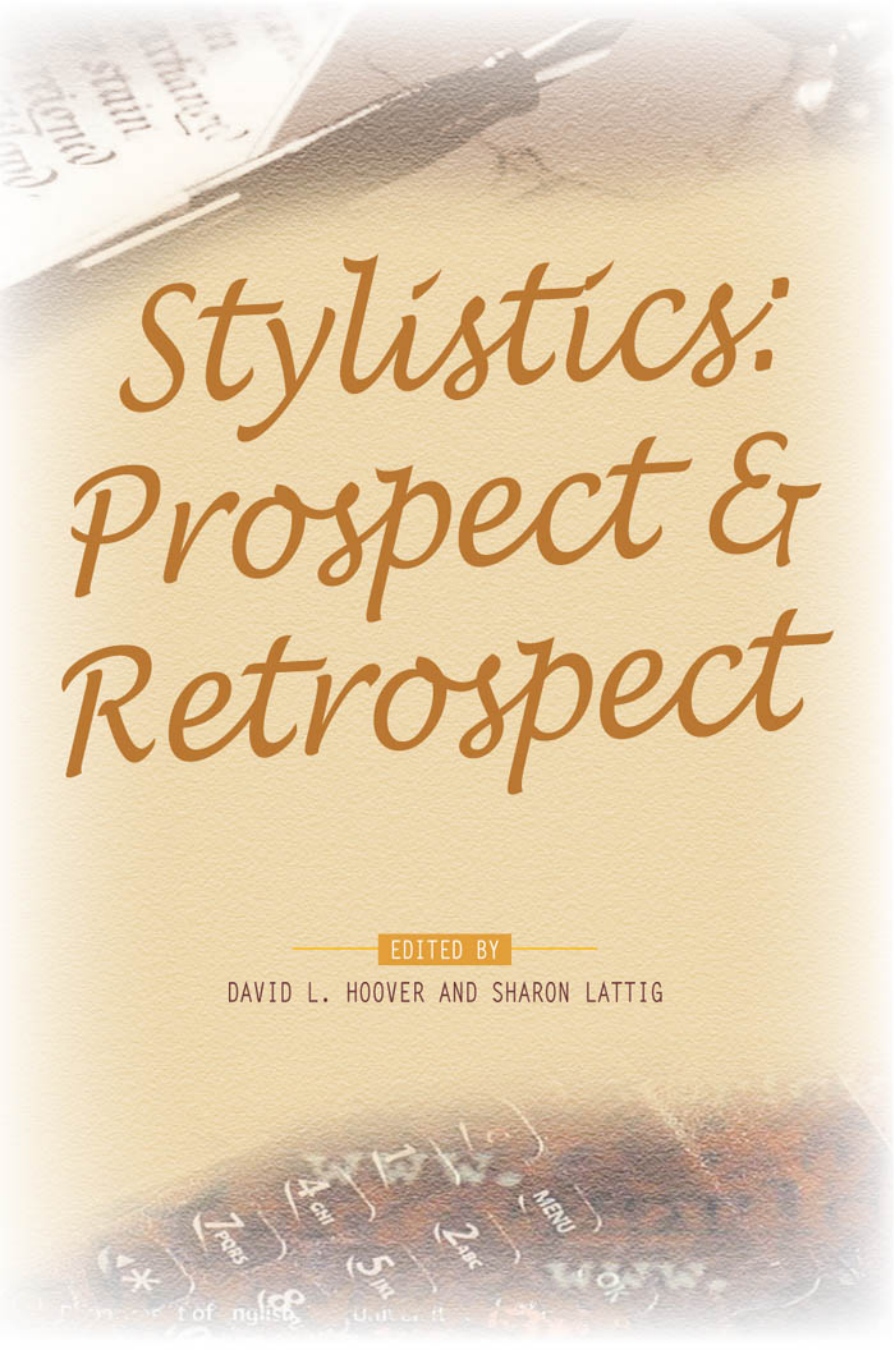

Stylistics: Prospect & Retrospect

EDITED BY

DAVID L. HOOVER AND SHARON LATTIG

Stylistics:
Prospect & Retrospect

PALA

POETICS AND LINGUISTICS ASSOCIATION

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Notes on Contributors

Anne Birien is Visiting Assistant Professor of French at James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA, USA. Her main research interests include literary manifestos, questions of authorship, and the influence of foreign languages on modern poetry. In keeping with the latter theme, she has also begun to translate some of Ezra Pound's poems into French.

birienax@jmu.edu

Ulf Cronquist is senior lecturer in the Department of Literature at Gothenburg University, Sweden. His research focus is on the relation between careful critical literary reading, grounded in semiotics, and recent findings from cognitive science and cognitive poetics, and it extends to creative writing, film analysis, and media-specific analyses (media multimodalities). Some of his forthcoming publications are 'The Socio-Psychology of "Interpretive Communities" and a Cognitive-Semiotic Model for Analysis', in Jeffreys, L. (ed.), *Stylistics and Social Cognition* and 'Donald Barthelme's Art of Storytelling: A Cognitive Semiotic Analysis of Three Short Stories', in Watson, G. (ed.), *The State of Stylistics*.

ulf.cronquist@spray.se

John Douthwaite is Professor of English Linguistics at the University of Genoa. He was formerly Professor of English at the University of Cagliari where he also directed the Language Centre. His research interests include stylistics, postcolonial studies, linguistics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and language acquisition and teaching. He is the author of *Towards a Linguistic Theory of Foregrounding*, and many book chapters, most recently, 'Coetzee's Disgrace: A Linguistic Analysis of the Opening Chapter', in Davis, G., P. Marsden, B. Ledente and M. Delrez (eds) *Towards a Transcultural Future: Literature and Society in a 'Post'-Colonial World*, and 'Ideology, Language and Gender Identity in a Detective Story' in Fairclough, N., G. Cortese and P. Ardizzone (eds), *Discourse and Contemporary Social Change*.

j.douthw@virgilio.it

Donald C. Freeman is Emeritus Professor of English at the University of Southern California, Adjunct Professor of Linguistics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst (where he founded the Department of Linguistics in 1971), and co-director of MICA, the Myrifield Institute for Cognition and the Arts, in Heath, Massachusetts, USA. His recent work has been in cognitive metaphor.
d.freeman@hughes.net

Jèmeljan Hakemulder is Researcher in the Institute for Media and Culture Studies at Utrecht University. He specialises in the psychology of literature, focusing on the effects of reading literary texts on attitudes. He has published several books and articles on this subject, including *The Moral Laboratory: Experiments Examining The Effects Of Reading Literature On Social Perception And Moral Self-Concept*. Some of his other recent publications are 'Tracing Foregrounding in Responses to Film' in *Language and Literature*, 'Foregrounding and its Effects on Readers' Perception' in *Discourse Processes*, and *Muses and Measures: Empirical Research Methods for the Humanities*, with W. Van Peer and S. Zyngier.
hakemulder@let.uu.nl

David L. Hoover is Professor of English at New York University, and Vice President of the Association for Computers and the Humanities. His main interests are in stylistics, humanities computing, and authorship attribution. He is the author of *Language and Style in* The Inheritors, as well as many recent articles on corpus stylistics, computational stylistics, authorship attribution, and text alteration.
david.hoover@nyu.edu

Yuchau E. Hsiao is Professor of Linguistics at the National Chengchi University (NCCU), Taipei, Taiwan. He has written books on prosodic phonology and tone sandhi, and continues to work on the interface between syntax and phonology. Some of his recent publications are 'The Metrical Structure of Changhua Folk Verse' in *Concentric: Studies in Linguistics* and 'The Role of Stress in Mandarin Finger Rhymes' in *Proceedings of the 18th North America Conference on Chinese Linguistics*.
ychsiao@nccu.edu.tw

Sharon Lattig is Assistant Professor of American Literature at New Jersey City University. Her work on a theory of lyric poetry and the

brain, which was awarded the international Longman Prize for 2003, has been published in Freeman, D., and I. Bas (eds) *Challenging the Boundaries; in* a recent issue of *Intertexts* entitled 'Literature and Science: The Next Generation', and in Lambrou, M., and P. Stockwell (eds) *Contemporary Stylistics*, to which she contributed the chapter 'Perception and the Lyric'.

sharonlattig@hotmail.com

Henrik Schärfe is Associate Professor in the Department of Communication at Aalborg University, Denmark. Coming from a background in Human Centered Informatics, he seeks to combine formal methods and techniques with more 'soft' areas of human knowing and understanding. In particular he is interested in narrative as a fundamental mode of understanding and communicating, and how aspects of narrative can be formalised. He has recently published 'Grand Principles of Narratology', in Freeman, D., and I. Bas (eds) *Challenging the Boundaries*. He has edited (with Pascal Hitzler) the forthcoming *Conceptual Structures in Practice* and the section on narrative theory in the forthcoming *Danish Encyclopedia of Media and Communication Theory*, Kolstrup, S., and K. Schrøder (eds).

scharfe@hum.aau.dk

Mick Short is Professor of English Language and Literature at Lancaster University, UK. His main interests are in the linguistic stylistic analysis of literary texts and in stylistics pedagogy. His recent books include *Exploring the Language of Poems, Plays and Prose* and, with E. Semino, *Corpus Stylistics: Speech, Writing and Thought Presentation in a Corpus of English Writing*. He is currently working on a book on the stylistic analysis of drama and film. He was founding editor of *Language and Literature*, the international journal of PALA (which he also founded). In 2000, he was awarded a National Teaching Fellowship by the Higher Education Funding Council for England. He used his prize in a project which produced an introductory web-based Stylistics course that is now available free to all at http://www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/projects/stylistics/start.htm.

m.short@lancaster.ac.uk

Violeta Sotirova is a Lecturer in Stylistics at the University of Nottingham. Her Ph. D. thesis was on dialogicity in narrative point of view. Some of her recent publications are 'Connectives in Free Indirect Style: Continuity or Shift?' in *Language and Literature*, 'Reader Responses to Narrative Point Of View' in *Poetics*, and 'Charting Stylistic Change: D. H. Lawrence's

Handling of Point of View' in *English Studies*. She is currently working on a book about the presentation of consciousness in modernist fiction.

violeta.sotirova@nottingham.ac.uk

Robin J. Sowards is Assistant Professor of English at Hobart & William Smith Colleges. He is currently at work on two book projects provisionally titled 'Chomsky and Literary Theory' and 'The Politics of Magnitude: Quantity and Quality in the Syntax of Victorian Poetry'. His most recent essay, 'Why Everyone Should Study Linguistics', will appear in the next issue of the *Minnesota Review*.

sowards@hws.edu

Willie van Peer is Professor of Literary Studies and Intercultural Hermeneutics at the University of Munich, former President of both IGEL (International Association for the Empirical Study of Literature) and PALA, and a Fellow of Clare Hall, Cambridge University. He is the author of several books and many articles on poetics and the epistemological foundations of literary studies, including *Stylistics and Psychology: Investigations of Foregrounding*. He edited *The Taming of the Text: Explorations in Language, Literature and Culture*; *New Perspectives on Narrative Perspective*, with S. Chatman; and *Thematics: Interdisciplinary Studies*, with M. Louwerse. He has just published *Muses and Measures: Empirical Research Methods for the Humanities*, with J. Hakemulder and S. Zyngier.

w_vp@yahoo.com

Sonia Zyngier is Associate Professor at the Postgraduate Programme of Applied Linguistics at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, where she has acted as Director of Cultural Affairs and Continuing Education. Together with W. van Peer and J. Hakemulder, she published *Muses and Measures: Empirical Research Methods for the Humanities* and set up the REDES Project, an international and multicultural programme aiming at training young researchers. She has also co-edited *Acting and Connecting: Cultural Approaches to Language and Literature* and *Literature and Stylistics for Language Learners*. Having held the post of Secretary of PALA for five years, she is now co-editor of the IGEL Newsletter and of the Language and Literature series published by John Benjamins. Her research interests include discourse analysis and pedagogical stylistics.

sonia.zyngier@gmail.com

Preface

Stylistics: Prospect and Retrospect is the third volume in the *PALA Papers* series. The essays included here continue the tradition of the first two volumes in their broad range of approaches to the field of stylistics. They range from an empirical investigation of foregrounding, to a formal analysis of the structure of fairy tales, to a cognitive analysis of conceptual blending, to a study of the changes in free indirect style from the 19th to the 20th century, to an analysis of the speech act of apology in film. They also continue the PALA tradition of internationalism, examining the literary responses of Brazilian, Dutch, Egyptian, German, Tunisian, and Ukrainian students, the place of 'translation' and foreignness in Pound and Mallarmé, the meter of Taiwanese nursery rhymes, the structure of traditional Russian folktales and contemporary fairy tales told by Danish pre-school children, and speech and thought presentation in English translations of contemporary Italian detective fiction. The contributors themselves represent nine countries in North and South America, Europe, and Asia.

Like all collections of essays, this volume has been a collaborative effort. I am grateful first to the contributors for submitting such stimulating and insightful scholarly work. I thank them also for their patience, for their willingness to revise, and for their timely and helpful responses to what must sometimes have seemed like an endless series of queries and suggestions. I am grateful as well to my local editorial board, whose names are listed in the Acknowledgments, for their care in evaluating the proposals from among which these essays were chosen. I am sure that the contributors will join me in thanking them for their challenging and helpful suggestions. My co-editor, Sharon Lattig, deserves special thanks for her diligent and painstaking work over the past three years

Finally, I am grateful to Donald C. Freeman, the Editor-in-Chief of the *PALA Papers* series, without whose meticulous and tireless work the first three volumes would never have been produced. PALA has

been fortunate to have had his wisdom, guidance, and good sense during the establishment of this series. He has been extraordinarily generous with his time in the preparation of this volume, and the results of his conscientious care, sound advice, and good sense are present on every page. Any remaining errors or inadequacies are mine alone.

David L. Hoover
New York University

Brooklyn, New York, USA
August 2007

Introduction

This volume comprises essays selected and edited from among the presentations given at the 24th annual international conference of the Poetics and Linguistics Association in New York in 2004. All are related in some way to the conference theme, 'Prospect and Retrospect'. Some look backward toward approaches or specific works that helped to establish the field. Others look forward by examining recent innovations that seem likely to alter the ways in which style is studied in the years to come. Some, Janus-like, do both.

The volume is divided into three parts, each containing three essays that present related approaches to stylistic issues. The essays in Part I, 'Foregrounding, Estrangement, and Pattern', deal with textual characteristics and features that mark a text as striking or special in some way. It has long been known that foregrounding and pattern are present in many kinds of texts, and that it is dangerous to posit any direct or invariant relationship between textual features and interpretation. Yet the significance of deviations from 'ordinary' language, of motivated patterns, of unusual combinations, presences, and absences, remains crucial to the establishment, maintenance, and variation of the styles of texts.

