Children's Response to Kipling's Patterns of Communication in *Just So Stories: For Little Children*

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Abstract

The role played by the reader in interacting with a text and constructing its meaning is a pivotal one. According to the reader- response criticism, the text, particularly the literary one, needs a dynamic kind of reader who resorts to his experience and imagination to form the meaning of the text. Literary texts transform reading into a creative process through which the reader activates his imagination to create the world presented by them. It is the coming together of the reader's imagination and the text that endows the text with its reality. As the interpretations of literary texts cannot be told in their entirety, the reader has to establish connections between the different parts of the text to form its entire meaning. This paper aims at investigating children's response in Kipling's *Just So Stories: For Little Children*. It examines the techniques used by Kipling in order to stimulate the child reader to interact with the stories. The study concentrates on the first seven stories of the collection as all of them are interesting animal stories.

Kipling uses a unique style throughout the stories. He supports each story by two illustrations and finally a poem that mostly elaborates the theme of the story. His funny situations, humorous discourse, word game and coinage of words hold the ear of children and amuse them. Moreover, his attractive techniques persuade children to interact with them and develop into critical readers as well. The study concludes that Kipling's skillful writing style successfully stirs the emotions, imagination and interaction of his young readers.

Key Words:Kipling, Just so Stories, Reader- response criticism, children's literature

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استجابة الأطفال لأنماط الاتصال في قصص كيبلنج للأطفال *قصص وحسب*

ملخص البحث:

يلعب القارئ دورا محوريا في التفاعل مع النص وتشكيل معناه. وطبقا لمدرسة النقد الخاصه بدراسة إستجابة القارئ للنصوص فإن النص وخاصة النص الأدبى يحتاج إلى قارئ نشط يعتمدعلى خبرته وخياله لتكوين معنى النص. وتحول النصوص الأدبيه عملية القراءه إلى عمليه إبداعيه يقوم القارئ من خلالها بتنشيط خياله ليخلق العالم الذي تقدمه له تلك النصوص. وما يمنح النص الأدبى حقيقة وجوده هو إجتماع خيال القارئ مع النص. ولأن النصوص الأدبيه لا يمكن سردها كاملة بكل تفاصيلها وانطباعاتها فإنه يتحتم على القارئ أن يقوم هو بخلق علاقات بين الأجزاء المختلفه للنص الأدبى ليصل إلى المعنى الكلى له. وتهدف هذه الدراسه لفحص إستجابة الأطفال لقراءة قصص كيبلنج للأطفال *قصص وحسب كما تحلل الدراسه الأساليب الفنيه التى يستخدمها كيبلنج لحث القارئ الصغير ليتفاعل مع القصص. هذا ويستخدم كيبلنج أسلوبا متفردا خلال القصص. فهو يدعم كل قصه باثنتين من الرسوم الإيضاحيه إحداهما فى منتصف القصه والأخرى قرب نهايتها ثم يختتم بقصيدة مضحكه غالبا ما تكون لتدعيم الفكرة الرئيسيه للقصه بطريقه شيقه. فمواقف كيبلنج ولغته المضحكه بالإضافه إلى تلاعبه بالكلمات واختراعه لكلمات جديدة كل هذا يجذب الطفل ويسليه. كما أن أساليبه الفنيه الجذابه تغرى الطفل بالتفاعل مع القصص وتطوره ليصبح قارئ ناقد أيضا. وتصل نتائج الدراسه إلى أن أسلوب كيبلنج المتفرد قد نجح في إثارة مشاعر وخيال وتفاعل قرائه الأطفال.*

الكلمات المفتاحية: *كيبلنج*، قصص وحسب، *أدب أطفال، نقد إستجابة القارئ،*

Children's Response to Kipling's Patterns of Communication in *Just So Stories: for Little Children*

Reading is the involvement of readers into the author's world so that any text needs the positive participation of its reader in order to properly form its meaning. The literary text, in particular, is influenced by the reader's feelings, emotions, imagination and his general experience. Reader- response criticism concentrates on the active role played by the reader in interpreting the text and interacting with it. According to this view, a literary text is something dynamic that is affected by the development of the reader's knowledge, intelligence and imagination. Therefore, the reading process, the kind of reader, and the aesthetic characteristics of the text are of crucial importance to reader- response theorists. However, when the reader is a young child, the text should be endowed with specific attractive elements such as rhythmic structure, humorous word games, and dramatic conflicts between contrasting powers. Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936) was so talented and prolific author that he was the first English author to be awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. Kipling's *Just So Stories* for children are written in such an attractive way that they stimulate children to respond wholeheartedly with the cadence of his humorous verse and funny word play.

Most of the previous critical studies that handle Kipling's work, devoted thorough examination to his life, frequent travels, political attitudes, and how they were reflected in his works. Even those who focused on his numerous short stories and his stories for children, they did not discuss *Just So Stories* thoroughly. James Harrison in his *Rudyard Kipling* devoted the third chapter of the book to Kipling's stories for children. He touched upon *Just So Stories* commending Kipling's unique use of language in order to make it enjoyable for him as a performer as well as for children as listeners. However, Harrison focused more on Kipling's other works for children such as the two *Jungle Books*, *Captains Courageous* and others.

In *Kipling and the Critics* edited by Elliot L. Gilbert, most of the critical essays handle Kipling's thoughts on imperialism, his politics, choice of poems, and his interest in writing for children. However, even Randall Jarrell who praises Kipling's use of language and his fantastic ability to "invent a conversation between an animal, a god, and a machine" (137), does not tackle *Just So Stories* among his other collections of short stories. Moreover, Norman Page's *A Kipling Companion* discusses the various works of this enormously prolific author. He provides the reader with a Kipling chronology in which he traces the main events of his life, his enormous travels and multitudes of his literary production. He also surveys his short stories, novels, and verse but he does not tackle any of his works

in depth. Therefore, it is worthwhile to reveal how *Just So Stories* is endowed with fantastic strategies that can easily stimulate children's imagination to positively interact with them and enjoy their originality.

