

A SEMANTIC TRIANGLE ANALYSIS OF SELECTED SYMBOLS IN JANE AUSTEN'S *PRIDE AND PREJUDICE*

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the construction of meaning in Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice through Ogden and Richards' Semantic Triangle of Meaning (1923). The study adopts a qualitative approach to analyze selected linguistic and literary symbols in the novel. The analysis focuses on the three elements of the Semantic Triangle: symbol, thought/reference, and referent. Selected symbols, including pride, prejudice, marriage, wealth, estate, outdoor spaces, food and dress, are examined in their textual and contextual settings. The study investigates how these symbols acquire meanings beyond their literal definitions and how they contribute to the representation of characters, relationships, social values, and major themes. The findings indicate that the meanings of symbols are strongly influenced by their narrative contexts and by the characters, situations, and social conditions with which they are associated. Abstract symbols such as pride and prejudice represent changing perceptions and psychological attitudes, while concrete symbols such as estates represent wealth, social status, heritage, and character. The study concludes that Ogden and Richards' Semantic Triangle provides a useful framework for examining how linguistic and literary elements construct meaning in fictional discourse. The research also demonstrates value of applying semantic analysis to literary texts and contributes to the understanding of Austen's use of language and symbolism in Pride and Prejudice.

Keywords: Semantic Triangle, Semantics, Jane Austen, Linguistics, Literature, Pride and Prejudice

INTRODUCTION

Language is one of the primary means through which human beings communicate ideas, express emotions, construct relationships, and interpret the world around them. The systematic study of language is known as linguistics. Linguistics examines the structure, use, development, and meaning of language and seeks to understand how language functions as a system of human communication (Yule, 2020). Rather than focusing only on correct or incorrect language, linguistics investigates the patterns and principles that underlie human language. It therefore provides a systematic framework for examining how words, sentences, sounds, and meanings operate in different contexts. Linguistics is a broad discipline with several major branches. Phonetics deals with the physical production, transmission, and perception of speech sounds, whereas phonology examines how sounds function and are organized within particular languages. Morphology is concerned with the internal structure and formation of words, while syntax examines how words combine to form phrases and sentences. Semantics focuses on meaning, particularly the conventional or literal meaning of linguistic expressions, whereas

pragmatics investigates how meaning is interpreted in relation to context and communicative situations (Yule, 2020). Among these branches, semantics is particularly relevant to literary analysis because literary texts depend heavily on words and expressions through which writers construct characters, settings, relationships, themes, and interpretations. Semantics can broadly be defined as the study of meaning in language. Meaning, however, is not always a simple relationship between a word and an object. Words can evoke concepts, ideas, experiences, and associations, and their interpretation may depend on the relationship between language and the world. This issue of meaning was addressed by C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards (1923) through their influential Semantic Triangle, presented in *The Meaning of Meaning*. The model proposes a relationship among three elements: symbol, thought or reference, and referent. The symbol is the linguistic expression or word; thought/reference represents the concept or idea associated with that symbol; and the referent is the object, person, event, or situation to which the expression refers (Ogden & Richards, 1923). The Semantic Triangle is particularly useful because it demonstrates that meaning does not necessarily arise from a direct relationship between a word and an object. Instead, the conceptual process of interpretation mediates between the linguistic symbol and the referent. In literary texts, this relationship can become even more complex because a word, place, object, or expression may acquire additional meanings through narrative context. Consequently, semantic analysis can investigate not only what an expression literally denotes but also what ideas and associations it generates within a particular literary context.

