"A pragmatic analysis of adverbial clauses in Paula Hawkins' *The girl on the train* **"**

التحليل التداولي للجمل الظرفية في رواية " الفتاة في ألقطار " لباولا هوكينز

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"A pragmatic analysis of adverbial clauses in Paula Hawkins' *The girl on the train* "

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المستلخص

تتناول هذه الدراسة الوظائف التداولية للجمل الظرفية في رواية The Girl on the Train. وبما أنّ الرواية تتسم بدرجة عالية من التعقيد ألنفسي فإنّها تمثّل مادة خصبة لتحليل دور الجمل الظرفية في بناء المعنى داخل النص الأدبي. وتعتمد الدراسة على الإطارين التحليليين اللذين قدّمهما ليتش (1983)، وهما : التداولية بوصفها حلًّا للمشكلات وذلك بغرض دراسة عشرة أنواع من الجمل ألظرفية مثل جمل ألزمن والسبب والشرط والتناقض والعرض والمكان ، والنتيجة ، والمقارن وغيرها. وقد اعتمدت الدراسة المنهج الكيفي من خلال تحليل مقاطع مختارة من الرواية للكشف عن كيفية إسهام الجمل الظرفية في التعبير عن مقاصد ألمتكلمين وحالاتهم ألنفسية وتماسك الخطاب. وقد أظهرت النتائج أنّ هذه الجمل لا تقتصر على أداء وظيفة نحويه بل تؤدي دورًا فاعلًا في نقل العمق النفسي للشخصيات وإبراز الغموض السردي. كما أنّها كثيرًا ما تُستَخدم كوسيلة غير مباشرة للتعبير عن الندم أو الإنكار أو الألم

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النفسـي أو محاولـة ألتبرير خصوصًـا فـي السـياقات المفعمـة بالصـراع أو الغمـوض. وتُسـهم هـذه الدراسـة فـي ميـدان التداوليـة عبـر إيضـاح كيفيـة تفاعـل السـياق والنيّـة والتأويـل فـي اللغـة ألأدبيـة وتقتـرح أنّ التحليـل التداولـي قـادر علـى تقديـم فهـم أعمـق لتطـور الشخصيات وتقنيـات السـرد فـي الروايـات الحديثة.

Abstract

This research explores the pragmatic functions of adverbial clauses in Paula Hawkins's novel The Girl on the Train. Characterized by its psychological complexity, the novel provides rich material for analyzing how adverbial clauses contribute to the construction of meaning within literary texts. The study depends on pragmatic as problem- solving proposed by Leech (1983), to examine eight types of adverbial clauses, such as clauses of time, cause, condition, concession, purpose, place, result, comparison, and others. The study followed a qualitative approach, focusing on selected excerpts from the novel to analyze how adverbial clauses express speaker intentions, psychological states, and discourse coherence. The results revealed that these clauses not only perform a grammatical function, but also contribute effectively to conveying the psychological depth of the characters and the ambiguity of the narrative. They are often used as an indirect means of expressing regret, denial, psychological pain, or an attempt at justification, especially in contexts characterized by conflict or ambiguity. This research contributes to the field of pragmatics by clarifying how context, intention, and interpretation interact in literary language. It suggests that pragmatic analysis can provide a deeper understanding of character development and narrative techniques in modern novels.

1- Introduction

This research examines the novel *The Girl on the Train*, written by Paula Hawkins, a literary work characterized by its complex narrative style . Set in London, the novel follows the journey of Rachel Watson, whose curiosity about the lives of others through a train window becomes a gateway to a complex criminal mystery. Published in 2015, the novel has received significant attention for its innovative narrative structure, which clearly relies on temporal manipulation and repetition, making the study of its adverbial clauses of particular interest.

 Adverbial clauses are an essential part of grammatical structure, helping to clarify the relationship between verbs and events within a sentence. They fall into three main types of dependent clauses: noun complements, relative clauses, and clauses that connect verbs or verb phrases, known as adverbial clauses (Lehmann, 1988; Matthiessen & Thompson, 1988).

