PRESENTATION OF SPEECH AND THOUGHT: A STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF OSCAR WILDE'S *THE SPHINX WITHOUT A SECRET*

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Abstract

The present paper intends to examine the significant role of the modes of Speech and Thought Presentation in Oscar Wilde's The Sphinx without a Secret. The researchers have rigorously examined both of the modes of speech and thought presentation, and highlighted the qualities and shortcomings. The study further explores justifications for the conceivable results and methodically answer the questions: how characters' speech and thought are presented in the story? How these modes impact readers' perception towards the characters in the text. Microsoft Excel 2016 has been used as a data analysis tool for the investigation of the modes of presentation, alongside the conscientious survey of the structure of the text. The findings suggest that not only the writer has dramatized things but also provided more significance to the words of the characters who speak and act for themselves. It also influences the events, the characters, and the spatiotemporal setting of the story. The paper uses the theoretical framework of the two influential American stylisticians Geoffrey Leech and Mick Short.

Keywords: Speech and thought presentation, stylistic analysis, sphinx without a secret

1. Introduction

Much work in stylistics relates to the detailed analysis of distinct scholarly texts or extracts, for the most part keeping in mind the end goal to relate particular linguistic choices and patterns to potential meaning and impacts. Such sort of work speaks to one of the principal strengths of the stylistics custom: for all the contention that occasionally encompasses the linguistic study of literature, extract, explicit, and sensitive linguistic analyses give precious bits of knowledge into the workings of text and language for the most part, and additionally helpful hypotheses and explanations regarding the readers' interpretation.

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The study of specific texts includes implicit or explicit correlation with different texts. Asserting that particular linguistic choices and patterns are noteworthy because they are conventional, exemplary or deviant, and claiming that comparable choices and patterns will or will not typically be found in other identical writings or in a day to day language use. This is where analysts frequently need to believe in their own intuitions as language users and literature readers, and on the supposition that perceptions will be shared by their audience.

Our primary goal, in this paper, is to show this by carrying out an in-depth analysis of the extracts from Oscar Wilde's short story *The Sphinx without a Secret.* We shall concentrate especially on how a character's speech and thought is presented in the story and how these modes of speech and thought impact readers' perception towards the characters in the text. Besides, the presentation of characters' words and thoughts is the prominent characteristic of a narrative, which has received a lot of consideration within stylistics (Leech and Short, 2007, Paul Simpson, 2004, Rimmon-Kenan, 2005& Toolan, 2001).

Oscar Wilde's *The Sphinx without a Secret*, which was first published in 1887, examines the themes of love, faithfulness of woman and feminene mystery. This appears from the start of the story when the unidentified narrator meets his college friend, Lord Murchison, who "looked anxious and puzzled" (Wilde, 1948, p. 59). The storyteller concludes that the problem must be a woman. Later, we came to know that Lord Murchison's love for Lady Alroy is merely based on physical attraction. It is Gerald Murchison's love that drives the plot of the story: his "troubled feelings" and his yearning to marry Lady Alroy provide the story interest. Besides, Lady Alroy remains quite mysterious. Murchison trusts "she has a mystery she cannot share" (Wilde, 1948, p. 64). Oscar Wilde additionally considers the subject of secrecy and examines the question why mystery is so appealing. This has appeared through the portrayal of Lady Alroy and the numerous riddles of her life. By never uncovering reality about Lady Alroy and her numerous mysteries, Wilde keeps the reader's thinking to the very end, engaging him/her without clarifying reality.

1.1. Research Questions
- How and to what extent are the modes of speech and thought presentation depicted in The *Sphinx without a Secret*?
- How do these modes impact the projection of perspective and readers' perception towards the characters in the story?

1.2. Research Objectives
- To explore how the various modes of speech and thought presentation are depicted in The *Sphinx without a Secret*?
- To examine how these modes impact characters and the readers' perception towards them in the story.

1.3. Theoretical Framework
The paper uses the hypothetical framework of the two influential American stylisticians *Geoffrey Leech and Mick Short* (2007).

1.4. The Methodology of the Study

A textual analysis technique is used alongside the statistical investigation of the data by means of Microsoft Excel. The story is the primary source of the data for the thorough exploration of the speech/thought modes; extracts from the story are chosen and examined thoroughly. However, for secondary data, critical works of literature related speech/thought presentation modes are studied and examined.

