Bulkina A.
Dialogic Love Discourse in Fictional Communication:
Marriage Proposals in the Novels of Thomas Hardy

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Abstract. This article deals with the issue of the fictional love discourse. It gives a brief overview if the principal approaches to the study of the nature of love discourse. The article gives a detailed analysis of speech genre "marriage proposal" in the works of Thomas Hardy. It describes the given speech genre as both ritual and argumentative and separates two formalization of the speech genre "marriage proposal": rigid and free.

Keywords: dialogue, formalization, love discourse, speech genre

The communicative function of language is most naturally realized in the process of dialogue interaction, that is why the specifics of the dialogue communication attract considerable attention of the linguistic research [1, p 5]. The particular interest presents the dialogical speech in the sphere of the fictional discourse. Literary dialogue as a form of secondary communication is an important factor of aesthetic effect, the specificity of which is caused by the author's identity [11, p. 6].

Fictional love discourse (FLD) is the sphere of interpersonal love communication that is focused on dialogical understanding in relation to the parameters of language, environment and culture. The communicative, linguistic and cultural aspects of FLD have been investigated by different scholars.

Among the first to produce the detailed analysis of the semiotics of "passionate discourse" were Algirdas J. Greimas and Jacques Fontanille, who interpret the feeling and passion as a way of life that exists outside of "rationality" and "semantic competence" and therefore the discourses of passion, including love, are defined as "other, new forms of narrative experiences" [3] .

Roland Barth has studied the main principals of differentiation and defining features of lover's discourse. According to the researcher, "Dis-cursus is, initially, the action of running around and walking back and forth, "demarches", "intrigues". Love discourse, in this case, is "like a speech attack caused by a casual drive". [2, p.81-82].

Julia Kristeva (1989) investigated diachronic and synchronic aspects of the love discourse in the Western culture [12]. Tatiana Renz (2011) singled out the specific features of romantic discourse in the English language [9]. Natalia Kushnir (2005) concentrated on the sensual communicative intentions in the Russian dialogical speech [8]. Up to now the research of particular speech genres of the FLD, with reference to the unfolding of the plot, has not been carried out.

The paper aims at the analyzing the speech genre "proposal" with regard to how social standings operate on the side of the effectiveness of utterances to attain communicative goals. A corpus of marriage proposals is made up of Thomas Hardy's novels.

The hypothesis is that the analyzed genre demonstrates specific characteristics of the ritual and thus can be realized in the loose and rigid formalizations depending upon the purpose and extralinguistic context of the communicative situation.

Love discourse is implemented through a series of speech genres, defined as "the systematic and structural phenomena, which are a complex combination of speech acts selected and connected with the special communicative purpose" [5, p. 43]. Speech genre in terms of pragmatics is a "verbal processing of typical situations of social interaction between people" [10, p. 11].

Proposal is one of the most expressive speech genres of the love discourse. The genre is both argumentative and ritual. Its argumentativity is determined by the general communicative and pragmatic aim of the speaker (initiator of the situation of communication) to persuade the recipient through a variety of tactics and strategies of argumentation and get the acceptance of marriage proposal. In the process of reasoning the speaker manifests himself as a linguistic identity, demonstrating his/her extralinguistic, linguistic and communicative competence [4, p. 189].

The problem of the rituality in love discourse is still insufficiently researched. Ritual – a fixed sequence of traditional symbolically significant actions, dynamic communicative formation, which occurs at a certain socially significant actions and is exposed through symbolic reconsideration (ritualization) [7, p. 276-277]. Ritual discourse, therefore, is a stereotyped symbolically laden communicative situation, which primarily aims at consolidating existing identity or creating a new one [6, p. 5].

Using the parameters developed by A.Izvekova to describe the ritual discourse, we can identify features of ritualization in the speech genre "marriage proposal": high mode, emotionality, dramatization, the main objective of dialogic interaction is initiation, i.e. the change of social status (in this case – the acquisition of a new social status "engaged"), scenarity (repeatability).