The purpose of this paper is to examine children's response to Kipling's *Just So Stories: for Little Children*. It analyzes the style and writing techniques used by him in order to amuse children and incite them to interact with the stories. The study shows that Kipling is not only a storyteller but also an illustrator and a poet in these stories. He addresses children in a familiar tone and attracts them by illustrating the main characters of the stories in order to depict his funny descriptions. Moreover, by adding a simple poem at the end of each story, he pleases his little readers with the lilt of verse so that they enjoy the poems and may try to learn them by heart. The study also reveals that Kipling was so interested in the response of his little readers that he stirred them to interact with his funny stories by all possible means.

Reader-response criticism began to gain more interest in the middle of the twentieth century. The pragmatic theories which shifted the focus of interest from the work of art to the audience attracted many critics at that time. In *The Mirror and the Lamp* M.H. Abrams expounds that Sir Philip Sidney considers poetry as a means whose end is to extract different responses from its readers. Sidney thinks that poetry is written to "delight and teach" (Abrams 14). He considers the needs of the readers as the basis of critical distinction so that the genres of poetry are classified according to the moral and social effects of each. Also Samuel Johnson believes that the artist exerts his creative ability for the pleasure of his readers as "the end of writing is to instruct; the end of poetry is to instruct by pleasing" (Abrams 19).

In the fifth edition of *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature* (2005) Wilfred L. Guerin, Lee Morgan et al. argue that the basic premises of reader-oriented theory shift emphasis from the text to the reader in the process of literary interpretation. Therefore, the techniques and strategies used to urge the reader to respond to the literary text become more important than the text itself. This is due to the supposed role of the readers as interpreters of the literary work. (Guerin 351)

Among the principal theorists of reader- response criticism, Hans Jauss, Stanely Fish, and Wolfgang Iser are distinguished. For Jauss, the literary work is not "universal" as it does not have the same effect on all readers at all times. Moreover, according to him, a literary work in "not a monument that monologically reveals its timeless essence" because the literary work "frees the text from the material of

the words and brings it to a contemporary existence" (Newton 222). The psychological and emotional influences of the reader take part in interpreting the work of art. Moreover, Stanely Fish thinks that "the process of reading is dynamic" (Guerin 359). He means that the readers interact with the text so that their interpretation may change with every new reading. Therefore, readers must be aware of the literary techniques that are used to be able to interact with the text. Fish calls such readers "informed" readers. He argues that meaning is "what happens to readers" during reading and that readers "actually create a piece of literature as they read it" (Guerin 341). For Fish, interpretation is a "communal affair" in which the readers depend on their linguistic competence in order to interact with the text (Guerin 341). Thus, a work of art can have more than one response as interpretation plays a role in understanding the meaning.

According to Wolfgang Iser, the text is "nothing more than an experience of a cultured reader" (Newton 227). He argues that there is a great difference between scientific texts and literary texts. The scientific texts that deal with concrete objects do not need the participation of the reader. They express independent, tangible truth which is not affected by the reader's individuality. However, the literary text needs a dynamic kind of reader who participates in forming the meaning of the text. He has to connect the text to the familiar world in order to help his imagination to visualize it.

However, the literary text cannot offer the reader all the details and information he wants. Iser sees that too many details are boring so that they hinder the reader's imagination. Consequently, there will be a lot of "gaps" in the literary text. Iser believes that they are these gaps that "give the reader the chance to build his own bridges" in order to understand the meaning of the text and fill the gaps (Newton 229). Thus, each individual reader will try to relate the fragments of the text to each other so as to fill in the gaps. Therefore, the interpretation of the text will depend on the reader's imagination, experience, and how he comprehends it. This interprets why a second reading of a literary text usually results in different impressions from the first reading. This is also due to many factors such as the knowledge and personal experience acquired by the reader between the first and second reading. Moreover, "a change in mood between our two encounters with the text, or a change in the purpose for which we're reading it" can result in forming new meanings for the same text (Tyson 170). The norms and values of the reader enable him to analyze the behavior of the different characters he is reading about. Moreover, the creative and active imagination of the reader helps him to comprehend the underlying meaning of the dialogues among characters and to be in a state of suspense. Iser believes that the reader must think of the underlying

meaning which is beyond the surface meaning. He must consider the implied indications of the text. The result of this interactive task of the reader is what Iser calls "the virtual dimension of the text" (Lodge 298). This virtual dimension is the result of mixing the content of the text with the imagination of the reader.

Iser differentiates between the "implied reader" who is in the mind of the author while writing and the "actual reader" who really reads the text and interacts with it (Selden 53). The characteristics of the implied reader can be deduced from analyzing the style of the text. This kind of reader "takes the textual structures, constructing and converting them into a personal explanation for the text" (Lobo 30). Moreover, Iser believes that during the process of reading, the reader goes from "anticipation" to "retrospection" in order to adjust and revise his expectations of the text (Lodge 300). He classifies the information together to form meaning and continuously modifies his expectations and activates his imagination to visualize the information given to him. Iser thinks that the reader makes a state of "identification" with what he reads so that he creates "a familiar ground on which [he is] able to experience the unfamiliar" (Lodge 307). The author of the text, in his turn, may "exert plenty of influence on the reader's imagination" depending on a "panoply of narrative techniques" (Lodge 300).

MacCann & Richard believe that young children "respond wholeheartedly to the lilt of verse, the excitement of conflict, the quirks of human personality, and the many humorous incongruities and fanciful plot inventions in picture books" (79). Kipling manages to achieve these requirements in his stories. Moreover, he is so interested in the illustrations to the extent that he has been his own illustrator. The relationship between his stories and their illustrations is intricate. Without the illustrations and the long captions that he adds to them, the stories seem incomplete. The illustrations have a narrative function because the child can follow the plotline of the story while looking at these illustrations.

Before carefully examining Kipling's stories and how they affect children, it will be worthwhile to consider Jill May's view concerning how children respond to their stories. In the preface to her book *Children's Literature and Critical Theory* (1995), Jill P. May explains that children read for pleasure before reading for information. She believes that children's "reading for enjoyment brings their own experiences with them and relates them to the story" (May viii). After their first reading of the story, children become able to discuss it with others so that "they can become the implied reader" (May ix). In addition, May thinks that children can also examine the author's style, comprehend the meaning of the story, and deduce their own conclusions so that they can be developed into "critical readers" (May

ix). Thus children can be enhanced from real readers to critical readers who are able to analyze and evaluate the literary elements used by the writer of the stories.

