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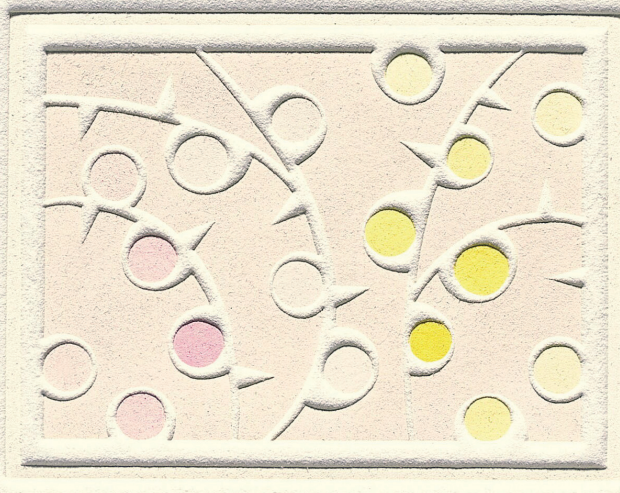**O**verseas
Perspectives and
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Editors: SMILJANA KOMAR and UROŠ MOZETIČ

LITERARY CRITICISM
AS METACOMMUNITY:
A FESTSCHRIFT FOR META GROSMAN

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EDITORS' FOREWORD

The man who does not read good books
has no advantage over the man who can't read them.

Mark Twain

Readers of ELOPE will have welcomed the appearance of this special issue, a Festschrift honouring the seventieth anniversary of Professor Meta Grosman, a stalwart in the field of English and American studies. Her immense contribution to scholarship is demonstrated in the ensuing comprehensive bibliography, comprising nearly three hundred monographs, studies, articles, reviews, forewords, introductions, interviews and other forms of her academic and public engagement.

Although the forty-six years of Meta Grosman's affiliation with the English department at the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana speak for themselves, as does her indefatigable effort to maintain the high academic and administrative efficiency of this department, it befits the occasion to outline her professional and institutional career before moving on to Meta as a teacher, colleague and friend.

Meta Grosman graduated in English and German from the Faculty of Arts in 1960 and was forthwith appointed the position of teaching assistant at the Department of Germanic Languages. She soon pursued her studies abroad, first at Cambridge University and in London (1963–1964), and finally, having obtained an American research scholarship, at the University of Miami, Ohio, where she took her MA degree in 1965. Six years later she earned a doctorate from the University of Ljubljana with her dissertation on the relation between the reader and the literary work of art in British criticism from 1921 to 1961. Foregrounding the reader a vital maker of meaning rather than being merely under the author's dominant control, the research immediately proved to have broken new ground in the Slovene literary community; the critics, willingly or not, were gradually becoming aware that there was more to the word on the page than met the eye. Not only did Meta Grosman's observations plant the seed for a more reader-oriented Slovene approach to studying literature – an approach largely influenced by Hans Robert Jauss's and Roman Ingarden's receptionist aesthetics, which had been previously ignored in Slovenia – they also paved a solitary and, more often than not, unappreciated way for what was to evolve a few decades later into literary pragmatics, now a major critical discipline.

In addition to her scholarly achievements, Meta has always stood out as a unique personality. Indeed, a statement and an example to all of us of the younger generation

who prefer the what-America-can-do-for-you commodity. In other words, as former students of Meta's we are only beginning to grasp her philosophy of duty, loyalty and concern – the very philosophy which underlay the years 1988–1992 and 1996–1998, when Meta Grosman acted as head of the Department of Germanic languages, as well as the years 1998–2000, when she became head of the newly established Department of English at the Faculty of Arts. It was a period which would be remembered for the growth and expansion of English and American studies in Slovenia, at least at the academic level if not nation-wide. This was largely due to Meta Grosman's policy of bringing together as many promising young scholars as possible, particularly in the domain of English linguistics, even though her commitment to literary studies might have encouraged a different priority. But she had a vision and a sense of duty. Thus she managed to make the department both compact and astonishingly diverse, with subjects ranging from in-depth surveys of literatures in English and modern English grammar to translation, discourse analysis, lexicography, generative grammar, or historical grammar.

This was also the period (1994–1997) of Meta Grosman's coordination of the TEMPUS project, which aimed to institutionalize translation studies in Slovenia and succeeded in founding a new translation department at the Faculty of Arts. It was a common feeling that, owing to Meta's international renown as well as the invariably persuasive power of her character, doors would open – and they did. No matter what project, position, promulgation, or representation she undertook, it always worked for the benefit of the department.

Among Meta Grosman's numerous achievements, let us just point out a few: she was the president of the Council of Humanities of Slovenia; she founded The Slovene Association for the Study of English (a member of the European Society for the Study of English) and acted as its first president; she has been a member of the FILLM (Fédération internationale des langues et littératures modernes) board since 1996; President of the Reading Association of Slovenia since 1995. In the years 1987 and 1988 she was a Fulbright professor at UC Berkeley, followed by her research scholarship at the University of Munich in 1992, granted by DAAD. In addition, Meta Grosman has for several years chaired the committee of the secondary education curriculum in Slovenia, with a view to making the school programmes more student-friendly and especially more functional in terms of developing the cognitive potentials of young learners. In 1997, her merits in the field of tertiary education were recognized with a national award by President Milan Kučan, followed by the SOVA (Slovene Association for Tertiary Didactics) award in 2000, and the 2006 Great Award in recognition of her pedagogic and scholarly contribution to Anglistics and the Ljubljana Faculty of Arts.

All medals, awards and nominations aside, Meta Grosman's central interest has been and continues to be the inter/cross-cultural reception of Angloamerican literature, with special

emphasis on the impact of translations on Slovene literary production, criticism and theory. However, as Meta's life-long students we cannot but sense that her main concern stays with ways of improving literature teaching, and that all her crusades over the newly-sprung critical thoughts have but one common purpose: to bring literature closer to its implied reader by making it sound alive, pertinent, potent. And no matter how many new theories tomorrow may bring, we firmly believe that she will do her best to put them into practice, to implement them in the classroom. As on the day when she walked in, and we were freshmen and had not the faintest idea what to do with this literature stuff, and she said: "You don't need to be a shoemaker to know that your shoe pinches. It's the same with literature." Curious enough, at the time, but then it dawned on us that Meta was actually using a metaphor for critical reading. And we gradually began to like it, we assumed the role of readers and started to value the stones which we ourselves brought to the vast mosaic of literature. And this is something that outweighs hundreds of bibliographical entries.

In the last few years, Meta Grosman's interest in the category of the reader in literary criticism has centred around the issue of reading and ways of improving reading literacy, particularly among the younger generations. Thus she has, more eagerly than ever, stood up against those proponents of literary texts (the majority of them being teachers at various levels of education) who impose their own arbitrary interpretations rather than encourage readers to develop their own literary sensitivity, appreciate their own experience and learn how to articulate it. Her empirical work is based on studying the development of cognitive functions parallel to the language development, which has proved instrumental in young learners' successful formation of their self-image, and therefore in their more active and coherent socialization. Meta's findings, encapsulated in three seminal publications, In Defense of Reading (2004), Literature in Intercultural Contexts (2004), and Dimensions of Reading (2006), have all the necessary power and persuasiveness to strengthen the public awareness of the significance of reading competence. This issue, which has for decades gone practically unnoticed, is now, thanks to Meta, properly articulated, and we can only hope that it will eventually bear fruit.

The range of topics covered in this volume reflects to a great extent the breadth of Meta's own scholarship, with an expected emphasis on inter/cross-cultural themes, whether in the form of literary, translational, or linguistic discourse. The list of contributors provides a fairly representative panorama of scholars who may differ in their primary research interests from Meta, but nevertheless share a close affinity with her: either as colleagues and friends, or simply as admirers of the same object.

Uroš Mozetič
Smiljana Komar

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Tihi bralci

Leta 383 po Kr., skoraj pol stoletja zatem, ko je prvi cesar krščanskega sveta Konstantin Veliki na smrtni postelji prejel krst, je prišel iz severnoafriškega rimskega oporišča v mesto Rim devetindvajsetletni učitelj latinske retorike, ki se je zapisal v spomin poznejših stoletij kot sveti Avguštin. Najel je hišo, odprl šolo in pritegnil precej učencev, ki so bili slišali za odlike tega provincialnega izobraženca, vendar mu je kmalu postalo jasno, da se v cesarski prestolnici ne bo mogel preživljati s poučevanjem. Njegovi učenci v domači Kartagini so bili resda razgrajaški huligani, vendar so vsaj plačevali za pouk. Dijaki v Rimu pa so tiho poslušali njegove razprave o Aristotelu in Ciceronu, dokler ni bilo treba poravnati šolnine – takrat pa so množično prešli k drugemu učitelju in pustili Avguština praznih rok. Zato je leto kasneje, ko mu je rimski prefekt ponudil stolico za književnost in govorništvo v Milanu in mu zagotovil še plačilo potnih stroškov, ponudbo hvaležno sprejel.[1]

Ker je bil v mestu tujec in je pogrešal družbo izobražencev, ali pa morda na materino prošnjo, je Avguštin v Milanu obiskal mestnega škofa – slovitega Ambrozija, prijatelja in svetovalca njegove matere Monike. Ambrozij (pozneje prav tako razglašen za svetnika) je bil mož v poznih štiridesetih letih, strogo pravoveren in brez strahu celo pred najvišjo posvetno oblastjo. Nekaj let po Avguštinovem prihodu v Milano je prisilil cesarja Teodozija I., da se je javno pokesal zaradi ukaza o pokolu izgrednikov, ki so ubili rimskega upravitelja v Solunu.[2] In ko je cesarica Justina želela od škofa eno izmed milanskih cerkva, da bi v njej lahko opravljala bogoslužje po arijanskih obredih, je organiziral zasedbo cerkve. V njej je vztrajal noč in dan, dokler ni cesarica odstopila od zahteve.

Sodeč po mozaiku iz petega stoletja je bil Ambrozij droben mož bistrega videza z velikimi ušesi in urejeno črno bradico, ki je njegov oglati obraz prej zmanjšala kot raztegnila. Bil je izredno priljubljen govornik; v poznejši krščanski ikonografiji je bil njegov simbol čebelji panj, ki je emblem tekočega govora.[3] Zaradi ugleda pri tolikšni množici ga je imel Avguštin za srečneža, vendar ga ni mogel povprašati o verskih vprašanjih, ki so ga mučila. Kadar Ambrozij ni bil zaposlen s skromnim obedom ali s sprejemanjem katerega izmed svojih številnih občudovalcev, je namreč sam bral v svoji celici.

Ambrozij je bil neobičajen bralec. "Kadar je bral," piše Avguštin, "so mu le oči pobirale vrstice, mu je le srce prodiralo v vsebino, glas in jezik pa sta mirovala. Bil sem večkrat navzoč – nikomur

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1   Sveti Avguštin, *Izpovedi* (Saint Augustine, *Confessions* [Pariz, 1959]), V, 12. – Vsi slovenski navedki so vzeti iz izdaje: Avrelij Avguštin, *Izpovedi*, prev. Anton Sovre, prir. Kajetan Gantar (Celje, 1991). (Op. prev.)
2   Donald Attwater, "Ambrose", v: *A Dictionary of Saints* (London, 1965).
3   W. Ellwood Post, *Saints, Signs and Symbols* (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 1962).

namreč ni branil dostopa in tudi obiskov napovedovati pri njem ni bilo navada –, a nikoli ga nisem videl drugače brati kot potihoma."[4]

Oči pobirajo vrstice, medtem ko jezik miruje – prav s temi besedami bi opisal današnjega bralca, ki sedi s knjigo v kavarnici nasproti Ambrozijeve bazilike v Milanu in morda bere Avguštinove *Izpovedi*. Podobno kot Ambrozij je postal gluh in slep za svet, za množice mimoidočih, za fasade poslopij iz rdečkaste krede. Toda človek, ki zbrano bere, menda nikomur ne pade v oči: ko se odmakne in zatopi v knjigo, je ta prizor nekaj povsem vsakdanjega.

Nasprotno pa se je zdelo Avguštinu takšno vedênje pri branju dovolj nenavadno, da ga je zabeležil v *Izpovedih*. To pomeni, da je bila metoda tihega prebiranja v njegovem času nekaj nenavadnega in da so ljudje običajno brali naglas. Čeprav zasledimo posamezne primere tihega branja že prej, na Zahodu ni prešlo v navado vse do desetega stoletja.[5]

Avguštinov opis Ambrozijevega tihega branja (skupaj z opombo, da ni *nikoli* bral naglas) je prvi nedvoumni zabeleženi primer v zahodni književnosti. Starejši primeri so veliko bolj negotovi. Dve drami iz petega stoletja pr. Kr. prikazujeta like, ki berejo na odru: v Evripidovem *Hipolitu* Tezej tiho prebere pismo, ki visi z roke njegove mrtve žene, v Aristofanovih *Vitezih* pa si Demosten ogleda pisalno tablico, ki jo je poslalo preročišče; ne pove, kaj stoji na njej, vendar ga vsebina povsem očitno osupne.[6] Plutarh poroča, da je Aleksander Veliki v četrtem stoletju pr. Kr. molče bral materino pismo in s tem vzbudil začudenje pri svojih vojakih.[7] V drugem stoletju po Kr. je Klavdij Ptolemaj v knjigi *O kriteriju* (možno je, da jo je Avguštin poznal) pripomnil, da včasih ljudje berejo tiho, kadar se poskušajo zelo zbrati, ker glasno izgovarjanje besed raztrese misli.[8] Julij Cezar je v senatu leta 63 pr. Kr. poleg svojega nasprotnika Katona molče prebral ljubezensko pisemce, ki mu ga je poslala Katonova lastna sestra.[9] Skoraj štiristo let kasneje pa je sveti Ciril Jeruzalemski v eni svojih katehez, verjetno v postnem času v letu 349, ženskam v cerkvi polagal na srce, naj čakajoč med obredi berejo, "toda tiho, tako da njihove ustnice sicer govorijo, vendar druga

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4   Sveti Avguštin, *Izpovedi*, VI, 3.

5   Leta 1927 je madžarski znanstvenik Josef Balogh v članku "Voces Paginarum" (*Philologus* 82) dokazoval, da je bilo tiho branje v starem veku skoraj povsem neznano. Enainštirideset let kasneje, leta 1968, mu je Bernard M. W. Knox ("Silent Reading in Antiquity", v: *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 9/4 [zima 1968]) ugovarjal, da "so knjige v starem veku običajno res brali naglas, vendar ni nikakršnih dokazov, da bi bilo tiho prebiranje knjig kaj nenavadnega". Vendar se mi zdijo Knoxovi primeri (nekaj jih tudi navajam) prešibki za podporo njegovi tezi; po vsem videzu so bolj *izjeme* h glasnemu branju kot pravilo.

6   Knox, "Silent Reading in Antiquity".

7   Plutarh, "O sreči ali pogumu Aleksandra Velikega" (Plutarch, "On the Fortune of Alexander"), fragment 340a, v: *Moralia*, IV. zv., ur. Frank Cole Babbitt (Cambridge, Massachusetts, & London, 1972): "Baje je nekoč, ko je prelomil pečat zaupnega materinega pisma in ga molče bral sam zase, Hefajstion tiho primaknil glavo k njegovi in bral skupaj z njim; Aleksandru srce ni dalo, da bi mu branil, marveč si je snel prstan in položil pečat na Hefajstionove ustnice."

8   Klavdij Ptolemaj, *O kriteriju*. Razpravo o tej knjigi najdemo v *The Criterion of Truth*, ur. Pamela Huby & Gordon Neal (Oxford, 1952).

9   Plutarh, "Brut" (Plutarch, "Brutus"), V, v: *Vzporedni življenjepisi* (*The Parallel Lives*), ur. B. Perrin (Cambridge, Massachusetts, & London, 1970). Nič čudnega ni, da je Cezar to pismo prebral molče. Morda ni želel, da bi kdo slišal ljubezensko pismo, morda pa je tudi načrtno dražil svojega sovražnika Katona in ga hotel napeljati k sumu na zaroto – kar se je po Plutarhovih besedah tudi zgodilo. Cezar je bil prisiljen pokazati pismo, Katon pa je postal tarča posmeha. – Slov. prevod: Plutarh, "M. Iunius Brutus", v: *Življenje velikih Rimljanov*, prev. Anton Sovre (Ljubljana, 1950). (Op. prev.)

ušesa ne morejo slišati, kaj pravijo".[10] Morda je imel v mislih šepet, pri katerem se ustnice naglo premikajo s pridušenimi glasovi.

Če je bilo glasno branje norma vse od začetkov pisane besede, kako neki je bilo, če si bral v velikih knjižnicah starega veka? Asirski učenjak, ki je v sedmem stoletju pr. Kr. preučeval eno od trideset tisoč tablic v knjižnici kralja Asurbanipala, ljudje, ki so razvijali zvitke v aleksandrinski in pergamonski knjižnici, Avguštin sam, ki je iskal to ali ono besedilo po knjižnicah v Kartagini in Rimu – vsi ti so nedvomno delali sredi hrušča in trušča. Toda pregovorne tišine tudi dandanes ne ohranjajo vse knjižnice. V sedemdesetih letih dvajsetega stoletja ni bilo v prelepi milanski Biblioteca Ambrosiana niti sledu o svečani tišini, kakršno sem opazil v londonski British Library ali pariški Bibliothèque Nationale. Bralci v Ambrosiani so se pogovarjali od mize do mize; od časa do časa je kdo zaklical vprašanje ali ime, s treskom se je zaprl težak zvezek, mimo je priropotal poln voziček knjig. Te dni ni popolnega miru ne v British Library ne v Bibliothèque Nationale; tiho branje prekinjata klikanje in tapkanje prenosnih računalnikov, kot bi v sobanah, obdanih s knjigami, živele jate žoln. Je bilo nekoč, v dneh Aten ali Pergamona, kaj drugače, ko si se poskušal zbrati, medtem ko so ducati bralcev razpostavljali tablice ali razvijali zvitke, zraven pa si momljali nešteto različnih zgodb? Morda ljudje hrupa niso slišali; morda sploh niso vedeli, da se da brati še kako drugače. Vsekakor nimamo zabeleženih pritožb nad hrupom v grških ali rimskih knjižnicah, kakor se je Seneka v prvem stoletju pritoževal nad truščem, v katerem je moral študirati v najetem stanovanju.[11]

Avguštin sam v ključnem odlomku *Izpovedi* opiše dogodek, pri katerem skoraj istočasno nastopita oba načina branja – glasno in tiho.[12] V mukah nad svojo neodločnostjo, v jezi nad preteklimi grehi in v strahu, da je naposled prišel dan plačila, Avguštin vstane od prijatelja Alipija, s katerim je (glasno) bral na svojem poletnem vrtu, in se vrže pod smokvino drevo, da bi se razjokal. Nenadoma pa zasliši od bližnje hiše otroški glasek – ne more reči, ali dečka ali deklice –, ki poje pesmico z refrenom *tolle, lege*, "spreberi si, preberi si".[13] Prepričan, da govori glas njemu, steče nazaj na kraj, kjer še vedno sedi Alipij, in pobere knjigo, ki jo je prej odložil, zvezek Pavlovih *Pisem*. Avguštin pripoveduje: "Pograbil sem knjigo, odprl in bral molče stavek, v katerega so se mi najprej ujele oči." Odlomek, ki ga prebere *molče*, je iz Pisma Rimljanom 13 – poziv, da "ne strezite mésu", ampak si "nadenite [tj. 'kot oklep'] Gospoda Jezusa Kristusa". Ves zaprepaden prebere stavek do konca. Srce mu preplavi "luč trdne gotovosti" in "temine dvomov" se razbežijo.

Osupli Alipij ga vpraša, kaj neki ga je tako presunilo. Avguštin (s kretnjo, ki nam je po vseh teh tujih stoletjih še danes tako dobro znana, je bil položil na prebrano mesto prst in zaprl knjigo) prijatelju pokaže besedilo. "Pokazal sem mu. Prebral je pazljivo [domnevamo, da naglas], in bral še dalje prek

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10 Sveti Ciril Jeruzalemski, *The Works of Saint Cyril of Jerusalem*, I. zv., angl. prev. L. P. McCauley & A. A. Stephenson (Washington, 1968).

11 Seneka, *Epistulae Morales*, ur. R. M. Gummere (Cambridge, Massachusetts, & London, 1968), 56. pismo. – Slov. prevod: Seneka, *Pisma prijatelju*, prev. Fran Bradač (Maribor, 1966). (Op. prev.)

12 Sveti Avguštin, *Izpovedi*, VIII, 12. (Op. prev.)

13 Refren *tolle, lege* se ne pojavi v nobeni otroški igri iz antike, kar jih poznamo. Pierre Courcelle predlaga, da bi utegnil biti vedeževalski obrazec, in navaja *Porfirijevo življenje*, ki ga je spisal Mark Diakon; tu ga izreče sanjska prikazen kot spodbudo k vedeževanju iz Biblije. Gl. Pierre Courcelle, "L'Enfant et les 'sortes bibliques'", v: *Vigiliae Christianae*, 7. zv. (Nîmes, 1953).

tega, kar sem bral jaz. Jaz nisem vedel, kaj je sledilo. Sledilo pa je: *'Slabotnega v veri pa sprejemajte medse!'"* Ta opomin je bil po Avguštinovih besedah dovolj, da je Alipija navdal z duhovno močjo, po kateri je hrepenel. Nekega avgustovskega dne v letu 386 sta torej na milanskem vrtu Avguštin in njegov prijatelj brala Pavlova *Pisma* zelo podobno, kot bi jih danes brali mi: eden tiho, za zasebni pouk, drugi pa naglas, da bi delil razodetje besedila s tovarišem. Nenavadno je, da se je Ambrozijeva dolga, molčeča zatopljenost v knjigo zdela Avguštinu nerazložljiva, v svojem lastnem tihem branju pa ni videl nič presenetljivega – morda zato ne, ker je zgolj ošinil nekaj bistvenih besed.

Avguštin – učitelj retorike, ki je bil dobro podkovan v poetiki in proznih ritmih, učenjak, ki je sovražil grščino, a ljubil latinščino – je imel isto navado kot večina bralcev: bral je vse, kar mu je prišlo v roke, iz čistega užitka ob zvokih.[14] Iz Aristotelovih naukov je vedel, da so črke, ki so bile "izumljene, da bi se lahko z njihovo pomočjo pogovarjali tudi z odsotnimi", "znaki za glasove", glasovi sami pa so "znaki za stvari, ki jih mislimo".[15] Pisano besedilo je pogovor, prenesen na papir, da odsotni sogovornik lahko izgovori besede, ki so mu namenjene. Za Avguština je bila govorjena beseda zapleten del besedila samega, pri čemer je imel pred očmi Marcialovo opozorilo izpred treh stoletij:

> Resda sem jaz napisal ta snopič, ki bereš iz njega,
> toda kjer bereš slabo, tvoj umotvor je, ne moj.[16]

Že od časa prvih sumerskih tablic so bile zapisane besede namenjene glasnemu izgovoru, saj je vsak znak nosil v sebi povsem določen glas, tako rekoč svojo dušo. Klasični rek *scripta manent, verba volant* dandanes pomeni, da zapisane besede ostanejo, izrečene pa se razblinijo v zrak. Toda nekoč je izražal prav nasprotno; ustvarili so ga v hvalo naglas izrečene besede, ki ima krila in lahko poleti, medtem ko je tiha beseda na papirju negibna, mrtva. Ko se je bralec soočil s pisanim besedilom, je bila njegova dolžnost, da tihim črkam, *scripta*, posodi glas in jim – po prefinjenem svetopisemskem razločevanju – dovoli postati *verba*, izgovorjene besede – duh. Prvotna jezika Svetega pisma, aramejščina in hebrejščina, ne razlikujeta med bralnim in govornim dejanjem; oboje imenujeta z isto besedo.[17]

Pri svetih besedilih, kjer je vsako črko, število črk in njihovo zaporedje narekoval Bog, za popolno razumevanje niso bile potrebne zgolj oči, ampak tudi preostalo telo: treba se je bilo zibati v skladu s kadenco stavkov in dvigati svete besede k ustnicam, tako da se pri branju ni mogla izgubiti niti trohica božanskosti. Na tak način je brala moja babica Staro zavezo: z ustnicami je oblikovala besede in se zibala naprej in nazaj v ritmu svoje molitve. Še zdaj jo vidim v njenem temačnem stanovanju v Barrio del Once, judovski soseski v Buenos Airesu, kako recitira starodavne besede iz svoje biblije, edine knjige pri hiši, katere črne platnice so postale podobne ustroju njene blede, od starosti zmehčane kože. Tudi pri muslimanih je pri svetem branju udeleženo vse telo. Vprašanje,

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14 Sveti Avguštin, *Izpovedi*, IV, 3.
15 Sveti Avguštin, "O Trojici" (Saint Augustine, "Concerning the Trinity"), XV, 10: 19, v: *Basic Writings of Saint Augustine*, ur. Whitney J. Oates (London, 1948).
16 Marcial, *Epigrami* (Martial, *Epigrams*), angl. prev. J. A. Pott & F. A. Wright (London, 1924), I. 38.
17 Prim. Henri Jean Martin, "Pour une histoire de la lecture", *Revue française d'histoire du livre* 46, Pariz, 1977. Po Martinovih besedah sumerščina (ne aramejščina) in hebrejščina nimata posebnega glagola, ki bi pomenil "brati".

ali je treba sveto besedilo poslušati ali brati, je v islamu bistvenega pomena. Učenjak Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Hanbal iz devetega stoletja ga je izrazil takole: Ker je izvirni Koran – Mati Knjige, Božja beseda, kot jo je Alah razodel Mohamedu – neustvarjen in večen, ali postane navzoč le takrat, ko ga izgovarjamo v molitvi? Ali pa množi svoje bistvo na straneh, namenjenih očem, ko ga v teku človeških dob prepisujejo različne roke? Ali je dobil odgovor, ne vemo, ker mu je njegovo vprašanje leta 833 prislužilo obsodbo *mihnah* ali islamske inkvizicije, ki so jo uvedli abasidski kalifi.[18] Tri stoletja kasneje je pravni učenjak in teolog Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazali vzpostavil niz pravil za preučevanje Korana, v katerih sta branje in poslušanje besedila postali del istega svetega dejanja. Pravilo številka pet je določalo, naj bralec sledi besedilu počasi in razločno, da lahko razmišlja o tem, kar bere. Pravilo številka šest je bilo "za jok. ... Če ne jokaš sam od sebe, se k temu prisili", kajti ob dojemanju svetih besed je treba vselej občutiti žalost. Pravilo številka devet je zahtevalo, da je Koran treba brati "dovolj glasno, da ga bralec sam sliši, ker brati pomeni razlikovati med glasovi", in tako odganjati motnje zunanjega sveta.[19]

Ameriški psiholog Julian Jaynes je v sporni študiji o izvoru zavesti dokazoval, da se je dvodomni um – pri katerem se ena od možganskih polobel specializira za tiho branje – razvil pozno v evoluciji človeštva in da se postopek, v katerem se razvije ta funkcija, še vedno spreminja. Predložil je misel, da so bili najzgodnejši primeri branja morda bolj slušne kot vidne zaznave. "Branje v tretjem tisočletju pr. Kr. je torej utegnilo pomeniti, da so ljudje klinopis *slišali*, se pravi, da so ob gledanju slikovnih simbolov halucinirali govor, ne pa vizualno brali zloge v našem pomenu besede."[20]

Ta "slušna halucinacija" je utegnila veljati tudi v Avguštinovem času, ko besede na papirju niso zgolj "postale" glasovi, brž ko jih je oko zaznalo, ampak so to *bile*. Otrok, ki je na vrtu poleg Avguštinovega pel razodetno pesem, se je brez dvoma naučil (prav tako kot Avguštin pred njim), da imajo ideje, opisi, resnične in izmišljene zgodbe ter sploh vse, kar um lahko premelje, snovno resničnost v glasovih. Edino logično je bilo, da te glasove, predstavljene na tablici, zvitku ali strani v rokopisu, jezik izgovori, ko jih oko prepozna. Branje je bilo oblika mišljenja in govorjenja. Ko je Ciceron v enem svojih moralnih esejev hotel nuditi tolažbo gluhim, je zapisal: "Če jih slučajno veselijo pesmi, naj najprej pomislijo, da je prenekateri modrec srečno živel, še preden so jih sploh iznašli, in zatem še, da pri branju teh pesmi lahko občutimo veliko večji užitek kot pri poslušanju."[21] Toda to je zgolj tolažilna nagrada iz rok filozofa, ki sam lahko uživa v zvenu zapisane besede. Kakor za Cicerona je bilo branje tudi za Avguština ustna veščina: v Ciceronovem primeru je bilo govorništvo, v Avguštinovem pridigarstvo.

Še dolgo v srednji vek so pisci predpostavljali, da njihovi bralci besedila ne bodo preprosto videli, ampak ga bodo slišali – podobno kot so sami glasno izgovarjali besede, ko so jih zlagali skupaj. Ker je znalo brati razmeroma malo ljudi, so bila javna branja nekaj običajnega in srednjeveška besedila spet in spet pozivajo občinstvo, naj "prisluhne" povesti. Podedovani odmev teh bralnih navad morda vztraja v nekaterih naših izrazih, kot kadar rečemo: "Tainta se je oglasil" (kar

18   Ilse Lichtenstadter, *Introduction to Classical Arabic Literature* (New York, 1974).

19   Nav. v: Gerald L. Bruns, *Hermeneutics Ancient and Modern* (New Haven & London, 1992).

20   Julian Jaynes, *The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind* (Princeton, 1976).

21   Ciceron, *Razprave v Tuskulu* (Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations*), ur. J. E. King (Cambridge, Massachusetts, & London, 1952), V. razprava.

pomeni: "Dobil sem pismo"), "Tainta pravi" (kar pomeni: "Tainta je napisal") ali: "To besedilo ne zveni prav" (kar pomeni: "Ni dobro napisano").

Ker so knjige zvečine prebirali naglas, črk, ki so jih sestavljale, ni bilo treba ločevati v fonetične enote, ampak so bile strnjeno nanizane v neprekinjenih stavkih. Smer, v kateri naj bi oči sledile tem črkovnim kolutom, se je razlikovala od dežele do dežele in od dobe do dobe; današnji zahodni način branja, od leve proti desni in od zgoraj navzdol, nikakor ni vsesplošen. Nekatere pisave je bilo treba brati od desne proti levi (hebrejsko in arabsko), druge v stolpcih od zgoraj navzdol (kitajsko in japonsko), peščico celo v parih vertikalnih stolpcev (majevsko). Nekatere so imele vrstice, ki so izmenično tekle v nasprotnih smereh, naprej in nazaj – to metodo so stari Grki imenovali *boustrophedón*, "kakor se obrača vol pri oranju". Spet druge so se vijugale čez stran kot jara kača, smer pa je bila nakazana s črtami ali pikami (azteška).[22]

V antiki pri popisovanju zvitkov niso ločevali besed, razlikovali med malimi in velikimi črkami ali uporabljali ločil. Tak način pisanja je bil uporaben za človeka, ki je bil vajen brati naglas in je prepustil svojim ušesom, da so razvozlala na pogled neprekinjen niz znakov. Sklenjenost besedila je bila tako pomembna, da so Atenci baje postavili kip nekemu Filatiju, ki je izumil lepilo za zlepljanje listov pergamenta ali papirusa.[23] Toda čeprav je zvitek v enem kosu bralcu nekoliko olajšal delo, mu le ni mogel biti v veliko pomoč pri razvozlavanju pomenskih sklopov. Stava ločil, ki jo je po izročilu iznašel Aristofan iz Bizanca (okoli 200 pr. Kr.), razvili pa so jo drugi učenjaki v aleksandrinski knjižnici, je bila v najboljšem primeru neredna. Kot nekoč Ciceron je moral tudi Avguštin vaditi besedilo, preden ga je prebral naglas, saj je bilo branje brez priprave v njegovem času neobičajna veščina, marsikdaj pa je tudi privedlo do napak pri interpretaciji. Gramatik Servij iz četrtega stoletja je kritiziral stanovskega kolego Donata, ker je bral del verza v Vergilijevi *Eneidi* kot *collectam ex Ilio pubem* ("ljudi, zbrane iz Ilija [Troje]") namesto *collectam exilio pubem* ("ljudi, zbrane, da bodo bežali").[24] Pri branju neprekinjenih besedil take napake niso bile redkost.

Pavlova *Pisma*, ki jih je bral Avguštin, pa niso bila zvitek, ampak kodeks – vezan, neprekinjeno popisan papirusni rokopis v novi unciali ali polunciali, ki se je pojavila v rimskih listinah v zadnjih letih tretjega stoletja. Kodeks je bil poganska iznajdba; po Svetonijevih besedah[25] je zvitke prvi zlagal v strani Julij Cezar, ko je pošiljal poročila senatu. Zgodnji kristjani pa so kodeks prevzeli, ker so ga zlahka skrili v obleko in tako prenašali besedila, ki so jih rimske oblasti prepovedale. Možnost številčenja strani je bralcu olajšala dostop do razdelkov, vrhu tega pa so lahko zvezali v priročen sveženj tudi po več samostojnih besedil, kot denimo Pavlova *Pisma*.[26]

Ločitev črk v besede in stavke se je razvijala zelo postopoma. Večina zgodnjih pisav – egiptovski hieroglifi, sumerski klinopis, sanskrt – ni potrebovala takih delitev. Starovešji pisarji so tako

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22 Albertine Gaur, *A History of Writing* (London, 1984).

23 William Shepard Walsh, *A Handy-Book of Literary Curiosities* (Philadelphia, 1892).

24 Nav. v: M. B. Parkes, *Pause and Effect: An Introduction to the History of Punctuation in the West* (Berkeley & Los Angeles, 1993).

25 Svetonij, *Življenjepisi cesarjev* (Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars*), ur. J. C. Rolfe (Cambridge, Massachusetts, & London, 1970). – Slov. prevod: Gaj Svetonij Trankvil, *Dvanajst rimskih cesarjev*, prev. Jože Šmit (Ljubljana, 1960). (Op. prev.)

26 T. Birt, *Aus dem Leben der Antike* (Leipzig, 1922).

obvladali konvencije svoje obrti, da po vsem videzu skoraj niso imeli potrebe po vizualnih pripomočkih, medtem ko so zgodnjekrščanski menihi besedila, ki so jih prepisovali, pogosto znali na pamet.[27] Za pomoč neveščim bralcem so menihi v skriptoriju uporabljali metodo pisanja *per cola et commata*, pri kateri so besedilo delili v smiselne vrstice – primitivno stavo ločil, ki je negotovemu bralcu pomagala znižati ali dvigniti glas na koncu miselne enote. (Ta format je bil v pomoč tudi učenjakom pri iskanju posameznih odlomkov.)[28] To metodo je konec četrtega stoletja odkril sveti Hieronim v prepisih Demostena in Cicerona ter jo prvi opisal v predgovoru k svojemu prevodu Ezekielove knjige; pojasnil je, da tisto, "kar je napisano *per cola et commata*, poda bralcem jasnejši smisel".[29]

Stava ločil je bila še naprej nezanesljiva, vendar so taki zgodnji pripomočki nedvomno pripomogli k napredku tihega branja. Konec šestega stoletja je sveti Izak iz Sirije že lahko opisal prednosti te metode: "Gojim tišino, da bi me verzi v mojih berilih in molitvah napolnili z radostjo. In ko mi užitek ob njihovem doumevanju utiša jezik, se kakor v snu pogreznem v stanje, ko so zbrani vsi moji čuti in misli. Nato, ko se ob vztrajnem molku poleže vihar spominov v mojem srcu, pa mi pričnejo pošiljati neskončne valove radosti notranje misli, ki nenadoma privrejo onkraj vsakega pričakovanja, da mi razveseljujejo srce."[30] Sredi sedmega stoletja je bilo teologu Izidorju Seviljskemu tiho branje dovolj domače, da ga je mogel hvaliti kot metodo za nenaporno branje, pri katerem o vsebini tudi premišljujemo in nam teže uide iz spomina.[31] Kot nekoč Avguštin je tudi Izidor verjel, da branje omogoča pogovor čez meje časa in prostora, toda z eno pomembno razliko. "Črke imajo tolikšno moč, da nam *brez glasu* govorijo besede odsotnih,"[32] je zapisal v svojih *Etimologijah*. Izidorjeve črke torej niso potrebovale glasov.

Ločila so dobivala nove podobe. Po sedmem stoletju je kombinacija pik in pomišljajev označevala končno ločilo (piko), dvignjena ali visoka pika je bila enakovredna naši vejici, podpičje pa so uporabljali enako kot danes.[33] Do devetega stoletja je tiho branje v skriptorijih najbrž postalo že tako običajno, da so začeli pisarji oddeljevati besede od vsiljivih sosed zaradi enostavnejšega branja besedil – morda pa tudi iz estetskih razlogov. V približno istem času so začeli irski pisarji, katerih spretnost je slovela po vsem krščanskem svetu, poleg besednih vrst osamljati tudi slovnične sestavnike stavka; pri tem so uvedli mnogo ločil, ki jih uporabljamo še danes.[34] Do desetega stoletja so kot dodatno pomoč tihemu bralcu začeli zapisovati prve vrstice glavnih razdelkov (na primer svetopisemskih knjig) z rdečim črnilom, prav tako pa tudi "rubrike" (iz latinske besede za "rdeč"), razlage, ki so bile neodvisne od glavnega besedila. Nove odstavke so še naprej uvajali z ločnico – s črto (grško *parágraphos*) ali klinom (*diplê*) – kot v antiki, pozneje pa so zapisovali prvo črko novega odstavka z malce večjim znakom oziroma z veliko začetnico.

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27 Gaur, *A History of Writing*.

28 Pierre Riché, *Les Écoles et l'enseignement dans l'Occident chrétien de la fin du Vᵉ si cle au milieu du XIᵉ si cle* (Pariz, 1979).

29 Parkes, *Pause and Effect*.

30 Sveti Izak iz Sirije, "Napotki za duhovne vaje" (Saint Isaac of Syria, "Directions of Spiritual Training"), v: *Early Fathers from the Philokalia*, ur. & angl. prev. E. Kadloubovsky & G. E. H. Palmer (London & Boston, 1954).

31 Izidor Seviljski, *Sententiarum libri III*, III, 13: 9, nav. v: Isidoro de Sevilla, *Etimologías*, ur. Manuel C. Díaz y Díaz (Madrid, 1982–83).

32 Izidor Seviljski, *Etimologije*, I, 3: 1.

33 David Diringer, *The Hand-Produced Book* (London, 1953).

34 Parkes, *Pause and Effect*.

Prvi predpisi, ki zahtevajo od pisarjev v samostanskih skriptorijih tišino, izvirajo iz devetega stoletja.[35] Dotlej so delali bodisi po nareku bodisi tako, da so si sami glasno brali besedilo, ki so ga prepisovali. Včasih je narekoval knjigo sam avtor ali "založnik". Anonimen pisar iz osmega stoletja je ob koncu prepisovanja zapisal: "Nihče si ne more misliti, kakšni napori so potrebni. Trije prsti pišejo, dvoje oči vidi. En jezik govori, gara pa vse telo."[36] Med prepisovalčevim delom torej *govori en jezik* in izgovarja besede, ki jih mož prepisuje.

Ko je tiho branje postalo norma v skriptoriju, so se pisarji med seboj sporazumevali z znaki: če je pisar hotel novo knjigo v prepis, se je delal, da obrača namišljene strani; če je izrecno potreboval psalter, si je položil roke na glavo v obliki krone (kot namig na kralja Davida); lekcionar je nakazal z brisanjem namišljenega voska s sveč, misal z znamenjem križa, pogansko delo pa tako, da se je popraskal kakor pes.[37]

 Glasno branje v prisotnosti druge osebe v sobi je pomenilo, da – namerno ali nenamerno – oba bereta skupaj. Ambrozijevo branje je bilo samotno dejanje. "[Najbrž se] boji," je razglabljal Avguštin, "da bi ga utegnil, če bi glasno bral, kak posebno radoveden in pazljiv poslušalec morda prisiliti, naj mu razloži kako temno mesto, ki ga je pravkar prebral, oziroma ga zvabiti v razpravljanje kakih težjih vprašanj."[38] S tihim branjem pa je bralec končno mogel vzpostaviti neovirano razmerje s knjigo in z besedami. Besede niso več nujno zavzele toliko časa, kolikor je bilo potrebno za izgovor. Lahko so obstajale v bralčevi notranjosti, drveč naprej ali komaj začete, povsem razvozlane ali le napol izgovorjene, medtem ko si jih je v mislih brez naglice ogledoval, črpal iz njih nove predstave in jih primerjal z odlomki iz spomina ali iz drugih knjig, ki jih je imel odprte za hkratno branje. Imel je čas za razmislek in ponovni razmislek o dragocenih besedah, katerih glasovi so, kot je zdaj vedel, lahko odmevali tudi znotraj. Besedilo samo, s platnicami zaščiteno pred vsiljivci, pa je postalo bralčeva last, njegova intimna vednost, naj bo že v vrvečem skriptoriju, na tržnici ali doma.

Pri nekaterih dogmatikih je nova moda vzbudila opreznost. V njihovih očeh je tiho branje dopuščalo sanjarjenje, nevarnost za naglavni greh lenobe, "želo, ki pustoši opoldne".[39] Prineslo pa je še drugo nevarnost, ki je krščanski očetje niso predvideli. Knjiga, ki jo lahko beremo zasebno in o njej razmišljamo, medtem ko oko razvozlava pomen besed, ni več podvržena takojšnji razjasnitvi ali vodstvu, obsodbi ali cenzuri poslušalca. Tiho branje omogoča bralcu, da se sporazumeva s knjigo brez prič in si na poseben način "krepča duha", kot se je posrečeno izrazil Avguštin.[40]

Dokler tiho branje ni postalo norma v krščanskem svetu, so bile herezije omejene na posameznike ali maloštevilne odpadniške skupnosti. Zgodnji kristjani so imeli dovolj dela že s tem, da so obsojali nevernike (pogane, jude, manihejce in po sedmem stoletju muslimane) in poskušali

35   Carlo M. Cipolla, *Literacy and Development in the West* (London, 1969).
36   Nav. v: Wilhelm Wattenbach, *Das Schriftwesen im Mittelalter* (Leipzig, 1896).
37   Alan G. Thomas, *Great Books and Book Collectors* (London, 1975).
38   Sveti Avguštin, *Izpovedi*, VI, 3.
39   Ps 91: 6. – Svetopisemsko besedilo je vzeto iz Slovenskega standardnega prevoda Svetega pisma (SSP). Copyright © 1996, 1997 Društvo Svetopisemska družba Slovenije. (Op. prev.)
40   Sveti Avguštin, *Izpovedi*, VI, 3.

vzpostaviti skupni nauk. Argumente, ki so se oddaljili od pravovernosti, so cerkvene oblasti bodisi odločno zavrnile bodisi previdno vključile, toda ker te herezije niso imele veliko privržencev, so jih obravnavali dokaj milo. V katalogu heretičnih glasov najdemo zanimive domislice: v drugem stoletju so montanisti (že) trdili, da se vračajo k običajem in verovanjem primitivne Cerkve in da so bili priča drugemu Kristusovemu prihodu v podobi ženske; v drugi polovici istega stoletja so monarhijanci na osnovi opredelitve Trojice sklenili, da je na križu trpel Bog Oče; pelagijanci, sodobniki svetega Avguština in Ambrozija, so zavračali predstavo o izvirnem grehu; apolinarijanci so v zadnjih letih četrtega stoletja izjavili, da se s Kristusovim mesom pri učlovečenju ni združila človeška duša, temveč Beseda; v četrtem stoletju so arijanci ugovarjali besedi *homooúsios* (istega bistva) za opis Sinove substance in (če navedemo sočasno besedno igro) "pretresli Cerkev z dvoglasnikom"; v petem stoletju so se nestorijanci postavili po robu starim apolinarijancem in trdili, da je bil Kristus dvoje bitij – Bog, vendar tudi človek; Evtihovi pristaši, sodobniki nestorijancev, pa so zanikali, da je Kristus trpel enako kot vsi ljudje.[41]

Čeprav je Cerkev določila smrtno kazen za herezijo že leta 382, je prvi heretik zgorel na grmadi šele leta 1022 v Orléansu. Takrat je Cerkev obsodila skupino kanonikov in laiških plemičev, ki so v prepričanju, da lahko pride pravi pouk zgolj neposredno od luči Svetega duha, zavračali Sveto pismo kot "izmišljotine, ki so jih napisali ljudje na živalske kože".[42] Takšni svojeglavi bralci so bili kajpak nevarni. Tolmačenje herezije kot državljanskega prestopka, kaznivega s smrtjo, ni dobilo pravne osnove vse do leta 1231, ko je tako določil cesar Friderik II. v melfskih odlokih, toda do dvanajstega stoletja je Cerkev že začela z vso vnemo obsojati velika, agresivna heretična gibanja, ki niso zagovarjala asketskega umika pred svetom (za to so se zavzemali odpadniki v prejšnjih obdobjih), ampak odpor proti skorumpirani oblasti in nepošteni duhovščini ter individualni poračun z Bogom. Gibanja so se širila po ovinkastih stranpoteh in se izkristalizirala v šestnajstem stoletju.

31. oktobra 1517 je menih, ki je z zasebnim preučevanjem Svetega pisma prišel do prepričanja, da je Božja milost pomembnejša od zaslug pridobljene vere, pribil na vrata Cerkve vseh svetih v Wittenbergu petindevetdeset tez proti odpustkarstvu – prodaji znižanja ali odpustitve časne kazni za grehe – in drugim cerkvenim zlorabam. S tem dejanjem je Martin Luther postal izobčenec v cesarjevih očeh in odpadnik v papeževih. Ko je leta 1529 rimsko-nemški cesar Karel V. preklical pravice, podeljene Luthrovim pristašem, je štirinajst svobodnih nemških mest s šestimi luteranskimi knezi dalo prebrati protest proti cesarski odločitvi. "Pri vprašanjih, ki zadevajo Božjo čast ter odrešenje in večno življenje naših duš, mora vsakdo stati sam in se zagovarjati pred Bogom," so trdili protestniki – ali, kot so bili znani pozneje, protestanti. Deset let prej je bil rimski teolog Silvester Prierias izjavil, da mora knjiga, na kateri je osnovana Cerkev, ostati skrivnost, ki jo tolmači le papež s svojo oblastjo in močjo.[43] Heretiki pa so vztrajali, da imajo ljudje pravico brati Božjo besedo sami, brez priče ali posrednika.[44]

Stoletja kasneje je onstran morja, ki bi bilo za Avguština na robu zemlje, Ralph Waldo Emerson, verski dedič nekdanjih protestnikov, izkoristil veščino, ki je svetnika tako presenečala. V cerkvi

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41 David Christie-Murray, *A History of Heresy* (Oxford & New York, 1976).
42 Robert I. Moore, *The Birth of Popular Heresy* (London, 1975).
43 Heiko A. Oberman, *Luther: Mensch zwischen Gott und Teufel* (Berlin, 1982).
44 E. G. Léonard, *Histoire générale du protestantisme*, I. zv. (Pariz, 1961–64).

je med dolgoveznimi in pogosto duhamornimi pridigami, ki se jih je udeleževal iz občutka družbene odgovornosti, tiho bral Pascalove *Misli*. Ponoči pa si je v svoji mrzli sobi v Concordu, "pokrit z odejami do brade", prebiral Platonove *Dialoge*. (Neki zgodovinar je zapisal: "Odtlej je Platona vedno povezoval z vonjem po volni.")[45] Čeprav je Emerson menil, da je vse preveč knjig, ki bi jih bilo treba prebrati, in da bi morali bralci med seboj deliti svoje izsledke, tako da bi drug drugemu poročali o bistvu svojih raziskav, je videl v branju knjige zasebno in samotno opravilo. "Vse te knjige," je zapisal, ko je sestavil seznam "svetih" besedil z *Upanišadami* in *Mislimi* vred, "so veličastni izrazi vesoljne vesti; za vsakdanjo rabo nam koristijo bolj kot letošnji almanah ali današnji časnik. Vendar jih je treba brati na samem v kabinetu, na kolenih. Njihovih sporočil ne moremo predajati ali sprejemati z ustnicami in s konico jezika, marveč iz žara na licu, z razbijajočim srcem."[46] V tišini.

Ko je Avguštin tistega davnega popoldneva v letu 384 opazoval svetega Ambrozija pri branju, pač ni mogel vedeti, kaj ima pred seboj. Mislil je, da vidi bralca, ki se poskuša izogniti vsiljivim obiskovalcem in hrani svoj glas za poučevanje. Dejansko pa je gledal celo množico, trumo tihih bralcev, ki so se ji v naslednjih stoletjih pridružili Luther, Calvin, Emerson in mi, ki ga beremo dandanes.

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Manguel, A. 1996. The Silent Readers. In *A History of Reading*, 41–53. New York etc.: Penguin.

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45   Van Wyck Brooks, *The Flowering of New England, 1815–1865* (New York, 1936).
46   Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Society and Solitude* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1870).

Veronika Rot Gabrovec

META – Interview

Professor Meta Grosman was one of the most influential teachers at the Department of English studies even before she became the head of the Department of Germanic languages and literatures in 1988. Her students have always known her as an energetic and enthusiastic, understanding but not undemanding, self-reflective and persuasive teacher. When meeting her at conferences or seminars, Slovenian teachers of English of all generations always wistfully claim that "Meta hasn't changed a bit." Indeed, she hasn't.

Let's start with a few rather personal questions. How did you become a reader? Do you remember any of the books you liked as a child?

It is difficult for me to remember how and when I became a reader. Books and reading were always taken for granted in my family. In my teens I had to sleep for several years in my father's library which, besides the first prints of new Slovene authors and translations, included over a thousand books of my grandfather in German. I was always read to and read fairy tales, Slovene translations by my grandfather, and lots of picture books. At school, however, I had to read and translate Latin poets and historians and Homer in ancient Greek. At that time it was incomprehensible to us why we got negative grades when we managed to secretly copy the official translations of Homer. It was recommended that we read several Slovene authors, but since there existed no readers with extracts, we mostly read integral texts when available.

How did you become interested in reading and reading theories? Who are the authors that have influenced you most?

When I was appointed to teach English literature at the department of Germanic languages, books in English were hard to get. The departmental library was burnt when an air plane dropped on the university library that housed the department and its library during WW II. At the time of my studies the remains of the library were in a small windowless room about 4 by 3 metres. However a colleague of mine, returning from Great Britain to teach the English language, was glad to swap his *Principles of Literary Criticism* by I. A. Richards for my *Language* by Bloomfield. I first read about different readings of literary texts in Ermatinger's studies (Ingarden was not yet available and, accordingly, not on the reading list for the examinations in literary theory), but I was fascinated by reading and rereading Richard's *Principles* and I still treasure my 1953 hard cover edition of it. Soon afterwards I decided to do my PhD on the reader as a critical category in British literary criticism.

And then there was another great figure, D. W. Harding, with whom your path literally crossed, and hose ideas still follow you.

That was later. In the 1970s, after my PhD and my habilitation thesis on T.S. Eliot's criticism on the *reader – poem relationship*, I realised there was more interesting research to be done on the relatively little known writing and early research of D. W. Harding. But my other work as the president of the *Council of Humanities of Slovenia*, along with my university teaching took too much of my time to engage in research. However, the invitation of the British Council in 1978 made it possible for me to meet D. W. Harding, to interview him and collect all his studies. Though I wrote two studies of his original theories on reading of fiction, I would still like to return to his work because it seems to me to be of new interest for the current problems with reading and literacy, but I had problems doing work in several fields of my interest, with intercultural reception attracting more and more of my time, including translation studies as well.

What enabled you to successfully pursue the course that initially caught your attention and interest? It must have been very difficult, if not completely impossible to find a supervisor and suitable bibliography for your MA and PhD here in Ljubljana?

An American research scholarship made it possible for me to study for my MA degree at Miami University, Ohio, and my supervisor there, Professor Almy, knew I. A. Richards personally and was glad to help me with my dissertation in 1965. He later sent a study of mine to I. A. Richards and so I got a very kind and interesting letter from the latter. My PhD in 1971 also dealt with the reader and processes of reading from a different and more critical perspective. Compiling the necessary bibliography in the British Library (then still in the British Museum), I became aware of the vastness of the topic; still I never fell out of love with the reader and reading.

Still, being in love with a topic and researching it is one thing, being able to pass your knowledge to your students is another. You 'officially' started teaching reading only about ten years ago. What about the previous generations? How did they benefit from your vast knowledge on reading?

Though I did not teach reading until 1997 (I started with the students at the Department of Translation Studies, not at the Department of English!), my permanent interest in reading has certainly been the most prominent influence on my teaching long before the reader response criticism. I have persistently – and, at the beginning, to my students' surprise – stimulated and supported my students in poetry classes and seminars on English novels to come up with their own meanings and interpretations and to reflect on how they have come to produce such readings.

This must have been a "road less travelled by" then – and definitely not as "safe" as explaining the texts to them and giving them the "ultimate answers".

Probably not. But I hope that many of them came to enjoy their reading and our discussions, though they frequently took unexpected turns. Their readings have been a constant source of surprise for me, along with their emerging interest in their own comprehension of texts, so I have always enjoyed my work, loved my students and have never had a conflict with any one of them.

And this has brought you deep into the woods of intercultural studies …

Yes, in a way I can say that my later interest and research in intercultural reading and reception of English and American literature grows out of my fascination with the rich possibilities of reading and the complex culturally specific factors shaping reader's interaction with literary texts. I got involved in intercultural studies and the reception (also in translation) of English literature in intercultural contexts in 1981. It also became obvious to me that I would not be able to avoid for ever some time-consuming responsibilities like heading our department. For the latter, however, I was quite sure my knowledge of linguistics had to be better and not limited to cognitive linguistics (reading) alone. So I decided to take a sabbatical year and spent 1987/88 as a Fulbright Professor at UC Berkeley. Remembering that year, Berkley's libraries, special cognitive linguistics collection, its Mark Twain collection, interesting colleagues and lots of films, makes me think it my most unforgettable year – the year I would like to live for a second time.

As far as I know, your stay at Berkley resulted in a rather influential book that made lots of Slovenians look at reading from a different perspective.

Yes, at Berkley I was able to finish my book *Bralec in književnost* (1989, *Reader and Literature*) and continue my study of the various aspects of intercultural reception. The book sold out within a year, and this encouraging response made me realise the demand for and interest in knowledge about reading literature. But in my absence I was appointed the head of the Department of Germanic languages, still unaware of what work this would involve. Therefore my other three books on reading only came out more than ten years later: *Zagovor branja* (*In Defense of Reading*) and *Književnost v medkulturnem položaju* (*Literature in Intercultural Contexts*) in 2004, and *Razsežnosti branja* (*Dimensions of Reading*) in 2006.

And then it snowballed. Not only were you the head of a large department at the Faculty of Arts, you also got appointed into various working bodies and were involved with the new curricula, and with the newly introduced *matura*.

Yes. It started with the constant demand for reforming study curricula at the Faculty, first from the existent 3 to 7 curricula in the beginning of the 90s, and then finally to 4. It all resulted in an independent Department of English and American Studies. Afterwards I was lucky to get a study leave for intercultural studies with DAF, University of Munich, which was made possible by DAAD, and which enabled me to 'armour myself' with new knowledge which I used straight after returning to Ljubljana when working in the very first *matura* committee. We started from scratch, so to speak, although we implemented all the knowledge we had on the latest research on testing, linguistics, and the teaching of literature. We were one of the first committees to mention and include various Council of Europe documents! At more or less the same time I was the chair of a group of authors working on the new curricula for English in Slovenian primary and secondary school.

But you reached once again across the borders of Slovenia, didn't you? It was in the nineties that you were invited to give a keynote address at a FILMM conference.

I have always believed in cooperation, especially with people who have the same interests, the

same orientation towards a better future – be it at school as teachers or students, be it in life. Therefore I always welcome new challenges, particularly those from which lots of benefits might spring – and in particular those which could improve the teaching of literature. In 1990 I was invited to the FILMM (Fédération internationale des langues et littératures modernes) conference in Novi Sad, where I met lots of people with different views and experiences, and which enriched me personally and professionally. I think it was about then when a new idea sprang to life, namely to organize a conference on American literature for non-American readers, which was eventually done in June 1992 under the auspices of the Rockefeller Foundation in Bellagio, Italy. The nineties were indeed a very demanding decade, but extremely fruitful. But I also enjoyed discussions with lots of colleagues and serving at FILLM Bureua as one of its vice presidents.

Even more fruitful because you started working more with teachers of Slovene? And cooperating with the leading scientists and researchers from other fields of research, like psychologists, librarians, teachers of other foreign languages?
Well, in 1994-97 I coordinated the TEMPUS project with the aim to establish the new translation studies programme with Slovene as the first language as a new department at the Faculty of Arts. It was a daring project, lots of verbal battles were fought, but in the end the group of people who believed that such a department is absolutely essential for Slovenia, then still a future member of the European Union, won.
Since 1995 I have been the President of the Reading Association of Slovenia. I firmly believe this association tries its best to fulfil its role as one of the strongest links in the chain of reading and general literacy education in Slovenia. Do you know that 77% of people in Slovenia apparently still do not reach functional literacy?

But then, one of your friends and colleagues, Roger Sell said that if people don't want to read novels, they don't need to read.
As dear as Roger is to me, I cannot agree with this view. It is a rather disputable statement, is it not? Can you accept the responsibility of letting people do harm to each other due to their lack of knowledge? And lack of self-criticism?

Whoever knows you, knows well that you have never kept quiet when you felt unhappy or dissatisfied with something. I am sure the future holds new challenges and many new goals for you. But let us finish this conversation with books and reading: do you read more <u>about</u> literature or more literature? And is there a book you haven't read yet, and wish you had?
My interest in the reader and later the immense knowledge of the processes of reading frequently makes me read more about the reader, reading and literary theory leaving less time for reading all the novels and poems I would like to read, let alone for following the incredible production of interesting literature in English. The day, however, has only 24 hours and I have already given up many of my previous interests to somehow realise all my professional interests and obligations. The number of the new novels I would like to read is too big to be listed and it is constantly growing and postponed because of my studying reading and literature and teaching the two.

The interview was carried out on 25 January, and 12 February 2007.

Meta Grosman: A Comprehensive Bibliography

A Note on the Presentation of Publications

To make Professor Meta Grosman's research and publications more easily accessible for use by scholars interested in the different fields of her studies, her publications have been categorized on the basis of her main research interest into four separate groups according to the predominant subject/topic of the individual publications:
1. Anglo-american literature and literary theory with intercultural and translational studies
2. Literary criticism
3. Didactics of language and literature
4. Reading and literacy

At this point we should draw the readers' attention to the fact that her great interest in, and indeed preoccupation with, reader response and reading processes run through her studies in different areas.

Entries within each of the group listed above have been arranged chronologically; within a single year they appear in alphabetical order.

ANGLO-AMERICAN LITERATURE AND LITERARY THEORY WITH INTERCULTURAL AND TRANSLATIONAL STUDIES

A. MONOGRAPHS

1970

Odnos med bralcem in besedno umetnino v luči angleške literarne kritike: Doctoral dissertation. Ljubljana [M. Grosman], 1970, 395 pp.

1974

Odnos med bralcem in besedno umetnino v luči angleške literarne kritike: (1921-1961): *izvleček iz doktorske disertacije = The relation between the reader and the literary work of art in British criticism (1921-1961): abstract of the doctoral dissertation.* Ljubljana, Filozofska fakulteta, 1974, 68 pp.

1981

English Novel 1830-1920. First printing. Ljubljana, Filozofska fakulteta, 1981. pp. IX, 324.

1984

English Novel 1830-1920. Second printing. Ljubljana, Filozofska fakulteta, 1984. pp. IX, 324.

1989

Angleški roman: 1830-1920. Third printing, with revisions. Ljubljana, Filozofska fakulteta, Oddelek za germanske jezike in književnosti, 1989. pp. III, 203.

2004

Književnost v medkulturnem položaju. Ljubljana, Znanstveni inštitut Filozofske fakultete, 2004, 223 pp. (Razprave Filozofske fakultete series)

B. STUDIES AND ARTICLES

1961

Kriza ameriške literature. *Naši razgledi* 10 (1961), no. 15 (230), p. 375.

1964

Problem vrednotenja v sodobni angleški literarni teoriji in kritiki. *Problemi* 2 (1964), no. 13, pp. 17-29.

Vprašanje dveh kultur. *Problemi* 2 (1964), no. 16/17, pp. 369-83.

1969

Scrutiny's Reviews of I. A. Richards' Works. *Acta neophilologica* 2 (1969), pp. 45-51.

1974

Branje pesmi v tujem jeziku. *Jezik in slovstvo* 20 (1974/1975), no. 2/3, pp. 60-66.

1977

T. S. Eliot on the Reader and Poetry. *Acta neophilologica* 10 (1977), pp. 3-40.

1982

The Literary Criticism of Denys Wyatt Harding. *Acta neophilologica* 15 (1982), pp. 63-95.

1983

Patrick White's *Voss*: An Attempt at Interpretation. In M. Jurak (ed.), *Australian Papers: Yugoslavia, Europe and Australia*. Ljubljana, Filozofska fakulteta, 1983, pp. 263-68.

1985

Denys Wyatt Harding on Entertainment and on Reading. *Acta neophilologica* 18 (1985), pp. 69-97.

1987

Novi pogledi na medkulturno posredovanje leposlovja. *Delo* 29 (7 May 1987), no. 104, pp. 4-5.

The Pluralistic World of Huckleberry Finn. *Acta neophilologica* 20 (1987), pp. 53-62.

Shakespearjevi soneti v slovenščini. *Slavistična revija* 35 (1987), no. 3, pp. 303-20.

Zakaj se književni prevodi in spremne študije starajo. *Delo* 29 (19 February 1987), no. 41, p. 3, and (26 February 1987), no. 47, pp. 3-4.

1988

The Americanness of American Literature in the European Context. In M. Jurak (ed.), *Cross-cultural Studies: American, Canadian and European Literatures, 1945-1985: Proceedings of the Symposium on Contemporary Literatures and Cultures of the United States of America and Canada, Bled, Yugoslavia, 9-14 May, 1988*. Ljubljana, Filozofska fakulteta, 1988, pp. 345-51.

1989

The Original and Its Translation from the Reader's Perspective. *Acta neophilologica* 22 (1989), pp. 61-68.

1992

Literary Theory and the Institution of English in USA. In M. Jurak (ed.), *Literature, Culture and Ethnicity: Studies on Medieval, Renaissance and Modern Literatures: A Festschrift for Janez Stanonik*. Ljubljana, Filozofska fakulteta, Znanstveni inštitut, 1992, pp. 51-59.

Medkulturne funkcije književnega prevajanja: prevod kot sestavni del narodove identitete. *Delo* 34 (1 October 1992), no. 227, p. 13.

Relacije književni prevod - izvirnik v luči novejših teorij: kaj beremo, ko imamo pred seboj prevod? *Delo* 34 (21 May 1992), no. 115, pp. 14-15, [and] (28 May 1992), no. 121, pp. 14-15.

Treba je vedeti: vsako prevajanje je (tudi) prisvajanje: delovno srečanje slovenskih prevajalcev. *Delo* 35 (30 September 1992), no. 227, pp. 14-15.

1993

Cross-cultural Awareness through Literary Translation. In C. Dollerup (ed.), *Teaching Translation and Interpreting: Insights, Aims, Visions: Abstracts of Papers.* Copenhagen, University of Copenhagen, 1993, pp. 8-9.

Nadmoč posameznih jezikov in nevarnosti manipuliranja: je kakovost prevoda nerazrešljiv izziv? *Delo* 35 (1 July 1993), no. 149, p. 15.

Spoznavati drugačnost drugega le s stališča lastne kulture: jezik in književnost danes. *Delo* 35 (9 September 1993), no. 209, p. 13.

1994

Cross-cultural Awareness: Focusing on Otherness. In C. Dollerup and A. Lindegaard (eds.), *Teaching Translation and Interpreting 2: Insights, Aims, Visions*. Amsterdam, Philadelphia, John Benjamins, 1994, pp. 51-57. (Benjamins Translation Library 5)

Status književnega prevoda v ciljni kulturi. In M. Stanovnik, A. Berger, and A. Stanič (eds.), *Prevod - posnetek, reprodukcija, interpretacija.* Ljubljana, Društvo slovenskih književnih prevajalcev, 1994, pp. 13-17. (Zbornik Društva slovenskih književnih prevajalcev 18)

1995

Multicultural Perspectives on Huckleberry Finn: Including a Look at the Lack of Primary Socialization in Huck's Development. In M. Grosman (ed.), *American Literature for Non-American Readers: Cross-cultural Perspectives on American Literature*. Frankfurt am Main [etc.], Peter Lang, 1995, pp. 33-47.

1996

How to Succeed in a TEMPUS Project: The Ljubljana Centre for Translation and Interpreting. *European English Messenger* 5 (1996), no. 1, pp. 46-47.

Reader-response Criticism: Interdisciplinary Perspectives. In N. Faria (ed.), *Language and Literature Today: Proceedings of the 19th Triennial Congress of the International Federation for Modern Languages and Literatures = Actes du 19e congrès de la Fédération internationale des langues et littératures modernes, Brasília 22-30 august 1993*. Brasília, Universidade de Brasília, 1996, pp. 842-51.

1997

Književni prevod kot oblika medkulturnega posredovanja leposlovja. In M. Grosman and U. Mozetič (eds.), *Književni prevod*. Ljubljana, Znanstveni inštitut Filozofske fakultete, 1997, pp. 11-56. (Razprave Filozofske fakultete series)

Književnost v medkulturnem položaju. *Razprave*. Razred za filološke in literarne vede SAZU 16 (1997), pp. 47-66.

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1999

Huckleberry Finn v medkulturni perspektivi. *Otrok in knjiga*. Special issue on "Perspektive v mladinski književnosti", 1999, pp. 75-87.

Reading Huckleberry Finn across Cultures. *Language and Literature* 24 (1999). Special issue on "Literature(s) across Culture(s)", pp. 65-78.

