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Reinventing Epistolarity in Cecelia Ahern's "Love, Rosie"

**Epistolārā žanra pārveide Sesilijas Ahernas romānā "Līdz
varavīksnei"**

BACHELOR THESIS

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ANOTĀCIJA

Bakalaura darbs ar nosaukumu *Epistolārā žanra pārveide Sesilijas Ahernas romānā "Līdz varavīksnei"* pēta jaunāko mediju komunikācijas līdzekļu: e-pasta un tērzēšanas ziņu ietekmi uz epistolāro žanru Sesilijas Ahernas romānā. Lai prezentētu pētījumu, tas ir sadalīts četrās nodaļās. Pirmās nodaļas mērķis ir iezīmet būtiskākos noveles elementus, kā arī stāstījuma pamatpaņēmienu. Šajā nodaļā, atsevišķas apakšnodaļas ietvaros, tiek apspriestas epistolāra žanra detaļas. Nākamajā nodaļā veidots pārskats pār cilvēku komunikācijas kultūras attīstību, kas veidojusies caur mutisko, rakstisko, drukas posmu, un bija pirms mūsdienu elektroniskā posma. Trešā un ceturtā nodaļa ir veltīta Sesilijas Ahernas noveles analīzei, ņemot vērā īpatnības, kas minētas iepriekšējās nodaļās. Papildus tiek izmantoti slavenu teorētiskās kultūras kritiķu, kā arī valodnieku viedokļi, lai pasniegtu Bakalaura darbu un sasniegtu izvirzīto mērķi.

Key words: dialogs, komunikācija, tērzēšana, e-pasts, epistolārais žanrs

ABSTRACT

The following Bachelor Paper *Reinventing Epistolarity in Cecelia Ahern's "Love, Rosie"* deals with the study of how new media of communication such as email and chat messages in Cecelia Ahern's novel helps to reinvent epistolary genre. To present this research, the paper is divided into four main chapters. The focus of the first chapter is to illustrate essential elements of the novel as well as some basic narrative techniques. Within this chapter as separate subchapter elements of epistolarity are discussed. The next chapter deals with overview on the development of human communication culture that has gone through oral, written, print stage that preceded the present electronic stage. The third and the fourth chapter are devoted to the analysis of Cecelia Ahern's novel according to peculiarities mentioned in the previous chapters. In addition, some theoretical literary critics as well as linguist's opinions are used to present Bachelor Paper to reach the main goal.

Key words: Dialogue, communication, chat, email, epistolarity

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INTRODUCTION

The history of the novel as a literary genre dates back to the antiquity when it was known as *antique novel* (e.g. *Daphnis and Chloe* by Longus, *The Satyricon* by Gaius Petronius). The origin of the term novel lies in the medieval literature, the period when chivalric romance experienced its peak of popularity (e.g. *Tristan and Isolde*, *Parzival* by Wolfram von Eschenbach). In addition, in the period between the seventeenth and the nineteenth century the novel as a long narrative started gaining popularity, and in order to better present their thoughts and feelings authors started experimenting with different forms and types of the novel. Thus, the novel in letters started appearing. Letters as part of narrative had been known in the history of literature before, yet in the novel letters began to flourish only in the mid-eighteenth century.

Alongside, the culture of human communication has been developing too. The oral, written, and the print stage of communication has preceded the contemporary electronic one. The electronic stage with its Internet and computer-mediated communication gave new possibilities to keep and maintain communication. Letter writing has also received a new impulse. Thus, it is possible to claim that a new language variety appeared.

The peculiarity of the Internet discourse is most frequently found in the electronic mails and instant messages. The following research is created in order to meet the principal goal of this Paper, namely, the analysis of Cecelia Ahern's novel *Love, Rosie* that is written as epistolary fiction in the form of emails and instant messages. *Love, Rosie* by Cecelia Ahern is a love story of two people, Alex and Rosie, who know each other since early childhood but are torn apart since Alex's father gets a job miles away. Young people's friendship is tested by time and circumstances before they recognize that they have some deeper and stronger than simple friendly feelings to each other.

Thus, the focus of this research is on the integration of the new type of communication into the epistolary novel. Therefore, the research question is what kinds of electronic communication are integrated and how it is done in Cecelia Ahern's novel *Love, Rosie*.

To answer the question of the Bachelor paper, the following enabling objectives are set:

1. To review the theory on the topic of communication on the example of two communication models, namely, Shannon and Weaver's and the narrative model of communication.
2. To study and analyse the available information on peculiarities of oral and written discourse used in such electronic means of communication as email and instant message.

3. To make research on the characteristic features of epistolary fiction.
4. To apply theoretical data in the analysis of Cecelia Ahern's epistolary novel *Love, Rosie*
5. To draw relevant conclusions

The following methods are used to develop the theoretical and practical parts of this Bachelor paper, and they are:

- Theoretical method (a study and analysis of the relevant theory and information generalizing and drawing relevant conclusion on communication and epistolary novel);
- Empirical method (text analysis of Cecelia Ahern's novel *Love, Rosie*)

In the paper, in order to reach the main goal various literary opinions and criticisms are applied, for instance Altman's *Epistolarity: Approaches to a Form* (1982), Abbot's *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative* (2002), Dancygier's *The Language of Stories: A Cognitive Approach* (2012), Wright, L., Hope's, J. (2005) *Stylistics: A practical Coursebook*, Crystal's (2002) *Language and Internet*, Fiske's (1991) *Introduction to communication* and some others.

The Paper consists of five chapters and subchapters accordingly. The focus of the first chapter is on models of communication. Further, syntactical and narrative structures are discussed as suggested by Laura Wright and Jonathan Hope (1996). The next chapter is devoted to the study of human communication culture with a particular emphasis on significant aspects of electronic discourse and a special attention on peculiar features of oral and written discourses as presented by David Crystal in his seminal *Language and the Internet* (2002) and *Internet Linguistics* (2011). In the third chapter the issue of the novel in letters, its history and distinctive features are discussed.

The framework created in the first three theoretical chapters is further used in the analysis of Cecelia Ahern's epistolary novel *Love, Rosie* in the last chapter.

1. THE IDEA OF COMMUNICATION AND BASIC MODELS OF COMMUNICATION

There exist various models of communication; on the example of narrative and linguistic models of communication (the latter is very similar to Shannon and Weaver's model) the idea of communication is discussed in the following chapter. Yet, before speaking about the above mentioned models, there is an attempt to define communication.

“Communication is one of those human activities that everyone recognizes but few can define satisfactory” (Fiske, 1991:1 quoted in Thompson, 2003: 9). At the same time, Fiske emphasises that “communication is too often taken for granted when it should be taken to pieces” (Fiske, 1991: 8 quoted in Thompson, 2003: 11). Thus, communication is one of the most important and effective ways how people share not only their experience and knowledge but also plans and emotions, including such strong feeling as love. In this regard, communication can be defined as “social interaction through messages” (Fiske, 1990: 2 quoted in Thompson, 2003: 11). *Social* aspect of communication is very significant since it “involves transmitting not only information from one person to another, but also in communicating a relationship” (Thompson, 2003: 10). *Interaction* is another equally important element of communication, and the third aspect is *message* that “can be sent and received even if a person communicating had no intention to do so” (Ibid: 11). As a result, communication is a social process which involves sending and receiving messages, but besides there are other aspects and elements that are included in this process, and they are discussed further on the examples of Shannon and Weaver's model and narrative model of communication.

As it has been mentioned, scholars may find it difficult to define communication due to different reasons. One of the main reasons is that communication involves such an idea as meaning that can be viewed twofold.

On the one hand, we have meaning in the sense of intentions. When I mean X, for example, this refers to the fact that I intended X, or to convey X. On the other hand, meaning can refer to interpretation, for example, if I ask the question, *What do you mean?* This can be translated: *How should I interpret what you have said?* (Thompson, 2003: 10 [online]).

The difficulty to define communication can be explained by the fact that “our actions and choices are based not only simply on the objective world out there, but rather on our subjective interpretation of that objective world” (Ibid). Consequently, it is possible to claim

that communication plays not only significant but also integral part in people's lives. Moreover, it is important to remember that communication involves both speakers' intention, what they want to say, and listeners' understanding and interpretation of what is said to them; it is referred to not only to spoken but also written communication.

1.1 Shannon and Weaver's Model of Communication

In order to understand communication better and following Fiske's idea that communication should be taken to pieces Shannon and Weaver's model of communication is presented further on. Shannon and Weaver's (1949) model of communication (see Figure 1.1 The basic model of communication) is one of the most popular and frequently mentioned models in the context of communication. At the same time, it should be pointed out that this model not only provides general idea of communication but also influenced various disciplines, linguistics included.

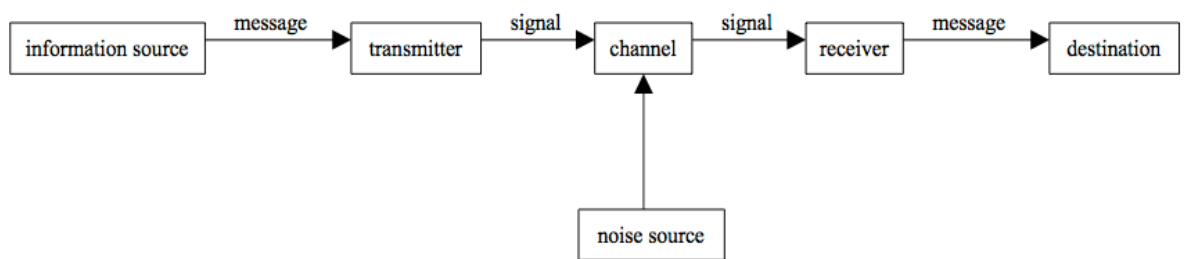


Figure 1.1 The basic model of communication

There are three primary important elements. “First, there is the transmitter – for example, the person initiating communication. Second, there is the receiver, the person being communicating with” (Thompson, 2003: 12-13). In between of these two elements there is the third element which is referred to as ‘noise source’. There are also other secondary supplementary elements (information source, channel, destination that have the same functions as primary key elements). Weaver sums up the idea of his model as follows:

The information source selects a desired message out of a set of possible messages. [...] The transmitter changes [encodes] this message into signal which is sent over the communication channel to the receiver. The receiver is a sort of inverse transmitter, changing the transmitted signal back into a message, and handing this message on the destination (*Easy numbers: Shakespeare and the definition of information*, [online])

This model of communication illustrates the way message passes from addresser to addressee, from point A to point B, and sometimes there is an obstacle on its way in the form of different kind that is defined by common term ‘noise’. Shannon and Weaver’s model of communication is considered to be the first one and the most popular models, having a number of advantages, but at the same time it has been very much criticized because of its too simple structure. Moreover, before proceeding further on, some words should be said about linguistic communication that has certain similarities with Shannon and Weaver’s model. From linguistic point of view communication can be analysed as transportation of message from speaker to the listener “a transfer of given thoughts and feelings were independent of and prior to the ‘encoding’ and ‘decoding’ process in communication” (*Linguistic Communication*, [online 3]). This view is related to the idea that linguistic expressions are objects with certain meaning. In communication process “speaker sends a fixed meaning to a hearer via linguistic expression associated with that meaning” (Ibid). It has been already mentioned that communication can fail “due to subjective errors since the meanings are objectively right there in the words” (Ibid). Besides, this model of communication fails to take account of some of the issues mentioned further on.

