

A pragma-Stylistic Study of Bullies' Speech in Selected Children Short Stories

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Abstract

The goal of the current study is to examine the pragma-stylistic strategies used by bullies to illustrate the concept of bullying in four selected American children's short stories. Children stories are often written, not only to present entertainment to readers, but to communicate moral, cultural, religious or pedagogical messages. The current study aims at inspecting the most and least common speech acts that bullies in the selected data utilize and highlighting the specific pragma-rhetorical tropes used by the bullies. In association with the aims, the study sets out two hypotheses: (1) in the selected stories, bullies tend to utilize directive SAs the most and representative SAs the least, (2) clarification tropes are mostly used by bullies. To examine the hypotheses set forth, an eclectic model is developed. The eclectic model encompasses Searle's (1969) classification of speech acts and Al-Hindawi and Abu-Krooz (2012) pragma-rhetorical tropes model for literary text analysis. The study has concluded that bullies use expressive SAs the most whereas declarative SAs are used the least frequently. Clarification tropes are deployed by bullies most commonly.

المستخلص

تبحث الدراسة الحالية في الأدوات الأسلوبية-التداولية التي يستخدمها الشخصيات في قصص الأطفال لتسليط الضوء على ظاهرة التنمر في أربع من القصص الأمريكية القصيرة المختارة للأطفال. لا تتم كتابة قصص الأطفال لتقديم الترفيه للقراء فحسب، بل كذلك لتوصيل الرسائل الأخلاقية، والثقافية، والدينية، والتربوية. تهدف الدراسة إلى استيضاح الأفعال الكلامية الأكثر والأقل استخداماً من قبل المتنمرين في القصص المختارة، وتسليط الضوء على أنواع المجازات البلاغية التي يستخدمها المتنمرين في قصص الأطفال. تزامناً مع هذه الأهداف، تحدد الدراسة فرضيتان: (١) في القصص المختارة يميل المتنمرون إلى استخدام أفعال الكلام التوجيهية أكثر وأفعال الكلام التمثيلية أقل (٣) غالباً ما يستخدم المتنمرون المجازات البلاغية-التوضيحية. لفحص الفرضيات المحددة مسبقاً، تم تصميم نموذج انتقائي يتكون من تصنيفات الأفعال الكلامية لسيرل (1969) وأنموذج المجازات الخطابية البلاغية للهنداوي وأبو كروز (2012) المصمم خصيصاً للنصوص الأدبية. يخلص التحليل إلى استنتاجين: (1) فيما يتعلق باستخدام أفعال الكلام في توضيح التنمر، يستخدم المتنمرون أفعال الكلام التعبيرية أكثر في حين يتم استخدام أفعال الكلام التصريحية على نطاق أقل. (2) فيما يتعلق باستخدام المجازات الخطابية – التوضيحية فإنه يسود استعمالها من قبل المتنمرين في أغلب الأحيان.

Key Words: Bullying, bullies, speech acts, clarification tropes, emphasis tropes.

1. INTRODUCTION

Bullying indicates an aggressive behavior or speech uttered by a bully (intimidator) against a victim either verbally or physically to feel powerful and

superior (Donegan, 2012, p.34). This study intends to analyze children's stories pragma-stylistically to explore the linguistic devices utilized by bullies in children's short stories to depict bullying. The current study focuses on how the bullying behavior among a considerable age-group ranging from 5-12 years old is enacted and issued by bullies in four short stories that are directed to children. Four extracts are analyzed in terms of the eclectic model developed in this study.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Pragma-Stylistics

Recent studies of stylistics have evolved beyond the study of the form of language utterances to a broader interest in pragmatics, or pragma-stylistics, as it is often called. This approach is no longer limited to examining speech acts as if they were our only pragmatic indicators. Its goal is to provide a framework to explain the relationships between linguistic forms and pragmatic interpretation, as well as how the style of communication changes as the speaker assists the hearer in identifying the thought behind an utterance, and the implicit interchanges with the explicit (Hickey, 1990, p.9).

Sell (1991, p.99) states that "the aim [of pragmatic stylistics] is to relate the writing and reading of literary texts to the linguistic and sociocultural contexts in which those processes have taken place. This means that it is literary on one hand and linguistic on the other with a great emphasis on contextualization".

