

## Discourse Analysis and Literary Study

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### ABSTRACT

*This article aims to discuss the role of discourse analysis in literary analysis. For this aim, the writers apply Sperber and Wilson's theory of relevance. This theory says that the meaning of utterance might be analyzed in terms of explicature, higher-level explicature, and implicature. The drama analyzed is Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman. The writers suggest that discourse analysis can function to analyze the language used in the context of drama and that this analysis should be applied in studying literary works.*

*Keywords: Literary works, discourse analysis; relevance; context; implicature*

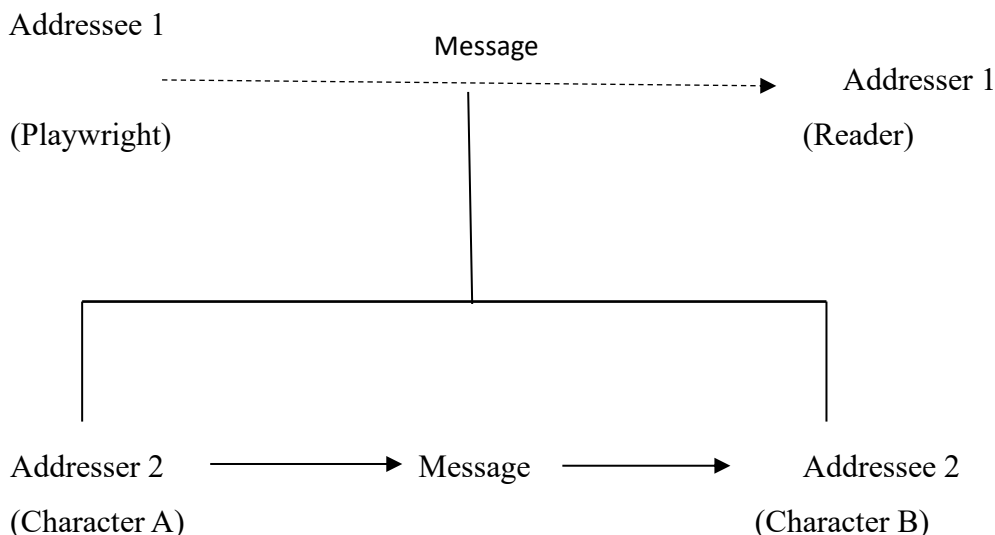
### INTRODUCTION

Discourse Analysis and literary study have been so far considered as two different things. According to Locke (Katili, 2021) discourse analysis studies language use in certain contexts (Locke, 2004). Literary study studies imaginative works comprising prose, poetry, and drama (<https://mcl.as.uky.edu/literary-studies>). However, the two studies intersect at one point, i.e. the study of language use in literary works. This article focuses on how discourse analysis is important in studying drama. This shows how to work discourse analysis in drama study.

Discourse analysis has been perceived as the study of language study in a certain context (Locke, 2004, Brown & Yule, 1983). It means that discourse analysis analyses language beyond the grammatical feature. It is more concerned with how language functions in various contexts. In terms of meaning, for instance, it studies the meaning of an utterance is different in different contexts. Therefore, the utterance *Good Morning* might be meant as a greeting in one context and mockery in another one.

Discourse analysis is the study of the contextual meaning of utterances, the relative power of the speaker, the social; distance of the speaker happens to be negotiating at the time of speaking. (Xafizovna 2022). In drama study, discourse analysis may function to analyze the meaning of each character in a certain context. Drama is a literary genre. This is based on the opinion that Drama, as a literary genre, delineates life and human activities through dialogues and actions. It is composed of aesthetic elements of theme, action (ordering of events), characterization, and setting (Taylor, 1981: 116-136). The keywords for this article are *literary human activities through dialogue*. It means that a playwright creates the characters' dialogues. In other words, drama is a communication between the playwright conducted through the characters' dialogue. It is clear in the following Katili's diagram (Katili, 2007):

FIGURE 1. Drama as a Discourse



## METHOD

The above introduction and the discussion of the nature of discourse analysis above clearly discuss show the important of the role discourse analysis in literary study. To elaborate it, the writer did library research. The writer conducted content analysis, i.e. analyse some document as the data resources. The data are the experts' opinion of the importance of discourse in literary study, especially drama. The first data obtained is the discussion of linguistics and literary study. The second data are that related to the importance of discourse analysis in drama study. The third data are Sperber and Wilson's Theory of Relevance. The third data is the example of applying Relevance in drama analysis.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### LINGUISTICS AND LITERARY STUDY

