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**THE LINGUISTIC DIACHRONIC IN THE PLAY OF EVGENY
SCHWARTZ'S 'THE DRAGON'; THE CONCEPT OF HETEROGLOSSIA
AND INTERTEXTUALITY VIA THE LEAD CHARACTERS OF THE PLAY**

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Summary

The concepts of heteroglossia and Intertextuality are not new to linguistic discourse and its discovery has unearthed an entirely new horizon for text analysis. Heteroglossia and Intertextual analysis of a literary text provide a comprehensive understanding of linguistic tools and double-voiced ness. The present article tries to study the multiculturalism and diachronicity of the play of Evgeny Schwartz "The Dragon" viz. its two leads and few lines from the text will be quoted for analysis and better comprehension. The author portrays the social and political structure of Stalinist Russia through a fairy tale- play where multiple voices have been used to articulate the existing problems. And quite a few rhetorical approaches have been used to define 'what is said and what is meant.

Key Words: Heteroglossia, Intertextuality, Bakhtin, Multiculturalism, Kristeva.

Introduction

The term 'Heteroglossia' was first coined by Mikhail Bakhtin in his book 'The Dialogic Imagination (1934). Bakhtin stated that "We are taking language not as a system of abstract grammatical categories but rather language conceived as ideologically saturated, language as world view even as concrete opinion ensuring a maximum of mutual understanding in all the spheres of ideological life"(Bakhtin, 1981; 271). In another term, Heteroglossia is said to be "another's speech in another's language, where one sees the author's voice in a single text through different

approaches as the language used in the text comprises all the voices of the text. Heteroglossia is a prominent stylistic tool to be kept in mind during discourse analysis of a novel or prose. “In *The Dialogical Imagination*, Bakhtin extends his analysis of dialogism through the concept of heteroglossia. This analysis emphasizes the combination of existing statements or speech genres to construct a text. Each novel is constructed from a diversity of styles and voices, assembled into a structured artistic system which arranges difference in a particular way”. (Andrew Robinson, 2011)

Bakhtin’s theory of heteroglossia in prose has further led to Marina Kristeva’s theory of intertextuality where she reiterates the Bakhtinian approach of Dialogic imagination more comprehensively and highlights the life of texts within the text. J. Kristeva mentions that “authors do not create texts from their original minds, but rather comprise them from pre-existing texts and thus (any) text is a permutation of texts, an ‘intertextuality’ in the space of a given text, in which several utterances, taken from other texts intersect and neutralize one another”. (Allen, G. 2011)

The article amplifies the analysis of folklore and motifs in a play having different characters and different approaches. Every text is a composition of many words, utterances, expressions, and ideas thus containing huge possibilities of heteroglot and intertextuality attributing to its composition and explanation. “The words of a language belong to nobody, but still we hear those words only in particular individual utterances, we read them in particular individual works, and in such cases, the words already have not only a typical, but also (depending on the genre) a more or less reflected individual expression, which is determined by the unrepeatable individual context of the utterance”. (Bakhtin, M. M. 2010)

As name suggests ‘Intertextuality’ is a form of meaning-making notion, or it is readers’ reference of one text in reading another. Primarily, it refers to the text’s relationship with other text or present references for further texts. It refers to the author’s borrowing and transformation of the previous books or to a reader’s referencing of one text in reading another. In this article, we are going to study the role of intertextuality in the play of Evgeny Schwartz’s “The Dragon” and how intertextual analysis is crucial for linguistic studies.

A word may contain various meanings as per the demand of the situation and context; it could be either direct or indirect (metaphorical). During the process of analysis, the semantics in the text should be studied properly for better comprehension, translation, storytelling, and so on.

As Mikhail Bakhtin writes that “The life of the word is contained in its transfer from one mouth to another, from one context to another, from one social collective to another, from one generation to another generation. In this process, the word does not forget its path and cannot completely free itself from the power of those concrete contexts into which it has entered.” (Bakhtin, M. M. 2010). When a word reflects various meanings and expressions it undergoes serious intertextual analysis which contributes to its meaning-making process and highlights the relevance of that particular word in that particular text.

