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The Suppression of Meaning in Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day*

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This article focuses on Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day* and the way the language of the novel suppresses meaning. After illuminating the concept of meaning suppression and its formation, the study offers two strategies with which meaning suppression is manifested: the unreliability of the narrator and the employment of the figurative language. The influential Factors in the unreliability of the narrator which contribute to meaning suppression are: first-person narrator, memory telling, discursive habits of the narrator and the contradiction between scenic presentations and commentaries. The other strategy contributing to the suppression of meaning in the novel is the figurative language. The figurative devices in this novel deviate the meaning from its conventional process of understanding and pave the way for the formation of meaning suppression. The devices to be discussed in this article are metaphor, metonymy, irony and euphemism each of which play their roles in fulfilling the goal of the study. The study, by bringing evidence from the text, highlights their contribution to the goal of the research. What the study proposes as a result is the way meaning suppression or more specifically, the unreliability of the narrator and the figurative language, deviate the meaning from the normal process of meaning formation.

Keywords: Kazuo Ishiguro, Suppression of Meaning, *The Remains of the Day*, Unreliable Narrator, Figurative Language.

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Introduction

The Japanese-born, English-raised Kazuo Ishiguro is one of the most popular British writers of his generation. Ishiguro's narratives and his employment of distinct narrative techniques enable his narratives to possess characteristics which distinguish him from other writers putting light on his distinct narrative style. Ishiguro tells of his own style of writing in this way:

The language I use tends to be the sort that actually suppresses the meaning and tries to hide away meaning rather than chase after something just beyond the reach of words. I am interested in the way words hide meaning. (qtd in Vorda and Herzinger 2008, 70-71)

Ishiguro never states how he achieves meaning suppression, therefore this research undertakes this task and shows to the readers how the author actualizes the suppression of meaning in his narration. In order to accomplish this task, first of all, the research should give a clear picture of what meaning suppression is. The study argues that any kind of deviation from the conventional process of meaning formation, whether major or minor can be considered as the actualization of the suppression of meaning. Michael Riffaterre in his *Text Production* indicates that:

The very formation of meaning suppression is due to the fact that in literary language the meaning is not static; if it were static, there would be no opportunity for the formation of meaning suppression because of the meaning's one-dimensional aspect. The dynamicity of literary language allows the meaning to be reversed or suppressed. In ordinary language the base of meaning is on multiple referents and which finds its truth in reality. (1983, 88)

On the other hand, he argues that the literary language has one referent which is not to be found in reality or in the author's intentions. Within the same book Riffaterre declares that the reader understands the text on the basis of his habitual behavior as an ordinary manner of communication; therefore it is possible to understand a non-metaphorical text as metaphorical. In this case it is nonsense to speak about the truthfulness of such a text. (1983, 88). what Riffaterre is indicating in the ideas above, is the fact that there is no rigidity in the meaning of literary language and that this dynamicity gives dimension to the meaning enabling the language to reverse and suppress the meaning. Now that the possibility of the suppression of meaning has been proved, the study will show how this writing style is manifested in the narrative of *The Remains of the Day*.

To fulfill the goal of the study, two strategies will be used by the research regarding the formation of meaning suppression: the unreliability of the narrator and the figurative language. Throughout the article a number of questions will be answered: How does the unreliability of the narrator contribute to the suppression of meaning in *The Remains of the Day*? How does the figurative language contribute to the suppression of meaning in *The Remains of the Day*? What results are achieved

due to the suppression of meaning in *The Remains of the Day*? In order to answer each of these questions, the study makes use of a number of theorists and their ideas. As far as the unreliability of the narrator is concerned, the study makes use of the ideas of Wayne Booth, and Ansgar Nunning and as for the figurative language the study employs Morton Ann Gernsbacher and Rachel R.W Robertson's research long with Jacque Lacan's ideas about the way metaphor and metonymy suppress meaning. Robyn Warhol's idea regarding the way the figurative devices can suppress meaning is also employed in this article. The figures this study introduces for the suppression of meaning in *The Remains of the Day* are metaphor, metonymy and irony and euphemism.

As part of the study deals with the unreliability of the narrator, it fits to discuss narratology in this part. The term narratology has been coined by Tzvetan Todorov who believed that narratology is the science of narrative or "la science du recit". In this regard one can define narratology as "a discipline that is a system of scientific practices for research into the conditions of possibility of an object domain called narrative". (Meister 2003, 57). Narratology has become an important field of study in the 20th century encompassing all that is present in a narrative from story, text, time, tense and voice to the gaps and things not told in a narrative. The focus of this article is on those aspects of narratology which sheds light on the things not narrated in a narrative. In order to approach this realm, the research makes use of Gerald Prince's theory of the unnarrated which falls into the category of the unnarratable. The unnarrated "refers to those passages that explicitly do not tell what is supposed to have happened, foregrounding the narrator's refusal to narrate" (Warhol 2005, 221). What this research does is to relate this methodology to what is known in Ishiguro's narration as the "suppression of meaning".

