

## **DEFEATED EXPECTANCY IN THE CONTEXT OF PREDICTABILITY AND UNPREDICTABILITY**

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### **ABSTRACT:**

The article is devoted to the study of the effect of defeated expectancy in the context of predictability and unpredictability. Defeated expectancy combines extra-regularities with extra-irregularities. Here some elements of the text receive prominence due to an interruption of predictability in the pattern. The low predictability elements violate the pattern which the reader has been conditioned to expect. Defeated expectancy can be realized at different levels of the text. The implementation of the effect of defeated expectancy allows writers to create an intrigue very often leading to humorous effects.

The article studies 20<sup>th</sup> century English writer S. Maugham's short stories, in which defeated expectancy is achieved by means of contradiction between the allusive titles and the plot.

**KEYWORDS** - defeated expectancy, predictability, unpredictability, allusive title, S. Maugham

### **INTRODUCTION:**

The effect of defeated expectancy is a strong tool implemented in literary works. Defeated expectancy or the effect of defeated expectancy is one of the types of foregrounding. Defeated expectancy undoubtedly violates definite, established order of semantic space of the literary text, so it violates the information that was laid in the text in advance by the author creating conflict between the real and expected situations.

Studying the effect of defeated expectancy opens new perspectives for linguistic and psycholinguistic investigations.

### **GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE EFFECT OF DEFEATED EXPECTANCY:**

The history of the concept "the effect of defeated expectancy" in literature takes roots from ancient times but the term itself was introduced by R. Jakobson [ 3] . According to him, the essence of the effect is accurately transferred in its statement that emphasizes the reaction of the reader on something that does not meet his expectations. This phenomenon is based on a characteristic, that is common for the production and perception of information, and specifically, on the prediction of subsequent actions, which represents a basic form of "adaptation of living matter to space-time structure of the inorganic world, where the sequence and repeatability are key timing parameters"[3, p.26]. I.V.Arnold proceeds the idea specifying that continuity, linearity of discourse means that the occurrence of each individual element is prepared by preceding one and it prepares the subsequent one [1]. The reader already expects a definite end since subsequent information is partially given in the previous one. Unexpected conclusion to a clause, extract of the text, or the whole work makes the reader reevaluate the narrative or characters. In other words, the effect of defeated expectancy can be characterized as a particular part of the text where the last part is surprising or unexpected in a way that causes the reader to re-frame or reinterpret it from the beginning. In the

process of perception of the text, the reader creates a certain picture of what is happening, and it is "tuned" to any particular text completion. But it so happens that there is an element that it interrupts the linearity, and the reader has to go back and rethink the events in the text, and sometimes the author helps him in this, he returns the reader back (in the case of flashbacks). The inseparable unity of centrifugal and centripetal forces of the text is maintained by such text categories as categories of prospection and retrospection [1].

The effect of defeated expectancy has a bilateral nature of a stylistic device and psycholinguistic phenomenon, since it arises from the interaction of two opposing phenomena that have psycholinguistic nature; predictability and unpredictability. As the reader can perceive the text in his interpretation, and such interpretation can contradict the author's intentions, the author should "control decoding by his own encoding" [6,p. 73], trying to draw the reader's attention to those elements of the text that seem important to him. And since the "predictability leads to an elliptical decoding, the most important elements should be unpredictable" [6, p. 7]. Stylistic context plays an important role in the appearance of unpredictable elements; by the definition of M. Riffaterre stylistic context is "a linguistic model, which is suddenly broken by unpredictable element" [6, p. 87]. "Predictability/unpredictability plays a significant role in establishing metatextual cohesion in the literary text" [2,p.547]. Mechanism of reader's relations with the text is based on expectation theory or regulated expectation of meanings in predictable interaction with the text. Recipient, in the process of reading, imagines what he/she "will see" further in the text due to contextual guess. And if the next sentence does not match the previous one, there is an

expectation violation, i.e. defeated expectancy can be considered as a conflict of expected and real perception. Therefore, further interpretation of a literary text requires more effort from the recipient, and thus causes more emotions during reader's perception. Hence, we have another important function of defeated expectancy –making mechanism of expressiveness on the consciousness of the reader.

