
PHONOLOGICAL FEATURES IN HARLEM HOPSCOTCH POEM BY MAYA ANGELOU

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ABSTRACT. Style is an essential component of every literary work. The poem is an example of a literary work. A poem's style can be researched in many ways, one of which is through its sound. As a result, the use of sound in a poem can be utilized to determine the author's style. In the case of sound, phonology provides an overview of the language's sound system. This thesis studied about analysis of pathological features in Maya Angelou's two selected poems. This research has two objectives to discuss. First, the researcher presents phonological features found in "Harlem Hopscotch" poem by Maya Angelou. Second, the researcher finds Maya Angelou's style in making the poems through the phonological features which are found. This research applied a stylistic approach to assess the phonological features of the poems and find Angelou's style in her poem. The population study was applied to collect the data. The researcher concludes and presents the result of phonological features analysis which consists of rhyme, meter, assonance, consonance, alliteration, and style of two poems. The suggestion of this research is to provide a comprehension to the readers and the next researchers.

Keyword : Poem, Phonology, Phonological features, Stylistics

1. Introduction

Literature uses language as a medium to convey various types of information. Poetry is a type of writing rendered in the medium of language. However, appreciation and study of poetry requires awareness of various literary devices. Literary writing employs various different linguistic devices that weave together words and ideas in order to construct something that has an intentional impact on readers. There are certain elements that a poet can put into a poem to shape it and to connect the reader to the poem. Poets always use poetic devices to reinforce meaning, dictate rhythm, or boost feeling and mood. It is thus important for the reader of a poem to be familiar with the different poetic devices to understand the feelings and thoughts of the poet and enhance the reader's appreciation of the poem's sounds and images. The beauty of poetry is achieved when the reader skillfully masters the ability to grasp the aesthetics of a poem through understanding the different poetic devices.

Style is a primary aspect of any literary piece of writing. Leech and Short (2007) state that "the word 'style' has a fairly uncontroversial meaning: it refers to the way in which language is used in a given context, by a given person, for a given purpose, and so on" (p.9). The general

meaning of style is the 'manner or mode' but the literary meaning of style refers to how a writer's thoughts take the shape of words. The style of literary work is discussed by using stylistics as the approach.

Stylistics is a branch of linguistics which deals with different styles of texts. Verdonk (2002) states that the description of language's intention and effect are also the concern of stylistics, except the expression in language. It is reinforced by Al Shawa (2015) who states that stylistics is a study that looks at the text in detail and analyzes the significant language forms for interpretation. It means that stylistics concerns the study and the interpretation of text from a linguistic perspective. Some different language devices, that are graphological, phonological, lexical, and grammatical, are projected to be observed in stylistics.

In this research, the researcher applies the phonological level of analysis which covers meter, rhyme, assonance, consonance, and alliteration. To be specific, this research aims to analyze the phonological level of poems. The poetry observed in this study will take one poem written by Maya Angelou entitled "Harlem Hopscotch".

Maya Angelou was an African-American who lived in America. In her poems, she depicted her life as a woman and as a Nigger. She conveyed her difficulties and happiness through her writing. The fact that Angelou experienced many struggles in her life made her become a Black American activist and poet. Cox (2006) writes Angelou's life story about the time she was in the struggle until the journey when she was to be an activist and writer. This book is based on interviews with Angelou. He also writes about how Angelou dealt with her life.

Of the many poems by Maya Angelou that tell a lot about the discrimination of black women, especially black feminism, one of them I chose was the poems "Harlem Hopscotch" and "Woman Work". "Harlem Hopscotch" was written in 1971, meanwhile "Woman Work" 1978, "Harlem Hopscotch" talks about how black Americans have to navigate a racist society and what it means to be truly free within such circumstances. This poem is inspired by the childhood game of hopscotch as an extended metaphor, what it means to grow up Black and poor in America. The speaker gives a series of directions about jumping and hopping that are recognizable from the popular children's game of the poem's title. Yet it is clear that in this case, the "game" is actually a set of rules that have to do with surviving prejudice and poverty. Black children growing up in poverty are forced to learn far more than the rules of kids' games, the poem argues, as they must also learn how to navigate a racist society.