The present study makes use of two techniques which contribute to the way the language of the narrative suppresses the meaning of the novel: the first one is the unreliability of the narrator and the second is the use of figurative language. The traces of the unreliability of the narrator enable the narrative to convey the meaning of the novel to the reader through veils. The inconsistencies between scenic presentation and commentaries, the narrator's constant self-justifications, discursive habit and memory-telling are some of the elements with which the researcher proves the unreliability of the narrator and at the same time indicates how these elements contribute to the suppression of meaning in the narrative.

Another strategy with which this research attempts to show the suppression of meaning in the narrative is the use of the figurative language. The figurative language has the potentiality to divert the language from its normal usage, makes it go through meaning deformation and end in meaning reversion and suppression; in this way the meaning of the novel is narrated through a veil. Harold Bloom claims that figurations or tropes create meaning, which could not exist without them, and

this making of meaning is largest in authentic poetry, where an excess or overflow emanates from figurative language, and brings about a condition of newness (Bloom 2004, 1). At the same time that the figurative language can create meaning, it can also suppress meaning, since by the use of the tropes one can arrive at a meaning which may not be the surface meaning it depicts.

Discussion

The role of Unreliability of the Narrator in Meaning Suppression

The unreliable narrator is a term coined by Wayne Booth in 1961. According to Booth a narrator is reliable when he speaks for or acts in accordance with the norms of the work which is the norms of the implied author and he calls a narrator unreliable when he does not. (qtd in Bal 2007, 144-5) This definition points out that a narrator is reliable or not based on the “degree and kind of distance that separates a given narrator from the implied author of the work.”(Nunning 2005, 89). This definition has raised many controversies because it has tried to define unreliability according to implied author, while the latter itself is a vague term. Nunning designs a tripartite structure for unreliability that consists of “an authorial agency, textual phenomenon (including a personalized narrator and signals of unreliability) and reader response (Nunning 2005, 90-1). This indicates that “the projection of an unreliable narrator depends on both textual information and extra textual conceptual information located in the reader’s mind” (Nunning 2005, 98).

The unreliability of the narrator has some potentialities which enables the text to suppress the real intentions of the narrative. Many factors help the unreliability of the narrator to suppress the meaning of the novel. Factors such as the first-person narrator, memory telling, discursive habits of the narrator, inconsistencies between scenic presentations and commentaries, the selective narrator and the true self/ false self of the narrator are very influential in causing the language to suppress the intentions of the narrative. This part of the article, aims to show how the above-mentioned factors contribute to the suppression of meaning in the narrative of *The Remains of the Day*.

First-person narrators are more liable to unreliability due to their “personal involvement” in the narrative of the novel. (Rimmon-kenan 2005, 104). The involvement of the narrator in the story he/she is narrating, flavors the story with biased judgments which serve his/her own purposes. William Riggan has something to say about the unreliability of first-person narrators:

First-person narration is, then, always at least potentially unreliable, in that the narrator, with these human limitations of perception and memory and assessment, may easily have missed, forgotten, or misconstrued certain incidents, words, or motives. ... Much of what he/she [the I-narrator] tells us also gives us an idea of what he himself is like and has a certain characterizing significance over and above its data value, by virtue of the fact that he is telling it to us. His narrative cannot be

accepted purely in absolute terms of true or false, probable or improbable, reliable or unreliable, convincing or unconvincing. (1981, 19-20)

When this becomes the case, the first-person unreliable narrator due to its evaluation and biased judgments cannot provide the readers with honest reports and in this regard the real meaning of the narrative of the novel is suppressed by the narrator. Ishiguro's preoccupation with the first-person narrator is intriguing. Brian W. Shaffer claims that: All of Ishiguro's novels are shown to capture first-person narrators in the intriguing act of revealing—yet also of attempting to conceal beneath the surface of their mundane present activities—the alarming significance and troubling consequences of their past lives. (1998, 45)

The choice of first-person narrator in *The Remains of the Day* is in line with the intentions of the novel since it conceals many realities of the novel. Stevens' biased interpretations of the letter Miss Kenton has written and his biased defenses toward lord Darlington throughout the narrative are important factors which hide the realities of the novel and which would not be possible with a third-person narrator. Therefore, this part of the research justifies the choice of the first-person narrator for *The Remains of the Day* because not only is the first-person narrator an appropriate device for heightening the unreliability of the narrator but also a useful device for the suppression of meaning.