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These clauses are used to add information about time, place, cause, and manner, helping to define the relationship between sentence parts, whether through single adverbials, adverbial phrases, or entire adverbial clauses (Greenhalgh & Strong, 2001; Murcia & Freeman, 2003; Jacobus & Miller, 1976). Since some grammatical structures are rare, studies have focused on analyzing common adverbial clauses to draw clear conclusions about their role (Meyer, 1994). Their relationship to the main clause is usually determined by subordination conjunctions, such as "after", "before", "until", "while"," because", "so that", "since"," if", "as if" "unless", "although" and "where", which are widely used in everyday conversation (Diessel, 2001; Chafe, 1984). They can precede or follow the main clause and occur in two main forms; definite adverbial clauses, which contain inflected verbs, and indefinite adverbial clauses, which lack inflection and are often more difficult to recognize (Scott, 1988; Verspoor & Sauter, 2000).

From a language acquisition perspective, people begin using adverbial clauses at an early age, with studies indicating that most people acquire the ability to produce complex linguistic structures before the age of three, while full use of these clauses, especially indefinite ones, appears later (Limber, 1971; Wells, 1985; O'Grady, 1997). Definite adverbial clauses are more common in conversations up to the age of ten, while both definite and indefinite clauses become more common in writing (Fletcher, 1986). The earliest adverbial devices used by humans include "because" and "when", followed by "before" and "after". Conditional and consequential devices such as "if" and "so" increase with age, while assignment, place, and manner remain less common among primary school children (Scott, 1988; Tyack). Pragmatically, adverbial clauses are syntactically flexible, as they can be inserted in multiple places within a sentence, giving them an important role in highlighting relationships between events and situations (Haiman, 1984). This diverse distribution leads to their frequent use in conversations and narratives, as well as their importance in organizing information within written texts, making them an essential element in the development of language communication skills.

Previous studies have approached adverbial clauses from multiple perspectives. Wongkittiporn (2021) focused on their analysis from a semantic perspective, examining their use in a British cookbook, demonstrating the influence of text type on the meanings generated by these clauses. Meanwhile, a study by (2022) focused on the grammatical structure of reduced adverbial clauses in two different text types: research articles in applied linguistics and novels, allowing for a comparison

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between their use in academic and literary discourse. In the same grammatical context, Kaburo & Karuri (2024) analyzed the grammatical structure of temporal adverbial clauses in the Kenyan language Kimuthambi, relying on the graphological approach to studying left periphery, adding a comparative dimension across languages. Regarding corpus-based studies, Collanggo & Celesio (2024) relied on the analysis of a broad corpus to examine the linguistic functions of adverbial clauses in literary texts. Their frequency, grammatical categories, and sentence positions were analyzed. These studies reflect a diversity of research approaches, including semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic analysis, in addition to their reliance on corpora. This contributes to providing a comprehensive view of the nature of adverbial clauses in different contexts.

English novels enhance thinking, expand imagination, and increase creativity (Lazar, 1990). Accordingly, this study aims to fill this research gap by analyzing all types of adverbial clauses in the novel, not just temporal adverbial clauses, from a pragmatic perspective. The research seeks to explore how these structures contribute to conveying information, guiding the reader's interpretation of events, and reinforcing the unreliable nature of the narrative in the novel. Through the analysis of a selected sample of text, new insights will be provided on how adverbial clauses are used to achieve various pragmatic functions within literary narratives. This research deals with the pragmatic analysis of adverbial clauses in the novel *The Girl on the Train* (Hawkins, 2015) ,using heuristics analysis and means-end analysis proposed by Leech (1983). Thus, the current study differs from previous studies in adopting this type of approach to analyzing adverbial clauses.

Research questions:

1-What are the types of adverbial clauses used in the novel and how can they be classified and described?

2-How do these clauses contribute to meaning, speaker intention, and discourse coherence?

2- Pragmatic analysis approach

Heuristic analysis refers to a logical method used to solve communicative problems through a series of sequential steps, beginning with identifying the main goal or problem in the spoken message, then formulating initial hypotheses, then testing them against contextual evidence, until arriving at a logical and coherent interpretation of the intended meaning. This method is based on pragmatic guidelines such as the cooperative principles proposed by Grice (1975), which include providing appropriate

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information (the quantity principle), considering contextual relevance (the relationship principle), and ensuring truthfulness and accuracy (the quality principle).

