schematic structure to be recognized by readers. The present study tackles the backtracking script in Agatha's detective stories: "*The Adventure of the Christmas Pudding"* And *"The Mystery of the Spanish Chest"*. Agatha Christie was one of the most celebrated writers of the 'Golden Age' period of detective fiction in the years between the

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world wars. The propounded model for backtracking script is embodied in the following two hypotheses and to be applied to Agatha's two detective stories: first, backtracking script is a mode of speech presentation, mapping the lineaments of how matters are or should be; second, there are four main backtracking schemes for scripts applicable to the novellas in hand: informative, reasoning, inter-textual and inter-lexical backtracking. The data analysis validates the proposed model through applying it to the data in hand. The study comes out with conclusion that the writer in her manipulative strategies for constructing backtracking scripts accommodates receivers' information to an advanced schematic succession of events, actions and notions as a material text-world.

Key words: *backtracking script, crime fiction, schema, scheme, text world.*

منحى الاقتفاء النصي في قصص جريمة مختارة لإغاثة كرستي: دراسة اسلوبية

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الــمستخلــص

إن منحى الاقتفاء النصي هو طريقة للعرض الكلامي، وتشمل مجالًا للرؤية الشمولية للنص, من حيث ان الكاتب يتعامل مع فهم القارئ بمليء الفجوات التي يفترضها لهم, و ذلك لتحفيز منشئ بياني يدركه القارئ. تتناول الدراسة الحالية منحى الاقتفاء النصي في قصتين بوليسيتين: «مغامرة كيكة عيد الميلاد» و «لغز النعش الإسباني» لأغاثا كريستي التي كانت واحدة من أشهر الكتاب في فترة «العصر الذهبي» من القصة البوليسية في السنوات بين الحربين العالميتين. يتجسد النموذج المطروح لمنحى الاقتفاء النصي في الفرضيتين التاليتين وتطبيقه على القصتين البوليسيتين: اولاً, الاقتفاء هو اسلوب للعرض الكلامي، و يرسم بيانا ذهنيا لما تؤول له الأمور؛ثانيا, هنالك اربع مناحٍ نصية رئيسة للاقتفاء قابلة للتطبيق على القصتان المطروحتان: الاقتفاء الاخباري، الاقتفاء المنطقي، اقتفاء التناص واقتفاء السياق. تهدف الدراسة إلى التحقق من صحة النموذج المقترح من خلال تطبيقه على النصوص الموجودة. خرجت الدراسة ان كاتب النص يكيف معلومات المتلقي مع متعاقبة ذهنية متقدمة لأحداث و وقائع مادية لعالم الرواية.

الكلمات الدالة: منحى الاقتفاء، قصص عن الجريمة، البيان الذهني , المخطط, رؤية عالم النص.

INTRODUCTION

The present study manifests a mode of speech presentation which is embraced in the ideological point of view. Scripts are conceptual structures that describe appropriate sequences of events, persons or social issues, of predetermined and stereotyped situations. Backtracking script in discourse, as the present study manifests, is a facet of the text world and an ideational orientation of speech presentation.

Backtracking script as a discoursal phenomenon has not been the focus of those interested in stylistics and those interested in the linguistic analysis of the text structure, specifically for crime fiction. The present study is supposed to fill in this gap. The study aims at exploring the backtracking script in selected crime fiction and it investigates the kind of mapping that backtracking scripts bring to light.

The question of the study is recognized in the hypothesis that backtracking script is a mode of speech presentation, implemented in discourse to retrace the evolution and development of persons, actions, events or language in the track of time, space and events. Four main backtracking schemes for scripts are proposed to be applied to the novellas in hand: informative, reasoning, inter-textual and inter-lexical backtracking. Retracing a state or a process can take a retrospective or prospective orientation to cognitively or linguistically mapping the lineaments of how matters are. The rational for data selection is that crime fiction, specifically that of Agatha Christie's, is more appropriate for constructing causal chain of event frame. The data analysis manifests the expediency of the selected novellas, "*The Adventure of the Christmas Pudding"* And *"The Mystery of the Spanish Chest"*, to the proposed model and reflects the disposition and orientation of the crime fiction. The backtracking schemes are ingrained in the nature of the crime fiction which requires tracing reasons and logical explanations, which in turn requires backtracking scripts for mapping conceptual structure.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Script as Schematic Structure

A writer may work on retracing events, actions and notions in a method for constructing perfect hash trials from a given set of mapping schemas. It is a directed inference process, resulting in a connected causal chain of events or actions that exist in the form of large predetermined units. Two mechanisms are needed for the development of such causal chain: a frequent event sequence in a sketchy manner and a script applier, filling in the causal chain between two seemingly unrelated events (Schank & Abelson, 1977, p. 38). In the dialogue of crime fiction, a principal may hold the floor by coming to the point right away and then backtracking for vital background informational strategies which produce the multi-levelled economy of the dialogue (see Fludernik, 1996, p. 45; Cherry, 2024; Mahmood, 2018, p. 108).

