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## THE CONNOTATIVE ASPECTS OF THE WORD 'PRIDE' IN THE NOVEL "PRIDE AND PREJUDICE" BY JANE AUSTEN

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### Introduction:

Jane Austen enriched English realistic prose, developing new thickened themes, important not only for English literature but for the morality of modern civilization. The purpose of this study is to ascertain the emotional aspects of the meaning of the word 'pride' in the novel. By the connotative aspect of the meaning of the word, we understand the information fixed in the meaning about the emotional attitude to the designated phenomenon.

### Discussion:

The novel 'Pride and Prejudice' was written in the late 18th century and first published in 1813. To determine the meaning of the word pride, we used dictionaries of that period. The term pride is often framed by negative implications in various dictionaries of the 18th century. According to Perry (1775), it is simply described as "inordinate self-esteem, insolence", while similarly for Marchant, J. (1760), it is "haughtiness; insolence; dignity of manners; loftiness of air; elevation; dignity; splendour; ostentation". Both of the explanations of this concept mostly remove the word out of possible positive inferences, yet at the same time bring to a common ground with parallel ideas and even making mutual use of the word 'insolence'. Published in the 18th century, both dictionaries are found to adopt similar approaches to the term as Austen does in her novel. Bearing in mind that the meaning of a word is formed in relation to the processes and phenomena of non-linguistic reality, we try to refer the negative connotation of this term to main social problems in three main problems that make up the plot of the novel which is concerned with tricks and follies of humans, class distinctions, and gender based on societal expectations.

Firstly, pride is determined by a more natural motivation in affiliation with 'high' quality work that manifests as **'shortage' of character**. This shortage is principally resulted from the lack of knowledge of the character from the speaker's point of view when this character is absent in the dialogue. High quality work can manifest as a discerner for different characters who share this type of pride, f.e., Mr. Wickham's quality on this account is his skill of social influence and attractive mien meanwhile Mr. Collins' quality is his position as a clergyman and his connection with his patroness, Lady Catherine de Bourgh.

The context below is suited for showcasing this first variety of pride: "A fortunate chance had recommended him to Lady Catherine de Bourgh when the living of Hunsford was vacant; and the respect which he felt for her high rank, and his

reverence for her as his patroness, mingling with a very good opinion of himself, of his authority as a clergyman, and his right as a rector, made him altogether a **mixture of pride and obsequiousness, self-importance and humility.**" (Austen, Jane. *Pride and prejudice*)

According to these characterizations of Mr. Collins by the narrative voice, both his respect for Lady Catherine de Bourgh and himself as a clergyman are addressed with four unfavorable terms except for the latest. "Humility" in this context seems to contradict with the rest of Mr. Collins' 'mixture', however it also can be assumed just as Burch (1975) pointed out while analyzing the word in Hume's work as "By 'humility' Hume means the feeling of humiliation, embarrassment, or shame. He does not mean the character trait of humbleness or modesty." Sense of Justice.

Another connotative aspect of the word can be found in the following context: "...she would not allow that any objections there had material weight with Mr. Darcy, whose pride, she was convinced, would receive a deeper wound from the want of importance in his friend's connections, than from their want of sense; and she was quite decided, at last, that he had been partly governed by **this worst kind of pride**, and partly by the wish of retaining Mr. Bingley for his sister." (Austen, Jane. *Pride and prejudice*)

The context above presents the aftermath of open, negatively perceived, social stigma admitted by Mr. Darcy to the protagonist Elizabeth. The stigma is due to class disparities in which the socially acceptable behaviors differ accordingly. The facet of pride in this context, is resulted from a sense of aristocratic upbringing and superior finance of Mr. Darcy. His pride is concluded as rather systematic and consequential, in other words not brought forth naturally but resulted from the social popularity.

The novel allows us to observe the polarity of its characters, and, consequently, the polar attitude to pride as a quality and manner of behavior. So, 'pride' for Mr. Darcy is not a weakness in the same manner 'vanity' is and his account for the matter is more positive than the heroine's one:

"I own, and I laugh at them whenever I can. But these, I suppose, are precisely what you are without." "Perhaps that is not possible for anyone. But it has been the study of my life to avoid those weaknesses which often expose a strong understanding to ridicule." "Such as vanity and pride." "Yes, vanity is a weakness indeed. But pride – where there is a real superiority of mind, pride will be always **under good regulation.**" Elizabeth turned away to hide a smile." (Austen, Jane. *Pride and prejudice*)

Another connotation of 'pride' in the novel comes from women's understanding of it as an excusable emotion as in the example:

"... 'His pride,' said Miss Lucas, "does not offend me so much as pride often does, because there is an excuse for it. One cannot wonder that so very fine a young man, with family, fortune, everything in his favour, should think highly of himself. If I may so express it, **he has a right to be proud.**" "That is very true," replied Elizabeth, "and I could easily **forgive his pride**, if he had not mortified mine." (Austen, Jane. *Pride and prejudice*) The heroine's desire to spare herself from the social

superiority of men can be attributed to her sense of self-esteem, in more honest terms, her **positive pride**.

The connotations of pride in this context can be accepted as positive. Miss Lucas perceives 'pride' more positively than Elizabeth who speaks of hers as a **natural** phenomenon. We can call this kind of connotation positive, as it is, 'self-defending' in this context. One of similar perceptions can be found in Krettenauer's (2015) study, which stated, "*Authentic pride* positively predicted moral behavior whereas *hubristic pride* undermined it."

We can assume that Jane Austen managed to show positive pride, and this kind of understanding was advanced for the time of its first publishing. She anonymously wrote books at a time where women were challenged by the norms of the society. Women were seen as the lower sex and expected to marry whoever chooses them; however, Austen idealized relationships where there was always mutual affection, she also gave her heroine Elizabeth, the right to act as she pleases. He, Liao (2015) explain, "Austen wrote the novels on the assumption that women were inherently as intelligent and rational as men were. In the marriage market into which her heroines usually enter, the woman is as likely to be the instructor as the man is."

#### Conclusion:

The basic connotative aspects of pride can be stated as both negative and positive. Negative aspects are formed by the understanding pride as a shortcoming of human personality (from the point of view of society) and as a norm of behavior in high society, having humiliating effect for those to whom this pride was demonstrated. Positive aspect is represented by understanding pride as a way of female self-defense in a world where women have less than few privileges. Following modern classification we can identify these first two types as hubristic and the last type of pride as authentic, recognizing that for Jane Austen positive views on pride were advanced for the time of writing the novel.

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