

## The Role of the Key Images in the Creation and Enhancement of the Pragmatic Potential of the Text

Mariana Sargsyan  
Yerevan State University

### Abstract

The present paper argues that the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the text pragmatics can be enhanced at the expense of stylistic devices. Particularly, the case of simile is considered with a view to exposing the pragmatic potential of the key images embedded therein. In line with our research goals, with the account of internal and external factors underlying the choice and application of language units, the pragmatic and pragmastylistic potential of the chosen units in the creation and enhancement of text pragmatics is revealed.

**Key words:** pragmatic orientation of text, qualitative and quantitative aspects of text pragmatics, simile, key image.

### Introduction

Presently, the traditional systematic-structural approach to the study of literary texts is considered to be insufficient as far as the authentic understanding of the propositional and communicative-intentional aspects of the text are concerned. As linguists tend to claim the cutting-edge research should be directed toward the investigation of the internal and external factors underlying the choice and application of this or that language means; otherwise stated the research should be aimed at revealing the communication goals that the author pursues. Pragmatics, the crucial aspect of the research on speech activity, accentuates the importance of the communicative content of speech in various conditions and forms of communication. Despite the fact that the frames of the pragmatic research have considerably enlarged in the last decades, the pragmatic approach is still in the making. Nevertheless, all the spheres of linguistic research, including Text Theory, display great enthusiasm for enriching the pure linguistic scope of research with the pragmatic one. This growing interest toward pragmatics is conditioned by the fact that the latter is oriented toward the study of communication, regarding the latter as a means of linguistic interaction. Pragmatics considers the language as a system of means for expression and investigates how the language functions in certain conditions of communication. Complex study of the process of communication demands that the role played by each component be revealed, wherein the pragmatic aspect of communication plays a most important role.

It follows from the aforementioned that within the frames of the pragmatic research the traditionally established interest toward language and its systematic-structural properties is gradually switching toward such issues as how the language means are applied and how the language functions in various forms and conditions of communication.

### Toward Enhancing the Pragmatic Potential of the Text

The pragmatic approach to the study of language phenomena contributes to the reve-

lation of the communicative orientation of language units, their application on the part of the author as a tool of interaction and influence, as well as to displaying the relation between the message and the addressee's response behavior.

Text, the basic category of speech activity, is defined by objective purpose of carrying out a certain function in the process of communication. Text is endowed with such properties as completeness, the latter concerning both the content and the syntactic-ideological interaction of its units. The communicative property of language units is the main property which we would like to especially highlight within the scope of the present research. By communicative property of language units linguistic characteristics of the latter with the account of *author-text-addressee* triad are first of all meant. This unity is the basic provision of pragmatics. Within the frames of the communicative approach to the study of language the interest toward the language identity of the author and reader is enhanced, especially when we take into account the fact that it is during the communication between the author and the reader that the formation and perception of the text is carried out.

The study of language means necessitates that communicative-pragmatic approach be applied as far as this pragmatic value is created only under certain circumstances. Thus, it follows that text interpretation is to a great extent context-based. As far as the category of text is concerned we can define text pragmatics as the expression of relations between the author and the reader and their attitude toward a certain piece of information that is contained in the text.

The reader's reaction is expressed implicitly and is formulated in the form of conclusions derived through explicitly applied linguistic and non-linguistic means. Pragmatic content of the word is developed in speech, in real contexts of communication.

The complex pragmatic approach toward texts, i.e. the account of structural-grammatical, lexical-phraseological and syntactical peculiarities, makes it possible to investigate the text in the unity of its propositional and communicative-intentional correlations. However, this kind of approach also takes into account the pragmatic orientation of the language means, which contributes to the creation and enhancement of the pragmatic potential of the text.

According to Arutyunova linguistic pragmatics involves a complex of issues related to the speaker, the addressee and their interaction. Thus, it is to be concluded that the rules governing the choice and the application of language units are to be treated from the speaker's point of view and in close interaction with the context (Arutyunova 1990:390).

According to Naer, the pragmatic aspect can be found in texts of various genres and the difference between various pragmatic aspects is of either quantitative (i.e. intensity of interaction) or qualitative character (texts differ by the pragmatic context and the means of its expression) (Naer 1985).

Text is actualized in the process of its creation and in the consciousness of its addressee not as a static, but rather a dynamic unit of language. Text is endowed with structural-ideological properties, wherein information is the basic marker of ideology and completeness – that of the structure.

Traditionally, text pragmatics includes the following components: the pragmatic con-

tent, the pragmatic setting, the author and the reader (addressor and addressee), the predictable pragmatic effect (Naer 1985:5). Consequently, text pragmatics involves the author's intention expressed through various means in the author's and characters' speeches, with the aim of affecting the reader, thus contributing to a deeper interpretation of these means and consequently that of the text.

In terms of creating and enhancing the communicative interaction it is to be noted that text pragmatics is created as a result of the interaction between verbal and non-verbal components of speech.