In 'Foregrounding: Past, Present, Future', Willie van Peer, Sonia Zyngier, and Jèmeljan Hakemulder trace the idea of 'foregrounding' or 'defamiliarisation' from Aristotle through the Russian formalists and structuralism and into the mainstream of modern stylistics. They argue that, as central and important as the concept is, it has been limited by being approached only through the analysis of texts, with the reader left out of the equation. The authors take seriously the functional value of foregrounding and argue persuasively for a distinction between text features, the processing of those features, and their effects on the reader. They insist that any theory of foregrounding must be based on empirical and statistically valid evidence: the theory must be open to refutation. The heart of the essay reports an experiment involving a single localised internal deviation in

a text composed specifically for the purpose of the experiment. This rather restricted experiment (broadened somewhat by the inclusion of a large group of subjects from several different cultures) shows considerable cross-cultural agreement that the foregrounded line is more 'beautiful'. At the same time, it shows considerable variation in the way readers from different cultures react to the individual lines. In spite of the simplicity of the experiment upon which it is based, this study has important implications for a theory of foregrounding, and for empirical studies of literature in general.

Anne Birien approaches defamiliarisation from a very different perspective in 'Modernist Poetics of Estrangement: Ezra Pound's Answer to Stéphane Mallarmé'. She argues that the two poets, both known as reinventers of poetic language, work in very different ways. From his study of philology, Latin verse, and the poetry of Poe, Mallarmé learns to focus on sounds, patterns, and repetitions. His movement toward a purity of language and the removal of all signs of exteriority ends in the creation of an internal foreignness within each poem, a foreignness 'not imported from any existing foreign language, but unfolded from within'. (28) Pound expresses his inventiveness in an utterly different way, insisting on the superiority of being multilingual for the poet-in-training. For Pound, the foreign can only be comprehended in its original form, so that the translator is the only hope for the monolingual reader. Yet his texts do more than translate – they also integrate. Rather than defamiliarising poetic language by rendering it unusually pure, Pound makes it polyglot, often juxtaposing several languages in the space of a few lines.

Although Robin J. Sowards only briefly mentions estrangement in 'Local Interpretation and the Syntax of Keats's "To Autumn"', his discussion of syntax and pattern sheds light on some closely related issues. He argues that stylistic analysis often overstates the importance of pattern in literary texts, and too readily equates pattern and form. While pattern may be more or less important in a text, syntactic structure – form without any necessary element of pattern – cannot easily be ignored because of its close relationship to semantics. Building on earlier work by Donald C. Freeman on three different types of verbs in the three stanzas of Keats's 'To Autumn', Sowards argues that the syntactic and semantic characteristics of the three types of verbs are crucial to an interpretation of the poem. The constraints

on transitivity for each of the verb types, and the kinds of arguments that each requires or allows are built into the structure of the language and are obviously relevant to the way the verbs are processed by a reader. When Keats pushes against or even violates these constraints, Sowards argues, he produces 'synthetic constructions', seemingly ungrammatical combinations of transitivity and roles that share characteristics normally found in different types of verbs. The analysis of such local effects and formal structures is more difficult than searching for patterns, but it also results in richer and more nuanced readings.

The essays in Part II, 'Formal Analysis and the Analysis of Form', are somewhat more varied, but all three focus on issues of form, whether narrative, metrical, or cognitive/conceptual. All three also employ formal analysis of some kind as an aid to understanding both the forms and their meanings. New formal methods always put pressure on the reader's understanding, and are always vulnerable to the challenge, 'So what?' The only answer to this challenge is a demonstration that the formalism adds depth to our understanding, helps to uncover knowledge that would otherwise have remained hidden, or points toward fruitful new avenues of investigation. We think readers will agree that these essays meet this challenge.

In 'Story Elements as Sets', Henrik Schärfe applies the methods of Formal Concept Analysis to Propp's seminal early work on folktales. He shows that treating story elements as members of sets clarifies the structure of folktales and the relationships between the story elements and between the tales themselves. Some story elements are prerequisites for others, and some combinations never occur. Further, although some tales are subsumed by other tales, others, which might therefore be considered prototypical, are not. Presenting the informational graphically in a lattice clarifies these relationships and suggests further avenues of investigation. Schärfe broadens the scope of his analysis and brings it forward to the present by applying it to a fairy tale created by Danish pre-school children. This tale shares many of the characteristics of the classical folktales, but also contains a unique combination of functions. Finally, Schärfe shows how the formalism allows for easy queries about the relationships among tales, such as which tales share which functions, which share only a single function or a specific combination of them. It also allows the analyst

to investigate the absence of specific functions and whether that absence is related to the presence of common elements. Although most of these relationships could be found by an exhaustive manual examination of the tales, the ease and speed of the queries allows the analyst to test many different hypotheses, even those that might seem too unlikely to be worth the effort otherwise. This kind of formal analysis seems very promising as an investigative tool.

Yuchau Hsiao's 'The Metrical Structure of Taiwanese Nursery Rhymes: A Corpus Study' examines the metrical structure of Taiwanese nursery rhymes. Basing his analysis on a corpus of more than 3000 lines of verse, Hsiao first divides the lines of his corpus into demibeats that mirror the clapping that traditionally accompanies them and then counts the demibeats, syllables, and word categories in each line. To this information he adds syntactic bracketing in order to investigate the relationship between syntax and meter. Hsiao shows that Taiwanese nursery rhymes have a predominantly trochaic rhythm, and that lines that end in a downbeat are strongly preferred. In addition, syllables sometimes share a demibeat (resulting in a masculine rather than a feminine rhythm). He also examines how beat-sharing is affected by syntactic structure. Finally, by reframing his analysis in terms of Optimality Theory, which posits a grammar consisting of universal constraints that are language-specifically ranked, Hsiao clarifies the relationships among the various metrical constraints on demibeats, syllables, stress, and syntactic structure.

Ulf Cronquist uses formal analysis as an integral part of his argument for a better integration of context into cognitive approaches to literature in his 'Embodiment and the Irreducible Sign: Towards a Theoretical Anthropo-Semiotic Grounding for Literary Textual Analysis'. Cronquist's cognitive-semiotic model for literary analysis addresses three kinds of embodiment: primary embodiment (the relation between the body and mental life), secondary embodiment (the relation between the self and the other), and tertiary embodiment (the relation between the self, the other, and cultural artefacts). Taking as his texts a trilogy of novels by John Hawkes, he shows how conceptual blending theory can be modified to address more adequately the socially constructed symbolic realm, a realm that he argues cannot be explained sufficiently in any model that relies only on neural or general cognitive processes. He ends with a plea for a

cognitive poetics that will proceed 'not by reducing textual analysis to non-contextual mechanistics, but by acknowledging our natural species-unique unbounded cognitive-semiotic possibilities.' (123)

The essays in Part III, 'Speech and Thought Presentation', all deal with the various ways that speech and thought are presented in literary texts. The presentation of speech and thought in a literary text is obviously central to the meaning, style, and aesthetic effect of the text, and the essays in this section acknowledge that centrality by the care and subtlety of their analyses. These three essays help to provide a clearer picture of how the modes of presentation have developed over time, how they can contribute to the definition and differentiation of genres, and how the presentation of a single speech act can be used thematically and as a method of characterisation.

In 'Historical Transformations of Free Indirect Style', Violeta Sotirova argues for an historicised view of free indirect style. Although it has long been recognised that significant differences exist in the way that free indirect style is presented in different texts and by different authors, critics have tended to see these primarily as synchronic variations. Sotirova's careful examination of passages from George Eliot, D. H. Lawrence, and Virginia Woolf, however, suggests that it may be fruitful to examine the linguistic makeup of free indirect style diachronically. She is careful to show that the quick perspectival shifts between characters that are so marked in writers like Woolf and Lawrence have precedents in Eliot. Yet, she argues, Eliot tends to keep the consciousnesses of her characters discrete and to connect them through the intervention of the narrator's voice. Woolf and Lawrence, in contrast, present the consciousnesses of their characters in more complex dialogical patterns that more closely resemble conversation. More study of a wider range of authors will be required to determine whether the differences in technique between Eliot and her successors is a general historical one, but Sotirova's suggestion that 'the evocation of subjectivity in narrative changes linguistically along with changes in our ideas about subjectivity' is a promising hypothesis.

John Douthwaite's 'Using Speech and Thought Presentation to Validate Hypotheses Regarding the Nature of the Crime Novels of Andrea Camilleri' also addresses variation in speech and thought presentation. Douthwaite's primary interest, however, is in genre,

specifically in two subgenres of the detective story: the classic lowbrow whodunit, represented by the Sherlock Holmes stories, and the more complex highbrow detective story, represented by Camilleri's Montalbano novels. Applying (and thereby also testing) a recently introduced model of speech and thought presentation (Semino & Short 2004), he shows that the lowbrow detective story tends to use only a small range of types of speech and thought presentation, restricted largely to external modes that deny the reader access to the detective's consciousness. This restricted range of modes is in keeping with the simple and somewhat stereotypical nature of the classic detective story, in which the focus is on an extraordinary figure who solves the apparently unsolvable crime without ever becoming a fully rounded character. Though the same modes function similarly in Camilleri's Montalbano novels, Camilleri also employs a wide range of other modes, including those that give intimate access to the detective's mind. The complex mix of modes of speech and thought presentation turn Montalbano into a fully human character and simultaneously identify Camilleri's novels as highbrow social detective fiction.

In 'How to Make a Drama out of a Speech Act: The Speech Act of Apology in the Film *A Fish Called Wanda*', Mick Short explores the structure, expression, and literary function of the many acts of apology in this very funny film. He shows that all of the apologies are defective in some way, either in their form or in the conditions under which they take place. The variations in the apologies also contribute to the establishment and maintenance of characterisation, and simultaneously to the humour of the film. For example, when Archie, the polite English lawyer, gives an extended, legalistic apology to Otto, a violent American criminal, for calling him stupid, the apology is multiply defective. Though Archie was *about to* call Otto stupid, he has not actually done so. The form of the apology might have been appropriate in a courtroom, but it is ludicrous as an apology for name-calling. To add to the humour, the film withholds until the end of the scene the fact that Otto is dangling Archie by his ankles from a high window, conditions under which the apology cannot be considered felicitous. Short shows that the apologies are so frequent and so consistently defective that the apology becomes a significant thematic element in the film.

The range and variety of the essays presented here testify to the vitality of the study of stylistics and to the stimulating and envigorating environment that PALA has provided its practitioners over its first quarter century. By looking backward toward classic and foundational approaches and texts and forward toward new approaches, these essays reconnect us to our past and assure that the hard-earned lessons of our predecessors will enrich our future work.

PART I

FOREGROUNDING, ESTRANGEMENT, AND PATTERN

Foregrounding: Past, Present, Future

Willie van Peer
Sonia Zyngier
Jèmeljan Hakemulder

Abstract

This essay presents an overview of the history of foregrounding theory coupled to a critical analysis of how progress has been made through systematic conceptual development, textual analysis, and empirical research. In the course of this retrospective, recommendations are made for prospective evolution. It is argued that there is a need for more independent testing of theories, statistical qualifications, and replications of earlier studies. As an example of how to deploy these recommendations, the second part of the essay singles out two areas where the theory of foregrounding needs to be reconsidered. It is first argued that so far only general effects of foregrounding have been investigated, and that we need more information on the effects of individual foregrounding devices. Secondly, it is argued that the limitation of empirical research on foregrounding to English-speaking countries should be superseded and that we should engage in more intercultural research. We then report on a reading experiment in which the effect of internal deviation was investigated in six different cultural contexts with a total of 275 participants. The results show that there is an overall enhancement of the sense of beauty as a consequence of internal deviation, that this effect occurs in all cultures (except for The Netherlands), and that simultaneously cultures also show significant differences in their reactions to the text, including the internal deviation. Since this is the first time that the theory of foregrounding is corroborated interculturally, we believe the results clearly indicate the theory's future prospects.

Key words: foregrounding; internal deviation; empirical research; statistics; intercultural studies; reader response.

There is no excellent beauty that hath not some strangeness in the proportion.
(Bacon 1597: 189)

1. Past simple

The present essay is an exercise in time management, not in the sense in which this word is used nowadays, but in the sense of looking over our shoulder from the present into the past and developing, from there, a perspective onto the future. We believe that such an exercise is needed from time to time within an academic discipline, in order to gain depth of focus into what we are presently doing and improve our knowledge and methods from there onwards. We take the theory of foregrounding as an exemplary theory that allows for and fosters such an enterprise. Let us therefore first explore the theory in some greater detail.

It may be somewhat risky to presuppose, to a circle of people familiar with stylistic analysis and theory, that the theory of foregrounding needs introduction. For practical purposes, however, and to prevent some readers from missing out on what the present research is all about, let us briefly outline what foregrounding involves; for a more detailed overview of the theory, see van Peer & Hakemulder (2006). In what follows, the emphasis will be more on the historical development of the theory and its potential for the future.

Its origins can be found in Aristotle's *Poetics*, where in Chapter 22 the philosopher states that the diction of the literary work must be *distinguished*, and that this effect is arrived at through the use of unfamiliar terms, metaphors, strange words, or lengthened forms. While remembrance of this insight lingered on for a long time in diluted and scattered forms in the West, and received some renewed attention from the Renaissance onwards, it was only in the 20th century that the notion was developed in a systematic way. From a historical point of view, it is a humbling experience to realise that it may take some 2,500 years for an idea to mature. It is perhaps also surprising to observe *where* this systematic development of the theory took place: in St. Petersburg, at the very fringe of European culture, and on the eve of the Russian Revolution, in the years 1916-17. The OPOYAZ group[1] of scholars like Viktor Shklovsky, Osip Brik, Boris Eixenbaum, Boris Tomashevsky, Yurij Tynjanov and others rediscovered the notion that one finds in an embryonic form in Aristotle.[2] In the work of Shklovsky, the idea first finds its most

systematic treatment. One fundamental hypothesis shared by all Russian Formalists,[3] as they were later called, is the notion that there is a special literary variety of the language, distinguishing it from everyday and scientific uses. Especially in Shklovsky (1917), the notions of *literaturnost* usually translated as *literariness* in English, and *priëm*, mostly translated as *literary device*, or *technique*, and *ostranenie* – 'making strange' – often rendered in English as *de-automatisation* or *defamiliarisation*, gained currency. In a by now famous quotation, Shklovsky (1917: 12) outlines his theoretical insight:

> And art exists that one may recover the sensation of life, it exists to make one feel things, to make the stone stony. The purpose of art is to impart the sensation of things as they are perceived and not as they are known. The technique of art is to make objects "unfamiliar," to make forms difficult, to increase the difficulty and length of perception because the process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged.

Here Shklovsky emphasises the function of novelty in art, as an anthropological solution to habituation and routines, which are necessary for our survival, but at the same time kill our sensibility: art ensures that this sensibility in the act of perception is restored.