Besides, this research study is categorised into four sections. The introduction is the first section, which comprises the gist of the story, the focus of the study, the research question, hypothetical framework, methodology, and the delimitation of the study. The second section critically studies and compares both of the modes of speech and thought alongside the textual evidence from the story. Section three provides a justification for the possible outcomes of the modes and how they could be compared. The findings of the paper are discussed in the concluding section.

1.5. Delimitation of the Study

This present study is delimited to the presentation of the characters' speech and thoughts in *The Sphinx without a Secret.* In this way, it neither examines the style, setting, and theme in the story nor attempts to resolve the mystery of Lady Alroy.

2. Meticulous Analysis, Comparison and Application of the Modes
2.1. G. Leech and Mick Short's Speech and Thought Presentation

The modes of speech and thought presentation are one of the distinguishing characteristics of style which demonstrates what kind of speech and thought representation the author has used within the text. While recounting an incident, we generally report the events from our own perspective. The primary events are narrated in the third person and the first person, and in the simple past or present tense. But with a specific end goal of being repetitive, we frequently recount what the character said or thought and attempt to recreate their speeches as faithfully as possible.

A writer has various options in the way the thought and speech of the characters are shown. He or she can utilize the exact words spoken by the characters without any alteration and can give us the feelings that the characters are speaking in our presence. He or she can simply refer to the way of the discourse made by the characters without citing the exact words of the speaker. The nature of the presentation of speech and thoughts rely on the level of the narration of the narrator. Is the narrator reliable, unreliable, homodiegetic, heterodiegetic? Whose voice do we listen to when we go through the words expressed by the character? Whether the narration is from the author's perspective or from the character's point of view?

Geoffrey Leech and Mick Short (2007) have categorized speech and thought presentation into five types. They are:

Table No. 1

S. No.	Categories	Speech	Thought
1	Direct Speech / Direct Thought	DS	DT
2	Indirect Speech / Indirect Thought	IS	IT
3	Free Direct Speech / Free Direct Thought	FDS	FDT
4	Free Indirect Speech / Free Indirect Thought	FIS	FIT

5	Narrative Report of Speech Act / Narrative Report of Thought Act	**NRSA**	**NRTA**

2.1.1. The Presentation of Speech

Before analysing how speech is presented in Oscar Wilde's *The Sphinx without a Secret,* it is essential at first to elucidate diverse modes of speech presentation. There are numerous choices accessible to the writer to show a character's speech and thought. These choices empower the writer to endure with varied perspectives and meanings. "…variation in speech presentation allows the authors to indicate how important a piece of speech is. In general terms, *Indirect Speech* appears to be a backgrounding, and *Direct Speech* a foregrounding device" (Short, 1996, pp. 292-293).

2.1.2. Direct Speech (DS)

Direct Speech (DS) is the 'baseline form against which other forms are often measured' (Paul Simpson, 2004, p. 31). Direct Speech is ordinarily connected with 'the faithful, verbatim reproduction of an original utterance' (Leech & Short, 2007, p. 255). When somebody uses DS to report an event that somebody has uttered, one quotes the exact words of the speaker. The words produced by the speaker are quoted within inverted commas. A storyteller uses DS to report verbatim what the character said in a particular context.

'I don't understand women well enough', he answered.
'My dear Gerald', I said, 'women are meant to be loved, not to be understood.'
'I can't love where I cannot trust', he replied (Wilde, 1948, p. 60).

2.1.3. Free Direct Speech (FDS)

Direct Speech has two noticeable characteristics: quotation marks and introductory reporting clause. These two features verify the existence of the narrator. In order to make *Free Direct Speech*, it is possible to remove either or both of these distinguishing features to create a freer form (FDS). In FDS, the character speaks directly without the intrusion of the storyteller. Short (1996) suggested that FDS is best viewed as the variant of *Direct Speech* rather than a different category of speech presentation (pp. 300-4). Example:

I was mad, frantic; I don't know what I said, but I said terrible things to her (Wilde, 1948, p. 63).

2.1.4. Indirect Speech (IS)

In indirect speech, the words of the utterer are reproduced in the third person with a reporting verb and one states 'what was said in one's own words' (Leech & Short, 2007, p. 255). Example:

So, I concluded that it was a woman, and asked him if he was married yet.

(Wilde, 1948, p. 59).

