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Author(s)	Li, Yimin
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A Stylistic Analysis on Speech and Thought Representation in *Oliver Twist*: With Special Reference to NRSA, NV, NRTA, and NI

Yimin Li

Oliver Twist (henceforth, *OT*) by Charles Dickens is considered an important literary work that discusses issues of human rights and poverty in 19th-century British society. Stylistic studies focus on the ways in which Dickens reveals these issues to the public through his unique writing technique. In this thesis, based on the theory proposed by Semino and Short (2004), I analysed the structures and functions of Narrator's Representation of Speech Acts (NRSA), Narrator's Representation of Voice (NV), Narrator's Representation of Thought Acts (NRTA), and Internal Narration/Narration of Internal States (NI) in *OT*.

The first two chapters mainly focus on the analysis of speech representation. In Chapter I, content-descriptive, neutral, and phonically descriptive speech act verbs are introduced to help to deal with the reporting verbs in the speech representations. In the use of NRSA, content-descriptive speech act verbs are the most frequently used because of their ability to express the topic of speech and the speaker's attitude, and therefore, it is used to provide background information and summarize unimportant utterances. Besides, I argued that prepositional phrases can replace speech act verbs to introduce reported clauses of speech acts. Such NRSA structures only function as adverbials and modify the behaviour of characters.

In Chapter II, the use of NV is discussed. The distinction between NRSA and NV is clarified in the first place. I concluded that NV has more flexible structures than NRSA, and its use is based on diverse points of view which can be those of different characters or the narrator. Structurally, apart from speech act verbs, it can be introduced by other non-speech verbs or delexicalized verbs to indicate a change in the topic of conversation, or it can be introduced by prepositions which are similar to those used in NRSA. Furthermore, I found that noun phrases in which the head noun preforms

verbal activity are usually placed in the position of subject to show the natural shift of speech events as the plot develops. Additionally, the non-verbal communication represented with NV, and the special case 'make no reply' are discussed. Although NV does not refer to any information about speech, the intentions of characters can be deduced from their body language.

In Chapter III, I examined the use of NRTA in OT. Above all, I introduced the mental verbs that are suggested by Biber, et al. (1999) and categorized them for the analysis of reporting verbs in the thought representations. NRTA is less frequently used in representing characters' summarized thought in OT, but it has very similar structures to its counterpart NRSA, which also includes a prepositional phrase structure, and the use of thought act verbs plays a dominant role in introducing NRTA. I also found that NRTA with the prepositional phrase structure is used like a suspension inserted between descriptions of characters' body movements and their speech to suggest the synchronicity between characters' thought and actions.

Since NI has complex and diverse sentence structures, in Chapter IV, I explored NI based on its functions of expressing characters' cognitive states, emotional or attitudinal states, and mental images. The function of NI is to reinforce the vividness of characters. Cognitive and emotional states are represented through mental verbs which have stative meanings. The representation of visual images is very complicated. Its reporting verbs include various types of verbs, but psychologically, it can be defined as depicting memories as representing past experience or imagination as creating images of the future or non-existent things. I also investigated some metaphorical expressions in NI. Expressions relating to the description of 'heart' and 'blood' are used to represent characters' emotional and attitudinal states.

Nevertheless, in this thesis, I have only analysed one of Dickens's third-person novels and it is difficult to draw a firm conclusion on his use of NRSA, NV, NRTA, and NI in respect of the characterisation. Further research is needed to complete the study of NI. Strictly speaking, my categorization of NI based on cognition, emotion and mental image is not very accurate, because they are all related to the inner emotional fluctuation, which is a vital problem in the field of psychology that I cannot fully resolve in this thesis. Thus, there are still many things to be done in future studies.