The chapter, where Bakhtin discussed ‘Heteroglossia’ was named ‘Discourse in the Novel’; it talked about the prosaic analysis and aimed at dealing with the double voicedness in novels. These theories, which gave the world an entirely new way of thinking towards discourse analysis of a novel, did not talk about plays as a potential genre for discourse analysis. The paragraph where Bakhtin pronounces this malediction is uncharacteristically straightforward, and, because it sets the ground for what I have come to think of as the central issues relevant to the roles of drama in society, it merits quoting in full: Literature of recent times knows only the dramatic dialogue and to some extent, the philosophical dialogue weakened into a mere form of exposition, a pedagogical device. And, in any case, the dramatic dialogue in drama and the dramatized dialogue in the narrative forms are always encased in a firm and stable monologic framework. In drama, of course,

this monologic framework does not find direct verbal expression, but precisely in drama is it especially monolithic. The rejoinders in the drama do not rip apart the represented world, do not make it multi-leveled; on the contrary if they are to be authentically dramatic. these rejoinders necessitate the utmost monolithic unity of that world. In drama, the world must be made from a single piece. Any weakening of this monolithic quality leads to a weakening of dramatic effect. The characters come together dialogically in the unified field of vision of author, director, and audience, against the clearly defined background of a single-tiered world. The whole concept of dramatic action as that which resolves all dialogic oppositions is purely monologic. A true multiplicity of levels would destroy drama, because dramatic action, relying as it does upon the unity of the world, could not link those levels together or resolve them. In drama, it is impossible to combine several integral fields of vision in a unity that encompasses and stands above them all, because the structure of drama offers no support for such a unity. (Keyssar, H. 1991, 89)

Play: An Overview

A play consists of majorly four participants; author, characters, theatre, and audience. We are familiar with the dramatic work and its explicit nature and we all know how a play can be multi-folded and can easily be transformed into one's realization. it portrays many layers, diverse characters, and classes altogether, and this is the focal point from where multi-voicedness and heteroglossia can be studied meticulously. Plays are created and shaped by many elements such as characters & their relationships, voices, metaphors, styles, plots, time, space, and so on, and at the same time, Director also plays an important role.

As Helene Keyssar writes in her work 'Drama and the dialogic imagination' that Bakhtin did not talk about the nature of plays and how they should be analyzed. "Bakhtin not only ignored drama in most of his writings, in explicit favor of the dialogic or polyphonous novel, but in one of his most important works, Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics, he explicitly denounced dramatic literature.. assaulting it with his unique curse: drama was monologic.(Keyssar, H. 1991, 90) But having said that we would also like to accept that, this model for prose is so apt that it can be extended in other literary genre and more importantly analyzed in plays.

Evgeny Schwartz stretched a leaner series of combinations in the play 'The Dragon' and thoroughly organized the content in such a manner that it transcended through time and space. The folklore motifs in the play allowed the playwright to use fantasy, satire through polyphonies in a single text. Characters in this play possess a clear understanding and confidence in their speeches, behavior, and cognition. 'Every character in a text is prominent' as stated by Bakhtin and omission of anyone can cause a serious imbalance in the text.

Schwartz's plays are the best examples of adaption of fairytales and traditional legends into classic fairy tales and often termed as adult play owing to the mature and sensitive content. He charismatically puts his own culture and tradition and restructures the text in an entirely different manner, teaching moral lessons to readers and communicating a deep political message. Mostly he adapted fairytales from various regions, gracefully adapted them and blended these tales with the contemporary world scenarios.

The Dragon (Play)

'The Dragon' is a complex linguistic piece and an amalgamation of different genres like

folktales, fairy-tales, motifs, and drama. Schwartz has portrayed a society that lacks empathy and basic human values. The ages of repression have turned them stone-hearted, cold, and coward. And parallelly Schwartz also portrays characters such as cats, mule, and dogs, who were full of compassion and humanity, establishing a contrast between humans and nature.

The concept of 'does not matter' has been highlighted in the text. The play revolves around a brutal beast 'Dragon' who has three heads, four paws, five talons and can transform himself into a human form. He has been living with them for the past four hundred years, and every month he was provided with a huge amount of food (thousand cows, two thousand sheep, five thousand chicken, and eighty pounds of salt in a month) by the townspeople. Additionally, he also chooses a maiden every year in exchange for protection from other evil dragons. Now it was the turn for the Archivist's daughter Elsa and the heroine of the play, who is a calm and beautiful lady. So apparently, in this happy-looking town, everything is not happy and people have learned to live with it. There comes the lead protagonist of the play strong and brave knight 'Sir Lancelot', he decides to fight the mighty dragon to save Elsa, for whom he has fallen. He invites the dragon for a fight, gets mocked and humiliated by the entire town, but also gets help from Cat, Mule, Weaver, Hatter, Luthier, Blacksmith. At the end, he kills 'The Dragon', but gets badly injured. Assuming that Lancelot is dead, Burgomaster (2nd in command) becomes 'The New Dragon' and follows Late Dragon's footsteps, and tries to marry Elsa. Meantime Lancelot returns, saves Elsa and the whole town again, and puts them behind bars. In the end, he says "This is going to be a very meticulous job. Even worse than embroidering. We have to kill the dragon in each one of them."