2000

Izzivi in področja medkulturne vzgoje. In I. Štrukelj (ed.), *Kultura, identiteta in jezik v procesih evropske integracije.* Ljubljana, Društvo za uporabno jezikoslovje Slovenije, 2000, pp. 11-22.

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Non-Mother Tongue Translation - An Open Challenge. In M. Grosman, M. Kadric, I. Kovačič, and M. Snell-Hornby (eds.), *Translation into Non-Mother Tongues: In Professional Practice and Training*. Tübingen, Stauffenburg, 2000, pp. 21-33. (Studien zur Translation 8)

2001

Medkulturna zavest proti hibridizaciji (slovenskega) jezika. In A. Vidovič Muha (ed.), *Slovenski knjižni jezik - aktualna vprašanja in zgodovinske izkušnje: ob 450-letnici izida prve slovenske knjige: povzetki predavanj = On the occasion of the 450th anniversary of the publication of the first Slovene book: summaries = K 450-letiju izdanija pervoj slovenskoj knigi: rezjume dokladov, Ljubljana, 5.-7. december 2001*. Ljubljana, Filozofska fakulteta, Oddelek za slovanske jezike in književnosti, Center za slovenščino kot drugi/tuji jezik, 2001, p. 20. (Obdobja, metode in zvrsti series 20)

2002

American Novels through the Eyes of Slovene Readers. *Language and Literature* 27 (2002). Special issue on "Intercultural Studies of Literature", pp. 5-26.

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Literary Translation for the Third Millennium. In T.E. Knight (ed.), *Broaching Frontiers, Shattering Boundaries: On Tradition and Culture at the Dawn of the Third Millennium*. Bern [etc.], Peter Lang, 2002, pp. 167-78.

Ob štiristoletnici Hamleta: slovenski kritiški zapisi v devetdesetih letih. *Vestnik* DTJK 36 (2002), no. 1/2, pp. 419-35.

2003

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2004

Intercultural Awareness for the European Year of Languages. In S. Bračič, D. Čuden, S. Podgoršek, and V. Pogačnik (eds.), *Linguistische Studien im Europäischen Jahr der Sprachen: Akten des 36. Linguistischen Kolloquiums in Ljubljana 2001 = Linguistic studies in the European year of languages: proceedings of the 36th linguistic colloquium, Ljubljana 2001*. Frankfurt am Main, Peter Lang, 2004, pp. 231-39. (Linguistik international 13)

2005

Jezikovne in spoznavne komponente medkulturne sporazumevalne zmožnosti. *Glas.* ZRS Koper 10 (2005), no. 4, pp. 86-87.

Medkulturnost kot izziv sodobnih družb. In V. Mikulič and K. Marc Bratina (eds.), *Slovenščina in njeni uporabniki v luči evropske integracije*. Koper, Univerza na Primorskem, Znanstveno-raziskovalno središče, Založba Annales, Zgodovinsko društvo za južno Primorsko, 2005, pp. 35-47, 289. (Annales Majora Library)

Multilingual Literacy through Literature. In *Literacy without Boundaries: 14. europska konferencija o čitanju, Zagreb, 31. srpnja 2005: Book of Abstracts*, p. 31.

C. REVIEWS, PREFACES, FOREWORDS

1991

Preface. In M. Grosman and U. Mozetič (eds.), *Trends in Contemporary British Novel 1940-1990: A Yugoslav View*. Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, English Department, 1991, pp. 5-10.

1995

Introduction: American Literature in Cross-cultural Context. In M. Grosman (ed.), *American Literature for Non-American Readers: Cross-cultural Perspectives on American Literature*. Frankfurt am Main, Peter Lang, 1995, pp. 7-17.

1997

Predgovor. In M. Grosman and U. Mozetič (eds.), *Književni prevod*. Ljubljana, Znanstveni inštitut Filozofske fakultete, 1997, pp. 7-10. (Razprave Filozofske fakultete series)

2001

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2002

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2003

Johann Köberl: *The Indeterminacy of Beowulf*. Lanham, MD, New York, Oxford: University Press of America, 2002. *Vestnik* DTJK 37 (2003), no. 1/2, pp. 439-40.

Roger D. Sell, ed.: *Children's Literature as Communication*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia, John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2002, 352 pp. *Otrok in knjiga* 30 (2003), no. 57, pp. 72-76.

2005

Meta Grosman: Književnost v medkulturnem položaju. Ljubljana: Znanstveni inštitut Filozofske fakultete, 2004 (Razprave Filozofske fakultete series). 223 pp. In M. Hladnik (ed.), *Vloga meje: madžarsko-slovenska razmerja, slovenistika na sosednjih univerzah, zahodnoslovanski študiji, izbor šolskega berila, humanistika in družboslovje v Pomurju*. Ljubljana, Slavistično društvo Slovenije, 2005, pp. 240-42. (Zbornik Slavističnega društva Slovenije series 16)

D. EDITOR

1991

Trends in Contemporary British Novel 1940-1990: *A Yugoslav View*. Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, English Department, 1991. 152 pp. (Co-edited with Uroš Mozetič)

1995

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I.

LANGUAGE

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Words in Sheep's Clothing

Summary

The paper focuses on various types of **dictionary words**, i.e. infrequent and rather uncommon words often listed in comprehensive monolingual English dictionaries but virtually nonexistent in actual usage. These are typically learned derivatives of Greek or Latin origin that are given as unlabeled synonyms of everyday vocabulary items. Their inclusion seems to stem from the application of two different bits of lexicographic philosophy: great respect for matters classical and the principle of comprehensiveness. Seen from this perspective, descriptive corpus-based lexicography is still too weak.

While in large native-speaker-oriented dictionaries of English such entries do not seem to cause any harm, they can be positively dangerous in EFL/ESL environments, because using them can easily lead to strange or downright incomprehensible lexical items. Learners are advised to be careful and check the status of such "dubious" items also in English monolingual learners' dictionaries, in which dictionary words are virtually nonexistent.

Key words: monolingual dictionary, English, decoding, dictionary word, "dubious" word, potential word

Besede v ovčji koži

Povzetek

Prispevek obravnava raznovrstne **slovarske besede**, tj. redke in nenavadne besede, ki jih večji enojezični slovarji angleščine pogosto vključujejo kot gesla, v dejanski rabi pa jih skoraj ni. To so pogosto učene klasične izpeljanke; navedene so kot sopomenske alternative vsakdanjih besed, in sicer brez kvalifikatorjev. Vključene so zaradi velikega spoštovanja do latinsko-grškega elementa v angleškem jeziku, pa tudi zaradi principa izčrpnosti. Pri tovrstnih geslih deskriptivnosti in uporabe korpusov v leksikografske namene torej še ni opaziti.

Čeprav v slovarjih za materne govorce angleščine tovrstna gesla najbrž nikomur ne škodijo, pa je v okoljih, kjer angleščino poučujejo/rabijo kot tuji jezik, ta praksa lahko nevarna, saj bi lahko marsikaterega uporabnika zapeljala v napačno ali vsaj čudno rabo. Pri uporabi večjih enojezičnih slovarjev je zato priporočljivo preverjati status "dvomljivih" leksikalnih enot tudi v enojezičnih angleških slovarjih za tujce, ki tovrstnega besedišča dosledno ne navajajo.

Ključne besede: enojezični slovar, angleščina, razvezovanje, slovarska beseda, "dvomljiva" beseda, potencialna beseda

Words in Sheep's Clothing

Words. A fascinating and fitting topic, to me at any rate, especially in a Festschrift for Meta Grosman, since it is a topic we have always shared a keen interest in, even if in different contexts. For most people, words are there simply to be used at will. The concept is clear, unproblematic, straightforward, useful, even indispensable, and dynamic enough to be recorded in a myriad of dictionaries, whether print, CD-ROM, or online. But on looking at them more closely, the serene picture of simplicity and clarity may no longer be at its most convincing ...

1. Introduction: The Elusive Word Captured and Recorded

Whenever we need to look up a word, most of us turn for help to a good, up-to-date comprehensive dictionary, thus demonstrating an awareness of the overall quality deriving from the dictionary's **size**. In other words, we assume that in assessing a dictionary's authority, size alone must be taken as a key factor. Indeed, it seems logical that the bigger a dictionary the better it is bound to be as a reference source, since it both contains more entries and provides more information on them than smaller works of reference. However, matters lexicographical are not always so straightforward, meaning that the seemingly unassailable "the bigger the better" philosophy need not always work, at least not for all purposes.

This paper focuses on words and dictionaries, specifically monolingual English dictionaries, and further on the situation when advanced-level speakers or users of English are in need of decoding information, that is, one of **understanding** a lexical item they encountered in reading or listening. In this task, dictionary users routinely consult a comprehensive dictionary. Users typically look at words in binary terms, viz. they are perceived as being either simple or difficult to understand, and of course it is the latter situation that often calls for dictionary consultation.

2. Lexical Items Listed in the Dictionary: A Motley Crew

Virtually all general dictionaries (especially the larger ones) contain various types of entries - not only general but technical, scientific, dialectal, slangy, jargon, formal and informal, literary, archaic, obsolete, merely old-fashioned, not to mention, on another level, abbreviations and acronyms, a variety of phrasal items, encyclopedic terms for people and places, foreign terms, etc. etc. that have different degrees of relevance for different types of dictionary users.

For most people, recognizing general and specialized words, and common nouns and proper nouns, may well be salient; for them, the linguists' standard division (e.g. Harley 2006, 117-19) of lexical items into **content words** and **function words**, based on the distinction between lexical and grammatical meaning, is not so obvious.

In this paper, I will briefly discuss a number of remarkable types of words, focusing on several categories of rather infrequent, uncommon and/or learned lexical items that get routinely listed in many (larger) general monolingual dictionaries of English produced on both sides of the Atlantic,

notably the major *Oxford, Longman, Collins, Chambers; Merriam-Webster, Random House, Webster's New World,* and *American Heritage* educated-native-speaker-oriented productions.

3. Sound Footing in Question: Dictionary Words

Let us first consider a handful of the <u>less-than-common</u>, abstruse, learned and/or borrowed, words listed - typically as undefined and unlabeled run-ons - in the bigger monolingual native-speaker dictionaries of English (say Butterfield ed. 2003, Higgleton and Thomson eds. 1998, Agnes ed. 1999, Soukhanov and Rooney eds. 1999, Pearsall ed. 1998, Mish ed. 2003, Steinmetz ed. 1997, and of course the 20-volume *Oxford English Dictionary* {Simpson and Weiner eds. 1989} and some of its offspring): *acceptableness* (cf. *acceptability), cooperator* (cf. *collaborator / co-worker), declaratory, delict, donator* (cf. *donor), endangerment, etheric (oil), facultative* (cf. *optional), feuilleton* (cf. *sketch), garniture* (cf. *set), geometer* (cf. *surveyor), graver* (cf. *engraver), incalculably, jalousie, legitimation, nautics, natality, narcomania©, nostrification, pelerine, prosaist, radicchio, redaction,* and scores of other items that are mere **dictionary words**, defined as those that you find only in a dictionary (Newmark 1991, 147). They are rarely – if ever – used but have time-honored places in the dictionary. Who, for example, would really use *pelerine* for *cape*? Talk about *conquerableness*? Such words – typically learned "latent" derivatives of standard vocabulary items – are chiefly artificial creations that serve almost no purpose in the language. Sometimes (Read 1978, 96) words are coined for the express purpose of being inserted into a dictionary; the status of such **opportunistic words**, as Read calls them, as viable lexical items is questionable. Note that this is not the question of deciding on either of two (or more) synonymous items that might make a native speaker think twice before settling on it, as in the case of *encyclopedicness* vs. *encyclopedicity* or *appropriateness* vs. *appropriacy,* or, more formally and with a personal view as to the "needless variant," of *averment* or *averral,* or *normality and normalcy* (Garner 1998, 67, 445-6, 453). I am rather talking about the formal, learned "potential" words that are virtually nonexistent in actual usage.

It would seem that dictionary words are commoner in those larger monolingual dictionaries which were compiled making little use of computer technology, and of corpus analysis in particular; thus a recent edition of the *Collins English Dictionary* (Butterfield ed. 2003) enters among its undefined run-ons the derivatives *oppositionist* and *oppositionless*; neither of these is to be found in the similar-sized (well, even larger) but corpus-based *New Oxford* (Pearsall ed. 1998).

Dictionary words also get listed in large bilingual dictionaries designed primarily for decoding tasks, that is, for understanding an L2 (=foreign-language) text or translating from an L2 into one's L1 (=first language, typically mother tongue). However, since bilingual dictionaries play a role that is considerably different from that of their monolingual counterparts, and are moreover still widely regarded as imperfect, flawed, partly outdated, or at least old-fashioned reflections of the monolingual tomes, they will be left out of discussion.

Some words are clearly different while still qualifying as dictionary words. For instance, take the general concept of 'which cannot be eliminated'; it should be expressed by *ineliminable.* Isn't

this just another dictionary word too? Why so? Do dictionaries (and corpora) concur, showing largely the same picture?

3.1 Dictionary Words Subdivided

Anyway, while pondering on such and similar lexical items, I realized that they are more diverse than might appear at first sight. To begin with, dictionary words appear to belong to at least two related subcategories.

(1)   First, there are also **dictionary-word morphemes**, that is, morphemes that are dubious as real language products. For example, the acclaimed monolingual *Collins*, referred to above, lists both the noun *catharsis* and its irregular plural, *catharses*. By contrast, the bilingual *Oxford Hachette* (Corréard and Grundy eds. 1994) does not enter any plural form at all. I am referring to a bilingual dictionary only to point out that in spite of what many people may think about bilingual dictionaries, the better bilingual dictionaries of today might be less prone to treat their entries mechanically than their large monolingual counterparts, opting instead for a more selective, corpus-based and thus more realistic, selection and presentation of their entries. Or consider the entry *falsie*, 'either of two pads worn inside a bra to make the breasts look larger or more shapely,' in the *Encarta* (Soukhanov and Rooney eds. 1999), which many other dictionaries list in the plural form only, in this sense at any rate. The dubious singular form seems to reflect the conviction that a canonical noun form be listed in the singular, whatever the cost.

(2)   Second, there is the **dubious sense**, a "somehow suspect" sense of a polysemous lexical item. For example, some of the larger English dictionaries (e.g. *Collins*) define *detector* also as a person doing detecting work, while many others restrict it to mean only a device for detecting. Even though corpus evidence suggests that the former sense is dubious, many respectable dictionaries keep recording it.

4. "Dubious" Words at Large

Quite a few native-speaker dictionaries of English contain many (mostly unlabeled) "dubious" words that are not really technical or dialectal or slangy or archaic, not being residues of specialized discourse or of an older state of the language (these, of course, are needed for decoding purposes in reading specialized or older texts), but rather made up e.g. by applying an existing word-formation rule, or borrowed wholesale from a reputable donor (typically Greek or Latin). When such items are entered in a dictionary, they seem to reflect two things: One, "the more the better" lexicographic policy of entry inclusion/exclusion, particularly if the item under discussion is of classsical origin, and two, an acute sense of scholarly comprehensiveness. But do such words, which are often derivatives, interpretable, possible words that are not actual words, existing as they do in theory rather than in practice (Miller 1991, 108-9), really belong in a (general) dictionary? I believe they do not, for the most part, given that their very existence is suspect, so that you are not likely to come upon them, which is precisely why you are not likely to need

information about them. Accordingly, Bailey (1991, 278) observes that "big dictionaries are nothing but storerooms with infrequently visited and dusty corners." On the other hand, in a large monolingual dictionary designed expressly for the native speaker, thus chiefly for decoding (=elucidation of the meanings of "hard" words or "difficult" senses), such items are defensible, on the grounds that ANY conceivable lexical item just might be found in a text, say used by an eccentric author, in which case it would of course need to be entered and defined somewhere. By contrast, in the context of English as a foreign language, such items may be positively harmful, especially for encoding (=either L1-to-L2 translation or writing in L2), because their inclusion might tempt the learner to use them in composing in (everyday) English, which could make one's prose, well, unusual, ponderous, outlandish, just slightly odd, or downright incomprehensible.

"Dubious" or "fringe" lexical items can be found - and quite legitimately at that - in certain smaller and specialized wordbooks, often repositories of arcane lexica, that is, idiosyncratic, colorful collections – usually compiled by non-linguists – of strange, preposterous, weird and wonderful, incredible, obscure, etc.etc. words, but these esoteric volumes too (e.g. Dickson 1982 and Saussy III 1984) will be left out of discussion. A related and more widely known English wordbook, the dictionary of dificult words, however, will not be totally ignored (cf. below).

4.1 Identification Stage: Easier Said Than Done

It is not always easy to determine whether a given item qualifies as a dictionary word, even if it is not a lengthy, learned Latinate term listed in a large desk dictionary (but hardly anywhere else). Take *jazzer* (or *jazzist*)*, guitarist,* and *bassist*, for instance: Are these legitimate, as it were, words, existing side by side with *jazz musician, guitar player,* and *bass player*? What about *boatful*? And *labourist* or *persiflage*, both entered as headwords in the acclaimed *Collins* (Butterfield ed. 2003)? Or consider *agendum*: Is it a <u>real</u> word? The *Encarta* and *Collins*, for instance, both enter it, while the *New Oxford* does not. The *Oxford English Dictionary* has a mere two citations, both fairly old, as against as many as 67 for *agenda*. Next, consider the noun *casualization* and the related verb, *to casualize*. Both the noun and the verb are entered and defined in the *OED* (Simpson and Weiner eds. 1989), but neither can be found in the *New Shorter Oxford* (Brown ed. 1993). The *New Oxford* (Pearsall ed. 1998) defines the noun, listing the verb only as an undefined run-on. Neither is listed in most of the other major dictionaries of English. It is not to be found in the 100-million-word British National Corpus either. Is the verb a likelier candidate for a dictionary word? What about the status of the suspiciously-looking adjectives *circulative* and *ensurable*? Next, is *problematics* a standard English word or a "European" dictionary word? The former, according to the *New Oxford* (Pearsall ed. 1998); a nonexistent item, hence the latter, according to most other dictionaries. Also, there are "competing derivatives": Is *torpidity* a dictionary word, given that the *Collins* (Butterfield ed. 2003) lists it as a mere undefined run-on while treating *torpor* as a headword? The same applies to the pair *ardor* (commoner) and *ardency* (rarer). A similar observation can be made about the "real" noun *detention* vs. the unlikelier *detainment*, routinely entered in most larger dictionaries of English as a run-on s.v. the verb *detain*, as in the *Collins* or *Encarta*, or less commonly as a headword but only cross-referred to *detention*, as in the two-volume *World Book Dictionary* (Barnhart ed. 1996). By contrast, the frequently revised

bilingual *Collins Robert* (Duval and Back eds. 1998) lists them side by side, suggesting two more or less equivalent competing noun forms. Still on the subject of pairs of learned words - are *appositive* and *appositional* dictionary words? The former seems to be commoner, so perhaps the latter only should be regarded as the culprit. The problem can indeed be discussed in terms of "clines of acceptability/use," as in the case of *-able* adjectives derived from verbs: *knowledgeable* and *washable* are OK, *attributable* being slightly less so, while *attemptable* is clearly less credible as a "real" lexical item. Can we draw the lines? Should we?

Or let us consider *applier* and *associator*. They are, to be sure, only listed, chiefly as run-ons, in the larger dictionaries. Are they dictionary words, carrying the stamp of questionableness (questionability?) as far as their very existence goes? Not long ago, I realized that sometimes a curious situation arises that complicates matters even more: Linguists discuss *idiomaticity*; however, the larger monolingual dictionaries of English either list *idiomaticalness* or *idiomaticness* (Barnhart ed. 1996, Butterfield ed. 2003, Soukhanov and Rooney eds. 1999), ignore the item altogether (Pearsall ed. 1998), or treat it as an undefined run-on (*Random House Webster's Unabridged Dictionary* on CD-ROM [Steinmetz ed. 1997] lists *idiomaticalness* and *idiomaticity*). The *New Shorter Oxford* (Brown ed. 1993; CD-ROM 1997) does get the better of all of its competitors: It lists and defines - as a subentry - one nominal derivative, *idiomaticity*.

Again, why do dictionaries enter such dubious items in the first place? To enhance their aura of authority or to inflate their entry count are probably the likeliest reasons. But this need not be as bad as it may sound: Since most of the works in question are comprehensive – containing upwards of 150,000 entries – native-speaker-oriented decoding dictionaries, the idea that it will do no harm to include as large a word stock as possible cannot really be faulted, even if that means including some really outlandish vocabulary items. After all, who can say that this or that **potential word** (Katamba 2005, 74) will NEVER be used, or has never been used, in any of the many millions of texts, written and spoken, short and long, general and specialized, for kids or for adults, generated on a daily basis throughout the English-speaking world?

Dictionary words proper can be broken down into
(1)   rare spelling variants, such as *independency*
(2)   words with "suspect" - well, ghost - senses, such as *to wolf*, an intransitive verb meaning also 'to hunt wolves' in the *Collins* (Butterfield ed. 2003, sense 15 s.v. **wolf**)
(3)   strange-looking, especially obsolete, forms of irregular verbs, such as *wrought, rove*
(4)   derived words such as *catchily* or *censurable*, both listed as run-ons (ss.vv. *catchy* and *censure*) in the not-so-large *Concise Oxford* (Soanes and Stevenson eds. 2004), for which there frequently exist "competing" forms, one of them being typically a dictionary word (e.g. *gentility* vs. the less likely *genteelness*, found e.g. in the bilingual *Oxford Hachette* [Corréard and Grundy eds. 1994]).

Sometimes, dictionaries do label such words; *Webster's New World* (Agnes ed. 1999) enters the adjective *longevous*, labels it *[Rare]*, and defines it simply as 'long-lived'. An excellent candidate for the status of a dictionary word, subject to confirmation by available corpus evidence!

Not surprisingly, dictionaries show little agreement in their inclusion/exclusion policy and treatment of dictionary words. Generally, however, the larger the dictionary the likelier it is to include such words.

Interestingly, there are "semantically motivated" dictionary words, where the reason for an item being (close to) a dictionary word is at least partly semantic in an extralinguistic sense. For example, while the adjectives *allowable, accountable,* and *readable* are semantically quite useful, the related adverbs *allowably, accountably,* and *readably* seem to be much less needed in everyday discourse (what is it that we do ALLOWABLY, ACCOUNTABLY, and READABLY?). Nevertheless, dictionaries routinely list many derived adverbs as undefined run-ons, so that one cannot really be sure about their status: *beady eyes*, sure; but what about *to look beadily (at someone)*? More generally, adverbs often seem to be less commonly used, and in fewer senses at that, than the adjectives they are formed from. This may well be the why they are typically given short shrift - in stark contrast to adjectives they are derived from - in many English monolingual dictionaries. However, problems are not restricted to adverbs. Take, for example, verbs derived from nouns indicating fields of study: archeology, ethnology, linguistics, astronomy, etc. - do we *archeologize, ethnologize, linguisticize,* or *astronomize*? The first seems acceptable, the second is suspect, while the third and the fourth sound more like a joke. Why so? Corpora are not much help here; these are rare words, and there are thousands of rare words that no corpus - however large - can be expected to contain, not even a single occurrence.

The concept of *dictionary word* can be extended to items that were once actually used but later fell into disuse. Such items are different from "hardcore" dictionary words, because they must be available in the larger dictionaries to help language users decode older texts. Moreover, they may be indicative of the dynamic nature of language: Newmark (2000, 191) thus notes that the Latin phrase *obiter dicta*, meaning 'things said in passing,' often misused "like many words that one hears but never looks up," appears to have fallen out of use, though it was not uncommon in an English intellectual's vocabulary fifty years ago, so that by the end of the 20th century it has become "merely a 'dictionary word'" (ibid.).

Aside from Newmark suggesting the label **dictionary word** for such items, linguists and lexicographers have come up with a number of related terms to better capture the varied world of lexical phenomena.

4.2 Types of Dictionary Words and Similar Kinds of Lexical Items

The concept of *dictionary word* may be said to include, or be flanked by, a number of (sub)types of less-than-everyday lexical items.

► First, there is the interesting **ghost word**, the best-known of the lot, also known as **ghost form** (Crystal 1999, 135; Cuddon 1999, 352), as *phantom word* (Cuddon 1999, 663), or even as *vox nihili* (Grambs 1984, 150). It is a word that never really existed but was coined due to the

blunders (including spurious readings) of printers or scribes and editors, and was in many cases inadvertently carried over from one dictionary into another. A famous example of a ghost word in English is *Dord*, listed as a synonym of *density* in *Webster's Second International Dictionary* of 1934; the error arose from an editor misinterpreting *D or d*, used to show that the item *density* could be abbreviated using either a capital *D* or a lowercase *d*, as though it were a real English word of its own (McArthur ed. 1992: 440).

The term is to be found in the literature (cf. e.g. Read 1978, 95; Cuddon 1999, 352; Howard 1985; and Iannucci 1986). Unlike *dictionary word*, it is entered in several large dictionaries of English; the *New Oxford* (Pearsall ed. 1998, 771), for instance, says it is 'a word recorded in a dictionary or other reference work which is not actually used,' thus making it more general, if we ignore the fact that the absence of a comma after *work* makes the definition ambiguous (is it the word or the reference work that is not actually used?). The *Collins* (Butterfield ed. 2003, 685) fares much better in this respect: *ghost word* is 'a word that has entered the language through the perpetuation, in dictionaries, etc., of an error', and so does the *Random House* (Steinmetz ed. 1997), which defines it as 'a word that has come into existence by error rather than by normal linguistic transmission, as through the mistaken reading of a manuscript, a scribal error, or a misprint,' giving [1885-90] as the estimate of the time the phrase entered the (written) language.

Howard (1985, 80-82) mentions several famous "ghosts," including *dord,   foop/foup(e), phantomnation, howl* ('a Scottish spelling of *hovel*'), and *momblishness*, observing that there are in addition some other words that "do not sound healthy"; rather than being ghosts, however, these words are merely **superannuated**, that is, 'old and no longer useful or no longer able to do things' (Summers ed. 2005). Furthermore, there are **poltergeist words**, or those which 'change their meanings through misapprehension' (Howard 1985, 83), such as *scarifying*, used as a colloquial synonym for *scaring*, while its former meaning was 'covering with scratches or scars.'

► Next in line, there is the humbler **hothouse word**, a term referring to a learned word that has never been used, so far as anyone can find; the older dictionaries contain many such words, e. g. *decircinate*, 'to bring out of compass,' listed in Thomas Blount's *Glossographia* (1656). Such items can be regarded as individualisms. Some of the hothouse words were probably also ghost words, i.e. those that never existed "but have dragged out a ghostly existence down through the years merely because some early lexicographer like Thomas Blount saw fit to include them in his dictionary" (Read 1978, 96).

► Further down the road, the **latent word**, a term suggested by Malkiel (1962, 9) for a word - mostly a derivative - that was created deliberately and entered into dictionaries by lexicographers according to the existing patterns of word formation, so that it is readily understandable and gives the appearance of authenticity, even though for such words "no record exists to prove that they have ever been used" (Landau 2001, 102; Svensén 1993, 41), because "speakers have not bothered to activate on the same scale all the grammatical potentialities" (Malkiel 1962, 9).

► The **spurious word** is a word that is erroneous, false, or one that cannot be authenticated (Berg 1993, 175). The large historical dictionaries record such items out of the need to enter and define whatever appears to be a lexical item, even if it can only be found in remote, outdated, or otherwise uncommon sources.

► Not to be forgotten, we can come across the **nonce (word)**, i.e. a word created for a particular occasion or publication and thus usually short-lived. The concept is listed in dictionaries of linguistic terms such as Crystal (2003) and discussed by Steinmetz and Kipfer (2006, Chapter 27). Such an item is coined by a native speaker who, feeling at home with the formative practices of the language, creates a "makeshift or convenient term, such as one invented by a novelist for a special usage or meaning" (Grambs 1984, 245). Katamba (2005, 74) defines *nonce words* as "words expressly coined for the first time and apparently used once."

► Next, the **nonwords**, or "words that aren't really words" (Garner 1998, 451-2), that is, meaningless words not recognized or accepted as legitimate (Steinmetz and Kipfer 2006, 227), such as *analyzation* ("a pseudo-learned variant of *analysis*" [Garner 1998, 39])*, annoyment* ("worse than a needless variant" of *annoyance* [ibid., p. 43]), and *seldomly* ("nonword" that is "never ... needed. It isn't even listed in most dictionaries" [ibid., p. 587]). While all these items have in fact been used by some native speakers, they are widely regarded as incorrect and/or unnecessary, which is why they often get listed - and criticized - in usage guides. Garner (1998, 451) notes that nonwords were discussed at least as early as 1899. A caveat, though: The term *nonword* may mean different things to different people: *The New Oxford* (Pearsall ed. 1998, 1262) defines *non-word* [sic] as 'a group of letters or speech sounds that looks or sounds like a word but that is not accepted as such by native speakers.'

► There are also the related **nonsense words**, i.e. words that may have little - if any - meaning but were coined to create a particular effect (Steinmetz and Kipfer 2006, Chapter 28).

► Another relevant term, **individualism** (Read 1978), refers to a word coined to fulfill the need of a particular speaker. The avant-garde writers like James Joyce and Jack Kerouac provide many examples.

► A stern technical term known cheifly to language specialists, **hapax legomenon** indicates a word found in classical texts in only one instance. The term can be applied more narrowly in word-formation; thus Aronoff (1976, 10) defines *hapax legomena* as 'morphemes which only occur in one English word,' such as the prototypical *#cran#* in *cranberry*, whence originates the alternative appellation, ***cranberry morphs***.

► More broadly, Read (1978, 95) suggests a catchall term, **evanescent words**, those which are commonly regarded as not being 'part of the language.'

5. More Than Meets the Eye: Yesterday and Today

Formerly, many strange-looking learned words, known as **hard words** and **inkhorn terms/ words**, were commonly listed and defined, particularly in the 17th-century monolingual English dictionaries, when the "hard-word" tradition was the order of the day (Hartmann and James 1998, 67, 75). Cuddon (1999, 420) defines them as "pedantic terms and learned borrowings from foreign tongues." Such terms are still present in the large dictionaries of English, for instance the awesome-looking *aurantiaceous* in the *World Book Dictionary* (Barnhart ed. 1996). Such outlandish items are entered in some usage dictionaries as **sesquipedalian words**. Garner (1998, 590-3) discusses them in his entry on *sesquipedality*, or "the use of big words."

Today, wordsmiths (cf. Lederer 1990, 155-9) are acutely aware of a number of other types of words, such as **alphabet words, letter words, palindromic words, pronoun words, pyramid words, snowball words, isograms** (the last-named being words in which no letter of the alphabet appears more than once, e.g. *uncopyrightable*). And there is the *-nym* army: not only **synonyms, homonyms, meronyms, pseudonyms** and **antonyms** but **eponyms, contronyms** (or **antagonyms**)[1]**, heteronyms, retronyms –** and a whole lot more (ibid., pp. 56-64, 65-84). Further, a glance at the *Wikipedia* can let you in on yet another category, **power words**, i.e. those words (or phrases) which are "used to make one's statement stronger" (cf. *http://en.wikipedia.org/ wiki/Power_word*). Evidently, words can be – well, more than words can say. Moreover, there are quite a few types of words that have no special appellations, such as *all-vowel words* and *one-letter words*, witness "Strange & Unusual Dictionaries," a delightful website (*http://www.oneletterwords. com/*). And there's more, for instance items known as **mondegreens**, or words misheard in songs (Safire 1980, 166-72), a class of items that still awaits lexicographical recognition.

A related and rather more general but elusive term, **difficult word**, will not be discussed in this paper, even though the concept behind it is intriguing. It has received its share of lexicographical attention in English dictionaries of, well, difficult words (edited e.g. by Laurence Urdang [1993] and by John Ayto [1994], an earlier version of the latter work being currently available on the Internet from *http://www.tiscali.co.uk/reference/dictionaries/difficultwords/*). Most dictionaries of difficult words have been designed for native speakers, to help them with "obscure, exotic, complex, misunderstood and misused words" (Urdang 1993, front cover). They are based on the assumption that native speakers of English are not likely to look up items such as *yes, but, father, nice, sure, to get*, but rather the likes of *intrados, intrant, intravasation, introgression, introjection,* and *intussusception*, all listed as headwords in the *Chambers* (Higgleton and Thomson eds. 1998) - so why bother to list the former at all? The trouble lies at the heart of the concept: What is it that makes a word difficult, and who is it difficult to?

6. Conclusions

As Landau (1984, 78) points out, a number of dubious items listed in the college dictionaries, e.g. *sluggardliness*, *oppressingly*, and *idioticalness*, all of which appear in the *Collins*, may never

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1   Antagonyms or contronyms are words having two diametrically opposed meanings, such as *hold up*, meaning either 'support' or 'hinder.' For English there exists a dictionary of antagonyms on the Web: Check *http://www-personal.umich.edu/~cellis/antagonym.html*.

have been used. College dictionaries include them (as rare run-on derivatives) in an effort to inflate their entry count. In a monolingual context, this practice does not really contribute to confusion or misunderstanding. By contrast, in a bilingual one, it often does, as when a Slovenian college student of English decided to use *facultative* instead of *optional* on the seemingly unassailable grounds that it is treated as its synonym (sense 1b: OPTIONAL) in Merriam-Webster's *Collegiate*° (Mish ed. 2003) without any restrictive label whatsoever! This implies that in the EFL context, the danger associated with dictionary words is likely to be lurking in encoding tasks, that is, in L1-to-L2-type translation or in producing L2 text. In such cases, the EFL student is advised to consider the possibility of a <u>two</u>-stage dictionary lookup process - to go from the large monolingual native-speaker-oriented tome to a good monolingual learners' dictionary, where dictionary words are virtually nonexistent.

The continued presence of dictionary words in the larger monolingual dictionaries of English even today implies that dictionary revisions chiefly concentrate on additions rather than deletions, so that a lot of deadwood remains recorded, the logic probably being that such items are not likely to do any harm. As long as they once really existed in the language, one should not complain. But *dictionary words* that never existed in English - well, that's another story, especially in the context of EFL. Moreover, in the age of corpus-based lexicography, the machines do not throw up nonexistent items! Yet most larger reputable dictionaries of English still contain them. Go figure . . .

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Unnaturalness of Negation – an Old Wives' Tale Retold

Summary

Negation has a very long history of study. In the realm of logic, negation is seen as a simple operation that turns an affirmative to a negative. This assumption strongly affected the linguistic study of negation, and led to some misconceptions. For example, negation in natural languages is seen as something unnatural, artificial and syntactically as well as semantically dependant on affirmation. It is perceived as a logical/mathematical operation that turns affirmatives into negatives by way of syntactic transformation and semantic cancellation of multiple negatives. To refute some of these misconceptions, the paper investigates the nature of negation as a linguistic phenomenon, and shows that negation in logic and linguistics should not and cannot be treated in the same fashion. Special attention is paid to the problems of structural complexity, the syntactic notion of multiple negation and its different semantic interpretations. With regard to the semantic interpretation of multiple negation, languages, by and large, allow for two possibilities: negative concord and double negation. Negative concord, which interprets two negatives as a single negation, seems to represent the natural course of language development, while double negation, which allows the cancellation of two negatives resulting in affirmation, was introduced into languages under the influence of logic in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Key words: negation, multiple negation, double negation, negative concord, psycholinguistics

Nenaravnost zanikanja – napačne predstave?

Povzetek

Proučevanje zanikanja ima dolgo tradicijo. Logika obravnava zanikanje kot operacijo, ki zanika trdilno propozicijo. To spoznanje je služilo kot izhodišče za jezikovno proučevanje zanikanja in je vodilo nekatere zmotne predstave o zanikanju. Zanikanje v naravnih jezikih se, na primer, pogosto obravnava kot pojav, ki je skladnjsko in pomensko odvisen od trdilnosti. Pričujoči članek se osredinja na nekatere najbolj pogoste napačne predstave, kot so problemi skladenjske kompleksnosti, večkratnega zanikanja in njegove pomenske razčlenitve. Naravni jeziki praviloma omogočajo dve interpretaciji večkratnega zanikanja: nikalno ujemanje in dvojno zanikanje. Večina naravnih jezikov razume večkratno zanikanje kot enkratno zanikanje in tako ne sledi poimovanju zanikanja v logiki, kjer se večkratno zanikanje med seboj izniči. Ta mehanizem, imenovan dvojno zanikanje, je bil umetno vpeljan v nekatere jezike, na primer angleščino, pod vplivom preskriptivne slovnice 17. in 18. stoletja.

Ključne besede: zanikanje, večkratno zanikanje, dvojno zanikanje, nikalno ujemanje, psiholingvistika

Unnaturalness of Negation – an Old Wives' Tale Retold

1. Introduction

The study of negation has a very long history that was primarily dominated by (onto)logical research. Seminal works of philosophers from Aristotle to Russell have left indelible marks on our perception of negation and it can even be claimed that they have changed the natural course of language development. Recent linguistic accounts (e.g. Klima 1964, Dahl 1979, Haegeman 1995 a.o.), however, have shown that negation in natural languages and logic do not share the same properties, and should not, therefore, be treated in the same fashion. The present paper discusses some of the differences and focusses on some popular misconceptions that have roots in ontological tradition but do not reflect the situation in natural languages.

The paper is organised as follows. Section 2 offers a brief outline of the differences between the negation in logic and natural languages. It particularly focusses on the problems of structural complexity (2.1), multiple negation, negative concord and double negation (2.2). Section 3 shows how the ontological treatment of negation has affected the study of negation in psycholinguistics and led to some highly questionable conclusions that are still argued for by some psycholinguists. Section 4 sums up the paper.

2. Negation and ontological legacy

To form negation in logic, the external negative operator ¬ is added to the proposition p, resulting in ¬p. The fact that this operation requires an affirmative preposition has led logicians to conclude that affirmation has a primary and negation a secondary status. As such, negation has often been seen as redundant and dispensable. This stance is perhaps best summarised by Russell (1948, 530), who claims that "[t]he world can be described without the use of the word 'not'".

Turning now to the linguistic definitions of negation in (1) – (3), we can see that they reflect the ontological treatment of negation, since all three assume that negative sentences are formed from the affirmatives by inserting a morpho-syntactic operator (hence the morpho-syntactic complexity of negation), and implicitly suggest that negation in natural languages also has a secondary status.

(1)   A simple positive sentence […] is negated by inserting the clause negator *not* between the operator and the predication[.]   Quirk et al. (1999, 776)

(2)   Clausal negation is used to deny or reject a proposition. Clauses are negated by the insertion of the negator *not* or by some other negative word [.] Biber et al. (1999, 158)

(3)   Although the semantics of Neg is connected with quite a few intricate problems, it still seems possible to give a relatively uncontroversial characterization of Neg in semantic terms. We thus formulate as a necessary condition for something to be called Neg that it

be a means for converting a sentence S_1 into S_2 such that S_2 is true whenever S_1 is false,[1] and vice versa.   Dahl (1979, 80)

Generalisations such as (1) – (3) may be practical when it comes to teaching languages, yet they do not really capture the linguistic properties of negation. In what follows we will try to address some of these properties from a cross-linguistic perspective, and show that negation is far more complex in natural languages than in logic.

2.1 Complexity of negation

We will start by examining the morpho-syntactic complexity of negative sentences. In his typological study of negation that includes data from approximately 300 languages, (Dahl 1979) points out that the majority of the languages investigated form negation by using different morphological (e.g. affixation and stem modification) or syntactic means (e.g. negative particles and auxiliaries). The presence of various markers of negation in negative sentences and their absence in affirmatives could be used to support the claim that negation is morpho-syntactically more complex than affirmation. It is questionable, however, whether this conclusion really encompasses all languages, and thus belongs to the universal property of negation. Dahl (op. cit., 82) also reports of languages in which negation does not seem to trigger morpho-syntactic complexity, at least not the one associated with the presence of an overt marker of negation that expands the affirmative structure. Examples of such languages are Mano and Kwaa, both belonging to the Niger-Congo language group. While in Mano negatives differ from the affirmatives only prosodically (4), in Kwaa negation involves prosodic modification and word order change (5).

(4)   a) `*n yídò*   (Dahl 1979, 82)
       'I know.'

       b) ^ *n yídò*
          'I do not know.'

(5)   a) *mà tè màna*   (Dahl 1979, 82)
          'I bought bananas.'

       b) /*mà maná tè*
          'I didn't buy bananas.'

The next issue to address is the question of forming negation by way of transformation. One cannot fail to notice that while in logic there is a clear-cut boundary between *p* and ¬*p*, in natural languages the boundaries are much more blurred. For example, sentences (7a,b) should be treated as negative counterparts of (6), since they display a high level of synonymity with the syntactically negated sentences (7a',b'). Even though they are affirmative in form (i.e. with

no overt marker of negation) they are semantically negative. Their negative status can be easily proven by using the diagnostic '*much less*' test: only two negative sentences can be coordinated by the quasi-coordinator *much less* (as shown in (8) and (9)).

(6) a) *John succeeded in finishing the paper in time.*
     b) *They have a lot of water to drink.*

(7) a) *John failed to finish the paper in time.*
     a') *John didn't succeed in finishing the paper in time.*
     b) *They are short of water to drink.*
     b') *They don't have a lot of water to drink.*

(8) a) **John succeeded in finishing the paper in time much less type it correctly.*
     b) **They have a lot of water to drink much less to bathe in.*

(9) a) *John failed to finish the paper in time much less type it correctly.*
     b) *They are short of water to drink much less to bathe in.*
     c) *John didn't succeed in finishing the paper in time much less type it correctly.*
     d) *They don't have a lot of water to drink much less to bathe in.*

It should also be noted that in natural languages, it is also possible to express negation implicitly, i.e. without using morpho-syntactic markers of negation. This can be mainly achieved by two different strategies: (i) by using lexical items that negative semantically and not syntactically[1] (e.g. the verbs *to fail, to doubt, to deny*); or (ii) by using affirmative sentences whose negative interpretation is triggered by the context, as in (10):

(10) a) *You are such a hero. Even a girl can beat you up!*

      b) *How should I know how to spell 'Liebowitzmeyer'!*

      c) *Fred, a priest! Never.*

      d) *Hercule Poirot to sleep while murder is committed! What a preposterous idea!*

The last problem we would like to present in this section is the ontological claim that negation always presupposes affirmation. To exemplify, the sentence *The car is not blue* states that the car is not of a blue colour but, more importantly, it presupposes at the same time that the car has a colour; it may be green, yellow, pink, etc.[2] It is not difficult, however, to find sentences for which it is impossible to find the presupposed affirmatives. Do the negative sentences in (11) – (13) really presuppose their affirmative counterparts? Obviously not, so it is safe to conclude

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1   The semantically negative status of a lexical item LI may affect the syntactic behaviour of a clause containing the LI – see examples in (6) – (9).
2   For a detailed analysis of the issue in question see Horn (2001, 63-73).

that the negative examples in (11) – (13) describe events on their own, and they do so without presupposing the affirmatives.

(11) a) *Peter hasn't read the book yet.*
b) ?*Peter has read something else.*

(12) a) *Peter doesn't pay taxes.*
b) ?*Peter pays something else.*

(13) a) *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife.*
b) ?*Thou shalt covet thy (friend's/enemy's) wife.*

2.2 Multiple negation, negative concord and double negation

The present section focusses on some misconceptions regarding semantic implications of the negatives. To start with, it is necessary to address the question of frequently-misused terminology. Multiple negation is used by syntactitians as a cover term to refer to any co-occurrence of two or more negative elements within the same syntactic structure, in most cases the clause (14).

(14) a) *Nobody saw nothing.*

b) *Personne n'a   rien   dit.*   French
    nobody   *ne* has nothing said
    'Nobody said anything.'

c) *Nihče   ni   videl ničesar.*   Slovenian
    Nobody not+is seen   nothing
    'Nobody saw anything'

Negative concord and double negation, on the other hand, pertain to semantics: they refer to two different interpretations of multiple negation. Negative concord languages interpret multiple negation occurrences as a single negation: two or more co-occurring negative elements within the same clause are always interpreted as a single negation (15). Negative concord comes in two forms (van der Wouden 1997, 182): (i) negative spread, and (ii) negative doubling. In the case of the latter a special marker of negation appears in all sentences that contain a negative expression, whereas in the case of the former the negative meaning is shared by any number of indefinite expressions within the negative scope.

Taking Slovenian as an example, we can observe that it displays the negative doubling but not the negative spread, since the wellformedness of negative sentences depends on the presence of the marker of negation *ne*:

(15) Nihče *(ne) bo odšel nikamor.
      nobody not will gone nowhere
      'Nobody will go nowhere.'

Italian, on the other hand, allows both the negative spread (16a) and negative doubling (16b), depending on the position of the indefinite pronouns such as *nessuno* and *niente*:

(16) a) *Nessuno ha detto niente.*   (Zanuttini 1997, 8)
         nobody has said nothing
         'Nobody said anything.'

      b) *Gianni *(non) legge niente.*   (Haegeman 1995, 196)
         John   not   reads nothing
         'John doesn't read anything.'

The second possible interpretation of multiple negation – <u>double negation</u> – follows the ontological principle of *Duplex negation affirmat* according to which one negation explicitly cancels the other, giving rise to an affirmative interpretation. A language that follows this principle is standard present-day English:

(17) a) *Nobody said nothing.*
         'Everybody said something.'

      b) *You simply cannot not adore her.*
         'You simply must adore her.'

Perhaps the best piece of evidence that double negation and negative concord are only two different semantic interpretations comes from the fact that double negation languages allow negative concord interpretation and vice versa. For example, some varieties of vernacular English allow negative concord interpretation (18a). Likewise, negative concord languages, such as Italian (18b) and Slovenian (18c-d), allow double negation readings:

(18) a) *You ain't got no money.*
         'You have no money.'

      b) *Nessuno non ha   fatto niente.*   Guglielmo Cinque p.c.
         nobody not have done nothing
         'Everybody did something.'

      c) *NIHČE   ni   rekel ničesar.*
         NOBODY not-is said nothing
         'Everybody said something.'

d) *Ti ne moreš kar ne poslušati.*
  you not can   just not listen
  'You cannot just not listen.'

Natural languages go even beyond the bipartite division into negative concord and double negation. There are at least two more interpretations of multiple negation namely, litotes, and emphatic negation. In the case of the latter, two negations strengthen each other, the result being a stronger negation than the same construction with only one negation (19a). In the case of the former, two negatives weaken each other, the result is less negative meaning that would be if there were only one negation present (19b). To acquire the meaning of litotes, one of the negatives need not be negative in form[3] as in (19c) where the adjective *bad* is negative only in meaning.

(19) a) *Can linguists study negation?* **Not** *and stay sane, I do**n't** think.*

    b) *Negation is* **not** *an* **un***important issue.* ≠ *Negation is an important issue.*

    c) *He does**n't** look too* **bad***.* ≠ *He looks dishy.*

2.2.1 Double negation in English

It is a well-known fact that double negation was forcefully introduced into natural languages by prescriptive grammarians who wanted to follow the principles of logic and not the (non)-logic of languages. It was believed that negative concord is an anomaly and should be expelled from natural languages. This standpoint is best described by Jespersen (1922, 352), who argues that "[o]ne of the most characteristic traits of the history of English is thus seen to be the gradual getting rid of [negative] concord as of something superfluous. Where concord is found in our family of languages, it certainly is an heirloom from a primitive age[.]"

At the beginning, English was a negative concord language (see Blake 1996), expressing single negation by using multiple negation constructions (like present-day Italian and Slovenian). The rise of prescriptive grammar in the 18th century gave birth to more philosophical approaches to the study of English. The most influential presciptivist of the period, Bishop Robert Lowth, observes in his *Short Introduction to English Grammar*, published in 1762, that "[t]wo negatives in English destroy one another, or are equivalent to affirmative". Decades later, in his publication *English Grammar* (1795), his follower, Lindley Murray, used the same explanation for the interpretation of multiple negation in English. Crystal (1999, 78-9) reports that both grammars were well-received and extensively used in education. They were later on also used as foundation stones for modern traditional grammars, so it is not surprising that double negation is now the only grammatically acceptable interpretation of multiple negation in present-day English.

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3   Strictly speaking, UN- adjectival prefixes are not negative prefixes but antonymic prefixes. Therefore, adjectives with the UN- prefix are only semantically (i.e. not syntactically) negative. For details, see Ilc (2005).

Table 1 closes section 2 and sums up the differences between the negation in logic and negation in natural languages discussed so far.

negation in logic	Negation in natural languages
external operator	internal operator
tied to a symbol ¬	floating signifié/signifiant relation (cf. e.g. (6) – (10))
negation is more complex than affirmation	negation is usually more complex structurally but not always (cf. e.g. (4) – (5))
symmetry between negative/positive proposition	asymmetry between negative/positive proposition (cf. e.g. (6) – (10))
negation presupposes affirmation	negation does not necessarily presuppose affirmation (cf. e.g. (11) – (12))
multiple negation:	multiple negation:
(i) double negation principle	(i) negative concord (cf. e.g. (15) and (16)) (ii) double negation (cf. e.g. (17)) (iii) emphatic negation (cf. e.g. (19a,b)) (iv) litotes (cf. e.g. (19c))

Table 1: Differences between negation in logic and natural languages.

3. Negation in psycholinguistics

The development of psycholinguistics in the 20th century enabled scholars to investigate the effect of negation on language acquisition and language processing. Building on the ontological principles that negation has a secondary status, psycholinguists of the 1960's and 1970's (e.g. Wason 1961, Cornish and Wason 1970 a.o.) conducted numerous empirical studies whose fundamental findings are that negation is: (i) more difficult to process and understand than affirmation, (ii) more difficult to produce than affirmation, (iii) prohibitive while affirmation is permissive.

These conclusions were later on proven by the theory to be invalid,[4] so, it is disappointing to see that some of these misconceptions should still persist in the academic circles. Andrej Marušič (2002), a Slovenian psychologist, claims that there is a strong link between a high suicide rate and the use of negation. Marušič (ibid.) believes that the extensive use of negation triggers off negative thinking which may cause psychological damage. To avoid the potential damage, the author suggests the use of non-restrictive affirmatives (20b) instead of restrictive negatives (20a):

(20) a) *Ne plezaj!*
   'Do not climb.'

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4 For a concise insight into the psycholinguistic theory regarding negation see Horn (2001, 168-203).

b) *Noge na tla!*
  'Put your feet down.'

Semantically and pragmatically, it is highly questionable whether the negatives are really more restrictive. As argued by Marušič, Marvin and Žaucer (2002) in their reply to Marušič (2002), (20a) is far less restrictive since it allows jumping, tumbling, etc., all of which are prohibited by (20b). Hence, (20b) can cause more psychological damage to a child than (20a).

As his theory develops, Marušič (ibid.) finds it interesting that "[n]ations with high suicide rates, such as Slovenians and Hungarians, have more negations than others. While Slovenians negate twice, in English we negate once[.]"[5] Building on this assumption, the author concludes that there is a strong link between the high suicide rates and the multiple occurrence of negative elements (i.e. multiple negation) in negative structures. This claim faces a basic problem, since multiple negation in Slovenian and Hungarian gives rise to a single negative interpretation (the s.c. negative concord languages). Slovenian/Hungarian negative sentences with one, two or more negative elements receive exactly the same interpretation as English negative sentences with one negative element, namely, single negation reading.[6]

As pointed out by Marušič, Marvin and Žaucer (ibid.), speakers of Slovenian and Hungarian have only one syntactic possibility of expressing negation, and that is multiple negation, which receives the semantic interpretation of negative concord. Hence, the only possible translation of English (21a) is (21b).

(21) a) *I haven't got any.*

b) *Nimam   nobenega.*
    not-have none
    'I haven't got any.'

To avoid the negative influence of negation on psychological development, Marušič (ibid.) proposes that Slovenian grammar should be less prescriptive. At this point, it seems that Marušič (ibid.) contradicts himself: on one hand he criticises the natural (and the only possible) way of expressing negation syntactically, while on the other he wants to prescribe newspeech. This viewpoint elevates the author to the status of the 17th/18th-century English presciptivists.

To end this section and to show that there is no, at least clear, co-relation between the type of a language and the suicide rate, we re-examine the suicide rate data. Table 2 shows the suicide rates for some of the Spanish-speaking countries (a negative concord language)[7] and English-

5   In the original: "[N]arodi z visokim samomorilnim količnikom, denimo Slovenci in Madžari, [imajo] več negacij kot drugi. Slovenci ob negiranju zanikamo dvojno, medtem ko se v angleščini zanika le enkrat[.]"
6   It should be noted that Marušič (ibid.) is not to be blamed exclusively for the wrong use of terminology since even the most widely used grammar of Slovenian uses the term double negation as a synonym for multiple negation and states that the abundance of negation is a feature common to all Slavic languages. Toporišič (2000, 498)
7   For a detailed analysis of negation in Spanish and its negative concord status see: Laka (1990), Su er (1995) and Espinal (2000) a.o.

speaking countries (a double negation language). The reasons for choosing Spanish and English are straightforward – they belong to two different language groups with regard to negation and they are both widely spoken.

Only 4 out of 16 Spanish-speaking countries have a higher suicide rate than the UK, and only 1 Spanish-speaking country has a higher suicide rate than the USA. If Marušič (ibid.) were correct, the data would be different.

country	year	males	females	total
Argentina	96	9.9	3.0	12.9
Chile	94	10.2	1.4	11.6
Colombia	94	5.5	1.5	7.0
Costa Rica	95	9.7	2.1	11.8
Cuba	96	24.5	12.0	36.5
Dominican Republic	94	0.0	0.0	0.0
Ecuador	95	6.4	3.2	9.6
El Salvador	93	10.4	5.5	15.9
Guatemala	84	0.9	0.1	1.0
Mexico	95	5.4	1.0	6.4
Panama	87	5.6	1.9	7.5
Paraguay	94	3.4	1.2	4.6
Peru	89	0.6	0.4	1.0
Spain	99	12.4	4.0	16.4
Uruguay	90	16.6	4.2	20.6
Venezuela	94	8.3	1.9	10.2
United Kingdom	99	11.8	3.3	15.1
United States of America	99	17.6	4.1	21.7

Table 2: Suicide rates per 100,000, by country, year and gender.
Source: http://www.who.int/mental_health/prevention/suicide/suiciderates/en/print.html

4. Conclusion

The present paper examines some common misconceptions regarding negation that are still present in our understanding of negation. By using relevant examples from sundry languages, it has been shown that negation as a linguistic phenomenon should not and cannot receive the same treatment as negation in logic.

We have tried to refute the belief that negation depends syntactically as well as semantically on affirmation. Firstly, negation in natural languages does not (universally) display the morpho-

syntactic complexity by way of transforming affirmative to negatives. Secondly, there are no clear-cut boundaries between the affirmation and negation, making it impossible to argue that negation presupposes or implies affirmation.

Special attention has also been paid to the syntactic notion of multiple negation and its different semantic interpretations: (i) negative concord, (ii) double negation, (iii) emphatic negation and (iv) litotes. All of the four semantic interpretations can be found within the same language, regardless of whether the language belongs to what has traditionally been classified as negative concord languages (e.g. Romance and Slavic languages) or double negation languages (e.g. English).

Finally, we have also provided an insight into the treatment of negation within psycholinguistics. It has been pointed out that any psycholinguistic study should not build on oversimplified understandings of negation.

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Source

http://www.who.int/mental_health/prevention/suicide/suiciderates/en/print.html, accessed November, 27, 2006.

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Exploring the Generic Nature of International English

Summary

The article investigates the nature of English as an International Language (EIL) from a sociolinguistic and sociocultural point via the notion of 'genre'. Genre, it is claimed, plays a central role in an understanding of the internal hybridity of EIL in that it represents the 'using' as opposed to 'use' (register) or 'user' (dialect) dimension of language realization. While all three dimensions as linguistic resources for different subjectivities can shape an ensuing EIL discourse (such mixes constituting the 'interdiscursivity' of (a) text), it is genre that expresses the actional (inter- and transactional) properties of EIL. Drawing also on other linguistic models of genre, the article concludes by interpreting EIL within the discourses of postmodernity, poststructuralism and postcolonialism and pointing to the possibility of developing a new 'postlinguistics' for the new millenium.

Key words: English as an International Language, genre, dialect, register, Bakhtin, CANCODE, discourse analysis.

Preučevanje generične narave mednarodne angleščine

Povzetek

Članek s sociolingvističnega in sociokulturološkega vidika in ob upoštevanju pojma "žanr" preučuje naravo angleščine kot mednarodnega jezika (EIL). Velja, da žanr igra centralno vlogo pri razumevanju notranje hibridnosti angleščine kot mednarodnega jezika, tako da predstavlja "uporabljanje" v nasprotju z "rabo" (register) ali "uporabnikom" (dialekt) kot dimenzijami jezikovne uresničitve. Medtem ko lahko vse tri dimenzije kot jezikovni viri za različne subjektivitete oblikujejo nastajajoči EIL diskurz (takšna mešanja tvorijo "meddiskurzivnost" besedila), pa je žanr tisti, ki izraža akcijske (inter- in transakcijske) značilnosti mednarodne angleščine. Ob upoštevanju tudi drugih jezikovnih modelov žanra, zaključimo interpretacijo angleščine kot mednarodnega jezika v smislu postmodernih, postkulturnih in postkolonialnih diskurzov in nakažemo možnost razvoja nove "postlingvistike" za novo tisočletje.

Ključne besede: angleščina kot mednarodni jezik, žanr, dialect, register, Bakhtin, CANCODE, besediloslovje.

Exploring the Generic Nature of International English

1. Introduction

The purpose of the present discussion is to reflect on the multifarious nature of English as used as an International Language (EIL) in Europe and by doing so to explore ways in which an understanding of the phenomenon might gain from linking (socio-)linguistic analysis with sociocultural theory in ways which have hitherto not been explored. It will be argued that a consideration of the structural diversity of English in transcultural use, particularly of its spoken form, necessitates an equal diversification of the categories of linguistic analysis which pertain to the kinds of codes being realised. This diversification at the same time allows a closer connection to be made to the diverse significations and practices of EIL in the sociocultural context of the new millenium. Concretely, it will be shown that expanding a structural-functional linguistic framework as developed by Firth and Halliday - in the very spirit of the polysystemicity which they advocate – might lead in a truly poststructural turn in linguistics of the kind called for by Graddol (1994), Pennycook (2001) and also James (2005, 2006). The key to this expansion/ diversification is in the present context the notion of 'genre'.

2. English as an International Language in use

The many contexts and functions of EIL have been commented on often enough in the sociolinguistics and applied linguistics literature, and hardly need be repeated here. However, concerning the forms of EIL, a kind of double-think has emerged in recent discussion. While on the one hand, the structural conformity-with-diversity of local English*es* around the world is celebrated (e.g. McArthur 2002) and the structural conformity-with-diversity of English*es* for Specific Purposes (ESP) is noted (Widdowson 1997), on the other hand speculation as to the emergence of *a* new 'non-conforming' EIL as English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) (note, <u>not</u> English*es* as LF) has been rife. Evidence for the latter has been culled from a number of empirical studies of the spoken English of (mainly European) interlocutors, whose primary linguistic socialization has not been via English and who employ it as a shared language (e.g. Jenkins 2000, Seidlhofer 2001). However, it has been argued elsewhere (James 2005, 2006)) that while local – in the temporal as well as spatial sense – *ad hoc* emergent structures of English may be observed in such conversations, which do not accord with the well-described *written* norms of the language, no evidence for any codifiable 'new' EIL/ ELF is seriously forthcoming. In fact, when comparing like with like, i.e. the same speech and conversation types of different communities of English language practice <u>including English as a 'Native' Language</u>, the typological characteristics of the language used are uncannily similar (James 2000).

One essence of the problem would seem to be that many linguists prefer their languages to be codifiable monoliths and we should be careful not to look for a new linguistic monolith with EIL/EFL. Such systematic sociolinguistic variation as is accepted is mainly restricted to Halliday's (1978) 'dialect' (regional or social variety) or 'register' (subject-matter variety), whereas variation in ESP is largely semantic and lexical (= 'register').

However, the variation that has been established in the spoken EIL/ELF data thus far analysed is largely grammatical (syntactic and morphological) and lexical (cf., e.g. James 2000, Seidlhofer 2001, Haegeman 2002, Dewey 2003, Breiteneder 2005), and this fact itself indicates that perhaps a new sociolinguistic categorization of this type of language in use is now necessary. While remembering that *any* single language shows variation of this three-way kind, it is the varied roles of English in the world that throw this linguistic situation into particular relief, and this state of affairs is itself a reflection of the particular sociocultural constellations of the times. It is suggested that the notion of 'genre' may be appropriate to handle this type of use. Genre, in the sense it is developed here, is indeed characterized by grammatical-lexical variation.

3. Genre

This is certainly not the place to engage in a comprehensive discussion of genre as employed in a linguistic, as opposed to, literary context. However, the notion of genre as employed here has nonetheless to be differentiated from the concept as developed in other areas of applied linguistic practice. There is extensive discussion of 'register' vs. 'genre' in the fields of stylistic analysis, translation studies, educational linguistics and not least English for Academic Purposes (EAP) (for a discussion and review cf. Limon 2003). Suffice it to say that in these fields, the notion of 'genre' as understood in 'genre analysis' is couched in ideas of 'community' and 'convention' within social practice: e.g. from an EAP perspective, genres "are socially authorized through conventions, which, in turn, are embedded in the discursive practices of members of specific disciplinary cultures" (Bhatia 2001); from an educational linguistics point of view genres are"culturally evolved goal-directed social purposes which are 'in principle' enabling and facilitative of some sociocultural purpose" (Painter 2001). 'Register', on the other hand, is seen as a text-linguistic phenomenon, in many ways the more strictly structural counterpart of 'genre', in agreement with the original Halliday (1978) formulation.

By contrast, the present notion of genre owes much to the work of Bakhtin (1981, 1986), McCarthy (1998), Fairclough (2003) and Carter (2004). With reference to Halliday's (1978) characterization of 'dialect' as 'variety according to user' and 'register' as 'variety according to use', here 'genre' may be specified as 'variety according to using', i.e. as that manifestation of language which is shaped by immediate actional contexts and which does *not* reflect the conventions of communities in any traditional sense. Following the original Halliday framework of description developed for 'dialect' and 'register' (1978, 35), the specification of 'genre' can be stated as:

> A genre is:
> - what actional mode you are speaking in
>   determined by how you are doing it, and
>   expressing diversity of social practice(s)
>
> So in principle genres are:
> - ways of saying things differently
>   and tend to differ in:

- grammar (syntax and morphology and lexis)

Extreme cases:
- text messaging, chat (?)

Typical instances:
- casual conversation, conversational varieties

Principal controlling variables:
- type of speech event; individual
  verbal capacities

Characterized by:
- major distinctions in types of verbalization   (James 2005, 142)

In other words, genre is that type of language which emerges in online discourse (in the first instance spoken) in recognition of the kind of verbal action being engaged in. Of course dialect and register also co-shape any discourse, the point being with genre, though, being that the subjectivity a language user derives from it is neither origin- (dialect) nor subject matter-based (register), but action (interaction or transaction)-based, and as such highly variable, dynamic and non-essentialist in nature. As such, it would seem to reflect closely the type of language variation and performance exhibited in 'everyday' (spoken) EIL/ELF for immediate interactional/transactional purposes.

4. Bakhtin and genre

Of genre Bakhtin states: "A speech genre is not a form of language, but a typical form of utterance. Genres correspond to typical situations of speech communication" (1981, 87). Elsewhere he observes that to learn to speak involves learning to construct utterances, i.e. to 'cast our speech in generic forms' (1986, 79). However, it should be noted that Bakhtin (1981) distinguishes 'primary' from 'secondary' genres. Whereas 'primary' genres are types of oral dialogue, i.e. correspond to the present definition of genre, 'secondary' genres include literary, 'commentarial', scientific and other text-types, i.e. conform to the present 'register'. Genres are therefore seen as constitutive linguistic frameworks for everyday oral action, or in his own words, "If speech genres did not exist…..speech communication would be almost impossible." (Bakhtin 1986, 60).

Indeed, other aspects of Bakhtin's socioculturally informed theory of language connect well with the present conception of EIL/ELF in use and will be briefly addressed below.

5. The CANCODE model of genre

McCarthy (1998) presents an extensive theory of genre, drawing on the analysis of spoken language deriving from the CANCODE (Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in

English) database in which "extracts display similarities at the lexical-grammatical level which correspond to higher-order features of generically-oriented activity" (1998, 2). Focussing on the occurrence of unrehearsed, non-formal talk, he distinguishes five broad contexts of talk based on the type of relationship among participants as comprising:

transactional-professional-pedagogical-socialising-intimate

Examples of these contexts would be for 'transactional' a service encounter, for 'professional' a staff meeting, for 'pedagogical' obviously a teaching situation, for 'socialising' a cultural activity of some kind, and for 'intimate' engagement with family, close friends, etc. (1998, 8-9)

For each context, three 'goal-types' may be distinguished (1998, 10):

provision of information-collaborative tasks-collaborative ideas

Examples of these goal-types would be for the first, an enquiry at a tourist office, for the second, parking a car, and for the third, sharing thoughts, ideas, etc.

Combining contexts and goal-types produces a matrix of 15 cells:

An example of a transactional context with provision of information as goal-type would be (again) an enquiry at a tourist office, one of a socialising context with a collaborative task as goal-type would be preparing food together, etc.

If the combination of context and goal-type supply 15 more concrete situations of generic activity, which are partly given, and partly negotiated, then the 'social compact' (via cooperative behaviour) of such activity is signalled linguistically by 'formulations', 'expectations', 'recollections' and 'instantiations' on the part of the participants (1998, 32-8). Finally, McCarthy demonstrates that 'lower-order features' of genre (i.e.lexicogrammar) do indeed correspond to the 'higher-level features' of context and goal-type (1998, 38-46).

In subsequent work the model has been slightly modified by reducing the 'context types' to four, omitting 'pedagogical', thereby allowing only for a 12-cell matrix (Carter 2004, 149-50). Also generic typology has been linked to a 'cline of creativity' and to nonnative English use (Carter 2004, 165 ff.)

