

THE HARMONY OF LANGUAGE AND STYLE: A STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF DOROTHY L.SAYERS NOVEL WHOSE BODY

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Abstract. *This article analyzes the stylistic features of the novel “Whose Body” –the debut detective novel of Dorothy L. Sayers. The differential features of the characters’ speech, irony, lexical contrasts and the artistic effect created through the language and stylistic means are explored in the work. In the process of analysis examples from the work are cited to illuminate the author’s literary and aesthetic approach.*

Key words: *stylistic analysis, language tools, ironic style, Wimsey, detective genre, dialogue, parody.*

Introduction. Dorothy L. Sayers is considered one of the greatest and most prominent representatives of XX century English detective literature. She was one of the first female graduates of Oxford University and had a very rich intellectual background. Sayers used complex, artistic language in her works. Her novels contain many references to classical literature, Latin and French idioms and intellectual humor. This method requires cultural knowledge and attention from readers. In 1923 she wrote her first novel “Whose Body” which paved the door to her literary career. The same year, the work was published by T. Fisher Unwin Publishing House. Readers welcomed the book due to the unusual characteristic features of lord Peter Wimsey in spite of being criticized by literary scholars (Holger45). The success of the work led to the writing of several subsequent novels featuring Lord Peter Wimsey such as *Clouds of Witness, Unnatural Death, Strong Poison* and so on.

The novel “Whose Body ” is notable for its new stylistic approach to the detective genre. Sayers incorporated artistic language, ironic tone and social criticism in addition to a complicated crime plot in her work. Stylistic analysis reveals how deep and multi-layered the text of the novel.

Analysis and results. The usage of the language in the novel is appropriate in a way to the social position. The differences between social classes are clearly shown through the language of the work. Upper-class characters, particularly lord Peter Wimsey, use a rich and intellectual vocabulary, while servants and commoners speak grammatically simplified language riddled with grammatical errors. For instance, Wimsey addresses inspector Parker:

“My dear man, do pull yourself together and do not be an ass. You have no sense of proportion.” (Sayers24)

Or another example spoken from the language of a servant is:

"Lor, sir, I never see such a thing in me life" (Sayers32)

Through this contrast Sayers shows the reflection of linguistic stratification in a social mirror and uses the difference between languages as a stylistic device.

Sayers tries to give each character a unique speech. Each person speaks in their own way which reflects their social background, level of education, life experience and psychological state. For example, the main character lord Peter Wimsey's speech is complex, rich in aphorisms and ironies, often embellished with references to ancient literature, anecdotes or quotations. And this shows that he belonged to upper class and received classical education.

"A body? In a bath? Naked? With pince-nez? Good Lord" (Sayers 5)

This is stylistically short, dynamic sentence that combines humor and surprise.

The servants create a realistic backdrop with their simple, humble speech.

"I found him, my lord, just lying there, as if he'd been put in by hand " (Bunter's speech) (Sayers 6)

Inspector Parker or police officers often speak in a practical, formal and professional manner.

"we've taken the statement, my lord. There is not much in it, but she seems pretty rattled." (Parker's speech) (Sayers 54)

In addition to the artistic language, the author used dialogues effectively to develop the plot of the work. With the help of dialogues Sayers reveals the inner layer of events and set the plot by revealing the characters. The dialogues are short, sharp, and to the point, especially the conversations between Wimsey and Parker, which take the form of intellectual question and answer.

Wimsey: "Do you suppose he could have got into the bath by mistake?"

Parker: "Hardly. He had a pince-nez on his nose" (Sayers18)

This simple conversation combines humor and logical discussion, and represents the main component of detective work: observation.

Sayers uses irony extensively throughout the novel. This is especially evident in the image of lord Peter Wimsey. His humorous approach reflects not only his reaction to the events, but also his critical view of false traditions and bureaucracy in society.

"It is one of the most fantastic thing I ever heard," said Wimsey, "unless it was the man who kept bees in his hat" (Sayers27)

In this phrase Wimsey approaches the serious investigation process with humor, bringing the crime to an absurd state. The author's this style indicates a parodic attitude towards the detective genre. With this style, Sayers offers a light, playful alternative to the seriousness of the classic detective novel. Through

Wimsey's speech and internal monologues a general style is created that is light, sarcastic and partly parodic. Even the novel begins with a strange and almost comical situation, not a complex crime: the discovery of a stranger's body in a bathtub, naked. This incident itself is a stylistic contrast: a serious crime but presented in a humorous manner.

Wimsey: "it is a queer business altogether. A man with nothing on but a pair of pince-nez found in a stranger's bath and nobody owns him" (Sayers12)

The novel is written in a completely light tone. Although the main theme is crime and death, the author illuminates the plot with humor and simplicity. This is absurdity and its explosion in a humorous, not serious way is Sayers' stylistic innovation. Sayers not only serves the detective genre through this novel, but also analyzes it with gentle parody and social satire. She criticizes the bureaucratic police system, exposes the moral weakness of lawyers and judges, and exposes the mass media's portrayal of crime as a mere spectacle.

Conclusion. In the novel *Whose Body*, language and style are used not only as a means of expression, but also as a key stylistic mechanism that expresses the author's aesthetic and critical attitude towards the genre. Sayers individualizes each character by choosing the appropriate language, making effective use of irony, and generalizing simplicity and logic in syntax. Using humor, satire, and parody against the backdrop of a detective story, she brings a new stylistic approach to the classic genre. Stylistically, this novel was the foundation for Sayers's later novels and played an important role in the intellectual and aesthetic formation of the image of Wimsey.

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