The next factor to be discussed in the article is memory-telling. Memory is precious to man; with the help of memories one can rewrite his past. Marc Green, who has done a research about memory, its types and the cause of memory unreliability points out that “narrating the past has a freeing and healing effect on the narrators, but it simultaneously underscores the unspeakability, as well as the absolute unrepresentability of the real event.” (2013) Within the same research, he discusses the reasons for memory unreliability. First of all, he argues that memory is blurred:

Images in our mind's eye are never as clear as an actual perception. If you try to recall your bedroom, you can get a general image of the location of large and significant objects, their shapes, colors, etc. But the image is not nearly as detailed as what you would see if you were actually viewing the room. (2013)

This extract could be a good starting point for showing the unreliability of memory. But no quotation could better illustrate how memory is influential in unreliability of the narrator and meaning suppression than Ishiguro's own:

I'm trying to capture the texture of memory. I need to keep reminding people that the flashbacks aren't just a clinical, technical means of conveying things that happened in the past. This is somebody turning over certain memories, in the light of his current emotional condition. I like blurred edges around these events, so you're not quite certain if they really happened and you're not quite certain to what extent the narrator is deliberately coloring them. (qtd in Shaffer and Wong 2008, 48)

To begin with Stevens' own quote in the novel would be an appropriate starting point: "It is possible this is a case of hindsight coloring my memory [...]" (Ishiguro 1993, 87). This is what Stevens confesses in the midst of narrating his past memories in Darlington Hall, which reveals that he himself knows that memory is liable to forgetfulness and confusion and in this case it provides a good ground for the unreliability of the narrator and the suppression of meaning. One other evidence with regard to memory-telling happens in the quarrel between Stevens and Miss Kenton about the inefficiency of Stevens' father in performing his duties. After Stevens' remark about the triviality of these errors, Miss Kenton claims that "These errors may be trivial in themselves, Mr. Stevens, but you must yourself realize their larger significance" (Ishiguro 1993, 59). After the end of this conversation Stevens comes to doubt the accuracy of what he narrates putting focus on the fact that Miss Kenton could not have spoken so boldly that day and he immediately attributes the remark to lord Darlington who called Stevens to his room to talk about his father. This evidence shows that Stevens is naïve in remembering his past memories and has a blurred view toward the past which makes him combines two different memories with each other.

Memory-telling by itself provides the ground for the unreliability of the narrator due to the inconsistencies between what has really happened in the past and the present report of the narrator. In *The Remains of the Day*, Stevens distorts his past memories and the reason for that is the fact that he aims to suppress the reality that he has wasted his life. This waste of life is manifested both in his professional life and in his private life. The former is with regard to lord Darlington's bad reputation as a Nazi sympathizer after his death which signifies that Stevens's service to him was a service to nothing more than a Nazi sympathizer and the latter is with regard to his lost opportunity for starting a love relationship with Miss Kenton. In order to avoid these two shameful facts, Stevens makes use of distorted memories. N. Rema claims that "a profound truth lying beneath the mind of the narrator is purely shadowed by the memory just upbringing the ideological perspectives unintentionally, hiding behind the rest" (2015, 1). He goes on to say that these kinds of memories surface the truth with a tissue of lies and that this kind of narration has a tendency to narrate the better side of the event withdrawing the undesirable ones (2015, 1). As a consequence, with the help of these distorted memories Stevens is able to present another version of the events that have happened in the past which are not the reality of the events and in this case he aims to justify the righteousness of his own way of life to his narratees.

One of the most important factors as an indication of unreliability and a contribution to the suppression of meaning in *The Remains of the Day* is the "discursive habits" of the narrator. The study divides these habits into three categories: repetitions, self-justifications and addressing the narratee. Starting with

repetitions the study indicates that Michael Billig in his Freudian Repression states that if one keeps saying unbidden “I’m not in love with him you know” then the listener would suspect something about the authenticity of his words (Billig 2004, 204). This issue is what Niederhofs has also paid attention to in his “Unlived Lives in Kazuo Ishiguro’s *The Remains of the Day*” within which he regards excessive repetition as a key to unlived lives: Since the unlived life is frequently the object of a desire that remains repressed or at least unfulfilled, the desire will continue to exist, seeking some sort of outlet or expression. Repetition here indicates an excess of desire, an overflow of feeling that has never been translated into action. Thus, Stevens refers to Mrs Benn’s letter time and again—one can almost see the butler holding it in his hands and cherishing the object that physically connects him with the woman he loves and with his past, constantly rereading her words and worrying about their precise meaning. (2011, 172)

Niederhofs’s claim shows how Stevens’ recurrent reading of the letter is an implicit indication of his attachment to the housekeeper. Therefore, the repetitions can be good motifs to trace the unreliability of the narrator.