The issue of conventionality and rigidity of the speech genre under analysis presents a great linguistic interest. The given analysis demonstrated that the speech genre "marriage proposal" can be characterized by rigid or loose formalization of discursive forms, depending on how strictly certain scenario parameters of the situation of ritual interaction are fixed.

Speech genre of rigid formalization is based on the respective scenario frame: 1) initiation / introduction, 2) a proposal, 3) negative reaction of the addressee, 4) a detailed argumentation, 5) the final answer of addressee, 6) a request for authorization to hope / for second proposal, 7) response / result of dialogic interaction.

Rigid structure of the communicative situation is most widely used in the course of formal offers of marriage with the lack of intimacy between speakers, especially when the stage of love confessions was not presented in their previous communication. Thus, the initiator of the marriage proposal opts for the rigid form of the speech genre when he/she isn't fully confident that his/her feelings will be reciprocated and the addressee will accept the proposal.

Let's have a close look at the dialogical interaction between young teacher Fanny Day and vicar Mr. Maybold from the novel "*Under the Greenwood Tree*" [3] in terms of the proposed scenarity of the speech genre "marriage proposal". The vicar is deeply interested in Fanny and showed her his attentions, but they communicated only as friends. Fancy is unaware of the depth of the vicar's feelings and has already secretly agreed to marry Dick Dewy. One day Mr. Meybold dared to pay young woman a visit to confess his feelings and offer her marriage.

INITIATION: declaring of the speaker's intentions and their importance

"Good-evening, Miss Day."

"Good-evening, Mr. Maybold," she said, in a strange state of mind. [...]

"I want to speak to you," he then said; "seriously—on a perhaps unexpected subject, but one which is all the world to me—I don't know what it may be to you, Miss Day."

No reply.

Fancy does not know about the nature of "unexpected subject", so she uses non-verbal means – silence, to induce him to talk more and to explicate the purpose of his visit.

QUESTION: Explicit

"Fancy, I have come to ask you if you will be my wife?"

As a person who has been idly amusing himself with rolling a snowball might start at finding he had set in motion an avalanche, so did Fancy start at these words from the vicar. [...]

The sender understands that the recipient has not be deciphered his hint, so chooses the tactics of direct question and asks her to be his wife. Fancy's reaction is primarily non-verbal and expresses her surprise, described with the help of metaphorical comparison (she is surprised as the human who played snowballs, and caused an avalanche).

NEGATIVE REACTION OF THE ADDRESSEE: refusal to participate in further communication

"I cannot, I cannot, Mr. Maybold—I cannot! Don't ask me!" she said.

Addressee expressively refuses to participate in further interaction by repetition of performative verbs in negative form (I can not).

ARGUMENTION OF THE SPEAKER: logical (prudence of feelings, wealth), emotional (declaration of love, compliments)

Argumentation of the speaker consists of several phases, each punctuated by the question on marriage:

a) an emotional argument, tactics of compliment.

"Don't answer in a hurry!" he entreated. "And do listen to me. This is no sudden feeling on my part. I have loved you for more than six months! Perhaps my late interest in teaching the children here has not been so single-minded as it seemed. You will understand my motive—like me better, perhaps, for honestly telling you that I have struggled against my emotion continually, because I have thought that it was not well for me to love you! But I resolved to struggle no longer; I have examined the feeling; and the love I bear you is as genuine as that I could bear any woman! I see your great charm; I respect your natural talents, and the refinement they have brought into your nature—they are quite enough, and more than enough for me! They are equal to anything ever required of the mistress of a quiet parsonage-house—the place in which I shall pass my days, wherever it may be situated. O Fancy, I have watched you, criticized you even severely, brought my feelings to the light of judgment, and still have found them rational, and such as any man might have expected to be inspired with by a woman like you! So there is nothing hurried, secret, or untoward in my desire to do this. Fancy, will you marry me?"

No answer was returned.

The addressee doesn't answer the questions and doesn't react to his emotional argumentation, that's why he comes to the logical stage of argumentation.

b) logical argumentation

"Don't refuse; don't," he implored. "It would be foolish of you—I mean cruel! Of course we would not live here, Fancy. [...] Your musical powers shall be still further developed; you shall have whatever pianoforte you like; you shall have anything, Fancy, anything to make you happy—pony-carriage, flowers, birds, pleasant society; yes, you have enough in you for any society, after a few months of travel with me! Will you, Fancy, marry me?"