2.1.5. Free Indirect Speech (FIS)

Free indirect Speech (FIS) is a mixed form and occupies a place between a direct speech and indirect speech. In FIS, the reporting verb is omitted, and the function of the 'tense' is similar

to that of IS. FIS is neither a 'verbatim reproduction of the original speech' nor is an insignificant roundabout rendering of the original. Leech and Short (2007) state that FIS includes the certain type of interference of the authorial voice between the reader and the words of the character 'the reader is distanced from the character's words' (pp. 268-9). Example:

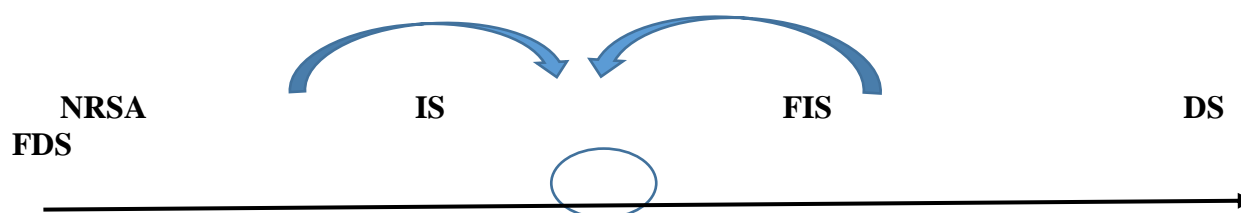He looked anxious and puzzled now, and seemed to be in doubt about something (Wilde, 1948, p. 59).

NRSA   **IS**   **FIS**   **DS**

FDS

Figure No. 1

NRSA > IS > FIS > DS > FDS

Figure No. 2

In NRSA, the narrator has full control of the diegesis alongside his complete intrusion. In, IS, quotation marks are omitted. The words of the characters are more important. It shows the narrator's presence and shows his distance from the character; the intrusion is at the maximum level. FIS is a mixed form of both IS and DS, and share the characteristics of both direct speech and indirect speech; whereas, in FDS, there is no narrator.

2.1.6. Narrative Report of Speech Act (NRSA)

Narrative Report of Speech Acts (NRSA) is more indirect than an indirect speech. The narrator does not replicate the exact words spoken by the speaker, whose discourse is being narrated. We see the viewpoint of the writer when the speech is recounted without quoting the verbatim utterance of the speaker. NRSA simply recounts that a speech act has happened. According to Short (2007), "Speech Act' is the term used to designate ACTS performed by saying something e.g. complaining, instructing, questioning, pleading, arguing" (p.1). Short additionally accentuates that NRSA is 'primarily defined as a reference to the illocutionary force of utterance', this idea cannot be directly applied to thought-which is a non-communicative phenomenon (ibid, p.130). Example:

He took from his pocket a little silver clasped morocco case, and handed it to me. I opened it. Inside there was the photograph of a woman. (Wilde, 1948, p. 60).

Categories of Speech Presentation based on Leech and Mick Short's model
Table No. 2

Category	Brief Description	Example from the story	Sentences contain mode in the story (Total 140 Sentences)	Percentage of Mode in the story

Direct Speech (DS)	Representation of an utterance or utterances typically via a reporting clause (e.g., 'she said') followed by a grammatically independent reported clause, which is typically enclosed in quotation marks. The language used in the reported clause is appropriate to the speaking character (in terms of pronoun, tense, lexis, etc.).	'I don't understand women well enough', he answered. (11) 'My dear Gerald', I said, 'women are meant to be loved, not to be understood.' (12) 'I can't love where I cannot trust', he replied. (13)	54	38.57 %
Free Direct Speech (FIS)	Representation of an utterance or utterances typically without a reporting clause (e.g., 'she said') and using language that is appropriate to the speaker (in terms of pronoun, tense, lexis, etc.). The speaker speaks directly without the intimacy of the narrator.	I was mad, frantic; I don't know what I said, but I said terrible things to her. (105) I had loved her so much, I had loved her so madly. (111) 'Good God! How I had loved that woman!' (112)	55	39.28 %
Indirect Speech (IS)	Representation of an utterance or utterances via a reporting clause (e.g., 'she said') followed by a grammatically subordinated reported clause. The language used in the reported clause is appropriate to the narrator (in terms of Pronoun, tense, lexis, etc.)	So I concluded that it was a woman, and asked him if he was married yet. (10) He told her that she had loved her madly.	38	27.14%