While reading *The Remains of the Day*, it is impossible not to note the recurrent repetitions of the word ‘professional’ in the narrative. This word and its derivations have been repeated by the narrator more than 70 times in the novel which by itself signifies its abnormality. Stevens’ severe devotion to his professional life, his insistence on the word dignity and his lack of attention to his private and emotional life makes him bring professional reasons for his every action:

What I mean to say is that Miss Kenton's letter set off a certain chain of ideas to do with *professional* matters here at Darlington Hall, and I would underline that it was a preoccupation with these very same *professional* matters that led me to consider anew my employer's kindly meant suggestion. (Emphasis added) (Ishiguro 1993, 5)

The reason behind these repetitions could be the fact that the narrator feels that the reason for his trip is not professional and that is why he continually repeats that the trip he is undertaking has professional reasons. The narrator in this case is hiding the true meaning of the event; at the same time the implied author by making the narrator repeat the same word makes the reader suspect the reliability of the narrator.

Self-justification is another discursive habit of the narrator which is influential in the suppression of meaning. The concept has close affinity with Freud’s self accusation: “Why should one defend oneself against an unmade accusation, unless one is seeking to prevent or counter a self- accusation? The self-accusation would be impossible without the imagination of the shameful wish” (qtd in Bilig 2004, 204). The same could be applied to self-justification; if one makes the attempt to justify his behavior without being asked to do that, one is suspected to have doubt about what he is saying. Stevens’ habit for calling the former housekeeper Miss Kenton

rather than her current name, Mrs. Benn, his recurrent claim that his journey is purely professional in tone and his justifications for reading a sentimental novel for improving his command of English language are good manifestations for the narrator's self-justifications. To illustrate the way self-justification can suppress meaning, the article makes use of Michael Billig's ideas in this regard: "Beware tales of self-justification, for they are also tales of self-presentation, concealing more than they reveal" (2004, 7). In this quote Billig considers self-justifications as concealing which illuminates the fact that the person provides the readers with justifications which suppress and conceal his real intentions since his intentions are not in line with what he aims to show to the readers. As a consequence due to these justifications, the reader is faced with another version of the events which are quite far from the reality of the novel.

Addressing the narratee as the last of the discursive habits of the narrator contributes to the suppression of meaning. Throughout the novel, one will note that Stevens frequently addresses his narratees: "I think you will understand" (Ishiguro 1993, 5), "But you will no doubt agree" (Ishiguro 1993, 9), "you will no doubt appreciate" (Ishiguro 1993, 14), "Perhaps you might be persuaded" (Ishiguro 1993, 34), "For you must understand" (Ishiguro 1993, 177). The reason for these references to the narratee is the narrator's desire to urge the reader to follow him in the course of the novel and to share his interpretations of the events. One will note that the narrator addresses the narratee only when he knows that what he is saying may not be encouraging or reliable like the following situation:

I hope you do not think me unduly vain with regard to this last matter; it is just that one never knows when one might be obliged to give out that one is from Darlington Hall, and it is important that one be attired at such times in a manner worthy of one's position. (Ishiguro 1993, 11)

This quotation shows the hesitancy of the narrator in what he is narrating. The phrase "I hope you do not think me unduly vain", is reminiscent of the fact that the narrator feels that what he is saying may not encourage the reader to accompany him in what he is saying because it is not encouraging enough; that is why he addresses the narratee into approving what he is doing. As a consequence, addressing the narratee is a strategy on the part of the unreliable narrator to justify the authenticity of his saying but to what extent this authenticity is reliable, is a matter of debate. The narrator by making the reader follow him in what he is saying tries to distort the reader from coming to the reality of the novel.

The last factor as one of the clues for the unreliability of the narrator and which contributes to the suppression of meaning in *The Remains of the Day* is the inconsistencies between scenic presentations and commentaries. Scene is the act of showing the reader what has happened in the text usually by the use of dialogues and actions. Commentary is when the narrator comments on the events that have

happened in the narrative (Booth 2004, 141-42). The present research proves that in the presentation of both, the narrator is unreliable in the way that in the former he suppresses his real feelings and self and in the latter he brings justifications for what he had done or said. There are also moments in the narrative of the novel when the narrator evades commentary and just provides the reader with scenic presentations. In such cases the reader falls into bewilderment, because there are no commentaries to illuminate the narrator's standing point; therefore the implied author makes other characters reveal the real emotions of the narrator.

One memory in this regard is narrated in day three of the journey when Stevens wants to offer his condolence to Miss Kenton due to the death of her aunt, but as soon as he encounters Miss Kenton and comes to dialogue with her, he reminds her of some professional tasks Miss Kenton should be more careful about:

I had been meaning to ask you if you were experiencing any particular problems with the new recruits. I gave a small laugh. Various small difficulties are apt to arise when so many new recruits arrive all at once. I dare say the best of us can often profit by a little professional discussion at such times. (Ishiguro 1993, 176-77).

It is quite clear that during this scene, he suppresses his true self and instead presents the readers with another version of himself which puts light on his professional attitudes. Therefore one sees a difference between what the narrator said he would do and what he did, bringing no reason for this discrepancy.

