

# Studying characterization in Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*

## A cognitive stylistic analysis

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Apart from the stylistic and cognitive studies which have already been done separately on Miller's *The Crucible*, this paper provides a new insight into the play and its system of characterization by integrating these approaches. To this end, the paper draws on Jonathan Culpeper's cognitive stylistic theory of top-down and bottom-up processes in literary text comprehension and characterization. Based on this holistic framework, the paper takes advantage of such stylistic tools as speech acts, the Cooperative Principle and politeness theory to examine features of the language used by the characters Proctor and Danforth. In this regard, the article assimilates those linguistic elements with the embedded schemata within the play.

Consequently, the study reveals that Proctor's complex characterization does not coincide with the readers' schema and thus they form their impression of his character based on piecemeal integration. On the other hand, Danforth's character reinforces the readers' schema about a representative of the church discourse and thus they comprehend his character on the basis of confirmatory categorization. The paper concludes that while Proctor and Danforth have a passive existence in the text or in people's minds, it is only in the interaction between their language and the readers' minds that they come into existence.

**Keywords:** *The Crucible*, characterization, schemata, top-down, bottom-up, speech acts, Grice's Maxims, politeness

## 1. Introduction

Arthur Miller (1915–2005) was a prolific twentieth-century American dramatist, essayist, novelist, short story writer and scriptwriter. Miller made his name as a dramatist through his well-known plays, including *All My Sons* (1947), *Death of a Salesman* (1949), *The Crucible* (1953) and *A View from the Bridge* (1955). His dramas address social issues and have been commended for their examinations of an individual in a social dilemma or an individual at the mercy of society. Writing about such topics gives Miller a reputation as a moralist (Stine 1983: 310).

Amongst Miller's popular plays, *The Crucible* is the most contentious one due to its critical essence in relation to political issues after WWII. Dealing with social problems in general, its moral vision is broader than Miller's other plays, which center exclusively around an individual in a society (Bergeron 1969: 53). *The Crucible* is a dramatized story of the Salem witch trials that took place in the Massachusetts Bay Colony during 1692. The Salem witch trials refer back to religious hysteria in American history, when people were living under strict Puritan principles. Abigail Williams, the play's antagonist, is the one who sowed the seeds of conflict among the people of Salem and those embroilments gradually developed into a widespread, far-reaching quarrel that soon got out of hand, both for the individual and for the society, and became impossible to control (Bonnet 1982: 32–33). As a result of these conflicts, twenty people were found guilty of witchcraft and hanged; others who had been accused saved themselves by confessing to witchcraft and accusing others.

To decipher the reasons for all these conflicts in the Salem community as they are presented in *The Crucible*, an all-inclusive study of Miller's play needs to be conducted. A more systematic study should consider aspects such as form, content, context and the reader's impression of the text. Some researchers, such as Martin (1977) and Budick (1985), have merely focused on the content and context of the play and neglected its linguistic aspects. Some others have exclusively focused on the language of the play and investigated it in terms of certain stylistic perspectives, but did not address the context, for example Lowe (1998) and Aziz and Al Qunayeer (2014).

This article presents a more comprehensive research on the play by focusing on Jonathan Culpeper's cognitive model as its framework (see Section 2 for details). In his approach, Culpeper (2001) takes the form, content, context and the cognitive dimension of the reader into consideration in the process of analyzing a literary work. Adopting Culpeper's *top-down* and *bottom-up* techniques, this study provides a stylistic analysis of the language of John Proctor and Deputy Governor Danforth, two opposing characters, through the theories of such philosophers of language as John R. Searle (1969), Herbert P. Grice (1989), Penelope Brown and

Stephen C. Levinson (1987) and assimilates the characters' linguistic aspects with the embedded schemas in *The Crucible* (see Section 4).

This research shows how the interaction between the readers' schemas and the language of Proctor and Danforth leads to the readers' impression of these two characters. By integrating schema theory into stylistic analysis, this study addresses Proctor and Danforth's characterization and distinguishes the opposing discourses arising from their character analysis. To sum up, with the help of Culpeper's cognitive stylistic approach, this study determines how the new stylistic achievements provide a framework to go beyond the realm of the text itself and acquire a more profound understanding of *The Crucible* and its characterization by taking its cognitive view of context and character into consideration.

## 2. Method

As an interdisciplinary study, this article takes advantage of cognitive theory and stylistics to examine *The Crucible*. By using the theories of many cognitive theoreticians such as van Dijk (1987, 1988, 1990), Jones (1990) and Kelley (1967, 1972, 1973), to name but a few, Culpeper (2001) has attempted to introduce and compile a new cognitive approach in order to fill the gaps in earlier theories. He draws together theories from linguistics, social cognition theories and literary stylistics to explore how the words of a literary text create a particular impression of characters in the readers' minds. Culpeper (2001) links schemata to linguistic components of the texts to produce a systematic analysis of characterization in drama. In this way, he asserts that two issues are important in the process of characterization: first, the readers' background knowledge of characterization in real life and in fiction, and second, the linguistic elements in the text of the play. Culpeper (2001) refers to two cognitive processes: top-down and bottom-up processes. "[T]op-down or conceptually-driven processes are cognitive processes that are designated by the application of past knowledge" (Culpeper 2001: 28). *Top-down inference processes* refer to the mental and psychological processes that a reader activates when confronted with different characters. "[B]ottom-up or data-driven processes are cognitive processes that are determined by an external stimulus" (Culpeper 2001: 28). *Bottom-up textual cues* deal with textual components that can give rise to information about a character.

On the basis of cognitive and schema theory (i.e. top-down), Culpeper (2001) introduces the perspectives of some prominent cognitive theoreticians and utilizes them for his own purpose. By using eminent works in the field of social cognition, such as Fiske and Taylor (1991), van Dijk (1987, 1988, 1990) and Wyer and Srull (1984), Culpeper (2001: 75–76) propounds a cognitive theory in which he

proposes three broad groupings for social categories through which people are able to understand others. They consist of *personal categories*, *social role categories* and *group membership categories*. Personal categories subsume information about "people's preferences, interests, habits, traits and goals" (Culpeper 2001:75). They can be regarded as idiosyncratic features and may also be attributed to groups of people. Social role categories relate to "people's social functions, such as kinship roles and occupational roles" (Culpeper 2001:76). Group membership categories include "knowledge about social groups including sex, race, class, age, nationality and religion" (Culpeper 2001:76). According to Culpeper (2001:77), all these categories are interrelated and when a category is activated, other categories may also start operating.

