

A Pragma-stylistic Analysis of E. E. Cummings' Play *Him*

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الملخص البحث

تتحقق هذه الدراسة في مسرحية (كومنغز) بعنوان (هو) من الناحية التداولية-الأسلوبية. تحاول هذه الدراسة عرض الطريقة التي يمكن من خلالها استغلال النظريات التداولية في الأسلوبية فيما يخص الخطاب الأدبي بشكل عام والخطاب المسرحي بشكل خاص. يتم تطبيق نظرية (سيرل) للأفعال الكلامية وكذلك المبدأ التعاوني لـ (غرايس) على البيانات التي تم اختيارها. بناء على ذلك، تهدف الدراسة إلى (١) تحديد فئات الأفعال الكلامية الأكثر استعمالاً من قبل كل شخصيه مع التأثيرات الأسلوبية التي يحققها استعمالها في مسرحية (كومنغز). (٢) إظهار كيف إن عدم الالتزام بقواعد (المبدأ التعاوني) لـ (غرايس) يؤدي إلى تأثيرات أسلوبية على مستويي التفاعل في مسرحية (كومنغز). لغرض تحقيق أهداف هذه الدراسة، تم افتراض بأنه (١) هنالك فئات محددة للأفعال الكلامية والتي تبدو بأنها توفر تفاصيل سياقية متعلقة بالحالات النفسية لشخصيات المسرحية وكذلك أبعاد شخصياتهم وتوجهاتهم. (٢) تم استغلال قواعد المبدأ التعاوني لـ (غرايس) من قبل كلا من (كومنغز) وشخصيات المسرحية لإيصال أفكار ورسائل بصورة غير مباشرة. ولغرض تحقيق أهداف الدراسة واختبار فرضياتها، تم إتباع الإجراءات التالية: (١) عرض التداخل بين علم التداولية والأسلوبية نظرياً وكذلك تأثيرها على الخطاب الأدبي بشكل عام والخطاب المسرحي بشكل خاص وكذلك بعض المفاهيم المتعلقة والمهمة لأهداف الدراسة. (٢) تحليل (٦) مقتطفات من مسرحية (هو) طبقاً لنموذج انتقالي تم تطويره في هذه الدراسة. أثبتت نتائج الدراسة الفرضيات المذكورة آنفاً.

الكلمات مفتاحية: دراسة تداولية-أسلوبية؛ كومنغز؛ هو.

Abstract

This study investigates Cummings' play *Him* pragma-stylistically. This study is an attempt to show the way pragmatic theories are exploited stylistically in literary discourse in general and in dramatic discourse in particular. Searle's Speech Acts Theory and Grice's Cooperative Principle are applied to the selected data. Thus, the study aims at: (1) Specifying the most dominant categories of speech acts used by each character along with the stylistic effects achieved through their use in Cummings' play. (2) Showing how non-observance of maxims yields stylistic effects on the two levels of interaction in Cummings' play. For the present study to achieve its aims, it is hypothesized that: (1) There are consistent patterns of speech acts that seem to provide contextual details about the characters' psychological states and the dimensions of their personalities and orientations, (2) Grice's four maxims are exploited by Cummings and the characters in the play to convey ideas and messages indirectly. Then, in order to achieve the aims of the study and test its hypotheses, the following procedures are adopted: (1) Presenting a theoretical background about the interaction between pragmatics and stylistics as well as their effects on literary discourse in general and dramatic discourse in particular with some related notions that are significant to the aims of the study. (2) Analyzing (six) extracts of *Him* according to an eclectic model developed by the study. The findings of the analysis verify the above mentioned hypotheses.

Keywords: Pragma-stylistics, Cummings, *Him*.

1. Introduction

Being a reflection of real life spoken language, play texts constitute a keystone in the field of pragma-stylistics and a distinctive genre worthy of analysis. Thus, the data selected in the present study is Cummings' play *Him*. Though, as Kostelanetz and Rocco (1999: xv) assert, no one can dispute the opinion that Cummings ranks among the prominent modern American writers, no other major American writer of his generation remains so neglected and misunderstood as Cummings is. His plays are rarely mentioned in histories of American theatre and have never been satisfactorily exhibited or completely examined. They (ibid: xvi) add that what survives of Cummings and his literary works are not his ideas, but his radical enlargement of our sense of linguistic possibilities and his exceptional use of language. Hence, linguistically, his play constitutes rich data for study. Therefore, the present study investigates his play from pragma-stylistic points of view in an attempt to answer the following questions: (1) What are the most dominant speech acts used by each character in Cummings' play to achieve some stylistic effects? (2) How does non-observance of Grice's maxims yield stylistic effects on the two levels of interaction in Cummings' play? As such, the study aims at: (1) Specifying the most dominant categories of speech acts used by each character along with the stylistic effects achieved through their use in Cummings' play. (2) Showing how non-observance of maxims yields stylistic effects on the two levels of interaction in Cummings' play. Thus, it is hypothesized that: (1) There are consistent patterns of speech acts that seem to provide contextual details about the characters' psychological states and the dimensions of their personalities and orientations. (2) Grice's four maxims are exploited by Cummings and the characters in the play to convey ideas and messages indirectly. In order to achieve the aim of the study and test its hypotheses, the following procedures are adopted: (1) Presenting a theoretical background about the interaction between pragmatics and stylistics as well as their effects on literary discourse in general and dramatic discourse in particular with some related notions that are significant to the aims of the study. (2) Analyzing six extracts of *Him* according to an eclectic model developed by the study.

2. Pragma-stylistics

Traditionally, the principal work in stylistics focused on analyzing the formal linguistic features of literary texts like the grammatical forms, the phonological features or the propositional meaning. The data for such analysis were mainly poems as they are short that the stylistician can analyze the complete text. Such analysis is straightforward because, as far as the discourse structure of the poem is concerned, we normally have only one discourse level where the poet addresses the reader directly. Conversely, in novels and plays, we have multiple discourse levels. That is, there is an address from the author to the reader, embedded in an address from the narrator to the narratee, which is in turn, embedded in a level where characters interact or address each other. That is why the analyst's job to identify the stylistic effects on such multiple discourse levels is difficult because it involves identifying the stylistic effects on each level in separation. Additionally, it is unfeasible to analyze the complete text because it tends to be longer. Thus, the early stylisticians' neglect of drama is ascribed to the lack of tools to deal with such types of texts or the analysis of discursive interaction (Jeffries and McIntyre, 2010: 100).

