

Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem

Bölcsészettudományi Kar

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

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The Semantic Examination of the Lyrical Sentence

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Budapest, 2015

1 Problem Statement and Structure of the Dissertation

When we think of 'sentence', especially of 'lyrical sentence', it occurs to us that a vast number of definitions have been trying to interpret and describe its structure. However, the twentieth century definitions, which were based on literary studies and prosody, did not succeed in giving a holistic explanation. The dissertation will not be able to provide one either, but it is definitely trying to establish a multidisciplinary answer. Thus, in the present dissertation the previous results will also be taken into consideration, and the methodology of semantics will be applied as a framework.

The study objectives are based on linguistics, as they are defined by disciplines of cognitive linguistics (Langacker 1987; Tolcsvai Nagy 2012). However, the study topic itself predicts the need for a literary perspective as well. In this way, the dissertation implements the definition of the sentence within an **interdisciplinary framework**. The starting point is cognitive semantics which approaches the language from the perspective of recognition and meaning. Hereby the meaning has priority over the structure. The main issue of the dissertation is establishing the ground of the most appropriate definition of the lyrical sentence, its structure and its reception.

The prior objective of the dissertation is to define the sentence with a special emphasis on its lyrical structure. The study aims at examining how the syntactic-semantic structures reflect the changes which are powered by the dynamics of the language. This doesn't mean that there is a division between languages in terms of where they are used – as it happened many times before. On the contrary, everyday language will be interpreted in line with literary language.

The main objective of the First Chapter is to summarize how the functional cognitive linguistics has examined the sentence. The twentieth century theories were either of linguistic or literary nature. Gasping the necessity of the lyrical sentence, the dissertation is trying to transgress this division.

The dissertation consists of two main parts: **I The theory of lyric poetry** and **II The theoretical approaches of lyrical sentences**. The most important definitions are embedded in two major theoretical units. One of them is the theory of lyric poetry – it clarifies what makes a plain text become a poetic one. In the second part, as the title already shows, the theoretical approaches will lead us to the realization of the sentence in lyric poetry.

The first part – the First Chapter and the Second Chapter – introduces **hermeneutics**, focusing on those aspects which can be connected to **cognitive linguistics**. The two theoretical approaches merge here, since both of them treat the concept of language as the base of recognitions and comprehension. The notions of meaning and recognition are strongly related, since the ways we treat and process information, transfer them and make them seen are all happening through language. At this point, the concept of meaning becomes significant; the perception of a text proceeds when we adjust a meaning to each and every word and sentence in it. Thus, the basic ideas of hermeneutics serve as a theoretical meeting point of cognitive semantics and poetics. At this point, it is important to emphasize that the dissertation does not tend to apply a hermeneutical condition. Instead, it is trying to provide a theoretical model through which we are able to approach the issues of perception and comprehension.

Both cognitive linguistics and hermeneutics examine the text – with its perceptive context – in its function. Thus, after considering the two schools of theories, we will be able to discuss their fusion.

The literary aspect, which examines the figurative language, i.e. the gestalt (Vandaele – Brone 2009: 2), is among the objectives of cognitive poetics. For this reason, it is important to emphasize that literary figurativeness is a crucial study area of this scientific area as well. In addition to the ornamental function, cognitive poetic deals also with its role in meaning production. This flow of thoughts gives one of the definitions of the lyrical sentence, since it is shaped by the figures of speech. So, besides the formal elements, the theory implies semantic aspects as well.

In the methodology of cognitive semantics, practice and theory gain the same territory. This is also true for cognitive poetics: it recycles and reinterprets the former conclusions, instead of refusing them, while it constantly relies on empirical results. This is the reason why this dissertation also provides examples to show how theory is manifested. This branch of linguistics complements theories with empirical approaches which prefer the a posteriori system to the earlier studies based primarily on a priori algorithms.

To summarize the ideas above, the cognitive approach puts an emphasis on the language in use and the way it is constructed. The intersection of cognitive linguistics and hermeneutics can

also be gasped from the side of the hermeneutical experience as well. It states that comprehension is always a historical process which can be interpreted only from the attitude of the receiver – this concept will be described at the end of the Second Chapter. We can explain it with the three-fold structure, so the way language is interpreted always depends on the sender, the receiver and the text as the manifestation of shared attention. With minor alterations, this is also true for lyric poetry in the triangle of author, reader and text (Tomasello 2002; Tátrai 2011). This “other” structure gives the key to understand literary texts. In everyday language, it happens within an intersubjective context when the speaker’s attention is drawn to the given referential frame. The same happens within literary discourse where the frame is represented by the piece of art.

