

The Communicative Competencies Depicted in “*Buthsarana*”

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The characteristic of any literary tradition is to enhance the knowledge of human beings psychologically, biologically, and philosophically. This characteristic is seen in most of the literary creations of classical Sinhala literary tradition. The literary features of classical Sinhala literary tradition are enriched with its own communication competencies, which are created to up lift the noble and spiritual qualities. This study was completed by studying the communication competencies depicted in classical Sinhala literary tradition, in relation to “*Buthsarana*”, which was written by *Vidyachakrawarthy*, in the early part of *Dambadeniya Era*. Accordingly, the research was done based on the features such as narrative style, writing techniques, language techniques, performing ability, and social analysis. *Vidyachakrawarthy* in his book brings forth the “*Nava Arahaadi Budu Guna*” (Nine Great Qualities) of Lord Buddha using the devotive path to enhance the wisdom of devotees. In that process *Vidyachakrawarthy* uses a creative communication method. An inherent narrative style, prose writing rules and styles are used to present the content regularly. Moreover, the content of the stories has been created by occupying language techniques and social analysis, while making it easy to understand the “*Nava Arahaadi Budu Guna*” of Lord Buddha. Therefore, a perspicuous narrative style and creative language competency are included in “*Buthsarana*”. The agreement of the format and the content specialties are capable of providing the reader with inter cultural understanding, building cultural relationships, new ways of thinking, by creating devotion in the minds of the reader. Therefore, “*Buthsarana*” has provided the society with physical and mental motivation. Thus it could be shown that, with the success of the format and the communication competency included, “*Buthsarana*” is an effective communication mode which is capable of awaking the critical thinking of the reader.

Keywords: communication competencies, agreement of the format, the content specialties, critical thinking

Introduction

The feature of any literary tradition is to enhance the knowledge of human beings psychologically, biologically, and philosophically. When talking about the origin of the literature in Sri Lanka, we can identify various eras from Anuradhapura to Colombo. This feature can be seen in literary creations such as “*Buthsarana*” by *Vidyachakrawarthy* written in *Dambadeniya Era*. Many research works were done on Sri Lankan Literature among them the research done on; language features and grammar of literary text are significant. Many scholars have done research on classical literature too. But, the research work done on the communicative competencies of classical literature is not that sufficient. Accordingly, this research problem is based on classical literary research area.

Literature Review

Many researchers were done on Sri Lankan Literature among them the researches done on; language features and grammar of literary text are significant. The scholars have done researches on classical literature. But, the researches done on the communicative competencies of classical literature is not that sufficient.

Research Problem

What are the communicative competencies depicted in “*Buthsarana*” literary text?

Research Hypothesis

The hypothesis of this research is that creative language features and communicative methods have been used in “*Buthsarana*”, in order to enhance a deep understanding in the listeners about “*Nava Arahadi Buduguna*” (Nine Great Qualities) of Lord Buddha.

Research Objective

This research is done in order to identify the communicative competencies depicted in “*Buthsarana*”. The main purpose is to study how “*Buthsarana*” is written by *Vidyachakrawarthy*, in order to fulfill the multi-communicative objectives in the contemporary society. And also other objectives are discussing the communicative competencies available in “*Buthsarana*”, studying how the story and its features are utilized to fulfill the objectives of the literary text and identifying the creative communicative techniques of the author.

Methodology

The main methodology is the qualitative methodology. Accordingly, an analysis of the content of “*Buthsarana*” is done. Data analysis of this research is done depending on several key factors. There, a study was done on the format, narrative style and prose writing methods (writing style) under the content, language gimmicks, presentation and contemporary social analysis of “*Buthsarana*” analyzed.

Data Analysis

There are many creative language features and communicative methods used in “*Buthsarana*”, in order to give a deep understanding to the listeners about “*Nava Arahadi Buduguna*” (Nine Great Qualities) of Lord Buddha. Accordingly, an analysis of the content of “*Buthsarana*” is done. The table of content of “*Buthsarana*” is divided into 16 parts. The number of monographs (which is called “*granthānsha*” in Sinhala) included in one chapter. Moreover, 480 monographs are included in “*Buthsarana*”.

Communicative competence of “*Buthsarana*” is done depending on several key factors such as: the format, narrative style, prose writing methods (writing style) under the content, language gimmicks, presentation and contemporary social analysis of “*Buthsarana*” analyzed.

