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Emotional Study of "Araby" Based on Cognitive Stylistics

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Abstract— *This paper analyzes how linguistic features in James Joyce's short story "Araby" affect the expression and appreciation of emotions from the perspective of cognitive stylistics. The article first briefly introduces the theoretical foundations of cognitive stylistics that can be applied to the study of emotions in literature. It then discusses the impact of styles on emotional presentation from the aspects of lexicon, syntax, and phonetics in the original text. Combining three cognitive theories, Conceptual Metaphor, Image Schema, and Foregrounding, it connects the three dimensions of language, cognition, and emotion. The correlation is used to analyze the emotional changes of the characters and reveal the growth and disillusionment of the young boy in the pursuit of love.*

Keywords— ***Cognitive Stylistics; "Araby"; James Joyce; Emotion***

I. INTRODUCTION

The origin of stylistics can be traced back to the early 20th century, influenced by modern linguistics and literary criticism. The early stylistic studies mostly focused on formal analysis. With the research enriched, researchers gradually extended their attention to the social and cultural background of language and readers' responses. In recent years, stylistics has interrelated with cognitive linguistics, corpus linguistics and other disciplines added with diversified research methods and perspectives. From linguistic analyses, cognitive science is applied in a systemic context based on theories. Cognitive stylistics inherits and extends cognitive linguistics and stylistics, concerning readers' cognitive process and features of in-text and outside-text (Bazarbaeva, 2024).

"Araby" is selected from *Dubliners*, a short novels collection written by James Joyce. The collection contains 15 short stories. These stories depict the lives of lower middle class people in Dublin at the beginning of the 20th century, showing their daily lives, moral dilemmas and social realities. At the start of the novel, the narrator depicts his street and childhood experiences with friends, establishing a lively, innocent atmosphere. He mentions a deceased priest and his effects before detailing his infatuation with Mangan's sister, with whom he shares an unrequited, fantasy-filled connection. Upon learning

she cannot attend the "Araby" bazaar, the narrator resolves to go and bring her a gift, though others dismiss his eagerness. After a long wait and a late departure, he arrives at the bazaar, only to find it mundane and disappointing, a far cry from his imagined exotic escape. Overwhelmed by the bazaar's ordinariness and ignored by others, he feels anger and bitterness. In this paper, the novel "Araby" will be analyzed in several aspects through the paradigm of cognitive stylistics for studying emotion in literature.

II. THEORIES OF APPRECIATING EMOTION FROM A COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVE

A range of principles and concepts are included in such domain. The term foregrounding is introduced in English by Mukaiovslj (1964), which is regarded as stylistic deviation in literature. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) have put forward the idea that most of metaphors we use are conceptual. Later, Johnson (1987) expounds image schema relating mind to body. Based on cognitive models, mental space theory (Fauconnier, 1994) and conceptual integration theory (Turner & Fauconnier, 1995) are pinpointed to construct language meanings by cognition universality. Apparently, cognitive stylistics, as an interdisciplinary subject, opens a new window for scholars to perceive deeper meanings of literature.

While intersecting with other disciplines like cognitive science, psychology and neuroscience, it has developed into Computational Stylistics, Emotional Stylistics and so on. Hogan (2021) proposed the term "affective stylistics" due to his advocacy of "affective narratology". It was later renamed "affective-cognitive stylistics" to avoid confusion with "affective stylistics" as advocated by Fish (1970), but according to the advice suggested by Huang (2023), it seems better to be defined as "emotional stylistics". Unlike cognitive stylistics, emotional stylistics uses affective theories and methods to clarify the role of emotions in reading literature, and its theoretical framework is "affective science", which is an extension of cognitive stylistics. Emotional stylistics emphasizes the importance of emotions and compensates for previous shortcomings. Emotion in literature is complex, varied and includes real and fictional characters, narrative content and action, identifiable and complex emotions, reader evaluations, and emotional intimacy. Emotions are often closely related to the environment in a narrative, and the physical and spiritual meanings are intertwined. As time goes by, the interaction between people and a certain place is no longer merely a simple attachment, but has risen to a more general level of perception of this place (Ariannia, Naseri & Yeganeh, 2024). Within the language, people can interpret the choice of words with emotional colors, different syntactic structures, phonetic rhythm, writing style, etc., while outside the language, it embraces the cultural context, aesthetic thoughts, cognitive experience and so on of the author and the reader. Coupled with these elements, emotional stylistics is able to analyze in-depth how literary works shape emotions through language and stylistic devices, and to explore how these emotions resonate with the reader's personal experience and sociocultural context (Stockwell, 2007).

