

ON A CHAPTER FROM DICKENS' HARD TIMES : PERSUASIVE STRATEGIES AND EVALUATION

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ملخص

أن اللغة والبلاغة تعملان معا من أجل جعل كلام شخصية ما، في نص أدبي، مقنعا للآخرين. واستراتيجيات الإقناع بشكل عام تشير الى الخلفية الحضارية للمتكلم من خلال طبيعة تفضيله لهذه أو تلك الإستراتيجية التي تؤدي دورها في أقناع المتلقي. هذه الدراسة تفرض مقدما أن المتكلم في نص ما يعتمد على عدد من الخيارات المرتكزة على حالات بلاغية متزامنة، دون استراتيجيات الإقناع الأخرى المتاحة لديه. وهذا الاختيار يظهر جليا من خلال الحوار بين شخصية العامل ستيفن بلاكبول وشخصية صاحب المصنع السيد بوندرباي في رواية ديكنز " أوقات صعبة"، الفصل ٢١. كذلك فإن البحث يحتوي على دراسة عدد من التقييمات التي تعطىها الشخصيات لبعضهم البعض وكذلك تقييم كاتب الرواية تشارلز ديكنز وتعليقاته على أقوال وأفعال هذه الشخصيات. كما وأن الكاتب يعطي تقييما دقيقا وغير مباشر للعصر الفيكتوري من خلال كلام الشخصيات وآرائها حول الأوضاع السائدة في تلك الفترة.

Abstract

Language and Rhetoric work together so as to make the speech of a character, in a literary text, persuasive for others. The persuasive strategies mostly relate to the culture of the speaker through his preference to this (or that) strategy among other available strategies of persuasion. Such choice of persuasion is clearly shown in the dialogue between the characters of *Stephen*

Blackpool and Mr. Bounderby in Dickens' Hard Times, chapter 21. Also, the study deals with the Evaluations given by the characters to each other, and Dickens' evaluations and comments to the speech and actions of these characters. The writer produces careful evaluation to the Victorian period via the speech and attitudes of the characters towards the predominant conditions of that period.

Introduction

In this paper, we may notice how language and rhetoric work together to make the speech of one character seem persuasive for others in fiction. It is an attempt to prove that persuasive strategy is mostly related to the culture of the speaker (or speakers) in a rhetorical situation. Of course, this can be known by describing the ways people use language and rhetoric in specific rhetorical situations. The paper predetermines that speakers make choices, based on simultaneous rhetorical situations, among other available means of persuasion.

The characters in *Hard Times*, said McLucas (1995), **"have both the simplistic characteristics of a character developed for allegorical purposes, as well as the intricate qualities of "real" people. These characters think and feel like we do and react to their situation in the same way that most of us would. These attributes are what give the characters life and allow us to relate to their decisions"**. For such reasons, the characters in this novel (especially Mr. Bounderby and Stephen Blackpool) are very suitable for the analysis in this paper. The novel was published, every week, as a serial in Dickens' weekly publication "Household Words" between April and August, 1854. It sold well, and a complete volume was published in August including the three books of the novel.

Persuasive Strategies: Types and Uses

Persuasive strategies (Johnstone, 1989:142) are "**the various means of persuasion available to any speaker**". And persuasive styles are "**a speaker's general tendency, resulting in part from cultural and historical factors, to adopt one particular persuasive strategy in any situation**".

The three different persuasive strategies are called: **Quasilogic, Presentation, and Analogy**). Johnstone also defines the "**linguistic correlates**" as "**what sorts of syntactic and lexical choices are most likely to be made in each mode**", while "**conceptual correlates**" are "**what sorts of beliefs about how persuasion works and how decisions are made tend to trigger each mode**"(Ibid).

There is a big distinction to be made between persuasive strategies and persuasive styles. Persuasive strategies are the range of options from which a speaker selects in deciding on an appropriate tactic or combination of tactics for persuasion in a given situation.

All of the people have knowledge to a combination of communicative strategies, verbal and nonverbal, from which they choose in situations where persuasion is necessary. People may use logical expression, sometimes, they display their emotions, threats, etc. They also tell stories or repeat what they mean until their interlocutors give in. All these tactics and some others are considered as persuasive strategies. They are the broad range of possible choices for how to persuade which is part of a speaker's communicative competence. Communities and other subgroups might differ in the strategies and choices available to their members. There is no speaker to be limited to a single persuasive strategy in all speech situations, and some strategies are universal since they are based on basic human ways of thinking.

