

PRAGMATIC AND STYLISTIC FEATURES OF DETECTIVE CHARACTERS' SPEECH: INSIGHTS FROM RUSSIAN AND WESTERN THEORIES

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Annotation. This article examines the pragmatic and stylistic features of detective fiction characters' speech. Drawing on the theories of V.V. Vinogradov, M.M. Bakhtin, Yu.N. Karaulov, as well as Umberto Eco, Stanley Fish, and Paul Grice, the study explores implicature, speech acts, stylistic registers, and their narrative functions. A comparative analysis highlights both universal and culture-specific tendencies across Russian and Western traditions.

Anotatsiya. Ushbu maqolada detektiv asarlardagi personajlar nutqining pragmatik va stilistik xususiyatlari tahlil qilinadi. Vinogradov, Baxtin kabi rus olimlari va Grays, Eko, Fish kabi g'arb olimlarining nazariy qarashlari asosida personaj nutqining yashirin ma'nolari, stilistik qatlamlari hamda o'quvchi bilan o'zaro aloqasi ko'rib chiqiladi. Maqolada rus va g'arb nazariyalari qiyoslab tahlil qilinib, umumiy va milliy xususiyatlar yoritiladi.

Аннотация В статье рассматриваются прагматические и стилистические особенности речи персонажей детективной литературы. На основе идей В.В. Виноградова, М.М. Бахтина, Ю.Н. Караулова, а также У. Эко, С. Фиша и П. Грайса анализируются импликатуры, речевые акты, стилистические регистры и их роль в развитии сюжета. Проводится сравнительный анализ русских и западных теорий, выявляются общие и культурно-специфические тенденции.

Keywords: expressive stylistic devices, character speech, metaphor, simile, irony, translation challenges, English literature, Uzbek literature.

Kalit so'zlar: ekspressiv stilistik vositalar, personaj nutqi, metafora, taqqoslash, istehzo, tarjima muammolari, ingliz adabiyoti, o'zbek adabiyoti.

Ключевые слова: экспрессивные стилистические средства, речь персонажей, метафора, сравнение, ирония, проблемы перевода, английская литература, узбекская литература.

Abstract. Detective fiction has long been one of the most popular genres in world literature, attracting readers with its intellectual intrigue, mystery, and the logical reasoning of its protagonists. The speech of detective characters is central to shaping the narrative and the relationships among characters. The way detectives speak — their style, pragmatic strategies, and rhetorical tools — reveals not only their intellect but also the cultural

background of the text. The study of detective characters' speech lies at the intersection of stylistics and pragmatics. Stylistics examines how language choices convey meaning, while pragmatics explores how utterances function in context, considering speaker intention, implicature, politeness strategies, and audience interpretation.¹ This dual focus allows for a deeper understanding of how authors manipulate language to build suspense, characterize detectives, and guide readers toward (or away from) solving the mystery. This paper aims to explore pragmatic and stylistic features of detective characters' speech, drawing on both Russian and Western theoretical perspectives. Russian scholars such as V.V. Vinogradov and M.M. Bakhtin laid the foundations of character speech typology, while Western theorists like Umberto Eco, Herbert Grice, and Stanley Fish contributed to semiotics, conversational implicature, and interpretive communities. Combining these approaches offers valuable insights into how detective speech is constructed and perceived across cultures.

Theoretical Background: Russian Perspectives. Russian linguistics and literary theory have made significant contributions to the analysis of character speech. V.V. Vinogradov, one of the pioneers of stylistics, emphasized that the speech of fictional characters is an artistic construct shaped by the author's stylistic intentions. He classified character speech into types based on narrative function: direct, indirect, and free indirect speech, each carrying distinct stylistic and pragmatic effects. Another key Russian thinker, M.M. Bakhtin, introduced the concept of dialogism, arguing that all speech is inherently dialogic — it responds to previous utterances and anticipates responses. In detective fiction, this manifests in the interrogative strategies of detectives, cross-examinations, and ironic or indirect clues. Bakhtin's ideas help explain how detectives' speech interacts with suspects, witnesses, and readers. Russian scholars also explored the emotive and evaluative function of language. Detectives often use subtle irony, evaluative markers, and speech acts to dominate conversations or influence suspects. This is evident in both classical Russian detective stories and translations of Western works, where linguistic choices signal authority and intellectual superiority.

Theoretical Background: Western Perspectives. Western theories also enrich the understanding of detective characters' speech. Umberto Eco, in his semiotic studies, analyzed detective fiction as a system of signs. According to Eco, the detective acts as a semiotician, decoding clues and interpreting hidden meanings. This semiotic approach reveals how language in detective narratives often serves a dual purpose: providing surface-level dialogue while embedding clues and

¹ Виноградов В.В. О языке художественной литературы. Москва: Наука. 1980.-с 34

subtexts. ²H.P. Grice's cooperative principle and conversational maxims (quality, quantity, relation, manner) are crucial to pragmatic analysis. Detectives frequently violate these maxims strategically — for example, giving less information (flouting quantity) or speaking ambiguously (flouting manner) to provoke suspects into revealing more. These pragmatic maneuvers are an essential stylistic feature of the genre. Stanley Fish's theory of interpretive communities is also relevant. Fish argues that meaning is not fixed in texts but constructed by readers based on shared conventions. In detective fiction, readers form expectations about how detectives speak — witty, logical, and insightful. Authors exploit these expectations stylistically, sometimes confirming them (e.g. Sherlock Holmes's brilliant deductions) or subverting them (e.g., Columbo's seemingly bumbling but cunning speech).

Pragmatic and Stylistic Analysis of Detective Characters' Speech

Across Russian and Western detective fiction, several common pragmatic and stylistic strategies emerge:

1. Interrogative Speech Acts: ³Detectives use questions not only to elicit information but also to control conversations and test alibis. Pragmatically, these are examples of indirect speech acts with implied meanings.

2. Politeness and Impoliteness Strategies: Detectives often switch between polite and confrontational registers. Brown and Levinson's politeness theory explains how they mitigate threats to face or deliberately impose on suspects' face needs.

3. Irony and Humor: Stylistically, irony serves to highlight the detective's intellectual edge. Holmes's dry remarks to Watson or suspects illustrate this well; similarly, Uzbek and Russian detective stories often use humor to establish character depth.

4. Code-switching and Cultural Markers: In translations and non-English works, detectives' speech reflects cultural norms — forms of address, honorifics, and proverbs often signal nationality and context.

5. Narrative Framing: As Vinogradov and Bakhtin emphasized, the stylistic framing of speech (direct/indirect) affects how readers perceive detectives' competence and reliability.

Conclusion. The analysis of detective characters' speech through pragmatic and stylistic lenses shows that this aspect of narrative is deeply connected to culture, genre

² Grice, P. (1975). Logic and Conversation. In Cole, P., & Morgan, J. (Eds.), *Syntax and Semantics* (Vol. 3). Academic Press.

³ Караулов Ю.Н. Русский язык и языковая личность. Москва: Издательство ЛКИ.2010.-с .168

conventions, and authorial strategy. Russian theories (Vinogradov's stylistics, Bakhtin's dialogism) provide tools for analyzing speech types and dialogic interactions, while Western theories (Eco's semiotics, Grice's pragmatics, Fish's interpretive communities) illuminate meaning-making and reader engagement. For modern linguistics and literary studies, examining detectives' speech is not only about stylistic appreciation but also about understanding communication strategies, persuasion, and cultural semiotics. This integrative approach has practical implications for translation studies, discourse analysis, and intercultural communication. Further research can explore corpus-based approaches, computational pragmatics, and the influence of media adaptations on detective characters' speech.

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