Free Indirect Speech (FIS)	Representation of an utterance or utterances without a reporting clause (e.g., 'she said') and using language that is partly appropriate to the narrator (in terms of pronoun, tense, lexis, etc.) and partly appropriate to the speaker.	He looked anxious and puzzled now, and seemed to be in doubt about something. (8)	3	2.14%
Narrative Report of Speech Act (NRSA)	Reference to an illocutionary force of utterance or utterances (possibly with an indication of the topic)	He took from his pocket a little silver-clasped morocco case and handed it to me (22). I opened it. (23) Inside there was the photograph of a woman. (24)	23	16.42%

Table No. 1 expounds briefly the modes of speech presentation alongside a number of sentences contain these modes with a specific percentage rate. The impact of both of the modes has been given in the findings section of this study.

2.2. The Presentation of Thought

The presentation of thought is regarded as alike as the presentation of speech since 'Thought' might be examined as a sort of 'internal discourse'. For instance, DS is similar to DT in presentation, except the reporting verb will be dissimilar.

For example,

Direct Speech:

He said, 'women are meant to be loved, not to be understood.'

Direct Thought:

He thought, 'women are meant to be loved, not to be understood.'

The thoughts of the characters can also be presented as DT, FDT, IT, FIT, NRTA.

2.2.1. Direct Thought (DT)

In DT, the thoughts of the character are reproduced/replicated verbatim by the narrator.

2.2.2. Free Direct Thought (FDT)
The Free Direct Thought (FDT) case resembles the *Direct Thought* (DT), however, the introductory reporting clause is omitted. In FDT, a character's thought is depicted exactly without the narrator's intrusion.
2.2.3. Indirect Thought (IT)

The rules for indirect speech (IS) similarly apply for Indirect Thought (IT). The storyteller presents the thoughts of the character in his/her own precise words. Besides, the character's thought is recounted in the third person viewpoint. Leech and Short (2007) state, "The IT version has an introductory reporting clause, explicit subordination, and a declarative form for the reported clause" (p.271).

2.2.4. Free Indirect Thought (FIT)

The *Free Indirect Thought* is between the DT and IT. Leech and Short indicate, "The FIT version differs from that of DT by virtue of the back-shift of the tense and the conversion of the first-person pronoun to the third person (indirect features) and also by the absence of a reporting clause and the retention of the interrogative forms and question mark (direct features)" (2007, p.271).
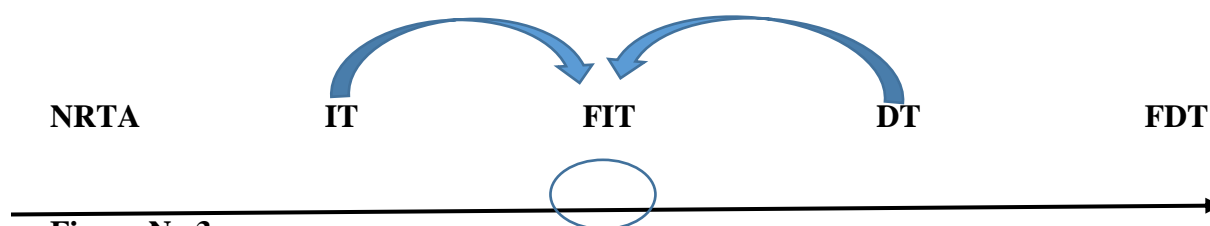

NRTA   IT   FIT   DT   FDT

Figure No.3

2.2.5. Narrative Report of Thought Act (NRTA)

In NRTA, the author does not replicate the characters' thought: he merely records the thought process of the character and his/her way of thinking.

Categories of Thought Presentation based on Leech and Mick Short (2007) Model
Table No. 3

Category	Brief Description	Example from the story	Sentences contain mode in the story (Total 140 Sentences)	Percentage in Mode in the story
Direct Thought (DT)	The thought of the character is reproduced verbatim by the narrator.	He thought, "why should I screen her who ruined my life"	1	0.71%
Free Direct Thought (FDT)	The thought of the character is presented directly without the intermediary of the narrator, and consequently, the reporting clause is omitted in presenting the thought.	Let her pay for what I have suffered.

