



DISCURSIVE INTERPRETATION OF POETIC TEXT AND ITS INFORMATIONAL CONTENT

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Abstract

This article explores the discursive interpretation of poetic texts and their informational content within the framework of modern anthropocentric linguistics. Drawing on pragmalinguistics, cognitive linguistics, and intercultural pragmatics, the study examines the communicative and pragmatic features of poetic discourse. Particular attention is paid to non-canonical speech situations, internal and external addressivity, multi-referential correlation, and the concept of the poetic linguistic personality. Wilfred Owen's elegy "Futility" is analyzed as an illustrative example. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of poetic discourse as a complex cognitive-pragmatic phenomenon.

Keywords: Poetic text, poetic discourse, discursive interpretation, informational content, pragmalinguistics, cognitive linguistics, anthropocentrism, poetic linguistic personality, addressivity, dialogicity.

Introduction

In contemporary linguistics, increasingly developing fields such as psycholinguistics, cognitive linguistics, linguistic-cultural studies, pragmalinguistics, and corpus linguistics have emphasized anthropocentric principles and analytical methods. These approaches highlight the necessity of studying language system units in relation to various factors of communicative activity



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The appeal to discourse as a phenomenon represents one of the most productive approaches in modern linguistics. Within this framework, the study and interpretation of phenomena traditionally excluded from linguistic analysis – such as “the incorporation of discourse analysis operations into the field of grammar enriching this domain with ‘living’ linguistic material and enhancing the reliability of conclusions and results” – becomes especially important [1].

Pragmalinguistics, as a key area of modern linguistics, acknowledges the relevance of identifying the laws and principles governing speech activity and determining the characteristics of linguistic phenomena in communication contexts. On one hand, this entails focusing on the communicative-pragmatic aspects of the sentence, the fundamental unit of the language system; on the other hand, it is explained by the insufficient description of information properties in the discourse analysis of poetic texts.

When analyzing discourse from an intercultural pragmatics perspective, it is essential to determine the nature of the interlocutors’ pragmatic knowledge involved in cross-cultural communication. Furthermore, it is necessary to investigate how the participants’ pragmatic knowledge depends on their proficiency in a foreign language and how it influences the selection of linguistic means and communication strategies [2].

Every discourse possesses its own pragmatic features, which manifest differently across languages. As R. Schmidt notes, “to acquire the pragmatic laws of a target language, one must pay attention to the linguistic form of expression while also considering the adaptable social and contextual situations.” P. Braun and S. Levinson distinguish the concepts of “social face,” “negative face,” and “positive face,” emphasizing that the “negative face” refers to independence, freedom of opinion, and freedom of action.

Before examining the characteristics of the poetic linguistic subject in detail, it is necessary to clarify the concept of a general linguistic subject. From a traditional perspective, this refers to a speaker of a particular language, whose texts reflect their perception of reality (worldview) through systematic linguistic means and who employs these means to achieve specific goals [3].

The processes of production and reception are interrelated in poetic speech, and their product is the poetic text. These processes involve cognitive actions of the



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same nature. The events in a poetic text are unique and non-repetitive, which can be contrasted with ordinary communication situations.

From the perspective of speech analysis, the directing situation within the text is linked to the referential content of the utterance as a segment of objective reality and represents one of the external communication parameters.

It should be emphasized that poetic texts are distinguished by their uniqueness, reflected in their concrete and generalized meanings. “The poetic form of speech, associated with the proper linguistic mode of existence, correlates the understanding of truth with external semantic and referential conditions, generalizes situational contexts, and compares them with the scientific depiction of the world, while simultaneously preserving the conditions of precision.”

Futility

Move him into the sun-
Gently its touch awoke him once,
At home, whispering of fields unsown.
Always it awake him, even in France,
Until this morning and this snow.
If anything might rouse him now
The kind old sun will know [4].

Wilfred Owen’s poem “Futility” (an elegy) begins with the depiction of an unknown soldier lying under the snow in France. The poet opens with a hopeful tone, wishing that the sun could “awaken” the lifeless body, but he soon realizes that death inevitably overcomes life, which leads him into confusion and despair. This mood is conveyed through the tone of the poem itself.

Initially, a poetic text can connect with multiple elements even if they are not directly tied to non-linguistic reality, as long as they present a similar position. In this sense, the text can create numerous links, incorporating reference to a particular situation and to a class of situations. This feature of poetic language allows us to speak of multi-referential correlation, which in the reader’s mind generates the virtual reality of an imaginary artistic world—the “other world” of the poetic text [5].



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Formally, poetic communication represents a typical example of a non-canonical speech situation. Unlike canonical situations, the speaker's spatial positioning may not correspond to the addressee, and the timing of utterance and reception may not coincide. Moreover, the communication may lack a definite destination. Non-canonical communicative situations are characterized by the constant introduction of new references, each directed toward the addressee and encompassing their empathy. An example of this can be seen in Owen's "Futility", which demonstrates the artistic features of external poetic communication:

If anyone should wake him, know
The kind effect of the sun, my friend.

The reader's perspective – "on the other side of the text" – differs from the author's in terms of the cognitive-pragmatic conditions under which the poetic text is perceived, even though successful poetic communication requires the intersection of the creative intentions and efforts of both poet and reader [6].

In global linguistics, understanding discourse as a multi-faceted phenomenon has enriched contemporary theoretical linguistics with new ideas and analytical methods. Therefore, discourse is increasingly described and systematically analyzed in terms of key categorical features such as dialogicality, addressee orientation, situationality, intentionality (expression of communicative goals), and evaluativeness.

Poetic communication is broader than dialogue because it combines self-addressing with an infinitely wide addressee. In poetic speech, there are two channels of communication: the internal (author) and the external (reader). The immanent anthropocentrism of poetic language manifests in several ways, among which lyrical self-reflection occupies a central position. Poetic speech is characterized by:

the priority of the speaker's perspective,
the speaker's knowledge of the subject of discourse,
the presence of the entire extralinguistic situation in the speaker's mind during utterance,
the speaker's specific position relative to the addressees, particularly the potential alignment of the speaker and the recipient.



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Formally, a poetic text is a reflexive monologic utterance, which can be understood as the speaker's statement about themselves.

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