This research employs a specific study as the principal of theoretical grounds. The approach used in this research is stylistics. Stylistics in this research will give a profound understanding towards the phonological level in "Harlem Hopscotch" and "Woman Work" poems. The research overwhelms rhymes, meters, alliterations, assonances, and consonances which are found in the poems.

2. Methods

This study conducted a data population method which means the similarity in characteristics between one group of statistics (Best, 2006, p.13). In this study, the population was the whole data in one poem of Maya Angelou, namely "Harlem Hopscotch". Moreover, the study aimed to find out the phonological features found in two selected poems of Maya Angelou. There were several steps of collecting the data. In order to analyze the phonological features found in "Harlem Hopscotch" poem. The analysis of the study was based on the phonological level of stylistics. It dealt with the rhyme, meter, assonance, and alliteration. There were two research problems which were formulated. Therefore, some steps were employed in the subsequent parts to answer the first problem.

First, the researcher analyzed the segmental sound features of the poems. It overwhelmed alliteration, consonance, and assonance of the poems. In alliteration, the researcher found out the repetition of the initial consonant sound in the two poems. The second the researcher limited the scope of the study As Angelou concerned with daily life which occurs in his life and his surroundings, the researcher decided to analyze the poems which portray Maya Angelou's life and its surroundings. Thirdly, the researcher read Maya Angelou's poems to search for the poems that would be analyzed. The researcher came to a decision to select two poems from all of Maya Angelou Poems.

3. Results and Discussion

In this section, the researcher provides results and discussion of the research. In order to analyze "Harlem Hopscotch" the poem, two parts are conducted by analyzing the phonological features and discussing how those features can constitute the style of Maya Angelou in making poems

Phonological Feature in Maya Angelou's "Harlem Hopscotch" and "Woman Work"

This analysis is divided into segmental sound features and supra-segmental sound features. The segmental sound feature overwhelms rhyme alliteration, consonance, and assonance. In the supra-segmental sound features overwhelm rhyme and meter.

A. "Harlem Hopscotch" Poem

1. Segmental Sound Features

Maya Angelo's poem "Harlem Hopscotch" contains several segmental sound qualities. It has several sound techniques, like alliteration, assonance, and consonance, although most of them are primarily used for aesthetic purposes in the poem. However, it turns out that various sound devices can help the researcher identify Maya Angelo's style in making poems. The researcher focuses on the poet's repeated sound in this study. As a result, those will be presented in the following discussion.

First, the segmental sound features like alliteration and consonance, the most significant finding in this poem is the assonance, which helps the researcher suggest Maya Angelo's style.

Bradford (2005) explains that the “assonance is the repetition of clusters of similar vowels within individual lines and across sequence of lines” (p.16). Therefore, the repeated sound which is found in “Harlem Hopscotch ” poem available in Table 1.

Table 1. Assonance Found in “Harlem Hopscotch”

Line		Assonance
1	<i>One foot down, then <u>hop</u>! It's <u>hot</u>.</i>	/ ɒ /
3	<i>An<u>o</u>ther <u>j</u>ump, now to the left.</i>	/ ʌ /
4	<i><u>E</u>verybody for his<u>s</u>self.</i>	/ e /
5	<i>In the air, n<u>o</u>w both feet d<u>o</u>wn.</i>	/ aʊ /
7	<i>Food <u>i</u>s gone, the rent <u>i</u>s due,</i>	/ ɪ /
8	<i>Curse <u>a</u>nd cry <u>a</u>nd then jump two.</i>	/ æ /
12	<i>That's wh<u>a</u>t h<u>o</u>pping's all about.</i>	/ ɒ /
14	<i>They think <u>I</u> lost. <u>I</u> think <u>I</u> won.</i>	/ aɪ /

From the table above, the assonance found in this poem are the vowel / ɒ /, / ʌ /, / e /, / aʊ /, / ɪ /, / æ /, / aɪ /. The back lax mid vowel / ɒ / is repeated in lines 1 and 12. It is stated that this sound device supports the remembrance of the title which can be seen in line 1 with words “hop!” and “hot”, line 12 with words “what” and “hopping’s”, and also in line 3, the back mid lax vowel with words “another” and “jump”, In line 4, the front mid lax vowel with words “everybody” and “hissself”. This poem also the repetition the central mid lax vowel / ɪ / in the line 7 with words “is” and “is”, and line 8, the front low lax vowel / æ / with words “and” and “and”. In line 5 with words “now” and “down” that repeats diphthong / aʊ /, and line 14 with pronoun “I” and “I” the repeats diphthong / aɪ /.

