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THE PRAGMATIC PARADIGM IN LITERARY STUDIES: THEORETICAL ASPECTS AND NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO STUDY LITERARY TEXTS

Abstract. The article explores the fundamental aspects of the pragmatic theory of literature and its applicability in analyzing contemporary literary texts. In the context of shifting paradigms in literary theory, there is a growing need to reconsider classical approaches and introduce interdisciplinary methods. Pragmatic literary theory, which emerged in the early 21st century, addresses this need by focusing on the communicative aspects of literature and the dynamic interaction between author, text, and reader. The study presents a methodological model for the pragmatic analysis of literary works, emphasizing the integration of literary pragmatics, narratology, and reader-response theory. This approach enables the identification of multilayered communicative relations and latent meanings within texts. The practical application of the model is demonstrated through analysis of selected contemporary Kazakh literary works, revealing how pragmatic strategies influence textual interpretation. The research concludes that the pragmatic paradigm enriches literary analysis and contributes to a deeper understanding of author-reader interaction in modern literature.

Keywords: pragmatic literary theory, interpretation of literary text, authorial intention, reader reception, pragmatic analysis

Introduction

In the 21st century, the science of literary studies is developing based on new perspectives and interdisciplinary methods. Within this framework, pragmatic theory has

become one of the key tools for interpreting contemporary literary processes and artistic texts. This theory aims to study literary texts not only from an aesthetic or structural perspective but also in terms of their communicative, social, and cultural functions.

The pragmatic aspects of a literary text – such as the relationship between author and reader, the intention conveyed through the text, its influence, and the reader's response – are becoming central subjects in modern literary studies. The relevance of this research topic is also supported by the active development of the pragmatic approach in contemporary philological science.

Pragmatics is not a temporary academic interest but a stable phenomenon arising from the inherent need to study language and communication. This approach plays a significant role in examining human interactions and the processes by which people comprehend the world through language (Al-Hindawi, Saffah, 2019a, p. 394–408).

The main advantage of pragmatic literary theory lies in its broad applicability in practice. It allows to deeper understand the linguistic structure and communicative functions of artistic texts and opens new pathways to analyze the dialogue between author and reader. Since the second half of the 20th century, pragmatics has emerged as a branch of linguistics and later became one of the leading approaches in literary studies and textology, laying the foundation for viewing literary texts as tools of communication.

Considering literary texts from a pragmatic perspective has contributed to the development of new methods of analysis and offers mechanisms for conveying information to the reader more effectively. Moreover, pragmatic theory has the potential to evolve into an independent branch within literary studies. These factors emphasize the need for a comprehensive and in-depth exploration of the pragmatic approach. This study aims to define the key elements of pragmatic literary theory and explore its potential for analyzing postmodern works in contemporary Kazakh literature. To accomplish this goal, the following objectives were outlined: to investigate the theoretical foundations, key concepts, and branches of literary pragmatics; to examine the contributions of scholars in this field; to evaluate the applicability of literary pragmatics to modern Kazakh texts; and to outline its future prospects within literary studies.

The article contributes to the theoretical development of literary scholarship by introducing a fresh perspective on the interpretation and communicative function of literary texts. Furthermore, by analyzing the pragmatic features of works in Kazakh literature, it seeks to address significant issues in the field and offer practical tools for understanding current literary dynamics.

The pragmatic approach is grounded in both philosophical and linguistic origins. Pragmatist philosophy was first systematized in the works of C.S. Peirce and later developed by W. James and J. Dewey (2000). According to Peirce (2000), pragmatism is a philosophical approach that determines the meaning of thought through its practical consequences. In other words, the meaning of any proposition is revealed through its potential applications and effects in practice. In linguistics, J.L. Austin's (1962) speech act theory and J.R. Searle's (1969) classification of speech acts emphasized language as a form of action. H.P. Grice (1975) introduced the cooperative principle, emphasizing the role of implicature and communicative intentions, which guide how speakers shape their utterances to achieve effective and meaningful interaction. D. Sperber and D. Wilson's (2004) relevance theory centers on aligning authorial intention with reader interpretation.

