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THE ROLE OF SOLILOQUY IN THE REPRESENTATION OF HAMLET'S PSYCHOLOGICAL COMPLEXITY

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ANNOTATION

This study examines how Hamlet's monologues function as a key dramatic device for revealing his complex character in William Shakespeare's tragedy Hamlet. *Through his soliloquies, Hamlet's inner thoughts, emotional conflicts, and philosophical reflections are directly presented to the audience. The analysis focuses on how these monologues expose his indecision, moral awareness, intellectual depth, and struggle between action and inaction. By closely examining key soliloquies such as "To be, or not to be," the study demonstrates that Hamlet's monologues not only deepen the audience's understanding of his psychological state but also advance the dramatic tension of the play. Ultimately, the monologues serve as a vital means of character development and highlight Hamlet's role as a reflective and tragic hero.*

KEYWORDS: *Hamlet, Monologue, Soliloquy, Character Revelation, Inner Conflict, Psychological Depth, Shakespearean Tragedy.*

Аннотация

В данном исследовании рассматривается, каким образом монологи Гамлета функционируют как ключевой драматический приём, раскрывающий сложный характер главного героя в трагедии Уильяма Шекспира *«Гамлет»*. Через свои солилоквии Гамлет напрямую открывает зрителю свои внутренние мысли, эмоциональные конфликты и философские размышления. Анализ сосредоточен на том, как эти монологи выявляют его нерешительность, нравственное сознание, интеллектуальную глубину, а также борьбу между действием и бездействием. Посредством детального рассмотрения ключевых солилоквиев, таких как «Быть или не быть», исследование показывает, что монологи Гамлета не только углубляют понимание его психологического состояния, но и усиливают драматическое напряжение пьесы. В конечном итоге монологи служат важнейшим средством развития характера и подчёркивают роль Гамлета как рефлексивного и трагического героя.

КЛЮЧЕВЫЕ СЛОВА: Гамлет, монолог, солилоквий, раскрытие характера, внутренний конфликт, психологическая глубина, шекспировская трагедия.

This study investigates the language strategies used by Shakespeare in The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark (1603). Emphasis is given to the type of language or register Shakespeare provides his characters with in order to give them genuine or assumed identities. The linguistic register of the three major characters of Claudius, the Ghost, and Hamlet is explored in light of the Elizabethan cultural context. This concern with these three characters stems from the basic assumption of the paper that the play is a struggle between Claudius and the Ghost over Hamlet. Claudius speaks the language of a monarch which is informed by the code of society; the Ghost, who used to speak such language of sovereignty while alive, speaks a language of the dead informed by a newly acquired experience not familiar to human beings. On the other hand, Hamlet's use of language is the most peculiar in the play. His register keeps changing according to his tragic growth and his readiness for action. The study indicates that the language functions Shakespeare utilizes in Hamlet are numerous. Language is used creatively for a variety of purposes in addition to communication. The playwright employs language as a shield for self-defence, a tool for defining and hiding identity and misleading and manipulating others, a means of search for reality, and a tool for punishment, among other functions. The study findings invite further research into Shakespeare's use of language in his plays. No detailed in-depth studies of Shakespearean language and its implications exist.

Claudius' Language of Terrestrial Sovereignty The language of Claudius maintains courtly diction, elevated style, and complex sentences. Notably, however, is the perversity in the grammar and arrangement of sentences in his inauguration speech during the first meeting in the court. Claudius addresses a number of issues: his marriage to the widow of his brother, the expected assault on Denmark by the Norwegian Prince Fortin bras, giving Leartes leave to depart to France, and the excessive mourning of Hamlet over his father's death. The king opens the meeting with the issue of mourning over the demise of the previous king, his brother:

Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death
The memory be green, and that it us befitted
To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom
To be contracted in one brow of woe,
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature

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That we with wisest sorrow think on him
Together with remembrance of ourselves. (Jenkins, 2003, I. ii. 1-7)

In this extended sentence of seven lines, he talks clearly and majestically in a powerful tone and elevated style. Grammatically, the sentence is complex and starts with a subordinate clause, which is extended and its effect in tensified by a series of conjunctions and infinitives. Pragmatically, it gives evidence of language of containment and manipulation in which Claudius pretends to join his courtiers in sadness over the death of the late king. In fact, he unites with the whole nation, which is all "contracted in one brow of woe", mourning the sad occasion.

