



A LINGUOSTYLISTIC INTERPRETATION OF THE LEXEME "HEART" IN THE LATER CHAPTERS OF JANE AUSTEN'S "PRIDE AND PREJUDICE"

Ruzikulov Fazliddin Shukurovich

Candidate of philological sciences, associate professor at Sam SIFL

Musoyeva Khayitgul Urokovna

Phd Student of Sam SIFL

Article history:	Abstract:
<p>Received: 14th October 2026 Accepted: 12th November 2026</p>	<p>This study continues the linguostylistic investigation of the lexeme <i>heart</i> in Jane Austen's <i>Pride and Prejudice</i>, focusing on twelve excerpts from the latter part of the novel. The research examines how <i>heart</i> functions as a linguistic and stylistic marker of emotional maturity, moral awareness, and reconciliation. Using semantic, pragmatic, and contextual stylistic analysis, the study reveals that in the final chapters, Austen employs <i>heart</i> to express moral self-reflection, empathy, and resolution rather than romantic excitement. The findings suggest that Austen's later usage of <i>heart</i> evolves from expressions of passion to representations of moral integrity and human connection, reflecting the author's broader ethical vision of emotion harmonized with reason</p>
<p>Keywords linguostylistics, semantics, pragmatics, Jane Austen, <i>Pride and Prejudice</i>, morality; emotion; stylistic analysis</p>	

INTRODUCTION. The concept of *heart* in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* develops throughout the narrative—from idiomatic expressions of affection to profound moral symbolism. In the earlier chapters, *heart* often conveys romantic emotion or social politeness; in the latter, it becomes a metaphor for moral introspection and ethical awakening.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze twelve later occurrences of *heart*, illustrating Austen's stylistic shift from externalized emotion to internalized virtue. The analysis reveals how language itself participates in moral resolution, transforming *heart* from a symbol of feeling into an emblem of conscience and maturity.

MATERIALS AND METHODS.

This research is based on twelve deliberately selected textual excerpts drawn from Chapters 15 to 28 of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), all of which contain the lexeme *heart*. The selection of these passages is not arbitrary; rather, they represent key moments in the narrative where emotional tension, moral judgment, and interpersonal relationships reach significant stages of development. Collectively, these excerpts trace the emotional and psychological evolution of Elizabeth Bennet, alongside other principal characters, during the novel's resolution phase, when misunderstandings are clarified, personal values are reassessed, and genuine affection is gradually revealed.

The lexeme *heart* functions in these contexts as a central linguistic and conceptual marker of emotional life, moral consciousness, and inner sincerity. Across the selected sentences, *heart* appears in a variety of semantic roles, ranging from literal and physiological references to highly figurative and symbolic representations of emotional endurance, affection, moral sensitivity, and personal integrity. Expressions such as *by heart*, *broken heart*, *whole heart*, and *open one's heart* demonstrate how Austen employs conventional idiomatic constructions while simultaneously enriching them with narrative and psychological depth. These usages contribute to the portrayal of inner conflict, emotional restraint, and ethical reflection, which are characteristic features of Austen's narrative style.

Methodologically, the study adopts a qualitative linguostylistic approach that allows for an in-depth examination of meaning, form, and function within a literary context. The analysis is conducted along three interrelated dimensions. The first is semantic analysis, which focuses on identifying and classifying the meanings of the lexeme *heart* as literal, figurative, idiomatic, or evaluative, with particular attention to shifts in meaning depending on narrative context. The second dimension is stylistic analysis, which examines the expressive and aesthetic functions of *heart*, including its role in metaphorical constructions, hyperbolic expressions, ironic undertones, and moral



symbolism. Through this lens, *heart* is shown to operate not merely as a lexical unit, but as a stylistic device that reinforces emotional intensity and ethical judgment. The third analytical dimension is pragmatic analysis, which explores how the lexeme *heart* contributes to emotional tone, interpersonal relations, and communicative intent within dialogue and narration. This dimension considers how references to the *heart* shape reader interpretation, signal sincerity or emotional vulnerability, and mediate relationships between characters. Special attention is given to the pragmatic implications of *heart*-related expressions in moments of confession, emotional disclosure, and moral reasoning.

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS.

