



The Specific Use of Expressions Related to the Market in Charles Dickens' Novel *Oliver Twist*

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Keywords: *stylistic analysis, market, enumeration, alliteration, assonance, emotive prose, Smithfield market.*

Stylistic analysis has been used to discuss the usage of expressions related to certain cultural phenomena and characterization of heroes in the works of literature. Thus the discussion of the application of stylistic analysis to literary works on the basis of various linguists' comments is necessary. On the one hand, the Russian linguist Ilja Galperin stated that stylistic analysis is used to distinguish linguistic components in their interaction, identification of functional styles of language, stylistic devices and expressive means as the special media of the language which secures the desirable effect of utterances (Г а л ь п е р и н 1981, 9). The German linguist John Esser (1993) pointed out that stylistic analysis means observation of linguistic phenomena dealing with aspects of general linguistics. According to British linguists Laura Wright and Jonathan Hope, stylistic analysis technique encompasses syntactic analysis (analysis of noun phrases, verb phrases, the clause, cohesion, coherence) and statistical analysis of vocabulary focusing attention on collocations, semantic fields (W r i g h t, H o p e 1996). The British linguist Thomas McArthur pointed out that stylistic analysis as the analysis typical for the branch of linguistics is more oriented to the text, its reader, linguistic forms, use of figurative language, figures of speech (*COCTEL* 1998, 584).

On the other hand, British linguists Harry Widdowson, George Leech, a French linguist M. Rifatterre argued that stylistic analysis means an interdisciplinary analysis, which shows the link between language and literature (quoted from G e n i e - n ė 1997, 15). Therefore, the term *linguistic stylistics* has been used as a synonym for the term *linguistic criticism*. The Lithuanian linguist Izolda Rita Geniene coined a term *text-stylistics*, which means that the inquiry is carried out into general comments about certain period of literature, the language of the text and its context (*Ibid.*, 25). Thus, stylists try to discover not just what a text means, but also how it comes to mean what it does.

The stylistic analysis of this research deals with identification of figurative language elements, such as lexical expressive means (comparisons, allusions), syntac-

tic expressive means (enumeration) and phonetic expressive means and stylistic devices in Charles Dickens' novel *Oliver Twist*.

The aim of this paper is to discuss stylistic references to the market in the novel *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens.

The following methods were used in the paper: a descriptive-analytical method and stylistic analysis.

There is a number of definitions referring to style; however, most of them convey one common phenomenon, i.e. style first of all deals with the effects of the message, its impact on the reader created by the individual author. Therefore one of the most frequent definitions of style is that of Seymour Chatman: 'Style is a product of individual choices and patterns of choices among linguistic possibilities' (C h a t m a n 1967, 30). To sum up, it could be said that the selection or deliberate choice of language and the ways the chosen elements are treated turn out to be the main distinctive features of an individual style. Galperin's definition of an individual style in his book *Stylistics* is as follows: 'Individual style is a unique combination of language units, expressive means and stylistic devices peculiar to a given writer, which makes that writer's works or even utterances easily recognizable' (Г а л ь п е р и н 1981, 17). All writers have an individual manner of using language means to achieve the effect they desire. The British linguist Thomas McArthur points out that educated readers recognize distinctive authorial styles (the loose sentence structures and grotesque metaphors of Charles Dickens, the periodic sentences and abstract diction of Henry James or short, simple, direct sentences by Ernest Hemingway), also differences between the styles of writers at different points in their careers can be noticed (the play of sound in Shakespeare's early style in his comedies is distinct from the richly figurative style in his last plays) (*COCTEL* 1998, 583).

Dickens' Style

As has been pointed out by the British linguist Thomas McArthur, loose sentence structures and grotesque metaphors are peculiar to Dickens' writings, while an American literary critic Benjamin Griffith emphasized that in early Dickens' novels (*Pickwick Papers*, *Oliver Twist*, *David Copperfield*) elements of social criticism linked with humour dominate, while in his later novels (*Bleak House*, *Hard Times*, *Great Expectations*, *Our Mutual Friend*) the chosen words have negative connotations and deal with accusation of Victorian society (G r i f f i t h 1991, 88). Galperin notes that Charles Dickens' prose possesses some elements of the 19th century emotive prose (substyle of belles-lettres style), which is abundant in jargon, professional words, slang, various use of detached constructions, experiments with syntax (Г а л ь п е р и н 1981, 280).

Geniene points out that Charles Dickens as well as Thackeray and George Eliot used style variation in the speech of their characters based on the register features such as tenor, field (domain of discourse) and dialect, which are effective stylistic means expressing different points of view, moral and social values, irony, and humour verging on satire (G e n i e n ė 1997, 78).