The man uses logical argumentation, enumerating all benefits of getting married to him, and finally asks the girl to marry him.

FINAL ANSWER OF THE ADDRESSEE: hesitations, positive (?)

Another pause ensued, varied only by the surging of the rain against the window-panes, and then Fancy spoke, in a faint and broken voice.

"Yes, I will," she said.

"God bless you, my own!" He advanced quickly, and put his arm out to embrace her. She drew back hastily.

"No no, not now!" she said in an agitated whisper. "There are things;... but the temptation is, O, too strong, and I can't resist it; I can't tell you now, but I must tell you! Don't, please, don't come near me now! I want to think, I can scarcely get myself used to the idea of what I have promised yet." The next minute she turned to a desk, buried her face in her hands, and burst into a hysterical fit of weeping. "O, leave me to myself!" she sobbed; "leave me! O, leave me!"

Fancy has already promised her hand and heart to Dick, but his Maybold's arguments and material promises of a happy life make her doubt and accept his proposal. However, it does not consent to be considered complete: although Fancy initially agrees to marry, she still continues to doubt

and is an intense emotional state. Indicators of high emotion are nonverbal characteristics of verbal behavior (*agitated whisper; hysterical fit of weeping*), and verbal means: interrupted speech acts (*There are things; ....*), elliptical constructions (*I can't tell you now, but I must tell you!*), using exclamatory sentences, repeated directives (*leave me! O, leave me!*).

The speaker has reached his communicative purpose: received formal consent to the marriage, but girl's embarrassment and doubts are indicators of future difficulties in their relationship. Finally, the engagement will be canceled as vicar learns that she has accepted the offer of another man.

However, the genre under analysis demonstrates variation of appropriate communicative acts and omission of certain scenario stages due to its exceptional axiological loading. However, the semantic core of the marriage proposal is always the set of question and answer "*Will you marry me? - Yes / No* ", which may take different forms of speech realization.

Deviations from rigid conventionality of the speech genre "proposal" are found in its instances of loose formalization and can take a variety of forms.

1. Violation of the scenario development of communicative situation under analysis can find its reflection in omission of certain stages of the proposal or changes in the typical sequence of communicative actions. This deviation is usually combined with other instances of loose formalization.

2. Exchange of traditional gender roles in relationships addresser-addressee. Thus, in the dialogue between Bathsheba and farmer Oak in the novel "Far from the Maddening Crowd" the woman initiates the proposal, violating social norms and coming home to the man and directly alluding to the possibility of marriage between them:

"Bathsheba," he said, tenderly and in surprise, and coming closer: "if I only knew one thing--whether you would allow me to love you and win you, and marry you after all—if I only knew that!"

*"**But you never will know**," she murmured.*
"Why?"
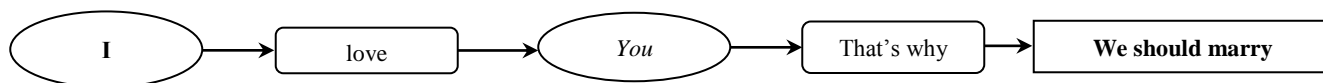
*"**Because you never ask**."*
"Oh--Oh!" said Gabriel, with a low laugh of joyousness. "My own dear-" [1, p 417].

Such choice of verbal behavior is explained, firstly, by the close friendship that connects both characters and secondly, by Bathsheba's confidence in Oak's love. In addition, Bathsheba does not completely take over the function of initiating the proposal, but merely directs dialogical interaction by implicit hint that takes the form of assertives "*But you never will know*" and "*Because you never ask*".

3. Transposition of the semantic centre of argumentation from the sender of the message to its recipient.

In the novel "*A Pair of Blue Eyes*" Stephen starts talking about marriage without any prefaces and introductory parts:

'And you do care for me and love me?' said he.
'Yes.'
'Very much?'
'Yes.'
*'**And I mustn't ask you if you'll wait for me, and be my wife some day?**"* [2].