According to May, active children readers must decide how a story "relates to their interpretation of the world they live in"(17). This enables them to understand the implied meanings of the stories. Moreover, the illustrations help children to visualize the heroes and their relationships. This merit of the illustrations becomes clearer, particularly when the heroes are animals. The animals of these stories act as if they were human characters so that they are often "involved in moralistic tales about human failings" (May 46). Donnarae MacCann and Olga Richard argue that "characterization in picture books is usually a case of one idiosyncrasy being exaggerated and used as the basis for a whole chain of actions" (92). Naturally, this adds a sense of humor to the stories and makes the characters easily remembered.

Just So Stories was written in 1902 in South Africa. Kipling's experience there affected him so much that he depicted in his stories the leopard, the elephant, the jungle, the forests and the Limpopo River. At that time Kipling was interested in the idea of writing some children's stories about animals. *Just So Stories* are "for little children" so some of them are written to be read aloud to the pre- school age group. The stories have appeal to both adults as readers and children as listeners. Moreover, reading aloud is important for children because it "reveals how stories are crafted" and "brings alive the adventures, feelings and dilemmas of the characters" (Mallett 4). Sometimes Kipling starts a story addressing his daughter "O my best beloved" as he experienced telling these stories to her. He explains the title of the stories' series that they are bedtime stories that have to be told "just so" (Lewis, introduction xix).

The study concentrates on the first seven stories of *Just So Stories* because all of them are interesting animal stories. They are considered by Angus Wilson as the "cream of the collection" (Page 55). Moreover, there is a salient ongoing theme in the stories as Kipling all the time, connects a prominent physical feature of an animal with a humorous and fanciful fact. In doing so, Kipling stereotypes each species of animals. This is contrary to the founders of children's realistic animal fiction who "focused on the individuality of their animal characters [and] avoided stereotyping the members of a given species" (Oswald 148). However, Kipling's animal characters "echo human virtues and vices" (Magee 224).

In her introduction to *Just So Stories*, Lisa Lewis suggests that "the most important linking theme in the book is --- the use and deliberate misuse of

language" (Lewis, introduction xxxvi). This is done for the purpose of humor. Almost all types of humorous fiction for children that are discussed by Kerry Mallan, are found in the stories. These types are humorous characters, humorous situations and humorous discourse. Mallan argues that "young children usually enjoy nonsense language and odd- sounding or inventive words" (15). Therefore, Kipling's coinage of words, word game, his duplicated onomatopoeic adjectives and odd little details are introduced to hold the ear of children and amuse them. A. G. Galistyan argues that Kipling's tales "guide children to a strange and mysterious world of fantasy" as they "enchant children by uncommonness of narration, hypnotize them by magic spells" (71).

Kipling handles an obvious, physical feature of an animal in a funny style based on a false principle. This happens with the throat of the whale, the hump of the camel, the skin of the rhinoceros, and the spots of the leopard. However, children are intelligent enough to realize that Kipling's humorous explanation of those parts of the animals' bodies is not to be taken seriously. Moreover, there is an exaggeration of a specific characteristic like the greed of the whale and the curiosity of the young elephant. Furthermore, a frequent use of parentheses is found to provide the text with detailed information. Kipling uses a unique technique throughout the stories. He supports each story with two illustrations elaborated by detailed captions and finally a poem that repeats the same theme of the story or is connected with it. Most of Kipling's poems are nonsense verse with fantastic themes to attract young reader's or listener's attention, helping them to memorize extraordinary words or word combinations. Margaret Mallett thinks that vocabulary of nonsense verse is "often unusual, novel and amusing" (180). She sees that they have the same features of poetry in general such as alliteration and assonance in addition to rhyme and rhythm. She also believes that "nonsense rhymes are full of strange, eccentric folk and wonderful creatures with strange names" (18).

The response of the child reader to Kipling's "How the Whale Got his Throat" can be traced. Kipling starts the story addressing his own daughter "O my Best Beloved" (3). He begins talking about the greed of the whale explaining that "He ate the starfish and garfish, and the crab and the dab, and the plaice and the dace, and the skate and his mate, and the mackereel and the pickereel, and the really truly twirly- whirly eel" (3). Here, besides the funny rhythm he makes by all these kinds of fish, Kipling also uses the epithet which is a descriptive phrase in "really truly twirly- whirly" to describe the eel. The sound of this sequence of syllables gives a rhythmical effect which amuses children and lets them imagine the extent to which the whale is greedy.

To avoid being eaten by the whale, the fish advises him to "taste" the man. The man of the story is a ship- wrecked mariner who is with nothing on except a pair of blue breeches and a pair of suspenders. Here, Kipling repeatedly uses parentheses in which he humorously reminds the child of the mariner's suspenders. These parentheses are not only used for a humorous effect but they make a kind of regular rhythmic pattern throughout the story. They show the steps of the conflict between the mariner and the whale and how he will make use of the suspenders to overcome the whale. It is a kind of a refrain which means a repeated sentence throughout the story and it "sounds like a magic formula, as an incantation" (Galystan 72). From time to time he humorously addresses the child, "(you must not forget the suspenders)", "(you must particularly remember the suspenders)" (4). The use of the parentheses makes the story seem realistic and reflects the intimate relationship he is establishing with his young readers.

The whale saw the man and opened his mouth "back and back and back till it nearly touched his tail" and swallowed the mariner "and the raft he was sitting on" (4). This humorous exaggeration depicts a detailed visual image to the child in order to stir his imagination. He swallowed the man and his raft into his "warm, dark, inside cupboards" (4). There is a deliberate misuse of language in the word "cupboards" in reference to the stomach of the whale. This image addresses the sense of seeing with the adjective "dark" and the sense of touching with the adjective "warm" to convey exactly the situation of the mariner. Therefore, the mariner makes many exhausting attempts to come out of the whale's inside body. To reveal the great effort exerted by the man and the troubles he makes to the whale, Kipling uses a series of rhyming, monosyllabic verbs in a kind of parallel structure.