Dickens loved the style of the 18th century gothic romance, although it had already become a target for parody; and while some of his characters are grotesque, their eccentricities do not usually overshadow the stories (M e r c k e n s 2010). “*When we read Dickens... we are reading all sorts of other things at the same time – plot, character, moral dilemma, historical predicament, and so forth – but we can see all these in their complexity only if we attend to the illuminating play of style*” (A l t e r 1984, 165).

Dickens applied his unique power of observation to the city in which he spent most of his life. He routinely walked the city streets, 10 or 20 miles at a time, and his descriptions of the nineteenth century London allow readers to experience the sights, sounds, and smells of the old city. This ability to immerse the reader into time and place sets the perfect stage for Dickens to weave his fiction.

Victorian London was the largest, most spectacular city in the world. While Britain was experiencing the Industrial Revolution, its capital was both reaping the benefits and suffering the consequences. In 1800 the population of London was around a million. That number would swell to 4.5 million by 1880. While fashionable areas like Regent and Oxford streets were growing in the west, new docks supporting the city's place as the world's trade center were being built in the east. Perhaps the biggest impact on the growth of London was the coming of the railroad in the 1830s which displaced thousands and accelerated the expansion of the city.

The price of this explosive growth and domination of world trade was untold squalor and filth. In his excellent biography, *Dickens*, Peter Ackroyd notes that “*If a late twentieth-century person were suddenly to find himself in a tavern or house of the period, he would be literally sick - sick with the smells, sick with the food, sick with the atmosphere around him*” (A c k r o y d 1990, 76).

Imagine yourself in the London of the early 19th century. The homes of the upper and middle class exist in close proximity to areas of unbelievable poverty and filth. Rich and poor alike are thrown together in the crowded city streets. Street sweepers attempt to keep the streets clean of manure, the result of thousands of horse-drawn vehicles. The city's thousands of chimney pots are belching coal smoke, resulting in soot which seems to settle everywhere. In many parts of the city raw sewage flows in gutters that empty into the Thames. Street vendors hawking their wares add to the cacophony of street noises. Pick-pockets, prostitutes, drunks, beggars, and vagabonds of every description add to the colourful multitude.

Personal cleanliness is not a big priority, nor is clean laundry. In close, crowded rooms the smell of unwashed bodies is stifling. It is unbearably hot by the fire, numbingly cold away from it. In the novel *Oliver Twist*, London itself seems to be part of the overall system of control that threatens and entraps Oliver at every turn. The streets are like a filthy labyrinth – once you turn wrong, it is impossible to escape. The country, on the other hand, is pristine and harmonious. Even the plants and flowers seem less constrained, and are able to grow freely wherever they want. It is no accident that Oliver keeps moving back and forth between urban and rural settings

in this novel. The city itself is condemned, almost as much as the institutions of religion and justice, for helping to create criminals and oppress the poor. Because of this, the city gets personified numerous times – it is always easier to blame a person than an inanimate city.

Despite poverty, humiliation and human inequality, *the market* remains the centre of attraction to all the countrymen living in London and around its vicinities.

Linguist Paul Simpson states: “<...> stylistics is interested in language as a function of texts in context, and it acknowledges the utterances (literary or otherwise) are produced in a time, a place, and in a cultural and cognitive context” (S i m p s o n 2004, 3).

The image of British market, as well as other cultural phenomena typical for Britain has been analysed by British cultural anthropologists (Nigel Barley, Harry Geoffrey Beasley, John Beddoe, etc) who examined culture as a meaningful scientific concept.

Dickens mentions three market places in London: that is the Smithfield market, Covent Garden market and ‘Rag Fair’. The Smithfield market is one of London’s oldest markets, where meat has been bought and sold for over 800 years. The market was held on Mondays and Thursdays. A livestock market occupied the site as early as the 10th century. The Smithfield live-cattle market was finally moved out of the city to slaughterhouses in Islington in 1855. It should be mentioned that at the same time it was the site of public executions and of course attracted crowds of people.

The name ‘Covent Garden’ has its origins in the mists of time, dating back to the reign of King John in the 13th century. It was a 40-acre site and formed the large kitchen garden for the Convent or Abbey of St Peter at Westminster. For the benefit of modern day visitors, the land lay between St Martin’s Lane in the west, Drury Lane in the east, Floral Street to the north and Maiden Lane to the south. The monks’ convent garden became a major source of fruit and vegetables in London and, for the next 700 years, Covent Garden became inexorably linked with fresh fruit and vegetables.

‘Rag Fair’ or old-clothes market in White Chapel Road was well known for receivers of stolen goods.

Having discussed the cultural reference to the market we can proceed to the discussion of the use of figurative elements in the descriptions of the market places. Actually we have selected the Smithfield market for a more thorough analysis.

