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The factors that influence the perceptibility of Free Indirect Speech

The problem of Free Indirect Speech (FIS) has been the subject of lengthy investigation. Considerations of this topic can be found in the works by C. Onions (1905), E. Kruisinga (1909; 1925-32), O. Jespersen (1924) and many others. Among contemporary investigators of FIS the following can be mentioned: A. Banfield (1973), Г. Чумаков, (1975), B. McHale (1978), E. Кусько (1980), I. Бехта (1992, 1999), A. Арцишевська (2003) and others.

There is no question of FIS functioning in a given context unless it can be recognised by the reader and interpreted appropriately; it does not necessarily have to be identified as "free indirect speech" as such, but at the very least as the intrusion of some voice other than or in conjunction with that of the narrator's. The reader does not experience a text as a collection of syntactical patterns, but as a sequence of signals, only some of which may lead him to discern the presence of "other voices" in the text. Difficulty thus appears in determining the relative significance of various kinds of index available. It is obvious that no kind of index is uniquely constitutive of FIS in all cases, but rather that some kinds are decisive for the reader's recognition of it in some cases; others in other cases. The most recognisable indices of FIS are those of a lexical nature, i.e., those of immediate context and register.

Let us consider how these lexical indices function in a literary work. Throughout, the illustrations will be taken from W.S. Maugham's short story "Outstation".

Verbs of speech or thought bear crucially upon the perceptibility of a sentence of FIS when they appear in the context immediately preceding that sentence, or immediately following it, or both following and preceding it. This can clearly be seen in the following two passages from "Outstation" by W.S. Maugham:

"When entering the bungalow, he had taken off his toupee and flung it to a waiting boy. Mr. Warburton noticed that his large skull, covered with short, brown hair, contrasted somewhat oddly with a weak, small chin. He was dressed in khaki shorts, and khaki shirt, but they were shabby and soiled; Mr. Warburton reflected that the young man had spent a week on a coasting steamer ... " W.S. Maugham (1974: 87)

"He began to think he was unfair to Cooper. Of course he was not a gentleman, but that was not his fault, and when you got to know him it might be that he would turn out a very good fellow." W.S. Maugham (1974: 100)

The lexical units "noticed", "reflected", "began to think" function as a link between the reflections and the character reflecting. They give hints to the reader that the whole passage presents the thoughts of the given character. Moreover, R. Pascal (1977: 26-27) observes that any expression may serve as a "bridge" between narration and FIS. Thus, the reader's attention is always primarily directed at a particular personage, to whom sentences of FIS can be attributed.

The general context has a considerable effect on the perceptibility of FIS in many cases: "But he did not sleep very long, he had terrible dreams, and seemed to be awakened by a cry. Of course that was a dream too, for no cry – from the bungalow for instance – could be heard in his room. He lay awake till dawn." W.S. Maugham (1974:126)

Besides, the reader is more likely to interpret a sentence as FIS when it appears in the immediate neighbourhood of Direct Speech (DS) or Indirect Speech (IS) sentences, especially when one or more FIS sentences occur after an initial sentence of IS:

"The impression which Allen Cooper had given him was not very favourable, but he was a fair man, and he knew that it was unjust to form an opinion on so brief a glimpse. Cooper seemed to be about thirty. He was a tall, thin fellow, with a shallow face in which there was not a spot of colour. It was a face all in one tone." W.S. Maugham (1974:87)

But any attempt to account for the perceptibility of FIS solely or primarily in terms of contextual cues is sure to fail to capture the full implications that can be shown by an approach based on categories of literary representation. According to this approach, the decisive indices of FIS ought to be not the markers of its syntactical distinctiveness, or even its traces in the surrounding context, but the lexical signs; namely the "words" of a personage belonging to his/her characteristic register and idioms.

We can ascribe to FIS a differentiating meta-function within the system of situationally-related varieties of language. Just as, for instance, the register of unscripted spoken commentary is signaled by certain prosodic features and by distinctive forms of incomplete syntax; the register of legal documents by a particular set of archaisms and by a high density of adverbial clauses, so is literary prose signaled by FIS, among other indices. FIS is distinctively literary not because it is exclusive to literary texts, for that is demonstrably not so, but rather because the essential character of literature itself is inscribed in miniature within it.