Communication can be also viewed as network (see *Figure 1.2 Networks of Communication*) where each cell has its own function and meaning. In this regard, communication is very closely connected with culture. “The term culture can be used to describe any shared of meanings – for example, when an organization develops its own distinctive organizational culture.

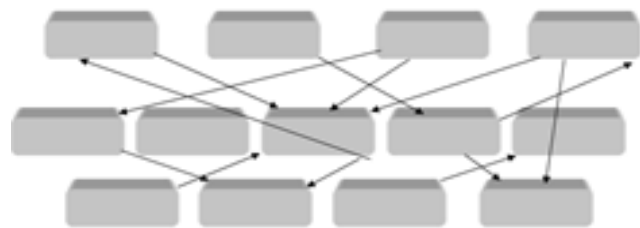


Figure 1.2 Networks of Communication

The significance of this for communication is twofold” (Thompson, 2003: 15). On the one had, by using signs and symbols, culture can communicate with each other. Yet, on the other hand, by using definite symbols and signs cultures are understood only within particular culture group(s). “For example, particular words and/or gestures can have different meanings in different cultural contexts” (Ibid). This particular emphasis on culture helped to develop cultural studies that study the way of life of definite group of people (their morals and beliefs) and how the later influences their communication. “A key concept in cultural studies is that of ideology. This refers to sets of ideas which become very powerful in their ability to influence the thoughts and actions of individuals and groups of people” (Ibid). What is more, as it will

be mentioned further on, with the development of human communication culture nowadays people are able to share their thoughts and discuss any topic they are interested in with people all around the world without leaving their home town. The Internet access is only what they need. Yet, continuing with the concept of ideology, it is also closely related with the idea of discourse. These terms very often are used interchangeably since they have much in common. Yet, Thompson points out (2003: 17) there is “one significant difference that discourse can be seen to be much more closely focused on language”. It is no coincidence that very often differences in discourse are reflected in the use of language. Nevertheless, the next chapter focuses on the way how words and clauses are linked together in the coherent narrative to form the story. Yet, before the story reaches its reader, it has to pass various stages that are further on discussed on the example of the narrative model of communication.

1.2 Narrative Model of Communication

It is impossible to think of communication without narrative. “Narrative is any verbal and nonverbal interpretation which is arranged logically to generate a meaning. The concept [narrative] upholds the idea that communication happens between a narrator and the listener in the form of a story” (*Communication theory*, [online 4]). This concept finds its roots in the oldest form of communication, namely storytelling. Since early times people experienced the need of communication, by recounting events from their lives. Oral tradition of telling events from daily life later found its reflection also in private letter correspondence. Moreover, authors of literary works borrowed this tradition and applied it in different literary genres such as, for instance, epistolary novel. Yet, before focusing on the essential features of epistolary novel, some words of narrative model of communication have to be said.

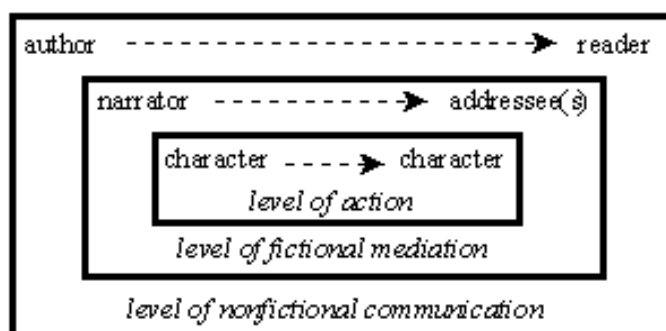


Figure 1.3 Narrative Model of Communication

As it is shown in *Figure 1.3*, “literary narrative communication involves the interplay of at least three communicative levels. Each level of communication comes with its own set of addressers and addressees” (Manfred, [online]). What is more, this model of communication “distinguishes between the levels of action, fictional mediation, and nonfictional communication, and establishes useful points of reference for key terms like *author*, *reader*, *narrator*, and *narratee/addressee*” (Ibid). On the first nonfictional level of communication, there are a real author and a reader. As Manfred ([online]) claims the “author and reader do not communicate in the text itself, their level of communication is an ‘extratextual’ one”. Nevertheless, there are also ‘intertextual’ levels of communication that is described as “narrative mediation (or narrative discourse)”. This level of communication is frequently found in the works of literature where the narrator tells the story addressing it to either to another character of the novel or to an unknown addressee. Here it is important to point out that the implied; Wayne C. Booth (1961) also describes the implied author as the real author’s *second self*, while the audience to which the narrator addresses the narrative is called narratee. “Moreover, the narratee helps the implied reader to understand the storyline through a sequence of flashbacks as recollection of memory which helps the implied reader to absorb the memory recollection” (Question, [online 5]). The communication between characters happens on the level of action. Manfred Jahn ([online]) “call[s] this latter level the ‘level of action’ because [he is] assuming that speech acts, (Austin 1962 [1955], Searle 1974 [1969] are not not categorically different from other acts”.

Considering the model of literary narrative communication, it is possible to recognize some similarities with Shannon’s model (see Figure 1.1). For instance, in the narrative model the role of either author/implied author or narrator one may recognize main functions of transmitter; while narratee has the same functions as the receiver. At the same time narrative can be compared with the element of noise in Shannon’s model of communication since it is constructed in such a way that any receiver/reader of the text can interpret in his/her own way since the message that conveyed in the narrative is interpreted differently according to reader’s experience. As it has been mentioned earlier, everything depends on people’s subjective interpretation of the objective world. Thus, the narrative model of communication is an example of communication that takes place in major cases in literary works that become the message the authors want to convey to their readers.

1.3 Syntax and Stylistic of Narrative

Narrative can be either oral or written kind of conveying the message. “The telling of stories, both those that are fictional and those that recount past personal experience, seems to play a major role in interpersonal interaction in all societies...” (*Developing Narrative Structure*, 1991:29). There are many different definitions of narrative; yet, there is one common feature of them all is that narrative is “the representation of events, consisting of story and narrative discourse, story is an event or sequence of events (the action); and narrative discourse is those events as represented” (Abbott, 2002: 16). Besides, there are multiple clauses in a narrative. Without going in careful details, “a clause is a part of sentence. There are two main types of clauses: independent (main clauses) and dependent (subordinate clauses)” (Clauses, [online]). The principal distinguishing feature between dependent and independent clause is that the later “is a complete sentence. It contains a subject and a verb and expresses a complete thought in both context and meaning” (Ibid). Moreover, “when noun and verb phrases function together, they form clauses. The simplest types of [sentence] consist of a noun phrase, a verb phrase and an optional third element (labelled as X)” (Wright, 2005: 70-71) (see Figure 1.4 Elements of Sentence)

NP (...) **VP (...)** **X (...)**

Figure 1.4 Elements of Sentence

“The first noun phrase is usually the subject (the person or thing which does the verb): the X element will be an object/complement (O/C) or it will be adverbial (Av) element – a clause or phrase which tells us something about the how, where or when of some aspect of the clause, and which can be moved around or deleted (Ibid).

Furthermore, “Cohesion describes the linguistic relationships between those clauses, that is, how the surface linguistic elements of a text are linked to each other in order to create a cohesive whole” (*Developing Narrative Structure*, 1991:30 [online]). Additionally, “Literary texts often seek coherence by more or less elaborate ways of pretending to be other texts – reproducing their typical patterns of vocabulary, syntax, or even physical form. Thus, we have diary, or the use of a series of text types ...” (Wright, Hope, 2005:129). Moreover, information that is presented in these clauses has some order: “things we already know from previous clauses, or things we can take for granted” (Ibid) are placed first, “with new information held over for as long as possible” (Ibid). This sequence helps the readers to move from what they already know to what they don’t know. Schematically it looks like the

example in **Figure 1.5** where **S** elements present information, and **X** elements supplements with additional new information. There is tendency when readers want to know more with each portion of new information than it is introduced.



Figure 1.5 Example of Elements in Clauses

“As clauses are put together to form texts, there is a natural tendency for elements which are new /X/ large to reappear in the following clause as given /S/” (Ibid) as it is illustrated in the example above. In addition, the above example illustrates how “information structure function[s] to give texts coherence and cohesion”. Within each sentence there are different types of phrases that are connected with each other. Without different types of clauses and phrases, there are also different stylistic devices used in the literary texts. For example, such stylistic device as ellipsis or elliptical construction (the omission of a word or words) also helps the author to create the narrative. It refers to constructions in which words are left out of a sentence but the sentence can still be understood. “Ellipsis helps us to avoid a lot of redundancy” (*Stylistic Devices – Ellipsis*, [online])

Continuing with literary text narrative, it is obvious fact that speech and writing are two completely different things.

Speech is transient, unplanned; it cannot be recalled and revised. Writing is fixed, considered; it can be recast or struck out. But there are differences of structure as well as medium and context – sentences exist only on the page, the cohesive links within conversations linking topics may extend over many minutes, some grammatical structures favour one form of language over the other (Wright, Hope, and 2005:129).

Nevertheless, the authors of contemporary fiction assimilate different elements and features found in the oral speech - “from dialect to complex patterns of grammatical organization” (Ibid) - in order to add verisimilitude to their works. Hence, the focus of attention of the next chapter is to overview the human communication culture that undergone a variety of stages, paying special attention on the development of letters since letters as part of epistolarity is one of such literary genres where both features of writing and speech find its representation. Letters become important part of Cecelia Ahern’s narrative.

2. HUMAN COMMUNICATION CULTURE: FROM ORAL TILL ELECTRONIC WORD

It has been already mentioned that communication is difficult to define since it may be viewed differently. Communication has been viewed from both the narrative viewpoint and the way how a message goes from the addresser to the addressee, from the author to the reader. Yet, it can be also “defined as transmission or exchange of ideas. From classical rhetoric comes the idea that communication can be studied and cultivated as a practical art of discourse” (Encyclopaedia of Rhetoric, 2006 [online]).

Proceeding with the same issue, effective communication can be established both orally and in written form. Sometimes the division is blurred; thus, with rapid development of computer-mediated communication (CMC) scholars started meditating whether electronic communication is an oral or written discourse. Hence, the focus of this chapter is on the development of human communication culture that has undergone various stages, paying special attention on the development of the novel in letters.

With the Internet and its services entering people’s life, scholars’ interest in computer-mediated communication is provoked by its enormous capacity. The Internet has a considerable influence upon people’s life since it offers principally new methods to share data and feelings alike. Besides, the rapid technological development that occurs in the new medium helps in building and maintaining contacts between people.