Accordingly, it can be seen that the back mid lax vowel / ɒ / dominates “Harlem Hopscotch” poem. The back mid lax vowel / ɒ / is repeated in line 1 and 12 with the words “hop”, “hot”, “what”, “hopping’s”.

Second, the alliteration is the segmental sound features found in this poem. Arp and Johnson (2009) explain that alliteration is “the repetition of initial consonant sound” (p.820). The alliteration also suggests the style of Maya Angelou in making poems. In addition the repetition of initial sounds will be provided in Table 2.

Table 2. Alliteration found in “Harlem Hopscotch”

Line		Alliteration
2	<i><u>G</u>ood things for the ones that's <u>g</u>ot.</i>	/ g /
8	<i><u>C</u>urse and <u>c</u>ry and then jump two.</i>	/ k /
11	<i><u>C</u>ross the line, they <u>c</u>ount you out</i>	/ k /

From the table above, the alliteration of the poem can be found in lines 2 and 8. In the line 2 repeats the velars voiced consonant / g / with words “Good” and “ got”, same with the line 2, in the line 8 and 11 the velars voiced consonant / k / are found with words “Curse”, “cry”, “Cross” and “count”

It can be seen that the velars voiced consonant dominated “Harlem Hopscotch” poem ... especially with alliteration / k / is repeated in line 8 and 11.

Last, Angelou also applies the consonance in “Harlem Hopscotch” poem. Arp and Johnson states that consonance is “the repetition of final consonance sound” (2009, p.820). Therefore the repetition of final consonance sound will be provided in Table 3.

Table 3. Consonance Found in “Harlem Hopscotch”

Line		Consonance
1	<i>One foot<u>t</u> down, then hop! It's hot<u>t</u></i>	/ t /
2	<i>Good thing<u>s</u> for the one<u>s</u> that's got</i>	/ s /
6	<i>Since you black<u>k</u>, don't stick<u>k</u> around.</i>	/ k /
7	<i>Food <u>i</u>s gone, the rent <u>i</u>s due,</i>	/ s /
8	<i>Curse <u>a</u>nd cry <u>a</u>nd then jump two</i>	/ d /
10	<i>Hold<u>d</u> for three, then twist <u>a</u>nd jerk</i>	/ d /
11	<i>Cross the line, they count<u>t</u> you out<u>t</u>.</i>	/ t /
12	<i>That's <u>s</u> what hopping's <u>s</u> all about</i>	/ s /
12	<i>That's what <u>t</u> hopping's all about<u>t</u></i>	/ t /
13	<i>Both feet <u>f</u>lat, the game is done</i>	/ t /
14	<i>They think<u>k</u> I lost. I think<u>k</u> I won.</i>	/ k /

From the table above, the consonant sounds that are found in this poem are / t /, / s /, / k /, and / d /. The alveolar voiced consonant / t /, / s /, and / d /, and the velars voiced consonant / k /. The alveolar voiced / t / is repeated in line 1, 11, 12, and 13 with words “foot”, “hot”, “count”, “out”, “what”, “about”, “feet”, and “flat”. The alveolar voiced consonant / s / is repeated in line 2, 7, and 12 with words “thing’s”, “is”, “That’s”, and “hopping’s”. The alveolar voiced consonant / d / is repeated in line 8 and 10 with words “and”, and “hold”. The velars voiced consonant / k / is repeated in line 6 and 14 with words “black”, “stick”, and “think”.

It can be seen the alveolar voiced / t / t/appears in four lines of this poem, the alveolar voiced / s / appears in three lines, the alveolar voiced / d / just appears in two lines. The velars voiced / k / just appear in two lines.