At the same time Roman Jakobson was labouring in Moscow at another aspect of the theory of foregrounding. While Shklovsky generated a model based on deviation, Jakobson emphasised the role of parallelism in aesthetic experience, which he (as the sole spiritual survivor of Russian Formalism) later introduced in the West in his famous formulation that students of our generation knew by heart: 'The poetic function projects the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection into the axis of combination'. (1960: 358) According to Jakobson, the literary variety of a language is predominantly characterised by instances of parallelism, a higher than expected repetition of linguistic elements and/or features. A few years later, the first English translations of texts by the Russian Formalists appeared (Lemon & Reis 1965),[4] soon generating a keen interest in the ideas brought forward by the Formalists and further enriched by their later development in Prague Structuralism.[5]

In the former Soviet Union, the notion of foregrounding could not, however, be developed into a full-fledged theory, nipped in the bud as it was by the Bolsheviks, as is well attested in Shklovsky's public

renunciation of his ideas written under the influence of the Bolshevik authorities, 'A Monument to Scientific Error' (1930). In the West, the approaches of Shklovsky and Jakobson stood next to each other for a while, until British stylisticians, especially Leech (1966; 1969), succeeded in uniting both strands of the theory into a meaningful whole, attesting that the conceptual clarification of the notion of foregrounding was then most advanced in British stylistics. By the mid 1970s, a keen interest in the insights and theory of foregrounding existed in virtually all major European languages (albeit not with the same terminology). By now, all people working in the field basically shared more or less the same definition that Simpson recently worded as follows:

> *Foregrounding* refers to a form of textual patterning which is motivated specifically for literary-aesthetic purposes. . . . [and] typically involves a stylistic distortion of some sort, either through an aspect of the text which deviates from a linguistic norm or, alternatively, where an aspect of the text is brought to the fore through repetition or parallelism. (2004: 50)

Such a consensus greatly facilitated both the application of the theory in textual analysis, and its further conceptual analysis, gradually leading to an ever sharper formulation of the theory's potential and limits. The theory was subsequently applied to an impressive range of literary texts from a considerable variety of cultures and languages, including some non-Western ones. At the same time, it remained fundamentally shackled in one respect: it was applied only in text-analysis, while all explanations as to its presumed effects on the reader remained purely speculative. Because of this, it did not realise its full functional potential as originally envisaged by the Formalists. Retrospectively, one can see that the situation could have remained like this forever, had not some researchers geared their attention precisely to this area of textual processing and its effects on the reader. With movements like reader reception in literary studies around, the time was ripe for a further stage in the theoretical development of foregrounding. Out of this old situation, a new awareness grew: that the speculative nature of the presumed foregrounding effects should be taken seriously. With the empirical study of its effects on readers, a new approach came into being. We leave the era of the simple past and come, with the present perfect, somewhat closer to our current situation.

2. Present Perfect

The conceptual clarity of the theory of foregrounding as expounded above may also have played a considerable role in later developments. It certainly allowed (if not promoted) a separation of textual features from reader effects. This separation of textual features from the effects of such features on readers may seem obvious today to some of us, but it is still not self-evident, either in stylistics or in literary studies in general. As a testimony, in recent work, Bortolussi & Dixon (2003)[6] still need to spell out the distinction in order to base their psychonarratology on it. By this they mean the study of readers' mental processing of narrative devices. Had the distinction been taken over by all scholars in the field, it would not have been necessary for them to elaborate on it. This, then, is a first prospective lesson to draw from the present exercise: that stylistics should be more rigorous in distinguishing between text features, their processing by readers and their effects on them, a distinction too often neglected, for instance when stylisticians ascribe reactions to readers purely on the basis of linguistic text analyses (of all stripes and colours).

The first step in providing the theory of foregrounding with an explicit empirical foundation consisted in systematically comparing meticulous analyses of texts with readers' reactions to those same texts. Van Peer (1986) undertook this enterprise as an effort to expose the Formalists' theoretical constructs to an independent falsification procedure, which presents a real test for the theory. A real test involves a serious risk for a theory: it was indeed a real possibility that no relationship between the results of the textual analysis and the responses elicited from readers would be found. Two brief methodological remarks are in order here. First, the explicit risks to which one must expose theories in order to find justification for them are still largely underestimated by scholars in the humanities, and unfortunately stylistics does not fare much better in this respect. Most work in this area still operates according to the principle *prove by examples*. It should by now be clear that under such a regimen *any* theory can be proven right: one can always find an example that illustrates a theory, however outlandish it may be. And no theory will ever be proven wrong this way. If there is one thing that the history of science teaches us, it is that we must be prepared to expose our theoretical constructions to risk-entailing tests. Without such tests we cannot even begin to dream of making progress in our field. This,

then, is a second point in which our retrospective reflection indicates a prospective road: we need more rigorous empirical testing of stylistic insights. Another way of saying this is that there is an imbalance between the number of speculative and empirical studies in the discipline. The bulk of work in any field should consist of empirical work, with a minority of studies involving speculative enterprise. Stylistics is not very different from most other humanities subjects by reversing this balance. The price we pay for this is that we drift from fashion to fashion – without the prospect of real progress.

A second remark concerns the need for statistical analysis, a need felt even less by humanists (and most stylisticians). Yet without a statistical qualification, no assertions can be generalised. And generalisation is the ultimate aim of any investigation. We do not need research to show that something is unique, as that is known from daily experience, a fact so concisely epitomised in the Latin phrase *de singularibus non est scientia*. Here we wish to show that stylisticians can and should engage in more statistical qualifications of their claims. Whenever we seek to generalise, when we hope to find patterns, to detect tendencies, we need to find out how likely the pattern can be found independently from the piece of research just carried out. Likelihood, however, is probability. And probability is the subject of statistics. So our lesson from the past to the present perfect – and one we would wish to propose for the future as well – is that without explicit testing of theoretical insights, and without statistical qualification of our claims, we will not be in a position to draw generalisations in the field of stylistics.[7] It may be the case, of course, that we have such a vested interest in a particular theory (or fashion) that we do not wish our theory to be exposed to such testing. We would argue that *without* such testing most of our efforts will be largely wasted.

As it turned out, the comparison of text analyses with readers' reactions in van Peer (1986) showed strong resemblances, indicating the psychological validity of the theory; apparently a detailed analysis of a text's foregrounding features allows one to predict average reader reaction. The statistical analysis of these results revealed, moreover, that the results were not restricted to those readers participating in the experiment, but could be generalised beyond that sample. They were also fairly consistent across readers with different educational and

motivational backgrounds, so that these text features seem to exert a powerful influence on the reading process, largely independently of personality variables – though more research is certainly necessary in this respect.

Had the matter been left at that, we might have progressed somewhat beyond the stage of mere textual analysis. But here another ingredient advisable for the future came in: *replication*. It is essential that research results should be replicated, which is our third prospective view of the discipline. Statistical analysis may indeed take some uncertainty out of our claims, but the world is so complex that it is always worthwhile to determine whether similar results are obtained in a different setting or under different conditions. This is not only to test whether our earlier results will be corroborated – experience teaches us that usually new and often unforeseen insights emerge from such efforts. Thus, van Peer (1986) found that the attention of readers is indeed attracted by the deviations and parallelisms contained in a text, that readers find text passages containing a high concentration of such devices more important and more worthy of discussion. In replicating this investigation, Miall & Kuiken (1994), Hakemulder (2004), and Sopcak (2004) also found evidence for the affective value foregrounding passages have for readers: they are read significantly more slowly and enhance aesthetic appreciation, they influence readers' perceptions of the world, and they are evaluated more highly on a second reading. In all these studies, moreover, readers' personalities played only a marginal role, confirming van Peer's earlier findings: apparently foregrounding devices operate partly independently of reader characteristics. Sopcak's study (2004) also brings out a completely new angle in foregrounding theory, on the one hand by making use of manuscript revisions of literary texts (in this case the successive versions in the production of James Joyce's *Ulysses*), and on the other by making it a good candidate to form the theoretical foundation for textual editing.[8] Although Zwaan (1993) suggests that the effects described above are caused by expectations generally associated with the genre of literature, Miall & Kuiken (1998) were able to show that it is the textual foregrounding itself that causes the observed effects. Hence we must replicate our studies – to expose our theories to further and even more risk-entailing tests, but also because in that process we generate new insights.

The value of separating text features from reader effects, of testing our theories, of statistically analysing the data, and of replicating studies is demonstrated by Martindale (1990), who takes up Shklovsky's notion of novelty, showing its validity in an impressive number of empirical studies. The fact is that with each new study and with each replication, with each new statistical analysis carried out, we increase the descriptive and explanatory power of our theories. We know of no single literary theory for which there is such a modest but yet convincing body of empirical evidence that has been accumulated over the past decades, no single theory that has withstood so many rigorous tests. As a matter of fact, the great majority of theories in stylistics do not get tested at all.

Recently, new territories have also been explored: Miall (1995) has reviewed evidence from neuropsychology in favour of foregrounding theory, while Hoorn (2001) has provided evidence that the incongruities of novel metaphor (a type of deviational device) cause a shock of surprise in the brain, as measured by electro-encephalograms. Van Peer (2003) has pointed out the correlation between foregrounding and thematic salience in literary texts, and there has been a good deal of work (albeit non-empirical) on foregrounding in film theory, as attested by Bordwell (1985) and Eagle (1981), and recently complemented with empirical research by Hakemulder (in press).

This does not mean all problems are ruled out when we use statistics. Especially to be singled out are, as indicated by Sopcak, problems of measurement. At the semantic level of linguistic organisation, we are very much dependent on intuitions in quantifying the amount of foregrounding. Be that as it may (and we shall certainly have to become inventive in this respect), we would like to point out two more problematic areas that foregrounding still confronts: the lack of information on the contribution of individual literary devices, and the lack of intercultural information on the theory's status. It is here, from these problematic areas in the present, that we may venture into future developments.

3. Simple Future

Investigations so far have taken global measures of foregrounding devices within particular texts and examined these measures with respect to reader reactions. Little attention has been devoted to the

empirical effects of individual devices.[9] The assumption seems to have been that all devices work in the same or a similar way, but this is rather unlikely. In van Peer (1986), a regression analysis of reader reactions and textual devices revealed that semantic devices play a much stronger role than grammatical ones, which in turn create stronger effects when compared to phonological ones. It may be expected, therefore, that different effects may ensue from external and internal deviations, from statistical deviation, and from parallelism. It is even possible, in theory, that in spite of the overall effect of foregrounding observed in previous studies, some foregrounding devices may in themselves exert little or no influence. In this study, we will concentrate on the effects of just one device: internal deviation, to which we will return shortly, after having outlined a second problematic area.

It has been mentioned before that several empirical studies of foregrounding carried out so far have found no (or negligible) effects of personality characteristics upon textual response. However, one must admit that such studies have been carried out predominantly in English-speaking cultures. Hence, an obvious next step toward the future would seem to be to extend the investigation beyond the boundaries of these cultures. Therefore, another point of this essay is that if a global perspective is to be taken seriously, intercultural studies should be carried out. Indeed, the great majority of work done in stylistics and related fields takes place within the framework of national cultures. It is rare for analysts to cross the border of their own culture and to trespass on another one. This means, then, that stylistics still lives in a world where globalisation has not yet begun, at least not when it comes to concrete analytical work. Of course PALA is a global organisation, and its members come from many different backgrounds and cultures. Yet a look at the 2004 New York conference program immediately reveals the truth of the above: virtually all contributions deal with texts within one culture only, with a very heavy emphasis on texts in the English language.

There are, of course, good reasons for this state of affairs. For one thing, studies on the interface between language and literature are already complex by themselves, so that there may be good reasons to concentrate on one language only. However, that need not be the case. Even as early as 1960, in his famous ‘Closing Statement: Linguistics

and Poetics', Roman Jakobson quotes from texts in a dozen different languages: Arabic, Chinese, Czech, French, Greek, Latin, Russian, Sanskrit, Serbian, Spanish, and of course English. Indeed scholars from Slavic cultures often brought (and bring!) a rich polyglot culture to the task. Somehow or other, we seem to have lost valuable methodological tools that were available in the past. Thus we believe that a major challenge for future work in stylistics lies in the systematic study of literary texts in a multitude of languages and cultures. In one sense, this work has become easier nowadays, as we can report this work and discuss it in the English language, more than ever before a *lingua franca* for international research and its communication. Yet what we must develop over the next decade is a keener awareness of similarities and differences between the role of foregrounding (and other literary phenomena) in different languages and cultures. In this essay, we shall take one step in this direction by systematically testing the theory of foregrounding, and more particularly the device of internal deviation, in a range of different cultures.

By *internal* is meant that a deviation occurs with respect to regularity *within* the text. This happens when within a literary text a particular pattern is set up which is subsequently deviated from. An example is the following lines in Leonard Cohen's song *Tonight will be Fine*:

> I choose the rooms that I live in with care
> The windows are small and the wall must be bare
> There's only one bed and there's only one prayer
> And I listen all night for your step on the stair.

The description of the room with the enumeration of furniture in the second line makes one expect *chair* to be the final word of the third line; instead, the unexpected *prayer* deviates from this enumeration, forming an internal deviation.

In this respect, the workings of internal deviation hinge on the linchpin between retrospect and prospect. Readers constantly try to frame hypotheses about the continuation of a text on the basis of information processed so far. Thus they continually move between retrospectively collecting evidence about a text's meaning and simultaneously using that evidence to draw up prospective hypotheses of what is to come next in the text. In literary theory, this idea has been most systematically developed by Iser (1979). In speaking about

reading processes, he points out that mental processes 'automatically have a retroactive effect on what has already been read', leading to the conclusion that that 'which is remembered becomes open to new connections, and these in turn influence the expectations aroused'. (1979: 111) While this is a general strategy readers employ to process texts, it gains a particular importance in the case of internal deviation. Because the text itself sets up a particular pattern of expectation, the retrospective activities set readers to prospectively hypothesise linguistic features that will *not* be realised – because that is in the nature of internal deviation. Hence, their strategies of building prospective hypotheses on the basis of retrospective text processing will be frustrated by internal deviation. This may cause frustration, of course, but if the theory of foregrounding is correct, the feelings of frustration will be overridden by surprise, interest, further (and deeper) interpretation, emotions, and so forth. We conjecture that one further effect of internal deviation is the perception of the deviation as beautiful.

