

Analysis of Tickets, Please from the Perspective of Female Stylistic

¹Cai Xiaoying, ²Cao Wei

¹Yancheng Teacher's College, 224002, Jiangsu, China

²Nanjing University Of The Arts, 210013, Jiangsu, China

hunter2011@foxmail.com

dfcaixiaoying@sina.com

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Abstract. The short story describes women's violent revenge on a dandy who jilts them after seducing them. Apparently, women are more powerful in position than men in this story, but as a matter of fact, the author tries not to highlight women's position in a male-dominated world, instead he mocks and scorns women by putting them into a self-contradictory and hysterical state. My paper is designed to carry out a feminist stylistic analysis of this short story in terms of Transitivity choices and symbolism, hoping to contribute to readers' better understanding of the story and to reveal women's deep frustration and the ambiguous relationships between the sexes and the author's mocks and scorns towards women.

Introduction

A Brief Introduction to Tickets, please. D.H. Lawrence's short story *Tickets, please* depicts a story set in WW1, that the leading figure, Annie, a female conductor in a tramcar, after being seduced and jilted by John Thomas, a young inspector of the tramway system, took revenge on the man by uniting all the female conductors who had experienced the same treatment as her to give the man a hard lesson. In the story, these girls seem to be put in a stronger position than male figures but as a matter of fact, there are still in the second-rate status when it comes to direct gender relationship. Apparently, they succeeded in giving the man a hard lesson by roughing him up but accurately, they are less emotionally satisfied and yet they are deeply spiritually lost.

Women in this short story seem to be put in a stronger position than men in the tram-system where the dominance is in the hands of girl conductors while men are mentioned either as cripples and hunchbacks or as dandies like John Thomas. But is this the real case? Have women really gained social recognition and self-identity in a male-dominated society? From the analysis of the story, I conclude that women are still in an inferior status and at the same time in the pursuit of strong position they get lost spiritually. They are easily to fall for men and lose their reasons. Their subsequent violent reaction reveals their deep frustration and the ambiguous relationships between the sexes. And I also want to reveal the author's mocking and scornful attitude towards women by putting them into self-contradictory and hysterical status.

A Brief Introduction to Feminist Stylistics. Feminist stylistics established itself as a branch of stylistics in the late 1970s and early 1980s, whilst the trend of contextualization was at an advantage in literary stylistic explorations. It shares much in both ideas and language models with critical stylistics, since analysis of literature as the product of social relations has found its strongest, and one of its most politically necessary expressions in feminist analysis of text (Birch, 1989: 18).

Deirdre Burton (1982) is one of the important figures in the realm of feminist stylistics. Burton employs the transitivity system to analyze *The Bell Jar*. The conclusion is that gender discrimination is an original and profound while difficult to be changed aspect which leads to social inequality (Burton, 1982: 197).

Sara Mills in her book *Feminist Stylistics*, which is a milestone in this field, points out ways of analyzing articles. According to her, "feminist stylistic analysis is concerned not only to describe sexism in a text, but also to analyse the way that point of view, agency, metaphor, or transitivity are

unexpectedly closely related to matters of gender, to discover whether women's writing practices can be described, and so on" (1995: 1). "Feminist Stylistics aims to make explicit some of the untenable assumptions underlying conventional stylistics and, by not simply adding gender to its list of interesting elements to analyse, to take stylistics into a new stage. . . . Feminist stylistics also aims to show that gender is foregrounded in texts at certain key moments and is usually dealt with in ways which can be predicted" (Mills, 1995:17). According to Sara Mills, feminist stylistic analysis is "an analysis which identifies itself as feminist and which uses linguistic or language analysis to examine texts" (Mills, 1995:1). She also shows that feminist stylistics focuses on the solution to two questions; that is, why authors have chosen certain ways to express their ideas on gender issues, and how certain effects related to the two sexes are achieved through language. To sum up, the book aims to provide with readers the tools to identify and deal with sexism and gender bias in texts.

Transitivity Systems

According to Halliday (Halliday, 1994:170), "transitivity is an important part of ideational function, which represents patterns of experience." "Transitivity is assumed as a universal property of human language." (Hopper & Thompson, 1980:251) It helps language to construe our experiences in real or fictional world into a manageable set of process types, and point out the participants and circumstantial elements involved in them. There are six processes. Material processes are concerned with the external world, portraying what things happen, and what people or actors do things, or make them happen; mental processes deal with the inner experiences, which are harder to sort out, but it is partly a kind of replay of the outer, recording it, reacting to it, reflecting on it, and partly a separate awareness of our states of being; relational processes are responsible for classifying and identifying, as a means of relating one fragment of experience to another. Apart from these three major processes we also recognize three minor ones distributed at the boundaries of the three major ones. Each of them shares some features of the bordering two, hence obtaining a character of their own. Between material and mental are the behavioral processes: those that externalize our inner workings, the manifestations of consciousness and physiological states. On the borderline between mental and relational is the category of verbal processes: symbolic relationships constructed in human consciousness and enacted in the form of language, like saying and meaning (Halliday, 1994:107). And between the relational and the material are the processes concerned with existence, i.e. the existential, indicating that a certain kind of phenomenon exists, or happens.

