

Implied Irony  
in Jane Austen's  
*Pride and Prejudice*



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*Pride and Prejudice*:

*To Be Mistress of Pemberley!*

By

Jessica Migliorelli

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## FOREWORD

MARGHERITA DORE

In this foreword, I do not wish to delve into defining and debating the concept of irony at length (cf. Chapters 3-6 in this volume). However, I would like to briefly mention some important issues and theories to understand it since they helped Jessica Migliorelli to investigate free indirect style and irony in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*.

Several scholars in various (sub)fields of linguistics have attempted to define irony. Wilson and Sperber (1992) describe it as a natural and universal phenomenon people do not have to learn or be taught. Li (2008) sees irony as a cultural universal whereas Liberman (2009) analyses irony from a cross-cultural perspective to pinpoint similarities and differences (Guidi 2017, 28, cf. also Colston 2017 for an overview). For their part, Burgers et al. (2011, 190) argue that irony is “a literal evaluation that is implicitly contrary to its intended evaluation” while Simpson and Bousfield (2017, 161) suggest that “irony is situated in the space between what you say and what you mean”.

From a pragmatic standpoint, Attardo (2000a) postulates that verbal irony entails the violation of any of Grice's four maxims, which in principle guarantee optimal communication between the speaker and hearer, if they are abided by (cf. Chapter 3 for an overview of Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle). Attardo (2000a, 818) explains that the inferential process for the understanding of irony can be explained via the principle of “relevant inappropriateness”. In his view, the hearer first accepts a non-ironic interpretation of the utterance; however, when they realize that such an utterance is inappropriate to the context, they are ready to replace it with an (ironic) interpretation that fits the context. Most importantly, in Attardo's view, an instance of inappropriateness must also be relevant to the hearer for irony to be achieved; it cannot be randomly inappropriate. In other words, the utterance, although inappropriate, must be contextually relevant yet inappropriate so that the irony can be conveyed and perceived (cf. also Colston 2017, 243-244 for similar consideration). Along with context, other elements may be important to the interpretation of irony. For instance, irony markers such as superlatives, adverbs and hesitations may be seen as meta-

communicative clues (Burgers and van Mulken 2017, 385) that can “alert the reader to the fact that an utterance is ironic” (Attardo 2000b, 7).

Yus (2017, 198-199) also concentrates on the inferential process that irony entails. Drawing on Curcó (2000), he sees this process as based on a series of relevance-centred steps: firstly, a speaker utters a sentence that expresses a belief implicitly attributed by the speaker to someone other than themselves. However, at the same time, this ironic utterance also implicitly expresses the speaker’s attitude to the beliefs being represented; it is therefore “echoic”. And yet, the speaker distance themselves from the thoughts echoed by the utterance. Consequently, the hearer’s task is “to determine the interpretation that the speaker ironically conveys and that differs, to a greater or lesser extent, from the interpretation that is explicitly communicated by the utterance” (ibid. 2017, 198-199).

As may be gathered, investigating irony can tell us a great deal about the speaker’s beliefs, intentions and emotions. For instance, it can tell us how they handle negativity and other face-related issues, or how they manage to offset communicative intentions and needs (Colston 2017, 246-247). It is therefore not surprising that many scholars have devoted their attention to understanding this phenomenon in naturally occurring communicative encounters, as well as fictional texts (cf. Booth 1974, Leech and Short, 2007 and Burgers et al. 2012, just to name a few).

In order to further explore irony in fiction, Migliorelli divides her study of free indirect style (speech and/or thought) to convey irony in *Pride and Prejudice* into two parts. Part I includes a thorough discussion of the theories of irony whereas Part II is devoted to data analysis. In Part I, Migliorelli concentrates particularly on Attardo’s (2000a) idea of “relevant inappropriateness”. She draws in particular on Dynel’s (2013, 2017) distinction of types of irony, such as “propositional negation irony” (Partington, 2006, 2007), “ideational/conceptual reversal irony”, “surrealistic irony” and “verisimilar irony”. Dynel (2013, 299-301) in particular suggests that “relevant inappropriateness” is unable to capture the essence of “verisimilar irony”, which is described as a kind of ironic utterance that implies overt untruthfulness. In other words, a verisimilar ironic remark can still be truthful to the context within which it is uttered, thus paving the way for further implicatures (albeit implicit). Consequently, this type of irony appears to depend on the flouting of the maxim of Relation, not on the first maxim of Quality.