Again, this model would appear to provide a very suitable basis for the analysis and understanding of the manifestation of EIL/ELF as genre. It allows for a sociolinguistically sensitive analysis of the language in various and changeable, ultimately emergent trans- and interactions. However, it may be argued that an abridged version of the model will suffice for the purposes of EIL/ELF talk. Indeed in the spirit of treating generic activity as primarily interactional and/or transactional one might conflate the four 'context types' to two, as illustrated by the following table:

Actional type		information exchange	collaborative idea	Goal orientation collaborative task
Interactional	e.g.	relating about self	matching opinions	cooking together
Transactional		asking tourist information	co-planning a trip	buying a backpack

(Note that the 'goal orientations' are largely suggestive only and – even - more empirical evidence would be needed for full substantiation)

6. Critical Discourse Analysis and genre

In his analysis of the discourse of social practices, the major proponent of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Fairclough, defines 'genres' as constituting 'ways of acting', i.e. they realize text meaning as 'action' (2003, 26). He goes on to distinguish 'pre-genres', i.e. generalizable genres such as Narrative or Report, 'disembedded genres' such a particular interview and 'situated genres' such as an ethnographic interview (2003, 69). Fairclough's conception of genres and generic structure is summarized as follows:

"Genres are the specifically discoursal aspect of ways of acting and interacting in the course of social events: we might say that (inter)acting is never just discourse, but it is often mainly discourse. So when we analyse a text or interaction in terms of genre, we are asking how it figures within and contributes to social action and interaction in social events" (2003, 65)

From a political perspective, it is 'genre chains', i.e. mixed genres, that are particularly interesting because "analysing [them] allows us to locate texts within processes of social change and to identify the potentially creative and innovative work of social agents in texturing" (2003, 216).

Significant for the present analysis is the fact that Fairclough locates the linguistic expression of genre firmly within grammatical sub-systems (2003, 92 ff.).

Finally, one notes in the analysis of social practices that 'discourses' constitute 'ways of representing', i.e. they realize text meaning as 'representation' and 'styles' constitute 'ways of being', i.e. they realize text meaning as 'identification' (2003: 26). It might be evident that Fairclough's 'discourses' and 'styles' closely correspond to the present 'registers' and 'dialects', respectively. A further important aspect of the CDA social practice/text model for EIL/EFL analysis will be discussed briefly below.

7. The end of the monolith: hybridity in EIL/ELF and the discourses of poststructuralism, postmodernism and postcolonialism – a brief consideration

Hybridity now emerges as a salient sociolinguistic characteristic of English as an International Language/English as a Lingua Franca in that any realization of language will be shaped by dialectal, register and generic resources. Users of the language may wish to express a primary

social subjectivity (via dialect – e.g. as a speaker of <u>British</u> English, <u>Hong Kong</u> English or even of <u>European</u> English or <u>East Asian</u> English, etc.), a professional or lifestyle subjectivity (via register – e.g. as a nutritional scientist, lawyer, skateboarder or war-games *aficionado*, etc.) and/or an actional subjectivity as facility for doing things in English (via genre). The balance between the three resources for subjectivites will of course always be in flux; the resulting language is polysystemic in structure-function and the texts a mix of 'interdiscursivity' (Fairclough 2003), i.e. of his 'genres', 'discourses' (here registers) and 'styles' (here dialects). And as Fairclough notes, an analysis of the interdiscursive hybridity in texts provides a resource for researching postmodern processes which "stress the blurring and breakdown of the boundaries characteristic of 'modern' societies, and the pervasive hybridity (mixing of practices, forms, etc.) which ensues" (2003, 218). The point out EIL/ELF is that its hybridity is that much more salient – if only via its instability and variability, but also by its prominent positioning in multilingual and transcultural space – than that of less exposed languages.

Bakhtin (1981, 1986), in his own form of poststructuralism develops, in addition to genre, the concepts of 'heteroglossia' and 'dialogism' to characterize language in use. Both concepts refer to the fact that language users are not entirely the free agents modern structural linguistic theory (from Saussure on) would like to think they are. On the contrary, "our speech, i.e. all our utterances,…is filled with the words of others" (1981, 89) [= 'heteroglossia'] and our choice of language is in any case also oriented to the other as addressee [= 'dialogism']. He equally stresses the fact that languages are kept in place by competing *centripetal* (or homogenizing) and *centrifugal* (or heterogenizing) forces. With regard to these claims about the poststructural constraints on language, we might illustrate the position of EIL/ELF as the following:

<div align="center">

--   dialogism   +

(centripetal)----DIALECT REGISTER   GENRE----(centrifugal)

+   heteroglossia   --

</div>
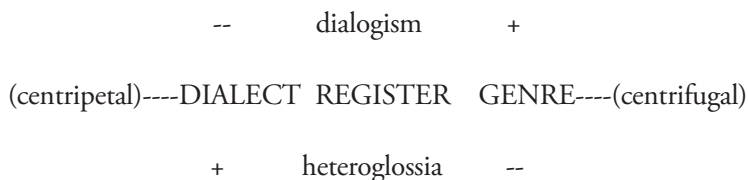
Dialogism is most clearly manifested via genre, (least clearly via dialect), and heteroglossia is most clearly manifested via dialect (least clearly with genre); but also centrifugal forces are strongest with genre (weakest with dialect), and centripetal forces strongest with dialect (weakest with genre). Register takes up an intermediate position in all cases. In other words, the cutting-edge addressivity and diversification of EIL /ELF is carried via its generic qualities, its 'employing the words of others' and its conformity via its dialectal qualities. Significant linguistic change over time in EIL/ELF will be most likely be genre-led and dialect-trailed.

Finally, to discourses of postcolonialism and the position of EIL/ELF. By convention, of course the 'chutneyfication' of English (Rushdie) via the Caliban phenomenon (Shakespeare) is mainly located within dialect and linguistically described in terms of phonological and lexical innovation. However, beyond this, the concept of a 'third space' (e.g. Bhabha 1990) depends very much on an interpretation of hybridity such that "the meaning of hybridity is no longer traceable

back to two original elements out of which a third emerged, rather hybridity informs a *third space* out of which other positions can emerge" (1990, 135). Such a third space is that created and inhabited, for example, by postcolonial writers positioned between but also beyond the periphery and centre, the diaspora and the metropolis. With regard to EIL/ELF, we have already indicated above that inasmuch as it is genre-driven, (addressive and nonconformist), it could equally be said to occupy a third space between and beyond the historically first space of English and the second space of the users' own historical language(s), as well as beyond 'first space' dialect and 'second space' register.

8. Conclusion: towards a postlinguistics, a translinguistics?

It has been argued that a sensitization of linguistic analysis to the hybridity of EIL/ELF as an eminently poststructural, postcolonial, postmodern language phenomenon is possible via the incorporation of 'genre' as a social and text meaning resource in transcultural communication, which can open up very fruitful avenues of exploration connecting sociocultural and (socio-)linguistic theory. Perhaps the resulting form of language inquiry gets nearer to the post- or trans-linguistics which researchers in the field are calling for.

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Listened To Any Good Books Lately?
The Prosodic Analysis of Audio Book Narration

Summary

The popularity of audio books is increasing. In the USA fewer people are reading books but many more are listening to them on tapes, CD's and in MP3 format. The phenomenon is redefining the notion of reading. The purpose of the paper is to present some pros and cons of listening to books instead of reading them. The conclusions have been reached on the basis of a linguistic analysis of parts of two audio books belonging to two different literary genres: a crime novel (Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code*) and a comic one (Helen Fielding, *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason*).

Key words: literature, narratology, linguistics, prosody

Ste v zadnjem času poslušali kakšno dobro knjigo?
Prozodična analiza branja v zvočnicah

Povzetek

Priljubljenost zvočnic narašča. V ZDA vedno manj ljudi knjige bere, mnogo več jih knjige posluša na trakovih, zgoščenkah in MP3 predvajalnikih. Ta pojav poskuša redefinirati branje. Namen tega članka je predstaviti nekaj dobrih in slabih strani poslušanja knjig. Zaključki so nastali na osnovi jezikovne analize nekaj odlomkov iz dveh zvočnic, ki sodita v dva zelo različna književna žanra: kriminalni roman (Dan Brown, *Da Vincijeva šifra*) in komični roman (Helen Fielding, *Bridget Jones: Na robu pameti*).

Ključne besede: književnost, narativnost, jezikoslovje, prozodija

Listened To Any Good Books Lately?
The Prosodic Analysis of Audio Book Narration

1. Introduction

An audio book is a recording of the contents of a book read by a professional reader, hence referred to as narrator. Some twenty years ago, the first audio books appeared as cassette tapes, and nowadays, with the development of technology, audio books are distributed as CD's or in digital formats.

Audio books can be abridged or unabridged and read either by the authors themselves or by professional readers, often actors. Sometimes a book is read by more than one person and accompanied by music and sound effects.

Initially, the reason for recording books on tape was to provide people with poor sight with books which otherwise they could never enjoy. Eventually, other people seem to have recognized the benefits that listening to books may have.

The phenomenon is particularly popular in the USA. According to the National Endowment for the Arts, fewer Americans are reading the books than a decade ago, but almost a third more are listening to them. An article published in *The New York Times* (Harmon 2005) in May 2005 presents the reasons why people have turned to audio books, as well as their attitudes to reading and listening of books.

One of the most frequently expressed reasons why people prefer audio books is that they can listen to them almost everywhere: when driving a car, eating lunch, sitting in doctors' waiting rooms, walking a dog or in bed with no lights on to disturb the sleeping partner.

The growing popularity of audio books has caused several debates among the critics, writers and readers. The purists believe that listening to books is inferior to reading and look down upon audio book fans. Writers of books prefer the audience to read their books, but believe that listening to them is better than nothing.

There are two types of audio book consumers: the ones who have never liked reading, and those who are simply too busy to spend time sitting and reading. They both claim that listening to books has several advantages to reading: they can jump among chapters, they have to listen to all the text, whereas when reading they tend to skip paragraphs, and, for some, the narrators untangle difficult grammatical structures and complex sentences. Their liking or disliking of a book often depends on the narrator's ability to get the most out of the text.

Due to their popularity, audio books deserve some literary and linguistic analysis.
In this paper, the matter of linguistic analysis is two audio books read by a single narrator. These

are: a crime novel by Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code*, and a comic one by Helen Fielding, *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason*. The former is read by the actor, Jeff Harding, the latter by the author herself. The purpose of the analysis was to answer to the following three questions: Is reading a book really the same as listening to it? What is the function of the narrator in an audio book? Can he influence the popularity of a book?

2. Reading vs. Listening

In order to be able to answer to the question whether reading a book is the same as listening to it, we have to acknowledge the fact that the two activities make use of different cognitive processes which are the consequence of the basic difference between the spoken and written modes: speech is a linear, ongoing process, whereas writing is a complete product. Thus in listening, the text is perceived dynamically, while in reading the text is presented synoptically. Our understanding of a spoken text largely depends on the intonation clues, such as the rhythm, the highlighting of important pieces of information, the pitch movement and the pitch range, volume, tempo and voice quality. In reading, the only clues that we have are punctuation and division into paragraphs and chapters. Those do not always overlap with prosodic clues, as will be shown below. It can be said that the visual analogue to listening is a film, to reading, a painting.

Knowing this, what are then the advantages and disadvantages of listening to reading? Apart from the fact that listening to books can be done while doing something else, there is no single and straightforward answer to this question. Some people prefer reading simply because their visual perception is better than the audial, others may be in favour of listening because they are slow readers or because their ability to extract the message is better when they listen to a text read aloud.

There is, however, one very important difference between reading a book and listening to it being read by somebody else. Reading a book is a solitary experience during which an invisible and very intimate bond is established between the reader and the author. The reader is allowed to make his own conclusions, opinions and interpretations as he goes on reading. In his mind, he creates his own images of the characters and hears their voices. Listening to a book read aloud is a sort of trilateral relation where the third party is the narrator acting as a go-between the author and the listener. Audio book listeners are deprived of the beautiful experience of being immersed into the story. Instead, the plot and the characters are interpreted for them and offered ready made. In abridged versions of novels whole paragraphs are usually cut and left out. These paragraphs often provide important background information for the plot and the character development, as it is the case with *The Da Vinci Code* and *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason*.

3. The Role of the Narrator

The person reading an audio book has a very serious and responsible job. The success of the audio experience is judged by what we hear. It is the narrator's job to make the story memorable, enjoyable and sometimes even understandable. In other words, a good narrator can contribute considerably to the success of a book, whereas a bad one can ruin it.

The task of the narrator is to transmit the story as accurately as possible but with necessary additions in the form of the voice quality, rhythm and pitch movement. In addition, he has to be able to interpret the text and by means of prosody make necessary alterations as to the coherence and cohesion of the text. This is particularly important in abridged audio books where whole paragraphs are cut out.

4. Prosodic Features Mirroring Text Relations

A written text is not merely a string of isolated sentences. In order for a sequence of sentences to be considered a text, certain criteria have to be met. Among them the most important ones are cohesion and coherence. In this way meaningful units are created which often deal with topics, hence they can be called topical units. In written texts, the boundaries between topical units are visually marked by paragraphs, whereas the unity within a paragraph is made visible by punctuation. Similarly, if the written text contains direct speech of one or more people, their turns are also visually marked by means of punctuation marks.

A hearer of a spoken text has no access to the visual clues of coherence and segmentation into paragraphs. Instead, he has to rely on prosodic clues to identify coherence relations, major breaks, changes of topics and subtopics, as well as the changes of speakers, their moods, emotions and attitudes.

The theory of discourse analysis and intonation particularly distinguishes among several degrees of preparedness in speech. Wichmann (2000) describes speech as a continuum from scripted (i.e. read) to spontaneous, and claims that every utterance is made with some degree of preparedness. Even in the most spontaneous spoken interactions, speakers take time to plan ahead and prepare for the next utterance. There are spoken interactions where speech seems spontaneous, but is in fact very prepared (e.g. interviews, public lectures, etc.). Reading a written text aloud is mostly prepared. Variation may be found in how much it has been rehearsed. In the case of audio books, we can assume that the narrators spend quite some time preparing and rehearsing their reading, not to mention correcting the recording if they are not satisfied with it.

Brazil et al. (1980) claim that the reader of a text has two options: he can either interpret and perform the text as if he himself were speaking to the listener, or he can step outside the text and simply stand as the medium. This depends on the type of text a person is reading aloud. If the purpose of the reading is to entertain, then some artistic performance is necessary. If, on the other hand, the text read aloud is of a more informative nature, then the role of the reader is to pass on someone else's message merely by converting the written text into speech.

The two books which have been chosen for the linguistic analysis are novels belonging to two different literary genres: a crime story (*The Da Vinci Code*) and a comedy (*Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason*). They were abridged and recorded as audio books. We can assume that both narrators were very familiar with the texts and had prepared and rehearsed the reading before they went into the studio to record the audio books. They knew that the purpose of their job was to

provide an entertaining and highly aesthetic reading of the novels. Thus we can expect their use of prosodic features mirroring the text relations to be appropriate.

The sub-sections to follow will discuss the prosodic features that the narrators in the two audio books have used to express:

- division into paragraphs,
- cohesion and coherence within and between paragraphs,
- character portrayal

4.1 Paragraph division vs. paratone division

A paragraph is a coherent textual unit which usually consists of more than one sentence and deals with one topic. The authors divide their texts into paragraphs according to the grammatical, textual and topical considerations. Grammatically speaking, a paragraph has to coincide with syntactically complete sentences. From the textual point of view, a paragraph has to be cohesive and coherent. The topical consideration is probably most flexible and left to the author's narrative ability. However, the readers expect a paragraph to be a topically complete unit.

In writing, we visually recognise a paragraph as a string of sentences separated from another string of sentences by an empty line or an indented beginning. In speech, paragraphs are marked by intonation.

The notion of paragraph intonation is not new. Yule (1980) proposed the existence of a paratone which covers a topic or a sub-topic in speech, roughly equivalent to a paragraph in writing[1]. The first extensive discussion, by Lehiste (1975), showed that the most common prosodic feature of a new paratone is an extra high pitch. Later studies by Brazil et al. (1980), Brown et al. (1980) and Yule (1980) all came to the same conclusion. "A new start is marked phonetically … by the speaker speaking high in his pitch range and speaking loudly" (Brown et al. 1980, 26). The other important prosodic feature involved in the audial perception of a paratone is the final low pitch contour, which is often accompanied by explicit phonetic criteria, such as "pause, lengthening of a preceding syllable or a break in the rhythm" (Williams 1996, 51).

Initial extra-high pitch and final low pitch accompanied by a pause are thus prosodic phenomena which occur at the boundary between two paratones. The third prosodic feature typical of paratone intonation is a gradual declination of pitch. Wichmann calls this gradual lowering of pitch over a topic unit "supradeclination" (2000, 107) in order to distinguish it from the notion of pitch declination across a single utterance. In other words, there is a distinction between utterance and paratone declination.

The topical structure of a novel is the author's construct and a reader has no access to the author's intentions behind the narrative structure. However, there should always be some textual motivation behind it. Similarly, the narrator of an audio book has his own understanding of the

1   In my references to speech I shall use the term 'paratone' to distinguish it from the written 'paragraph'.

narrative structure and his own interpretation of the story. Thus we can expect that the written division into paragraphs may not always overlap with the spoken one.

My analysis of paratone division in the spoken delivery of a novel was based on the comparison between the written division into paragraphs and the acoustic features of their spoken delivery. I decided for a paratone whenever there was a pause followed by a considerable change in pitch or just a pause with no change in pitch in the following initial accented syllables.

4.1.1 *The Da Vinci Code*

The analysis of the written and spoken paragraph division in *The Da Vinci Code* has shown that the narrator quite strictly follows the author's division into paragraphs. There are, however, two types of deviation from the written text. The narrator either divides one written paragraph into two paratones (1), or joins two paragraphs into one paratone (2).

(1) printed version:
Pain is good, Silas whispered, repeating the sacred mantra of Father Josemaría Escrivá – the Teacher of all Teachers. Although Escrivá had died in 1975, his wisdom lived on, his words still whispered by thousands of faithful servants around the globe as they knelt on the floor and performed the sacred practice known as 'corporal mortification'. (30)
spoken version:
Pain is good, Silas whispered, repeating the sacred mantra of Father Josemaría Escrivá – the Teacher of all Teachers. [pause]
↑[2] Although Escrivá had died in 1975, his wisdom lived on, his words still whispered by thousands of faithful servants around the globe as they ~~knelt on the floor and~~[3] performed the sacred practice known as 'corporal mortification'.

(2) printed version:
The Louvre's main entrance was visible now, rising boldly in the distance, encircled by seven triangular pools from which spouted illuminated fountains.
La Pyramide.
The new entrance to the Paris Louvre had become almost as famous as the museum itself. The controversial, neomodern glass pyramide designed by Chinese-born American architect I. M. Pei still evoked scorn from traditionalists who felt it destroyed the dignity of the Renaissance courtyard. (35)
spoken version:
The Louvre's main entrance was visible now~~, rising boldly in the distance,~~ encircled by seven triangular pools from which spouted illuminated fountains. *La Pyramide.* ~~The new entrance to the Paris Louvre had become almost as famous as the museum itself.~~ The controversial, neomodern glass pyramide ~~designed by Chinese-born American architect I. M. Pei~~ still evoked scorn from traditionalists who felt it destroyed the dignity of the Renaissance courtyard.

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2   ↑(high key), ↓ (low key), ↗ (rise), ↘ (fall), ↘↗ (fall-rise), ↗↘ (rise-fall), →(level);
3   ~~knelt on the floor and~~, the part was omitted from the spoken version;

In order to understand why paratones do not overlap with the paragraphs, one has to look at the structure of the text. In (1) the division into two paratones can be explained by the narrator's need to give special emphasis, and hence a new paratone, to the information about Father Escrivá. In (2) the narrator joins the three paragraphs into one paratone because they all concern the same topic, i.e. the pyramid in front of the Louvre. The justification for one paratone instead of three paragraphs is even stronger due to the abridged spoken version.

4.1.2 *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason*

The analysis of the written and spoken paragraph division in *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason* shows a much more faithful narration of the written text in spite of the fact that the novel is heavily abridged for the purpose of the audio recording. The reason for that is certainly the fact that the narrator is the author herself. In addition, the novel is written as a diary in which each chapter begins with the day of the month and the entries in the diary are preceded by the time of the day. Each entry, unless it is very long, is typed as one paragraph. The shorter entries often deal with more than one topic: Bridget's thoughts and the actual events which happen at the indicated time of the day. By means of intonation the narrator successfully interprets the text and a listener has the impression that there is more than one paragraph. The opening entry (3) deals with three ideas written as one paragraph but read as three paratones:

(3)   printed version:
7.15 a.m. Hurrah! The wilderness years are over. For four weeks and five days now have been in functional relationship with adult male thereby proving am not love pariah as previously feared. Feel marvellous, rather like Jemima Goldsmith or similar radiant newlywed opening cancer hospital in veil while everyone imagines her in bed with Imran Khan. Ooh. Mark Darcy just moved. Maybe he will wake up and talk to me about my opinions. (3)

spoken version:
7.15 a.m. ~~Hurrah!~~ The wilderness years are over. For four weeks and five days now have been in functional relationship with adult male ~~thereby proving am not love pariah as previously feared.~~ [pause]
Feel marvellous, rather like Jemima Goldsmith or similar radiant newlywed opening cancer hospital in veil while everyone imagines her in bed with Imran Khan. [pause]
↑   Ooh. Mark Darcy just moved. Maybe he will wake up and talk to me about my opinions.

Another example of disentangling the complicated paragraph structure of the written text, where a reader has to be quite attentive to learn who is talking and to whom, is (4) where Bridget receives a telephone call from her friend Magda, a mother of two baby sons, who is simultaneously talking to Bridget and the elder son:

(4)   <u>written version</u>:
       'Bridget, hi! I was just ringing to say in the potty! In the potty! Do it in the potty!' (11)

       <u>spoken version</u>:
       'Bridget, hi! I was just ringing to say [pause]
       ↑ in the potty! In the potty! Do it in the potty!'

There are other cases of paragraph coalescence which are due to the abridgement and not to a different interpretation of the written text.

2.2 Cohesion and coherence within and between paratones

4.2.1 Cohesion

In written texts cohesion is expressed by different types of grammatical and lexical references present either in the actual text or in the context of the situation. In speech cohesion is additionally expressed by means of different prosodic features. The pioneering and seminal work on discourse intonation was carried out by Brazil (1997) who has established that the prosodic features of 'tone', 'key' and 'termination' play an important part in expressing cohesion and coherence in speech.

The 'referring' tones (i.e. the fall-rise, the rise) are to express the anaphoric reference to everything that is shared by the interlocutors, whereas the 'proclaiming' tones (i.e. the fall, the rise-fall) are usually used to express cataphoric reference, i.e. to introduce new information.

The analysis of narration in the two audio books has proved the validity of Brazil's intonation model. The anaphoric and cataphoric references realized by the tones are systematically used by both narrators, which suggests that the system works both in British and American pronunciation.[4]

Example (5) is taken from The Da Vinci Code and is a good example of interplay of a proclaiming tone (↘) introducing new information, followed by a referring tone (↘↗) providing the name of the place, and then followed by another piece of new information (↘) which winds up the whole informational unit and completes the sentence:

(5)   Shaped like an enormous ↘ horseshoe, / the ↘↗ Louvre / was the longest building in ↘ Europe. (34)

In this way listeners are provided with prosodic clues of cohesion between the three pieces of information.

By means of the same prosodic features cohesion is established within one paragraph in example

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4   Helen Fielding who narrates her own novel is British, while Jeff Harding, the narrator of The Da Vinci Code, was born in New England, USA.

(6), which is also taken from *The Da Vinci Code*, and describes the room in which the albino Silas was staying during his visit to Paris:

(6)   The room was ↘ spartan / – hardwood ↗ floors, / a pine ↗dresser, / a canvas ↘ mat / that served as his ↘ bed. He was a ↘↗visitor here this week,/ and for many →years / he had been blessed with a ↘↗ similar sanctuary / in New York ↘City. (27)

The fall on *spartan* introduces the topic of the paragraph while the four tone units which follow provide the explanation of the spartan ambient of the room. The first two are pronounced with referring tones (↗) because they express a common bit of knowledge regarding simple accommodation. The narrator has decided to pronounce *canvas mat* with a proclaiming tone (↘) thus treating this piece of information as different from expectation; it is common knowledge that even the most uncomfortable and simple accommodation would have a bed. The second sentence begins with a referring tone (↘↗), introducing the fact that Silas's room was his temporary residence. The repetition of the referring tone in the third tone unit of the second sentence not only makes reference to a miserable accommodation in New York City, but also implies Silas's ascetic lifestyle.

4.2.2 Coherence

If the proclaiming and referring tones are the prosodic features used to express cataphoric and anaphoric references respectively, then keys and terminations are the prosodic features used to express coherence, i.e. different meaningful relations between sentences and paragraphs.

Brazil (1997, 40) distinguishes between three levels of key and termination: high, mid and low. Different keys establish contrastive or equivalent meaningful relations between two pieces of information. Thus the high key is used to express contrast and the low key equivalence between two packages of information. The mid key is used to add one piece of information to another. The function of termination is primarily to limit and predict the addressee's response: the high termination is said to encourage further conversation, while the low termination indicates the possible end of conversation. The low termination has an additional function: it marks the end of a unit, which Brazil (1997, 117) calls a 'pitch sequence' and which often coincides with a written paragraph. The pitch sequence is hierarchically higher than a tone unit. Brazil claims that the choice of the key in the beginning of a pitch sequence puts the whole sequence in a meaningful relation with the previous pitch sequence. Thus a pitch sequence with an initial high key puts the whole sequence in a contrastive relation with the previous one, whereas a pitch sequence with an initial low key establishes a relation of equivalence between the two successive pitch sequences.

The analysis of narration in the two audio books has confirmed Brazil's theory. Examples (7) and (8) are taken from *The Da Vinci Code* and show the relations of contrast and equivalence between two paratones respectively. In example (7) there are two packages of information about the physical appearance of Robert Langdon and his public image which are in a contrastive meaningful relation:

(7)   His usually sharp blue eyes looked hazy and drawn tonight. Around his temples, the grey highlights were advancing into his thicket of coarse black hair.
↑ Last month, much to Langdon's embarrassment, Boston magazine had listed him as one of that city's top ten most intriguing people ... (23)

In example (8) a whole paragraph is dedicated to a detailed description of corporal mortification performed by Silas which is wound up by the second, one-sentence long paragraph containing the expected consequences of the whole ritual and thus uttered in low key:

(8)   Silas turned now to a heavy knotted rope coiled neatly beside him.
↓   The Discipline↓. The knots were caked with dried blood. Eager for the purifying effects of his own agony, Silas said a quick prayer. Then, gripping one end of the rope, he closed his eyes and swung it hard over his shoulder, feeling the knots slap against his back. He whipped it over his shoulder again, slashing at his flesh. Again and again, he lashed.
↓ Finally, he felt the blood begin to flow.↓ (30)

In example (8) there is also an internal relation of equivalence between the message of the first sentence and the second one which can be interpreted as: *The Discipline* is *a heavy knotted rope*.

It was said above that the initial extra-high pitch and the final low pitch accompanied by a pause were the prosodic phenomena which marked the boundary between two paratones. Although this is very often the case, one cannot precipitously jump to the conclusion that this is the only possibility. The examples (7) and (8) clearly indicate that the meaningful relations between the paragraphs have to be taken into consideration.

2.2 Character portrayal

Character portrayal is probably the most important and demanding element in audio book narration. It is also an element where the narrator's own image of the characters and his own interpretations of their behaviour come to light. Although the narrator reads the words of the author, it is his or her voice which gives life to the characters and triggers our imagination. The narrator takes the author's cues and provides the dramatic experience. In doing so, the narrator has two choices: he can keep a low profile and merely read the story providing subtle emotional and attitudinal colouring of the characters and the events; or he can go out of his way and use the author's words to make his own story by adding passionate and exaggerated prosodic choices. A good narrator will know how to keep his interpretation within acceptable limits and not get carried away with exaggerated imitations of characters. He will know how to create the appropriate atmosphere, when to become an invisible channel of words, as well as when and how to make the narration vivid.

Evaluating the quality of the narration is just as difficult and subjective as is the narration itself. Our judgements are conditioned by our personal preferences regarding the voice and the accent of the narrator. In my analysis of the two audio books I have tried to be as objective as possible but unfortunately could not help myself being partial and critical, too.

4.3.1 *The Da Vinci Code*

The characters in *The Da Vinci Code* are of different nationalities, occupations and ages. Although male characters prevail, one of the main protagonists is a young French woman, Sophie Neveu. The main male character is a Harvard professor, Robert Langdon. Among other important characters there are several French police officers, a French albino called Silas, a Spanish bishop and a British historian of aristocratic origin, Sir Leigh Teabing. The narrator, Jeff Harding, has decided to give each of the characters his or her own tone of voice depending on the character's age, occupation, nationality and gender. Thus he uses English with a heavy French accent when reading the words of the French characters, adding a variety of different voice qualities, such as roughness pitched low for the main detective, Bezu Fache, or very weak and frightened voices pitched either high or low for other minor police officers.

If the narrator's French English accent is acceptable to some extent, this cannot be said for his imitation of female voices because he sounds like Dustin Hoffman playing 'Dorothy Michaels' in the well-known comedy *Tootsie*. This has created a totally misplaced humorous effect in this crime story.

Another weak point in Jeff Harding's narration is his imitation of the British English aristocratic accent which he uses for Sir Leigh Teabing, a knight and a historian of great influence, wealth and power. The narrator has failed to acquire those British English vowels which are not present in the American English or have a different quality and quantity. Among the consonants he uses voiced, alveolar tap /ɾ/ instead of the British voiceless, alveolar plosive /t/ and he pronounces post-vocalic /r/ also before consonants. Intonation-wise, he retains his American mid-level pitch contour instead of the more lively British intonation which exhibits a number of pitch jumps and pitch slumps. The only intonation which he manages to get right is the intonation of exclamations and greetings where he puts on a very posh and affected British English accent which is generally associated with older aristocrats. But, unfortunately, this produces inconsistency with his English accent.

The narrative structure of the whole novel is quite varied: in the foreground there is the death of the Louvre's curator, Jacques Saunière, and the mysterious message which he left, as well as his instruction to his granddaughter, Sophie Neveu, to contact Robert Langdon. The two become prime suspects in Saunière's murder and try to escape the French police in order to decode the message and find the real murderer. The story is interrupted by Silas's attempt to find the keystone before Sophie and Robert. In order to understand the importance of the keystone, the action is often slowed down by longer explanations of historical nature, as well as the main characters' inner thoughts.

The narrator is quite successful in using the prosodic features of rhythm and volume, as well as the pitch height to distinguish between the meditative and explanatory parts of the novel on the one hand, and the actions surrounding them, on the other. In the book, the parts that represent the characters' thoughts are written in italics, and the narrator pronounces them slowly, silently and in the lower key of the pitch range:

(9)   The spiked cilice belt that he wore around his thigh cut into his flesh, and yet his soul sang with satisfaction of service to the Lord.↓Pain is good.↓(27).

Increased volume and speed of speech are used to interpret the fast actions, such as the chase of the police after Robert Langdon who had faked the escape from the Louvre museum by throwing the tracking dot through a window on a by-passing truck.

In sum, the narrator of *The Da Vinci Code* quite successfully uses different prosodic features to bring to life the intricate string of events and historical facts and assumptions, but fails with the portrayal of some of the important protagonists of the story.

4.3.2 *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason*

The characters in *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason* are all British in their thirties and forties. The main protagonists are Bridget Jones and her boyfriend Mark Darcy, as well as a number of their female and male friends. The novel is written as a diary in which Bridget diligently notes her daily thoughts and events. The main theme of this comic novel is Bridget's brand new relationship with Mark, their ups and downs and the cliché differences between male and female way of thinking and behaving. Since the narrator is the author herself, it is possible to assume that she knows her characters very well and will be able to bring them to life as accurately as possible.

And indeed her narration is faithful to the book in that it tries to produce the characters' feelings and attitudes towards each other and the events surrounding them. Thus she puts on the sobbing, bellowing, murmuring and whispering voices when her characters behave in those ways. When narrating the male voices, she does not exaggerate but simply drops her voice to her normal low pitch.

The narrative structure of the novel is actually a fast interchange of events and the characters' thoughts, which the narrator manages to achieve by means of the rhythm of the narration. Bridget's thoughts and meditations are narrated in slow rhythm and with neutral, mid pitch range. But when her dreamy, thoughtful mood is interrupted by a sudden event, her startled reaction is appropriately marked by a high pitched intonation and increased speed of delivery. In example (10) these changes of rhythm and pitch are well conditioned by the action:

(10)   **11.05 a.m.** Yes. As it says in *How to Get the Love You Want* – or maybe it was *Keeping the Love You Find?* – the blending together of man and woman is a delicate thing. Man must pursue. Will wait for him to ring me.
        11.15 a.m. Was Richard Finch yelling again. Have been put on the fox-hunting item instead of Labour Women and have got to do live insert from Leicestershire.
        Right, better get out cuts…
        [fast rhythm, very high pitch] ↘Oh. ↘Telephone. (10-1)

5. Conclusion

In the paper I have tried to present how narrators use their voices to deliver as accurately as possible the contents of a written novel in an audio book. I have specifically looked at different prosodic features which are used to achieve cohesion and coherence within and between different topical units or paratones, as well as how narrators use their voices for character portrayal and the narrative structure of the plot.

The analysis of two audio books of two different genres has shown that the written division into paragraphs is not observed in the spoken version. In the analysis I decided to treat a shorter or a longer pause as the only clue for the paratone division. The reason for this is to be found in Brazil's intonation theory, which claims that the paratone initial key puts the whole paratone in a particular relation with the previous paratone. The relation can be either that of contrast or equivalence. In this way, a speaker achieves coherence between two paratones.

The analysis into paratones has shown that the two narrators have not strictly observed the division of the written text into paragraphs. There are two reasons for that: the first one is due to the abridgement of the written novels for the purpose of audio book narration, the second one has to do with the narrators' perception of the information packed into one paragraph. They have either decided to split a written paragraph into two or more paratones or they joined two or three paragraphs into one paratone. Both decisions have been made according to the narrators' perception of topical unity.

Cohesion in speech is achieved by means of different tones, whereas coherence is expressed by the prosodic features of key and termination. The interplay of new and old or referred-to information has been analysed and compared with the prosodic realizations. The analysis has proved the theoretical assumptions made by Brazil (1997) that the fall-rising and the rising tones make reference to shared knowledge, whereas the falling tone is used to introduce new information. The analysis of paratone initial keys has also confirmed Brazil's theory of high key expressing contrast and low key expressing equivalence between to topical units.

Another very important element in the audio book narration is the character portrayal and the delivery of events. Although this is the most difficult element to evaluate because it is often very subjective, I can nonetheless conclude that some artistic performance is necessary to transmit the right moods and attitudes of the characters, as well as the pace of events. However, an exaggerated performance can achieve an unwanted effect, as is the case with the imitation of a female voice by the male narrator in *The Da Vinci Code*.

In conclusion I would like to return to the initial dilemma whether listening to audio books will eventually replace the traditional reading of written books. I believe that this will not happen and that the present enthusiasm will eventually wane. Audio books may be a good solution for some types of books and some people. Although the idea of listening to a crime story while cooking or driving a car may be pleasing, it cannot compare to a quite and intimate experience of being immersed in the story and carried away by the characters.

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Misconceptions about Article Use in English

Summary

The paper addresses some major misconceptions about article use in English, proceeding from purely syntactic issues to those relating directly to pragmatics. It is based on authentic, perfectly acceptable examples of article use that many Slovenian students of English would describe as 'odd' or 'not in accordance with the rules'. The students' explanations as to why the examples in question should be ruled out confirm the hypothesis that misconceptions about article use are largely ascribable to an insufficient understanding of grammatical rules. The rules governing article use are often misunderstood due to inaccurate interpretations of the terms *defining/restrictive, definite, identifying, specifying, classifying*, etc. The commonest mistake is equating *defining* with *definite*, and *defining/restrictive* with *identifying*, the consequence being the overuse of the definite article. Another important point made in the paper is that article use is a matter of pragmatics. The choice between the definite and indefinite articles reflects the speaker's decision to present a piece of information as hearer-old or hearer-new respectively.

Key words: article use, (in)definiteness, reference, identification, restrictive function, identifying function, old and new information

Zmote o rabi člena v angleščini

Povzetek

V članku obravnavam nekaj večjih zmot o rabi člena v angleščini, in sicer od takšnih povsem skladenjske narave do takšnih, ki spadajo naravnost v pragmatiko. Članek je zasnovan na pristnih angleških, popolnoma sprejemljivih zgledih rabe člena, ki pa so po mnenju mnogih slovenskih študentov angleščine 'čudni' oziroma 'niso v skladu s pravili'. Razlage, ki jih ob tem navajajo študenje, potrjujejo predpostavko, da je zmote o rabi člena v veliki meri moč pripisati pomanjkljivemu razumevanju slovničnih pravil. Napačno razumevanje pravil je pogosto posledica nepravilnega tolmačenja izrazov *omejevalnost, določnost, identifikacija, specifičnost, vrstnost* itd. Najpogostejša napaka je enačenje *omejevalnosti* z *določnostjo* oziroma *identifikacijo*, kar ima za posledico prekomerno rabo določnega člena. Sploh pa je raba člena stvar pragmatike. Izbira med določnim in nedoločnim členom odraža odločitev govorca o tem, ali bo poslušalcu nekaj predstavil kot že znano ali kot novo informacijo.

Ključne besede: raba člena, (ne)določnost, referenca, identifikacija, omejevalna funkcija, identifikacijska funkcija, stara in nova informacija

Misconceptions about Article Use in English

1. Introduction

A point came in my teaching career when I realized that the only way to thoroughly understand the students' mistakes was to find out what was going on in their heads. So I asked the students in my 3rd and 4th year translation classes to start collecting authentic examples of article use they might find 'odd' or 'not in accordance with the rules'. I also asked them to provide explanations of why they thought them problematic. Interestingly, most of these 'striking' examples turned out to be perfectly explicable in terms of the very same rules the students would use as arguments to prove the opposite. This brought me to the root of the problem: the students seem to know the rules, but they do not quite *understand* them. The paper points out some major misconceptions that have arisen regarding article use in English.

2. The Saxon Genitive

The first point of attention is the Saxon Genitive and its cooccurrence with the article. A surprising number of students find examples like those in (1) ungrammatical because, as they claim, 'the Saxon Genitive cannot be preceded by a determiner'.

(1) ♥ [1]
a. <u>the</u> world's first national park
b. <u>the</u> Queen's dazzling crown jewels
c. <u>the</u> unique ecosystem's death sentence
d. Diamonds are <u>a</u> girl's best friends.
e. Self-consciousness is <u>a</u> man's worst enemy.
f. <u>A</u> violin's authenticity can only be determined through [...]

It is true that a possessive determiner is mutually exclusive with other (central) determiners because the (central) determiner position in an English noun phrase can be filled only once (cf. Biber et al. 1999, 294, Quirk et al. 1985, 326). This explains why *a bike* and *Peter's bike* are correct whereas **a Peter's bike* is not. Nevertheless, the misconception that has grown up around article-possessor complementarity is that phrases like *a boy's bike* are of the same type as **a Peter's bike*, with two determiners placed side by side. The key question is: What counts as one determiner? An article, a demonstrative pronoun, a possessive pronoun, a Saxon Genitive phrase. It is crucial to make it clear that even in *Peter's bike* the determiner is a Saxon Genitive *phrase*, not a Saxon Genitive noun. In other words, the determiner is a noun phrase in the genitive case. Bracketing can be of help too: [***the/that/a/some boy***]*'s bike;* [***the world***]*'s first national park*. There is something in brackets and that *something* is in the genitive case, with the whole lot (be it one word or more) representing one single determiner. If the article or pronoun in question is inside the brackets, its use cannot be precluded by the one-determiner-only rule. A nice test for that would be shifting the material from the Saxon Genitive phrase

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1   Throughout the paper, a little heart is used to mark examples listed by my students.

into the postmodification: *the bike owned by* [**the/that/a/some boy**]*; the first national park in* [**the world**].

The vagueness of the students' comments on (1) is further proved by cases where a Saxon Genitive noun is used as a classifier and does not occupy the determiner position. In the noun phrase *a lady's bike*, for example, the classifier *lady's* restricts the headword *bike* to a particular type: *a* [*lady's bike*]. The determiner preceding the classifier can also be a Saxon Genitive phrase: [**that child**]*'s* [*lady's bike*] (i.e. *the* [*bike for ladies*] *owned by* [**that child**]).

3. Ordinal Numerals

It's a common fallacy that an ordinal numeral *per se* triggers the use of the definite article. Examples in (2) are by no means ungrammatical.

(2)♥
a. The book he bought at the auction proved to be <u>a</u> *first* edition.
b. More creative forms of help might be to put them on a credit card as <u>a</u> *second* card holder.
c. The play was followed by <u>a</u> *second* sermon, reinforcing the lesson of the representation.
d. They had <u>a</u> *third* child a year ago.

An ordinal numeral must be preceded by the definite article when a kind of *mathematical order* is implied. This, however, is not the case if the numeral has the function of a classifier, forming a very close syntactic unit or even a compound with the head noun, or if its meaning corresponds to that of *other*. Compare (3) and (4):

(3) They have three children. <u>The</u> *first* was born the year they got married, <u>the</u> *second* a couple of years later, and <u>the</u> *third* a year ago.

(4)
a. I'd like <u>a</u> *second* opinion on that matter.
b. Do you have <u>a</u> *second* name?
c. I think you should give him <u>a</u> *second* chance.
d. She took <u>a</u> *second* spoon of sugar, and <u>a</u> *third* one, and <u>a</u> *fourth* one, and [...]

4. Prepositional Phrases and Relative Clauses

One of the major misconceptions about articles in English is the belief that an of-phrase (or a prepositional phrase in general) in postmodifying position triggers the use of the definite article. Accordingly, many a student would rule out the sentences in (5) as ungrammatical.

(5)♥
a. Immediately, we are in <u>*an atmosphere of artificiality*</u>.
b. In *( ) areas where a thick blanket of snow lay luxuriantly right down to the valley a hundred*

years ago, only dirty patches can be seen today.
c. In a survey of farmed salmon on sale at major stores, *( ) samples from Morrisons* contained malachite green.

The examples in (5) are, of course, perfectly acceptable. The above-mentioned 'rule' applies only in cases when the function of the prepositional phrase is *identifying*, i.e. when it narrows down the set of possible referents of the headword to a unique, identifiable referent or subset of referents. Very often, however, the prepositional phrase merely restricts the meaning of the headword to a particular class. This *restrictive* function is not to be confused with the identifying one. The same degree of cautiousness is needed when the head noun is postmodified by a restrictive (i.e. defining) relative clause. The fact that *defining* is often misunderstood as 'making definite' is likely to lead to confusion. It should be noted that it is not necessary for a defining relative clause to identify the referent and 'make the head noun definite'. Definitions of *restrictive* can be confusing too. Trask (1993, 239), for example, describes a restrictive item as 'a modifier whose presence is essential for identifying the referent of the noun phrase'. I find this definition rather misleading, for it blurs the boundary between *restrictive* and *identifying*. Its vagueness lies in the fact that a restrictive modifier may well be essential for identification, but it will not suffice for the hearer to uniquely identify the referent. Or, in terms of formal logic, a restrictive modifier is a necessary condition for identification, but not a sufficient one.

Misconceptions about the function of restrictive postmodification, along with the confusing terminology, give rise to the overuse of the definite article, especially in the plural. The key word here is reference. The presence of a restrictive postmodifier often makes it hard to decide whether the reference of a plural noun phrase is definite, indefinite or generic. It is therefore advisable to put the head noun into the singular and check the items that occur in determiner position. These should make the reference clear, as in (6) and (7) below.

(6)
a. The matter was first brought to our attention by *readers of this magazine.*
b. The matter was first brought to our attention by *people who read this magazine.*
c. The matter was first brought to our attention by a/some reader of this magazine.
d. The matter was first brought to our attention by a/some person who reads this magazine / by somebody who reads this magazine.
(Reference: specific, **indefinite**)

(7)
a. *Readers of such magazines* know what an invaluable source of inspiration they are.
b. *People who read such magazines* know what an invaluable source of inspiration they are.
c. A/Any reader of such magazines knows what an invaluable source of inspiration they are.
d. A/Any person who / Anybody who reads such magazines knows what an invaluable source of inspiration they are.
(Reference: **generic**)

The point I want to make here is that notwithstanding the restrictive postmodification of *readers* and *people* above, their reference is not definite. Both types of postmodifier (i.e. the of-phrase and the relative clause) in (6) and (7) are *restrictive*, but neither of them is *identifying*. In other words, the postmodifier restricts the set of possible referents to a subset, but it does not enable the hearer to uniquely identify it. In (6), the speaker may have some specific readers in mind, but he presents them as indefinite because he does not expect the hearer to be able to identify them (cf. Taylor 1996, 185). In (7), the noun phrase headed by *readers* refers to a particular type of readers in general or, following Taylor (1996, 186), it is 'used to make a statement about a category of entities as a whole'.

Although the identifying and restrictive functions are to be kept clearly apart, they are not unrelated. In fact, the former derives from the latter, provided that the primary set of possible referents is already identified. The situation is illustrated in (8).

> (8)
> a. In general, *students that are good at maths* are good at grammar too. (**generic**: a–b)
> b. In general, *a student that is good at maths* is good at grammar too.
> c. The teacher gave *the students* some extra homework. (specific, **definite**: c–f)
> d. The teacher gave *the students that were good at grammar* no additional homework.
> e. The teacher gave *the student that was top in grammar* no additional homework.
> f. The teacher gave *the student* some extra homework.

In (8a–b) and (8d–e) the same type of postmodification is used: a restrictive relative clause. If we compare (8a) and (8d), or (8b) and (8e), we can see that although the same type of clause is used as a postmodifier, the respective headwords do not share the same kind of reference. Furthermore, the reference can be definite even if there is no restrictive postmodification, as in (8c) and (8f). In (8c), the identification starts with the subject of the sentence, which sets in motion the following chain: the teacher > his/her class > his/her students = the students. The very same process is repeated in (8d) and (8e). When the primary set of referents (i.e. all the students in the class = the students) is identified, the postmodifying clause restricts it to a subset. This final set of referents contains only those members of the primary set that belong to the type described by the clause. What might come as a real revelation at this point is the observation that the definite article in sentences like (8d) and (8e) is not due to the restrictive postmodifier but rather to the specific, definite reference of the headword before it becomes postmodified. The identification of the final set of referents is possible only if the primary set of referents is identified first. This goes hand in hand with the view that a restrictive postmodifier is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for identification.

The identification in (8f) can follow the same path as that in (8c), provided there is only one student in the class: the teacher > his/her class > his/her student = the student. If there are more students in the class, one of them must be singled out in the discourse before (8f) is uttered. (9) and (10) below illustrate the case in point. (8f) is repeated here as (9b) and (10b).

(9)
a. *The student that had cheated* admitted that the use of articles was a mystery to him.
b. The teacher gave *the student* some extra homework. (= 8f)

(10)
a. *A student* complained to the teacher that the exercises he had set were too easy.
b. The teacher gave *the student* some extra homework. (= 8f)

Example (9) illustrates 'derived identification' (cf. Anderson 2004). The identification process in (9a) runs parallel to that in (8e), the fully established identity of *the student* in (9a) being picked up in (9b). In (10), on the other hand, the referent in question is introduced into the discourse through (10a) as a specific, yet not specifically identified entity. Or, as Anderson (2004) puts it, 'the speaker has a specific referent in mind, but does not, or cannot, identify it to the addressee'. Thus the specific identity of *the student* in (10b) is not established. This type of identification is referred to as 'nonspecific identification' (ibid).

Example (10) raises another interesting aspect. It may be true that every uniquely identifiable entity is referred to by a definite expression, but not every definite expression refers to a uniquely identifiable entity. Let us compare (11) and (12).

(11)
a. They live on <u>the outskirts of Paris</u>.
b. The stolen car was found in <u>the vicinity of the station</u>.
c. There are two birds nesting in <u>the top of the tree</u>.

(12)
a. They live on <u>the outskirts of a big city</u>.
b. The car was found in <u>the vicinity of an old building</u>.
c. Have you ever seen a bird nesting in <u>the top of a tree</u>?

The headword of each italicized phrase in (11) and (12) is a relational noun with a one-place argument. The relation between the two can be explained in terms of a part-whole relationship where the given 'part' (be it an item or a group of items) is the only of its kind within the same 'whole'. If, as in (11), the 'whole' is presented as a specific, definite, identifiable entity, the 'part' named by the headword is uniquely identifiable too. The reference of *the outskirts, the vicinity* and *the top* in (11) is definite. In (12), on the other hand, the 'whole' is presented as an indefinite entity, specific in (12a–b), nonspecific in (12c). Since the 'whole' cannot be identified, none of its 'parts' can be identified either. Thus the reference of *the outskirts, the vicinity* and *the top* in (12) is indefinite. The reference can be tested by replacing the given phrase with a one-word equivalent. For example:

(13)
a. Have you ever seen a bird nesting in <u>the top of a tree</u>? (= 12c)
b. Have you ever seen a bird nesting in <u>a treetop</u>?

The indefinite article in (13b) should be convincing enough. Compare:

(14)
a. There are two birds nesting in *the top of the tree*. (= 11c)
b. There are two birds nesting in *the treetop*.

The examples in (12) illustrate the same phenomenon as (10): nonspecific identification. There are two entities involved, A and B. Entity A could be uniquely identified on the basis of its relation with B if B were a specific, definite entity. Since B is indefinite, no specific identity of A can be established.

Nonspecific identification can be observed even in cases where entity B (underlined below) is definite. Example (15) is taken from Anderson (2004, 444).

(15)
a. Whoever (s)he may be, *the murderer of those people* is insane.
b. Whoever (s)he may be, *the author of this pamphlet* is a liar.

5. Restrictive Premodification

A strong tendency to overuse the definite article can also be observed when the meaning of the headword is restricted by certain types of premodification:

(16)♥
a. *ancient* Greece; *present-day* Germany; *9th-century* Northumbria
b. *British* Egyptologists; *Egyptian* surgeons; *Slovenian* archaeologists; *Arabic* scholars
c. *human* language; *twentieth-century* linguistics
d. The chemical was used as a cheap alternative to *licensed* medicines for dealing with parasites.

The winners in this respect are items denoting periods of time (especially when premodifying geographical names) and nationalities or countries of origin. This is likely due to two facts. First, the specific, unique, definite reference of these entities makes them highly reliable means of identifying other entities. Second, they seem to evoke pictures of contrast in the hearer's head, for example: 'ancient, not modern', 'British, not Slovenian', etc. Another problem arises when the premodifier begins with an ordinal numeral (which I call 'double trouble' in class) because many a student will see this as an additional argument for using the definite article. To illustrate how the definite article before an ordinal disappears when the ordinal introduces a premodifying item, the following example can be used:

(17)
a. works by many sculptors and architects of [the 20th century]
b. works by many [20th century] sculptors and architects

c. works by many of *the* [20th century] *sculptors and architects*
d. works by many of *the* above-mentioned *sculptors and architects*

It should be noted that the definite article in (17c) has nothing to do with the ordinal numeral. This is confirmed by (17d), where the same article is used, occupying the determiner position in the phrase co-headed by *sculptors* and *architects*.

Example (17) may help dismiss one argument, but it still remains rather difficult to comprehend why no definite article is needed in (16). In the case of countable nouns, the strategy of singularization (cf. (6–8)) can be employed to check the reference:

(18)
a. British Egyptologists have made a new, surprising discovery.
b. A/Some British Egyptologist has made a new, surprising discovery.

It should be admitted, though, that the definite article with plural headwords is often merely redundant rather than wrong:

(19)
a. The chemical was used as a cheap alternative to (the) licensed medicines for dealing with parasites. (<> 16d)
b. The chemical was used as a cheap alternative to any licensed medicine (= any of the licensed medicines) for dealing with parasites.

One explanation could be the view that despite its generalizing meaning, *licensed medicines* in (16d) involves partitivity, i.e. it assumes the existence of a particular subset of medicines. It is obvious that the example does not represent the core generic type, for 'full genericness demands both nonspecificity and nonpartitivity' (Anderson 2004, 446). My point here is that genericness seems to be far closer to definiteness than we like to think. If we think of people in general, for example, isn't it possible to perceive them as 'definite' in the sense that they represent one big, unique, identifiable 'group': mankind? It should nevertheless be pointed out that a generic interpretation of a definite plural in English is possible only if it has an attributive (Anderson 2004, 448). This explains why *the licensed medicines for dealing with parasites* can be generic whereas *the medicines* would yield only a specific, definite interpretation.

If, on the other hand, the reference is indefinite, the definite article is unacceptable:

(20)
a. The chemical was used as a cheap alternative to (some/*the) licensed medicines for dealing with parasites.
b. The chemical was used as a cheap alternative to a/some licensed medicine (= one of the licensed medicines) for dealing with parasites.

A similar line of reasonig can be adopted in cases where the reference of a plural noun is restricted by the context:

(21)♥
a. The wheel and its axle are now at the Institute of Archaeology, where they are awaiting preservation. [...] ( ) **Experts** have also started on the reconstruction of the cart.
b. Britain decided to site a military base at Aldabra, effectively turning it into a giant aircraft carrier. ( ) **Campaigners** rolled back that decision in what was feted as a landmark victory for the modern environmental movement.

As regards (16a) and (16c), where no tests like singularization are available, the logic behind the omission of the article is much less obvious. Longobardi (2002, 358–9) bases his explanation of instances like (16a) on the absence of overt N-to-D raising of proper names in English. Anderson (2004, 444–6) points out that proper names are self-identifying and as such definite when used as arguments. Thus (16a) can partly be explained by drawing a parallel to (8d), where the definite article is not due to the restrictive clause postmodifying the headword, but to the specific, definite reference of the headword before it gets postmodified. The postmodifier simply restricts this <u>already definite</u> set of referents to a (definite) subset. Compare:

(22)
a. The teacher gave *the students* some extra homework. (= 8c)
b. The teacher gave *the students that were good at grammar* no additional homework. (= 8d)
c. I'm reading a book about *Egypt*.
d. I'm reading a book about *ancient Egypt*.

6. Old and New Information

The article use to be discussed in this section is an intriguing issue. It should be noted that in most (if not all) of the examples below, the indefinite article (or its zero counterpart preceding a name, an uncountable noun or a noun in the plural) can be replaced by the definite article or some other definite determiner. The question is therefore not that of grammaticality. Example (23), for example, is no less grammatical if the indefinite article is omitted:

(23)
a. ♥ I explained that **<u>a</u> Mr. George Cole**, with whom I was currently acting, had damaged it.
b. I explained that Mr. George Cole, with whom I was currently acting, had damaged it.

In fact, (23b) seems to be completely in accordance with the general view that a known, old piece of information is not to be presented as an indefinite entity. That the person referred to as *Mr. George Cole* is known to the speaker is obvious from the information given in the postmodifying clause. But is he known to the hearer too? According to (23b), the answer is yes. The use of a name in (23b) conveys the speaker's assumption that the hearer too can identify the referent. As pointed out by Anderson (2004, 443), the speaker's and hearer's assumed co-identification of

an entity is reflected in the use of a name, a deictic or some other definite expression. If, on the other hand, the speaker assumes that the hearer cannot identify the given entity, an indefinite expression should be used. Example (23a) is a case in point.

It is crucial to understand that an entity that may be perfectly known to the speaker is not necessarily identifiable from the hearer's point of view. The speaker must tailor his message to the hearer's knowledge and expectations, otherwise the communication is likely to break down. The hearer's mind is therefore a constant subject of speculation on the part of the speaker.

Example (24) contains a typical description, with a number of indefinite entities introduced one after another. Of interest here are the indefinite article in front of *field* and the zero article in front of *bushes*. Again, the definite article could be used instead, but that would imply that the hearer should already know about the field and the bushes or at least find them identifiable on the basis of the given context (cf. *the station; the road*). The speaker, however, has decided to present the field and the bushes in the same way as the rest of the enumerated entities, that is as hearer-new.

> (24)♥ With a sort of military precision that astonished him, she outlined the route that he was to follow. A half-hour railway journey; turn left outside the station; two kilometres along the road: <u>a</u> gate with the top bar missing; <u>a</u> path across **a field**; <u>a</u> grass-grown lane; <u>a</u> track between **( ) bushes**; <u>a</u> dead tree with ( ) moss on it.

The message is as follows:
>> 'You will see *a field* and a path across it; you will see *( ) bushes* and a track between them.'

It often happens in a narrative that something presented as hearer-new is in fact not new for the reader but only for a character in the story. Let us suppose that the route described in (24) really exists and that somebody who actually lives there happens to be reading the above description. Should such a reader find the indefinite article disturbing? No, when he realizes that he is in fact only an 'indirect' receiver of the message conveyed by the description.

It is possible to imagine a situation where the speaker (person A) describes the route to somebody who doesn't know it (person B), and then reports this to somebody who knows the route very well (person C). Let us compare the following two scenarios:

> (25)
> a. (A to B) There is <u>a</u> gate with the top bar missing; <u>a</u> path across <u>a</u> field; <u>a</u> grass-grown lane; <u>a</u> track between ( ) bushes; <u>a</u> dead tree with ( ) moss on it.
> (A to C) I told B about <u>the</u> gate with the top bar missing; <u>the</u> path across <u>the</u> field; <u>the</u> grass-grown lane; <u>the</u> track between <u>the</u> bushes; <u>the</u> dead tree with <u>all that</u> moss on it.
>
> b. (A to B) There is <u>a</u> gate with the top bar missing; <u>a</u> path across <u>a</u> field; <u>a</u> grass-grown lane; <u>a</u> track between ( ) bushes; <u>a</u> dead tree with ( ) moss on it.
> (A to C) I told B about <u>a</u> gate with the top bar missing; <u>a</u> path across <u>a</u> field; <u>a</u> grass-grown lane; <u>a</u> track between ( ) bushes; <u>a</u> dead tree with ( ) moss on it.

The difference lies in the speaker's choice of perspective. Although A knows that C can identify any part of the route, he can decide to present it from B's point of view. In other words, the speaker can decide to treat a hearer-old entity as hearer-new.

Similarly, the fact that everybody knows about Einstein's contribution to the development of the nuclear bomb does not preclude the possibility of presenting the bomb as a new piece of information:

> (26)♥ When I failed to become a concert pianist, or even an accompanist for the church youth choir, she finally explained that I was late-blooming, like Einstein, who everyone thought was retarded until he discovered **a bomb**.
> >> 'who everyone thought was retarded until *something happened*: He discovered *a bomb*.'

As is illustrated in (27), information presented as hearer-new typically yields an existential interpretation:[2]

> (27)♥ With **( ) hyperinflation**, **( ) wages** among the lowest in Europe and **an agricultural system** that sometimes seems a vestige from the last century, the country is facing big problems.
> >> 'There are *( ) hyperinflation*, *( ) wages* [...] and *an agricultural system* [...], and because of this the country is facing big problems.'

While, due to its existential meaning, (27) is relatively straightforward, more attention should be devoted to the following example:

> (28)♥ In **a life** lived largely for the sake of others, it was the one place that was her own.

A 4th year student made the following comment on (28): 'To me, *In the life lived* [...] would sound better since that *life* is definite: first, it is hers, and second, it is lived for the sake of others.' The student may have had a point: the life in question *is* definite. Compare:

> (29) In her life / this life of hers, lived largely for the sake of others, it was the one place that was her own.

But the second of the two arguments given by the student should be dismissed. The postmodifier in (28) in no way contributes to the definite reference of the headword. It should also be noted that the solution proposed by the student (with the definite article and a restrictive postmodifier) would imply that the character concerned lived at least two lives.

The function of the postmodifier in (28) is to highlight a particular aspect of the character's life, presenting it as new information. This is reflected in the use of the indefinite article. The

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2 This, however, should not imply that existentials serve solely to introduce new referents into the discourse. The postverbal noun phrase in an existential *there*-sentence often represents an entity that is hearer-old (cf. Abbott 1997).

indefinite phrase in (28) behaves like a predicative item, a fact which becomes more transparent if we consider the following paraphrase:

>> 'In <u>her</u> life, which was <u>**a**</u> life *lived largely for the sake of others*, it was the one place that was her own.'

The rest of the examples follow the same logic:

(30)♥ The north-eastern region of Karamoja is the only arid region in <u>**a country**</u> rich in lakes and rivers, and suffers from a cyclical problem of drought and famine.
>> 'the only arid region in <u>this</u> country, which is <u>**a**</u> country *rich in lakes and rivers*, [...]'

(31)♥ [...] we were going into the unknown, although South Australia had not been foreign to me for quite some time. <u>**A**</u> dreary **day** was slowly approaching the evening, and our voyage was uncertain with the waves beating mercilessly against the shore.
>> '<u>The</u> day, which was <u>**a**</u> *dreary* day, [...]'

(32)♥ After <u>**a**</u> strenuous **landing** and short consultation it was decided that we would be ferried to the island.
>> 'After <u>the</u> landing, which was <u>**a**</u> *strenuous* landing, [...]'

As pointed out elsewhere in the paper, it is a common misconception that a restrictive modifier triggers the use of the definite article. Even when its function is defining in the proper sense of the word, the definite reference of the headword does not seem to be the consequence of this defining function but rather a necessary condition for it (cf. (8)). In examples (28–32), by contrast, the article reflects a special function of the modifier. The reference of the headword is definite, and only the highlighting function of the modifier can trigger the indefinite article. If the modifier is omitted, a definite determiner is the only choice:

(33)
a. In <u>this</u> life of hers, it was the one place that was her own.
b. The north-eastern region of Karamoja is the only arid region in <u>this</u> country, and suffers from a cyclical problem of drought and famine.
c. [...] we were going into the unknown, although South Australia had not been foreign to me for quite some time. <u>The</u> day was slowly approaching the evening, [...]
d. After <u>the</u> landing and short consultation it was decided that we would be ferried to the island.

It is, of course, possible to add a modifier to any of the headwords in (33) without changing the type of determiner. It should be noted, however, that the function of the modifier in such cases is solely descriptive, not highlighting. If it comes after the headword, it has to be enclosed in a pair of commas as a non-restrictive item:

(34)

a. In <u>this</u> life of hers, lived largely for the sake of others, it was the one place that was her own.

b. The north-eastern region of Karamoja is the only arid region in <u>this</u> country, rich in lakes and rivers, and suffers from a cyclical problem of drought and famine.

c. [...] we were going into the unknown, although South Australia had not been foreign to me for quite some time. <u>The</u> dreary day was slowly approaching the evening, [...]

d. After <u>the</u> strenuous landing and short consultation it was decided that we would be ferried to the island.

7. Some Other Tricky Words and Constructions

Last but not least, there are also some very simple, everyday words and constructions that may pose problems when it comes to article use. There is, for example, a general misconception that the adjectives *so-called, unique* and *most* (in the sense 'very') trigger the use of the definite article. I asked my 3rd year students once how they would justify the article underlined in the example below:

(35) For millenia the atoll known as Aldabra has bloomed in the absence of man. [...] In the mid-1960s Britain appeared to deliver <u>the</u> unique ecosystem's death by [...]

To my great disappointment, almost half of the class claimed the reason was the adjective *unique*. It was only omitting the adjective or/and replacing the article with a demonstrative that convinced them of the opposite. *Unique* seems to be misleading for its meaning, *most* for its form, whereas associating *so-called* with the definite article could be due to the fact that this adjective is often found in definite noun phrases, which might create the wrong impression that *so-called* and the definite article are in a cause-result relationship. The following sentences should dispel the above misconception.

(36)

a. This is <u>a</u> so-called protractor.

b. The amphibian known as *proteus* is <u>a</u> unique creature.

c. It was <u>a</u> most interesting evening.

Another fertile ground for mistakes is exclamatory sentences with *what* and *such*. It may be true that the pattern with countable, singular heads (e.g. *What a clever child!*) is a very frequent one, but this does not mean that the general pattern is *'what a / such a* + noun'. The general pattern is *'what/such* + [noun phrase]', the use of the article depending solely on the headword of the noun phrase:

(37)

a. What [a clever <u>boy</u>] he is! (countable, singular)

b. What [( )/*a clever <u>children</u>] they are! (countable, plural)

c. What [( )/*a terrible <u>weather</u>] we're having! (non-countable)

A third problematic usage – the last to be mentioned in the paper, yet far from making the list of 'tricky words and constructions' complete – can be found with measurements, or more specifically, with the pattern '*a length/height/depth/weight/angle* etc. *of* + amount'. For example:

(38) The flute should be held at <u>an angle of 90°</u> to the axis of the head.

There might be a temptation to use the definite article in (38). What appears misleading is the fact that the angle size is universally and absolutely defined: be it called 90° or π/2, everybody knows exactly how wide the angle is. The misconception here is that *90°* is in apposition to *angle* in the very same way as *London* is in apposition to *city* in *the city of London*. But while *London* is the name of a unique entity, *90°* can name an infinite number of entities, which in fact represent instances of a type:

(39)
a. We visited *a [city of London] / *[cities of London].
b. The teacher drew an [angle of 90°] using only a ruler and a pair of compasses.
c. The teacher kept drawing [angles of 90°] using only a ruler and a pair of compasses.

Compare:

(40)
a. The teacher drew a [right angle] using only a ruler and a pair of compasses.
b. The teacher kept drawing [right angles] using only a ruler and a pair of compasses.
c. The flute should be held at [right angles] to the axis of the head.

It should be admitted, though, that the classifying function of the postmodifier is not always as obvious as in the above examples. To avoid even greater confusion, it is probably best to simply learn the pattern because 'this is how it is'. A clear distinction, however, is to be drawn between this pattern and phrases in which the postmodifier designates the 'possessor' of the quality named by the headword:

(41)
a. These fish can reach a length <u>of over two metres</u>. (<> What (kind of) length?)
b. The length <u>of these fish</u> can be over two metres. (<> Whose length?)