Interdisciplinary integration subsequently facilitated the incorporation of pragmatics into literary theory. R. Chartier (2006) conceptualized literature as a communicative act, focusing on the processes of reception and interpretation.

Although the issues of authorial intention and pragmatic orientation in literary texts have not yet been fully systematized in Kazakh literary studies, related research has been reflected through analyses of the stylistic and communicative functions of linguistic units in the works of R. Syzdyk, et al. (2024a). Within the Kazakh academic community, the contributions of Z. Temirgazina in pragmalinguistics (2010) and D. Alkebaeva (2018) in pragmastylistics and functional pragmatics significantly deepen these issues and provide a theoretical basis for pragmatic interpretation of literary texts.

Materials and methods

The object of this study is T. Asemkulov's short story "Bektory's Treasure" (2018) written in the postmodernist tradition. This literary text serves as an effective model for analysis within the framework of pragmatic literary theory, as it consistently employs indirect communication between the author and the reader, symbolic structures, and expressive linguistic devices. The presence of pragmatic intentions and mechanisms of influence directed at the addressee within the narrative provides a solid foundation for its scholarly examination.

A range of methods was employed in the course of this research. The theoretical-analytical method was used to systematize the key principles, conceptual foundations, and scholarly aspects of pragmatic literary theory, as well as to analyze relevant academic works. The pragmatic analysis method aimed to identify the author's intention, pragmatic addressivity, speech acts, implicit meanings, and mechanisms of influence on the reader within the literary text. The structural method served to examine the narrative style and the structural-functional organization of pragmatic units in the text. Inally, the content analysis method was applied to systematically assess pragmatic elements and culturally embedded cognitive meanings in the literary work.

Results and discussion

Pragmatics in literature is an approach that views how a text influences the reader and examines the semantic relationship between the author and the recipient. The pragmatic method considers the literary text as a meaningful structure organized by the author with a specific purpose, designed to evoke a particular reaction in the reader's mind. In the current age of contextuality, the pragmatic approach allows for a completely new perspective on their interaction. Its primary goal is to identify the author's presence through alternative methods. This literary theory is based on the reader's freedom to interpret and critically dissect the literary work. Advocates of this method promote the idea of the "death of the author," emphasizing the need to free the reader from the constraints of authorial intent. In doing so, the "new theory" rejects aesthetic unity and places reader autonomy and subjectivity at the forefront (Qi & Chen, 2025, p. 172).

Based on the analysis of scholarly works (Turysheva, 2015; Konkin & Kotenko, 2022), it can be concluded that the pragmatic approach in literary studies consists of several branches: the phenomenology of reading, the indirect impact of artistic communication, the history of literary reception, and the pragmatic theory of narration. To facilitate the understanding of the main concepts and features of these directions, we present them in the table below (Table 1).

Table 1. The main conclusions of the branches of literary pragmati

The main idea	Object of study	Authors and main works	Contribution to literary pragmatics
Educational phenomenology			
Text is a system that generates meaning. The reader is an active subject who makes sense	Relationship between the reader and the text	R. Barthes "The Rhetorical of image: Semiotika: Poetika" (1989), H.-G. Gadamer "Language and Understanding" (1991), U. Eco "The Missing Structure" (2006), W. Iser "Der Leservorgang" (Rezeptionsästhetik: Theory und Praxis, 1993), P. Ricoeur "The Method of Hermeneutics of Social Science" (1995) and others.	The consideration of the reader as a creator of meaning was the basis for the formation of receptive aesthetics. Introduced the concepts of "implicit reader", "act of perception", "reflection"
Indirect influence of artistic communication			
Literature can influence human activity, values	Reader's model of behavior, life experience	Yu. Lotman "The Poetics of Everyday Behavior in Russian Culture of the XVIII century" (1992), S. Greenblatt "The Formation of the "Self" in the Renaissance: from Moore to Shakespeare" (1999) and others.	The literary text was considered as a tool that presents patterns of behavior, influencing action
History of artistic perception			
The perception of literature depends on the historical and social context	Types of historical perception of the reader	H.-R. Yauss "Aesthetic Experience and Literary Hermeneutics" (1995), W. Iser "Changing the Functions of Literature" (2004), "The Educational Process: Phenomenological Method" (2004), etc.	Divided the history of perception into stages (associative, sympathetic, ironic, etc.). Defined the role of the public context
Pragmatic theory of narrative			
Narrative is a communicative act that creates meaning, not the structure of the text	Relationship between author, narrator, reader	M. Bakhtin "Author and Hero" (1994), W. Iser "Der Leservorgang" (Rezeptionsästhetik: Theorie und Praxis, 1993), etc	The implicit author, the narrator, proposed the narrator system. He combined the theory of narratology and receptive aesthetics