The set of strategies which are assumed to be the best and the most universally applicable are referred to as persuasive style. There are situations in which a person (speaker) does not know how to persuade others because he faces unfamiliar rhetorical task, or he may face a person whose responses are not easily predicted.

Three Persuasive Strategies : Linguistic Correlates

The three persuasive strategies are called: Quasilogical, Presentation, and Analogy (see Figure.1 below). The term "**Quasilogical**" was borrowed from Chaim Perelman, a Belgian philosopher of rhetoric (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969). Quasilogical argumentation is informal, nondemonstrative reasoning that takes its effectiveness from its similarity to formal, demonstrative logic. Persuaders in the quasilogical mode use the structural and vocabulary items of formal logic to reflect that their speech is logically convenient. Their aim is to (convince) others, to make them feel impossible not to accept the persuaders' conclusions.

One of the examples of quasilogical argumentation is like what is called, mathematically, an equality or numerical superiority that makes it possible to infer the relationships between things. So, if (Sam) is a friend of (Jack), and (Jack) is a friend of (Xena), then (Sam) and (Xena) ought to get along well. Quasilogical expressions are characterized by their use of "logical connectives" like thus, hence, and therefore, as well as by their use of hypotactic, subordinate structures, such as the conditional clauses needed to relate premises to conclusions. Quasilogical persuasive discourse is highly integrated.

	<i>Quasilogic</i>	<i>Presentation</i>	<i>Analogy</i>
distinguishing model	model from formal logic; convincing	model from poetry ; moving	model from narrative; teaching
linguistic correlates	use of "logical connectives" : <u>thus</u> , <u>hence</u> , <u>therefore</u>	"rhetorical deixis": <u>here</u> , <u>now</u> , <u>this</u>	formulaic language: "You know what they say"; "That reminds me"
		visual metaphors: <u>behold</u> , <u>look</u> , <u>see</u>	"the words of the ancestors"; proverbs
	subordination; integration	coordination/ parataxis/ parallelism; involvement	chronology; timeless past(once upon a time); involvement

Figure 1. Three Persuasive Strategies

Johnstone (1989: 147-148) explains that "**presentational persuasion could be said to be based on the assumption that being persuaded is being moved, being swept along by a rhythmic flow of words and sounds, in the way people are swept along by poetry. The goal of presentational persuasion is to make one's claim maximally present in the audience's consciousness, by repeating it, paraphrasing it, and calling aesthetic attention to it**".

The language of presentational persuasion is characterized by its rhythmic, paratactic flow. In a presentational persuasion, persons go along parallel clauses linked in a coordinate series.

Presentational discourse also makes use of what is called "rhetorical deixis", the use of terms like here, now, and this from the spatial and temporal realms in reference to ideas. It creates involvement in the way good poetry does. "**This strategy has many shared features with oral modes of discourse**"(Ong,

1982).But we should notice that not all presentational persuasive discourse is spoken. Presentational discourse has many features: it has long patterns of syntactic parallelism of clauses, poetic alliteration and imagery, and repeated appeals of 'here' and 'now'. A third type is called the Analogical persuasive strategy. It works by calling to mind, explicitly or implicitly, traditional wisdom, often in the form of parable or fablelike stories. It persuades by teaching, reminding, and bringing into minds the past values through the indirect mode of storytelling. The analogical persuaders convince their audiences by making them leap between past events and current issues. The language of "Analogy" is that of folktales with formal openings and endings, and timeless and placeless quality. Johnstone (1989:149) writes that **"as do all narratives, stories used as analogies involve chronology and the linguistic markings of chronology, as well as what LABOV (1972) and others refer to as 'evaluation' or the various linguistic devices that underscore the pointfulness of stories"**.