The present study applies this semantic perspective to Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. Literature provides a rich field for linguistic investigation because literary writers use language deliberately to create meanings and communicate social, psychological, and cultural ideas. Literary language can represent characters, relationships, social institutions, conflicts, and values through both abstract concepts and concrete objects or places. As Leech and Short (2007) explain, linguistic choices in literary texts contribute significantly to the construction of meaning and style. Therefore, linguistic approaches can provide a systematic method for examining how literary meanings are created through language. A novel is a form of extended fictional narrative that represents characters, events, settings, and human experiences through language. The language of a novel does not merely transmit information; it also contributes to characterization, thematic development, and the representation of society. Literary works can therefore be examined from a linguistic perspective to identify how particular words and expressions acquire significance within their contexts. Stylistic approaches to literature similarly emphasize the importance of examining linguistic patterns in order to understand how textual meanings are constructed (Leech & Short, 2007). One of the most important English novelists associated with the nineteenth century is Jane Austen (1775–1817). Austen is particularly known for her representation of social relationships, marriage, class, family, manners, wealth, and gender relations. Her novels include *Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Mansfield Park*, *Emma*, *Northanger Abbey*, and *Persuasion*. Her works continue to receive considerable literary attention

because of their detailed representation of social life and their sophisticated use of dialogue, irony, characterization, and narrative language. Among Austen's novels, *Pride and Prejudice*, first published in 1813, is especially suitable for semantic analysis. The novel centers on Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy and explores their developing relationship against the social environment of Regency-era England. The narrative addresses issues such as marriage, social class, wealth, reputation, family, manners, pride, prejudice, and personal judgment. Austen's use of language allows these concepts to operate at both literal and broader conceptual levels. The title itself, *Pride and Prejudice*, provides an important starting point for semantic investigation. "Pride" and "prejudice" are linguistic symbols that acquire complex meanings through the actions, thoughts, and relationships of the characters. Similarly, words such as marriage, and wealth can be examined according to the concepts they evoke and the people, situations, or social realities to which they refer. The study can also extend beyond abstract lexical items to places and concrete elements in the novel. Pemberley, for example, is literally Mr. Darcy's estate, but its significance extends beyond its physical identity. The present study therefore uses the Semantic Triangle to investigate selected symbols in *Pride and Prejudice* and to determine how their meanings are constructed through the relationship between symbol, thought/reference, and referent. Rather than treating meaning as a fixed property of individual words, the study considers how literary context influences interpretation. This approach is expected to demonstrate how Austen uses language and significant textual elements to represent social values, relationships, character development, and broader themes. In this way, the study connects linguistics, semantics, and literary analysis and demonstrates how a linguistic theory of meaning can be applied to the interpretation of a major literary work.

Objectives of the study:

1. To analyze selected symbols in *Pride and Prejudice* through Ogden and Richards' Semantic Triangle.
2. To examine how symbol, thought/reference, and referent construct meaning in the novel.

Research Questions:

1. How are selected symbols in *Pride and Prejudice* represented through the Semantic Triangle?
2. How do symbol, thought/reference, and referent contribute to the interpretation of meaning in the novel?

Significance of the Study

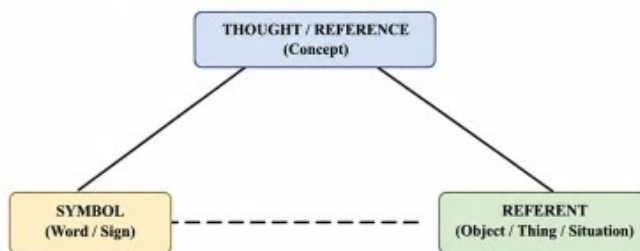
The study demonstrates how a semantic model can be applied to a literary text and connects linguistic theory with literary interpretation. It helps explain how words, expressions, places, and