8. Conclusion

The most frequently held misconceptions about article use seem to be the following: (i) the category of article is incompatible with the Saxon Genitive; (ii) an ordinal numeral is always preceded by the definite article; (iii) a restrictive modifier per se (especially a postmodifying of-phrase or a restrictive relative clause) triggers the use of the definite article. As shown in the paper, all the three erroneous beliefs can be ascribed to an insufficient understanding of grammatical rules. The terminology used is often interpreted incorrectly. The commonest mistake is equating

defining with *definite*, and *defining/restrictive* with *identifying*, which can lead to the false conclusion that the presence of a restrictive item yields a specific, definite interpretation. It is therefore absolutely vital to thoroughly understand these terms and the concepts they denote. It is also worth keeping in mind that article use is primarily a matter of pragmatics: the choice between the definite and indefinite articles reflects the speaker's decision to present a piece of information as hearer-old or hearer-new, depending on the hearer's knowledge and expectations.

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Some Observations on Poetic *YOU*

Summary

One of the difficulties that may arise in translating poetry is the schematic character of personal pronouns. For this reason the identities of the speaker and addressee can be ambiguous, which is a problem in translating into languages that grammaticalize more semantic features than the source language. The article analyzes some ambiguous texts in some English and Danish poetry and suggests some translation strategies used.

Key Words: Discourse roles, poetry, translation

Nekaj opažanj o poetičnem *YOU*

Povzetek

Pri prevajanju poezije lahko eno od težav predstavlja shematični značaj osebnih zaimkov. Zaradi tega sta identiteti govorca in naslovnika pogosto dvomljivi, kar je še posebej problematično pri prevajanju v jezike, ki gramatikalizirajo već semantičnih značilnosti kot izvorni jezik. Članek analizira nekatera dvomljiva besedila iz angleške in danske poezije ter ponuja nekaj prevajalskih strategij.

Ključne besede: besedilne vloge, poezija, prevodoslovje

Some Observations on Poetic *YOU*

1. Introduction

Motivated by Meta Grosman's crucial concern with the links between literature, language and culture, and their interaction in practice, I would like to contribute to this volume some reflections on how a reader understands the singular of the second person personal pronoun; in other words, how the addressee is identified when the context is not transparent. I have become aware of this problem while translating Danish and English poetry into Croatian.

2.

One of those short and simple words we use hundreds of times a day, which belong to the first words acquired by children in their early years of life, and by learners of a foreign language right at the beginning of the course, are the pronouns classified in grammars as personal pronouns. They refer to participants in face to face interaction, which is one of the features that points to their great antiquity. The others are their great simplicity, frequency of usage and membership in a "closed system". Nevertheless, they do not seem to be indispensable; there is perhaps no language without them, as Lyons (1977, 639) speculates. Their frequent presence in languages must be the result of a tendency to economize in communication. In some non typical situations of communication, such as in poetry, they are likely to be ambiguous. My intention is to formulate some problems that can arise in translation.

First, I shall give an overview of the forms of the first and second person of the personal pronoun in English, Danish and Croatian and, next, give a brief account of them from two sources I consider relevant. I shall then show, through examples of poetry in English (Heaney 1990) and Danish (Jorn 2001, Læby, personal communication, Nordbrandt, personal communication, Tafdrup 1998), and finally formulate the strategies employed in disambiguation.

3.

The following table gives the inventory of forms of the first and second person personal pronouns in English (Quirk et al. 1972, 209), Danish (Allan et al. 1995, 140f) and Croatian (Barić et al. 1979, 121). They are the pronouns for the two participants in communication.

They reflect our awareness of ourselves as speakers and those we communicate with as the recipients of our messages. So normally, for a speaker in such a situation it is quite evident whom he or she is addressing, whether they are men or women, young or old, one or many, etc. This type of participation in communication being basic and frequent, words for the participants have been grammaticalized.

| | 1st person sg. | 1st person pl. | 2md person sg. | 2nd person pl. |
	Subjective/objective case	Subj./obj. case	Subj./obj. case	Subj./obj. case
English	I / me	We/us	You	You
Danish	Jeg/mig	Vi/os	Du/dig De/Dem	I/jer
Croatian	Ja/mene/meni/ mene/meni/mnom	Mi/nas/nama/ nama/nama/nama	Ti/tebe/tebi/ tebe/tebi/tobom Vi/Vas/Vama/ Vas/Vama/Vama	Vi/vas/vama/ Vas/vama/vama

It is evident that the three languages differ in several ways as far as the number of grammatical categories they explicitly express, or the way they grammaticalize various functions of participants in the communication.

In English no distinction is made between number in the second person, nor between subjective and objective case, and there are no specific "honorific" forms, thus making the English "closed system" of pronouns the simplest of the three shown in the table.

The Danish system is comparable with the English in the first person, but the second person does not only have distinctive forms for singular and plural and for the subjective and objective cases, as well as a specific "honorific pronoun" for the addressee (identical in form to the third person plural, except for the spelling with a capital letter). It stands between the English minimalistic system and the more elaborate Croatian one.

The elaboration in Croatian appears in the case forms other than objective. The "honorific form" does not formally (except in spelling) differ from the second person plural. Additionally, Croatian grammaticalizes the category "person," both singular and plural in the form of the verb. Moreover, it grammaticalizes the sex of the participants in the communication in such parts of the predicate as the participle (active and passive), determiners, adjectives and nouns.

From these preliminary remarks it can be gathered that a translation from either English or Danish into Croatian (and for that matter into other Slavic languages) will need more interpreting on the part of the translator than between English and Danish (and the other Nordic languages) or, in those rare instances, in translating from Croatian into English or Danish.

4.

Discussing personal pronouns from a semantic and pragmatic point of view Lyons (1977, 636-46) and Halliday and Hasan (1976, 43-52) point out that the term "pronoun" is misleading and that it is a deictic identifying "persons", more precisely participants in a speech situation and specifying their "roles" as speaker, addressee, etc. It is at the same time clear, that in most communicative situations, the roles of speaker and listener repeatedly switch from one side to the other.

These are the roles of speaker and addressee, the canonical situation (Lyons 1977, 638) being a single speaker and at least one addressee, i.e. one-one, or one-many participants. He further says that the canonical situation is egocentric, in that the speaker "relates everything to his viewpoint". This is why both speaker and addressee have to be considered in interpreting such a situation. The addressee is a "person designated by the speaker as recipient of the communication, as distinct from one who *chooses to listen or happens to hear the communication*" (Halliday and Hasan 1976, 45). In literary texts the reader, or in translating the translator, is the person who "chooses to listen", but does not in fact see the participants in the communication. If the speaker/author is known to him or her, i.e. the role of the speaker is by default understood to be the author, this fact can be helpful in identifying the second person or addressee in ambiguous texts.

The "speech roles" (ibid., 44) are grammaticalized also with regard to the social role, and express equality or inequality, depending on the social status of the participants. In English, as we can see from the table, this does not apply to the pronoun, but to other linguistic means. In Danish and Croatian this indeed is the case.

Lyons makes another important point, and that is that "many utterances which would be readily interpretable in a canonical situation-of-utterance are subject to various kinds of ambiguity or indeterminacy if they are produced in a non-canonical situation" (Lyons 1977, 638). The non canonical situations are, amongst others: written rather than spoken, if the participants are widely separated in space and time, if they cannot see what the other can see. So since the participants in the event are supposed to have "shared knowledge of the speech-act participants" as well as of the context, the ambiguities for the reader arise from the schematic character of the pronouns. (Taylor 2002, 346-51)

To sum up, what we usually term the first and second person of the personal pronoun are grammaticalizations of the roles participants in a speech situation take and often their social roles are grammaticalized as well.

To reformulate the table above, in the category of "roles", in the relation of speaker and addressee, English recognizes only number difference in the category of "speaker", but it makes no distinction as to the number of addressees, their social status, or social distance between addressee and speaker. (Haliday and Hasan 1976, 46). In Danish these distinctions are clearly made, as they are in Croatian.

5.

What we propose to examine here is the situation which pretends to be a face-to face communication, with the reader as a passive participant, occasionally addressee, without the possibility of taking a turn in the role of speaker. The reader chooses to "listen" but can "see" the addressee as well as the speaker and the whole context of discourse only through the words of the poet, who often plays the role of speaker as well (first person). The poet chooses the words and with them he or she chooses what to disclose to the reader. Any ambiguity that may arise from

an incomplete or insufficient clarification of the situation, is frequently desirable in literature, especially poetry, since it allows for multiple interpretations. In translation, however, this is likely to pose a problem for the translator, if the target language grammaticalizes some categories that demand a more explicit expression than the one offered by the schematic pronouns. The following examples will illustrate the possible difficulties.

In poetic discourse the poet often speaks to one addressee, most frequently using *you* in English and *du* in Danish (or other languages that grammaticalize the number of addressees). Alternatively, a multiple audience is addressed, again with *you* in English and *I* in Danish (or other languages that grammaticalize the number of addressees).

In this situation the poet is perfectly familiar with the addressees sex, age, position in space, his or her relationship to the poet, etc. The reader, on the other hand, creates an impression of the person being addressed by interpreting the poet's text. In order to do so, the reader relies on the words the poet uses, and interprets them in relation to his or her knowledge of the language and knowledge of the world. In translating a poetic text, no greater problems will be posed by possible ambiguities that arise from the schematic nature of the pronouns in the text, but a translation into languages requiring additional overt features will require more careful interpreting. In such cases, of course, there is a greater possibility that an erroneous interpretation becomes apparent.

Pragmatically speaking the likely addressees are the following:
  a. the audience in general, anyone
  b. the reader
  c. one addressee, male or female other than the reader
  d. the poet himself/herself
  e. a personified object, abstract idea etc.
  f. several addressees

It can be predicted that a translation into English would be least problematic if it is the target language of translation from Danish or Croatian. Next come translations from Croatian into Danish, somewhat more complex from English into Danish, because of the lack of honorific forms. Most demanding would be the interpretations from Danish into Croatian, and particularly from English into Croatian. Most difficulties will arise from the often ambiguous reference to the gender of the addressee, in both English and Danish, which has to be disambiguated in the Croatian translation. For example in lines as the following:

C   Mudar si/Mudra si > E You are wise   D Du er klok
            or: Ti si mudar/mudra

when translated from Croatian into English or Danish, no decision has to be made as to the gender of the adjective, no matter which one appears in the Croatian text. Differently, however, when the Danish lines (Jorn, 19) are translated:

D	Stilhed Stilhed	>	E Stillness Stillness	C Mir Mir
	Du er rolig		You are calm	Miran si / Mirna si
				Ti si miran/mirna

No special forms are needed in English, but in Croatian the second line must contain the adjective in either masculine or feminine form.

If it is not quite evident who is addressed it is not easy to decide whether to use the masculine or the feminine form of the gendered words in translation. The first move in interpretation is to look at the context, which can provide a clue. If there is no satisfactory indication in the context, a wider knowledge of the discourse situation, or of the poet himself/herself will have to be relied on.

The most explicit identification of the addressee is in poems where he or she addressed by name, e.g.

I know you Simon Sweeney (Heaney 1990, 163-4)

or is, for example, mentioned in the dedication of the poem, as in Heaney's (98):

Strand at Lough Bay,
In Memory of Colum McCartney.

In the line:

There you once heard guns fired...

"you" is Colum McCartney, and the masculine form of the verbal adjective in Croatian *čuo si* or *ti si čuo* can be safely used.

Similarly in the title, where the number and sex of the addressees is made evident:

A Kite for Michael and Christopher (ibid., 158)

provides a clue for the line:

You were born fit for it.   –   C Rođeni (masc. Pl.) ste sposobni za to.
                                           D I er født duelig til dette.

Likewise, in another poem with the title "Otter" (ibid., 120), the animal is the personified addressee, and the grammatical feminine gender of the noun "vidra" in Croatian will govern other gendered forms, here the participle:

When you plunged	Kad si zaronila (fem.)
The light of Tuscany wavered	Toskansko je svjetlo zadrhtalo

In the following lines (Jorn 2001, 55) a "Burning bush" is addressed:

Du sidder på en lavgrå klippe	You sit on a lichen grey rock	Sjediš na stijeni sivoj kao lišaj
svejset sammen med den	welded to it	Zavaren (masc.) s njom

Similar, but somewhat more hidden is the personification of, for example, Ireland (Heaney 1990, 75 v)

> ...No treaty,
> I foresee will salve completely your tracked
> And stretchmarked body, the big pain
> That leaves you raw, like opened ground, again.

In Croatian the adjective *raw* – m *ranjav*/f *ranjava* /n *ranjavo* is marked for gender. The "you" here is Ireland, as gathered from the title "Act of Union", from the context which relates Ireland's relationship with England, and of course, from the knowledge that Ireland will be a primary theme in Heaney's poetry. In the translation *Irska* is feminine, and thus the form *ranjava* will be selected.

Clues can be found in the text when, for example, someone is referred to as "he" (ibid., 161)

> I was sure I knew him.
> ....- Are you the one   C Jesi li ti taj (masc. demonstrative)

Another case of a relatively uncomplicated identification is when "you" functions as an indefinite pronoun, being equivalent to "one" or the passive, e.g. (ibid., 79)

> Religion's never mentioned here, of course.
> "You know them by their eyes"...
>   D Du kender dem...   C Prepoznaješ iz....

or paraphrased as:

> a. One knows them...
>   D Man kender dem...
> b. They are recognised...
>   D De kendes...   C Prepoznaju se...
>   Prepoznaje ih se...

In some poems the poet can participate in communication and be addressed by a character in the poem, e.g.:

> "Did you ever hear tell",
> Said Jimmy Farell,
> "Of the skulls they have in Dublin?..."

That the poet is being addressed is suggested several lines further where he says:

> My words lick around cobbled keys...go hunting...over the skull-
> capped ground (ibid., 61)

The tone of the poem in general appears to reflect the poet's experience of Viking Dublin. On the other hand, it is possible to imagine that a larger audience, in a pub perhaps, is addressed by one of the guests. The translation into both Croatian and Danish will have to interpret it either way, since in both languages the number of addressees is relevant, thus:

	D Har du hørt fortælle...	C Jesi (sg) li čuo da se priča...
or:	Har I hørt fortælle...	Jeste (pl) li čuli da se priča....

perhaps even the honorific:	D har De hørt fortælle...
	C Jeste li čuli da se priča...

with no difference between this form and the plural in Croatian. In distinction to English and Danish the addressee's gender in the singular must be marked, i.e. *čuo* (masc.).

Number in English is often disambiguated by adding "all, many, few," etc. E.g. (ibid., 151)

> *Come to me,* it says, *all you who labour ...*   – C *svi vi*
>   D *I alle*

In dialogues the roles of the speakers are understood from the context. For example, in a dialogue between the poet and his wife (ibid., 119), the gender is evident, so when the poets wife says: "You weren't the worst" – Nisi bio najgori (*najgora,*najgore), the masculine form of the adjective is selected.

A very common type of communication is that of the poet with him- or herself. Speaking of their experience they look at themselves form outside as it were. In a poem where the poet (Jorn) describes the Nordic nature and says: *Du er ét med landskabet – You are one with the landscape*, it is her personal experience. The poet is a woman, (Susanne Jorn) which fact determines all gendered forms as in the last line, which says: *Du er rolig* – in Croatian translation *Mirna* (fem.) *si.* The English translation of the same poem remains uncommitted as to gender: *You are calm*, and thus open to other interpretations, such as an experience of the poet observing someone in the Nordic landscape, becoming part of it.

Anonymous poetry is, of course, uncertain even with respect to the gender of the poet/addressee,

which will therefore be interpreted by default. Traditionally the default form would be masculine, but contemporary translators with a feminist leaning will choose the feminine.

In the canonical type of communication, however, the poet addresses one addressee, but quite frequently there are no obvious hints as to who the person could be. For example in the following lines (Jorn 2001, 25) it is clear that it is a dead or dying person:

> D Pludselig faldt temperaturen i dagligstuen
>   Med ét mistede du livet   forvandledes til
>   en afsjæle skabning med ligblå læber
>   E Suddenly the temperature in the living room fell
>   At once you lost life transformed into
>   an inanimate creature with corpse blue lips
>   C Odjednom se u sobi spustila temperatura
>   Smjesta si izgubio/izgubila život pretvoren/a
>   U bezživotnog stvora poput leša modrih usana

The author is familiar or close to the dead or dying person, and from a wider context it can be gathered that it is a parent. It is not evident though whether it is the father or the mother of the poet. Without knowing who the poet is referring to, which can be clarified only from the knowledge of the poet's private background, the translator must revert to the default interpretation, and opt for either the masculine or feminine form of the past participle. Either solution may turn out to be the intended one, particularly if the poem is read as a general expression of an encounter with death, or with the death of a close person, in which case the gender is irrelevant. In some texts, as in this one, it is also possible to avoid a gendered form by using the second person singular of the old-fashioned aorist, which is gender neutral: *izgubi život* (or: *Ti smjesta izgubi život*). A drawback of this solution is the archaic tense form which stands in contrast to the general style of the poem, and is thus unintentionally marked. Finally, the translator can seek information from the author, if he or she is alive. If the poet is deceased there is, of course, rich ground for different interpretations and scholarly discussion.

More frequently a living person is addressed, and in the form of address the poet usually evokes his or her relationship with that person. The context and/or information about the identity of the poet facilitate a decision about the gender of the addressee. The title of the following poem

(Læby, Din eneste):
>   Din eneste   Your only one   Tvoj jedini/tvoja jedina

makes for an unclear situation, as do the concluding lines:

>   Jeg var ...   I was...   Bio/bila sam...
>   Din eneste...   your only one   Tvoj jedini/tvoja jedina

so the entire text has to be carefully searched for a clue. Two elements in the poem point to a man addressing a woman. The first being the poet himself, who is a man, and the poem his intimate experience. Next is the context in which *he* asks *her* to bring him the child, imagines her travelling, and himself running or jogging. Now neither of these is foolproof evidence for the interpretation suggested above, but the translator can imagine that it is a woman leaving with the pair's child, and it is imaginable that the man would be jogging in such a situation, rather than the other way round, i.e. a mother addressing the man who left her, taking their child. This again, need not be a personal experience by the poet, but an observation by a third person, who then plays the role of the speaker, which seems not quite in agreement with our experience of poetry.

In other poems there may be just the information on the gender of the poet that decides the gender of the addressee, as in the following lines from poems (a.) by a man (Nordbrandt: Ønske) and (b.) by a woman (Tafdrup: Kun en kniv)

a. Jeg ville ønske, jeg kunne se dig, som du var
         I wish that I could see you as you were
             Želio bih da te mogu vidjeti, kakva si bila.
     Nej! Jeg ville ønske, jeg kunne se dig
     som jeg ville ønske, du var...
             No! I wish I could see you
          as I wish you were ...
             Ne! želio bih da te mogu vidjeti
             kakva želim da si bila....

A woman is spoken to, hence the feminine forms of the relative pronoun *kakav* i.e. *kakva* and the active participle of the verb "to be" *biti*, i.e. *bila*.

Conversly, the poet, a woman, speaks to a man:

b. Du træder ind som en fremmed,
     taler til mig som en ukendt...
             You walk in like a stranger,
             talk to me like someone I don't know...
                     Ti ulaziš kao stranac (masc.)
                     govoriš mi kao netko nepoznat (masc.)

The noun "stranger" and the adjective "unknown" are here masculine.

In homosexual relationships, the information on the gender of the poet would be an important clue, as well as the context and general knowledge. At worst, as with anonymous poetry, the gender would have to be decided on by default. In anonymous poetry, however, if gender is not signalled from the context, the canonical relationship between two sexes would be taken by default.

When the addressee is not a person in close relationship with the speaker/poet, it is much more difficult to decide on his or her gender. A clue is difficult to find in the person of the poet too. The context and knowledge of the general circumstances, current events, etc. is then the only source of information. For example in (Læby, Landene):

> du hentede dem ved bådene
> > you brought them (some people) with boats.
> > > dovodio (masc.) si ih čamcima

It seems more likely that a man would collect people by boat than a woman. In this poem however, it is not impossible, that the poet, a man, is telling of his own experience by placing himself in the role of addressee. In the Croatian translation this disambiguation is needed for parts of the text, such as *du hentede* would be interpreted as masculine

6. Conclusion

We may sum up now the various strategies a translator into Croatian (or other languages that grammaticalize gender) uses to interpret the vagueness of gender (and sometimes number) of the speaker, often the poet, and the person spoken to. The various strategies will follow in the order sketched below:

> a. the text of the entire poem, as well as a wider context is searched for clues;
> b. one interprets the second person pronoun you/du as I/jeg, i.e. identifies the speaker with the poet; if the poet is not anonymous, the speaker's gender is taken to be the gender of the poet, and the addressees will depend on the relationship between the poet and the one spoken to;
> c. one considers whether in texts rendering the poet's experience, the addressee could be the poet;
> d. if the second person pronoun is paraphrasable by an indefinite pronoun or passive, the addressee is the public in general, including the reader/translator; in that case various solutions are tested, such as: default gender, i.e. masculine, which (still) has generic meaning, forms not marked for if applicable;
> f. research into other work by the poet, his or her biography etc. is a prerequisite in translation, but sometimes greater detail may be needed than normally;
> g. gender will be assigned by default.

The advantages for the translator into a minimal system of "second person personal pronoun" are obvious. With less effort an effect of open interpretation is achieved. On the other hand, a translation into an "elaborate system" of pronoun, syntactically and semantically dependent members of the sentence will not only pose problems for the translator, but force certain meanings

which have to be made explicit. Since these depend on the translator's judgment, they are often likely to be mistranslated.

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Patient or Vehicle? Semantic roles in German and English descriptive verbs (revisited)

Summary

The paper investigates the problem of semantic roles within the concept of verb-descriptivity (Snell-Hornby 1983). Descriptive verbs are semantically complex lexical items, where the modifying components are more focal than the verbal action itself (as in *bustle* or *strut*), and where the participants, the background situation and the attitude of the speaker emerge as distinctive elements (as in *grovel* and *waft*). As against orthodox views in early case grammar, a distinction is made here between the Patient as "sufferer" of the verbal action and the Vehicle as its "conveyer". It is argued that this differentiation is essential for the understanding, the analysis and the translation of descriptive verbs, as the semantic roles are by no means identical when compared in various languages (here English and German). This is illustrated by the comparison of lexemes in the semantic field of verbs expressing anger. The aim of the paper is to sharpen awareness of such fine distinctions, particularly in their relevance for translation.

Key-words: case grammar, semantic roles, verb-descriptivity, modificant, agent, patient, vehicle.

Prizadeto ali Posredovalec? Udeleženske vloge nemških in angleških opisnih glagolov (nov pogled)

Povzetek

Članek obravnava problem udeleženskih vlog znotraj koncepta glagolskega opisa (Snell-Hornby 1983). Opisni glagoli so semantično kompleksne leksikalne enote, kjer so modifikacijski elementi bolj v žarišču kot samo glagolsko dejanje (npr. *bustle* ali *strut*) in kjer se udeleženci, ozadje situacije in odnos do govorcev kažejo kot razločevalni elementi (npr. *grovel* in *waft*). V nasprotju z ortodoksnim razumevanjem zgodnje sklonske slovnice, razlikujemo med vlogo Prizadeto, ki jo glagolsko dejanje spreminja, in udeležensko vlogo Posredovalec, ki je prenosnik glagolskega dejanja. Trdimo, da je to razlikovanje bistvenega pomena za razumevanje, analiuzo in prevajanje opisnih glagolov, saj udeleženske vloge nikakor niso enake, ko primerjamo različne jezike (tu angleščino in nemščino). To trditev ponazarjamo s primerjavo leksemov iz semantičnega polja glagolov, ki izražajo jezo. Namen članke je izostriti zavedanje fines še posebej za potrebe prevajanja.

Ključne beside: sklonska slovnica, udeleženske vloge, opisni glagoli, modifikant, vršilec, prizadeto, posredovalec.

Patient or Vehicle? Semantic roles
in German and English descriptive verbs (revisited)

1. Introduction

This contribution to the Festschrift for Meta Grosman goes back to the days when I was still working in lexical semantics, and for some reason, now forgotten, the essay never seems to have been published in this form. Many of the ideas and concepts so hotly debated at the time have meanwhile however proved invaluable for Translation Studies, and the contrastive analysis of German and English descriptive verbs should still be valid. This contribution comes with the wish that someone might investigate the same phenomena for Slovene – or other Slavonic languages.

2. The semantic structure of the descriptive verb

Both in traditional grammar and in modern linguistics it is the accepted function of the lexical verb to denote a state, event or process (here subsumed in the phrase "verbal action"), while the function of modifying is conventionally ascribed to the adjective or adverb. The subject of this essay is a type of verb which itself modifies the action it expresses: in other words, beyond its grammatical and syntactic functions, beyond the basic semantic situation created by the participants in the action and the circumstances accompanying the action, it contains a further focal semantic element that assumes the function of, and is expressed in the verb's basic definition by one or more dynamic adjectives or manner adverbs. The verbal action is in fact not merely stated, but – in the traditional sense of the world – described; and for this reason the verb concerned has been named the "descriptive verb". The linguistic phenomenon itself can then be termed "verb-descriptivity" (Snell-Hornby 1983).

The descriptive verb (DV) must be understood as a semantic complex basically divisible into a core of verbal action – or *act-nucleus* – and the descriptive, modifying element or complex of elements, which we may call the *modificant*[1]. An obvious example is the English verb *strut*, as defined in four standard English dictionaries:

1. walk in a stiff, self-satisfied way (*ALD*)
2. walk in a pompous manner, swagger (*CED*)
3. walk with pompous or affected stiff erect gait (*COD*)
4. to walk with a proud lofty gait and an erect head; esp. to walk with pomposity or affected dignity (*Webster 3*).[2]

From these definitions the act-nucleus clearly emerges as *walk*, and the accompanying adverbial phrases express the modificant. When it is applied to isolated groups of lexemes, such a

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1   This is a coinage applicable only to verb-descriptivity. The term modificant (modificans) is derived from Latin modificare and formed on analogy with agent (agens) as derived from agere, thus denoting the "element that modifies" in the verb, as the agent is the "one who acts".

2   Note the varying adjectives used in the different definitions, their respective accuracy being debatable.

distinction is of course nothing new in semantic studies; in our approach however the DV is identified as a specific semantic structure independent of any onomasiological criteria, upon which most studies in semantic fields are based. Within this semantic structure, the verbal action itself is either relatively clear-cut, hence easily isolatable and itself already lexicalized (as in *strut*), or else it is only vaguely definable (as in English *bustle* or German *schmieren*) or even irrelevant (as in *dawdle* and *trödeln*)[3], while the modificant is always focal, usually clearly definable and often highly complex. It is at the same time a part of the verb that only receives inadequate attention in most dictionary definitions.[4] The modificant may express modality of action (loudness in *shout* and *schreien*, stiffness in *strut* and *stolzieren*), thus characterizing the verbal action directly; this semantic element, with which we are not concerned here, may be called *direct descriptivity*. More usually however the modificant characterizes and evaluates one or more of the participants (such as the agent, who in *strut* is self-satisfied and pompous), or it may specify certain background circumstances, such as the cause of the action (emotion or pain in *scream*, anger in *toben*) or the hierarchical status of the participants (as in *grovel* or *kuschen*); this semantic element, with which we are immediately concerned in this essay, may be called *indirect descriptivity*. Frequently the modificant combines both types of descriptivity: in *strut*, for example, the action is stiff and the agent is self-satisfied.

As indicated above, the modificant of a descriptive verb consists largely of dynamic adjectives susceptible to subjective measurement,[5] thus expressing a distinct attitude of the speaker; this we may call *speaker-evaluation*. Most DVs, especially those denoting human behaviour, express negative speaker-evaluation, ranging from criticism of the action (as in *meddle* and *jammern*) to rejection of the agent (as in *grovel* and *keifen*). Furthermore the dynamic adjective, in being gradable, permits variations in degree and measurement on a scale; hence its value is relative and can be judged in terms of an implied and accepted norm. This norm can be set personally by the speaker, as is his/her attitude towards speed (*plod* and *bummeln* refer to action felt to be extremely slow), or his/her perception as of movement or sound (whereby *dash* and *sausen* are experienced as being excessively fast, *roar* and *krachen* as excessively loud). Another type of norm is that set by the social environment and implicitly accepted by the speaker; usually this involves basic aspects of human behaviour such as speaking, walking, eating and drinking, whereby the concept of norm merges into that of speaker-evaluation, to indicate, for example, greed or "bad manners" on the part of the agent (*gorge, schmatzen*) or high consumption of alcohol, typically with the speaker's professed disapproval (*booze, saufen*). [6]

The modificant consists further of merging, interdependent components of varying stress – as against the principle of clear-cut binary opposites in formalized componential analysis

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3   Bustle refers to movement or unidentified behaviour, schmieren to the action of writing, painting, marking or *or covering with* some greasy substance. Both dawdle and trödeln refer to any action in progress.

4   Cf. fn 2 above. A high frequency of circular definitions is observable with DVs, as illustrated by swagger in the CED definition of strut quoted above.

5   As opposed to stative adjectives: cf Quirk et al. 1972, 541 and Leisi 1975, 42.

6   Such norms can depend on or vary with factors like the age or sex of the agent (cf. toddle of a small child and dodder expressing senility, and note the tolerant attitude of the speaker in poltern, which favours a male agent, as against the rejecting attitude in keifen, which specifies a female agent).

– whereby the focus can again be placed on modality of action or on one of the participants or attendant circumstances. Thus focus is a further important concept in verb-descriptivity, and can well serve to differentiate lexemes of otherwise apparently identical semantic content: *scream* and *yell*, for example, differ in that *yell* focusses on sound volume and *scream* on the expression of emotion or pain. The same principle can apply contrastively: while *glow* and *glühen* both include elements of light and heat, *glühen* focusses on that of heat and *glow* on that of light. Descriptive verbs can also focus on a participant, most typically the agent, or on one of the background circumstances; the near-synonyms *blunder* and *bungle* differ in that *blunder* focusses on modality of action, while *bungle* focusses on the result. The difference between focal and peripheral components emerges for example from the grammatical forms most naturally taken by the verb concerned: present participle for focus on agent or action ("ein keifendes Weib", "he went blundering on") as against past participle in a passive construction for focus on patient or result ("der geplagte Bundesbürger", "the affair was badly bungled"). Furthermore, while focal components are obligatory and cannot be contradicted (as seen in the unacceptable collocations *he dawdled quickly, *es glühte kalt), peripheral elements may be optional, and it is a literary device to use them deviating from their accepted usage.

3. Verb-descriptivity and semantic roles

In postulating this semantic structure of descriptive verbs, we are of course indirectly concerned with various important issues in linguistics, among them componential analysis and case grammar. It must be stressed that the categories and distinctions outlined above emerged inductively from empirical methods and from direct observation of the usage of DVs,[7] and do not attempt to apply any specific linguistic theory. There is however a striking resemblance between these categories and those presented firstly by Tesnière and secondly by Fillmore and other case theorists.

Firstly, we have endorsed Tesnière's concept of the verb as the central element in the sentence, "un petit drame" (1969, 102) that presupposes an entire situation involving a set of participants (*actants*) and circumstances (*circonstants*). Tesnière explicated his concept of the verb as follows:

> Le verbe exprime le procès. (…) Les actants sont les êtres ou les choses qui (…) participent au procès. (…) Les actants sont toujours des substantifs ou des équivalents de substantifs. (…) Les circonstances expriment les circonstances de temps, lieu, manière, etc. (…) dans lesquelles se déroule le procès. (…) Les circonstants sont toujours des adverbes (…) ou des équivalents d'adverbes. (1969, 102-3)

 A similar distinction is made by Halliday (1970, 149):

> In English, typically, processes are expressed by verbal groups, participants by nominal groups and circumstances by adverbial groups – the last often in the form of prepositional phrases.

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7   As in an extensive corpus of literature, interviews with informants, through critical study of dictionary definitions, grammatical transformations and substitution tests, also through error analysis in student translations.

It is interesting that the syntactically realized categories described by Tesnière and Halliday are in part precisely reflected as built-in roles within the structure of descriptive verbs, whose participants are likewise expressed as modified and evaluated nominals.. While the circumstances, as explicated by Halliday and Tesnière, are only partially equivalent to those included in the basic definitions of DVs, there is a certain amount of convergence: in the statement "The child screamed", for example, the emotion inherent in *scream* (as "in terror" or "in pain") would be realized in the basic definition of the verb by an adverbial phrase. In short, inherent in the semantic components of DVs are the same structures as those realized syntactically at sentence level: in its microstructure and specifications of semantic roles with their additional elements of evaluation and characterization, the descriptive verb has indeed the elements of a "miniature drama".

Secondly, in quoting the role of the agent in DVs, we have already implicitly entered the discussion, so intensely pursued by Fillmore (1968, 1971, 1977), Halliday (1967, 1968, 1970) and other theorists as to the type and definitions of the roles in case grammar. It is here that some basic discrepancies begin to emerge.

a. Agentive and vehicular verbs

The broadest distinction made between the roles in DVs is that between the participants in the action and the circumstances accompanying the action, as delineated above. The circumstances include the cause of the action (emotion or pain as in *scream*), the purpose of the action (as in *haggle* or *drängen*), the result (as in *shatter* or *quetschen*), prescribed surroundings (such as open country as in *hike*), and a possible hierarchy among the participants (inferior status of the agent as in *grovel* or *flehen*). The participants on the other hand are involved in the action itself. The central participant is the agent, the "one who acts", the role which in our definition corresponds to Fillmore's concept of the instigator of the action (1968, 24) and more precisely to Gruber's definition of the agentive verb:

> An Agentive verb is one whose subject refers to an *animate* object which is thought of as the *willful source* or agent of the activity described in the sentence. (1967, 943, emphasis added.)

Proceeding from this definition, one can classify DVs according to the role of their grammatical subject. Some DVs, typically those denoting human activities (eating, speaking, working, walking etc.), take an animate agent who instigates or performs the action as specified above. Typical examples of agentive DVs are *kick, scamper, shout* and *scribble* in English, and *grinsen, plaudern, schleudern* and *schreiten* in German. Other DVs, frequently in intransitive usage and with monovalent character, have as grammatical subject an often inanimate *vehicle*[8], by means of which the action is manifested. Such vehicular verbs typically denote the perception of sound, light, and in certain cases movement. Examples of vehicular DVs are *crackle, shimmer* and *waft* in English and *rattern*, *glühen* and *rutschen* in German.

8   This concept is taken from Leisi (1973, 59), who speaks of the Vorgangsträger, a term I have translated as vehicle.

It is with the role of vehicle that we depart radically from early studies in case grammar, which would include the vehicle under what is here called *patient*. The empirical investigation of descriptive verbs has however shown the rigid distinction of agent and patient to be inadequate, as it forces the patient-role to assume what in verb-descriptivity emerges as two clearly differing functions. I would therefore replace the agent-patient dichotomy by a threefold spectrum or cline embracing the concepts of *agent, vehicle* and *patient*. The agent is, as defined above, the animate, active instigator or performer of the action; the vehicle is the inactive and often inanimate "conveyer" through which the verbal action manifests itself; the patient is the passive undergoer or "sufferer" of the action, the being or object on whom or on which the action is performed from outside, and this normally presupposes the existence of an agent or instrument acting in complementary role opposition. Thus in surface realization the patient normally appears as the grammatical direct object of an active (agentive) verb or as the grammatical object of a passive verb. The conceptual distinctions between agent, vehicle and patient can be illustrated by the following examples:

1. *The soldier* was pacing up and down. (Agent)
2. a) *The sun* is shining. (Vehicle)
   b) *The river* was flowing fast. (Vehicle)
3. a) The sadist tormented *the prisoner*. (Patient)
   b) The salesman swindled *the old lady*. (Patient)

In the sentences under (2) it is clear that nothing is actually being performed on the respective grammatical subjects *the sun* and *the river* in the same way as with *the prisoner* (3a) and *the old lady* (3b); on the contrary, they are the natural phenomena essential for the manifestation of the verbal action. The distinction emerges even more clearly if we convert the sentences into the passive:

4. a) *the sun is being shone.
   b)*the river was being flowed.
5. a) The prisoner was tormented.
   b) The old lady was swindled.

4 (a) and (b) are clearly anomalous; the verbs are in vehicular usage where the role of patient is not admitted. In 5 (a) and (b) on the other hand, *the prisoner* and *the old lady* assume the patient role of an agentive verb.

The conceptual core of the terms *agent, vehicle* and *patient* should now be clear; it should however be stressed that the borderlines are by no means clear-cut, and in practice overlappings are not uncommon. Much is obscured – or clarified – by the surface forms of the particular language under discussion: semantic roles, despite their postulated universality,[9] actually owe much to the fact that they were conceived on the basis of the English language and are invariably illustrated by

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9 Pleines (1978) argues convincingly against their alleged universality, and points out the insecure theoeretical basis on which this claim is founded.

isolated and sometimes idiosyncratic sentences devoid of any context.[10] Further confusion has been caused by the phenomenon of ergativity, which in English often remains undifferentiated in the surface realization of the sentence. This is amply illustrated by some of the much-quoted sentences with which Fillmore opened the discussion of semantic roles (1968, 25 ff.):

6. a) John opened the door.
   b) The door opened.
   c) The key opened the door.
   d) The wind opened the door.

For further illustration let us also take the following sentences:

7. a) The man is burning the wood.
   b) The wood is burning.
   c) The little girl dangled her legs from the chair.
   d) Her legs were dangling from the chair.

John (6a), *the man* (7a) and *the little girl* (7c) all clearly emerge as the agent of the verb concerned. By common consensus of the early case theorists, *the door* (6b), *the wood* (7b), and *her legs* (7d) would normally be classified as the patient. In our definition of semantic roles, as the perspective of these sentences does not prescribe an agent or instrument acting in complementary role opposition, they are classified as the vehicle – although they do represent the point where the concepts of vehicle and patient begin to merge. Contrast however the following two sentences, where by virtue of the passive construction the perspective of the sentence implies the existence of an agent;

8. a) The door was opened.
   b) The wood is being burnt.

In the examples quoted under (6) and (7) we can thus see that some verbs can be both agentive and vehicular, depending on usage and context. This is however by no means always the case; as we saw in (4a) and (4b), vehicular and agentive usage is not freely interchangeable, and the construction used in (6b) and (7b) is by no means universally applicable. A similar grammatical transformation of (3a) and (3b) for example would produce the following anomalous constructions:

8. c) *the prisoner tormented
   d) *the old lady swindled.

The sentences (6c) and (6d) quoted above were in the 1970s the subject of much discussion, and it is not my purpose here to revive the debate. I would however like to point out that the surface

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10 This is a criticism generally valid for the examples that were presented in work on Transformational Generative Grammar (cf. Snell-Hornby 1983, and see also Pleines 1978, 362 ff., whose reservations I endorse). Due to limitations of space, the examples presented in this essay had likewise to be isolated sentences, but a full discussion of semantic roles should ideally relate to sentences in context.

similarity of these two sentences is in fact deceptive, and the problems they give rise to are again related to specific idiosyncrasies of English syntax. It is commonly agreed that *the key* in (6c) has the role of instrument, but it should be emphasized that here the usage of *open* is deviant, denoting *unlock* as against the action of causing movement involved in the sentences (6a), (6b) and (6d), and hence it should be discussed on a different semantic basis. Equally idiosyncratic is the usage in (6d), a sentence used by Huddleston (1970, 504) to illustrate the concept of an inanimate Force with the same function as an animate agent. Here again however *open* is not used in the same agentive sense as in (6a), whereby an act is consciously and wilfully carried out; the sentence rather means, in less artificial and more idiomatic expression, "The wind blew the door open", where, as in the two sentences (4a) and (4b), *the wind* emerges as vehicle of *blew* and the problem of an inanimate agentive Force does not arise.

The above arguments are strongly supported by the German translations of the sentences concerned, as we see from the following representative cross-section:

1. *Der Soldat* schritt auf und ab. (Agent)
2a. *Die Sonne* scheint. (Vehicle)
3a. Der Sadist quälte *den Gefangenen.* (Patient)
4a. *die Sonne wird geschienen
5a. Der Gefangene wurde gequält.
8c. *der Gefangene quälte.

These sentences reflect precisely the same principles as we have seen in the English examples: the distinction between agent, vehicle and patient – as in (1), (2a) and (3a) – and the non-acceptability of both the vehicle of a monovalent verb in a passive construction (4a) and the patient of an agentive verb in an active construction (8c). Let us now compare German renderings of the remaining examples:

6a.   Hans öffnete die Tür.
6b.   Die Tür *öffnete sich.*
6c.   ? Die Tür wurde mit dem Schlüssel geöffnet.
        ? Jemand schloss auf.
        ? Der Schlüssel passte zur Tür.
6d.   ? Der Wind drückte die Tür auf.

7a.   Der Mann *verbrennt* das Holz.
7b.   Das Holz brennt.
7c.   Das Kind *ließ* die Beine vom Stuhl *baumeln.*
7d.   Die Beine baumelten vom Stuhl herunter.

8a.   Die Tür wurde geöffnet.
8b.   Das Holz wird verbrannt.

Here three significant points emerge. Firstly, in contrast to the English sentences, ergativity is realized by distinct grammatical markers – in (7a) and (8b) by a prefix, and in (7c) by an auxiliary verb.[11] Secondly, the vehicular usage of an agentive verb is naturally realized in German by a reflexive construction (6b). This illustrates a basic difference in the function of the reflexive in German and English; in English the verb is essentially agentive with a co-referential patient, viz. "He cut himself", but not *the door opened itself.

Thirdly, the semantic haziness of the two problem sentences (6c) and (6d) is reflected in the confusion of the three German speakers asked to translate them, in the case of (6c) resulting in three different interpretations.

The conceptual spectrum agent-vehicle-patient, with the ensuing distinction between patient and vehicle is, as illustrated above in the examples with *open* and *burn*, by no means limited to descriptive verbs. For the semantic analysis of these particular verbs however, it is indispensable. Firstly, it admits a clear-cut barrier between the roles of agent and patient, and secondly it helps eliminate the confusion which would arise in explaining semantic distinctions if two such essentially differing participants as patient and vehicle were both referred to in the same terms. This becomes clear for example, where verbs are used figuratively:

9a. *The sun* glared down from the sky. (Vehicle)
9b. *The linguist* glared at the pelican. (Agent)

This is one of several examples of the verbs denoting light-perception, which can also be used figuratively and agentively to describe facial expression, whereby the vehicular role of the sun is assumed by the eye. (Other examples are *sparkle, gleam* and *glitter* in English and *blitzen, funkeln* and *leuchten* in German.) The modificant, centring round the dynamic adjectives *fierce, hostile, intense*, is in both senses of the verb *glare* basically the same; the constellation of roles, given the figurative variation, remains essentially stable. In conventional terms of case grammar however, *the linguist* (9b) would be classified as the Agent, while *the sun* (9a) would be the Patient; in other words, what is in fact functionally identical would be rendered in terms of binary opposites, in terms of a clear-cut dichotomy.

a. Structure of roles in verb-descriptivity

The basic division of roles into participants and background circumstances, was illustrated above on the basis of *strut*; of these however, only the agent was relevant, the remaining participants and circumstances are in *strut* left open. The semantic roles in descriptive verbs can however be much more complicated. Apart from the agent, vehicle and patient as discussed here, we have the adressee, the experiencer, the instrument and medium as participants, while the circumstances involve the surroundings, hierarchy of participants, cause, purpose and result of the verbal

11   Ergativity is sometimes also realized by an auxiliary verb in English, especially where two human participants are involved, e.g. "He made the boys walk home".

action. Among these roles, some tend to be more salient – and more complex – than others.[12] The circumstances, as background, attendant factors in the verbal action, tend to be the least salient and the least complex. The same applies to the medium (as for example the hampering medium such as snow in *stapfen* or dimmed visibility in *peer*) and the addressee (the participant to whom the action is addressed, as in *grovel, schwindeln, glare* and *glotzen,* but who, unlike the patient, can remain unaffected by it), insofar as they both give rise to and influence the action, but are only directly involved in its execution.

The remaining five roles are more salient and considerably more complex: while the conceptual essence of agent, vehicle and patient should be clear from the above discussion, in concrete realization there are frequent overlappings. It helps considerably if we take over the concepts of *experiencer* and *instrument* as auxiliary roles, admitting the possibility of role combinations. In verb-descriptivity the evaluating, normative part played by the speaker provides a further complicating factor, in that it colours and often even manipulates the roles of the different participants and their relation to each other.

Let us illustrate this by comparing the English and German semantic fields of verbs denoting the expression of anger, as depicted in Snell-Hornby 1983:

curse -----	swear	fluchen -----	schimpfen
storm	scold	wüten	
fume ----- rage	rail	toben	
bristle		rasen	
		geifern	
		/	
		keifen ----	zetern

Here the experiencer of the emotion is the vehicle of the verb to the extent that he feels (salient in *fume* and *bristle),* and the agent to the extent that he acts (salient in *curse* and *fluchen*). Where an inanimate natural phenomenon is involved, such as a storm in *rage* or *wüten*, the verb is of course vehicular. The subtle interplay of roles and the speaker's manipulation of them is clearly revealed by a semantic analysis, both paradigmatic and contrastive, of the verbs concerned. *Schimpfen* for example focusses on the loud and voluble expression of anger and casts no aspirations on the agent, while *fluchen* focusses on the strong language used, but without indicating the cause, which must be specified in the context. Thus *fluchen* covers *curse* and one sense of *swear*, whereby *swear* focusses on the actual verbs used and *curse* on the vehement imprecations behind them. *Scold* and *rail* focus on blame and fault-finding, whereby *scold* indicates noisy and voluble reproof directed personally at an addressee usually in a weaker position than the agent, typically a child or servant, and *rail* focusses on a furious outbreak of words aimed either at a person, whether present or absent, or at some object or abstraction. *Storm* and *rage* denote a state of violent fury, whereby *storm,* with a human

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12 Cf. Van Valin and Foley (1980, 338-9: "In general, animate, especially human, participants tend to be more salient than inanimate or abstract ones."

agent, focusses either on angry movement or on expression through words, and *rage*, with either a human agent or an inanimate vehicle, focusses on the fit of anger or state of violence itself. These words are matched in German by *wüten, toben* and *rasen,* representing in that order a gradation of violence. *Wüten* focusses on an unrestrained and destructive outburst of aggression directed at some specific cause or object; *toben* denotes a fit of rage without a clear target or direction, but which so overcomes the agent that he loses all self-control; *rasen* is again directed at a particular object or cause, whereby the agent is driven into a state of frenzied fury. *Fume* and *bristle* both denote repressed anger, whereby *bristle* indicates a mute, static reaction of indignation and *fume* a state of seething anger or suppressed irritation, sometimes finding expression in words. German *geifern* denotes harsh and vituperative abuse, with extremely negative evaluation by the speaker and open condemnation of the agent. *Keifen* indicates venomous abuse made in a state of extreme agitation and in an unpleasantly loud shrill voice, hence invariably with a female agent towards whom the speaker expresses overt rejection. *Zetern* indicates a loud, persistent and quarrelsome type of fault-finding, whereby however the speaker detaches himself from the action and tends to find it amusing rather than repulsive. It is significant that what is objectively the same verbal action can sometimes be lexicalized by several of the verbs sketched above, whereby the difference lies in the attitude and perception of the speaker. (Cf. Snell-Hornby 1983, 115-6)

A final comment must now be made on a problem arising with the distinction between vehicle and patient. Consider the following examples:

10   a) *The torch* shone brightly.
       b) A torch was shone in my face.

According to our interpretation, *the torch* in (10a) is the vehicle and *a torch* in (10b) is the patient. That there is a fallacy here is shown in the German equivalents of these sentences:

10   c) Die Taschenlampe leuchtete hell.
       d) Jemand leuchtete mir mit der Taschenlampe ins Gesicht.

The surface realization of the German sentence discloses the instrumental character inherent in the role of *a torch* (10b), thereby revealing yet another idiosyncratic usage in English grammar. Here again, we may accept that, while the abstract concepts of patient and instrument are clearly distinguishable, in their concrete realization the two roles may merge and combine, according to the perspective of the sentence.

In this way, our conceptual spectrum of *agent – vehicle – patient* is refined and completed; with the intermediary roles of experiencer and instrument supporting and combining with them, the entire continuum of salient roles in verb-decriptivity is covered, whereby we observe that the agent and experiencer are invariably animate, the instrument is inanimate, and the vehicle and patient may be either.

4. Verb-descriptivity and case grammar theory

As an offshoot of transformational generative grammar, case grammar naturally inherited some of its basic aims, methods and theoretical implications, among the most central of these being its syntactic approach, the dichotomy of deep and surface structure, and the aim of identifying language universals. None of these principles has been basic here: I rather hope to have pointed out the interdependence of syntax and semantics, of deep and surface structure and the the significance of idiosyncrasies specific to individual languages.

It is interesting that the main problem of case grammar has been seen to lie in the delimitation and definition of the case-roles, aptly described by Dillon (1977, 68) as "intuitionism run wild", by Pleines (1978, 360) as "Zaubertrick-Kasus", and more soberly expressed by Fillmore himself:

> The next truly worrisome criticism of case theory is the observation that nobody working within the various versions of grammars with 'cases' has come up with a principled way of defining the cases, or principled procedures for determining how many cases there are, or for determining when you are faced with two cases that happen to have something in common as opposed to one case that has two variants. (1977, 14)

It was not my primary aim with this essay to enter the theoretical discussion on case grammar, nor did I intend with the introduction of the role of vehicle to aggravate the already existing "case proliferation". The roles discussed here enmerged from essentially empirical observation, and apply specifically to German and English descriptive verbs in their concrete realization.

Our observations do however permit certain general conclusions, especially with regard to the initial concept of case roles as a limited set of separate and universally valid labels, whereby each role in its surface realization can be neatly inserted into its own theoretical slot. Later publications on case grammar disputed this view: Pleines, in his rejection of the claim to universality, described the "Zusammenspiel kognitiver, perzeptueller und linguistischer Determinanten" (1978, 368), while Van Valin and Foley emphasize the "interaction of syntax, semantics and pragmatics" (1980, 331), both arguments fully endorsed by this essay, where case roles have emerged as essentially pragmatic relationships within the semantic structure of the verb rather than as purely theoretical categories. One should distinguish between the purety of a theoretical concept and a fluidity apparent in its concrete realization. Dillon observes, with reference to semantic roles:

> … these concepts have a central core or prototype that most analysts would agree to and a number of associated properties, but they have fringes and overlappings with the fringes of other roles where a decision to assign one role instead of another will inevitably be somewhat arbitrary. (1977, 70)

Accepting this principle of a central core with fringes and overlappings, we must also accept that no terminology is likely to present a fool-proof system of labels for every usage of every verb. It is unlikely that semantic roles will be conclusively arranged into a rigid system of slots and labels:

in our observations they have rather emerged as a flexible structure of shifting, merging and interdependent components, reflecting, as Mario Wandruszka described it, the "schöpferische Unschärfe" of language.

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II.

LITERATURE

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Alice Munro: The Stories of *Runaway*

Summary

This essay will analyze and explicate the stories in Munro's latest collection, *Runaway*, in order to present the reader with a description of her artistic interests, motifs and techniques in this work. The author finds remarkable similarities among the stories, even as they explore very different female characters and situations. The author notes the delicacy and precision with which Munro tracks the progress of her characters' thoughts and feelings, often in a kind of interior dialogue with themselves. Love, or its absence, is the usual subject matter in the stories – most often between a woman and a man, but sometimes between parent and child – and the author shows how Munro's characters deal with the "old confusions or obligations" engendered by this emotion. Finally, the author cites several examples in describing Munro's style of presenting her characters, one typified by colloquial and self-deprecating dialogue, but punctuated at times by language of great poetic and emotional power.

Key words: Women as main characters in Munro's fiction, Colloquial, self-deprecating dialogue and language of poetic, emotional power, Retrospection and understanding, Unity of "Chance", "Soon", and "Silence"

Alice Munro: Zbirka kratkih zgodb *Ubežnik* (*Runaway*)

Povzetek

Pričujoči esej osvetli in razčleni zadnjo zbirko kratkih zgodb uveljavljene kanadske pisateljice Alice Munro z naslovom *Ubežnik* ter se pri tem posebej osredotoči na avtoričine umetniške težnje, motive in postopke. V ospredje stopijo osupljive podobnosti med zgodbami, in to kljub precejšnjim razlikam med ženskimi liki, ki praviloma nastopajo kot protagonistke v teh zgodbah. Poleg tega avtor nameni posebno pozornost razčlembi notranjega monologa, s katerim liki praviloma udejanjajo svojo pripovedno držo. Poglavitna tematika zgodb je ljubezen (oziroma njeno umanjkanje), in sicer v razmerjih ona–on, starši–otroci, kot posledica preteklih nesporazumov in odgovornosti. Sklepni del poda slogovno analizo pripovednih postopkov karakterizacije likov ter oriše pisateljičin poetični in emocionalni domet.

Ključne besede: Ženske kot osrednji liki v zgodbah Alice Munro, pogovorno-samoobtožujoči dialog in jezik poetično-emocionalne moči, retrospekcija in umevanje, enotnost "naključnega", "skorajšnjega" ter "molka"

Alice Munro: The Stories of *Runaway*

1. Introduction

Alice Munro is widely regarded as one of the world's very best living writers of short fiction in English. A Canadian author who suffuses her stories with the geography and common life of her native western Ontario and of her second home near the Pacific coast in British Columbia, Munro nevertheless expresses a style and sensibility which speak to a great many North Americans, Canadians and U.S. citizens alike. In addition, the issues she explores and the sensibility with which she presents them make her an important writer for the world at large.[1]

I met Alice Munro briefly in the spring of 2006, on a ferry returning to the Ontario, Canada mainland from Pelee Island where she had read from a book in progress to an assorted audience of birders and literary enthusiasts. She was charming, openly friendly, with a ready smile. But, her eyes and expressions hinted at depths of understanding, a sense of humor and an ironic habit of mind. There was, I thought, a contrast between her quiet, mid-western friendliness and an implied set of richer, more private reserves within.[2] Not surprisingly, these are all qualities which are reflected in the stories which comprise Munro's latest collection of short stories, *Runaway*.

Known primarily for her short fiction, Munro has published over a dozen collections and other full-length works, almost all of them to enthusiastic, sometimes rapturous acclaim.[3] She deserves every bit of the respect and praise which has been lavished upon her, I believe, and will endure as a major writer because of the quiet revelations, the biting ironies, the acute presentations of common life and the sure use of language and dialogue in her stories.

Because her latest collection has not yet been the subject of much direct critical attention – except for the many fine reviews, of course – *Runaway* is an especially apt subject for a general appreciation and analysis of Munro's fiction. I will treat the stories separately and as a whole in an attempt to isolate and explain their essential qualities. It seems clear that these stories extend habits of thought and composition which Munro has used before, but it is not my goal to explore the relationships of this latest publication to her work at large. Rather, I will try to let *Runaway* speak wholly for itself.

2. Generalizations and the First Story

To begin with the obvious, it should be said that all the stories in *Runaway* center on women's thoughts and feelings about themselves and their situations. They track the unsteady progress of those thoughts and feelings with great delicacy and precision. In the broadest sense, each of the stories is about a woman acquiring knowledge, about the consequences thereof and

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1   Readers interested in biographical information about Munro, as well as the relationship between her life and her fiction, should see especially Robert Thacker, *Alice Munro: Writing Her Lives.* This is the most recent biography, and one with which Munro cooperated.

2   For a personal take on Munro and her art, see the memoir by Munro's eldest child, Shelia Munro.

3   For an excellent, up-to-date select bibliography of works by and about Munro, including reviews of Runaway, see Thacker 2005.

about knowing herself. Some of Munro's women are young adults, some are mature individuals looking back on their earlier lives and one – in "Trespasses" – is a pre-teen girl. Indeed, with a single partial exception, the stories are presented entirely from the perspectives of these women. Love, or its absence, is the usual subject matter in the stories, most often between a woman and a man, but sometimes between parent and child. Yet, this topic only partly defines the issues and concerns which the author engages. Munro explores her characters' inner and outer lives with subtlety and nuance, always sympathetically, but with a strong sense of irony and dryness which shades sometimes into a dispassion which is almost ruthless. She does not shy away from exposing her characters to the most painful thoughts and revelations.

Rarely are men much in focus in this collection. Only a few are interesting in their own right, but even these are not richly drawn, remaining somewhat shadowy foils for the women whose lives they affect. Most of the other men are not especially attractive individuals and they are seen only through women's eyes. The absence of fully-developed central male characters might be viewed as a limitation in Munro, but it is probably a simple matter of artistic choice on her part. It is the women who interest her most and who continually surprise, anguish and delight the reader with their experiences, their pain, their passion, their insights and their awareness.

To analyze and explain Munro's stories is, inevitably, to reduce them shamefully. The characters and their situations are most meaningful in and of themselves, needing no external explication. And yet, with a writer as evocative and complex as Munro, one feels a near compulsion to talk, to explain and to share. The first story in *Runaway,* from which the collection takes its title, is perhaps one least likely to be seriously reduced by comment and analysis. It also introduces themes, perspectives and approaches which Munro develops in different ways within the stories that follow.

The principal character in "Runaway" is Carla, a young woman fixed in a relationship with a moody, rather threatening lover named Clark. She is one of the least sympathetic of the women depicted in this collection, with her weepiness, her inability to see herself clearly or control her decisions. She is depicted once as seeing herself as "captive" to Clark (32) and, again, in a scene of crisis, as someone with no existence separate from him. Of course Carla is quite young, so her raw emotionality and shallow sense of self have not yet undergone the trying fires of experience. The narrative voice of the story alternates between Carla and Sylvia Jamieson, an older neighbor whose husband has recently died after a confining illness, but it concentrates mostly on Carla.

"This was the summer of rain and more rain," the narrative voice tells us near the beginning of the story, speaking presumably for Carla (4). Continuous rain sets a pervading atmosphere of apprehension and discord. Apprehension that Carla and Clark's boarding and riding stable will fail for lack of customers, and discord between the couple over Clark's plan to blackmail their neighbor, Sylvia. The rain seems to function as atmosphere and symbol, but when it finally breaks, the relief is illusory. Feelings of resolution and renewed happiness for the couple, which the sun brings with it, prove tenuous and probably temporary. It may be that Munro is quietly

commenting here on the writer's craft, suggesting that symbols can be too rigid and misleading a guide to understanding.

Munro presents her characters without illusion as to their weaknesses. All are flawed, although Carla seems especially so, perhaps only because she is so much the center of Munro's attention. In an effort to please Clark and to stimulate their sex life, Carla has developed a fragmented and fictitious story about how the dying Mr. Jamieson next door has been aroused by her and sought her sexual favors during her visits to help with the housework. Carla is now caught in her lie, being unable to tell Clark the truth – that she was never even once alone with Mr. Jamieson – even as he forces her to re-visit Sylvia after the death of her husband to set the groundwork for his scheme to blackmail Sylvia into giving him money to keep her well-known poet husband's reputation intact.

Part of this rainy summer's anguish for Carla is the absence of her pet Flora, a little white goat to which Carla has developed a strong attachment, maybe as a counterweight to her increasing feelings of uncertainty and distress with Clark. Flora has run away from the stables, adding to Carla's apprehension and discomfort in her relationship. Carla dreams of Flora, a creature which can be seen as representing Carla's earlier, happy, carefree state with Clark or as an object of support or even self-awareness in Carla's apparently disintegrating life. Flora is described as looking at Carla:

> . . . with an expression that was not quite sympathy—it was more like comradely mockery.
> . . . She was quick and graceful and provocative as a kitten, and her resemblance to a guileless girl in love had made them both [Carla and Clark] laugh. . . . but the comradeship with Flora was quite different, Flora allowing her no sense of superiority. (9)

When the narrative voice shifts to Sylvia, we learn that she, having developed a fascination with Carla's spontaneous personality, is eagerly awaiting her visit. But that visit goes very differently than expected for both Sylvia and Carla. Carla breaks down under the stress of what Clark wants her to do. Although she avoids telling the older woman about the blackmail scheme, she does, amidst much weeping, tell Sylvia about the loss of Flora and, when pressed, about her unhappiness with Clark. Sylvia takes control of the situation, urges Carla to leave Clark, to run away, and helps make arrangements for her escape. Affected, perhaps, by the wine and food which Sylvia has provided, Carla brightens up, agrees to the plan and eventually boards a bus for Toronto. So, Carla appears to be headed for a new, more self-examined, independent life, and it seems significant that Flora's absence no longer figures in her thinking.

A reversal occurs almost immediately, however. While Sylvia is thinking over the day's events, Carla's newly gained composure is coming unglued on the bus. Before she reaches the third stop she has run through a gamut of recollections and feelings, including a grudging acknowledgment that she has adapted truth somewhat with Sylvia in order to live up to what she imagined to be the latter's expectations of her, as well as increasing self-doubts and a growing panicky feeling that she is incapable of living without Clark. She gets off the bus and phones Clark to come get her!

Now the sun comes out; the summer is saved for the riding stable; Clark and Carla are in love again; the sex is good. Even a trip which Clark makes to Sylvia's house, ostensibly to return clothing which Sylvia had given to Carla, but really, one suspects, to bully and threaten Sylvia for having urged Carla's attempt at flight, doesn't turn out badly. Just as Clark's presence and talk seem most threatening to Sylvia, Flora reappears suddenly in a kind of magical dance, as highlighted in the fog by a passing car's headlights. The mood shifts; Clark is distracted and gives up any plans he might still have been harboring about blackmailing Sylvia.

The story turns yet again in the final section, however. We learn that Clark did not bring Flora home. In fact, he never told Carla about the goat's appearance at Sylvia's. Carla is stunned, therefore, when she receives a letter from Sylvia mentioning Flora's return. Still, she doesn't act. She is silent, blank.

> At night when Clark put his arms around her—busy as he was now, he was never too tired, never cross—she did not find it hard to be cooperative. . . . [But,] it was as if she had a murderous needle somewhere in her lungs, and by breathing carefully, she could avoid feeling it. But every once in a while she had to take a deep breath, and it was still there. (46)

As fall comes on, Carla gets used to the "needle" but finds herself tempted, seduced almost, by an urge to seek a place in the woods where she imagines Flora might have been killed by Clark. To seek "knowledge", as Munro imagines her saying to herself (47). But, the story concludes with these words: "The days passed and Carla didn't go near that place. She held out against the temptation" (47).

What is this "temptation" that Carla feels? What is the meaning of this ending? What is the meaning of Flora? One of the main attractions of this story is that Munro provides no easy answers to these questions. It concludes in subtlety, ambiguity and open-endedness. We may think we have followed the clues successfully and understand that Carla faces a life ahead with Clark which will be more meaningless and more threatening than she has yet experienced. We may think that Flora represented a more independent and self-confident Carla, one now lost for good. But the language of the story refuses to make that explicit.

Upon his return from Sylvia's, in bed with Carla, Clark tells her: "When I read your note, it was just like I went hollow inside. It's true. If you ever went away, I'd feel like I didn't have anything left in me" (42). On first reading this, one is inclined to think of these words positively, as one more nice effect of the sun's coming out. But, upon reflection, it's clear that Clark could just as well be lying to Carla or even threatening her. Munro leaves the meaning ambiguous. And the story's concluding words are ambiguous as well. While we may feel strongly that Carla is foolish and self-deceived to hold out against temptation, *i.e.*, to seek the knowledge of Clark's motives and her own that might come from finding Flora's bones in the woods, and that she is simply making herself vulnerable to some future abuse from Clark once their new sexual high is over, it is also true that we cannot predict for sure. Carla, like anyone, may eventually find an occasion to seek the truth and to liberate herself with self-awareness and self-sufficiency.

Finally, what are we to think about Flora? The little white goat is clearly meant to be a symbol in this story. But almost too obviously so, it seems. Disappearing with the rain! Reappearing with the sun! In a mist of magical meaning! Once again it is hard not to suspect an artist's irony on Munro's part. Symbols are fun, she seems to imply, without ever putting it in words, but once again they are a poor guide to understanding.

3. The Second through Sixth Stories

"Runaway" may serve as a take-off point for a broader investigation of the stories in the collection. Carla is one kind of woman, seen in a particular situation. Munro presents many others. Juliet, for example, is the protagonist in three linked stories, "Chance", "Soon" and "Silence". She is a young grad student turned teacher in "Chance", a still youthful mother visiting her parents with their new grandchild in "Soon" and an older, chastened woman in "Silence", where the crux of the story is Juliet's attempt to deal with the fact that her own daughter has decided to cut off all contact, totally and permanently.

There are several similarities between Juliet and Carla. Each pursues love – for both romance and sex – and each makes a leap into a new life. Carla runs off with Clark and Juliet seeks out a man she met only once on a train and from whom she has subsequently received a single letter. Also, Juliet is eventually forced to endure complications in her relationship with Eric, not exactly like Carla's with Clark, but with the similar effect – as revealed in "Silence" – of making her feel miserable and disaffected. In addition, although in different ways, both of these women have to face death. Juliet's partner dies at sea and her mother dies as well, while for Carla the death she has to confront is a more uncertain and symbolic one. She doesn't know for sure, but she suspects that Flora, her absent comrade and surrogate self, has been killed.

Nevertheless, Juliet is very different from Carla, and the crucial situations she faces are different as well. While she shares a youthful uncertainty (in "Chance") with Carla, and a self-effacing manner, Juliet is not weepy, dependent or living an unexamined life. Even in the first of the three stories she is very much aware of herself and her actions in pursuit of love with Eric. She may have doubts about the wisdom of her impulsive rush to the north country to see him, but she knows what she's doing and is willing to face the consequences. Perhaps this is partly because Juliet is a bright, educated woman, someone with "special" knowledge and a background of reading and study against which she can test herself. This is true, actually, of most of Munro's lead women in this collection (and Sylvia in "Runaway" as well), making Carla's stubborn and maudlin inarticulateness and helplessness something of an exception to the rule.

The three linked stories with Juliet are undeniably about love, but in the case of the last two, the love which Munro investigates is the love of parent and child. Visiting her parents in western Ontario when her daughter is about a year old, Juliet is surprised and pained in "Soon" to discover a great many previously unexamined aspects of her relationship with them. Her lack of real understanding of her mother and father is anticipated in Juliet's earlier choice of a wildly

unconventional Marc Chagall print for her parents' Christmas present. She discovers that picture in the attic when she visits them, and although she's offended, the knowledge that the Chagall did not speak to them as it did to her adds weight to the gathering evidence that she had not looked truthfully before at her parents' thoughts and feelings. She had been too self-centered to see clearly. The father, Sam, whom she had idolized and respected, is now revealed as weakly conservative about many things, as foolishly attracted to a girl who is helping out about the house and as less devoted to his wife than Juliet had always imagined.