Strategies Become Styles : Conceptual Correlates
Conceptual correlates (Ibid: 150) are **"an epistemological stance about what sorts of arguments and what sorts of people can be persuasive"**. Quasilogical persuasion concerns itself with the assumption that the key to the persuasiveness of an argument is the ideas that are expressed. So, it doesn't matter who states the (truth) or what sort of language is used to express it. But what is important about any quasilogical discourse is that it should have arranged logical structure. Of course, it is well-known that invention and arrangement are prior to mere style, which is simply the dressing up of ideas in clever ways. On the other side, a presentational persuasion is made by a context in which people, rather than ideas, are responsible for

persuasion. It is worth mentioning that what is crucial is the individual's choice of repeated words, phrases, and rhythms with which to move other individuals to belief. It is expository because truths are made available by being stated and restated. Presentational persuasion is usually in texts in which truth is imminent, and the task of the persuader is to bring the available truth actually present in the audience's consciousness. Example of presentational persuasion is that found in religion (in which truth is made real rather than stated out of human rationality). Thereby, persuaders deal with individuals rather than absolute ideas or mere situations.

Analogical persuasion is narrative in nature. It is rooted in the belief that traditional stories are persuasive, and that decisions are best made with reference to historical precedent. Also, what is crucial in a setting like this is the arguer's choice of apt historical examples. Analogical persuasion may be found in legal discussions which have its effectiveness from describing a preceding happening. It may be used by teachers, mothers, and others who are called "**culture bearers**" by anthropologists (see Figure 2. below).

	<i>Quasilogical</i>	<i>Presentational</i>	<i>Analogical</i>
conceptual correlates	ideas are persuasive	people are persuasive	culture is persuasive
	institutions make decisions	individuals make decisions	history, tradition make decisions
	structure is crucial	words are crucial	aptness is crucial
culture/ geography	canonically Western (though not so typical as we suppose)	Eastern (in older and more religious tradition)	

Figure 2. Three Persuasive Styles

Evaluation in a Text

The term **Evaluation** is considered as a very comprehensive term. It consists of many sets of information for the reader. It is almost used by the writer for the assessment of the events and characters in the story. Evaluation normally consists of information and assessments of the features of the thing under evaluation and also tells the reader how good or bad that thing is in comparison with the features of the group (or class) containing that thing. Ghailan(1999:43)assertains that "**evaluation may depend on absolute or underlined criteria, or it may be a mere subjective assessment or opinion about something or idea, it may also contain both of these manners of measurements**".

Evaluation means any information stated about something (or someone) or about which is an expression of personal assessment. Jordan(1984:89)explains that "**evaluation tells us how 'good' or 'bad' something is in respect of various features, such as: its ability to overcome a defined problem, its importance, its solvability(of a problem),its clarity(of an essay),its efficiency(of an engine),its effectiveness(of a law), and so on**". Most of the evaluations contain subjective assessment and an objective basis. In some cases, the assessment is made without relying on any objective basis, or sometimes, it is possible to have the basis, while the assessment is left for the evaluator. However, a good evaluation is the one which links together the subjective and objective assessment. The assessment can be considered as the most important part of the evaluation. Most of the people are familiar with measuring the information and next depending on themselves to make assessments on the basis of their information. Thus, the comprehensive and complete evaluation is that which contains both the subjective and objective sides of the criteria. It is not enough for the evaluation to be complete to depend on the objective data (basis) only or on the subjective assessment. The basis and assessment are the elements of any sufficient evaluation. Sometimes, the procedures are different from one evaluation to another but the idea is the same. The evaluator finds out the essential data (basis)

Apparently, it is not the task of the evaluator to make a report of justification for the readers before the evaluation since they are expected to be acknowledged with the topic he is evaluating. Rather, his main task is to provide the readers with his subjective assessment and opinion of the topic he is evaluating; therefore, he produces any bases or evidences in order to get the readers' convenience about his view in the subject. Of course, in any literary text, the evaluations for the topics and ideas (or characters) are made for a specific purpose. The writer, of any literary text, can manipulate the information about the characters, their manners of living, affairs, and so on as a subject for his evaluation. Anyway, the aim of any evaluation (by the writer) is to ascertain his point of view about an episode, or a character, in his text ; for it is difficult for the writer to describe a situation or a character without making an evaluation of it in his writing. Sometimes, the way the writer arranging the information in the text and the sentence structures in the story may supply a deliberate way for the evaluation of that writing. However, the writer or any character in the story may evaluate everything in the text : the characters , the episodes , and etc .

Persuasive Strategies and Evaluation in Chapter 21: Men and Masters

For the analysis of this chapter and make clear that individuals have an access to a combination of persuasive strategies, it is preferable to discuss some instances of all three strategies (mentioned earlier) as they are found in Dickens' *Hard Times*; chapter 21: **Men and Masters** (see the introduction). It is important to tell the reader that Dickens is a universally well-known novelist. He dominated the first half of the nineteenth century .He is famous at writing novels for moral purposes. At his time, novel comes at the head of literary prosaic forms.