There are several ways need to be mentioned in emotional stylistics when we study literature. The first is characters' emotion. Through the analysis of the language, behavior and psychological description of the characters, we can have a deeper understanding of the characters' personality, motivation and fate. The same is true in theme by the story's main emotions which may be inferred from ambience. For example, Hemingway's concise style in writing can be found to create some specific emotional ambience through the use of short sentences, repetition and ellipsis. Furthermore, readers will have different emotional reactions when reading literary works, in other words, readers will be affected by the emotions of the works. Therefore, some scholars try to understand readers' emotional resonance and cultural identity in literature.

Amounts of studies can be sought between emotion and cognition. In an empirical research, Miall (2011) suggests that emotions play an important role in subsequent cognitive processes such as inference, recollection of what has been read, and empathy for characters. Thus, there are several different emotion processes evoked when reading literature,including self-reference (e.g., autobiographical memory) and anticipation (e.g., foreshadowing, character development goals). Burke and Coats (2022) launch an appeal that Stylists have important linguistic and analytical skills and tools that help them address contemporary social, emotional, and cognitive issues in children's development through reading and writing, especially in interdisciplinary settings. The following will use "cognitive stylistics" as the theoretical basis and adopt the method of text analysis to examine the emotional connections in "Araby" from the dimensions of vocabulary, syntax, phonetics, conceptual metaphor, image schema and foregrounding.

III. LEXICON, SYNTAX AND PHONETICS

i. Lexicon

Indeed, Van Emde Boas (2022) have shown that the study of mind style focuses on a wide variety of linguistic phenomena, including grammatical structures (e.g., sentence length and complexity, transitive verbs), lexicon (e.g., semantic fields of "key words," over- and under-lexicalization). To illustrate, three times of repetition of "blind" is used in the article:

*a. North Richmond Street, being **blind**, was a quiet street except at the hour when the Christian Brothers' School set the boys free.*

*b. An uninhabited house of two storeys stood at the **blind** end, detached from its neighbours in a square ground.*

*c. The **blind** was pulled down to within an inch of the sash so that I could not be seen.*

The first two uses describe the condition of the street as closed, without openings. This word is not only a physical description but also a spiritual one, implying a sense of hopelessness, closure, and lack of vitality. It foreshadows the protagonist's emotional confusion and an inescapable predicament. The third use in the sentence refers to shutters, but in the context of the boy's feelings for Mangan's sister, it suggests that his love is blind and ignorant, foretelling a failed outcome.

The word "gaze" is also repeated twice in the beginning and in the end:

*a. The other houses of the street, conscious of decent lives within them, **gazed** at one another with brown imperturbable faces.*

b. ***Gazing** up into the darkness I saw myself as a creature driven and derided by vanity; and my eyes burned with anguish and anger*.

The text opens on a quiet street where houses "look at each other"and the camera looks at the empty house of a deceased priest, showing the isolation and loneliness between the house and the outside world.The repetition seems to echo each other, emphasizing the spiritual bonds from which it is impossible to escape and the insurmountable conditions of life. At the same time, this isolation deepens the loneliness experienced by the protagonist throughout the novel.

Thus, Joyce's choice of vocabulary in his writing reflects his writing style and serves the expression of his writing, possessing specific literary effects and meanings, including emotions. The author employs sensory vocabulary, religious vocabulary, exotic vocabulary, and words with negative emotions. When describing the little boy entering the back parlor on a rainy night, listening to the rain outside, yet thankful for not being able to see the distant light, the suppression of sensory friendship here actually reveals his uncontrollable desires, and he whispers his love in the end.

In "Araby," religious vocabulary is frequently used to connect love with religious feelings, expressing the boy's devotion and desire for love. The word "chalice" symbolizes the boy's pure pursuit of love and its sanctification, suggesting that he regards his admiration for Mangan's sister as a kind of religious belief. The symbolic use of this term highlights the boy's innocence and idealism, while also foreshadowing the collapse of this ideal. As for exoticism, "Araby" itself is an exotic name, implying that the bazaar is entirely different from the boy's daily life, full of the unknown and temptation, creating a mysterious and romantic atmosphere. Noteworthy are the negative adjectives in the second paragraph, "musty," "rusty," "damp," "wild" to describe the dead classroom room, dilapidated, full of mold and mess, indicating that this place has long been forgotten, further revealing the moral collapse and spiritual numbness of Irish society at the time.

ii. Syntax

Sentence structure, as an aspect of language, can also reflect language changes, which often affect readers' reading experience and feelings subconsciously.