In contemporary literary studies, these approaches continue to be enriched with new interpretative perspectives. Based on the pragmatic directions systematized in the table and current scholarly views, selected literary excerpts from T. Asemkulov's "Bektory's Treasure" (2018) are examined.

The ideas of "the phenomenology of reading" have provided a scientific foundation for key concepts in contemporary literary pragmatics, such as the reader mode, the act of reception, and the dialogue between text and experience. In modern literary studies, scholars have continued to develop this approach from new perspectives. Thus, reading phenomenology is understood as an important direction in literary scholarship that integrates the cognitive, existential, and pragmatic dimensions of perceiving literary texts, and treats the reader as an active constructor of meaning (Hinton, 2023; Zaccari, et al., 2024).

From this perspective, the following dialogue in "Bektory's Treasure" draws particular attention: the brief yet profound exchange between Kaiyrboldy and the mysterious girl – "I trust you too, Kaiyrboldy" – "How do you know my name?" – "It's a secret…" (Asemkulov, 2018) – serves as a pragmatic element that establishes a personal connection between the reader and the text. Such moments encourage the reader to derive meaning based on their own experience, intuition, and emotional state. Concepts like "enigmatic resonance" and "trust" are perceived on an existential level, intensifying the dialogue between the reader and the text. This phenomenon forms a foundation for interpretation within the framework of reader phenomenology.

The second branch of literary pragmatics, "the indirect influence of literary communication," has been supported by a number of studies on behavioral theory in literature (Wright & Snezhina, 2022). Researchers argue that a literary text can influence real-life behavior through its interaction with the reader, offering reflected models of behavior. That is, readers often apply the ideas expressed in literary works to their own experiences, leading to changes in their beliefs and actions (Zihan & Parkinson, 2021).

Within this framework, the following scene in the work deserves attention: Kaiyrboldy promptly acts to save an unknown child who has suffered a serious accident, delegating the organization of necessary assistance (Asemkulov, 2018). This episode reflects the character's moral stance and likely evokes in the reader, without direct persuasion, reflections on kindness, compassion, and the responsible use of material resources. Such moments are regarded as powerful manifestations of indirect influence in literary texts, as they encourage the reader toward reflection rather than immediate action.

The next branch of literary pragmatics, "the history of literary reception," is grounded in the crucial role of specific socio-historical contexts. In conveying a nation's historical memory and cultural-spiritual identity, the writer's choice of words, methods of presenting historical facts, and pragmatic strategies in using linguistic units become key indicators. In this regard, contemporary philologists view the pragmatic analysis of literary texts as an effective means of uncovering the author's cultural and cognitive worldview (Saira, et al., 2023). Furthermore, when examining text pragmatics and author pragmatics, it is essential to consider the issue of "background knowledge," as the linguistic communication between the text producer and recipient is directly linked to their shared foundational knowledge (Iskakova, et al., 2024b, p. 44). This thereby forms an essential element of pragmatic understanding.

The following episode in the text offers an opportunity for a pragmatic interpretation of the artistic representation of historical and cultural memory. The story vividly depicts how characters from the childhood tale "Er Tostik," particularly the figure of Bektory,

have deeply ingrained themselves in the child's consciousness. The grandmother's frequent recounting of folkloric legends and archetypal images influences the child's intuition, permeating the realms of dreams and imagination (Asemkulov, 2018). Through this episode, the author revitalizes national historical memory and cultural archetypes within the literary text, thereby enhancing its pragmatic potential in resonance with the reader's folkloric background knowledge. Consequently, this approach is regarded as a significant pragmatic structure within the history of literary reception.