Late in the 1980's, after the developments of conversation analysis, pragmatics and discourse analysis, stylisticians became equipped with tools to analyze the meaning of dialogue and

interaction in literary types (Norgaard, et. al. 2010: 45). This has led to the emergence of pragmatic stylistics or (more frequently pragma-stylistics). According to Davies (2007: 106), pragma-stylistics is stylistics, but with a pragmatic component. It is concerned with the application of pragmatic theories to literary texts to present an explanation about the way literary language is used in context or how powerful structures are created. Its approaches are a combination of pragmatic and stylistic approaches to explain the way (literary) language is used in context and how it may contribute to the characterization of the protagonists in a literary piece of art or how power structures are created and so on (Norgaard, et. al. 2010: 39).

Allan (2016: 217) defines it as an approach aims at applying the findings and methodologies of pragmatics to the concept of style in language, that is to say, the variations in usage in written and spoken language such as analyzing the language of literary texts among writers, genres and periods.

Sell (1991: 99) states that "the aim [of pragmatic stylistics] is to relate the writing and reading of literary texts to the linguistic and sociocultural contexts in which those processes have taken place. This means that it is literary on one hand and linguistic on the other with a great emphasis on contextualization".

Mey (2009: 256) agrees on situating pragma-stylistics within the larger literary subfield of stylistics claiming that it is an established discipline lies on the cusp of narrative studies within stylistics. He characterizes it as the study of the 'user's role in the societal production and consumption texts' and alternatively as the 'science of the unsaid'. Thus, Pragma-stylistics, being a stylistic study carried out according to the tents of pragmatics, attempts to discover, analyze and formalize the implicit meanings of utterances. It is unified, however, by its emphasis on explaining existing interpretation of texts rather than generating new readings.

3. Dramatic Discourse

Cummings (2010: n.p.) defines 'dramatic discourse' as a linguistic component of a text written for performance, in which, in its archetypal form, a story develops through dialogue accompanied by extralinguistic elements such as physical action, costume, and staging. This linguistic component of play texts comprises not only the dialogic or monologic speech of characters, but also the framing aspects of the text such as stage directions (although this aspect has received little attention from linguists to date).

It is the 'conversational' aspect of dramatic dialogue interaction that has attracted the attention of linguists, many of whom have turned to the field of discourse analysis to pin order to 'account for reader and audience intuitions about dialogue in those texts' (Burton, 1980: ix).

Pragmatic approaches also reveal the dynamic process of meaning construction- and the exploitation of meaning potential- that involves the author, text and audience, to arrive at a sense of characterization and plot development. This has particular importance bearing in mind the performative role of language in drama, forming part of the action and creating characterization, often in the absence of a narratorial guide (ibid.).

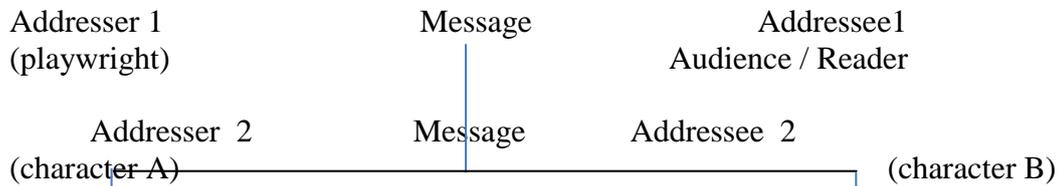
Bowles (2010: 10) points out that the dramatic discourse is usually complex because during the dramatic performances at least two types of interaction simultaneously. That is, there is the dialogue onstage between the characters but at the same time the onstage characters also communicate with the audience. These simultaneous interactions create a structure which makes dramatic discourse more difficult to classify than face-to-face communication in real life.

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Short's (1989: 149) split-level model of live dramatic dialogue shows how one level (the interaction between the characters) is embedded in the other (the interaction between the dramatist and audience/reader):



Tan (1993: 50) argues that this layered aspect makes the analysis of inter-character interaction somewhat unproductive, if not misleading. Nonetheless, the superficial similarities to naturally occurring speech events encourage much linguistic research to focus on dialogic exchanges between characters.

Short (1989: 149) adds that "it is this doubled discourse which accounts for so-called dramatic irony, when the viewpoint of the audience is different from that of some character(s)."

It also extends possible speaker and listener roles. Characters on stage will generally address each other directly but they can also break out of this horizontal interaction by addressing the audience directly through soliloquy or by taking on a narrator role. In this respect, the audience can be both a spectator of the performance on stage and a silent participant in it, "both 'inside' and 'outside' the contexts of the utterance entailed by the speech events of the play" (Herman, 1995: 30).

4. Pragmatic Approaches to Literature

Dascal (2003: 273) believes that there is a natural and even necessary connection between pragmatics and literary studies. This is justified by the fact that pragmatics is the theory of *all* uses of language. Therefore, literary discourse cannot be left outside the framework of pragmatics. Including literary discourse will force pragmatics to enrich and improve itself because such inclusion requires reformulating and deepening the pragmatic principles.

The following sections give an account of the most applicable theories to literary discourse.

4.1 Speech Acts Theory

As literary discourse is an imitation to normal discourse, Speech Acts theory has been applied to literary works as to ordinary discourse. So, since SAs theory can be used to account for the language of a given text and its interpretation, it is reliable to maintain that it is of value to apply it to literary discourse. Thus, the usefulness of speech act theory has been first emphasized by Pratt (1973) in her book "Towards a Speech Act Theory of Literary Discourse". She tries to show that SAs model of analysis and theories of discourse analysis can also be used to analyze literary discourse. She proposes that the contextual knowledge that governs the literary works is similar to the appropriateness conditions governing particular SAs in everyday discourse (Ohmann, 1972: 369).