> The man --- stumped and he jumped and he thumped and he pumped, and
> he pranced and he danced, and he banged, and he clanged and he hit and he bit,
> and he leaped and he creeped and he prowled and he howled, and he hopped
> and he dropped, and he cried and he sighed, and he crawled and he bawled, and
> he stepped and he lepped (5).

The whale becomes so tired that he hiccoughs. The word "hiccough" is a humorous onomatopoeic word that has a funny effect on children. In order to get rid of the hiccoughs, the whale agrees to take the mariner to his native shore. There, he opened his mouth "wide and wide and wide" (8). Yet, before leaving, the mariner cut up the raft into a little square grating and tied it firm with his suspenders into the whale's throat. The use of parentheses appears again to show

the benefit of the suspenders "(now you know why you were not to forget the suspenders" (8). Kipling's interesting technique of directly addressing his child readers like this is an example of his successful attempts to urge them concentrate on the possible value of trivial things think like suspenders. The previous technique is absolutely convenient since the writer has already made it clear that his readers might be falling asleep. Then, he ends his story with a funny false principle claiming that the raft is the "reason why whales nowadays never eat men or boys or girls" (9). Wisely, Kipling makes sure to end his story with an optimistic note perhaps to ensure that his "Best Beloved" will only have peaceful dreams where girls and boys are safe from whale attacks.

Kipling adds two illustrations with long captions. The first one depicts the whale swallowing the mariner. He describes the picture in detail giving both the whale and the mariner definite names. He also describes the sea as "ooshy-skooshy" which is a word game that adds a light- hearted tone to the story. In the second picture, through his intimate way of addressing the child reader, he is no longer a detached omniscient author. He is showing his skill as an illustrator explaining the details of the picture in a funny way "I have drawn the Doors of the Equator" (10). This is followed by a short, funny poem that has no strong relationship with the whale story but it depicts the image of a passenger boat sailing in the sea.

In "How the Camel Got his Hump" Kipling again depends on his coinage of new language and word play to attract children. His word game appears in describing the desert as "howling" and the camel as "a Howler himself" (13). In addition, he chooses suitable plants of the desert expounding that the camel eats "sticks and thorns and tamarisks and milkweed and prickles" (13). This indirectly shows children a variety of desert plants and adds a sense of reality to the story.

Kipling starts with generalization claiming that the camel says "humph" to "anybody" who speaks to him. Then, he relies on a variation of the verbs used with animals according to the different tasks they perform. The horse asks the camel to come out and "trot like the rest of us" (13), while the dog asks him to "fetch and carry like the rest of us", and finally the ox asks him to "plough like the rest of us" (14). The camel's reply to the three animals is "humph". This rhythmic repetition reveals the frequent attempts made by the three animals to incite the camel to work. It also convinces the child that the camel deserves punishment. Moreover, the repetition of "the rest of us" teaches children that all creatures have to work otherwise they will be punished.

The animals complain to the "Man" as the master of animals but, instead of punishing the camel, he orders the animals to work double- time to make up for the idleness of the camel. The animals become angry and negotiate with each other to find a solution to this problem. Kipling is so sarcastic of the animals' talks that he humorously says that they "held a palaver, and an indaba, and a punchayet, and pow- wow on the edge of the desert" (14). All of these are synonyms of the word "conference" and the word "punchayet" means a village council in India. Therefore, he ironically considers their talks something serious. He, thus, conveys to the child reader a feeling of facing a dangerous problem.

The animals complain to the "Djinn in charge of All deserts" who was "rolling in a cloud of dust" (14). Kipling adds an explanatory parenthesis because he is addressing a young reader "(Djinn always travels that way because it is Magic)" (14). The Djinn promises them "I'll humph him" (15). Kipling uses the word "humph" as a funny pun as it equates the word "hump". Then, he draws an illustration of the Djinn making magic and explains, in a long caption, the magical instruments of the Djinn such as a magic pumpkin and a magic fan. After ending his argument with the Djinn saying "humph", the camel "saw his back, that he was so proud of, puffing up and up into a great lolloping humph" (18). He tells the camel "that's your very own humph that you've brought upon your very own self by not working" (18). Though it appears as a kind of punishment, he adds that the camel can live on his "humph" for three days without eating in order to expound to the child the benefits of this distinguished part of the camel's body. The Djinn orders him "Humph yourself" and the camel "humphed himself, humph and all" (18) and he joined the three animals in work. Kipling's word play is clear with the word "humph" that he sometimes uses as a verb and at other times as a noun. Then, he adds a humorous, explanatory parenthesis "(We call it 'hump' now, not to hurt his feelings" (18). Though he is sarcastic, he teaches the young child to be tactful and polite. Furthermore, a second illustration reveals the very moment of adding the hump to the camel while showing the new world with its volcanoes and mountains. He then, as an illustrator, addresses the child explaining "I couldn't draw all the deserts that the Djinn was in charge of, so I only draw one" (20). The one he draws is "a most deserty desert" (20). The coinage of new adjectives besides the alliteration used here, achieves the purpose of word play that is enjoyable for the child reader.

Kipling ends his story with a poem that calls for the privilege of work and warns that the lazy person will get a hump like that of the camel. He thus stresses the fact that a hump is a kind of punishment that reveals the laziness of its owners.

Kiddies and grown- ups too- oo- oo,

If we haven't enough to do- oo- oo

We get the hump-

Camelious hump-

The hump that is black and blue!

The poem of this story is closely related to its theme so that he coins the adjective "camelious" to enforce its connection with the camel. It gives the child a moral lesson in a funny way that cannot be forgotten easily.

'How the Rhinoceros Got His Skin" depicts a Parsee living by the Red Sea and eats nothing except cake. To make one, he puts "flour and water and currants and plums and sugar and things" (23). The repetition of "and" shows the different ingredients of this delicious cake which "smelt most sentimental" (23). There is malapropism in this phrase because the sense of smelling is not suitable with the word "sentimental". This also makes the child more aware of scents and the sense of smelling. Then, a rhinoceros, whose skin had no wrinkles at that time, appeared. Yet he "had no manners then, and he has no manners now, and he never will have any manners" (24). This funny description demonstrates the impoliteness of the rhinoceros in the past, present and future. Being afraid of the rhinoceros, the Parsee left the cake and climbed to the top of a palm- tree whereas the rhinoceros ate the cake. Therefore, the Parsee recited the following Sloka which is a verse from the Sanskrit epics:

Them that takes cakes

Which the Parsee- man bakes

Makes dreadful mistakes.

