

Persecution of Children in "Jane Eyre": A Socio-pragmatic Analysis

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Abstract

Persecution is the act of depriving someone or a group of people of their freedom or happiness because of their religion, color, nationality, political convictions, and a variety of other causes which result in a breach of an individual's identity. As a result, investigating persecution is a problem that, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, has received insufficient attention, mainly from a Socio-pragmatic standpoint. So, the present study analyses how persecution is used Socio-pragmatically in the novel "Jane Eyre". This study aims at: identifying the most common types of persecution of children in the chosen data, discovering the most common types of speech acts that are used in the chosen data, pinpointing the impoliteness strategies that are frequently used to accomplish persecution of children in the chosen data, exploring the impact of social variables of persecution in the chosen data. It is hypothesized that: persecution of children requires various types, the commonest used is religious, there are various types of speech acts that indicate persecution of children in the chosen data, however, expressives speech act of criticizing can be the dominant type, bald on record strategy is used highly to achieve persecution in the chosen data, the social variable of religion influences the impact of the pragmatic strategies. So, the eclectic model of persecution of children is shown to be effective in interpreting the data of this study.

Keywords: persecution, socio-pragmatics, strategies.

1-Introduction

Language is considered as a mechanism used by people to develop and sustain social interactions as well as convey meaning (Trudgill, 2000). Persecution, according to (Goldman, 2000), it is taken with the goal of discrimination, which is a violation of human rights. This concept arises from depriving others of their freedom or happiness in addition to the restriction of others' liberty or delight, and it results in a betrayal of an individual's identity. It is the act of oppressing a person or a group of people, particularly because of their identity. People are persecuted throughout history because of their religion, color, nationality, political convictions, and a variety of other causes. Persecution is defined as a discriminatory violation of human rights that is not limited to the suffering of a single individual or a certain style of behavior. Persecution is an act carried out with malice and often for no apparent reason. It

includes murder, torture, assault, humiliation, degradation, the destruction of religious and cultural sites, and the denial of fundamental rights (Kassimeris, 2016). For example,

Mr. Brocklehurst: "Do you know, Jane Eyre, where the wicked go after death?"
Young Jane: "They go to hell."
Mr. Brocklehurst: "And what is hell?"
Young Jane: "A pit full of fire."
Mr. Brocklehurst: "Should you like to fall into this pit and be burned there forever?"
Young Jane: "No, sir."
Mr. Brocklehurst: "How might you avoid it?"
Young Jane: "I must keep in good health and not die" (Bronte, 1847).

In the above example, Mr. Brocklehurst exemplifies the deceit of misdirected religion; by informing Jane as a terrible child, he is supposed to be doing a Christian gesture of compassion. As a result, he represents a type of religion that Jane instinctively rejects because he abuses the children under his care. Thus, religious persecution takes place.

This linguistic phenomenon is worth exploring from a Socio-pragmatic standpoint. As a result, investigating persecution is a problem that, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, has received insufficient attention, mainly from a Socio-pragmatic standpoint. Consequently, this study seeks to fill this gap by answering the following questions:

- 1- Which types of persecution are most commonly used by the persecutor in "Jane Eyre" ?
- 2- What are the most common speech acts used to manifest persecution of children in "Jane Eyre" ?
- 3- Which impoliteness strategies are frequently used to accomplish persecution of children in "Jane Eyre" ?
- 4- How do the social variables impact the emergence of persecution of children in "Jane Eyre"?

2-Socio-pragmatics

In an attempt to make Socio-pragmatics and more specifically how pragmatic meaning communication involves the presentation of their identities by the speakers, (Leech, 2016) uses the term Socio-pragmatics to explain ways in which pragmatic meanings represent unique local conditions on language use, a sub-field of pragmatics that is differentiated from the analysis of a more general pragmatic interpretation. According to (Crystal, 2011), Socio-pragmatics is a term used frequently in the study of pragmatics to describe how social context influences language usage. This contrasts with pragmatics, which examines language use through the structural resources available in a language (also known as pragmalinguistics). In a more serious vein, (Trosborg, 2011) claims that Socio-pragmatics is concerned with studying patterns of behavior in a specific social situation, where SAs can be interpreted in different ways within a specific speaking community in terms of different socio - cultural backgrounds, conditions, and social groups.