A process itself consists potentially of three components: 1) the process itself; 2) participants in the process; 3) circumstances associated with the process. A process is realized in the grammar by means of a verbal group, which is either one word, belonging to the class verb, or a group of words with a class verb word as the head or nucleus of the group. The participants in processes are realized by nominal groups. The circumstances are realized by adverbial groups or prepositional phrases.

My paper takes advantage of transitivity analysis in SFG to examine how women and men interact with one another in *Tickets, please*. In this sense, the attempt may be classified as a functional stylistic one in terms of the means it takes, while a feminist one in the light of the goal of research.

Analysis of Transitivity choices in this story

As has been described in the opening paragraphs of the story, we know that the story is set in WW1 when men with healthy and sound bodies are all in the war while in tramcar system at home "the drivers are men unfit for active service: cripples and hunchbacks." and, "the most dangerous tram-service in England is entirely conducted by girls, "they wear "ugly blue uniform, skirts up to their knees, shapeless old peaked caps, they have all the sang-froid of an old non-commissioned officer.....they fear nobody_and every body fears them." we get the impression that girls in the tram-car system are in strong position than man. And women figure seem to know very clear about

their identity. Is this the real case? In order to help readers better understand women's complex conditions, I take two different excerpts from the story according to different scenes. First excerpt takes place in the Statutes fair where Annie and John Thomas had a love encounter. Although they have known each other by working together and as depicted in the story that "in this subtle antagonism they knew each other like old friend, they were as shrewd with one another almost as man as wife", they do not have real physical contact before this excerpt and it's in this excerpt that their ambiguous relationship begins to develop. This excerpt concerns their riding Dragon, Horse and watching films. Let's look into how their relationships are construed in terms of transitivity choices, in particular, material processes.

According to Halliday, "material processes are processes of doing. They express the notion that some entity 'does' something- which may be done 'to' some other entity" (Halliday, 110) The 'doer' of this type of action is called Actor. The action may direct towards a second participant; this participant is called the Goal.

Table 1: Material Process on Annie's part

Actor	Material Process	Goal	Circumstance
1. she	sat		Sideways, towards him, on the inner horse
2. She (could hardly for shame)	repulse	him	

Table 2: Material Process on John's part

Actor	Material Process	Goal	Circumstance
1. John Thomas	made stay on	her	for the next round
2. he	put his arm round	her	
3.	drew	her	a little nearer
4. He	kept	his movement	as hidden as possible
5. John Thomas	paid		each time
6. He	sat astride on	the outer horse	
7. He	swung		on his wooden steed
8.	Flingging	one leg	across her mount
9.	tipping		up and down
10.	Across the space, half lying		back

11.	Laughing at	her	
12.He	threw	quoits	on a table
13.	And won		for her two large,pale-blue hat-pins
14.John Thomas	drew	Annie	towards him
15.He	leaned over	her	

From table 1 and 2 above , we can add up that there are only 2 material processes with Annie as the actor, in comparison with the 15 processes with John Thomas as the actor. This simple counting of the actors and their actions shows us that John Thomas does more things than Annie and he is in control of his processes deliberately. Among 15 material processes produced by John as actor, 5(1,2,3,11,15) of them are directed at Annie as goal, and other actions are aimed to attract Annie's attention by "flinging one leg across her amount ,and periodically tipping up and down,cross the space,half lying back". So we can infer that he is seducing Annie, trying all ways to give hints that he may like her and want to have further moves with her. Also there is one action worthy of attention that "he kept his movement as hidden as possible"when he put his arm round Annie and drew her a little nearer to him so that when Annie looked down she couldn't saw his hand once touching her. This shows that he is a good flirt know how to ambiguous atmosphere on girls.Annie is passively receive John Thomas's seducing while at the same time she does not make obvious moves to refuse his seduceing,showing that she is immersed in the ambiguous atmosphere created by John and blind about the real fact that he is nothing but a playboy. When it comes to love, women are more easily to be more emotional and less reasonable. In this excerpt, Annie's feminine instincts and impulse are still there, given full play on a fit occasion. She resumes her traditional passive attitude, whereas John Thomas asserts his long-established economic superiority as male. Annie is no longer the woman in charge; she has left her uniform to don her best clothes, more appropriate in this place where it is advisable to observe a ritualistic form of behaviour to be in "the right style", which is in fact an intimation of submissiveness.

Let's take a look at the second excerpt from the story . After being jilted by John Thomas Annie persuaded other victims into setting John Thomas up and acting violently in roughing him up.