This funny rhyme shows that something horrible will happen to the rhinoceros. The rhyme is easily remembered by the child and teaches him not to take others' possession. Five weeks later, it was so hot that the "rhinoceros took off his skin and carried it over his shoulder as he came down to the beach to bathe" (25). This is a humorous image that personifies the animal as if he were a person going to swim. This concrete language gives a vivid and funny image to the child reader. Again, he says that the rhinoceros left "his skin on the beach" (25) in a fanciful image that likens the skin of the animal to a piece of clothes that can be taken off. However, the Parsee exploits the chance and puts cake – crumbs in the skin of the

rhinoceros. He "took that skin, and he shook that skin, and he scrubbed that skin, and he rubbed that skin" and filled it with "old, dry, stale, tickly cake- crumbs" (25). This series of rhyming, monosyllabic verbs in addition to the epithet "old, dry, stale, tickly" reflect the severity of the Parsee's revenge in a humorous way.

When the rhinoceros put on his skin, it tickled him so that he "rolled and rolled and rolled" on the sands (25), but the cake crumbs tickled him "worse and worse and worse" (30). Moreover, he "rubbed and rubbed and rubbed himself" against a palm- tree (30). The repetition of verbs depicts the agony of the rhinoceros and his frequent attempts to get rid of this torturing feeling. It also reflects a vivid imagery connected with the sense of touching. In a humorous way Kipling says that "from that day to this, every rhinoceros has great folds in his skin and a very bad temper" (30). He once again gives a funny comment on describing a distinguished quality of an animal's body.

As usual Kipling makes two illustrations for his story. In the first one, he draws the Parsee while making a cake and in the captions he calls the rhinoceros "Strorks" and writes some ridiculous comments. Giving names to the animal endows him with a sense of individuality and a sense of reality as well. In the second illustration, he draws the rhinoceros who was bathing without his skin. Moreover, the story is followed by a very short poem that talks about an inhabited, hot island in which lives the Parsee who bakes cake. Naturally, such a poem is so closely related to the theme of the story that it stirs the child's imagination and fascinates him.

In "How the Leopard Got his Spots" Kipling starts his story with humorous rhythmic repetition in describing to his "best beloved" the place where the leopard lives, the High Veldt. He gives a detailed description of the place in a familiar childish way, "Member it wasn't the Low Veldet, or the Bush Veldet, or the Sour Veldet, but the 'sclusively bare, hot, shiny High Veldet" (33). Of course, this rhythmic structure is amusing and attractive to the child's ear. Moreover, there is a lot of vivid imagery in the careful description of the colors of things. The rock is "sandy- coloured" and the grass is "sandy- yellowish" (33). Many animals live in the Veldt like the giraffe, zebra, eland, koodoo, and the hartebeest. They are "sandy- yellowish- brownish" but the leopard is the "sandiest- yellowest- brownest" of them all (33). This word play that consists of an epithet of onomatopoeic, rhythmic adjectives portrays for the child reader an obvious visual image of the color and shape of the leopard. It is also amusing and enjoyable to be heard. Furthermore, there is an Ethiopian who ironically forms a team with the leopard for hunting. The man hunts with his "bows and arrows" whereas the

leopard hunts with his teeth and claws. Again, Kipling chooses the tools of hunting that suit a man and those of an animal. He uses a parenthesis in describing the Ethiopian who is "(a grayish- brownish- yellowish man)" (34) and this is a humorous description of a human being.

However, the other animals tried to avoid both the leopard and the Ethiopian. Humorously, Kipling claims that because the animals stand half in the shade and half out of it, they get their present shape. The giraffe becomes "blotchy" and the zebra "stripy" while the eland and the koodoo grow darker with little grey lines on their backs. Here, imagery is highlighted to attract children and enrich their imagination. Because of this description "you could hear them and smell them" but "you could very seldom see them" (34, 35). This reflects that the sense of smelling is prominent and crucial for animals as it is what they primarily depend upon for hunting.

The leopard and the Ethiopian ran through the "'sclusively greyish- yellowish-reddish" High Veldt but they do not have any kind of animals for their food (35). Kipling deliberately relies on wordplay in giving these colors. Of course such a friendly relationship between a leopard and a human being is fanciful. In their search for food, they met the Baviaan who is a dog-headed Baboon that is to say a big monkey. Kipling draws the Baviaan in the first illustration of the story to make it clear for children. His coinage of adjectives continues as he describes the "umbrellaish" thing about the Baviaan head as his "conventional Mane" (36). While the leopard asks the Baviaan about the place of the "game", the Ethiopian asks him about the place of the "aboriginal Fauna" (35) meaning all the animals of the area. Kipling expounds in an explanatory parenthesis "(That meant just the same thing, but the Ethiopian always used long words. He was a grown up)" (35). He thus shows the child that the language of adults is more complicated and that it is acceptable for the young to use simpler vocabulary.

The leopard and the Ethiopian found a forest full of trees "speckled and sprottled and spottled, dotted and splashed and slashed and hatched and cross-hatched" with shadows (38). This alliterative, rhythmic epithet is humorous and is written for the purpose of oral pronunciation and oral rhyme. Kipling clarifies this intention in a parenthesis "(Say that quickly aloud, and you will see how very shadowy the forest must have been)" (38). The leopard sees that the forest is "dark, yet so full of little pieces of light" (38). The contradiction between "dark" and "light" highlights the confusion of the leopard.