Experienced participants in CMC claim that e-mail, newsgroup, Internet Relay, Chat, Multiple Users Domains, the World Wide Web and other CMC devices radically reconfigure patterns of social interaction. Some go so far as to assert that CMC will revolutionize social life and liberate it from the principles and processes that shape offline relationships. Others express fears of the potential effects of the new communication technologies saying ‘cyberporn’ and violent propaganda will poison the use of CMC (Jonsson, 1998 [online]).

All in all, with CMC entering people’s life, it becomes possible to claim that a new stage of human communication culture has begun. Yet, in order to understand this stage, some words about the previous stages should be said.

The culture of human communication has gone through oral, written and print stage that preceded the present electronic stage. However, “[t]he cultures are not to be thought of as solely chronological, mutually exclusive, historical periods, since oral cultures for instance still exist in vast parts of the world” (Ibid). In his article *Changing contexts of communication* (1995) McMurdo (quoted in Jonsson [online]) states that during the oral stage “the storage,

transmission and dissemination of linguistic information occurred face-to-face and the sense of social space was defined by range of collective ‘earshot’”.

In the so-called written cultural period things changed; it became possible to have distant communication instead of face-to-face one. Invention of writing gave plenty of opportunities like sending long orders as well as different instructions over longer or shorter distances. No matter whether it might be a hieroglyphic writing on papyrus or today’s letter “the written word remained constant over years, decades and centuries” (Jonsson, [online]). With new print culture spreading, wider audience gets access to the written word. What is more, printing as such increased the effectiveness of written communication. “Spelling and vocabulary changed more slowly and language became more consistent in their usages. More than anything, however, print had the effect of dissociating age from wisdom – a feature we often ascribe to the information technology of today” (Jonsson, [online]).

Electronic communication culture entered people’s life in the middle of the twentieth century. Yet, in the late 60’s the Advanced Research Project Agency Network (ARPANET) created the opportunity of communication between computers in geographically remote areas. With the time passing, client-server protocols developed and, the ARPANET has changed into the well-known Internet today. There are minor differences in functioning of the two networks. Only programmers can distinguish between them, yet it is not actually the object of research of this Paper.

Nevertheless, continuing with the human communication culture, letter writing has always been the principal means of communication used among people over centuries. There are various kinds of letters, but the private letter writing has been one of the most popular, becoming even a separate literary genre which is talked further on in separate chapter while in the next chapter the distinguishing features of oral and written discourse are discussed. It is important to draw this distinguishing line because with the Internet and its facilities entering people’s life, the border between oral and written becomes less distinguishable.

2.1 Distinguishing Features of Oral and Written Discourse

Nowadays “some of the services provided in the global communication network are intended to enable instant, interactive sharing of ideas and information (communication services). These include electronic mail (email), Internet Relay Chat (IRC) and Multiple User Domains (Muds)” (Johnsson, [online]). Since they combine peculiarities of electronic discourse, the main distinguishing features of oral and written discourse are presented. These peculiarities

later are used to analyse Cecelia Ahern's work of literature. David Crystal recognized to be one of the world's foremost authority on language, has done an extensive research in this field. For that reason, the object of this chapter is to study distinctive characteristics of oral and written discourse based on his findings.

According to David Crystal (2011:17), "Speech is time bound, dynamic, and transient; it is part of an interaction in which both participants are usually present, and the speaker has a particular addressee (or several addresses) in mind" whereas writing is described as "space bound, static, and permanent" (Ibid). It is explained by the fact that there is distance between reader and writer.

Time lag is another distinguishing feature. There is no time lag with the speech. Moreover, spontaneity in which speech frequently takes place "make[s] it difficult to engage in complex advance planning. The pressure to think while talking promotes looser construction, repetition, rephrasing, and comment clauses (such as *as you know, you see, mind you*)" (Crystal, 2011:17). While in writing there is such a time lag that allows close reading for several times, layout and content organization.

Besides, there are definite words and constructions which are common for speech, especially informal, for instance, contracted forms (e.g. *isn't*).

Lengthy coordinate sentences are normal, and often of considerable complexity. There is nonsense vocabulary (e.g. *thingamajig*), obscenity, and slang, some of which may appear as graphic euphemism (f***). Writing displays different characteristics, such as multiple instances of subordination in the same sentence, elaborately balanced syntactic patterns, and the long sentences [are common for written discourse] (Crystal, 2011:18).

Moreover, some words should be also said about mistakes. In speech if a mistake is made, it cannot be withdrawn like it is done in writing. Nevertheless, "interruptions and overlapping speech are normal [occurrence]" (Crystal, 2011:19) that frequently happen in the informal discourse.

Hence, before the age of electronic communication entered people's life, speech and writing were two different types of communication that have more distinguishing features than similarities. With computer-mediated communication becoming an integral part of contemporary life, the border between oral and written discourse became less distinguishable. The focus of the next chapter is on the way how electronic discourse is represented in asynchronous and synchronous modes in the relation to written and oral communication that.

2.2 Peculiarities of Electronic Discourse

This subchapter attempts to study peculiarities of informal electronic discourse presented in the Emails and two types of chats both synchronous and asynchronous. The outcomes of this chapter are later applied in the analysis of Cecelia Ahern's novel *Love, Rosie* that is written in the form of not only traditional letter correspondence but also electronic letters and chats.

2.2.1. Electronic Mail Correspondence

Human communication culture has gone through various stages of development. Today people live in the electronic age that provides new opportunities for communication. Since the object of the present research, namely, Cecelia Ahern's novel *Love, Rosie* is represented mainly in the form of Email and instant message exchange, this subchapter deals with the study of particularities of these forms of electronic communication.

To start with, the term email is "used to describe a message sent electronically from one computer to another via a network" (Muniandy, [online]). The email can be either like a formal document letter, a memo or informal note message. It can also be written offline and kept in a paper format. Since the email is an asynchronous type of communication ("the interchange between people may be spread over a period of several days" (Jonsson, [online])), it is often compared to traditional letter writing. At the same time, email writing can turn into synchronous communication when it "turns [into] instant messaging" (Ibid). Moreover, the electronic mail has another feature, namely, more than one addressee may receive the message at a time.

The instant and unpretentious nature of electronic mail encourages immediacy and spontaneity. In electronic mail discussions messages are often sent and replied to with great ease and without much careful consideration. E-mail messages are usually informal and often short, quickly exchanged notes with an obvious resemblance to verbal conversation (Mc Murdo, 1995: 145 as quoted in Jonsson, [online]).

Therefore, it is possible to say that the email shares features of both traditional letter writing and instant messaging (to be discussed in the next subchapter).

As David Crystal admits (2001:94) "At one level, it is extremely easy to define the linguistic identity of e-mail as a variety of language; at another level, it is surprisingly difficult". There is one definite and standardized structure (see Figure 2.1 Structure of Email) applied in the email software over the last twenty years.



Figure 2.1 Structure of Email

Crystal also believes (Ibid) that it is easy to analyse the Email because “in the same way we can analyse the functionally distinct elements that constitute a newspaper article (in terms of headline, body copy, illustration, caption, etc) or a specific paper (in terms of title, authorship [...]), so we can see in E-mails a fixed sequence of discourse elements.” At the same time the difficult part lies “in the range of opinions about the purpose of email, as a communication medium, and about the kind of language which is the most appropriate and effective for that purpose (Ibid).”

On the one hand, it is easy to speak about the structure of the email since all the programmes have almost the same structure. On the other hand, because of the interest of this part of the paper is to study peculiarities of electronic communication in emails, it is difficult, because “the body of the Email [is] viewed in terms of optional” (Crystal: 99). There are various ways how the body of the letter starts, with or without greeting (or salutation, opening), and what is followed by a farewell (or signature, closing). What is more, there are definite electronic messages which do not have greeting or/and farewell. Public announcements and junk mails according to David Crystal belong to this category of emails. Yet, there are emails within institutions that “can be mainly used for the sending of information and instructions to all members of staff, in the manner of traditional memo, so that a personalized greeting is unnecessary” (Ibid: 100).

The next feature is also common for informal correspondence “between people who know each other, greetingless messages are usually promptly sent responses, where the responder sees the message as the second part of a two-part interaction (an *adjacency-pair*) for which an introductory greeting is inappropriate” (Crystal, 2001:100). In addition, it is

more likely that the reply will contain either a greeting or an apology phrase for the delay if it took long time to reply. Even if the addressers use a greeting, they have most frequently used a definite greeting formula, for example, “*Dear David*, followed by *David*, then *Hi David*, confirming the general view about the medium as a means of informal interaction between people who know each other” (Crystal, 2001:101). Furthermore, the placement of this opening does not differ much from the one used in the traditional letter, namely, it is placed at the head of the message and there is space between greeting and main body of the letter.

In the case of farewell, there are just few possibilities for variation: a pre-closing formula (e.g. *Best wishes*) and the identification (ID) of the sender. “Most impersonal messages end with both elements present, and the influence of traditional letter-writing is evident in the overwhelming tendency to place each element on a separate line, usually spaced away from the message body” (Crystal, 2001:102). There are also other formulae taken from traditional letter-writing, the formulae with the same range of functions (affection, gratitude, expectation, communicative intent, and so on): *Lots of love*, *Thanks for everything*, *See you soon*, *Let me know if this isn't clear dear*, etc. What concerns IDs, they can be inserted either automatically or manually.

First name, initial letter(s), and first name followed by surname (or vice versa in languages where the ordering conventions differ). Titles, qualifications, and other ‘letters after the name’ may be present, depending on the formality of the message, and these may also be a status or origin identifier on a separate line (Crystal, 2001:103).

The use of initialisms, either the initial letter of just the first name or the both first name and surname, are common for both formal and informal letters “even between people who do not know each other well” (Crystal, 2001:103). In addition, mailer software provides automatic signatures that are “created by the sender and stored in a file” (Ibid: 104). There are various kinds of information added in the automatic signatures. Crystal (Ibid) mentions the following:

- A person’s full name (perhaps with the title and qualifications); address and communication detail (phone, fax, email, website);
- A character note, often framed typographically (commonly within asterisks), such as a slogan, logo, favourite quotation, piece of personal promotion, or even a ‘picture’ (constructed out of keyboard symbols).

Farewell is used to point out that no more personalised information is followed. Moreover, the farewell has an extended identity function. It identifies the sender to the immediate recipient (typically providing information which is not present in the header, especially useful if the e-address is opaque), but it also makes

this fuller identification available to others who may eventually see the message, in the case of forwarded or attached mail (Crystal, 2001:105).