Dickens is considered a social reformer. His writings help the reader to discern the amount of interaction between 'literature and society'. One of the chief concerns in his works is the description and analysis of **'the condition of England'**. He adopted a criticism against the prevailing economic theories concerning poverty, population, and the scope of public responsibility. In Grade Saver Classic Note about *Hard Times* (2006) **"Hard Times reveals Dickens' increased interest in class issues and social commentary. In contrast to the earliest work, like the more "playful" novel, *The Pickwick Papers*, *Hard Times* is seen by critics as being more in line with the novels published immediately before it: *Martin Chuzzlewit*, *Dombey and Son*, and *Bleak House*. While *Hard Times* does not have the epic proportions of some of Dickens's other work, the concern for the plight of the poor and the hypocrisy of the leisure class is more explicit than it had been previously"**. The influence of Dickens lies in deciding the special qualities of the English novel. Dickens seems to be adept at using the rhetorical strategies available to the characters of *Hard Times*. In fact, the persuasive strategies of his characters are not different from those used by any English speaker in attempting to persuade his audience. As it seems clearly, there are several quasilogical persuasive discourses throughout the chapter:-

– **'What were it, sir ,said Stephen,' as yo were pleased to want wi 'me? 'why, I have told you,' returned Bounderby. 'Speak up like a man since you are a man, and tell us about yourself and this combination' .**

– **'You said. Ah! I know what you said; more than that, I know what you mean, you see. Not always the same thing, by the Lord Harry! Quite different things. You had better tell us at once, that that fellow Slackbridge is not in the town, stirring up the people to mutiny; and that he is not a regular**

qualified leader of the people: that is, a most confounded scoundrel .You had better tell us so at once; you can't deceive me. You want to tell us so .Why don't you?'

Dickens starts this dialogue of Stephen with Mr. Bounderby by discussing that Stephen Blackpool may come to talk (before Mr. Bounderby) against the working union and Mr. Slackbridge, the representative. Since Mr. Stephen had been rejected by the other workers previously, and their working union is against Mr. Bounderby; therefore, he must be at the side of his master. Also, Mr. Bounderby expected Stephen to tell him that Mr. Slackbridge to be a bad representative. Of course, talking badly about Mr. Slackbridge is something expected from Mr. Stephen because the former had treated him badly, accusing him to be coward, traitor, and etc. So, Mr. Bounderby expected Stephen to tell him everything bad about this leader of the union. The discussion here has the form A=B(Being alienated by the workers and thrown out of the union), C=B(Mr. Slackbridge and the working union are against Mr. Bounderby) ; therefore, C=A(Mr. Bounderby expects Mr. Stephen to talk badly about the union and Mr. Slackbridge).Of course, this will be valid if Mr. Stephen had rejected the union for Bounderby's sake. But, this is not the case. Stephen had refused to come into the union for another reason. This is stated in the following:-
'I d leefeer not coom to 't sir; but sin you put th' question- an not want' t' be ill-manner 'n - I'll answer. I ha passed a promess.' **'Not to me, you know, 'said Bounderby. (Gusty weather with deceitful calms. One now prevailing. _'O no, sir. Not to yo.'**

Of course, it seems clear to the reader that the character whom Stephen promised not to be into any union is Rachael (his beloved). Mr. Stephen has a very intimate love relation with Rachael and he promised her so. McLucas (1995)states that

Stephen "is in love with Rachael but cannot be with her because he is married to a woman who left him years before. He also cannot divorce her because he cannot afford to. This adds the emotional complexity of something unattainable to Stephen's character, making him even more believable as a character". He is such an honest man and; therefore, he keeps his word to his beloved. In Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia (2006)"Stephen journeys to Bounderby's retreat in the country to inform him of his abstention from joining the union led by the orator Slackbridge, and Bounderby accuses Stephen of fealty and of pledging an oath of secrecy to the union. Stephen denies this and states that he avoided the Union because of a promise he'd made earlier to Rachael. Bounderby is bedevilled by this conflict of interest and accuses Stephen of being 'waspish'. He dismisses him on the spot, on the basis that he has betrayed both employer and union". Apparently, the rhetorical influence of the argument (between Bounderby and Stephen) does not lie in its formal validity, rather, from the way it makes use of the structures of formal discussions.