One afternoon I was sitting outside the Café de la Paix, watching the splendour and shabbiness of Parisian life, and wondering over my vermouth at the strange panorama of pride and poverty that was passing before me | 4 | 2.85 % |

		(1)		
Indirect Thought (IT)	The thought of the character is reported in the third person with a reporting verb.	He stopped to see what it was.	1	0.71%
Free Indirect Thought (FIT)	It differs from DT by virtue of the backshift of the tense and the conversion of the first person pronoun to the third person (indirect features) and also by the absence of a reporting clause and the retention of the interrogative form and question mark.	I wandered up and down that wretched Row, peering into every carriage, and waiting for the yellow brougham; but I could not find ma belle inconnue, and at last, I began to think she was merely a dream (44)	1	%0.71
Narrative Report of Thought Act (NRTA)	Simply, the thought process of the character is recorded.	All that night I kept thinking of it, and all the next day. (43)	1	0.71%

Table No. 3 shows a vibrant picture of the various categories of thought presentation alongside the number of sentences contains the modes of speech presentation with a specific percentage rate.

Moreover, the histogram 1, below, demonstrates the modes of speech presentation in the story by means of statistics. It shows that the author has purposely used FDS and DS more in this story in order to dramatize and assign more importance to the words of the characters. The character is distanced from the narrator.

TOTAL (% AGE) OF SPEECH PRESENTATION MODES IN THE SPHINX WITHOUT A SECRET

Modes of Speech Presentation
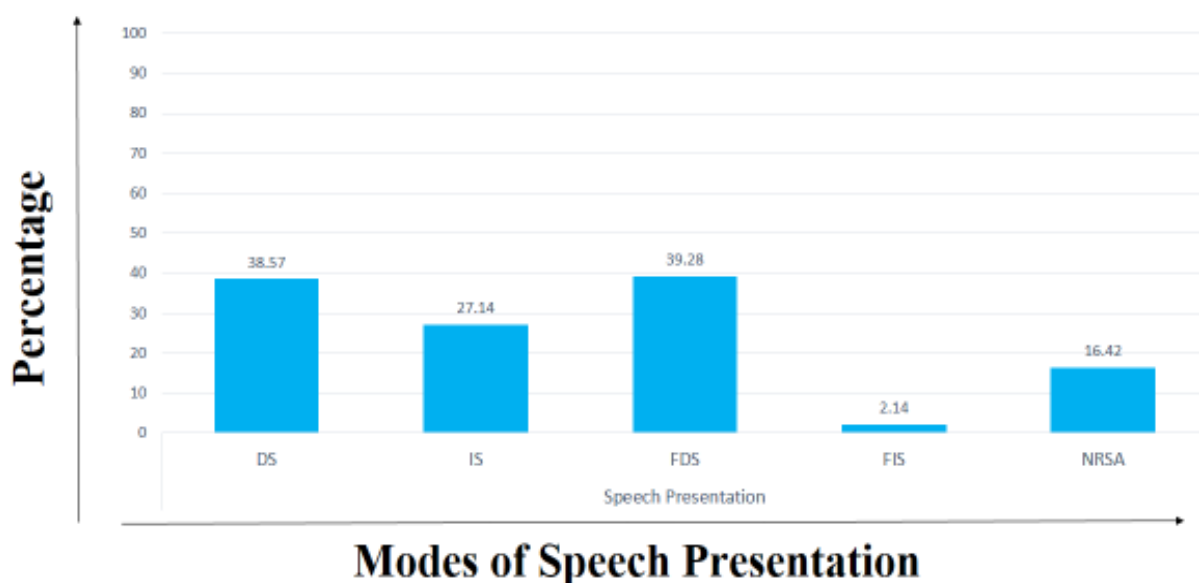
Histogram No. 1

However, histogram 2 highlights a comparative analysis of both of the modes of speech and thought presentation in this story. We can clearly analyse that the writer has given significance to the characters' words rather than their thoughts. The narrator is restricted and is not allowed to express the thought process of the characters. The narrator is distanced and he/she can express his/her self from far behind.