So, since 1970, speech act theory has influenced the literary studies in various ways. It has been providing a systematic framework to the analysis of direct discourse by a character within a literary work such as identifying the implications and effects of speech acts that critics and readers have always taken into account, subtly though unsystematically. Moreover, it has been used as a model recasting and modifying the literary theory especially fictional works such as the way the author holds "pretended" assertions by inventing a narrator narrating what the former intends without being responsible for the truth and

ordinary illocutionary commitments. Moreover, some speech acts theorists suggest that literature is a mimetic discourse. That is a lyric or a play is said to be an imitation of ordinary discourse in which we can express our thoughts and feeling about something. Thus, a novel, a story or a play can be an imitation of a biography or autobiography (Abrams and Harpham, 2009: 376).

Add to that, in his book "Speech Acts in Literature", Miller (2001: 1) maintains that the phrase "speech acts in literature" has different meanings. It can mean speech acts uttered in literary works like requests, promises, apologizes and the like (whether said or written by characters or the writer). It can also mean a possible performative dimension of a literary work taken as a whole.

More specifically, in drama, many practitioners of stylistics have looked for ways to tackle dramatic texts in terms of SAs theory. One of the applications is that of Elam (1984). He affirms that the language of drama should be described in terms of SAs theory since dramatic discourse comes closer to everyday language. Dramatic discourse is a series of SAs; therefore it should be evaluated within SAs rules. He claims that not all actions in dramatic texts or discourse are *communicative acts*; some of them are *conventional acts* (Makaryk, 1998:196). Supporting Elam, Esterhammer (1994: 13) states that speech act theory has made its most considerable and productive impact on literary theory in the study of drama. For him, drama proved to be a valuable illustration of the way social reality is created and reflected by verbal exchange. This is ascribed to the nature of drama in which speaking and acting are inseparable. This, in turn, invokes conversational exchange and behavioural convention of the society it portrays in a public context.

Short (1996:194) adds that through recognizing the acts people perform, one can infer things about them and their social relations, for example, if someone habitually performs the act of ordering others to do things, he will be thought to be a bossy. What works for the real world, also works for fictional world of the play. One can infer things about the characters on the stage via SAs patterns. He (ibid: 195-6) presents an example from Shakespeare's play "*King Lear*". The act of ordering others to things is a reflection to his power as a king. For him saying things represents law. So when he divides his kingdom between his two wicked daughters, he loses his power as a king. SAs affect the real world and the literary world. Reading a text and realizing SAs rules, one can infer important unstated aspects of context.

Carter and Simpson (1989: 162) demonstrate that one way to analyze a dramatic text in terms of speech acts can be by specifying the kinds of speech acts used by characters and examining whether there is a consistent pattern in the distribution of speech acts. Such analysis is of use to reveal about nature and the social relationship of characters.

Similarly, Beach et al. (2011: n.p.) claim that, based on the type of speech acts performed, it is possible to infer the characters' traits, goals and beliefs about their own and their audience's status and power, their intended meaning and actual effect, their ability to perform the act, their sincerity in performing the act, the social context in which a particular act occurs and the effects of these acts on other characters.

Speech act theory, therefore, plays a significant role in everyday language and literary language. It is a linguistic link between normal language and parasitic language.

4.2 Grice's Cooperative Principle

Many linguists hint at the applicability of Grice's cooperative principle to literary discourse. Assuming that Grice is right in his hypothesis, Black (2006: 27) and Mazzon (2009: 120) believe that Grice's maxims are relevant to the processing of literary discourse since the conversation between characters in a literary discourse is mimetic to our naturally occurring

talk. In this way the cooperative principle works as systematic interpretive procedure that guides our reading of the literary text.

Grice's maxims may go unfulfilled in five ways, i.e. flouting, violation, opting out, infringing and suspending. Literary discourse attests such non-fulfillment of maxims on two levels character-to-character interaction and narrator -reader interaction. On character-to-character level of interaction, the maxim of quality may be violated when characters lie, exaggerate or conceal. They may flout a maxim such as flouting the maxim of manner by being ambiguous. Moreover, the character may be faced with a Clash of maxims and so on. So, in a literary discourse, these conversational maxims work in a way analogous to our natural interaction. On the narrator –reader level of interaction, Black (2006: 29) illustrates, the narrator may not fulfill a maxim by violating it, though many violations may characterize the narrator as unreliable. The narrator may be faced with a clash between the demands of various maxims. For example, in detective stories, the writer may be faced with such clash because he knows 'who done it', but conceals the identity of the murder as long as possible; or by trying to engage the interest of the reader, the writer may reveal the broad lines of the plot in the fiction, but teasingly does not directly answer the major questions that might arise when reading the literary work. More interestingly, the narrator may flout a certain maxim to prompt the reader to look for some implicit meanings of the text. That is, he exploits a maxim or maxims to generate implicature.

4.3 Implicature

The speaker may flout a maxim to trigger an interpretive activity on the part of the hearer. As far as literature is concerned, it is said that it has its own set of maxims that govern the meaning implied by the writer. Besides, this set is agreed upon between the writer and the reader. That is, mostly, writers exploit a maxim or maxims because literary texts are not obviously required to be informative, truthful or relevant. For example, the writer may exploit the maxim of manner, i.e. obscurity or prolixity as effective literary devices. The same thing holds true with poetic ambiguity that is supposed to be deliberate (Mitchell, 2008: 65).

Starting with the maxim of quantity, it is claimed that it is irrelevant to literary discourse because both of the situation and the information are fictional that one cannot decide on the particular amount of information to be useful or required or it is difficult to decide whether or not the narrator's judgement on the appropriate amount of information is trust worthy. However, it explains the reason behind the reader's searching for the implicit meaning in the apparent insignificant or irrelevant details. For example, in 'A Painful Case', the narrator's detailed description of the protagonist's room, prompts the reader to interpret the character via the descriptions of the surroundings such as the books' selection and arrangement by size which seem to refer to the character's intellectual development. Thus, the reader is left to infer the information (Black, 2006: 29-30).

