Pragmastylistic Features of Characters' Speech in the Text of Fiction

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Abstract

Largely speaking, the present paper seeks to substantiate the role of the pragmastylistic analysis as a crucial tool for the study of relations between various levels of literary texts and to illustrate how the pragmatic and stylistic dimensions in the study of the literary texts can become an efficient extension to the traditional analytical toolkit. Our major objective is to expose the role of the character's speech in the work of fiction, meanwhile observing those pragmastylistic resources employed by the author which contribute to the formation of the pragmatic meaning of the text and support the pragmatic impact on the reader.

Key words: pragmastylistics, meaning, effect, characters' speech, pragmastylistic resources and markers.

Introduction

Any piece of verbal art is a complex object of study for its being a multi-layered and multi-functional phenomenon. The latter accounts for the impossibility of fitting the study of literary texts into pure linguistic frames of research. Presently, linguists tend to define the text as a unit of communication, or otherwise, a unit of psychological speech of pragmatic character, ignoring the traditionally established definition of that of a unit of speech or language. The abundance in opinions about the nature of texts urges us to study them based not only on one guiding principle, but involving as many aspects of texts as possible, with due regard paid to the interaction between the text levels.

The research work in Linguistic Pragmatics stands apart by the multi-perspective outlook it casts upon the texts. By and large the pragmatic research is oriented toward exposing the relations between the language units and the conditions of their application in the communicative-pragmatic environment, where the interaction between the writer and the reader are taken into full account (Sargsyan 2014:76-77)

Thus, Pragmatics is concerned with the "conditions, methods, and consequences of facilitating or impeding the fulfillment of a speaker's objectives: it investigates what language users mean, as distinct from what their language means, what they do and how they do it in real situations" (Leo Hickey 1993: 576). To put the latter into a more simple sense, Pragmatics is said to be the "study of language usage" (Levinson 1983:5).

Current developments in Linguistic Pragmatics have proved the validity of its principles in analyzing texts intertwined by stylistic objectives. In exploring the stylistic potential of a language or of a specific particular construction or while analyzing a certain piece of text, at times we face with the necessity of paying special attention to those fea-

tures that the writer may choose from a wide variety of acceptable forms that would be conditionally equivalent but may serve for different objectives or perform a different function.

In other words the choice of this or that means may be determined by the desired effects, be it expressive, evaluative, emotional, affective, etc, or by the communicative qualities aimed at, e.g. clarity, effectiveness, aesthetic impact and finally by the context or situation itself (what is the level of the shared knowledge, correlation between the old and new information, the distance between the writer and the reader). In this case the complex analysis of texts with the involvement of both pragmatic and stylistic aspects of analysis is estimated to lead to more coherent and comprehensive results.

What does Pragmastylistics Have to Offer?

By and large, it was due to the above-mentioned considerations that the new discipline -*Pragmastylistics* has emerged, involving the study of all the conditions, linguistic and extralinguistic, which allows the rules and potential of a language to combine with the special elements of the context to produce a text capable of causing specific internal changes in the reader's state of mind or knowledge (Hickey 1993:578).

The scope of pragmastylistic analysis is any piece of language (spoken or written) in use, ranging from phrase or clause to a complete discourse or text. As the adherents of this principle envisage, pragmastylistics can provide more exhaustive explanations for many hitherto unexplained phenomena and issues, something that Stylistics and Pragmatics will fail to do separately.

To our firm belief pragmastylistic analysis may as well involve the whole set of the writer's intention expressed with the help of various language units in the *writer's* and *characters'* speech employed with a view to generating certain emotional and aesthetic impact on the reader. The writer's and the character's speech are those universals which contribute to creating the polyphonic features of text's pragmastylistics, unfailingly leading to adequate exposition of the text ideology and its communicative objectives. All the means employed at various text levels are meant for an in-depth interpretation of the emotive, expressive and evaluative potential of the mentioned means on the part of the reader.

As far as the structure of Pragmastylistics is concerned, the results of our analysis allow us to state that they completely coincide with the structure of text pragmatics, involving the cultural-historic pragmatic intention; emotional – evaluative contexts; imagery and implication.

While analyzing the pragmastylistic potential of the language units at various text levels it should be noted that the whole pragmastylistic intention of the text is formed as a result of the interaction of units at various text levels: *phonographic, lexical, syntactic and overall textual.* Text pragmatics, consequently, text pragmastylistics depends on how the pragmastylistic meanings of various text units at various levels are interrelated to each other and how they are correlated to the context and the presupposition. Text pragmastylistics is formed at the expense of the pragmatic and stylistic properties of the units forming the text.