Culpeper (2001:83) believes that readers do not rely solely on top-down processes for understanding characters. Sometimes they use bottom-up processes which lead to rather different types of impressions. There are two fundamental alternatives in the process of perception: first, learning about the characters according to the category they belong to, and second, the impressions received based on knowledge about a particular individual not based on the category. The first alternative deals with top-down processing and can be considered *category-based impression*, and the second alternative is related to bottom-up processing and is called *person-based* or *attribute-based impression* (Culpeper 2001:83). As Culpeper (2001:83) argues, category-based processing deals with prior knowledge categories or schemata in shaping the impression of characters, and person-based processing is text-based in nature. He explains that direct access to a person's mind and finding the reasons for a person's actions in real life and even in fiction is a hard task and has to be inferred from observable evidence such as conversational behavior.

*Attribution* is a term in social psychology which connotes extracting information from people's behavioral acts and attributing this behavior to their dispositions (Culpeper 2001:115). Culpeper (2001) alludes to Jones's *Correspondent Inference Theory* (Jones & Davis 1965; Jones & McGillis 1976; Jones 1990) and Kelley's *Covariation Theory* (1967, 1972, 1973), which are two classic theories related to the process of attribution. Jones's *correspondent inference* refers to "a degree of correspondence between a person's behavior and their disposition" (Culpeper 2001:116); accordingly, circumstances that lead to an inference should be taken into account. According to Jones, a valid correspondent inference can be made when the doer of the action is not under external duress. A person's behavior should not be attributed to his personality when that person is under external pressure (as cited in Culpeper 2001:117). According to this view, Culpeper pinpoints Kelley's *discounting principle* which refers to the particular contextual conditions that lead a person to behave in such a way that his behavior cannot be attributed to his disposition. Culpeper (2001:274) also alludes to Kelley's *augmenting principle* which postulates that "if

somebody does something in spite of reasons for not doing it, a perceiver would be likely to infer that that person had a particularly strong reason for doing it”.

Based on Jones's perspective, a perceiver's expectancies of people's behavior which stem from schematic knowledge can be divided into three groups: *normative*, *category-based* and *target-based* expectancies (as cited in Culpeper 2001: 120). *Normative expectancies* refer to the social norms that constitute appropriate behaviors. *Category-based expectancies* allude to expectancies about the behavior of general groupings such as gender, age and class. *Target-based expectancies* include expectancies that one has about a particular person. Category-based and target-based expectancies can be linked to impression formation procedure. As a matter of fact, the activation of social schemata in one's mind leads to category-based expectancies and person-based impressions yielding target-based expectancies (Culpeper 2001: 120–121).

With regard to Kelley's (1967) *Covariation Theory*, there are three possible attributions: a *person attribution*, a *stimulus attribution* and a *circumstance attribution*. In this regard, Culpeper (2001: 128) discusses Kelley's three main criteria of *distinctiveness*, *consistency* and *consensus* on which those attributions are made, and defines them as follows: *distinctiveness* implies “the extent to which the target person reacts in a distinctive way to different stimuli”; *consistency* refers to “the extent to which the target person reacts to the same stimulus in the same way at other times and in other situations”, and *consensus* alludes to “the extent to which others react in a similar way to this stimulus”. Different attributions have different information patterns. The information pattern for a person attribution consists of low distinctiveness, high consistency and low consensus (Culpeper 2001: 128). In Culpeper's view, the information pattern for a person attribution is of special importance for evaluating characterization in literary texts.

Regarding bottom-up processes, Culpeper (2001) focuses on the language of literary texts and its association with the identification of characters' features and their relations with one another. He takes advantage of several linguistic theories for eliciting essential information from the language of the text. He mentions three main stylistic tools, including *Speech Act Theory*, Grice's *Cooperative Principle* and *politeness theory* for scrutinizing the linguistic elements of drama. On this basis, this paper also singles out three stylistic tools of Searle's (1969) speech acts, Grice's (1989) Cooperative Principle, and Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory among others to anatomize certain linguistic elements of the play. By using these stylistic tools, we shall find out the function of language in the characterization of John Proctor and Deputy Governor Danforth by studying their dialogues. To illustrate the bottom-up processes and the impression formation of Proctor and Danforth's characters in the readers' minds, we will present three successive extracts from the end of the play in Section 4. In the following section, we will elaborate on dominant schemata within the historical context of *The*

*Crucible* to indicate how the readers' impression of characters can be crystallized through interaction between schemata (i.e. top-down) and linguistic aspects (i.e. bottom-up) of the play.

### 3. The dominant schemata in *The Crucible*

Devoted to top-down cognitive processes, this section explains dominant schemata available to the Puritans, knowledge of which is required for readers' understanding of *The Crucible*. We elaborate on the two major schemata of WITCHCRAFT and THE COURT and clarify the kind of schema the Puritans had for a WITCH in order to shed light on characterization and conflicts within the play.

The first and foremost schema in *The Crucible* is the WITCHCRAFT schema. Its origin dates back to ancient times when people believed that all forms of magic such as witchcraft and their harmful effects were led by Satan. Thus, the fear of witchcraft became a significant issue in religion (Ciekawy 2005: 2477), and the Puritans regarded witchcraft as equivalent to Satan's presence and power (Weisman 1984: 27). According to the doctrines of the Puritans, witchcraft was regarded as the most heinous crime and everyone who performed that diabolical act was accused of this (Weisman 1984: 9). The Puritans maintained that Satan was able to exert his mischief and malignancy on human beings through witches. The witches were considered to represent Satan's power on earth; therefore, those accused of witchery were bound to be prosecuted by the court or the Puritan church (Weisman 1984: 32).

The COURT schema is another significant schema in *The Crucible*, knowledge of which is crucial for the readers to grasp the process of the Salem witchcraft trials. The readers' confrontation with the scenes of the witch trials in the play triggers the sequential practices and contextualization conventions of the court in their minds. The script-based framework of the court enables the readers to activate expectations about its default conceptual slots such as social roles, which include at least five people: a plaintiff, who initiates a lawsuit; a defendant, who is accused of a crime; a prosecutor, who questions the defendant and his witnesses to convince the jury that the suspect is guilty; a defense attorney, who is the advocate of the defendant and acts on behalf of him; and a judge, who as a judicial power presides over the proceedings, makes decisions and imposes the sentence if the defendant is found guilty. The court officials gather in the formal environment of the courtroom (setting) with the aim of dispensing justice fairly to everyone and upholding, interpreting, and applying the law. Moreover, on the basis of their COURT schema, the readers are able to distinguish the asymmetrical power relations among the participants: the judge is the most powerful figure in the court and the defendant is the most subordinate figure.