In the last three lines of the sentence, he quickly revokes the unanimity of sorrow and reminds his audience of the necessity to carry on with their lives after showing due grief over the death of the late king. His style here is assertive and demonstrates a seemingly avid confidence. As a new ruler, he wants his subjects to go on with their lives as they, like him, have duly mourned their previous monarch.

Overwhelmed by the apparent sagacity and persuasive discourse, the unquestioning attendants are meant not to notice the swift transition to his conclusion in the second sentence:

Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,
The imperial join tress to this warlike state,
Have we, as 'were with a defeated joy,
With an auspicious and a dropping eye,
With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage,
In equal scale weighing delight and dole,
Taken to wife. Nor have we herein barr'd
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
With this affair along. For all, our thanks. (I. ii. 8-16; the author's italics)

Here he announces his marriage to his sister-in-law. This sentence starts with the connecting word, therefore, which gives the impression of sequential progression in logic, as Hussey (1982, p. 96) pointed out. The sentence seems to be saying that because Claudius, like his subjects, has mourned the late king properly, he gets married to his widow. Analysing the argument carefully, however, shows a non sequitur and perversity in logic.

More perverse is the anastrophe in which he announces his marital alliance to Gertrude. He twists the sentence around so that it is rearranged backward. Instead of saying: "We have taken our sometime sister to wife"(S {aux. + V} O), he reverses the order of the sentence: "Our sometime sister… have we… taken to wife" (O auxS V). Furthermore, he severs the auxiliary verb from the main verb. Naturally, the main verb which carries the news of his immoral marriage is delayed for four lines. After pronouncing the auxiliary verb, the main verb is put off by three prepositional phrases. These phrases are no more than a cluster of three paradoxes and an oxymoron. Hussey (1982, p. 96) rightly noticed that the subordination and parentheses of its syntax reveal the new King as a master of circumlocution. In fact, the delay of the verb is related to the nature of the message itself. Marriage to a sister-in-law was considered by the church and society as incestuous and immoral, thus unacceptable. The paradoxical language in the phrases is congruous with the laxity and illegitimacy of the marriage. This way the circumlocution of the language reflects the crookedness of the marriage.

The new monarch has his listeners swallow the idea, but gives them no chance to digest it. He quickly sweeps it away and moves swiftly to the other topic of the Norwegian preparation for war against his country. Claudius' fast pace in transiting to the war theme is clearly meant to distract the court from the domestic affair to the national issue, a concern that supposedly deserves more attention from them.

The language which he uses in tackling the public issue (I. ii. 27-39) is meant to assert his leadership and confidence, and necessarily to derive the courtiers' admiration of his kingship. In an elevated and majestic style, Claudius uses a language which is direct and to the point. The message to Voltim and and Cornelius is shrewd and pragmatic. It implies that the speaker is confident and in control of his kingdom, and is going to prove a successful king. He dispatches his royal messengers to the bed-stricken King of Norway urging him to put an end his nephew's preparation for war against Denmark to recover the disputed lands between the two countries lost by the Norwegian previous king in a dual with Old Hamlet. Parallel to this diplomatic initiative, he mobilizes his country to a state of emergency and preparation for war that astonishes the public. Marcellus wonders at the reason behind all that preparation for war:

Why this same strict and most observant watch
So nightly toils the subject of the land,
And why such daily cast of brazen cannon
And foreign mart for implements of war,
Why such impress of shipwrights, whose sore task
Does not divide the Sunday from the week.
What might be toward that this sweaty haste
Doth make the night joint-labourer with the day,
Who is it that can inform me? (I. i. 74-82)

The king makes a show of taking measures to defend his country against the plans of Fortin bras, who hopes to recover the disputed lands lost by his father to Old Hamlet. However, there is no evidence in the play after this scene that Claudius follows up on these measures through out the action of the play, whereas the Now we gian prince keeps approaching slowly but steadily till he conquers the Danish court at the end of the play. The Norwegian army's persistent movement runs parallel to Claudius' laborious effort to subdue Hamlet and avoid his revenge rather than securing the country against outside aggression. These facts give evidence that the show of Claudius' concern with public affairs is merely a lip service meant to distract his listeners from the main issue of his speech, namely, his marriage to the widow of his brother.