The definitions of literary or lyrical discourse must be given at this point. The motto of the Third Chapter is Jakobson’s idea. According to him, we can define what poetry is only by defining what poetry is not (Jakobson, 1958). So, in the Third Chapter I examine the structure, the special attributes and forms of the lyrical sentence. The fact that lyric poetry is unique can be explained by its function and intersubjectivity – these two features are actually close to each other. The lyrical subject and the receiver are in a very special relationship. However, we have to keep in mind that the addresser in lyric poetry is not identical with the everyday speaker. This idea is justified by the fact that one of the prior functions of lyrical language is to influence the receiver on an emotional level. Furthermore, my questionnaire-based research represents the same.

In the second part of the dissertation, I discuss the lyrical sentence in details. I apply various approaches and aspects to do so, hoping that the fusion will take us closer to a holistic explanation of the sentence.

The Fourth Chapter serves as a bridge between the two major parts which examine the lyrical subject. The chapter examines the difference between the lyrical sentence and the everyday one from the aspect of the Subject, since the participants, i.e. Subject and Object, are not articulated in the same way. We can state that based on the facts that the language activity is two-sided, it is getting constructed within the Self-Other relationship and it can be gasped in the structure of form and meaning. I describe the lyrical Self from various aspects, since it is created by the unique fictive world of the text; and in this way, it becomes the base of the lyrical sentence.

The scheme and manifestation of the lyrical sentence give us further possibilities to define what it actually is (Fifth Chapter). The scheme is the generally practiced way in which the sentence becomes elaborated. Moreover, it covers the mental processes that contribute to the construction of the sentence. What we primarily mean by the sentence is a prototypical construction which is based on the verb-noun relation. This schematic representation becomes relevant when the language is in use, so this time in lyrical poetry. Cognitive linguistics examines language in its function, in other words within discourse. It can be connected to the working memory and the flow of information represented by the line.

In each and every discourse, both in everyday life and in literary context, there are always **participants**. The division of sender and receiver is always there – even in monologic text where the receiver is the sender in one person. There are two sides paying attention to each other and influencing the course of events this way. The participants shape the knowledge about the actual situation which is summarized in the sentence.

The sentence is always attached to the actual situation. This process becomes clear in the Sixth Chapter when I explain deixis and anchorage. The epistemic anchorage helps the receiver understand the recognition of the speech act. The term of anchorage must be defined in broader sense, too. In broader sense, by the term we mean all the textual "tools" (Dirven-Verspoor 1998). Yet, in the narrow sense, it is produced in specific interpretations. Lyrical sentence is seen in deixis and anchorage as a particular construction; in this chapter it is supported by examples. In lyric poetry, the deixis and the epistemic anchorage point out that sentence creates a conceptual space between the two.

The Seventh Chapter focuses on the command of attention. Attention is the most important part of human behaviour; one is able to command another's attention to a third party. Since the human mind is holistic in its function, it is in strong relation with cognition. Also, the whole concept can be related to the perspective according to which lyrical sentence represents a point of view in which the Self's nature is to refer to the Other. In other words, the Self is, in almost all cases, the starting point. To sum up, the elemental sentence works as a referential scene, so it is anchored, and it provides the core of understanding.

The next two chapters discuss the figures and style from the aspect of their possibility to become an interpretative frame.

In the Eighth Chapter some of the figures become the main focus of examination: namely the transmutation, repetition and metaphors. Here the emphasis is on the realization of the sentence, and its semantical significance which transcends the ornamental function. In previous studies speech figures were examined mainly from rhetorical and poetical viewpoints. The dissertation keeps these main ideas; while it puts the focus on their functioning in language and on the difference between the ways thinking and drawing attention are structured in literary versus everyday language. In this way, figures help to command the interpersonal communication and the attention in the actual speech act.

The Ninth Chapter examines the interpretation of lyrical sentence **style**. Style appears in the manifestation or on the textual level. So, the lyrical Subject defines the style and the content of the particular text. It means that style, figure and line are in strong relation.

The dissertation outlines lyrical sentence on the horizons of cognitive linguistics and hermeneutics. Besides the analysis of the particular territories, a holistic model is kept in view. Thus, I examine the lyrical sentence from multiple aspects. The dissertation finishes with the summary of these results (in Conclusion).

2 Theses

- i. Semantics and hermeneutics as the science of interpretation takes us closer to the definition of lyrical sentence. The interseption of cognitive semantics and hermeneutics can be gasped from the side of hermeneutical experience; so, comprehension is always a historical process, because the receiver`s expectation horizon (primary expectations and ideas) and the textual horizon (historical aspect) constantly form each other (melting of horizons). (Gadamer 1984: 327)
- ii. The dissertation defines the lyrical sentence. Due to the primary function of lyric poetry, the emotional influence appears in the sentence, too. This approach is related to the context of Self-Other which is part of the identity formation system. (It can be explained by the intersubjective feature of functional linguistics.)