4. Future Progressive

In order to investigate the *beauty effect* of an internal deviation in different cultures, we composed a poem designed to test this hypothesis. In this poem the line 'I love you not' is first presented. Presumably it has some poetic ring to it, deviating, as it does, from the canonical form of present-day grammar, 'I don't love you'. The sentence is projected on a screen, and readers are requested to indicate, on a scale ranging from minus five to plus five, how beautiful they find the *text*. When they are ready, the second (same) line is added on the screen again, and again readers are requested to indicate how much beauty they find in the text so far. Thus, line by line the poem is revealed, with the first eight lines being identical. (The repetition elicits signs of amusement on the faces of some participants from l. 3 onwards). In this way, a pattern of expectation is built. The ninth, and final, line then breaks up this pattern by strongly deviating from it, as can be seen in the poem as a whole:

I love you not
I love you not
I love you not
I love you not
I love you not
I love you not

I love you not
I love you not
I love you notwithstanding

Thus, for each line we now have evaluations from readers indicating how beautiful they regard the text as it gradually unfolds. If the theory of foregrounding is correct, the first eight lines must be evaluated more or less the same, with presumably a gradual decrease in the evaluation as the pattern becomes so repetitive that it begins to be monotonous. The ninth line, by contrast, should be evaluated entirely differently. Note that readers do not indicate the degree of the line's *strikingness* – which would not be a spectacular observation in this case, but the degree to which they find the text *beautiful*. We did not give any instructions as to what we meant by the word, but trusted that its everyday meaning would be transparent enough. Note that any individual variation in the semantics of *beautiful* may certainly be expected to exist across individuals and cultures and to exert an influence during the experiment. However, any such individual variation will work against our hypothesis, as it will create *noise*, by making people react differently. If, in spite of such looseness of definition, we find strong agreement among participants and cultures, we will have hit upon an interesting effect.

The design as described above leads us to formulate the following hypotheses. First of all, it is hypothesised that there will be a remarkable difference between the ratings for ll. 1-8 and the ones for l. 9, in the sense that perceived beauty will be considerably higher for l. 9 (Hypothesis One). This is consistent with earlier research by Berlyne (1971), who found that increase in novelty (up to a certain degree) causes a heightened sense of beauty. Furthermore, we predict that this difference between l. 9 and the preceding lines will be found in all cultures (Hypothesis Two). Finally, because we were interested in cultural differences (as this was one of the aims of the study), we wanted to test the hypothesis that, in spite of the preceding hypotheses, considerable cultural differences in the reactions of readers belonging to different cultures would also be observed (Hypothesis Three). These then were the hypotheses tested in a reading experiment. A total of 275 readers from six different cultures participated in the experiment, the distribution of which was as follows:[10]

Brazilian	42
Dutch	66
Egyptian	43
German	69
Tunisian	20
Ukrainian	34

All participants were university students, hence sharing some basic characteristics. On the other hand, certain differences could not be avoided. For instance, students in Germany tend to be some three to four years older on average than their colleagues in the other countries. Dutch students must pay fees, not so the other ones. Brazilian students have to undergo highly competitive entrance exams to be accepted at university, but this is not the case with the other cultures. With such diversity, it is quite possible, of course, that considerable variation in word meanings exists among these groups. Does the German *Schönheit* have the same meaning and the same connotations as the English *beauty*? Again it is important to emphasize that any such variation would create *noise* and thereby make it more difficult for our hypotheses to be confirmed, thus working *against* the chances that we would find support for them.

We deliberately kept the design of the study very simple because we wished to concentrate on the issue at hand, and not dilute the discussion with other topics. Also for this reason, we did not register personal data like gender, age, etc. This decision has drawbacks, of course, but we opted for this simple design in order to be able to isolate internal deviation clearly – and to allow us to draw straightforward (albeit limited) conclusions. Let us now look at some results. Figure 1 summarises the general trend.

As can be seen, at l. 9 (as predicted by Hypothesis One) the amount of perceived beauty jumps dramatically: from a mere 3.6 (on the 11-point scale) to a 6.7. This is a considerable effect size, and one that is statistically significant according to a Wilcoxon test ($z = -11.04$, $p = .000$).[11] Average reactions to l. 9 compared to all other lines, as shown by a Friedman test, also yielded systematically highly significant results (chi-squared = 417.03, df = 8, $p = .000$). If the eight first lines are made into one new variable (which is allowed, according to a reliability analysis, showing Cronbach's alpha to be .93, with all scales scoring higher than .60), the Wilcoxon test comparing average

ratings for this new variable and l. 9 also produces a highly significant difference (z = -8.50, p = .000).

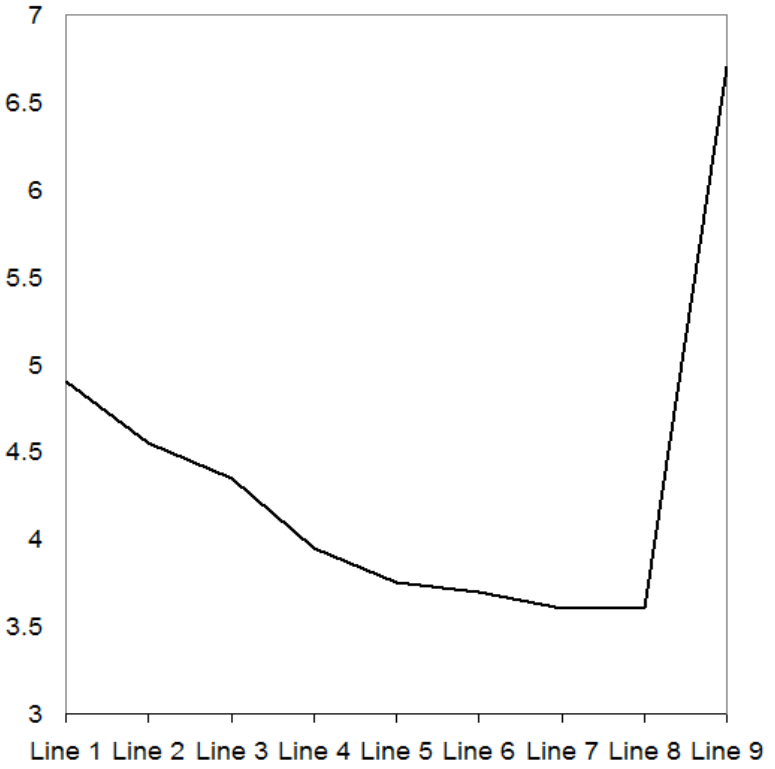

Figure 1 General average response to the nine lines

Thus, Hypothesis One is powerfully confirmed by the data: there is a highly significant (and dramatic) difference between the degree of beauty perceived in the first eight lines as compared to l. 9. We have here clear experimental evidence that internal deviation creates (presumably among other things) a powerful impression of beauty. Francis Bacon's view quoted as the motto to this essay would seem to be supported by the data of this investigation: the perceived strangeness of l. 9, in comparison to the eight identical preceding lines, leads readers to experience this line as beautiful. And the Russian Formalists were right too, according to our analysis: the

literary device of deviating from the expected generates a powerful image of beauty. While habituation (in the first eight lines) increases, perceived beauty decreases, and vice versa; the moment the habituation is broken by a verse line which is highly defamiliarised in this context, ratings for beauty shoot up. Notice that it is not mere interest in the line that is boosted, for that would have been rather predictable. But why should it be the case that the unexpected is perceived as beautiful? The theory of foregrounding answers that question: see the quote by Shklovsky above.

An important question in this respect becomes, as indicated above, whether this effect is universal, or rather culture-bound. This is what Hypothesis Two outlines: that the general pattern of response found in Fig. 1 will also show up in the individual cultures. Figure 2 shows the reactions to the first eight lines and l. 9 in the respective cultures.

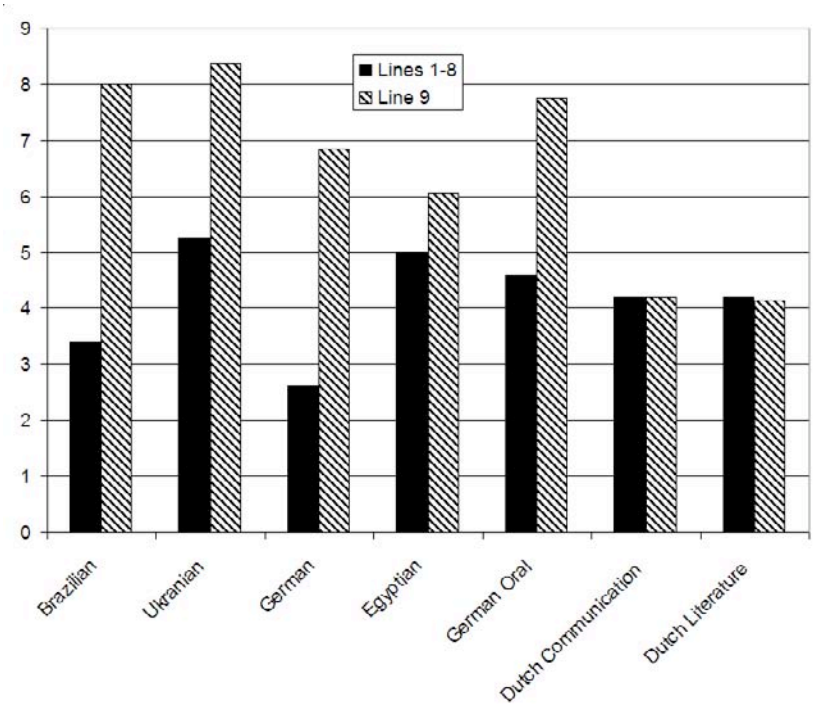

Figure 2 Cultural differences between background / foregrounded lines

As one can see, in all cultures l. 9 (patterned) scored considerably higher than the first eight lines (solid), with one exception: The Netherlands. All differences are highly significant ($p = .000$), as measured through a Wilcoxon test, except for the Egyptian group, where $p = .052$.

These results are very encouraging on the one hand, as they show a clear and significant effect of the internal deviation in five very different cultures: Brazilian, Egyptian, German, Tunisian, and Ukrainian. On the other hand, how to explain that a Western culture such as The Netherlands showed absolutely no effect whatsoever? The only plausible explanation we can come up with is that participants in this study did not fill out the scales in a careful way. The experimenter indeed observed that they were not very motivated to cooperate in the study. It is indeed very odd to observe that Dutch readers differed dramatically from Germans, where German, Brazilian and Egyptian readers responded in such similar ways. We cannot think of any reason why Dutch respondents would differ so much from their colleagues in Germany who speak a closely related language and share many elements of European culture. Hence it would be advisable to replicate the study in The Netherlands, to see whether a more cooperative group would also give answers that are so deviant from those of the other cultures. Nevertheless, in general the results clearly confirm Hypothesis Two: the internal deviation also significantly boosted perceived beauty in the individual cultures.

Our Hypothesis Three was that in spite of a relatively high degree of stable reaction to internal deviation in all cultures, there would nonetheless be cultural variation. In order to test it, a Kruskal-Wallis test was run with nationality as the factor to be scrutinised. All lines yielded highly significant differences in reactions of readers from different cultures: all p-values are .000 (including l. 9!), with the exceptions of l. 7 ($p = .003$) and l. 8 ($p = .008$). Thus, the reactions of readers belonging to different cultures to each of the nine lines, while conforming to the general pattern described in Hypotheses One and Two, simultaneously show highly significant differences. That means that indeed cultural differentiation in the perception of beauty in these lines varied considerably; the levels of probability associated with these differences, moreover, make it clear that these are characteristics of the population of humanities students in those cultures, not merely

of the sample of participants in our study. We believe this to be an important finding in itself. Beyond this, our data also illustrate the futility of (antagonistic) debates about the (im)possibility of universal aesthetic principles.[12] The results of our experiment clearly demonstrate the possibility of universality (minus the Dutch results) next to considerable cultural variability. Indeed, we find the same pattern of reaction in every culture except Dutch: l. 9 is felt to be significantly more beautiful than the eight other lines (our Hypothesis Two), indicating a potential universal effect. On the other hand, we also observe considerable variation in reactions between cultures (Hypothesis Three).

5. Back to the Future

This essay started with the announcement of a retrospective analysis with the aim of a prospective learning exercise. Developments over the past 80 years have shown a slow but remarkable progress in stylistics, which, as we remarked, is bound to three methodological principles: an increase of independent empirical tests of existing theories, the use of statistics in qualifying assertions, and the replication of research results. In Section Four, we presented the results of such an empirical investigation that was replicated in six different cultures. The results showed that internal deviation as one of the various foregrounding devices exerts a powerful influence on the perception of beauty. The exercise now provides a fourth principle for prospective work in stylistics: systematic intercultural comparison.

At this point it may be relevant to point out that the above summary may not really mirror reality. Although l. 9 certainly contains an instance of a rather powerful internal deviation, it also contains what is called a statistical deviation. The line 'I love you notwithstanding' is perhaps not altogether ungrammatical (in that case it would have been categorised as a determinate deviation), but it is still somewhat odd. Normally with *notwithstanding* there would be a complement, for example, 'I love you notwithstanding the fact that you have hurt me', thus making the verb transitive. The intransitive use in l. 9 may therefore sound odd. Thus, what we observe in respondents' reactions is actually the result of two forces: the effect of the internal plus the statistical deviation. There are two reasons why we think that in the present circumstances this may not be too much of a problem. First, we believe there are good grounds to expect the effect of the statistical

deviation to be overridden by the more powerful and perceptually more evident internal deviation. Secondly, about half of our participants read the lines in English, hence in a foreign language. We assume that non-native readers may be less aware of the subtle deviation contained in l. 9. Finally, the fact that the effect created by l. 9 was basically the same for the native and non-native speakers alike seems to indicate that an awareness of its statistical deviation did not cause much of a difference.

It is important to stress here that the results – in a dramatically unexpected way – cast a shadow over the theory of foregrounding.[13] The first eight lines of the poem are identical, thus demonstrating a high degree of parallelism, and hence of foregrounding. Yet our participants did not report any outstanding experiences for these lines (in that they generally rated them low on the scale) – at least not in terms of perceived beauty! Since the lines were heavily foregrounded (how often does one encounter the same eight utterances repeated?) respondents should have rated these lines as very beautiful. They did not. Obviously, the theory of foregrounding is deficient here, and will have to be further examined. Could it be that there is a fundamental difference between the devices of deviation and of parallelism in the theory, at least as far as their respective effects on readers are concerned? From the present results, it would seem that deviational aspects of foregrounding exert a dramatically more powerful effect compared to the effects of parallelism – as a result, we have to remind ourselves that pure repetition is not, of course, really parallelism. In future studies, it will therefore be highly interesting to contrast the effects of mere repetition with those of parallelism. Be that as it may, the theory of foregrounding should also be made more precise when strong effects are to be expected (as with internal deviation) and when not (with mere repetition).

A final remark is appropriate here. It is crucial in all experimental work that alternative explanations for the observations be ruled out. We have not been successful in this respect here. At least one alternative presents itself: the first eight lines of the poem are all negative assertions, while l. 9 is a positive one. Could it be that the switch from a negative to a positive semantics made the line so much more beautiful? Obviously, on the basis of the present results there is no way to know. But the possibility cannot be ruled out. This brings

us back to the third principle: the experiment will have to be replicated with reverse semantics!