In this context, Leech (1983) presented an approach for solving pragmatic problems based on sequential steps:

1. Identify the problem or communicative goal
2. Formulate a hypothesis that explains this goal
3. Test the hypothesis based on contextual data
4. Arrive at a suitable explanation

If the hypothesis fails the test, the analyst returns to the first step to formulate an alternative hypothesis. This approach is concerned not only with how meaning is produced but also with how it is inferred, and it relies on the role of the recipient as the primary actor in the comprehension process. The recipient is the one who connects what is said to what is intended, based on their knowledge of the context and principles of cooperation. Although the speaker plans their linguistic choices in advance to achieve their goal in the most concise and efficient way, Leech argues that excessive emphasis on the speaker's intentions may not be necessary, especially in situations where the speaker subsequently becomes the recipient of the interpretation of their speech, So there is no need to use means-end analysis

Ultimately, the hypothesis that most closely matches the available evidence is assumed to be the minimum illustrative assumption that is, the interpretation most plausible until proven otherwise. (Leech, 1983, as cited in Tawfiq, 1994, p. 26) .

3-Method

The researcher relied on a qualitative approach in his study, which is characterized by posing research questions and collecting data in a descriptive and analytical manner. This approach includes a variety of tools such as in-depth interviews, direct and indirect observations, focus groups, document analysis, and other information gathering techniques (Kothari ,2008) . purposive sampling was employed in this research to track and extract the adverbial phrases found in Paula Hawkins' novel "The Girl on the Train." The aim of the study is to uncover these phrases and classify them according to their types, making the nature of the subject perfectly suited for qualitative research that links linguistic aspects with literary text.

The primary material in this research is the novel "The Girl on the Train," published in London in 2015. Set in 2013, the novel is not divided into traditional chapters, but rather follows a narrative based on the characters' voices, focusing primarily on Rachel and Megan. The novel is 245 pages

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long, and the researcher is interested in collecting and analyzing sentences containing grammatical adverbials within the narrative context. The research focuses on eight types of adverbial sentences: time , reason , concession , comparison , result , manner , purpose and place .

As for the data collection steps, they included the following: First, the novel was deliberately selected as a data source based on its relevance to the topic. Second, the type of data required was determined by the researcher reading the novel comprehensively, focusing on sentences containing adverbial clauses. Each sentence was then categorized according to the type of adverbial it contained. Third, this data was discussed and analyzed according to the study's objective, by preparing analytical cards for each type of adverbial sentence.

The data analysis phases consisted of several steps, including: reviewing theoretical references related to adverbial phrases, rereading the novel, identifying sentences that met the adverbial characteristics, and then analyzing them using Leech's (1983) approach . This was followed by interpreting the results and drawing final conclusions, and finally drafting the final research report.

4- Result and Discussion

 The analysis of the adverbial clauses extracted from the novel was carried out based on the approach developed by Leech as explained in a previous section, and then the researcher moved on the analysis of adverbial clauses types .

4.1. <u>Adverbial Clauses of Time</u>

 "<u>*Cathy is waiting for me when I get home*</u>. She's standing in the kitchen, aggressively drinking a glass of water.

'Good day at the office?' she asks, pursing her lips. She knows. " (Hawkins, 2015, p. 122).

Our initial Hypothesis is for this sentence "Cathy is waiting for me when I get home" is an assertion made by the speaker. It communicates a situation (Cathy waiting) that occurs under a certain condition (the speaker's arrival home). The statement appears to be a factual declaration rather than an expression of personal emotion or opinion. To test this hypothesis , the following steps can be performed .

A. (s) says to (h) that (cathy) is waiting for (s) when (s) gets home.

B. (s) means that (cathy) is waiting for (s) when (s) gets home.

C. (s) believes that (h) knows that (cathy) is waiting for (s) when (s) gets home.   (Maxims of Quality)

D. (s) believes that (h) is not aware that (cathy) is waiting for (s) when (s) gets home.   (Maxims of Quantity)

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E. (s) believes it is desirable (or undesirable) for (h) to be aware that (cathy) is waiting for (s) when (s) gets home.

(Maxims of Relation)

In this sentence, there are no violations of the Maxims of Quality or Quantity, as the statement is straightforward and assumes the hearer can easily interpret it. The Maxim of Relation may be relevant if the speaker is providing this information to highlight the relevance of their actions or the situation (e.g., to explain why they are coming home late, or to create a connection with the hearer). So we consider our hypothesis successful .