A script is a schematic structure, being a chunk of knowledge which describes 'a predetermined, stereotyped sequence of actions that defines a well-known situation'. Scripts are subject to modification as the incoming information interacts with what readers already know, thereby causing to modify their mental representations (Schank and Abelson, 1977, p. 41; Simpson, 2004, p. 89). Seeing that readers bring certain

expectations to any text, based upon their previous experience of texts and the world, and scripts are the pre-existing knowledge structures which enable us to process discourse quickly, a crucial function of literary discourse in a crime fiction is the refreshing of readers' scripts (see Cook, 1994; Black, 2006, p. 36).

Summary Plot

The longevity of Agatha Christie ensures her continuing domination of public perceptions of British detection from the 1940s until as late as the 1970s, as she died in 1976. Not only does the pleasure of Christie's work lie in the creation of Poirot's character, but also in those wonderfully engineered plots of Christie's which still remain as diverting as ever (Priestman, 2003, p. 147, 188; Forshaw, 2007, pp. 15 – 16; Ahmad, 2019, p. 23). *"The Adventure of the Christmas Pudding"* is about a stolen ruby which belongs to an eastern prince. This prince intends to present this ruby for his cousin whom he is going to marry. Seeing that the betrothal day is announced, Mr. Jesmond asked Poirot for help to avoid a scandal. The Jewel is stolen by a young lady and her partner, Desmond who was in relation with a rich lady called Sarah. The mystery of the stolen ruby can be solved at an old English country house called Kings Lacey, where Colonel Lacey and his wife Mrs. Lacey live with their granddaughter, Sarah; their grandson, Colin; Bridget, Mrs. Lacey's niece and Michael, Colin's friend at school. It is set for Poirot to join the family there for their Christmas celebration, supposedly to experience a typical English Christmas. Poirot restores the ruby by accident; Colonel Lacey has chocked it in the Christmas pudding, where the thief, Desmond's supposedly sister, hides the ruby there for the fear that Poirot finds it. Colin, Michael, and Bridget arrange a false murder for Poirot to detect. Bridget is lying in the snow with blood as the "dead" body and Desmond's footprints leading through the snow which is now falling and expected to grow heavier. Poirot is involved in this plan to set up Desmond and reveal his fraud for Sarah. Desmond escapes to avoid the police, taking a false ruby from Bridget's hand, as he thought she is killed for stealing the ruby. Finally, Poirot tells the family a brief about the mysterious events and how he planned for the investigation in the case of the ruby (see Hameed, 2019, p. 119).

Poirot in *"The Mystery of the Spanish Chest"* investigates in a mysterious murder where the victim is staggered in the neck, lying in a Spanish chest. Mr. Clayton is killed in Major Rich's house where a party is held and the attendants are Mrs. Clayton, Mr. and Mrs. Prince and Commander McLaren. Mr. Clayton, before his death, comes to Major Rich's house to apologize for not attending the party because he receives a telegram and he is supposed to go to Edinburgh. The next day, the servant finds Mr. Clayton murdered in the chest and he directly informs the police. Major Rich is accused for this murder because he is in love with Mrs. Clayton, and it is suggested that he killed Mr. Clayton to marry his wife. Poirot discovers a new drama for this murdering scenario since he finds that Commander McLaren trapped his friends to have Mrs. Clayton. Poirot deduces the reasoning of Mr. Clayton's murder and innocence of Major Rich by backtracking historical events derived from Shakespeare's play, Othello. In this murdering drama, so to speak, Mr. Clayton is Othello and his wife is Desdemona and the missing character of Iago in this scene is Commander McLaren who loves Mrs. Clayton and is jealous of her attraction to Major Rich. Commander McLaren plans the perfect crime whereby Clayton would die and Major Rich be accused of the murder.