With these premises in mind, Migliorelli carries out her analysis, which is also backed up by the main tenets of Politeness Theory (Chapter 6) and a necessary discussion of the construction of narrative discourse in fictional texts (Chapter 2). This approach allows Migliorelli to detect and investigate

the instances of free indirect speech and thought attributed to Mrs. Bennet and her daughter Elizabeth. She isolates and analyses the former's ironic remarks in Chapter 7 while Elizabeth's are extensively explored in Chapters 8 and 9, respectively before and after Elizabeth receives Mr. Darcy's letter. The analysis demonstrates that Jane Austen seems to use free indirect style mainly to attempt to control the reading process rather than to convey irony. Migliorelli argues that the author skilfully manipulates her readers' expectations and, consequently, that the real irony in *Pride and Prejudice* can truly be captured and appreciated in hindsight. As she puts it "[f]oreknowledge of the entire novel may indeed make the irony in it more evident when rereading judgments that had at first been construed as narrative report, but are subsequently revealed to stem from a character's distorted view of people and events due to common prejudiced attitudes that are derided throughout" (Migliorelli in this volume, 105-106). Interestingly, this may also be connected to the question regarding why irony may or may not be perceived as humorous (Yus 2017, 198-199). In reading Migliorelli's analysis, I am inclined to agree with her findings, which suggest that the irony seems to come from the implied author, who expresses it via her character's speech and thoughts (p. 111). Interestingly, though, in my view, irony is potentially or apparently negative in the fictional context within which it is produced and perceived as such during the first reading of the novel. Certainly, the reader's expectations are defied by the turns in the plot and irony helps unveil the prejudiced views the characters hold. Yet, rereading the text puts the reader in a very different position. Being in the know probably allows the reader to perceive Jane Austen's irony not only as dissociative and partly negative, but also as amusing or humorous.

Finally, Migliorelli's analysis corroborates the idea that irony depends on the violation of Grice's maxim of Quality, as traditionally argued. However, "verisimilar irony" is more likely to depend on the maxim of Relation (Dynel 2013). Migliorelli's study is indeed an intriguing exploration of how irony is conveyed in fiction. Future studies will hopefully continue in the same direction so as to further explore this fascinating phenomenon and its mechanisms, as well as to uncover the effect(s) of irony on readers.

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Rome, Italy, March 2020

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## INTRODUCTION

Her astonishment, as she reflected on what had passed, was increased by every review of it. That she should receive an offer of marriage from Mr Darcy! that he should have been in love with her for so many months! so much in love as to wish to marry her in spite of all the objections which had made him prevent his friend's marrying her sister, and which must appear at least with equal force in his own case, was almost incredible! it was gratifying to have inspired unconsciously so strong an affection. But his pride, his abominable pride, his shameless avowal of what he had done with respect to Jane, his unpardonable assurance in acknowledging, though he could not justify it, and the unfeeling manner in which he had mentioned Mr Wickham, his cruelty towards whom he had not attempted to deny, soon overcame the pity which the consideration of his attachment had for a moment excited. (Chap. 34, 167)

This extract from the end of chapter thirty-four of *Pride and Prejudice*<sup>1</sup> conveys Elizabeth's thoughts in response to Darcy's marriage proposal. Except for the first sentence, it is entirely written in free indirect discourse (FID). Jane Austen used this style skilfully to reveal her characters' innermost feelings (Rawson 2004, 228-229) through statements that may sound like narrative report but directly echo the characters' voices. Thanks to Austen, as well as to Flaubert, Zola and James, who abandoned first-person narration, the novel found its subjectivity once again, not by means of self-narration, but by blending mental reactions and the objective report of speech and events (Cohn, 1978, 115). In effect, when the characters' mental reactions started dominating novels written by Impressionists and Expressionists in Germany and by authors concerned with the stream of consciousness in England, such authors had at their disposal the technique of FID, which could be adapted to suit their aims (ibid.).

Being this style used especially to give the reader insights into a character's mind, it usually represents a very effective tool for authors to express their views on certain issues by voicing them through their characters in a detached, often ironic, way. It has been shown how this in particular may be done by means of free indirect speech (FIS) since

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<sup>1</sup> The edition used in this volume is: Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions Limited, [1813]1993.)

narrative authority creates some distance between what the character says and the reader (Leech and Short, 2007, 268). However, because FID, not just speech, may deceive readers into thinking they are “hearing” the narrator’s voice, it has also been shown that Austen’s narrators may often be perceived as “ventriloquizing” other voices (Morini, 2016, 34-35) in a way that is similar to the definition of irony as echoic language (Wilson and Sperber 1992). The present discussion thus attempts to illustrate how FID generates irony in one of Jane Austen’s most admired works, namely *Pride and Prejudice*, focusing on Elizabeth and Mrs. Bennet.