- iii. Meaning is a primary factor in lyric poetry which can be seized in the relationship between the receiver and the author. The lyrical sentence is not purely a linguistic representation; it becomes lyrical from the perspective of the receiver. Here I conclude that meaning formation and mental representation becomes primary, because the use of language is shaped in the course of recognition. This is the way how lyrical sentences construct themselves to lyrical texts, because the receiver attributes a meaning to the sentences.
- iv. It is the lyrical addresser who speaks most of the times in the first person singular, and this is how he/she becomes the ground and the starting point. Although, we should not forget that the Self of everyday life and the lyrical Self are not identical. It strongly relies on the structure of views on a particular event – where we see it and make it seen from. Lyrical texts construct a unique fictive world; the Self-Other relation is constructed in this fictive situation. Besides, it is important to see here that in romanticism there was a certain self-identity. After a change had taken place, the Self shoved off from itself (Kulcsár Szabó 1998), and started taking a major part in shaping the sentence.
- v. Deixis results in a specific semantic saturation which is up to the receiver. The anchorage elements are different in everyday and in literary contexts: the receiver, partially starting from the everyday context, constructs the literary context. It is very interesting in the lyrical sentence how the receiver constructs the situation to which he/she anchors the sentence elements. The literary context should not be viewed as a personal world constructed exclusively by the receiver. Instead, we must see that the lyrical addresser and the work of art itself have also a great influence in shaping the context.
- vi. The flow of information has a significant role in lyrical poetry, which can be paralleled to the line theory. According to it, line is a factor in shaping the sentences.
- vii. Drawing attention in lyrical sentence starts working as a realm of recognition. The sentence represents a scene, on which attention is drawn by the Self and Other, and it makes itself clear to us. This situation is then being mentally processed. Thus, sentence is a mental scene that reflects information of the world, and it draws the Other's attention to the part represented by the agent. It is definitely relates to the viewpoint. The viewpoint is the starting point through which we can understand the scene represented by the sentence

(Tolcsvai Nagy 2006). The changing viewpoint does not confuse the receiver; the identification of other viewpoints is possible, even in spite of the efforts it takes.

- viii. The receiver constructs the mental model through a lot of observations and conclusions, and it reflects the system of figures. The primary function of the figures in lyric poetry is to differ from the ordinary and to stagger the receiver. The way in which the ordinal changes relates of the lyrical sentence relates to the original sentence can be revealed. It means that the difference between the figurative and ordinary language appears according to a rule.

3 The Significance of the Study Subjects

The sentence has had a significant place in the linguistical discourse, so there is a large scale of interpretations. Most disciplines of linguistics try define what sentence is. For instance, it was often asked whether the structure or the meaning influences the set of the sentence (see in Chafe 1971: 10; Chomsky 1999). The lyrical sentence was also examined from the perspectives of literary studies. The dissertation vindicates linguistic as well as literary aspects. It derives from the viewpoint of functional cognitive semantics which places the concept of meaning in the foreground (Langacker 1987) and becomes open to hermeneutical sources. In this way, there is an opportunity to merge the two theoretical approaches.

Meaning production is a core point in cognitive poetics and linguistics, and it can be strongly related to hermeneutical experience. Hermeneutics treats language as the main source of recognition, while functional linguistics also states that language serves as a medium in recognition.

The source of lyrical sentence is human recognition, so the way in which the addresser and the addressee construct the sentence. Cognitive semantics and poetics provides the theoretical background here. Cognitive poetics examines the particular texts and their manifestations.

The aim of the dissertation is to construct a definition of the lyrical sentence based on the fusion of **cognitive semantics** and **hermeneutics**. I apply their terminology and methodology. In this way, we are able to see the nuances of the previous theories and, in addition, get a summary within the frames. I find it crucial to emphasize that, due to its limited framework, the

dissertation will not answer all the questions. However, I believe that the dissertation will widen the interpretative framework of the lyrical sentence. I hope that in the future it might be the subject of further studies within areas such as the history of lyrical sentence and the examination of language specific elements.

4 Hypotheses and Methodology

Cognitive linguistics is based on human cognition which is the most complex part of human behaviour (Kertész 2001). It is represented in the use of language.

The lyrical sentence is the basic organizational unit of the poetical text, and as such, it becomes interpretable within the context of lyric poetry. The functional approach interprets the language as a whole. Language structures initiate, command and form cognitive procedures. Language should be examined in use, since language is a kind of knowledge which depends on the recognition of the world. So, language is not an imaginary construction; it is a process whose parts are in dynamic relation with each other. Language is a `social institution` which is being shaped during speech acts.

