

TEXT – ART FOR LISTENERS

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Abstract

Since the last century, the text is understood as a poly-semiotic structure. For example, P. Sergio, based on French experience, offers the list¹³⁶ comprising eight formed components; that is the idea of “discourse” in the text related to theory is already ambiguous. We can identify three main determinants of “discourse” based on different cultures and thoughts. In the linguistic context, the term was first coined by American scientist Z. Harris in his article “Discourse Analysis¹³⁷”. However, the broad application of the term was acquired twenty years later. In the world of linguistics, discourse is defined as a speech, text, dialogue, which is an integral part of communicational case. Thus, discourse is countering the text both dynamically and statically. The understanding of the term by French Structuralists and Post-Structuralists is indicated through works by M. Foucault¹³⁸ and his followers. According to the scientists, discourse equates the style of speech, the manner and carries individualistic qualities (political discourse, teachers’ discourse, the authors’ style as discourse). This vision represents discourse in a social color.

Keywords: Discourse, Text, Reader, Listener

Introduction

Until recent times, the science saw a literary work (and discourse as well) as a (immanent) close system and carried out the so-called internal research of the text. Thus, all the external aspects used to be rejected and the text was perceived as a unity closed to itself¹³⁹. Hence, the role of the listener (as well as that of the reader) was almost ignored. However, if regarding the fact that the text itself comprises the three elements (a narrator, the text and a listener), we will understand the fallacy of the aforementioned assertion. Any sort of fiction or text is structured around those three basic elements, which according to Wolfgang Keiser are called “the first narrative line (plot¹⁴⁰)”.

Before actually analyzing political discourse along with the listener’s role, let us evaluate the references of the fiction works and their readers while the role discussion of the works in the world of the Romanic literary world offers an interesting mix of both scientific works and numerous research results in the field proper.

While analyzing the aspects of the text, one should make the following comparisons: a literary text, the same novel, is a certain type of discourse. The author is logically equaled to the author of the discourse and the reader is the addressee of the one.

Throughout the centuries, there were two types of readers: first, people for whom reading is a typical sort of entertainment and the other type, for whom the text always represented the source for mental work and an interesting structure of its own. The ones of

¹³⁶ Sériot, Patrick. *Structure Et Totalité: Les Origines Intellectuelles Du Structuralisme En Europe Centrale Et Orientale*. Paris. 1999:12

¹³⁷ Harris, Zellig. *Methods in Structural Linguistics*, New-York. 1951:42

¹³⁸ Foucault, Michel. *Dits et écrits*. Paris. 1994:34-38

¹³⁹ Karalashvili Revaz. *A Book and a Reader*. Tbilisi, 1977:3-4

¹⁴⁰ Karalashvili Revaz. *A Book and a Reader*. Tbilisi, 1977:6

the first category try to “escape” into the text (using it as a shelter) and thus sincerely “enter” into the roles offered by the characters created by the author. This circumstance is described by the fact that the inspiration level of any kind of political as well as other kinds of discourse is observable even among such kind of people whose IQ and ability to analyze is relatively low. The world history is rich of examples of the kind. Another research carried out in the last years of the twentieth century in France additionally proves the fact. As it turned, the works easily perceived by genre, have more readers than the ones reading and analyzing of which required more effort and mental energy¹⁴¹. The reader and the listener of the kind tries to find «une source d'évasion» in the text so as they made it be solution for their everyday problems and respond all those questions the individuals might have¹⁴². The circumstance is explained also by the fact that moralists' novels enjoy wider popularity regardless the epoch¹⁴³.

For example, in the thirteenth century, “the Rose Novel” written by Joan de Men, remained actual in the sixteenth century France. The same can be said about the works by La Fontaine and Moeller. In this case, the addressee of the discourse may not notice the sheer fact that the authors, just like any other people, may well incorrectly address the question raised by the reality of the time. At the same time, the issues are perceived according to the history and political creed shared by contemporary representatives of the epoch. Thus, the reading or perceiving the text in this very line may cause less favorable consequences, visual representation of which are (or have been) the deliberate and forceful equalization of individuals into the faceless mass by authoritarian regimes of various types (Nazis, etc.).

In reality, the text is not the object of “fun”, but the animated, mental dialogue with the author. While creating the text, potential addressee of the text is first to be considered - the one who is to share its ideas, enrich it and take us to specific goals. The actual participation of the reader in the text had already been mentioned by enlighteners of the eighteenth century France, which is proved by the following quote by Voltaire: «*Les livres les plus utiles sont eux dont les lecteurs font eux-mêmes la moitié*»¹⁴⁴.