In "Outstation" the reader encounters two contrary characters – Mr. Warburton and Cooper. The former is a person of refined manners; he strives to attain the upper echelons of high-class society, to be like them. More than that, he despises those whom he considers inferior (mainly in terms of social status). Nevertheless, Mr. Warburton remains a borderline case, since he belongs to the group of people which can loosely be termed as snobs, who are not accepted by nobles and are held in utter contempt by their peers. Cooper, on the contrary, is a harsh person; he scorns such people as Mr. Warburton. W.S. Maugham brings them together for, contrasted

with one another, they present the features typical of their classes. The reader is an eyewitness to the psychological battle between the characters, for neither of them expresses his opinion openly. The narrator penetrates the characters' minds and explores their thoughts. Such style of narration brings about numerous examples of FIS.

FIS may, primarily, be constituted by features which the reader interprets as markers of colloquialism in general. Consequently, it acquires the quality of spoken language prior to or underlying any finer distinctions into varieties of speech. These might be described as minimal lexical indices. Among these minimal indices are **exclamations** (ah, in heavens name, by George, etc.) and the so-called **lexical time fillers** which express continuing internal interchange (as a rule, of course, after all, so, perhaps, certainly, etc.):

"Of course Warburton would hear of what had happened, the old devil knew everything." W.S. Maugham (1974:124);

"After all, he liked to mix with people of his own class, he was only at home in their company, and how in heaven's name could anyone say that he was snob-bish?" W.S. Maugham (1974:104);

"His faults, perhaps, were faults of manner. And he was certainly good at his work, quick, conscientious, and thorough." W.S. Maugham (1974:101)

Usually lexical time fillers are placed propositionally, so that they introduce the passage of FIS. Interpositional location is also encountered.

Various **evaluative expressions** are an essential part of minimal lexical indices, particularly pronominal adjectives (poor, damned, fool, etc.) which seem to require the presence of some evaluating speaker other than the narrator:

"Poor Warburton was a dreadful snob, of course, but after all he was a good fellow." W.S. Maugham (1974: 94);

"That fool Cooper!" W.S. Maugham (1974:128);

"It was a damned shame that he had never got his commission in the war; he was as good as any one else. They were a lot of dirty snobs. He was damned if he was going to knuckle under now." W.S. Maugham (1974:124)

Evaluative expressions show the attitude of the speaker towards the subject of speech.

Modal verbs will make the survey of minimal lexical indices entirely comprehensive. In a particular context modal verbs serve to emphasise the psychological side of discourse, to individualise the narration:

"Mr. Warburton sighed. It was his duty to warn him, and of course he must do it." W.S. Maugham (1974:120);

"... his blue eyes, cold as a rule and observing, could flush with sudden wrath; but he was a man of words and he hoped a just one. He must do his best to get on with this fellow." W.S. Maugham (1974: 88)

The modal verb "must" in both examples above causes the discourse to be perceived not as the narration of the author but as the reflections of a character.

Beyond merely signalling the spoken nature of FIS, lexical features differentiate the supposed speaker's **personal idiom**. What is involved, in general, is a mode of expression perceived as incompatible with the narrator's voice. Related to these

particular effects are markers which indicate not idiolect or individuality as such, but social role-relationships; for instance, appellations which can appropriately be used only by particular speakers with respect to other people related to them in particular ways: "Of course Warburton would hear of what had happened; the old devil knew everything. He was not afraid. He was not afraid of any Malay in Borneo, and Warburton could go to blazes." W.S. Maugham (1974:124)

Colloquialisms, as another type of lexical indices, are a part of personal idioms, for they equally convey the typical features of the personage's nature, feelings and opinions, hidden in the connotational meanings of colloquial words, unlike those with a neutral literary meaning:

"Cooper! An envious, ill-bred fellow, bumptious, self-assertive and vain." W.S. Maugham (1974: 93);

"The idiot! Hesitation for a little was in Mr Warburton's mind. Did the man know in what peril he was?" W.S. Maugham (1974:125);

"The cad had had his warning. Now let him take what was coming to him." W.S. Maugham (1974:125)

Generalising the observations of lexical peculiarities of FIS in fiction, particularly in the short story "Outstation" by W.S. Maugham, it should be stated that defined lexical indices of FIS are not of regular character; they appear sporadically, in various qualitative and quantitative ranges and represent a subjective personage's plane. In order to get the approximate picture of the productivity of the enumerated lexical indices the analysis of the short story "Outstation" was carried out. The results are presented in table 1:

