SOME LINGUISTIC PECULIARITIES OF MENTAL DISORDERS IN FICTION (BASED ON "FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON" BY DANIEL KEYES)

IVDITDIASAMIDZE

Department of European Studies, Batumi ShotaRustaveli state University,Georgia
Email: ivditidiasamidze@gmail.com

Abstract - Different writers try to organize and refine the raw material of facts to empathize and clarify what is the most significant in life in diverse ways. Each writer's style is unique. Nothing is straightforward in the world of literary taste. Just there are writers who worship figurative language; there are others who apart from figurative language use graphic devices for narratives and sending messages to readers. . The way in which authors manipulate with these means as well as how they apply them in the context evoke readers' appropriate comprehension. As a result, readers draw inferences as they are expected to do. The present paper aims at clarifying what graphic means are applied while portraying Charlie, a mentally disabled person and his hurt and sufferings. In the world of fiction authors often violate the accepted rules in order to achieve particular purposes. Being one of graphic means, punctuation is frequently ignored by the author in "Flowers for Algernon".Therefore, the author creates the appropriate atmosphere. The other device that helps the author affect readers is graphic realization of mispronounced words, whose importance is also analyzed in the work. One more device analyzed and illustrated in the paper is a spelling mistake that is deliberately made by the author to achieve particular goals.

Graphic means are considered visual effects that have a great influence on readers since authors want their readers to infer their main message to them. The way the author uses to portray a vivid image of a mentally disabled person is marked by the application of some graphic devices.

Keywords - Figurative Language, Visual Language, Graphic Devices, Punctuation, Mispronounced Words, Spelling Mistakes, Sending Messages, Readers, Great Influence, Portraying, Mentally Disabled.

I. INTRODUCTION

Different writers try to organize and refine the raw material of facts to empathize and clarify what is the most significant in life in diverse ways. Each writer's style is unique. Nothing is straightforward in the world of literary taste. Just there are writers who worship figurative language; there are others who apart from figurative language use graphic devices for narratives and sending messages to readers. The way in which authors manipulate with these means as well as how they apply them in the definite context evoke readers' appropriate comprehension. As a result, readers draw inferences as they are expected to do. Graphic means are considered visual effects. Therefore, they belong to the visual language. Although the latter is an extremely broader term that comprises diverse elements. We refer to the visual means that are commonly used in fiction for portraying different characters. Their application has a great influence on readers since authors want their readers to infer their main message to them. The way how Daniel Keyes portrays a vivid image of a mentally disabled person is marked by the application of some graphic devices.

The present paper aims at clarifying what graphic means are applied while portraying Charlie, a mentally disabled person and his hurt and sufferings. Graphic devices are classified in relation to the way they are transmitted. In the world of fiction authors often violate the accepted rules in order to achieve particular purposes. This time they become meaningful devices so called unspoken codes. Being one of graphic means, punctuation is frequently ignored by the author in "Flowers for Algernon".Therefore, the author creates the appropriate atmosphere. Another device that helps the author affect readers is so called graphic realization of mispronounced words, whose importance is also analyzed in the work. Spelling and grammatical mistakes are also overused to depict Charlie's mental disorders. All the above listed graphic (visual) devices are inevitable parts of Charlie's portrait. Graphic devices in a spatial content and the author's wording are parallel and often interdependent means by which readers get the exact image of Charlie.

II. DETAILS EXPERIMENTAL

2.1. Different approaches to the visual language

Visual Language, a term introduced by Robert Horn, refers to "language based on tight integration of words and visual elements". The visual elements include shapes, as well as images (e.g., icons, clip art). The appropriate use of images usually makes information more memorable, but visual language has considerably more to offer than that.[7]

Although researchers still argue about a single, universally agreed-upon definition of exactly what a

visual language is, most of them have some common elements.The visual language is a system of communication using visual elements. Language is not just verbal or written. Speech as a means of communication cannot strictly be separated from the whole of human communicative activity which includes the visual and the term 'language' in relation to vision is an extension of its use to describe the perception, comprehension and production of visible signs.

