

## Pragmstylistics Analysis of Filmic Text of *Pride and Prejudice*

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**Abstract:** In recent years, a new interdisciplinary, Pragmstylistics, which has attracted broad attention of domestic and foreign scholars, is emerging as a pragmatic analysis to interpret literary works. It integrates a variety of ideas in the understanding of literary language in its real connotations. Jane Austen's classic work *Pride and Prejudice* is always the apple in many scholars' eyes who have studied it systematically from the perspective of literature or Pragmatics. As Pragmstylistics has been developing in recent years, increasing focus is drawn to the pragmstylistic analysis of many versions of literary works or films.

### 1. Introduction

*Pride and Prejudice* is the outstanding masterpiece of Jane Austen. The works mainly introduced a love story between a rich, proud young man Darcy and a beautiful, intelligent lady, Elizabeth. Sharing the general writing styles with the other of her major works, *Pride and Prejudice* deals mainly with the everyday trifles of the Bennet family in Jane Austen's masterpieces.

### 2. Conversational Implicature by Violating of Cooperative Principle

#### 2.1 Conversational Implicature by Violating of Quantity Maxim

When more or less information than is required is said by a speaker, his/her utterance is violating the quantity maxim and generates an implicature. There are many cases where overstatement and understatement are employed in the filmic texts. Here are examples as follows:

Example

Context: on one occasion, Wickham comes across Darcy, but Darcy seems to hate him, Elizabeth observes it and asks Wickham why it happened. Wickham uses a jealousy to describe Darcy's behavior and tells Elizabeth that Darcy's father leaves a good position to him, while Darcy doesn't fulfill his father's promise, which makes Elizabeth confused. At the ball in Bingley's, Elizabeth tries to observe Darcy, and makes effort to learn about the weird person further, therefore, the following dialogues occurs, Mr.Bingley asks who she is looking for.

Mr.Bingley: and how are you? Miss Elizabeth? Are you looking for someone?

Elizabeth: no, not at all, I was just admiring the general splendour.

Here, Elizabeth's reply is obviously violating the quantity maxim, her peering in all directions attracts Mr.Bingley, which makes her embarrassed, admiring the general splendour reflects on her nervous emotion at that time.

#### 2.2 Conversational Implicature by Violating of Quality Maxim

Grice (1975) noted that speakers value the maxim of Quality much highly than the other maxims. There are many conversational implicatures in *Pride and Prejudice* generated by violating the Quality maxim of Grice's CP.

Example

Context: Elizabeth's youngest sister, Lydia, elopes with Wickham, who is irresponsible; the affair disgraces Elizabeth's whole family greatly. Finally, Darcy deals with the affair and makes Wickham marry Lydia, which saves the Bennets' reputation. The thesis will cut out words uttered by Bennet when everyone is cheering out in Lydia's wedding ceremony.

Mr.Bennet: He (Wickham) is as fine a fellow as ever I saw. He simpers, and smirks, and makes

love to us all. I am prodigiously proud of him. I defy even Sir William Lucas himself, to produce a more valuable son-in-law.

Bennet tells that Wickham is the best young man that he ever saw, even better than Collins, in fact, it is known to everybody that Mr. Bennet hates Collins for his vulgarity and stupidity, and never has a good feeling on him, now he compares him with Wickham, and manifests that Wickham is even better than him, it is obvious that this is an example of violating Quality Maxim. This kind of violation is connected with context as follows: the Bennets and neighbors are together to cheer up for the new-married couple, how dare he say that Wickham is bad. Therefore, what he can only do is presenting that he has no choice but laughing at himself. Here, Austen applies violation of quality maxim to reveal the sarcasm about marriage for the middle bourgeoisie.

### **2.3 Conversational Implicature by Violating of Relation Maxim**

The speaker may not say something which is explicitly referred to the topic of the conversation and wants the hearer to seek for an interpretation of the possible relevance. This circumstance is violating the Maxim of Relevance. The following is exploring examples in film *Pride and Prejudice*.

#### **Example**

Context: knowing that the sister Jane has already been falling in love with Bingley, Collins turns to seek his another hostess who can inherit a large fortune of Bennet's, and he freezes the target for charming Elizabeth, at the ball hold in Bingley's, he wants to invite Elizabeth to dance with him, the following dialogues are examples of violating relation maxim.

Collins: Perhaps you will do me honor, Miss Elizabeth.