Therefore, from this analysis, it is clear that the poet uses all sound devices which are assonance, consonance, and alliteration in her poem entitled “Harlem Hopscotch”. The poet uses consonance more frequently in each line of this poem. These all sound devices show that the poet cares about the use of some repetition of sound in her poem.

2. Supra-Segmental Sound Features

Maya Angelou has also used supra-segmental sound features in her “Harlem Hopscotch” poem. It consists of rhyme which includes the patterns and form of the poem and meter which includes the metrical feet of the poem. Both rhyme and meter also help the researcher to find out Maya Angelou’s style in making poems. In this research, the researcher focuses on the patterns, the forms, and the orderliness employed by the poet. Then, those will be presented in the following discussion.

a. Rhyme

The analysis of the rhyme includes the patterns of the poem and the forms of the poem. Both the patterns and the forms help to find the style of Maya Angelou. Rhyme is one of the supra-segmental features in poetry. Angelou emphasizes the use of repetition in rhyme to bring the listeners and the reader’s attention. In Maya Angelou’s “Harlem Hopscotch”, an interesting use of rhymes is obvious.

The poem consists of four stanzas, and it contains 14 lines. Angelou uses her own verse form in this poem. The rhyme scheme of “Harlem Hopscotch” is simple and straightforward—at least on the surface. The poem is composed primarily of rhyming couplets. Two of these couplets appear in each of the first three stanzas, forming quatrains, but the last stanza stands alone.

Table 4. Rhyme Found in “Harlem Hopscotch”

Line		Rhyme
1	One foot down, then hop! It's hot .	/ ɒt /
2	Good things for the ones that's got .	/ ɒt /
3	Another jump, now to the left .	/ ɛft /
4	Everybody for his self	/ ɛlf /
5	In the air, now both feet down .	/ aʊn /
6	Since you black, don't stick around .	/ aʊn /
7	Food is gone, the rent is due ,	/ u: /
8	Curse and cry and then jump two .	/ u: /
9	All the people out of work ,	/ ɜ:k /
10	Hold for three, then twist and jerk .	/ ɜ:k /
11	Cross the line, they count you out .	/ aʊt /
12	That's what hopping's all about .	/ aʊt /
13	Both feet flat, the game is done .	/ ʌn /
14	They think I lost. I think I won .	/ ʌn /

From the rhymed words above, the end of rhyme pattern for each line of the poem is categorized into AABB, CCDD for the second, EEFF for the third, and GG for the final couple. At this poem, AA in line 1 and 2 is intended for end rhyme /ɒt/, BB in line 3 and 4 is a slant

rhyme is intended for end rhyme /ɛft/ and /ɛlf/, these words sound similar but are not the same. CC in line 5 and 6 is intended for end rhyme /aʊn/. DD in line 7 and 8 is intended for end rhyme / u: /. EE in line 9 and 10 is intended for end rhyme /ɜ:k/, FF in line 11 and 12 is intended for end rhyme /aot/ and GG in line 13 and 14 is intended for end rhyme /ʌn/. The pace of this poem is like a song, with characteristics of a ballad. The poem has couplets that rhyme. This indicates that it has a general pattern of AABCCDDEEFFGG. These rhymes range from full rhymes to half rhymes.

As a result, from the rhymed words provided before, the rhyming arrangement of "Harlem Hopscotch" is basic and straightforward—at least on the surface. The poem is composed of rhyming couplets. The first three stanzas include two of these couplets, but the last stanza stands alone.

b. Meter

Another supra-segmental sound element that can be heard in poetry in place of rhyme is metre. Gill (1995, p.387) defines that meter is “the regular rhythms of poetic lines, created by sequence of stressed or unstressed syllables”. The number of feet in the poem as well as its metrical feet are included in the examination of metre. The arrangement of stressed and unstressed syllables in a line is referred to as metre. When observing metres, the presence of a foot in a straight line becomes important in determining the kind of metres (Simpson, 2004, p.15). The term "number of feet" refers to the total number of syllables that make up a single metric unit.

The analysis of this stanza of the poem also reveals the metre of the lines. The unstressed syllables are represented in (X), while the stressed syllables are represented in (/), therefore table 5 will show the poem's metre. Here, the numbering is intended to indicate the poem's line.