If the experiment had yielded only the verification of a theory in the past, it would have made its way into the present. But it does not limit itself to that. By pointing out irregularities in the theory of foregrounding, such as the non-support for the first eight parallel lines, and by demonstrating cultural differences simultaneously with a quasi-universal regularity, the experiment also points to the future: these are irregularities that the theory confronts and which will have to be sorted out. We would argue that most empirical work to be carried out in stylistics is of that kind. It should be rooted in the past, through the development of theoretical insights. From these we may derive concrete hypotheses in the present, which can then be subjected to independent tests. The results of such tests will in turn lead the way to the future. This will happen not only through corroboration or rejection of the hypotheses, but even more so through emerging new insights that would not have been gained without the experiment. Staying in the present is regressing to the past. As the founder of management theory, once said: If you want to know the future, invent it!

Endnotes

[1]OPOYAZ is a Russian acronym, *Obshchestvo Izuchenija Poeticheskogo Yazyka*, that is, 'Society for Research in Poetic Language'.

[2]For the link between Aristotle and the Russian Formalists, see Hansen-Löve (1978).

[3]The term Formalists is seriously misleading, and a term of abuse given to them by their Bolshevik enemies. As will be seen in the formulation by Shklovsky in the quotation below, 'Functionalists' would be much more appropriate – although admittedly they laid great emphasis on the function of literary form.

[4]Further readings on Russian Formalism include Ehrlich (1965), Steiner (1984), Vodicka (1976). On Formalist film theory, see Bordwell (1985) and Eagle (1981).

[5]See Garvin (1964), Galan (1985), and Striedter (1989).

[6]See van Peer (2007) or http://www.ualberta.ca/igel/ for a review of this book.

[7]For an incisive critique of this situation, see Short (2001).

[8]Another highly interesting new development is the use of foregrounding theory that McIntyre (2003) proposes in educational settings where its insights may be employed to shape and improve the efficiency of the learning process.

[9]Exceptions that come to mind are Miall (2001) and Wiseman & van Peer (2002; 2003) on phonetic iconicity, and van Peer (1990) on meter; see also Fialho & Zyngier (forthcoming).

[10]We thank all participants for their willingness to spend some of their leisure time. We are especially grateful to Dr. Amany El-Shazly (Helwan University, Cairo) for having collected the Egyptian data for us.

[11]A Kolmogoroff-Smirnov test showed the data not to be normally distributed, barring the use of parametric tests. The different tests mentioned in the text all do the same thing: they calculate a p-value, which is the probability that the results obtained are caused by error. Since one does not want high error probabilities, this p-value must be as low as possible, in any case lower than 0.05 (or 5 percent). Different tests are applied in different situations; for instance, whether one compares informants from different cultures, as against when one compares the answers to different lines by the same informants. For a useful introduction to such statistical issues, see van Peer, Hakemulder & Zyngier (2007), especially chapters 8 through 11.

[12]For a highly interesting overview of potential candidates for such principles, see Dutton (2002).

[13]We owe this insight to Anton Geist, who was an Erasmus student from Copenhagen University with van Peer in 2004.

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Modernist Poetics of Estrangement: Ezra Pound's Answer to Stéphane Mallarmé

Anne Birien

Abstract

This essay argues that foreign languages, in their different degrees of foreignness, were vital to the development of the poetics of Pound and Mallarmé. It considers such questions as what poets learn about literary language from contact with foreign languages, what successive roles foreign sources, whether domesticated or not, play in promoting the poetics of the new, and how a poet's engagement with foreign literary traditions shapes the prospects of poetry. Close readings of the poems, letters, and essays of Pound and Mallarmé highlight the links between the varying uses of foreign languages and the different directions chosen by these reinventors of poetic language. A commitment to the foreign partly determines the poets' respective brands of literary vernaculars and creates an estrangement effect, a token of literariness. Two tendencies emerge: one toward a purified and domesticated poetic language essentially foreign to everyday prose, the other toward a multilingual poetic idiom that keeps visible the linguistically foreign. Indeed, the idea of poetic language as foreign is something Pound takes very literally: whereas for Mallarmé it is the vernacular itself that is made strange, for Pound, poetry is made strange by becoming polyglot.

Key words: syntax; poetics; estrangement; philology; translation; multilingualism; purism.

> Mais écrit-on jamais dans sa propre langue? L'œuvre littéraire n'est-elle pas la conquête d'une autre langue, mieux défendue contre nos entreprises, plus secrète et qu'il nous faut, mot à mot, extraire de la bouillie langagière que produisent le premier jet, le naturel, la confiance naïve faite à un instrument si familier? (Nourissier 2000: 211) [Yet, does one ever write in one's own language? Isn't a work of literature the conquest of another language, better defended against our endeavours, a more secret language, which one has to extract word after word from the linguistic mush produced by a first draft, by the force of habit, and by the naïve trust placed in such a familiar tool?] (Translations in this essay are my own.)

> Wer fremde Sprachen nicht kennt, weiβ nichts von seiner eigenen. (Goethe 1947: 236) [He who knows no foreign language, knows nothing of his own.]

For both Stéphane Mallarmé and Ezra Pound, the foreign – whether it remains visible, intrusive even, on the surface of the text, or is buried deep within the folds of the poem – soon becomes a privileged source for 'the new'. From within, a language is bound to remain opaque to its user, no matter how deceptively familiar: 'He who knows no foreign language, knows nothing of his own', Goethe had warned. Without recourse to the foreign, then, a poet wanders in a maze without map, thread, or light for guidance, searching in vain for the pathway to a new poetic tongue simultaneously capable of accuracy and surprise. There is no way out for a poet who is not also a bit of a philologist. The belief that poets test the boundaries of their own language by making a habit of crossing them is woven first through the critical and pedagogical works of Mallarmé and Pound. Both authors, I will argue, make foreign languages, not just foreign traditions, intervene early in advancing what Nourissier identifies above, in a gesture strongly reminiscent of Russian formalism, as the essence and criterion of all great works of literature, namely the 'conquest of another language'. Indeed, each poet's deployment of the foreign within his philological writings and translations helped to shape a distinct kind of poetic revolution, mirroring different attitudes toward linguistic loyalty: polyglot and prosaic for Pound, monolingual and supreme for Mallarmé.

In an often-quoted letter to Paul Verlaine, Mallarmé dismisses his own dealings with philology as 'mere chores and that is all'. (Mallarmé 1998: 788) This letter, dated 16th November 1885 and known as 'Autobiographie', sets forth the poetic legacy Mallarmé entrusts to his literary executor. It has earned a prominent place in the Mallarméan canon, along with another text written just a few months earlier, in time to appear as the 'Avant-dire' in the second and third editions of Ghil's *Traité du verbe* (see Ghil 1978). The text provides Mallarmé with an occasion to reflect on the art of verse:

> Verse, which out of several words fashions a new total word foreign to the language and incantatory, completes the isolation of speech . . . and causes you to experience the surprise of never having heard such ordinary fragment of elocution as the reminiscence of the object named glows in a moment of clairvoyance. (Mallarmé 1998: 678)

This passage survives, untouched, first in 'Divagation' (1891), second in 'Divagation première' (1893), and finally as the conclusion to the tableau of a contemporary French poetry in crisis, an essay known as

'Crise de vers' (in *La revue blanche*, 1895 and again in the volume of *Divagations* edited by the author in 1896 and published in 1897).[1] As the paragraph's resilience throughout the lengthy process of Mallarméan textual recycling and pruning indicates, the idea of renewal by estrangement is confirmed as the universal solution to the crisis of poetry. And it is in the context of his poetics that the letter to Verlaine should be read; indeed, the autobiographical account offers Mallarmé a chance to measure himself against the ideal he has described. Little, according to him, passes muster; what does not is slated for erasure.

Throughout the years of doom following his poetic crisis of 1866, Mallarmé writes steadily: serious articles on innovators in the arts, 'gossips' about Parisian life for the *Athenaeum*, and pedagogical works and translations – the latter two contributing the lion's share toward Mallarmé's complete production. In 'Autobiographie', however, he remains remarkably silent about his polymath textual creation. Sacrificed in the crucible of pure poetry are the 'bits and pieces of prose and poetry', 'the thousand known shards' or 'rags' of verse that the poet is in no hurry to gather (Mallarmé 1998: 788-9). By insisting that *Les mots anglais* (1878) and *Les dieux antiques* (1880), (studies of English vocabulary and mythology) be placed in a separate and impermeable category of their own, without so much as a point of contact with the poems and essays he considers his masterworks, Mallarmé takes a first step toward limiting textual interferences. By further insisting that the pedagogical writings no longer be mentioned, and by drawing attention away from his other manuscripts about the English language (*Thèmes anglais*, and *Beautés de l'anglais*, for instance), he sets out to forge the legend of the alchemist forever toiling on his *grand œuvre*, very much troubled by the proximity of the common and the foreign.

Against the legend, I contend that Mallarmé relies on the study of foreign languages and comparative linguistics to formulate his conception of poetic language. As early as 1860, Mallarmé, then in his last year of secondary school, divides his time between two literary projects: *Entre quatre murs*, his first volume of poetry, and *Glanes*, his own anthology of verse in three notebooks. The young Mallarmé inaugurates his anthology with his own translations of Poe's poems. From the start, then, the project is conceived as a tribune where the

poet can stage his own experiments with poetry at the contact of the foreign. As Henri Mondor records in *Mallarmé lycéen*, it is with tremendous enthusiasm that Mallarmé describes 'the immense effect' provoked in him by the 'nevermore' of the Raven,

> which one pronounces *Niveurmôrre*; it is one of the most beautiful English words by its idea, so very sad, and it is a lugubrious sound that imitates admirably the guttural croaking of the sinister visitor (1954: 324 and Mallarmé 1998: 800).

Early in his career, therefore, Mallarmé connects his fascination for sounds with the power of one poetic word to carry or tie together an entire poem – as he perceives the 'nevermore' of Poe to do. Poetry in a foreign language thus serves to unleash the power of words and train the poet's ear to catch the most suggestive combinations of sounds in his own language, even among common words.

Not surprisingly, in January of 1862, Mallarmé resolves to prepare for an academic career in English (Mallarmé 1954: 16). It is then, too, that he is inspired to brush up on his Latin, so that he can write Latin verse in his spare time. In Latin verse, the young man finds an 'exquisite charm' and an ideal companion for contemporary French poetry; both, he adds, are lying next to each other across his writing table (Mallarmé 1954: 21). Freed from the drudgery of school assignments, Mallarmé can start to enjoy the formal patterns and the combinations of sounds in foreign poems; he develops, that is, a sensitivity to a different kind of beauty. Furthermore, instead of keeping the poets of antiquity in a separate category, a category with limits that are dictated mainly by the practical division of the curriculum into hermetic scholastic disciplines, he circles back to the classical tradition of verse through travels in a modern tongue, guided not by Virgil, or by a canonical British author, but by Poe, the American *poète maudit*. The linguistic frontiers recede to facilitate textual exchanges and to create a poetic territory in which all poems that can sharpen the poet's linguistic and formal acumen will be accepted. It is to the aspiring linguist fascinated by the power of English words – words with a power of fascination that lies or originates in their foreignness – that the poet owes his essential poetic evolution. Yes, Mallarmé may have taken up English 'to read Poe better', but in the process he realises that he is developing a new poetic sensibility. Even for the struggling poet-professor, there is more to be gotten from a philological essay than a few hundred francs.

In June of the same year, a letter to his closest friend, Henri Cazalis, confirms that his poetic and linguistic projects run parallel courses. The poet mentions his projected trip to London, and then, a few lines later, he confides that

> Emmanuel may have told you of a curious sterility that the spring had set in me. After three months of impotence, I am at least rid of it, and my first sonnet is devoted to describing it, that is to say to curse it. This poetry is a rather new genre, where material effects, blood, nerves, are analyzed and mixed with moral effects, of the mind and soul. It could be called spleen in spring. (Mallarmé 1954: 30)

With this new poem, then titled 'Vere novo', we witness a crucial moment in the definition of Mallarmé's poetics: the poet is embracing a different practice of poetry. However, as the quotation below makes clear, he is not seeking a new form or a new theme – 'Vere novo' is a sonnet, and the arrival of spring and the promises it purports to bear, whether they are realised or not, is a familiar topos. Rather, what Mallarmé begins to formulate, however tentatively, is a new treatment of the material of verse founded on a new set of expectations.

> Le printemps maladif a chassé tristement
> L'hiver, saison de l'art serein, l'hiver lucide,
> Et dans mon être à qui le sang morne préside
> L'impuissance s'étire en un long bâillement.

The rhythm of each verse is sure, the words aptly chosen. In contrast to the earlier poems, 'Vere novo' displays a sense of measure and regularity imputable in part to Mallarmé's choice of simple words over their more pompous or Latinate counterparts. Instead of relying on unfamiliar or arcane words for literary effect, the student trusts that, when they are well combined with each other, simple words can release their poetic power. In addition, the enjambments, the unobtrusive punctuation, and the relative clauses contribute toward the fluid rhythm of the verse, and to the impression that the individual words are not vying for attention but furthering the common cause of the poem. Notably, the most obvious change between the first known version and the one published concerns the shift from the Latin title, 'Vere novo', to the French title, 'Renouveau' (Mallarmé 1954: 30, note). In the process, the new title joins the rest of the poem more seamlessly and no longer gestures toward a text outside the text (Hugo's 'Vere Novo'), or even toward a foreign literature.

What Mallarmé learns from the foreign is to focus on sounds, on patterns and repetitions. A few months later, in a letter to Cazalis, he expands upon the magic of German sounds:

> For several days now I have been reading Train Schedules as my one and only poem! If you knew what exquisite pleasures I experience when I look at these numbers, aligned like verses! And these divine names, which are my blue horizon: Cologne, Mayence, Wiesbaden. It is there that I wish I could fly away with my sweet Marie (Mallarmé 1954: 50-1).

The foreign is here another occasion for poetry to arise, under the most unexpected guise. It is not the foreign lands that might draw the young man away, but their names. It is there, into the land of foreign names, that Mallarmé wishes he could take his beloved.

A few of years after having expressed his need to 'invent a language' that would accommodate the new poetics he inherited from the American – 'paint not the thing but the effect it produces' (Mallarmé 1998: 663) – Mallarmé faces a fundamental crisis; while working on 'the sonnet in -yx', he confides to Eugène Lefébure his hope that the word

> 'ptyx' does not exist in any language so that [he can] have the pleasure of creating it by the magic of rhyme. (1998: 728-9)

'Ptyx' is not a quick fix for the poet running out of words that rhyme with 'onyx' and 'Styx'; it is a test of the validity of the rhyme scheme, of its force of integration and assimilation. Already, Mallarmé seems to be formulating his solution to the cursed multiplicity of tongues, relying on verse and its organic strength to atone for the limitations of languages by creating foreignness. When he expresses the same idea in 'Avant-dire' (1885), 'poetry' has replaced the first person pronoun, the poet, the magician of rhymes (Mallarmé 2003: 677-8). What is achieved as a result is not a mere generalisation of a fortuitous finding; rather, it is the crucial realisation that poetry's organic growth necessarily ends in the creation of foreignness within each individual poem. Foreignness, for Mallarmé, is not imported from any existing foreign language, but unfolded from within; it is born of the rhythms and rhymes of the poem.