Beside the greeting and farewell, every email has the body. Depending on whether the email is in formal or informal register (“a term used in stylistics to refer to a variety of language used in specified kinds of social situation; e.g. familial, legal, military: thus, a formal register differs from an informal one, usually in vocabulary, pronunciation, and (if written) punctuation” (Chris Badlick, 2015 [online]) the body also differs. There are many guidelines to formal email writing which include elements that are common for formal letter correspondence. The principal basic rules of this type of communication are as follows:

- Do not use contractions;
- End the sentence with preposition;
- Start the sentence with a coordinate conjunction.

David Crystal also states that from the first days when the Email as a means of communication appeared, some features were borrowed from newspaper writing: “the important information should appear in the opening paragraph, with less important information in the next paragraph...” (Crystal, 2001:109). What is more, E-mail manuals insist on the clarity of the message that includes both legibility and intelligibility (Ibid: 111).

With the time email writing gained integral part of people’s life, becoming one of the most significant ways of communication. Nowadays there are different features that make the formal email different from the informal one. In comparison with formal letter writing, informal letter communication between, for instance, two friends, may resemble IRC. Besides, speaking about screen structure of informal letter correspondence,

“there has been a tendency to highlight the informal features of messages – such as the use of contractions, loose sentence constructions, subject ellipsis (e.g. *Will let you know*), colloquial abbreviations and ‘cool’ acronyms (see Appendix 1) – but these are plainly not indicative of the variety as a whole, as many messages do not use them” (Crystal, 2001:122).

What is more, there is another distinctive feature, namely, graphological peculiarity that is popular among mailers Crystal (2001:125) admits that “much of the graphological deviance noted in messages is also not universal, being typical of informal Internet exchanges especially among younger users”. Further are presented graphological deviation most commonly found in informal letter correspondence:

- Different types of misspelling (e.g. Heeeeellllloooooo);

- A reduced use of capitalization, which may involve either grammar (e.g. sentence-initial) or lexicon (e.g. proper names) or both;
- Extended punctuation (e.g. Yes!!!!!!!!!!);
- Emoticons (Smileys (Appendix 2)) (Crystal, 2001:123-124).

To conclude on E-mail writing, it is possible to say that this kind of correspondence has many similarities with other forms of communication such as traditional letter as well as business writing, or the memo in terms of fixed header structure. At the same time the body of the letter may differ, depending on the register. Formal emails are frequently compared to the traditional letter of the same register while the body of the informal electronic mail has borrowed previously unused features of chat discourse (which are to be discussed later on), for instance, the emoticons, extended use of punctuation, different kinds of misspellings.

2.2.2 Internet Relay Chat Discourse

In 1988 Finish programmer Jarkko Oikarinen invented the medium of IRC, which became very popular among thousands of the Internet users over 60 countries and is still widely used.

The users in IRC are fairly anonymous as they are known by nicknames only – but a user's PC can always be traced. In the IRC network, users meet on channels (rooms, virtual places, usually with a certain topic of conversation) to talk in groups, or individually. In IRC participants in a conversation are usually not in the same natural room or setting. Rather, participants are usually geographically vastly dispersed (Jahnsson [online]).

With the rapid development of the Internet and computer-mediated communication chat groups became synchronous and asynchronous. In contrast to email (discussed in the next chapter) and, following the traditional pattern with mainly two people, addressee and addresser involved, chat-groups involve several people with message-exchanges often anonymous, continuing indefinitely, and dealing with a wide and unpredictable range of topics.

- *Asynchronous chat-group*

The first asynchronous groups appeared in 1990s. People discussed different topics in these chat groups like for instance, recreation, science, business, computing, news and many others. All these groups have almost the same introduction and help lines, pages of FAQ (frequently asked questions).

All the groups have been organized in the same way, namely, members

send (*post*) their contributions (*articles, messages, posts*) to the group, and the system makes these available to all addresses it holds, some of which may be other networks of addresses. Messages maybe saved in files for future reading or searching (*archives, notebooks, logs, conferences*), and catalogued with varying depth of detail in terms of date, topic, author, etc. (Crystal, 2001:133).

Further, each group has a *moderator* who manages what is happening in the group. There are various options how the messages can be received and read by members of these chat-groups, and the options depend on the software. What is more, a chat-group is not the place where long monologues or balanced dialogues or formal debates can be found. Non-linear nature is another essential feature of asynchronous chat-groups. For instance, joining any chat-group, it is possible to start a conversation at any moment since there is no particular chronological beginning. Therefore, “each contributor leaves a linguistic ‘footprint’” (Crystal, 2001:135). At the same time, even though “topics are classified thematically or by the author within directories, [there is no] communication consequence: there is no guarantee that a sender E, responding to message A, has read any messages B, C, D which may have been sent to the group in the interim” (Ibid). What is more, not only email writers but also members of the chat-groups wait for replies,

but whereas the email writer is surprised if no response arrives (*‘Didn’t you get my email?’*) the chat group writer is not unduly disturbed if a message fails to elicit an individual reaction. Chat group messages are contributions to an ongoing discussion. A lack of reply is not taken personally (Crystal, 2001:139).

Similarly, to the title in e-mails, clear stated title of asynchronous chat-group plays equally import role. Moreover, there is another feature of these chat-groups, and that is the use of “message with an explicit reference to a previous posting, usually in the form of a quotation” (Ibid: 141). David Crystal (Ibid: 142) claims that this kind of technique has two basic functions:

1. “it conveys the illusion of adjacency, and thus makes the interaction more like the real conversational world;
2. it is another way of acknowledging group membership”.

Furthermore, the reference to the previously mentioned content functions as a greeting. “The strategy is common enough in face-to-face conversation, where we may hear people beginning a conversation by quoting something from their previous communicative encounter” (Crystal, 2001: 142). Besides quotations, anaphoric cross- references are also used in the opening sentences. There are also close-binding links, such as *‘Yeah’*, *‘Thanks’*,

‘Wow!’, ‘Great idea’, and discourse features like ‘Well’ and ‘Umm’ “may appear in messages separated by long periods of time” (Ibid: 143).

Chat-group has an interesting asymmetry, namely, there might be no greeting, but there is a farewell “usually a simple name, but often preceded by a closing formula, such as ‘Cheers’ or ‘Take care’ or an expression of affiliation (‘All power to the Jeffs of this world’) (Crystal, 2001: 144)“, [D]epending on the interest of a topic, the personality of a speaker, and other such factors” (Ibid: 145) a chat may turn into dynamic dialogue. “Another conversation-like feature is the unpredictability of the subject-matter. Although a particular topic motivates a message, there is nothing to stop the writer from introducing a new topic” (Ibid: 146). Moreover, people who communicate in chat-groups very often “come from different backgrounds, and write in many different styles, [but] their contributions progressively develop a shared linguistic character – the equivalent of a local dialect or accent” (Ibid: 146) that makes it also similar to a face-to-face conversation.

To sum up, asynchronous chat-groups is the Internet platform where multiple numbers of users are involved in discussion with each other. There are different issues discussed in these chat-groups. Therefore, users can choose any group they are interested in. Each asynchronous chat-group is controlled by moderator. Moreover, asynchronous chat-groups have non-linear nature, which enables the participant to join chats any time.

- ***Synchronous chat-groups***

Synchronous chat-group is another type of Internet discourse that has features of real life communication. “There are several ways of making this happen. Some systems are designed to facilitate communication between just two users; others among several users” (Crystal, 2001:151). In case of communication among two or more people, the screen is divided into two or more parts accordingly, and each typed word by A speaker immediately appears on the screen of B speaker and vice versa. Moreover, communication is private and in contrast to asynchronous chat-groups, there is no mediator involved.

Another feature of this chat-group is that “[a] large network, such as Enet, Undernet, IRCnet [and others] regularly connects tens of thousands of people” (Crystal, 2001:152), who use nickname (*nick*) to stay anonymously.

In contrast to the asynchronous chat-room where the user finds himself in the middle of conversation and has to think of an interactive way to start a conversation for other users to notice his presence; a member of the synchronous chat-group should not worry about the way

s/he greets others or say farewell when sign on, “software tells other users that you have arrived” (Ibid). The same happens when someone leaves the chat.

Another distinctive feature of these chat-groups is the time lag that is a very important factor “in many situations: there is an inherent uncertainty in knowing the length of the gap between the moment of posting a message and the moment of receiving a reaction” (Crystal, 2001: 155). Therefore, messages in this type of chat-groups are usually short and the use of acronyms, abbreviations and initialism is common to keep messages short.

David Crystal in his book *Language and the Internet* (2001:159) compares synchronous chat-group with a cocktail party

in which everyone is talking at once – except that it is worse, because every guest can ‘hear’ every conversation equally, and every guest needs to keep talking in order to prove to others that they are still involved in the interchange. In real-life party, if someone is not talking you can at least see that (s)he is still paying attention.

To keep the conversation alive and maintain the screen presence, many chat group users continue talking, but their conversation is pointless since “they may not in fact have anything to say” (Crystal, 2001:159).

Further on, the use of nicknames is a “highly distinctive feature of synchronous chat group language” (Crystal, 2001: 159). As Crystal argues “the choice of a nick is a ritual act, demanded by the culture to which the individual aspires to belong. The nick is their [users] electronic identity: it says something about who they are, and acts as an invitation to others to talk to them” (Ibid). Hence, the creation of a nickname is an art; moreover, it is far from easy, since “users are restricted to a single string of characters. Any upper- and lower-case letters can be used, along with numerals, hyphens. Their nicks may be words or phrases, sense or nonsense” (Ibid: 160-161). As a result, playing with real name-like words, users can frequently produce linguistically unusual names. What is more,

Nicks have a discourse value, also, in that they provide a crucial means of maintaining semantic threads in what is otherwise a potentially incoherent situation. When interactions become complex, members name each other – usually before, sometimes during or after the body of their message – as a discourse signal to the intended recipient (Crystal, 2001: 161-162).

There are also other visually distinctive elements. For instance, the omission of the apostrophe in contracted forms is a regular occurrence, “emotive punctuation is often seen as an exaggerated form, perverse spellings (e.g. out of > outta, see you > cee ya, etc.), typographical errors or capitalization is regularly ignored, even for *I*” (Crystal, 2001: 164). Speaking about grammar, it “is chiefly characterized by highly colloquial constructions and

non-standard usage, often following patterns known in other dialects or genres” (Ibid: 165). In addition, “nonce-formations are [also] common - running words together into a compound (*what a unifreakiniversitynerd*), or linking several words by hyphen (*dead-slow-and-stop computer*)” (Ibid).

Nevertheless, Crystal (2001: 165) admits that “the use of non-standard formations, jargon, and slang varies from group to group. Different systems have their individual command – dialects”. Furthermore, for each synchronous group there might be found its own distinctive features.

If an adult chooses to visit a teenage chat room, it would be difficult for the visitor to adopt and maintain the assumed teenage identity, given the many linguistic differences (especially of slang) between the generations. Similarly, a male in a female chat room (or vice versa) – an extremely common occurrence – would also encounter difficulties in adopting the right persona (Crystal, 2001: 165).