A key point to note here is that any deviation from the COURT schematic assumptions yields a foregrounding effect which consequently gives rise to specific interpretations and inferences (Culpeper & McIntyre 2010:184). For instance, the absence of the social roles of the prosecutor and the defense attorney, as two separate legal entities, in the process of the court is considered an anomaly and is thus contrary to the readers' normative expectancies of the COURT schema. Twentieth and twenty-first century readers observe such an abnormality in the process of the Salem witchcraft trials. In *The Crucible*, the social roles of the judge, the plaintiff and the defendant are filled with such specific values as Danforth, Abigail and Proctor, respectively (Hamilton 2007:228). Needless to say, during the Salem witch-hunting, many people (*values*) filled the role of defendant and plaintiff (Hamilton 2011:35). However, there is no special value for the social role of the defense attorney in the Salem court and the judges such as Danforth and Hathorne fill the role of the prosecutor as well. The conflation of the two roles of judge and prosecutor in one value (e.g. Danforth) is opposed to the contemporary readers' expectations of the court processes, in that the judges are not expected to take the role of prosecutor and interrogate the defendants directly. This unusual, one-to-one confrontation between the judge and the defendant will be observed practically in the following section, which presents the analysis of a text passage in which Danforth seeks to elicit a confession from Proctor by himself.

In the process of the Salem witchcraft trials, the judges considered themselves the absolute power of the court who were able to handle the court cases without mediation by other judicial authorities. They put pressure on defendants to confess and identify other witches in order to be spared execution, and those who denied their compliance with the Devil were sent to the scaffold. The judges justified their murders by referring to the Bible: "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" and "A man or a woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard shall surely be put to death" (Sogliuzzo 2012:367–368). As protectors of the Puritan church values, the judges and the ministers believed that their responsibility was to force the will of God upon the people and that if they condoned the evil practices and signs of corruption, God would penalize the whole community (Morgan 2008:51).

Furthermore, the accused who were arraigned on a charge of witchcraft were not permitted to have a defense attorney. In act three of the play, Danforth's response, "Mr. Hale, you surely do not doubt my justice" (Miller 1953:89) to Reverend Hale's insistence on appointing a lawyer to defend John Proctor reveals that the judges interpreted the presence of a lawyer as an insult to their ability to administer justice. In point of fact, they considered the presence of a lawyer unnecessary in cases of witchcraft, in which the only evidence was the testimony of the victims (Miller 1953:90). The judges hated limits on their jurisdiction over the matter of witchcraft and they thought that they were the only ones who were

able to perceive the truth. The absence of two main judicial roles of the court and the assumption of the role of prosecutor by the judges further discredit the formality of the Salem legal system in the eyes of contemporary readers. It can be construed that the disruption of the legal structure of the court changes the Salem court into an authoritarian court which functions in line with the oppression of the Puritan church.

To complicate the matter further, the unusual court procedure of Salem invites the American readers of the 1950s to draw a parallel between the Salem witch trials and the House Un-American Activities Committee's (HUAC) anti-communist investigations in the McCarthy era. The Committee did not have a legitimate program of investigation (Carr 1950:604) in a way that is analogous to the absence of the juridical pattern for interrogating the accused by the Salem officials. According to the recorded documents of the HUAC hearings (see United States 1951–52, 1953–54, 1955–56, and Bentley 1972), the HUAC chairmen, including J. Parnell Thomas and John S. Wood, filled the role of the judge in the Committee, took the role of the prosecutor and, along with other Committee members, questioned the people suspected of being Communist Party members.

Consequently, the lack of a clear boundary between the judicial roles of the court both in the Salem court and in the HUAC makes the conscious readers correlate the conflation of the roles of judge and prosecutor in one person during the HUAC hearings with the same conflation during the Salem trials. Finding the Committee's chairman as a new value (in place of Danforth) to fill the roles of judge and prosecutor at the same time prompts the readers to cognitively make connections between the unfair court process of late-seventeenth-century Salem and the unjustified procedures of HUAC hearings in mid-twentieth-century America. Thus, Miller invites readers to interpret the play as an allegory for McCarthyism through a particular conceptual blending. As a matter of fact, "the tragedy of justice in *The Crucible*, which is explicit, becomes an implicit condemnation of McCarthyism in the blend" (Hamilton 2011:34–35).

It is worth mentioning here that the readers of *The Crucible* have shaped their mental image of the courtroom out of their past experiences collected either through direct contact, that is, personal experience, or through indirect sources including films, television series and literature. Accordingly, both direct contact and indirect sources related to the court can provide sufficient input for the contemporary readers to form their COURT schema. In this way, the readers' schematic knowledge of their present-day courtroom and its legal proceedings empower them to figure out the process of the Salem court. In other words, although *The Crucible* illustrates the historical world of the late seventeenth century, contemporary readers are able to thoroughly understand the process of the Salem witch trials in relation to their present-day COURT schema.

Considering the importance of indirect sources in developing the readers' schematic knowledge, the readers of the play may construct their schemas about the Puritans' belief in witchcraft and their way of confrontation with witches through historical facts reflected both in historical books and in literary works such as Nathaniel Hawthorne's stories. Hawthorne's literary words help the readers acquire adequate knowledge about the dark side of seventeenth-century America as well as about the shameful participation of the judges in the persecution of innocent people during the Salem witch trials (Saari 2001:179 and 181). Like Hawthorne's stories, *The Crucible* also documents Puritan self-righteousness and hypocrisy (Saari 2001:145). In a nutshell, contemporary readers' prior knowledge about the court process in general and the doctrinal system of the Puritans in particular enables them to understand *The Crucible* properly.

#### 4. Examining characterization by integrating the mind and the text

Due to space limitations, we cannot present a comprehensive analysis of the interaction between all the characters; therefore, we will focus on the conversation of the two main characters, John Proctor and Deputy Governor Danforth. The importance of their concluding conversations in pushing forward the plot motivates us to select and divide them into three successive extracts in order to be able to illustrate the process of their characterization and power relationship through close cognitive stylistic analysis. Although the readers have already formed their impressions of the characters by the time they get to the last part of the play, they find Proctor and Danforth's concluding conflictual dialogues more informative about their characterizations and thus the readers begin to shape their final impressions of the characters in their minds. In point of fact, Proctor and Danforth's characterizations culminate in their concluding conversations and the reason for this salience should be investigated in their language. In addition to the readers' schemata which help them to comprehend the characters, the language of the characters as well as the descriptions in the stage directions pave the way for the readers to form their impressions of the characters. In this regard, the linguistic analysis of Proctor and Danforth's dialogues near the end of the play can prove that the readers' crystallized schemata about these two characters will be reinforced or refreshed.<sup>1</sup>

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1. For more information about *schema refreshment* and *schema reinforcement*, see Cook (1994:191).