On the contrary with the quasilogical persuasive strategy in having its implicit metaphoric persuasion as a process of rational convincing, presentational persuasion is based on the assumption that for a person to be persuaded is to be moved, to be swept along over a rhythmic flow of words and phrases. The aim of presentational persuasion is to make the character's claim highly present in the reader's consciousness. This is made, by the character, by using repetition, paraphrase, and calling attention to this persuasive expression accompanied with tension and suspense. In a presentational persuasion, the language of the character is characterized by its rhythmic and paratactic flow. For the readers, instead of having to skip from a level to

subordinate one, they are swept along by parallel clauses embodied in coordinate series. Two examples of presentational discourse are from this chapter as the following:-

_They're true to one another, faithfo 'to one another,' fectionate to one another, e'en to death. Be poor amoong 'em, be sick amoong 'em, grieve amoong 'em for onny o 'th' monny causes that carries grief to the poor man's door ,and they'll be tender wi' yo ,gentle wi' yo, comfortable wi' yo, chrisen wi' yo. Be sure o' that, ma'am. They'd be riven to bits, ere ever they'd be different.'

_ 'Sir, I were never good at showin o't, though I ha had'n my share in feeling o't. 'Deed we are in a muddle, sir. Look round town- so rich as 'tis- and see the numbers o' people as has been broughten into bein heer, fur to weave, an to card, an to piece out a livin', aw the same one way, somehows, twixt their cradles and their graves. Look how we live, an wheer we live, an in what numbers, an by what chances, an wi' what sameness: and look how the mills is awlus a goin, and how they never works us no nigher to ony dis'ant object-ceptin awlus, Death. Look how you considers of us, an writes of us, an talks of us , and goes up wi' yor deputations to Secretaries o' State 'bout us, and how yo are awlus right ,and how we are awlus wrong, and never had'n no reason in us sin ever we were born. Look how this ha growen and growen, sir , bigger an bigger, broader an broader, harder an harder , fro year to year, fro generation unto generation. Who can look on't, sir, and fairly tell a man 'tis not a muddle?'

In addition to the visual nature of presentational persuasion, it is important to notice the impact of the speech of Mr. Stephen first on the attendants (especially Louisa) and then on the readers. McLucas (1995) asserts that **"Stephen Blackpool is the martyr of the lower-class. We can relate the most to Stephen**

as a character because he holds the most admirable human qualities. As a worker in Bounderby's factory, Stephen must work very hard to maintain himself. He sees that despite the poor conditions in the factories, the union is not a very viable option because the negotiator, Slackbridge, as his name suggests, is a very poor "bridge" between the workers and the owners. Because he does not support the union, his peers reject him. We can easily relate to his isolated feeling and sympathize with him". Concerning the visual metaphors, they help to make the speaker's (Stephen) claim present as it is in the claim which was actually in the readers' line of vision. Examples of visual metaphor as in:-

**_They'd be riven to bits, ere ever they'd be different.
_a w the same one way, somehows, twixt their cradles and their graves.**

It is worth mentioning that both of presentational discourses (mentioned above) have many repetitions of rhetorical deixis like: how, what, etc., as the following:-

_Look how we live, an wheer we live, an in what numbers, an by what chances ,an wi' what sameness: and look how the mills is awlus a goin, and how they never works us no nigher to ony dis'ant object_ceptin awlus, Death. Look how you considers of us, an writes of us, an talks of us, and goes up wi' yor deputations to Secretaries o' state 'bout us, and how yo are awlus right, and how we are awlus wrong, and never had'n no reason in us sin ever we were born. Look how this ha growen and growen, sir, bigger an bigger, broader an broader, harder an harder, fro year to year, fro generation unto generation. Who can look on't, sir, and fairly tell a man 'tis not a muddle?'

In both discourses, Dickens uses all of the features of presentation that have just been listed Vis patterns of syntactic

parallelism, poetic alliteration, and imagery. There is also a use of rhetorical deixis like **how** and **what** in reference to ideas.

The third type of strategies of persuasion is "Analogy". Analogical persuasion is made in a form of parable or fabulous stories. It works by calling to mind the traditional wisdom whether explicitly or implicitly. Most of the people use analogy to persuade others as, for instance, in saying a " proverb" or using " once upon a time" story to tell some people out of something. It is used for teaching and reminding its listeners (or readers) of the values and traditions by the indirect mode of storytelling. Analogical arguers persuade by having their readers make lateral and adductive leaps between past happenings and current topics.