In addition, synchronous chat group conversation can resemble a real-life chitchat because of a simple sentence structure.

To conclude, synchronous and asynchronous chat groups share a number of similar features as well as they can be compared with informal face-to-face communication. Certain deliberate misspelling patterns, the use of emoticons that stand for expressions of emotions in real life as well as the use of contracted forms are very common for these chat-groups. Yet, the principal difference between these two types of chat-groups is that the participants of synchronous chats are not limited by the subject discussed in this group while in asynchronous members of the group are directed by the definite topic. What is more, neither greeting nor farewell phrase is required.

3. NOVEL IN LETTERS

Today the Internet is used not only as a means of communication but also as a means of pictures, documents, video and other kinds of information transfer. However, “The core motivation for human communication has remained constant throughout history – what has changed is the context and the media for our transfer of information” (Jonsson, [online]). The communication process has remained the same as it has been discussed in the previous chapters on the example of Shannon and Weaver’s (1949) model of communication (see Figure *The basic model of communication*). Therefore, there are certain features of the previous human communication cultures that found their reflections in contemporary communication culture and, especially in such literary genre as epistolary novel. Yet, before speaking about main features of epistolary fiction, some words about what preceded the appearance of this literary genre is mentioned.

Réne Milleran in his *Le Nouveua Secrétaire de la Cour* (a manual for letter writing published in 1737) claimed that “Letters were invented so that one can communicate one’s thoughts to people that one cannot converse with; they bring the absent closer...” (Bray, [online]). The first letters that survived are dated in the 3rd and 2nd millennia BC, and they had either commerce or diplomatic relations were written using cuneiform characters. Up to the present day when it is not possible to have face-to-face communication, letter writing can substitute this dialogue.

Medieval letter writing is associated with the names of such philosophers as Petrarch, Erasmus, and Justus Lipsius who tried to conceptualize the genre of private correspondence. In the Middle Ages, most letters had religious content. Petrarch (1304 – 1374) who is recognized to be “the father of the modern conception of letters as an ‘autobiographical’ genre of literature” (Bray, [online]), wrote letters in which expressed addresser’s thoughts and intimate feelings. These letters were written under Ciceron’s influence. Next, there were Erasmus (*De conscribendis epistolis*, 1522) and Justus Lipsius (*Epistolica institution*, 1591) who are considered to be great theorists of letter writing. Erasmus believed that “letters belong to what is an essentially free and varied genre, which is therefore impossible to define rigorously or to regulate. They demand from those who write them a mastery of style and attentive adaptation to the specific conditions in which they are being written” (Ibid). In contrast to Erasmus, Lipsius draws strict distinction between letters as a written genre, and the oral forms of conversation. He “sets out the distinctive qualities of letter writing: a simple or familiar style [...], an absence of longueurs, and the capacity to read with pleasure” (Ibid).

Later, a number of manuals, handbooks, and guidelines how to write letters as well as anthologies became very popular among less educated people. The relationship between letter's addresser and its addressee starts playing great role in written correspondence.

[It] does not merely determine the tone and the subject of a letter, in particular the degree of freedom to write about oneself. It has also an impact on the choice of medium (whether to use headed or decorated letter paper, or a picture postcard, not to mention modern means of written communication), the arrangement of the text on the paper, the degree of care taken in dating the letter and adopting a style and a form of handwriting; the forms of address (ranging from 'The Minister of ...', 'My dear friend ...') and the polite formulas that end the letter, the wording of the address on the envelope (Ibid).

By the 18th century letter writing became such a commonplace "that one of the first prose narratives to be considered a novel, Samuel Richardson's *Pamela*, was entirely of letters of a daughter to her parents, and epistolary method lent that novel what realism possessed (Jones, 2009 [online]). Consequently, further on the principal features of epistolarity as literary genre are discussed.

The epistolary novel is defined as "a story written in the form of letters, or letters with journals, usually presented by an anonymous author masquerading as 'editor'" (Birch 2009, [online]). According to Richard Davies ([online]), "In the days before emails and text messages, letters were an essential part of everyday life and it was only natural for authors to embrace this form of communication". Having appeared in the Middle Ages, the epistolary novel gained popularity in the eighteenth century with Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* (1740). Thus, it is possible to claim that authors' interest in epistolary fiction is marked by the popularity of traditional letter communication. At the same time, it would be wrong to think that with decreasing interest in traditional letter writing, the popularity of this genre also declined. Significantly, "the epistolary novel has made significant contributions to the development of the novel. Its impact is evident in our contemporary society where the form is still common, now with the inclusion of electronic formats of communication in epistolary works" (*Epistolarity*, 2011[online]). Therefore, continuing with the principal issue, novel in letters, the object of the next chapter is to study characteristic features of epistolary fiction.

3.1 Parameters of Epistolary Fiction

There can be distinguished several peculiar features that have gradually grown into the epistolary novel as we know it now. To start in the Middle Ages,

Love letters was a common activity between lovers [...] as a means of long distance communication as well as an intimate pastime. At the same time, the letter developed as a literary instrument as collections of model letters were published to teach the public how to write (*Epistolarity*, 2011[online]).

The popularity of letter writing steadily increasing, the number of topics discussed in these letters also expanded. In the beginning these were letters that had political and formal content, but later letter writing developed, and it became possible to find more intimate and passionate correspondence. For example, in Aphra Behn's *Love-Letters Between a Nobleman and His Sister* there is "a constant dynamics between sex and politics" (*Epistolarity*, 2011 [online]).

Hence, at the advent of epistolary fiction "writers slowly moved away from the formal letter into familiar letters that related more to the readers themselves" (*Epistolarity*, 2011 [online]) and as a result, two genres, love letter and formal letter, merged into one literary form. According to Altman (1982:14),

At one moment, [the lover] may proclaim the power of the letter to make the distant addressee present and at the next lament the absence of the loved one and the letter's powerlessness to replace the spoken word or physical presence. The letter is ... literally a chain of communication, one whose physical shape metamorphoses according to the sentimental forces acting upon it.

Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* is considered to be one of the first epistolary fictions where characters share their stories using their own words. What is more, Samuel Richardson was able to adopt "the tools, the space, and the freedom to develop distinctly different characters speaking directly to the reader" (Ardolino, as quoted in *Epistolarity*, 2011 [online]), allowing the reader to look into characters' way of thinking. As a consequence, "the epistolary novel enables the writer to convey different viewpoints as told by the various narrators through their letters" (*What is the Origin of Epistolary Novels*, 2006-2013 [online]). In addition, "sometimes the narrator boldly imposed his own attitudes; always he assumed an omniscience that tended to reduce the characters to puppets and the action to a predetermined course with an end implicit in the beginning" (*Britannica*). Yet, there are authors who are not fond of that narrative method; they assume it "limit[s] the free will of the characters" (*Britannica*).

Besides, in the majority of cases epistolary fiction is written from two perspectives that might be compared with a dialogue. However, it is also possible to find the monological type of epistolary novel, for instance *Letters of Portuguese Nun* (1669) or polylogic epistolary fiction which is represented by Samuel Richardson novel *Pamela*.

Nevertheless, “it is hard to resist the uneasy feeling that a kind of divine editor is sorting and ordering the letters into his own pattern” (*Britannica*). At the same time, the epistolary method limits the story that is told since narrators can depict only those events in which they have participated. For this reason, secondary characters are introduced. “[T]his device has been used triumphantly by Conrad and, on a lesser scale, by W. Somerset Maugham. A, the main narrator, tells what he knows directly of the story and introduces what B and C and D have told him about the parts that he does not know” (Ibid).

In addition, there is another peculiarity of epistolary fiction that is worth emphasising. In comparison with the novels where the narrator is the one of the characters, in epistolary fiction “the intimacy of [letters] allows readers a sense of voyeurism that is often heightened by the [letters] being read in a simultaneous of a private inbox or arriving in the reader’s own inbox but addressed to somebody else” (Jil Walker, 178 quoted in Robertson, 2013 [online]). Practice of voyeurism comes from film studies where it is described as “pleasure from looking at the image on the cinema screen which by its nature is unaware of the spectator’s presence” (Kuhn and Westwell, 2012 [online]). As a result, there is always the sense of presence of an unseen character (or voyeur) in the novels of letters.

Furthermore, according to Bray, (2003: 92, [online]) there is a distinctive feature of the eighteenth-century fiction that also left influence upon further novel development, and that is “reason and feeling in constant negotiation and interaction within consciousness, with neither triumphing over the other. Initial impressions can be too chaotic and disordered to be translated into reasoned ideas”, transforming the novel in letters into a stream of consciousness narrative. As a result, epistolary fiction experienced decline of popularity during a definite period of time becoming less and less popular among writers till the new age of communication entered people’s life. The interest in epistolary literature awakened with the Internet and services it provides.

To sum up, in literary criticism beginning of epistolary novel is marked by publication of Samuel Richardson’s *Pamela*. Having polylogical type of epistolarity, this novel has a great influence upon the further development of this literary genre as well as the stream of consciousness narrative. Even after the decline of letter correspondence and their replacement by emails, romantic and passionate content of the novel in letters remained the same. Contemporary writers successfully make use of epistolary fiction in creating their novels in letters. *Love, Rosie* is an example of such epistolary novels that is analysed further on.

4. PECULIARITIES OF EPISTOLARY NARRATIVE IN LOVE, ROSIE BY CECELIA AHERN

With electronic media entering people's life, it is possible to say that a new era of letter communication has begun. Gradually since mid-90s of the twentieth century people have started more actively and frequently using the Internet and the services it provides in order to keep and maintain communication. Changes are inevitable; new media has also left its influence upon literary genres and types of the novel, especially upon epistolary fiction, where new ways of conveying message are integrated into the main story. Epistolary fiction that is created today is frequently uses the email instead of traditional letters which become less common kind of communication. The following chapter is the analysis of contemporary epistolary fiction with the focus on the narrative. *Love, Rosie* written by Irish novelist Cecelia Ahern is presented mainly in the form of emails and instant messages.

4.1 Polylogic Form of Love, Rosie

Cecelia Ahern is a contemporary writer whose name became popular with publication of *P.S. I Love You* in 2004; in the same year her second book, *Love, Rosie (Where the Rainbows End)*, was published which added to the popularity of the author. *Love, Rosie* by Cecelia Ahern is based on heart-warming story that is written in the form of not only electronic letters but also chats. Summarizing the plot, *Love, Rosie* is a love story of Rosie and Alex, two friends since early childhood, who are separated when Alex's father is offered a new job miles away. The characters' friendship is developed through the whole narrative before Alex and Rosie recognize their feeling is something deeper and stronger. *Love, Rosie* by Cecelia Ahern is an example of contemporary fiction written in the epistolary form.