### Free Indirect Style and Irony

Whilst FID, in *Pride and Prejudice*, may be more properly viewed as a literary technique capably exploited by the author to control the reader’s point of view (Moses 2003), this consideration aims to show how, by blurring the distinction between the voice of the narrator and those of the characters, the irony in the novel may be heightened in hindsight. This is because, as noted by Kelly (1997, 166), Austen deceives first-time readers allowing them to “[read] or [misread] with the protagonist, despite the warnings of narratorial irony, and then teaches her readers how to read better” and, “chastened, the reader can reread Austen’s novels with instructed interest”. The attentive implied reader who rereads the novel therefore realizes that the narrator is often perceived as endorsing propositions that in the end will turn out to be the wrong judgment of a character, or what makes both character and reader the butt of the irony.

Because the sort of irony under scrutiny may only be accounted for by taking into consideration the implied reader, it may be referred to as “implied” irony. A discussion of “implied” irony, like this one, ought to consider the pragmatics of irony not only in the context of the novel but also, and especially, at the level of narrator and implied reader. The definition of irony as echoic language helps the reader to grasp how FID may cause Austen’s narrators to be “heard” “ventriloquizing” other voices (Morini, 2016, 34-35). This approach posits that the speaker would not be communicating a belief/opinion (or an echo of beliefs, Sperber and Wilson, 1986) by uttering a false statement because it is the context that makes it evident that the statement is false (Sperber and Wilson 1981, 295-318, Wilson and Sperber 1992, Wilson 2006). The view of irony as echo, however, is a direct access approach, and this means that the intended meaning can be reached without activating the initial meaning (Gibbs 1986, 1994). Two-step theories, which are, instead, based on the assumption that the initial meaning is processed first (Dews and Winner 1999, Schwoebel et

al. 2000), seem to better describe the processes involved in the perception of irony generated by Austen's use of FID since activation of the initial meaning is an important step. This, in fact, would occur when the reader believes he is "hearing" the voice of the omniscient narrator. The intended meaning would be reached only after realizing that it is not the narrator's voice that the reader is "hearing", which in some instances may happen when rereading the novel.

Given the above, two multistage approaches are used here to ascertain the presence of irony: Penelope Brown and Stephen C. Levinson's ([1978]1987) account of irony, as defined in their Politeness Theory, and Salvatore Attardo's (2000b) theory of irony. The present consideration puts these two approaches, both based on Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle (CP), to the test.

### **Why *Pride and Prejudice*?**

The choice of *Pride and Prejudice* was motivated first and foremost by Jane Austen's role in the evolution of FID (Rawson 2004, 228-229), and secondly by the author's conscious choice to adopt this narrative technique in this particular work for the first time. The first version of *Pride and Prejudice*, in fact, seems to have been written in letter form, but was consequently rewritten following Austen's choice to move away from epistolary form (ibid.). In line with this, Kelly (1997, 160-161) points out that, after experimenting with first-person epistolary form in the 1790s, Austen shifted to third-person narration with restricted FID, that is, "the narrator's representation of the protagonist's inward speech and thought". As a matter of fact, Jane Austen finished writing *First Impressions* in 1797 and started revising it into *Pride and Prejudice* in 1811. The aim of such stylistic choices was to limit narrative authority and make the reader feel closer to the protagonist so that he may be more emotionally involved (Kelly 1997, 161). In *Emma* (1815), Austen's style likewise appears to have evolved from an initial stage and also to have moved a little further, though it still seems to be in the process of experimentation as the greater detachment from narrative authority observed in *Emma* does not yet appear to have reached the mature writing style observed in *Persuasion* (1817) (Burrows 1997, 170-188). Therefore, it can be said that *Pride and Prejudice* and *Emma* belong to a middle stage of Austen's writing choices, and this is confirmed by the fact that they are often mentioned together because they share several narrative aspects.