"Narrative pragmatics" is another major subfield of literary pragmatics. Current studies focus on narrative structures and reader categories, aiming to explore narration as a communicative act that generates meaning (Al-Hindawi & Saffah, 2019b). The intersection of narratology and reception aesthetics has significantly contributed to the formation of literary pragmatics. Narrative pragmatics thus encompasses not only structural elements, but also the processes of reception within a historical and cultural context, offering a comprehensive understanding of the pragmatic function of literary works (Ormerod, 2020).

Building upon these theoretical principles, the following excerpt opens the way to explore the pragmatic potentials of narrative structure. In Bektory's Treasure, the narrative technique complicates the reader's perception process. Although the main events initially revolve around the character Kaiyrboldy, by the end the reader discovers that the entire narration is actually a dream of Sagyndyk (Asemkulov, 2018). This structural shift serves as a pragmatic device that prompts a renewed understanding of the text's meaning.

The author's deliberate use of this narrative misdirection compels the reader to revisit the text and reconstruct their interpretation. Thus, narration functions not merely as a means of conveying content but as a complex pragmatic mechanism of influence on the reader. This element significantly enlivens the multilayered interpretive structure of the literary work and deepens the interaction between the text and its audience.

There are two key directions in applying the pragmatic method in literary studies:

1. Investigating the role of a literary work in the reader's consciousness and life experience. This approach focuses on how the reader applies the experiences gained from interpreting the text to real-life situations.

2. Studying how the mechanism for engaging the reader is encoded in the text's structure from the outset. Here, the pragmatic method reveals how artistic organization shapes the text's intentional orientation and how it affects the reader.

Thus, the common foundation of both research paths is the exploration of the communicative orientation of the literary text, which allows them to be considered as complementary and integrated directions of study.

To illustrate and support this view, we offer an analysis of Asemkulov's short story "Bektory's Treasure" through the lens of pragmatic literary theory:

1. Pragmatic Act and Addressivity

In the story, both the authorial narration and the characters' speech are often directed explicitly at an addressee. As M. Bakhtin noted, this reveals the inner pragmatic nature of the narrative act. For example, Bektory speaks to Qaiyrboldy, yet his words seem to address not only the character but also the reader:

"From the moment you stepped over this threshold, you ceased to exist in this world... we are now sitting inside your subconscious" (Asemkulov, 2018).

In this passage, the use of the second-person form directly activates the mechanism of addressivity (speaking directly to the reader). Such speech tightens the relationship between the text and the reader, drawing the reader into the internal space of the narrative.

Moreover, the discourse structure of the story clearly demonstrates the author's appeal to an "implicit reader" – that is, the text presumes a reader with a certain cultural and intellectual background.

2. The Pragmatic Load of Symbol and Metaphor

Bektory's "collection of hearts" functions as a symbolic structure within the literary text. This image holds not only metaphorical but also pragmatic and philosophical significance. Each heart encodes a different fate, a different emotional world. Through this, the author attempts to establish a personal connection with the reader's own lived experience:

"Jars holding hearts on the shelves. Suspended in liquid… one is pink, another violet, and one is jet black…" (Asemkulov, 2018).

By using color, the author evokes an emotional response in the reader, activating internal reflection. This illustrates one of the key principles of literary pragmatics: the meaning of a text lies not solely in what the author says, but in how the reader perceives and constructs meaning from it.

3. Reception Pragmatics and Reader Experience

The literary text is deliberately structured to engage the reader actively in the interpretive process. The reader interprets each scene through their own cultural and philosophical experience. For instance:

"A glass door close to the left wall. The room is empty. Not a single piece of furniture. Only – a profound silence" (Asemkulov, 2018).

Though this appears to be a simple description at first glance, it offers a wide field for interpretation from a pragmatic standpoint. The phrase "profound silence" stimulates an emotional state in the reader, which may be interpreted as mystical quietude, loneliness, or even a metaphor for death. Such pragmatic fluctuation demonstrates the multilayered nature of the literary text.