2.2. Speech Acts Theory

The essential concept behind the theory of speech acts is that saying something, whether orally or in writing, is doing something, and hence speaking is an act. SAs theory is fundamentally pragmatic since it incorporates the speaker's intention and the hearer's inference (Birner, 2013, p.175).

Austin (1962) proposed SAs theory, which was further refined by philosopher Searle (1969 and 1975), who attempted to describe spoken language in terms of what is done rather than what is spoken (Warren, 2006, p.87).

Searle's model is based on the notion that when a person speaks a language; he is engaging in a rule-governed type of behavior. This means that the speaker undertakes illocutionary acts such as asking questions, making statements, giving commands, making

promises, and so on when uttering utterances. According to Searle (Searle, 1969, p.17)., there are five different types of illocutionary speaking acts:

- *Representatives*
- *Expressives*
- *Declarations*
- *Directives*
- *Commissives*

2.3. Pragma-Rhetorical Tropes

Writers utilize figures of speech, which are ways of using words or phrases that go beyond their actual meaning, to create a colorful and dramatic impact or to make the meaning of a statement obvious and easy to recall. Figures of speech make a literary work more enjoyable or stimulating (Steffoff, 2018, p.5).

Al-Hindawi and Abu-Krooz (2012) develop their Pragma-Rhetorical Tropes model for literary text analysis, which includes rhetorical devices with pragmatic-oriented goal (Al-Hindawi & Abu-Krooz, 2017, pp. 20-22). *Clarification* and *emphatic* tropes are the two main components of the model.

1. Clarification Tropes

A main form of tropes, according to Al-Hindawi and Abu-Krooz (2012, p. 20), may be used by writers to convey some attitudinal and evaluative concepts in regard to a specific issue or person. These includes:

- **Metaphor:** A metaphor is a figure of similarity in which a word or phrase is replaced by a statement representing a similar situation in a different semantic field (Gibbs, 2001, p.326).
- **Simile:** A simile is a direct comparison (using the words "like" or "as") between two things that are diametrically opposed in nature but have something in common. The words 'like' or 'as' are used to introduce two objects that are freely compared to each other (Cruse, 2006, p.165).
- **Irony:** according to Wales (2011, p.240), irony is a trope that denotes a conflict between the words used in actuality and the desired meaning, as in the epitome "What a lovely weather!" (While it's raining).

2. Emphasis Tropes

Some tropes, such as overstatement and understatement, are primarily used by speakers for emphatic purposes, according to Mendoza and Pea (2007, p.152), these includes:

- **Rhetorical Questions:** This type of questions, according to Quirk et al. (1985, pp. 825,6), has the structure of an interrogation but the power of a strong assertion.
- **Overstatement (Hyperbole):** Hyperbole is a figure of speech that uses deliberate exaggeration to achieve rhetorical effect, create impact, or draw attention. Exaggeration can be both positive and bad (Cruse, 2006, p.80).
- **Understatement (Litotes):** Understatement is a derivative of flouting the quantity and quality maxims. An understatement is a statement that can be utilized to represent the meaning of a more informative statement even though it is noticeably less informative. Such deliberate unrevealing situation runs antithetical to the Gricean principle of doing what one can to

understand oneself, but it is consistent with the opposite notion of doing no more than one has to (Al-Hindawi and Abu-Krooz, 2012, p.22).

2.4. Bullying

Bullying has become a popular topic among researchers, says Berger (2007, p.1). The reason for that is the contradictory results to the public presumptions for bullying which researchers come up with. Additionally, many studies concerning the desire for children at school to attack other children have discovered many reasons and ways for bullying changeable according to age, gender, context, and social status (Archer, 2004, p.4).

The term bullying is defined by Smith and Sharp (1994) as “the systematic abuse of power”. Bullying can occur in a variety of settings, including the workplace and the family; however, it is more likely to occur in social groupings with evident relations of power and a little monitoring, such as the military forces, prisons, and schools (p. 2).

Harris and Petrie (2003) describe the term ‘bullying’ as complex and hard to define. However, their definition of the term is ‘bullying is an extreme behavior that is abusive’ (p.1).