The leopard manages to hunt a zebra while the Ethiopian succeeds in hunting a giraffe. By using parallel structure, Kipling intensifies his concentration on imagery and addresses the senses of smelling, hearing and finally seeing. The leopard heard something breathing which "smelt like zebra, and it felt like zebra, and when he knocked it down, it kicked like zebra" (39). Also, the man caught a thing that "smells like Giraffe, and it kicks like giraffe" (39). Yet, because it was dark, they could not see what they caught. Through this vivid description, Kipling is giving the reader a wonderful image of hunting which depends on hearing the victim's breath, smelling it and feeling it but not yet seeing it. However, the zebra and the Giraffe manage to escape from them so that they only see "stripy shadows" of the zebra and "blotched shadows" of the giraffe (40). The Ethiopian and the leopard decide to take the Baviaan's advice to change their shapes. The Ethiopian decides to change his skin to "a nice working blackish- brownish colour" (41). This epithet gives details of his new color in a clear visual image. Moreover, he advises the leopard to "go into spots" (41) clarifying to him that he means "spots on your skin" (42) not spots in South Africa. This humorous pun stirs the child's imagination to think of the difference between a place and the shape of an animal. The leopard cannot hunt animals because he looks "like a sun- flower against a tarred fence" (42). The simile reflects the clarity of the leopard's color in the darkness, therefore, he agrees to let the Ethiopian draws black marks with his five fingers on the leopard's skin. Kipling's humorous comment appears here, as in other stories, in telling his "best beloved" that if she looks at any leopard now, she "will see that there are always five spots- off five fat black finger-tips" (43).

Finally, Kipling ends the story by a rhythmic pattern that is achieved by parallel structure and multitude of similes. This portrays a lively image to the shape of the leopard and its spots. The Ethiopian addresses the leopard saying:

> You can lie out on the bare ground and look like a heap of pebbles.
>
> You can lie out on the naked rocks and look like a piece of pudding- stone.
>
> You can lie out on a leafy branch and look like sunshine sifting through the leaves; and you can lie right across the center of a path and look like nothing in particular (43).

These similes reveal the benefit of the new color of the leopard and how it will help him to be hidden from other animals in order to be able to hunt them. The story ends with the second illustration showing the Ethiopian and a blurred image of the leopard. Kipling humorously confesses that his illustration "is really a

puzzle- picture like 'Find – the – Cat'" (44) as he cannot clarify it more than that. This is followed by a poem about the Baviaan that is written in a light- hearted tone. Yet, it does not have a strong relationship with the leopard's story. However, the story teems with bright imagery, word-game, and many other attractive patterns of communication. It attracts the reader's imagination, teaches him about hunting and the complicated relationships between the hunted and the hunter.

"The Elephant Child" has a humorous beginning highlighted by Kipling's claim that elephants in the far – off – times had no trunk and that instead of it, they had "blackish, bulgy nose" (47). The adjective "bulgy" is a wordplay of "bulge" to describe how his nose is swelling behind the usual size in an amusing way that suits children. Moreover, the exaggeration used in describing the elephant's nose "as big as a boot" (47) is for the purpose of humor. The young elephant was so curious that he asked about everything. Kipling uses deliberate misspelling in saying that the elephant child is full of "'satiable curiosity" instead of "insatiable curiosity" (47). He plays on words for the purpose of amusement and to be close to his child readers who will feel that the storyteller is someone familiar with them. Again, Kipling exaggerates when he claims that the young elephant "filled all Africa with his 'satiable curiosities" (47). Consequently, he incites the young reader to imagine the native habitat of elephants and think of its jungle and forests.

The elephant's child asked the Ostrich about her tail- features, the Giraffe about his spotty skin, the hippopotamus about his red eyes and the Baboon about the taste of melons. The reply of animals is expressed in a kind of rhythmic repetition that reflects the various kinds of punishment he received. The ostrich "spanked him with her hard, hard claw", the hippopotamus "spanked him with her broad, broad hoof", the giraffe "spanked him with his hard, hard hoof" and the baboon "spanked him with his hairy, hairy paw" (47, 48). The variation of the parts used by animals in spanking the elephant highlights the prominent feature of each animal. There is also funny personification in describing the ostrich and the hippopotamus as his "aunts" while the giraffe and the baboon as his "uncles". He thus likens the young elephant to a young child who has to be polite with the grown- ups. There is exaggeration again in saying that the young elephant asked questions "about everything that he saw, or heard, or felt, or smelt, or touched" (48). This concentration on the different senses of the elephant reveals how curious he is so that he is either punished or criticized.

When the elephant's child asks about the dinner of the crocodile, the Kolokolo bird advises him to go the banks of the "great grey- green, greasy" Limpopo River to find out (48). The epithet used here with its alliteration creates a distinguished

rhythm while describing the river. The elephant begins his journey to the Limpopo River in spite of the fact that till that "week, and hour, and minute", he had never seen a crocodile (49). The gradual decreasing of the time unit reflects his insistence on knowledge and his ignorance of the danger of a crocodile. Therefore, he asks a "Bi-Coloured- Python- Rock- Snake" about the crocodile (49). By using such an epithet, Kipling describes the species of the snake in some detail. The young elephant finally, meets a crocodile and asks him what he has for dinner. At that time, the crocodile deceives the elephant and by his "musky, tusky mouth" catches him by his little nose (51). There is a rhythmic, onomatopoeic assonance in describing the mouth so as to achieve a funny effect. The crocodile ironically replies to the elephant's question "I will begin with the Elephant's child" (52). Thus, the child reader indirectly learns to be careful with strangers so as not to be hurt. Moreover, he feels excited and sympathizes with the young elephant against the aggressive crocodile.

The Elephant's nose hurts him and there is a deliberate humorous misuse of language as he is talking through his nose saying, "Led go! You are hurting be" (52). The snake, who is a real friend of the elephant, advises him to pull his nose as hard as he can. He calls the crocodile "the large- pattern leather ulster" which is an ironic epithet showing the snake's sympathy with the elephant. Kipling clarifies this by a parenthesis in which he explains, "(and by this he meant the Crocodile)" (52). As each one of them pulls, the elephant's nose grows "longer and longer". This fanciful incident stirs the child's imagination and incites him to think of the length and benefits of the trunk of the elephant. However, the elephant is about to surrender "This is too butch for be" as he talks through his nose (53). Yet, the snake keeps urging him to resist in order to pull his nose and he himself helps the elephant till he gets rid of the crocodile's grasp. Furthermore, when the elephant complains that he has to wait for his nose to shrink because it is badly out of shape, the snake gives him an indirect advice. Knowing that the trunk will be useful for the elephant, the snake comments "some people do not know what is good for them" (54). He then, begins to enumerate the advantages of the trunk to the elephant and through a kind of rhythmic repetition, he comments on each benefit saying to the elephant "you couldn't have done that with a mere- smear nose" (55). The assonance between "mere" and "smear" makes the rhythm more wonderful. Kipling indirectly informs the young readers about the merits of such a prominent feature of elephants and shows them how it facilitates the life of a huge elephant. He portrays how the elephant's child goes home across Africa, "frisking and whisking" his trunk (55). The rhythm of his contemplation of his trunk reflects his happiness and pride. An advantage of his trunk appears when he pulls fruits from a tree instead of waiting for it to fall. He also, plucks grass from the ground instead of going on his knees

to eat grass. Moreover, he revenges himself on his relatives for spanking him before. Kipling ends the story humorously claiming that all elephants from that day have trunks like that of the 'satiable' Elephant's child.