objects acquire meanings beyond their immediate or literal references. The study provides a linguistic perspective on Austen's representation of concepts such as pride, prejudice, marriage, class, wealth, reputation, and social relationships. The research can serve as a reference for students and researchers interested in semantics, stylistics, literary linguistics, and language-based literary analysis. The study demonstrates the practical usefulness of Ogden and Richards' model by showing how the relationship between symbol, thought/reference, and referent can be identified within an extended literary text.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The relationship between language and meaning has been examined from linguistic, philosophical, semiotic, and literary perspectives. The following studies and theoretical works provide a foundation for analyzing meaning and symbols in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. Ogden and Richards (1923) developed the Semantic Triangle in *The Meaning of Meaning*. They explained meaning through the relationship among symbol, thought/reference, and referent, emphasizing that the relationship between a linguistic symbol and its referent is indirect. Their model provides the principal theoretical foundation for the present study. The symbol is the linguistic form, such as a word or expression. The thought/reference refers to the concept, idea, or mental association that arises in the mind of the interpreter when encountering the symbol. The referent is the actual person, object, event, situation, or entity to which the symbol refers.

Figure 1. Ogden and Richards' Semantic Triangle



Richards (1924) further contributed to the study of meaning by emphasizing the importance of context and interpretation in understanding language. His work helped establish meaning as a complex phenomenon involving linguistic and psychological processes. Malinowski (1923), whose work appears as a supplementary contribution in *The Meaning of Meaning*, emphasized the importance of context in interpreting linguistic expressions. His discussion supports the idea that meaning cannot always be understood independently of the situation in which language occurs. Firth (1957) developed the concept of meaning through context and argued that linguistic expressions should be examined in relation to their contexts of use. His approach is relevant to literary analysis because words and expressions may acquire particular meanings within specific textual environments. Lyons (1977) provided a systematic account of linguistic semantics and

distinguished different dimensions of meaning in language. His work established semantics as an important branch of linguistics concerned with how linguistic expressions communicate meaning. Leech (1981) examined semantics through different dimensions of meaning, including conceptual and associative meaning. His approach is useful for literary research because literary words can communicate both direct meanings and additional associations.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) demonstrated that language frequently reflects conceptual structures through metaphor. Their work is relevant to literary analysis because recurring words and expressions may evoke conceptual meanings beyond their literal interpretation. Leech and Short (2007) demonstrated how linguistic analysis can be used to examine literary style and meaning. Their work provides an important methodological basis for connecting linguistic features with characterization, narrative perspective, and thematic interpretation in fiction. Halliday (1978) emphasized the relationship between language and social context through a functional approach to language. His work demonstrates that linguistic choices can communicate meanings related to social relationships, experience, and interaction. Culler (2002) discussed the interpretation of literary texts and emphasized that literary meaning emerges through conventions, textual relationships, and interpretation. His work supports the use of linguistic and semiotic approaches in literary studies. Fischer-Starcke (2009) conducted a corpus-stylistic analysis of keywords and frequent phrases in *Pride and Prejudice*. The study demonstrated that corpus-based examination can uncover meanings and structural patterns that may not be immediately visible through intuitive literary interpretation.

Baker (2006) demonstrated the usefulness of corpus approaches for investigating language patterns and meanings systematically. Although her work is not restricted to Austen, it provides methodological support for examining recurring lexical patterns in literary texts. Culpeper (2001) examined how linguistic choices contribute to characterization and interpersonal relationships in fictional discourse. His work is relevant to *Pride and Prejudice* because Austen's characters are strongly constructed through their dialogue and interaction. Semino and Culpeper (2002) explored the relationship between language, cognition, and literary interpretation. Their work demonstrates how linguistic analysis can provide systematic explanations of meaning and characterization in literary texts. Stockwell (2002) introduced cognitive approaches to literary interpretation and examined how readers construct meanings from textual elements. His work is relevant to the present study because the interpretation of symbols involves the reader's conceptual understanding of linguistic and literary elements. Badi, Ismael, and Saleh (2023) examined names and naming practices in *Pride and Prejudice* from a sociolinguistic perspective. Their study shows that apparently simple linguistic elements such as character names can carry social and semantic significance within the novel.

Ejaz and Gill (2008) examined Austen's stylistic practices in *Pride and Prejudice*, focusing on irony, satire, social commentary, dialogue, characterization, and interpersonal relationships.