Finally, Juliet must face a painful truth about children and parents, and one which Munro does not shrink from depicting. Sara, who is dying, and from whom Juliet has felt disaffected since her teens, tells her daughter near the end of the story, in response to some statements by Juliet about the illogic of religious faith:

> My faith isn't so simple. . . . I can't describe it. But it's—all I can say—it's *something*. It's a—wonderful—*something*. When it gets really bad for me—when it gets so bad I—you know what I think then? I think, all right. I think—Soon. *Soon I'll see Juliet*. (124).

Munro, in typical fashion, deals with the effect of this on Juliet indirectly. It is only some years later, upon re-reading a letter she wrote to Eric at the time, that she ruminates on the meaning of "home" and then faces the excruciating fact of her own reticence and self-centeredness. Munro ends the story thus:

> When Sara had said, *soon I'll see Juliet*, Juliet had found no reply. Could it not have been managed? Why should it have been so difficult? Just to say *Yes*. To Sara it would have meant so much – to herself, surely, so little. But she had turned away, she had carried the tray to the kitchen, and there she washed and dried the cups and also the glass that held the grape soda. She had put everything away. (125)

Munro's simple words here, small detail piled on small detail, extended out, put the reader in close touch with the anguish and regret which Juliet now feels for her cowardice, or whatever it was that kept her from responding to her mother.

Some of this comes around again in "Silence", for here it is Juliet who is abandoned by her own daughter, Penelope. The circumstances are different, of course, and there is no actual death which might eventually take away some of the pain and regret. But, the daughter is gone just the same. Munro charts the manner of Juliet's response, the long wearing way in which her loss eats at her and the slow dawning of understanding and a kind of acceptance. "Silence" is an exceptional story, a powerful story, but not one which can be easily encapsulated or explained. While it contains – like many of Munro's stories – at least one scene of vivid, imaginative extravagance, in this case a description of the local seamen burning Eric's body on a great wood pyre by the sea, it is very much an internal story of Juliet's state of mind, told in a quiet style with great restraint. Munro's method is simply accretive. She adds small irony to small irony, one of Juliet's thoughts to another**,** thus achieving an overall effect which must be experienced first hand to be fully appreciated. In other words, to read the story is to feel that we **are** Juliet, experiencing her anger, her agony and her small gains of understanding for ourselves.

The fact that Munro develops Juliet over the course of three stories is significant. Munro is able to explore her character's motivations, reactions and self-assessment at greater leisure than is her norm, something more in the manner of a novelist. The reader appreciates the care with which Juliet is given a chance as an older woman to reflect back on key aspects of her life. However, in this she is not unique in *Runaway*. Grace looks back in "Passion", Robin does so in "Tricks", and Nancy reflects on her earlier self in "Powers". The difference between the three Juliet stories and the others is simply the amount of space Munro gives herself to explore the ironies, the self-assessments and understandings that come to her characters with age. We are very glad for the opportunity to follow Juliet's life through "Chance", "Soon" and "Silence", feeling rewarded for the fuller picture that Munro provides. However, the same investigative process is also present in 'Passion", "Tricks" and "Powers", although more compressed, more suggestive, more allusive and less specific. Suggestion and allusion have their special magic, of course, and these stories do not seem in any way lesser treatments of their women characters. We may welcome the chance to read an extended fiction by Munro, but we are equally delighted when she returns to the individual story form.

"Old confusions or obligations." This is a key phrase from "Passion", the fifth story in *Runaway*, and it can be fairly applied backward and forward to earlier and later stories. It might be a key phrase for the whole collection, as well as an author's comment on her craft. "Passion" begins with Grace, in her sixties, revisiting a scene of crisis from her youth. Before the narrator tells the tale of that crisis, she asks, presumably in Grace's mature voice:

> What was Grace really looking for when she had undertaken this expedition? Maybe the worst thing would have been to get just what she might have thought she was after. . . . To find something so diminished [the house and area where this scene from her youth occurred], still existing but made irrelevant . . . might be less hurtful in the long run. . . . And what if you find it gone altogether? You make a fuss. . . . But mightn't a feeling of relief pass over you, of old confusions or obligations wiped away? (161)

Munro puts her idea directly forward here in "Passion", but every one of the stories in *Runaway* deals with the rock bottom truth that one never finds relief from past thoughts and actions, nor escape from the steps of fate which determine one's destiny. It may also be that Munro is quietly suggesting something about her own work as an artist in seeking out "old confusions or obligations" and putting them to the test of time to see whether they disappear or remain for life.

Looking back to the earlier stories, it is clear that the whole story of Juliet, told in its three parts, is one about old confusions and obligations which developed in her life and which haunt her still. The motif is less direct in "Runaway", but the strong implication at that story's conclusion is that Carla will **not** escape the confusions and obligations which have occurred in her young life. And, looking ahead quickly, it can be easily seen that the same theme pervades stories like "Trespasses", "Tricks" and "Powers".

In "Trespasses" the obligations and confusions embedded in the emotionally fraught situation which a pre-teen, Lauren, learns about from her mother and father and from another woman,

Delphine, are certainly there to stay in all their lives. For Lauren especially questions will persist. Was I adopted? Was Delphine my birth mother? Were Harry and Ellen lying in saying that it was an earlier child, a sister who died as an infant, who was the adopted one? Like Juliet and like Grace, Lauren may very well come to wish as she grows older that the old confusions or obligations might be wiped away.

The paradigm of "old confusions or obligations" is present again in "Tricks", but works a bit differently. Learning the truth about an early, ill-fated love only in her old age, Robin would not for a second wish the memory of those awful, unfair confusions, those truly devastating tricks of fate, to be wiped away. Painful as they are, they define her. She is grateful, in fact, for the all-too-late revelation of the truth about what happened to separate her permanently from Danilo. Not his fault! Not hers either, although she cannot stop entirely from blaming herself.

All of which is another reminder of how important it is not to reduce Munro's stories to a single theme or motif. Even where similarities are visible, the execution each time is different, surprising and uniquely clarifying. That is one of the special fascinations of these stories, along with the seemingly infinite variety of ways in which Munro is able to portray her characters' interior dialogues with themselves. They step forward in thought, pull back, test one idea against another. Munro shows them speculating, assessing (always assessing!) and pitting one emotion against its opposite or its companion. It is in the quiet intensity of these internal dialogues, coupled with the often crippling ironies which she constructs for her characters, that Munro's excellence as a writer shines most brightly.

In "Passion" Grace is a young high school graduate who stands out against the norm with her strong thirst to read and learn, against the odds of her family's meager means. She stands out also for some strong feminist views (the only ones openly expressed by any female character in this collection) and for her cold-eyed assessments of the boy, Maury Travers, who has fallen in love with her. She stands out particularly for her quick decision (not nearly as impulsive as it seems) to drive off from her fiancé's home with his married half-brother, Neil. She imagines herself having a satisfying sexual encounter with Neil, very unlike the frustrating gropings she has endured with Maury, who believes passionately in the inviolability of her virginity. However, from her day-long travels with the alcoholic, despairing Neil she learns about a totally different kind of passion, finds herself facing death in an indirect but forceful way and makes what she herself describes as an irrevocable leap toward a different life for herself. ". . . it was as if a gate had clanged shut behind her" (182). From Neil's resigned desperation during their day-long travels and from his suicide that same night in a car crash, Grace learns that there are different kinds of passion, as well as different kinds of lives which must be lived.

Munro tells us almost nothing about the changes which occurred in Grace's life after that "gate" slammed shut. All we are told is that Maury ends their engagement and that Mr. Travers shows up to give Grace a check for one thousand dollars – guilt money from the family, perhaps, or an implied bribe. The story ends with this line: "In those days, it was enough money to insure her a start in life" (196). Whatever she did in the forty or so years between the events of the story and the

present, we know from the opening paragraph that Grace never outlived her past, never stopped wondering about the "old confusions or obligations" gathered in her youth, never stopped seeking to know the meaning of what happened, and never stopped assessing herself and her circumstance. In these respects, Grace is a true sister to the protagonists in *Runaway*'s other stories.

Like Grace, most of Munro's women are recognizable characters who seem very real to the reader and who are brought especially close to us by their self-deprecating ordinariness and by Munro's habit of punctuating scenes of high emotion or dramatic import with colloquial expressions of everyday, north-American use. There is always a sense of irony in this, of course, but the reader cannot help feeling disarmed as well, drawn more closely to the characters and encouraged to feel even more strongly the extent to which those characters' thoughts, feelings and experiences are reflections of her or his own.

One example of the way these qualities – self-deprecating comments by characters and colloquial, deflating expressions – work in Munro's fiction may be seen in "Tricks", the penultimate story of *Runaway*. Packing a powerful emotional impact, this story is somewhat different from the others in the collection for its directness and simplicity. As a young, unmarried woman who is solely responsible for an older, bitter and sarcastic sister who has been "Stunted, crippled in a way, by severe and persisting asthma from childhood on" (237), Robin has inner urges, partially suppressed, for a richer, more fulfilling life. Against her sister's wishes and against the norms of her small-town neighbors she goes alone once a year to see one play at the Stratford Shakespeare Festival in Stratford, Ontario (a real place and real festival, by the way). We learn that the previous year she met a man there, fell immediately and deeply in love with him and arranged to meet him again in one year, after his return from his native Montenegro, but without specifying a particular date or time. In the present, the story follows her back to Stratford to the planned rendezvous, depicting her as full of hope and joy, imagining the ways in which her life will be changed. But, a cruel fate intervenes. When she reaches Danilo's apartment, he seems to reject her without a word. However, in the story's final section Robin, a much older woman now, accidentally learns the awful irony of what happened to change her life so forcefully, although hardly in the way she had so eagerly anticipated. The man who rejected her in Stratford was not Danilo, but his twin brother, a deaf mute whom Danilo had brought back to Canada from Montenegro. Danilo himself had simply been out of the house when Robin arrived.

The events of this story are more charged with high drama than is typical of the other stories in *Runaway*, it being the only one in the collection to come even close to being sentimental. But, it is not really sentimental either, despite the powerful sense of regret, grief and anger which it arouses in the reader. For one thing, the "trick", the irony, is muted by the context, for the setting is Stratford, after all, and Robin knows that "Shakespeare should have prepared her. Twins are often the reason for mix-ups and disasters in Shakespeare. A means to an end, those tricks are supposed to be" (268). In addition, however, the sentimental is forestalled as well by Robin's self-deprecating reactions in the minutes and hours after the rejection, as well as by the colloquial expressions which Munro uses to undercut the open, welling sentiment. Here are some of the words from the text:

With horror she understood what he was doing. He was putting on this act [slamming the door in her face without saying a word] because it was an easier way to get rid of her than making an explanation, dealing with her astonishment and female carrying-on, her wounded feelings and possible collapse and tears. . . . And deep down, Robin was not surprised, either, but the blame was for herself. . . . No apologies, no explanations, no hope. Pretend you don't recognize her, and if that doesn't work, slam a door in her face. The sooner you can get her to hate you the better. Though with some of them it's uphill work. Exactly. (259–60)

Munro's style in "Tricks" is typical of her approach to both character and event throughout *Runaway*. In "Chance", for example, Juliet indulges in self-deprecating self-chastisement for having pulled away from Eric's kisses on the train and for having said, in explanation, that she was a virgin.

How stupid, how disastrous. Afraid, of course, that his stroking hand would go farther down and reach the knot she had made securing the pad to the belt. If she had been the sort of girl who could rely on tampons this need never have happened. And why *virgin*? When she had gone to such unpleasant lengths, in Willis Park, to insure that such a condition would not be an impediment? So now he could tell someone how he listened all evening to this fool girl showing off what she knew about Greek mythology, and in the end – when he finally kissed her good night, to get rid of her – she started screaming that she was a virgin. (80)

Munro's use of colloquial language is also apparent here, especially in the final phrases.

Another example may be noted in "Silence". Here Munro's narrative voice uses a common colloquialism to undercut both Juliet's continuing hurt over Penelope's loss and her rather pretentious, academic interest in a late Greek romance by Heliodorus. Having described the tale, with its obvious parallels to Juliet's own loss of a daughter, the narrator, *cum* Juliet, concludes, "Interesting themes were thick as flies here. . ." (151). This technique reduces Juliet's sense of specialness, and it resists any pull toward the sentimental.

4. The Final Story

"Powers", as noted above, is the concluding story, a challenging work in which Munro once again explores motifs and strategies which she has used before. One might even say that "Powers" helps put the rest of the collection in perspective by stressing certain themes and approaches. There are some techniques and strategies we have not seen previously, such as the use of diary entries and letters, the division of the story into five titled sections and the use of a male character's perspective for part of the story. Nevertheless, it is the commonality of "Powers" with its sisters in *Runaway* which is most striking and, perhaps, illuminating.

In a fashion which is typical, for this collection at least, Munro develops her chief protagonist slowly and deliberately, first of all with hints and suggestions from the youthful Nancy's own diary entries and from letters she writes as a young woman, as well as from comments made by Ollie, a young man her own age who is her husband-to-be's cousin. Nancy strikes us as

a bright, impulsive woman, self-centered and conventional certainly, a bit condescending and rather thoughtless about other people's feelings. However, Ollie is probably unfair in bluntly characterizing Nancy as "spoiled, saucy, and egotistical" (285) because she does express hints of self-awareness about her weaknesses from the beginning. Unfortunately, that sense of self-awareness is not nearly strong enough to prevent her from accepting a loveless but conventionally happy marriage to the older Wilf or from casually showing off her acquaintance, Tessa, to Ollie by descending on her home and insisting that Tessa demonstrate her special psychic powers by telling Ollie what he has in his pockets. When Tessa succeeds, Nancy gets the satisfaction of seeing that Ollie is greatly impressed. Still, when he questions her about Tessa on their walk home, he causes her to wonder – but only very briefly – whether she hadn't been at fault in showing Tessa off "Like a freak" (295).

The action of "Powers" unfolds continuously in the first and second sections, but forty-one years go by between the second and third sections. Now Nancy is about sixty-three, with a husband falling into dementia. Having just received word of Tessa for the first time in many years, she visits a private hospital where Tessa has been incarcerated for decades. Forty years ago Tessa had agreed to run off with Ollie, thinking he loved her and was proposing marriage, in order that they might investigate her psychic powers in a scientific way. Now Tessa tells Nancy that Ollie is gone; she believes that he's dead, because she saw him so in her mind's eye after she was committed to the hospital and because he has never come to rescue her.

Nancy has come to this hospital, having been notified that it is about to close and that Tessa's future is therefore in limbo, out of a presumed good intention to help. But, she does not help. She does not take Tessa with her when she leaves, and although she promises to write, she never does. In other words, we see Nancy still as a generally sympathetic person, but someone more inclined to "act" nice, to do the conventionally proper thing, than someone who is truly good and benevolent. In this respect, she is the total opposite of Tessa who is someone so direct, so simple, so non-judgmental as to be scarcely of this world. Like Irene in "Soon", Tessa is presented as something of a gothic figure. These two women stand out from the norm in *Runaway* because of their odd physical appearance and farm background. Tessa stands out even more with her naiveté and psychic powers. However, it is the fact that Munro shows other characters treating them as freaks which most emphasizes their gothic aspect. Tessa and Irene are interesting, if shadowy, characters in their own right, but Munro uses them primarily as foils to the protagonists, serving to expose weaknesses or pretenses in their more educated companions.

The fourth and fifth sections of "Powers" reinforce our view of Nancy, but in a different and painful way. Sixty-seven years old, a widow now, returning from a cruise meant to help her recover from Wilf's death, Nancy meets Ollie, totally unexpectedly, on the streets of Vancouver. She says nothing to him about what she learned from Tessa, even though it is sharply in her mind, and Ollie lies more directly by describing how Tessa died years ago and how he spread her ashes in the Pacific. They both paste over the truth with pleasant conversation, and once more our earlier assessment of Nancy is reinforced. She's still vain, she's still bound by convention, and she can still be bright and sarcastic when on display.

Now, however, a seemingly minor crisis intervenes. Ollie drives Nancy to her hotel, and she, without forethought it seems, prepares to invite him in for the night. His refusal provokes a suddenly piercing light of understanding and self-awareness. Nancy now seems to understand something of the desire she must have felt for Ollie all these years. She seems to accept that her failure to tell him about meeting Tessa four years earlier is a direct, damning and cowardly form of lying. She seems to accept that her long marriage to Wilf was a loveless sham and that she has "traveled light" all her life, making "the road easy" for herself by shutting out real emotions, real commitments and honest self-evaluation (329). In other words, the obligations and confusions of her life are suddenly writ large for her to see.

Somehow Munro makes this a moment of great sadness and pain for the reader as well. We are made to feel the intensity of Nancy's regret for a largely wasted life in which she so seriously, willfully, misunderstood others and herself. This is especially so in the final section, which describes a dream of Nancy's in which she imagines a reversal of destiny for Ollie and Tessa, one in which the two are reconciled and make a new commitment to each other just before Ollie is about to follow through on his plan to commit Tessa to a mental hospital in order to be rid of her. But, Nancy cannot maintain this wishful desire to cancel out her pain and obligations. Munro describes it thus: "Gently, inexorably [someone – maybe Wilf – is] leading her away from what begins to crumble behind her, to crumble and darken tenderly into something like soot and soft ash" (335).

5. Conclusion

The ending of "Powers" makes one think of parallel situations or experiences in the other stories, of other moments in which a flash of truth or recognition comes to a character, or in which, sometimes, Munro brings that flash of illumination directly to her readers. One thinks of Carla, for example, choosing to avoid the temptation to seek knowledge in "Runaway", or of Juliet, in "Soon" and "Silence", forced to face the crushing truth about the ways in which the love of parent and child are taken for granted, sometimes severed and never mended. And, one remembers Grace, thinking at the beginning of "Passion" about the great relief that would ensue if the memories of old confusions and obligations could simply be wiped away. Finally, there is Robin's agony and anger to recall in "Tricks". As readers we cannot help but feel intensely for the painful self-awareness and knowledge these characters all come to face.

"Powers" is also a particularly good example of the way Munro keeps her main characters in a kind of balance. They are both weak and strong, with their weaknesses and strengths blending subtly together. They are blind to themselves **and** they are aware. They are presented always with sympathy and compassion, but Munro sometimes judges them harshly as well, although never directly and openly. They are always judged first and foremost by themselves, not by the author alone.

Parallel to this is a habit in Munro's writing of juxtaposing a most realistic, detailed, often colloquial style with brief lyric passages of great beauty. "Powers" is an excellent case in point. Munro has Nancy present herself in a colloquial manner that is sharply realistic and true to character. But,

Munro also has her speak, indirectly through the narrative voice, in the poetically evocative final lines quoted above: ". . . to crumble and darken tenderly into something like soot and soft ash."

Here, in addition, is Carla near the end of "Runaway":

> She had only to raise her eyes, she had only to look in one direction, to know where she might go. An evening walk, once her chores for the day were finished. To the edge of the woods, and the bare tree where the buzzards had held their party. And then the little dirty bones in the grass. The skull with perhaps some shreds of bloodied skin clinging to it. A skull that she could hold like a teacup in one hand. Knowledge in one hand. Or perhaps not. Nothing there. (47)

And here is Juliet in "Soon" describing the letter she wrote home to Eric years ago:

> When she read the letter, Juliet winced, as anybody does on discovering the preserved and disconcerting voice of some past fabricated self. She wondered at the sprightly cover-up, contrasting with the pain of her memories. Then she thought that some shift must have taken place, at that time, which she had not remembered. Some shift concerning where home was. (125)

Lastly, here is Grace's voice, presented by the narrator, in "Passion":

> She'd thought it was touch. Mouths, tongues, skin, bodies, banging bone on bone. Inflammation. Passion. But that wasn't what had been meant for them at all. That was child's play, compared to how she knew him, how far she'd seen into him, now. What she had seen was final. As if she was at the edge of a flat dark body of water that stretched on and on. Cold, level water. Looking out at such dark, cold, level water, and knowing it was all there was. (193)

With the ring of Munro's words in our ears, this is a very good place to end. We are reminded yet again that this author, like all others, speaks best for herself. There are common threads among the stories which may be commented on, to be sure, and there are points of explication which may be helpful, but in the end each story is a unique and powerful exploration, utterly unto itself.

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Using *Oroonoko* to Teach
the Corrosive Effects of Racism

Summary

Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko* offers the reader a rich set of examples illustrating the complexities of interracial relationships. Throughout the work, the imperatives of slave society clash with the human desire for friendship, resulting in a series of untenable contradictions for the characters involved. When people, even those of good will, are participants in and beneficiaries of systems that victimize others, they find their friendships complicated and compromised. The work is a powerful text for teaching the conflicting dynamics of race relations in our own times. By having students order the characters in power ranking, plot a power grid of shifting alliances, and carefully examine moral dilemmas faced by the characters, the teacher can get them to see the contortions caused by prejudice and clashing economic interests. Teaching *Oroonoko* in the safe confines of a literature classroom can also give students training and practice in how to have conversations about race, a skill which they can put to good use when they enter broader society.

Key words: Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko*, Teaching race relations, Slave society

Roman *Oroonoko* pri pouku
o razdiralnih posledicah rasizma

Povzetek

Delo pisateljice Aprhe Behn z naslovom *Oroonoko* ponuja bralcu bogato paleto vpogledov v zapleteno problematiko medrasnih odnosov. Besedilo vseskozi prepleta boj med suženjsko naravnano družbo ter človeško željo po prijateljstvu, kar doživljajo osebe kot niz nevzdržnih nasprotujočih si okoliščin. Tako ljudje, ki bodisi sodelujejo pri sistemu, ki tlači druge, bodisi se okoriščajo z njim, in to celo tisti, ki jih žene dober namen, ugotavljajo, da so njihove prijateljske zveze otežene ali celo ogrožene. *Oronooko* je izjemno primerno delo za poučevanje navskrižnih dinamičnih trenj v sodobnih medrasnih okoljih. S pomočjo razvrščanja pripovednih oseb glede na njihovo pozicijo moči, izdelovanja mreže menjajočih se povezav in zavezništev ter z natančnim opazovanjem moralnih dilem študenti spoznavajo izkrivljene predstave, ki jih porajajo predsodki in nasprotujoči si ekonomski interesi. Poučevanje besedila študentom hkrati odpira možnosti za vzpostavljanje pristne komunikacije glede rasnih vprašanj pri vstopanju v svet širše družbe.

Ključne besede: Aphra Behn, *Oronooko*, družba suženjstva in pouk o njej

Using *Oroonoko* to Teach the Corrosive Effects of Racism

1. Introduction

"Can we all get along?" Rodney King plaintively asked as he saw the 1992 Los Angeles race riots break out following the acquittal of the policemen who had been videotaped beating him. My students invariably ask a version of this question whenever issues of race surface in the literature that we are studying. They want to know why we can't all just be friends. The question is laudable, of course, and testifies to their good hearts. They believe, with Martin Luther King, that our relationships should be based on the content of our character rather than on the color of our skin.

But sometimes these same students may resist undertaking the tough exploration that answering their question requires. Sometimes they act as though it is the very act of talking about race that keeps people apart. If we didn't mention racial tension, they imply, it would disappear. African-American poet Lucille Clifton, finding herself criticized for discussing how racism continues to taint the American landscape, complains, "I am accused of attending to the past/as if I made it" (Clifton 1991, 7). Truthtellers can find themselves branded as the cause of the problem rather than a necessary part of the solution.

If we need open and honest conversations about race to foster genuine interracial friendships, then why do students (and not only students) shy away from these conversations? In part, I think, it is because they fear that, if they fully acknowledged the pervasiveness and intensity of bigotry, they would feel overwhelmed. If ignorance is bliss, they figure, 'tis folly to be wise. They may also harbor, or fear that they harbor, their own racist sentiments and wish to avoid conversations that might expose them to others, or even reveal themselves to themselves. They may feel guilty that their own privileged status in the world comes at the expense of someone else. Feeling angry and confused may seem easier than substantive exploration.

Only it's not easier. In Hegel's famous formulation, the master as well as the slave pays a price for power imbalance. The students' denial takes a toll, making them fearful and evasive. They can live hunkered-down lives. Yet where such repressed energy is present, the opportunity for deep insight and commitment also exists, especially in idealistic young people. Once students realize that their fears need not control them, that they can confront the issues head-on, that interracial friendships are actually strengthened rather than undermined by frank discussions of race; they feel liberated from a shackling denial. This, I believe, helps explain the success on college campuses of the hard-hitting film *Crash*, the 2005 Oscar winner. Through its even-handed strategy of finding racism, sexism, and a host of other "isms" within each character in the film, yet at the same time finding something redemptive about each character, *Crash* shows audiences that it is possible to face up to and move beyond corrosive prejudice. When, in the climactic ending, the sexist and racist white cop heroically risks his life to save the African American woman that he has abused, we see how, despite all our flaws, we can step into our better selves.

This insight, however, cannot be doled out from a moral height and distributed in the form of maxims to people who are expected to salute sharply and change their behavior. Only by participating in communal conversations can society grapple with charged racial topics. The classroom is one place – maybe the main place – where young citizens and future leaders can learn how to talk about race. The teacher's challenge is to create a safe environment in which practice conversations can occur. The challenges are formidable, as anyone knows who has tried to hold discussions about race. White students can remain silent or censor themselves for fear of being "politically incorrect" and exposing themselves as racists. They can go on the attack or overly defer to students of color as "the experts." Students of color, meanwhile, can remain silent to avoid controversy or use their "victim status" to claim a moral superiority and score points. Such class discussions can be marked by long silences, angry outbursts, defensive attacks, and convoluted sentences. If the health of the society were not at stake, all the discomfort might not seem worth it. Why not use literature to escape from rather than to engage with a flawed world?

Yet if one sets up a discussion intelligently and sensitively, the literature classroom can be a site of healing and empowerment. The indirection of symbolic literary representation provides a way to circumvent defenses while introducing students to charged issues. Students are less likely to retreat into a formulaic soapbox stance where thinking stops if they have become involved in the lives of characters and the complexities of their situations. Paradoxically, the very fictionality of literature allows real conversations to occur.

Aphra Behn's 1688 masterpiece *Oroonoko*, the quasi-autobiographical, quasi-fictional memoir-travelogue-biography-romance about an enslaved African prince, is one of the most successful works I have found for fostering these conversations because it sets forth the complex dynamics of an interracial friendship between a white woman and a black man. In certain ways, the narrator is like my students: Behn wants everyone to get along. And like many of my students, she is blind to the ways than social injustices and power imbalances contaminate such friendships. The book lays out the contradictions clearly in part because the author doesn't have our 21st century awareness, and therefore our evasions and defenses. Often the contradictions are dropped into the text without comment and without any attempt at resolution. Teachers of the work therefore can turn their students loose on a set of provocative ethical questions and moral dilemmas and have them try out the kinds of conversations they will need to engage in as they enter society.

One reason *Oroonoko* is so rich is because of the contradictory nature of the author herself. Teaching her colorful and fascinating life along with *Oroonoko* both enthralls students and helps them to identify and better understand their own contradictions. Although an entrepreneur who made her living by her pen – one of the first British women to do so – Behn was opposed to capitalism. Her opposition was not progressive, however, but reactionary, coming from a monarchist vantage point. (She herself, however, was probably middle class, notwithstanding her self-depiction in *Oroonoko* as the daughter of a lieutenant general.) She may well have been a friend of the slave whose life she recounts, but her work is not against slavery, just against the treatment of this one exceptional slave. Although Behn is seen as an early feminist – Virginia Woolf famously wrote that all women writers should "let flowers fall upon the tomb of Aphra Behn, for it was she who earned

them the right to speak their minds" – the author celebrates the divine Imoinda/Clemene's total devotion to Oroonoko, culminating in her enthusiastic willingness that he cut her throat in their suicide pact. This from an author who was an independent widow and who took advantage of this status to (among other things) serve as a spy for the English during the Second Anglo-Dutch War, make a public name for herself as a successful playwright, and write propaganda for the crown. Teaching the life along with the work has the advantage of undermining traditional political categories, thereby creating a more open field for discussing difficult topics.

The issue of interracial friendships is broached at the beginning of the book and becomes the major focus of the second half, when Oroonoko is enslaved and transported to Surinam. In my class, I set the stage for discussion by having my students, in a homework assignment, comb through these parts of the work to find instances of interracial friendships, both false and true. They invariably discover the following examples:

> ". . . we find it necessary to caress 'em [the Indians] as Friends . . ." (Behn 1973, 4)

> "And the Captain [of the slave ship], in return of all these mighty Favours, besought the Prince to honor his Vessel with his Presence, some day or other at Dinner, before he shou'd set sail . . ." (Behn 1973, 32)

> "Trefry [the plantation overseer] soon found he [Oroonoko/Caesar] was yet something greater than he confess'd; and from that moment began to conceive so vast an Esteem for him, that he ever after lov'd him as his dearest Brother . . ." (Behn 1973, 38)

> "So that obliging him [Oroonoko] to love us very well, we [the British women] had all the Liberty of Speech with him, especially my self, whom he call'd his *Great Mistress*; and indeed my Word would go a great way with him." (Behn 1973, 46)

> "The Deputy-Governour . . . , who was the most fawning fair-tongu'd Fellow in the World, and one that pretended the most Friendship to *Caesar*, was now the only violent Man against him . . . He was a Fellow, whose Character is not fit to be mentioned with the worst of the slaves . . . ." (Behn 1973, 63–4)

> "He [Colonel Martin] was a Friend to *Caesar*, and resented this false dealing with him very much." (Behn 1973, 68)

This exercise allows the students to divide people into two groups they recognize, liberals and racists. Because the narrator's voice is vouching for these friendships and because, as readers, we want to believe in interracial friendships, the students often overlook trouble spots and override uneasiness. These trouble spots will become the centerpieces of the discussions to come.

The second homework exercise asks the students to diagram the social power grid. They are to do a power ranking, first of the different populations and then of every character within each population.

Ordering the groups is fairly easy. The colonists are clearly the most powerful and the slaves the least. Some discussion invariably arises about the ordering of the first two. Although the natives cannot repel the colonists, neither can they be conquered by them. This conversation has the value of surfacing the following remarkably open admission (by 21st century terms): The narrator writes, "we find it absolutely necessary to caress 'em as Friends, and not to treat 'em as Slaves, nor dare we do other, their numbers so far surpassing ours in the Continent" (Behn 1973, 5).

This passage will prove so useful that we look at it closely. I ask my students what the statement reveals about the relationship between friendship and power and why Behn writes this compound-complex sentence the way that she does. The students unpack the author's words, balancing her apparent sincerity with the colonists' self interest. Would the colonists cease caressing if they could in fact enslave the natives, we ask? What does this reveal about the nature of interracial friendship in the book?

Having the students rank the characters within each population helps them appreciate the complexity of the issues. It also gets them to read the work closely as they must comb through every sentence. I tell them that they are to leave no individual behind. When the students bring their assignments to class, I divide them into groups and have them compare their rankings. There are usually disagreements, and the resultant conversations lay out some of the power ambiguities in the book.

For simplicity's sake, in the student ranking below (which is fairly common) I have eliminated the Indians and many of the minor characters:

> The British Colonizers
>
> Lord Willoughby of Parnham, absentee coproprietor of Surinam
> William Byam, Lieutenant Governor
> John Trefry, Parnham plantation overseer
> Aphra Behn, daughter of a deceased lieutenant general of islands off Surinam's coast
> Colonel Martin
> Captain of slave ship
> Bannister, member of the council and Byam ally
>
>
> The African Slaves
>
> Oroonoko/Caesar
> Imoinda/Clemene, Oroonoko's wife
> Tuscan, spokesman for the other slaves
> The male slaves
> The female slaves

While ordering the slaves is fairly straightforward (essentially they fall into some version of house slaves and field slaves), ordering the colonists is more difficult. The difficulty leads to illuminating discussions. The students must wrestle with where authority lies: in the executive authority (Byam) or in the plantation owners and their representatives (Trefry, Colonel Martin)? What emerges in these discussions is a sense that the upper-class plantation owners are able to appear humane only because others do the dirty work. Trefry may invoke the king's charter to provide a safe haven for Oroonoko at Parnham House, but the Parnhamites are often conveniently absent when Byam moves against Oroonoko. Behn may claim authority as the daughter of a (now deceased) lieutenant general, but it is not clear whether her status endows her with any real clout. Behn's identity as a woman, of course, raises its own set of questions about how much power a woman had in this society.

Once we have discussed the rankings, I ask the students to disregard the population groupings and see how many different alliances they can find in the text. The result is a scrambled picture. Among the alliances they identify are the following:

> Oroonoko first with and then against the slave trader
> Parnham plantation (Trefry and Behn) with Oroonoko against Byam
> Oroonoko mediating with the Indians on the colonists' behalf
> Oroonoko with the other slaves against the colonists
> The colonists and the slaves against Oroonoko
> Byam's Indian mistress with Byam
> Tuscan with Byam against Oroonoko
> The British women with Oroonoko in complaining
> against the injustices that have been done to him

In addition to rendering problematic naïve notions of friendship, having the students focus on the shifting alliances helps them see the ambiguities and complexities of power. Other than the very top and very bottom of the list, we discuss how no one is either a pure victimizer or a pure victim. The lieutenant governor may have the ultimate power to mete out injustice and the wives of the lesser slaves seem to justify Zora Neale Hurston's depiction of poor black women as the "mules of the world," but everyone else occupies a middle ground. And to be in the middle, *Oroonoko* makes clear, is to be conflicted. The most interesting characters from this point of view are Trefry, Behn, and Oroonoko. Although all three are described as people of good will who witness and protest against injustice, all three are participants in and beneficiaries of systems that victimize others, including each other. They reach out the hand of friendship in mutual respect, but their friendships are complicated and compromised.

For instance, Trefry admires Oroonoko but collaborates in his capture. Behn admires Oroonoko, placates him, spies on him, flees from him, and empathizes with him in his agony, experiencing in this last instance some of his own feelings of powerlessness in the face of white male power. Oroonoko identifies with the slave trader, is victimized by the slave trader, bonds with Trefry, is

strung along by Trefry, promises to enslave others to gain his freedom, seeks to make common cause with the other slaves, is betrayed by the other slaves, and in the end is twice promised protection by Trefry and twice ends up in the hands of Byam.

The students are more likely to come to an appreciation of these intricacies if they struggle with them on their own than if they hear them presented in a lecture. I therefore divide the class into small groups and hand out the passages below, along with a set of instructions. Each passage provides a difficult moral and political dilemma that challenges the reader. Following their small group discussions, the students return to the assembled class and report on their ideas. Along with the passages and instructions, I have added a brief comment on how the teacher can show the relevance of the passages to our own race conversations today.

Passage #1 – Oroonoko strung along

"[Oroonoko, having discovered that Imoinda is pregnant] was every day treating with Trefry for his and Clemene's liberty, and offered either Gold, or a vast quantity of Slaves, which should be paid before they let him go, provided he could have any Security that he should go when his Ransom was paid. They fed him from day to day with Promises, and delay'd him till the Lord-Governour should come; so that he began to suspect them of Falshood . . ." (Behn 1973, 45)

Instructions for discussion: Recall that Trefry, who purchased Oroonoko, has promised him, "on his Word and Honour, [that] he would find the means to reconduct him to his own Country again" (Behn 1973, 38). List the possibilities of who "they" are. If Trefry, why would he be feeding Oroonoko with promises? Who else could "they" be, and why does Behn use a vague pronoun. Why, instead of laying out the situation clearly (she, after all, may be in a position to know), does she use Oroonoko's limited point of view?

Continuing relevance: Trefry's desire to be both friend and master of Oroonoko and the elaborate dance that this contradictory stance requires points to the contradictions of privilege and what is sacrificed when one human being exploits another. Behn's vague and evasive language, used to cover the contradictions of privilege, is characteristic of many current discussions of race.

Passage #2 – Trefry's negotiation with Oroonoko

"But Trefry and Byam [negotiating with a cornered Oroonoko] pleaded and protested together so much, that Trefry believing the Governour to mean what he said, and speaking very cordially himself, generously put himself into Caesar's hands, and took him aside, and persuaded him, even with Tears, to live, by surrendering himself, and to name his Conditions. . . .

But [following Oroonoko's agreement and surrender] they were no sooner arrived at the Place where all the Slaves receive their Punishments of Whipping, but they laid hands on Caesar and Tuscan . . . bound them to two several Stakes, and whipped them in a most deplorable and inhuman manner, rending the very Flesh from their Bones . . . " (Behn 1973, 66–7)

Instructions for discussion: Discuss whether Trefry gets a free pass here. How responsible is he for his apparent naiveté (or stupidity)? Exactly how innocent is he? Does he benefit in any way from collaborating with Byam? From Oroonoko's capture? Does he pay a price if Oroonoko escapes? If you had to choose between (1) acknowledging that your wealth comes from a system of horrendous brutality and (2) pretending that you didn't know how depraved humans could be, which way would you go? Why? What would you gain and lose from each choice?

Continuing relevance: The desire for innocence in the text – which starts with the Edenic innocence of the natives and recurs in professions of ignorance on the part of Trefry, Behn and Oroonoko – continues on today as people react against the compromises pushed upon them by the societies in which they live. We often want to pretend that racism doesn't exist because we don't want to admit how close we are to it or how we benefit from it. The teacher can ask the students to what extent is that innocence in actuality a willed ignorance.

Passage #3 – Behn's Friendship with Oroonoko

"This Thought made him very uneasy [Oroonoko's growing suspicion that he is being strung along with future promises of freedom], and his Sullenness gave them some Jealousies of him; so that I was obliged, by some Persons who fear'd a Mutiny (which is very fatal sometimes in those Colonies that abound so with Slaves, that they exceed the Whites in vast numbers), to discourse with Caesar, and to give him all the Satisfaction I possibly could: they knew he and Clemene were scarce an Hour in a Day from my Lodgings; that they eat with me, and that I oblig'd 'em in all things I was capable of. . . . [H]e liked the Company of us Women much above the Men . . . . So that obliging him to love us very well, we had all the Liberty of Speech with him, especially my self, whom he call'd his Great Mistress; and indeed my Word would go a great way with him. For these Reasons I had opportunity to take notice to him, that he was not well pleased of late, as he used to be; was more retired and thoughtful; and told him, I took it ill he shou'd suspect we wou'd break our Words with him, and not permit both him and Clemene to return to his own Kingdom . . . . He made me some Answers that shew'd a doubt in him, which made me ask, what advantage it would be to doubt. It would but give us a fear of him, and possibly compel us to treat him so as I should be very loath to behold: that is, it might occasion his Confinement. Perhaps this was not so luckily spoke of me, for I perceiv'd he resented that word, which I strove to soften again in vain . . ." (Behn 1973, 45–57)

Instructions for discussion: Discuss the nature of Behn's relationship with Oroonoko. What do you think it means for her to "be obliged by some persons who feared a mutiny" to give Oroonoko "satisfaction." Is she a willing or unwilling tool? Do you think she feels compromised or does she feel proud to be of service? Or does she have other feelings about the situation? What power does she think she actually has? Is she deliberately manipulating Oroonoko and, if so, what do you think of the fact that she tries to shame him into trusting her? What mistake does she feel she has made when, after mentioning "confinement," she sees Oroonoko's reaction?

Continuing relevance: This wonderfully complex passage captures the contradictions of privilege as effectively as any in the book, with Behn's conflicting loyalties set forth. The situation rings true for many students, who find themselves caught in such middle positions, especially when they leave the classroom and have conversations about race with less sympathetic family and friends.

Passage #4 – Distrusting Oroonoko

"*Before I parted that day with him, I got, with much ado, a Promise from him to rest yet a little longer with patience, and wait the coming of the Lord Governour, who was every day expected on our shore: he assur'd me he would, and this Promise he desired me to know was given perfectly in complaisance to me, in whome he had an intire Confidence.*

After this, I neither thought it convenient to trust him much out of our view, nor did the Country, who fear'd him; but with one accord it was advis'd he should be permitted, as seldom as could be, to go up to the Plantations of the Negroes; or, if he did, to be accompany'd by some that should be rather in appearance Attendants than Spies." (Behn 1973, 47–8)

Instructions for discussion: Discuss whether you think that Behn believes that Oroonoko will in fact receive his freedom when the lieutenant governor shows up. If not, what does that say about her relationship with Oroonoko? Recall that, earlier in the book, Behn says that the Africans and the Indians, when they give their word, are unlike the Europeans in that they always keep it. What do you make of Behn's lack of trust? How do you imagine that she is communicating with "the country"?

Continuing relevance: The passage points to the kinds of disjunction that can occur when one converses with a person of another race and then leaves to enter the society of one's own race, with all its prejudices. It's a challenging situation, and the class can discuss how to negotiate it.

Passage #5 – The women flee

"*. . . we were possess'd with extreme Fear [during the slave revolt], which no Persuasions could dissipate, that he would secure himself till night, and then that he would come down and cut all our Throats. This Apprehension made all the Females of us fly down the River, to be secured; and while we were away they acted this Cruelty [the whipping of Oroonoko]; for I suppose I had Authority and Interest enough there, had I suspected any such thing, to have prevented it . . .*" (Behn 1973, 68).

Instructions for discussion: Recall that Behn has conversed daily with Oroonoko and traveled with him on dangerous expeditions. Why would she now see him this way? Were there the roots of this fear in their previous relationship – what exactly was the nature of their friendship? – or is this vision of a throat-cutting Oroonoko entirely new? Is Behn correct in saying that she could have prevented the whipping? Does she believe it? If she does and the idea is preposterous, why would she be so deluded? If she doesn't believe it, why would she make the statement?

Continuing relevance: One issue raised by the passage is how and why we stereotype people from other races, even when we know them. Another is how difficult it is to acknowledge how little power we actually have.

Passage #6 – Begging pardon of Oroonoko

"We [the women] were no sooner arrived but we went up to the Plantation to see Caesar; whom we found in a very miserable and unexpressible Condition . . . . We said all things to him, that Trouble, Pity, and Good-Nature could suggest, protesting our Innocency of the Fact and our Abhorrence of such Cruelties; making a thousand Professions of Services to him, and begging as many Pardons for the Offenders, till we said so much, that he believed we had no hand in his ill Treatment; but told us, he could never pardon Byam; as for Trefry, he confess'd he saw his Grief and Sorrow for his Suffering, which he could not hinder, but was like to have been beaten down by the very Slaves for speaking in his defence . . . ." (Behn 1973, 68–9)

Instructions for discussion: Are the women more concerned that Oroonoko feel better or that he absolve them of any responsibility for what has happened to him? Do they want his absolution because they feel guilty? If they feel guilty, why do they? Is it important to Behn that Oroonoko absolve Trefry? Why? Why does Oroonoko distinguish between his own absolution of Trefry and the refusal of the other slaves to do likewise.

Continuing relevance: This passage allows a discussion of liberal guilt, a powerful player in race issues. Although I can't do justice to the complexity of the topic here, suffice it to say that guilt can sometimes function as a cheap substitution for action. It can also provide consolation to those who are powerless, allowing them to believe that their failure to act comes from choice rather than necessity.

Passage #7 – Helping out the slave captain

". . . he [Oroonoko] besought 'em [the other slaves on board this ship] to bear their Chains with that Bravery that became those whom he had seen act so nobly in Arms; and that they could not give him greater Proofs of their Love and Friendship, since 'twas all the Security the Captain (his Friend) could have against the Revenge, he said they might possibly justly take, for the injuries sustained by him . . .

After this, they no longer refus'd to eat, but took what was brought 'em, and were pleas'd with their Captivity, since by it they hoped to redeem the Prince . . . " (Behn 1973, 36).

Instructions for discussion: The captain of the slave ship stands to lose his entire "cargo" if the hunger fast continues so he persuades Oroonoko to persuade his people to eat in return for their eventual freedom. Why was Oroonoko tricked by the slave captain the first time? Why didn't he understand that the captain might see him as a potential slave? Why does he believe him this time? Is he naïve or stupid? If naïve, what is the nature of that naïveté? Is naïveté preferable to the other options before him? How hard would it be for Oroonoko to acknowledge his actual

powerlessness? And how culpable is he for playing into the captain's hands, essentially saving his merchandise?

Continuing relevance: It is often revealing to white students that their fellow students of color are just as desirous as they are to believe that racism does not exist and that they too often strive to remain willfully blind to racism. The difference is that, as targets of racism, it is ultimately harder for them to ignore it. College students of color on predominantly white college especially find themselves engaging in a complex and confusing identity dance with white students.

Passage #8 – Oroonoko's first and final words to the slaves

"Caesar troubled with their Over-Joy and Over-Ceremony [the adulation of the other slaves upon his arrival], besought 'em to rise and to receive him as their Fellow-Slave; assuring them he was no better." (Behn 1973, 41)

"As for the Rashness and Inconsiderateness of his Action, he would confess the Governour is in the right; and that he was ashamed of what he had done, in endeavoring to make those free [the other slaves] who were by Nature Slaves, poor wretched Rogues, fit to be used as Christians' Tools; Dogs, treacherous and cowardly, fit for such Masters; and they wanted only but to be whipped into the knowledge of the Christian Gods, to be the vilest of all creeping things; to learn to worship such Deities as had not power to make 'em just, brave, or honest. . . ." (Behn 1973, 66)

Instructions for discussion: These two passages mark Oroonoko's first and final encounters with the Surinam slaves. What are we to make of his initial gesture to them? How do you imagine them reacting to the fact that, after his first encounter, he doesn't return to them until he needs their help in the rebellion? Are they to be blamed for abandoning him? What does the above attack on them say about him?

Continuing relevance: Oroonoko's relationship with the other slaves resembles that of the protagonist of Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* to the lower-class African Americans in the "Battle Royale" chapter. How a white power structure exacerbates already existent fault lines within black society, and how middle-class people of color find themselves torn in different directions, is a drama that many of my students of color recognize.

Conclusion

I conclude with an account of how a discussion of *Oroonoko* helped students talk about a series of conflicts at the college where I teach. St. Mary's College of Maryland is a small liberal arts residential college with a student body of just under 2000. Like many American colleges, it has a multicultural mix of students, and like most colleges, the tensions that exist in the larger society manifest themselves periodically in this small community. Recently, over a two-year period, the college underwent a series of incidents which, while insignificant by the world's standards – most of them were not even of interest to the local newspaper – nevertheless disrupted St. Mary's, which likes to see itself as a family. A white male student date raped a white female student.

The black girlfriend (not a student) of an African American man beat up his ex-girlfriend, who was white. A Koran owned by a Muslim student was vandalized. A gay slur was written on the door of a homosexual student. A Latino and an Ethiopian-American student squared off in a fistfight with two white students. The Latino man was also involved in several lunchroom shouting matches with African American women. In a campus that puts a premium on trust and mutual respect, as ours does, the incidents make an impact. The student leaders called together a community meeting where people could air their concerns.

I was teaching *Oroonoko* at the time and invited the Latino and the Ethiopian-American student to my class and briefly summarized the plot of the book. Both students recognized relationships they had had with white women students in the Oroonoko-Behn friendship. They said that sensed that they were seen as exotic, which both flattered them and made them feel slightly unreal. The Ethiopian-American, who was solidly middle class, talked of his attraction to lower-class African-American culture although he admitted that he would be rejected by lower class blacks as a "college boy" if he were to try to reach out to them. The Latino student, whose mother entered the country illegally and eleven years later brought him over from Nicaragua after gaining citizenship, talked of feeling angry about the privilege he saw all about him but also said he wanted to be accepted by those at whom he was angry. Some white students in the class essentially asked why everyone couldn't just get along – they were bewildered at all the commotion – although they admitted that they didn't try to make friends with students of color, including those who lived and ate beside them, because they felt uncomfortable.

This unusually frank conversation may have been initiated by the events on campus, but the framework of *Oroonoko* made possible a deeper discussion. No conclusions were reached – one class discussion will not change attitudes – but students left feeling relieved that seemingly taboo issues could be laid out in the open. They received a glimpse of the potential of conversations about race.

I choose to describe these incidents, not because they are momentous – most of them would hardly cause a ripple in a metropolitan area or even in a large American urban high school – but because versions of these tensions regularly appear in organizations and workplaces. They don't always result in blow-ups. Sometimes the effects are less dramatic, a subtle corroding of the bonds that hold communities together. The power of talking about race in the safe space of a literature classroom with a complex work like *Oroonoko* allows the future leaders of those organizations and of the workplace to see the potential power of such conversations. They see that civil dialogue over a hot button topic can lead to mutual respect and new hope. It's not a bad lesson to learn.

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Emigration Gothic: A Scotswoman's Contribution to the New World

Summary

Ellen Ross (1816?–1892) emigrated from Scotland to Montreal at mid-century and wrote two Gothic novels, in one of which – *Violet Keith, An Autobiography* (1868) – she used the Canadian setting as a fantastic Gothic locale in which to explore areas of social and sexual transgression.

Drawing on earlier traditions of European Gothic, including Sir Walter Scott's mythologized Scottish landscape, and on an emerging North American genre of convent exposés, Ross's writing accommodates female protest, distances it from reality and allows its dissipation in conventional denouements. If female Gothic can be read as an analogue of realistic women's problems, then perhaps this analogy can be extended to encompass emigration and immigrant life. The paper analyzes Ross's motifs of loss, imprisonment, solitude, surveillance and deliverance and considers the possibility that Gothic motifs in her work both conceal and express features of the immigrant's psychic battle with the transition to the New World.

Keywords: female Gothic, Canadian immigration, Ellen Ross

Gotska emigracija: Prispevek Škotinje k novemu svetu

Povzetek

Ellen Ross (1816?–1892) je emigrirala iz Škotske v Montreal na sredini devetnajstega stoletja in tam napisala dva gotska romana. V romanu z naslovom *Violet Keith, avtobiografija* (1868) je uporabila kanadsko okolje za prizorišče gotskega dogajanja, v katerem se je lotila obravnave družbenih in spolnih prekoračitev.

Rossijino pisanje izhaja iz zgodnje tradicije evropske gotske književnosti, vštevši mitologizirano škotsko pokrajino Walterja Scotta, ter iz porajajoče se severnoameriške zvrsti svetohlinske čistosti, ki ustvarja plodna tla za žensko kljubovanje, odmik od stvarnosti in konvencionalnega razpleta. Če je mogoče brati žensko gotsko književnost v povezavi s stvarnimi problemi ženske, omenjena analogija zaobjema območje izseljenskega in priseljenskega življenja. Članek analizira Rossijine motive izgube, jetništva, samote, nadzora in osvoboditve ter se sprašuje, ali vsi ti motivi morda niso le odraz hkratnega prikrivanja in izražanja notranjega boja priseljenke s prehajanjem v območje novega sveta.

Ključne besede: ženska gotska književnost, priseljevanje v Kanado, Ellen Ross

Emigration Gothic: A Scotswoman's Contribution to the New World

Scottish immigrants helped to create Canada and played a vital part in the development of trade and industry that fuelled Canadian expansion before and after Confederation (1867). This is the immigration story sanctioned by history and oral tradition – a well-known mythology featuring Scots hardihood, canniness and staunch Presbyterianism. The task of this paper is not to debunk this myth, but to explore one concurrent counter myth negotiating the contact between a Scottish immigrant and Canadian reality. In the Gothic novels of a mid-nineteenth-century emigrant, Ellen Ross, one finds a fantastic story of emigration, imprisonment and deliverance that lends itself to decoding in the light of the emigrant's experience.

The type of reading I will attempt here is based on the precedent set by the critics who read female Gothic as an analogue to the repressions and exclusions of real women's lives (Kate Ferguson Ellis, J. Fleenor). If such hidden tales can be told through the medium of the Gothic, then perhaps the story of other, more overt types of women's experience could be similarly encoded. While attending to metaphorical readings, this study will nevertheless begin by considering the possible historical basis of the heroine's negative emigrant experience. For if the Gothic sections of Ross's novel, *Violet Keith, An Autobiography*, are to be read in relation to real immigrant experience, then we must ask what that experience was like for women in the nineteenth century, and how they expressed their feelings about it.

Additionally, there is the question of the inspiration for the Gothic section of the novel. Some critics have assumed that the nunnery Gothic traces its lineage to other sensational anti-Catholic literature of the nineteenth century in North America. However, an examination of the main features of this type of writing suggests that this is not an adequate account of this novel's literary ancestry. *Violet Keith* is a type of Gothic that is not completely traceable to works such as *Awful Disclosures by Maria Monk, of the Hotel Dieu Nunnery of Montreal* (1836) and its imitators; there is evidence to believe that some of the Gothic features relate instead to Sir Walter Scott's border Gothic.

My final contention, then, is that Ross, a Scottish emigrant, writes a form of Gothic closer to home models than to those of the New World, while using that form to express the experience of entering the New World. The known facts of the author's life are slim. Born Ellen Edith Alice McGregor, the author lived in Banff and Inverness before emigrating to Montreal in the early 1850s. Widowed, and with two children, Ellen Stalker remarried Alexander Ross of Inverness and bore two more children before the family's voyage to Canada. Since few have actually read *Violet Keith*, I will briefly sketch the plot's main events.

Violet Keith and her brother are orphaned and left with only memories of a genteel French mother and her Bible, which on her deathbed she bade them cherish. The Bible's cover conceals documents that show the parents' marriage to be legal. Although the mother tries to signal to the

children the importance of what is concealed in the Bible's binding, Violet and her brother fail to understand. Only late in the novel does Violet, in re-covering her mother's gift, discover the hidden marriage documents.

After a boarding-school education, Violet becomes a governess in the household of the Scott family outside Edinburgh. She is sought in marriage by the family's eldest son, Robert. His father objects and Violet is driven from the house. She hears of an opportunity to teach in Canada, and takes ship. Following her friend Gertrude, Violet arrives at a convent school in Canada. Although the prioress is sympathetic, there is one nun who terrifies Violet, and soon the persecutions of that nun have transformed the convent into a prison. Violet ends up starving in a haunted dungeon, containing a dangerous pagan well, and escapes only as the convent burns down. Rescued by Robert, Violet uncovers the bible, finds the family documents and finally gets the family inheritance. Violet and Robert marry and make their home in Scotland.

Clearly, the change from Scotland to Canada is the catalyst for the change from a realistic, domestic story – a version of the familiar property restoration plot – to a tale of Gothic torture and imprisonment.

Before considering whether the nunnery experience in the novel can be a metaphorical analogue for immigrant experience, we must briefly consider to what extent if any it could be a more direct record of experience. After all, the novel is subtitled "An Autobiography." What did happen, then, in mid-nineteenth century in Catholic convent schools in Montreal? In particular, what were the experiences of single female immigrant teachers? Could Violet's experience as a migrant teacher might be less fantastic than first appears?

First one must establish where these Canadian convents were located. Violet is imprisoned at a nunnery in "Algona," Canada. This is an invented place, quite different in intent and effect from the real places named in the sensation literature. Although there are townships in Ontario's Renfrew County west of Ottawa called North and South Algona, it is unlikely that Ross envisioned an Ontario setting. The author seems to have distributed the geographical specifics in such a way as to dis-locate the reader.[1] Her Algona, "one of the first cities in Canada" (147), is reached by steamboat, two to three days travel from Montreal--her one definite place name. Neither Kingston nor Toronto, this might possibly be Ottawa. The urban setting and twin nunneries, however, almost mandate a Quebec setting, perhaps based on Ross's knowledge of Quebec City's Ursuline Convent School, or the Hotel-Dieu establishments of either Quebec City or Montreal.

Such convent schools did exist in Quebec City, Montreal and Ottawa. There is also evidence that single female immigrants were considered to be at risk. There were protests about conditions of immigration among single women, and some attempts to ameliorate conditions for this

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1   There is also an obscure Gothic novel, *Don Algonah or the Sorceress of Montillo*, (1802) that Ross just might have had in mind. If Ross knew this title, then 'Algona' might have had the requisite Gothic atmosphere while also sounding appropriately Canadian. Other evidence from proper names hints at Ross's reading of forgotten Gothic novels: 'Poor sister Valleiry' from Violet Keith recalls *The Castle of St. Vallery* (1792).

category of emigrant worker. In 1879 Elsie von Koerber published a pamphlet called *Reception and Protection of Female Immigrants in Canada*, in which she speaks of "tales of shocking abuse of this special kind of emigration; the traffic, in fact, which is made with women as a purchasable merchandise" (Koerber 1879, 5). The pamphleteer's concern was the vulnerability of unaccompanied female immigrants to prostitution – a moral danger rather than a physical one. Violet's fears, therefore, may not belong entirely to the realm of the fantastic, although it is clear that at mid-century the main threat to any immigrant – male or female – was dying of cholera.

The real convent schools were more rational places than Violet's St. Mary's. For example, the 1883 prospectus for the Congregation of Notre Dame school for girls in Ottawa (one possible location for Ross's Algona) reveals a place tolerant, if not actually secular. The school accepts young ladies of any denomination, and promises to exercise "no undue influence" (8) on the religious opinions of non-Catholic pupils. Good families sent their daughters to convent schools for snobbish reasons, not religious ones. Related to the "oldest educational establishment in Canada" founded by Margaret Bourgeois in 1656, the Ottawa establishment does, however, retain some conservative structures: correspondence is supervised, visiting is limited, students' money is held by the Mother Superior, and the school uniform is black. Each of these details, so mundane in the cheery prose of the prospectus, is transformed into something sinister in the account of Violet's imprisonment.

One has to look almost two centuries earlier than when Ross was writing to find historical evidence of convent conditions approximating those Ross describes. In the mid-seventeenth century, for instance, the sisters of the Ursuline convent in Montreal received young Iroquois girls as slaves. Closer to Ross's time, 3724 children died while in the care of the Grey Nuns of Montreal (1847). The rearing of foundlings was one of the chief functions of charitable convent institutions, but the death rate for foundlings was an unbelievable 87%. However, one must put this statistic into perspective; Montreal in general had a frighteningly high infant mortality rate even in 1869. Small children did die in the care of the nuns, but this does not make their establishments into the sinister places of torture that Ross depicts.

As for the happiness and satisfaction of immigrant female teachers, the evidence is partial and inconclusive. Immigration societies do record concerns for the safety and morality of female immigrants. Nothing, however suggests that convents were luring underpaid Scottish teachers to Montreal and using them as classroom slaves. Instead, we have the testimony of a contemporary immigrant teacher, Mrs. Simpson, giving the valedictory address to the graduating class of her own school in Montreal in 1863, who testifies that ". . . I, at all events, have been so happy in my professional career in Canada that I have lost all homesickness, and desire nothing better than to end my days in this my adopted country" (Simpson 1863). Testimony like this allows us to assume that Violet's terrifying experience is pure fiction.

Since nothing from the historical record corroborates Violet's story of starvation and entombment, then the lurid parts of her story (the insane nuns, the dungeon, the pagan well-spirit) are thus dependent on fictional precedent. The novel has been associated on

these grounds with pre-existing popular, anti-Catholic sensation literature. Headed by the notorious *Awful Disclosures by Maria Monk, of the Hotel Dieu Nunnery of Montreal* (1836), a stream of lurid revelations about convent life were published during the middle decades of the nineteenth century. An earlier example is *Lorette, The History of Louise, daughter of a Canadian Nun; exhibiting the interior of female convents* (New York, 1833), and one much closer to Ross's own time is Sarah J. Richardson's *Life in the Grey Nunnery of Montreal; an authentic narrative of the horrors, mysteries and cruelties of convent life* (Boston, 1858). The critic Jeffrey Wollock has placed *Violet Keith* firmly in this tradition (Wollock 1974, 85–6). However, Ross's novel differs from these earlier sensational accounts in several respects, in particular in the use of corroborative detail, the political subtext and the degree of anti-Catholic sentiment in the text.

The clearest difference between Ross's novel and the anti-Catholic literature concerns corroborative Canadian detail. The other accounts all make references to objective place names, topography and geographical features. All of them name the priests, and all depict details of the world outside the convent once the victims have escaped. The escape route and its concomitant deceitful landladies, boatmen and cart men play a prominent role in the scandal stories and in their polemics. Such details support each narrative's claim to authenticity. Sarah Richardson's nun, for instance, escapes to the real town of Ogdensburg, then to Albany. She crosses the national border between the United States and the Canadas. She meets French speaking people in her flight. There is the mandatory 'teepee and moccasins' scene – a tableau of Indian life that seems to signify authentic Canadian experience. In contrast, *Violet Keith* does not exist in the world of geographical and national facts. Ross does not invoke corroborative detail of religious or secular life outside the convent walls. The French nature of French Canada is established by three words: 'habitans' 'charrette' and 'tuque'. The rescued Violet even chooses to skip the teepee scene (*Violet Keith* 454). Her 'Canadian nunnery' could be anywhere; its description could easily have been written by someone who had never been in Canada at all. The same is not true of the Scottish part of the novel, where the detail of place names, boat schedules, embarkation and disembarkation points, local schools and churches testifies to someone who knows that region well. Since generalization is not an overall feature of Ross's narrative technique, its presence in the Canadian parts of the novel distances the work decisively from other convent narratives that claim to document evidence of the Catholic threat.

Another difference concerns the political subtext of the sensation literature. Escape is a common theme, and physical liberation from the convent is always equated with political liberty, and compared to the condition of the post-revolutionary United States. Each escaped nun (with the exception of Maria Monk) is the "imprisoned American female" and enacts in microcosm the Boston Tea Party, Washington crossing the Delaware and so on, culminating in the cry of 'Give me Liberty or Give me Death' in Sarah Richardson's account. Ross's *Violet Keith*, on the other hand, lacks this particular political gloss. Ross is not interested in the United States or its liberties. It is not that *Violet Keith* lacks political subtext – far from it. A strong motif of the work is the call for independence and responsibility for women, for changes in women's working

conditions and for improved education for young women. The narrator, for instance, laments women's lack of choices in a passage which despairingly paints women's subordination to others' needs as part of the "discipline of life" (*Violet Keith* 98). The authorial voice of this novel is far from indifferent to the social and material world. In contrast, its connection to the actual, North American political and social world of mid-century is tenuous.

Different also, is the heroine's attitude towards Roman Catholicism. The staunch Protestant faith of its heroine finally saves her, but in the middle Violet almost succumbs to the pervasive Mariolatry of the convent. She is filled alternately with excitement and dread, "a sort of intermittent fever of the mind, having its heats and chills, the former full of a fear I could not define" (307). One of the convent paintings, "of the blessed Virgin, her hands clasped, and her beautiful head bowed down" (322) reaches out to Violet. "It was so real, it seemed a living, breathing woman oppressed with sorrow for her dead. I have more than once felt an impulse to take my handkerchief and wipe off the tear which lay upon her cheek" (322). A fascination with Roman Catholicism in its maternal forms, especially as embodied in artistic representations of the Virgin Mary and in Sister St Angelo, the Prioress, tempers the anti-Catholicism, and shows that Violet is conflicted – both repulsed by and attracted to the imprisoning space of the convent. The attraction of the mother figures, not inexplicable in an orphan, is part of the Gothic secret that Violet conceals. This pro-Catholic subtext is downplayed by older traditions of the female Gothic, where the Church of Rome and its institutions tend to be identified with the patriarchal family and its rulers (Ellis 1989, 45–9). The role of the Gothic heroine is thus "to embody Protestant individualism . . ." (Ellis 1989, 48). Violet's secret fascination with Mariolatry disallows this polarity, without asserting a unified position.

It is even possible that the real Gothic secret of the book is the sexual nature of the attraction felt by the heroine for the all-female world of the convent and, in particular, for its benevolent Prioress, who is entombed along with Violet. This would be only one of several strands of sexual irregularity that appear during the course of the novel (an androgynous nun, a voyeur, a priest who may be a pederast) but which are never fully explained. The reader of *Violet Keith* might well expect that these various strands will culminate in one horrific act of taboo violation, as would be the pattern in the sensational anti-Catholic texts, but Ross plays a subtler game. The unvoiced realm of maternal fascination remains firmly in place, though displaced into the Gothic spaces of the text, and on to female figures encountered by Violet within them.

This secret fascination with the forbidden Catholicism is lacking in the sensation literature, where the female narrators have long renounced any attraction to veil or cloister. This element may, in contrast, represent an imported, Scottish component in Ross's novel. It is traceable to the Gothic motifs used by Sir Walter Scott in his novels, *The Monastery* (1820) and *The Abbot* (1820), in both of which Protestant triumph is preceded by considerable engagement with Catholic characters and rituals. We will consider later how Ross's brand of Gothic both follows and adapts Scott's pattern, as she shapes her material to fit the demands of New World fiction. What Ross takes from Scott is a pattern of motifs interweaving Catholic, Protestant and pagan beliefs and talismans.

Ross sends the reader to Scott in a section defending the reading of novels as a morally permissible activity:

> "What! You have never read a novel; never read Sir Walter Scott's novels?"
> "No. I knew Sir Walter Scott as the historian of Napoleon, Swift, Dryden, and others, but as a novelist, no."
> "You have a rich field of enjoyment before you, "said she [Hariote Scott]: . . . How did it happen that you never saw a novel?"
> "Mrs. Moodie did not approve of young people reading works of fiction, and never permitted such books to be in the house."
> "I dare say; I know that among Protestants those who are considered pious people look upon novel-reading as nearly allied to the sin against the Holy Ghost. I simply pity such people. "(50–1)

This intertextual special pleading was common in nineteenth-century Gothic and romantic novels, which sought to deflect criticism of their genres. Here it serves to link Ross's novel with the Old World pattern of monastery Gothic, not the New World tradition of sensational nunnery polemic.