Moreover, the maxim of quality is said to be flouted by being fictional or by means of the writer's or the characters' (on the character-character level of interaction) use of metaphor and irony (Pratt 1977: 53).

In addition, the maxim of manner refers not to what is said but to the way something is said, that is why it is firmly under the control of the writer. This maxim is flouted whenever a departure from the chronological order of events occurs. This often occurs in detective stories where revealing the identity of the murder when approaching the victim from the early beginning costs much as the narrator will spoil the story and lose his readers. Furthermore, rhetorical questions and figures of speech involve the flouting of this maxim, for example,

metaphor is not literally true, or irony which takes the form of exaggeration or a counterfactual statement. They involve the maxim of manner because they are considered as instances of alternative views of the same thing or event, i.e. rephrasing (Black, 2006: 30).

In texts that are obscure, ambiguous, or disorderly, the author challenges the readers' creativity and invites the readers to participate in building up the meaning. Lack of orderliness has long been known in literature. Changing the order of events and relocating characters to new settings has become a norm in literary texts. Accordingly, the partial violation of the sub-maxim of orderliness is conventional in literary texts (Van Dijk, 1997: 50).

With regard to the maxim of relation, one assumes that everything within a fiction will be relevant. This maxim is crucial for the interpretation of figures of speech, where one is invited to consider the relevance they may have to the narrative (ibid.).

As far as drama is concerned, Culpeper (2001: 180) notes that it provides a useful framework for explicating the way characters generate implicature and an effective way to capture the differences in the conversational behaviour. Implicature, being the responsibility of the hearer to work out, can be interpreted by both the characters on stage and the audience. However, in certain situations the character cannot work it out, the audience is only able to do so. One of these situations is the dramatic irony which refers to the irony that occurs when the audience knows more than the characters. Within the level whereby the playwright is conveying the message to the audience, there is an embedded level whereby one character conveys a message to the other one; he may flout a maxim generating implicature that both of the other character and the audience can work out. However, sometimes the character generates implicature which only the audience can work out, thus the occurrence of dramatic irony. For example in Shakespeare's play *Richard III*, the playwright, through soliloquies, provides the audience with much more information about the protagonist. In this way, unlike other characters on stage, the audience can interpret the implicature generated by Richard, for example, when he says that he will lie (I i. 115) for his brother Clarence, the characters' interpretation of this might be that he means that he will position himself, in the place of his brother who has been condemned to death. According to this interpretation, Richard appears magnanimous. On the other hand, for the audience this 'lie' is ambiguous. It could be interpreted to mean that is his untruths that will condemn his brother to death. Thus, the playwright has conveyed implicature to the audience about Richard via the character himself by exploiting the maxim of manner.

Within the same play, another example could be quoted to show the way the playwright exploits the maxims of quantity and manner to enable the audience capturing the conversational behavior of a character. This character is Justice Shallow who, while recruiting some law officers, examines the roll call and says:

Where's the Role? Where's the Role? Where's the Role?

Let me see, Let me see, Let me see: so, so, so, so: yea marry sir. Raphe Mouldie: let them appears as I call: let them do so, let them do so: Let me see, Where is Mouldie? Henry IV, Pt. II (II. ii. 96-100).

In the above example, by providing unnecessary details, unnecessary repetition, and presenting information in a disorderly manner, an implicature is generated to mean that this character is somewhat senile. Thus, such a pragmatic approach to analyze the conversational behavior of characters enables the audience or the reader to make judgements about the personalities of characters.

So, since the language of drama is viewed as a reproduction of real life language, the audience calculates implicature generated in the dramatic discourse in the same way the hearers do in real conversations. They decide, according to the context of the genre of a particular discourse, and the particular time and culture, the audience decides whether failures to fulfill Grice's maxims are significant.

5. The Model of the Analysis

The analysis of Cummings' play *Him* is carried out according to an eclectic model intended to be presented by this study to include various notions mentioned in the previous sections. In this model, this play is analyzed pragma-stylistically. Hence, for each selected extract of the play, the kinds of SAs classified by Searle such as representatives, directives, expressive, and commissives are investigated. Moreover, in the same extract, Grice's cooperative principle is examined to show to what extent the playwright and the characters exploit the maxims of quantity, quality, relation, and manner to convey ideas and messages indirectly. This model will be the main instrument by which the data of this study is analyzed on two levels of interaction; the character-character and the playwright-reader level.

6. Data Analysis

Extract No.1

Scene: A room: three visible walls and an invisible wall. Of the visible walls one, the wall to the audience's left, is solid. In the middle wall is a door and in the wall to the audience's right a window. Against the solid wall is a sofa on which lies a man's brown felt hat, much the worse for wear. Under the window in the opposite wall is a table on which reposes a large box for cigarettes; and near the table are two chairs in the less comfortable of which him sits, back to the audience, writing in a notebook[...] Me stands facing the audience just inside the invisible fourth wall. Her open eyes (which are focussed at a point only a few inches distant) and her gestures (arranging hair, smoothing eyebrows, etc.) as well as the pose of her body (which bends slightly forward from the hips) suggest to the audience that she is looking at her reflection in an invisible mirror which hangs on this invisible wall.

Me: O—suddenly I think I'd like to die.

Him: I think myself that there's some thinking being done around here. But why die now? The morn's on the thorn, the snail's on the wing, the play's on the way; and who knows?

Me: I do. I know we're absolutely different. I've tried and tried not to know it, but what in the world is the use of trying? O, I'm so sick of trying—

Him: Me too. This business of writing a play, I mean.

Me: You mean I'm no good to you and that we should have ended everything long ago; because—not being interested.