3-The Concept of Persecution of Children

Persecution originally is arised in 1400–50, according to Merriam Webster; back construction from persectour "persecutor," ultimately from Late Latin persecutor "prosecutor," comparable to persec-, variant stem of persecu "to prosecute, pursue closely" + -tor. Persecucioun originates from the Old French persecucion, which means "persecution, harm, affliction, suffering," and denotes "oppression for holding a belief or concept."

"annoying or oppressive treatment," and "an era of universal or systematic tyranny" are all late 14c senses. Persecution, according to (Goldman, 2000), includes three types; racial, religious, and political discriminatory activities. In another form, it is taken with the goal of discrimination, which is a violation of human rights. The individual who carries out the act of persecuting is known as a persecutor and the person being persecuted is called the persecutee or the victim. Human rights violations can come not only from higher-ranking government officials, but also from lower-ranking government officials or non-government officials.

It includes murder, torture, assault, humiliation, degradation, the destruction of religious and cultural sites, and the denial of fundamental rights (Kassimeris, 2016).

It has both positive and negative effects, the martyrs will inherit the Kingdom of Heaven if they imitate Christ's conduct. However, the positive impacts only go so far since the bad effects of persecution is far harsher. To begin with, the victim may be tortured, forced to convert religions, pushed to leave religion entirely, imprisoned, or executed (Web Source).

4-Methodology

This section is recommended for the work's practical part. It is concerned with data, its gathering, description, and analysis.

4.1 The Data

The data for this study is represented by Charlotte Bronte's novel "Jane Eyre".

4.1.1 Data Description and Collection

The data under investigation is chosen intentionally by the researcher, it is limited to five extracts from one novel. The American novel, "Jane Eyre" by Charlotte Bronte's, is published in 1847, it belongs to the Victorian era. In this regard, the researcher chooses this work not for its historical context, but for its theme of persecution.

4.1.2 Data Analysis

4.1.2.1 Methods of Analysis

Five literary extracts are studied socio-pragmatically using the eclectic model of analysis created by the current study. The eclectic model is represented by speech acts, and impoliteness strategies.

This study is qualitative, which means it describes different types of features and occurrences without comparing them in terms of measurement amounts. The instances for the analysis are picked from the novel, to determine the type of analysis shown and to account for the analysis' findings. Then, quantitatively the data is analyzed by using statistic equations.

Extract 1

Jane: "Then learn from me, not to judge by appearances: I'm, as Miss Scatcherd said, slatternly; I seldom put, and never keep, things, in order; I am careless; I forget rules; I read when I should learn my lessons; I have no method; and sometimes I say, like you, I cannot bear to be subjected to systematic arrangements. This is all very provoking to Miss Scatcherd, who is naturally neat, punctual, and particular."

Jane: "And cross and cruel," I added; but Helen Burns would not admit my addition:
she kept silence

Helen: "Is Miss Temple as severe to you as Miss Scatcherd?"

At the utterance of Miss Temple's name, a soft smile flitted over her grave face.

In the above extract, Mrs. Scatcherd (the persecutor) is an aggressive woman who envies her students' intelligence by punishing in front of her peers, she uses 'Expressive' SA of criticizing in the initiating and developing stages to criticize and abuse Jane (the persecutee), calling her careless and lazy. Mrs. Scatcherd is referred to as "the small black haired one." As a result, she becomes enraged and envious of Jane and the other students around her. She does, however, try to make a distinction between Jane and the other students by tormenting her. Thus, racial persecution takes place. Jane also in the reaction stage uses 'Exp.' SA as a response to Mrs. Scatcherd. Mrs. Scatcherd tries to harm Jane's and other students' reputations by tormenting them repeatedly by following off record impoliteness while the victim utilizes negative strategy to target and harm the persecutor's face. Mrs. Scatcherd believes she is treated unfairly by others since she is regarded as "the small one with black hair." Thus, racism takes place.