As it was mentioned previously, there are some moments in the narrative when the narrator having presented the exchanges of dialogues evades commentary and this causes confusion for the reader since there is no commentary to show the standing point of the narrator. As the narrator refuses to present his interpretation of the events, the implied author steps in and uses other devices to illustrate the reality of the novel for the reader. What the implied author does is to make use of other characters reveal the real emotions and facial expressions of the narrator.

-Stevens, are you all right?

-Yes, sir. Perfectly.

-You look as though you're crying.

I laughed and taking out a handkerchief, quickly wiped my face. I'm very sorry,

-Sir. The strains of a hard day.

-Yes, it's been hard work. (Ishiguro 1993, 105)

The extract above illuminates something important about Steven's personality which he himself was not willing to reveal to his narratees. These conversations show how the narrator tried to suppress his own emotions by not revealing his real feeling to the reader and how other characters helped the reader conquer the veil the narrator has created.

The role of Figurative Language in Meaning Suppression

Figurative language is in contrast with the literary language; while the literary language is what the words mean in standard usage, figurative language is a departure from standard meaning. In this regard, one should note that the way figurative language creates meaning is different from the way literal language creates meaning. While the latter conveys meaning on its surface level, the former's surface level is not its intended meaning and some process should be undertaken in order for the reader to arrive at the intended meaning of the figurative language. According to Harold Bloom, "[f]igurations or tropes create meaning, which could not exist without them, and this making of meaning is largest in authentic poetry, where an excess or overflow emanates from figurative language, and brings about a condition of newness" (2004, 1). At the same time that the figurative language can create meaning, it can also suppress meaning since by the use of the tropes one can arrive at a meaning which may not be the surface meaning of the sentence; the surface meaning should be suppressed and the underlying meaning should be considered. A comprehensive research has been done by Gernsbacher and Robertson on the role suppression plays in understanding figurative language. They claim that in order to understand figurative language one should suppress the literal meaning and focus on the figurative meaning (Gernsbacher and Robertson 1999, 1622). In understanding the figurative language, the reader proposes a different interpretation of meaning which starts from a kind of deviation from conventional meaning, goes through meaning deformation and ends in meaning reversion and suppression. For example, Robyn Warhol in her article called "Neonarrative; or, How to Render the Unnarratable in Realist Fiction and Contemporary Film" claims that Victorian narrative due to some limitations it has to narrate prohibited issues like sex for example "uses euphemism, allusion, metaphor, and especially metonymy to signify sexual connection between characters, but never narration – and not even unnarration of the kind premodernist novels use to represent sentimental affect" (2005, 224). Each narrative which deems an issue not in line with its frameworks and intentions can use figures such as metaphor, metonymy, Irony and euphemism etc. in order to hide the prohibited issue. The same is the case for *The Remains of the Day*; the aged butler of Darlington Hall, due to his care for the concept of dignity consistently suppresses the reality of the events since they are not in line with what he aimed to connote to his narratees. Therefore, the narrator uses figurative language to achieve this goal.

Metaphor as the first of the figurative devices to be discussed in this article is defined as "a word or expression that in literal usage denotes one kind of thing is applied to a distinctly different kind of thing, without asserting a comparison" (Abrams 1999, 97). One of the most important metaphors within the narrative of the novel is Stevens' definition for the concept of dignity. He defines it as "not

removing one's clothing in public" (Ishiguro 1993, 210). The very definition is a metaphor since Stevens has compared dignity to a person who should not take off his clothes in front of other people. Dignity in Stevens' mind is the inhibition to reveal one's real self and in this case the relation between the two is that of similarity. But if the reader goes to the novel he/she will see that the doctor, to whom Stevens is speaking with, does not understand the metaphor Stevens uses by saying "Sorry. What does?" (Ishiguro 1993, 210); this indicates his bemusement toward the definition. Therefore, the definition rather than illuminating the nature of dignity suppresses its nature. This definition may also have an underlying metaphor and that goes back to the very narration of the narrator. In this novel the narrator's narration is the same as his treatment of the metaphor of dignity; he does not narrate the reality of the events in front of the public. As it was indicated in the previous chapter, Stevens does not have the desire to tell the reality directly to the reader and in most cases evades informing the reader from what goes on in the narrative of the novel which by itself is reminiscent of the suppression of meaning in the novel. Therefore, the researcher draws a similarity between the definition Stevens presents for dignity and the way he narrates his own story.

Metaphor is a useful device for hiding the reality of what should not be narrated because it diverts the language from its normal and clear form and makes it follow its own rules which are more or less far from the surface meaning of the sentence. Jacques Lacan in his attempt to draw a distinction between metaphor and metonymy argues that metaphor functions to suppress while metonymy functions to combine and that the formula of metaphor is one word for another meaning that in metaphor one meaning is substituted for the other meaning therefore, the first meaning is suppressed in order for the second one to be accepted (Lacan qtd in Grigg 2009, 155). With the information given, one will come to the point that metaphor has the potential to suppress meaning.