3. METHODOLOGY

The analysis of the present data follows a mixed research design with a descriptive analysis performed first and then supported by a quantitative analysis in the form of frequencies and percentages. One way to think of qualitative research is as the “study of things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p.2). Quantitative research, on the other hand, is defined as the application of statistical methods that are “based on numerical measurements of specific aspects of phenomena...[and] are easily replicable by other researchers” (King et al., 1994, pp.3-4).

The data is collected from the website (Z-library); a free website to download books and articles. The study presents an analysis of some extracts taken from four short stories written primarily for children. The stories address children within the age group of 7-12 years old. All the four stories are adopted by the researcher based on a certain *criterion*. All of the stories include a depiction of antisocial behavior directed from one or a group of students toward a socially weaker person/group.

The model that is developed to analyze the present data is eclectic. Since the research aims to identify the stylistic features of the literary discourse in the stories as well as how these features pragmatically manifest bullying, pragmatic and stylistic theories are used to assess the bullies’ speech from a pragmatic and stylistic perspective. The model is based on the following models: Searle's model of speech acts (1969) and Al-Hindawi and Abu-Krooz (2012) Pragma-Rhetorical Tropes model for literary text analysis, which includes rhetorical devices with pragmatic-oriented goal (Al-Hindawi & Abu-Krooz, 2012, p.20-22). Clarification and emphatic tropes are the two main components of the model.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1. Jake Drake- Bully Buster

Andrew Elborn Clements is an American children's book author ("Andrew Clements," 2022, para.1). Clements' short story, Jake Drake-Bully Buster, is the first installment in the renowned Jake Drake series, published in 2001. Jake, a fourth grader of average height, lacks an older sibling, does not appear to be a gossip, and appears intelligent. The majority of the book is on his relationship with his second-grade classmate 'Link' (*Jake Drake-Bully Buster*, 2015).

Illustrative Excerpt

"I saw Link walking behind Mrs. Brattle. She was showing him which bus to ride home. "Please," I whispered. "Not my bus. Not bus three. Please, please, please, not bus three." But Mrs. Brattle led him right over to bus number three. And ten seconds later, Link was on my bus, standing there next to me. Looking down at me. In a voice much louder than it needed to be, he said, "Hey, Fake, anyone else gonna sit here?" I looked up and I remembered how tall he was. But now he was messing with my name. And he already had me mad and scared at the same time. But I didn't care because I didn't want him to make fun of my name. So I said, "My name's Jake, Jake Drake." And right away I knew I had made a mistake. Because now he knew that I cared about him goofing around with my name. Link smiled that special bully-smile. He said, "Yeah, I know. Like I said. Your name's Fake, Fake Drake." And that made the other kids on the bus start laughing. And then he sat down next to me."

(Chapter Three-From Bad to

Worse, p.18)

Speech Acts

In "*Hey, Fake, anyone else gonna sit here?*", Link uses an expressive speech act of mocking when he name-calls Jake as Fake, and he deliberately and with enjoyment tries to make fun of Jake's name. One more time, calling Jake as "*Fake*" is an expressive speech act of mocking. Ascribing a name "*Fake*" to Jake is apparently a matter of mocking. Link's action is a bullying as he intends to harm

‘Jake’ and to get power over him, and this desire is expressed in an action which is making fun of his name.

Rhetorical Tropes

Link is criticizing Jake and overtly emphasizes the new name ‘*Fake*’ as he repeats it more than once, and by this he overstates his insult by issuing an overstatement.

4.2 Roxie and the Hooligans by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor

Phyllis Reynolds Naylor is an American author who is specialized in young adult and children's fiction (“Phyllis Reynolds Naylor,” 2022, para.1).

Roxie and The Hooligans is a short story about a fourth grader girl with huge ears is being pursued by Helvetia and her gang of Hooligans, and there appears to be no way out. When they all wind up stranded on a small island together, trying to figure out how to survive and get back home, Roxie is the one who has the skills and knows what they need to do. When confronted with the challenge of being bullied because of her big ears, Roxie tries to answer the harsh words with a smile at first. When that does not work, she tries to figure out a means to simply avoid them on her own. With her clever, savvy, know-how-can-do attitude, she gradually takes leadership of the group while they are stranded on the island, finally able to put everything she has learned from her adventuresome Uncle Dangerfoot into practice (Umlauf, 2014).