There are two illustrations in the story. The first one depicts the crocodile while pulling the nose of the elephant's child. The second one portrays the elephant while making use of his trunk and pulling banana. In addition, the story is followed by a nice poem that praises curiosity as a way of acquiring knowledge and experience. Kipling personifies the question words as his "serving- men" who are "hungry men" in the meantime (62). There is a funny pun in the word "hungry" as they are also hungry for knowledge. He adds a parenthesis to clarify that these words "(taught me all I know)" (62). The humorous personification is obvious when he mentions the names of his "six honest serving men" as: "What and Why and When and How and Where and Who" (62). He sarcastically adds that he knows other curious persons who have "one million Hows, two million Wheres, and seven million Whys" (62). Through this indirect, funny way, the child reader thinks of the different question words and their functions. He may learn them by heart and learn their different usages.

According to "The Sing- Song of Old Man Kangaroo", most of it is written in free verse. There is a funny antithesis in the title itself "old Man Kangaroo" by which he may mean the oldest Kangaroo. As the Kangaroo wanted to be different from the other animals, he went to the Big God Nqa who ordered the yellow Dog Dingo to make the kangaroo different from other animals. Therefore, the dog begins to chase the kangaroo throughout the whole of Australia.

For the first time in his stories Kipling divides his story into two parts. At this part of the story, he addresses his daughter: "This, O Beloved of mine, ends the first part of the tale!" (64). This is because the second part teems with rhythmic repetition and parallel structure that make the story look like a poem written in free verse. This is obvious in "he ran through the desert; he ran through the mountains; he ran through the salt- pans; he ran through the reed beds; he ran through the blue gums; he ran through the spinifex" (65). The rhythmic repetition of "he ran through" shows the various places to which he went. Moreover, he ends each paragraph with the sentence "he had to!" (65). There is also parallel structure in describing the dog who was "never getting nearer, never getting farther" (65). This attracts the ear of the child while stirring his curiosity and imagination.

When the kangaroo's legs ached, he began to hop. Again, a parallel structure is used to depict the kangaroo's movement. "He hopped through the Flinders, He hopped through the Cinders, he hopped through the deserts …" (65). This

rhythmic repetition is amusing to the child because it makes the story as if it were a poem. Again parallel description appears in "his legs growing stronger; his legs growing longer" (68). The kangaroo hopped "like a cricket; like a pea in a sauce-pan; or a new rubber ball on a nursery floor" (68). The similes used here, besides the rhythm and assonance between "ball" and "floor", create a humorous and interesting imagery that portrays how the kangaroo moves. Again, parallel structure is used when the time of changing the kangaroo comes, "Down sat Dingo- Poor Dog Dingo" and "Down sat kangaroo- Old Man Kangaroo" (68). Moreover, there is rhythmic repetition when the kangaroo complains to God Nqong that the dog chased and exhausted him. "He's chased me out of the homes of my childhood; he's chased me out of my regular meal- times; he's altered my shape so I'll never get it back; and he's played Old Scratch with my legs" (69). The parallel structure of repeating the verbs in the present perfect tense is used to show the result of what the Dog has made to the kangaroo. Kipling humorously claims that the hind legs of the kangaroo are long since that time.

There are two illustrations in the story. The first one depicts the kangaroo when his legs were short and gives him the name "Boomer" (66). In so doing, he individualizes the kangaroo to create an intimate relationship between him and the child. The second illustration portrays the dog chasing the kangaroo through the bare hills. The kangaroo's hind legs have become longer and in his caption Kipling explains that he draws the kangaroo's pouch as he has to have one. The story is followed by a very long poem of unrhymed verse that depicts the pursuit of the dog to the kangaroo throughout different places so that in a parenthesis Kipling says "(Look at the Atlas, please)" (73). This reveals how Kipling is so interested in maps and places that he wants children to be aware of them.

"The Beginning of the Armadilloes" represents a salient example of Kipling's wordplay and his deliberate misuse of language, in addition to his deliberate mixing up of nouns and verbs. His main aim in doing so is amuse the child and engage his ear. In this story, Kipling introduces the "Stickly- Prickly" Hedgehog and the "Slow -Solid" tortoise who could deceive the jaguar in order not to eat them. The word game of their funny names creates a light-hearted tone in the story. The jaguar's mother advises him that before eating a hedgehog, he has to drop him into water and he will uncoil. Yet, before eating a tortoise, he must scoop her out of her shell. The young reader learns the physical attributes of a tortoise and a hedgehog through the advice of the jaguar's mother. He begins to think of the nature of these animals and how they are different from each other. Moreover, he may sympathize with them and rejoice at their rescue from the jaguar.

One night the jaguar catches the hedgehog and the tortoise but he tells them that he does not know which one is the tortoise and which is the hedgehog. Therefore, they begin to confuse and deceive him in order to escape. By using humorous wordplay and confusing concepts, the hedgehog tells the jaguar the opposite of his mother's advice. He says to him "perhaps she said that when you uncoil a Tortoise you must shell him out of the water with a scoop, and when you paw a Hedgehog you must drop him on the shell" (76). This is a deliberate misuse of language with the purpose of mixing things up in the jaguar's mind. The wordplay continues as the Tortoise says "when you scoop water with your paw you uncoil it with a Hedgehog" (77). Moreover, the Hedgehog humorously exploits the jaguar's ignorance and claims that he is a Tortoise so he addresses the jaguar, "you can scoop me out of my shell if you like" (77). The Hedgehog curls himself up so that the jaguar's paddy- paw is filled with prickles. He knocked Stickly- Prickly away into the woods as the prickles hurt him badly.

