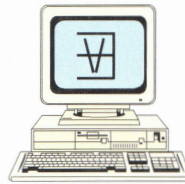


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10.05. ფილოლოგიის PHILOLOGY

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STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS AS A NARRATIVE TEXT: LINGUISTIC ASPECTS AND THE PROBLEMS OF INTERPRETATION

The paper is an attempt to approach stream of consciousness as a narrative text from linguistic point of view viz. text linguistics and stylistics, at the same time outlining that linguistic aspects do not themselves constitute the meaning of the text, i.e. linguistic analysis will pinpoint possible explanations, but will fail to interpret it - the interpretation will depend on the interaction of the reader with the text.

We support those linguists (R.Jacobson, D. Lodge, G.Leech, P.Simpson, R.Bradford, D. Freeman, R. Fowler, M. Short, M. Toolan) who think that literature cannot be examined in any depth apart from the language. "A literary work cannot be properly understood without a thorough knowledge of the language which is its medium of expression. But there is a deeper reliance of literary studies on linguistic studies than this. Most critical discussions of literature revolve, at some stage, round appeal to linguistic evidence - that is, the words and sentences which actually occur on the printed page, in literary texts. The type of critical activity known as "practical criticism" relies more heavily on linguistic evidence rather than others" (Leech, 1969 : 1). Though, we cannot but agree with the most commonly accepted opinion that in spite of the fact that linguistic structures are an important manifestation of the function of the text and linguistic analysis provides discovering "empirical evidence for the validity of the theories of language on which they are based", "the main problems with linguistic approaches to literature is that they seldom aim at interpreting literary texts" (Watts, 1981 : 9).

The reason why the use of particular linguistic structures and stylistic features in stream of consciousness as a text is important is that they are an important index of the function of the text and give us possible explanations about the meaning of the text. And "the text's functional significance as discourse acts in turn as gateway to its interpretation" (Simpson, 2002 : 2).

The current research work is approached from interdisciplinary theoretical perspective involving the theories of linguistics, literary studies, narrative studies, stylistics and psychology.

It is worthwhile to note that in stream of consciousness novels the text changes unpredictably from the inner speech of the characters to more objective, traditional narrative methods. Though all forms and techniques¹ - whether traditional or new - serve a definite purpose: satisfactory depiction of consciousness. It should be emphasized that the term "consciousness" in literary studies, from a certain point of view, opposes its initial meaning. Initially, the term, which was coined by psychologist, W.James, had only a psychological meaning and was applied to designate the stream (flow) of individual's inner mental processes. While in literary studies, the term "consciousness" indicates the entire area of psychic structure and on the other hand, subconscious (prespeech) levels of psychic activity (Humphrey, 1968: 1-3). Hence, some of the narrative forms are employed to reveal the psychic level "close to the surface, while others, to depict the deeper ones, the layers lying deep in the psychic structure of the individual (Humphrey, 1968: 23).¹

Narratologists point out that in the main, a narrative text of a literary work can be subdivided into narrator's discourse and character's discourse. In stream of consciousness narrative, author's discourse is most often employed in order to describe the psychic content of a character in the author's words, either through conventional methods of narration and third person description, or through unconventional methods of narration rendered in the third person singular (occasionally in the second person) presenting the prespeech psychic content as if it were directly from the consciousness of the character, though the reader is guided through this with the author's comments and description and it gives him a sense of the author's continuous presence : it is rendered and may have the author's qualitative words. Thus, the consciousness (more precisely the psychic processes) of the character comes to the reader through the voice of the author.

As for character's discourse, it is most often composed of a variety of speech types including **narrated stream of consciousness, quoted stream of consciousness, psychonarration, free indirect style, interior monologue, inner voice, internal speech**, etc. It usually employs the first-person pronoun and presents either surface level of consciousness and verbalized thought, or discontinuity of thoughts, memories, sensations, psychic processes lying deep in the psychic structure at the prespeech level, so that the reader gets "a live report" from a character's psychic processes.

The range of interest of the present paper focuses exclusively on the texts comprising illustrative examples of so called "pure stream" of thoughts, impressions or perceptions in a character's consciousness (more precisely, subconscious psychic processes). Therefore, for this purpose, for the material of analysis will serve the passages, containing the character's discourse:

1. Stephen Dedalus' "stream" of memories and imaginations which are related to the recent death of his mother;

2. And, Molly Bloom's, perhaps, the most famous and most extended psycho-narration² comprising about fifty pages (direct interior monologue as R.Humphrey names it) in James Joyce's "Ulysses."

By analyzing the linguistic features of the above mentioned passages, we would be able to see how the writer deployed different linguistic means to give a convincing picture how psychic processes work. And identifying the distinguishing linguistic features from other "normal" texts, will inevitably involve the engagement with style.