These two novels' closeness in terms of narrative choices and their distance from Austen's most mature work, *Persuasion* (Johnson 2004, 143-

166), may be attested, for instance, by a comparison of their protagonists (Bloom 2004, 1-9, Tave 2004, 11-33). Another aspect that *Emma* and *Pride and Prejudice* share, which they also share with Austen's other novels but not with *Persuasion*, is the fact that they are divided into three parts following the three-act structure of a stage comedy, and the three parts of *Emma* correspond to a process of self-discovery in three successive stages (Litz 2004). On the other hand, *Persuasion* was deliberately divided into two parts only, and Litz (2004, 42) observes that "much of the apparent unevenness or "dullness" of the novel is explained by this artistic decision". This was one among other conscious choices showing that the transitional stage of Austen's style had ended and a more mature phase had started.

As previously mentioned, though still belonging to the transitional stage, *Emma* seems to have resulted from a more experienced use of style. This is evident, for example, from the fact that the narrator's authority is reduced, albeit not as much as in *Persuasion*. In the latter, as Brown (2004, 64) explains, "the narrator no longer cares what the reader thinks" as the narrator's authority is almost completely left in the hands of the protagonist. The same author observes that, while it is true that in *Emma* many events are seen from the protagonist's point of view, "the central intelligence lies somewhere between the narrator and the reader, who together see that Emma sees wrongly". This means that, even though the narrative style observed in *Emma* has not reached the mature stage observed in *Persuasion* yet, it seems to be moving closer to it given its reduction in narrative authority.

In conclusion, *Pride and Prejudice* may well represent Austen's initial exploitation of FID, while *Emma* seems to exhibit a more extensive and progressed use of this style. Hence, a greater degree of accuracy may be expected from an analysis of the former novel because of the restricted amount of text in FID.

## Stylistics and Corpora

The studies that were mainly referred to in the process of identifying FID in *Pride and Prejudice* are both corpus and non-corpus-based. Several scholars have pointed out the advantages of using corpora. Corpus linguistics and critical linguistics have developed greatly (Widdowson 2000, 6), and corpora have shown to provide knowledge with regard to language that is more accurate than native speakers' intuition (Hunston, 2002, 20). Mahlberg (2012, 78) notes that corpus-based studies have shown that key words can be used to compare the speech of different characters in a play (Culpeper, 2001), and that key words and key semantic domains can be useful to study characters in a screenplay (McIntyre 2010).

Jeffries and McIntyre (2010, 182) highlight that it is possible to use software like the WordSmith Tools software package (Scott 2004), which was used by Mahlberg (2007) in her analysis of Dickens' *Great Expectations* to carry out her investigation on repeated patterns of words. Mahlberg (2012, 77-95) found that clusters and suspensions can provide character information. Clusters are word sequences, whose frequent use suggests that they may be connected with certain functions within the text, while suspensions are "five or more words of (narrator) text" that interrupt quoted speech, thought or writing (ibid., 78, 80). Clusters and suspensions seem to be especially valuable for studying body language in literature. For instance, Mahlberg (2012, 92) observes that, besides being influenced by textual cues, readers' impression of body language is also influenced by their knowledge of body language in real life, which may be thought of as different from that of the character simply because of the way it is described. The study of literary texts by means of corpus stylistics may thus yield promising results in psycholinguistics as it may foreground patterns or portions of text that reveal information about body language and, consequently, about characters (ibid.).

Some limitations in connection with the use of corpora have nevertheless also been mentioned. One has to do with the texts and the way language is presented. In fact, it must be acknowledged that the examples found in corpora are decontextualized, one reason being that paralinguistic information, such as intonation or body language, will never be represented thoroughly (Hunston, 2002, 23). Even when speech is transcribed word for word, there is a loss, be it false starts, pauses, repetitions, gestures, elements of prosody or voice quality (Amador-Moreno 2010, 531, Toolan 1992, 31). The examples in a corpus are also decontextualized as the structure of the original text is lost given that it shows concordance lines (Hunston, 2002, 23). This can be advantageous in that, as stated above, the way textual patterns are organized and presented may actually foreground information that is not readily apparent while reading the text (Mahlberg 2012, 92). Yet, being decontextualized, the texts in corpora do not completely correspond to language as it is used in real life (Widdowson 2000, 4-5). The use of smaller corpora with detailed contextual information has therefore been suggested as a way to overcome this limitation (Thornbury 2010, 276). At the same time, Leech and Short (2007, 206-230), among others (Amador-Moreno 2010, Hughes, 1996, Simpson 2004), point out the need to take into account the fact that narrative discourse differs from typical conversations.