Epistolary fiction in which *Love, Rosie* is written is both a serious challenge to the writer and a different experience for the reader. In spite of the fact that the novel is written chronologically, due to the peculiarity of the novel's type, these events are introduced in a fragmented way. There is more than one character's narrative whose story adds some new information to the whole plot. Moreover, speaking about the novel structure, if in traditional letter correspondence there is clearly defined setting, identifying and setting in this Cecelia Ahern's novel is problematic for here are only hints. Thus, the novel starts with a small Birthday letter-invitation which Rosie sends to her friend Alex.

To Alex

You are invited to my 7th birthday party on Tuesday the 8th of April in my house. We are having a magician and you can come to my house at 2 o'clock. It is over at 5 o'clock. I hope you will come,

From your best friend Rosie.

(Ahern, 2005: 3).

With this letter, the reader immediately is introduced to one of the main characters, Rosie, who is getting 7 years old, and she decides to invite her best friend Alex to her birthday party. Since there are also other minor characters, Cecelia Ahern's novel can be characterized as a polylogic epistolary fiction, in which the author presents the letter correspondence and instant message communication not only between main characters but also between protagonists and minor characters of the novel, the later help to reveal additional information about the characters. The polylogic nature of Cecelia Ahern's epistolary fiction has even more functions.

One of the functions is to give the reader some extra explanation; for example, while talking and agreeing about the time and place where the Birthday party will take place, the children have a row. If Cecelia Ahern had not integrated another minor character's, Alice Dunne's, letter (see Appendix 3) as a part of the story line, the reader would not be able to understand what happened and what made Alex and Rosie reconcile. Alice Dunne's letter is a small but important link to the whole story. This letter differs dramatically from Alex and Rosie children's correspondence. It sounds quite formal despite some contracted forms used in this letter. There is a number of such kinds of letters in the novel that serve as a cohesive link to the whole narrative. For example, President's *Charles and Charles Co* letter; without this letter, the reader is not able to understand the reason why Alex leaves for Boston (see Appendix 3). Like Alice Dunne's, the president's letter is also very formal in contrast to Alex and Rosie's letter communication. Therefore, on the one hand, the polylogic nature of Cecelia Ahern's novel enables to introduce additional details and information to the main story.

Although the novel has the polylogic nature, it still implies some limited data; since the reader is able to know only those events that characters find important to mention in their letters or chat messages. For example, (see Appendix 4) the reader can suspect that something has occurred with Rosie during the debs (a formal ball for students in their final year of secondary school in Ireland). In the chat with her sister Stephanie Rosie sounds nervous and anxious about what bothers her. Likewise, in the previous examples due to the introduction of a minor character, Alex's brother, Phil, the reader is able to know the reason why Rosie

sounded so uneasy in her virtual talk with her sister. Some pages later, the reader finds out that she is pregnant,

Phil: How do you feel about it?

Alex: Everyone keeps asking me that and I have no idea. It's weird. Rosie is pregnant. (Ahern, 2005: 44).

At the same time, the polylogic nature of the novel helps the author to illustrate her main and minor characters at different period of their lives, from the time they are small kids till they are either teenagers or already grown-ups. These age changes are illustrated by the peculiarity of characters' conversational style that is discussed further on.

To sum up, the polylogic nature of Cecelia Ahern's novel allows not only to put together the story that is written in a fragmented way (as there is letter correspondence and instant message exchange of more than one character) but also to add additional information as well as explanation which sometimes is necessary since the characters limit the information they share in their letters.

4.2. Epistolary Voyeurism

There is another peculiarity of the epistolary narrative that allows illustrating characters' deep and personal feelings as well as their more intimate thoughts and opinions. It is achieved by the help of such feature as voyeurism.

Voyeurism is another equally important feature used in Cecelia Ahern's novel. The role of the unseen narratee allows the reader to get access to characters' private correspondence.

In fact, never have sex. Might as well try to completely eradicate the odds. Trust me Steph, it is not pleasant. I'm not feeling at all at one with nature, I'm not radiating any sort of magical motherly signals, I'm fat. And bloated. And tired. And sick. And wondering what on earth I'm going to do when this little one is born and looks at me and shrug back (Ahern, 2005: 45)

At the same time, it gives the reader opportunity to try in the role of co-author by creating the events which are not described in the story.

Dear Ms. Quinn

Alex will be unable to attend school tomorrow, the 8th of April, as he has a dental appointment.

Sandra Stewart

Dear Ms. Quinn

Rosie will be unable to attend school tomorrow, the 8th of April, as she has a doctor's appointment.

Alice Dunne (Ahern, 2005: 10).

By reading this letter exchange, the reader gets suspicious about the strange coincidence that both Alex and Rosie have doctor's appointment on the same date (see example above). Only later when Alex sends Rosie the letter (see the example below), from which it becomes clear about teenagers' real plans about school truancy.

Rosie,

I'll meet you around the corner at 8:30 a.m. Remember to bring a change of clothes. We're not wandering around town in our uniforms. This is going to be the best birthday you ever had Rosie Dunne, trust me! I can't believe we're actually getting away with this!

Alex

P.S. Sweet 16 my arse!

Hence, in the role of voyeur the reader gets to know some more additional information that is not shared directly in the instant messages and letter exchange. What is more, voyeurism of the novel allows observing events from various perspectives as well as having additional information which is not shared directly in instant message and letter exchange.

4.3. Time and Place

Traditionally novels have definite settings that include time frame and place that describe where and when the principal events of the narrative take place. *Love, Rosie* by Cecelia Ahern being an example of contemporary epistolary fiction also has such narrative elements. Yet, as it is stated that "epistolary fictions do not have fixed setting but rather present the story line and hints of setting through description in the letters" (*The Edible Eighteenth Century*, [online]). Therefore, the focus of the following chapter is to study those hints that help to identify the setting in Cecelia Ahern's novel *Love, Rosie*.

One of the peculiarities of *Love, Rosie* epistolary fiction is described by its being written in a fragmented way by more than one character who adds additional information to the whole story. There are some particular hints that let the reader guesses about the time and place. At the same time the narrative is written has chronological sequence of events. As a result, letters, emails and instant messages that make up the novel narrative are constructed in such a way that the reader is able to follow protagonists' lives. As already mentioned earlier the novel starts with Rosie's invitation to her 7th Birthday party while the last chapter of the novel

is fifty which the reader is informed about in one of the last chats the main heroine has with her grown-up daughter,

Katie: *Happy birthday, Mum! How does it feel to be 50?! (Ahern, 2005: 421).*

Nevertheless, the novel ends with an epilogue which is written in the third-person narrative

Rosie read the letter for what seemed like the millionth time in her life, folded it into four neat squares, and slid it back into the envelope. Her eyes panned across her collection of letters, greeting cards, e-mail printouts, chat room printouts, faxes, and scribbled notes from her school days. There were hundreds of them spread across the floor, each telling its triumph or sadness, each letter representing a phase in her life (Ahern, 2005: 429).

From this epilogue, the reader can have an impression that all this collection of letters, greeting cards, emails, chat room messages may serve as flashback to the narrative back to the time when the first Rosie's letter was sent.

While speaking about the place where the narrative takes place, it varies depending on the author of a letter or an instant message that is sent. The major part of letters and messages is constructed on the basis of Alex and Rosie's correspondence. Hence, Alex's messages and letters are sent from Boston and replied by Rosie from Dublin. The names of places are not mentioned directly like in the traditional letters in the address; they are only mentioned in the content of letters. *"I almost felt like stealing her and bringing her back over to Boston. In fact that's a lie, I really like staying in Dublin"* (Ahern, 2005:46). Thus, in the exemplified letter extract Alex in a nostalgic mood expresses his fascination about Katie (Rosie's daughter) and her Christening party in which he had recently participated and was happy to feel like at home again in Dublin. Although many years have already passed since he and his parents moved over the sea to Boston, the United States, the main character still feels homesick.

There are also another places mentioned in the novel, for example Spain (the country Alex visits with his parents being a child) and Lundin (some place in Norway where Rosie goes with her parents once being a small girl). There are also instant messages and letters that come from other parts of the world; for instance, Rosie keeps communicating with her sister Stephanie who lives in France (*Hello from Disney World! Hi sis, having a brill time* (Ahern, 2005: 362), as well as there are mentioned some cards sent by Rosie's parents while they are in their voyage. *„Rosie and Katie, Magandang tanghali po from the Philippines! Left the top end of Australia a few days ago, we were in Brisbane and Sydney—very beautiful. Here for a*

little while and moving on to China for a few days. Love you and miss you both, Mum and Dad" (Ibid: 288)

To sum up, traditionally novels are divided according to a definite time frame. *Love, Rosie* by Cecelia Ahern being the example of contemporary epistolary fiction can be also studied following this tenet. In spite of the fact that is written in a fragmented way there are time markers and place names that create chronological order of the storyline which helps the reader to follow protagonists' lives.

5. CONVERSATIONAL STYLE OF LOVE, ROSIE

Nowadays it is possible to observe that a wide range of Web applications entering people's daily life enable the user to keep and maintain communication borrowing features from oral and written discourse. In spite of the fact that "the precise moment of transmutation from oral narrative to written narrative is almost impossible to identify" (Cobley, 2014:53), there has always been attempts to depict the story very closely to real life. This mimetic impulse found its expression in different kinds of forms and genres in literary works; the use of dialogue is one of them. Since classical literature, "writers used dialogue to represent our communicative facilities [as well as] stylized written or spoken exchange between two or more people" (Gentry, [online]). Hence, the use of dialogue is one of the principal tools that help the authors to depict not only their characters from various perspectives but also to advance the plot.

Communication as it is defined in *A Dictionary of Media and Communication* (Chandler, [online]) is "messages from sender to a receiver [that can be referred to] face-to-face interaction or message exchange via either chat or email letter correspondence" becomes the core part of Cecelia Ahern's novel *Love, Rosie*. Communicative functions of both written and spoken texts are reflected in the collection of letters, greeting cards, e-mails, chat-room and instant messages that become the whole form of Cecelia Ahern's novel narrative. The following chapter is to study peculiarities of conversational style in *Love, Rosie*, on the basis of email and letter writing as well as instant message exchange.

As it has been mentioned in the previous chapter, Cecelia Ahern's novel can be defined as polylogic epistolary fiction; it means that there are more than two characters involved in letter writing. Nevertheless, the main storyline is constructed on the basis of the letter and message exchange between the two principal characters, Alex and Rosie. The function of the secondary characters' correspondence is to present additional information as well as to observe the main characters from various perspectives. Therefore, the object of this chapter is to study the peculiarities of conversational style in letters and chat-messages found in Cecelia Ahern's novel *Love, Rosie*, stressing on how the age difference is depicted with the help of various tools.

While creating her novel *Love, Rosie*, Cecelia Ahern met considerable challenge, she had to think of various ways and devices that would help her to distinguish one character from another. Since the novel is written in the form of emails and instant messages, the primary and secondary characters are illustrated only by the language they use in their correspondence and chat-message exchange. The novelist in her work tries to depict how her characters grow and their feelings develop throughout the whole narrative and it becomes another challenge for the

author. Language of their email correspondence and instant message exchange becomes the primary tool with the help of which the author is able to distinguish her characters. Peculiarities of these types of communications are studied in the following subchapters.