Their study demonstrates the value of stylistic analysis for understanding how Austen's linguistic choices contribute to the social and thematic meanings of the novel. Musoyeva (2025) conducted a linguo-stylistic analysis of the word “heart” in *Pride and Prejudice*. The study examined metaphorical and idiomatic uses of the lexical item and found that “heart” contributes to emotional characterization, sincerity, and the tension between emotion and reason. This study is particularly relevant to the present research because it demonstrates how a single lexical item can acquire multiple meanings through context. Fischer-Starcke (2009) further demonstrated that the frequent lexical patterns of *Pride and Prejudice* can reveal meanings that are not always emphasized in traditional literary criticism. Her findings strengthen the argument that systematic linguistic examination can contribute to a deeper understanding of Austen's novel. Badi, Ismael, and Saleh (2023) also demonstrate that semantic and sociolinguistic analysis can be successfully applied to specific linguistic elements in Austen's novel. Their work indicates that language in *Pride and Prejudice* can be studied beyond dialogue and grammar to investigate how linguistic choices represent social and cultural meanings.

However, the reviewed studies do not sufficiently examine selected symbols in *Pride and Prejudice* through Ogden and Richards' Semantic Triangle, particularly by systematically relating each symbol to its thought/reference and referent. The present study addresses this gap by selecting significant linguistic and literary symbols, including abstract concepts such as *pride*, *prejudice*, *marriage*, and *wealth*, as well as concrete elements such as *estates*, *food and dresses* and examining how their meanings are constructed within the novel. Thus, the present research differs from previous studies by placing the Symbol–Thought/Reference–Referent relationship at the center of the analysis. The study seeks to demonstrate how Austen's selected words, expressions, places, and objects acquire meanings through their contextual and conceptual relationships within *Pride and Prejudice*.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative research design to examine selected symbols in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* through Ogden and Richards' Semantic Triangle of Meaning (1923). The novel serves as the primary source of data, while relevant books, research articles, and linguistic studies are used as secondary sources. The data consist of selected words, expressions, places, objects, and concepts that carry significant meanings in the novel. Eight symbols will be selected purposively, including *pride*, *prejudice*, *marriage*, *wealth*, *estates*, *outdoor spaces*, *food and dress*. The selection will be based on their recurrence, thematic importance, and relevance to the characters and events. Each selected symbol will be analyzed according to the three elements of the Semantic Triangle: Symbol, Thought/Reference, and Referent. First, the linguistic symbol will be identified in its original context. Second, the thought or concept associated with the symbol will be examined. Third, its referent, the person, object, place, event, or situation to which it refers, will be identified. The analysis will then explain how these three elements work

together to construct meaning in the novel. The study will use close textual reading to interpret the selected passages and will consider the surrounding narrative and character context. The findings will be presented descriptively to demonstrate how Austen uses significant linguistic and literary symbols to represent themes, characters, social values, and relationships.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This chapter presents the analysis and findings of the selected symbols in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* through Ogden and Richards' Semantic Triangle. The analysis focuses on how each symbol is connected with thought/reference and referent and how its meaning changes according to the literary and social context. The selected symbols include abstract concepts such as *pride*, *prejudice*, *marriage*, and *wealth* as well as concrete and spatial elements such as *estates*, *outdoor spaces*, *dress*, and *food*. The findings demonstrate that these symbols often carry meanings beyond their literal definitions and contribute to the representation of characters, relationships, social values, and major themes in the novel.