Elizabeth: oh, I did not think you dance, Mr. Collins

Collins: I don't think it incompatible with clergyman. Several people, her ladyship included, have complimented me on my lightness of my foot.

Since the first sight, each woman in Bennet's didn't have good impression on Collins, so when Collins gives invitation to Elizabeth, he makes her in a fuss, and gives a response incompatible with the request, nevertheless, Collins' reply is violating relation maxim again, who answers more than the required information which refers to other's compliment and his lightness of foot, through the dialogue, we can conclude that Mr. Collins is a ridiculous character who is always intending to attract lady attention. However, on the contrary, he leaves bad impression for them.

### **2.4 Conversational Implicature by Violating of Manner Maxim**

According to CP, people are required to talk briefly and orderly, avoiding obscurity and ambiguity. However, in the film, the playwright often carefully chooses the diction for the characters to express themselves implicitly and indefinitely. That is, there is an obscurity or ambiguity in their discourses to make it understood either in this way or in that way how the author describes the character of Collins in *Pride and Prejudice* can set an good example for violating the maxim of manner.

Context: Collins is falling in love with the heroine Elizabeth, the following example is that he purposes to her in a ball, and gives three reasons why he wants to marry.

#### **Example**

First, that I think it a right thing for every clergyman in easy circumstances (like myself) to set the example of matrimony in his parish. Secondly, that I am convinced it will add very greatly to my happiness; and thirdly-which perhaps I ought to have mentioned earlier, that it is the particular advice and recommendation of the very noble lady whom I have the honour of calling patroness...

We can make a conclusion that Collins is pompous and flamboyant; he is always boasting the relationship with Lady Catherine, never talks about her and her daughters without excessive Praising. In the story, he mentions his patroness Catherine at least 30times which is disgusting. And he also pretends to be knowledgeable; his speech of proposal likes a mechanical convention. This kind of violation of manner maxim is actually exposing his stupidity and slavishness, which is applauding for Elizabeth's refusal about his proposal at the same time. Furthermore, it can set off the topic of the everlasting works: although all the girls and their mothers in a middle-class family consider the fortune as main aim of marriage, Elizabeth will not give up her spirit pursuit for

chasing fortune. Her values are different from people of that age. The audience will give applause for her wisdom and sense.

## **2.5 Hedges in the Film *Pride and Prejudice***

In novel or film, the speakers often make use of hedges to reveal the personality of characters and social cultures deliberately. In the film, when Darcy and Miss Bingley talk about the social status of relatives of the Bennets, the dialogue goes as follows:

Example

Darcy: I think I have heard you say, that their uncle is an attorney in Mertyton.

Miss Bingley: yes, and they have another, who lives somewhere near the Cheapside.

Her sister: That is capital (laughing).

The sisters used “somewhere”, “that is capital” to describe home of the Bennets’ relative, the hedges demonstrate that they are actually having no idea about home of Elizabeth’s uncle. As a matter of fact, they are flouting the quality maxim and manner maxim, but since they are uncertain about the concrete place, why do they only mention the “capital” which is irrelevant to Elizabeth’s uncle and laugh at it? Although this hedge can’t convey accurate information, it does give the audience the fact that they look down upon Elizabeth’s uncle. Here, it is just a brief sentence that reveals Bingley sisters’ snobbishness and conceit. We know that he is just a businessman in the latter plot, and we can also make a conclusion from Bingley sisters’ mock that: although the bourgeoisie has begun to spread up, the new traders are still disdained by the land class in town.

In view of holding prejudice to arrogant and conceited Darcy, There’s always referring to more than what she says in Elizabeth’s utterances. Leech (1983) views silence as a disagreeable behavior, and silence should be avoided in some way or other in interpersonal communication, for it is an undesirable conversational practice to a large extent. In light of ritual of those times, both parties should organize communication with each other when they are dancing, so silence that Darcy possesses is contrary to politeness principle, and that silence leaves Darcy a terrible impression.

## **3. Conclusion**

Now that filmic dialogues can transfer extra meanings which convey far more beyond the literal meanings of the utterance uttered by the characters, analysis of the filmic text should be a way that can forcefully make a description of the implied meanings. This thesis makes effort to analyze the filmic text based on the theories of Pragmatics to verify that this perspective can achieve the goal of revealing the theme of the text from it.

## **References**

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