In addressing Laertes' quest for leave, Claudius uses language in a peculiar way: He showers Laertes with a cluster of questions without waiting for a reply, while simultaneously blaming him for losing his voice.

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?
You told us of some suit: what is't, Laertes?

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You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,
And loose your voice: what wouldst thou beg, Laertes,
That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?
…
What wouldst thou have, Laertes? (I. ii. 42-49)

He shows abidance by social rules and social propriety: He gives Laertes permission to leave only after he secures his father's consent (I. ii. 57).

Claudius' main language encounter in the first court meeting is with Hamlet. Their initial short exchange looks like a linguistic duel.

KING CLAUDIUS
But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son—
HAMLET
A little more than kin, and less than kind.
KING CLAUDIUS
How is it that the clouds still hang on you?
HAMLET
Not so, my lord, I am too much in the sun. (I. ii. 64-68)

In the first sentence, Claudius uses a pun to address Hamlet, who responds with a pun in an aside. Then Claudius uses a metaphor and Hamlet responds with a metaphor. Hamlet offers an immediate language-enabled counter part for the monarch who dominates all others with his overreaching language.

Reading closely, however, one finds that the king's question of "How is it that the clouds still hang on you?"contradicts his preceding claim that he bears his heart in grief in a country that is all contracted in one brow of woe. And out of wisdom and practicality, he simply combines delight and dole, and mirth and dirge. If so why wonder if Hamlet, the son of the dead king, is still mourning the death of his father. The question indicates that the king has given up mourning totally. His foregoing claims about merging sadness and joy are no more than an engagement in discourse.

Claudius in his long rebuke of Hamlet (I. ii. 87-117) reminds his nephew of the social and cultural code of the Danish society in a situation like the one at hand. That code is the outcome of collective experience of the members of the community (the nation), who have found out the most acceptable and practical form of submission to the necessity of death. Submission to death has been dictated by a number of factors which include religious beliefs of the group, natural necessity, the inevitability of death, and the natural quest of the living for life (Kramsch, 1998, pp. 5-7).

Claudius defines the acceptable response of a prince to the death of his father as thus:

'This sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,
To give these mourning duties to your father,
But, you must know your father lost a father,
That father lost, lost his—and the survivor bound
In filial obligation for some term
To do obsequious sorrow. (I. ii. 87-92)

In light of that social and cultural code, the persistence of Hamlet's mourning for the death of his father is viewed by Claudius as:

… a fault to heaven,
A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
To reason most absurd, whose common theme
Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,
From the first course till he that died today,
"This must be so". (I. ii. 101-105)

Furthermore, Claudius argues that Hamlet's perseverance in mourning shows an "impious stubbornness", an "unmanly grief", and defiance of religion ("a will most incorrect to heaven"). It shows that he has not been educated in the traditions of society, demonstrating major personal defects:

A heart unfortified, a mind impatient,
An understanding simple and unschool'd; (I. ii. 96-97)

Claudius succeeds in putting himself at the heart of the speech community of Elsinore which devises what can be called discourse community, to use the terminology of Claire Kramsch in her brilliant book, Language and Culture(1998). Kramsch (1998) argued that "Speech community is composed of people who use the same linguistic code" (p. 6) and discourse community is the way the group uses language to serve their social needs, because the group develops similar ways to view the world through interaction among the members of the group. The views of the group are reinforced by institutions like the government and the family. Their discourse does not only mean their lexical, grammatical, and phonological features, but also the topics they choose to talk about and their discourse accent, which is the style they use as they interact (Kramsch, 1998, p. 7).

The language Claudius speaks here echoes the concepts of the Danish people on the occasion of death. His view on death and mourning represents the community discourse which has developed through the years, and is rein forced by the beliefs and traditions of the nation. In contrast, Hamlet's persistence on mourning does not represent the traditions of the country, religion, and culture.

Before this courtly language and discourse, Hamlet finds no choice but to succumb to the desire of his mother and uncle of staying in Denmark and not continuing his studies at Wittenberg University in Germany. Hamlet's answer tremendously thrills Claudius who decides a massive nuptial ceremony of a drinking rouse and shooting cannons whose echo will reach the boundaries of the celestial world. Claudius says:

No jocund health that Denmark drinks today
But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,
And the king's rouse the heavens all bruit again,
Re-speaking earthly thunder.