Not aiming to undermine the role of non-verbal components in the creation of the pragmatic meaning, basing our assumption on our own observations, it is to be highlighted that on a large scale the verbal components of text pragmatics prevail over the non-verbal ones. Stylistic devices, in particular, metaphors, similes, epithets, hyperboles, allusions, intensifiers of various text levels, idioms, proverbs as well as inversion are the basic means contributing to the creation of text pragmatics.

Above all, key images (e.g. the image-symbol), which concentrate the ideological and aesthetic information of the text, contribute to the creation and further enhancement of the text pragmatics. As has already been shown in our previous papers on the topic from the functional-communicative perspective, the key image, or the image-symbol, is an essential element of the text via which communication is established between the writer and the reader which serves as a powerful tool for bridging the communication gaps (Gasparyan, Sargsyan 2011:135; Sargsyan 2013:41).

### **Qualitative and Quantitative Aspects of Text Pragmatics**

Text pragmatics created at the expense of key images can be treated and analyzed from different perspectives. But here, in line with our research goals, we will regard text pragmatics from quantitative and qualitative aspects that get enhanced due to the application of key images. As will be argued below, ideologically and aesthetically overloaded images contribute to the enhancement of both quantitative and qualitative parameters of the author's communication goals, thus resulting in an increased pragmatic load of language units and intensity of interaction.

Let us note at this point that the study of text pragmatics with the account of SDs and EMs of language bring our research closer to Pragmastylistics, the principles and methods of which are now being widely developed with a view to providing a firm ground for decoding the pragmatic intention embedded in the text (Hickey 1993).

According to the results obtained by the study of a considerable amount of material, the quantitative aspect (i.e. the intensity of interaction) of the pragmatic aspect can be established through the repetition or frequent occurrence of words or images encompassing the basic themes and concepts underlying the writer's message. Thus, frequency of occurrence contributes to a deeper penetration into the text message and enhances the understanding of the latter. Frequently repeated words or images bring forth certain emotional expressive and modal meanings which turn into kernel signals conveying the writer's pragmatic intention.

To demonstrate this specifics let us turn to the analysis of the Lawrencean image of

*flower*. The themes of *womanhood* and *woman nature* are one of the central themes exploited in D.H. Lawrence's literary tradition. A whole arsenal of masterfully developed images is applied for the depiction of the *woman nature*, *woman's role in the family and society*. Among these images a crucial role can be ascribed to the word *flower* which encompasses such emosemes as *beauty*, *admiration*, *innocence*, *fragility*, *naturalness*, *fruitfulness*, *continuation of life*, etc.

Now let us adduce a passage to demonstrate the aforementioned:

*Now, washed all clean by her tears, she was new and frail like a flower just unfolded a flower so new, so tender, so made perfect by inner light, that he could not bear to look at her, he must hide himself, cover his eyes against her. She had the perfect candour of creation, something translucent and simple, like a radiant, shining flower that moment unfolded in primal blessedness. She was so new, so wonderful, clear, so undimmed. Her soul was new, undefined and glimmering with the unseen.*

(D.H. Lawrence "Women in Love" 1956, p.881)

As is evident from the adduced excerpt, the literary image of *flower* is realized in similes, the latter being the most successfully exploited and frequently applied device in the writer's narrative technique. In the mentioned context we deal with an extended simile, the pragmatic and emotional potential of which is enhanced by the repetition of the word *flower* on the one hand and the application of pre-position (*new*, *frail*, *radiant*, *shining*) and post-position (*just unfolded*, *so new*, *so tender*, *so made perfect by inner light*, *unfolded in primal blessedness*) epithets, parallel constructions (*so new*, *so tender*, *so made perfect by inner light*) on the other. If viewed in the global context of Lawrence's works, the frequent use of similes helps the word *flower* get enriched with a wide scope of inherent meanings and emotional-evaluative overtones. This observation directs us to the conclusion that the pragmatics of the passage is dependent on the character of the interaction between the pragmatic meaning of the applied language units (the image of *flower* realized in the simile) and the context. All the aforementioned allows us to state that the passage under consideration compared to others incorporating the image of *flower and simile* is especially effective in terms of enhancing both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of text pragmatics.

If the quantitative aspect of text pragmatics can be enhanced by means of frequent repetition of key images, the qualitative aspect is dependent on to what extent this or that image becomes overloaded with aesthetic and ideological information, as well as the density of the pragmatic orientation of expressivity.

The frequent repetition of the image of *flower* in works by the author contributes to the enhancement of the communicative impact on the reader. On a large scale, the image becomes an aesthetically, ideologically and pragmatically overloaded unit of text condensing the author's pragmatic intention to a great extent.

To reinforce our argument, let us switch to the analysis of another type of frequently applied Lawrencean similes containing names of animals.