The sender considers feelings of love sufficient basis for marriage. After receiving the affirmative answer to the first question, he immediately comes to the nuclear issue, which takes the form of implicit assertive through the use of the modal verb **must** in the negative form. Thus, the speaker indirectly demonstrates confidence in the affirmative reply of the recipient.

This instance vividly demonstrates the principal difference between the loose and rigid formalizations of the genre: traditionally during the proposal addressee suggests marriage and proclaims his own feelings for the recipient with the purpose of convincing her to accept the marriage offer. In the given case, the reasons for marriage are the feelings of the person who decides on the acceptance or refusal of marriage, i.e. the semantic center of the argument is not the addresser, but the addressee. Schematic representation of this deviation can take the following form, where option number 1 represents the line of reasoning of the speech genre "marriage proposal" in rigid formalization, and option number 2 – the direction of reasoning in loose formalization of the genre:

№1

| **I** | → | love | → | *You* | → | That's why | → | **We should marry** |

№2

| **You** | → | love | → | *Me* | → | That's why | → | **We should marry** |

4. **The omission** of the core question *Will you marry me?*, which is replaced by the utterance that does not allow negative response. The reason for such speech behavior may be the sufficient reason for marriage, such as the preg-nancy of woman. The illustration is the dialogue between Dick and Fancy in the novel "*Under the Greenwood Tree*":

„You do know, that even if I care very much for you, I must remember that I have a difficult position to maintain.

The vicar would not like me, as his schoolmistress, to indulge in a tete-a-tete anywhere with anybody."

"But I am not any body!" exclaimed Dick.

"No, no, I mean with a young man;" and she added softly, "unless I were really engaged to be married to him."

*"Is that all? **Then, dearest, dearest, why we'll be engaged at once, to be sure we will, and down I sit! There it is, as easy as a glove!***" [3].

The interaction shows the temporal substitution of the roles of interlocutors: Fancy sends Dick out because her staying in the same room with the man, with whom she is not even engaged, is socially inappropriate, thereby hinting at the need to formalize their relationship. This behavior allows the interlocutor Dick feel confident in getting the positive answer to the proposal of marriage, he even says "*it's as easy as a glove"*. However, further development of interaction and the lack of quick acceptance of proposal from Fancy still urges him to make an explicit proposal: "*And you'll be my own wife?*"

The analysis of dialogical discourse of proposal in fiction reveals the following causes of realization of speech genre in loose formalization:

a) confidence in obtaining the positive answer, which is usually a result of:

• a significant degree of intimacy between interlocutors;

• objective reasons that lead to marriage (e.g. pregnancy or destroying the reputation of girl, threat of departure of one of the communicants, extraordinary circumstances, etc);

• implicit provoking suggestions of women;

b) spontaneous emergence of decision to make a proposal;

– high emotionality of interlocutors that is usually caused by the depth and intensity of love feelings between them.

The given analysis showed that the speech genre "marriage proposal" in rigid or partially rigid formalization results in negative or partly negative outcome. In addition, in most cases these are strictly regulated communicative interactions that arise between the parties, relationships of which are not close or even friendly and who haven't not passed the initial stage of formalization of romantic relationship – previous declaration of love. Deviations from rigid conventionality of the given genre in loose formalization can take a number of implications and in most cases result in full or partial positive outcome.

Further research of the speech genre "marriage proposal" on a larger fictional corpus can be carried out with the aim to investigate the socio-cultural component of FLD.

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Булкина А.В.
Диалогический любовный дискурс в литературном общении: предложения руки и сердца в романах Томаса Гарди
Аннотация. Эта статья рассматривает вопрос художественного любовного дискурса. В статье предложен краткий обзор основных подходов к изучению природы любовного дискурса. В статье подробно анализируется речевой жанр "предложение руки и сердца" в творчестве Томаса Харди. Предложена характеристика данного речевого жанра как аргументативно-ритуального, а также выделены два типа формализации речевого жанра "предложение руки и сердца": жесткая и мягкая.
Ключевые слова: диалог, формализация, любовь дискурс, речевой жанр