Summary
Discourse Perspective in Lyrical Poetry: An Essay on the Genre Grammar

The book raises issues concerning foreground-background division of lyrical discourse. While many authors consider foreground in lyrical poetry to be marked by metaphors, comparisons and other types of figurative speech, as well as by departures from linguistic and/or literary conventions, there exists a more fundamental and far-reaching compositional divide indicated as far back as in 1977 by the Russian literary scholar Tamara Silman. In her view, the generic nature of lyrical poetry consists in that, first, it presents some experience open to the lyrical hero, and next, the latter one discovers some important truth about the world and/or oneself. As far as this 'wisdom' part of the text is apparently more significant, and the 'empirical' fragments play a subordinate role, the former may be thought of as the foreground (focus) of lyrical discourse, the latter ones being backgrounded.

The book is intended to explore in what ways this basic distinction manifests itself in the linguistic matter of poetic texts. The material is mostly drawn from the Russian poetry (A. Pushkin, M. Lermontov, F. Tyutchev, A. Fet, O. Mandelstam, M. Cvetaeva, B. Pasternak, A. Tarkovsky); however, much verse translated into Russian from Polish, English, German, Spanish, Portuguese, and Japanese is also closely inspected.

The book comprises 7 chapters.

In Chapter 1, "Discourse perspective of lyrical poem and discourse relations", it is shown that focus tends to be richer in terms of its discourse relations, i.e. to be linked to non-focal fragments of the poem with more such relations than the latter ones are linked to each other. To be sure, sometimes the reverse situation arises, the focus being distinguished by the fact that its discourse relations are less numerous than those of any other part of the text.

Chapter 2, "Discourse structure of lyrical poem and temporal reference", demonstrates how focus may be marked by temporal reference different from that to be found elsewhere. Since focus tends to be a discovery of a significant truth, the best predictable option is, of course, its having gnomic reference, or at least considerably extended time frame. On the other hand, this choice is extremely trivial, hence either some detrivialization techniques are called for, or other possibilities used to make the time reference of the focus different from that of empirical fragments. The relevant mechanisms are closely scrutinized.

Chapter 3, "Discourse perspective of lyrical text and its referential structure", shows that focus may be marked by its referential alienation from the preceding text. Strategies employed for such an alienation are discussed at some length, the most prominent one being the use of lexical nouns for already activated referents, i.e. presentation of well-known referents as discourse new ones.

In Chapter 4, "Discourse perspective of lyrical text and the point of view", it is argued that focus may be marked by disharmony between the cognitive stance of the lyrical hero and the reader, or sometimes by disharmony between that of lyrical hero and the 'external' addressee. Insofar as in focus some significant truth must be discovered, it implies two consecutive states of mind on the part of the relevant cognitive subject, which in the general case does not hold of empirical fragments. In the view of such an aspectual complexity of focus, here it is much harder for the reader or 'external' addressee to mentally follow the lyrical I, which quite often results in that certain pieces of information already known to the latter turn out to be totally new for the recipient(s) of poem.

Chapter 5, "Composition of lyrical text and 'density' of the verse line", discusses a generous variety of phenomena whose common denominator is focus' tendency towards being more informative than empirical fragments, or towards emphasizing its high informative load in ways untypical of the latter ones. The most productive marking devices in this domain are as follows. (1) If the discourse relations tying a given fragment to the foregoing text are less predictable – and hence more 'informative' – than the earlier established ones, it is very likely that the relevant fragment is foregrounded. (2) The discourse chunk containing the greatest number of discourse new entities is likely to be foregrounded. (3) The part of discourse that comprises the greatest variety of types of linguistic information, or the part where differentiation of their types is underscored the most emphatically, tends to be the focus of the poem. (4) Foregrounded are usually those fragments of the poem that modify, in some way or other, the interpretation of previous ones – because such an ability may be viewed as enriching typological diversity of the relevant information. (5) In languages with free word order, inversions of different kind amplify the sense of sentence, wherefore marked word order is more characteristic of focus. (6) As far as in focus some transcendental insight should be normally gained, here the mind of the lyrical hero strongly tends to acquire introverted, rather than extraverted orientation – which finds its direct reflection in the linguistic structure of relevant poems. At the same time, it is argued that introverted orientation of the relevant fragment makes it in a sense more informative. (7) If a fragment of lyrical poem has unordinary argumentative force, hence extending the space of possibilities in the domain of argumentative relations and thus considerably changing our view of the world, then such a fragment is a good candidate for being the focus. (8) *Ceteris paribus*, the fragment with the most elaborate structure of spatial and/or temporal relations has the best chances for being the focus. (9) In the view of the fact that metaphors, similes and other tropes may differ significantly and qualitatively in terms of their informativeness, their distribution across the poem may serve a compositional role, the most informative ones being more at home in focus.

Chapter 6, "On some less prototypical ways of marking discourse perspective in lyrical poem", analyses a range of relatively rare foregrounding strategies. The most interesting among them are as follows. (1) As far as focus tends to be located towards the end of the poem, every suggestion to the effect that the text is completed can be thought of as a focus marking device. It is often the case that some semantic and/or structural theme is developed throughout the text, its completion coinciding with focus. (2) Since it is in focus where lyrical discourse should fully succeed in its strive for harmony, focus is also the most probable place for the principle of golden section to be most pronouncedly at work. (To be sure, this principle must be substantially loosened for analysis of poetry). (3) In focus, the lyrical hero's conscience is more active than elsewhere. Among other things, here reference to causal relations is more probable, such relations being to a much extent the product of our subjective

mind. (4) Greater inner integrity of the lyrical hero's conscience is also a hallmark of focus. (5) Because the empirical part of lyrical text plays a subordinate role vis-à-vis its focus, it is quite commonplace that in the latter the relevant experience undergoes some devaluation, being declared insignificant, (half-)fictitious, etc. (6) In a sense paradoxically, since the vocation of focus is to reveal a notable truth about life, here the lyrical hero's conscience also tends to recede to background, as if becoming less important and less goal-oriented. (7) Some of the time, focus is marked in a paradoxical manner, by its apparent inability to display characteristic properties of empirical fragments.

Chapter 7, "On the phenomenon of parcellation in the foreground of lyrical discourse", discusses the situation where various portions of focus are marked by different means, as well as deeper reasons rendering this type of marking ubiquitous.

In conclusion, the main results of the study are summarized. The most prominent ones are that (1) although the linguistic mechanisms recruited for marking of foreground in lyrical discourse show a huge variation, most of them may be subsumed under the notion of informativeness-increasing strategy; (2) their employment has an important (if not readily detectable) secondary function of transcending the language beyond its usual confines; (3) the foregrounding mechanisms being at work in lyrical poetry differ considerably, and in some cases drastically, from those employed in narrative texts, which requires us to seriously revise the overall theory of foregrounding phenomena.