The word "imagination" definitely suggests that we can also think in images.An image which dramatizes and communicates an idea presupposes the use of a visual language. Just as people can verbalize their thinking, they can visualize it. A diagram, a map, and a painting are all examples of uses of visual language. Its structural units include line, shape, color, form, motion, texture, pattern, direction, orientation, scale, angle, space, and proportion. The elements in an image represent concepts in a spatial context, rather than the time-based linear progression used in talking and reading. Speech and visual communication are parallel and often interdependent means by which humans exchange information. [8]

Trying to reflect and comprehend the world through what we see and not through what one has to say with words, engages the mind in a more powerful way. The transformation of the world onto two-dimensional surfaces requires a deep understanding of the unspoken codes and symbols. These help to build the visual language and how one choices to introduce their understanding of the world is how diversity within a visual language is created.

Through the use of art elements, artists not only create their own impressions of the world but also their own meaning. Understanding that art conveys messages and communicates ideas makes almost every picture an element of the visual language. These pictures, thanks to the individual use and understanding of art elements and design principles, such as rhythm, contrast, or texture, help create a thousand vivid stories. [10]

Literacy (communicating in words by means of writing and reading) and numeracy (communicating information by means of numbers) are already well-developed achievements of the human species. The development of the visual aspect of human communications as a parallel discipline to literacy and numeracy has been referred to as graphicacy, still far from being a familiar term. The ability to think and communicate in visual terms—both the understanding and conception of the visual—becomes of equal importance with that of literacy and numeracy in today's learning process.[8]

2.2.Graphic devices used to highlight mental disorders

As we have already stated a language is not just verbal or written and the visual language is there to be mentioned and studied. All the graphic means that are analyzed and illustrated in the present paper are based on deliberate violations of conventions, this time they turn into particular images, special codes having nothing in common with just the written language. We focus on punctuation, as a graphic device, whose main purpose is to show intonation layout of an oral speech in writing. Punctuation gives possibility to underline major elements in writing and give rhythmical –intonation division to an expression. Intonation, in itself, is one of the means for revealing syntactic structure of speech. Hence, it is possible to state that punctuation expresses syntactic structure of speech. However, it draws our attention and becomes an invaluable device when punctuation is used inappropriately.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Punctuation and grammaticalerrors

By manipulating and evaluating ideas before putting them on paper the author makes deliberate errors that can form images in a mind's eye of a reader. Visual thinking institutes a cognitive system equivalent with, but different from, the verbal language system. In order to show Charlie's inability to write and thus, to highlight his mental disorders the author refers to the use of lots of errors in punctuation as well as grammatical accuracy.

The use of apostrophe in the following examples.

I don't know why but he says its importint so they will see if they will use me. P.285

… maybe now they wontuse me. 285

Icouldnt see any pictures. P.285

Ill get it in a few minitsbecausImno so fast sometimes. P.285

I told him I think a inkblot but that wasnt rite eather. P.285

The use of inverted commas in direct speech.

He sed Charlie what do you see on this card. Insteadof He said:"Charlie what do you see on this

card?" (aquestion mark and quotation marks are missing) p. 285
He said now sit down Carlie we are not thru yet. Instead ofHe said "now sit down Carlie, we are not thru yet." P.285
I said please let me try agen. Instead of I said" please let me try agen." P.285
They said Miss Kinniantold that I was her bestist pupil in the adult nitescoolbecaus I tryed the hardist and reely wanted to lern. P.286
They said you know it willprobly be tempirery. P.286
The following examples illustrate some grammatical mistakes: the use of will after I hope and the use were with plural noun forms.
I hope they use me insteadofI hope they will use me. P.285
…….there was pictures there…. P.285
Capitalization is used inappropriately in the middle of the sentence.
Miss Kinnian says Maybeits another langwidge or something. p. 289

3.2. Incorrect Written Units

Another graphic device used to portray Charlie is an incorrect written unit. Incorrect written units may fall into two major categories a) Spelling mistakes that are words fixed in writing incorrectly and b) so called "graphones" that are used to expose phonetic mistakes graphically with the violation of all the accepted rules in writing.

