AUTHOR’S INTENTION IN A LITERARY TEXT

O. Zabolotskaya
Kherson State University,
27, 40-richchya Zhovtnia Str., Kherson 73000 Ukraine
sandra27111@mail.ru

Abstract. Studying of different aspects of a literary text associated with the author's position, aims and intentions, suggests the involvement of a pragmatic approach, use of techniques and procedures of linguopragmatic analysis. However, nowadays in linguostylistics and linguopoetics we observe the lack of methodologically grounded conceptions concerning pragmatic aspects of a literary text analysis, that leads to the limitation of existing studies of literary linguostylistic analysis of the author's intention and the means of its realization in the text.

Keywords: linguistics, literary text, linguopragmatic analysis, linguostylistics, linguopoetics.

Introduction

In this paper a definition of author’s intention of a literary text from the standpoint of cognitive-oriented linguopragmatics is proposed.

Author's concept of the literary text is directly related to the communicative intentions of the author – his intentions (from Lat. Intentio – 'attention', 'intention' (Bußmann, 2001, p. 313). Verbal behavior of the individual in the society is always intentional and can’t help having an impact on the recipient, so any text, including literary one, being a product of author’s thinking, reflects one or more his intentions.

Intention, one of the basic notions of philosophical phenomenology and cognitive psychology – is understood in these sciences as a focus of consciousness of the subject on a specific object, the activity of subject’s consciousness (Lapshova, 2004, p. 242; Ushakova and Pavlova, 2000, p. 10). The scientists distinguish intentions of two levels – primary and secondary (communicative). The primary intention is directly connected with the peculiarities of the human nervous system functioning, while communicative intention, based on the primary one, is social in nature and forms communication (Ushakova and Pavlova, 2000, p. 12).

But one should distinguish the notions of intention and intentionality. If intention is a state of orientation of consciousness to the object, then intentionality is the property of consciousness to be directed to the object or the property of the text that appears in the process of communication.

Intentionality of verbal behavior in linguistics was firstly investigated with the development of speech act theory, due to which the term "intention" entered the linguistic usage. J.R. Searle emphasizes that:

• intentions, representing a fundamental and complete property of consciousness, are instrument of the subject’s reference to the outer world;
• the ability of the speaker to express his intentions and concern about their recognition by the addressee is the basis of the speech act (Searle, 1987, p. 123);
• the type of intention determines the type of speech act (Searle, 1987, p. 100).

Essential for linguistics in the philosophical and cognitive understanding of intentionality is that it means not only the property both of our consciousness and speech, and this property is the "only specific and substantial" (Ushakova and Pavlova, 2000, p. 11). Communicative intention is inseparable from the speech and in the process of its realization the leading role belongs to language, that’s why language and speech are invariably present in the linguistic definitions of intentions: "speech intention is the motive to perform an action using such a tool as language - speech, i.e. to realize a speech act in communicative activities, interaction with a partner" (Formanovskaya, 2005, p. 109).

Modern linguistic understanding of intention suggests emphasizing its cognitive nature – it is observed as "mental representation capable to be realized in the form of action" (Sperber and Wilson, 1990, p. 31). Mental representation in cognitive linguistics is defined as "an object that is created by using different cognitive
processes from referential meanings of elements that form a sentence, understanding of speech situation, background knowledge, etc." (Talma, 1999, p. 114). Nevertheless, there are significant variations in the interpretation of intention by linguists. For example, M.M. Bakhtin understands the notion of intentionality in narrower meaning referring as the orientation of a word on the extralinguistic items or on the other word that is perceived as an object (Bakhtin, 1997, p. 164).

Often the notion of communicative intention is narrowing to the intention of the speaker to inform or to induce the recipient to act on the basis of his own desires: for example, F.S. Batsevich states communicative intention as a "meaningful or intuitive motive of the addressee, which defines the internal program of speech and the way of its realization" (Batsevich, 2004, p. 116), and O.G. Pocheptsov underlines that "intention can be regarded as a kind of desire, namely the desire the realization of which needs certain actions performed by the speaker" (Pocheptsov, 1989, p. 74). However, in this case non-intentional such speech acts as a promise, reproaches, compliment, expression of joy, surprise, anger and other emotions, the intentional nature of which is obvious owing to their purpose, social character and a certain degree of awareness should be considered.

To sum up, the definition of communicative intention displays: 1) its cognitive nature, 2) the orientation on the object, and 3) the recipient, 4) influence on the addressee, 5) language as an instrument of such influence. In this context, the communicative intention is defined as a kind of mental representation of a communicant, which consists of his intention to convey to the recipient of a certain focus of his consciousness on the state of objects in the outer world using the natural language and thus influence him.

Author's intention is a literary text is a kind of textual intention, such intention, which is manifested at the level of the text. G.G. Pocheptsov was the first who isolated text intentions: "what can be achieved by the use of the sentence can be achieved as well (sometimes even better) by using a series of sentences, i.e. text" (Pocheptsov, 2009, p. 476). Intentions expressed in a literary text are called author’s.

Author's intention is communicative, as a literary text is a means of communication between author and reader, which is mediated by communication between the characters of this text. On the basis of discrimination of communication in a literary text into two types – vertical (communication between author and reader) and horizontal (communication between characters) (Tschauder, 1989, p. 194) there are differentiated two kinds of intentions – author's intentions and intentions of characters used by the author for the purposes of vertical communication.

To make the definition of communicative intention clearer, we can determine the author's intention as its particular manifestation: it is a kind of mental representation of the author of a literary text, which has the motive to convey to the reader a certain focus of his consciousness on the state of objects in the outer world using this text and thus influence him.

Although "the notion of intentionality is equally applicable to both mental states and linguistic entities, such as speech acts and sentences" (Searle, 1987, p. 123), it should be noted that the terms "intention of the speech act", "intention of the text" and "intentionality of any speech act", "intentionality of the text" are used metonymically. In fact, this or that intention belongs to the consciousness of the subject, and the text is a material resource, mouthpiece of this intention.

As the reflection of the mental world of the human being and being exposed to extra-linguistic factors, communicative intentions are very fuzzy, that complicates their study. A big role in defining the intentions belongs to the factor of addressee: "addressees interpret the content of the texts, using their own ideas, life experience, the impact of previous texts, so audience’s reaction is often quite unexpected, unpredictable for the author" (Lapshova, 2004, p. 242).

To establish author’s intention in a literary text one should resort to psychosemantic analysis of the context and situation together with cognitive, bio-social, psychological, communicative and linguistic factors, method of intent analysis (intentional analysis). In the study of literary texts Intent- analysis allows to come to conclusions concerning the degree and quality of the impact on an individual and public consciousness, the degree of "world" changing by the author of the text reference, as proposed by the author subjective picture of reality is capable to transform world’s perception and the aesthetic preferences of recipients.

Person’s conceptual sphere is active, so dynamic processes can pass in it: the formation of new entities, verbalization of information contained in the concepts by the producer (in terms of text communication – by the speaker – by the author of the literary work) and interpretation verbalized within the conceptual sphere of the recipient (addressee – the reader). We believe that it is impossible to research and describe in details of the
nature of any concept without studying the process of its modeling and verbalization by the author and main forces of this process.

Conclusion

Thus, cognitive understanding of author’s intention in a literary text brings together cognitive, pragmatic and stylistic approaches in his analysis, trying to clarify the relationship of author’s intention, textual concepts and discursive strategies.

References