In *Oliver Twist*, Dickens describes the scene as Oliver and Bill Sikes travel through the Smithfield live-cattle market on their way to burglarize the Maylie home: and here the writer masterfully uses stylistic device of enumeration. “Enumeration is a stylistic device by which separate things, objects, phenomena, properties, actions are named one by one so that they produce a chain, the links of which, being syntactically in the same position (homogeneous parts of speech), are forced to display some kind of semantic homogeneity” (Г а л ь п е р и н 1981, 217). Enumeration is frequently used as a device to depict scenery through a person’s eyes. The enumeration here is worth analyzing:

It was market-morning. The ground was covered, nearly ankle-deep, with filth and mire; a thick steam, perpetually rising from the reeking bodies of the cattle, and mingling with the fog, which seemed to rest upon the chimney-tops, hung heavily above. All the pens in the centre of the large area, and as many temporary pens as could be crowded into the vacant space, were filled with sheep; tied up to posts by the gutter side were long lines of beasts and oxen, three or four deep. Countrymen, butchers, drovers, hawkers, boys, thieves, idlers, and vagabonds of every low grade, were mingled together in a mass; the whistling of drovers, the barking dogs, the bellowing and plunging of the oxen, the bleating of sheep, the grunting and squeaking of pigs, the cries of hawkers, the shouts, oaths, and quarrelling on all sides; the ringing of bells and roar of voices, that issued from every public-house; the crowding, pushing, driving, beating, whooping and yelling; the hideous and discordant din that resounded from every corner of the market; and the unwashed, unshaven, squalid, and dirty figures constantly running to and fro, and bursting in and out of the throng; rendered it a stunning and bewildering scene, which quite confounded the senses (Dickens 2010).

The various elements of this enumeration can be approximately grouped in the following semantic fields: 1) ankle-deep filth and mire, thick steam, fog; 2) cattle, bleating sheep, plunging oxen, grunting and squeaking pigs, barking dogs, lines of beasts; 3) chimney tops, pens, vacant space, public house, every corner, scene, gutter; 4) countrymen, butchers, drovers, hawkers, boys, thieves, idlers, vagabonds, dirty figures.

Dickens found it necessary to arrange them in this order, which apparently would suggest the rapidly changing impressions of the market in the eyes of the main character Oliver Twist. Enumeration of this kind assumes a stylistic function and may therefore be regarded as a stylistic device, inasmuch as the objects in the enumeration are not distributed in quite logical order and therefore become more striking.

“The heterogeneous enumeration gives one an insight into the mind of the observer, into the great variety of miscellaneous objects which caught his eye <...>” (Галъперин 1981, 217). The parts of enumeration may be likened to the strokes of a painter's brush who by the choice of colours presents to our eyes an unforgettable image of the scene, and provides the reader with a possibility to emerge into the motion and life of the 19th century most famous live stock market in Britain, Smithfield.

Here is another description of the scene portraying the people travelling to the market early in the morning:

Then, came straggling groups of labourers going to their work; then, men and women with fish-baskets on their heads; donkey-carts laden with vegetables; chaise-carts filled with live-stock or whole carcasses of meat; milk-women with pails; an unbroken concourse of people, trudging out with various supplies to the eastern suburbs of the town. As they approached the City, the noise and traffic gradually increased; when they threaded the streets between Shoreditch and Smithfield, it

had swelled into a roar of sound and bustle. It was as light as it was likely to be, till night came on again, and the busy morning of half the London population had begun (D i c k e n s 2010).

And again Charles Dickens expertly exploits enumeration delegating to it the role of the stylistic device. The elements of the enumeration could be loosely grouped into the following semantic fields: 1) labourers, men, women, milk-women, people, population; 2) fish-baskets, donkey-carts, carcasses of meat, pails 3) the eastern suburbs, the City, Smithfield, London, Shoreditch 4) laden with vegetables, filled with livestock. This kind of enumeration helps to create the realistically lively, full of motion morning atmosphere and the scene of the crowd hurrying to the market which is the place of immense importance for Victorian man.

“The stylistic approach to the utterance is not confined to its structure and sense. There is another thing to be taken into account which plays an important role. This is the way a word, a phrase or a sentence sounds. The sound of most words taken separately will have little or no aesthetic value. It is in combination with other words that a word may acquire a desired phonetic effect” (Г а л ь п е р и н 1981, 123). This is a matter of individual perception and feeling. And Dickens seems to be a great master of weaving phonetic stylistic devices into the fabric of his works. In the depiction of Smithfield market, the writer employs onomatopoeia. Onomatopoeia is a combination of speech-sounds which aims at imitating sounds produced in nature, by people, by things and animals (Ibid., 124). While describing a market day, Dickens creates a palette of a deafening cacophony : we hear the sounds of whistling, barking, bellowing, bleating, grunting and squeaking; we are disgusted by shouts, oaths, sounds of quarrelling, the ringing of bells, roar of voices, whooping and yelling and “<...> the hideous discordant dim that resounded from every corner of the market <...> ” (Dickens 2010). In addition, the onomatopoeic effect is achieved by combination of words ending in ‘-ing’ at certain intervals. It helps to create an intense rhythm for the whole utterance as if reflecting a wide and varied range of activities: frantic, suspicious, possibly illegal and subversive.