Metonymy as one of the most important figurative devices is "a figure of language and thought in which one entity is used to refer to, or in cognitive linguistic terms 'provide access to', another entity to which it is somehow related" (Littlemore 2015, 4). Metonymy as a figurative device diverts the meaning from its normal procedure and in this case has a role in the suppression of meaning. Three types of metonymies are seen in the narrative of *The Remains of the Day*: product-producer, part for whole metonymy (synecdoche) and metonymy of containment. One of the most important manifestations of metonymy in the novel is Miss Kenton's letter. The relation between the letter and Miss Kenton is that of product-producer and the letter stands as a metonymy for the housekeeper. The narrator's frequent reading of the letter and his attempts in interpreting the material of the letter (cf. Ishiguro 1993, 10) actually shows his preoccupation with the housekeeper. His physical engagement with the letter is a clue for his metonymic engagement with the housekeeper. Therefore, the author instead of directly showing the narrator's

preoccupation with Miss Kenton uses the letter as a means for suppressing the real meaning of the narrative.

To see the best of England “within these very walls” (Ishiguro 1993, 4) is another metonymic comment by the narrator. The wall as part of the house has been used metonymically to refer to the house as a whole. Another manifestation of part for whole metonymy includes: “are these words to use about an ally you stood shoulder to shoulder with only a few years back?” (Ishiguro 1993, 95). The phrase “shoulder to shoulder” does not mean that only their shoulders stood together; rather it means that the two stood together in all aspects of their life. Shoulder as a part of a person has been used metonymically to refer to the alliance between the two countries. Evidences for the use of metonymy of containment are the following: “Now, in these quiet moments as I wait for the world about to awake, I find myself going over in my mind again passages from Miss Kenton's letter” (Ishiguro 1993, 47). To “wait for the world to awake” is a metonymic comment since it is not the world which he is waiting to be awake but the people and living beings within that. “The whole village was aware of my 'mishap' and subsequent arrival at this cottage” (Ishiguro 1993, 182) is another manifestation of this type of metonymy in the novel.

Based on what Lacan has achieved in following Jakobson's ideas about the term, metonymy functions to combine. For Jakobson, the mode of combination, functions to join distinct meaning units together by locating them within the same context, and as such it comes with the implication of difference, discrimination, contiguity, and displacement. (Jakobson 2002, 25-8). These researches illuminate that metonymy like metaphor and other figurative devices tends to divert meaning from its standard procedure and state the meaning in a way that the surface meaning is not the correct meaning rather a close association or contiguity with the surface meaning is the correct meaning of the sentence.

Irony is defined as “a sense of dissembling or hiding what is actually the case; not, however, in order to deceive, but to achieve special rhetorical or artistic effects” (Abrams 1999, 135). Henry Watson Fowler, in *The King's English*, says “any definition of irony must include this, that the surface meaning and the underlying meaning of what is said are not the same” (1906, 140). Two kinds of ironies will be discussed in this part: irony of situation and dramatic irony. The former is defined as “a situation where the outcome is incongruous with what was expected, but it is also more generally understood as a situation that includes contradictions or sharp contrasts” (Elleström 2002, 51). The latter “involves a situation in a play or a narrative in which the audience or reader shares with the author knowledge of present or future circumstances of which a character is ignorant” (Abrams 1999, 136).

The very title of the novel is a good manifestation of situational irony in the narrative. ‘The remains of the day’ with its indication of what remains of a day

makes the reader expect a narrative about the future but what the reader encounters throughout the narrative is a preoccupation with the past and the nostalgic desire for the past events. This irony of situation could be a good proof for showing what one sees on the surface of the novel is not necessarily the reality. Another manifestation of this kind of irony is lord Darlington's decision in making Stevens inform the young Mr. Cardinal of the facts of life before his marriage. Stevens avoids expressing his own private emotions let alone informing another person from the difference between men and women before marriage. Based on Ishiguro's remarks about the way his language suppresses meaning, in this part of the narrative the irony used by the narrative helps the formation of meaning suppression. The narrative instead of explicitly stating that Stevens is incapable of expressing domestic affairs employs irony to implicitly indicate this fact.

One of the most important manifestations of dramatic irony is the fact that the reader from the very beginning of the novel understands that Stevens' goal in undertaking this journey is to offer the former housekeeper to come back to Darlington hall in order to fill the staff shortage (Ishiguro 1993, 5). The housekeeper herself is however ignorant of this fact and even to the ending of the novel does not understand that the narrator had such an aim. Had she known the reason for the meeting, she would dismiss it from the beginning since she has no desire to return to Darlington hall.