Table 5. Metrical Pattern Found in “Harlem Hopscotch”

Line	Meter
1	One foot down, then hop! It's hot. / X / X / X /
2	Good things for the ones that's got. / X / X / X /
3	Another jump, now to the left. / X / X / X /
4	Every body for himself / X / X / X /
5	In the air, now both feet down. / X / X / X /
6	Since you black, don't stick around.

	/ X / X / X
7	Food is gone, the rent is due, / X / X / X /
8	Curse and cry and then jump two. / X / X / X /
9	All the people out of work, / X / / X /
10	Hold for three, then twist and jerk. / X / X / X /
11	Cross the line, They count you out. / X / X / X /
12	That's what hopping's all about. / X / X / X
13	Both feet flat, the game is done. / X / X / X /
14	They think I lost. I think I won. X / X / X / X /

From the meter above, of the entire poem "Harlem Hopscotch" the final line of the poem is written in a different metre from the previous thirteen lines. The emphasis in the words "They think I lost." I think I won." falls on the second, fourth, sixth, and eighth syllables rather than the first, third, fifth, and seventh. In other words, it's written in iambic tetrameter rather than trochaic trimeter. Iambic, which emphasizes the second of two syllables rather than the first, sounds more natural to the ordinary English speaker. While the preceding lines' choppy trochees resembled a hopscotch player's hops.

The metre of "Harlem Hopscotch" is arbitrary. Instead, the entire thing has a relaxed, jazzy vibe. The poem does have a distinct feeling of music and rhythm despite its inconsistent metre. For example, in stanza three or in line 11 ("Cross the **line**, they **count** you **out**") and in line 12 ("That's what **hopping's all** about") the poem sometimes groups together lines that follow an alternating pattern of stressed and unstressed beats. This creates a bouncy, steady rhythm that reflects the lines content, so it seems sense that the rhythm here is predictable and quite rigid.

4. Conclusions

After conducting the research, the researcher determined the style of rhyme, end rhyme pattern, meter, and sound repetition the poet employed in "Harlem Hopscotch". In the "Harlem Hopscotch" poem, the researcher finds that the poem has a regular pattern in terms of its phonological features. Angelou applies a couplet verse for end rhyme in this poem. This poem has AABB, CCDD, EEFF, and GG for the final couple.

There are seven rhyme sounds found in this poem. First, the rhyme sound / ɒt / is repeated in lines 1 and 2. Second, the rhyme sounds / ɛft / and / ɛlf / in lines 3 and 4 is a slant rhyme. Slant rhyme also known as is a type of rhyming where words sound similar but do not rhyme exactly. Third, the rhyme sound / aɒn / is repeated in lines 5 and 6. Fourth, the rhyme sound / u: / is repeated in lines 7 and 8. Fifth, the rhyme sound / ɜ:k / is repeated in lines 9 and 10. Sixth, the rhyme sound / aɔt / is repeated in lines 11 and 12. Last, the rhyme sound / ʌn / is repeated in lines 13 and 14. The poet is mostly basic and straightforward at least on the surface. Rhyming couplets make up the rhyme.

Two of these couplets are present in the first three stanzas, while the last stanza stands alone. In terms of meter, this poem is written with no specific metric. The final line of the poem is written in a different meter from the previous thirteen lines. in line 14 written in iambic tetrameter than trochaic trimeter in lines 1-13. Then, the repetition of sound, such as assonance, alliteration, and consonance, is also found in this poem. The back mid-lax vowel / ɒt / dominate the repetition of vowel sound. The alveolar voice / t / t/is repeated in the end of the words, while the velars voiced / k / is the only sound that is repeated in the beginning of the words.

Acknowledgements

The researchers would like to thank those who contributed for the completion of this research. First and foremost, we would like to thank Putra Indonesia University for giving us this learning opportunity that helped us develop valuable life lessons of patience, perseverance, teamwork, resilience, cooperation, and most of all, the endless pursuit of knowledge.

Second, we would also like to express our greatest gratitude towards our parents for their endless love, prayers, support, and sacrifices. In fact, this would not have been possible without their unselfish love and support given to us at all times.

Last but not least, our thanks go to all people who have supported us to complete the research work directly or indirectly.

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