By analyzing the language of Proctor and Danforth, this study employs an *outside-in approach* (Culpeper & McIntyre 2010:182) and shows how their conflict affects their use of language. Investigating their language by adopting the three stylistic tools, Searle's speech acts, Grice's Cooperative Principle and Brown and Levinson's politeness theory, which are applicable to these extracts, and amalgamating them with dominant schemata help the readers to understand the character formations of Proctor and Danforth at the end of the play. The focus of the linguistic analysis will be on dialogues between Proctor and Danforth; therefore, to save space, other characters' utterances within these extracts will be displayed by dots.

#### 4.1 Extract 1

The first extract begins with Danforth, the church discourse signifier, who asks Proctor some questions to get information about his association with the Devil. Proctor is the representative of the discourse of the people accused of witchery.

1. Danforth: Now, then, Mister, will you speak slowly, and directly to the point, for Mr. Cheever's sake. *He is on record now, and is really dictating to Cheever, who writes.* Mr. Proctor, have you seen the Devil in your life? *Proctor's jaws lock.* Come, man, there is light in the sky; the town waits at the scaffold; I would give out this news. Did you see the Devil?

2. Proctor: I did. [...]

3. Danforth: And when he come to you, what were his demand? *Proctor is silent. Danforth helps.* Did he bid you to do his work upon the earth?

4. Proctor: He did.

5. Danforth: And you bound yourself to his service? *Danforth turns, as Rebecca Nurse enters, with Herrick helping to support her. She is barely able to walk.* Come in, come in, woman! [...] *Proctor turns his face to the wall.*

6. Danforth: Courage, man, courage – let her witness your good example that she may come to God herself. Now hear it, Goody Nurse! Say on, Mr. Proctor. Did you bind yourself to the Devil's service? [...]

7. Proctor, *through his teeth, his face turned from Rebecca:* I did.

(Miller 1953:121; italics original)

According to the Puritans' WITCHCRAFT schema, people who were charged with witchery had to confess to save their lives; otherwise, they were hanged so that society would be purged of the demon. Before the beginning of the extract, John Proctor was charged with sending his spirit out upon Mary Warren. Although this accusation was fake, he resolved to confess in the hope of saving his life. Despite the fact that Danforth's direct questioning of Proctor is contrary to the readers' schema about the relationship between a judge and a defendant in the court scene,

the readers' awareness of their different social status helps them to infer characters' speech acts. Therefore, the readers interpret Danforth's first utterance in turn 1 as a directive speech act of command instead of a request. It is the illocutionary force which is more likely to be that of a command than anything else. Danforth desires Proctor to speak slowly in order that the clerk can record his confession. He uses the interrogative structure ("will you speak slowly") instead of a direct command (*speak slowly*) by starting his utterance with the auxiliary verb *will*, with the intention of securing Proctor's cooperation and minimizing the sense of imposition or face-threat. Indeed, Danforth's command is regarded as threatening Proctor's negative face by delimiting his speech rate.

Danforth proceeds his first turn by interrogating Proctor in order to elicit information about Proctor's contact with the Devil. Clearly, the whole trial triggers the readers' schema about witches. According to the Salem belief system, the witch is guilty of making a contract with the Devil and with his representatives on earth. The illocutionary act of accusation can be inferred from Danforth's questions, which are meant to compel a guilty person to confess. Proctor's confession means admitting a crime which he did not perform and he shows his unwillingness to confess falsely with silence as the stage direction "*Proctor's jaws lock*" in turn 1 implies. Here, Danforth's intended perlocutionary effect is not fulfilled due to Proctor's silence. Danforth's reaction to Proctor's stillness is to resort to threat indirectly. He reminds Proctor that death awaits him if he does not confess. It reflects the witchcraft schema that the doom of witches is death unless they confess their pact with Satan.

According to Searle (1975:71), certain *felicity conditions* are necessary for an illocutionary act to be performed successfully. He asserts that the *preparatory condition* for threatening someone is that the hearer is able to perform the act. In this case, Proctor is expected to be able to confess; thus, Danforth insists on his question. Proctor's answer in turn 2 fulfils Danforth's desire; however, based on Austin's (1962:21) Speech Act Theory, his response is regarded as an infelicitous speech act due to coercion. It is clear from the threat of being hanged for refusing to confess that Proctor is under duress and thus his confession is infelicitous. Proctor's answers to the accusatory questions in turns 2, 4 and 7 also indicate the infelicitous confessions. It should be noted that based on Grice's perspective, they violate the Maxim of Quality because Proctor's responses are false. In point of fact, by lying, which represents a "covert untruthfulness" (Dynel 2016:184), Proctor aims to induce a false belief in Danforth as a hearer. The readers are able to recognize his false confession through reading the stage direction of turn 7, which states that Proctor articulates his confession reluctantly through his teeth and turns his face from Rebecca. In view of this menacing context, the readers are not able to make a corresponding inference between Proctor's confession and his personality as a

result of external constraint. In terms of a discounting principle, the readers cannot attribute Proctor's confession to his guiltiness.

As the above extract demonstrates, Danforth's directive speech acts of question deviate from the readers' category-based expectancies about the social role of a judge. They indicate that Danforth takes both the role of a judge and the role of a prosecutor and the conflation of these two roles in one person is highly unusual based on Common Law. As a result of deviation from what the readers expect of the role of a judge in court processes, a particular characterization of Danforth can be foregrounded. A judge is expected to establish justice throughout society and be wise enough not to accuse others based on invalid proofs. However, in the case of Danforth, he judges innocent people to be witches on the basis of unreliable evidence and forces them to confess to an uncommitted action. Thus, regarding *attribution theory*, the readers can make a corresponding inference between Danforth's behavior and his personality. His strict demeanor towards the accused converts him into a dictatorial Puritan judge whose aim is not to promulgate justice throughout the community, but rather to reinforce his authority and power. He is characterized as a doctrinaire judge; he imposes his ideas on others and suspects anyone who disagrees with him to be an enemy of the church and its teachings. Danforth's domineering ways conform with the readers' prior knowledge about the despotic system of the Puritan church in the seventeenth century. On this basis, Danforth's character is in accordance with the readers' category-based expectancies about the Puritan authorities whose religious fanaticism pulled down the Salem community into an abyss of destruction. Thus, the readers can comprehend the character of Danforth according to their category-based impression.