1. Symbol: Pride

A significant symbol in *Pride and Prejudice* is "pride." The word appears repeatedly in relation to characters' attitudes, social position, and self-perception. One important example occurs when Mary Bennet states: "Pride relates more to our opinion of ourselves, vanity to what we would have others think of us." (Austen, 1813) According to Ogden and Richards' Semantic Triangle, "pride" functions as the symbol, while the thought/reference associated with it is the idea of excessive self-regard, self-respect, dignity, or a strong opinion of one's own importance. The referent is not limited to a physical object; rather, it can be identified through the behavior and attitudes of characters, particularly Mr. Darcy. Darcy's pride is initially associated with his awareness of his superior social position. At the Meryton assembly, his refusal to dance with Elizabeth and his dismissive attitude toward the people around him contribute to Elizabeth's interpretation of him as arrogant. Therefore, the symbol "pride" evokes the concept of social superiority in Elizabeth's mind and refers to Darcy's observable behavior. However, the meaning of "pride" becomes more complex as the narrative progresses. Darcy's later actions demonstrate that what initially appears to Elizabeth as arrogance can also involve self-respect, dignity, and personal principles. Thus, the Semantic Triangle demonstrates that the meaning associated with the symbol is influenced by the interpreter's knowledge and the surrounding context. The referent remains connected to Darcy, but the thought/reference associated with him changes as Elizabeth gains new information. Consequently, Austen uses "pride" not merely as a character trait but as a semantic concept whose interpretation develops throughout the novel. The changing relationship between the symbol, thought/reference, and referent reflects Elizabeth's changing understanding of Darcy.

2. Symbol: Prejudice

The second major symbol is “prejudice,” which is central to both the title and the development of the plot. The symbol refers to a preconceived judgment formed without sufficient knowledge or objective understanding. In the novel, the most significant referent of this concept is Elizabeth Bennet's initial judgment of Darcy. After Darcy's early behavior and Wickham's account of his relationship with Darcy, Elizabeth develops a negative opinion of Darcy. Her interpretation is strongly influenced by the information available to her at that stage of the narrative. According to the Semantic Triangle, “prejudice” is the symbol, while its thought/reference is the concept of preconceived judgment or bias. Its referent is represented through Elizabeth's judgments and attitudes toward Darcy. The important semantic feature is that Elizabeth's interpretation is not based on complete knowledge of Darcy's character. As the narrative progresses, Elizabeth discovers that her initial interpretation was incomplete. Darcy's letter provides information about Wickham and Darcy's previous actions, causing Elizabeth to reconsider her assumptions. She eventually recognizes the limitations of her earlier judgment. Therefore, the thought/reference connected with the symbol “prejudice” changes through the narrative. The symbol consequently represents more than a simple dictionary meaning. It becomes associated with the psychological process through which Elizabeth interprets another person's behavior on the basis of incomplete information. Austen uses this changing interpretation to demonstrate how perception can influence the construction of meaning.

3. Symbol: Marriage

The third important symbol in *Pride and Prejudice* is “marriage.” Marriage is one of the central concerns of the novel and is associated with different meanings depending on the character and situation. Austen presents marriage not only as a romantic relationship but also as a social, economic, and familial institution. Using Ogden and Richards' Semantic Triangle, “marriage” is the symbol, while the thought/reference includes ideas of love, companionship, financial security, social status, family responsibility, and social advancement. The referent is represented by the different marriages and proposed marriages in the novel, including the relationships of Jane and Bingley, Elizabeth and Darcy, Charlotte and Collins, and Lydia and Wickham. The meaning of the symbol changes according to the character. For Charlotte Lucas, marriage primarily represents security and a socially acceptable position. Her decision to marry Mr. Collins demonstrates a practical understanding of marriage rather than an ideal based exclusively on romantic love. In contrast, Elizabeth Bennet associates marriage with affection, mutual understanding, and personal compatibility. Her refusal to marry Mr. Collins and her eventual acceptance of Darcy demonstrate this difference. Therefore, symbol “marriage” does not have one fixed contextual meaning in the novel. Its thought/reference changes according to the character's values and circumstances, while its referents are actual relationships and marriage

arrangements presented by Austen. Through this variation, Austen uses concept of marriage to represent interaction between love, economic security, social expectations, and personal choice.