5.1. Children’s Discourse

Constructing the novel in chronological order, the author starts her fiction when the main characters are small children. The novel opened with the letter exchange between Rosie and Alex who discuss details of Rosie’s birthday party. It should be pointed out that each time in order to integrate her characters and give them *voice*, the author starts with a letter-invitation which has definite features (see *Table 5.1 Children’s discourse*).

<i>Character</i>	<i>Number of words in the sentence</i>	<i>Examples of spelling mistakes</i>	<i>Examples of deliberate mistakes</i>	<i>Clauses</i>
Rosie	~ 13	Brust, sandy, dont, amnt		Sentences have independent clauses
Alex	~11	Laffting, dont, wot, sandy	No (instead of <i>know</i>)	Sentences have independent clauses
Katie	~13	Laffed, majic man, howse	Written in capital letters No (instead of <i>know</i>)	Sentences have independent clauses
Josh	~11	Praty		Sentences have independent clauses

Table 5.1 Children’s discourse

To start with, Rosie and Alex’s letter correspondence in the beginning of the novel sounds informal and resembles sometimes more either the chitchat dialogue or note exchange rather than letters. Moreover, sentences clauses are short, the average sentence is about thirteen words long. Basically these are independent sentence. There are also some minor spelling mistakes in words that are frequently found in children’s language “*I do not care wot your stupid mum says sandy wants to come*” (Ahern, 2005:3). Besides, already from early letters exchange, the reader can notice some definite spelling mistakes that become characteristic

mark of one particular character. “*I don’t know why. I no it is reall boring up the front of the class*” (Ahern, 2005:5). From the given example, it is possible to see Alex’s particular spelling mistake of the word *know* that Alex continues to make throughout the whole story. Alex is aware of this misspelling “*Sorry miss perfect. I no how to spell it*” (Ibid: 6). Nevertheless, he keeps repeating it from time to time further on just to tease Rosie.

It is also worth mentioning that there are other secondary characters that are also illustrated as children in Cecelia Ahern’s novel. For example, Rosie’s daughter, Katie is given *voice*, when she sends her own first letter-invitation addressed to Alex. While reading this letter, the reader experiences the feeling of *déjà vu* because of a similar content. “*YOU ARE INVITED TO MY 7TH BIRTHDAY PARTY ON THE 4TH OF MAY IN MY HOUSE*” (Ibid: 62). The only difference with the previously mentioned letter exchange is that it is written in capital letters. Katie’s letters can draw an image of child’s handwriting who tries to put every letter in a nice handwriting, and only some spelling mistakes betray her, reminding the reader that she is still a small girl who learns how to write words which sometimes are not written as she hears “*THE MAJICIN WAS GOOD AND MY BEST FREIND TOBY SAID HE NEW HE WAS CHEATING AND SHOWED EVERYONE WHERE THE MAN HID THE CARDS*” (Ibid: 63). Besides, there is an interesting thing about Katie’s letter, namely already from her early age the girl repeats the same spelling mistake in the word *know* as Alex does. While seeing this mistake for the first time, it may be explained by the fact that the girl is still learning and might not know all spelling rules. Yet, the same mistake is repeated in girl’s further chat and letters. For example, “*No, I no your filthy magazines tell you to do and it’s not anything to do with dressing. More like undressing*” (Ibid: 209). Katie might have used this mistake in order to emphasise her viewpoint as well as it shows how much she is fascinated by her godfather Alex. At the same time, it is a clever move created by the author to show affinity between unrelated people, thus giving hope for the continuity of Alex and Rosie’s romance.

There is another secondary character that is described as a child. It is Josh, Alex’s elder son. Continuing with already set up tradition, Cecelia Ahern’s introduces her character by a letter-invitation on the seventh birthday party. “*You are invited on my 7th birthday praty on November 18th. I am haveing a magicman* (Ahern, 2005: 207). Like other letter invitations, Josh’s letter is written in simple sentences, with minor spelling mistakes.

Summarizing this part, to introduce her characters for the first time, Cecelia Ahern *sends a* letter-invitation where the basic information is given. The content of these letters is informative. Sentences used in these invitations are short; there is an independent clause used in these letters. Moreover, there are about thirteen words in each sentence with some minor

spelling mistakes that is common for the children of their age. To add, besides those letter-invitations that the principal characters send to each other, there are other letters that by their content resemble more notes than letters.

5.2 Teenager’s Dialogue

As previously said peculiarity of Cecelia Ahern’s epistolary fiction is that there is no definite date mentioned in either letter or instant messages. Greeting cards that Alex and Rosie receive and send to each other are one of the indicators that help the reader follow the time in the novel. At the same time, certain language markers help the author to depict her characters, to show that they become older. What’s more, teenager’s interaction depicted in the novel in form of the email and chat message exchange is kind of threshold in conversation between Alex and Rosie that are illustrated as children and Alex and Rosie who are shown as grownups people.

<i>Character</i>	<i>Types of the sentence</i>	<i>Examples of slang words/expressions</i>
Rosie	-independent clauses -dependent clauses	Comfy, snuggy, puke, idiot
Alex	-independent clauses -dependent clauses	Pissed off, bastards, lazy bitch

Table 5.2 Teenager’s discourse

Thus, spelling mistakes are replaced by the use of urban slang words that are used to emphasise too informal character of the letters. “*Holy shit! I didn’t think that old bogey would go ahead and suspend us!*” (Ahern, 2005:12). This is a line from the email which Rosie sends to Alex after her sixteenth birthday. The slang words in Rosie-teenager’s discourse emphasise the feeling of annoyance that their plans about the birthday party have been ruined.

Additionally, handwritten notes between Alex and Rosie (“*Now leave me alone I’m listening to the teacher. If she catches us passing notes again we’re dead meat*” (Ahern, 2005:8)) are replaced by the electronic mails and instant messages that enter character’s life. For instance, during one class instead of working on the assignment that they were given young people chat

You have instant message from: Alex

Alex: Hey there Rosie got some news for you

Rosie: Leave me alone please I'm trying to concentrate on what Mr Simpson is saying

Alex: Hmmm wonder why ... could it be those beautiful big blue eyes all you girls are always going on about?

Rosie: Nope, I have a great and growing interest in excel. It's so exciting I find. I could just sit in and do it all weekend,

Alex: Oh you're turning into such a bore.

Rosie: I WAS JOKING YOU IDIOT! I bloody hate this crap my brain is turning to mush from listening to him. But go away anyway.

(Ahern, 2005:15)

Furthermore, to make her protagonists' instant messages and electronic mails resemble more like real teenagers, Cecelia Ahern also integrates definite features of informal oral and electronic discourse. For instance, the way Alex opens the conversation (*Hey*) as well as the use of interjections (*Hmmm*) that are most commonly used in oral dialogue to sound reassuring yet non-committal. There are also other features that are most frequently used among teenagers, for example the word *bloody* for the emphasis the word it is used together, or the use of capital letters indicating that Rosie is shouting to get Alex's attention and make emphasis on what she says.

Electronic mail correspondence between Alex and Rosie that takes place in this period of time sometimes resembles teenager's face-to-face communication (e.g. *Hiya, long time no see ...* (Ahern, 2005: 18)). To make her characters sound more like teens, Cecelia Ahern makes use of slang words in the email correspondence (e.g. *To a very pissed off Alex* (Ibid: 13)). Nevertheless, the letter exchange still resembles more the chat rather than the email. For example, the extended use of punctuation marks (*I begin to take it personally?!!* (Ibid: 20)) that are implied to emphasise what is written.

From: Rosie

To: Alex

Subject: To a very pissed off Alex

Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha em ... I've forgotten what I was going to write ...oh yeah... ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha.

Lots of love from an extremely comfy, smuggy, warm, and happy Rosie typing from her bedroom. (Ahern, 2005: 13).

The multiple uses of interjections in the given example stands for emoticons that are a characteristic feature of chat messages. Besides, the use of capital letters which "are

considered to be ‘shouting’, and netiquette guides strongly recommended they should be avoided” (Crystal, 2011:22) are found in this correspondence, too.

What is more, according to David Crystal (2011) constantly thinking about what should be said make the speaker repeat, rephrase and comment on what previously has been said. Such constructions as *you see, you know* are very common in oral discourse. “*Because you know I am sorry about that but they just couldn’t get me another flight*” (Ahern, 2005:40). Alex by adding construction *you know* in the example as if tries to find the correct words to explain why he could not get to the debs. Therefore, some parts of the novel where Rosie and Alex are depicted as teenagers sound like a piece of conversation, for no one would write like that.

To conclude, to make her main characters sound more like teenagers, Cecelia Ahern does not only change the length of sentences making them longer but also replace spelling mistakes which children make by the use of slang words popular among teens. As well as by integrating definite features of electronic means of communication in her novel for example, multiple use of interjections and extended use of punctuation helps the author to make an image of conversation between teenagers.

5.3 Discourse of Grownups

The main characters Alex and Rosie keep and maintain friendly communication even when they have their own families and children. Their conversation represented by letter exchange becomes more mature and intimate. There are no longer those unconscious mistakes that the reader could find in the children’s letters of main characters or teenager’s slang words and expressions which resemble more a piece of conversation. Cecelia Ahern does not use those distinguishing features that are common for chat communication in this part of the novel. On the contrary, electronic letters of grown up Alex and Rosie are similar to traditional informal letter correspondence. Moreover, the addressing title in one of Rosie’s letters creates humorous atmosphere between the characters that have common memories and experience to share with “*Well thank you, Mr Supportive, for being so happy for me. In case you haven’t noticed, you and I are not involved in a romantic relationship*” (Ahern, 2005:85). In addition, the third part of the novel has more personal feelings. “*Today I love you more than ever, tomorrow I will love you even more. I need you more than ever; I want you more than ever*” (Ahern, 2005:428). This letter becomes Alex’s declaration of love. Long sentences with subordinate clauses erase the border between a message as an electronic letter sent by one of the characters and a message as a narrative sent by the author to her reader.

To conclude, today when people live in the electronic age, when emails and text messages are integral and important part of their lives, the art of letter experiences a new life; it is replaced by other means of communication. The focus of this chapter was on the peculiarities of conversational style between the protagonists of Cecelia Ahern's novel *Love, Rosie*. Borrowing some elements from traditional letter writing like, for instance, salutation phrase, the author nevertheless manages to combine instant messages of chat-group with the email writing making the novel more dynamic and the dialogue between characters alive, revealing additional information. The informal peculiarity of electronic communication that is depicted in the use of extended use of punctuation, misspelling makes the dialogue sound like real face-to-face communication. In addition, with the help of electronic mail and instant messages which are part of Cecelia Ahern's narrative, the author is able to show her main characters Rosie and Alex at different periods of their lives. Hence, successful integration of new electronic media such as chats and emails gave not only a new life to already known literary genre of the epistolary novel but also these new means of communication become significant tools with the help of which the author is able to illustrate her characters at different periods of their lives.