The entire play advances as per Vladimir Propp's classification of fairy-tale in the book "Morphology of the Folktale". Little difference does it create in the mode of storytelling, this tale has been delivered in a medium of play, in multiple dialogues, monologues, and acts.

The Dragon (Character)

Lourella Rouster in her work 'The footprints of Dragons' talks about the etymology of the word and how it was derived, she writes "The word "dragon," according to the Oxford English Dictionary (1966), is derived from the Old French, which in turn was derived from the Latin *dracon* (serpent), which in turn was derived from the Greek *Spakov* (serpent), from the Greek aorist verb, *Spakelv* (to see clearly). It is related to many other ancient words related to sight, such as Sanskrit *darc* (see), Avestic *darstis* (sight), Old Irish *derc* (eye), Old English *torht*, Old Saxon *torht* and Old High German *zoraht*, all meaning clear, or bright. The roots of the word can be traced, then, back to most early Indo-European tongues. This may indicate that it is possible that the immediate ancestor of the word was a part of the original hypothetical Indo-European tongue which may have been a part of the vocabulary of Japheth's descendants, soon after the Flood and the dispersion from Babel. The Oxford English Dictionary points out that 'Spakelv' is derived from the Greek stem 'Spak' meaning strong. The connection with dragons is obvious. According to the OED, the word was first used in English about 1220 A.D. It was used in English versions of the Bible from 1340 on." (Lourella Rouster, 2017, 21)

Dragons are present in almost every mythology with good and bad omens, from Indian to Norse and from Roman to Greek. Slavic mythology mentions several types of dragons; Chudo-Yudo, Smok, and Russian Zmei also known as Zmei Gorynych, who is very similar to the dragon of our play. Zmei Gorynych is a multiheaded (mostly three), fire-breathing dragon who can change into other forms. He eats a huge amount of food and loves maidens.

The leading antagonist of the play 'Dragon', who can change into humans, lives on the grey

mountains. This place; grey mountains' is specific for the fictional world and taken from Norse Mythology (Myths of the Scandinavian people or North Germanic people) and states the period of Midgard or 'Middle Earth' as translated by British author J. R. R. Tolkien, whose works 'The Hobbit' and 'The Lord of the Rings' are based in this period. Grey mountains are home to mythical creatures like Durin's Folk, Dragons, and Orcs of Scandinavian tales.

'The Dragon' possesses a different speech style with the persons he interacts with, the emotions he reflects, and the places he visits, and that's how characters are shown constantly in relation and dialogue with each other.

His conversation with Elsa and Charlemagne (her father)

Man. How's it going, guys. Hi, Elsa, honey. You've got yourselves a guest. Who is it now?

(Elsa's father) Charlemagne. That's a stranger. Just passing by.

Man. What? Report loudly and precisely, as a soldier should.

Charlemagne. He is a stranger! (Yuri Machkasov, 2001)

Elsa. Yes, sir dragon.

Dragon. Give me your paw.

Elsa gives Dragon her hand.

You sweet little thing, you. Such a warm paw. Chin up! Give us a smile. Right. What's that, stranger? Huh?

Lancelot. Admiring the view. (Yuri Machkasov, 2001)

When he is talking to Lancelot regarding his people and what he has done to them. He has a sense of moral degradation which is being portrayed through his character on rare occasions.

Dragon. Lies again. My people are very scary. Won't find any like them anywhere. Solid piece of work. Hewn them myself.

Lancelot. They're still human.

Dragon. That's from the outside.

Lancelot. No.

Dragon. If you could see their souls, that would give you a fright.

Dragon. You'd run away. Wouldn't risk your life for the cripples. My dear man, I crippled them myself. Crippled them exactly as required... Hollow souls, corrupt souls, worn out souls, dead souls. A pity they're invisible, really.

Lancelot. You're lucky they are.

Dragon. How do you mean?

Lancelot. People would be horrified if they could see with their own eyes what happened to their souls. They would rather march to their deaths than remain enslaved. Who is going to feed you then? (Yuri Machkasov, 2001)

Intertextuality in the Play

Many critics see the nature of this play as satire and black humor, they indicated that 'The Dragon' is metaphorically used for Stalin and the town for Russia.