The effect of creating the impression of the process of fleeting thoughts, series of associations emerging from subconscious (prespeech) levels of psychic activity is achieved by:

¹ According to R. Humphrey there are four basic techniques employed in presenting the stream of consciousness: interior monologue (Humphrey divides it into direct interior monologue and indirect interior monologue); soliloquy; and omniscient description.

² In her book "Transparent Minds: Narrative Modes for Presenting Consciousness in Fiction", Cohn (1978:11) introduced the term "psycho-narration" to refer to narrator's discourse about character's consciousness.

Violating cohesive rules – text-based features which provide cohesion in a text cannot provide holding the text together and giving it a meaning; principles of linear-type relations between phrases are rejected; sentences are not linked together in a syntactic continuity, as in the following extract:

I often asked him atheists or whatever they call themselves go and wash the cobbles off themselves first then they go howling for the priest and they dying and why why because they are afraid of hell on account of their bad conscience ah eyes I know them well who was the first person in the universe before there was anybody that made it all who ah that they don't know neither do I so there you are they might as well try to stop the sun from rising tomorrow the sun shines for you he said the day we were lying among the rhododendrons (J. Joyce, 1960 : 703).

Disregarding Formal Syntax Rules - the rapid "stream" of thoughts and associations leads to the rejection of normal syntactic structures, fast change of deictic focus, frequency of conjunction and interjection usage, sometimes complete absence of punctuation and lack of standard capitalization and paragraph indention as in the following extracts:

Yes because he never did a thing like that before as ask to get his breakfast in bed with a couple of eggs since the City Arms hotel when he used to be pretending to be laid up with a sick voice doing his highness to make himself interesting for that old faggot Mrs Riordan that he thought he had a great leg of ... (Joyce, 1960: 659);

that awful deepdown torrent O and the sea the sea crimson sometimes like fire and the glorious sunsets and the figtrees in the Alameda gardens yes and all the queer little streets and pink and blue and yellow houses and the rosegardens and the jessamine and geraniums and cactuses and Gibraltar as a girl where I was a Flower of the mountain yes when I put the rose in my hair like the Andalusian girls used or shall I wear a red yes and how he kissed me under the Moorish wall and I thought well as well him as another and then I asked him with my eyes to ask again yes and then he asked me would I yes to say yes my mountain flower and first I put my arms around him yes and drew him down Jo me so he could feel my breasts all perfume yes and his heart was going like mad and yes I said yes I will Yes (Joyce, 1960: 704).

Breaking down the established stylistic conventions – broad usage of nominal style, i.e. introducing nominal sentences not containing finite verbs which enable to achieve the effect of passing, fleeting psychic processes, thoughts, emotions, impressions of the pre-speech level and to create stagnant image, concentration on most essential in an impressionistic manner - Inshore and farther out the mirror of water whitened, spurned by lightshod hurrying feet. White breast of the dim sea. The twining stresses, two by two. A hand plucking the harpstrings merging their twining chords. Wavewhite wedded words shimmering on the dim tide ((Joyce, 1960: 15);

Her secrets: old feather fans, tasseled dancecards, powdered with mask, a gaud of amber beads in her locked drawer. A birdcage hung in the sunny window of her house when she was a girl (Joyce, 1960: 16);

Her glass of water from the kitchen tap when she had approached the sacrament. A cored apple, filled with brown sugar, roasting for her at the hob on a dark autumn evening. Her shapely fingernails reddened by the blood of squashed lice from the children's shirts (Joyce, 1960: 16);

Her wasted body within its loose graveclothes giving off an odour of wax and rosewood, her breath bent over him with mute secret words, a faint odour of wetted ashes... Her glazing eyes, staring out of death, to shake and bend my soul. On me alone. The ghostcandle to light her agony. Ghostly light on the tortured face" (Joyce, 1960: 16).

Reversed Word order – "In a dream, silently, she had come to him" (Joyce, 1960: 16); "and her soul greatest miser was"... "she had too much old chat in her" ... "the smutty photo he has" (Joyce, 1960: 659).

Frequent occurrence of polysyndeton (repetition of conjunctions) - to reinforce the associative memories from the past - the sea and the waves rushing then the beautiful country with fields of oats and wheat and all kinds of things and all the fine cattle going about that would do your heart good to see rivers and lakes and flowers all sorts of shapes and smells and colours springing up (Joyce, 1960: 704).

Intentional violation of grammar rules - occurrence of two or more negative words: ("None not said nothing); dropping apostrophes; misspelled words; employing a direct question instead of an indirect one - to make the impression of the natural and easy flow of associations and emphasize illogical thought progression, as in the following examples: "Id say by the bullneck in his horsecollar I wonder did he know me in the box I could see his face he couldnt see mine of course hed never turn or let on still his eyes were red when his father died theyre lost for a woman of course must be terrible when a man cries let alone them Id like to be embraced (Joyce, 1960: 662).

Numerous passages containing foreign words, which occur in Stephen dedalus' mind at the moment of utmost tension - "Liliata rutilantium te confessorum turma circumdet: iubilantium te virginum chorus excipiat" (Joyce, 1960: 16).