Discourse Analysis is a branch of Linguistics. Linguistic, as commonly understood, is a scientific study of language. Therefore, in this section the writers discuss the nature of linguistics in literature. Linguistics functions to study the textual and contextual meaning of language in drama (Annisa Rakhmawati, Muhammad Rohmadi 2015). In this study, the analysts study how textual meaning of language drama to come to the contextual meaning. The other function of linguistic is to study Grice's Maxims are violated in drama. In this study. Zain finds that Grice's Maxims, as in real conversation, are violated for some reasons, such as to convey the meaning implicitly. (Zain 2020)

The other study of linguistics in literature that is one conducted to reveal how metaphor in metonymy in literary texts. This study finds that metaphor and metonymy are important aspects of literary texts. They are mean of carrying meaning in aesthetic effect (Barcelona 2012). It is also a mean of revealing the emotive meaning of characters in fiction (Akasheva, Rakhimova, and Emets 2018)

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF DISCOURSE ANALYSIS IN DRAMA STUDY

Discourse analysis in a literary work functions to reveal the meaning of utterances politeness strategy, and the verbal communication the author wants to convey to the reader (Xafizovna 2022). Discourse analysis is a means of interpreting the meaning of utterance between the character as an addresser and addressee. The utterances are considered signs that convey meaning to be intended by the analyst (Johansen 2002).

Discourse analysis of a literary work is conducted to reveal the phenomenological meaning of fictional discourse. (Medina et al. 2021) Doing discourse analysis on drama is the activity of meaning-making (Rezaei 2022). Doing discourse is also analysing the locutionary act of the character (Rasa, Andayani, and Ulya 2019). The discussion above shows that discourse analysis in dramatic work is the meaning-making of a character's dialogue. According to the writer, making meaning a discourse, including dramatic discourse involves cognitive ability. This is the ability to recognize the message of utterances through the cognition process. This leads the writer to think of applying Sperber and Wilson's Theory of Relevance. This theory is about

#### SPERBER AND WILSON'S THEORY OF RELEVANCE

The study of relevance in drama characters was conducted to analyse to reveal the meaning utterances of every character. The Principle of Relevance that are introduced by Sperber and Wilson are benefit to analyse the meaning. It can be applied to find both the literal meaning and the contextual meaning of the utterances (Scott, Clark, and Carston 2019).

Relevance is a theory of how a speaker or writer intends a meaning. This involves both the speaker or writer's effort to be relevant to the meaning s/he wants to intend and the hearer or reader's effort to interpret the most relevant meaning. According to this, theory, a writer or speaker's utterances may lead to several possible interpretations. The speaker or reader, on the other hand, makes an effort to make the most relevant meaning (Sperber and Wilson 2001).

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The most relevant meaning of an utterance might be in explicature, higher-level explicature, or implicature. Explicature is what the speaker says or encodes in the utterance. Its criteria are explicit, it is encoded linguistically, it is inferred contextually, and stated both in complete and incomplete propositions.

Higher-level explicature is the propositional attitude of the speaker toward his or her utterance. Implicature is the message implied in utterance. It is similar to illocutionary acts in Austin's speech acts. It is indicated by the following criteria:

1. It contains the propositional attitude of the speaker, i.e. what the speaker wants the hearer to convey by his message.
2. It uses the sentence adverb as the procedural encoding. The sentence adverbs that may be used are *clear*.
3. It is context-bounded; which means what the speaker means by his utterance depends on the context.
4. It is stated in imperative, declarative, or interrogative sentences.

Implicature is the implied meaning of an utterance. It must be inferential meaning is fully unliteral. Its criteria are:

1. Its meaning is fully inferential.

2. Its inferential meaning is different from its original form.
3. The hearer needs encyclopedic knowledge to infer it.
4. It is inferred by using deductive logic.
5. It is contextual. ([Peter\_Grundy]\_Doing\_Pragmatics(BookFi.org) n.d.).

As discussed earlier, discourse analysis is the study of language in a certain context. Context determines the meaning of an utterance. According to Simpson, context consists of physical context, personnel context, and cognitive context. Physical context is the actual context where the conversation takes place. Personnel context is the person involved in a conversation. Cognitive context is the knowledge of the persons involved in a conversation (Katili, 2007).

#### SOME EXAMPLES OF DISCOURSE ANALYSIS IN DRAMA

*Death of a Salesman* is a drama written a drama written by Arthur Miller. It is the story of an old salesman namely Willy Loman. Due to his old age, Willy Loman cannot sell successfully anymore. He often gets into accidents when driving. He also often daydreams of being successful and rich. He often pretends to be successful in selling by bringing money that he borrows from his friend.

The utterances for this analysis were taken from Drama *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller.

LINDA: Where are you all day? You look terrible.

WILLY: I got as far as a little above Yonkers. I stopped for a moment for a cup of coffee. Maybe it was the coffee.