Since many dialogues reminded of what happened in the USSR; these lines from the text were written in a soviet newspaper in bold headlines in wartime, and probably referred to Stalin's war strategies. Charlemagne- Not in the last two hundred years. Before that, he was fought a lot, but he would kill all his adversaries. He's an amazing strategist and a great tactician. He attacks the enemy unawares,... Then he rips the horseman apart with his claws. Well, in time, they finally stopped going against him. (Yuri Machkasov, 2001)

Other accounts of feeding the dragon with a huge amount of food have been associated with 'Great Famine of Ukraine' or 'Holdomor' which was allegedly started to punish soviet people, especially, Ukrainians, as they have been protesting to collectivization and supporting freedom movement. Different research shows an estimate of 3.4 to 7 million deaths.

'The Dragon' was written during Stalin's rule in the USSR in 1943. The choices of the characters by Schwartz were a deliberate attempt to mock the Soviet system as he again writes in the text: "the only way to get rid of dragons is to have one of your own" (Yuri Machkasov, 2001). people need someone to defend and fight for them. They have been told from the ages, that they are worthless and cannot be independent, powerful, and self-sufficient. People require someone in the name of 'Protection' from other evil entities. This 'Dragon' could be anyone; Stalin, Hitler, Mussolini, or any autocrat from our contemporary world.

But unfortunately, two wrongs never make a right, and here lies the irony; the dragon in the name of 'protection' actually feeds on innocent and naïve people, slowly and gradually, decaying their mind, body, and soul. By the time they realize it, their capacity for reasoning and thinking is long gone. This portrays the sorry state of the country, citizens, and rulers.

Heinrich: "It's not my fault, I was taught that way."

Lancelot: "Everyone was, but why did you have to be first in class?" (Yuri Machkasov, 2001)

It was needed to be taken into consideration that invading Stalin's political space in Russia would have been a nightmare. It was an attempt from the author's side to legitimize fairytales to impart not only education but also socio-political awareness among adults. Schwartz's plays are understood to be highly subversive, and a satire on the ruling regime. The picture of Dragon which was drawn in the play when Lancelot was talking to 'The Cat' represents him huge and mighty similar to a country and state, having three mouths, five talons, four paws which can be metaphorically used as a federal and power-sharing form of government who watches over every citizen using federal structure.

Lancelot. How many heads does he have?

Cat. Three.

Lancelot. Impressive. What about paws?

Cat. Four.

Lancelot. Well, that's decent. Talons?

Cat. Sure. Five talons on each paw. Each one the size of an antler.

Lancelot. You don't say! Are they sharp, those talons?

Cat. Like knives.

Lancelot. I see. How about breathing fire?

Cat. That, too.

Lancelot. Real fire?

Cat. Burns the forest.

Lancelot. Uh-huh. Has he got scales?

Cat. He got scales.

Lancelot. And them scales, tough, I gather?

Cat. Solid.

Lancelot. No, really, how tough?

Cat. Couldn't cut'em with a diamond.

Lancelot. I see. Size?

Cat. Like a church.

Lancelot. OK, I get the picture. Thanks, Cat.

Cat. Are you going to fight him?

Lancelot. We'll see. (Yuri Machkasov, 2001)

Another perspective developed by Karen Ryan said that “The soviet, as well as some Western criticism, has held that *The Dragon* is an allegorical satire on German fascism, and there is ample evidence to support this reading. Shvarts had begun writing the play—indeed, had completed a draft of the first act—before the Nazi invasion in June 1941. 17 It may be that he perceived the growing threat of fascism (which was certainly in the air). In any case, the play deals more with the psychology of totalitarianism than with military action. In his stage directions, Shvarts specifies Gothic lettering on the town hall, which enhances the Germanic atmosphere. Many of the characters' names sound distinctly German to the Russian ear: Genrickh, El'za, Burgomistr, Sharleman'. The reference in the play to the Dragon ridding the kingdom of Gypsies certainly suggests Hitler's “final solution.” Veniamin Kaverin notes that the propagandistic jargon mouthed by Charlemagne concerning the Gypsies echoes the racist rhetoric popularized by Goebbels.18 Charlemagne assures Lancelot that the Gypsies are “vagrants by nature and by blood. They're enemies of any government system, otherwise, they would settle down somewhere and not wander all over the place.”19 The Dragon's assertion that he arose from the carnage of a battlefield would also seem to be an allusion to nazism. (Ryan K. L., 2009, p 97)

Ryan K. L also talks about the general idea of the play emphasizing the burning issues of society; moral and social degradation of mankind, deep-rooted corruption in the society, and death of free will, as he writes “Another school of thought regards *The Dragon* as a generalized allegory attacking corruption, pernicious ideology, and institutionalized evil of any stripe. The Dragon's tyranny is generic, unconnected to a specific time or place.