(Act I, scene 2, p. 2-6)

a. Speech Acts

Me starts with an expressive speech act about the state she experiences "O—suddenly I think I'd like to die". Him's utterance, "I think myself that there's some thinking being done around here..." is a representative speech act of stating to comfort her. Her reply, "I do. I know we're absolutely different..." is another expressive speech act. Again, Him's utterance is a representative speech act of stating "Me too. This business of writing a play, I mean". Finally, by means of a representative speech act of asserting, "You mean I'm no good to you and that

we should have ended everything long ago; because—not being interested”, Me tells Him that she understands their relationship and he is not interested in her.

b. Cooperative Principle and Conversational Implicature

In his figurative expressions, "The morn's on the thorn", "the snail's on the wing", Him flouts the maxim of quality twice to depict life as something that deserves living for such nice things. On the face of it, Him tries to be hopeful comforting Me; however, he talks about his concerns and interests as an artist especially when he says "the play is in the way". In this way, he is being selfish and far from Me's problem. This justifies the flouting of the maxim of relation in this utterance. Moreover, the maxim of quality is flouted twice in his rhetorical questions "why die know?" and "who knows?" to assert indirectly that there is no reason deserves thinking of death. Another flouting of the maxim of quality occurs in Me's rhetorical question "but what in the world is the use of trying?" to implicate that it is of no use trying to pretend not knowing that they are different. Him's reply "Me too. This business of writing a play, I mean" flouts the maxim of quantity by being more informative than required to avoid misunderstanding and clarifies that his tiredness is from his play not for Me's same reason. In this same utterance, he flouts the maxim of relation to show that he is basically concerned with his own problem and does not care about Me's. This is the implicature Me reaches at and states explicitly " You mean I'm no good to you and that we should have ended everything long ago; because—not being interested".

From the early beginning, the playwright flouts the maxim of quantity in his detailed description of the scene. He provides many details that contribute to the interpretation of the theme of the play. For example, the box of cigarette communicates something on some deeper level, especially when it is frequently referred to during the play. As one of the symbolic interpretations of cigarette or smoking is the time to think, contemplate, or evaluate, the reference to the cigarette could be linked to the main theme of the play of self-discovery or understanding. Each character begins his journey to think, Him thinks of himself as an artist and Me thinks of their relationship. This unclear reference affects the maxim of manner. The maxim of manner is also flouted in the playwright's reference to the way Him sits. The lack of clarity is intended by the playwright to generate implicature. He is an artist who is unable to understand himself and his ideals; therefore he is unable to express himself to the audience. So, sitting on the less comfortable chair and his back to the audience means that his position is precarious and he is isolated from his audience.

Extract No.2

Scene: The room of Scene 2 revolved clockwise with reference to the audience so that the fourth or invisible wall is now the window wall. The wall to the audience's right (corresponding to the window wall of Scene 2) is the door wall. The middle wall (corresponding to the door wall of Scene 2) is the solid wall, against which is the sofa. To the audience's left a new wall with a large mirror (the invisible fourth wall of Scene 2) is now visible. me is standing and gesturing before the mirror, as at the beginning and end of Scene 2 ; but at the point on the stage where she then stood there is now the table, near which are the two chairs.

Him: How is it with you, lady?

Me (Quietly, to the ceiling): It's wonderful with me.

Him: (Lights his cigarette. Sitting on the table, back to the audience, murmurs vaguely.): The king's to blame[..].

Me: (Vaguely murmurs): What . . . king.

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Him : King queen and knave, King kinkajou with his prehensile tail, King C. Y. Didn't Gillette Me know.

Me (As before) : The second sounds like a nice king (Silence, Him smokes) Are—are you busy?

Him (Laughs) : "Busy" ? Not just now.

(Act I, scene III, p. 16-20)

a. Speech Acts

Him performs a directive speech act by asking Me “How is it with you, lady?” in an unserious way. This reveals his carelessness to Me as there is a kind of formality in his speech act reflecting that he is not really interested in how she feels or does. In the same tone of formality, Me performs an expressive speech act expressing the opposite of what she feels “It's wonderful with me”. Him’s utterance “The king's to blame...” is a representative speech act of stating about something he reads. Me’s next utterance “What . . . king” is a directive speech act of asking. However, the question mark is missed may be because the playwright wants to show that her question is not a serious, or the superficiality of her interest in his work. Trying to explain to Me what he says, Him performs a representative speech act of answering, “King queen and knave, ...”. Me’s utterance “The second sounds like a nice king” is a representative speech act of stating. Without any reaction of Him to her opinion, she understands that he is busy and maybe she is disturbing him. Thus she utters a directive speech act asking whether he is busy “Are—are you busy?”. Him answers indirectly with another representative speech act “"Busy" ? Not just now”.

b. Cooperative Principle and Conversational Implicature

On the character-character level of interaction, Me seems to flout the maxim of quality and manner in her reply “It's wonderful with me”. This is so because what she says is not true which affects the maxim of quality, her utterance reveals an ironic tone which, in turn, affects the maxim of manner. In simple words, this flouting implicates that what she says does not express what she really feels; she, indirectly, complains. Him, in his utterance, “the king's to blame...”, flouts the maxim of relation because his conversational contribution is not relevant to that of Me. This flouting implicates that he is not interested in or does not care to what Me really feels. Rather, his interest is devoted to his play or “art”. This what Me understands when she says “are you busy?”. Her question flouts the maxim of relation to implicate that she understands that he is not with her and he concentrates on something else and this is clear from his first reply “The king's to blame ...”. By his reply to this question, Him flouts the maxim of manner; specifically the sub-maxim “be clear” to implicate that now and always he is busy in his work and he has no time for her.