Violet Keith, like other North American Gothic writing, does "recycle" (Griffin 2001, 159) certain standard elements of the fictional cloistered experience – innocent young woman, duplicitous priest, hostile older nun – but it adds prominent elements that are particularly reminiscent of Scott's *The Monastery*. For instance, a secret book around which Catholic-Protestant conflict swirls haunts the centre of each work. *The Monastery* features a 'black book' (a copy of the scriptures in English – a heretical possession in the 16th century), which is a family possession and a mother's only legacy. Like Violet Keith's mother, Scott's Lady Avenel passes on to the next generation a secret cached inside a Bible. The impetus of the plot is to discover what "mystery is wrapt in it". Through many hidings and revealings and a trial by fire, this bible takes on near-magical powers. In Violet's case, her tattered bible holds the actual power of conferring gentility, through the marriage license concealed in its binding – literally 'wrapt' in the bible. In both novels, the book is a maternal legacy and a source of both power and division within a family (brother is divided from brother in *The Monastery*). Each book also becomes a source of reunification for deserving members of the family.

In a further striking echo, both Ross's and Scott's novels feature pre-Christian spirits associated with water, as well as visits to mysterious underground spaces. Also similar in *The Monastery* is the clash between Protestant and Catholic systems, despite the fact that Scott's novel remains almost completely outside the monastic building. Scott's historical setting (the novel's events take place somewhere between 1550 and 1575) dictates the co-existence of Catholics and Protestants in the Border regions, but Scott has deliberately chosen a plot that hinges on doctrinal differences, and ultimately on the conversion of key characters to Protestantism. Through the agency of the black book, Halbert Glendinning is anointed as hero, because he alone is unafraid either of its Christian message or of the pre-Christian demon that guards the Avenel family honour.

Scott's haunted locales (those manifesting and concealing the Gothic secret of the text) are all external – glen, pool, river, and waterfall. His family demon rises from a natural spring, and leads the hero, not into a dungeon, but into a grotto or natural cavern. The landscape Gothic of Scott is thus rife with the sublime. It is difficult to believe that Ross hadn't read *The Monastery,* for all these motifs are echoed in *Violet Keith*, where they have been re-incorporated into a monastic space – St. Mary's of Algona (the monastery in Scott's novel is also called St Mary's).

Scott's Gothic is rooted in ethnography, philology, and local history; its fantastic events are tempered by the structure of research into the costume, custom, superstition, and artifacts of the Borders. Ross borrows the motifs, but has no such ethnographic grounding. It's not that Quebec lacked an eventful pre-history: there was plenty of highly-coloured historical and legendary material about the early Jesuit and Ursuline missions in the Canadas.[2] However, Ross's narrative becomes a-historical as soon as Violet embarks for the New World. We have the irony, therefore, that Ross's Gothic which had available to it a wilderness landscape of undeniable awfulness and sublimity, turns its back on that landscape and re-inters a version of Scott's Gothic in a man-made architectural space owing more to literary precedent than to any realistic experience of external Canadian surroundings.[3]

If Ross's Gothic discourse, based on Scott's Gothic sublime, denies the Canadian landscape, it does, nevertheless, echo the discourse of early women pioneers in Ontario who wrote of their settler experience. If we stop thinking of Violet, in European literary terms, as a Gothic victim, and consider her instead, in New World terms, as an immigrant to the still undeveloped area of the pre-Confederation Canadas, then her bizarre convent experience can be seen as a displaced version of the female settler narrative. The immigration guide and the slightly different settler narrative became the best known genres to arise out of nineteenth-century Canada, typified by Susanna Moodie's *Roughing It in the Bush* (1852) and Catharine Parr Traill's *The Backwoods of Canada* (1836), and by the much less familiar *Canada: why we live in it and why we like it* by Mrs. Edward Copleston (1861).

In reading the Gothic ordeal as an analogy of the kind of settler immigrant experience, one is taking certain retrospective liberties with the text. Nevertheless, there are hints that legitimate this kind of interpretation. To begin with, the novel situates its actors in an overtly imperial world. In Ross's fiction (including *The Wreck of the White Bear*, 1870), characters move from one part of the British empire to the other. Army families are common (Ross's own was an army family), and regiments do duty in India and the Canadas. Indian connections both trading (the East India company) and military are mentioned, while other characters go out to plantations in the West Indies. Back at home, the dockyards of Leith and Glasgow, with ships leaving for all parts of the world, seem an unlikely launching place for a Gothic tale, but it is one of this novel's peculiarities that it keeps one eye firmly on Canada as the favored emigration outlet that it actually was for Scots. In short, Ross's fiction evokes a tangible nineteenth-century experience of Britain as the hub of an empire whose existence conferred mobility even on lower-class subjects.

2   Consider, for instance, the Filles de Roi, who had a decidedly Gothic fate. Between 1663 and 1673 these young women were recruited in France and sent under royal sponsorship to settle in New France and marry the wife-less male population. See Choquette.

3   Description of the interior of the convent is lavish: paintings, candlesticks, stained-glass windows, floral offerings and the altar (*Violet Keith* 322–3*).*

Moreover, Ross drops a broad hint about the emigration subtext by having Violet thrown out of a Scottish home where the family name is Scott – perhaps just an unoriginal choice, or, more likely subtle confirmation of Violet's exile from the home of Scotland. After this banishment, her experience in many ways replicates the historical one of any would-be emigrant. She gets advice from one who has gone before, the experienced Miss Watson:

> "Put off that sad face of yours," said my companion, giving me a shake as she spoke. "Canada is in reality to us governesses not further off than London; were we in the latter we could only come home to see our friends at the year's end, and we would have to work for half the sum you are to receive; if you tire of Canada you can come back next year, pay your passage, and have fifty pounds in your pocket to live on for a year, if you wish to do so. Going to a convent in Canada is part of the romance of governess life; . . ." (218).

This advice dwells on two salient details of Canadian emigration: distance and money. The crucial temptation for many real emigrants must have been the promise of higher earnings in the colonies. The major drawback must certainly have been the impassability of the North Atlantic. Real immigrants such as Moodie and Traill never made it home again. Only Miss Watson's final remark concerning the romance of governess life points to the fictional function of Violet's coming trip.

Despite this reassurance, Violet experiences the sense of loss and anxiety that we find in other accounts by female immigrants. Mrs. Edward Copleston reported "feelings of anxiety and despondency" at departure, mostly owing to "circumstances over which we had no control" (Copleston 1861, 7). The move across the Atlantic is accompanied by a sense of psychic displacement. This happens despite the fact that Violet, like many real immigrants, is going to join someone she knows.

The personal connection does not prevent her suffering from the loneliness that replicates a common immigrant experience: "Our own loneliness struck me painfully," wrote one real immigrant. "Our family group looked so genuinely green and forlorn. . ." (Copleston 1861, 7–8). Of life in the bush, Moodie writes, "Man finds himself with God – alone" (Moodie 1852, 28); "The homesickness was sore upon me, and all my solitary hours were spent in tears" (Moodie 1852, 89). Even her sister, the normally cheerful Catharine Parr Traill speaks of being "buried in the solitude of the Canadian woods" (Traill 1836, 29). For Violet and Gertrude, convent life releases them from one kind of solitude, only to deliver them into another.

Accompanying the convent solitude and in apparent contradiction to it, is the experience of surveillance, what one critic calls "the pervasive Catholic spying and deceit" (Griffin 2001, 160). Violet is constantly watched in the convent. The masculine nun, Sister Agatha, dogs her footsteps and listens at doors. Violet must hide everything she cherishes on her person, for all possessions are subject to search. Even the body of the immigrant is not inevitably a site of privacy. This is a frequent refrain in the immigrant accounts too. Susannah Moodie documents the discomfort of setting up housekeeping under the direct and critical gaze of lower-class neighbours: "There is no

such thing as privacy in this country" (Moodie 1852, 80). The business of being observed was directly connected to the different class structure of the New World. It was not just being watched, but how and by whom that made it uncomfortable. The problem is connected to the gentility that was the reason for emigration in the first place. Many came, like Moodie, to maintain a social place, but found themselves in new conditions where the lowest had the right to criticize even the most ladylike. Inevitably the definition of the lady would change in the New World, but in the meantime, English immigrants like Mrs. Edward Copleston complained that as new settlers they were "objects of great curiosity" (48), constantly subject to the stares of the lower class inhabitants.

Violet's surveillance is doubly uncomfortable because she is spied on by Sister Agatha, the masculine nun who is described at some length:

> I had seen this nun before once or twice, and felt an instinctive dread of her, which I could neither account for or shake off. She was a tall, dark, hard-featured woman, with a sullen, defiant look; she seemed to me as if she was always plotting mischief. She entered the ward in which the Prioress and I were occupied, walking with great strides and a heavy step more like a man than a woman . . . (366).

Dark in complexion, Spanish speaking, coarse of manner and rumored to be from the 'south,' Sister Agatha compounds many features of otherness, but is accepted as the guardian of the convent's religious purity. To be watched by her is to be under surveillance by another gender, race, religion, class and nationality. The psychic discomfort of this mirrors the conditions complained of by the Ontario settlers, Traill, Moodie and Copleston.

If one looks closely at Violet's reasons for emigration, they are congruent with the economic-social motives of most real emigrants to Canada. First there is economic necessity; without any proof of inheritance rights, Violet must support herself in one of the ways sanctioned for gentlewomen – she must teach or be a governess. Then there is the impossibility of proving gentility without the papers concealed in her Bible. What sends her across the Atlantic is not flight from a tyrannical Mr. Scott, but the need for social class maintenance and repair, so common to nineteenth-century British emigrants. She comes in order to remain a lady, but ironically has had the means to do this with her the whole time: the all-important Bible. This will be the common discovery of all genteel immigrants, who will find themselves in a new system where what makes a 'lady' is increasingly redefined in the direction of intrinsic moral qualities. Thus, although her flight appears pure plot device, its Gothic structure replicates the system of social and economic expectations in which many emigrants were caught.

Then there is Violet's experience of imprisonment. Should there be any doubt that this is an exaggerated version of negative immigrant experience, some words from Mrs. Copleston will serve to correct the picture:

> I could afford to admire the noble forest at a distance, but when the possibility of my being *imprisoned in its vast depths for the remainder of my life* was mooted, I *shrank from such an ordeal* (Copleston 1861, 60; my emphasis).

Moodie, too, spoke of the Ontario wilderness in terms of a "dark prison" (Moodie 1852, 163) from which she had little hope of deliverance:

> At that period my love for Canada was a feeling very nearly allied to that which the condemned criminal entertains for his cell – his only hope of escape being through the portals of the grave (Moodie 1852, 135).

These passages raise an interesting question: were settlers writing like Gothic novelists, or was it the other way around? Traill and Copleston also use the trope of burial alive to describe their immigrant experience. The likelihood is that both female forms of expression – settler narrative and Gothic novel – rely on biblical rhetoric as an acceptable avenue for women's expression of excessive emotion. Sections of the Bible such as the Psalms set patterns of lamentation for loss and abandonment as well as for rejoicing and deliverance. Ultimately Copleston did face her ordeal: despite recording feelings of suffocation in her earliest week in Toronto (Copleston 1851, 65), she persevered to become an immigrant success story – someone glad to call Canada home.

In contrast, Violet is placed in an actual dungeon, the nunnery's crypt. Her cell contains a deep well haunted by an evil spirit; she is tempted with meager, salty rations while being deprived of drinking water, and all this occurs in a place ostensibly of female refuge. Ross has previously given Violet a premonition of this experience in the form of a dream:

> I was lying in a deep dungeon, dug in the bowels of the earth, surrounded by thick darkness such as might be felt. I was confined there for some offence, of which I was quite guiltless; and it was darkness evermore, and days and months passed away, and was still there, surrounded by that black darkness; only once in a long time a faint ray of light came from above, and a mysterious hand let down a pitcher of water and a morsel of bread. (*Violet Keith* 116).

Violet's nightmare uses the imagery of the Christian mystic, enabling several metaphorical readings of the later dungeon ordeal. It is likely that this interpretation of the dungeon as a mystic dark night of the soul was the preferred one for the Victorian audience, reading as they were from a context steeped in the rhetoric of piety.

In contrast, I am arguing here that Ross's convent and its dungeon form a complex example of that Gothic "inner space" that Cynthia Griffin Wolff reads exclusively as a metaphoric locus for exploring the "dilemmas of female sexuality" (Wolff 1983, 208). I want to broaden the tenor of the metaphor to include the female immigrant's condition and thus to elucidate Ross's point about the emigration system and women's participation in it. By dwelling on the stories of other convent inmates, Ross calls attention to the duplicity of institutions that exist ostensibly to provide refuge for victimized women, but in practice serve to imprison them and to suppress their stories. Two nuns' stories illustrate how convents as well as emigration systems can lure women in.

The story of "Poor Sister Valleiry" (433) is relatively benign: she entered the convent with a broken heart. In compensation for worldly losses, the convent offers a life of "self-denying benevolence" (212). From this perspective, the convent is a place of healing. However, little actual healing is depicted, and long before her dungeon experience, Violet has come to view the convent as a limbo, where wounds are kept open and emotional maturation postponed:

> I had become convinced . . . that the ideas I had formerly entertained of the happiness and tranquility enjoyed there were entirely fallacious. ... I had learned that gossiping arrogance and avarice were rife here as in the world, and I well knew there were breaking hearts wearing out a hapless existence that bitterly regretted the irrevocable step they had taken (402).

Another convent inmate who, like the Canadian immigrant, cannot depart is the novice Emma, who entered the convent at fourteen and lost her wits ten months later when confined in a haunted dungeon (*Violet Keith* 435–6). Emma's is the test case for Violet's: her grisly fate threatens to prefigure the heroine's unless the cycle of silencing and imprisonment is broken: "Would you like to become such an one as the first Emma?" threatens Sister Agatha. This old tragedy haunts the convent in the person of Emma herself, who still lives despite eighty-six years as a "raving maniac" (347). Emma embodies the unspoken function of the convent: to arrest the female will and mind from puberty (Emma's presumable stage at 14) to centenary – her age at death. Ross stresses the close link between Emma and the convent itself by inserting (and fulfilling) a legend "that on the day of Emma's death, the convent of St. Brides would fall to the ground . . ." (437). Both stories establish that the convent is built on a basic hypocrisy, that, promising refuge, it produces instead torture, isolation, surveillance, imprisonment and a choice of madness or death – of these being exaggerated features of the realistic experience of settler life as described by earlier writers.

The Catholic Church's right to exist in the colony is also called in question when the dungeon experience reveals to Violet the foundations upon which the actual and sacral structures rely. What Violet discovers in the dungeon is that the Christian structure is built upon a pagan foundation "some terrible deed of darkness was done there by heathen hands in the days of the early Christian settlement" (435). Ross may be evoking an event of 1661–2, when a chaplain of the Ursuline monastery in Montreal was killed and allegedly eaten by the Iroquois (*Catholic Encyclopedia*). The 'Eaten Missionary' is perhaps the root of the fascination in all the anti-Catholic tracts with the eating habits of nuns. In some cases the taboo violation at the heart of the convent concerns food – the nuns are eating babies, eating novices or, more mundanely, eating meat when they should not. Ross's narrative eschews these exaggerations from the anti-Catholic literature, while preserving the motif as a trope covering more interesting issues. Violet refuses the salty meat that will create thirst and drive her towards death in the haunted dungeon well. She cannot, however, avoid being herself swallowed up, as were the settlers in the Canadian wilderness. Like Jonah, she is disgorged, but not before she has seen in the dungeon the truth about the body into which she was so nearly subsumed.

The great horror of the experience at the convent, finally, is that the whole structure is founded upon blood spilled long ago in a monstrous parody of the mass. The Gothic structure, like the

structure of any immigrant's life, is built over an abyss of past violence and wrong. Significantly, Violet is strongly tempted to fall into the pagan well that holds the basal evil of the institution: this is just one hint of the extent to which Violet is self-imprisoned, self-deluded. Like other, real emigrants, she came willingly – "We were not compelled to emigrate," confesses Moodie (194) – and has participated in the maintenance of the very systems of Catholic hypocrisy, on one level, and immigrant mythology, on the other, that entrap her.

One of the subtleties of Ross's *Violet Keith* is its suggestion that the Gothic horrors of the convent are not all that different from life in the patriarchal home in Scotland. The cynical Miss Watson who counsels emigration also points out this disturbing fact. At home a woman's gentility is preserved by selling the woman's body in marriage (the mercenary nature of this transaction is clearer in Ross's other novel *The Wreck of the White Bear*). In Canada gentility can be purchased at the price of accepting both the spatial displacement of the body and the violent displacement of original races and creeds.

Thus, although *Violet Keith* is short of the factual, new-world landscape details that one might expect in an emigration account, one can argue that Ross's Canadian nunnery is a Gothic structure that both expresses and conceals Ross's own conflicted feelings about immigrant life in the colony. This author has her heroine enter a space both geographical and psychological. In its combination of isolation, oppression, imprisonment and surveillance, it can represent those aspects of the New World experience most unpleasant to the female immigrant, and made even less palatable by the fact of voluntary participation. Both Violet and the average immigrant actively sought the transition to the New World, and both find that their own desires take monstrous form and threaten their lives before delivering them. Violet's miraculous escape from the burned convent perhaps expresses the dearest wish of many emigrants to return 'home,' just as Violet does to Scotland. Like many nineteenth-century novels by women, *Violet Keith* contains both protest and this measure of acquiescence to conventional wish-fulfillment. The subversive prescriptions of immigration Gothic inhabit the Gothic spaces of the text, echo the rhetoric of female immigrant writing and may even indicate an implicit discomfort with the initial violence on which the project of New World colonialism was premised.

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Maritime Regionalism:
A Reading of John Casey's Novel *Spartina*

Summary

The theoretical framework within which the author reads John Casey's novel *Spartina* is the renewed interest in the notion of the regional. The choice of the novel is additionally dictated by the fact it deals with the sea. As such it allows the author to discuss the sea both as it is positioned within the American cultural imaginary and the way that it is represented in works of literature. The article delineates how these two themes are thematized in the novel and what kind of insights they can provide about certain aspects of the American polity.

Key words: John Casey, spatiality, regionalism, sea, cultural imaginary

Pomorski regionalizem:
pogled na roman *Spartina* pisatelja Johna Caseyja

Povzetek

Teoretični okvir, skozi katerega avtor prispevka obravnava roman *Spartina* Johna Caseyja, ponovno vzpostavlja pojem regije v književnosti. Izbira romana je dodatno pogojena z dejstvom, da je v ospredju morje kot tako, kar omogoča njegovo obravnavo tako v kontekstu ameriškega kulturnega imaginarija kot v smislu njegove upodobitve v književnosti. Razprava odstira postopke tematizacije teh dveh tém in omogoči vpogled v različne vidike ameriške organizirane nacionalnosti.

Ključne besede: John Casey, prostornost, regionalizem, morje, kulturni imaginarij

Maritime Regionalism:
A Reading of John Casey's Novel *Spartina*

1.

My title juxtaposes two spaces which I believe are not only relevant to the reading of the chosen novel but have a theoretical pertinence both within the general and the more local, in this case American, context. Namely, both the broader concept of regionalism and the more specific site of the sea create new resources for the study of literature and its place in culture. As part of an ongoing project, the point I want to underline is my belief that geographical knowledge can greatly contribute to our understanding of culture and its artifacts. The basic premise of my argument is that readings of regionalist texts, which all too frequently are ignored in critical surveys, enable us to reclaim works and the places they describe which would otherwise be sidelined or simply ignored.

To situate my reading within the broader theoretical framework and the more specific field of American studies I feel it is necessary to briefly comment upon the place of regionalism in these discussions. Without doubt there is a certain pejorative quality attached to the word. One can adduce reasons for this by referring to the value-laden opposition between the concepts of the particular and the universal or, if literary works are at issue, one can see it as the logical consequence of the aesthetic moment where the local tends to be elided in seeking out universal aesthetic worth. On a more concrete level, one can see the demise of regionalism as resulting from the decline of spatial diversity in the ways of life during the last century. New communication technologies have contributed to the disappearance of distinctive localities, a process which in its wake has dissolved the psycho-emotional ties humans have traditionally felt for distinct places. In an earlier reading of the contemporary American novel I have shown how these developments have manifested themselves in the United States and how their prominence gives one ample warrant to consider the United States as the exemplary postmodern polity (Grgas 2000).

In addition, it has often been contended that the American project as such is antipodal to the sustainability of the region. On the present occasion I call upon Jim Wayne Miller who is of the opinion that the American national identity "is essentially extraterritorial ... subordination of place, and hence of region, to a national perspective" (in Mallry and Simpson-Housley 1987, 4). He expands on this idea:

> An inherited Renaissance concept of culture; the increasing tendency to see human collectivities in terms no smaller than the nation state; the association of culture with history, with time rather than with space; the essential extra-territoriality of the American idea – all of these and subordinate considerations have caused regions and regionalism (literary and otherwise) to come to be associated with backwardness and limitation. (5)

The rhetoric which legitimated the United States either as a religious mission or as the embodiment of Enlightenment ideas projected a homogenized, unified space. Its undeniable plurality, perhaps

precisely because of the latent danger of heterogeneous fragmentation, was throughout American history being co-opted into an ideal of unity.

But these remarks far from exhaust the issue at hand. Looking at the matter from a general perspective, one can hardly speak of a consensus if the question of the homogenization of space or the process of globalization is at stake. In a paradoxical fashion, the process of globalization has, for instance, been accompanied by an antipodal human affective and existential investment in the local. In the revised edition of his *The Cultural Geography of the United States* (1992) Wilbur Zelinsky speaks of the "disappointments of the contemporary world" and the search for "more authentic modes of anchorage". He remarks: "In spatial terms, the safest haven appears to be located somewhere midway between the cold, faceless bureaucratic state and the incertitudes of kith, kin, and hearth – in the renewal of regional identity" (173). In the later added "afterthoughts" to his study he discerns "that, working at cross-purposes against the all too obvious process of convergence and homogenization, are innumerable local foci of resistance, all those spatially intimate and personal assertions of individuality and specialness" (184).

To return to the American context, it should be pointed out that the unifying vision or the rhetoric of monolithic political identity never actually extirpated oppositional, particularist solidarities. Sectional interests are and have always been a constant of American politics; United States history bears the traces of their struggles, while its space of cultural production is geographically differentiated both according to those who are its makers and to the landscapes that it has mapped and explored. Needless to say, the relationship between the nation and the region bears the imprint of different historical junctures. During different historical periods either one or the other side have been emphasized or underplayed. In his classification of narratives that emerged in the United States during the formative period between 1820–1860, Jonathan Arac describes "local narratives" as at that time offering "alternative emphases" to the "national narratives" adding: "The actual differences among the regions of the United States meant that the story of America was not the only story" (2005, 30).

Both a certain crop of novels in the United States, amongst which I count John Casey's *Spartina*, and theoretically informed investigations of the local have prompted some to speak of a "new regionalism". Introducing his collection of essays bearing this title, Charles Reagan Wilson calls upon Foucault and contends that the French philosopher offers insights "as to the significance of regionalism in a postmodern world"(Wilson 1998, xv). He adds: "Even more relevant, though, is his stress on site. Foucault draws attention to marginal social groups who experience the effects of power in particular places and contexts" (xvi). In accord with this line of thinking, instead of being a remnant of a simplistic understanding of the intimate relationship between humans and their environment, the region is envisioned as a powerful tool of analysis and synthesis. As a metonym of the collective, the region is a barometer of the distribution of power within the state polity, at times contributing to and at times subverting its hegemony. Scattered over the varied landscapes of America, one can see regionalism as the critical interrogation of the center with its official histories and definitions, as the inscription of voices and places which have been elided from the dominant narrative of the American polity.

One of those elisions is the relegation of the sea from the American spatial imaginary. In the preface to the collections of papers entitled *America and the Sea* (1995) Haskell Springer makes the following observation:

> While, for example, the vanished western has been repeatedly so studied and invoked as to make it a hoary cliché, that other, and permanent, American frontier, the sea, hardly registers today in our cultural consciousness as setting, theme, metaphor, symbol, or powerful shaper of literary history. (1995, ix)

Notwithstanding the displacement of the sea by the continental saga, a development which has been accounted for by both politico-economic and ideological reasons, the contributors to Spinger's collection trace its abiding presence in American literature. It was one of these, Dennis Berthold, who in his survey of American prose since 1960 drew my attention to John Casey's novel (1995, 317).

Casey's novel won the National Book Award in 1989. If, as Tony Tanner had diagnosed the earlier period, much of American literature during the previous decades had "foregrounded language" (Tanner 1971, 20), *Spartina* belongs to a growing number of texts published during the most recent period which, in different ways, evince a rejection of postmodernist extravaganza, finding it both tedious and self-indulgent. Instead of the earlier metafictional obfuscations and their linguistic play, a growing number of writers espouse a revived realism as a textual practice that can provide a meaningful purchase on today's America.

In their attempts to render America in a more straightforward manner, many of these writers ground their novels in geographically specific sites so that there are those who have found evidence of a new regionalism in the contemporary American novel (Rebein 2001). However, neither are the novels written in this vein replicas of traditional realism nor is their regionalism a throwback to an outdated mode of writing that shuns the complexities and the trials of the present. Discussing the work of Annie Proulx, perhaps the best known representative of this literary tendency, Karen Rood makes the following observation: "Readers who approach the works of these new regionalists out of a turn-of-the-century nostalgia for getting back to their country roots quickly have their notions of pastoral serenity replaced by pictures of rural poverty and varying degrees of violence" (2001, 15). Without engaging questions of comparative aesthetic value, one can say that John Casey's novel accords with Rood's pronouncement on what awaits the reader in this new trend within contemporary American fiction. Therefore, in what follows, my first task will be to delineate those features of Casey's novel which allow the reader to approach it as a regionalist novel. The second step of my analysis will be to show how, far from projecting a "pastoral serenity", his novel registers the impact of forces and agencies from the world at large. In conclusion of my paper I will return to the problem of the sea and show how Casey deals with it.

2.

Excepting the flashback account of Dick Pierce's trip with Parker to the West Indies, the entire narrative of *Spartina* is set in the salt marshes, on and off the coast of Rhode Island. Descriptions

of these sites, focalized through Dick's native vision, reflect an intimate knowledge of their geological, botanical and ichthyological characteristics. At a remove from these renderings of the natural world, the text relies upon toponyms to inscribe the locale: Pierce Creek, Sawtooth Creek, Salt Pond, Block Island and so on. When Dick daydreams about his boat entering the local harbor with the inscription "Galilee, R.I." (26) written under its name on the stern, giving him the right to moor as a resident, he discloses the South County town that is the nearest political seat of power. Finally, Rhode Island as a state is the outlining border which constitutes the horizon of space that the main character projects and within which he and the other characters appear in this novel. As far as the Rhode Island setting is concerned I draw attention to the self-deprecatory comment made by Parker:

> Cute little state. First time I heard of it, I was running a
> charter boat in the Gulf, had a couple of Texans on board.
> One says to the other, 'I hear you picked up that land next
> to yours. You must have quite a spread now.' The other one
> says, 'Middling. Just over two and a half Rhode Islands'. (51)

Although no more than a trifling exchange this is the only instance in the book where the reader has an outsider's perspective on the state-region in which Casey sets his novel. A similar differential logic is evident when Dick, thinking of fish prices, summons up places like New York (7) or Connecticut (11) as providing better opportunities than he can expect in his place of residence. However, the act of constituting identity through difference can best be seen in the explanation why he felt "fuddy-duddy" in the West Indies:

> But it wasn't just that, or the foreignness of the people or
> the sleekness of some of them, that put Dick at half-speed.
> It was the *place* that knocked him for a loop. The air, the
> sea, the islands. Dick had fished off Cape Cod, Maine, and
> Nova Scotia. All that was more or less the same, or at
> least understandably different. The West Indies was another
> planet. The air smelled different, touched his skin like silk.
> The water was the same salt water, but the colors were different,
> greens and blues he'd never seen. (14)

Without elaborating upon this or going into the question to what extent is New England indicated here as the reference point of a broader regional identity – or something that is "understandably different" – I think the italicized form of the word "place" as it appears in the text is sufficient proof of its significance in Casey's novel. To put this otherwise: the geographical space of Rhode Island is not a mere geometrical extension but is a place invested with affective attachments and experiential significance.

Although this passage downplays the impact of the "foreignness of the people", the same relationship between identity and difference is reenacted on the level of characters. Dick Pierce

is a descendent of one of the oldest families – at one point explicitly naming it the "good stock" (128) – who had of yore been able to live off the marshes and the sea, relying on their wit, skill and toil. Keeping to the old ways he is known for his "grim Yankee manner" (15) and, comparing himself to the encroaching newly rich, he thinks of himself as a "dumb swamp Yankee" (48). These qualities are recognized by the other characters so that Parker at one point censures Dick for "dividing up the world into the idle rich and the true-blue salts. The unworthy and the worthy" (75). While Parker is representative of those on the cast of characters who, although they are willing to avail themselves of Dick's skills, hardly show him any sympathy, there are others, Elsie in particular, whose words and deeds reflect a profound respect for the values Dick epitomizes. To use a graphic metaphor one could say that the characters are either absorbed into the centripetal spin of Dick's value system and his obsession of building his own boat or they look upon these in an askance manner from the outside. Dick's response early in the novel to the bank loan officer who suggests that he consider welfare as a way to alleviate his financial difficulties is indicative of his ethical profile. He is appalled at the suggestion and his rejoinder that he could be making good money if only he could build his boat instead of going on welfare (8) has a resounding political charge in the ongoing discussion of US social policy.

Although distinct, the region is nevertheless a part of a larger whole and is therefore susceptible to developments that originate elsewhere. Since regionalist literature invests so much in the notion of place, a useful way of understanding that relationship and its consequences would be to analyze the impact outside forces have had on the land itself, particularly on the way humans have used it. Reshuffling the numerous references to this problematic scattered throughout *Spartina* one could propose a history whose beginning and present stage are juxtaposed in the following passage:

> Tautog. Squeateague. Indian names. Names left over like
> bones. From half a mile away Dick heard the trucks leaving
> the building site on Sawtooth Point. Narragansett. Matunuck.
> Words from before anyone had owned anything. (87–8)

In passing, through the character of Miss Perry, Dick is made aware of the original inhabitants and the fact that they "hadn't owned land individually" but as tribes "they'd had dominion over tribal lands" (88). But not much is made of this within the novel since the focus is upon what happened to the land that Dick's family had previously owned and upon how it is being transformed in the present of the novel. Throughout the narrative Dick is constantly being reminded, feeling "anger, envy, and regret" (89), of the fact that his father had lost the largest part of the family land. Apparently his belief "in the natural order of the Pierces' owning land" (128) was unfounded and after that order had showed itself to be far from natural his son was left with a "sliver of marsh" (9), with certain hunting and fishing rights. It is from this position of the dispossessed native, at a point where the old mode of "family's farming and fishing" (89) has been displaced by the rules of late capitalist economy, that Dick Pierce is witnessing changes that are transforming the land and the older way of life.

Real estate transactions had driven away all but a few of the older residents so that "every other house was now a summer rental" (24). A "flood tide of money and fun" (49) had brought in a new group of people who see the land as an opportunity for profitable investment in the cottage project. To put this in economic terms, what is unfolding before Dick's eyes is the gradual disappearance of the use-value of land and the growing significance of its exchange-value. The role of the filmmaker Schuyler can be understood within this context since he is there to booster the appeal of the place to future property buyers. Although Dick is constantly immersed in financial worries both as they pertain to supporting his family but, more significantly, to the project of building his own boat, he refuses to compromise on the issue of mortgaging his home place. His "sliver of marsh" is his last anchorage in a world which is in flux, caught up in changes over which he has no control. In making Dick the center of the novel, Casey is giving a voice to a specimen of those who are being overwhelmed by the processes of corporate America. The narrative of Dick Pierce's survival strategies and of his tortuous humanity provides a counterpoint from which to take stock of what is involved in the all-devouring power of capital and its ability to appropriate and expand. If that alternative is not already foreclosed the question that needs to be asked is from where does it draw its potential.

3.

To answer this question we have to go the coast and out to sea as the other site of my reading. To be more precise, it is the ocean and its lure, the way that it calls out the best in man and the way that it is has always been the element that cannot be subjugated to the whims of human hubris – these facets of the sea and the way man relates to it, on different levels of the narrative, empower the mode of being which is embodied in the main protagonist of the novel. Faced with its elemental force the humans have to rely on their mother wit, their skills and their energy. On each of the voyages to the sea depicted in the novel one can decipher a story of trial and initiation. It is on the sea that the constrictions and the encroachment of capital do not hold dominion.

There are different psycho-emotional responses that are evoked by the sea. In one place we read that some of the lobstermen are "scared to go all the way out to the edge of the shelf" (7). At one point, ruminating on the need of making a compromise in order to build his boat, Dick muses that he will work just in order to "get himself out to sea" (34). The journey out is envisioned as an escape from the pitfalls and the debilitating protocols that reign on land. Elsewhere Dick explicitly states his love of the sea – "I like the time out there" (52). On a more abstract level there is the following comment: "Being at sea opened you up. And if you wanted to do things right, you had to use all that opening up for what you were doing, for where you were, for what was going to happen" (63). The exigent circumstances in which man encounters the elements on the open sea demand of him an utter intentness to the tasks at hand, an attentiveness through which the skilled mariner becomes one with his surroundings. In a rare metaphysical bent of mind Dick thinks of the sea in the following manner:

Everything in the sea dissolves – the particular matter
into the deeps, then back into upwellings, into the chain
whose first invisible links are animal-plants, plant-animals;
and all the while the great fluid of the sea is drawn into
the sky by the sun, takes passing shapes as cloud, and
returns to the earth. (137)

In an extended metaphor appearing later in the text I find a word which I think summarizes many of the characteristics that are latent in these pronouncements: "a bay as it becomes deeper and vaguer, undefining itself into the broader sea" (158). The expanse of waters lapping at the shore is the site where land demarcations and all of the cultural weight that they carry become irrelevant. The arrangements that prevail on the land mass are blotted out on the sea where the solid security of the firm earth – which is in this novel socially differentiated – falls into disarray. I offer here a thought from an article by David Wills:

the distinction between ocean and dry land has led to attempts
at the partition and defense of parcels of that land, to interminable
territorial dispute. Again, the sea has parted, distinguishing and
defining the land, defining it as distinction in opposition to the
indiscriminate sea; but again the sea has returned for the lines drawn
in the sand of the land are lines drawn in the ocean, undecidable,
difficult to defend, changeable, always threatened with
disappearance or reimposition, subject to waves of conquest
or flight. (Wills 2001, 531)

Although the implications of this observation go far beyond our immediate topic, nevertheless it gives us some of the parameters which allow us to read the thematic of the sea in Casey's novel.

The sublimity of the ocean, the fact that in a sense it can be seen as the radical other of culture is, in my opinion, one of the reasons that it has had a problematical position within the imaginative repertoire of different peoples. The American example offers a fascinating story of the displacement of the sea from its cultural imaginary, particularly if we keep in mind both the early history of the United States on the Atlantic seaboard but also the geographical position of the United States between two oceans. However, a novel such as *Spartina* shows that this displacement has not been total and that geographical realities inevitably make their way into the cultural archive. Let me propose a thesis: in order to reclaim the ocean for the American imagination, in order to understand how the ocean has related to different aspects of American experience we would have to go to texts which project the space of the littoral or which stage the human drama on the waters that spread out in front of it.

Bringing these remarks to a close I join the ranks of those who, in arguing for the continuing relevance of the regionalist approach, call upon Michel Foucault to theoretically sustain their claims. In a passage often quoted in this context Foucault argued that historical research is prone to ignore or to eliminate from its accounts "particular, local, regional knowledge … incapable of

unanimity" and to privilege "systematizing thought" or the established version (Foucault 1980, 82). He voices a plea for the "subjugated knowledges", that have been eclipsed by the dominant paradigms, to be recovered and reclaimed as vital elements in charting human reality. Although there might be some who would warn that I am reading too much into a straightforward tale I nevertheless maintain, as I have tried to show in my reading, that John Casey's novel can be seen as a work of reclamation and that it gives voice to geographical sites and social groups who are often displaced from the different American narratives. This can be seen in two antipodal passages in the closing section of the novel. The first one is the disparaging commentary that accompanies Schuyler's movie which is being watched by Dick and his cronies in the local bar Neptune. After some statistics have been read out, there is a factual description of the state of Rhode Island, some of whose items the reader recognizes had been previously thematized in Casey's novel:

> If Rhode Island were a country, it would be part of the
> Third World. The largest employer is the military. Tourism
> is the major moneymaker, although most Rhode Islanders
> benefit from it only in service positions. The bulk of choice
> real estate is in the form of second homes or resorts run by
> absentee corporations.
> There is a seafaring tradition, and there is – still – a
> fishing fleet. By comparison to the high-tech factory ships
> of Russia, East or West Germany, Japan, or the tuna clippers of
> our own West Coast, the boats and methods are quaint. (344)

What is occluded in such a stereotyping account of the region is exactly the content, both spatial, temporal and human, that the novel *Spartina* in different ways has brought to light. Near the end of the book, in a kind of epiphanic revelation, Dick comes to terms with "something he's always known – that they all flowed into each other. All of them set about the salt marsh in the little towns and the houses on the hills – they all got mixed in, they stayed themselves" (371). Dick intuits at this point the human value of the particularist solidarity that had been explored and put to the test in the previous escapades. To put a number of complex, interweaving themes in the crudest terms, we can say that *Spartina* makes visible a region and its inhabitants which have been overwritten by the United States national narrative.

In doing so it has empowered through the vision and voice of its narrator a social group – that has "stayed themselves" to use Casey's formulation – that has, in my opinion, all too frequently been ignored even in the contemporary "full-blown diversity madness" (Jacobson 2006, 313). In the context of present day identity politics, in which every statement is discussed as the projection of someone's distinct self or view of the world, I would contend that a stratum of United States society, a very important one for that matter, has been blotted out from the overall picture. Simply put these are the impoverished Anglo-Saxons. Their presence complicates the celebratory discourse of ethnic difference and compels us to reengage the issue of fault lines between classes within seemingly homogenic ethnic groups, an issue that I believe can help us gain a better understanding of certain politico-cultural realities in present-day America.

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An Exploration of Canadian Identity in Recent Literary Narratives of the Franklin Expeditions

Summary

Sir John Franklin's three expeditions to the high Arctic in 1819, 1825, and 1845 have become the stuff of Canadian legend, enshrined in history books, songs, short stories, novels, and web sites. Franklin set out in 1845 to discover the Northwest Passage with the most advanced technology the British Empire could muster, and disappeared forever. Many rescue explorations found only scant evidence of the Expedition, and the mystery was finally solved only recently. This paper will explore four recent fictional works on Franklin's expeditions, Stan Rogers' song "Northwest Passage", Margaret Atwood's short story "The Age of Lead", Rudy Wiebe's *A Discovery of Strangers*, and John Wilson's *North with Franklin: the Lost Journals of James Fitzjames*, to see how Franklin's ghost has haunted the hopes and values of nineteenth-century, as well as modern, Canada.

Key Words: Canadian literature and culture, Franklin Expedition, Stan Rogers ("Northwest Passage"), Margaret Atwood ("The Age of Lead"), Rudy Wiebe (*Discovery of Strangers*), John Wilson (*North with Franklin*)

Po poteh kanadske identitete v sodobnih literarnih pripovedih o odpravah Johna Franklina

Povzetek

Sir John Franklin se je s svojimi tremi odpravami na Arktiko v letih 1819, 1825 in 1845 neminljivo zapisal v anale kanadskih legend, zgodovinskih učbenikov, pesmi kratkih zgodb in spletnih strani. Leta 1845 se je Franklin odpravil z namenom, da razišče severozahodni prehod, opremljen z najsodobnejšo tehnologijo, ki jo je takrat premogel britanski imperij, nakar je za vselej izginil. Številne reševalne odprave so naletele zgolj na pomanjkljive sledove, potem pa je skrivnost pred kratkim izplavala na površje. Članek se loteva štirih sodobnih literarnih upodobitev Franklinovih odprav: pesmi "Severozahodni prehod" ("Northwest Passage") Stana Rogersa, novele "Doba svinca" ("The Age of Lead") Margaret Atwood, *Odkritje tujcev* (*A Discovery of Strangers*) pisatelja Rudyja Wiebeja ter dela *Na sever s Franklinom: izgubljeni dnevniki Jamesa Fitzjamesa* (*North with Franklin: the Lost Journals of James Fitzjames*) avtorja Johna Wilsona. Iz vseh teh del veje Franklinov duh, ki je prežemal upe in vrednote Kanade devetnajstega stoletja in ki jih prežema še danes.

Ključne besede: kanadska književnost in kultura, Franklinova odprava, Stan Rogers ("Northwest Passage"), Margaret Atwood ("The Age of Lead"), Rudy Wiebe (*Discovery of Strangers*), John Wilson (*North with Franklin*)

An Exploration of Canadian Identity in Recent Literary Narratives of the Franklin Expeditions

The last voyage of Sir John Franklin and his expedition to explore the Canadian north and to find the Northwest Passage has become the stuff of Canadian legend, inspiring songs, stories, novels, chapters in history books, and now web sites. The expedition was a catastrophe. Franklin and his men set off in 1845 and disappeared, almost without a trace, and for over a hundred years no one knew what had happened to them. What is it about Canadians that makes them celebrate such an enigma?

Franklin, an English naval officer, led three expeditions into Canada's high Arctic: the first, in 1819-21, north from Great Slave Lake along the Coppermine River to the Arctic Ocean; the second in 1925, north from Fort Franklin, on Great Bear River, along the Mackenzie River to the Beaufort Sea. For his reports of these discoveries, he was knighted in 1829 and made governor of Van Diemen's Land, now Tasmania. In May, 1845 Franklin left London on an expedition with two ships, the *Erebus* and *Terror*, and 134 men. They were last seen in Baffin Bay on June 26. From 1847 to 1859, thirty rescue expeditions were sent to find Franklin. In 1854, the first remains of the expedition were found by John Rae of the Hudson's Bay Company on King William Island. Since 1854, the reasons for the failure of Franklin's last expedition have been hotly debated, and the story of the expedition has become a Canadian legend.

In the last couple of decades of the twentieth century, the Franklin Expeditions were the subject of popular music and literature. Stan Rogers, a Canadian folksinger who died tragically in an airplane fire in 1983, wrote "Northwest Passage" to celebrate Franklin and other early explorers, and Margaret Atwood, Rudy Wiebe, and John Wilson based a short story and two novels on the Franklin Expeditions.

In Rogers's 1981 song, "Northwest Passage", Franklin and his expedition are the main motif, although several other early explorers of Canada are mentioned:

Northwest Passage

> Ah for just one time I would take the Northwest Passage
> To find the hand of Franklin reaching for the Beaufort Sea
> Tracing one warm line through a land so wide and savage
> And make a northwest passage to the sea

Rogers' song struck a responsive chord in Canadian listeners, and was often played on Peter Gzowski's CBC radio program, *Morningside*. Its appeal can be partly laid to Rogers' haunting *a capella* performance, but equally to the resonance of the lyrics. Many Canadians spend much of their leisure time hiking and canoeing in the great north woods, but few can claim to have explored the wilderness to the extent that Franklin and Rogers' narrator can, and those who have

spent any time in Canada's north know well that very, very few of us would survive the attempt. Even with the best modern equipment, which Franklin and his expeditions did not have, the Canadian North is a cold, inhospitable place, and many early explorers succumbed to Franklin's fate. Even today, survival in the north depends on trade with the south and, sadly, traditional survival skills have largely been lost. Modern Nunavut schools now teach courses in traditional survival skills. It is a sobering thought to anyone who visits the Canadian North that the survival time of an unprotected person in winter can be measured in minutes.

Despite a common cultural fascination with heroic acts of endurance in the north, very few Canadians have ever been to the far north. Most have only ever been exposed to Toronto or Montreal winters, to the hardships of frozen plumbing, and cars that won't start. The north is something known only from history and geography tests in school. Those tests, however, and programs like Gzowski's, elicit curiosity about the early explorers of the country. Rogers' song traces Franklin's route on a modern highway, but the landscape evokes an imaginative vision of the difficulties Franklin and his men must have faced from the land, the weather, and the uncertainty of travelling in an unknown land. Rogers also indulges in a bit of typically Canadian self-deprecating irony by having his speaker identify himself as "This tardiest explorer driving hard across the plain." Compared to the stories of heroism to which Canadians are constantly exposed from their southern neighbours, Canadian history seems largely stories of failure, of explorers who take wrong turns and freeze to death, and, in the case of Franklin's men, even resort to cannibalism. Is there any wonder that many Canadians consider their own history boring, and know more about American history than their own?

Songwriters like Rogers and novelists like Atwood and Wiebe brought stories of the explorers who tried and failed, and the success of those who followed, back into cultural prominence. Although Franklin was a hero in his own time, modern accounts, both historical and fictional, focus instead on his lack of preparation, and stubborn refusal to consider either the warnings or the survival expertise of his native Canadian guides. Determination may be one of the character traits Canadians see and prize in themselves, but pigheadedness is not. Rather, it is the determination of his rescuers that is prized, and the ability to learn from mistakes. This is the theme of Atwood's story, the stick-to-itiveness that results in a solution to the mystery, even if it takes a hundred years to find it.

Margaret Atwood's short story "The Age of Lead" refers to the discovery of the body of John Torrington, who died during Franklin's last expedition, 1845–1847. The narrator is watching a television documentary about the autopsy being performed on Torrington's recently discovered body (a reference to a television program based on Owen Beattie's work):

> The scientists are back on the screen. They are excited, their earnest mouths are twitching, you could almost call them joyful. They know why John Torrington died, they know, at last, why the Franklin Expedition went so terribly wrong. They've snipped off pieces of John Torrington, a fingernail, a lock of hair, they've run them through machines and come out with their answers.

There is a shot of an old tin can, pulled open to show the seam. It looks like a bomb casing. A finger points: it was the tin cans that did it, a new invention back then, a new technology, the ultimate defence against starvation and scurvy. The Franklin Expedition was excellently provisioned with tin cans, stuffed full of meat and soup and soldered together with lead. The whole expedition got lead poisoning. Nobody knew it. Nobody could taste it. It invaded their bones, their lungs, their brains, weakening them and confusing their thinking, so that at the end those that had not yet died in the ships set out in an idiotic trek across the stony, icy ground, pulling a lifeboat laden with down with toothbrushes, soap, handkerchiefs, and slippers, useless pieces of junk. When they were found ten years later, they were skeletons in tattered coats, lying where they'd collapsed. They'd been heading back toward the ships. It was what they'd been eating that killed them. (Atwood 1991, 168-9)

Atwood's writing embodies what is probably the defining characteristic of Canadian writing, a self-deprecating irony and a sardonic sense of humour. The irony of this passage, that Franklin and his men were done in by the very thing they expected would save them, their state-of-the-Victorian-art technology, is reflected in the title of the story. There is a double irony in the tone of Atwood's narrative voice in the first paragraph. The same hubris seen in Franklin's plans is repeated in the joyfulness of Atwood's "scientists". Her narrator invites the reader to see the same mistaken reliance on science in the modern detectives that resulted in Franklin's death. The implication is that there was no single element to blame, that the whole enterprise was doomed, that Franklin and his men had bitten off more than they could chew, although the lead poisoning is seen as the main cause.

Rudy Wiebe's *A Discovery of Strangers* dramatizes Franklin's earlier 1820-1821 expedition along the Coppermine River to its mouth in the Arctic Ocean. Wiebe, like Atwood, explores the idea that one of the problems that caused Franklin and his men difficulties was their preoccupation with material goods and failure to appreciate the wisdom and warning of their Native Canadian hosts. Taking too much equipment and not enough food resulted in starvation and finally cannibalism:

The name for it is "long pig", you ever heard of that?
Ask any English tar an' he'll tell you. Give him a drink, an' he'll tell you more than you can stomach, ha-ha!
Stomach all right it is, an' was, all of them bloody big Canadian paddlers dead, just dropped an' dead on that trek from the Northern Ocean over all those rivers an' barrens an' snowdrifts an' rocks an' that big double rapid on the Coppermine, Obstruction Rapids, what took us nine days trying to get across till St. Germain, who could do anything, made that cup out of canvas an' we pulled ourselves across one by one--the rapids really finished us. But those Canadians were dead, an' our English officers alive--except poor Hood shot when he lies dying already, our officers live to come home an' every one of them quick as a winking Knight of the Garter an' famous.
An' me too, alive, the one yattering tar daft enough to go every step with them when even the Orkneymen--God be blessed, quick Orkneymen!--know enough to run early in the

hard going, me a sailor of the bottom class given a soft lick on the London docks all those years, an' now more than soft in the sweet air of Van Diemen's Land, sweet if you ain't a gaolbird here, all because I come alive out of that trek, you think ten Canadian voyageurs are falling down dead because they were *weaker* than us? Ha! (286)

Wiebe's narrator in this passage is one of the common sailors, not one of the officers, and his story reveals one of the truths that the official explanation of the expedition would rather have kept hidden, that the survivors of this early expedition had resorted to cannibalism. The would-be survivors of the last expedition also tried this desperate measure but it failed them. Charles Dickens was so horrified by the thought that an English sailor could stoop to such a savage measure that he rejected out of hand the story of one of Franklin's would-be rescuers in his periodical *Household Words*:

> Dr. Rae may be considered to have established, by the mute but solemn testimony of the relics he has brought home, that Sir John Franklin and his party are no more. But, there is one passage in his melancholy report, some examination into the probabilities and improbabilities of which, we hope will tend to the consolation of those who take the nearest and dearest interest in the fate of that unfortunate expedition, by leading to the conclusion that there is no reason whatever to believe, that any of its members prolonged their existence by the dreadful expedient of eating the bodies of their dead companions. Quite apart from the very loose and unreliable nature of the Esquimaux [i.e. Inuit] representations (on which it would be necessary to receive with great caution, even the commonest and most natural occurrence), we believe we shall show, that close analogy and the mass of experience are decidedly against the reception of any such statement, and that it is in highest degree improbable that such men as the officers and crews of the two lost ships would or could, in any extremity of hunger, alleviate the pains of starvation by this horrible means. (Dickens 1854)

Wiebe's sailor goes on to develop a second theme: what killed Franklin's expedition was its dependence on what the Victorians considered their strength, materialism (some would go further and say technology):

> Why ten of twelve falling down? I'll tell you: they had carried so much of our useless stuff – useless for staying alive, if that's what you're after in that country, an' what else can you chase there once you're forced to get down to it? – carrying so much stuff even on foot in bloody big packs even after all the canoes were smashed, that strong as they were, they got caught on a neat point: what between starvin' and droppin' of scurvy an' freezing, they were just *worked* to death. (288–9)

Elsewhere in Wiebe's novel, Franklin and his men ignore the advice of their native Canadian guides, considering the opinions of those "savages" to be beneath their notice. Wiebe points out that the survival lessons of the native Canadians were honed over millennia of successful adaptation to the conditions of the land, an insight it seems incredible that the supposedly

educated English officers could be blind to. Although Wiebe chose to write about Franklin's 1821 expedition, it was the same materialistic hubris and failure to heed the warnings of the local inhabitants that resulted in the final disaster of the last expedition over twenty years later.

In contrast, John Wilson's novel *North with Franklin: the Lost Journals of James Fitzjames* directly confronts the final expedition. It is a fictional recreation of the private journal of the captain of Franklin's ship *Erebus* on the 1846-1849 voyage. The early part of the novel contains excerpts from Fitzjames' journal, but the rest is Wilson's creation. The expedition left Greenland in 1846 and met a whaling ship, transferred some letters home along with a portion of Fitzjames' journal, and was never seen again, although, as Wilson notes in his afterword, several bodies of crew members were discovered by other Arctic expeditions many years later.

The novel describes the early successes of the expedition, including the final traverse, on foot, of the Northwest Passage, the initial reason for the expedition. However, as time went by the expedition suffered reverses, including both becoming inextricably trapped in the ice and being unable to escape for two years owing to short summer sailing seasons, increasing sickness and death from exposure, frostbite, amputations, exhaustion, scurvy, an inexplicable illness which one of the ships' doctors diagnoses as being connected with their canned food, and finally starvation and cannibalism. Here we have not just a single cause, as in Atwood's story, but a combination of factors (leading to the suspicion that Atwood's "scientists" may be as mistaken in their singlemindedness as Franklin was). Wilson thus builds upon the themes and theories proposed in the earlier stories of Atwood and Wiebe, as well as in actual historic accounts, and adds some philosophizing between Fitzjames and Captain Crozier of Franklin's second ship, *Terror*. Crozier, who has been in the Arctic before, argues with Franklin and Fitzjames about the value of learning from the experience of the natives. Fitzjames responds with the standard British line:

> Undeniably, Crozier knows much of these lands, but surely he cannot seriously believe that the natives who live here, accomplished though they may be in naming snow, can hold a candle to us when it comes to mechanical accomplishment and fitness to survive in almost every circumstance. (74)

After some argument, Franklin ends the discussion with a blanket statement: "Our means of doing things is different, but superior, to the primitives in this land" (83), and Fitzjames sums up his agreement in his journal, addressed to his sister-in-law, Elizabeth: "I also have no desire to adopt Esquimaux ways, dress in stinking skins, live in a snow house, and eat raw seal meat. My uniform, bunk, and roast beef will suffice, thank you" (83). Ironically, near the end of the novel, after Crozier's death, Fitzjames does take to wearing Crozier's sealskin suit, finding it warmer than his English officer's uniform, and to eating seal meat and blubber after the ship's doctor voices his suspicion that the canned food has been poisoning the crew, but by this time it is too late to save him or his crew. Wilson dramatizes the debate, taking licence to do so because almost no information survived the catastrophe. Giving Crozier the more modern, enlightened position redeems the British navy and makes blame more a matter of individual failure rather than national myopia.

In one of their last conversations, Crozier explains his early doubts about the whole enterprise of Arctic exploration:

> The danger is that our successful machines give us false confidence and an overweening arrogance. We come to think that we can achieve anything we wish, but as we strive for achievements outside our ken, we will be bound to fail; as we have failed. (247)

The danger, he goes on to say, lies not just in over reliance on technology, but on a broader failure to understand our place in the world:

> It is a failure because we come here in arrogance thinking that we can dominate nature. We cannot. We are at its mercy and it can snuff us out as easily as we can extinguish a candle. Any attempt to defeat nature, to overcome it, is doomed. Even if nature allows us a few moments of victory, ultimately we are doomed. (248)

The message these modern writers derive from the story of the Franklin Expedition is threefold. The traditional view of the explorers, admiration for their bravery and determination, is still valid. Even today, the far north is a cold, inhospitable landscape, not to be taken lightly. To survive there, even with modern technology, is still a challenge. Rogers' ballad embodies this theme. Wiebe and Atwood bring a postmodern irony to this view, however. Franklin and his men fell victim to their narrow-mindedness and hubris by depending solely on their military hierarchy and technology which, although successful in building an empire, fell short against the vast landscape. Both writers also point out that unless we learn from their mistakes, modern civilization and culture still depend on the basic assumptions that led Franklin astray, and that we are just as likely to fall into the same trap. Wilson goes further, with a reminder reminiscent of current thinking on ecology and environmental science.

Perhaps there is an American equivalent; perhaps Canadians prefer their heroes like Shane, who don't grow old, or fade away, but ride off into the wilderness to disappear. It helps to maintain the mystery. It has been said, for example, by Margaret Atwood in *Survival*, that Canadian literature is about the search for identity. Certainly, Wiebe has written many stories that deal with this quest, from the voice of Almighty Voice in "Where is the Voice Coming From?" to "The Naming of Albert Johnson," who remains anonymous even after he has been named. Here, the question of identity is not so much the character's name, or their official identity, but the modern reader's perception of them. Were the explorers the heroic role models they are portrayed in the history books, and in Stan Rogers' song, or something else, and what does our judgement of them say about us?

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E. E. Cummings: From Parenthesis to Personality (Part I)

Summary

The paper presents the unique oeuvre of E.E. Cummings, who claims an outstanding position in the heritage of American poetry, as a case of Bildungsdichtung. This status is largely due to his highly innovative and iconoclastic approach to poetic composition, starting from his early rebellious endeavours drawing on an astounding variety of non-standard and downright shocking potentialities of the English language (including such peculiar linguistic and stylistic idiosyncracies as drastic changes of the syntactic English word order, shifts at the morphology and word-formation level, unorthodox use of punctuation, extravagant typography and spacing or arrangement of space between the lines, a diversity of meters and rhymes, as well as seemingly eccentric imagery), to his later and invariably maturer poetic diction – the diction of one who has apparently come to terms with the world and his fellow-beings, realising that genuine wisdom resides in the understanding and forgiveness of the inherently fallible human nature rather than in its continuous sardonic scrutiny.

Key words: E.E.Cummings, uniqueness of rhetoric, poetic truth and human truth, epiphany

E. E. Cummings: Od oklepaja do osebnosti (1. del)

Povzetek

Članek oriše umetniški in človeški razvoj ameriškega pesnika E.E.Cummingsa, ki ima v ameriški književnosti poseben sloves. Utemeljen je na Cummingsovi nezmotljivi avtorski govorici ter vrsti njegovih izvirnih posegov v ustaljeno pesniško dikcijo, ki jo spoznava za preživeto, iztrošeno, neprepoznavno in zatorej vredno temeljite prenove. Takšno prenovo najde Cummings v mnogovrstnih preigravanjih skrajnega dometa angleščine ter njene leposlovne izraznosti, od osupljivih jezikovno-slogovnih bravur, kot so na primer drastično spreminjanje ustaljenega skladenjskega reda, premiki na oblikoslovni in besedotvorni ravni (posamostaljena raba glagolov, zaimkov, prislovov in veznikov), neustaljena raba ločil (zlasti oklepajev) ter velike/male začetnice, nenavadna tipografija in razmiki oziroma razporeditev prostora med verzi, preigravanje raznoterih oblik metruma in rime, do navidez čudaškega podobarstva in drugih retoričnih ter vizualnih prijemov. Razprava sledi razvoju avtorjeve pesniške in osebnostne konstelacije, ki jo zaznamujeta mladostno vihravo uporništvo ter poznejši zreli uvid v bistvo človeškega poslanstva.

Ključni pojmi: E.E.Cummings, revolucija retorike, pesniška in človeška resnica, epifanija

E. E. Cummings: From Parenthesis to Personality (Part I)

for life's not a paragraph

And death i think is no parenthesis

1. Introduction

The greatest names of 20th-century American poetry, such as Robert Frost, T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, William Carlos Williams, Wallace Stevens, and in the last decades John Ashbery, undoubtedly include E(dward) E(stlin) Cummings. But while Cummings' poetic expression and spirit had received occasional attention in the Slovene cultural circles,[1] it was only in 2006 that a translation of his selected poems was published in book format. Rather than to the Slovene *Geistesgeschichte*, this belated Slovene reception is probably to be attributed to the form, style, and language of Cummings' work, for his poetic experience is articulated in a highly idiosyncratic, experimental idiom, extremely difficult to imitate or reflect in any target language. This, of course, means that many of his well-nigh *emblematic* poems are simply not transferable to any other, different, language system. While this is to a degree true of many poets, the inner structure of Cummings' expression in fact rests on the closest possible interdependence of content and form – sometimes, as will be shown later, to the point of their amalgamation into a tightly knit cohesive and coherent organism. According to a 1940 letter by William Carlos Williams, who was known for his extraordinary ear for language, "[i]n the use of language Pound and Cummings are beyond doubt the two most distinguished American poets of today" (qtd. in Matthews 1985, 251). Williams even included the figure of Cummings in his famous epic *Paterson* under the name of Hopper Cumming (derived from one of Cummings' early poems which graphically represents the movement of a grasshopper, with the letters and syllables hopping over each other on the page in various combinations, until the poem literally jumps over the edge), sending him to his death in the waterfalls of the Passaic River, which represents the living stream of language. In a sense, then, Williams portrays Cummings' poetic horizon as embracing both birth and death, success and defeat, originality and exhaustion – as if foreseeing the absence of further linguistic innovations in Cummings' subsequent work (he died in 1962). Instead of these, Cummings significantly expanded the horizons of his thought, filling the existing form with new contents – contents which were to influence not only American but world poetry at large.

In many respects, E. E. Cummings, poet, writer, playwright, and essayist (Cummings himself would certainly include – and doubly emphasise – his painting, although his pictures[2] are little

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1 Cummings has received fairly little attention from either Slovene literary critics or translators. While the earliest references to his work appeared as early as 1926, his poetics was not given detailed treatment until 1963 (M. Jurak. 1963. E. E. Cummings: uveljavljeni eksperiment v poeziji. *Problemi* 1, no. 8: 779), with the first translations of his poems arriving in 1965 (H. Pribac). Since then, selections from his work have been translated by V. Taufer, M. Avanzo, P. Semolič and V. Pejović, and U. Mozetič.

2 Interestingly, Cummings spent far more time on his painting than on his poetry, a fact attested to by thousands of his notes on various aspects of painting, such as colour theory, analysis of the human form, the "intelligence" of painting, reflections on the Masters, etc. Striving for recognition as an all-round artist, he went so far as to invent dialogues which promoted his artistic activity with the utmost earnestness and commitment, despite their ironical tone: See appendix A.

known today and rate far lower than his literary works), holds an exceptional place in modern literature. On the one hand, there are many critics, especially those opposing the modernist movement in literature, who would group him with avant-gardists, dadaists, surrealists, and even futurists. On the other, there are those who see his works as marked with indisputable features of the romantic tradition and symbolism, which has often earned him the labels of a "sentimentalist" and "perennial adolescent". His love lyrics, moreover, which the author of this article considers to be among the world's most beautiful, have been repeatedly dismissed as "infantile". The unfavourable reviews may be said to culminate in a piece by Philip Horton, who evaluated Cummings' poetry collections over the previous fifteen years for the *Partisan Review* (Friedman 1996, 90–1).[3] According to Horton, the poet's "notorious typography" is a mere "historical curiosity", while his satirical mingling of the trivial and the serious leads to a complete confusion of values, resulting from his deliberate rejection of knowledge. Other more or less vituperative views include Horace Gregory's description of Cummings in the *New Republic* as "the Jazz Age Peter Pan", "fixed in rigid attitudes of youth" in his defiance of the ruling values of the modern world (ibid., 88), and Edwin Honig's piece in the *Kenyon Review* (one of the severest), which proclaims Cummings' poetics to be "cantankerous and juvenile", capable of neither acting nor feeling but merely thinking, as a mere "public confession of opposing selves" (ibid., 94).

All these views raise the following question: How was it possible to level charges of artistic immaturity, lack of aesthetic dimension, and all manner of simplification at a poet nowadays considered one of the most fanatic rebels and nonconformists in the American literary experience, an author with the most radical, original yet precise poetic idiom? Although the decisive majority of reviews have been positive and highly favourable to Cummings, the fact remains that no critic would have ventured a similar dismissal of, say, the (ultra)modernist poetics of Ezra Pound or Wallace Stevens. What, then, are the elements in Cummings that have prompted (and probably always will prompt) conflicting critical responses, while paradoxically ensuring him relatively high popularity with readers? And not only with readers, but with undergraduate students as well – during his lifetime, when he was invited to give lectures and poetry readings, as well as today, when he is discussed in university classes worldwide. A strikingly enthusiastic critical response was offered by Ezra Pound, who rated Cummings' poetry collection *is 5* (1926) as the second most important book of the 20th century, before Joyce's *Ulysses* and immediately after *The Apes of God* by Wyndham Lewis. His popularity with readers, on the other hand, is attested to by statistics: at the time of his death in 1962 he was second on the list of the most widely read American poets, preceded only by Robert Frost.