Contrary to the legend, Mallarmé's fascination with English does not end with Poe, or with poetry. In the 1870s he undertakes a number of studies which testify, as does his correspondence, to his genuine interest in the philological and linguistic findings of his time. Instead of dedicating his entire sabbatical to the composition of poetry, he

resolves that he will also prepare his *licence* and his *doctorat* in English. From his friend Eugène Lefébure, then an Egyptologist on the rise, Mallarmé receives reading recommendations (Michon 1978: 29). In particular, the poet reads Bopp and Max Müller in translation and follows discussions about figurative and phonetic languages intently (Mallarmé 1954: 318). He also keeps in touch with Émile Chasles, author of the 1865 'Note on applied philology' commissioned by the Ministère de l'Instruction Publique (Mallarmé 1954: 329). And, according to Jacques Michon, it is most likely around this time that he becomes fascinated enough by the hieroglyphic quality of language to request that Truchy, the publisher of *Les mots anglais*, use the Elzevir type to underline the cryptic nature of some of the letters of the alphabet (Michon 1978: 30).

It is then that Mallarmé first shares his plans to write a 'Comparative Grammar of Indo-Germanic Languages', though he publishes no such study under this title (1954: 318). What I would like to suggest, however, is that this ambitious doctoral project survives and resurfaces under a different form in *Les mots anglais*. In effect, the latter, thought to be finished by 1875 and condemned in the autobiography as a mere text book, presents the very materials Mallarmé explored at the beginning of the decade. Furthermore, the successive purposes (scholarly, poetic, and pedagogical) of the text are still evident in its published form. The subtitle of the book, 'Petite philologie à l'usage des classes et du monde', contributes to its generic instability. The adjective 'petite' may be meant to prevent the title from sounding too forbidding, but it does not altogether erase the serious aspirations of the author. Indeed, the bibliographical notice published in the 1875 catalogue of Truchy (and bearing the unmistakable mark of Mallarmé) presents the work as an original scholarly study that cannot possibly appeal to beginners in English. *Les mots anglais* plays a crucial role in increasing Mallarmé's awareness of the words of his 'tribe' (the expression, 'mots de la tribu', is found in Mallarmé's homage to Edgar Poe). The phonetic dissection to which he submits English words is a first step toward determining the hybrid genetic makeup that distinguishes them from their French counterparts. It is within the English language that Mallarmé finds the essence or the *génie* of the French language. *Les mots anglais* is not simply a philological treatise tracing the origins

and evolution of English words; it is also often concerned with *mots français,* looking for the pure words of the French language.

In the first version of 'Le tombeau d'Edgar Poe', commissioned in 1876, Mallarmé identifies the task of the poet as follows: 'donner un sens plus pur aux mots de la tribu'. Mallarmé's own English translation, composed in July 1877, displays a slight but representative change: *un sens plus pur* 'purer meaning' has been replaced with *un sens trop pur* 'too pure a meaning'. Naturally, it is not the poet, represented by the angel, who deems the purity excessive. Rather, it is its nemesis, the hydra, standing for a community of poets and readers too attached to layers of literary dust to welcome the brewing revolution. As Mallarmé approaches, to scrape off the cumbersome scoria, the pure paradoxically turns into the estranged, foreignness into a chance for revolution. In the end, the monolingualism of the text is not threatened but reinforced by the increasing powers of the vernacular. It can be all in one language. Antoine Compagnon's description of Mallarmé's textual practice as 'an ultimate disavowal of the process of staining' applies perfectly to the poet's attitude toward foreign language words in poetry (1979: 392). A poem's success rests on the removal of all signs of exteriority.

The American poet Ezra Pound chose to favour a different answer to the question of the place of foreign languages in poetry. Interestingly, Pound's use of linguistic staining is strongly influenced by Dante's exception to his own rule of linguistic unity. Alone in the *Commedia*, the Provençal poet and master of the *trobar clus*, Arnaut Daniel, is allowed to speak in his own tongue, not in translation: he is the better craftsman of his mother tongue, a role model for Dante himself. Likewise, excellence in the vernacular constitutes sufficient ground for unadulterated inclusion in *The Cantos*, Pound's poem about history. Pound's first publications confront the foreign head-on: his very first crusade takes on the

> scholars of classic Latin, bound to the Germanic ideal of scholarship, [who] are no longer able as of old to fill themselves with the beauty of the classics. (Baechler et al. 1991: 5)

Yet, even as Pound continues to fight against offending philologists, he signs a truce with a number of them. Professors Shepard, Ibbotson, and Paris escape his wrath, and the flames of his modern inferno. All three help Pound to establish an alternative kind of philology, one that

offers a less compartmentalised model for education and is at the same time well suited to apprentice poets.

In September 1906, upon his return from Europe, Pound, then a Fellow in Romance Languages at the University of Pennsylvania, castigates academics for venerating the wrong gods: the scholars of Classic Latin are 'bowed down to the Germanic ideal of scholarship' (Baechler et al. 1991: 5). The academic institution itself is an obstacle preventing Pound from developing his conception of poetry, one that rests first and foremost on the mastery of several foreign languages. Most importantly, and more systematically and loudly than Mallarmé, he refuses to remain within the strictly linguistic boundaries that limit the scope of study as well as exchanges between authors. There is no room, in the current hermetic system, Pound remarks in 'Raphaelite Latin', for the Latin texts of this period because they do 'not strictly belong to any of the Romance literatures – French, Italian or Spanish' (Baechler et al. 1991: 5). Presented at its outset as the result of the young scholar's fruitful textual searches and digs, the aforementioned essay not only rehabilitates a few scorned poets of Late Latinity, it proposes a severe diagnosis of the systemic disease afflicting departments of Romance Languages in American universities. Indeed, the introductory biographical blurb shows Pound ready to challenge a widely accepted but narrow canon as well as the very criteria – be they historical, national, or linguistic – that help justify its permanence. The reform he gradually unfolds consists in retrieving several centuries' worth of poetic texts from stubborn oblivion without submitting them to the philological grinder. Contrary to classical philologists who, according to Pound, bury texts more deeply in the past, he vows to bring them back to life. Pound the student of foreign literatures is already defending the theses of Pound the poet. Even then he is envisioning the ideal scholar as a gatherer of texts, a metaphor he will recycle and develop in 'I Gather the Limbs of Osiris' (Baechler et al. 1991: 107-145).

'M. Antonius Flaminius and John Keats, a Kinship in Genius', Pound's manifesto for the teaching of foreign languages, appeared toward the end of Pound's shortened tenure at Wabash College (Baechler et al. 1991: 16-8). It opens with the question to which Pound wishes to subordinate his philological searches: 'What is beauty and where shall one lay hold upon it?' Scholars and poets share

a single mission: while the first focus on digging for past instances of beauty the second ought to be busy inventing new sources of beauty. Yet, Pound informs us, most scholars have betrayed 'the genius' of their poets by tracking 'such artifice as intervenes between that genius and its expression: syntax, metrics, errors in typography, etc.' (Baechler et al. 1991: 16). As a result, 'the young man reading quantitative meters in the mother of tongues, in quest of pleasure or beauty, is, to say the least, uncommon' (Baechler et al. 1991: 16). Of import here is the emphasis on Latin as the common root for all Romance literatures. Without access to this 'mother of tongues', students cannot hope to find any kinship similar to the one Pound suggests in the title. Only an apprentice philologist can appreciate the foreign layers of the palimpsest. In contrast to Mallarmé, Pound saw his pedagogical writings as worthy pursuits, integral to his *œuvre*; he was therefore not afraid that they would give him or his poetry umbrage.

At the outset of *The Spirit of Romance*, Pound identifies his motivation for bringing together various texts from various vernacular traditions:

> I have attempted to examine certain forces, elements or qualities which were potent in the medieval literature of the Latin tongues, and are I believe, still potent in our own. (1968: 9)

By redefining philology as the study of forces traceable across texts, authors, and even linguistic frontiers, Pound officially inaugurates his search for what he later calls the English national chemical. Increasingly clear in the collection is not only the superiority of texts in the original language over their translated versions, but the superiority of a multilingual poetic training over one that is, by necessity, restricted to one language. Only a multilingual reader can have access to a wide scale of accomplishments against which he can measure the attempts of his contemporaries, as well as his own. Toward this end, Pound rehabilitates Arnaut and places him in Dante's company, a company Pound suspects has been denied him 'chiefly . . . because poets have not been able to read his language, and because the scholars have not known anything about poetry'. (1968: 23) This is perhaps Pound's strongest statement in favour of poet-philologists: neither the poets nor the scholars have done Daniel's *trobar clus* justice.

To buttress his project, Pound finds support from Dante, the poet-philologist par excellence. For Dante, via Pound, the 'Langue d'Oc . . . is a more finished and sweeter language for poetry than the Langue d'Oil'. (1968: 44) For both, different languages have different poetic potentials; for both, the linguist is always at the service of the poet. Much later, in the seventh section of *The Spirit of Romance*, it is also Dante who brings about Pound's first bout of repressed anger:

> I am always filled with a sort of angry wonder that anyone professing to care for poetry can remain in ignorance of the tongue in which the poem is written. It shows a dullness, a stolidity, which is incomprehensible to any one who knows the *Commedia*. (1968: 144)

Poetry, in particular, is inextricably linked to the language in which it was imagined and shaped. In 'I Gather the Limbs of Osiris', Pound adds a different force to the curriculum: Anglo-Saxon is thus put in contact with Provençal and Italian. The poet, in the role of Isis, is piecing back together the body of the vernacular tradition whose limbs are found scattered in foreign and distant lands. In this series of articles, the young scholar gathers the scattered fragments of the dead discipline of philology. Taken separately, the fragments, like the limbs of Osiris, cannot amount to a valid humanities curriculum. Rather, it takes a synthesising force – be it a poet or a scholar, or a poet-philologist – to bring this useless body back to life against the destructive forces of the discipline. It is useless to unearth and edit texts to 'dump [them] in one museum' where a few 'learned men rejoice in the treasure' (Baechler et al. 1991: 130). By bringing a piece in contact with other ones with which it shares a common root, the philologist plays a crucial part in helping the poet to 'make it new'.

And though Pound is committed to reaching the knowledge-starved masses, he cannot always refrain from placing the bar very high. He realises that he

> has to divide the readers who want to be experts from those who do not, and divide, as it were, those who want to see the world from those who merely want to know WHAT PART OF IT THEY LIVE IN. (1987: 42)

Pound struggles to address both groups simultaneously, offering different programs to match the abilities and curiosity of his charges. Yet, he cannot help relegating the monolingual student,

> the weak-hearted reader [sitting] down in the road, remov[ing] his shoes and weep[ing] that he 'is a bad linguist' or that he or she can't possibly learn all those languages

to the back rows of the Ezuversity (1987: 42). When Ezra addresses the most able students, he resorts to direct apostrophe:

> YOU WILL NEVER KNOW either why I chose them, or why they were worth choosing, or why you approve or disapprove my choice, until you go to the TEXTS, the originals. (1987: 45)

When he turns to the students who resent having to read literature in a foreign language, we witness a pronominal switch from the empowered and affectionate 'you' to the helpless and distant 'they'. At first, however, Pound does his best to come up with alternatives for the linguistically challenged; he does not give up on the poor students right away:

> HAVE PATIENCE, I am not insisting even now on your learning a multitude of strange languages, I will even tell you, in due course, what you can do if you can read only English. (1987: 49)

Toward this goal, Pound suggests that the monolingual student start his studies with Fielding. But his own patience wears out as he insists that so much is lost in translation. He then reminds his readers,

> For *those who read only English*, I have done what I can. I have translated the TA HIO [Confucius, *The Great Learning*] so that they can learn where to start THINKING. And I have translated the Seafarer; so that they can see more or less where English poetry starts. I don't know how they can get an idea of Greek. (1987: 58)

Pound's use of 'they' is already an admission of a partial failure; it is also a confirmation of one of the main messages developed throughout his works: the models for students and poets exist not in one, but in many languages. Soon, he provides his definitive take on the subject. 'You cannot learn to write by reading English' (1987: 71). This last possibly direct call to the student emphasises just how much is at stake for Pound: in languages lies the future of poetry. Pound will not make it possible to get it all in one language.

'Every great age is an age of translation, or follows it' (Pound 1935: 35). This statement echoes throughout Pound's works. Translation, as Pound conceives of it, is already a means of exploitation of the foreign within the familiar; it does not allow a solid sheet of concrete to spread over the ruins of Babel. Rather, it functions as a palimpsest permitting the original and foreign language to surface in the English narrative. These layers create a space where the poet can refuse to choose definitively between newness and tradition. Indeed, while texts resulting from the process of translation ordinarily fulfil a promise of

monolingualism, the process itself stresses a constant commitment to foreign sources. In Pound's case, this commitment is undeniable; it manifests itself in the visible traces left by the original in the translated text. In particular, the Poundian personae that evolve from translations often bear marks of their linguistic origins. Let us look at 'Homage to Sextus Propertius' (1917):

> Persephone and Dis, Dis, have mercy upon her,
> There are enough women in hell,
> quite enough beautiful women,
> Iope, and Tyro, and Pasiphae, and the formal girls of Achaia. (1990: 218-9)

In these four lines, three different languages are conjured to appeal to the guardians of Hell for clemency: the narrative is in English; the names of the characters, victims or executioners (except for Dis), plus Achaia are borrowed from Greek; and finally, Latin makes a discreet but crucial appearance in the adjective 'formal'. The only way the latter can mean anything is if it is infused with the Latin meaning of beauty (*forma*) – the word 'beautiful' provides a clue in the previous line. 'Formal', with this reconstructed meaning of 'beautiful', is neither a Latin word, nor an English word; it is derived from one language, and is not yet part of the next: a word in translation. It looks English, it even sounds English out of context, but it isn't since it has to depend on another language for meaning. So, it seems to me that 'formal' exemplifies the zone of contact between two languages; for example, between Propertius's Latin and Pound's English (three languages, if one counts the neighbouring Greek), a zone of contact translators are most likely to occupy. Yet here Pound refuses to camouflage the encounter; he highlights the linguistic travels inherent in the process of translation. 'Formal', the hybrid word, prevents the repetition of 'beautiful', but it does much more. The foreignness of the word is responsible for the increasing sense of ceremony, of sacrificial ritual even. 'Formal' removes from the group of girls any touch of commonness; it underlines the fatality of their plight.