4. Symbol: Wealth

“Wealth” is a significant symbol in *Pride and Prejudice* because economic position strongly influences social relationships, marriage prospects, and perceptions of individuals. Using Ogden and Richards’ Semantic Triangle, “wealth” is the symbol, while the reference includes financial security, social influence, independence, status, and economic power. The referent is found in the actual financial circumstances and incomes of characters such as Mr. Darcy, Mr. Bingley, and the Bennet family. Mr. Darcy’s income of £10,000 a year establishes his considerable wealth and elevated social position. Similarly, Mr. Bingley’s £5,000 a year makes him a financially desirable potential husband and contributes to Mrs. Bennet’s interest in him. In contrast, the Bennet family’s financial insecurity is heightened by the entail of Longbourn, which prevents the property from passing to the Bennet daughters. The novel also refers to fortunes, estates, incomes, and property, showing how economic resources influence marriage and social relationships. Thus, “wealth” does not simply refer to possessing money; it evokes broader concepts of social power, security, status, property, and marriageability. Austen therefore uses economic references to show how financial circumstances shape lives and choices of her characters.

5. Symbol: Estates

“Estates” is a significant symbol in *Pride and Prejudice* because estates represent wealth, social position, inheritance, security, and economic power. According to Ogden and Richards’ Semantic Triangle, “estates” is the symbol, while the reference includes property, and inheritance. The referents are the actual estates and properties mentioned in the novel, including Pemberley, Longbourn, Netherfield Park, Rosings Park, Lucas Lodge, and Hunsford Parsonage. Pemberley, Mr. Darcy’s estate, represents considerable high social status. Longbourn, the Bennet family estate, represents family inheritance and financial insecurity because of the entail. Netherfield Park, rented by Mr. Bingley, reflects wealth, hospitality, and social mobility, while Rosings Park reflects Lady Catherine’s aristocratic authority and social superiority. Lucas Lodge reflects the Lucas family’s comfortable social position, whereas Hunsford Parsonage represents Mr. Collins’s more modest economic and professional position. Thus, “estate” extends beyond a physical property and evokes broader concepts of wealth, class, inheritance, authority, and social security. Austen uses these different estates to reveal the economic and social structures that shape her characters’ lives and relationships.

6. Symbol: Outdoor Spaces

Outdoor spaces in *Pride and Prejudice*, including walks, gardens, parks, grounds, and roads, can be examined as symbols of movement, freedom, privacy, reflection, and interpersonal interaction. According to Ogden and Richards' Semantic Triangle, these spatial symbols refer literally to physical places or activities, while their reference can include concepts such as independence, personal freedom, reflection, nature, and social interaction. Their referents are the actual outdoor spaces and walking activities experienced by characters in the novel. The walk is particularly significant in the characterization of Elizabeth Bennet. She frequently walks independently, most notably when she walks to Netherfield to visit Jane. Her willingness to travel on foot despite the muddy conditions demonstrates her independence and disregard for excessive concern about appearance. The garden and grounds also provide less formal spaces for character interaction. At Rosings Park and Pemberley, cultivated gardens and extensive grounds reflect the wealth and social position of their owners while also creating spaces away from crowded drawing rooms. Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy's encounters within and around these estates contribute to the gradual development of their relationship. The outdoor environment therefore contrasts with highly formal indoor spaces and allows more personal observation and interaction. The road and journey are also important in Elizabeth's experiences. Her movement between Longbourn, Netherfield, Rosings, and Pemberley physically connects different social environments and allows her to encounter different people and situations. Thus, outdoor symbols operate at both literal and conceptual levels. Walk, garden, park, grounds, and road refer literally to outdoor movement and spaces, while conceptually they can represent freedom, independence, reflection, social mobility, privacy, and changing relationships. Through these spaces, Austen connects characters' physical movement with their social and emotional experiences.