It should be borne in mind that the schematic analysis of Danforth's character is derived from the interaction between the readers' minds and Danforth's language. In other words, scrutinizing Danforth's language through stylistic tools without considering the readers' schematic knowledge cannot lead to comprehending his character. In Culpeper's (2001: 23) view, "what one understands about people on the basis of language is part of communication", not all of it. For Culpeper, the mere linguistic analysis of characters pragmatically cannot produce character comprehension. He (Culpeper 2001: 24) argues that

[t]he main theoretical contributions, such as speech act theory (Austin 1962; Searle 1969), conversational implicature (Grice 1975), and relevance theory (Sperber and Wilson 1986, 1995), although they can – I shall argue – be useful in describing aspects of characterization, say nearly nothing about the presentation and perception of identities, or even about the fact that some people might be different from others.

Therefore, character comprehension can be obtained by combining linguistic analysis with cognitive considerations of the readers (Culpeper & Fernandez-Quintanilla 2017: 93).

#### 4.2 Extract 2

The stage direction “*Proctor turns his face to the wall*” in the above extract informs the readers about Proctor’s reaction to Rebecca’s entrance to the courtroom. He tries not to encounter Rebecca Nurse because he is ashamed of his immoral action in front of someone who prefers to preserve her integrity and piety rather than bow to despotism. After Proctor’s confession, Danforth obliged Rebecca to confess in order to free herself from the yoke of the Devil, but she refused to lie and damn herself. Danforth turned to Proctor and forced him to unmask Rebecca’s mendacity after his failure to obtain Rebecca’s confession:

8. Danforth: Mr. Proctor. When the Devil came to you did you see Rebecca Nurse in his company? *Proctor is silent.* Come, man, take courage – did you ever see her with the Devil?

9. Proctor, *almost inaudibly*: No.

*Danforth, now sensing trouble, glances at John and goes to the table, and picks up a sheet – the list of condemned.*

10. Danforth: Did you ever see her sister, Mary Easty, with the Devil?

11. Proctor: No, I did not.

12. Danforth, *his eyes narrow on Proctor*: Did you ever see Martha Corey with the Devil?

13. Proctor: I did not.

14. Danforth, *realizing, slowly putting the sheet down*: Did you ever see anyone with the Devil?

15. Proctor: I did not.

16. Danforth: Proctor, you mistake me. I am not empowered to trade your life for a lie. You have most certainly seen some person with the Devil. *Proctor is silent.* Mr. Proctor, a score of people have already testified they saw this woman with the Devil.

17. Proctor: Then it is proved. Why must I say it?

18. Danforth: Why “must” you say it! Why, you should rejoice to say it if your soul is truly purged of any love for Hell!

19. Proctor: They think to go like saints. I like not to spoil their names.

20. Danforth, *inquiring, incredulous*: Mr. Proctor, do you think they go like saints?

21. Proctor, *evading*: This woman never thought she done the Devil’s work.

22. Danforth: Look you, sir. I think you mistake your duty here. It matters nothing what she thought – she is convicted of the unnatural murder of children, and you for sending your spirit out upon Mary Warren. Your soul alone is the issue here, Mister, and you will prove its whiteness or you cannot live in a Christian country. Will you tell me now what persons conspired with you in the Devil's company? *Proctor is silent.* To your knowledge was Rebecca Nurse ever –

23. Proctor: I speak my own sins; I cannot judge another. *Crying out, with hatred:* I have no tongue for it. (Miller 1953: 121–123; italics original)

According to the WITCHCRAFT schema, the accused person is expected to identify other witches whom he had seen in company of the Devil. However, Proctor's answer in turn 9 to Danforth's question (turn 8) is not in accordance with the judge's expectation. In other words, Proctor's actual perlocutionary effect is contrary to Danforth's desire and the judge does not find his illocutionary act successful. Based on Searle's (1975) Speech Act Theory, Danforth's illocutionary act is unsuccessful because he does not take the felicity conditions into consideration. Danforth's question (turn 8) presupposes Proctor's ability to name the witches. His ignorance of Proctor's false confession and of his true character leads him to neglect the preparatory condition of his question. The preparatory condition for Proctor's performing the act of disclosure is that he is able to perform this act. However, it is not within Proctor's power to reveal Satan's companions because he is only pretending to be a wizard. The sincerity and essential conditions and propositional content, which depend on Danforth's wants, are fulfilled, but the preparatory condition associated with the ability of Proctor to perform the act is not taken into account. According to Searle (1975: 72), "it is a rule of the directive class of speech acts that the directive is defective if the hearer is unable to perform the act".

As the stage direction of turn 9 indicates, Proctor's negative answer to the judge's question surprises Danforth and troubles him because it goes against the tenets of a true confession. Thus, he starts to repeatedly ask Proctor questions (turns 10, 12 and 14), which can be considered as threatening Proctor's negative face, in order to elicit information about other companions of the devil, but every time Proctor refuses to cooperate by flouting the Maxim of Quantity. By using the speech act of denial, Proctor gives as little information as possible to Danforth, who regards Proctor's lack of contribution as mocking the church and its authorities. Therefore, Proctor's denial that he had never seen anyone with the Devil implicates damage to Danforth's positive face as a judge whose utterance "Proctor, you mistake me" in turn 16 proves this inference. Danforth's utterance "I am not empowered to trade your life for a lie" (turn 16) reminds Proctor that he has no power and his life and death are in Danforth's powerful hands; hence, this utterance can be

interpreted as an attack on Proctor's positive face. Danforth threatens Proctor that if he continues his mendacity, his death is inevitable. Danforth and other church authorities establish their judgement on falsehood and construe Proctor's honesty as untruthfulness.

Proctor's riposte in turn 17 to Danforth's urge to elicit a confession from him is contrary to the readers' schema about the behavior of a defendant. The accused is not expected to stand against the judge's wishes or to ask questions of him. The readers' stereotypical knowledge about the social role of a defendant is to regard him as an obedient person. Proctor's refusal to comply with the rule of the court foregrounds his characterization and leads the reader to interpret his character according to a person-based impression. It should be noted here that Proctor's conversational behavior in this extract differs from what the readers have observed in the previous one. Proctor's unexpected reactions to Danforth's repeated questions show a change in his character. He is no longer an obedient defendant whose speech is controlled by the judge. From then on, the readers observe the beginning of an overt discord between Danforth and Proctor and this open opposition helps the characters be defined more vividly. This contrast can be seen in their assertive speech acts in turns 18, 19 and 20, which express their beliefs and schemas.