Pragmastylistic Features of the Characters' Speech

To expose the pragmastylistic potential of the text with the account of the interaction at various text levels we found it appropriate to carry out a complex analysis with the involvement of the techniques provided by contextual and content analysis. Hereunder, we will take into consideration the pragmastylistic resources employed by the author in the speech of characters with the aim of enhancing the predictable pragmatic effect on the reader (Naer 1985:5)

Let us mention at this point that in this paper we have largely concentrated on the characters' speech in dialogues, since a considerable amount of research work is already available on the pragmatic features of the author's speech. On the other hand, in the present research we aim at going deeper into the text microstructure, thus trying to observe the interaction between various levels thereof.

First of all, as a most crucial pragmastylistic aspect of the character's speech the prosodic arrangement thereof should be highlighted. For example,

> *– No, I wouldn't say he was exactly...but there was something queer...*
> *there was something uncanny about him. I'll tell you my opinion... .*
> *He began to puff at his pipe, no doubt arranging his opinion in his*
> *mind.*
>
> *– I have my own theory about it, he said. I think it was one of those ...*
> *peculiar cases... . But it's hard to say... .*
> *He began to puff again at his pipe without giving us his theory.*
>
> (J. Joyce "Dubliners" p.3)

Above we can follow Mr. Cotter suggesting his "opinion" and "own theory" concerning Father Flynn and his death. In the context concerned we must highlight the existence of numerous breaks and pauses marked by ellipsis, which function as a pragmastylistic means aimed at displaying the division of speech from the points of syntax, intonation and meaning. Hence, the abundance in pauses and the cases of ellipses can be regarded as pragamastylistic markers. The reader can hardly make out what theory Mr. Cotter was speaking of. But even in this interrupted speech we come across some important elements which we should highlight as pragmastylistic markers signaling the character's state of mind and attitude. We should mention the word *exactly* which, softens Cotter's negative disposition and suggests hesitation. The words *peculiar, queer and uncanny* are associated with mysterious and distressed feelings. The pauses in Cotter's speech are accompanied by a certain action – *puffing at his pipe from time to time*, this pointing to the agitated state of mind. The thorough consideration of the above discussed passage brings us to the conclusion that the author intended to confuse or appeal the reader and his imagination; Cotter puts forward questions, meanwhile leaving them unanswered.[1]

Further, in the below excerpted passage we witness a dialogue between Mr. Cotter and the boy's aunt.

> *– I wouldn't like children of mine, he said, to have too much to say to
> a man like that.*
> *– How do you mean, Mr. Cotter? asked my aunt.*
> *– What I mean is, said old Cotter, it's bad for children. My idea is: let
> a young lad run about and play with young lads of his own age and not
> be... Am I right, Jack?*
>
> ----
>
> *– But why do you think it's not good for children, Mr. Cotter? she asked.*
> *– It's bad for children, said old Cotter, because their minds are so
> impressionable. When children see things like that, you know, it has an
> effect.....*   (J. Joyce "Dubliners" p.4)

Mr. Cotter's speech is endowed with appellative and persuasive overtones aiming at influencing the listener in a way so as to make him change his viewpoints and accept the more favorable ones. Partially this effect is achieved by the repetition of the word *lad* - informal way of addressing a young boy. In this context the application of an informal and dialectical word hints the type of the contact between the characters, which in this case indicates familiarity, as well as the distance between the speakers – close relations. As we may conclude, the influence of the socio-cultural factors should not be underrated in the creation of the pragmastylistic effect. This effect results also in uncovering the psychological base of the dialogue, i.e. we can identify the type of relations between the speakers – sympathy, attachment, trust, which can be traced back to their past experience.