E.g. *North Richmond Street, being blind, was a quiet street except at the hour when the Christian Brothers' School set the boys free.*

This long sentence details the quiet of the street and the bustle of a particular hour, creating an atmosphere that is both subdued and energetic.

E.g. *She was waiting for us, her figure defined sharply against the light*.

This short sentence is concise and clear, highlighting the image of the character and emphasizing the boy's concern and expectation for Mangan's sister.

Long sentences are used to show delicate inner feelings and descriptions of the environment, while short sentences are used to express sudden emotions or actions. This kind of alternating use enhances the sense of rhythm and makes the emotional expression more rich.

E.g. *My eyes were often full of tears (I could not tell why) and at times a flood from my heart seemed to pour itself out into my bosom.*

In this sentence, parenthesis and many modifiers are used to describe in detail the complex and inexpressible feelings of the boy.

iii. Phonetics

In "Araby" , Joyce skillfully uses alliteration (repetition of consonants at the beginning of a word) and end rhyme (repetition of vowels or consonants at the end of a word) to enhance the rhythm and musicality of the language.

E.g. *Our shout**s** echoed in the **s**ilent **s**treet.*

The "s" in "shouts" , "silent" and "street" is alliterative and enhances the flow and rhythm of the words. The sound in language can strengthen the description of the characters' emotions and make it easier for readers to resonate. From the phrase, the energy of the children contrasted with the lethargy of the others in Irish street.

E.g. *and my eyes burned with **ang**uish and **ang**er.*

The alliterative "an"in"anguish" and "anger" not only makes the words more musical, but also indicates the boy's intense and complicated emotion, which also ends the full text.

Besides, in the sentence "Her name was like a summons to all my foolish blood", the harmonious combination of vowels and consonants makes the language sound smooth and natural, and also expresses the boy's infatuation with Mangan's sister. "I imagined that I bore my chalice safely **th**rough a **th**rong of foes". In this line, the alliterative "th" enhances the rhythm of the language and alludes to the hostility and pressure the boy feels at the fair. In the description of the sounds of the market, the narrator can create a noisy atmosphere, so that readers can feel the confusion and loss of the boy in the market.

IV. CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR, IMAGE SCHEMA AND FOREGROUNDING

i. Conceptual Metaphor

In contrast to earlier theories of metaphor and metaphorical meaning, CMT (Conceptual Metaphor Theory) suggested that metaphor is an essential component of human cognition rather than merely a feature of language. In fact, preexisting metaphorical thought patterns or conceptual metaphors are the source of most metaphorical language (Gibbs, 2011). Conceptual metaphors originate from linguistic metaphors and are understood through cognitive processing. When faced with metaphors in a text, readers can not only grasp the metaphorical meaning of abstract concepts but also activate feelings related to their own experiences and cognition.

Table 1 Conceptual Metaphor in "Araby"

conceptual metaphor	source domain	target domain	linguistic metaphor / example
LOVE IS RELIGION	RELIGION	LOVE	*I imagined that I bore my chalice safely through a throng of foes.*
LIFE IS JOURNEY	JOURNEY	LIFE	*The sight of the streets thronged with buyers and glaring with gas recalled to me the purpose of my journey.*
DISAPPOINTMENT IS DARKNESS	DARKNESS	DISAPPOINTMENT	*Gazing up into the darkness, I saw myself as a creature driven and derided by vanity.*
HOPE IS LIGHT	LIGHT	HOPE	*I heard a voice call from one end of the gallery that the light was out.*

From the conceptual metaphor LOVE IS RELIGION in the table, the boy's love for Mangan's sister is portrayed as an almost religious devotion. He saw his affection for her as a sacred mission. In this way, it highlights the inner innocence and idealism of the boy, but also implies the fragility and perishable nature of this emotion. After a long wait and anxious anticipation to get to the Araby Market, the boy finally arrives to find that the market is nearly closed and full of commercial atmosphere, far from the romantic scene he had imagined. The metaphor LIFE IS JOURNEY reveals the gap between reality and ideal, emphasizing the uncertainty and disillusionment in life.