Another point of view was given by J. Douglas Clayton, he said “It should be further said that to read the play as a close representation of either Fascist Germany or Stalin's “socialism in one country” seems patently absurd. Shvarts could not foresee, in 1943, the rise of West Germany (the correlative of the Burgomaster, if we accept the *Dragon* as Hitler), any more than he knew that some twelve years later Khrushchev would maneuver himself into some of the power that Stalin had wielded. This play is primarily a comedy of human manners, an idealized representation of the struggle for social good against eternal human misery and venality.” (Ryan K. L., 2009, p 98)

This dragon could also be inspired by the famous folktale “St. George and The Dragon” compiled by Jacopo De Fazio, an archbishop of Genoa and a chronicler. In one of the most famous books of the Medieval period (13th Century) “The Golden Legend” (A compilation of Hagiographies). But this character has traveled in time capsule and talks in modern terms with modern problems, his portrait has been an amalgamation of power, corruption, ignorance, thirst, and arrogance. These qualities are often attributed to allegorical elements of the text. The leading antagonist of the play has different approaches with the characters he interacts with; Lancelot, Elsa, Mayor, or Hennery.

While doing the intertextual analysis we cannot miss the fact that *Dragon* is a biblical character as well, and many references by Schwartz points out the presence of Biblical and Gothic motifs. *Dragon* as a serpent has been used several times in the Old and New Testament has been having several accounts in other legends and fairy tales. Interestingly word *Dragon* has been used 29 times in Old Testament and around 100 times in New Testament, as Satan with many heads, fire breathing, and a symbol for Devil and Curse.

And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were

thrown down with him. (Revelation 12:9)

And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems. (Revelation 12:3)

Lancelot

We are now going to talk about the lead protagonist and famous knight Lancelot or Sir Lancelot. Sir Lancelot is one of the cultural heroes who has been present across cultures and was first found in Arthurian Legends. Mark Joshua while digging the history of this character came with the interesting finding that Lancelot, also known as Sir Lancelot and “Lancelot du Lac (“Lancelot of the Lake”) is the greatest knight of King Arthur’s court and lover of Arthur’s wife, Queen Guinevere, best known from Sir Thomas Malory’s *Le Morte D’Arthur* (1469 CE). The character was first developed by the French poet Chretien de Troyes (l. c. 1130-1190 CE) in his *Lancelot or the Knight of the Cart* (c. 1177 CE) who introduced Lancelot’s affair with Guinevere as well as his reputation as a famously skilled warrior”. (Mark Joshua, 2019;1)

The character has many versions of himself, as he is one of the most well-known characters from ‘Arthurian legend’ also known as ‘The Matter of Britain’. As per these tales he was considered to be the best and most skilled knight in King Arthur's Court. He became popular in French Arthurian legends after the Middle Ages. Among scholars, it is generally agreed that the character of Lancelot originated in the work of Chretien de Troyes who first introduced him in his poem *Erec and Enide* (c. 1170 CE) and used him again in his *Cliges* (c. 1170’s CE) but did not develop the character until his *Lancelot or the Knight of the Cart*. (Mark, J.J, 2019;2) When Schwartz calls his lead hero Lancelot, not only this name, but his character travels from the medieval period to the modern world and tries to justify his place in the text.

Conclusion

When I started reading this play, I wanted to ask why among all wicked characters, he chose Dragon to be his lead antagonist? And i think, that the dragon was used by Schwartz probably for two reasons; it is a mythical beast and always been depicted as mighty, wicked, and vicious, so anthropologically he gets more attention in the human world, so he must be killed by some kind-hearted and brave warrior and it shows how significant is the concept of good and bad for mankind. Secondly, Dragons are a figment of our imagination, in short fantasy, therefore we never have been encountered with such a creature in reality, so the depiction of something unreal provided freedom to the author to portray him, in howsoever manner, he wanted. Here hugeness of the dragon is depicted as a satire parallel to the state.

The play “Dragon” is a timeless political satire where continuous clash, mistrust, and sacrifices have been made, and owing to the socio-political scenarios and an everlasting relevance, these plays are popular and staged with a wider viewership even to date.

Every character is in continuous dilemma and clashes with the other voices. The author has successfully portrayed, how heteroglossia works in a text and how even a heterogeneous and diverse society binds oneself with the centripetal force of a language. Multiple voices also allow us to draw a more realistic and livelier picture of a society where there is space for everyone, for every bit and piece of society. The people in the play were given equal space to grow and nurture through their voices as they have represented different strata, classes, and minds of the society.

It is very enchanting to see how homogenously both the genre has been used and how artistically and aesthetically, it has been written. These types of works unveil a completely new horizon for linguistic discourse and leave us with a huge opportunity to study the language of a text.

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