Danforth believes that a witch should rejoice in naming Satan's companions after his soul is purged by confession, and Proctor's refusal gives rise to Danforth's suspicion about his confession. Despite Danforth's expectation, Proctor expresses his attitude towards the accused people and calls them "saints" (turn 19). He sides with his fellows by refusing to spoil their names. Proctor is aware of the fact that he is damaging his positive face by sacrificing his name and integrity in order to save himself; nevertheless, he cannot allow himself to threaten the positive face of others by sacrificing their good names for his own benefit. Therefore, it is possible to make a reasonably strong correspondent inference that Proctor is a righteous and devoted Christian man and a faithful person to his friends. His characterization deviates from the readers' category-based expectancies about those accused people who incriminate innocent people in order to save themselves from retribution. Hence, Proctor's behavior leads the readers to interpret his character based on target-based expectancies. His positive behavior clashes with the readers' expectations derived from their knowledge about other defendants' negative behaviors.

Turning to the character of Danforth, he expresses his surprise at Proctor's utterance in question form (turn 20) and Proctor evades the judge's question by flouting the Maxim of Relation. By reading the stage direction "*evading*" the readers are able to infer that Proctor diverts Danforth's attention from his own opinion about the sainthood of the innocent people to Rebecca's thoughts about herself (turn 21). Nevertheless, Proctor emphasizes the innocence of Rebecca and other

accused people by using this evasive response. Danforth impedes Proctor's further judgement by reminding him of his duty and his social role as a culprit (turn 22), thus damaging his positive and negative faces. Danforth's failure to gain information causes him to compel Proctor either to confess and purify his soul or to be put to death. Danforth's continual directive and commissive speech acts of threatening and questioning in these two extracts support a personal attribution. So far, we have had a high consistency and low distinctiveness information pattern for Danforth. Thus, it is possible to make a corresponding inference that Danforth is a tyrannical Puritan judge who uses threatening language in order to achieve his goal and substantiate his power. However, his threats have no influence on Proctor's decision and in spite of external pressures, Proctor keeps silent instead of incriminating others.

#### 4.3 Extract 3

Reverend Hale and Reverend Parris persuade Danforth to accept Proctor's confession anyway and let him sign it. In the following extract, the conflict between Danforth and Proctor reaches its climax:

24. Danforth, *considers; then with dissatisfaction*: Come, then, sign your testimony. To Cheever: Give it to him. Cheever goes to Proctor, the confession and a pen in hand. Proctor does not look at it. Come, man, sign it.

25. Proctor, *after glancing at the confession*: You have all witnessed it – it is enough.

26. Danforth: You will not sign it?

27. Proctor: You have all witnessed it; what more is needed?

28. Danforth: Do you sport with me? You will sign your name or it is no confession, Mister! *His breast heaving with agonized breathing, Proctor now lays the paper down and signs his name. [...]*

*Proctor has just finished signing when Danforth reaches for the paper. But Proctor snatches it up, and now a wild terror is rising in him, and a boundless anger.*

29. Danforth, *perplexed, but politely extending his hand*: If you please, sir.

30. Proctor: No.

31. Danforth, *as though Proctor did not understand*: Mr. Proctor, I must have –

32. Proctor: No, no. I have signed it. You have seen me. It is done! You have no need for this.

33. Parris: Proctor, the village must have proof that –

34. Proctor: Damn the village! I confess to God, and God has seen my name on this! It is enough!

35. Danforth: No, sir, it is –

36. Proctor: You came to save my soul, did you not? Here! I have confessed myself; it is enough!

37. Danforth: You have not con –

38. Proctor: I have confessed myself! Is there no good penitence but it be public? God does not need my name nailed upon the church! God sees my name; God knows how black my sins are! It is enough!

39. Danforth: Mr. Proctor –

40. Proctor: You will not use me! I am no Sarah Good or Tituba, I am John Proctor! You will not use me! It is no part of salvation that you should use me!

41. Danforth: I do not wish to –

42. Proctor: I have three children – how may I teach them to walk like men in the world, and I sold my friends?

43. Danforth: You have not sold your friends –

44. Proctor: Beguile me not! I blacken all of them when this is nailed to the church the very day they hang for silence!

45. Danforth: Mr. Proctor, I must have good and legal proof that you –

46. Proctor: You are the high court, your word is good enough! Tell them I confessed myself; say Proctor broke his knees and wept like a woman; say what you will, but my name cannot –

47. Danforth, *with suspicion*: It is the same, is it not? If I report it or you sign to it?

48. Proctor – *he knows it is insane*: No, it is not the same! What others say and what I sign to is not the same!

49. Danforth: Why? Do you mean to deny this confession when you are free?

50. Proctor: I mean to deny nothing!

51. Danforth: Then explain to me, Mr. Proctor, why you will not let –

52. Proctor, *with a cry of his whole soul*: Because it is my name! Because I cannot have another in my life! Because I lie and sign myself to lies! Because I am not worth the dust on the feet of them that hang! How may I live without my name? I have given you my soul; leave me my name!

53. Danforth, *pointing at the confession in Proctor's hand*: Is that document a lie? If it is a lie I will not accept it! What say you? I will not deal in lies, Mister! *Proctor is motionless*. You will give me your honest confession in my hand, or I cannot keep you from the rope. *Proctor does not reply*. Which way do you go, Mister?

*His breast heaving, his eyes staring, Proctor tears the paper and crumples it, and he is weeping in fury, but erect.*

54. Danforth: Marshal! [...]

55. Proctor, *his eyes full of tears*: I can. And there's your first marvel, that I can. You have made your magic now, for now I do think I see some shred of goodness in John Proctor. Not enough to weave a banner with, but white enough to keep it from such dogs [...]

56. Danforth: Hang them high over the town! Who weeps for these, weeps for corruption! *He sweeps out past them* [...].

(Miller 1953: 123–125; italics original)

Despite his dissatisfaction, Danforth accepts Hale and Parris's offer and forsakes his insistence on acquiring Proctor's confession. Danforth's direct speech act of command "sign your testimony" (turn 24) is a clear example of *bald on record impoliteness* (see Brown and Levinson 1987: 69). This direct command generates disharmony and conflict between characters and reminds the readers of Danforth's great power over Proctor. It is in accordance with Grice's Maxims of Manner and Quantity due to its unambiguity and conciseness. This threatens Proctor's positive and negative face at the same time. Here, Danforth's locutionary act coincides with his illocutionary one. Nonetheless, his intended perlocutionary effect is not fulfilled due to Proctor's resistance (turn 25) to signing the confession. Proctor's utterance breaks the Maxims of Relation and Manner because it is irrelevant to Danforth's order and also by expressing his statement ambiguously Proctor implicates that he does not intend to sign his confession. Although the Salem court process is entirely incompatible with the contemporary American readers' COURT schema due to a one-to-one confrontation between the judge and the defendant, Proctor's refusal to obey the judge's command also triggers both the reader's and Danforth's surprise, in that a defendant who has a low social status is not expected to disobey his superior's command.