Extract 2

John Reed: "You have no business to take our books; you are a dependent, mama says; you have no money; your father left you none; you ought to beg, and not to live here with gentlemen's children like us, and eat the same meals we do, and wear clothes at our mama's expense. Now, I'll teach you to rummage my bookshelves: for they are mine; all the house belongs to me, or will do in a few years. Go and stand by the door, out of the way of the mirror and the windows."

Jane: "Wicked and cruel boy!" "You are like a murderer—you are like a slave-driver—you are like the Roman emperors!"

In this excerpt, Jane's cousin (John Reed) uses 'Exp.' SA of criticizing in the initiating and developing stages to criticize and torment her as she reads silently, reminding her of her position within the household. Thus, position as a social variable takes place. Jane also uses 'Exp.' SA of criticizing to criticize John as a response to his attack. Thus, racial persecution takes place. In addition to her aunt's persecution of criticizing Jane and segregating her from the rest of the family on multiple occasions.

John purposefully attacks Jane's face by utilizing bald on record strategy of impoliteness because he believes she is less able to protect herself from this agony. Jane in the reaction stage employs positive impoliteness strategy by anticipating reciprocity.

Extract 3

Mr. Brocklehurst: "Do you know, Jane Eyre, where the wicked go after death?"

Young Jane: "They go to hell."

Mr. Brocklehurst: "And what is hell?"

Young Jane: "A pit full of fire."

Mr. Brocklehurst: "Should you like to fall into this pit and be burned there forever?"

Young Jane: "No, sir."

Mr. Brocklehurst: "How might you avoid it?"

Young Jane: "I must keep in good health and not die."

Mr. Brocklehurst exemplifies the deceit of misdirected religion; by informing Jane as a terrible child, he is supposed to be doing a Christian gesture of compassion. Thus, he persecutes Jane throughout religious persecution. As a result, he represents a type of religion that Jane instinctively rejects because he abuses the children under his care. Mr. Brocklehurst uses the "Dir." SA of asking to inquire about wicked persons in Jane's life. The victim (Jane) uses the "Dir." SA of telling to tell that evil people go to hell. Mr. Brocklehurst portrays himself as a clear phony who fails to uphold the lofty religious principles that he teaches. The persecutor tries to use the negative impoliteness strategy twice to keep questioning Jane. According to this strategy, the victim also employs it to reduce the severity of the punishment.

Extract 4

Mrs. Scatcherd : You dirty, disagreeable girl! you have never cleaned your nails this morning!"

Burns made no answer: I wondered at her silence. "Why," thought I, "does she not explain that she could neither clean her nails nor wash her face, as the water was frozen?"

In the above extract, Mrs. Scatcherd, who is in charge of the Lowood School girls, constantly scolds and punishes Helen for minor infractions. As a Brocklehurst, she is supposed to be performing the Christian act of caring for Helen, but she breaks religious laws by persecuting her. In Mrs. Scatcherd's speech, mainly, the initiating stage "Exp." SA of criticizing is used to criticize Helen by imposing heavy punishments for the smallest of offenses. Mrs. Scatcherd beats her because she can't wash her fingernails. The persecutor uses the "Representative" SA of guessing to determine whether Helen is capable of cleaning her nails while the persecutee remains silent. Mrs. Scatcherd appears to be a Jewish religious instructor, yet she is a hypocrite. She brags about her charitable contributions to orphans, yet she is greedy and self-centered from the inside. So, religion plays an important role as a social variable in this extract. The persecutor uses bald on record strategy to deliberately attack Helen in the initial stage. In the developing stage, she utilizes off record strategy by asking rhetorical questions, she tries to harm Helen's face. The victim uses negative impoliteness so that Mrs. Scatcherd's threat or imposition is to be minimized.