7. Symbol: Dress

In *Pride and Prejudice*, "dress" can be examined as a symbol of social identity, appearance, status, elegance, and self-presentation. According to Ogden and Richards' Semantic Triangle, "dress" is the symbol, the reference includes concepts such as fashion, respectability, social status, beauty, and appearance, while the referent consists of the actual clothing worn by characters in particular social situations. Austen refers to clothing through details such as gowns, caps, bonnets, ribbons, gloves, and fine dresses, particularly during balls and formal visits. Caroline Bingley's attention to fashionable dress reflects her concern with elegance and high social status, while Elizabeth Bennet's simpler and more natural appearance corresponds with her independent personality. Lydia Bennet, with her enthusiasm for fashionable social occasions, connects dress with youthful excitement and the desire for attention. Jane Bennet's elegant and modest appearance complements her characterization as gentle and respectable. Thus, dress operates at both literal and conceptual levels: literally, it refers to clothing such as gowns, bonnets, caps, ribbons, and gloves; conceptually, it can represent social identity, class,

femininity, respectability, beauty, and self-presentation. Through these clothing details, Austen shows how appearance contributes to the way characters are perceived and positioned within the social hierarchy of the novel.

8. Symbol: Food

Food and eating in *Pride and Prejudice* can be examined as symbols associated with hospitality, social interaction, wealth, domesticity, and social relationships. Austen frequently places food within meals, social visits, and gatherings, making it part of the social world of the novel. From the perspective of Ogden and Richards' Semantic Triangle, the symbol consists of food-related expressions such as *white soup*, *tea*, *cake*, *cold meat*, *fruit*, and *dinner*, while the reference involves the concepts associated with these expressions, including hospitality, social connection, domestic comfort, refinement, and social status. The referent consists of the actual food items and meal situations presented in the novel. Specific food references further demonstrate these associations. White soup, mentioned in connection with the Netherfield ball, is associated with the elaborate hospitality and fashionable social environment of the occasion. Tea is repeatedly connected with social visits and polite interaction, functioning as part of the conventions of domestic hospitality. Cake and fruit, particularly in scenes of hospitality at Pemberley, contribute to the impression of abundance and comfortable household provision. The broader terms dinner, breakfast, and supper establish the routine of domestic and social life and provide settings in which characters communicate, observe one another, and follow social conventions.

Table 1. Semantic Triangle Analysis of Major Symbols in *Pride and Prejudice*

SYMBOL	THOUGHT / REFERENCE	REFERENT
Pride	Excessive self-regard, self-respect, dignity, strong opinion of one's own importance, and social superiority	Mr. Darcy's attitudes and behavior, particularly his initial behavior toward Elizabeth and others
Prejudice	Preconceived judgment, bias, incomplete perception, and judgment formed without sufficient knowledge	Elizabeth Bennet's initial negative judgment and attitude toward Mr. Darcy
Marriage	Companionship, financial security, family responsibility, social advancement	The actual marriages and proposed marriages of Jane–Bingley, Elizabeth–Darcy, Charlotte–Collins, and Lydia–Wickham
Wealth	Financial security, economic power, property	The actual financial circumstances and incomes of characters such as Mr. Darcy, Mr. Bingley, and the Bennet family
Estates	Property, inheritance, social position, authority	The actual estates and properties: Pemberley, Longbourn, Netherfield

		Park, Rosings Park, Lucas Lodge, and Hunsford Parsonage
Outdoor Spaces	Freedom, independence, privacy, reflection, social interaction	Actual walks, gardens, parks, grounds, roads, and walking activities experienced by the characters
Dress	Fashion, respectability, social status, beauty, appearance, femininity, and self-presentation	The actual clothing worn by characters, such as gowns, caps, bonnets, ribbons, gloves, and fine dresses
Food	Hospitality, social connection, domestic comfort, refinement, domestic life, and economic circumstances	Actual food items and meal situations, such as white soup, tea, cake, fruit, dinner, breakfast, and supper

DISCUSSION

The findings of the present study show that selected symbols in *Pride and Prejudice* acquire meaning through the relationship between symbol, thought/reference, and referent, supporting the basic principles proposed by Ogden and Richards (1923). The analysis of *pride*, *prejudice*, *marriage*, *wealth*, *estates*, *outdoor spaces*, *dress*, and *food* demonstrates that Austen's language and literary elements often communicate meanings beyond their immediate literal references.