Danforth expresses his wonder through the indirect speech act of question (turn 26). His sentence's declarative structure along with a question mark turns it to a hybrid form between a statement and a question. He states it in declarative form because he seems to think that Proctor is not going to sign it. Furthermore, the question mark seems to indicate that Danforth is not completely sure what Proctor is actually going to do; hence, he uses the mixed form to convey both senses at the same time. Proctor's utterance in turn 27 is not a direct answer to Danforth's question and it flouts the Maxim of Manner. Danforth infers that Proctor does not mean to sign the confession. Therefore, Danforth produces face-threatening behavior (turn 28) in order to pursue his particular goal. He puts pressure on Proctor to sign his confession or else his confession is void and execution is his destiny. By forcing Proctor to do something which is against his will, Danforth attacks his negative face.

With regard to the stage direction “*His breast heaving with agonized breathing*”, although Proctor is reluctant to sign his confession, he succumbs to the judge’s threat and signs his name. Proctor’s act of signing is infelicitous owing to the external constraint. Thereupon, according to the *discounting principle*, one cannot soundly infer that Proctor’s action reveals his character as a diabolical figure. The readers’ impression of Proctor’s character is contrary to their WITCH schema and this view is reinforced by Proctor’s refusal to pass his signed confession to the judge. Through the stage direction of “*now a wild terror is rising in him, and a boundless anger*”, the readers have been notified about Proctor’s inner feelings which assure the readers of his dissatisfaction with his deed. Proctor knows that his confession is a lie and he does not wish to swap his integrity with a lie. It is worth mentioning here that Proctor’s false confession at the end of the play mirrors Tituba’s “unhappy confession” (Lowe 1998: 131) in act one. Based on Speech Act Theory, Valerie Lowe (1998) also reveals that Tituba’s confession is “unhappy” or infelicitous due to both external constraint and Tituba’s belief in her innocence. Although Lowe (1998) examines Tituba’s language stylistically, she ignores the crucial role of the readers’ minds in comprehending her character with respect to her speech acts. However, Culpeper’s cognitive stylistic approach paves the way for us to unravel the readers’ schematic dimension in the process of their impression formation of Proctor’s character by analyzing his language and interpreting his intentions behind his every speech. This is what is lacking in Lowe’s mere stylistic study.

Proctor’s disobedient behavior rouses Danforth’s suspicion, but this time Danforth does not adopt a commissive speech act (i.e. a threat) in order to persuade Proctor to hand over the confession; hence, his behavior toward Proctor changes dramatically. He articulates his request politely (turn 29) by extending his hand towards Proctor and begging him to deliver his signed confession. He employs the conditional sentence “If you please, sir” to soften the imposition of his request and to mitigate its face-threatening act. Danforth produces context-related language here in order to pursue a particular goal. His intention in changing his language from face-damaging speech acts of threat and order to the more polite speech act of request is not to preserve Proctor’s face, but rather he aims to protect his and his government’s positive face and reputation at the cost of Proctor’s good name.

Danforth’s unsteady behavior in this extract can be attributed to his hypocritical and selfish personality. What he cares about are his and the Puritan church’s position and authority, not the innocence of the accused people and their rights. On the other hand, John Proctor, as the representative of the accused people, withstands Danforth’s demand firmly by his direct answer “No” (turns 30 and 32). As the discussion unfolds, the power relationship between the two men changes and henceforth Proctor gains control of the dialogues, so that he impedes Danforth’s contributions by repetitive interruptions of his dialogues, thus damaging his negative face.

Based on Culpeper's perspective, one cannot rely solely on these linguistic analyses in order to comprehend Proctor's character. In Culpeper's view:

Whilst fictional characters have a passive existence in texts or in people's minds, it is only in the interaction between texts and minds that they attain actual existence. Characters in texts without readers are just patterns of ink on the page; minds without texts are empty of character. (Culpeper & McIntyre 2010:176)

Accordingly, through consideration of Proctor's language, the readers come to the conclusion that Proctor's aggressive behavior in this extract is not congruent with their category-based expectancies of the group of defendants to whom Proctor belongs. On this basis, Proctor's unusual behavior breaks the social norms and is thereby foregrounded. His unexpected behavior tends to be informative and enables the readers to make corresponding inferences about his character.

Proctor transforms into an autonomous person who dares to fight against the tyranny of the church discourse. He uses the *off-record strategy* in turns 34 and 38 to criticize the church authorities obliquely. He flouts Grice's Maxim of Manner and conveys the criticism couched in an implicature. Proctor's utterances implicate that God's approval should be the ultimate goal for the church, not the villager's approbation. He means that if the church principles follow God's will, its authorities would accept his confession because he confesses to God and He sees his name on it. However, Danforth's persistence in obtaining Proctor's confession to show it to the people reflects the falsity of the church discourse. Proctor's confession is worth a lot for the church authorities due to Proctor's popularity with the people. Thus, the authorities attempt to prove their righteousness to the people by means of Proctor's confession in order to secure their reputation and domination. However, Proctor does not allow the authorities to abuse his name for their own benefits. In turn 40, Proctor compares himself with those accused people, such as Sarah Good and Tituba, who confessed falsely and incriminated innocent people in witchcraft. He flouts the second Maxim of Quantity (i.e. "do not make your contribution more informative than is required"; Grice 1989: 26) by introducing himself in order to detach himself from those unfaithful defendants.