On the playwright-reader level of interaction, Cummings flouts the maxim of quantity by his description of the setting in which Me and Him confront. More clearly, their confrontations take place in four-sided room, but one side is invisible and faces the room. This description is repeated five times during the play with the playwright’s focus on the circular movement of the setting. When first described, in the second scene of the first act, the wall to the audience left is blank or invisible on which an invisible mirror Me is looking into, the middle wall has a door, and the wall to the audience's right has a window. In the next Him-Me scene, the room has turned one-quarter revolution to the right, and the mirrored wall becomes on the audience's left. The circular movement of the room permits the viewer to recognize that there

is in fact a fourth wall and that it is not illusionary. Till the final scene, or the final confrontation, the room has made a full circle and has turned in its same position at the beginning of the play or the first scene in which it is described. By focusing on and repeating the description in five scenes in the play, Cummings wants the reader to look for the meaning he intends to convey by being more informative than required. The playwright implicates that the revolving setting represents Him and me journey or struggle to understand something or their beginning to proceed. Him's struggle to understand the play and himself, i.e. self-awareness; and Me's struggle or attempt to understand Him and their relationship together. Ending the play with the setting as first described, implicates that the Him is still with the dilemma of understanding himself and proves that there is no ultimate or definite solution. Moreover, as he believes, life is a natural and endless phenomenon and if he puts an end for the play, then, he will contradict himself. The maxim of manner is also flouted as the playwright does not avoid obscurity and is not clear enough in his description. However, such flouting becomes a condition for some literary works to activate the reader processing what the playwright wants to convey and clarity may spoil the interest.

Extract No. 3

Him, putting his notebook in his pocket, stretches over a sofa and begins to speak to no one about a scene of a play. Me is Standing at a table and looking out the window.

Me: What's all this play of yours about?

Him (To himself, smiling at the ceiling): This play of mine is all about mirrors.

Me: But who's the hero?

Him (To her): The hero of this play of mine? (Hesitates) A man[...]who is writing a play about a man who is writing a sort of a play[...]This hero is called "Mr. O. Him, the Man in the Mirror."

Me: O. Him.(Smiles) And the heroine? (Quickly) —or isn't there any?

Him: On the contrary. My heroine lives over there—. (Points to the mirror)

(Act I, scene III, p. 24-25)

a. Speech Acts

Me starts with a directive speech act asking about the theme of Him's play, "What's all this play of yours about?". Him answers her question with a representative speech act of answering "This play of mine is all about mirrors". Again, Me asks another question by means of a directive speech act "But who's the hero?". His reply is a representative speech act of answering "The hero of this play of mine?....". Asking another question about the heroine of the play, Me uses another directive speech act "O. Him. And the heroine? or isn't there any?". He tells her about the heroine his play by means of a representative speech act of answering "On the contrary. My heroine lives over there".

b. Cooperative Principle and Conversational Implicature

In this extract, Him flouts the maxims of quantity and manner. In his frequent reference to the mirror, he is being more informative than required and he is not clear enough in his reference especially in his expression "the Man in the Mirror" and the metaphorical one "My heroine lives over there", which, in turn, affects the maxim of quality. In this way, he has something to communicate other than the thing he said. It's Me's job now to look for the meaning he implicates. First, when referring to the mirror, Him implicates that both of himself and Me has other self, which both are searching for; Mr. O. Him, the successful artist who is trying to reach the stage of self-transcendence and understand that without love he can achieve nothing, and Me, the woman for whom Him creates an image in his mind or the woman who can understand their relationship together. Second, what he intends to convey is that for every

person, there are two sides and his play is a mirror or a reflection of these two sides or selves of Him and Me. In his play, Him releases Mr. O. Him by allowing him to be the author and hero of the interior play.

On the playwright-reader level of interaction, Cummings flouts these same maxims. The maxim of quantity is flouted as the playwright, in addition to this reference, mentions the idea of mirror more than eight times in different scenes. The playwright, for sure, wants the reader to look for the intended meaning behind such over-informativeness. However, the intended meaning cannot precisely be pinned down. This ambiguity affects the maxim of manner. There are several ideas encompassed by Cummings's mirror imagery, in addition to the idea that there are two sides to a person: the man outside the mirror, and the man in the mirror, Cummings wants to convey a message that his natural art can only be achieved by holding a mirror up to nature and reflecting the true picture of reality. For him, it is more important for a play to be something (a reflection) than to be an illusion of something. Hence, the interior play, as well as Him, is a play of reflections and is spontaneous and organic. It embodies Cummings' life, art, relationships and struggle.

Extract No.4

Me and Him are waiting Him's play to be performed. The curtain rises and falls. Darkness.

Voice of Him: This is the Other Play.

Voice of Me: By Mr. O. Him?

Voice of Him: —The Man in the Mirror.

Voice of Me: But tell me, what's this Other Play all about?

Voice of Him: About? It's about anything you like, about nothing and something and everything, about blood and thunder and love and death—in fact, about as much as you can stand.

(Act II, scene I, p. 27)

a. Speech Acts

Him starts the conversation with a representative speech act of stating telling Me that the performance of his play begins, "This is the Other Play". To be sure about the play he refers to, Me performs a directive speech act asking, "By Mr. O. Him?". With another representative speech act, "The Man in the Mirror", Him indirectly answers her by mentioning the name of the play she asks about. Her next utterance, "But tell me, what's this Other Play all about?" is another directive speech act to ask about the theme of his play. Again, Him performs a representative speech act answering her about the theme of his play.

b. Cooperative Principle and Conversational Implicature

On the character-character level of interaction, Him flouts maxims in two occasions. The first is in his utterance "The Man in the Mirror" since Me asks a yes-no question and he can simply answer with "yes"; however, his answer is more informative than required which affects the maxim of quantity to implicate and emphasize the idea referred to in (extract 3). The second occasion in which flouting occurs is in his utterance "About? It's about anything you like, about nothing and something and everything, about blood and thunder and love and death—in fact, about as much as you can stand". Again, he flouts the maxim of quantity, but, here, the other case around occurs. In simple words, Him's conversational contribution is less informative than required. This is so because the interior play is spontaneous and it is a play of reflections as Him in one occasion says "it is all about mirrors". It reflects what happens around Him, his inability to understand himself and his struggle or journey of self-transcendence. He is unable to understand himself and his nature, that's why he is unable to

understand his play or to tell Me about its theme, the thing that makes his answer less informative than required “anything you like, about nothing and something and everything”.

In addition, the scenes of the interior play are unrelated to each other. The thing that results in flouting the maxims of relation and manner on the playwright-reader level of interaction for the same above mentioned reason because Him’s thoughts, situation, and play are reflections of those of Cummings.

Extract No.5

Him (Unhearing, proceeds contemptuously) : The average "painter" "sculptor" "poet" "composer" "playwright" is a person who cannot leap through a hoop from the back of a galloping horse, make people laugh with a clown's mouth, orchestrate twenty lions.