The influence of the prosodic arrangement of the utterance and the predictable pragmastylistic effect is observable in the following passage taken from Ignatius Gallaher's speech:

> *– Hallo, Tommy, old hero, here you are! What is it to be? What will you
> have? I'm taking whisky: better stuff than we get across the water. Soda?
> Lithia? No mineral? I'm the same. Spoils the flavor... . Here, garçon,
> bring us two halves of malt whisky, like a good fellow... Well, and how have
> you been pulling along since I saw you last? Dear God, how old we're get-
> ting! Do you see any signs of aging in me – eh, what? A little grey and thin
> on the top – what?*   (J. Joyce "Dubliners" p. 56)

The passage is marked by specific syntactic and prosodic arrangement – short questions, unfinished sentences, which impart liveliness to the speech. From the pragmastylistic perspective this passage succeeds in showcasing the character of a very noisy and a loud person, with bold attitude toward the environment. Gallaher's goal in his speech is his monologic performance which is revealed in his direct responses to the questions addressed to his friend. Gallaher talks mostly about himself. We should mention that Gallaher's presence with his self-satisfaction and excessive pride makes grow Little Chandler's discontentment. He tries to prevent Chandler's claim to "culture" by his frequent use of French word *garçon*. Gallaher's speech leaves the impression of a person

belonging to the cream of the society, with whiskey, cigars, gambling parties and a company of "immoral women" as he suggests.

Switching to the lexical means, let us mention that the emotional - evaluative - expressive semems and words are those means which can contribute to enhancing the pragmastylistic aspect of the dialogic speech to a great extent.

To demonstrate the case, let us turn to the analysis of the following excerpt:

> *My aunt waited until Eliza sighed and then said:*
> *– Ah, well, he's gone to a better world.*
> *Eliza sighed again and bowed her head in assent. My aunt fingered the*
> *stem of her wine-glass before sipping a little.*
> *– Did he... peacefully? she asked.*
> *– Oh, quite peacefully, ma'am, said Eliza. You couldn't tell when the*
> *breath went out of him. He had a beautiful death, God be praised.*
> *– And everything...?*
> *– Father O'Rourke was in with him a Tuesday and anointed him and*
> *prepared him and all.*
> *– He knew then?*
> *– He was quite resigned.*
> *– He looks quite resigned, said my aunt.*
> *– That's what the woman we had in to wash him said. She said he just*
> *looked as if he was asleep, he looked that peaceful and resigned. No one*
> *would think he'd make such a beautiful corpse.*
> *– Yes, indeed, said my aunt.*
> *She sipped a little more from her glass and said:*
> *– Well, Miss Flynn, at any rate it must be a great comfort for you to*
> *know that you did all you could for him. You were both very kind to him, I*
> *must say.*   (J. Joyce "Dubliners" p.7-8)

The passage presents the talk between the boy's aunt and Father Flynn's sister, Elisa. Here, what strikes us as unexpected, are such phrases as *beautiful corpse* and *beautiful death*, which may be accredited by several functions from pragmastylistic perspectives.

From the outset, the adjective *beautiful* brings forth associations with something pleasant, lovely, attractive, nevertheless its collocation with the word *corpse* evokes an unpleasant and distressing emotion. So, we can conclude that the adjective *beautiful* is applied as an intensifier for the sake of recreating the so called "the image of death". This case can be regarded as a most powerful allegory – through the dead body at the background of historic and cultural contexts underlying the text the implication of *the dead church* is made.

Further, as we see, the phrase contains a slight irony if viewed from cultural and historic perspectives. It contains elements of paradox and absurdity. On the symbolic level the priest is the image of the Irish religion and church, so we may just as well conclude that the irony is addressed to the Irish church. The oxymoron created by the application

of phrases *beautiful death* and *beautiful corpse* can be symbolically represented as pure irony directed to the Irish church and the priests.

Thus, the important markers which intensify the pragmastylistic effect of the above discussed dialogue are the adjective intensifiers, the oxymoron and the irony that all together function as constitutive elements of the pragmastylistic aspect of the character's speech.

Alongside the above discussed features we find it appropriate to mention that the pragmastylistic effect of the dialogic speech can be enhanced due to the idioms and, last but not least, on the account of the general stylistic characteristics of speech, i.e. the pronunciation, which indicates the level of literacy / illiteracy, slang and jargonisms, indicating the social class.

The following passages will enable us to observe the aforementioned features to the full extent:

> – *It pulls you down, he said, Press life. Always hurry and scurry, looking for copy and sometimes not finding it: and then, always to have something new in your stuff. Damn proofs and printers, I say, for a few days. I'm deuced glad, I can tell you, to get back to the old country. Does a fellow good, a bit of a holiday. I feel a ton better since I landed again in dear dirty Dublin... . Here you are, Tommy. Water? Say when.*
> (J. Joyce "Dubliners" p.56-57)

> – *Every place is immoral, he said. Of course, you do find spicy bits in*
> *Paris.*   (J. Joyce "Dubliners" p.58)

> – *You'll put your head in the sack, repeated Little Chandler stoutly, like everyone else if you can find the girl.*
> (J. Joyce "Dubliners" p.61)