The present study is similar to Fischer-Starcke (2009), who demonstrated that systematic linguistic analysis of *Pride and Prejudice* can reveal meanings and patterns that may not be immediately apparent through traditional reading. Similarly, the present research shows that recurring words and textual elements such as *pride*, *prejudice*, *marriage*, and *wealth* acquire significant meanings through their contextual use. Both studies therefore demonstrate the usefulness of linguistic approaches for gaining a deeper understanding of Austen's novel. The study also agrees with Musoyeva (2025), who examined the word *heart* in *Pride and Prejudice* and found that its meaning changes according to context and contributes to emotional characterization. In the present study, symbols such as *marriage*, and *pride* similarly demonstrate contextual variation. Their meanings cannot be understood solely from dictionary definitions because their significance develops through characters, situations, and narrative context.

Despite these similarities, the present study differs from Fischer-Starcke (2009) because her research primarily uses corpus stylistics and quantitative examination of linguistic patterns, whereas the present study adopts a qualitative semantic approach based specifically on Ogden and Richards' Semantic Triangle. The focus here is not primarily on frequency but on the relationship between the linguistic symbol, the concept it evokes, and its contextual referent. The present study also differs from Musoyeva (2025), whose analysis concentrates specifically on the lexical item "heart" and its metaphorical and idiomatic meanings. In contrast, the present research examines a broader range of abstract and concrete symbols, including concepts such as *pride*, *prejudice*, *marriage*, and *wealth*, as well as physical and spatial elements such as *estates*,

dress, food, and outdoor spaces. This broader selection allows the study to investigate how both linguistic expressions and significant literary elements contribute to meaning in *Pride and Prejudice*. Overall, the findings support previous research showing that Austen's language is rich in contextual and stylistic meaning, while extending existing work by applying Ogden and Richards' Semantic Triangle systematically to selected symbols throughout the novel.

CONCLUSION

The present study examined the construction of meaning in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* through Ogden and Richards' Semantic Triangle of Meaning (1923). The study focused on selected symbols, including *pride, prejudice, marriage, wealth, estates, outdoor spaces, dress, and food*. Each symbol was examined through the three elements of the Semantic Triangle: symbol, thought/reference, and referent. The analysis demonstrates that meaning in the novel is not restricted to the literal meaning of individual words or objects. Instead, symbols acquire broader meanings through their relationship with characters, situations, social conditions, and narrative context. For example, *pride* and *prejudice* develop complex meanings through Darcy and Elizabeth's changing perceptions, while *marriage* represents different concepts for different characters, including love, security, and social advancement. Similarly, *Pemberley* functions not only as a physical estate but also evokes wealth, status, heritage, refinement, and Darcy's changing characterization. The analysis also shows that concrete and material elements can contribute to meaning alongside abstract concepts. Symbols such as *dress, walk, garden, and food* can evoke ideas of social identity, freedom, hospitality, interaction, and social conventions when examined within their specific contexts. Therefore, the Semantic Triangle provides a useful framework for demonstrating how linguistic and literary elements participate in the construction of meaning. The findings are consistent with previous linguistic and stylistic studies of *Pride and Prejudice*, particularly research emphasizing the importance of contextual meaning and Austen's linguistic choices. However, the present study extends this work by systematically applying the Symbol–Thought/Reference–Referent relationship to a diverse selection of symbols in the novel. In conclusion, the study demonstrates that *Pride and Prejudice* can be productively examined from a semantic perspective. Austen's use of words, expressions, places, objects, and social concepts contributes to the representation of character, relationships, social hierarchy, and major themes. The Semantic Triangle therefore offers a valuable linguistic framework for understanding how meaning is constructed and interpreted within literary discourse.

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