METHODOLOGY

The present study is qualitative in trend and propounds four main backtracking schemes for script where a principal in a crime fiction may embrace in his dialogue. The model of the study is embodied in the following set of backtracking schemes for scripts to be applied to the novellas in hand: informative, reasoning, inter-textual and inter-lexical backtracking. The data analysis takes two trends: portraying manipulative backtracking scripts as mapped schemes in the text; unfolding the transference of these discursive schemes into structures of scripts. The text analysis involves the page number, a description of the backtracking strategies manipulated in the text and an explanation of how such backtracking discursive schemes contribute in constructing a schema. The chunks of data are chosen to explicate the applicability of the proposed schemes and confirm the validity of the model in hand. Four schemes for backtracking script are propose to be applied to the novellas in hand, embodying discursive strategies for accommodating or forming schemas via backtracking schemes:

Informative Backtracking

A principal talks about persons or events happened within the story world, i.e. textual actual world. It is triggered by verbs of saying, projecting different sub-worlds (see Norgaard, et al, 2010, p. 139).

Reasoning Backtracking

This is when expectations about specific principals and events are retrieved from those participants' personalities, social background and social relations. Backtracking script in this scheme embraces mapping knowledge of epistemic world.

Inter-textual Backtracking

Inter-textuality refers to the presence of one or more texts within the text in focus. The shaping of text meaning by another occurs when a principal talks or thinks about persons or events happened in another text abstracted from the actual world. Inter-textual references are used to retrace the course of actions or chain of events in line with those in an outsider text (see Schleicher, 2007, p. 9).

Inter-lexical Backtracking

It is a backtracking scheme between consecutive words in a chunk of a dialogue**.** A text can have its pedagogical purposes of explaining unfamiliar words, phrases and sentences, enabling readers to discern specific linguistic vocabulary, or to react to a statement. This kind of lexical cohesive backtracking takes the forms of:

1) **Wh-questions:** these require explanation of the meaning of specific items.
2) **Echo utterances:** We can use an echo question, exclamations or echo tag, by repeating utterances as a whole or in part, to react to a statement (Quirk et al, 1985, p. 835; Eastwood, 1994, p. 26).
3) **Rewording**: this includes the introducing and paraphrasing of unfamiliar words to the reader.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Agatha's novellas (Christie, 1960) are to be analyzed due to the above mentioned schemes of backtracking script. The suggested schemes include informative backtracking, reasoning backtracking, inter-textual backtracking and inter-lexical backtracking; the last scheme also involves Wh-questions, echo utterances and rewording.

The Adventure of the Christmas Pudding

    a- Informative backtracking:

      i. *"Tell me,' said Poirot, 'exactly what is it that troubles you?*
           'Our son was killed in the war,' said Mrs Lacey. 'My…" (p. 18)

In his trial to help Mrs. Lacey, Poirot backtracks her worries to see what impressions she has about Desmond. Mrs. Lacey starts talking about her early life to end her speech with her worries of the relation between Sarah and Desmond. The verb "*tell*" triggers the informative backtracking.

      ii. *"I mean the first young man one fell in love with was always someone undesirable. I remember I had a horrible passion for a young man called….Tibbitt.*" (p. 19)

Backtracking her past experience with a beloved, Mrs. Lacey predicts the failure of her granddaughter with Desmond. Here is an association between past event and future expectations.

      iii. *"I mind now that when I was a child and we went to church every Sunday, we'd start listening for the collect that begins "Stir up O Lord we beseech thee" because that collect was the signal, as it were, that the puddings should be made that week.*" (p. 43)
      iv. *"Christmas Day has been like the Christmas Days of old.*" (p. 44)

Mrs. Ross, the cook, informs Poirot of the traditions of making the pudding for Christmas in her childhood. This backtracking links the past with the present, transmitting a "*significant*" message from one generation to another; this message encodes grouping, happiness and good habits.

      v. *"His mind went back fleetingly to the cup of coffee so politely handed him by Desmond…."* (p. 47).

Seeing that Desmond puts a drug in Poirot's cup of tea and the latter avoids this as he knows what Desmond intends to do, i.e. restoring the jewel, Poirot retrieves this in his mind. This backtracking explains why Poirot does not reacts to Desmond's intrusive action.

      vi. *"I have to recount to you,' he said, 'a little history. I cannot tell you all the details, no. But I can give you the main outline.*"(p. 57)

The phrase "recount … history" triggers the informative backtracking as Poirot is retrieving the events that represent unraveled knots for the principals whom he addresses. This panoramic backtracking of the events that happened in an earlier phase of the story succession reflects a retrospective orientation of retracing the events.

vii. *"Eh bien, what happens next? The ruby is passed round. I examine it and I manage unobtrusively to slip it in my pocket…"* (p. 58).