A serious scrutiny will show that the apparently glamorous language of Claudius suffers from perversity inform and structure and hides numerous linguistic trick sand games. However, on its face value, the sovereign register of Claudius has been congruous and suitable to the court and the community and this is why everybody in court, not excluding Hamlet, is cheated by the glamour of that register.

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In contrast, the Ghost is provided with another type of register, one that relies heavily and distinctly on classical mythology and Biblical references and allusions. This sort of language is meant to isolate the Ghost as an alien to the terrestrial culture of this world. After his death, Old Hamlet should not appear again in the terrestrial world. So the language he speaks is consistently estranged from the code of language used in the court and the world of the living. This is why the appearance of the Ghost to the guards in "the vast and middle of the night" (I. ii. 197) in a figure like Hamlet's father makes them "distilled almost to jelly with the act of fear" (I. ii.204). His slow and stately walk in full arms before their "oppressed and fear-surprised eyes" (I. ii. 202) indicates some havoc in the world order, as Hamlet suggests upon hearing the news from Horatio. Hamlet suspects something fiche in that return of his father's spirit from the world of the dead:

My father's spirit in arms! all is not well;
I doubt some foul play: would the night were come!
Till then sit still, my soul: foul deeds will rise,
Though all the earth over whelm them, to men's eyes.

Later as Hamlet himself sees the Ghost, he expresses his doubts about the apparition and the possibilities it can take. The Ghost appears exhausted, tortured, and revengeful. He requires that Hamlet take revenge for the crime committed against him by Claudius who is currently married to his wife, wearing his crown, and ruling his kingdom:

The serpent that did sting thy father's life
Now wears his crown.

Shakespeare clearly represents the Renaissance world view which indicated that the universe was divided into three layers: the celestial (the realm of God and the angels), the terrestrial (the realm of Man and the lower creatures of the Chain of Being), and the chthonian (the realm of the dead) (Tillyard, 1943). The encroachment of the dwellers of the chthonian upon the terrestrial sphere, like the appearance of ghosts or witches, was considered suspicious and forebodes unnatural events. The Ghost of Old Hamlet is thus supposed to be stationed in the chthonian realm and has no place among the dwellers of the terrestrial sphere. Hamlet marvels:

Why thy canonized bones, hear sed in death,
Have burst their cerements; why the sepulchre,
Wherein we saw thee quietly in urn'd,
Hath opened his ponderous and marble jaws,
To cast thee up again.

Old Hamlet's appearance in this world is suspicious and raises the doubts of the young prince. Suspicions are justified in a culture that believed that demons and spirits existed and could metamorphose into any form(Nighan, 2001, ch. 3). Believing in the concept of demons and spirits and their abilities to transform was not a folkloric concept, but the conviction of the elites in society not excluding King James I of England himself, who wrote a book titled Daemonologie(1597) about demons and demonology. According to Nighan, King James was surrounded by well known magicians (Nighan, 2001, ch. 3).

In his book, Hamlet and the Deamons (2001), which argues that the Ghost in Hamlet is an evil spirit, Nighan devoted a chapter to trace the sources of Elizabethan view on ghosts and demons by way of analyzing the cultural roots that informed Shakespeare's Hamlet. He isolates quotations and excerpts from a number of important sources like St. Augustine's The City of God(written 413 A.D.-426A.D.), Thomas Aquinas' Summa Theologica(written 1265-1274), and James' Daemonologie, among other sources (Nighan, 2001, ch. 3). All those sources agree on some basic facts about ghosts that can be summarized as follows: Ghosts return to earth to one who seeks revenge, one who is evil, or one who hates God; ghosts find it easy to work on melancholic minds; they can cause madness and cause the evil to suffer and the good to be tested. This is why Hamlet is suspicious about the identity of the apparition of his father after their first encounter. His doubts are justified:

Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damn'd,
Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
Thou comest in such a questionable shape
That I will speak to thee:

This study, however, is not concerned with the nature of the Ghost, be it a malevolent or benevolent spirit. The paper is concerned with the register Shakespeare provides him with by way of differentiating his language from that of living beings in the court and in public. His language is loaded with experience that living human beings have not undergone. It is a language that is appropriated to a spirit coming from the dead. To make it plausibly so, Shakespeare has him deliver his speeches in a selection of language loaded with a set of metaphors and images that belong to non-terrestrial culture. It is a combination of classical mythological references and biblical motifs and allusions.

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