Table 3: Material Process on girls' part

Actor	Material Process	Goal	Circumstance
1.She	had taken off	her belt	
2.	and swinging	it	
3.She	fetches him a sharp blow	him	over the head with the buckle end

4. But immediately the other girls	rushed upon	him	
5.	pulling	(him)	
6.	and tearing	(him)	
7.	and beating	him	
8. Strange, wild creatures, they	hung on	him	
9.	and rushed at	him	
10.	to bear down	him	
11. Nora	had hold at	the back of his collar	
12.	and was actually stangling	him	
13. The girls	rushed at	him	
14.	clenched	their hands	on him
15.	and pulled at	him	
16. Or they	rushed at	him	
17.	and pushed	him	
18.	butted him	him	with all their might
19. Or they	struck	him	wild blows

Table 4: Material Process on John Thomas' part

Actor	Material Process	Goal	Circumstance
1.he	went forward		rather vaguely
2.He	sprang		
3.	And seized	her	
4.He	struggled		1. in a wild frenzy of fury and terror,Almost mad terror
5.He	ducked		
6.	and cringed		
7.	and struck		sideways

In the above two tables, it is clearly shown that women get the upper hand in the physical assault against John Thomas, dominating John Thomas by force of numbers. There are 19 material processes made by these female conductors, in comparison with only 7 material processes made by John Thomas, who finally can not dare to fight back but only "ducked, cringed and struck sideways". These girls' will for revenge sets free deep forces in them, as with the words "rushed upon", "pulling""tearing""beating""butted", showing their fury and violence. Their emotions are out of control and they are on the verge of hysteria. One of the girls, Nora even wants to strangle the man by holding at the back of his collar. They have worked themselves in a wild frenzy that they cannot understand and that might conceivably end in extreme violence.

This excerpt portrays a picture of several female figures acting like furious lions brutally and aggressively, showing that women are turning to the extreme opposite of their traditional image. Apparently, girls pour out some of their feelings of hurt and anger, but will they really be relieved from their hurt and anger? They may feel half relieved when they rough John Thomas up, but they sink into deeper frustration and vagueness afterwards.

Analysis of Symbolism in the story

Symbolism is widely used in D.H.Lawrance's writings, and this story is of no exception. Let's take a look at the different wooden horses Annie and John Thomas rides in the Satutes fair. One is named "Black Bess", which is ridden by John, and the other one is named "wildfire", which is ridden by Annie. These two names have their symbolic meanings.

The color black is associated with darkness, symbolizing temptation, degeneration and sin and the power to destroy. John Thomas is the representative of darkness, seducing female conductors and then deserting them one by one. When Annie and other girls continually force him to answer the obsessive question of who he will choose to marry, at last he spitefully picks Annie so marks her out

as his favourite enemy and purposely puts her into the situation of being the object of girls' hatred, which gives Annie a hard blow back.

While Annie is like the wildfire, once ignited, cannot be put out easily. The adjective "wild" is repeated five times in the short sentences used to describe the physical assault against John Thomas ("wild creatures," "in a wild frenzy of fury," "wild blows," "their hair wild," "the wild faces of the girls," to stress the young women's metamorphosis and to throw a different light on the scene. In the physical assault against John Thomas, staged like a hunt, a dream scene can be read between the lines, the Freudian Other Scene, in which the girls' unconscious desire to own the man, to "hold" him emerges. Annie's desire has been frustrated ("she had been so *very* sure of holding him," and changed into manifest aggressivity. What the text shows us really is an aggravated date rape: an over-confident victim willingly walking into a self-set trap, a gang of aggressors, mounting tension in the dialogues and the final breaking loose of instincts. That's where lies D.H. Lawrence's mocks and scorns that women will become reasonless, hysterical and lunatic when they realize that they can not clutch men and have them in their power.

I rather like the last line. It contains much meaning. Apparently, it makes for an ending that is more decisively one of John 's defeat., but it's more than this. Although "his head is dropped" as he leaves, there seems a quiet dignity about him that is created by these lines:

"He looked at none of them. He espied his cap in a corner and went and picked it up. He put it on his head, and one of the girls burst into a shrill, hysteric laugh at the sight he presented. He, however, took no heed but went straight to where his overcoat hung on a peg. The girls moved away from contact with him as if he had been an electric wire. He put on his coat and buttoned it down. Then he rolled his tunic-rags

into a bundle, and stood before the locked door, dumbly."

John Thomas is the one who denies the existence of the women. Hats are a symbol of authority, and he retrieves his and places it back on his head. Girls laugh but make way for him. And he takes "no heed" of their laughter. An "electric wire" can be deadly if touched. He takes the time to make himself presentable again just as the women do and then stands defiantly in front of the door waiting for the keymaster to give back his command by opening the door for him. In the story John Thomas is a much stronger character in my opinion. So women are ironically reduced to the most pitiable and pathetic condition compared with their violent and aggressive assault.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the transitivity analysis of *Ticket, please* provides an objective way for readers to interpret the story and through analysing processes produced by different genders readers can better understand characters' relationship and how their relationship develops and infer Lawrence's intention to depict and mocks an ambiguous figure of women as a strange mixture of aggressiveness and passivity, of cruelty and tenderness, of possessiveness and surrender. At the same time, the analysis of symbolism helps readers to better understand the thematic meaning of this short story. All in all, the employment of Transitivity choices and Symbolism can be effectively applied in Feminist Stylistics.

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