

An Analysis of Linguistics Connotation of Rhetorical Device in Literature

----Taking *Ulysses* for Example

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Abstract

*With the development of linguistics study, readers have found a better way to understand and interpret literature work. Literature work needs language to express itself for the reader and language itself can create many kinds of rhetorical devices to enrich literature world. Therefore, the rhetorical device in literature has linguistics connotation to some extent. This paper aims to analyze the linguistics connotation of rhetorical device in literature taking *Ulysses* written by James Joyce for example and to make readers understand literature language and interpret literature work better.*

Key words: linguistics; connotation; rhetorical device; literature; *Ulysses*

1. Introduction

Literature is made of language which needs reader to contemplate and understand, “works of literature are written works that demand and reward active, critical, and careful reading”(Brown, 2005, p.5). And the rhetorical device is a language method which can express thoughts of literature work vividly and concretely. And Brown said that “It either means something other than what it literally says or it says what it means in an interesting or surprising way for artistic effect(a rhetorical device)”(ibid.p.69).“Linguistics is usually defined as the science of language or, alternately, as the scientific study of language. Linguistics is a rich and exciting field”(Hu Zhuanglin, 2011, p.14).Actually, literature work requires language to express thoughts and the subtle combination made by language itself creates a lot of rhetorical devices to enrich literature world. Therefore, the rhetorical devices have deep connotation in linguistics study to some extent. The goal in this paper is to explore the linguistics connotation of literature rhetorical devices and to make reader understand language itself and interpret literature better by analyzing some fragments from *Ulysses*.

2. The Representation of Rhetorical Devices in Cooperative Principles

The Cooperative Principle is a very important part proposed by Oxford philosopher Herbert Paul Grice in pragmatic study which is included in linguistics research. This principle focuses on that whether people can communicate successfully when people use language to speak with each other depends on these cooperative principles. That is to say, people who take part in the conversation should cooperate with each other and they definitely have tacit understanding to make their dialogue meaningful and reach their conversation purpose. “Our talk exchanged do not normally consist of a succession of disconnected remarks, and would not be rational if they did. They are characteristically, to some degree at least, cooperative efforts; and each participant recognizes in them, to some extent, a common purpose or set of purposes, or at least a mutually accepted direction”(Grice, 1975, p.45). And as for the observe of cooperative principles, Grice said that: “Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged”(ibid.p.45).However, in literature world, many languages do not always comply with the cooperative principles and they make language itself more vivid and concrete to create literature language by violating them. Simile, personification and exaggeration these rhetorical devices enrich literature language by violating cooperative principles and consequently they have linguistics connotations to some degree.

2.1. The Rhetorical Device Which Violates the First Minor Maxim of the Maxim of Quality

Grice’s cooperative principle can be divided into four kinds of maxims: Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner. In *Ulysses*, largely by violating the maxim of quality to reflect the linguistics connotation of literature work. “Some rhetorical devices such as irony and metaphor and so on which all violate the maxim of quality to create some unexpected effects by speaker. The aim of rhetorical devices is to reach stronger mood and to express speaker’s intention vividly through using more implicated language” (Zhang Yun, 2009(29), 151-152). Quality maxim has two important minor maxim:

QUALITY

Try to make your contribution one that is true.

1. Do not say what you believe to be false.

2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence. (ibid. p.45-46)

Largely, the rhetorical devices often violate the first maxim of cooperative principle quality. Simile and personification violate the first minor maxim of maxim of quality. Next following examples are chosen from *Ulysses*.

Example 1

On the weed grown rocks along Sandy mount Shore and, last but not least, on the quiet church whence there streamed forth at times upon the stillness the voice of prayer to her who is in her pure radiance a beacon ever to the stormtossed heart of man, Mary Star of the sea. (Joyce 284)

In this excerpt, Joyce describes the scenery of twilight in summer on the seaside. We all know that Mary, the mother of God is not the star of the sea let alone a beacon, but here, author violates the first minor maxim of maxim of quality by using the sentence “the voice of prayer to her who is in her pure radiance a beacon ever to the stormtossed heart of man, Mary Star of the sea” to emphasize the virgin and greatness of Mary and to give a brief background of the story.

Example 2

Quick warm sunlight came running from Berkeley road, swiftly, in slims sandals, along the brightening footpath. Runs, she runs to meet me, a girl with gold hair on the wind. (50)

The case is same with the example 1, in this part, obviously, the sunlight can not run from Berkeley road and author regards the sunlight as the girl Millie, therefore, the author violates the first minor maxim of maxim of quality to describe the warmness and fast speed of Millie and to reflect the bright image of Millie.

Example 3

Dogs at each other behind. Good evening. Evening, How do you sniff? Hm, Hm. Very well, thank you. (307)

We all know that dog can not speak, but here, two dogs talk with each other. The author violates the first minor maxim of the maxim of quality by using the rhetorical device personification to point out the deep fragrance of the heroine Mollie even animals can smell it.

Example 4

The summer evening had begun to fold the world in its mysterious embrace. Far away in the west the sun was setting and the last glow of all too fleeting day lingered lovingly on the sea and strand, on the proud promontory of dear old howth guarding as ever the waters of the bay. (284)

The author personifies the twilight and sunset clouds as man to have a hug and can exuding tenderness and love through eyes. However, these natural things can not do that kind of thing which only human can do. Author violates the first minor maxim of maxim of quality to give reader vivid image of these two dogs.