The noticeable contrast between Proctor's character, who does not denigrate the names of innocent people despite external constraints, and the perfidious characters of Tituba or Sarah Good is the salient issue here. Based on the *augmenting principle* which is relevant here, Proctor's action seems to have an augmenting effect and points to his having a strong reason to behave in this way. The readers can infer that Proctor is a faithful fellow who tries not only to enhance his positive face by protecting his good name, but also to justify the brave and noble deed of all innocent people who refused to lie to save themselves. He is a conscientious man who has a sense of responsibility towards the life and dignity of his friends. Proctor's answer to Danforth's question (turns 47 and 48) violates Grice's Maxim of Quality

for the purpose of misleading the judge that his official declaration of his confession is more authentic than the manifestation of his written and signed confession to the villagers. As a matter fact, Proctor means to persuade Danforth that his words are stronger than his confession; accordingly, he, as a powerful figure in the society, can use his words as a legal proof for the people. As the stage direction (*"he knows it is insane"*) informs the readers, although Proctor knows his answer is insane and inaccurate, he intends to preserve his good name and positive face at any cost. Proctor's unexpected behavior breaks Danforth's normative expectancies about the behavior of a culprit, thus he suspects Proctor and invites an explanation for his refusal to hand his confession over. By flouting the Quantity Maxim in turn 52, Proctor elucidates the reason for his action. He admits that his confession was a lie: "Because I lie and sign myself to lies" (turn 52). His true confession is a felicitous confession due to the absence of external pressures. Proctor attempts to save his integrity by his true confession because he knows that he will be unable to live in Salem if he gives up his name. In speech act terms, Proctor makes a direct plea, "I have given you my soul, leave me my name", to urge his request.

On the other hand, Danforth considers Proctor's true confession a lie and neglects the true side of the matter. Indeed, the disparity between Danforth's schemata and Proctor's leads them to misunderstand each other and consequently heighten their conflict. Danforth as a religious authority maintains that he is one of God's emissaries and therefore everything he believes in must be true and everything he does must be right. Therefore, he authorizes himself to extirpate any attempt considered a threat to Puritan dogma. In fact, the Puritan authorities established their government on lies and absolute ideologies which yielded to tyranny without even realizing it. Danforth's threatening act in turn 53 is understandable on the basis of this schema. According to Searle's (1975) felicity conditions, Danforth takes the preparatory condition of his threat into consideration because he believes in himself as a dominant figure who is able to perform the act of commanding someone to be killed or saved. Although his sentence "You will give me your honest confession in my hand, or I cannot keep you from the rope" functions as an offer, the threatening speech act is embedded in it. Proctor's acceptance of Danforth's offer to hand his confession over would be equivalent to saving his life, but at the cost of losing his integrity; however, his refusal means death, but his good name and honor are gained instead. Accordingly, Danforth damages Proctor's negative face by limiting his choices and impeding his action.

In response to Danforth's offer "Which way do you go, Mister?", Proctor chooses his way by ripping his confession to pieces and crumpling it. The importance of his behavioral pattern is that it allows the readers to infer that the cause of his behavior lies not in external phenomena, but in his personality. Based on the augmenting principle, despite the threat of death for refusing to pass his confession to the judge, Proctor's action (i.e. tearing up his confession) indicates that he

has a particularly strong reason for his practice: he tries to preserve his personal integrity by choosing death with honor instead of life with shame. This activates the corresponding inference in the readers' minds about his character: he has a noble and dignified personality. He is not a passive and spineless character bowing to all the authorities' wishes.

Danforth's successful imperative command ("hang them high over the town") in turn 56 alludes to the fact that he is the controlling figure in the play, which is not surprising given his social role as a judge in the procedure of the Salem witchcraft trials. Although Proctor seized the power of conversation from Danforth throughout their interaction, it was temporary and Danforth continued to impose his authority on Proctor by his frequent use of directives. The conflicting relationship between Danforth and Proctor demonstrates that even though Danforth succeeds in suppressing his antagonist by hanging him, the true winner of the battle is Proctor, the righteous Christian man.

## 5. Conclusion

As a comprehensive, interdisciplinary method, Culpeper's cognitive approach for analyzing characterization in drama provides a basis for this article to link *The Crucible's* form, content and context to the reader's mind in order to indicate how their interactions lead to comprehension of the text and its characterization. Integrating schema theory (i.e. top-down cognitive processes) and pragmatic frameworks, including Searle's (1969) speech acts, Grice's (1989) Cooperative Principle and Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory (i.e. bottom-up cognitive processes) has produced useful insights into the issue of *The Crucible's* characterization and its prevailing opposing discourses.

Accepting the main tenets of Culpeper's framework, this paper employed both top-down and bottom-up processes to give a more comprehensive analysis of the main characters in the play. In this regard, the pragmatic theories of philosophers of language have been used to prove the crucial and integral role of bottom-up processes in constructing characterization. Since the main focus of stylistic theories is on detailed analysis of the language of the texts, many analysts have taken advantage of them for the linguistic analysis of various literary works, especially drama.<sup>2</sup> In this study, the assimilation of the readers' schemata about the processes of the court and the issue of witchcraft with the linguistic elements of the play

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2. The short essays in the book *Exploring the language of drama: From text to context* (Culpeper, Short & Verdonk 1998) can be taken into account as the prime examples of stylistic studies which apply such theories as speech acts, Cooperative Principle and politeness to different plays and anatomize their language professionally.

help the readers to understand the characterization of Proctor and Danforth as the central conflicting figures in the play.

As a result of a cognitive stylistic analysis of Proctor's character, the study reveals that his unexpected and complex verbal and nonverbal behavior is not in accordance with the familiar schemata commonly developed by the readers. In other words, Proctor's character refreshes the readers' schema about the social role of a defendant and thus leads the readers to interpret him as a *personalised* or *round* character. On this basis, in order to comprehend Proctor's character, readers are required to move away from schema-driven impression towards *piecemeal integration* (Culpeper & Fernandez-Quintanilla 2017:103).<sup>3</sup> As the protagonist of the play, Proctor is the one who is full of contradictions and challenges the readers' minds. By ripping his confession to pieces at the end of the play, Proctor attests to his complex or round personality.

On the opposite side of the round character of Proctor stands the *flat* character of Danforth, whose severe and oppressive behavior towards innocent people in general and towards Proctor in particular reinforces the readers' schema about the tyrannical methods of church discourse. In fact, readers of *The Crucible* take the false trend of the Salem church discourse into consideration as an equivalent to the fallacious belief system of medieval church discourse, but in a new form. On this basis, Danforth is a prototypical and unremarkable character who confirms readers' expectations of a representative of Puritan church discourse, which the readers were already familiar with from their reading of historical and literary books relating to witchcraft trials. Therefore, the readers form their impression of Danforth's character in their minds according to schema-based impression or *confirmatory categorization* (Culpeper 2001: 94).

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3. Culpeper (2001) establishes his theory about flat and round characters based on Fiske and Neuberg's (1990) *impression formation model*. For more detailed information about Fiske and Neuberg's model and Culpeper's flat and round character theory, see Culpeper (2001: 84–96).

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