4. Intertextuality and Cultural Codes

The image of Bektory represents a convergence of mythological consciousness, archetypal structures, and modern philosophy – a phenomenon of pragmatic intertextuality. Drawing on archetypal knowledge, the author activates the reader's cultural codes. For example:

"Bektory was once a living man. But, unable to find his place in life, disillusioned with all existence… he retreated, entering his inner world…" (Asemkulov, 2018).

This portrayal presents Bektory as a metaphysical wanderer of contemporary culture. Pragmatically, the image resonates with the reader's awareness of spiritual crisis in modern society.

5. The Pragmatics of Time and Space In the story, space and time appear not as realistic constructs, but as hyperrealistic elements. This artistic device disrupts the reader's conventional boundaries of perception:

"This room stretches and dissolves into hyperspace – that is, into infinity" (Asemkulov, 2018).

From a pragmatic perspective, this sentence does not merely describe physical space – it guides the reader into a realm of thought beyond real time and space. Thus, such a narrative technique invites the reader toward reflection, philosophical reasoning, and abstract interpretation.

6. Dialogue and Inner Monologue as semantic-pragmatic structures Qaiyrboldy's inner turmoil and his dialogue with Bektory form a structure that generates internal

pragmatic meaning. His inner speech, questions, and oscillation between belief and doubt evoke parallel emotional and cognitive responses in the reader:

"...Am I dead? Or am I still alive? Is this a dream? Or is it real?" (Asemkulov, 2018).

This is an example of pragmatic interaction within a literary text – the reader experiences the character's internal crisis through their own consciousness.

Applying the literary pragmatic method to a literary text is an effective way to co-create meaning in collaboration with the reader. This highlights the practical value of the pragmatic approach. Such analytical methods provide new perspectives for studying contemporary Kazakh literature.

At the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries, shifts in scholarly and humanistic thinking have redefined the status of literature and philological sciences, increasingly shaped by trends of global integration. This process will undoubtedly remain a relevant direction for development in the context of globalization. Furthermore, the best principles of world literature are being adapted into Kazakh literature with consideration for national characteristics (Matayeva, et al., 2025, p. 639–653).

Conclusion

The widespread application of pragmatic aspects is considered one of the promising directions in literary studies, as it opens new possibilities for interaction between the author and the reader and expands the mechanisms of literary text reception. The research undertaken has effectively highlighted the theoretical relevance and practical utility of the pragmatic approach within modern literary analysis.

The study revealed that fundamental principles of pragmatic literary theory – such as interpreting the literary text as a form of communication, recognizing the interactive dynamic between the author and the reader, and analyzing the underlying cultural codes and implied meanings – offer valuable insights into the multilayered structure of literary works.

Based on the analysis of scholarly literature, the following key aspects of pragmatic literary theory were identified:

– literary pragmatics treats the text not as a static structure but as a meaning-generating action;

– meaning is shaped not only by content and structure but also by the reader's cognitive and cultural context;

– pragmatic analysis provides tools for uncovering complex phenomena in literary texts, such as polysemy and indirect speech;

– the pragmatic approach is increasingly used as an interdisciplinary method in interpreting and teaching literature.

While the full potential of this approach has yet to be fully explored within Kazakh literary studies, recent methodological developments – building on earlier scholarly groundwork – suggest that the pragmatic paradigm is gradually gaining recognition and legitimacy in this field. The conducted research offered a pragmatic interpretation of Talasbek Asemkulov's short story "Bektory's Treasure." This examination focused on the narrative structure, speech acts, the implicit representations of both author and reader, as well as the cultural and semantic frameworks embedded in the text, all through a pragmatic lens.

The theoretical and applied value of the pragmatic method lies in its capacity to reveal the complex, layered meanings of literary works. It also proves to be a powerful

tool for literary education when approached through a culturally and communicatively informed framework. These advantages allow us to anticipate that the pragmatic method will contribute to expanding interpretive strategies in the future analysis of Kazakh literature.