2.2. The Rhetorical Device Which Violates the Second Minor Maxim of the Maxim of Quality

In literature work, exaggeration is frequently used to express author's feelings and to make reader understand the text better. Exaggeration usually violates the second minor maxim of maxim of quality. Next following examples are excerpted from *Ulysses*.

Example 5

I'm the bloody well gigant rolls all them bloody well boulders, bones for my stepping stones. Feefawfum. I zmallz de bloodz odz an Iridzman. (37)

This excerpt tells us that the bloody gigant stones roll on their way and pave the way for me. But apparently, author lacks of sufficient evidence to explain how the gigant stones pave the way for me and use the exaggeration to make the story interesting by violating the second minor maxim of the maxim of quality.

Example 6

God oils slid along his veins, chilling his blood: age crusting him with a salt cloak. (50)

The case is same with the example 6, here, the exaggeration is used totally by violating the second minor maxim of the maxim of quality to express thoughts fully that oil is in his veins and make him chill and the description make the image and the change of psychology of "he" vivid and concrete.

3. The Representation of Rhetorical Devices in Cognitive Linguistics

In linguistics, "Cognitive linguistics is a newly established approach to the study of language that emerged in the 1970s as a reaction against the dominant generative paradigm which pursues an autonomous view of language"(Ruiz de Mendoza, 1997). That is to say, cognitive linguistics is related to the change of people's psychology, and cognitive language is often used in literature work to reflect character's psychology and express their feelings. In literature, metaphor and metonymy these two rhetorical devices possess special cognitive function and this kind of function makes people use a brand new perspective to recognize and perceive the literature world. Ungerer and Schmid think that "Cognitive linguistics is based on human experiences of the world and the way they perceive and conceptualize the world" (Ungerer&Schmid 1996/2001).

3.1. The Representation of Metaphor in Cognitive Linguistics

The application of metaphor is a common phenomenon in literature. Actually, in linguistics world, "Metaphor involves the comparison of two concepts in that one is construed in terms of the other. It's often described in terms of a target, domain and a source domain. The target domain is the experience being described by the metaphor and the source domain is the means that we use in order to describe the experience"(Hu, 2011, p.135). Metaphor is actually a cognitive tool that helps us structure our thoughts and experiences in the world around us.

Example 7

He took off his silk hat and, blowing out impatiently his bushy moustache, welshcombed his hair with raking fingers. (186)

In this sentence, the author compares the five fingers of Welsh to welshcomb and it hints that Welsh are rude, barbarous, and frowziness. Joyce uses metaphor to make the figure of Welsh more lively and specific.

Example 8

Of the twoheaded octopus, one of whose heads is the head upon which the ends of the world have forgotten to come while the other speaks with a Scotch accent. The tentacles... (135)

The content of this excerpt tells us that one of the head of twoheaded octopus is born in the end of the world and the other head uses Scotch accent to speak. Actually, here, the twoheaded octopus refers to the

England, and one of the head is London and the other is Edinburgh. The deep meaning is that England is killing the economy of Ireland. The author does not want to say out the crime of England straightforward by applying metaphor to satire the ugly face of England and to sympathize his country Ireland.

3.2. The Representation of Metonymy in Cognitive Linguistics

Metonymy is another rhetorical device in literature to reflect character's cognitive psychology. "Metonymy, in the cognitive literature, is defined as a cognitive process in which the vehicle provides mental access to the target within the same domain"(Hu, 2011, p.138). Metonymy is an indispensable rhetorical device to enrich literature world and to make reader be attracted by these profound and complicated metonymy.

Example 9

Aha, Eating your groatworth of mou encivet, fleshpots of Egypt, elbowed by belching cabmen. (35)

In this excerpt, the fleshpots of Egypt represent all delicious food of Egypt. The author compares the part to the whole thing by using the specific food fleshpots to refer whole delicious food in Egypt. Consequently, this kind of metonymy illustrates the favourite food of Egypt and attracts people to know more about the culture of Egypt.

Example 10

Swans from Anna Liffey swim down here sometimes to preen themselves. No accounting for taster. Wonder what kind is swanmeat. (126)

The Anna Liffey is a river and it refers the river of life of Ireland. Actually, in Irish's heart, the Anna Liffey refers to the upstream which flows through the south and the west part of Dublin in which the scenery is beautiful. The case is same with example 10, the author only uses the river Anna Liffey to represent the whole upstream of the south and the west which flows through Dublin and to foreground the importance of the river Anna Liffey in Irish's heart.

4. Conclusion

The rhetorical devices are applied in literature world to make literature language vivid and concrete and this type of language possesses linguistics connotation to some extent. "In terms of literature, this may apply to the wordcraft and mastery of language that the author employs. Or perhaps the work is a departure from all literature that has gone before it, like James Joyce's *Ulysses*"(Brown, 2005, p.2).The violation of cooperative principle of simile, personification and exaggeration these rhetorical devices show the vigorous and powerful language of literature and the representation of metaphor and metonymy in cognitive linguistics world provides readers with a unique way to recognize and perceive literature world. In a word, literature and linguistics are related to each other. Literature needs many various languages to express literature thoughts and languages require literature to reflect its flexural and various changes which make literature image vivid and concrete.

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