As *The Cantos* intimate from the very start, Pound's revolution consists in linguistic exuberance, explosion, and reconstruction. What first strikes the reader is the amount of text that parades shamelessly in all its foreignness. Translation cannot, therefore, be the exclusive means of cultural digestion. *The Cantos* keep visible the multilingual traces of their origins. Pound's understanding of poetic beauty is comparable to Bertran de Born's ideal lady, pieced together from

many different beauties. Beauty is difficult. It is not to be found in any one language any more than, according to the Provençal poet, it can be found in any one woman. Beauty is difficult. Creating beauty from fragments is the work of the poet. Pound's paradise, then, is inhabited by personae bringing with them samples of linguistic riches. Let us look at one more example, from 'Canto 27', in which four languages are involved in a continuous tale:

> Formando di disio nuova persona
> One man is dead, and another has rotted his end off
> Et quant au troisième
> Il est tombé dans le
> De sa femme, on ne le reverra
> Pas, oth fugol othbaer

This passage is most representative of Pound's undertaking. One language effortlessly leads to the next without disrupting the flow of the narrative. From Guido Cavalcanti Pound borrows the Italian line announcing the willed creation of a new character. The following sentence, in English, recounts the fate met by one and then another of the poet's creations. In the third line, French takes over for three, almost four lines, and introduces yet another persona. The shift from English to French occurs quite naturally, thanks to the enumeration: 'one man, . . . and another', 'Et quant au troisième' [as for the third]. All three men meet sad ends: 'dead', 'rotted his end off', 'tombé' [fallen] and 'on ne le reverra / Pas' [he will not be seen again]. In addition, the enjambment 'reverra / Pas' efficiently leads the eye of the reader to the following language, Old English, which provides an unexpected ending. The last creation to come out of the poet's fancy is a bird (fugol). It is born of the familiarity with different languages.

Both Mallarmé and Pound owe much of their poetic development to their involvement with philology and translation. For Mallarmé, verse is a fabricated language, and its newness depends on creating the foreign from within and giving it the reins of the poetic revolution: it reaches deep into the folds of words for unadulterated beauty. For Pound, on the other hand, words need not all be naturalised before they enter a poem; rather, the future of American poetry rests on the foreign kept untamed and visible, as one more testament of the cultural resilience of literary traditions confronted with the constant challenge of renewal. Mallarmé and Pound interpret the idea of poetic language as foreign with different degrees of literality. Whereas the

vernacular itself is made strange for the French prince of Symbolism, for the American, poetry is made strange by becoming polyglot.

Endnotes

[1]All of Mallarmé's manuscripts, juvenilia, and translations, as well as the works cited by date that do not appear in the "References," can be found in *Œuvres complètes***.**

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Local Interpretation and the Syntax of Keats's 'To Autumn'

Robin J. Sowards

Abstract

This essay proposes a substantially new critical methodology whose central strategy is the close, local analysis of the syntax of individual sentences in a poem, showing how the whole poem does its intellectual work at the level of individual syntactic details (rather than at the level of propositional or thematic content). Since, in current theory, syntax is bound up with semantic determinations, the syntactic constructions that appear in a poem bear on interpretation quite directly. If we construe form as syntax, we also evade a crippling defect of previous linguistically informed approaches, namely the equation of form with *pattern*, which leaves such approaches vulnerable to criticisms such as those of Stanley Fish.

This methodology is exemplified in detail through an examination of Keats's 'To Autumn' and an engagement with a classic essay on the distribution of verbs in that poem by Donald C. Freeman. Freeman's essay is a particularly illuminating instance both of the potential of syntactic analysis to illuminate poems and of some of the pitfalls that attend the approach. Drawing on the work of Luigi Burzio, this essay discusses the unaccusative/unergative distinction in connection with the distribution of verbs in the poem, and also identifies a unique feature of poetic syntax called a 'synthetic construction'.

Key words: syntax; pattern; Keats; unaccusativity; thematic roles.

'To Autumn', endlessly praised for its praise of plenty, fills our ken with such concretion that time is out of mind and we, like the bees, 'think warm days will never cease'. (l. 10) But the bees are deceived. To praise the poem as 'perfect' suggests not merely that it is faultless (a dubious compliment, even outside Vasari) but, as Walter Jackson Bate observes, that it has been brought to completion (1963: 581), that it is as free of superfluities as it is of irregularities. However much this may be so, the poem is not uniform, and if it will succeed in reconciling 'process and stasis' in an organic whole as Bate claims (1963: 582), it must invoke them in isolation. Bate's intuition is that the first stanza presents us with process and the second presents us

with stasis, an intuition which has been given a firmer foundation in Donald C. Freeman's analysis of the poem's verbs (1978). Since the publication of Freeman's essay, research in linguistics has provided yet more support for his main observations and has given us an opportunity to elaborate others in more detail. The risky passage is, as always, from these formal descriptions to meaning. Freeman's analysis opens the possibility of a linguistically rigorous mode of criticism, but it is also a crucial case for understanding how linguistically informed criticism has often gone astray, namely by equating *form* with *pattern* rather than with *syntax* (and, as I will show, one of the crucial features of poetic language, what I call 'synthetic constructions', cannot be construed as a question of pattern at all).

Syntactic theory, aspiring as it does to systematically formalise the constants of human language, has often been treated with suspicion by those who dread the reduction of language to a mathematical purity void of human meaning. But for some time its tendency has not been to purify syntax of any semantic perplexities, but to assimilate semantics into syntax. As Noam Chomsky has argued, much of semantics may be redundant if we understand syntax properly:

> One can speak of 'reference' or 'coreference' with some intelligibility if one postulates a domain of mental objects associated with formal entities of language by a relation with many of the properties of reference, but all of this is internal to the theory of mental representations; it is a form of syntax. (1986: 45)

As he puts it, rather bluntly, in a more recent book, 'It is possible that natural language has only syntax and pragmatics'. (2000: 132) The fact that many syntactic processes seem sensitive to the semantic properties of particular lexical items suggests that Chomsky's supposition may well be correct, if perhaps in a weaker form.

A particularly clear instance of the significance of semantic information in current syntactic theory is the prominence of the theory of thematic relations or 'θ-roles' (originating in Gruber [1965]). Every verb requires a specific number of *arguments*, typically noun phrases; for example, an intransitive verb like *sneeze* takes one argument (*John* in *John sneezed*) whereas a transitive verb like *buy* takes two arguments (a buyer and a thing bought, as well as an optional argument for the seller). The mental lexical entry for each verb must specify how many arguments the verb takes, but it must also have

some way of distinguishing the argument positions to be filled, otherwise it would fail to differentiate between *John bought the cheese* and **The cheese bought John.* (Throughout this essay, ungrammatical sentences are marked with asterisks). The distinction between *John* and *the cheese* in *John bought the cheese* is in part a semantic one (John is the entity doing the buying, and the cheese is the entity being bought), and the syntactic realisation of a verb's argument positions seems to correlate strongly with the semantic differences (e.g., the grammatical subject of an action verb like *buy* or *tickle* is almost invariably the agent of the action). *John*, then, bears the θ-role of Agent and *the cheese* bears the θ-role of Theme.[1] In cases such as these, syntax and semantics are clearly on intimate terms: a change in one effects a corresponding change in the other.

Θ-theory unveils a set of cases in which this intimacy almost goes over into identity, in which a strictly syntactic phenomenon is inexplicable without an appeal to semantic distinctions. Luigi Burzio (1986) uses θ-theory to distinguish between two classes of intransitive verbs. Being intransitive, each takes only a single argument, but the argument of one class, the *unergative* verbs, is assigned the Agent θ-role, whereas the argument of the other class, the *unaccusative* verbs, is assigned the Theme θ-role. The class of unergative verbs would include the following (examples 1-6 and 8-10 are adapted from Radford [1997]):

(1) John may *protest.*
John was *lying.*
John *complained*.
John was *fishing.*
John *whistled*.
John *sang.*

The subject of each of the verbs in (1) seems to be an Agent, and many of these verbs can be paraphrased as a verb + noun in which a Theme argument also appears:

(2) John may *make a protest.*
John was *telling a lie.*
John *made a complaint.*
John was *catching fish.*

The paraphrases in (2) suggest that each of the verbs in (1) has an implicit Theme argument, and hence that their explicit argument must be an Agent (Radford 1997: 390-1; see also Baker 1988).

The subjects of unaccusative verbs, on the other hand, do not seem intuitively to be agents of the action designated by the verb:

(3) The train *arrived.*
The sun *emerged* from the clouds.
A slight discomfort will *begin.*
A corpse-light *appeared* on the bog.

The intuition that the subjects of these verbs are Themes rather than Agents gains force if we paraphrase the sentences in (3) as noun phrases, in which case the subjects in (3) appear in a normal Theme position:

(4) The *arrival* of the train …
The *emergence* of the sun from the clouds …
The *beginning* of a slight discomfort …
The *appearance* of a corpse-light on the bog …

Just like *the city* in *The destruction of the city,* where *the city* is not the entity that initiates the action but the entity that must suffer it, the overt subjects in (3) show up as Themes in (4).

The distinction between unergative verbs (which take an Agent argument) and unaccusative verbs (which take a Theme argument), a distinction that seems primarily semantic, produces a wide array of systematic syntactic effects, as in the following sentences:

(5) An unfortunate misunderstanding *arose.*
There *arose* an unfortunate misunderstanding.
A ghostly face *appeared* at the window.
There *appeared* a ghostly face at the window.

(6) The dentist's patient *groaned.*
*There *groaned* the dentist's patient.
Major Muddle has *apologised* for firebombing civilians.
*There has *apologised* Major Muddle for firebombing civilians.

Unaccusative verbs, such as those in (5), are consistently grammatical in expletive constructions with *there,* whereas unergative verbs, such as those in (6), are consistently ungrammatical in the same constructions.

Auxiliary selection also seems to be determined by the unergative/unaccusative distinction, as in the case of Burzio's examples from Italian:

(7) Giovanni *è* arrivato.
Giovanni is arrived.
'Giovanni has arrived.'
Giovanni *ha* telefonato.
Giovanni has telephoned.

Unaccusative verbs like *arrivare* take *essere* 'to be' as their auxiliary in the past tense, whereas unergative verbs like *telefonare* take *avere* 'to have'. The same distribution appears cross-linguistically in languages like French and German, and the remnants of the distinction are to be found in Early Modern English before the past auxiliary *be* fell out of the language entirely, as in these (unaccusative) examples from Shakespeare:

(8) Mistress Page *is come* with me. (*The Merry Wives of Windsor* V.v.22)
Is the duke *gone?* / Then *is* your cause *gone* too. (*Measure for Measure* V.i.299-300)
How chance thou *art returned* so soon? (*The Comedy of Errors* I.ii.42)

All of these syntactic phenomena are inexplicable without appealing to the fundamentally semantic categories of θ-theory, and so the unergative/unaccusative distinction is one clear case in which syntax as a 'theory of mental representations' in Chomsky's sense must wholly incorporate semantics. Literary critics, obliged as they are to cross the mountainous border between form and content, description and interpretation, might reasonably hope that this distinction, employed in the analysis of such a poem as 'To Autumn', will ease their passage. This is just what Donald Freeman has done in his essay on 'To Autumn', albeit sometimes a bit approximately due to the limitations of the theory then at his disposal (his essay was published nearly a decade before Burzio's monograph).

The centrepiece of Freeman's analysis is his observation that each of the three stanzas of 'To Autumn' is almost exclusively dominated by a single verb type. The dominant type in the first stanza is the causative transitive verb. The distinguishing property of such verbs is that they have unaccusative intransitive counterparts, as in the following:

(9) The Americans *sank* the boat.
The boat *sank.*

Sally *opened* the window on the south side.
The window on the south side *opened*.
John *broke* the vase on Tuesday.
The vase *broke* on Tuesday.

Non-causative transitive verbs, on the other hand, do not have intransitive counterparts at all:

(10) John *watched* the sunset.
*The sunset *watched.*
Colonel Kilgore *smelled* the napalm.
*The napalm *smelled*. (ungrammatical as unaccusative)
Egbert *found* the Easter eggs under the chiffonier.
*The Easter eggs *found* under the chiffonier.

Just as the syntactic behaviour of unaccusative and unergative intransitive verbs is determined by their semantic properties, causative verbs cause some state of affairs to be the case (hence the name).

The first stanza of 'To Autumn' is largely made up of non-finite clauses whose main verb is a causative transitive ('to *load* and *bless* … / To *bend* … / And *fill* … / To *swell* … and *plump* ….'). As Freeman argues, this

> mak[es] the *subjects* of these natural processes – the vines (which load), the trees (which bend), the fruit (which fills with ripeness), the gourd (which swells), and the hazel shells (which plump) – into *objects* of Autumn's all-powerful agency. All of the verb phrases in the first stanza reflect the transformation of natural states … into active dynamic *processes* fundamental to the poem's structure. (1978: 87)

In the second stanza, Autumn's agency wanes:

> nearly every mention of Autumn here [is surrounded] with past participles, which are reduced passives ('soft-lifted', 'half-reaped', 'drows'd', 'twined', 'laden'). Even the transitive verbs predicated of Autumn are strangely inactive ('spares', 'keep steady', 'watchest'). (Freeman 1978: 92)

All of these 'strangely inactive' verbs are what we have just defined as non-causative transitives (those lacking unaccusative counterparts), and here they are largely verbs of sensory perception.

As Freeman points out, the third stanza marks a dramatic shift because its verbs are predominantly intransitive, but, thanks to Burzio, we can also observe that all the intransitive verbs are also unergative (their subjects are assigned the Agent θ-role and they have only an implicit Theme). Freeman claims that in the final stanza

> the personified vision fades. … [T]he poem ends in a series of short conjoined sentences all of which have intransitive verbs which focus on minute and precise detail, and which, with the dying of the light, leave us with only sound – the unaffected, utterly spontaneous and natural end of another 'diurnal course' in a wholly ordered and harmonious natural universe.

The trajectory of the whole poem, then, is on Freeman's reading 'a steady diminution of transitivity, agency, and causation: by the last lines of the poem, natural processes occur self-caused, autonomously'. (1978: 92)

This direct conversion of syntactic observations into interpretive claims seems, given the nature of the evidence, quite plausible, and the resulting reading is consistent with some of the more influential readings of the poem (those of Hartman and Bate, for example, both of whom Freeman specifically acknowledges). But one category intervenes with seeming innocence between description and interpretation here: the notion of *pattern*. The conception of linguistic pattern Freeman appeals to is derived from Paul Kiparsky's essay 'The Role of Linguistics in a Theory of Poetry'. Kiparsky defines a pattern as 'some kind of recurrence of equivalent linguistic elements' (1973: 233), but what he primarily has in mind are phenomena like meter, rhyme and alliteration (from analogy with which he derives an account of syntactic pattern). All three phenomena involve the repetition of some linguistic element or structure (a phoneme or stress contour) that is potentially *significant* only by virtue of that repetition. It is simply a formal linguistic fact that *spill* and *fill* end with the same sounds; the specifically poetic use of such accidental properties results from their repetition, and only when repeated can they bear on poetic meaning.