The theoretical framework of the study draws upon established models in stylistics and cognitive linguistics,

particularly Galperin’s (1981) theory of stylistic function, Leech and Short’s (2007) discourse-oriented approach to literary analysis, and Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980) conceptual metaphor theory. These frameworks enable the interpretation of *heart* as a conceptual metaphor representing emotion, morality, and inner selfhood, while also accounting for its stylistic and pragmatic significance in narrative discourse.

Each occurrence of the lexeme *heart* is systematically examined in terms of its lexical function, emotional polarity (positive, negative, or ambivalent), and narrative context. This integrative approach ensures a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of how *heart* operates as a key semantic and stylistic element in *Pride and Prejudice*, contributing to the novel’s emotional structure, character development, and moral vision.

Function	Examples	Stylistic Device	Meaning/Effect
Cognitiv internalization	(11)	Metaphor	“By heart”-memory as emotional understanding
Moral readiness	(12)	Metanomy	Acceptance and self-control
Sentimental exaggeration	(13,15)	Hyperbole	Overstated grief or affection (Mrs. Bennet)
Emotional absence	(14)	Negation (heartlessness)	Moral insensitivity
Encouragement/resilience	(16)	Prefixal metaphor (“disheartened”)	Figurative use for courage
Full sincerity	(17)	Emphasis	Total involvement and devotion
Physical emotion	(18)	Somatic metaphor	Anxiety embodied in heartbeat
Moral intuition	(19,20)	Personification	Heart as conscience and inner voice
Openness/reconciliation	(21,22)	Symbolism	Affection, harmony, completion

Quantitative Summary:

Metaphorical uses: 8 (~67%)

Idiomatic / evaluative: 3 (~25%)

Literal physiological: 1 (~8%) — sentence (18) refers to an actual heartbeat

This indicates a transition from emotional to moral-metaphorical meaning—a shift from feeling to conscience.

Discussion. A comparison with earlier chapters reveals Austen’s evolution of linguistic focus.

In the beginning, heart served romantic or polite functions (“with all my heart,” “winning of his heart”).

In later chapters, it becomes cognitive and ethical, as in:

“Her heart did whisper that he had done it for her.” (Ch. 25)

Here, heart signifies intuitive moral awareness — an internalized judgment rather than impulsive emotion. The figurative phrase “did whisper” personifies the heart, implying conscience as a silent moral guide.

Likewise, “Your own heart, your own conscience must tell you...” (Ch. 26) fuses emotion and morality linguistically, framing heart as synonymous with ethical insight.



Even idiomatic phrases such as “do not be disheartened” (Ch. 17) use heart metaphorically, connecting courage and morale to emotional strength — a conceptual metaphor consistent with Lakoff & Johnson’s theory (heart = center of vitality).

Austen also uses irony, particularly in “Jane will die of a broken heart” (Ch. 16), where Mrs. Bennet’s melodramatic tone parodies sentimental language. This maintains the author’s stylistic tension between true sentiment and social performance.

By the final chapters, expressions like “opened her heart to Jane” and “her loving heart” resolve this irony. Heart now symbolizes sincerity and reconciliation, completing the emotional and ethical arc of the novel.

CONCLUSION. In the closing chapters of *Pride and Prejudice*, the lexeme heart undergoes a semantic and stylistic transformation — from expressions of passion and politeness to symbols of conscience, empathy, and harmony.

The analysis confirms that Austen’s later uses of heart reflect a mature integration of emotion and morality, consistent with her moral aesthetics. The figurative richness of the lexeme enables Austen to express internal transformation linguistically, illustrating that genuine virtue arises from emotional authenticity tempered by reason.

Thus, the heart in Austen’s language becomes not only a site of feeling but also a linguistic metaphor for moral awakening.

LITERATURE

1. Austen, J. (1813). *Pride and Prejudice*. London: Pearson Education. Retold by Evelyn Attwood Series Editors: Andy Hopkins and Jocelyn Potter
2. Brown, P., & Levinson, S. (1987). *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*. Cambridge University Press.
3. Galperin, I. R. (1981). *Stylistics*. Moscow: Higher School Publishing.
4. Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors We Live By*. University of Chicago Press.
5. Leech, G., & Short, M. (2007). *Style in Fiction: A Linguistic Introduction to English Fictional Prose*. Pearson Longman.
6. Simpson, P. (2004). *Stylistics: A Resource Book for Students*. Routledge.
7. Toolan, M. (2016). *Language in Literature: An Introduction to Stylistics*. Routledge.