Analogical persuasion uses a language of folktales, with their formulaic openings and endings. It mostly has a timeless and placeless quality stated by expressions like "once upon a time", " in a land far away", and etc. Stories using analogical expressions often involve chronology and others refer to as "evaluation" or some linguistic devices so as to underline the main topics of stories.

The following example is from Dickens' **Hard Times**. It shows how Dickens uses persuasive analogy. The example is an answer of Mr. Bounderby (the factory owner) to the speech of Mr. Stephen when he told the attendants that the workers are not machines and they do have souls. The answer of Mr. Bounderby takes the form of reference to the tyranny and despondence of the masters at that time:-

_'You are such a waspish, raspish , ill-conditioned chap, you see, ' said Mr. Bounderby, 'that even your own Union, the men who know you best, will have nothing to do with you. I never thought those fellows could be right in anything; but I

tell you what! I so far go along with them for a novelty, that I'll have nothing to do with you either.'

In such excerpt, Mr. Bounderby tries to criticize his worker (Stephen) and defend his dismissal on false criterion, "I so far go along with them for a novelty, that I'll have nothing to do with you either". In Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia (2006) "**Dickens portrays the wealthy in this novel, as being morally corrupt. Bounderby has no moral scruples, and this is evidenced when he fires Blackpool 'for a novelty'. He also conducts himself without any shred of decency, frequently losing his temper. He is cynically false about his childhood.....On the opposite spectrum, Stephen Blackpool, a destitute worker, is equipped with perfect morals, always abiding by his promises, and he is always thoughtful and considerate of others'**". With this case, Mr. Bounderby's insistent use of analogical persuasion and Stephen's refusal to the condition of life at that time; as well as the inability or refusal of each to see the other's style in a persuasive light are at the root of the ultimate failure of accepting each other's situation.

Concerning the evaluation expressions in this chapter, it seems that the writer has distributed it throughout the persuasive discourses of the characters of Mr. Bounderby and Stephen Blackpool. From the beginning of this chapter, Mr. Bounderby mentions his negative evaluation of the working union. He doesn't consider them as ordinary humans equal to him. But, rather, he looks at them as "pests of the earth" and they deserve to be trodden by him. Mr. Bounderby is always arrogant, proud with himself, and trying to lower other people. He does not consider the workers as human beings at all. In Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia (2006) "**Josiah Bounderby is a business associate of Mr. Gradgrind. He is a bombastic, yet thunderous merchant given to lecturing others. He employs**

many of the other central characters of the novel, and his rise to prosperity is shown to be an example of social mobility". This is clear from the following :-

_'Well Stephen,' said Bounderby, in his windy manner, 'what's this I hear? What have these pests of the earth been doing to you? Come in, and speak up.'

Also, Mr. Bounderby tries to impose his evaluation on the relation of Stephen with other workers and their union. He seems to be dissatisfied with the loyalty of Stephen to his fellow-sufferers in the work. Hyland (2001) believes that **"there is not a single redeeming feature in Bounderby's character. He is, as Dickens frequently describes him, a 'bully'. None of the goodness in the novel ever affects him"**. Of course, Mr. Bounderby didn't make his evaluation about Stephen's relation with other workers from nothing. Furthermore, he previously knows about the refusal of Stephen Blackpool to be with other workers in the same union, and also about the accusation of Mr. Slackbridge for Stephen to be coward, traitor, and afraid of Mr. Bounderby. According to Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia (2006) **"Stephen is a man 'of integrity', a man who will never give up his moral standpoint to follow along with the crowd (which leads to the conflict with Slackbridge and the Trade Union"**. Mr. Bounderby expects Stephen to talk badly about the workers and their union. Therefore, he directs his speech to Mr. Harthouse (one of the attendants at Bounderby's house) saying that:-

_'Now, look here, Harthouse, 'said he, 'here's a specimen of ' em. When this man was here once before, I warned this man against the mischievous strangers who are always about – and who ought to be hanged wherever they are found- and I told this man that he was going in the wrong direction. Now, would you believe it, although they have put this mark

upon him, he is such a slave to them still, that he's afraid to open his lips about them?'