SPEECH & THOUGHT MODES IN SPHINX WITHOUT A SECRET
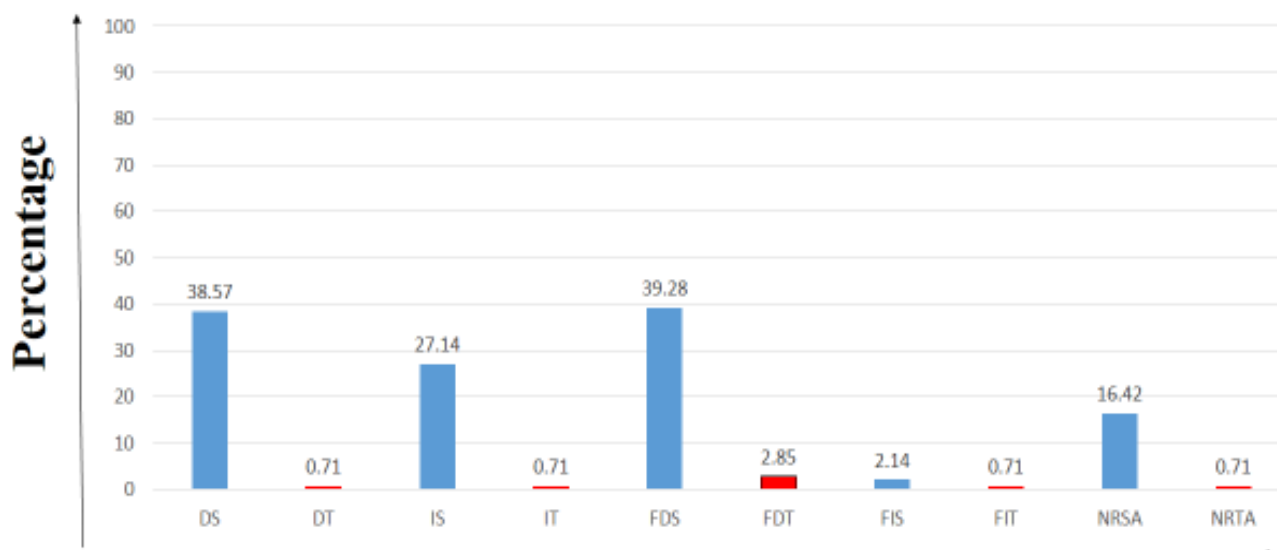
Modes of Speech & Thought Presentation

3. Findings and Conclusion

The analysis in this paper has shown the inconspicuous ways in which diverse types of discourse presentation can be maneuvered keeping in mind the end goal to accomplish an extensive variety of noteworthy impacts of the modes of speech and thought on characters and events in *The Sphinx without a Secret.*

The application of the various modes of speech and thought presentation depicts how these modes spellbound the readers and mould their perspectives towards characters. However, both of these modes are interconnected with each other. Nonetheless, in this story, the author has purposely and enormously used the modes of speech presentation-which is 92 % of the text, more than thought presentation-which is merely 8%. It highlights that Oscar Wilde has given more significance to the characters' speech as compared to their thoughts. On the other hand, there is a maximum use of FDS (39 %) and DS (38 %). With the help of FDS and DS, the author has tried to present the whole story from the viewpoint of the protagonist. It has helped the author to gain readers' sympathy towards the characters. Not only this, the narrated signs such as events, character and setting both spatial and temporal, are additionally affected. Besides, he dramatizes the events.

The study has likewise highlighted the dominance of speech modes and the rarity of thought modes in this story and suggested forms distinctive to the signs of the narrated: diegetic and storyteller-impacted. The researchers assumed that the enormous utilization of the modes of speech and thought presentation has altogether influenced the narrative structure of the story.

The notion of diegesis and mimesis, in this story, has been utilized to differentiate direct modes from the indirect modes. Diegesis is associated with the 'telling' part of the story through the recounting of interceding storyteller. On the other hand, mimesis identifies with the 'showing' of the data in an immediate and unmediated manner. Direct speech (DS), however, is mimetic which is known as to be the faithful verbatim of speech. Indirect modes of speech presentation are diegetic, which recounts of an intervening storyteller.

Moreover, the most pervasive type of speech presentation is FDS and DS in *The Sphinx without a Secret* with an enormous percentage of 32.5%. The author has attempted to demonstrate the entire story from the perspective of the third person omniscient narrator, with DS and its variants' help. Further, the NRSA third highest usage in this story portray events and how these are influenced by other modes. Through the gigantic utilization of these modes, the events, spatiotemporal setting and the characters are greatly affected.

Diegetic types of direct speech depict the storyteller's intrusion and enable the narrator to impart messages through the immediate voice of the characters and therefore recount in mimetic shape. In these storyteller affected types of direct speech, it can at no time in the future be regarded as entirely loyal and precise as storyteller intrusion is available in it.

The study shows that such an analysis can uncover the author's artistry of the stylistic and structural arrangement at a meticulous level encompassing the addition and deletion of reporting verbs and quotation marks.

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