The important question that should be asked is why we did not use means _end analysis in analyzing sentences? In fact, means _end analysis indicates that understanding the context and the rules followed by the speaker is important. If these rules are not recognized, the communication process may collapse.

4.2. Adverbial Clauses of Reason

"I was the one who suggested she talk to someone. **I was the one who encouraged her to go, because I didn't seem to be able to help her.**'
His voice cracked a little then. 'I couldn't help her. **"** (Hawkins, 2015, p. 96).

The initial hypothesis is that the inability to help led directly to the encouragement of her to leave.

Testing the Hypothesis Using Grice's Analysis Steps:

A. (s) tells (h) that (s) encouraged her to leave because he could not help her.

B.(s) means that (s) saw his inability to help as a reason for encouraging her to leave.

C.(s) believes that (h) understands that (s) encouraged her to leave based on his perception of his inability to help her.

<div align="right">(Maxim of Quality)</div>

D. (s) believes that (h) has no information that would make (h) doubt that encouraging her to leave was a result of (s) being unable to help.

<div align="right">(Maxim of Quantity)</div>

E. (s) believes it is desirable (or undesirable) for (h) to realize that the decision to encourage her to leave was based on (s) realizing that he was unable to help.

<div align="right">(Maxim of Relation)</div>

If it later turns out that (s) was able to help in some way (even though he believed he was unable), the initial hypothesis fails. This means that steps C , D and E may be misleading so a new hypothesis must be formed.

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Instead of the categorical assumption of inability to help, it can be replaced with a probability estimate:

"I may not have been able to help her", which reduces the severity of the contradiction or failure in the hypothesis.

4.3. <u>Adverbial Clauses of Concession</u>

" I think I last brushed my teeth on Wednesday. **<u>I am still feigning illness, although I'm pretty sure I'm fooling no one</u>**. I can't face getting up, getting dressed, getting on to the train, going into London, wandering the streets " (Hawkins, 2015, p.115)

Our initial Hypothesis is (s) continues to portend to be ill and (h) doubts that anyone believes (s) . To test the Hypothesis using Grice's steps:

A. (s) says to (h) that (s) is pretending to be ill but realizes they are fooling no one.

B. (s) knows that (s) is pretending, but (s) effort seems pointless."

C. (s) believes that (h) knows that (s) is pretending to be ill but has not been deceived .

(Maxim of Quality)

D. (s) believes that (h) is not fully aware of why (s) continues pretending to be ill .

(Maxim of Quantity)

E. (s) believes it is desirable (or undesirable) for (h) to realize that (s) is pretending to be ill in vain .   (Maxim of Relation)

Let us assume that (h) already knows that (s) is pretending to be ill , in this case , step D and E fail because (s) does not explain why he continues to pretend and this demonstration is not understood by (h). so (h) should form a new hypothesis (e.g. that (s) is pretending to be ill to rest and recharge and (h) understand , rest is important .

In our analysis , Step A (where (s) says they are pretending to be ill but knows they're fooling no one) can be interpreted as a straightforward acknowledgment of their condition and behavior. If (h) already knows (s) is pretending, then (h) interprets this without much need for further reasoning, assuming the maxim of quality is being followed (s is providing truthful information about their state).

In this case, the interpretation aligns with **default interpretation** because it involves little or no additional processing: (s) is faking illness, and (h) assumes this, with no need to probe into why. On the other hand Step D and Step E could lead to **a corroborative condition** if (s) were to provide further insight into why they are continuing to pretend to be ill despite knowing they are fooling no one. If (s) were to explain the need for rest (as in your suggestion), this would align with a corroborative

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interpretation because (s) is providing supplementary reasoning that reinforces the shared understanding between (s) and (h). This step would support a richer understanding of (s)'s actions, reinforcing (h)'s interpretation of the situation.

4.4. Adverbial Clauses of place

"we have to leave, there's no way I can stay in this house, on this road, knowing everything that has gone on here. **Everywhere I look now, I have to see not only Rachel, but Megan too**. I have to think about everything she touched. It's too much. I said I didn't care whether we got a good price for the house or not." (Hawkins, 2015, p. 152)

We begin with an initial hypothesis . The sentence carries an assertive force in which (S) attempts to express a psychological state he is experiencing, and Megan has become part of the suffering.To test this hypothesis , we will use Grice's Cooperative principle and follow the following steps .