Another undeniable function of the effect of defeated expectancy in the structure of the text is to create a mechanism of expressiveness. Under expressiveness I. V. Arnold [1] understands such a quality of the text that conveys the high intensity, expresses the inner state of the speaker, and consequently is the result of logical and emotional intensification. Thus, defeated expectancy combines extra-regularities with extra-irregularities. Here some elements of the text receive prominence due to an interruption of predictability in the pattern. An unexpected change may be created due to some combination of extra regularity. The low predictability elements violate the pattern which the reader has been conditioned to expect. This causes a temporary sense of disorientation compelling the reader's attention. When viewed in terms of probability prognostication, it may be interpreted as follows: extra-regularity creates a certain pattern in the verbal chain; this conditions the reader to expect that this pattern will be continued. His expectation is defeated by the appearance of some element of low predictability. The more clearly the pattern is delineated, the more unexpected the contrast, the more effective the surprise and the stronger the impression.

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## DEFEATED EXPECTANCY AND ALLUSIVE

### TITLES:

S. Maugham stands out with his unique attitude to the surrounding world and the implementation of the effect of the defeated expectancy in his short stories as a means of expressing that outlook. Actually the author's uniqueness lies in his allusive titles which are part of the scheme. Such works as "A Friend in Need" [4], "The Ant and the Grasshopper" [5] are the best ones for this discussion.

The title of the short story "A Friend in Need" alludes to the proverb "A friend in need is a friend indeed", the idea of which is friendship, loyalty to your friends. Here it is worth paying attention to the fact that in the title only the first part of the proverb is involved, which aims at creating an intrigue for the reader. The reader before reading the story naturally expects the development of the plot according to the proverb's original meaning. It is just here that predictability and non-predictability clash with each other and the content of the story develops in another way. The positive original meaning is distorted and the friend in need is not a friend indeed. As it can be seen the allusive title and the story itself appear to interact with each other in the context of predictability vs unpredictability creating the effect of defeated expectancy.

Another short story "The Ant and the Grasshopper" alludes to Aesop's famous fable "The Ant and the Grasshopper". The title wholly repeats the fable's title. The reader unconsciously goes back to the fable, where the idea is the following - a person should work hard to support himself/herself to be able to face the difficulties. However, the author is of opposite view - since early childhood his sympathies were for the grasshopper. In the story the plot develops in such a way, that the grasshopper - George lives the way he likes, enjoys it completely without thinking and

worrying about his next day. The reader obviously expects something to happen to give a lesson to him and show that it is not the right way of living, however unexpectedly for the reader a very rich old woman with whom George had love affairs dies and leaves all his fortune to him. Throughout the whole text, the addressee considers himself/herself to be an observer watching over a distance at the course of events. At the end, during the disclosure of the plot, they get into a shock. In fact, over the whole work the addressee thinks that everything is under control and he/she constructs particular images of the heroes in his head. To elicit surprise, some significant expository information is hidden to the reader until a surprising event occurs, which makes a knowledge gap between the reader and some characters in the story. The reader understands that throughout the whole text he was led astray, after what he begins to re-imagine the entire text. The reader's expectations do not coincide with the plot development as the allusive title leads him/her to the idea which is preached by the fable. It seems S. Maugham prepares the reader for such a life where their expectations are not always met like. It is obvious that the author believes that though the proverbs, sayings, fables are an inseparable part of collective thinking and in a way they can influence it, in many cases in the real life they do not reflect the reality. The author's individual perception of the world is expressed in his short stories applying to the literary device of defeated expectancy.

### CONCLUSION:

To sum it up "defeated expectancy" is a technique which is based on the distortion of the addressee's expectations. Defeated expectancy combines extra-regularities with extra-irregularities. When the addressee's expectations are not fulfilled, he/she starts to

estimate the work retrospectively. By means of the effect of defeated expectancy 20<sup>th</sup> century English writer S. Maugham tries to show the discrepancy between the fables, proverbs and sayings which are part of collective thinking of generations, and the real life. This, of course, does not mean that the discrepancy should be understood in all cases. In fact, it is the author's world outlook, attitude to life and the desire to look at it ironically.

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