CONCLUSIONS

Human communication has always been the most significant and successful way of sharing not only experience and knowledge but also strong feelings and emotions; it can be established both orally and in written form. Besides, human communication has undergone various stages of development from oral till electronic communication. Today people live in a new era of communication which helps people to keep and maintain communication over longer and shorter distance, borrowing features from oral and written discourse.

The aim of the present Bachelor Paper was to investigate the contemporary writer's Cecelia Ahern's novel *Love, Rosie (Where Rainbows End)*. To create her novel, Cecelia Ahern makes use of electronic letters and chat message exchange. While analyzing the novel, basic elements of epistolary fiction were investigated as well as Internet discourse in chat-groups and electronic mails was studied. For that purpose, the following objectives were set: to study theoretical data on important elements of peculiar features of the epistolary novel. Studying the theory of human communication Shannon and Weaver's model was considered together with narrative model of communication. Also, there was made an attempt to find distinguishing features of oral and written discourse in the electronic type of communication. The acquired theory was used to analyze Cecelia Ahern's *Love, Rosie*. The research was performed on the basis of various literary opinions and criticisms as well as theoretical works like, for instance David Crystal's *Language and the Internet* as well as *Internet Linguistics*, Jonathan Hope *Stylistics A Practical Coursebook, Developing Narrative Structure* edited by Carole Peterson and others in order to find the answers on the research question: what kinds of electronic communication are integrated and how it is done in Cecelia Ahern's novel *Love, Rosie*.

The paper was divided into five main chapters. The aim of the first chapter was to discuss the idea of communication on the example of two models: Shannon and Weaver's and narrative model. Besides, in separate subchapter syntactical pattern was discussed. Then the next chapter dealt with not only overview of the development of the human communication culture but also with the peculiarities of electronic discourse. While in the third chapter epistolary fiction as novel in letters and its characteristic features were studied. The framework created in the first two chapters was further used in the analysis of the epistolary novel *Love, Rosie* written by the Irish novel writer Cecelia Ahern. The major results of which are the following:

- Polylogic nature of the Cecelia Ahern's novel allows the reader to know additional information about the major events and characters of the novel;
- By using specific syntactic and narrative strategies voyeurism becomes an integral part of the epistolary fiction that lets the reader observe the events and characters from various perspectives.
- In spite of the fact that there is no clear-cut setting that is possible to find in the novel, there are only hints mentioning time and place in *Love, Rosie*;
- The narrative shows the progression of the electronic means (not only chats, E-mails but also tradition letter writing) and the mastery of their use. Thus, the novel can be divided into three main parts according to principal heroes' life stages; each part has its definite characteristic features of the conversational style.

The analysis of Cecelia Ahern's novel *Love, Rosie* shows that in the electronic era of communication emails and instant messages gave the second life to such a literary genre as the epistolary novel. Therefore, the further research can be based on the analysis of peculiarity of male and female letter email correspondence and chat messages.

THESES

1. Communication can be defined as social interaction through messages, and it is the way how people share not only their experience and knowledge but also plans and emotions.
2. Shannon and Weaver's model of communication describes the way a message passes from addresser to addressee overcoming definite obstacles in the form of 'noise' on its way.
3. Narrative is defined as a verbal and nonverbal representation of events that is arranged logically to generate the meaning.
4. Narrative model of communication distinguishes between levels of action, fictional mediation, and nonfictional communication.
5. With development of computer-mediated communication the division between oral and written communication became less distinguishable.
6. Electronic communication can be distinguished between synchronous and asynchronous type.
7. Letters as part of literary work have always been popular among writers, yet the birth of epistolary fiction is marked with publication of *Pamela* by Samuel Richardson.
8. Epistolary fiction has two types; monological and polylogical type depending on how many perspectives is involved in creating the novel.
9. *Love, Rosie* by Cecelia Ahern belongs to the polylogical type of epistolary fiction, where the secondary characters mainly serve to add on the missing detail.
10. Language of the main characters' email correspondence and instant message exchange become the primary tool with the help of which the author distinguishes her characters at different periods of time.

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GLOSSARY

- ***Addresser and addressee***

In the electronic communication addresser is the synonym for sender, and addressee – the receiver.

- ***Advanced Research Project Agency Network (APRANET)***

In the 1970s widely used network which became the forerunner of the present Internet.

- ***American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASII)***

Alphanumeric set of characters which is stored with 7 bits is usually abbreviated to ASCII.

- ***Asynchronous communication***

To describe communication that is outside the real time, for example, by sending email messages the term of asynchronous communication is used.

- ***Chat***

This term is applied to describe Internet communication in its broad meaning which takes place in real time.

- ***Communication***

In the broadest meaning this term refers to interaction process by means of messages or signals; in the human communication it means spreading of messages from sender to receiver.

- ***Computer-mediated communication***

This term is applied to define any human communication that takes place using different electronic devices with the Internet connection. There are various formats such as instant messages, email, chat rooms are used to describe computer-mediated communication.

- ***Email (electronic mail)***

Special software application used to type messages that are sent from computer to computer with the Internet connection. This kind of electronic communication is described as

asynchronous one. In comparison with postal mail, there is no time lag between sending and receiving though it is not necessary addresser and addressee to be by computer to receive mail.

- ***Internet***

Medium which is used to define a number of communicational technologies that includes the World Wide Web, email, chat (instant messages, IRC), newsgroups, etc.

- ***Internet Relay Chat (IRC)***

Internet software programme used to have synchronous communication by exchanging messages.

- ***Instant message (IM)***

Instant message is online device that is used for written message exchange between two or more people. This Internet application can be downloaded on computers and mobile phones.

- ***Moderator***

In the electronic communication moderator means the one who censors and decides what is allowed to be posted in the chat groups.

- ***Multi user dungeon (MUDs)***

There is special kind of chat room which is meant for role-playing games.

- ***Nickname***

In the context of information technology, the term nickname is applied to identify a person for the sake of anonymity.

- ***Synchronous communication***

In order to describe the Internet communication without significant time lag, the term synchronous communication is used. The later feature includes the presence of communication participants and technical features of the Internet medium.

APPENDIX 1

The Most Frequent Abbreviations Used in E-Mails and Chat-Groups

afaik – as far as I know

afk – away from keyboard

asap – as soon as possible

atw – at the weekend

bbfn – bye bye for now

bbl – be back later

bcnu – be seeing you

b4 – before

brb – be right back

btw –by the way

cfc – call for comments

cm – call me

cu – see you

cyl – see you later

f2f – face-to-face

hhok – ha ha only kidding

ic – I see

icwum – I see what you mean

idk – I do not know

imho – in my humble opinion

imo – in my opinion

iou – I owe you

lol – laughing out loud

np – no problem

o4u – only for you

oic – oh I see

sc – stay cool

thx – thanks

ttyl – talk to you later

tuwm – thank you very much

wb – welcome back

2bctnd – to be continued

4e – forever

4yed – for your eyes only

2l8 – too late

X! – typical woman

Y! – typical man

APPENDIX 2

Basic Smileys

:-) pleasure, humour, etc

:-(sadness, dissatisfaction, etc

;-) winking (in any of its meanings)

;-(:~ - (crying

% -(%-) confused

:-O 8-0 shocked, amazed

:-] :-[sarcastic

Joke smileys

[:-) user is wearing a walkman

8-) user is wearing sunglasses

B-) user is wearing sunglasses on head

:-{) user has a moustache

:*) user is drunk

:-[user is a vampire

:-E user is a bucktoothed vampire

:-F user is a bucktoothed vampire with one tooth missing

:- ~ user has a cold

:-@ user is screaming

-:-) user is a punk

- :-(real punks do not smile

+ :--) user holds a Christian religious office

O:-) user is an angel at heart

APPENDIX 3

Alice Dunne's Letter

Dear Ms. Stewart

I just called by to have a word with you about my daughter Rosie's birthday on the 8th of April. Sorry you weren't in when I called, I'll call around again later this afternoon and hopefully we can talk then.

I think these seems some sort of little problem with Alex and Rosie lately, I don't quite think they're on talking terms. Hopefully you can fill me in on the situation when we meet. Rosie would really love if he came to her birthday party.

I'm looking forward to meeting with the mother of this charming young man!

See you then,

Alice Dunne

(Ahern, 2005:4)

APPENDIX 4

Instant Message Chat Between Rosie and Her Sister Stephanie

Steph: Rosie, stop avoiding Alex and tell him how the debts went. Alex is even e-mailing me wondering what happened and I'm certainly not going to tell him! The poor guy missed out and all he wants to know is who did what, when and where.

Rosie: Well I certainly won't be telling him who did who

Steph: Ha ha

Rosie: It's not funny

Steph: I think it's hilarious. Come on it's been three weeks now!

Rosie: Are you sure it's been three weeks?

Steph: Oh don't try to play that one Rosie!

Rosie: No I'm serious Steph. Has it been *three* weeks?

Steph: Yeah, why?

Rosie: Holy shit

Rosie has logged off

(Ahern, 2005:39)

APPENDIX 5

Traditional Letter and Electronic Mail Correspondence

From: Alex

To: Rosie

Hi Rosie. It's really important that I talk to you right now. It's about the letter. I wrote some things and I would really love you to read it if you can. Please try and find it?

(Ahern, 2005: 143)

Hi, it's me, Alex.

Look I'm really sorry but I'm not going to be able to make it out for dinner tonight. I'm sorry to tell you in a letter but it's the best way I no how. You're a wonderful, intelligent woman but my heart lies with someone else. It has gone for many, many years. I hope that when we meet we can remain friends at least.

Take care,

Alex.

(Ahern, 2005: 219)

APPENDIX 6

Email or Instant Message Exchange

From: Alex
To: Rosie
Subject: Manhunt

Any luck finding a man?

From: Rosie
To: Alex
Subject: Man found

What a stupid question!! Of course I found a man. I'm insulted you even needed to ask ...

From: Alex
To: Rosie
Subject: Mystery man

Then who is it?

From: Rosie
To: Alex
Subject: Secret man

That would be absolutely none of your business...

From: Alex
To: Rosie
Subject: Invisible man

HA! You didn't find a date!! I knew it!

From: Rosie
To: Alex
Subject: Big strong man

Yes I did

From: Alex
To: Rosie
Subject: No man

No you didn't

From: Rosie

To: Alex
Subject: Yes, man!

Yes I did

From: Alex
To: Rosie
Subject: what man?

THEN WHO IS IT????

(Ahern, 2005:34-35)

Dokumentārā lapa

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Ar savu parakstu apliecinu, ka pētījums veikts patstāvīgi, izmantoti tikai tajā norādītie informācijas avoti un iesniegtā darba elektroniskā kopija atbilst izdrukai.

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