In his backtracking of the events through which the ruby was restored, Poirot makes a question, then he answers this question, to explain the succession of the events. This strategy of backtracking, asking a question and answering it, stimulates reader's yeaning to know the details of the actions by retracing the path of the events.

viii. *"I will show you something that may explain the mystery.…Consider once again,' said Poirot, 'the scene of the crime."* (p. 59)

ix. *"You really wish that I should solve for you this last mystery?"* (p. 64)

Poirot unravels the mystery of the (fabricated) murder of Bridget in his backtracking of the crime scene and the way he planned to set up Desmond by this drama. This Backtracking fills the gaps of the unconnected events and enacts readers to retrieve an earlier plot in the story.

Informative backtracking can be triggered by the verbs *tell, remember, recount, mind, show, solve* or a question with *what*. Informative backtracking enacts an idea of how things would be due to pre-existed experiences.

b- Reasoning backtracking:

i. " *Especially if a baby's coming. One has to give in then, and let them get married. And then, nearly always, it seems to me, after a year or two there's a divorce. And then the girl comes home*." (p. 19)

In her reasoning discursive mapping of the unfavoured relation between Sarah and Desmond, Mrs. Lacey predicts the miserable future of her granddaughter, unless the latter changes her mind. The orientation of this kind of backtracking is directed towards the future, a prospective one, rather than the past, because the speaker retraces what is expected on behalf of past experience.

ii. *You have read the detective stories. It is most important that nothing should be touched and that the body should be left as it is..... We must think of the doctor, must we not, before we think of the police?* (p. 50)

Discursive steps should be followed when a crime occurs: nothing should be touched and that the body should be left as it is, think of a doctor, etc. This backtracking scheme which is derived from detective stories carries a sort of instruction of how to deal with situations like that.

c- Iner-textual backtracking:

i. "*Stir up O Lord we beseech thee*" (p. 43)

Mrs. Ross traces this Collect prayer which is said on the last Sunday before the advent, and was to be said while making the Christmas pudding. She links her past memories in the church and her preservation of that custom to the present time. This reflects the writer's intention to attract readers attention to such customs.

d- Inter-lexical backtracking:

1) Echo questions:

i. A- *"Her husband had looked at her piercingly and said, 'Not up to something, are you, Em?"*

B - *'Up to something?' said Em … 'of course not' "* (p. 17)

Backtracking the phrase in the first turn via an echo question indicates Em's dissatisfaction with her husband. This echo question reflects the mental state of the

speaker and his reaction to another interlocutor, using the same words with interrogative mood.

2) Echo exclamation:
i. *It's more exciting. Beautiful girl lying lifeless in the snow.'*
 'Beautiful girl! Ah-ha,' said Michael in derision. (p. 32)
 Seeing that Bridget describes herself as being beautiful, Michael backtracks her words to express an irony of what she says.

3) Rewording:
 i- *"Eh bien,'* he said, '*I accept.*" (p. 14)
 ii- "*Ça, c'est tout à fait naturelle,*" said Poirot. 'It is the fashion of the moment. (p. 18)

Foreign words are translated, though with sense translation, by the principal to give the reader a hint of what they mean.

The Mystery of the Spanish Chest

a- Informative backtracking:
i. *"Tell me now about the events of that evening.*" (p. 90)

Poirot asks Mrs. Clayton to inform him of what happened in the evening when the murder occurred. The backtracking of the events at that night is an essential procedure of tracing a crime, as far as an investigation is to be held.

ii. *"What did your husband tell you exactly?*" (p. 91)

Backtracking the verbiage of someone is not the same as describing events and actions because such description is manifested from another person's point of view. This brings to light the construction of two schemas: a schema of what happened and a schema of what is said.

iii. *"Now tell me about that last evening. Mr. Clayton dined with you at the club. What did he say?*" (p. 91)

Backtracking the events of the "*last time*" and what *Mr. Clayton* said to McLaren, Poirot relates Mrs. Clayton verbiage to what McLaren says while they are talking . He tries to puzzle McLaren in a trial to set him up.

iv. *"'Ah', said Poirot, 'last night…Do you remember exactly when it was Mr. Clayton arrived here?*"(p. 116)
 Backtracking the events from the valet's point of view enacts a panoramic description of what happened that night.