LINDA: What?

WILLY [after a slight pause]: I suddenly couldn't drive anymore. The car kept going on to the shoulder, y'know?

LINDA [helpfully: *Maybe it was the steering again.* I don't think Angelo knows the Studebaker.

Willy: No, it's me, it's me. Suddenly I realize that (Miller 1961)

The analysis was focused on the utterance *Maybe it was the steering again.* The people involved in the dialogue were Willy and his wife, Linda. The physical context is in the Loman Family's house. The personnel context is Willy Loman and his wife, Linda. The topic is the accident that happened to Willy. Therefore, contextually Linda's utterance **Maybe it was the steering again** explicates that the accident was caused by the bad steering of the car.

In terms of higher-level explicate, it is a suggestion, i.e. Linda suggests Willy repair the car steering. However, it is not stated explicitly. It is stated in implicature. The implicit higher-level explicature is derived by processing the deductive logic:

If the steering caused the accident, then it needs to repair  
The steering caused the accident  
Therefore, the steering needs to repair

The following example reads:

LINDA: *Maybe it's your glasses. You never went for your new glasses.*

WILLY: No, I see everything. I came back ten miles an hour. It took me nearly four hours from Yonkers. (Miller 1961).

The physical context is still in the Loman's house. The personnel context is still Willy Loman and his wife, Linda. The topic is still the accident. Linda's utterance, *Maybe it's your glasses. You never went for your new glasses.* In terms of explicature, it is Linda's statement that it was Willy's glasses that caused the accident. The next utterance *You never went for your new glasses,* is, in terms of higher-level explicature, a suggestion that Willy needs to get new glasses.

The other example is the following:

LINDA: Willy, dear. Talk to them again. There's no reason why you can't work in New York.

WILLY: They don't need me in New York. I'm the New England man. I'm vital in New England.

LINDA: *But you're sixty years old. They can't expect you to keep traveling every week*

WILLY: I'll have to send a wire to Portland. I'm supposed to see Brown at ten o'clock to show the line. Goddamit, I could sell them! (Miller 1961)

The above dialogue takes place in the Loman's house as the physical context. The personnel context is Willy Loman and his wife. The topic is about Willy's age. Linda's utterance *But you're sixty years old. They can't expect you to keep traveling every week* means that Willy is now too old to travel. In terms of explicature, it is a statement that Willy is now old and he is not able to travel every week. In terms of higher-level explicature it means Linda expects Willy to stop travelling every week due to his age. The higher-level explicature is stated explicitly, therefore, there is implicature in this utterance.

## DISCUSSION

From the example of analysis above, it can be seen that discourse analysis can be applied in literary analysis, especially drama. Drama is a literary use of language and, as discussed earlier, discourse analysis studies the use of language in a certain context. To do a discourse analysis on drama, we can apply pragmatics, that is the study of how a speaker or writer intends the message in utterance and how the hearer. It is the study of the distance between what is stated and what it might mean ([Peter\_Grundy]\_Doing\_Pragmatics(BookFi.org) n.d.)

In the article, the writers demonstrate the application of Sperber and Wilson's theory of relevance, that is how the speaker's utterance is relevant to the topic and how the speaker or reader's interpretation is relevant to the message being conveyed.

The above examples of analysis show that the character's utterances might be inferred in three terms of meaning, i.e. explicature, higher-level explicature, and implicature. In terms of explicature, the character, as the interlocutors, states explicitly his/her message. However, in explicit statements there are higher-level explicature of the propositional attitude of the speakers, which is what the characters possibly want to convey. Some of the propositional higher-level explicature are stated in implicature.

This model of drama study can be applied to infer the message of drama. Message in drama is conveyed through the dialogue between characters. The readers are to infer the characters' utterances to understand the characters' messages. By inferring the characters' message, the drama readers are expected to be able to convey the general message of the drama.

## CONCLUSION

To close this article, the writers conclude that, first, literary works, especially drama are a discourse. In this context, it is literary discourse, and more specifically, dramatic drama. In drama, the playwright sends the message through the dialogue among characters. Therefore, discourse analysis can function to analyze the language used in the context of drama. Secondly, discourse analysis is intended to analyze what the characters might mean in their utterances during dialogue. The study of meaning is necessary to interpret the general meaning of drama. Thirdly, Sperber and Wilson's theory of relevance is a good example of studying the meaning of characters' utterances. Its application in analyzing Miller's drama *Death of a Salesman* shows that this theory is necessary. The writers also suggest that discourse analysis should be applied in studying literary works. Literary works use language as the media. Therefore, discourse analysis is needed to interpret the message that the author wants to convey in their works.

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