A. (s) says to (h) that (s) has to see both Rachel and Megan everywhere.

b. (s) means that (s) is emotionally affected by seeing both Rachel and Megan everywhere.

C. (s) believes that (h) knows the emotional weight of seeing both Rachel and Megan.

<div align="center">(Maxims of Quality)</div>

D. (s) believes that (h) is not aware of the depth of emotional pain caused by seeing both Rachel and Megan.

<div align="center">(Maxims of Quantity)</div>

E. (s) believes it is desirable for (h) to be aware of this emotional burden.

<div align="center">(Maxims of Relation)</div>

Let us assume that (h) knows the nature of (s)'s relationship with Rachel and Megan. In this case, steps C, D and E may fail, as the hearer is already aware of the speaker's emotional connection to both individuals. Thus, a new hypothesis must be formed based on the context and the hearer's background knowledge. This leads to a reformulation of the interpretation: (s) may be implying that (h) underestimates the speaker's ongoing psychological distress, or that (s) feels haunted by unresolved emotions connected to both Rachel and Megan. Therefore, the speaker's utterance serves not merely as a description of what he sees, but as an indirect appeal for understanding or empathy regarding his emotional state.

4.5. Adverbial Clauses of Condition

"I want to drag knives over my skin, just so that I can feel something other than shame, but I'm not even brave enough to do that. I start writing

to Tom, writing and deleting, writing and deleting, trying to find ways to ask forgiveness for the things I said last night. ***If I had to write down every transgression for which I should apologize to Tom, I could fill a book. ***" (Hawkins, 2015, p. 84)

Initial Hypothesis:

(s) expresses a feeling of deep regret and believes he has done so many wrongs to Tom that he could fill a book with apologies.

Applying Grice's Steps:

A. (s) says to (h) that (s) could fill a book with apologies owed to Tom.

B. (s) means that he has committed a significant number of transgressions toward Tom.

C. (s) believes that (h) knows or can infer that (s) owes apologies to Tom. (Maxim of Quality).

D. (s) believes that (h) is not fully aware of the specific details or full extent of (s)'s transgressions.   (Maxim of Quantity)

 E. s) believes it is desirable (or undesirable) for (h) to understand the weight of (s)'s regret .

                                      (Maxim of Relation)

 If the speaker is sincerely remorseful, the use of hyperbole (e.g., "I could fill a book with apologies") may be a defense mechanism, where the speaker attempts to express the depth of their remorse in a nonspecific or detail-avoidant way. This could be a sign that the speaker feels confused or embarrassed to confront the details of their wrongdoing, or that they are unwilling or unable to articulate these details clearly. The failure of steps D and E, then, suggests that the speaker may not be sincere in their apology, which could suggest that the remorse may not be due to a desire for genuine reconciliation but rather to guilt and an attempt to avoid direct confrontation with the painful details.

4.6.Adverbial Clauses of Comparison

" He asks me whether we talked about Ben. Scott thinks everything is about Ben. He may be right. **He may know me better than I think he does. **" (Hawkins, 2015, p. 25)

Our initial hypothesis is that (s) expresses doubt about his assessment of (h)'s understanding of him, suggesting surprise or realization that (h) may know him better than he thinks. To test this hypothesis, we will use Grice's Cooperative Principle and follow the steps below:

Steps Based on Grice's Maxims

A. The speaker (s) says to the hearer (h) that the other person may know them better than they think.

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B. The speaker means that the other person may have a deeper understanding of them than the speaker believes.

C. The speaker believes that the hearer (h) understands that the speaker is expressing doubt about their own assessment of the other person's knowledge.

(Maxim of Quality)

D. The speaker believes that the hearer may not fully realize the extent of the speaker's uncertainty about their own assessment.

(Maxim of Quantity)

5. (E) The speaker believes it is desirable for the hearer to interpret the statement as a genuine emotional doubt about their own assessment, rather than as a mere rhetorical question.