Illustrative Excerpt

[...] “I think we ought to tape those ears to the sides of her head where they belong,” said Helvetia Hagus, a large-boned girl with a square face and a square frame who wore her kneesocks rolled down around her ankles.

“I think we ought to find something to hang on those ears,” said Simon Surly, who was as tall and skinny as a broom. When he was feeling nasty, his lips curled down on the left side and up on the right.

“I think we ought to find something to pour in those ears,” said Freddy Filch, [...]

Smoky Jo [...] “I think we should hang her up by the ears!” she squealed, and they brayed and howled and cawed and squeaked some more.

Every day it happened again, only each day the hooligans crowded a little closer around Roxie.”

(Chapter One- Uncle Dangerfoot P. 8)

Speech Acts

Helvetia, one of the hooligans, makes use of an expressive speech act of mocking in ***"I think we ought to tape those ears to the sides of her head where they belong,"*** wherein Helvetia makes a fun statement of Roxie because Roxie has a big ear. She performs the speech act indirectly since the direct utterance i.e., the locutionary act is a suggestion. Simon Surly is one of the hooligans who keeps taunting and teasing Roxie for her look. He comments ***"I think we ought to find something to hang on those ears,"*** using an expressive speech act of mocking as he implicitly ridicules Roxie's ears as big and to be a hang for things. He directly suggests but indirectly mocks.

Freddy, one of the hooligans, also makes fun of Roxie's ear when he comments ***"I think we ought to find something to pour in those ears,"***. Freddy employs an expressive speech act of mocking. He mocks her ears by describing them as big and hollow implicitly by using an indirect speech act. He even compared her ears to something like a cup or a glass that is used to drink tea or milk. Smoky Jo, one of the hooligans, states ***"I think we should hang her up by the ears!"***. She means Roxie by her speech using an expressive speech act of mocking, she is admitting that Roxie's ears are so big to the point that they could hang her from them.

Rhetorical Tropes

Helvetia is being ironic in ***"I think we ought to tape those ears to the sides of her head where they belong"***. She is issuing the trope of irony since she knows that Roxie's ears need not be taped. Simon Surly is also implicitly comparing Roxie's ear to a hang i.e., something we hang clothes on; he says ***"I think we ought to find something to hang on those ears"***. He employs a metaphor by saying that her ears are a hang. Freddy uses another metaphor because he says that Roxie's ears can be used to pour something in. He comments ***"I think we ought to find something to pour in those ears,"***. Smoky Jo says that ***"I think we should hang her up by the ears!"***. She refers to Roxie by her speech implying a fun statement that Roxie has a very big ear. The metaphor here is that Roxie's ears are ropes that can be hanged.

4.3 How to Be Cool in The Third Grade

How to Be Cool in The Third Grade is a story written by Betsy Duffey, an American writer, in 1999. The narrator tells the story of Robbie, a third grader student. Robbie is going to start the new school year, and he keeps dreaming of being cool in the third grade. Robbie thinks of the new school year as a wiped chalkboard that he can write anything on. His real name is Robert, and he does not like when his mother calls him Robbie; he believes it is not cool. He starts making notes about how to be cool in the third grade in his spiral notebook.

Illustrative Excerpt

"Slowly Robbie continued down the aisle. Before he could get all the way to the back of the bus the bus lurched forward.

Then it happened.

Later, Robbie could not tell exactly what had happened. All he knew was, one second he was standing, and the next second he was sitting.

The problem was that he was not sitting in an empty seat. The problem was that he was sitting in Bo Haney's seat. Worse than that, he was sitting on Bo Haney's lap. The entire bus was silent for a second. Then Bo's voice broke the silence.

"Hey, Wobbie," said Bo, "Hey, Baby Wobbie!"

He pushed Robbie down to the floor. Robbie was so surprised that he sat on the floor and could not say a word.

"This seat is taken!"

Then Robbie got up and stumbled backward, trying to get his balance. He tried to think of something to say. He couldn't think of a single word.

With his mouth wide open, he stood looking at Bo. "Heh, heh, heh," Bo laughed. "Can't you talk, Baby Wobbie? Can't the widdle baby say 'goo goo'?"