The enlighteners rejected any kind of volatile approaches to the text analysis. According to them, the reader should approach the text as an object of “deep pondering” and should contribute to forming the inherent pictures of the textual body. During the reading process, various writers and scientists used to take an interest in the role of the reader, the true representation of which is the works of well-known French authors like Stendhal, Maupassant, Flaubert and others. The authors also took into account the circumstance according to which it was extremely hard to find the reader who would be “exemplary” and share, enrich and partly transform the work. Stendhal dedicates his outstanding work “Cloister of Parma” to the small but “happy” society with the words literary given as “To the Happy Few”¹⁴⁵.

Various authors of the twentieth century reveal themselves to our society not as “preachers” but friendly interlocutors with the reading audience.

“*Je suis un être de dialogue et non point d'affirmation*”, says Andre Gide, the French author at the beginning of the century.

In the midst of the twentieth century, the reader related to the problem had been actively promoted by Russian formalists as well. They juxtaposed practical and poetic languages. According to them, practical language has the ability to turn any subject into

¹⁴¹ Steiner, George. *Passions impunis*. Gallimard. 1997:43

¹⁴² Steiner, George. *Passions impunis*. Gallimard. 1997:46

¹⁴³ Voltaire. *Dictionnaire philosophique*. Gallimard. Paris. 1962.

¹⁴⁴ Stendhal. *La Chartreuse de Parme*. Flammarion. Paris. 1964.

¹⁴⁵ Gide, Paul Guillaume André. *Réflexions sur quelques points de littérature et de morale*, Mercure de France, 1897.

phenomenon what makes it lose the true idea and depth. Through poetic language, however, ideas acquire their true sense and the problem of automatic transfiguration falls apart.

Russian formalists attached specific role to the way of reading by which the reader should be able to see the true ideas beyond the subjects and phenomena.

In the 60s of the previous century France, numerous researches were held regarding the literary communications, specifically concerning relationships between the author and the reader. Various sciences participate in the work analysis – linguistics, semantics, stylistics, lexicology, grammar, etc. The text limits had to be widened. Attempts for many approaches were applied. Sciences such as philosophy, psychology, sociology, histories and others had to be widely appealed. Since that time, based on the cognitive perception, text analysis (with many followers in France) has been enjoying wide popularity. French scientist, Roland Barthes considers the reading audience as a sole participator in the process of the text creation; whereas the author is in constant pursuit of desirable readers:

“If I enjoy reading the phrase of any kind, or word, this means the creator of those had been enjoying the same joy. And if vice versa? If I, an author, seek joy in writing, this means the reader should enjoy it as well. Therefore, I feel compelled to find my reader, even if I do not know what their physical address is¹⁴⁶.”

Michel Butor expands Barthes’ idea with the following words: “A person writes with the intention to be read. I always write for the watching eye, even for my own. The sheer process of writing already involves participation from the reader¹⁴⁷.”

Italian writer Umberto Eco recognizes the reader as the most important element in the epic world¹⁴⁸. Eco entitles the work composed for the reading audience with an interesting title: “Lupus in Fabula”. These Latin words tell us the fact that wolf is the true character in all “fables”. Juxtaposing the wolf and the reader, the scientist and writer recognizes the reader as one of the most and basic element of the epic world. The wolf belongs to the forest; therefore, Umberto Eco represents the forest as the metaphor of the literary (fiction) work.

According to the scientific view, the book represents a thick forest for the reader. The forest is equated with the shady, ambiguous associations and strife for the positive outcome, thus making him or her activate their brainpower and intellectual abilities. The symbol of the forest is also given in the critical letters by Borsches. According to him, “The forest is the garden where each path has various ramifications and even when the path is not clear, each passer-by still has the ability to cut through.”

Hence, in the world of text, while “roving”, the reader faces the constant choice, strains their intellectual abilities and thus tries to go on the favorable path.

Umberto Eco thinks that “each text represents that very sluggish structure which requires from readers to perform their own share of work¹⁴⁹.”

Conclusion

Regarding the mentioned above, we can conclude that in the process of text analysis the addressee first works on developing his/her imagination, acuteness and different cognitive skills. We should not miss the fact that the images displayed by the text reading are nearly always different in each reader’s mind – whether they are of the written or vocal texts. This circumstance ensues from the difference of individual perceptions of the world bound to different social strata, political visions, spatial and time and various different engraved clichés of the time.

¹⁴⁶ Barthes, Roland Gérard. *Sur la littérature*. Presses universitaires de Grenoble, 1980:20

¹⁴⁷ Butor, Michel. *Matière de rêves : série de cinq ouvrages*. Hachette. Paris. 1985:18

¹⁴⁸ Eco, Umberto. *Six promenades dans les bois du roman et d’ailleurs*. Gallimard. Paris. 1996:2-3

¹⁴⁹ Eco, Umberto. *Six promenades dans les bois du roman et d’ailleurs*. Gallimard. Paris. 1996:10-12

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