Me: Indeed.

Him (To her) : But imagine a human being who balances three chairs, one on top of another, on a wire, eighty feet in air with no net underneath, and then climbs into the top chair, sits down, and begins to swing

Me (Shudders): I'm glad I never saw that—makes me dizzy just to think of it.

Him (Quietly): I never saw that either [...] because I am that.

(Act I, scene II, p. 10)

a. Speech Acts

Attempting to explain to Me how he understands himself as an artist, Him's utterance is a representative speech act of stating. Me's reply is a representative speech act of agreeing. Next, Him uses another speech act of stating to complete his description about himself as an artist “But imagine a human being who balances three chairs, ...”. With an expressive speech act Me expresses the difficulty of what he describes that she just stand thinking of it as it makes her feel "dizzy". With another representative speech act of stating he says that neither has he seen it, because he experiences this situation or he is the doer of that action, “I never saw that either [...] because I am that”.

b. Cooperative principle and Conversational Implicature

In his explanation of the artist, Him alludes to the circus to depict the average artist. Metaphor is used twice here to depict the situation the ‘average artist’ is going through "The average "painter" "sculptor" "poet" "composer" "playwright" is a person" and the artist Him tries to define or with whom he is concerned "a human being who balances three chairs ...". In this way, the speaker flouts the maxim of quality twice because the salient feature of the figurative utterance is that it is false because it is imaginative. The point of a metaphor is conversationally implied in virtue of the fact that the speaker flouts the maxim of quality. Besides, the maxim of manner is flouted twice since the speaker conversational contribution is not clear enough. Him, here, communicates more than he says generating implicature about the agony of the ‘average artist’ and by assimilating it to the way the circus performers and animal trainers could present something new and daring in spite of the danger of their works. The artist needs to present something inspires the audience with its precision and beauty; at the same time, communicating risk and its skillful avoidance.

On the playwright-reader level of interaction, Cummings, through these cases of flouting, echoes his precise feelings about himself. In simple words, Cummings' employed Him as a character that reflects his reality and his feeling that he is not superhuman, but "a human being" whose "position is precarious and isolated from his audience.". Above all qualities, an artist is a human being who tries to understand himself so that he can express himself.

Extract No.6

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In the same four-sided room, with a further circular movement, Me and Him are talking to each other.

Me (Pauses, standing before him): What will you believe?

Him (Bitterly): That beauty has shut me from truth; that beauty has walls—is like this room [...] whose walls shut us from everything outside.

Me: If what you are looking for is not here, why don't you go where it is? (The drum sound heightens)

Him: In all directions I cannot move. Through you I have made a discovery: you have shown me something . . . something about which I am doubtful deep in my heart.

(Act III, scene V, p. 100-101)

a. Speech Acts

In her utterance “What will you believe?”, Me performs a directive speech act of asking. She wants to know how Him’s beliefs have changed. By a representative speech act of stating, Him talks about the fact he reaches at and understands, “That beauty has shut me from truth...”. Me’s next utterance, “If what you are looking for is not here, why don't you go where it is?” is a directive speech act of suggesting. She tries to find solutions for Him to help him to understand himself. Him’s reply is a hybrid speech act; the first is a representative one of answering, “In all directions I cannot move” while the second is a representative speech act of stating “Through you I have made a discovery ...”.

b. Cooperative Principle and Conversational Implicature

On the character-character level of interaction, Him flouts the maxims of quality and manner in his utterance “That beauty has shut me from truth; that beauty has walls—is like this room [...] whose walls shut us from everything outside”. The maxim of quality is flouted because what he says, literally, is false. This is so because beauty is something abstract and cannot have concrete walls. The maxim of manner is flouted because his conversational contribution is not clear enough as he uses linguistic devices to implicate or communicate something on a deeper level. In simple words, he uses metaphorical expressions to convey a profound idea. That is, he now better understands himself and, hence, the relationship of love and art. He realizes that his concern for art has blinded him from the truth that there are other things in life that deserves attention such as love. He assimilates his concern for art to a room that blinded him and prevented him to be near those who love him. Using similar expressions to reply, Me flouts the same after-mentioned maxims. She suggests getting out of this room which she refers to as “here” to implicate that Him should leave what blinds him from love. Here, as if she wants him to choose between her and his art. Expressing his inability to understand himself, he flouts the same maxims, i.e. the maxim of quality and the maxim of manner “In all directions I cannot move”.

On the playwright-reader level of interaction, the playwright’s remark before Me speaks, “Pauses, standing before him”, gives an indication that, for the first time, there is a daring confrontation between the two main characters Me and Him. Me wants to end the struggle helping Him to understand himself; at the same time, she wants to understand their relationship. Though obscure, the remark is indicative. This obscurity results in flouting the maxim of manner. The same maxim is flouted when the playwright remarks “The drum sound heightens”. Cummings seems to implicate that Me, for the first time, tries to be direct approaching her and Him’s problem of understanding. Therefore, he wants this remark to attract the reader’s attention by linking the sound in its higher level to Me in her strongest

states. This remark is also linked to the condition in which Him approaches a clearer understanding of his love for Me.

7. The Results of the Analysis

Table (1): the Results of SAs in *Him*

SA Types	Him		Me	
	Freq	Per	Freq.	Per
Representative of stating	9	47.3%	1	6.6%
Representative of asserting	1	5.2%	0	0%
Representative of agreeing	0	0%	1	6.6%
Representative of answering	8	42%	0	0%
Directive of asking	1	5.2%	8	53.3%
Directive of suggesting	0	0%	1	6.6%
Expressive of feeling	0	0%	4	26.6%
Total	19	100%	15	100%

Key: SA=Speech Act, Freq=Frequency, Per=Percentage

As far as these findings are concerned, different types of SAs the characters perform such as stating, asserting, agreeing, answering, asking, suggesting and expressive speech acts. However, some percentages of speech acts are indicative and contribute to the theme of the play. For example, the speech act of stating is highly performed by Him in comparison with Me and other characters, i.e. (47.3%). This could be attributed to the playwright's aim, as an artist, to present his views, ideas, experiences and events of his life through Him.