Harold Bloom in his book *The Best Poems of English Language* agrees with Kenneth Burke:

As Burke tells us, irony commits those who employ it to issues of presence and absence, since they are saying one thing while meaning something so different that it can be the precise opposite. We learn to wince when Hamlet says: "I humbly thank you" or its equivalent, since the prince generally is neither humble nor grateful. (2004, 1)

Therefore, all the documents illuminate this fact that irony has the potentiality to suppress meaning because somebody says something but the surface meaning is not the intended meaning. The intended meaning should be inferred from the context. In this regard the surface sentence tries to suppress the intended meaning of the text.

Euphemism as the last of the figurative devices influential in the formation of meaning suppression is defined as "an inoffensive expression which is used in place of a blunt one that is felt to be disagreeable or embarrassing" (Abrams 1999, 83). One of the characteristics of euphemism is that it avoids expressing the explicit term, choosing instead to tell the term in milder and more pleasant but not necessarily more explicit ways. Poetic language due to its emphasis on the beauty and the effectiveness of its sentences has a good potentiality for using euphemism. Euphemism allows the poetic language to avoid making use of unpleasant and harsh words or issues; in this way, the language becomes more in line with the frameworks

of each poetic language. Throughout *The Remains of the Day* one will realize that the narrator creates a framework for his manner of behavior as a butler. He believes that “dignity has to do crucially with a butler's ability not to abandon the professional being he inhabits” (Ishiguro 1993, 42). And somewhere else he states that dignity “comes down to not removing one’s clothing in public” (Ishiguro 1993, 210). Such frameworks make some of the issues forbidden for the narrator. One of these forbidden and embarrassing issues for the narrator of this novel is his manner toward love and his affair with Miss Kenton is the most conspicuous of these evidences. Whenever he talks about the reason for his trip, Miss Kenton and her return to Darlington hall, he immediately states that this trip is professional and that his desire for Miss Kenton’s return to Darlington hall is merely for professional reasons (Ishiguro 1993, 5). As a butler who devotes himself to his profession and who believes that a butler should not remove his professional being in front of the public, confessing the love desire for somebody else would deem to be a forbidden matter. Therefore the narrator tries to suppress the offensive matter, which in this case is his love, desire for the housekeeper and instead offer a matter which is more in line with his frameworks which in this case is the professional reasons he brings for his intentions. Another instance with regard to love happens when Stevens is reading a sentimental love story in his private hours. Feeling embarrassed for being in a situation associated with love, he immediately declares that he was reading the novel for the improvement of his command of English language (cf. Ishiguro 1993, 167). One can see that whenever the narrator encounters love he seeks to replace it with a more proper matter to justify his professional manners. These evidences clearly show that the narrator has used a milder matter to replace it with the forbidden issue and employing this strategy is called euphemism.

Robyn Warhol believes that Victorian narratives due to their care for decorum and restraint used euphemism to avoid unpleasantness. Issues such as sex were to be indicated by euphemism: “Victorian narrative uses euphemism, allusion, metaphor, and especially metonymy to signify sexual connection between characters, but never narration – and not even unnarration of the kind premodernist novels use to represent sentimental affect” (Warhol 2005, 224). This information put light on the fact that euphemism like other rhetorical devices has the potentiality to suppress and hide the real meaning of the narrative since it alienates the sentence from its normal process and tells it in other forms which may divert the reader from the very plain and explicit meaning. In using Euphemism the person takes the offensive term aside and instead chooses a word which may not convey the plain intention of the previous term but is milder in nature.

Findings

This section aims to collect the answers that have been provided for the research questions of this research in a clear-cut manner. The way unreliability of the narrator

can suppress meaning is answered in his way: The unreliability of the narrator of *The Remains of the Day* along with all the factors that create that unreliability provide a good ground for the suppression of meaning in the novel. The first-person unreliable narrator of the novel, the unreliable memories, the discursive habits of the narrator, the inconsistencies between scenic presentations and commentaries all were sufficient factors for making the meaning deviate from the normal process of meaning formation. The fact that the novel is solely narrated by a first- person unreliable narrator heightens the degree of deviation from the reality because what the narrator claims is at odds with the implied author and reader's surmises about the reality.

The way figurative devices can suppress meaning is answered in this way: in figurative language the reality is not manifested on the surface level rather it is hidden in the underlying level which the reader should grasp. Metaphor functions to suppress; that is in the formation of metaphor, one meaning is substituted for the other meaning and therefore the first meaning is suppressed in order for the second one to be accepted. Different types of metaphors such as underlying ones and those which are used as a metaphoric terms or concepts are all used in the novel in this manner. Metonymy states the meaning in a way that the surface meaning is not the correct meaning rather a close association or contiguity with the surface meaning comes to be the correct meaning of the sentence. The minor but consistent uses of different types of metonymies in the narrative of the novel help the surface meaning to be different from the underlying meaning. Irony's potential for saying something while meaning something quite the opposite is the base for meaning suppression. The situational and dramatic ironies inherent in the narrative of the novel consistently divert the reader from the pass that reaches to the reality of the novel. Euphemism's role in avoiding to mention forbidden and unconventional issues could be a good cause for its potential in meaning suppression. The narrator's consistent use of such device is reminiscent of the fact that he aims to tell his stories in a way to be better received by his readers that is why he uses terms or issues which though may not be that much direct better depict him as a highly professional butler.