Under the format, writing could see that the prose method of “*Buthsarana*” is created depending on “*Nava Arahadi Buduguna*” of Lord Buddha and the narrative style goes with it. It has used the “Dhamma Surmon” style which is called “*Banakhathā Shylyiya’in Sinhala*”. For example, “The Virtuous who love their selves and wish to attain Nibbāna should listen carefully” (Sōratha Nāyakasthavira, 2000, p. 285) could be cited and author invites the receivers to listen to the stories in “*Buthsarana*”. This is written focusing on a society where

there are people who understand the content by listening to the story. The format is formed in a way that can be heard and understood by the listeners.

Under the content, author had a clear objective which is mentioned in “*Buthsarana*”.

...to the eyes those who wish to see, to ears those who wish to hear, to the mind those who wish to think, to the words those who wish to speak, to worship those who wish to worship, to make offerings those who wish to offer, there is no one other than the precious Lord Buddha. I worship Lord Buddha. One should become a disciple of Lord Buddha. (Sōratha Nāyakasthavira, 2000, p. 7)

Every monograph ends with “Thinking that I take the refuge of Lord Buddha. One must take the refuge of Lord Buddha”.

Every monograph gives reasons as to why you should worship Lord Buddha. Moreover, “*Buthsarana*” is consisted of a content that is capable of grasping human emotions. There are writing style, rhythm, similes, metaphors, and social analysis used to build up the content of story. For example, the author moves from one paragraph to the next, arousing the interest of reader. After worshiping Lord Buddha (Sōratha Nāyakasthavira, 2000, pp. 1-2), second paragraph ends. Third paragraph starts mentioning about the taming of *Alawaka yakka* (Sōratha Nāyakasthavira, 2000, p. 2) with a language style that shows the cruel, uncontrollable nature of *yakka*. And forth paragraph starts with a summary of *Jathaka* (Sōratha Nāyakasthavira, 2000, pp. 2-3) stories. Then the fifth content describes *Kibulwathpura* (Sōratha Nāyakasthavira, 2000, p. 3) city with reported speech. The author focuses the reader’s attention suddenly and unexpectedly about certain incidents. It focuses listener’s attention towards the message given. The writer moves from one paragraph to the next, arousing the interest of reader.

In “*Buthsarana*” various presentation skills are used to describe occasions and characters with a contemporary social analysis. It improves knowledge and attitudes with story taste, which persuades the receivers to perform good habits.

A perspicuous narrative style and creative language competency are included in “*Buthsarana*”. *Nalagiri damanaya* is one of the best examples to prove that. It is amazing that this type of imaginative presentation has been used in “*Buthsarana*” ages before. *Vidyachkravathi* presents these simple sentences to describe situation and positions of *Nalagiri damanaya* in *Rajagahanuwara*.

First incident—Nature of the road:

For fear that the maddened elephant was being loosed all the townsfolk kept out of the streets, and the streets were as it were washed clean.

Second incident—Gathering of people to see the incident:

The fashionable women decked themselves in much finery and stood on the upper storeys on all sides, with many-coloured curtains placed around them.

Third incident—Lord Buddha’s arrival with eighty of *Mahā Sanga*:

When all was made ready, our great Lord came out from his Fragrant Chamber, like a maned lion coming out from a jeweled cave, confident to spring upon the back of a maddened elephant, tossing his heavy mane, testing the sharpness of his claws; or like the young sun in his mansion a hundred and fifty yojanas in circumference, rising up and scattering a thousand rays in the heavens, and bursting through the waters of the ocean... (Reynolds, 1970, p. 112)

Forth incident—The surrounding of *Rajagahanuwara*:

In the skies above the city of *Rajagaha* countless hosts of gods stood like pictures on a wall (Reynolds, 1970, p. 112).

As if they had taken up all the many colours from all objects in the whole world and mixed them all together, all those shining rays, as broad as the trunk of a *tal*-tree, as great as a tall house, began to spread about and cover all the city...

Fifth incident—The terrifying way that *Nalagiri* the tusker come towards Lord Buddha:

Then that maddened elephant curled up his trunk, and as a ball of fire from the hell *Aviichi* escaping through the jaws of the *Mare*, to burn all the waters of the sea... (Reynolds, 1970, p. 114)

Sixth incident—The thoughts that emerged in people’s mind after seeing the tusker:

Then the people turned and saw the elephant coming afar off; and those that were against the Buddha rejoiced, but those that were for Buddha began to cringe and say “Whatever will happen now?” (Reynolds, 1970, p. 114)

However, format and content of language features are well balanced. Further it is helpful for the motivation to achieve worldly and spiritual (transcendental) wellbeing. One of the examples for this is the significant of the story of “Taming of *Nalagiri*”, which is called *Nalagiri damanaya*. It has 11 monographs. This is written to show Lord Buddha’s capability of controlling indisciplined persons and great kindness which is called “*Purisadamma sarathi*” Quality *Vidyachkravathi* presents these simple sentences to show Lord Buddha controlling *Nagiri*.