Informative backtracking is triggered by the verbs *tell*, *remember* and *say*.

b- Reasoning backtracking:
i. *"Perhaps Major Rich had had an Italian mother? Somewhere—surely—there should be something to explain the choice of a dagger as a weapon.*" (p. 80)

In account of Poirot's point of view, if Major Rich had an Italian mother, there is a possibility that he uses a dagger. This may presuppose that Italian ladies keep such daggers and Major Rich has inherited it from his mother, with the assumption that she is Italian. Poirot backtracks an Italian tradition to unravel a knot in the case by explaining it.

  ii. *Yet the possibility is there. Your husband undoubtedly came to the flat, since his body was found there…. Suspicion will immediately fall on Rich.* (p. 89)

Poirot maps the reasoning of the murder as he backtracks the course of events in terms of possibility. Mrs. Clayton's reaction gives him feedback on the track of actions.

  iii-*"If he had a body in the chest…. why didn't he get rid of it?"* (p. 97)

Enquiring information by means of a discursive question draws the line for the probability of one's (non)involvement in an action. Backtracking the suspect's behaviors in the wake of reasoning can indicate what he is supposed to do if he is to conceal his crime.

  iv-*"Already I have looked up your career…… It is impossible that a man of your ability should commit a murder in the way this one was committed. Very well. You are innocent."* (p. 110)

Retracing Rich's personalities, Poirot concludes that he is innocent. This backtracking follows logical reasoning to map the traits of truth.

  iii. *"I think I now know what happened on that fatal evening at Major Rich's flat…We started, all of us, by an assumption that was not true".* (p. 126)

Poirot portraits the murdering drama that happened that evening and the possibilities that can lead him to truth, backtracking verbiages, actions, events and reasons elaborated from different resources.

  Reasoning backtracking is triggered by expressions of likelihood, such as *possibly, impossibly, assumption* and *there should be.*

c- Inter-textual backtracking:

  i. *"Exactly. What is that something that they possess—the sirens of this world! The Helens of Troy, the Cleopatras?"*(p. 72)

There is an association between sinister events (like the murder in question) and what women's beauty can lead to, retrieving historical characters, *The Helens of Troy* and *the Cleopatras*. Poirot backtracks historical figures to manipulate a complicated case surrounding a beautiful lady.

  ii. *He thought of Mary Stuart, the Scottish Queen. Had she known, that night in Kirk o' Fields, of the deed that was to be done? Or was she completely innocent?* (p. 94)

In this backtracking strategy, Poirot retraces Mrs. Clayton's personalities in terms of *"Mary Stuart"* to see if the former has any relation with the murderer. Association between the two characters gives rise to the probability of Mrs. Clayton's involvement in the murder.

  iii. *"Othello—that sort of thing. Margharita, you know, had an extraordinary effect on men."* (p. 104)

   iv. *"We are back at Othello. Yes, Othello…you have given me there a little idea…"*. (p. 107)

   v. *"Read Othello, Miller. Consider the characters in Othello."* (p. 124)

In iii, Mrs. Spence makes a comparison between Othello and Mr. Clayton, and according to her view, both died in misery of jealousy and suspicion of their beautiful wives. Backtracking the character of Othello underpins Mrs. Clayton's affair with Rich, and hence, a motive of hostility between Mr. Clayton and Rich. This indicates that other persons' experiences can lead us to facts and it was an inspiration, as in <u>iv</u>, for Poirot in his investigation. In <u>v</u>, Poirot draws on what happened in "*Othello*" play and Desdemona's associated role in that play, in relation to Mr. and Mrs. Clayton.

   vi. *A thing that has often been done throughout the course of history. The dead bride in the Mistletoe Bough, Iachimo with designs on the virtue of Imogen and so on.*(p. 126)

Poirot Backtracks events from a historical horror story (The Legend of the *Mistletoe Bough*), describing the murder of a new bride who is supposed to play a game. Amalgamation of personalities from Othello's jealousy and Iachimo's game can map how Mr. Clayton behaved that night.

   An investigator, in a script applier mechanism, makes use of others' experiences by backtracking historical events and characters. He draws on the crime scene, what the witnesses say and believe, as well as his intuition of the discursive consequence of events.

   d- Inter-lexical backtracking:

   1- Wh- questions:

     i. *"What exactly is a Spanish chest?*
     I suppose, M. Poirot, that it is a chest that came originally from Spain." (p. 70)

The second turn is a paraphrasing of the phrase "*a Spanish chest"*, explaining how an attribute of an item is structured by a pre-modifier derived from the country of origin and the commodity.