Ironically, when the Tortoise informs the jaguar that she is a real tortoise, he cannot believe her. The wordplay is salient when the Tortoise discusses with the jaguar the advice of his mother saying, "Well, suppose you say that I said that she said something quite different, I don't see that it makes any difference; because if she said what you said I said she said, it's just the same as if I said what she said she said" (80). This confusion creates a funny and humorous effect that young children will enjoy and try to imitate. Consequently, the jaguar admits to the tortoise "you've mixed up all the things my mother told me to do" so that "I don't know whether I'm on my head or my painted tail" (81). This confusion is achieved by the Tortoise's wordplay and deliberate misuse of language in which all words are mixed up. As a result of this confusion, the jaguar leaves the Tortoise to jump into the turbid Amazon.

Again, there is word game that is enjoyable for children when the jaguar's mother asks him, "What have you been doing that you shouldn't have done?" (82). When he confesses his failure to catch either of them because they are "too clever" (82), she teaches him again that a Hedgehog curls himself up and his prickles stick out everywhere. She also explains to him that a tortoise can't curl himself up. In order not to forget, the jaguar composes a humorous rhyme in which he marks the specific characteristics of the two animals:

Can't curl, but can swim-
Slow- Solid, that's him!
Curls up, but can't swim-
Stickly- Prickly, That's him! (83)

For more protection, the Stickly- Prickly decides to learn swimming while encouraging the Tortoise to exercise curling up. The Tortoise praises the Hedgehog's swimming with a humorous exaggeration saying that "a little more practice will make you a regular whale" (84). They continue their exercise, each helping the other till they become different from what they had been. Both of them curled themselves up and rolled round the jaguar. He was so confused that "his eyes turned truly cart-wheels in his head" (86). This has a very humorous effect and the child becomes very pleased on seeing the success of the tortoise and the hedgehog to save themselves. He may encourage their attempts to deceive the jaguar and admire their skill and persistence. There is a humorous wordplay when the jaguar complains to his mother that he saw two new animals but "the one that you said couldn't swim, swims, and the one that you said couldn't curl up, curls" (86). There is a humorous, rhythmic repetition in the mother's reply. She replies "a Hedgehog is a Hedgehog, and can't be anything but a Hedgehog; and a Tortoise is a Tortoise, and can never be anything else" (87). When the jaguar tells his mother that the new animal is a little bit of both, she replies that it is called the "armadillo". From that day on, the animal that lives on the banks of the turbid Amazon is called the armadillo. Again this is the usual, humorous end of Kipling's stories.

There are two illustrations in this story. The first one depicts a map of the turbid Amazon. The second illustration portrays the jaguar, the Hedgehog, the Tortoise, and the Armadillo "all in a heap" (88). It reflects the confusion that happens in the mind of the jaguar. This is followed by a short poem in which the speaker says that he never sailed the Amazon. Moreover, he has never reached Brazil, and he has never seen a jaguar or an armadillo. However, he expresses his wish to go to Rio before becoming old. The poem thus shows the importance of places and travelling for Kipling. Kipling's predilection for places is intensified by the variation of places represented in his stories. There is the camel of Asia, the leopard and the elephant of Africa, the kangaroo of Australia, the armadillo of the turbid Amazon, and the whale and rhinoceros who live in water.

Thus, *Just So Stories* has a special position among Kipling's work because it shows his unique style in addressing children's emotions and stirring their imagination. It is the only book he illustrates. Each story has an illustration in the middle of the incidents, and an illustration at the end of the story followed by a poem. The illustrations are accompanied by long and detailed captions that explain everything in the pictures. In so doing, he helps the child to reach an appropriate interpretation of the stories. The child has to connect the stories to his familiar world to be able to visualize their characters and events. The result of the

interactive role of the child achieves what Iser calls "the virtual dimension of the text" which is a blend of the child's imagination and the stories (Lodge 298). He resorts to his previous knowledge of these animals to be able to imagine their behavior. In order to attract children, Kipling addresses them in a very familiar, intimate, and humorous way. Moreover, the poems are sometimes functional, that is to say they are so relevant to the story that they repeat its theme in verse. This happens with the poems of the camel's story that urges children to work and not to be lazy. In addition, the poem that accompanies the story of the curious young elephant talks about curiosity and question words, and the poem of the kangaroo's story handles how his hind legs become longer. However, with some other stories, the poems are irrelevant and seem to be just a kind of interesting songs that are added to amuse children.

The other linking theme in the stories is the deliberate misuse of language. Kipling's stories teem with wordplay, misspelling, malapropism and puns. Moreover, there are attractive onomatopoeic adjectives, rhythmic repetitions, parallel structure and rhythmic patterns. In addition, there are many examples of exaggeration that have a great humorous effect. The use of parenthesis is also notable for adding explanatory but usually humorous details. Randall Jarrel describes Kipling as "a professional magician" whose words hold the ear and draw the eye (138). Furthermore, James Harrison ascribes the beauty of *Just So Stories* to its dependence on "its simultaneous appeal to both reader and listener" (59). Harrison believes that the "story's crowning glory" is due to "the author's unashamed enjoyment of language" which is felt by the adult as a performer and the child as listener (60). Moreover, A. G. Galystan holds that the peculiarities of the style and structure of the stories "provide sufficient grounds for considering the book to be one of the masterpieces among books for children" (76).

Kipling's strong love for folk stories and fables from many lands is revealed in the variety of cultures and places from which he writes *Just So Stories*. Yet, he is distinguished because of his skillful ability to select and create from these various sources. This increases the child's enjoyment and stirs his imagination while reading these wonderful stories. He laughs, anticipates what is coming next, and enjoys the misuse of language. Moreover, he rejoices in the illustrations with their joyful characters and enjoys the lilt of the poems following the stories. However, the child is able to distinguish the information that can be taken seriously from the humorous details that are a prominent characteristic of Kipling's style. If the child does not play his vital and active role in interpreting Kipling's stories, he will not be able to properly enjoy them.

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