Meaning is formed by experience, and it reflects the individual as well as the social changes of the language. At this point, it is crucial to see that language is not static; instead, it is in constant change.

The focus on the usage shows us that experiencing the operation of language structures is only possible in discourse. In literary texts it is the actual text and the author that create the common attention scene. The literary work of art including the sentence itself gain their meaning within their receptive interpretation. This statement is the underlining motive of the structure. It might be interesting concerning methodology, since the lyrical sentence does not appear individually and separated. For this reason, it can be interpreted in textual context.

The construction and reception of the language does not happen separately from the everyday language. Instead, they are being constructed side by side, dynamically influencing each other. Among all the genres, lyrical poetry occupies a specific space. I examine the attributes and features of this unique textual manifestation.

The relation of the receptive attitude, the author and the type of literary text explains the structure of the lyrical sentence. The receiver's approach to written (lyrical) texts is different from his/her attitude towards spoken language. Yet, the receiver has a previously formed scheme in both cases; the difference is in the manifestation of the categories.

Cognitive poetics introduced a new approach to the interpretation (Vandale – Brone 2009). The vision of the fixed mental object is replaced by a dynamic model. The starting point of the lyrical sentence is human recognition and the way lyrical sentence is formed by its author and interpreter.

Cognitive linguistics emphasizes empirics and practice. Cognitive science and empirical subjective interpretation are strongly connected. This relation is presented by the charts (line and sentence interpretation, examining the parts of speech) and the questionnaire research. I applied the system of theory, which I have presented above, in my own research. The result is the definition of lyrical sentence. In addition, the questionnaires examine the definition of the poem, and what teenagers think it is. The next step in the analysis is the recognition of lyrical sentence: I examined how students find the end of a sentence in a poem without punctuation and I analyzed the frequency of parts of speech from the perspective of figurativeness.

According to the analysis, the structure of the lyrical sentence is figurative. A line shows the borders of a sentence. Human attention identifies the line and the sentence as a unit. However, it also depends on the punctuation in the sentence (e.g. a dot at the end of the sentence strengthens the line-sentence parallel). The receiver verifies the sentence borders from the aspect of sense formation. The construction of the scene is the connection between a thing and a temporary relation. In a prototypical situation it covers the relationship between a verb and a noun and its expansion. We can declare that the borders of the sentences are appointed by the punctuation. The latter is being absolved as a break which makes the reader stop and think.

The analysis represents the connection between the line and sentence borders and their relation to the parts of speech. The chart displays the role of parts of speech in sentence formation.

The aim of the examples, embedded in cognitive and hermeneutic theories, was to point out the unique feature of the sentence.

5 The Results of the Dissertation

- i. Hermeneutics take us closer to the definition of the sentence.
- ii. Semantics is a primary factor in lyric poetry, which are deeply looked at in my research.
- iii. Figures are frames to define the sentence with, and they also influence attention.
- iv. The line, which is an element of drawing attention, is in strong relation to work memory, and it forms the sentence.
- v. The lyrical Self can be interpreted only when the Other is present. The Other holds a mirror facing the Self. The reader is able to recognize the flow of the dialogue (i.e. who speaks when) only by following sentence edition.
- vi. The perspective is connected to the previous point, because the lyrical sentence evolves this way.
- vii. Deixis results in a unique semantical saturation, which is partly up to the reader.
- viii. The position of a sentence in the text is peculiar from the aspect of network formation.

The listed points represent how particular results grasp the definition of the sentence, and how it becomes possible to make it seen in a unity. I believe that the model is open for further interpretation. I hope that my dissertation evokes further thoughts and ideas. Finally, cognitive poetics becomes open to work in an interdisciplinary framework.

Related Lectures and Publications:

Lectures:

- Nyelv és kultúra, kulturális nyelvészet – Új nézőpontok a magyar nyelv leírásában 3.
2010. november 23-24. – ELTE BTK (1088 Budapest, Múzeum krt. 4 D. ép.)
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- Fiatal Kutatók és Doktoranduszok III. Nemzetközi Teológuskonferenciája
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Előadás helye, ideje: 2012. november 2. – Károli Gáspár Református Egyetem Hittudományi Kar -
- Explorations Into Meaphor and Metonymy Conference VI. – „Metaphor and Metonymy Discourse”
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Előadás címe: Metaphors All Around (Love Metaphors in Weöres Sándor’s Poems)
Előadás helye, ideje: 2014. június 26. – ELTE Doktori Kiválósági Központ
- Generációk nyelve konferencia
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Előadás helye, ideje: 2014. november 28. ELTE BTK – Kari Tanácsterem, szekcióelnök: Antalné Szabó Ágnes

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