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## A Stylistic Study of Narrative Elements in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*

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### Abstract

The paper aims at the plot organization of the novel under study to decipher its structure and deep meaning. The narrative structure of the novel is analyzed from the category of narrative transformation proposed by French Linguist Tzvetan Todorov. The selected chapter from the novel i.e. *Pride and Prejudice* has also been analyzed keeping in view the sub categories of narrative transformation. This study will surely benefit the students to develop their linguistic competence through literature and make the readers understand the basic nuisances of literary writings. For the sake of brevity and the limitation of this paper, the researcher has analyzed the chapter-I as it's not possible to take up all the chapters for the analysis.

Key Words: *Stylistic analysis, narrative transformation, Tzevatatn Todorov, Pride and Prejudice*

### Introduction

This is one of the most celebrated novels of Jane Austen. The researcher has tried to delve into the stylistic analysis of *Pride and Prejudice* via the narrative theory based on analytical method proposed by Tzevaran Todorv. For the purpose of brevity and precision, the researcher has selected a chapter from the text *Pride and Prejudice* against 32 chapters which will be critically dealt with in the proposed research. Stylistics explains and analyzes the variability of linguistic forms and their use in the language.

The idea of 'style' and 'stylistic variation' in language rest on the general postulation that within the language system, the same content can be determined in more than one linguistic form. Working at all linguistic levels whether it is lexicology or syntax or it may be text linguistics, and intonation, stylisticians analyse equally the style of specific texts and stylistic variation across texts whether these texts are literary texts or non-literary in nature. Normally, style is considered as a preference of linguistic means or a departure from a norm or as a recurrence of linguistic forms in a writer.

In stylistics, the learners discover the aesthetic purpose of narrative behind its underlying structure adorned by many stylistic devices. “Special choices of vocabulary, word-order, repetition, rhythmical and musical patterns, metaphor, symbol and imagery, local colour, [and] synesthetic effect” (Hough, 1969, p. 37-38). Every literary text is one of the best examples of linguistic marvel with distinct patterns and grammatical items. Thus, it stands out to be the most eclectic field in the linguistic research.

Stylistics draws upon theories and models from other fields more frequently than it develops its own unique theories. This is because it is at a point of confluence of many sub-disciplines of linguistics, and other disciplines, such as literary studies and psychology, drawing upon these (sub-) disciplines but not seeking to duplicate or replace them. (Jeffries and McIntyre, 2010 :3)

## **Narrative Transformations in Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice***

### **Syntactic Analysis of *Pride and Prejudice***

Proposed by French linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, Structuralism has emerged as one of the widely used theories in linguistics in present time. Many renowned critics have employed structural approaches in their analysis of literary works. These theories and approaches have proved to be of utmost importance to understand the deep structure and interpretative meaning of the literary texts. The

Narrative transformations entail two types i.e. Simple Narrative Transformations and Complex Narrative Transformations. This clarification is made according to the form of relationship between the “base predicate and the “transformed predicate” as called by Todorov (1981b:290). However, this grading is purely logical and it is universal. In addition, the grouping of verbs within a single class of transformations is done according to the relationship they signify between the base predicate and the transformed one. Anyhow, they vary in terms of their presupposed meaning.

Simple Transformations (or specification) are found in the modification (or addition) of a certain operator that determines the predicate. This type involves the addition of an operator of modality, negation, etc. to the base predicate. Examples of such operators are negation, modality and so on:

X must eat an apple everyday.

X does not eat an apple everyday.

The base predicate can be regarded as having zero operator. Structurally speaking, there is one predicate here and hence only one subject. This phenomenon in language evokes the process of auxiliatation in its broad sense where a verb accompanies the main verb and specifies its meaning. In English, the operator may be designated by different linguistic forms as well: auxiliary verbs, adjectives, adverbs, particles, or other lexical items.

Complex transformations (or reaction) are characterized by the emergence of a second predicate which is conjoined to the first and can not stand by its own independently of it. This type involves the grafting of a predicate onto a base predicate:

X eats an apple everyday. X [or Y] says that X eats an apple everyday.

Hence, both, “X thinks that he has done the job” and “Y thinks that X has done the job” are complex transformations of the base proposition; “ X has done the job.”

*The writer has* employed complex propositions in her renowned novel *Pride and Prejudice* mainly the direct speech in the narrative. The majority of transformations are simple transformations in the this chapter as the narrator has lot to say about the events, characters and their complex relationships which they share among each other in the structure of narrative. The reason for the predominance of simple narrative transformations may be due to the genre of the text i.e. a novel which deals with more of narrations than dialogues. Opening line of the novel *Pride and Prejudice* is the best example of simple narrative proposition. This chapter has 80 % simple narrative propositions. Through the predominance of such type of predominance, she unleashes the themes of her novels.

It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife. (1)

## 2. Textual analysis of Narrative Elements in *Pride and Prejudice*

The stylistic analysis of the selected chapter has been done taking into account the employment of some of the grammatical elements needed to form the simple and complex narrative propositions.

Simple Transformation	Complex Transformation	Total
24 (80%)	06 (20 %)	30

Table: 2.1 Category of narrative transformations in PAP

The writer has employed majority of indefinite articles in this chapter as she bases her propositions on generalizations. Her characters represent the voice of the manners of Victorian people. The exchange of specific ideas between the characters and the correlations of events accounts for the specificity of the narrative. This selection of indefinite articles in the chapter universalizes the themes and the characters used here.

Articles	Indefinite	Definite	Total
	17	14	31

Table: 2.2 Usage of articles in the chapter

The verb be is used as an auxiliary verb and it can also be used as a main verb. The verb be is irregular. It has eight different forms: be, am, is, are, was, were, being, been. The present simple and past simple tenses make more changes than those of other verbs. As far as the analysis of this chapter is concerned, the writer

seems to have balance of present and past events in the narrative which can be clearly seen in the below table.

to be verb	Is	13
	Am	02
	Are	07
	was	09
	were	06
	been	02
	being	00

Table: 2.3 'to be' verbs in the chapter

In the simple transformation, the transformation of mode is concerned with the possibility and impossibility or necessity of action. The writer has used some modal auxiliary verbs in the propositions to denote the necessity of action which she wants to highlight in her text. For example, the opening line of the text contains the modal verb 'must' which has occurred 7 times in the first chapter. By doing so, she stresses on customary practice of her time whether people with good fortune think about a beautiful wife.

Modal verbs	must	07
	may	06
	can	04

Table: 2.4 Modal verbs in the chapter.

The statistical analysis of the number of pronouns used show the dominance of 'I' pronoun in as compared to others. Jane Austen lets the characters gradually unfold the events and their traits as the story progresses. The pronouns 'I' and 'you' make the text a dialogic one. This type of interactions are seen in the novels revolving around the themes of marriage, domestic life etc. It can be found out that she has undeniably used these words to corroborate the themes of this novel.

Pronouns	I	19
	We	00
	You	15
	They	04
	He	09
	She	07

Table: 2.5 Pronouns used in this chapter.

Albeit the study is limited to the micro-analysis of the novel (Chapter-I), it will surely paves a way for the researchers to understand the rudimentary style of Jane Auten's writings. She also used similar diction and syntactical structures in her other works like the novel under study.

## Conclusion

Having carried out the structural analysis of the chapter-I of *Pride and Prejudice*, the researcher has concluded that dismantling and later reorganization of a text, produce well-defined goals with which the writer has composed her work. Undoubtedly, the writer has intentional incorporations of certain structures after careful consideration and research. These narrative elements modify the corresponding words and phrases which are vital for setting up different themes and tones to the plot organisation and characterisation.

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