Another limitation of corpus stylistics is related to the type of information that can be obtained from corpora. To begin with, it has been drawn attention to the fact that corpora can only be used to discuss the inner

life of characters as far as it is connected with quantifiable features (Mahlberg 2012, 81). What is more, corpora cannot account for the significance of certain features with respect to the style of a given author, or the presence of metaphoric and idiomatic expressions, which may not be signalled or may not appear among the frequently used words (Amador-Moreno 2010, 541). Different spellings used to represent certain dialects may not be detected either (*ibid.*). Furthermore, corpora may allow researchers to gather data on features like linking expressions or discourse markers, but they cannot provide information pertaining to how the different parts of a text are semantically connected (Thornbury 2010, 275), and they cannot account for the significance of textual features in the reading process (Mahlberg 2012, 77). Corpora can only provide examples, which need to be interpreted by the researcher (Hunston, 2002, Amador-Moreno 2010, Stubbs 2006, Baker, 2007). Hence, data retrieved by means of corpora may be useful to complement discourse analysis, but it would still require an interpretation (Thornbury 2010, 276). Lastly, because a corpus represents just a sample of the language contained in it, it will only produce evidence true for itself, and any conclusions that are drawn from it can only be considered suppositions (Hunston, 2002, 23).

What can be done by means of corpora alone, then, should not be considered exhaustive (*ibid.*, 3). In this regard, it has been noted that the enthusiasm connected with the use of corpora may cause researchers to interpret results as more important than they actually are and that, when it comes to analyses of fiction, reading the text is an essential step and it should not be replaced with corpus stylistics approaches (Mahlberg 2012, 77, 88). It should also be borne in mind that people's knowledge and beliefs are produced by means of discourse and are shaped by the culture of their society (Carter and Simpson, 1989, 15, see Foucault 1972). Accordingly, linguistic description models will always be partial given that any effort to objectively describe data will inevitably end up being an interpretation. (Carter and Simpson, 1989, 5-6, see Culler, 1981). In effect, as far as stylistics is concerned, Leech and Short (2007, 3) reason that, because it is "the study of the relation between linguistic form and literary function", much of it can only be discerned by means of the reader's intuition and personal judgment.

Leech and Short (2007, 35-36) provide several reasons why measuring style in terms of higher and lower frequencies of occurrences that deviate from the norm is almost impossible. To start with, the researcher would need to determine the norm, which in most cases will not result from an objective judgment. Moreover, in order to do that, one would need to collect a complete corpus of the language used in the time during which the author



lived, that is, every imaginable type of written and spoken language, be it formal or informal, including private conversations and notes. Needless to say, such a thing would be inconceivable. It would also be impossible to make a complete list of all the linguistic features that may be found in a text. In fact, the researcher would need to determine an exhaustive description of the language in which the text was written but, as Leech and Short argue, such descriptions have never existed because of the intrinsic complexity of languages and the interminable amount of time it would take to create them.

Even so, Jeffries and McIntyre (2010, 182) highlight that corpus linguistics provides frequency information and allows researchers to conduct detailed analyses of complete texts, providing a solution to the problems identified by Leech and Short (1981) concerning the impossibility of carrying out such analyses given the long amounts of time they would require and the risk of human error. In like manner, Leech and Short (2007, 38) also recognize that the use of numerical data cannot be completely ignored since it may constitute the only means available to support any observations that could be made on the style of a given author.

In view of the above, Geoffrey Leech and Mick Short's (2007[1981]) model, based on examples selected through a careful reading of texts, constituted the main reference work for guidelines in this discussion. As outlined in their introduction, this model was developed according to criteria that are in perfect harmony with the aim of the present analysis (Leech and Short, 2007, 5). First of all, it is restricted to fictional prose. Additionally, Leech and Short use as examples extracts from works written between the eighteenth and the twentieth century, and Jane Austen's use of FID is illustrated as well. The Leech and Short model also focuses on the practical aspects of style such as the effects on the reader.

Elena Semino and Mick Short's (2004) study also provided useful guidelines given its important contributions as a corpus-based test of Leech and Short's model. Semino and Short used the categories identified by Leech and Short to create a corpus of both fiction and non-fiction texts that were annotated manually (Jeffries and McIntyre, 2010, 182). Given that the data found by Semino and Short did not always support Leech and Short's model, a few changes were made (*ibid.*). Semino and Short were able to identify the most common categories, consequently discerning with greater certainty what constitutes the norm, as well as deviations, for speech and thought presentation (*ibid.*). As pointed out by Jeffries and McIntyre (2010, 88), in addition to the category "narrative report of speech act" (NRSA), which does not report speech but the speech act that was used (e.g. "he agreed"), Semino and Short (2004) identified the category "narrative report of voice" (NV), which only informs the reader that speech has occurred. For

example, “he agreed” would be labelled NRSA and “he spoke” would be labelled NV (Jeffries and McIntyre 2010, 88). However, Jeffries and McIntyre observe that such minimal reports are not used extensively in narrative texts.