The reasons for Cummings' popularity with readers are fairly obvious: he is one of the few

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3   Friedman contributes a thorough evaluation and re-evaluation of critical responses to Cummings from 1922 to 1983, complemented by an exhaustive list of poets, critics, and other academics who have dealt with Cummings in one way or another. It includes such names as Cleanth Brooks, Kenneth Burke, Malcolm Cowley, Hart Crane, John Dos Passos, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Robert Graves, Marianne Moore, Octavio Paz, Ezra Pound, Gertrude Stein, and William Carlos Williams. At the same time, Friedman seeks to answer the question why Cummings has not been ranked with the great modernist poets by a number of other critics. In his opinion, the main reason lies in the relation between Cummings and his audience: while delighted by the author's relaxed, joyous, confident attitude, the readers feel deprived of the true context of inner struggle which gives significance to his poetic vision and techniques (ibid., 89).

modernist poets to write about love (as well as sexuality, particularly in his early and middle periods)[4] in a straightforward and simple but original manner, with an enviable lighthearted humour which brings together sensuality, satire, and exceptional openness to the entire physical world, urban and rural alike. At the same time he remains highly serious, always striving for a metaphysical surplus. The finish which separates him from other modernist lyric poets is his ability to encapsulate a mood of love in a single moment, invest it with the voluptuousness of pleasure, and finally exalt it to sublime devotion. This is where Cummings comes closest to the romantic subjectivity, a subjectivity unburdened by any experience of the scepticism, ambivalence, and paradox which underlie modernist vision and are present in the poetry of T. S. Eliot ("The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock") or Wallace Stevens ("Final Soliloquy of the Interior Paramour") – and, of course, in that unofficial avatar of Anglo-American love poetry, the poem "Lullaby" by W. H. Auden. Since the latter naturally invites comparison with Cummings' poem *somewhere i have never traveled, gladly beyond*, the two should be illustrated here with a few representative lines:

> *Lay your sleeping head, my love,*
> *Human on my faithless arm;*
> *Time and fevers burn away*
> *Individual beauty from*
> *Thoughtful children, and the grave*
> *Proves the child ephemeral:*
> *But in my arms till break of day*
> *Let the living creature lie,*
> *Mortal, guilty, but to me,*
> *The entirely beautiful.* (Auden [1937] 1973, 2098)

> *somewhere i have never traveled,gladly beyond*
> *any experience,your eyes have their silence:*
> *in your most frail gesture are things which enclose me,*
> *or which i cannot touch because they are too near*
> *…*
> *(i do not know what it is about you that closes*
> *and opens;only something in me understands*
> *the voice of your eyes is deeper than all roses)*
> *nobody,not even the rain,has such small hands* (Cummings 1972, 366)

In comparison with Auden's, Cummings' attitude to love appears rather more sentimental at first glance because it is not conditional or momentary – not the result of a passing inspiration, which would make it transitory or at least entail the inequality of the two participants, as is evidently the case in Auden's poem. While Auden's speaker, addressing a sleeping lover,

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4   Some of Cummings' erotic poetry is surprisingly daring and explicit, such as the following piece from the collection & [*AND*] (1925): See appendix B.

is in a position of dominance, Cummings' speaker (or, rather, the poet's own projection)[5] never addresses a beloved person who is not at least hypothetically present. Most importantly, Cummings' notion of love differs from all others in not depending on a three-dimensional modernist coordinate grid, where a transcendental vision can only be reached via a struggle. By Cummings, this vision is approached through a fourth dimension as an intuitive and immediate experience. He appears to be untouched by the fundamental rift between reality and truth which preoccupies modernist poets, especially in his earlier poems, which surprise the reader with their author's masterful understanding of the world and its laws. But a deeper reading of Cummings' poetological maxims, such as the introduction to his *Collected Poems* (1938), reveals indisputable and significant points of contact with the philosophy of high modernist poetics:

> *... never to rest and never to have:only to grow.*
> *Always the beautiful answer who asks a more beautiful question* (Cummings 1972, 462)

These lines unmistakably evoke Rilke's poem "Der Fremde" (1908):

> *Und dies alles immer unbegehrend*
> *hinzulassen, schien ihm mehr als seines*
> *Lebens Lust, Besitz und Ruhm.*
> *Doch auf fremden Plätzen war ihm eines*
> *täglich ausgetretnen Brunnensteines*
> *Mulde manchmal wie ein Eigentum.*

The similarity between the two is no accident, for Cummings was thoroughly acquainted both with Rilke's poetry and his *Letters to a Young Poet* (1903–4). He quoted a passage from the latter in his first 1952 Harvard lecture (all six lectures were published in 1953 under the title *i: six non lectures*) to express what he considered the essence of art criticism:

> *Works of art are of an infinite loneliness and with nothing to be so little reached as with criticism.*
> *Only love can grasp and hold and fairly judge them.* (Cummings [1953] 1995, 7)

Cummings' rootedness in the physical world – indeed, his sheer delight in it, his denial of the (modernist) ever-changing value standpoint, his persistent assertion of the ego through rejecting inherited, norm-bound patterns of perception, his consolidation of his own identity while

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5   Another point where Cummings significantly diverges from most of his contemporaries is the relation between the author and the speaker, where Cummings again draws closer to the romantic tradition than to modernism. In contrast to Eliot and Pound, who establish this relation on the principle of a *persona* or mask (e.g. with J. Alfred Prufrock and Hugh Selwyn Mauberley respectively), or Stevens, whose speaker – a subtle metaphysician – has no connection at all to the author — the manager of the largest insurance company in Boston –, Cummings resembles Whitman in deliberately creating an image of his speaker, to which he then consistently subordinates his emotion, thought, and his private life in general.
The author-speaker relation in Cummings is also influenced by his carefully fostered cult of the poet and artist. This fact should be taken into account in any reading of his poetry, for he has often been reproached by critics (though never by readers!) for his supposedly superior aristocratic and discriminatory attitude as a human being and as a poet. He toyed with this reproach in various ways, for example in the imaginary interview which introduces *The Enormous Room* [1922] (1949, ix–x): See appendix C.

emphasising individuality – all these are features which never fail to establish contact with the reader. Critical response, however, is a more complex issue, requiring a deeper, more detailed insight into the fundamental characteristics of the poet's aesthetics and beliefs.

Although Cummings had written poetry ever since his childhood, his first published book (1922) was not a collection of poems but a prose work, a novel/memoir entitled *The Enormous Room*. It describes a segment of his World War I experience as an American volunteer in France, three months spent in the internment camp at La Ferté-Macé with his friend and comrade Brown. He had been arrested and incarcerated under a mistaken suspicion of espionage, the French counter-intelligence having allegedly intercepted a suspicious letter of Brown's to the US. At first Cummings had no intention of making his diary notes public, but he finally decided on publication at the constant promptings of his father, an eminent Boston intellectual, university professor and humanist, who had made use of all his contacts in government to secure his son's release (his letter to the White House, together with the reply, was included by Cummings in the book's preface). In contrast to many literary autobiographies dealing with similar themes, Cummings' evocation of his mental and physical torments contains no bitterness, let alone self-pity. His writing is surprisingly lighthearted, full of humour, satire, and, above all, a sense of distance which helps him to preserve his human dignity in a demeaning environment. Even at this early stage, the young Cummings seems to have perfected his basic anti-authoritarian, anti-institutional, and generally rebellious attitude, to which he would remain faithful all his life.[6]

A closer examination of his attitude to politics and society reveals a surprising lack of commitment, as if, for him, the so-called real world had never existed. Many poets and writers in the interbellum period, including famous names such as Ezra Pound, W. H. Auden, Archibald MacLeish, Steven Spender, or John Dos Passos, felt that their mission involved active public criticism of the socio-political constellations,[7] even if "poetry makes nothing happen" (Auden [1940] 1973, 2105). Cummings, by contrast, displays a sometimes puzzling ambivalence: he rejects or is even indifferent to such crucial developments as Roosevelt's introduction of the *New Deal* programme or the fast-emerging fascism, socialism, and communism, while expressing distress about relatively trivial events. An example is his indignation on learning about the

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6 Cummings' social and political stance and activity have always been deemed controversial by modernist criticism: in contrast to other modernists, the poet appeared largely uninterested in the universal community and a just society, while his momentary flashes of interest seemingly revealed simplified, well-nigh na ve views. The truth, however, was that Cummings rejected any official version of history or society, perceiving institutions as abstract and therefore unreal.

7 The issue of the modernists' social commitment still appears to be one of the central critical nodes. The fundamental question is whether – and to what degree – modernist poetics reflects the world as it is or creates a new world of its own. There have been claims that "modernist literature does not permit social and political commitment" because "the world of poetry always appears different from external reality" (Kos 1995, 56). Such statements, based on tying up the modernist processing of the world with the radical construction of reality in the author's mind, must appear inadequate because they ignore the fact that many leading modernist writers did take a stand on the contemporary social events both during the interbellum period and in World War II. They expressed it either through their works (Eliot's *The Waste Land* reflects on the material, emotional, and spiritual devastation in the aftermath of World War I, suggesting a possible way of salvation for humanity; the same applies to Auden's famous socio-political poem "September 1, 1939") or in public (Pound's speeches on the Roman radio in support of Mussolini's Fascism). It is true, on the other hand, that Eliot himself, in his well-known essay on Joyce's 'mythical method', argued for the creation of a world tailored to art (Brooker 1993, 6). The answer thus seems to lie at the intersection of the documentary and visionary in modernist literary discourse. Interestingly, one of the reproaches most frequently levelled at postmodernists is precisely their socio-political indifference (cf. e.g. Krivak 2002, 218–9 et passim).

manufacture of billiard balls from ivory, given voice in his collection *W* [*ViVa*] (1931):

> *Space being(don't forget to remember)Curved*
> …
>   *LONG LIVE that Upwardlooking*
> *Serene Illustrious and Beatific*
> *Lord of Creation,MAN:*
>   *at a least crooking*
> *of Whose compassionate digit,earth's most teriffic*
>
> *quadruped swoons into billiardBalls!* (Cummings 1972, 315)

Cummings' political scepticism was probably reinforced by his visit to Russia in 1931, when her communism was still seen in the West as a potential hope for humanity. What Cummings encountered in Russia, however, was extreme poverty, oppression, and death – a far cry from a new Arcadia. On his return, he is reputed to have all but gone down on his knees and kissed his "bourgeois" home soil. While his satire does include a political edge, it is true that the relatively vigorous anti-imperialist criticism of his youth weakened over the years, gradually seguing into the conservatism of his family tradition.

Lacking reference to external, abstract entities such as history, government, or the socio-political system, Cummings' understanding of the true reality could only exist in relation to a pure transcendence, as the result of his contact with the seamless unity of existence as such. And the key to such contact, as he was to discover, lay in an annihilation of the dichotomy between matter and spirit, temporality and timelessness.

The narrative style of *The Enormous Room* was steeped in French avant-garde art, especially dadaism and surrealism but also cubism, which had aroused Cummings' enthusiasm when he studied Picasso's sketches during his first visit to Paris in 1917. It launched him among the contemporary "pioneers" of the rising modernism,[8] even more so because the seminal works of Anglo-American modernism, *The Waste Land* by T. S. Eliot and *Ulysses* by James Joyce, were published in the same year (1922). Although some critics (such as the writer John Dos Passos) admired Cummings' spiritual fervour, his views and humanist vision in this book are not as clear-cut yet as they appear in his later works. Nevertheless, the language and style of *The Enormous Room* show a degree of inventiveness and experimentation perfectly suited to the modernist demand for the articulation of fragmented, hollowed-out, or even emptied experience – an articulation which would invest this experience with a new meaning and restore the quality of immanence. This may be achieved by saying something new against a familiar background – or, as in the case of Cummings, by saying the familiar in a novel way.

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8   Critics and theorists still differ widely on the so-called official beginning of modernism. While the movement loosely spans the period between 1880 and 1950, the year 1922 may be arguably considered at least a watershed of its development, if not its outright peak. Cf. e.g. Brooker (1993).

Since an idea is inseparable from its form of expression, it must be expressed so as to appear in the most original and striking light possible. A poet, in other words, needs the kind of language which will not intrude between the subject and object of perception but accurately represent the true, objective reality which it aims to encompass poetically. And this is where we encounter the first difficulty, for, according to Cummings, the greater part of our perception has become blurred by habit and our vision reduced to mere outlines of objects, with a correspondingly blurred language to describe them. A poet, however, must find a language which will derail the accustomed, norm-bound, stereotyped way of looking, thus shedding light on the objects from a new, ever-changing perspective. Indeed, Cummings sees it as a mission of art to encapsulate in a single moment all the complexity of the dynamics of observation, and consequently of reflection.

Cummings' thoughts on the task of the poet (artist) are not entirely original, for identical or at least very similar premises appear almost simultaneously in the art theory of the Russian formalist school, especially in the writings of Viktor Shklovsky. In his view, art should be capable of tapping into the linguistic potential to find ways of *defamiliarising* perception: "…[art] exists to help or recover the sensation of life, it exists to enable us to feel things, to make the stone stony. The purpose of art is to give a sensation of the object as something seen, not something recognised. The technique of art is to make things unfamiliar" (Gray 1990, 22–3). This view harmonises perfectly with Cummings' understanding of artistic creativity as the interaction of two processes: the concentration on the "moment", on the act in the process of changing, as well as the representation, not of the object itself, but of the way in which it is perceived by the artist.

A key to this *defamiliarisation* effect is found by Cummings in radical experimentation with language and style, which he elaborates to a perfection and distinctiveness hardly parallelled in Anglo-American literature. What, then, are the basic characteristics of his poetic diction? There would be little point in attempting to impose a hierarchical order on his various techniques, for they are mutually dependent and supportive to such a degree that the least tampering with their internal structure would result in the total collapse of the text. His idiosyncrasies of style and language include drastic changes of the syntactic English word order, shifts at the morphology and word-formation levels (the nominalisation of verbs, pronouns, adverbs, and conjunctions), unorthodox use of punctuation (especially of parentheses) and of uppercase/lowercase letters, extravagant typography and spacing (or arrangement of space) between the lines, a diversity of metres and rhymes, seemingly eccentric imagery, and other rhetorical and visual devices. While astonishing and delightful, these techniques also tend to hamper unaccustomed readers, confronting them with the extremes of linguistic potential. This is why the opinion expressed by Richard D. Cureton[9] in his detailed analysis of Cummings' visual prosodies has particular significance. According to Cureton, the poet's visual experiments paradoxically often seem more important for their failure than for their success, but, "[s]ucceed or fail, Cummings puts us to school about our language, and we should be grateful for the education" (1986, 277). His most effective experiments, on the other hand, are paragons of superb typographical poem structure

9   Focusing on the structural properties of the collection *No Thanks* (1933), Cureton concludes that Cummings' techniques are produc-
     tive only when his visual forms are clearly subordinate to, or completely independent of, a phonological prosody, while the poems
     which rely exclusively on the visually symmetrical poetic line are rather less satisfying (1986, 277).

(dubbed *poempicture* by the poet himself), as is revealed by probably the most popular and most frequently analysed piece from his collection *95 Poems* (1958):[10]

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iness (Cummings 1972, 673)

The effect of Cummings' verbal "pyrotechnics" was graphically expressed by the American poet Randall Jarrell: "Cummings is a very great expert in all these, so to speak, illegal syntactical devices: his misuse of parts of speech, his use of negative prefixes, his word-coining, his systematic relation of words that grammar and syntax don't permit us to relate – all this makes him a magical bootlegger or moonshiner of language, one who intoxicates us on a clear liquor no government has legalized with its stamp" (qtd. in Schafer 2002).

It must be noted, however, that this technical artistry is more prominent in the poet's earlier and middle phases, while the final part of his oeuvre shifts to an increased use of symbolism, allegory, and paradox, limiting the rhetorical idiosyncrasies to word-coining and some typographical techniques. Cummings' love of linguistic and stylistic innovation thus grows less rampant over the years, being replaced by a metaphysical content – one that reaches such maturity towards the close of his life that its message no longer depends on formal eccentricity.

(To be continued.)

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10 According to Martland (1985, 272 et passim), this poem in fact relates two different principles – the principle of representation and the principle of presentation. Directing the reader to the extratextual perception of a falling leaf as a metaphor for loneliness, it also draws attention to its own verbal constellation.

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Appendix A

Why do you paint?
For exactly the same reason I breathe.
That's not an answer.
There isn't any answer.
How long hasn't there been any answer?
As long as I can remember.
And how long have you written?
As long as I can remember.
I mean poetry.
So do I.
Tell me, doesn't your painting interfere with your writing?
Quite the contrary: they love each other dearly.
They're very different.
Very: one is painting and one is writing.
But your poems are rather hard to understand, whereas your paintings are so easy.
Easy?
Of course – you paint flowers and girls and sunsets; things that everybody understands.
I never met him.
Who?
Everybody.
Did you ever hear of nonrepresentational painting?

I am.
Pardon me?
I am a painter, and painting is nonrepresentational.
Not all painting.
No: housepainting is representational.
And what does a housepainter represent?
Ten dollars an hour.
In other words, you don't want to be serious –
It takes two to be serious.
Well let me see … oh yes, one more question: where will you live after this war is over?
In China; as usual.
China?
Of course.
Whereabouts in China?
Where a painter is a poet. (Firmage 1965, 316–7)

Appendix B

i like my body when it is with your
body. It is so quite new a thing.
Muscles better and nerves more.
i like your body. i like what it does,
i like its hows. i like to feel the spine
of your body and its bones, and the trembling
-firm-smooth ness and which i will
again and again and again
kiss, i like kissing this and that of you,
i like, slowly stroking the, shocking fuzz
of your electric fur, and what-is-it comes
over parting flesh . . . . And eyes big love-crumbs,

and possibly i like the thrill

of under me you so quite new (Cummings 1972, 175)

Appendix C

…

…
And aren't you supposed to be ultramodernistic?
- I dare say.
- But I dare say you don't dare say precisely why you consider your art of vital consequence –

- Thanks to I dare say my art I am able to become myself.

- Well well! Doesn't that sound as if people who weren't artists couldn't become themselves?

- Does it?

- What do you think people who aren't artists become?

- I feel they don't become. I feel nothing happens to them. I feel negation becomes of them.

- Negation?

- You paraphrased it a few moments ago.

- How?

- "This so called world of yours" …

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Gadamer, Habermas and a Re-humanized Literary Scholarship

Summary

This paper speaks of an ongoing re-humanization of literary studies to which the work of Gadamer and Habermas can valuably contribute. True, these two thinkers themselves run the risk becoming the focus of commentaries that are aridly scholastic. True, too, they themselves tend to think of literature as an aesthetic heterocosm that is quite distinct from human communication in general. Yet human communication in general is something they certainly understand, and their profound insights into it can actually be applied to literature, in ways which they themselves have not envisaged. Especially relevant in Gadamer is his sense of the changes which can be brought about by communication, and his rehabilitation of common sense. In both Gadamer and Habermas, there is also a clear recognition of communicational dialogicality, and of communication's sheer possibility, even between human beings who are very differently placed. To this can be added Habermas's central insistence on ethical considerations – on human equality, on truthfulness, on trust, on fairness, on cooperativeness – as an integral dimension of communication at its most genuine. These insights can facilitate the discussion as illustrated with the writings of Dickens and T.S. Eliot.

Key words: philosophical hermeneutics; literary theory; literature as communication; mediating scholarship; Gadamer; Habermas; Dickens; T.S. Eliot

Gadamer, Habermas in ponovno počlovečenje literarne vede

Povzetek

Razprava govori predvsem o Habermasovih in Gadamerjevih dragocenih prispevkih k ponovnemu počlovečenju literarnih študij, s katerimi se oba misleca izpostavljata suhoparnim akademskim komentarjem. Prav tako oba pojmujeta književnost kot estetski heterokozmos, ki se bistveno razlikuje od splošne človeške komunikacije, ki pa jo razumeta tako nedvoumno, da je njuno globokoumno razmišljanje mogoče zvesti na književnost samo, in sicer v oblikah, ki jih sama niti nista predvidela. Pri Gadamerju je posebej relevanten njegov občutek za spremembe, ki jih prinaša komunikacija, in pa njegovo obujanje zdrave pameti. Poleg tega tako pri Gadamerju kot pri Habermasu obstaja jasno zavedanje komunikacijske dialoškosti in možnosti komunikacije celo pri osebah v zelo različnih položajih. K temu je treba dodati Habermasovo poglavitno vztrajanje pri etičnih predpostavkah – človeški enakosti, resnicoljubnosti, zaupanju, odkritosrčnosti, sodelovanju – kot nepogrešljivih sestavinah pristne človeške komunikacije. Njuni pogledi so ponazorjeni z deli Dickensa in T.S.Eliota.

Ključne besede: filozofska hermenevtika, literarna teorija, književnost kot komunikacija, posredovanje védenja, Gadamer in Habermas, Dickens in T.S.Eliot

Gadamer, Habermas and a Re-humanized Literary Scholarship

Huge generalizations about the state of scholarship should be taken with a pinch of salt, especially when they are self-congratulatory. But for what it is worth, my impression is that we literary scholars are now leaving some of our twentieth-century shortcomings well behind. During that century huge amounts of literary scholarship were being published, much of it faithfully carrying on the traditional tasks of editing, annotation, commentary and interpretation, and much of it wonderfully enriching. The long series of attempts to develop a theory of literature led to important new insights, and the sheer professionalization of literary studies brought enormous benefits, ranging from the steadily increasing wealth of bibliographical and other research tools to the rich variety of opportunities for discussion, whether at conferences, through scholarly networks, or in journals and periodicals. The downsides of twentieth-century literary scholarship were that literary theorizing sometimes distanced itself from actual literary texts, and from the human beings who actually write and read them, and that scholarly professionalism could all too easily lead to a publish-or-perish mentality, elitist jargon, and sheer over-specialization. Symptomatically, books on literature for the general educated reader were becoming something of a rarity. I touched on this dehumanizing scholasticism in an interview for *Sobodnost* in 2003, and elsewhere tried to suggest some remedies, most extensively in *Mediating Criticism: Literary Education Humanized* (2001). Judging from several publications and conference papers of the past two or three years, however, there is now a clear shift of emphasis. Especially noteworthy was Peter Barry's paper at the 2006 Conference of the European Society for the Study of English, in which he argued that it is time to go back to careful reading, and to a genuine effort of textual, co-textual, contextual and intertextual interpretation. It is against this encouraging background that I shall here try to suggest the possible relevance, for a re-humanized literary scholarship, of Gadamer and Habermas.

At first my suggestion may seem a complete non-starter. Gadamer and Habermas have published a fair number of books, some of them very fat, and in difficult language. That there are already extensive commentaries on them could seem to indicate a risk of more mere scholasticism. This possibility I must frankly acknowledge. But to the extent that the risk is real, I personally hope to avoid it by being as clear and concise as I can manage.

Literary scholars undaunted by the prospect of scholasticism may have another objection. Gadamer and Habermas are interested in interpersonal understanding and interpretation, whereas literature – well, *is* literature something to be understood and interpreted? Peter Barry thinks it is, and I do, too. But are Peter Barry and I right? Are understanding and interpretation the most appropriate modes to be applied to literature? Or are they the *only* modes, or just *two* of the modes? Do we have to understand and interpret literature first, before we can do anything else with it? Or do we understand and interpret it in parallel processing with some other activity? Or does understanding and interpretation come last? After all, some commentators do seem to have rationalized after the event – whatever the event was.

According to F.R. Leavis (1962), when readers turn to a literary work they are not looking for a line of argument, but for qualities of felt life and experience. Cleanth Brooks (1960)[1947], too, said that literary texts are fundamentally unparaphrasable. Oddly enough, though, a similar stance is to be found in Gadamer, who discusses literature under the category of the beautiful. A work of art, he says, has to be thought of *as* a work of art. It is not "the bearer of a message". So he finds Hegel's approach to art unsatisfactory, because it assumed that "everything that addresses us obscurely and non-conceptually in the particular sensuous language of art was to be recuperated by philosophy in the form of a concept" (Gadamer 1986, 33). Why, then, we might ask, does Gadamer himself write about art? – unless to say that he *cannot* write about it. About beauty, is there anything hermeneutical really to be said?

By perpetuating, as it would seem, a Kantian sense of aesthetic beauty, Gadamer is surely in danger of dehumanizing literature at least as much as twentieth-century literary formalists did. And surely his concept of the work of art as a classic could easily flip over into elitism. True, his point is not that the classic work establishes some kind of standard before which admirers must for ever afterwards bow and scrape. Instead, the classic for him is always the same, yet is also always different, depending on how it is freshly perceived by each new audience. The classic is not so much universal as deciduous, so to speak (cf. Weinsheimer 1991: 148). But in his thinking generally, Gadamer does place a very strong emphasis on tradition, of which the artistic and literary heritage is of course a part. Habermas has not been alone in thinking that this does leave an opening, at least, for authoritarianism.

But Habermas (1998)[1985] himself makes a sharp distinction between poetry and communication. Poetry, he says, is not communication but a heightening of rhetoric. In real communication, he continues, such heightening does not occur. In real communication, the role of rhetoric is much more subordinate.

How rhetoric, especially heightened rhetoric, can be anything but oriented to communication is difficult to see. But Habermas's suggestion, so closely akin to the formalist New Critics' disregard of authorial intention and impact on the reader, is typical enough of philosophical hermeneuticians, whose usual starting-point is a concern for ratiocination. Their interest is in meanings, interpretation, understanding, agreement, and disagreement. So they often think of language mainly as a medium for thoughts, for arguments, for ideas, and for real-world truths. They also go well beyond this, making crucial connections between language-use and real-world power. The central concept in Habermas (1984, 1987, 1998) is nothing less than "communicative action". He sees communication as a *form* of action, and re-writes sociology entirely on this basis, as a *critical* sociology, which examines communicational pragmatics from precisely an ethical point of view. But as for literature, both Habermas and Gadamer think of it as an aesthetic heterocosm that is quite separate.

So on *literary* pragmatics they remain silent, and it is no surprise that they have nothing to say about the pragmatics of fiction. When Gadamer speaks of poetry's aesthetic beauty and of the impossibility of recuperating art in the form of a concept, there may even be a distant echo of Plato's grouse about

the poet as a liar. It is almost as if literary language could engage in no form of action apart from beauty-making and truth-telling, and as if these two activities were mutually exclusive.

A humanized literary scholarship must certainly acknowledge literature's full communicativity, it seems to me, in ways which Habermas and Gadamer have explicitly ruled out. My suggestion is, though, that we can apply to literature these two thinkers' most profound insights into communication in general, along lines which they themselves have not envisaged.

In what senses, exactly, is the interchange between a literary author and a reader the same as other kinds of communication? My own account, developed in *Literature as Communication: The Foundations of Mediating Criticism* (2000), runs as follows. When two parties are genuinely communicating, this is not a matter of a message being transmitted from an active sender to a more passive receiver, though – heaven knows! – much communication certainly is depressingly monologic. Genuine communication is more egalitarian, tending, as the term's own etymology suggests, to *make a community.* The two parties begin from within their two different positionalities – two life-worlds of experience-knowledge-beliefs-thoughts-values which only partly overlap with each other – and the process entered upon is essentially one of comparing notes about some third entity. This third entity can be either the communicants themselves (as when you and I can talk about you and me) or somebody or something quite unconnected with the communicants themselves, and it can also involve an element of hypotheticality or even fiction, as in jokes about celebrities, or as in most of the texts nowadays regarded as literary. Nor does what is said or written necessarily involve a paraphrasable argument. What goes on can have less to do with meanings than with feelings, attitudes, affect, and moral sensibility, so that any change to the status quo will begin as a change in the communicants' perceptions, feelings, or evaluations surrounding the real, hypothetical or fictional third entity under discussion. Seen this way, communicants, including readers of literature, inevitably lay themselves open to the possibility of mental and emotional re-adjustment, by which the overlap between the two different life-worlds will actually be increased, sometimes very considerably. Even at its most minimal, even when communicants' attempts to empathize with otherness do not result in positive agreement, the expansion of positional overlap is in itself an enlargement of community. A community arising from mutual understanding and respect can be very heterogeneous.

I say this is my own account. But apart from its inclusion of fictionality and unparaphrasability, nothing could be more Gadamerian. It is from Gadamer (1989) that I have drawn the crucial point about communication as a dynamic triangularity. It is Gadamer who says that communicant *A*, with his or her own context and horizon of expectations, is in communication with communicant *B*, with his or her own context and horizon of expectations, about some third entity. And it is Gadamer who suggests that as a result of negotiating this third entity their two understandings may come closer together, and their different horizons of expectations partly merge.

Despite his own aesthetics, then, Gadamer can provide an counterbalance to literary theory in its more de-humanizing forms. But both he and Habermas offer literary scholars other important benefits as well.

For a start, their intense concern for dialogicality can help the literary scholar avoid both arrogant presentism and dry-as-dust historical or cultural purism. On the one hand, they will shame us out of imposing our own values on a writer's there-and-then. On the other hand, as soon as we so much as hint that writers' significance within their own there-and-then represents the sum total of their human interest, Gadamer and Habermas will ridicule our pedantry.

More generally, they can inspire a sheer hopefulness for human communication which will make certain trends in twentieth century commentary seem quaintly paranoiac. Especially potent will be their antidote to interpretations that were grimly deterministic. Their perception is that human beings are *not* completely shaped by language, culture, society or history, so that the barrier between one sociocultural grouping and another is *not* completely watertight. Communication between different formations is seen as bracingly possible.

In fact for Gadamer and Habermas, sociohistorical differences are not an insuperable obstacle to communication but a positive stimulus. Otherness is exciting, because it may always turn out to be a significant otherness for us, so prompting us to creative self-scrutiny. In other words, communication is bound up with our very processes of individuation, which are nothing if not dialogical. To speak metaphorically, genuine communication is itself metaphor! It is a juxtaposition of participant *A* and participant *B*, as a result of which they see themselves in each other's light, and become susceptible to change.

This is *not* how Dickens was read by the Modernist critic Edmund Wilson (1941). Wilson's was a gloomily presentist reading, according to which Dickens exposed disturbing subconscious traits of the kind identified by Freud or Adler or Jung, plus ideological subterfuges of the kind pinpointed by Marxian analysis. For Wilson, Dickens was a kindred spirit, whose picture of both human nature and society was very bleak indeed.

Dickens certainly can be extremely unsettling, and Wilson's commentary can help us put this into words. But then the hermeneutic critic will say: "Fine! And what would Dickens have thought about Edmund Wilson?" If Wilson disparaged all the fun and cheerful entertainment in Dickens, all Dickens's belief in the possibility of decent behaviour and sincere human goodness, then surely Dickens would have felt that Wilson and his contemporaries were – understandably, perhaps, given the appalling age in which they lived – dreadfully miserable. After a whole century of cultural pessimism, the hermeneutic critic of today can at last point to new potential allies of Dickens, such as the zoologist Matt Ridley (1997), who argues that virtuous behaviour may actually be natural – that virtue comes much more readily to our genetic programming than psychoanalysts, Marxists and Modernist critics once believed.

As a Modernist critic, Wilson was trying to highlight aspects of Dickens's work which ordinary readers might have overlooked. His working assumption was that ordinary readers were too complacent; they simply perpetuated the wide-spread view that Dickens was above all a jovial entertainer – the favourite uncle at every family hearth. But although Wilson's "Dickens: The Two Scrooges" remains one of the greatest critical essays ever written, the Modernist suspicion of

common sense could be carried too far. Not only was it elitist. It could become an unreflecting stock response in its own right, deliberately cutting itself off from important ideas and feelings just because they were widely shared. Within the culture of literary studies, this attitude was still inhibiting discussion – the discussion of *Dombey and Son* and *David Copperfield*, for instance – several decades after Modernism's acme (Sell 2001, 165–93, 263–90).

Another benefit of philosophical hermeneutics is to prompt a cautious rehabilitation of common sense, and even a carefully hedged apology for prejudice. According to Gadamer, we have the common sense and prejudices of our own situationality – of our "thrown-ness", in Heidegger's language – and this serves as a kind of support to us. Without it, in situations demanding a swift response we should be quite incapacitated, and even when we do have more time to think, common sense and prejudice are still our only starting point. Some commentators have complained that Gadamer is very conservative and even reactionary here. Others, rightly in my view, say this is unfair, since he also strongly emphasizes that when we do think, and when we are confronted by new situations, our common sense and prejudices are open to revision. His idea is that common sense and prejudice are assets deserving a certain respect, but not that our critical faculties should be allowed to go into abeyance. On the contrary, he sees today's common sense and prejudice as having resulted from a criticism of yesterday's.

If these insights were to permeate the culture of literary scholarship, scholastic one-up-manship would become, even more rapidly, a thing of the past. The feelings, perceptions and responses of people who are not themselves members of the scholarly profession would win greater respect, and be more warmly welcomed as partners in dialogue, whose views might well be open to change, but might equally well challenge scholarship's own orthodoxies and clichés. The knee-jerk rejection of ordinary ways of thinking so typical of literary-scholarly professionals in the twentieth century – think only of their proclamation of intentional and affective fallacies, their blanket denunciation of stock responses, their routine deconstruction of common sense – would be superseded by a truer scholarly self-knowledge and greater modesty.

As well as improving the general climate of debate, these same insights could help with certain specific problems in literary discussion. Not least: How are we to talk about the prejudices we find in literary authors? What about T.S. Eliot's anti-Semitic attitudes, for instance?

As a young man, Eliot was apparently a dreadful snob. One of the student essays he wrote at Harvard was about Kipling, and it blamed Kipling, an older member of something rather like his own patrician class, but a very popular writer, for being immature (see Ricks 2001). The foretaste of I.A. Richards and F.R. Leavis's chastisement of stock responses was very marked here, and in the critical essays through which he later prepared the ground for his own literary breakthrough one of the key arguments was that "it appears likely that poets in our civilization, as it exists at present, must be *difficult*" (his italics), a sentence which rapidly became a *locus classicus* of Modernist elitism. Yet the connotations evoked by the Jewish characters in his own early poems can seem at least as facile and unquestioning as Kipling's alleged jingoism, and were also, of course, just as acceptable to contemporaries of widely varied class backgrounds. But then

again, given the subsequent course of twentieth century history, and given Eliot's indisputable intelligence, and his later, very credible Christian humility, did he remain unswervingly anti-Semitic for the rest of his life? Or did he begin to scrutinize and readjust his own prejudices in the way that Gadamerian hermeneutics would suggest is natural? According to Christopher Ricks's *T.S. Eliot and Prejudice* (1994), Eliot really did subject his own views to criticism, and from very early on. Ricks's slight handicap, however, is his own apparent unawareness of Gadamer, which means that his revisionist account of prejudice, timely and profoundly thoughtful in itself, is more uphill work than it need have been, and correspondingly more open to attack. In the Jewish critic Anthony Julius's *T.S. Eliot, Anti-Semitism, and Literary Form* (1995), Ricks is accused of actually trivializing the issues. For Julius, a prejudice is always evil in itself, and extremely unlikely to be changed. If literary scholars were more widely conversant with philosophical hermeneutics, such controversies could be usefully re-assessed.

In debates about Dickens or Eliot or any other writer, a readership comes into communication not only with the writer but with other readerships. As in society at large, newer communicants and their situationalities are for ever commenting on older ones, and receiving in return, as it were, queries or confirmation. To repeat, a community is not a static consensus, but can be dynamically heterogeneous.

This brings us back to Habermas's insights into communicative ethics, which apply not only to the natural sciences, but to literary texts, to discussions of them, and to *Geisteswissenschaften* and the critical sciences in general. Although Habermas grants the human being a certain autonomy, it is an autonomy which often comes under threat. What he shows is that ethical considerations – of human equality, of truthfulness, of trust, of fairness, and of cooperativeness – are always an integral part of human intercourse, unless, as so often in non-dialogical communication, the process is distorted by some power factor.

One thing this can help literary scholars to think about is literary ethics in the diachronic plane. Dickens, Edmund Wilson and a present-day admirer of Matt Ridley all have to be allowed their say. In the mind of anyone interested, their different viewpoints can all co-exist and throw light on each other.

But Habermas dwells mainly on the possibility of many different tastes co-existing in one and the same time, within a community that is unitary, albeit polycultural. For him, to see Ricks and Julius as belonging to two different communities would be an oversimplification. In a disagreement such as theirs, the depth and sincerity of feeling on both sides is perfectly apparent. Yet literature is nevertheless bringing them into communication, and levels of mutual understanding and respect can always, according to Habermas, be raised. What he foresees in his great essay "Struggles for Recognition in the Democratic Constitutional State" is a shared political culture, within which cultural differences at other levels can be readily accommodated.

From this we literary scholars could take yet another cue. In our own sphere, we, too, can endorse an ethical politics of communication. The kind of intercultural non-communication so noticeable

in the Rushdie affair, or more generally in the so-called culture wars of the mid-1990s, is not something we can want to see again. Literary texts do *get to* people, and one and the same text can get to different people in different ways, as a form of real human interaction. As literary scholars, we can try to develop a sharper awareness of this, and to find ways in which our own work can mediate in situations of misunderstanding and even conflict, whether within the present or between the present and the past. Here our aim will not be to bring about a total consensus, for then we ourselves would be communicating, not genuinely but coercively, thereby depriving literature of necessary air. A literary text's essential existence is not as a book on a shelf but in the minds of readers as they go on pondering its significance and value, for ever subjecting so-called definitive interpretations to thoughtful scrutiny. But what our scholarly mediation certainly can hope to promote is a higher level of mutual understanding and respect, whether between writers and readers, between one writer and another, or between one reader and another, all of which parties can be thought of as members of a literary community that is not only indefinitely large but indefinitely heterogeneous. In fact with a nudge from Gadamer and Habermas, we may actually be able to speed up the ongoing re-humanization of literary scholarship, by making real for ourselves and others a sense of literary communication as at once profoundly universal and profoundly historical. This is what, in their diametrically opposite ways, both Victorian liberal humanists and late-twentieth-century postmodern commentators only partly grasped and only partly failed to grasp.

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'Objectifying' the War. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial as a Secular Message Board.

Summary

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C. has become one of the most important cultural signifiers of the nation. Only what it signifies is far from clear. 'A place of healing' is a frequently applied epithet, in conjunction with partial memory loss; but 'healing' does not work without prior analysis of the wound. In postmodern fashion, anyone can read into it what they want. Evidence for its enduring popularity are the roughly 90 000 objects that have since its inception in 1982 been deposited at 'the Wall'. These depositions represent an uncensored and hard to control alternative discourse on Vietnam; they are collected daily and stored at a huge warehouse. The 'Wall' is not only a sacred site, a locus of grief and contemplation, and a locus of re-uniting the nation, it has also become a prominent place where cultural battles are waged. Since 1995 there has been a permanent exhibition of a selected "Offerings at the Wall" at the Smithsonian Institute. They collectively represent a discourse refusing to be co-opted into a national strategy to re-interpret the Vietnam War as "in truth a noble cause" and an event in which American soldiers acted honourably.

Key words: Vietnam War aftermath, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, offerings at 'the Wall', object-based cultural discourse, American History Museum

"Objektivizacija" vojne. Spomenik vietnamskim vojnim veteranom kot svetno sporočilo

Povzetek

Spomenik vietnamskim vojnim veteranom predstavlja eno najpomembnejših kulturnih znamenj naroda, čeravno ni povsem jasno, kaj zaznamuje. Pogosto se zanj uporablja oznaka "prostor za celjenje ran", v povezavi z delno izgubo spomina. Toda celjenje ne more biti uspešno brez ugotovitve vzroka rane. V skladu s postmoderno maniro si ga lahko vsak razlaga po svoje. Dokaz za njegovo množično razširjenost, ki se še veča, je okrog 90.000 predmetov, ki so jih ljudje od njegove zasnove leta 1982 položili k "Zidu". Ti predmeti so necenzuriran in alternativni diskurz o Vietnamu, ki ga je težko nadzirati; zbira se dnevno in shranjuje v ogromno skladišče. "Zid" ni zgolj posvečeno mesto, prostor žalovanja in premišljevanja, tako kot ni zgolj prostor ponovne zedinjenosti naroda, marveč postaja tudi prostor kulturnih soočenj. Od leta 1995 si je moč ogledati stalno zbirko izbranih "daritev Zidu" v prostorih instituta Smithsonian. Zbirka se tako zoperstavlja vključevanju v nacionalno strategijo, ki razlaga vojno v Vietnamu kot "v resnici plemenito dejanje" ter kot dogodek, v katerem so ameriški vojaki odigrali častno vlogo.

Ključne besede: vojna v Vietnamu in njene posledice, Spomenik vietnamskim vojnim veteranom, prispevki "Zidu", popredmetenje kulturnega diskurza, ameriški zgodovinski muzej

'Objectifying' the War. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial as a Secular Message Board.

When the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (see website) was solemnly dedicated on Veterans' Day 1982, it was – in more sense than one – a contested site. Many in the Reagan administration of that time, as well as many Vietnam veterans, could not accept that the jury which had sifted through 1421 submitted architectural designs had chosen one which ran counter to the tenets of Washington's memorial culture: it was not above ground, it was not white, it was not 'realistic' in the sense of portraying soldierdom, and it did not contain a traditional dedication containing such words as honor or duty or patriotism. It did not even allow for an American flag. Some also objected that its designer, Maya Lin, was an Asian-American woman, and not a veteran or at least a well-respected artist. The stated intention of Jan Scruggs, who had the idea of a memorial in 1979, to start a "process of healing", seemed doomed amidst a cacophony of politically motivated criticism. Its design was abstract: an open 'V' sunk into the ground, with black granite walls containing the names of the 58 000 American dead, reflecting the image of each visitor, who would thus be compelled to view himself as involved into the national disaster that was the Vietnam War. "A black gash of shame" was the quick verdict of the objectors, to which May Lin replied that she had indeed meant to symbolize a breaking open of a comfortable surface, in order to instigate discussion not closure. And so the whole of the Reagan administration pointedly stayed away from the opening ceremony, while prominent right-wing nay-sayers to the design made dire prognostications about the memorial becoming a rallying ground for hippies and leftist protesters. James Webb, then a hawkish member of the Reagan cabinet, but since the congressional elections of November 2006 a Democratic senator for Virginia, predicted that it would turn into "a wailing wall for future anti-draft and anti-nuclear demonstrators" (cited in Allen 1995). A building permission was only granted after the Memorial committee agreed to add Frederick Hart's "Three Servicemen", a traditional bronze statue of three Vietnam War soldiers, and a flag (see website).

Those right-wing fears were totally unfounded. Against all expectations, the 'Vietnam Memorial' (as it now generally known: the shortened term signals a wider degree of cultural acceptance than Vietnam *Veterans* Memorial, an even more pithy term is 'The Wall') exerted a strange fascination on all that visited it. The most common term to describe it in the earliest years was "haunting." This, as can easily be seen, is as yet a qualifier allowing for a great variety of readings. Visitors came from each of the 50 states. They wept, they touched the names of those they had lost, they began to make rubbings. Within one year, all criticism of its modern design stopped. As early as in 1984, Ronald Reagan (no slouch when it came to exploiting popular opinion) gave a speech on Memorial Day, the second anniversary of its dedication, and other cabinet members followed. The number of visitors rose to 3, then to 5 million a year. In November 1985 an article in the *Washington Post* claimed that a full 20 million Americans had visited the site (Wimmer 1989, 232). An exaggeration maybe, but indicative of how 'mainstream' the memorial became in such a short time. Currently, the Memorial's official website claims that 4.5 million visitors come

to see it each year. Obviously, many visitors turn up more than once in a lifetime, but even so we may calculate that since its dedication in 1982, more than 70 million Americans have visited it. Many more have seen it in TV programs, and also in a number of feature films. A visit to the Memorial is the end and climax of Norman Jewison's adaptation of Bobby Ann Mason's novel *In Country* (1989). Hollywood too has discovered the selling power of 'the Wall'.

The opposition from the political Right had been so intense from the time the winner of the architectural contest was announced that some form of reconciliation was felt necessary by the veterans lest the whole plan collapse. Thus, the organizers of the Memorial site with Jan Scruggs as their president felt they had to come to a tentative agreement with the White House as to what the site was. And so Jan Scruggs, after admitting that the nation was bitterly divided on the Vietnam war, made this declaration at the 1982 dedication ceremony:

> But one thing that all Americans can agree upon is that the Vietnam veteran deserves recognition and appreciation for their sacrifices. Let this memorial begin the healing process and forever stand as a symbol of national unity (cited in McCombs, 1982).

And "healing" became indeed the most frequently used word in speeches held at the Memorial. A deal was struck: the veterans (who in the 1970s had frequently been portrayed as mentally unstable killers in many Hollywood movies as well as in popular novels) were re-integrated into American society, while they in turn desisted from using their knowledge to break up the official view of Vietnam as "in truth a noble cause". William D. Ehrhart, a Viet vet and also a poet, described the "cliché" of the Wall as a healing site and attacked its silencing effect when he wrote that 'the Wall':

> has come to substitute for substance and fact, as if the Wall says it all when in truth it tells us only what each of us chooses to hear. It precludes discussion or critique or wisdom, as though its dark polished face is all we will ever need to know, or ought to know, about the Vietnam War. This is very convenient for those in whose interest it is not to raise such questions as: Why did all those people die? Who offered them up for slaughter? What was accomplished for the price of so much blood? (2002, 24)

Once the memorial's 'sacred' status was established, other interested parties emerged to claim their presence at the memorial. After intense lobbying, a "Vietnam Women's Memorial" was dedicated (see website). It is even more traditional and uninspiring than Frederick Hart's statue, and was unveiled on Veterans Day 1993. Next in line were the dog handlers: they wanted a statue of a dog on the site, to commemorate the dog casualties of 'the Nam'. Their demand was resisted. But another addition happened on Veterans Day 2004: a commemorative plaque titled "In Memory" (see website) was added. The inscription reads: "In memory of the men and women who served in the Vietnam War and later died as a result of their service. We honor and remember their sacrifice." Whether this will be the last addition to the site is doubtful. A strong lobby wants to have another memorial added to American Prisoners of War, those that really were imprisoned in Hanoi and released in 1973, and those that have allegedly been left behind.

Dislocated Discourses

Now for the discourses that have been triggered by 'the Wall' but are dislocated from it. As early as in 1984, a veteran named John Devitt resolved to create a 'Travelling Wall'[1] which was 50% the size of the real memorial, so that people unable to travel could see it in their hometowns. Quirky as the idea may seem, it was a smash success. Small towns all over the Union lined up for a visit, thousands of volunteers came forward to help with the arrangements on each site. A second structure was built in 1987, a third in 1989. By 2006, the organizers claimed that more than 1000 towns had been visited, with an estimate of total visitors in the "tens of millions." The "Travelling Wall" organisation says its intentions is "to honor the fallen" (*Wikipedia*), a distinct narrowing of the original reflexive intentions by Maya Lin.

That somebody would copy this idea was inevitable. Prodded into action by John Devitt's idea, 'Dignity Memorial®' (see website), a private enterprise describing itself as "funeral, cremation and cemetery providers", created a second travelling replica. While the 'Travelling Wall' is made of plywood, clearly an 'undignified' material, and is 50% the size of the original, the 'Dignity Vietnam Wall' is 75% the size of the original and thus substantially more 'dignified.' Bigger is better, as we all know. The material used is described as "faux granite", imitation granite in other words. There is, understandably, a lot of 'undignified' friction between the two competing organisations. The 'Vietnam Dignity Wall' claims to have visited 158 American cities from coast to coast since the first visits in 1998.

This is the age of the internet, and of course we find a plethora of textual or pictorial responses to the Memorial. To cite but one example, a so-called "The Wall" website offers dozens of poems, short stories and even paintings that were created in response to the Memorial. One might be cynical and say the reason why they are there is that no publisher would print them. Patriotism and sentimentality are dominant features, no poem or story ever mentions the pain and suffering of the Vietnamese.

Offerings at the Wall

Maya Lin said in an interview that she had not wanted a memorial where people just come to have a look. She wanted a place where the survivors could interact with the dead. In her own words, she proposed "an interface between the sunny world and the quiet, dark world beyond, that we can't enter." Initially, her intentions were not fulfilled, thanks to politicians like Reagan or generals like Westmoreland who wanted to co-opt this memorial into the long-standing tradition of America's "good and just" wars. So far we have observed a narrowing of the original discourse range intended by Maya Lin's design down to those of grief, loss, and a revival of the "in truth a noble cause" reading of the Vietnam War, as initiated by Ronald Reagan in 1981. However, let me now turn to a strange and truly haunting discursive aspect connected with 'The Wall', and that is the discourse of left-behind objects. This discourse is much less under the sway of a cultural master narrative, and less controllable.

1   Sometimes also referred to as "the Moving Wall".

It is said that the first person to leave an object at the Wall was a veteran who turned up when the concrete for the Wall's base was poured, and he threw his Purple Heart medal into the fresh concrete. The story is widely circulated, although the identity of the veteran was never established. Soon after the dedication of November 1982, the Park Service personnel noticed that visitors would paste little notes to the wall, would leave flowers, flags and personal mementos behind. It was decided that one could not leave them all there or else the site would have soon looked like a rubbish dump. So each evening, the Park Service had to collect all the non-perishable objects, and since it seemed undignified just to trash them, stored them at a nearby storage facility[2]. When the initial facility was full, a huge storage hall close to NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center, in Glenn Dale, Maryland, was rented. Once this became public knowledge, the depositions became bigger and also more planned. By this time we also have a full-time curator; his name is Duery Felton[3], a 'purple heart' Vietnam Veteran. A pair of cowboy boots turned up. Then a teddy bear. Or an AK-47 rifle, Russian made and as such war booty, but much preferred by all combat veterans to the standard issue M-16. In 1984, a delegation of Hawaiian veterans came with a string of orchids that were as long as the entire memorial (Oral communication, Felton.)

In 1991 Felton approached the American History section of the Smithsonian Institution asking for a small portion of its rooms to house a temporary exhibition of the collected "Offerings at the Wall". Three rooms were set aside and a six-month exhibition period was agreed upon. Its title was (surprise, surprise!) "Personal Legacy: *The Healing* of a Nation" (my emphasis.)

The success of the exhibition took everyone by surprise. On Sundays, visitors queued up to three hours to get in. After its designated running time, it had to be prolonged, and in 1995 was turned into a permanent exhibition. Thirteen history museums in thirteen states as well as the Imperial War Museum London expressed an interest and had the whole exhibition shipped to them. Their exhibition titles sometimes varied, including "Gathered at the Memorial" or "Vietnam Memories: stories deposited at the Memorial". Of course this did nothing to stop the objects from coming. In 1992 there had been 25 000 objects. In spring 1998, this had swollen to 60 000 objects, and in 2006 the count stands at 90 000. Already poor Mr Felton is thinking of obtaining an even bigger storage facility.

'Offerings at the Wall': the Exhibition

Upon entering the exhibition at the American History Museum the visitor suspects he has come upon evidence of a bizarre death cult. Next to military medals, uniform epaulettes and bayonets lies a "Peace" medal. A cuddly teddy bear sits upright next to an empty cartridge of an M-16. But most significantly, the majority of objects connote a personal stake in the history of the war, outside of what the nation may be thinking. There is a freshly laundered nurse's uniform spread across army issue boots. A bottle of whiskey (full), a joint, a six-pack of beer (also full), a sealed box of cigarettes, a pack of playing cards, a can of pineapples complete with opener, and a can of Campbell's soup hint at what the 'in-country' soldiers desired while "humping the boonies"

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2   Except miniature flags, which are left by the hundreds each week. They go to civic institutions.

3   Mr Felton agreed to be interviewed by me in May 1998. On two separate occasions we talked for a total of about two hours. Subsequently he was also kind and patient when answering my queries by Mail

(hiking through the jungles). A pair of spectacles of the terribly unfashionable horn-rimmed type, so common 40 years ago, bridge a historical and cultural gap. These are everyday objects, but the everyday no longer exists for the boys that were wasted in Vietnam. Then there are objects that hint at what might have been, what developments the dead boys (whose average age as we know was only 19 in this war) might have taken. There are sports trophies, high school pennants, a trumpet, a golf club, a baseball with the inscription "Floyd, you get one free throw." How many sports careers were never realized, how many academic careers cut short? In 1990, a woman who was 17 when her boyfriend was killed deposited a ballroom shoe with a love message. A widow left two wedding rings behind, explaining their story on an attached letter. More personal even will be an untold story connected to a piece of ladies' underwear.

Into this category also belong a pair of baby shoes, so pink and tiny that tears instantly shot into my eyes. The soldier to whom this baby was born probably never saw her. He was never allowed to live his parenthood and to forge a bond to his offspring. All those things in a normal life which we cherish and consider essential to the human condition never came to fruition. The communicative essence of such objects is a far cry from the political Sunday speeches on themes of valor and sacrifice, pride and service.

The exhibits are not ordered chronologically, just as the names of the dead are not ordered alphabetically. They are grouped by categories. Curator Jennifer Locke of the Smithsonian Institute told me that she and Duery Felton had aimed at the widest possible spectrum of categories. She also advised me that initially, small objects were, sometimes spontaneously, left behind at the wall, but now the process of depositing an object is often carefully planned, can even be the result of a year-long school project. And while the typical 'Wall donor' used to be a parent, a widow or a former sweetheart, i.e. persons very close to the deceased, now it is aunts and uncles and cousins that come to the Wall, there to leave objects. Also present are former buddies, neighbors or even schoolchildren who never knew the dead, but who attend the same school as he once did and use this as link to the past. For example, 46 students of the Rockland County high school in New York left a letter in which they reported how they planted 46 fir trees in honor of the 46 Vietnam soldiers of the same county that did not come back. Another such 'offering' was made by Norman Jewison, the director of the successful 1989 movie *In Country,* which starred Emily Floyd and 'Die Hard' Bruce Willis. He deposited a film roll of the movie *In Country*, in its shiny aluminium box. Such exhibits testify to the enduring power of the Vietnam War, which refuses to be 'over' as president George Bush Sr. advised the nation after the military success of Operation Desert Storm. In the words of Leslie Allen:

> That this flood tide of artefacts and documents shows no sign of ebbing even as the war itself recedes into the past testifies to the insistent role Vietnam continues to play in the national imagination. As that role has evolved, the memorial itself has become a combination of holy shrine and secular bulletin board (1995, *website*).

It is the function of the "secular bulletin board" that is of particular interest. At the Wall itself no political statements must be made, but in the notes and objects such statements *are*

invested. Possibly the most problematic of these is a carefully crafted bamboo cage complete with glass splinters in its bottom, 'donated' by a state chapter of the 'National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia.' It insinuates that there are still American prisoners of war kept alive in Vietnamese prisons, something that the MIA/POW lobby has claimed for 26 years now, without producing any evidence. However, extreme right-wing declarations such as this one are unusual. What did the person mean to tell us about the war who left a television set at the Wall? That this was the world's first televised war? or that the plug was pulled from reporting on Vietnam? Other responses have emanated from the opposite end of the political spectrum. One of the subtlest was a well-thumbed copy of LIFE magazine issued 27 June 1969. Its cover story was "The Faces of the American Dead in Vietnam". For page after page there were photos and short biographies of the 242 soldiers that had had died the previous week. Leaving this issue at the Wall said "for how long will the after effects of that war be with us?" A model of a toy merry-go-round with empty seats was left by a veteran of Gas City, Indiana, with the inscription "Where have all the children gone / long time passing?" No one can doubt the eloquence of such a simple anti-war statement. Next to a pair of Texas cowboy boots was deposited a large pink triangle, in reference to the way German concentration camps branded homosexual inmates. The inscription on it reads: "In memory of all gay soldiers in Vietnam. They were declared heroes when they battled with other men, they were declared shameful when they loved other men." And the most powerful indictment of American culture is found in a letter by a black American veteran dedicated to his former buddies: "Dear Gut, Susex, Smazo, Wheat and Edwards – I miss you so very much, but you have died in vain. Apartheid is alive and well and lives on at … (*name of a US company deleted*). I shall fight no more. With love brother Chief". Even a package of M&M sweets might be charged with political meaning. As I was once advised by a former field medic, when too many wounded had to be cared for and the morphine ran out, it was standard operating procedure to give them M&M sweets as a placebo.

Letters

A category of its own are the letters which are usually taped to the name of a soldier whose name is on 'the Wall.' A collection of such messages was published already back in 1987, edited by Laura Palmer. Hers is a totally one-sided collection, one that contains no messages or poems that would in any way upset traditional discursive strategies to reintegrate the veteran into US society. Palmer, who incredibly proclaims that she does "not know whether this war was right or wrong" (cf. introduction) is out to revise the Vietnam War so that it fits the paradigm of World War II, the "good war" as journalist Studs Terkel said. More recently, an expanded but likewise de-ideologized letter anthology was published continuing the 'Wall' visitor responses where Palmer left off (Sofarelli, 2006). But in the 'Offerings at the Wall' exhibition such letters are not the norm. The emphasis in these poems is on individual pain and loss. Here is a typical example:

Goodbye David,
My name is Dusty,
And I am the last person

Who you will see,
Who you will touch,
The last person liking you.

Take a rest David
My name is Dusty.
David: and who will give *me*
something for the pain?[4]

Unlike the majority in Laura Palmer's collection, this poem is both powerful in its content and acceptable in its form. Its persona (if not its author) is a nurse, and we would like to think that nurses usually save their patients. The realities of modern warfare are of course very different. Another poem written by a woman is less insistent on personal pain even though it is impossible to overlook it.

Dear Daddy,
Now I'm twenty-three!
You would be proud of me.
They all say I take after you.
I notice the similarities myself.
And I have never forgotten you.
I knew it was you then as Santa Claus –
But I did not want to spoil it for you.

Possibly the most intriguing message ever left at 'the Wall' tells a story of combat and subsequent grief, but its unique aspect is that it is addressed to a *Vietnamese* dead. The message was accompanied by a faded and hand-tinted photograph of a soldier in a North Vietnamese uniform with an approximately six-year-old girl, his daughter presumably. Signed Richard Luttrell, Rochester, Illinois, it explains that the photo came into his possession when he went through the pockets of an enemy soldier whom he had just shot dead. Intriguingly, he emphasizes that the only way he could get rid of the picture which he had "stared at for twenty years" was to donate it to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial:

Dear Sir,

For twenty two years I have carried your picture in my wallet. I was only eighteen years old that day we faced one another on that trail in Chu Lai, Vietnam. Why you did not take my life I'll never know. You stared at me for such a long time, you with your AK-47. Please forgive me for taking your life, I was just reacting the way I was trained. So many times over the years I have stared at your picture and your daughter, I suspect. Each time my heart and gutts [*sic*] would burn with the pain of guilt. I have two daughters myself now. One

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4   The poem was written by a woman who for years identified herself only as Dusty, but was eventually identified as Dana Shuster. She even published a book of poems under her own name called Battle Dressing: Poems About the Journey of a Nurse in Vietnam, which includes the poem "Goodbye, David." On 30 September 2006, National Public Radio revealed that Dana Shuster had never been a nurse, never in the military, and never in Vietnam. The revelation came inside the "All Things Considered" slot and had the title of "Celebrated Military Nurse, Poet Revealed as a Fraud".

is twenty. The other one is twenty-two, and has blessed me with two granddaughters. (. .) Forgive me Sir, I shall try to live my life to the fullest, an opportunity that you and many others were denied.[5]

Luttrell's photo was eventually returned to him so that he could fulfil his secret plan to find the little girl whose father he had killed in Vietnam. An American TV company (NBC) assisted him in his plan and so did a Hanoi newspaper, who published the photo in 1999. Miraculously, the newspaper became wrapping material for a parcel that was sent from the capital into a remote village, where a villager recognized the soldier and his daughter. In March 2000, Luttrell (now white-haired, in his sixties and retired from his job) travelled to North Vietnam and made his peace with the 'girl', a woman who was now 36 years old with a family of her own. In a tearful meeting she embraced him like she had found her own father (Morrison, 2000, website).

However, even this letter and the story it tells is much more likely to arouse pity for the *American* man and not for his victims, the man he killed and his infant daughter. Sigmund Freud (1917a) in writing about the 'labor' of mourning pointed out that mourning was a process in three stages: acceptance, remembrance, and finally what he called *Durcharbeiten*, a process involving appreciation of the what has been lost (which in our case would be America's 'lost innocence') as well as an assessment of the new situation. The opposite of mourning is melancholia, a permanent and pathological sentimentality coupled with a general weepiness. And in an essay published not long after the one referred to above he made a few remarks about unhealthy and unresolved sadness that directly impinge on my discussion. The melancholy person "does not feel shame before others" he wrote, and is possessed by "an importunate urge to communicate which finds satisfaction in its own debasement." (Freuds 1917b, 433). While Richard Luttrell's story is one in which the final stage and with it, closure, were reached, the exhibition is, on the whole, more inclined towards melancholia rather than mourning; it panders to the emotions and discourages critical analysis. Prominently displayed is a large placard close to the entry that proclaims "this is not a history of the Vietnam War, but a long-lost opportunity to say 'welcome home' to our soldiers." A "long-lost opportunity"? How many more "Welcome Home" events, of which there were dozens already in 1985, the ten year anniversary of the fall of Saigon, must be organized? And that quixotic disavowal of the exhibition having to do with the history of the Vietnam War: the site is the Museum for *American History*! How can even one room in it *not* have to do with history? It goes without saying that each of the objects on display has its own historiographical as well as narrative potential, and is tied to a network of other objects that all possess a potential of historical sense making. But it seems that was of no importance at all to the curators. By selecting objects according to their power to evoke pity for Vietnam veterans they have, deliberately it seems, stymied any discussion of the war's historical and ethical dimensions. The wealth of devotional objects amassed in this collection must inevitably suck up all the inquisitorial energy that visitors bring to this site, and will prevent any detached reflection as to the war's wider political and ethical contexts. How could it be otherwise, when so many inscriptions speak of or imply a terribly wrongful treatment of American Vietnam veterans by their country? That myth has long since been exploded. Weighed down by a culture of veneration for the Vietnam warrior,

5   Parts of this letter are available on http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/warletters/letters/warletter_21.html

American youngsters will find it hard to ponder the issue whether the war itself was wrong, whether there should be an apology from its former architects, or why the US has once again embarked on an amoral and unwinnable war in Iraq. They ought to contemplate the question why Americans are so fond of waging war, but they won't, not in this exhibition. Nor will they be encouraged to contemplating the possibility that some of the celebrated veterans may have been evil killers. And how are they to understand that harboring such thoughts is both legitimate and supportive of peace?

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III.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE TEACHING

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Anglistics as a Dialogic Discipline

Summary

In my article, dialogue is suggested as a basic direction for Anglistics. Such a perspective results from a normative notion of dialogue based on a set of particular criteria. In general terms, a case is made for (self)-critical and respectful confrontation with other viewpoints within and beyond Anglistics to further develop existing positions and to create new forms of co-operation. While in the first two sections this concept is introduced and applied to the discipline of Anglistics, the final section is focussed on an area of major conflict in contemporary ELT debates. In fact, a dialogic approach will be suggested for dealing with two opposite tendencies, one aiming for standardization and the other for a humanistic form of education.

Keywords: Dialogue, Anglistics, interdisciplinarity, culture, educational standards, Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

Anglistika kot dialoška disciplina

Povzetek

Članek vidi dialog kot osnovno smer anglistike in izhaja iz normativnega pojmovanja le-tega, ki temelji na točno določenih kriterijih. V splošnem gre za predstavitev možnosti, ki predpostavljajo (samo)kritično in spoštljivo soočenje z drugimi stališči znotraj anglistike pa tudi onkraj nje za nadaljnji razvoj obstoječih dognanj ter vzpostavitev novih oblik povezovanja. Prvi poglavji uvedeta koncept in se navežeta na anglistiko kot disciplino, sklepni del razprave pa se osredotoči na področje poučevanja angleščine (ELT) in nesoglasja, ki se pojavljajo v sodobnem času. Dialoški pristop predlaga konsenz med dvema nasprotujočima si težnjama, med tisto, ki zagovarja standardizirano, in tisto, ki si prizadeva za humanistično obliko izobraževanja.

Ključne besede: dialog, anglistika, interdisciplinarnost, kultura, standardi izobraževanja, Skupni evropski referenčni okvir za jezike

Anglistics as a Dialogic Discipline

When I first met Meta Grosman in 1990, she was already a well-established professor of high international repute, while I was at the beginning of my career. Yet, when we discussed our ideas on literature teaching, she treated me like an equal partner in a most constructive professional debate. When she then invited me to Ljubljana for a public talk at the *Filozofska fakulteta*, this highly challenging and respectful sharing, testing and further developing of ideas was continued, and I am most grateful to her that we have carried on in this vein until the very present. In recent years, I have repeatedly made attempts to develop a normative concept of dialogue as a foundation for research in English Studies (cf. Delanoy 2002 and 2005). In fact, Meta Grosman's work and her personality have been a great source of inspiration for this project. In other words, I see her as a role model for a life lived in dialogue, and it is through people like her that I have kept my belief in the possibility of dialogue as a basic direction for human existence.

In the following reflections, a case will be made for Anglistics as a dialogic discipline. Such a perspective implies openness towards other viewpoints, a continuous questioning of the tried and tested, and the ability to forge new links both within and beyond disciplinary boundaries. First, this notion will be contrasted with other concepts sharing a similar agenda. In fact, attention will be drawn to areas of overlap and difference between the concepts of *dialogue*, *interdisciplinarity* and *culture* as orientations for English Studies. Secondly, the normative criteria underlying my understanding of dialogue will be discussed and related to the discipline of Anglistics. Finally, one concrete example will be given to discuss the relevance of a dialogic approach. Here, the focus is on the debate on what in German-speaking countries has been labelled as *educational standards* for English language learning.

1. Dialogue as a foundation for Anglistics

Suggesting *dialogue* as a foundation for *Anglistics* implies certain programmatic interests. As will be shown in the second section, my understanding of dialogue is based on a specific set of key convictions derived from a post-Gadamerian hermeneutics, Bakhtin's notion of *heteroglossia* and late-modern concepts of subjectivity. The term *Anglistics* refers to the discipline and the location from where I speak. Although *Anglistics* and *English Studies* will be used synonymously in the following reflections, *Anglistics* also has specific meaning implications. In fact, the term mainly occurs outside English speaking countries, thus indicating that my perspective is inextricably linked to foreign language studies.

Anglistics is also a reference to a specific field of enquiry and its institutional anchoring. In line with various other upper and lower case distinctions I also distinguish between an *A*nglistics and an *a*nglistics. According to my understanding of these two concepts, the upper case variant refers to *English Studies* as a historically grown and institutionally established research discipline in its own right which has mainly concerned itself with the study of the languages, literatures and cultures of English speaking communities. On the other hand, *a*nglistics stands for any concern with issues related to English-speaking communities going beyond the research practices of

*A*nglistics. Such issues may either fall into the domain of other research disciplines (e.g. history, media studies, geography, business studies), or they may still have escaped the notice of existing disciplines both inside and outside Anglistics. Following Rob Pope (2002, 12), I also favour an approach to English Studies which aims at preparing "… the way for subjects, disciplines and forms of knowledge which as yet have no name". Such an approach implies a strong interest in the lower case variant. Yet, I am aware that in my research I have mainly argued from perspectives affiliated to *Anglistics.* Speaking of a dialogic *Anglistics*, therefore, is also a reference to what has so far served me as my 'home' discipline.

When one looks at the history of English Studies there has been a noticeable proliferation of research interests since the 1970s leading to the redefinition of old and creation of manifold new directions for the discipline. On the one hand, such development has greatly increased the scope of Anglistics. Also, new links have been forged across disciplines because of a growing interest in perspectives of a more general dimension (e.g. gender issues, cultural epistemes, ecological concerns). On the other hand, both internal cohesion and cooperation within and across disciplines have become a problem. As a counter movement, therefore, attempts have been made to create a new basis for communication and cooperation inside Anglistics and across disciplines. Making a case for a dialogic Anglistics is such an attempt. This raises the question how this concept compares to other suggestions.

The two other concepts which have been suggested in recent debates concern the notion of *interdisciplinarity* and that of *Kulturwissenschaft* (*culture studies*). Following Joe Moran (2003, 15), the term *interdisciplinarity* comprises (1) the creation of "… connections across different disciplines", (2) the establishment of "a kind of undisciplined space in the interstices between disciplines", and (3) attempts "… to transcend disciplinary boundaries altogether". While in the first instance existing disciplines still wish to keep intact their institutional moorings, the other two imply transdisciplinary perspectives, which in the third case may lead to the dissolution of existing and the creation of new disciplines. In fact, English Studies itself came into existence through a reconfiguration of disciplines by replacing, for example, Rhetoric, and it may itself be subsumed under disciplines such as Cultural-, Communication- or Media Studies in the future (cf. Pope 2002, 13). The other perspective – namely that of *culture studies* – sees a shared interest in a wide-reaching notion of culture as a common basis for many disciplines. Culture, here, is defined as a symbolically constructed way of life including material, mental and social dimensions (cf. Nünning and Sommer 2004, 17–9).