Lexical time fillers	Evaluative expressions	Exclamations	Modal verbs	Idioms colloquialisms
As a rule Perhaps Of course After all Of course Certainly Hardly After all Probably Of course Of course Perhaps Certainly Perhaps Of course Of course Of course	Poor Dreadful snob Insolent fool What a fool A coarse feeder Dammed That fool Dirty snobs	By heaven! Ah! In heaven's name! By George!	Must Could Might Might Could Could Might Should Could Must Could Ought Could Must	A good fellow To knuckle under Be in a tight corner Old devil Fellow Go to blazes Not a bad sort Put on airs Cad The idiot Birds of a feather Counter-jumpers Cad Bully A coarse feeder
17	8	4	14	15

Table 1. Lexical indices of FIS (in W.S. Maugham's "Outstation")

As is obvious from Table 1 the most frequent lexical indices of FIS in "Outstation" are lexical time fillers and idioms. They took 29.3% and 25.9% respectively. Modal verbs, evaluative expressions and exclamations took accordingly 24.1%, 13.8%, 6.9%.

The percentage correlations between the most productive types of lexical markers of FIS in "Outstation" – lexical time fillers and modal verbs – are presented in tables 2 and 3:

Lexical time fillers	as a rule	perhaps	of course	after all	certainly	hardly	probably
Quantity	1	3	7	2	2	1	1
%	5.9 %	17.6 %	41.18 %	11.76 %	11.76 %	5.9%	5.9%

Table 2. Lexical time fillers (in S.W. Maugham's "Outstation")

Considering the figures in Table 2, the lexical time filler "of course" is the most numerous among other lexical time fillers. It takes 41.2% of all available lexical indices of this type in the short story analysed.

Modal verbs	must	could	might	should	ought
Quantity	3	6	3	1	1
%	21.4 %	42.9 %	21.4%	7.1%	7.1%

Table 3: Modal verbs (in S.W. Maugham's "Outstation")

The data presented in Table 3 testifies to the fact that the most productive modal verb in "Outstation" is "could". "Actually" its frequency is explained by the broad spectrum of its possible meanings. Could expresses permission, offers, requests, orders, suggestions, and – last but not least – criticism.

From analysis of FIS on a lexical level certain conclusions follow. The examination of the lexical peculiarities of FIS verifies the notion of FIS as a distinct type of discourse. The observations from the genre of the short story confirm that the spoken style typical of FIS is reflected in the availability of various items of vocabulary of general use. The vocabulary of FIS is characterised, first of all, by its colloquial style. The absence of the author's refinement gives the opportunity for more unaffected, natural sounding of speech, and avoids the objectiveness of the narration.

Besides colloquialisms such spoken lexical forms characterise FIS as lexical time fillers, evaluative expressions, exclamations, modal verbs and idioms. Each of

them, while carrying out their usual function, creates the peculiar stylistic meaning of FIS. Lexical time fillers like "of course", "after all", "certainly", etc., serve as the indices of continuity of the speaking process. Often the subjective character of the personage's narration is rendered by means of emphatically coloured vocabulary and evaluative expressions. Usually they have negative indices and prompt the reader to treat the narration as FIS.

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THE FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE PERCEPTIBILITY OF FREE INDIRECT SPEECH

The aim of the article consists of defining the indices of Free Indirect Speech on a lexical level which detect it in the body of a text as a distinguished type of represented discourse. The lexico-semantic peculiarities of Free Indirect Speech are analysed in fiction, in particular, in the genre of short story. Throughout, the illustrations are drawn from W.S. Maugham's short story "Outstation". It is typical of the writer to give a detailed description of the narrator himself and the circumstances of the narration. The narrator penetrates into characters minds, explores their thoughts. Such a manner of narration brings about numerous examples of FIS.

The examination of the lexical peculiarities of FIS verifies the notion of FIS as a peculiar type of discourse; it is an authentic style that serves to convey the message in its special way.

Key words: mowa pozornie zależna, minimalne wskaźniki leksykalne, narracja, narrator, sygnały kontekstualne, zwroty potoczne, wypełniacze czasu leksykalne, wyrażenia oceniające, czasowniki modalne, wykrzykniki.