   2- Rewording:

     i. *"Anyway, one must accept the dagger (some papers called it a stiletto!)"* (p. 80)

An originally Italian word (*stiletto*) is introduced to the reader.

     ii. *"Please, please, please don't let me down! Don't say you can't manage it."* (p. 81)

The second sentence explains the first, seeing that *"let down"*, as an idiom is not so familiar to foreign readers.

     iii. *"You noticed nothing unusual—nothing out of place?"* (p. 91)

Since Mrs. Clayton (supposedly) does not recognize the phrase "*out of place*", it is a maneuver by the author to refer to this idiomatic expression in a way presuming that it is Mrs. Clayton who does not know the meaning of expression rather than the (foreign) reader.

   3- Echo question:

iv. *"You noticed nothing unusual—nothing out of place?' 'Out of place?' She frowned for a moment."* (p. 91)

In reaction to the idiomatic expression, Mrs. Clayton frowns to express her wondering of such an unfamiliar expression. This is a strategic maneuver of explaining unfamiliar expressions, especially at the time of writing the novella, without belittling readers' abilities to understand idiomatic expressions.

v. *"He was all bottled up, if you know what I mean… he was a dry stick with no feelings at all."* (p. 105).

The idiomatic expression "*bottled up*" is explained in the sentence that follows it, though with a metaphor.

vi. *"She would get men all het up—mad about her… Une femme fatale."* (p. 105)

The expression "het up" is explained as "mad about her" and Mrs. Clayton is described, with French, as a fatal women to interpret " *get men all het up*" .

Rewording is a strategy to introduce readers with what unfamiliar (or idiomatic) expressions mean, especially for those whose English is not the mother tongue. This can be attributed to pedagogical motives. However, an idiom can function as a resource of language enrichment for learners of English.

The data analysis manifests the potential applicability of the propounded model to the crime fiction and specifically the novellas in hand. Backtracking scripts encompass essential modes of instruction via the crime fiction, composed of adjacent or paired discursive elucidation. They answer fundamental questions of what things look like, where things come from, and what designates their future, i.e. ontological, explanatory and predicative issues. This validates the first hypothesis of the study.

The writer works on accommodating receivers' schemata to the proceeding schemes of the current textual succession of events, actions or ideas, and hence facilitating comprehension and enhancing knowledge. He creates a textual world view, portraying eventual script that accommodates receivers' mind for specific trends of the schematic profile. Schemata that have not been filled with information are filled by default assignments based on backtracked stereotypical expectations. Backtracking scripts evoke in the reader associated concepts by matching input to slots in the schema, and hence, slots instantiation involves interaction between paired textual scripts and reader's cognitive scripts.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusions

1- Backtracking script is a mode of speech presentation, characterizing the textual organization of discourse in Agatha's crime fiction. The writer with backtracking script provokes a schematic structure to be recognized by the reader, retrieving information that fills gaps in the succession of events or ideas. Backtracking script is categorized into four main types: informative, reasoning, inter-textual and inter-lexical. They enact

retracing personalities, verbiages, past actions and events, ideologies, and reasoning. This validates the first hypothesis.

2- Backtracking script enhances readers' knowledge, putting the reader on a specific trajectory. Backtracking mode in discourse reflects a retrospective or prospective orientation of retracing persons and events in the actual textual world as well as the actual world. It maps a schema of what happens or will happen. This validates the second hypothesis.

3- The two novellas give an impression of the attitude that many problems and difficulties in life can be resolved by backtracking history, i.e. a link between the past and the present.

4- Unfamiliar words and notions and idiomatic expressions are explained by rewarding strategy of the inter-lexical backtracking, while inter-textual backtracking involves antics with maxim. This carries pedagogical tendencies in its frame. There are also pedagogical purposes embedded in the novellas, derived from the reasoning backtrackings which enlist instructions of how to deal with a situation of a murder.

5- Informative backtracking follows communicative interactions that can be triggered with verbs like *tell, say, recount, remember* and *show,* while reasoning backtracking, with deductive strategies, is triggered with expressions like *possibly, impossibly* and *assumption.*

A Recommendation for a Further Study.

A stylistic analysis is recommended for the study of backtracking script in Detective Conon TV series.

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