The third evaluation is made by Stephen himself. Such evaluation has come as a commentary on the speech of Mr. Bounderby for believing that Mr. Slackbridge is not a good leader of the union and he is stirring up the workers to mutiny. Of course, Stephen's evaluation of Mr. Slackbridge is compatible with that of Bounderby's. He believes that the working union has a bad leader. In fact, Dickens' opinion is expressed in the dialogue as Stephen tells Bounderby that the leaders at that time are bad as in:-

_'I'm as soary as yo, sir, when the people's leaders is bad,' said Stephen, shaking his head. 'They taks such as offers. Haply 'tis na' the sma'est o' their misfortuns when they can get no better.'

Mr. Bounderby states another evaluation on the workers and their union. With this case, he considers them as "a set of rascals and rebels". For the dissatisfaction of his master, Stephen defends the workers. This is clear from the following excerpts:-

_'Though he knows,' said Mr. Bounderby, now blowing a gale, 'that these are a set of rascals and rebels whom transportation is too good for! !

_'Nay, ma'am,' said Stephen Blackpool, staunchly protesting against the words that had been used, and instinctively addressing himself to Louisa, after glancing at her face. 'Not rebels, nor yet rascals. Nowt o' th' kind, ma'am, nowt th' kind .

Although his own fellow workers distrust him, Stephen is faithful to them and, thus, infuriating Mr. Bounderby who stands against the union. Apparently, Dickens has made the character of Stephen Blackpool express the feeling and suffering of the workers.

Another evaluation expression is mentioned by the character of Stephen and it is embodied within a presentational discourse attributed to the same character. Such evaluation is the following:-

_ 'Sir, I were never good at showin o't, though I ha had'n my share in feeling o't. 'Deed we are in a muddle, sir.

In such evaluation, Stephen confesses his inability to describe all the problems of the other workers. Stephen Blackpool certainly is not a typical worker. He has somewhat vague views throughout the novel. In this expression, the character of Stephen gives his opinion of the situation of the working class with all its problems and manners of living. The confused debate between Bounderby and Stephen is an important successful one in the novel. The two debators (Bounderby and Stephen) symbolize the two contending classes, the capitalist and the worker.

The last evaluation is made by Mr. Bounderby on Stephen Blackpool. It seems that Mr. Bounderby is greatly dissatisfied with the speech of Stephen as he tells his master that workers are not machines and they do have souls like other human beings. Therefore, they have the right to live well, to educate, and to teach their children. As a result, Mr. Bounderby describes Stephen as:-

_ 'You are such a waspish, raspish, ill-conditioned chap.'

Such evaluation is really expected from the arrogant Bounderby since he considers himself higher than other people, including the workers. He finally dismisses Stephen Blackpool, from the work, for his defence of the working life.

Conclusion

After the analysis of chapter 21, an important question comes into mind. It is about the validity of the assumption that some people resort to a specific persuasive strategy (whether quasilogical, presentational, or analogical). Or to put it another way, does the culture of the person determine his language use (or persuasive style) in a rhetorical situation? Of course, the answer to both questions is "NO". Any person, or persuader, has a variety of persuasive strategies and he is at liberty to choose any one of them according to the context of the interaction at hand. The cultural background may make the person prefer certain choices of persuasion over others. But, in fact, it does not determine them.

During the interaction, the problems that occur and make communication fail may have their reasons not in cultural differences but, rather, in specific rhetorical interactions (as in the case of Bounderby and Stephen). The theme of escape really underlines the difference between the lives of the wealthy and the poor.

In Stephen's situation, we find a gentleman who intends to escape from his failed life but he cannot do so. In fact, Dickens' characters in *Hard Times* are more than just caricatures for a novel on the Victorian states of England. They are also real, thinking, and feeling characters. Such use of characters makes this novel very realistic and; therefore, more effective. If Dickens had chosen to write this text using shallow characters, the novel would be considered as a social commentary. As it seems, only when the literary text is appreciated on many levels can it really be influential in any specific area.

It is better, for any researcher, to think of rhetoric and culture that do not end in cultural determinism. Instead, we should deal with rhetoric as Aristotle said: the craft of finding the best of the available means of persuasion for the rhetorical situation at hand (as cited in Johnstone, 1989). We should also put a borderline between persuasive strategies and persuasive styles; and treating the latter as cultural readiness rather than as cultural rules.

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