A dialogic Anglistics shares important concerns with both, yet, it also differs from these concepts in significant ways. In fact, *inter*disciplinarity is an important dimension of a dialogic approach, and the different possibilities for interdisciplinary development as distinguished by Moran all feature prominently in my dialogic concept. A dialogic Anglistics, however, also draws attention to *intra*disciplinary plurality and (lack of) contact. According to Pope (2002, 48), the discipline of Anglistics has become a "richly variegated" set of approaches. Such plurality can serve as a joint resource for the discipline but also lead to its fragmentation. A strengthening of ties within the discipline, therefore, is needed to pool plural energies. Such an interest implies a strong

*intra*disciplinary focus which I find lacking in the concept of *inter*disciplinarity. Also, my notion of dialogue is an idealistic concept aiming for an equal distribution of power. Interdisciplinarity, on the other hand, is a descriptive rather than a normative term. It may, therefore, foster a dialogic agenda. Yet, it may also perpetuate old or create new hierarchies in the furtherance of academic empire building.

Culture as the epistemological foundation for how humans live their lives can serve as a key concept for all research disciplines. Yet, the notion of *Kulturwissenschaft* has been mainly used as an umbrella term for the humanities. As a result, it may be too narrow to include disciplines going beyond arts faculties. In his book *Doing English*, Robert Eaglestone (2000, 124 ff.), argues that the time is ripe for creating stronger links between English and science, since in recent debates both have expressed a strong interest in ecological and ethical perspectives. In the interest of a wide-ranging concept of dialogue, I would, therefore, suggest an approach where a distinction is made between *culture* and *Kulturwissenschaft*, the former inviting reflection upon the cultural implications of arts- and science-related research to help overcome barriers existing between the two.

2. A normative concept of dialogue as a basic direction for Anglistics

As mentioned above, my understanding of dialogue is a normative concept based on certain key convictions. In fact, I see dialogue as an idealistic suggestion for how humans should live their lives. In other words, such a concept goes far beyond research-related communication. Let me, therefore, briefly introduce what I see as key criteria for dialogue in general before the term is applied to the research discipline of Anglistics:

(1) *First*, dialogue is based on the conviction that all forms of human understanding are limited, since they are tied to concrete subjects and situated in specific socio-cultural contexts. Moreover, the environments in which humans live are seen as so complex that they can only be grasped in parts. Such a concept rules out any claims to absolute knowledge. This condition, of course, also applies to notions of dialogue which are always created within particular socio-cultural formations.

(2) *Secondly*, dialogue is seen as a chance to widen one's scope for reflection and action through (self)-critical encounters with other positions. Although these positions are also limited, they may be limited in different ways, thus offering insight going beyond one's existing knowledge base. The possibility to widen one's knowledge base goes hand in hand with the belief in a critical and partly autonomous subject which can take responsibility for his/her agency. Such a concept is in line with a late-modern understanding of human subjectivity (cf. Kögler 2003; Zima 2000), which acknowledges culture's shaping influence on the self without seeing the latter as fully determined by culture.

(3) *Thirdly*, a case is made for respectful confrontation with other viewpoints, where respect does not stop when other perspectives conflict with or call into question one's own convictions. In fact, one of the key aims of dialogue is to foster respect for difference and plurality. Also, difference can be more or less fundamental. On the one hand, groups may share the same key convictions and only differ on less fundamental levels. On the other

hand, difference may concern the basic values informing people's thought and action. For the model of dialogue as suggested in this article, respect, of course, also includes the latter. Finally, respect for difference also implies acceptance of unresolved conflict.

(4) *Fourthly*, dialogue is seen as an open and ongoing process where, in Bakhtin's (1987, 30) words, "there is no first word, and the final word has not yet been spoken". Also, the contexts in which dialogue takes place are so complex that the factors to be taken into consideration can never be fully determined in advance. Hence, the tried and tested needs to be continually reconfigured to meet changing situational demands.

(5) *Fifthly*, dialogue ideally is a meeting of equal partners. Engaging in dialogue, therefore, implies making attempts to equip its participants with equal rights and opportunities. To further this aim, existing power hierarchies need to be addressed, and, when possible, replaced by more egalitarian structures.

(6) *Sixthly*, dialogue is shaped by its participants. Hence, as many people as possible should be encouraged and enabled to become involved in dialogue to bring in and further develop their concerns.

(7) *Finally*, dialogue is seen as the interplay of two different logics, a constructive one, permitting potentially far-reaching coherent action and reflection, and a deconstructive logic, drawing attention to different possibilities and inviting a radical questioning of people's values and convictions. Following Ernesto Laclau (2000, 303), the terms *logic of equivalence* and *logic of difference* will be used for these two modes of thinking. For Zima (2000, 414 ff.) and Kögler (2003, 86) these two logics should inter-animate and contest each other in a continuing debate. Within this debate, one of the two may prove more important at times. Yet, whether one is temporarily preferred over the other is not a matter of principle but a decision to be reached through dialogue itself.

This notion of dialogue goes back to the following concepts and approaches. The belief in the contingency of human knowledge and a plea for respectful plus (self)-critical confrontation with different viewpoints can be found in a post-Gadamerian hermeneutics (cf. Bredella 2002; Kögler 1992) and in late-modern approaches to ideology critique (cf. Laclau 2000; Zima 2000). Another major influence is Bakhtin (1987) and his notion of *heteroglossia*. Bakhtin makes a case for dialogue as an open and continuing process, and his concept aims for the inclusion of as many different 'voices' as possible. Also, his understanding of novel writing is opposed to forms of hierarchical thinking, thus including the argument for a meeting of equal partners. A distinction between more or less fundamental difference is made by Zima (1991, 402), who contrasts *intersubjective* with *interdiscursive* difference. While intersubjective difference concerns variety within one discursively constructed thought and value system, the latter implies a clash of different systems. As indicated above, the interplay between the two opposite logics goes back to proponents of both hermeneutic (Kögler) and ideology-critical approaches (Laclau, Zima). A similar approach can also be found in Bakhtin's (1987, 272) writings, where a distinction is made between *centripetal* (unifying) and *centrifugal* (diversifying) forces. Finally, respect for unresolved conflict is a basic principle in recent research in hermeneutics (cf. Kögler 2003) and ideology critique (Zima 2000). Yet, such respect does not mean that no further attempts are made to gain a better understanding of the other viewpoint in the interest of finding new solutions. Dialogue,

here, includes a continuous search for *third places* (cf. Kramsch 1993, 233 ff.), where boundaries become fluid and concrete possibilites may emerge for cooperation.

Coming back to Zima's distinction between *intersubjective* and *interdiscursive* dialogue, let me add that it offers an important angle for reflection upon intra- and interdisciplinary cooperation and conflict in and beyond English Studies. Discourses represent particular ways of understanding and constructing realities. Also, certain academic discourses like positivism, (post-)structuralism, constructivism or liberal-humanism can be found within different fields of Anglistics and in different disciplines. Thus, *inter*disciplinary difference may be relatively small on a deep-level structure when the schools involved belong to the same or a similar discourse community. On the other hand, *intra*disciplinary difference can be radical when different discourse communities become involved.

Building on the above-mentioned criteria for dialogue the following characteristics are constitutive of a dialogic Anglistics:

> *(1) First*, such a perspective sees all A/a/nglistics-related inquiry as creating contingent and incomplete knowledge. Yet, through (self)-critical and continuing reflection upon one's own limitations and through exploration of other viewpoints the knowledge base of the people and schools involved can be considerably widened. In other words, a dialogic Anglistics views itself as a self-reflexive project where the quality of the research largely depends on the ability to interact with other viewpoints within, across and beyond disciplines.
>
> *(2) Secondly*, a dialogic Anglistics is always in the making, and with reference to the two opposite logics *both* wider-reaching *and* situation-specific solutions need to be found and continuously reconfigured to meet *both* 'global' challenges *and* local needs and interests. Seeing the two logics as equally important also implies that in the light of certain contextual requirements the partners involved may opt either for a phase of consolidation or diversification.
>
> *(3) Thirdly*, a dialogic Anglistics not only shows respect for difference but also cultivates plurality to create a rich basis for mutual enlightenment. To further such a project, an egalitarian approach is suggested which in ideal terms gives different individuals and groups in English Studies equal possibilities to bring in and develop their interests. I am aware that this is a utopian concept which may be in stark contrast to existing disciplinary and social hierarchies. Also, Anglistics does not possess the socio-political power to implement such change on a large scale. Yet, in the light of my professional experience I strongly believe in possibilities for developing more egalitarian structures both within and between research communities and in the learning environments where our teaching takes place.

Of course, this is *one* notion of dialogue among others. For example, in its hermeneutic orientation my concept follows Gadamer's rather than Habermas' notion of dialogue. While Habermas (1971) uncouples his ideal conditions for dialogue from real-life situations, the concept of dialogue as advocated in this article critically confronts ideals with realities. In other words, while in the case of Habermas the ideal conditions are not subject to critical questioning, a post-

Gadamerian approach dialogically links ideals and realities to question and transforms both in the light of the other. Also, a distinction needs to be made between normative and descriptive notions of dialogue. For the proponents of normative approaches, dialogue is informed by and oriented towards particular values. On the other hand, dialogue has been discussed in more descriptive terms as any conversation between at least two partners in communication or any meeting of two different logics. Here, a central focus is on what speakers or writers need to take into consideration to ensure that their messages reach their intended target addressees. In fact, I see both directions as central for the success of dialogue. While normative concepts draw attention to the ideals behind notions of dialogue, the other focus shifts attention to – in a linguistic sense – pragmatic concerns without which communication cannot take place in intended ways.

3. Dialogue as an orientation for ELT: *the case of educational standards*

In the following, this concept of dialogue will be applied to what I see as one of the central issues for ELT in a new Europe. In fact, attention will be drawn to the highly controversial debate on *educational standards*, where a clash between radically different notions of language learning has become noticeable. Inspired by the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (2004), attempts have been made to homogenize achievement standards for European countries, the emphasis being on empirically testable language skills. On the other hand, such a concept has met with fierce opposition from those viewing language learning as inextricably linked to wider-reaching educational perspectives. In German-speaking countries the major reference point in this controversy is the term *Bildungsstandards* (*educational standards*). While those interested in measurable output have claimed this term for their project, the other group has pointed to fundamental differences between education and standardization as objectives for language learning. For them, *educational standards* is a misnomer, which at a first glance seems to include both poles, yet, at closer inspection leaves very little space for educational perspectives.

From my dialogic angle, neither of these perspectives is to be treated as superior to the other in principle. On the contrary, each of them deserves equal attention in an open-ended debate, where they can mutually question, complement and enrich each other in the interest of both wide-reaching and local solutions. Yet, treating them as equal must not be mistaken for total relativity. Adopting a dialogic stance also implies reflection upon how dialogue-friendly these two orientations are.

(a) The Common European Framework (CEF) as a joint reference point?

The *CEF* marks an attempt to foster European integration in the field of language learning. According to Keith Morrow (2004, 6) the document originates from attempts in the early 1990s to define "purely descriptive" common achievement standards to facilitate mutual recognition of language-related qualifications throughout Europe. As a result different achievement levels were defined with the help of so-called 'descriptors' to provide a common basis for assessing competence levels. These descriptors are mainly related to the so-called four basic skills (reading, listening, speaking and writing). Also, criteria have been developed for grammar and vocabulary-related learning domains.

Yet, the CEF also addresses educational perspectives for foreign language learning going beyond a narrow conception of language competence. The document also makes a case for linking language learning to developing intercultural awareness and mediation in the interest of a democratic agenda for a new Europe (cf. CEF 2004, 6 ff., 103 ff.). This also includes positive assessment of "imaginative and artistic uses of language" (ibid., 56), and of critical abilities permitting a differentiated understanding of texts and issues in a foreign language context (ibid., 69). Finally, language learning is seen as connected to a form of personality development grounded in a variety of 'existential' competences, which potentially are highly conducive to a dialogic agenda. Such competences comprise "openness towards, and interest in new experiences, other persons, ideas, peoples, societies and cultures", "[a] willingness to relativise one's own cultural viewpoint and cultural value-system" or personality factors such as "flexibility, … self confidence, [and] self esteem" (ibid., 105-6) plus "a high level of intrinsic motivation" (ibid., 161). Frank Heyworth (2004, 16), therefore, concludes that "the CEF provides a useful reminder to language teachers to extend the range of their teaching beyond the narrowly linguistic".

On a general level, I would, therefore, see the CEF as an attempt to bring together standardization and a humanistic form of education in the interest of both generally acceptable achievement standards and democratic citizenship in a multicultural Europe. While in the first instance the emphasis is on standardization, the second area includes awareness of and respect for cultural diversity and (inter)-cultural exchange on national, regional and different social levels (cf. CEF 2004, 6 & 103). Such an approach seems in line with my dialogic agenda which also stresses the importance of a homogenizing (standardization) *and* a diversifying logic (respect for cultural plurality). Thus, on a general level the CEF can serve as a reference point for both tendencies. Yet, on more concrete levels the diversifying logic loses in importance. Concomitantly, the democratic and cultural learning aims at best recede into the background, while a narrow understanding of language competence with a focus on the four skills takes central place. Indeed, the term *educational standards* can be rather misleading on these levels, since the educational dimension has widely disappeared. Following Becker (2004, 17), I will, therefore, speak of *achievements standards*, where standardization is suggested for the above-mentioned areas of linguistic competence. Yet, I do not intend to give up the term *educational standards* altogether. In fact, I see the term as a steady reminder to keep in sight both dimensions and to constructively combine them within a dialogic agenda.

(b) Achievement standards:

There is a lot to be said in favour of common achievement standards.[1] Indeed, such standards provide clear guidelines for certification within and across countries. Also, such standards permit greater transparency for learners, teachers and administrators. As a consequence, different competence levels can be identified more easily. Such an app Anglistics as a Dialogic Discipline
 roach can help locate those learning areas that students still need to work on if they want to make further progress, thus giving people a clear idea of further learning steps. Moreover, such standards are formulated as 'can-do statements'. In other words, they focus on learner

1   For a more detailed discussion of what experts in ELT see as the CEF's potential benefits, see the different contributions in Morrow (2004).

strengths rather than on their deficiencies. Such a concept can invite a reorientation where language teaching is primarily focussed on the learners' mistakes. This in turn can strengthen the students' self-esteem when learning foreign languages. Finally, these can-do statements concern communicative abilities, thus suggesting a communicative rather than a grammar-based orientation for language learning.

The CEF has been defined as an open-ended project by some of its proponents. Morrow (2004, 1), for example, points out that "the Common European Framework is not fixed in stone", thus advocating its redefinition in different educational contexts. Also, its implementation can be organized along more or less dialogic lines. In Austria, for example, in a first step, the ministry responsible for education invited the Austrian Language Centre in Graz[2] and a group of teachers to discuss the CEF and to translate its criteria and descriptors into concrete materials for classroom use. Although the CEF as such was not really subject to critical questioning, the administrators and teachers involved at least were given space to bring in ideas and to revise them in the light of concrete classroom projects. Finally, the CEF need not lead to a predominantly functional and pragmatic orientation for language learning. In Slovenia, for example, the CEF has been read as confirmation of the importance of a humanistic, intercultural and communicative direction for language learning. In line with such a concept, a reader-related understanding of literature learning still plays a crucial role in Slovenian curricula and school-leaving exams. In fact, Meta Grosman has been a main influence here. In her work as researcher, teacher, teacher trainer and educational reformer she has shown how humanistic aims and common guidelines for language learning can be successfully integrated.

From a dialogic perspective, achievement standards, however, do become problematic where they are suggested as the sole or dominant basis for learner assessment. Where ultimately only those results count as valid information on language proficiency which can be empirically tested on a grand scale, language learning is narrowed down to what can be unambiguously assessed. Such assessment may invite a teaching-to-the-test, which widely ignores educational objectives such as empathy, creativity, critical competence, frustration tolerance, intrinsic motivation or self esteem, since all of them defy exact measurement. Furthermore, sheer concentration on what is clearly testable can create fixed hierarchies among areas of, and those concerned with, foreign language learning. As already mentioned, such an approach gives what is testable priority over other areas. As a backwash effect, teachers will lose most of their power to co-shape the ends of language learning. In line with Schön's (1983) notion of *technical rationality*, experts from outside define general solutions which are then to be implemented in a prescribed way.

(c) Educational perspectives:

As mentioned above, Morrow (2004, 6) claims that one of the aims of the CEF has been to define "purely descriptive" achievement standards. From a dialogic and culture-related perspective this comment merits particular attention. In my view, "purely descriptive" suggests that such standards are untainted by any bias (*pure*), by just describing an object (linguistic competence), which can be defined in no uncertain ways. A dialogic perspective, however, is based on the assumption that

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2   The German name for this centre is *Österreichisches Sprachen-Kompetenz-Zentrum* (ÖSZ).

phenomena like language are so complex that they can only be 'described' in parts. Thus, what is left out becomes as important as what is included, which renders impossible sheer concentration on the quantitatively testable. Also, such a perspective views all understanding as always influenced by certain interests and values, no matter whether they are stated explicitly or not. Moreover, any attempt to construct a programme is seen as a cultural act with manifold implications for those concerned. From such a perspective, achievement standards, for example, have been criticized as indicative of a market-oriented, capitalist programme (cf. Barkowski 2005). What counts for such an orientation is measurable output in the interest of certain attainment targets. In education, these targets are related to competences that increase the likelihood of economic success without questioning the interests of a capitalist programme.

What is missing in such a programme is a form of humanism, which – in Edward Said's (2003, 21–2) words – stands for "a process of unending disclosure, discovery, self-criticism and liberation". In a similar vein, the economic scientist and philosopher Amartya Sen (2001) makes a case for seeing human freedom and not capital accumulation as the principle aim for human existence. For Sen, freedom is a substantive concept based on specific capabilities. So far, however, such capabilities have been defined in rather vague terms by those concerned about the educational dimension of foreign language learning. Here, ELT experts could learn from colleagues working in other disciplines (economic science, pedagogy, philosophy), where efforts have been made to further define such ability (cf. Elliot 2005; Nussbaum 2000). Also, the work done by those in favour of achievement standards can serve as a stimulus to create something equally elaborate for educational objectives. Of course, these objectives would spring from a different logic, which would not go for the easily testable. Yet, an elaborate ensemble of categories plus descriptors would definitely help to gain a clearer picture of dialogically motivated educational objectives and how they are achieved and redefined in ELT-classroom contexts.

In my view, the debate on educational standards results from a clash of two radically different positions. On the one hand, one can find a positivist, output-oriented concept of language competence bracketing out all those areas of language use which defy unambiguous assessment. On the other hand, language is seen as steeped in socio-cultural values and as the medium through which different value systems are constructed, re-activated and redefined. While the first concept seems in favour of a top-down approach where experts define the relevant knowledge, the latter approach has argued for a negotiation of meanings in and through wide-reaching dialogue. Whether and how the two can be reconciled has become a major issue for ELT. One solution is to establish a clear hierarchy, where one perspective marks the dominant pole. Yet, also more dialogic solutions could be found. One possibility is a mere co-existence of both, where each pole is weighted equally, and where communicative competence is seen as a complex phenomenon including clearly testable *and* value-related dimensions. A third solution would be in line with my understanding of interdiscursive dialogue. Here, both positions would see themselves as culture-bound discourses informed by certain values. Furthermore, they would use the other position to (self-)critically and respectfully reflect upon one's own and the other perspective to learn more about the complexities involved in language learning. Respect for the other implies that the legitimacy of both projects would be recognized. What is testable would be

tested and what goes beyond such a perspective would be given equal attention. Depending on local needs and interests one of the approaches may – temporarily – be preferred to the other. Yet, this would not rule out the possibility to try a different approach. In fact, it is the third option which I would prefer.

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IV.

TRANSLATION STUDIES

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Alliteration as a Means of Characterization of Dramatic Personae: A Translation Issue

Summary

Alliteration is usually defined as a repetition of the same initial consonant in consecutive or neighbouring words. Despite its importance for dramatic construction, alliteration is rarely preserved in Slovene translations of dramatic texts. Detailed research into this phenomenon in several British and American plays and their Slovene translations showed that the survival of alliterations in the translation process is mostly random. On the rare occasions when alliteration is preserved, no proof could be found of a clear translation strategy focusing on this linguistic element. Since alliteration in most cases appears not as an isolated language element but rather as one of many important text features, the translator should devise priorities. The purpose of this article is not to urge translators to give alliteration the highest priority, but merely to suggest its inclusion among the features considered. This paper also includes examples of non-preservance of alliteration in translated text illustrating the loss for the text and its implications.

Key words: translation, drama, drama translation, alliteration, characterisation

Aliteracija kot sredstvo karakterizacije dramskih oseb: prevajalska dilema

Povzetek

Aliteracija je navadno definirana kot ujemanje vzglasnih soglasnikov ali soglasniških skupin v zaporednih besedah. Kljub svoji pomembnosti za dramsko zgradbo, se aliteracija le redko ohranja v slovenskih prevodih dramskih besedil. Podrobna raziskava tega pojava v nekaterih britanskih in ameriških dramah in njihovih slovenskih prevodih je pokazala, da je ohranitev aliteracij večinoma naključna. V redkih primerih, ko je ohranjena, ni zaznati nobene opaznejše prevajalske strategije, ki bi ta jezikovni element posebej upoštevala. Ker aliteracija v večini primerov ne nastopa izolirano oz. kot edini jezikovni element, ki ga je treba upoštevati, mora prevajalska strategija predvidevati določene prioritete. Namen tega članka ni prepričati prevajalca, da bi aliteracijo uvrstil čim višje na prioritetno listo upoštevanja vidikov dramskega besedila, ampak ga opozoriti, da jo sploh vključi med obravnavane elemente. Poleg tega prinaša študija tudi nekaj primerov, ki ponazorijo posledice izgube aliteracij za besedilo.

Ključne besede: prevajanje, drama, dramski prevod, aliteracija, karakterizacija

Alliteration as a Means of Characterization of Dramatic Personae: A Translation Issue

1. Introduction

Alliteration is usually defined as a repetition of the same sound, generally the initial consonant, in any sequence of words or neighbouring words. Historically, alliteration was a characteristic of Anglo-Saxon dramatic poetry, but it is still used, with modifications, by modern poets. This traditional poetic device is often associated with literary texts but is also frequent in everyday language (e.g. television advertising, folklore sayings, etc.). It is usually intentional, used for placing emphasis on the meaning of a text or for producing additional effects.

2. Alliteration in Drama

Alliteration is based on similarity of sounds and as such is bound to spoken rather than written language. In other words, alliteration will have a far greater effect on the listener than on the reader, because it is the sound of word, not its visual appearance or other characteristics, that brings alliteration to life. Therefore, this figure of speech is particularly appropriate in drama texts, because they are primarily intended for stage production and thus committed to the voice medium rather than reading. According to Kralj, drama needs to be staged in order to make the best of all its potentials: "drama is a literary text that, apart from being read, offers staging; in fact, it requires it" (1998, 5). This is, however, not true for the dramatic sub-genre, called *closet drama*. These plays are primarily intended for reading and therefore not the focus of this article's interest.

3. Characterisation of Dramatic Personae

An important reason for alliteration in drama is the fact that it is an excellent means of characterisation. The characters who use it in their utterances tend to present themselves to the audience as educated, well behaved, naturally intelligent, belonging to a higher social rank, perhaps possessing a sense of humour, etc. In any case, they will sound more sophisticated than other characters who never use it. Alliteration is, of course, not the only instrument for portraying a person – this would be too much to demand of such a refined literary tool – but it subtly helps to underline characteristics that are also shown by other means.

For the audience to perceive these characteristics, hearing the exact spoken words is essential. Indirect speech reported by the author of the text or various descriptions of a character's language will not produce the same effect. The actual alliterative expression as uttered by the person is much stronger than the author's description of this character's use of alliteration. Moreover, such reporting on the utterances employed can appear only once or twice in the same text in order not to sound repetitive, whereas alliteration in direct speech can be much more frequent – in fact, as frequent as needed for characterisation – since it is the character himself/herself who utters them

and not the narrator. To sum up, alliteration can perform its function of characterisation only in texts with a sufficient amount of direct speech. From this point of view, drama is the perfect type of text.

Alliterations must not be disregarded by the translator, even though they sometimes represent a minor share of the whole dramatic structure from a quantitative point of view. The translator's awareness of their presence and their importance in the text is an important starting point in the process of translation. This information should be acquired during the stage of text analysis that takes place before the actual translation.

4. Coincidental and Planned Alliterations

A certain percentage of the alliterations in every text is coincidental, which means these have no particular importance for the dramatic structure. This is often the case when sound connections involve auxiliary words, unstressed monosyllables, words without full meaning, etc. In most cases, these alliterations (e.g. *for free*, *so small*, *he has*, etc.) are not a result of the author's (or character's) intention to serve a purpose but are simply there for grammatical reasons: certain words have a specific grammatical function and are used in various contexts and with no regard to the initial consonants of the neighbouring words. In the translation process, these alliterations can be disregarded with no harm to the text and, as Slovene translation practice shows, in general, they are.

The other extreme situation arises in instances where alliteration is so tightly bound to the structure of the scene (usually to the content) that its presence cannot be avoided. Here is an example of such alliteration, taken from Act II of G. B. Shaw's *Pygmalion*. Mrs. Pearce, the housekeeper, comes to professor Higgins in order to ask him if he could change his behaviour when Eliza is present. She asks him not to use "a certain word" (the audience can guess that she is referring to the word "bloody"), and the euphemistic technique that she uses to get her message across hints at alliteration:

> Mrs. Pearce. That's what I mean, sir. You swear a great deal too much. I don't mind your damning and blasting /…/ – but there is a certain word I must ask you not to use. The girl used it herself when she began to enjoy the **b**ath. **It begins with the same letter as bath**. /…/ (Shaw 1957, 51)

Higgins, of course, objects to her implications that he uses it frequently, but Mrs. Pearce presents the evidence by specifying the times of transgression, and this time she uses a salient alliteration. In his answer, Higgins finally calls the figure alliteration and thus prevents it escaping notice by the audience:

> Mrs. Pearce. Only this morning, sir, you applied it to your **b**oots, to the **b**utter, and to the **b**rown **b**read.
> Higgins. Oh, that! Mere **alliteration**, Mrs. Pearce, natural to a poet. (Shaw 1957, 51)

In instances like this, it is necessary for the translator to consider and preserve alliteration. In the example from Pygmalion, it is so strongly interwoven with the plot that, were it to be misplaced, the conversation would become senseless. However, alliterations that are the focus of this article, and should also be the focus of the translator's attention, occupy a field between these two extreme situations. These are a result of authorial decision, and because of their specific role, they represent a building block of the dramatic structure. The translator must pay attention to these alliterations and try to identify their function. Thus he/she will set the grounds for an optimal and, in terms of all the structural elements of a play, balanced translation.

5. Translating Alliterations

Preserving alliteration is often not an easy task, specially when those involving more than two or three words are concerned. One of the difficulties may be finding a sufficient number of semantically adequate alliterative words in the target language. Moreover, alliteration is rarely the only feature, apart from the meaning, to be considered. Other very common features in drama translation include register, rhythm, length of words and various kinds of markedness. In practice, it is almost impossible to preserve all of these; however, the decision about which to preserve, which to replace with other means with similar effect, and which to disregard completely must not be left to chance. It needs to be the translator's conscious decision, made on the basis of a thorough text analysis, and it should be in accordance with an already defined translation strategy and its norms.

Unfortunately, alliteration is often disregarded in translation, not just because of the translator's unawareness of its existence, but also as a result of his/her conscious decisions. This occurs when absence of alliteration does not disturb the textual structure, because the audience simply does not know that there should be alliteration at a particular point in the play. The overall dramatic potential is slightly lower, but there is no detraction from the flow of the play. This is, however, not true for many other features, whose absence or presence does disturb the text; in such cases the flaw is easily noticed by the careful audience (e.g. the use of inappropriate register, etc.). So, sacrificing an alliteration in order to preserve another, more noticeable feature sometimes seems an optimal emergency exit from a difficult translation situation.

The length of an alliteration (i.e. the number of words it involves) is for the translator often the first information about its importance; the longer ones represent a greater challenge but usually also have a stronger auditory effect. The other important characteristic is the nature of the repeated sound; theoretically, plosive and voiced sounds leave a stronger trace than other sounds. Nevertheless, none of the above statements should be accepted as an absolute translation rule for rendering alliteration. As the examples provided below will show, a short but strong alliteration involving no more than two words, or an alliteration with repeated voiceless, fricative sounds, is sometimes salient and thus important to preserve. The deciding factor for whether to give priority to alliteration or to some other dramatic feature is, therefore, the context and the role of these features within it. In the remainder of the article, there are a few examples of alliterations taken from British and American plays that illustrate the points already highlighted. Most of

these were not preserved in Slovene translation. The article also provides comments on these and suggests alternative translation solutions.

Many alliterations from Harold Pinter's *The Caretaker*, translated into Slovene by Janko Moder (Pinter 1990), are lost or weakened in the translation. Here are two examples:

In this utterance, Davies, a homeless tramp whom a good-hearted and slightly mentally handicapped Aston has brought into his apartment and offered shelter, talks about the incident at the café where he worked as a cleaner. We do not know what happened to him and whether Aston really saved him from a fight and how, but this is what he says:

> DAVIES. /…/ I could have got **done** in **down** there. (Pinter 1977, 17)

In the original, Pinter uses the alliterative words "done" and "down". The repetition of "d" is intensified with the appearance of "n" in both words and the similarity of the vowels contained in the two words. The final effect of the alliteration is even stronger because each of the words is stressed. What is more, the plosive sounds contribute to the onomatopoetic effect, recreating the tense atmosphere of the physical fight (regardless of whether it actually took place or not), and they emphasise Davies's panicky reaction to what could have happened to him. So, in this case, alliteration is a verbal representation of physical and mental actions, and thus it activates not just the reason but also emotions of the audience.

In Moder's translation "Tam spod bi blo lahko po meni" (Pinter 1990, 3), the effect of the alliteration is weaker: there is no additional repeated sound to reinforce it, and the rhythm of the whole sentence places the stress only on the second word "blo", while "bi" remains without its own accent. In terms of alliteration alone, one of my suggested translations –"**Skoraj** bi jo **skupil** tam spodaj" – might be preferable. It would preserve the alliteration – "sk" is rather strong – and the stress on each of the two words. It also contains a third word beginning with an "s", that is "spodaj", which is an additional intensifying element in the whole alliteration. However, the argument that speaks against this suggestion is its inadequate register; the phrase "skupiti jo" sounds somewhat too cultivated for an uneducated tramp. Therefore, I suggest the translation: "Lahko bi jih **dobil** tam **doli**."

Later in the play, Davies starts complaining about the bag that he left at the café because everything he had was in it:

> DAVIES. /…/ Every lousy **blasted bit** of my **bleeding belongings** I left down there now. (Pinter 1977, 19)

The "b" alliteration adds force and emotion. Davies is frustrated because he has lost all his belongings, and, apart from expressing his anger, he wants to make Aston aware of this terrible state. So, he is trying to put emphasis on how completely he left everything behind. The force of "b" as a plosive sound also suggests verbal violence, and with its repetition the belongings are

being verbally 'trashed'. Most of the characteristics connected to this alliteration are not included in Moder's translation: "Vso tisto prekleto usrano kramo, vso tisto piškavo mizerijo sem pustil tam" (Pinter 1990, 5). Only two adjectives start with the same sound, "prekleto" and "piškavo", but they are so far apart that they can hardly constitute alliteration. My suggested translation preserves it more: "Vse tiste **preklete preostanke** mojega **posranega premoženja** sem zdaj pustil tam." The effect of the alliterative sound "pr" is similar to "b" in the original: "p" being a plosive contributes the force, and "r" adds voice. The aforementioned characteristics of the original are thus valid for this translation, too. Grammatical incorrectness in the use of the pronoun "mojega" helps to establish the register: in colloquial language it is often used instead of the correct form "svojega" and is therefore more suitable for a character like Davies.

The following examples are taken from T. Williams's *Streetcar Named Desire*. The play is set in New Orleans. Blanche comes to her sister, Stella, and her husband, after having sold and lost the family estate in a suspicious way. Throughout the play, alliterations appear almost exclusively in Blanche's utterances. They masterfully reveal her character by depicting the changing states of her mentally and emotionally unstable personality. The audience gradually realises that these are reflected in her speech. When she feels upbeat, her language is poetic and often over-formal; on the other hand, her moments of depression are marked by nervous attempts to hide her confusion. In both of these sets of mental states, alliterations subtly support her belief that she is superior. Apart from the fact she is an English teacher, her upper-class standards, one of which is the necessity for polite and erudite diction, seem to be built into her subconscious.

This excerpt is a good example of how alliteration effectively and elegantly adds force to Blanche's statement, with which she wants to stress the difficulty of her position in managing the family assets and, at the same time, to keep her integrity and absolve herself from guilt. At this point, Stella still does not know about the loss of the estate, and Blanche is trying to prepare her before she reveals the news:

> Blanche. /…/ I know that you're bound to reproach me – but before you do – take into consideration – you left! I **st**ayed and **st**ruggled! (Williams 1989, 1826)

The last sentence in the utterance is short and powerful. The most obvious reason for its effectiveness is, of course, the meaning of the two stressed words, which is tightly connected to the idea of the speaker's sacrifice for a noble cause. But the contribution of alliteration and rhythm to the phrase can hardly be overlooked. The Slovene translations: "Jaz sem ostala in sem se borila!" (Williams 1952, 15) and "Jaz sem ostala in se borila!" (Williams 1999, 16) by Grün and Duša, respectively, lose the alliteration and weaken the original rhythm. The loss of rhythm is at least partly due to the attributes of Slovene grammar, which only has composed tenses to express past actions; therefore the constructions are necessarily longer. However, the presence of three-syllable words in both key positions in the sentence is the choice that loosens the condensed force of the original statement. The first of my suggested translations is "Jaz sem branila **d**om in se **d**ušila!", in which the alliterative "st" is replaced by "d", still a plosive sound which adds force to the meaning. "Dom" is emotionally a very powerful word with connotations that fit this

context, and "dušiti se" picks up the meaning of "struggle". My second suggestion, "Jaz sem se postavila v **br**an in iz**br**ala **b**oj!", is, from an alliteration point of view, even more appropriate. The nouns "**b**ran" and "**b**oj", which carry the meaning, are short and stressed, and also semantically a better choice. Moreover, the original alliteration is strengthened with a consonance, **"br**an" and "iz**br**ala", which, apart from the alliterative "b" sound, brings out the strong "r".

When Blanche and Mitch, her potential suitor and Stanley's friend, return home after they have enjoyed an evening out, Blanche is obviously overcome with emotion. Mitch has been courting her, and she has responded to his admiration in accordance with her "rules of ladyhood". The favourable atmosphere has been building up throughout their conversation. They get to the front door, and she hands him the key with the following words:

> Blanche. /…/ Honey, you open the door while I take a **l**ast **l**ook at the sky.
> (Williams 1989, 1853)

The above alliteration is just one example of the figurative language that prevails in Blanche's utterances in *Scene Six*. It is an important indication of her emotional state. In Slovene translations, though some elements of her poetic diction are preserved, unfortunately not many alliterations are among them. This one is lost, too: "/…/ tačas pa še enkrat pogledam v nebo." (Williams 1952, 63); and "/…/ jaz pa še zadnjič pogledam v nebo." (Williams 1999, 71).

Since alliteration is the most outstanding sound effect in this word group, it should – apart from the content – be the translator's main concern. Two alternative translations come naturally to mind. The first one, "/…/ medtem ko se jaz še **z**adnjič o**z**rem v nebo", according to some definitions does not contain pure alliteration. It is a consonance, but a great deal of the sound effect is still there. The word "ozrem" could also be replaced by "zazrem", which would improve the alliteration but would also move slightly away from a meaning that suits the situation; "zazreti se" suggests a somewhat longer act of gazing into the sky, which probably could not be concluded by the time Mitch unlocked the door (whereas "ozreti se" is an instantaneous act). The other suggestion is even more straightforward and needs no special commentary: "/…/ medtem ko jaz še **po**slednjič **po**gledam v nebo."

Many alliterations have onomatopoetic characteristics. This is not surprising, considering the fact that both figures operate on the basis of sound effects. Onomatopoeia adds another dimension to an alliterative group of words; thus the joint effect on the audience is even more observable than that of plain alliteration. Such an instance automatically implies a more demanding task for the translator, whose restriction in the selection of target language elements doubles. Finding a suitable solution in this case needs to satisfy two conditions because of the more complex sound manipulation. A good example of such a combination is Blanche's utterance when Stella is about to pour her a glass of Coke:

> Blanche. Yes, honey. Watch how you pour – that **f**izzy stu**ff f**oams over!
> (Williams 1989, 1850)

Grün had, obviously, noticed the double sound effect and also successfully transferred it into Slovene: "Pazi kako naliva**š** – ta **š**ume**č**a re**č** **pre**cej **pre**kipi!" (Williams 1952, 57). As we see, he replaced the onomatopoetic sound "f", that imitates the foaming of a drink caused by released carbon dioxide, with "š", also a voiceless fricative, and the plosive "č". This combination has a similar, maybe even stronger onomatopoetic potential. As far as sound effects are concerned, this translation alone would meet the original qualitatively and quantitatively, yet Grün strengthened it with another alliteration, "**pre**cej **pre**kipi!".

Duša's translation, "Pazi kako naliva**š** – tile mehur**č**ki udarijo **č**ez!" (Williams 1999, 65), is less successful in preserving the indicated sound qualities. He also used the sounds "č" and "š", the latter, in fact, being a part of the previous phrase (which in Grün's translation is also present). Apart from the fact that the translation is quantitatively weaker, the alliterative sounds are farther apart from each other in comparison to the original (and Grün's translation), which weakens the effect.

Not that Grün's translation would need improvement, but here is my attempt at an alternative translation which builds on his solution with "š" and "č" sounds: "Pazi kako naliva**š** – ta **š**ume**č**a re**č** rada **s**te**č**e **č**ez!" Instead of introducing a new alliteration in the last part of the sentence, I extended the existing one with two more "č" sounds. Moreover, there is also the double appearance of a new sound, "s". Technically, this is a new alliteration, but, in fact, it adds to the overall sound image because it is onomatopoetically highly compatible with the existing sounds.

6. Conclusion

At first sight, alliteration may seem a marginal language feature with no significant impact on the overall potential of a play. This article tries to prove the opposite and thus draws the translators' attention to this and other generally neglected elements of the language. In Slovene translation practice, translators often pay too little attention to these aspects of their work (cf. Hribar 1999, 2001; Onič 2003). A possible reason – but not an excuse – for this may be that translators, especially drama translators bound by theatre contracts, are constantly under time pressure, which does not allow for a thorough text analysis and formation of a translation strategy before they actually start translating. On the other hand, published versions are often just slightly or not at all changed working translations – despite the fact that the time pressure argument is practically irrelevant in these cases.

The selected examples illustrate the role of alliteration in different dramatic situations. Moreover, they are supported by analysis of their Slovene translations, pointing out the negative influence of unintentional translation shifts on the meaning potential of the play in the target language. It is hoped that this article will contribute to drawing the translators' attention to alliteration and other similar textual elements in drama translation and thus have a positive long-term influence on drama translation in our language space.

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Repetition and Translation Shifts

Summary

Repetition manifests itself in different ways and at different levels of the text. The first basic type of repetition involves complete recurrences, in which a particular textual feature repeats in its entirety. The second type involves partial recurrences, in which the second repetition of the same textual feature includes certain modifications to the first occurrence.

In the article, repetitive patterns in Edgar Allan Poe's short story "The Fall of the House of Usher" and its Slovene translation, "Konec Usherjeve hiše", are compared. The author examines different kinds of repetitive patterns. Repetitions are compared at both the micro- and macrostructural levels. As detailed analyses have shown, considerable microstructural translation shifts occur in certain types of repetitive patterns. Since these are not only occasional, sporadic phenomena, but are of a relatively high frequency, they reduce the translated text's potential for achieving some of the gothic effects. The macrostructural textual property particularly affected by these shifts is the narrator's experience as described by the narrative, which suffers a reduction in intensity.

Key words: repetition, translation shifts, E. A. Poe, "The Fall of the House of Usher"

Ponavljanje in prevodni premiki

Povzetek

Fenomen ponavljanja se kaže na različne načine in na različnih ravneh besedila. Prvi osnovni tip ponovitev predstavljajo popolne ponovne pojavitve, pri katerih se določen besedilni element ponovi v celoti. Drugi tip predstavljajo delne ponovne pojavitve, pri katerih je pri drugi ponovni pojavitvi istega besedilnega elementa v primerjavi s prvo mogoče opaziti nekatere spremembe.

V prispevku avtor primerja vzorce ponavljanja v izvirni noveli Edgarja Allana Poeja, "The Fall of the House of Usher", in njenem slovenskem prevodu, "Konec Usherjeve hiše". Predstavljene so različne vrste vzorcev ponavljanja. Avtor primerja ponovitve tako na mikro- kot na makrostrukturni ravnini. Kot je pokazala temeljita predhodna analiza, je pri nekaterih vzorcih ponavljanja mogoče opaziti precejšnje mikrostrukturne prevodne premike. Ker ne gre zgolj za osamljene, naključne primere, temveč se ti pojavljajo razmeroma pogosto, pride do krnitve potenciala besedila za doseganje nekaterih gotskih oz. grozljivih učinkov. Makrostrukturna besedilna prvina, pri kateri se še posebno močno kažejo vplivi omenjenih premikov, je pripovedovalčevo doživetje, saj v prevodu opis le-tega učinkuje manj intenzivno.

Ključne besede: ponavljanje, prevodni premiki, E. A. Poe, "The Fall of the House of Usher"

Repetition and Translation Shifts

1. Introduction

Repetition is a phenomenon that occurs when the text features the same element for the second time. Robert de Beaugrande and Wolfgang Ulrich Dressler (1992) recognize two types of repetition: recurrences and partial recurrences. Recurrences are straightforward repetitions of elements or patterns. This type of repetition is most typical of spoken language where the speaker as a rule does not have sufficient time to plan and form the message, which is why they often use the same words. Beaugrande and Dressler illustrate this type of repetition with a dialogue in which one of the speakers repeats the words of the other speaker, since he cannot believe the first dared to command him in his own house (Beaugrande and Dressler 1992, 46). Partial recurrences, on the other hand, occur when the same word material is used for the second time, however, with some changes (Onič 2002, 98). A typical example of what is known as polyptoton in classical rhetoric, involves sentences where words belonging to different word-classes can be derived from one root (in the American Declaration of Independence, for example, the verb "*suffer*", the adjective "*sufferable*" and the noun "sufferance" appear close to one another [Beaugrande and Dressler 1992, 48]). What is particularly interesting from our point of view is the pattern called parallelism, which entails reusing identical surface formats but with different content. We also need to mention paraphrase, where the content of the message stays the same but is expressed in different ways. Beaugrande and Dressler illustrate the former with the example from the Declaration that describes the English king's actions: "He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns", and the latter with the following sentence: "I had never seen a <u>murderer</u> … the decent symbol which indemnifies the <u>taker of a life</u>" (ibid.).

It needs to be stressed that the above categorization only recognizes two basic types of recurrence. Each of the two, of course, comprises a number of subcategories. Thus paraphrase alone, besides synonymy, to which the example above belongs, also includes incomplete synonymy, the superordinates, general expressions, and so on (Halliday and Hasan 1995).

2. Recurrences and partial recurrences in "The Fall of the House of Usher"

Recurrences and partial recurrences in "The Fall of the House of Usher" represent an important narrative feature. Analysis has shown that among the 220 sentences constituting the story, almost one quarter (just over 50 sentences) show obvious signs of repetition. This number only includes certain types of repetition. These include repetitions that occur at the sentence level, and only those repetitions above the sentence level that occur in the immediate textual vicinity of the sentence where a particular pattern occurs for the first time (the figure does not include, for example, lexical repetitions of particular words over the text as a whole). The figure also does not include repetitions that can be found in the poem "The Haunted Palace", since its classical form presupposes elements of repetition at various levels (e.g. meter, rhyme). Repetitions that occur at the lowest, phonological level, for example in alliterations of the "horrid and harsh" or "heavy and horrible" type, are likewise not included. Otherwise, the total number of repetitions on the level of the text as a whole would be even higher.

A relatively high number of repetitions in the story was not unexpected, since the phenomenon of repetition is even believed by some critics to be a *differentia specifica* of the gothic genre. Rebecca E. Martin thus believes repetition to be part and parcel of every gothic narrative, which presents itself both as a formal structural device and as a thematic effect. In her view, gothic narratives attract their readers because of their extraordinary visuality, and it is precisely repetition that guarantees them repeated exposure to spectacular scenes (Martin 1998, 75–6).

3. Comparison of recurrences and partial recurrences in the original and its Slovene translation

A detailed comparison of the story "The Fall of the House of Usher" and its Slovene translation, "Konec Usherjeve hiše", has not shown major discrepancies between the two texts with regard to recurrences and partial recurrences. This does not come as a surprise, since repetition from the translator's point of view in most cases does not represent a difficult problem. The translator usually only has to recognize the figure of repetition and identify its constituent elements in the original text, and then try to recreate the same pattern(s) in the translation. The complete recurrences seem particularly unproblematic in this respect.

However, repetitive patterns in the original and the translation occasionally do differ considerably. These examples are the more interesting because it turns out that these translation shifts affect not only the microstructural, but also the macrostructural level of the text. Repetition turns out to be a formal means that the narrator uses to intensify the narrative and make it more dramatic. It is particularly the following types of repetition patterns in which translation shifts occur: repetitions of syntactic patterns at the sentence level and repetitions at the level of the phrase, in particular prepositional phrases and appositions.

3.1. Syntactic structures

This category includes sentences in which a particular syntactic pattern repeats two or three times. In the majority of examples these patterns are formed by the subject + verb + object string, in which the same pattern is repeated with modifications to one or more of its constituent elements. Except for these partial recurrences, the original text features examples of complete recurrences, where the syntactic pattern and its constituent elements repeat in entirety. Preliminary analyses have shown that these repetitions most often occur in those parts of the text that are characterized by uncertainty, in particular when the narrator tries to rationally explain supernatural phenomena. Repetitions show the narrator's continuous, almost cyclic attempts at naming or describing these phenomena.

A typical example can be found in the introductory part of the narrative, in which the narrator describes his arrival at the House of Usher. According to him, it was already with the "first glimpse of the building" that "a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded his spirit". He immediately asks himself about the cause of the unusual experience (Poe 1986, 186):

What was it – I paused to think – what was it that so unnerved me in the contemplation of the House of Usher? (My emphasis, as in all the subsequent quotes from the original text and/or its Slovene translation.)

As can be seen in the underlined part of the text, the narrator sets the question in such a way as to repeat its introductory part twice. A complete recurrence of the syntactic structure "what was it" occurs. The recurrence is not coincidental here. It is the result of his manner of experiencing the situation. By beginning to develop the question, then pausing for a brief moment (which he explicitly indicates with the words "I paused to think"), and then returning to the initial point of departure, together with the verbatim repetition of the initial part of the question, the narrator signals his uncertainty about and even discomfort with the phenomenon. It is evident the phenomenon is at least partly a mystery to him, which is why this particular textual segment functions somewhat dramatically at the macrostructural level. The fact that he is dealing with the situation retrospectively adds to this effect, since not even remoteness in time helps him gain deeper insight into what has happened. In Slovene, the effect of the narrator's self-questioning is similar to the effect of the following wording: "*kaj,* le kaj *me je tako vznemirilo…?*".

Considerable shifts among these components appear in the Slovene translation (Poe 1993, 31):

Ustavil sem se in pomislil, <u>kaj je to</u>, kar me je ob pogledu na Usherjevo hišo tako potrlo.

The first noticeable change is the loss of the repetition. While in the original the introductory part of the sentence is repeated in its entirety, that does not happen in the translation. The question "what was it" thus occurs only once. The other shift regards the question as such. While the question mark in the original makes it evident that the narrator is directly quoting the question he was asking, the translation features a declarative sentence instead, in which the narrator only summarizes the content of the original question. These microstructural shifts result in changes on the macrostructural level of the text. While the manner in which the narrator poses the question (through the repetition) in the original points to the intensity of his experience, this effect is somewhat weakened in the translation because of the loss of repetition and through the introduction of the declarative sentence.

Another element that contributes to the weaker effect of the translation is the changed narrative technique. In the original text the narrator employs the type of discourse[1] that moves in the direction of free direct thought; the translation, in contrast, exhibits a move in the direction of the narrative report of a thought act. This shift above all affects the distance between the narrator and the reader and the reader and the narrator-narratee (the object of the narrator's own narrative). While in the original the distance between the reader and the narrator-narratee, i.e. the person that in the framework of the narrative is situated in front of the House of Usher, thinking about its unusual effects upon him, is small; that is not so in the translation. Since in the translation the narrator inhabits the discourse level, summarizing his own past thoughts, his distance from the reader diminishes, while the reader's distance from the narrator-narratee increases.

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1   Speech and thought presentation paradigms are adapted from Leech and Short (1995) and Mozetič (2000).

This distinction may at first sight seem unimportant, since both the narrator and the narrator-narratee represent the "same" person. In principle, that is true. However, we must not overlook the fact that this "same" person in the framework of the textual world inhabits two different temporal and spatial positions; that according to narratological conventions the first-person narrator occupies the discourse level, so that his *hic et nunc* differs from that of the narrator-narratee, i.e. of the object of his own narrative, who finds himself somewhere "in the past" in front of the House of Usher. This distinction between the two temporal planes is important from the point of view of the story's dramatic effects. It allows the narrator to establish a dialogic relationship between himself as the narrator and himself as the narrator-narratee. By constantly switching between the discourse level and the story level, and by continuously returning to the thoughts that went through his mind "in the past", he adds to the intensity of his attempts to deal rationally with the (irrational) phenomena he has witnessed. This is why the distinction between the temporal and spatial planes needs to be preserved in the translation, together with the form and the character of the thoughts past and present. This simultaneously clarifies why the elements of the two different discourses have to be preserved in the translation, including the repetitions in the narrator's discourse, which are particularly characteristic of his experience of the situation at the House of Usher.

Another similar example can be found in the introductory part of the narrative. In this sentence, the narrator is describing the letter he has received from Roderick. According to the narrator, Roderick spoke of an acute illness in the letter and of the wish to see the narrator. The narrator now finds himself thinking what exactly it was in the letter that made him visit Roderick immediately (Poe 1986, 139):

> It was the manner in which all this, and much more, was said – it was the apparent *heart* that went with his request – which allowed me no room for hesitation; and I accordingly obeyed forthwith what I still considered a very singular summons.

In this sentence, too, the repetition pattern is easily noticed. As in the previous example, here, too, the recurrence is formed by the repetition of the same syntactic structure (underline). The difference between them is that the recurrence is partial in this case. The structure that repeats is part of the cleft sentence. The narrator uses it to point out two characteristics of the letter, the "manner" and the "apparent *heart*" of Roderick's writing. The second recurrence is separated from the rest of the sentence by the dashes. Punctuation thus reminds the reader that the second repetition is an inserted item, an additional explanation, which the narrator somewhat eagerly appends to his original proposition, as if in an attempt to describe the characteristics of the letter as accurately as possible. Since the two characteristics are described with the same syntactic structure, this, through parallelism, sets both of the singled-out properties of the letter on the same plane, i.e. it shows that the narrator sees each of them as equally important.

It is not coincidental that this figure of repetition involves a cleft sentence. The narrator employs it to lay additional stress on the two characteristics of the letter. He does so by exploiting the basic function of the cleft sentence. As is known, the cleft sentence, which consists of the semantically

"empty" pronoun "it", the copula, and the nominal phrase, serves to emphasize the meaning of the nominal phrase, since end-focus falls on it (Quirk et al. 1992, 1384). In this case, the two properties are certainly at the centre of the narrator's and, consequently, the reader's attention. The narrator's preoccupation with the two properties of the letter also appears in the additional stress (italics) he lays on the second.

In the translation, however, several translation shifts occur with regard to the properties just mentioned (Poe 1993, 32):

> S takimi in podobnimi besedami je bilo povedano to in še dosti drugega, iz njih je govorilo potrto, tolažbe potrebno srce, zato se nisem smel obotavljati in sem pri priči ustregel temu zelo čudnemu vabilu.

Here, the repetition, at least in the form in which it exists the original, disappears in the translation. The translation likewise does not contain structures that emphasize the two essential properties of Roderick's letter in the same way as in the original. Moreover, for no obvious reason, the additional emphasis on the word "*heart*", indicated by the italics, disappears in the translation. The translator also omitted the dashes. These microstructural shifts make the translation function slightly differently on the macrostructural level than the original. While in the original the narrator's explanation appears hasty, even dramatic, in the translation it appears much calmer, balanced, as if the decision following the unusual summons were perfectly normal. This represents a considerable translation shift compared with the original text. In the original, it is clear why the narrator tries so hastily to justify his decision to visit Roderick: he knows that it – in particular in retrospect – was irrational, more so because he himself admits that the summons was "very singular". Such a "mistake", of course, is something the narrator now finds difficult to admit – in the original text, so it seems, even more so.

3.2. Repetition at the phrase level

Besides the recurrences of entire syntactic structures, the phenomenon of repetition also shows at the phrase level. The two most commonly involved types of phrases are the prepositional and the nominal phrase, in particular appositions. Repetition has not gone unnoticed by critics. Scott Peeples (2002), for example, points out strings of prepositional phrases of the same type, which, he says, "abound" in the text (Peeples 2002, 182). He thus draws attention to a sentence with a string of four consecutive prepositional phrases beginning with the preposition "of", and in particular to the following sentence, where six prepositional phrases of the same type follow each other (Poe 1986, 138):

> I looked upon the scene before me – upon the mere house, and the simple landscape features of the domain – upon the bleak walls – upon the vacant eye-like windows – upon a few rank sedges – and upon a few white trunks of decayed trees – with an utter depression of soul which I can compare to no earthly sensation more properly than to the after-dream of the reveller upon opium – the bitter lapse into everyday life – the hideous dropping off of the veil.

In Peeples' opinion, such repetitions increase the sense of inertia and textual opacity (2002, 182). They make the narrative appear as if at a "standstill". Their purpose is to call the readers' attention to the "words *as words*". The latter is especially interesting from the point of view of some contemporary critical (meta-)readings that see Poe's story as a hall or house of mirrors, suggesting the way that words in this story give the illusion of depth while actually keeping readers focused on the mirror-like surface of words (ibid.).

Strings of prepositional phrases (together with dashes) also serve as a formal means of locating the entities described in the phrases at the same level. This phenomenon is similar to the one mentioned with regard to the repetitions of syntactic structures. In the sentence above, for example, the narrator employs the same type of prepositional phrase to emphasize that each of the items described contributed to his uneasiness to the same extent. At the same time, the string apparently recreates the movement of his gaze.

All this makes it essential that the translator pay attention to these features of the discourse in the original. This is not always easy to do. The problem the translator faces is that they must not only consider the formal, but also the functional and pragmatic differences between the two language codes. A prepositional phrase in the source code thus cannot always be mechanically translated with a prepositional phrase in the target code. In our case, the narrator faces yet another problem. The original sentence contains a combination of the verb "look" and the preposition "upon". This makes the structure grammatically ambiguous, since it can be interpreted either as a combination of an intransitive verb, followed by a prepositional phrase functioning as an adverbial, or, alternatively, the two can be seen as one semantic unit, followed by the prepositional object.

In our example we can easily establish that it is the former case, since an adverb can be inserted between the verb and the prepositional phrase (otherwise that is not possible [Quirk et al. 1992, 1167]). At this stage, the translation solution appears at hand: the translator need only find an appropriate (intransitive) equivalent for the verb "look", and then use a string of prepositional phrases of the same type to describe the situation analogously with the original. In this way, the repetitive pattern could be easily retained. It turns out, however, that this is only one possible solution. The verb "look" can also be translated with a transitive verb. In this case the items from the prepositional phrases find themselves in the position of the direct object, which automatically means that the formal repetitive pattern of the prepositions is lost. This is exactly the solution that Jože Udovič chose in his translation (Poe 1993, 31):

> Gledal sem pred seboj tisti kraj – samotno hišo in puščobno pokrajino okoli nje, mrzle zidove, votla okna, podobna očesnim duplinam, nekaj stebel bičja, nekaj belih debel posušenih dreves, – gledal sem vse to s tako potrto dušo, da tega ne morem primerjati nobenemu drugemu človeškemu občutku kakor tisti še megleni, vračajoči se zavesti, ko se človek prebuja iz opijske pijanosti, grenkemu pogrezanju v vsakdanje življenje, ko se prijetna tančica opoja žalostno gubi.

Several shifts can be noticed in the translation. The obvious one is the loss of the repetitive pattern formed by the prepositional phrases in the original. Just as evident is the difference in the use of the dash; while eight of these appear in the original, the translator used only two. The loss of the repetitive pattern is connected with the introduction of the transitive verb. While the intransitive verb in the original allows the narrator to string together several prepositional phrases of the same type, the translator chose a different solution. Building on the transitive verb "g*ledati*", the narrator describes the phenomena in the world he is observing with the help of nominal phrases. This, of course, automatically deprives him of the possibility of preserving the original repetition paradigm in the translation. At the same time, however, the translator paid at least some attention to the notion of repetition. He did so by repeating the verbal combination "*gledal sem*". The latter thus functions as partial compensation for the loss.

A much less understandable interference with the original, however, occurs with the use of the dash. These are dropped in the translation and are replaced by commas. It seems there exists no particular reason for such a decision. In contrast, Poe used dashes because they mark longer pauses in the narrative current than do commas. This allows him to recreate even more effectively the effect of an intermittent, apparently somewhat nervous narrative, so as to better emphasise the depth and intensity of the experience. For this reason, the narrator in the original, when compared with the "same" narrator in the translation, appears to perceive the scene he encounters, less dramatically.

Some of the possible deficiencies of the translation have been noted by the critics. Raša Šuklje (1961), for example, who wrote one of the first reviews of Udovič's translations, paid special attention to his use of the dash. As she pointed out correctly, "the secret of a style lies not in counting full-stops and commas; however, it is not insignificant that Poe (…) in the first paragraph of 'Usherjeva hiša' used […] no fewer than fourteen [dashes], while the translator got along with two altogether" (Šuklje 1961, 669). Of even more interest from our point of view is her comment on the effect of the microstructural shifts on the macrostructural level of the text. Among other things, she writes that the omission of the dashes contributes to the loss of (ibid.):

> the nervous narrative style, which Poe uses to achieve the effect of an impromptu, intermittent narrative, of improvisation. […] This way, what in Poe is palpably rhythmic, musical and spontaneous, received a much more definite, incomparably massive form in Slovene; a quick succession of ideas thus turned into a well-conceived programme.

3.3. Appositions

At the level of the phrase, appositions are another category where a number of translation shifts can be noticed. These are particularly interesting, since the inner elements of repetition in some cases appear on two different planes at the same time, semantic and lexical. This is related to the basic properties of appositions. By definition, appositions represent combinations of two co-referential nominal phrases that stand side by side. Since they both have the same referent (semantically), repetition occurs with the double emergence of the same item. At the same time, elements of

repetition can also occur simultaneously at the lexical level. That happens when the same lexical item occurs at the head of each phrase, and the two only have different modifiers. In the original text, strings of two, three, four or even more nominal phrases in apposition are used. The narrator most often has recourse to these when he has difficulty naming or describing a particular phenomenon; appositions allow him to at least try to describe the item as precisely as possible. However, significant discrepancies between the translation and the original occur occasionally.

The first example of the kind is the sentence in which the narrator describes his first meeting with Roderick. He reports that Roderick was a victim of phobophobia, fear of fear itself. According to Roderick's vague explanations, it was the unusual influence of the house that contributed to the fear (Poe 1986, 144):

> He was enchained by certain superstitious impressions in regard to the dwelling which he tenanted, and whence, for many years, he had never ventured forth – in regard to <u>an influence</u> whose supposititious force was conveyed in terms too shadowy here to be re-stated – <u>an influence</u> which some peculiarities in the mere form and substance of his family mansion, had, by ding of long sufferance, he said, obtained over his spirit – <u>an effect</u> which the *physique* of the gray walls and turrets, and of the dim tarn into which they all looked down, had, at length, brought about upon the *morale* of his existence.

The underlining reveals three appositions in the sentence: the first two have the noun "influence" at their head, and the third, "effect". Elements of repetition thus occur at both the semantic and the lexical level. The phrases are divided by dashes. The appositions constitute the part of the text in which the narrator is describing the unusual influence to which Roderick has supposedly been exposed. The narrator uses this part of the sentence to describe the details of the influence as precisely as possible. Each nominal phrase describes one particular feature of this influence. Since they all refer practically to the same phenomenon, this indicates the narrator's hyper-concentration, and the intensity of his effort to describe it appropriately. The dashes make the situation even more dramatic. They mark short breaks in the narrator's stream of thoughts, they even make it into a kind of *staccato*. The effect is further intensified with the repetition of the same word in the first two appositions.

Several translation shifts can be detected in this part of the target text (Poe 1993, 38):

> Bil je v oblasti nekakih praznovernih predstav o hiši, ki je živel v nji in ki si že več let ni upal iz nje, to pa zaradi nekega vpliva, ki mi je njegovo namišljeno moč orisal s pretemnimi besedami, da bi jih lahko tu ponovil. Rekel je: nekatere posebnosti v obliki in gradivu domačega dvorca so zaradi njegove dolge bolezni dobile tako moč nad njegovim duhom, da je snovna narava sivih zidov in stolpov in pa motnega ribnika, ki so se gledali v njem, naposled vplivala na njegovo duhovno naravo.

The first evident change is the loss of the appositions. The translator did preserve the general contents of the original text; however, since the formal structure of the original sentence has

been changed, that makes the target text function slightly differently from the original. While the narrator uses exactly the appositions and the *staccato* to make the original text function more dramatically on the macrostructural level, this effect gets weakened in the translation. The changes in the syntactic relations between the individual nominal phrases are particularly noticeable. While the narrator uses the appositions in the original to keep each of the nominal phrases at the same syntactic level, not hierarchising them, that changes in the translation. The second and the third nominal phrase ("an influence which some peculiarities…" and "an effect which the physique…"), which are in apposition in the original, i.e. syntactically at the same level, suddenly find themselves in a causal-consecutive relation, in which the narrator explains directly that some peculiarities in the mere form and substance of his family mansion obtained such power over his spirit, <u>that</u> the *physique* of the gray walls changed the *morale* of his spirit ("nekatere posebnosti v obliki in gradivu … dobile tako moč nad njegovim duhom, da je snovna narava sivih zidov in stolpov … naposled vplivala na njegovo duhovno naravo"). This represents a considerable translation shift. In the original text the narrator is not convinced about the correctness of his speculations about the reasons for Roderick's irrational fears. This is also why he makes no additional comment on their (inter)relationships. Since this is exactly what the "same" narrator does in the translation, a translation shift has occurred with regard to his perception of the situation, because the translation suggests the narrator is capable of rationally explaining the background and interrelationship of the unusual events. Thus these microstructural shifts not only change the translation formally, but also modify its macrostructural meaning potential by mediating for the reader a slightly different perception of the situation by the narrator.

The introductory part of the narrative includes yet another similar example. This time, the narrator is describing Roderick's letter, explaining why he decided to visit him immediately (Poe 1986, 139).

> <u>A letter</u>, however, had lately reached me in a distant part of the country – <u>a letter from him</u> – which, in its wildly importunate nature, had admitted of no other than a personal reply.

Repetition involves the nominal phrases "a letter" and "a letter from him", since both have the same lexeme at their head. Since their referent is the same, too, the phrases form an apposition. The apposition, however, is to some extent atypical, as the phrases do not follow each other, but are divided by the predicate. This gap is related to the effect the narrative is supposed to achieve at this point. The narrator begins the sentence by developing a proposition about the letter, and he actually develops it to some extent ("a letter, however, had lately reached me in a distant part of the country"). However, the narrative is then suddenly interrupted, and the narrator once more returns to the thematic point of departure – the letter. At that point, separated from the rest of the sentence by the dashes, he then adds additional information about the letter, explaining and emphasizing at the same time that the letter had come from Roderick. The fact that he interrupts the stream of his own narration in order to add this particular piece of information shows that the narrator finds it important. The narrator's eagerness becomes easier to understand if we think that the letter itself was directly "responsible" for the narrator's departure for the House of Usher and the series of unusual incidents. A small microstructural feature thus once more plays an important role at the macrostructural level of the text.

In the translation, however, the repetitive pattern undergoes considerable change (Poe 1993, 32):

> Pred kratkim pa me je v nekem oddaljenem kraju našlo pismo, in bilo je napisano s tako čudno nezadržanostjo, da sem nanj lahko odgovoril samo osebno.

The translation shift occurs with the nominal phrase "pismo". The translator elided the second instance of the noun "letter", which in the original functions as an apposition to the first. The word letter (*"pismo"*), with the exception of pronominal structures, is mentioned only once. Consequently, punctuation changes, too, since both dashes are omitted. These microstructural shifts result in several changes on the text's macrostructural level. While the insertion in the original, which the narrator uses to add information about the letter, emphasizes the fact that the letter came from Roderick, that does not happen in the translation. Instead, the narrator's wording suggests he ascribes much less importance to the fact that the letter came from Roderick. The change in punctuation, by which the effect of an impromptu insertion disappears, also makes the sentence sound less dramatic. Consequently, the narrator in the translation, compared to his counterpart in the original text, appears to perceive the entire incident more calmly, as if he were completely reconciled to the whole experience as such.

4. Conclusion

We have examined some examples of translation shifts that occur in repetitive patterns in the Slovene translation of E. A. Poe's short story "The Fall of the House of Usher". The study focused on different types of repetition: repetitions of syntactic patterns at the sentence level and repetitions at the phrase level, in particular with regard to prepositional phrases and appositions. As the analysis of individual examples has shown, microstructural shifts in repetitive patterns oftentimes considerably alter the way the translated text functions at the macrostructural level, compared to the original text. The analysis, above all, revealed repetitive patterns at different levels to be more than a mere formal property of the original text; rather, repetitions play an important role with regard to some of the story's effects: intensity, emphasis, focalization, dramatic effect, tension, and the like. Since the translator paid insufficient attention to repetitive patterns, some of these have disappeared in the translation, which weakens some of the effects mentioned previously.

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