From the last two conceptual metaphors DISAPPOINTMENT IS DARKNESS and HOPE IS LIGHT, it can be seen that emotions are relatively complex, abstract, and invisible. However, they can be connected through the relatively simple, concrete, and visible concepts of light and darkness. This visual metaphor allows readers to perhaps experience the emotions carried in the author's language after careful reading. Faint light symbolizes faint hope, and in the text, it often accompanies the figure of Mangan's sister, indicating that Mangan's sister also carries metaphorical meaning. Multiple depictions of darkness enhance the tragic color of the work, highlighting the boy's inner pain and disillusionment. Darkness is not only physical, but also symbolizes the boy's ignorance of reality and disappointment in the future.

ii. Image Schema

Image schema is a pattern of sensory-motion-emotion experience that appears

repeatedly in the process of body-environment interaction, which has abstract and general characteristics. They are stored in the brain in the form of schematized mental representations and mapped to the rational domain through metaphorical projection, helping humans to construct abstract concepts and carry out thinking activities such as understanding, imagination and reasoning. To a certain extent, image schema are mental patterns that represent conceptual structures in expressions and are acquired through visual experiences. Their representations in language analysis frequently lack a generalizable framework and are context-dependent (Hedblom, Neuhaus, & Mossakowski, 2024). Image schema, by linking abstract emotion with concrete images, can enhance the intuitiveness of emotion and make it easier for readers to understand and feel the emotion of characters.

Table 2 Image Schema in "Araby"

image schema	example
CONTAINER	*An uninhabited house of two storeys stood at the blind end, detached from its neighbours in a square ground.*
UP-DOWN	*I listened to the fall of the coins.*
BLOCKAGE	*After an intolerable delay the train moved out of the station slowly.*

The CONTAINER schema is reflected in the boy's inner closure and desire for the outside world. The boy's room and North Richmond Street can be seen as containers, symbolizing his restricted living space and inner repression. He was eager to escape this closed environment to find new experiences and emotions. It highlights the contradiction between the boy's inner desire and the constraints of reality.

The UP-DOWN schema describes the position relation of the object in the vertical direction. When the boy is full of hope for Sister Mangan, his emotions are upward, full of longing and expectation. But when he arrives at the Araby Bazaar and discovers the gap between reality and fantasy, his emotions hit rock bottom like a coin dropping. The schema highlights the boy's loss, reflects his change from hope to disappointment, and enhances the tragic color.

In this narrative, the various obstacles encountered by the boy on his way to the bazaar Araby. For example, the boy had to wait for his uncle to come home before he could get the money, and the traffic delayed his journey. These obstacles prevented him from reaching the fair in time and eventually led to his disappointment. The BLOCKAGE schema enables the readers to relate to the various challenges and difficulties encountered in his own life, thus making it easier to understand the boy's frustration.

iii. Foregrounding

The term foregrounding we mentioned is the equivalent of defamiliarization, which means to be prominent and focalized from background. Leech (2007) figured out two types of foregrounding: qualitative and quantitative foregrounding. The former includes the deviation of lexis, syntax and semantics.

E.g. *The syllables of the word Araby were called to me through the silence in which my soul* ***luxuriated*** *and cast an Eastern* ***enchantment*** *over me.*

The words "luxuriated" and "enchantment" here, with a strong romantic vibe, highlight the boy's fantasy and longing for the Araby bazaar. The use of these words breaks the banality of everyday language and focuses the reader's attention on the boy's emotional experience.

The latter is embodied by frequency, containing the

repetition of certain prosodies, words, phrases, sentences or even paragraphs. As a case in point, the image "dark" appears repeatedly in the novel, such as "the **dark** muddy lanes" and "The **dark** rainy evening"; The place "Araby" or "bazaar" appears time and again in the text, such as "She asked me was I going to **Araby**." The intentional repetition symbolizes the boy's dreams and fantasies. By using these words frequently, Joyce reinforces the theme of the work and makes the reader more able to understand the boy's inner feelings.

V. CONCLUSION

This article takes cognitive stylistics as its theoretical framework and delves into the expression and construction of emotions in James Joyce's short story "Araby." Through a detailed analysis of stylistic aspects such as lexicon, syntax, and phonetics, as well as cognitive aspects like conceptual metaphors, image schema, and foregrounding at the cognitive level, it reveals how the story shapes the emotional experiences of its characters, and guides the emotional responses of readers through linguistic style and embodied cognition.

The study finds that Joyce skillfully employed various stylistic devices, reflecting the cognitive essence in the text, highlighting the protagonist's complex emotions such as longing, disillusionment, and loss. On the other hand, readers, from a cognitive perspective, can identify and interpret these elements to gain a deeper understanding of the characters' inner worlds and resonate with the thematic emotions of the work. From this view, it can be understood that both language and cognition can serve emotions, and a cognitive perspective helps to better understand the emotional experiences of characters in literature and the emotional experiences of readers. This research can not only enrich the interpretation of "Araby" but also provide a new perspective for the application of cognitive stylistics in literary studies. Future research could further explore these findings through empirical studies and interdisciplinary approaches.

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