

“One day I wrote her name upon the strand”: Cognitive Poetics and Literary Communication

This paper will use a cognitive approach to conduct a study of literary communication. It will begin with discussion of communication theory, and then define literature as a special kind of communication. By using Edmund Spenser's sonnet “One day I wrote her name upon the strand”, my analysis will show how a series of communications within/out the text occurs and how a reader recognises these communications and negotiates his/her own communication with the text. When an author uses a text to communicate with its reader, the reader generates its meanings to continue the communication sequence, even though the reader's response cannot actually reach the author. In this particular poem, in addition to the communication between the author and the reader, the poet creates a speaker to address both an implied reader and a female addressee, and thus makes the multi-facets of the communications in the text. By recognizing various roles as well as the communicative worlds in the text, a reader has to adjust to and accommodate cognitive deixis in a reading activity. This paper will then look into how different deictic projections access, carry on, and interact with these literary communications. The process of recognising these intra/extralocutions will lead to reader's interpretation, influence critical analysis and comments, and create meanings of the text. In turn, these meanings will bring forth further dialogues among readers and critics and determine another phase of communication which happens between teacher and students in classroom. Cognitive poetics, therefore, reveals what is happening when a reader encounters a text, how the reader can think and do about the text, and finally, what the literary text as an artefact affects literary pedagogy and human communication.

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