The different forms of speech and thought presentation available to authors and discourse in fiction are discussed next (Chapters 1 and 2). Subsequently, Grice’s CP and his notion of implicatures (on which several accounts of irony are based) are introduced (Chapter 3). Then, irony is briefly defined (Chapter 4), and the two approaches that are used to account for irony in this discussion—Attardo’s and Brown and Levinson’s—are dealt with in more detail (Chapters 5 and 6). Afterwards, the analysis of “implied” irony in *Pride and Prejudice* is presented (Chapters 7-9).

# **I**

## **DISCOURSE IN FICTION AND IRONY**



# CHAPTER 1

## SPEECH AND THOUGHT PRESENTATION

In this chapter, the different ways of reporting speech and thought are defined in order to clarify what is meant by free indirect discourse (FID).

### Speech

The statements below, taken from chapter eight of *Pride and Prejudice*, are examples of direct (DS) and indirect speech (IS). Elizabeth is at Bingley's house and, after spending some time with her sister Jane, who is in bed with fever, joins the others in the drawing room.

[Elizabeth] making her sister the excuse, [a] said she would amuse herself for the short time she could stay below with a book. Mr Hurst looked at her with astonishment. [b] 'Do you prefer reading to cards?' said he; 'that is rather singular'. (Chap. 8, 33-34)

The first basic difference between IS and DS, as illustrated in *a* and *b*, is that the former reports what was said, while the latter reports the words exactly as they were uttered by the original speaker. The second easily discernible difference is that in DS the reported speech is enclosed within quotation marks, whereas in IS the quotation marks are removed and the portion of reported speech becomes dependent on the reporting verb. Another feature that distinguishes IS from DS is that in IS the reported statement is often introduced by the subordinating conjunction "that". For instance, "that" could be added in *a* in the following way:

- [Elizabeth] making her sister the excuse, [a] said [that] she would amuse herself, for the short time she could stay below, with a book.

Thus, another characteristic of IS is that it is syntactically subordinated (Fludernik, 2009, 66). Furthermore, the tense undergoes "backshift" (Leech and Short, 2007, 256). In other words, if the tense used by the speaker is the present simple, the past simple is used when reporting what was said, while the past perfect is used in place of the past simple or the present perfect, the

past perfect continuous in place of the past continuous or the present perfect continuous, and “would” in place of “will”. Adjectives/pronouns referring either to the first person singular (e.g. “I”, “me”, “mine”) or to the first person plural (e.g. “we”, “our”, “ourselves”) are changed to the corresponding third person, either singular or plural. The changes discussed above can be seen in the following transformation of *a* into DS:

- [Elizabeth] making her sister the excuse, [a] said [that] she would amuse herself, for the short time she could stay below, with a book.
- [Elizabeth] making her sister the excuse, [a] said [: “I will] amuse [my]self, for the short time [I can] stay below, with a book[”].

Near deictic expressions, such as “tomorrow” or “this week”, are changed to far deictic expressions (i.e. “the following day”, “that week”). Yet, some extralinguistic referents (e.g. “here”, “tomorrow”) do not change when the time and place in which the statement was uttered by the original speaker coincide with the time and place of the situation in which the statement is reported (Leech and Short, 2007, 256). In addition, “if”, “whether”, “what” and “why” are used to report questions, while “to” is used to introduce an order. The transformation of the question in *b* into IS is shown below:

- Mr Hurst looked at her with astonishment. [b] “Do you prefer reading to cards?”
- Mr Hurst looked at her with astonishment. [b] [He asked her if/whether she preferred] reading to cards[.]

In IS, what is stated is faithful to the original statement, but it is reported with changes in the syntactic and lexical structure, which, instead, is preserved faithfully in DS. The person who reports a statement uttered by someone else acts as an interpreter between his interlocutor and the words of the original speaker (Leech and Short, 2007, 256-257).

Free direct speech (FDS) is more direct than DS (ibid., 258). In chapter six of *Pride and Prejudice*, Darcy and Sir William are engaged in the following conversation:

Sir William thus began.

‘What a charming amusement for young people this is, Mr Darcy! – There is nothing like dancing after all. – I consider it as one of the first refinements of polished societies.’