(Maxim of Relation)

If (h) is aware that (s) tends to question their own judgments or the ability of others to understand them, they may interpret the statement as genuine doubt, understanding that the speaker is unsure about their own assessment of the situation and the other person's knowledge. However, if (h) is not familiar with (s)'s tendency to doubt their own judgments, they might misinterpret the statement as a sign of confidence in the other person's understanding, assuming that the speaker is more sure of the other person's knowledge than they actually are.

4.7. Adverbial Clauses of Result

" He has no problems at all getting the news up, he goes straight to the *Daily Telegraph* site and there it is, in big, bold letters, the third story: MAN ARRESTED IN CONNECTION WITH MEGAN HIPWELL DISAPPEARANCE. **I get such a fright that I forget myself and lean right over to get a better look**. He looks up at me, affronted, almost startled. 'I'm sorry,' I say. 'I know her. The missing woman. " (Hawkins, 2015, p. 101)

The initial hypothesis is that (s)'s feeling of extreme terror and its effect on his actions.

To test this hypothesis

a. (s) says to (h) that (s) got such a fright that (s) forgot themselves and leaned over to get a better look.

b. (s) means that (s) experienced such a strong fright that it led to a momentary lapse in self-awareness and caused them to lean over.

c. (s) believes that (h) knows that (s) got such a fright and acted by leaning over.

(Maxim of quality)

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d. (s) believes that (h) is not aware that (s) was frightened or the reason for their behavior (leaning over).

(Maxim of quantity)

e. (s) believes it is desirable for (h) to believe that (s) got frightened and leaned over to get a better look. (Maxim of relation)

When there is clear evidence from the context that the speaker's fear influences his actions, the speaker is complying with all maxims. In this case, the relation between "fear" and "action" is understood to be consistent with Grice's principles, and so there is no violation.

4.8. Adverbial Clauses of Purpose

" He tapped away at the computer. 'There's a website, I think. I'm sure there is. I think there's a picture …'

He spun the laptop round so that I could see the screen. I leaned forward to get a closer look. 'That's him,' I said. 'That's definitely him. "
(Hawkins, 2015, p. 95)

Our initial hypothesis is (s) spin the laptop to show (h) the screen .

A: (s) says to (h) that (s) spun the laptop to achieve visibility of the screen.

B: (s) means that (s) intended for (h) to see the screen.

C: (s) believes that (h) knows (s)'s intention was to show the screen.

(Maxims of Quality)

D: (s) believes that (h) may not have noticed the intention unless explicitly stated.

(Maxims of Quantity)

E: (s) believes it is relevant for (h) to observe the screen.

(Maxims of Relation)

If the intention is clear and the action achieves the desired goal, the relationship between the means and the end aligns with Grice's principles, especially the Maxim of Quality, where the action corresponds to reality. However, if the means fails to achieve the goal, questions may arise about the reason for the failure to achieve the end. For example, the hearer may not be in a position to see the screen properly (due to angle, lighting issues, or other material factors). This could lead to reformulating the hypothesis based on the changing context.

Personal and cognitive contexts play a role in modifying the interpretation. For instance, if the hearer knows the speaker's personality or typical behavior, the default interpretation may change. If the hearer doubts the speaker's intentions, they might think the action was aimed at hiding something or representing something different from the apparent

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truth. These interactions between action, intention, and context highlight the importance of understanding the relationship between means and ends in light of changing contexts.

Ultimately, as in the previous example, the default understanding of this sentence is that the action achieves the intended goal unless other factors emerge that influence the interpretation of the intention or outcome.

5.Conclusion

By analyzing the adverbial clauses in The Girl on the Train, it was found that these clauses are used effectively not only for grammatical or organizational purposes, but also as expressive tools that help reveal the characters' unspoken feelings and intentions. Using Leech's approach helped uncover implicit meanings that go beyond the surface level of the text.

The results showed that adverbial clauses are used in situations of tension, regret, deception, and psychological vulnerability, highlighting their pragmatic role in adding depth to literary narratives. It also became clear that some sentences are interpreted differently depending on the recipient's background and the context of the speech, emphasizing the importance of viewing literary texts from a pragmatic perspective.

Based on the above, it is recommended that pragmatic analysis tools be used in other similar studies, especially those dealing with legal texts or sports articles. This type of analysis can also be applied to other narrative genres, such as memoirs and autobiographies, to expand the scope of pragmatic understanding of literary texts.

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