Extract 5

"Hardened girl!" exclaimed Miss Scatcherd; "nothing can correct you of your slatternly habits: carry the rod away."

Burns obeyed:" I looked at her narrowly as she emerged from the book-closet; she was just putting back her handkerchief into her pocket, and the trace of a tear glistened on her thin cheek."

In the above extract, Mrs. Scatcherd is supposed to care for her students as a religious teacher, but instead she prates Helen. By punishing her students, she disobeys her religious responsibility. Thus, religious persecution takes place. Mrs. Scatcherd uses the "Rep." SA of asserting and blaming to assert and blame Helen as a lazy and harsh girl in order to persecute her. Helen uses also 'Rep.' of asserting that she was just putting back her handkerchief into her pocket. The persecutor acts like a religious teacher who enjoys her job, but she is a phony who abruptly abuses the majority of her students. Thus, religion as a social variable occurs.

Mrs. Scatcherd, the persecutor, uses bald on record to purposefully target Helen. As a result, Helen is unable to stop the attack. Therefore, negative impoliteness is utilized by the victim.

5.1 The Results

In the novel "Jane Eyre", the following table summarizes the frequency of occurrence and percentages of types of persecution of children, speech acts, impoliteness strategies, and social variables.

Table (1) The Results of the English Novel "Jane Eyre"

No.	Types of Persecution	Fr.	Pr.	Speech Acts		Fr.	Pr.	Impoliteness Strategies	Fr.	Pr.	Social Variables	Fr.	Pr.
1	Religious	3	60%	Dir.	telling	1	10%	Off Record	3	23.07%	Racism	1	20%
2	Racial	2	40%		asking	1	10%	Bald On Record	5	38.46%	Position	1	20%
3				Rep.	blaming	1	10%	Positive	1	7.69%	Religion	3	60%
4					asserting	1	10%	Negative	4	30.76%			
5					guessing	1	10%						
6				Exp.	criticizing	5	50%						
Total		5	100%			10	100%		13	100%		5	100%

In light of these findings, it is obvious that religious persecution is the commonest sort of persecution used in Jane Eyre's novel. It receives (60%) of the vote. This suggests that the persecutors (Mr. Brocklehurst, Mr. Reed, and Mrs. Scatcherd) represent a form of religious dogma against Jane, rather than a Christian gesture of love. This rejects the second hypothesis which states: persecution of children requires various types, the commonest used are religious and racial. Since the persecutors in the initiating and developing stages attempt to criticize and insult Jane by persecuting her, Exp. SA of criticizing is heavily used in this stage, which receives (50%). Bald on record is the commonest impoliteness strategy because the persecutors attack the victim intentionally. It earns (38%). Religion receives the biggest percentage, and it makes up the majority of the total (60%). As a result, the persecutors in this novel reflect a type of religious doctrine against Jane by imposing their belief on Jane when she does not prefer to read the Bible.

5-Conclusions

The following conclusions focus on the analysis accomplished in section four of the current study:

1- According to the findings, the most common type of persecution is religious. This finding supports the study's first hypothesis which is as follows: Persecution of children requires various types, the commonest used is religious.

2- In the novel chosen, the expressive SA of criticizing is the dominant type performed in the selected novel. Consequently, the results of the novel have confirmed the second hypothesis which reads: The most dominant type of speech acts that indicate persecution of children in the novel is expressive SA of criticizing.

4- The third hypothesis, which states: Strategy of bald on record impoliteness is frequently used by to achieve persecution of children in the selected novel, is affirmed because these strategies are used by the persecutors in the novel.

7- The analysis of the data reveals that in the novel "Jane Eyre", religion is the most commonly used social variable by the persecutor. As a consequence, the fourth hypothesis, which says: The social variable of religion impacts the emergence of the pragmatic strategies, is confirmed.

5- The eclectic model of persecution of children is shown to be effective in interpreting the data of this study.

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