Intentional violation of the graphical shape of the words and abundant use of onomatopoeic words to create the impression of certain emotional condition of the character or visual imitation of the noise coming directly from the mind of the character: I married him comes looooves old deep down chin back not too much (Joyce, 1960: 684); 'frseeeeeeeffronnnng train somewhere whistling(Joyce, 1960: 675); Frseeeeeeeffron that train again weeping tone once ... I hate that itsbeg comes loves sweet ssooooooog (Joyce, 1960: 683); on my side piano quietly sweeeee theres that train far away pianissimo eeeeeeee one more song (Joyce, 1960: 684);

Extensive use of alliteration Wavewhite wedded words (Joyce, 1960: 16); wild wet west (Joyce, 1960: 261); in the dear deacad days (Joyce, 1960: 683); waiting Bill Bailey wont you please come home her widows weeds wont improve her appearance (Joyce, 1960: 695).

As we have seen, by using specific graphical, lexical and syntactic features and breaking down the established stylistic conventions, according to G.Leech, one would be in doubt whether to treat the texts comprising stream of consciousness as "written in English" at all". (Leech, 1969: 25).

Therefore, basing on the fact that all texts, whether literary or non-literary are uses of language - ("All texts are uses of language which are produced with the intention to refer to something for some purpose") [Widdowson, 2007:6], we should treat the texts comprising stream of consciousness as uses of language, though peculiar uses of language, which cannot be understood and explained by a direct application of conventional rules of language or conventional logic. Though, R.Humphrey so rightly notes that readers "expect of language and syntax some kind of empirical order and completeness" and the purpose of literature is not to express enigmas. Consequently, the writer of stream-of-consciousness literature has to manage to communicate something to the reader through this" [Humphrey, 1968 : 62].

The question arises: how can a writer manage to communicate that "something" which at first glance is chaotic, incoherent, illogical and absurd to the reader so that the latter could make meaning out of it and make it a communicative reality?

Deriving insights about linguistic structures and analyzing linguistic features of this kind of text will facilitate to ground explanations why the writer deployed different means of form to achieve the overall effect, but the interpretation will depend on the interaction between the language users of the text viz. the communication between the author and the reader and on the interaction of the reader with the text.

It has already been mentioned above that in stream of consciousness novels the text changes unpredictably from the inner speech of the characters (which is composed of a variety of speech types depicting subconscious (pre-speech) levels of the psychic activity) to more objective, traditional narrative methods (depicting the levels close to the surface of the psychic structure). Therefore, further research into the nature of linguistic peculiarities and linguistic communication of this kind of text should be carried out in view of all the forms (techniques) presenting stream of consciousness.

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Summary

The paper deals with the problem of analyzing stream of consciousness as a narrative text from linguistic point of view viz. text linguistics and stylistics. The author points out linguistic analysis will pinpoint possible explanations about different language means which the writer deployed to give a convincing picture how mental processes work at subconscious (prespeech) levels of psychic activity, but the interpretation will depend on the interaction between the language users of the text viz. the communication between the author and the reader and on the interaction of the reader with the text. The author intensifies the fact that further research into the nature of linguistic peculiarities and linguistic communication of this kind of text should be carried out in view of all the forms (techniques) presenting stream of consciousness.

ნინო თევდორაძე

ცნობიერების ნაკადი როგორც ნარატიული ტექსტი: ლინგვისტური ასპექტები და ინტერპრეტაციის პრობლემები

რეზიუმე

მოცემულია ცნობიერების ნაკადის, როგორც ნარატიული ტექსტის ენობრივი თავისებურებების კვლევა ლინგვისტიკის, კერძოდ ტექსტის ლინგვისტიკისა და სტილისტიკის თანამედროვე თეორიებზე დაყრდნობით. განხილულია ის ენობრივი თავისებურებანი, რომლებიც დამახასიათებელია პერსონაჟის მეტყველებაში წარმოდგენილი ქვეცნობიერი (მეტყველებამდელი) ფსიქიკური სტრუქტურების შემცველი ტექსტებისათვის. ამგვარი ანალიზი საშუალებას მოგვცემს შესაძლო ინტენსივობით გამოვავლინოთ და ემპირიული დასაბუთება მოვუძებნოთ ისეთი უჩვეულო ენობრივი ფორმების გამოყენებას, რაც დამახასიათებელია ამ ტიპის ტექსტებისათვის. თუმცა, მათი იდენტიფიცირება არ გულისხმობს ინტერპრეტაციას, ვინაიდან ლინგვისტური ასპექტები არ შეადგენს ტექსტის მნიშვნელობას (საზრისს). ინტერპრეტაცია დამოკიდებული იქნება მხატვრულ კომუნიკანტთა - ერთი მხრივ, ავტორისა და მკითხველის ინტერაქციაზე და, მეორე მხრივ, მკითხველის ინტერაქციაზე ტექსტთან.