Regarding the last of the questions, the research highlight the role of the reader who comes to the point that the narrative of the novel consistently deviates the him/her from the reality of the events due to the author's employment of such techniques as the unreliable narrator and the figurative language. The by-product of these deviations which the research calls the suppression of meaning is another version of the novel; a version which comes to contradict with the surface version the unreliable narrator and the figurative language were trying to impose. The reader's awareness of these two techniques makes him put aside the surface meaning to grasp the real meaning out of it.

Conclusion

This article made the attempt to study Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day* by focusing on the way the language of the novel suppresses meaning. Two rhetorical strategies were used in order to trace the formation of meaning suppression in the novel: the unreliability of the narrator and figurative language. What the unreliable narrator says is at odds with the surmises of the implied author; therefore, a contradiction forms between the two and each of them try to dictate their own orders. The research examined a number of factors influential in unreliability which contribute to the suppression of meaning. First-person narrator, memory-telling, discursive habits of the narrator and the inconsistencies between scenic presentation and commentaries as influential factors in unreliability of the narrator each in a way help to divert the meaning from the normal and standard process of meaning formation because each of them due to their potentials hide the reality of the novel than revealing it. The study also illuminated how the figurative devices like metaphor, metonymy, irony and euphemism as parts of the figurative language divert the meaning from the normal process of meaning formation. Figurative language due to its nature does not offer the reality in its surface layer rather the real meaning is understood from the underlying meaning it offers. In this way it contributes to the suppression of the intended meaning of the narrative.

The by-product of the unreliability of the narrator and the figurative language within the narrative of *The Remains of the Day* is the suppression of meaning, that is, a text whose meaning has been diverted from the normal process of meaning formation. The by-product of meaning suppression is a narrative whose meaning is hidden beneath the words or as Ishiguro himself has said "a flat, plain surface where the meaning is subtly pushed between the lines rather than overtly expressed".

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سرکوب معنی در رمان بازمانده روز کازو ایشیگرو: یک خوانش روایت‌شناسانه

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این مقاله با اتخاذ یک روش روایت‌شناسانه در تلاش است تا طبق گفته‌های کازو ایشیگرو راجع به سرکوب معنی، نحوه سرکوب شدن معنی روایت توسط زبان را پیدا کند. با تمرکز بر روی روایت *بازمانده روز*، این تحقیق می‌کوشد که تعریفی از سرکوب کردن معنی ارائه بدهد. هر نوع انحرافی از روند متعارف شکل‌گیری معنی، تعریفی است که تحقیق در این باره ارائه می‌دهد. در طول این مقاله تلاش می‌شود به تعدادی سوال راجع به نحوه نمایان شدن سرکوب معنی پاسخ داده شود. این تحقیق، غیر قابل اطمینان بودن راوی و به کارگیری زبان مجازی را به عنوان دو مؤلفه در شکل‌گیری سرکوب معنی در *بازمانده روز* معرفی می‌کند. در طول مقاله، نظرات و مفاهیم مربوط به غیرقابل اطمینان بودن راوی و زبان مجازی به کار گرفته می‌شود تا سوالات را پاسخ دهند و بدین ترتیب چارچوب نظری شکل می‌گیرد. این تحقیق شش مؤلفه تأثیر گذار در غیر قابل اطمینان بودن راوی را معرفی می‌کند که به شکل‌گیری سرکوب معنی کمک می‌کنند. عوامل زبان مجازی انتخاب شده برای بحث در مقاله استعاره، مجاز، کنایه و حسن تعبیر هستند که هر کدام معنی را از روند متعارف منحرف می‌کنند. نتایج به دست آمده توسط سرکوب معنی به وسیله راوی غیر قابل اعتماد و زبان مجازی نیز مورد بررسی قرار می‌گیرد. سرکوب معنی که به وسیله راوی غیر قابل اطمینان و زبان مجازی شکل گرفته است باعث ایجاد نسخه‌ای از رمان می‌شود که با حقایق اتفاق افتاده در رمان تفاوت دارد و خواننده را از واقعیت رمان منحرف می‌کند. خواننده در پایان رمان، با آگاهی از حضور این دو تکنیک قادر است از عهده سرکوب معنی برآید و با کنار زدن پرده‌ها حقایق روایت را دریابد.

واژه‌های کلیدی: کازو ایشیگرو، سرکوب معنی، *بازمانده روز*، راوی غیر قابل اطمینان، زبان مجازی.

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