Bo turned around and looked at the other kids on the bus. A few of them laughed with Bo.

"Don't let it happen again, Wobbie."

Somehow Robbie's legs began to move. He passed the other seats of the bus without looking up."

(Chapter Four- Bo Haney,

p.24-25)

Speech Acts

Bo breaks the silence via issuing an expressive speech act of mocking when he says "**Hey, Wobbie,**". Bo continues his mockery behaviour when he adds "**Hey, Baby Wobbie!**", and by this Bo has utilized another indirect expressive speech act of mocking as he mocks Robert and calls him **baby** and **wobbie** respectively. Bo belittles Robert through turning his name into a funny version. Bo issues a commissive speech act of warning as he reminds Robert that "**This seat is taken!**". Bo does not give up and goes on insulting Robert's reaction. He comments "**Heh, heh, heh, can't you talk, Baby Wobbie? Can't the widdle baby say 'goo goo'?**" with a laugh. Bo is using an expressive speech act of insulting because he compares Robert to a **baby** to belittle and make fun of Robbie. Bo, additionally, uses a mockful phrase **widdle baby**. Bo makes his last speech act directed to Robbie; he threatens Robert not to do the same thing again. Bo uses a commissive speech act of threatening.

Rhetorical Tropes

Bo calls Robbie as *baby* using a metaphor. Bo is eager to disturb others, so he uses these diminutive words to humiliate Robbie and eventually increases his reputation among other kids; that is what bullies often do. Bo issues a metaphor which is manifested in the words *Wobby* and *baby*. Bo mocks Robbie when he says “*Can’t you talk, Baby Wobbie? Can’t the widdle baby say ‘goo goo’?*”, and the metaphors generated here are *Baby Wobbie* and *widdle baby*.

4.4 The Hundred Dresses by Eleanor Estes

Eleanor Estes was an American writer (“Eleanor Estes,” 2022, para.1). she wrote the children's book *The Hundred Dresses* which rests on the story of Wanda Petronski, a Polish girl, attends a Connecticut school where the other students mock her because she is "different." Wanda, a poor and lonely Polish American girl, is the protagonist of the story (“The Hundred Dresses,” 2022, para.1).

Illustrative Excerpt

“Wanda, Peggy would say in a most courteous manner, as though she were talking to Miss Mason or to the principal perhaps.

“Wanda,” she’d say, giving one of her friends a nudge, “tell us. How many dresses did you say you had hanging up in your closet?”

“A hundred,” said Wanda.

“A hundred!” exclaimed all the girls incredulously, and the little girls would stop playing hopscotch and listen.

“Yeah, a hundred, all lined up,” said Wanda. Then her thin lips drew together in silence.

“What are they like? All silk, I bet,” said Peggy.

“Yeah, all silk, all colors.”

“Velvet too?”

“Yeah, velvet too. A hundred dresses,” repeated Wanda stolidly. “All lined up in my closet.”

Then they’d let her go. And then before she’d gone very far, they couldn’t help bursting into shrieks and peals of laughter.”

(Chapter Two- The Dresses Game-p.6)

Speech Acts

The question Peggy gives to Wanda is an expressive speech act of criticizing. She aspires to hear from Wanda the same answer of “*a hundred dresses*”, which she already knows, but she repeatedly humiliates and criticizes Wanda for being poor and less than her. This speech act is indirect since it is an implied act of criticizing. Again, the girls also comment when Wanda answers, “*A hundred!*”; they use expressive speech act of exclaiming. Peggy again asks “*What are they like? All silk, I bet*”; she uses an indirect speech act of mocking. She deliberately harms and mocks Wanda. Moreover, by saying “*Velvet too?*”; the same expressive speech act of criticizing is used.