Example:

... Yonder then there stood the lordly elephant, covered with dust; here stood the lordly Buddha, adorned with the broad six fold Buddha-rays. Yonder was the lordly elephant, with eyes red with fury, like balls of molten iron; here was the lordly Buddha, with eyes moist with compassion, surpassing the petals of a blue water-lily. Yonder ran the lordly elephant, who seemed to split the earth each time he set a foot upon the ground; here moved the lordly Buddha. Who seemed to soothe our lady the earth each time he set his foot upon the ground. Yonder the lordly elephant made all that saw him cry Alas! Alas! Here the lordly Buddha made all that saw him cry Hail! Hail!... (Reynolds, 1970, p. 114)

This writing style is similar to the “Pareral Editing” method used by present film producers to show two contrastive incidents that happen at one time. Many stories like *Nalagiri Damanaya* can be seen in the stories of “*Buthsarana*” such as Taming *Angulimala*, *Schchhaka*, *Theerathaka*, and *Alavaka yakka*. All these are presented to build up physical and mental discipline. The stories given in “*Buthsarana*” set background for people to enter into the Noble path. And also these create deep devotion in the people and lead them in the correct path in order to improve critical thinking.

New thinking approaches are presented in “*Buthsarana*”. This is clearly visible in the last story *Vessanthara Jathakaya*. That is to say, people are led to perform alms “giving” and “leaving” things that they are so attached. According to Buddhist thinking it is the first step towards the Noble path. *Vessanthara Jathakaya* depicts how the Lord Buddha fulfilled “*Dana Paramitha*”. There, the writer clearly presents how the *Bodhisaththa* sacrificed his wife and beloved children, which is mention very sensitivity in “*Buthsarana*”. Example: The author in “*Buthsarana*” depicts the grief generated due to the separation of children, when king *Vessanthara* gives his two children to *Jūjaka*.

...And the tears that the two children shed fell upon the two feet of the bodhisattava, that were like lotus flowers; and tears that the bodhisattava shed at the sorrows of the two children fell upon their backs, as they lay flat like golden couches...

Author in his writing method uses various characters to describe incidents. There, a very successful depiction of incidents is done using the dialogues of the king’s children.

...And as they went, the children kept turning round to see their father and they made obeisance towards his lotus-like feet with their little hands, and called out in lamentation: See the blood that flows from our backs. See the weal where our hands are tied. Will you sit there in silence while this devil tortures us to death? Tell mother we bow our farewells to her. Tell her we are well, and that we shall not see her again...

...And they called out in their sorrow; 'Sweet blossoming trees, we, brother and sister, who played at your feet and knew you well, salute you and take our leave of you, from this day we see you no more. shining coloured sands, pleasant falling stream where we played in the water, we take our leave of you as we go to work as servants... tell our mother that we bow before her and take our leave. Also, gods of the forest, you who have knows us, tell our mother that our feet and arms are swollen and that we can go no further. Tell her how we are; and tell our mother, if she comes, to run quickly after us along this way... (Reynolds, 1970, pp. 156, 158)

New ways of thinking are presented by evoking devotion about Lord Buddha by mingling the content and format.

It builds up cultural relationships. One significant feature is that the writing style, rhythm, similes, metaphors, and contemporary social analysis utilized in “*Buthsarana*” have an unbreakable bond with the cultural background of Sri Lanka. There are so many folk language features included in “*Buthsarana*”. And also it creates inter-cultural understanding. The plot is created with the incidents took place in India, including *Nalagiri damanaya* which *rajagaha Nuwara*, *Angulimala*, *Vessanthara*, etc., all stories take place in Lord Buddha’s period. However, the receiver can taste the essence irrespective of borders and boundaries, because, a unique format, content, and communicative competencies in relation to language, are used in “*Buthsarana*”. Author of “*Buthsarana*” mingles all the factors such as content and format together. It is capable of awakening the critical thinking of readers. Therefore, “*Buthsarana*” provides a physical and mental motivation in order to direct the human society of this country, along the “Nobal Path”.

Conclusions

Therefore, this text can be recommended to study about communication. “*Buthsarana*” gives a clear communicative analysis about the quality of communication purpose. “*Buthsarana*” can be used as a fine example for creative an effective method of giving media messages in order to fulfill proper communicative purpose. Many biological, sociological, psychological, and ethical factors can be identified in “*Buthsarana*”. Reading literature should be done in a novel way to grasp the universal truth in “*Buthsarana*”. That’s to say scientific view should be used to study literature.

References

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