*She always kept a bright, blithe manner, and was pleasant to all the teachers. For she felt like a swan away the geese, of superior heritage and belonging.* (D.H. Lawrence "The Rainbow", p.358)

*She felt like a bird flying in the air, as her voice soared out, enjoyed herself extremely in the balance and flight of the song, like the motion of a bird's wings...* (D.H. Lawrence "Women in Love", p.906)

*Maurice was feeling, with curious little movements, almost like a cat kneading her bed for his place, his knife and fork and his napkin.* (D.H. Lawrence "The Blind Man", p.358).

In this respect it should be mentioned at this point that in Lawrence's metaphysical view of the world the emotional aspect of the man's essence should dominate over rationality, this postulate being substantiated by the author's assertion that men would feel better if they went back to nature, set free the animal residing their subconsciousness and gave way to emotions, letting the instincts guide them. The emosemes of *emotionality* and *instinctiveness* are implicitly realized by the application of the images of animals materialized in similes.

All the above presented similes serve the purpose of conjuring a certain imaginary view of the true human nature and suggest definite attitude toward the problem reflected in the text. In the reader's consciousness the latter generates certain attitude toward the reality as seen by the author.

It should also be observed that all the similes under consideration are reduced from the author's speech and this peculiarity in its turn enhances the informative, emotional-evaluative, aesthetic, stylistic and pragmatic potential of the units under consideration. Text pragmatics is supported and enhanced due to the author's intention and his immediate evaluation of the reality.

### Conclusion

The obtained results allow us to conclude that text pragmatics is the expression of relations between the author and the reader and their attitude toward a certain piece of information that is contained in the text. In the text the author's attitude and intention is observable on all the text levels, where the elements serve one and the same communicative-pragmatic task, i.e. the impact on the reader, formation of certain attitude toward reality, persuasion in the rightness of the arguments, etc. The pragmatic and pragmastylistic potential of the text can be enhanced due to the application of stylistic devices. Meanwhile, the impact of stylistic devices on enhancing the qualitative and quantitative aspects of text pragmatics may be increased at the expense of key images.

### References:

1. Arutyunova, N.D. (1990) *Diskurs. // Lingvisticheskij jenciklopedicheskij slovar'*. Moscow. Sov. jencikl., p.390.

2. Gasparyan, S.K.; Sargsyan, M.S. (2011) *Simvolicheskie obrazy v kontekste hudozhestvennogo proizvedeniya*. // Vestnik Khar'kovskogo nacional'nogo universiteta . N 972, Vyp.. 67. Kharkov, Ukraine, pp. 134-138.
3. Grajs, G. P. (1985) *Logika i rechevoe obshhenie* // Novoe v zarubezhnoj lingvistike. Vyp. XVI: Lingvisticheskaja pragmatika. Moscow: Progress, N 16, pp. 217-257.
4. Dijk, Teun A. van. (1976) *Pragmatics and Poetics*. // Pragmatics of Language and Literature 2. / Ed. by T.A. van Dijk. Amsterdam: North-Holland, pp. 22-57.
5. Hickey, L. (1993) *Stylistics, Pragmatics and Pragmastylistics*. // Revue Belge de Philologie et d' Histoire LXXI, pp. 573-586.
6. Naer, V.L. (1985) *Pragmatika teksta i ee sostavljajushhie*. // V sb. nauch. trudov. Moscow, p. 245.
7. Sargsyan, M. (2013) *Utilization of Key Images toward Enhancing Text Informativeness*. // Armenian Folia Anglistika. International Journal of English Studies. N8 (1). Yerevan: Lusakn Publishers, pp. 40-46.

**Acknowledgement:** This work was supported by the RA MES State Committee of Science, in the frame of the research project № SCS13 YR – 6B0025.

### **Հիմնապատկերների դերը տեքստի գործարանական արժեքի ձևավորման և ուժգնացման գործում**

Սույն աշխատանքում առաջ է քաշված այն պնդումը, որ լեզվաոճական հնարների կիրառումը նպաստում է տեքստի գործարանական արժեքի քանակական և որակական կողմերի ուժգնացմանը: Մասնավորապես, մեր կողմից քննության է ենթարկվում հիմնապատկեր պարունակող գեղարվեստական համեմատությունը: Ելնելով մեր հետազոտության նպատակներից և հաշվի առնելով լեզվական միավորների ընտրության և կիրառության համար անհրաժեշտ ներլեզվական և արտալեզվական գործոնները՝ հետինակը բացահայտում է ընտրված լեզվաոճական հնարի գործարանական և ոճագործարանական ներուժը տեքստի գործարանական ուղղվածության ուժգնացման գործում:

### **Роль ключевых образов в формировании и усилении прагматического потенциала текста**

В данной статье рассматриваются количественные и качественные аспекты прагматики текста которые могут быть усилены за счет лингво-стилистических средств. В частности, нами было изучено художественное сравнение для выявления прагматического потенциала ключевых образов, реализованных в сравнении. Учет лингвистических и экстралингвистические факторов в выборе и применении языковых единиц позволяют выявить прагматический и прагмастилистический потенциал указанных элементов в создании и усилении количественных и качественных аспектов прагматики текста.