Sometimes it is rather hard to draw a hard and fast line between non-standard written units (spelling mistakes) and non-standard phonetic units (graphic realization of phonetic mistakes) since both of them are based on errors in the conventionally accepted form of spelling a word. However, while reading readers almost always visualize theses errors and are aware whether they represent spelling or phonetic mistakes.

The following examples of spelling mistakes represent Charlie's image as a mentally handicapped person the best. In fact Daniel Keyes uses them a lot.
DrNemur who looked at some of my other ones says I spell PROGRESS WRONG and he told me how to spell it and REPORT too. I got to try and remember that. I have a very bad memory for spelling. That is how Charli admits that he cannot write properly because of his bad memory.
Mr. Strauss says I shud rite(the error based on the word - put /should write) down what I think and evrey(the error based on the word- key/ every) thing that happins to me from now on. P.285
He rotesomething down on a paper. P.285
I have nuthing(the error based on the word- nut / nothing) else to rite now so I will close for today. P.285
I had a test today. I think I faled(the error based on the word- name/ fail) it. 285
I gotskared of falingthe test. P.285
He sed(the error based on the word- red/ said) Charlie what do you see on this card. 285
I was veryskared(the error based on the word- sky/ scared) even tho (though)I had myrabit(rabbit)foot in mypockit(pocket). 285
…. When I was a kid I always faled tests in school and I spilled ink to. (too) 285
I thot(the error based on the word- lot/ thought) that was all but when I got yp to go he stopped me. P.285
He said now sit down Carlie we are not thru (through)yet. P.285
Then I dont remember so goodbut he wantid me to say what was in the ink. P.285
I reelytryed(really tried)to see. Then I said if I had my glases(glasses) I could see better I usually ware(the error based on the word bare/ wear) my glasesin the movies or TV. P.285
I said please let me try agen(again). P.285
Ill get it in a few minitsbecaus (minutes because) Imno so fast sometimes. (simple spelling errors) P.285
I told him I think a inkblot but that wasntriteeather. (right either)P.285
I reelytryed(really) to see. P.285

They said Miss Kinnian told that I was her bestist pupil in the adult nitescoolbecaus I tryedthe hardist andreely wanted to lern. (rite / nite right/ night tebts to omit gh / (other simple spelling errors) p. 286
I said I askdpepul and sumbody told me where I shud go to lern to read and spell good. P.286 (the error based on the word- pub/ somebody; in the previous example pupil is correct here- pepul)p. 286
Dr. Strauss brot me in. (the error analogues to another errorthotbased on the use of- otinstead of oughtin brought/ thought)p.286
Miss Kinnian says Maybeits another langwidge or something. (correct language). P.289
I analyzed almost all the examples and tried to provide some analogies for the errors made based on which Charlie came up with the incorrect forms. His memory refuses to recall correct forms and totally

mixes spelling and pronunciation rules. Spelling mistakes outnumber totally all other graphic devices.

The following examples illustrate how Charlie distorts the pronunciation of certain words. Actually, readers might not find it difficult to figure out the way these words are pronounced by Charlie. He tends to say short (i) instead of (a) in the following two sentences.

……. thing that happins to me from now on. P.285 happins/happind

……. but he says its importintso… P.285

Instead of /ˈpjuːp(ə)l/ he says /ˈpepul/

There was pictures there other pepul saw some pictures P.285

Instead of /ˈprɒbəbli/ he says /ˈprɒbli/ and /ˈtempirəri/ instead of /ˈtemp(ə)rəri/

They said you know it will probly be tempirery. P.286(probably/ temporary)

He says /ˌɒpəˈrəʃun/ instead of /ˌɒpəˈreɪʃ(ə)n/ and /ˈdınt/ instead of /ˈdɪd(ə)nt/

The operashun dint hurt. (operation)p.287

3.3. Focal changes and graphic devices

Sincementally handicapped Carlie yearns to be smarter and knows that he is not normal when he gets the chance to undergo a scientific experiment that will inject him with a solution to make him smarter, he says yes. The author shows the evolution of Charlie in journal entries within the book. Charlie gradually becomes smarter. The following examples show how Charlie improves his writing by making fewer and fewer mistakes after operation.