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ӘДЕБИЕТТАНУДАҒЫ ПРАГМАТИКАЛЫҚ ПАРАДИГМА: ТЕОРИЯЛЫҚ АСПЕКТІЛЕР МЕН КӨРКЕМ МӘТІНДІ ЗЕРТТЕУДІҢ ЖАҢА МҮМКІНДІКТЕРІ

Аңдатпа. Зерттеудің мақсаты – прагматикалық әдебиет теориясының негізгі аспектілерін анықтау және оның қазіргі көркем шығармаларды зерттеудегі қолдану мүмкіндіктерін айқындау. Әдебиеттану ғылымындағы дәстүрлі теориялық ұстанымдардың трансформациялануы жағдайында жаңа интерпретациялық үлгілерді жасау қажеттілігі алға шығады. Осы тұрғыдан алғанда XXI ғасырдың басында қалыптасқан прагматикалық әдебиет теориясы әдебиетті зерттеудің жаңа әдістемелік негіздерін қарастыру қажеттілігінен туындап отыр. Зерттеудің ғылыми жаңалығы – көркем мәтінді прагматикалық тұрғыдан талдаудың жаңаша әдіснамалық үлгісі ұсынылып, қазіргі қазақ әдебиетінде прагматикалық парадигманың қолданылу мүмкіндіктері нақты мысал негізінде қарастырылады. Әдеби прагматика, нарратология және рецептивтік эстетика теориялары тоғыстырылып, автор мен оқырман арасындағы көпдеңгейлі коммуникативтік қатынастарды саралауға

негізделген интердисциплинарлық әдіс ұсынылды. Сонымен қатар прагматикалық теорияның басты қағидаттары, әдіснамалық негіздері және оны әдебиеттану зерттеулерінде қолдану мүмкіндіктері жан-жақты қарастырылған. Нәтижесінде қазіргі көркем мәтіннің прагматикалық қырлары коммуникация ерекшеліктерін көрсетіп, автор мен оқырман арасындағы өзара әрекеттестіктің жаңа үлгілерін қалыптастыратыны дәлелденді. Бұл бағыт қазіргі әдебиеттің өзгермелі құрылымын терең түсінуге, жаңа интерпретациялық модельдерді дамытуға және әдеби шығарма мен оқырман арасындағы байланысты нығайтуға мүмкіндік береді.

Түйінді сөздер: прагматикалық әдебиет теориясы, көркем мәтін интерпретациясы, автор интенциясы, оқырман қабылдауы, прагматикалық талдау.

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ПРАГМАТИЧЕСКАЯ ПАРАДИГМА В ЛИТЕРАТУРОВЕДЕНИИ: ТЕОРЕТИЧЕСКИЕ АСПЕКТЫ И НОВЫЕ ВОЗМОЖНОСТИ ИЗУЧЕНИЯ ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННОГО ТЕКСТА

Аннотация. Целью данного исследования является изучение ключевых аспектов прагматической теории литературы и определение возможностей её применения в анализе современных художественных текстов. В условиях трансформации традиционных теоретических подходов в литературоведении всё более актуальной становится задача разработки новых интерпретационных моделей и подходов к анализу текста. В этом контексте прагматическая теория литературы, сформировавшаяся в начале XXI века, отражает необходимость переосмысления методологических основ изучения художественного текста и взаимодействия автора и читателя. Научная новизна исследования заключается в разработке новой методологической модели анализа текста с прагматической позиции и её апробации на материале современной казахской литературы. Интеграция принципов прагматики, нарратологии и рецептивной эстетики позволяет исследовать многоуровневые коммуникативные связи между автором и читателем и выявить новые механизмы смыслопорождения. Кроме того, подробно раскрываются основные принципы прагматической теории, её методологические основания и прикладной потенциал для современного литературоведения. Установлено, что прагматический подход способствует более глубокому пониманию художественных текстов, расширению интерпретационных стратегий и укреплению продуктивного взаимодействия между произведением и читательской аудиторией в условиях современных литературных процессов.

Ключевые слова: прагматическая теория литературы, интерпретация художественного текста, авторское намерение, восприятие читателя, прагматический анализ.