Rhetorical Tropes

In her question to Wanda, “*tell us. How many dresses did you say you had hanging up in your closet?*”; Peggy employs irony in that her intended meaning is not to ask Wanda about her dresses but to offend her because she already knows that Wanda is poor and that is evident from her clothes; she wears the same attire every day. Peggy’s question “*What are they like? All silk, I bet,*”, is another ironic expression. Moreover, by saying “*Velvet too?*”; Peggy is criticizing Wanda via using the clarification trope of irony.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1 Speech Acts

The detailed findings of SAs by the characters mentioned earlier are displayed by using frequencies and percentages. The results are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Frequencies and Percentages of SAs in the Selected Short Stories

SAs Ch.	Rep.		Exp.		Dec.		Dir.		Com.		Total	
	Fr.	Pr.	Fr.	Pr.	Fr.	Pr.	Fr.	Pr.	Fr.	Pr.	Fr.	Pr.
Bullies	D. 6	85.71%	D. 21	47.73%	D. 0	0%	D.12	80%	D.14	77.78%	84	100%
	In. 1	14.29%		52.27%		0%		20%		22.22%		
Total	7	8.33%	44	52.39	0	0%	15	17.85%	18	21.43%		

Expressive SAs are the mostly deployed SA by bullies while declarative is the least used. In other words, SAs can be arranged in terms of use from top to down as follows: expressives, commissives, directives, representatives, and declaratives.

Expressive SAs are the mostly used SAs by bullies since they are used 44 times (52.39%). The reason for that can lie in the bullies’ tendency to express their feelings which stems from their overindulgence in others issues rather than theirs. Moreover, they tend to exhibit their power over the weaker characters, namely the victims, either to maintain their status in the hierarchical scale of the peers’ society or to gain some resources from their victims. In terms of direct and indirect expressive SAs, bullies employ expressives indirectly 23 times (52.27%) meanwhile directly 21 times (47.73%). The frequencies seem convergent.

As one type of expressive SAs, bullies also employ direct insulting. They are characterized by the over-use of aggressive actions and words, preserving an image of strength in front of others, misunderstanding of other’s aggressiveness, maintaining angry thoughts toward others, and concealing compassion to their victims. A possible explanation of the bullies’ abundant use of direct expressive

mocking SAs is that they aspire to exercise their power and raise their popularity since the concept of popularity is linked to the concept of power when it comes to school relationships. Regarding the bullies' indirect use of expressive SAs, Helvetia criticizes Roxie's ears via an indirect act of criticizing. Freddy and Smoky Jo, the bullies, employ indirect mocking and criticizing.

Bullies deploy commissive SAs 18 times (21.43%) both directly and indirectly. Direct commissive SAs are used by bullies 14 times (22.22%) while indirect commissives used only 4 times (21.43%). Bullies' use of commissives can be attributed to their aggressive nature and their commitment to abuse others who seem to have weaker personalities. Threatening and warning, as examples of commissive SAs, are used by bullies in the selected stories.

Directive SAs are found to be used by bullies 15 times (17.85%) both directly and indirectly. Direct directive SAs occur 12 times (80%) whereas indirect occur 3 times (20%). It is found that bullies tend to direct their victims into their desired outcomes which could be both sociological and resourceful.

Representative SA exploited by bullies 7 times (8.33%). Direct representatives score 6 times (85.71%) and indirect representatives score only one time (14.29%). Representative SAs include stating, informing, describing, answering, agreeing, disagreeing, reminding, denying, predicting, and accusing. Bullies is skillful in informing or accusing others due to their strong personalities.

Lastly, declarative SAs are never found in the data and as such achieving the last rank among other SAs. Bullies are not in a position to give declarations. Furthermore, despite the fact that bullies have stronger psychological or physical characteristics; they target victims' emotional and relational states aiming at expelling this imbalance of power in the form of repeated hurtful, intentional, and repeated actions either for their own enjoyment or to save the reputation they gain in their schools. Maintaining social status do not require bullies to use declarations to change the world, instead, they build their reputation through their abusive behaviour to physically and psychologically weaker students.

5.2 Pragma-Rhetorical Tropes

Frequencies and percentages are used to illustrate the bullies' comprehensive use of pragma-rhetorical tropes. For further clarity, the findings are presented in Table 7 below.

Table 2

Frequencies and Percentages of Pragma-Rhetorical Tropes in the Selected Short Stories

Tropes
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1. Clarification Tropes

Clarification tropes are utilized by bullies 41 times (٨٠.39%). It is evident that bullies utilized this type of tropes the most. This kind of tropes, as its name suggests, may be employed to portray an attitude and judgmental ideas about a certain subject or character. Metaphor, simile, and irony are three other sub-tropes included in the clarification category.