Joe Carp said I shoud show the girls how I mop out the toilet in the factory and he got me a mop. P. 290 (after being operated on the difference is vivid; shud turned into shoud but still l is missing.)

Everybody laffed and we had a good time and they gave me lots of drinks and Joe said Charlie is a card when hes potted. P.290 (Obviously Charlie’s IQ is increasing. The author reveals this process by using fewer non-standard written units).

Burt said no Algernon is a very specshul mouse with an operashunlike mine, and he was the first of all the animals to stay smart so long. (In words special/ operation suffixes cial/ tion are replaced by cshul/ shun)p. 291.

Miss Kinnian teaches me to spell better. She says look at a word and close your eyes and say it over and over until you remember. I have lots of truble with through that you say threw and enough and tough that you dont say enewand tew. You got to say enuffand tuff. Thats how I use to write it before I started to get smart. Im confused but MssKinnian says theres no reason in spelling. P.291 (In this particular example Charlie himself describes how he tries to handle his problems and how excited he feels about his progress)

Today, I lerned, the comma, this is a comma (,) a period, with a tail, Miss Kinnian, says its importent, because, it makes writing, better, she said, somebody, coud lose, a lot of money, is a comma, isnt, in the, right place, I dont have, any money, and I dontsee, how a comma, keeps you, from losing it. P.291 (In this example Charlie tends to show excessive use of comma).

Everyone was looking at me and laughing and I felt naked. P.292 (improving spelling of laugh -laffed)

Anyway, now I know I’m getting smarter every day. I know punctuation and I can spell good. I like to look up all the hard words in the dictionary and I remember them. I’m reading a lot now, and Miss Kinnian says I read very fast. Sometimes I even understand what I’m reading about, and it stays in my mind. There are times when I can close my eyes and think of a page and it all comes back like a picture. P. 293

As Charlie gets the surgery and his intelligence quickly blooms his writing becomes polished. His intelligence tops out at 185, where he is deemed a certified genius. At this point, he is frantically soaking up all the knowledge he can and his journal entries are characterized with no use of graphic devises analyzed in the previous examples.

I’ve given up using the typewriter completely. My co-ordination is bad. I feel that I’m moving slower and slower. Had a terrible shock today. I picked up a copy of an article I used in my research, Krueger’sUberpsychischeGanzheit, to see if it would help me understand what I had done. First I thought there was something wrong with my eyes. Then I realized I could no longer read German. I tested myself in other languages. All gone. P.303

At the end of the story Charlie is showing all the signs of decline that mouse Algernon did. Charlie himself is becoming aware of a sharp decrease in Algernon's intelligence. He begins to research the effect and eventually publishes his findings, having realized that he will suffer the same decline and return to his original mental state.

Told entirely in journal entries ("progress reports"), the book does a wonderful job of showing how Charlie's intelligence changes. Since he also loses the intelligence he gained, his motor activity slows and

he loses his coordination. Hence, the graphic devices, having disappeared for some time, become visible again.

Then all of a suddin I remembered some things about the operashun and me getting smart and I said holy smoke I reelypulled a Charlie Gordon that time. P.305

The solution that had been making him smarter fails, and he devolves back into his original self, leaving Alice forever in love with the man inside Charlie that is, yet again, hidden by his disability. Before he loses his intelligence, he tries to correct the formula throughout his journal entries, but the story ends with Charlie back to his original self butwith fond memories, making him more contented.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Recent analysis suggests that the use of graphic means can influence readers' perception; For example, a great deal of evidence provided proves that readers tend to perceive things in ways that are influenced by the manner in which the author creates the image of mental disorders. In order to function efficiently the number of graphic devices vary throughout the story. The beginning of the book is marked by numerous non- standard written units; they gradually decrease when Charlie gets an operation and eventually, they disappear. Once the mouse Algernon shows signs of mental decline Charlie undergoes the same process. This time the number of non -standard written units drastically soars. Graphic devices are used to encode particular meaning, they are first visualized and then perceived by readers. Therefore, readers create the exact image of mentally handicapped man with some focal mental increases and decreases. We can conclude that graphic devices analyzed in the paper serve to be special images or codes. They are the only tools the author could rely while portraying Charlie.

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