On the other hand, the speech act of asking is frequently performed by Me as her use makes (53.3%) to denote that she is in a struggle to reach self-transcendence and want to understand her relationship with Him and Him himself.

Moreover, expressive speech acts are performed more in Me's speeches than in Him's or other characters', who have not performed such speech acts at all. She uses expressive speech acts (26.6%). A plausible interpretation for this is that Me is a character who embodies love and feeling, while other characters are unable to understand the importance of love, feeling, and understanding self like Him.

Table (2): The Results of Grice's Maxims on the Character-Character Level of Interaction in *Him*

The maxims are exploited more by Him (78.5%) than the other character Me (21.4%). Him

Grice's Maxims	Him		Me		Total
	Freq	Per	Freq	Per	
The Quantity Maxim	4	100%	0	0%	4
The Quality Maxim	9	75%	3	25	12
The Relation Maxim	3	75%	1	25	4
The Manner Maxim	6	75%	2	25	8
Total	22	78.5	6	21.4	28

flouts the maxim of quantity (100%), specifically those of over-informativeness, occur in situations he talks about his play. This explains his interest in art and his play than in anything else. Again, the maxim of quality is exploited more by Him than Me, making (75%) and (25%) respectively. This is so because Him, in addition to his role in the play as an artist or playwright whose speech should be figurative, he plays an autobiographical role of Cummings presenting his ideas and language. Moreover, his flouting of the maxim of relation, (75%), indicates that he is distant from Me, who flouts it (25%), and careless or unable to understand her because of his interest for art. Finally, his exploiting of the maxim of manner is also more than that of Me making (75%) and (25%) respectively. This could be interpreted in terms of his inability to confront Me and the reality and explain his intentions, wishes and problems clearly or directly, the thing that can help him to understand himself, Me and their relationship.

Table (3): The Results of Grice's Maxims on the Playwright-Reader Level of Interaction in *Him*

Grice's Maxims	Freq	Per
The Quantity Maxim	3	18.7%
The Quality Maxim	3	18.7%
The Relation Maxim	1	6.2%
The Manner Maxim	9	56.2%
Total	16	100%

Cummings flouts Grice's four maxims in his play. The most frequently flouted maxim is the maxim of manner (56.2%). This is ascribed to Cummings attempt to present his ideas by means of symbolism like the symbolic use of the four-sided room, the mirror, the hat and cigarettes. The least frequently flouted maxim is the maxim of relation (6.2%). It is exploited only once when the playwright presents the interior play to reflect his muddled mind and life. The maxim of quantity flouting makes (18.7%). This denotes that the playwright in many occasions is more informative than required to credit the reader's ability to understand the theme of the play through his descriptions of scenes because no events are there in the play and, belonging to the theatre of absurd, the play all is about speaking only most of which is nonsensical. The maxim of quality makes a similar percentage (18.7%). This comes as a result of the satirical technique and literary images employed by the playwright.

8. Conclusions

The present study is undertaken to provide a pragma-stylistic analysis of Cummings' play and prove the possibility of utilizing pragmatic theories for the benefit of stylistic analysis. Thus, on the basis of the analysis conducted in the present study, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. The most dominant speech acts performed by characters in the play are stating, asking and expressive speech acts. Stylistically, such use is indicative and effective when linked to the theme of the play. That is, in this play, Cummings employs a character to reflect his ideas, beliefs and views of the world. Him fulfills such role; therefore, the speech act of stating is dominant in his speeches (47.3%). Moreover, asking is performed by those characters who are in a struggle or a journey to understand themselves and reach self-transcendence, i.e. Me. The percentage of her use of this speech act makes (53.3%). Finally, expressive speech acts are performed by those characters who believe that love and feeling are of great importance and one is not a human being unless he is able to love, feel and understand himself. Again, Me is a representative of such characters. The percentage of her use of expressive speech acts makes (26.6%). This outcome verifies hypothesis No (1) which reads *as there are consistent patterns of speech acts that seem to provide contextual details about the characters' psychological states and the dimensions of their personalities and orientations in the play.*
2. On the character-character level of interaction, Grice's maxims are all flouted by the characters in the play. However, flouting is manipulated more frequently by those characters Cummings chooses to reflect his ideas and beliefs than other characters except for the maxim of manner. The maxims are exploited more by Him (78.5%) than the other character Me (21.4%). He flouts the maxim of quantity (100%). This flouting, specifically of over-informativeness, occurs in situations he talks about his play. This explains his interest in art and his play than in anything else. The maxim of quality is also exploited more by Him than Me, making (75%) and (25%) respectively. This flouting is influenced by his role in the play as an artist or playwright whose speech should be figurative, and his autobiographical role of Cummings presenting his ideas and language. Moreover, his flouting of the maxim of relation, (75%), indicates that he is distant from Me, who flouts it (25%), and careless or unable to understand her because of his interest for art. Finally, his exploiting of the maxim of manner is also more than that of Me making (75%) and (25%) respectively. This could be interpreted in terms of his inability to confront Me and the reality and explain his intentions, wishes and problems clearly or directly, the thing that can help him to understand himself, Me and their relationship.
3. Cummings depends on flouting Grice's maxims to generate conversational implicature and convey his message effectively. The maxim of quantity is exploited in the (18.7%) in the

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play. In *Him*, it is manipulated in the descriptions of scenes to deliver his message because there are no events in the play and most of the characters' speech is nonsensical. The maxim of quality makes the same percentage (18.7%). It is exploited as a result of the ironical tone that pervades the play. Thus, Cummings' instrument to truth is irony. The maxim of relation is the least frequently exploited maxim (6.2%). For the maxim of manner, it is the most frequently flouted maxim in the play (56.2%) because of the symbolism and literary images employed in *Him*. This outcome, along with the previous one, validates hypothesis No (2) which reads as *Grice's four maxims are exploited by Cummings and the characters in the play to convey ideas and messages indirectly*

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