Gallaher's speech is dynamic, his "busy life" is described by the expression *hurry and scurry*, through which colors are brought to the text meaning. A slang word *deuced* points to Gallaher's intensified emotions and feelings. We come across a good deal of more informal and slang words and phrases, for instance *damn; a tone better; spicy bits; put the head in the sack* in Chandler's speech. Reading further, we can point out the phrase *dear dirty Dublin*. Here we can leave all the detailed observations and perceive its implicit meaning; of course, being dirty for a city is not strange and paradoxical. But looking into the context, we can conclude that the words help to create a feeling of dearness despite the fact that Dublin was "dirty". Somehow, the element of irony should not be ignored as well.

Last but not the least, throughout our research we have exposed that counter questions can also be considered as an auxiliary means of enhancing the pragmastylistic features of dialogic speech: Thus,

> *– And is it really so beautiful as they say? asked Little Chandler.*
> *He sipped a little of his drink while Ignatius Gallaher finished his boldly.*
> *– Beautiful? Said Ignatius Gallaher, pausing on the word and on the*
> *flavour of his drink. It's not so beautiful, you know. Of course, it is beauti-*
> *ful... . But it's the life of Paris; that's the thing. Ah, there's no city like Paris*
> *for gaiety, movement, excitement... .*   (J. Joyce "Dubliners" p.57)

The counter question *"Beautiful?"* is meant to make the reader reflect on Gallaher's self-confidence, astonishment and his experience or progressed character. By means of the counter question the dynamics of the dialogue is supported further which by and large holds the reader's attention on the given information, generating a certain predicted response.

Conclusion
As mentioned formerly, the multi-perspective approach to the study of literary texts accounts for a better understanding of the relations between text layers, which in its turn results in the adequate estimation of the pragmatic and stylistic effect of the text. As illustrated above, the pragmastylistic analysis exposes those pragmatically and stylistically relevant elements of the characters' speech which can play a crucial role in the creation of the pragmastylistic information of the text. Through a detailed analysis of the pragmastylistic markers we highlighted the basic features of the character's speech which provide the link between various text levels.

Note:

1. Interestingly enough, in the following utterance we also come across the same technique. Both in old Cotter's and Gallaher's speech, we see that they suggest an opinion, which is never revealed. In this case, Gallaher mentions that that he "has heard" of such cases, which is followed by a rhetorical question as if addressed to himself, after which he recalls something (marked by pauses), then it is stressed by "have known". The use of pauses, marked by ellipses, impart some tints of mystery to his speech. As a result, the reader gets more excited and interested:

> *– I'll tell you my opinion, said Ignatius Gallaher, emerging after some*
> *time from the clouds of smoke in which he had taken refuge, it's a rum*
> *world. Talk of immorality! I've heard of cases- what am I saying? - I've*
> *known them: cases of...immorality... .*   (J. Joyce "Dubliners" p.59)

If viewed in the global context of Joyce's narrative technique, incompleteness of utterance can be regarded as a specific means of creating characters. This incompleteness of efforts in explaining or introducing opinion can be accounted for the collapse of the social life and the mundanity that the Dubliners are going through.

References:

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Source of Data:

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Կերպարների խոսքի ոճաբանական եւ գործաբանական առանձնահատկությունները գեղարվեստական տեքստում

Սույն աշխատանքում արձնորվում է գործաբանական ոճաբանական վերլուծության մեթոդը՝ գեղարվեստական տեքստում կերպարների խոսքի ստանձնած դերի բացահայտմամ Նպատակով։ Ուսումնասիրությունը կատարված է կերպարի խոսքի հնչյունային, բառային և շարահյուսական մակարդակների ընդգրկմամբ՝ միտում ունենալով բացահայտելու հեղինակի կողմից կիրառված այն ռեսուրսները, որոնք կերտում են տեքստի գործաբանական իմաստը և կանխատեսում գործաբանական ու ոճաբանական ազդեցությունն ընթերցողի վրա:

Прагмастилистические особенности персонажной речи в художественном тексте

В данной статье определяется значимость прагмастилистического метода анализа для выявления роли персонажной речи в контексте художественного произведения. Исследование выполнено на фонетическом, лексическом и синтаксическом уровнях речи персонажей в целях выявления тех ресурсов, которые выполняют роль прагмастилистических маркеров, способствуют формированию прагматического смысла текста и поддерживают прогнозируемый прагмастилистический эффект на читателя.