In another extract related to Smithfield market Charles Dickens makes good use of alliteration. It is a phonetic stylistic device that aims at imparting melodic effect to the utterance. The essence of this device lies in the repetition of similar sounds, in particular consonant sounds, in close succession, particularly at the beginning of successive words:

*It was **S**mithfield that they were **c**rossing, although it might have been Gros**v**enor **S**quare, for anything Oliver knew to the **c**ontrary. The night was dark and foggy. The lights in the **s**hops could **s**carcely **s**truggle through the heavy mist, which thickened every moment and **s**hrouded the **s**treet and houses in gloom; rendering the **s**trange place **s**till **s**tranger in Oliver’s eyes; and making his **u**ncertainty the more **d**ismal and **d**epressing (D i c k e n s 2010).*

“Alliteration does not bear any lexical or other meaning unless we agree that a sound meaning exists as such” (Г а л ь п е р и н 1981, 126). But even so we may not be able to specify clearly the character of this meaning. Therefore alliteration

is regarded as a musical accompaniment of the author's idea, supporting it with some vague emotional atmosphere which each reader interprets for himself. Thus the repetition of the sound [s] and [d] prompts the feeling of fear, horror, anguish or all these feelings together. By the end of the novel the usage of alliteration helps to depict a much jollier atmosphere which inspires hope and reliance on new prospects. "*The sun, the bright sun, that brings back, not light alone, but new life, and hope, and freshness to man – burst upon the crowded city in clear and radiant glory*" (Dickens 2010). The repetition of the initial sounds of the stressed words integrates the utterance into a compositional unit.

"Only literary language", Davis (expert of Victorian literature) argues, can offer "the direct imaginative experience of deep meaning that reading constitutes for serious Victorians" (Davis 2004, 9).

Conclusions

To conclude we would like to mention the following:

1. Charles Dickens' style in *Oliver Twist* reflects the features of the 19th century emotive prose.
2. The imagery of the British meat and poultry market, the Smithfield market, has been revealed through the usage of figurative language.
3. The stylistic analysis has shown that Charles Dickens in the description of the Smithfield market employs phonetic and syntactic expressive means and stylistic devices such as onomatopoeia, alliteration and enumeration to depict the spirit of the market of Victorian era.

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Source

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Specifinis posakių, susijusių su turgumi, vartojamas Charleso Dickenso romane *Oliveris Twistas*

S a n t r a u k a

Pagrindinės sąvokos: *stilistinė analizė, turgus, išvardijimas, aliteracija, asonansas, emocinė proza, Smitfildo turgus.*

Šio straipsnio tikslas – aptarti stilistinės raiškos priemones britų rašytojo Charleso Dickenso romane *Oliveris Twistas*. Remiantis autoritetingų lingvistų teoriniais darbais, analizuotas romanas, išskirtas tam tikrų stilistinių figūrų pasikartojimas aprašant turgų, jo atmosferą Viktorijos laikų Londone. Romano autorius meistriškai taiko fonetinės raiškos priemones – onomatopėją, aliteraciją, kurios įtaigiai perteikia tokią dinamišką, slogią ir triukšmingą britų turgaus kasdienybę. Pasitelkęs sintaksines stilistines priemones (išvardijimą) Dickensas nukelia skaitytoją į garsų ir gyvulių ir paukščių turgų vakarų Smitfilde Londone karalienės Viktorijos valdymo metais. Galima teigti, kad visos šios raiškos priemonės prisideda ir prie negatyvaus turgaus įvaizdžio kūrimo. Taip Dickensas lyg ir griaua tradicinę 19-ojo amžiaus emocinės prozos struktūrą.

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The aim of the article is to discuss stylistic references to the market in the British novelist Charles Dickens' novel *Oliver Twist*. The following research methods have been used in the discussion of the chosen novel: a descriptive-analytical method and stylistic analysis. Discussion of the style of Dickens' writings according to linguists' theoretical works enabled to identify specific stylistic features (use of dialect, humour, satire, imagery). The use of figurative language elements (lexical and syntactic devices) helps to form the image of the British market. Phonological figures (onomatopoeias, alliterations) enable to render intense rhythm and atmosphere of the British market. Specific use of syntactic phenomena

(enumeration) helps to create the image of the oldest British meat and poultry market in West Smithfield, the area of the city of London during the Victorian period. In conclusion, it could be claimed that the use of figurative language helps to show a negative image of the British market in Victorian England. The stylistic analysis showed that Charles Dickens uses references to unusual location as the way of breaking traditional syntactic design of the 19th century emotive prose.

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