As evident in Table 2, bullies use two types of the clarification tropes in their interaction with their victims in the selected short stories. They deploy metaphor 25 times (60.97%), and therefore it occupies the first rank as the mostly used clarification trope by bullies. Irony comes next with 16 occurrences (39.02%).

Bullies are the ones who use metaphor the most. It occurs when the bully seeks to discreetly draw comparisons between his victim and something or someone. The comparison conveys information about the motives and assessments of bullies toward their victims.

The second type of clarification tropes employed by bullies after metaphor tropes is irony. Irony denotes difference between reality or the implied meaning and the expressed meaning. It is frequently utilized by bullies in the data. A possible reason can be the sarcastic nature of bullies toward their victims.

The third type of clarification tropes is simile. It is used to directly compare two things or people. It never gets used by bullies in the stories and the cause could lie in the bullies' desire to conceal their comparisons, or they do not want to be caught mocking the victim.

2. Emphasis Tropes

In comparison with clarification tropes, this kind is utilized 10 times (19.61%) by bullies. This kind of tropes is used primarily for emphatic purposes such as putting more emphasis on the speaker's idea and opinion and emphasize the speakers' points. They are used to assist in delivering confirmations or disapprovals. Three tropes are involved within emphasis: rhetorical questions, overstatements, and understatements.

Bullies' employment of overstatement trope comes first with 5 occurrences (50%). It can be traced to bullies exaggerated images concerning their victims to make others convinced of the same concepts as theirs.

Then the trope of rhetorical questions comes with 3 occurrences (30%) by bullies. They use it mostly, not to question someone, but to emphasize their speech. Understatement is deployed twice by bullies with the percentage (20%).

Conclusion

This section presents the conclusions of the findings arrived at in the analysis of the selected data.

1- Regarding the use of SAs in reflecting bullying, expressive SAs are used by bullies the most, whereas declarative SAs are used the least frequently. The cause of such may be the bullies' propensity to vent their emotions, which results from their overindulgence in other people's issues as opposed to their own. Additionally, they frequently demonstrate their dominance over the weaker characters—the victims—either to uphold their position in the social hierarchy of their peers or to extract something of value from them. Bullies are more likely to utilize indirect expressive SAs than the direct ones, according to the current data. When it comes to being direct, bullies want to surpass everyone else, which leads them to pick a victim (or victims) who they perceive as misfits or who do not simply fit the group's qualities. The indirectness of the bully's expressive SAs may be a sign of the wrongdoings they have committed as well as their desire to hide the mocking and teasing to maintain their position and popularity. The last rank among SAs is achieved by declarative SAs, which are never detected in the data. Bullies lack the authority to make statements. They create their reputation via their abusive behavior toward physically and psychologically weaker pupils rather than making grand statements about how they would change the world in order to maintain their social position.

Consequently, hypothesis **No. 1** which reads: *"In the selected stories, bullies tend to utilize directive SAs the most and representative SAs the least"*, is invalid.

2- The study reveals that both clarification and emphasis tropes are deployed differently by the bullies and can be briefly summarized:

A. Clarification Tropes

- This type of tropes can be used to express an attitude and prejudicial notions about a certain issue or character. It includes the sub-tropes of metaphor, simile, and irony. Clarification tropes are deployed by bullies most frequently. Bullies commonly use metaphors to covertly compare their victims to something or someone. The contrast explains the attitudes and

motivations of bullies toward their victims; they may employ this trope to control the emotions of their victims so that others would see them, i.e., bullies, as strong and powerful.

B. Emphasis Tropes

- This type of trope is employed largely for emphatic objectives, such as highlighting the speaker's arguments and placing greater focus on their ideas and opinions. They aid in conveying the approval or disapproval of bullies. The three tropes of rhetorical questions, overstatements, and understatements all have a role in emphasis. Bullies often employ emphasis tropes to further their derisive statements about their victims by using rhetorical questions, or to emphasize their exaggerated depictions of their victims in order to persuade others of the same ideas as theirs, or to convey their understatement in order to make their evaluation of the victim more tragic.

Consequently, the hypothesis **No 2** which reads “*clarification tropes are mostly used by bullies*”, is validated since clarification tropes are mostly utilized by bullies.

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