Syntax, however, is a rather different case. It is certainly possible to have a syntactic pattern of the sort that Kiparsky has in mind (a repetition of Adjective-Noun sequences, for example), and such a pattern may well be suggestive (hence the utility of classical rhetorical schemes). But the individual instances in a syntactic pattern are already meaningful in themselves and do not depend on repetition to accrue significance. On the contrary, the significance of the pattern will be highly dependent on the significance of the individual words and phrases that make it up.

The appeal to pattern is just what leaves linguistically informed approaches to literature vulnerable to Stanley Fish's criticism that the real relationship between form and content is undertheorised. Fish's

> thesis is that formal patterns are themselves the products of interpretation and that therefore there is no such thing as a formal pattern, at least in the sense necessary for the practice of stylistics: that is, no pattern that one can observe before interpretation is hazarded and which therefore can be used to prefer one interpretation to another. (1980: 267)

The target of this thesis is the notion of 'a formal pattern': since identification of a pattern always involves a principle of selection, and since any non-arbitrary principle of selection must contain interpretive determinations, Fish believes he is authorised to infer that there is no such thing as form – an inference which, in his mind, fells stylistics and Chomskyan linguistics in one blow. Much as Fish is inclined to make his opponents into straw men, and much as he is hampered by a lack of even rudimentary competence in the linguistics he opposes, and much as his case is wildly overstated – still, he has a point about patterns. The implications of his point are clear: no patterns of any kind can be directly converted into interpretations or can have a necessary relationship with interpretation, including statistical word counts, attempts to identify an author's style in terms of linguistic regularities, microgrammars of poems or corpora, and much else.

As usual when Fish is right about something, he is wrong about the reasons he is right, for they are invariably more metaphysical than he would wish them to be. And in the metaphysics we may find a clue about what kind of linguistically informed criticism would not be vulnerable to Fish's argument. Patterns have the structure of universals. The individual instances of the pattern (like *spill* and *fill* in my previous example) are only specimens, and in the absence of the pattern are nothing at all, blank, mere stuff. A universal term like *muffin* enables us to designate some class of objects in the world, and presumably all muffins bear properties by virtue of which they are muffins and not, say, sheep. But every particular muffin has many more properties than just those that make it a muffin, and we can only arrive at the category of *muffin* by subtracting every unique property of a given muffin, everything concrete and specific in our experience of the muffin. This subtraction of the singular is what makes universal terms useful, allowing us, for example, to make predictive judgements: armed with the category of *muffin* we will be able to spot

muffins when we see them, we will have a much better idea what a muffin is going to taste like, and so we will be better able to decide if we would prefer to have a muffin or a croissant or a leg of lamb.

The utility of universals is what drew Socrates to seek them and Plato to elevate them to the status of eternal absolutes. But in his *Poetics*, Aristotle provides an account of poetry that seems to muddle the distinction between universal and particular, claiming that poetry is 'something more philosophic and of graver import than history, since poetry rather speaks universally [*katholou*], whereas history speaks the particular [*hekaston*]'. (1451b5-7, trans. modified) Achilles may have been an historical personage, and an historical discourse about him could relate all the particular facts of his character and life; but the *Iliad* does more than present us with the mere historical fact that Achilles returned Hector's corpse to his grieving father. The *Iliad* invests this fact with universal significance, extending beyond the mere particulars of a given time and place – extending it toward some abstract idea of compassion or *caritas*, unmoored from culturally specific burial rites. But the *Iliad* is not a philosophical discourse that takes place merely at the level of universals like compassion or *caritas;* the poem is about particulars and is itself irreducibly particular. For Aristotle, then, poetry is neither merely concrete and particular nor merely abstract and universal, but is a way of thinking the universal *through* the particular. This seemingly paradoxical formulation is typical of the main strand of philosophical aesthetics, and we see similarly paradoxical formulations in subsequent works in the tradition. Kant, in his *Critique of the Power of Judgment* (1793), defines the beautiful as that 'which pleases universally without a concept' (5: 219), when conceptuality is otherwise what makes universal judgements possible, in his view. For Hegel, the beautiful artwork is the concrete realisation of the Idea, a concrete universal (1842: 13). And for Adorno in *Aesthetic Theory*, the truth-content of an artwork is a function of its enigma-character, the fact that it both demands and obstructs interpretation (1970: 120).

The insistence on particularity is always in danger of stripping art bare in order to save it, despairing of poetry's claim to truth. But to commit oneself wholly to universality (e.g., to appeal to the 'timeless themes' of literature) is to repudiate poetry as such, poetry as something different from merely instrumental language. As Cleanth Brooks

argues, poems dramatise ethical situations, and are likely to inspire us to ethical reflection by putting us in someone else's shoes, but 'poems as such indulge in no ethical *generalizations*'. (1947: 258) Poetry especially among the arts invites the liquidation of the particular because its medium is language, and language is inextricably bound up with conceptuality (and hence with the universal) in a way that granite and oil paint are not. If poetry is particular, then, it must achieve that particularity against the grain of the language it uses; and because poetry's medium is language, its full unfolding within the domain of the universal is already present in the poem's particularity.

The main consequence of this for our purposes is that no meaningful syntactic pattern is possible that is not already present *in nuce* in singular constructions. Fish is right that there is 'no pattern that one can observe before interpretation is hazarded', but the 'interpretation' in question emerges from reflection on the form of specific, individual syntactic constructions whose syntactic/semantic structure *does* exist prior to the act of conscious interpretation. The particular contains the principle of selection from which the universal derives. Form, then, is not only something quite different from pattern, but precedes pattern and is its ground. It is possible to pay no attention to patterns in a literary work, but form, in the sense of syntactic structure, cannot be ignored. Every interpretation of a poem that pays even the slightest attention to the text itself (i.e., any interpretation which meets the most minimal standards for evidence) is engaged in the analysis of form as syntax.

If, as Aristotle argues, poetry thinks universality through particularity, and if the sort of particularity peculiar to poetry dwells in its syntactic form, then the project of criticism is to seek the moments in which syntactic particulars point beyond themselves. In Keats's 'To Autumn', we should search for the ways in which the pattern Freeman brings out is determined by and transformed in particular constructions. In the first stanza, for example, Freeman points out that the main verbs of the non-finite clauses ('to load and bless', etc.) are all causative transitive verbs, and he infers from this that 'the *subjects* of these natural processes' have been turned into '*objects* of Autumn's all-powerful agency'. (1978: 87) If we turn to the main clause to which these non-finite clauses are subordinated, looking for evidence of Autumn's agency, what we find is that the main clause –

'Conspiring with him [the sun] how to load and bless' – appears to be ungrammatical. The verb *conspire* is normally followed by a naked non-finite clause, not by a wh-word like *how* as in

(11) a. *Sally and John conspired *how* to rob the bank.

The normal use of *conspire* looks like (11b):

(11) b. [The President and his cronies]$_1$ conspired [PRO$_1$ to enrich themselves].

Instead of an expressed wh-word like *how,* this lower clause begins with a phonetically null element identified in the literature as *PRO* (so named because it functions similarly to a pronoun). The rationale behind positing this null element has to do with θ-roles, according to Chomsky 1995 (see Adger 2003: 304-5 for an accessible summary). In example (11) b. the verb of the lower clause, *enrich,* must assign both Agent and Theme θ-roles; *themselves* can take the Theme, but there is no subject in the same clause to take the Agent role. *Enrich* also cannot assign the Agent role to the subject of the higher clause, *The President and his cronies,* because this already has a θ-role assigned to it by its own verb, *conspire.* Since, in accordance with the Uniform Theta Assignment Hypothesis of Baker (1988), every argument must receive one and only one θ-role, the Agent θ-role for *enrich* is assigned to a null element within its own clause, *viz.*, PRO. We understand the agents of the action of enriching to be the same as the agents of the action of conspiring, so PRO must refer to the same entity as the subject of the higher clause. This is what is called a *control construction,* and *conspire* is thus a *control verb* (because its subject controls the reference of PRO).

The construction that shows up in the poem would have been just fine with a non-control verb like *explain,* as in (11c):

(11) c. Sally explained *how* to build an obelisk.

So what we get in the poem is something we might call a *synthetic* construction, an ungrammatical combination of two different normal grammatical constructions, in this case a combination of a normal construction with a control verb like *conspire* and a normal construction with a non-control verb like *explain*. Synthetic constructions are one way the language of poetry differentiates itself from ordinary uses of language and effects the enigmatic union of familiarity and estrangement through which poetry's truth content unfolds.[2]

According to Freeman's reading, this stanza, dominated as it is by causative transitive verbs, is all about Autumn's *agency*. But the introduction of *how* into this construction prevents the null element PRO from appearing in any of the lower clauses, thus preventing it from embodying Autumn in any of those clauses (since it would have been coindexed with the subject of the higher clause, 'Season of mists') and from bearing the Agent θ-role assigned by each causative transitive verb. Autumn-as-agent is thereby excluded from participating in the unfolding processes each subordinate clause describes; the verbs of the subordinate clauses are still transitive, but their Agents are hidden. One way to gloss this phrase is to say that Autumn and the sun have a conspiracy which involves some entity (which may or may not be the two of them) causing all of the enumerated things to happen. This synthetic construction, in other words, introduces an ambivalent third term between Autumn (the universal) and her[3] phenomenal manifestations (the particulars), which means that this stanza cannot be read as a straightforward affirmation of Autumn's agency in the transformation of things.

The slightly sinister undertones of the word *conspire* flower in the final subordinate clause, which Freeman does not discuss:

> to set budding more,
> And still more, later flowers for the bees,
> Until they think warms days will never cease,
> For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells. (8-11)

This clause also fits Freeman's pattern to the extent that it too is causative and transitive. But here the cause and the process effected do not appear through a single verb; *set* marks the initiating cause and *budding* the process that, once caused, carries on autonomously.[4] The gap between Autumn's agency (or someone else's agency) and the process it brings into being finds explicit form here, reflecting within the particular the gap that separates it from the universal. Moreover, we can no longer speak here of the conversion of 'natural *states* … into active dynamic *processes*', since *budding* is a process already. The causative here just sets in motion what was already processual, adding to Summer's already excessive abundance a super-added plenitude of natural bounty.

Autumn's agency looks even shakier if we consider that the entire first stanza does not have a main verb. Despite the complexity of its

subordinate clauses, the first stanza is nothing but an appositive, just a noun phrase, reducible simply to *O Autumn.* The first complete sentence of the poem is a question: 'Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?'. (l. 12) If we take this question literally, it concerns only a single individual: who is this person who has failed to see Autumn often in her abundance? The question seems, in a way, to have a straightforward answer, since we might well wonder who *has* actually seen Autumn herself rather than simply seeing the 'store' of her phenomenal manifestations. But the question is also a strange one because it is addressed to Autumn. How would Autumn know who hasn't seen her? The bees don't seem to have noticed her arrival, but *the bees* is not singular, and we know the answer to the question must be singular from the inflection of the verb ('hath'). The only thing we can be sure of if we take this question literally is that the person inquired about cannot bear witness to the veracity of the poem's statements about Autumn, and we might understand the question as an attempt to include those lonely souls who are excluded in principle by the gesture of apostrophe to a deity.

The more intuitive reading is surely to take the question as rhetorical, and in such a reading the question expands from the particular to an emphatic universal. As a rhetorical question, it is in effect a statement that no one has failed to see Autumn often amid her store. This rhetorical question is perhaps the most roundabout possible means of claiming universal validity for the poem's truth. Such a near-qualification through form emerges explicitly in the *sometimes* with which the following line begins. Strict logical consistency between the two lines would require that 'whoever seeks abroad may find' Autumn *often,* not 'sometimes'.[5] And if only those who wilfully seek Autumn out can find her, then the proportion of those who see her will surely be a good deal smaller than the rhetorical reading of the preceding question would suggest. This dubiety about the visibility of Autumn emerges naturally from any attempt to take the poem seriously, to take seriously its claim that Autumn is a person. The fact that the poem explicitly registers this dubiety indicates retroactively that the poem is to be taken seriously, that this personification is not just a manner of speaking but a matter of fact. Autumn must therefore be rendered not merely personable but visible, and the aim of the second stanza is to achieve this through the incarnation of the divinity, through the unity of universal Autumn and her plumping particulars. The rhetorical

question, with its oscillation between (literal) particular and (rhetorical) universal, is the fulcrum on which Autumn's descent into concretion turns.

If the actual agency behind the ripening of things in the first stanza turns out to be some unspecified third term, we might imagine that the second stanza has now provided us with the identity of that third term: the observer who 'seeks abroad' for Autumn and finds her 'sitting careless on a granary floor'. (ll. 13-4) Autumn, as Freeman's observations make clear, appears exceedingly passive in this stanza (or at least in ll. 14-8). Although all of the main verbs in the stanza are non-causative transitives, ll. 14-8 contain only one main verb but four reduced passives (see Freeman 1978: 92), two describing Autumn and two describing the furrow twining the two together. Autumn is neither subject nor Agent of a single verb in this stanza until l. 18, and even then it is only her 'hook' (stranded at the end of a line) that 'Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers'. The cost of rendering Autumn visible is to render her utterly inactive; even the instrument of her agency, her hook, can perform no action but to realise its restraint as Autumn sleeps the afternoon away.

In the last few lines of the stanza, though, the gazing third party disappears, and we get a direct description of a slightly more active Autumn:

> And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
> Steady thy laden head across a brook;
> Or by a cyder-press, with patient look,
> Thou watchest the last oozings hours by hours. (19-22)

Here Autumn acts, but these are actions of a peculiar sort. In order to 'keep / Steady [her] laden head', she must continuously act, unlike her hook simply sparing the flowers, but the outcome of the act is stillness, immobility, something that does not *look* like an action. The visible action that she is presumably performing, crossing the river, is nowhere to be found in the sentence (i.e., we do not get a phrase like *as you cross the brook* or *while crossing the brook*). The syntax of the phrase 'across a brook' is similar to a sentence like *Sally held her breath [all the way home]*, which implies, if anything, that Sally is being passively transported. At the very least, these lines suggest that the primary, important action is the invisible act of Autumn steadying her load.

In the following two lines, Autumn again performs an action that is invisible, watching 'the last oozings hours by hours'. Just as the previous lines emphasise the labour underwriting her seeming inactivity, here the qualification that her 'look' is 'patient' suggests a gaze that is deliberate, engaged, meaningful, a watching that needs to be done (the derivation of *patient* from the Latin *patior*, 'to suffer', also underscores the arduousness and seriousness of the task). But it is not clear why exactly this job needs to be done; if it is only 'the *last* oozings' Autumn is watching, then we can scarcely be concerned that the barrel they are oozing into will overflow. Where the flowers and the bees' clammy cells continued to overproduce in the first stanza, here we seem to be reaching the end of Autumn's fecundity.

With this thought of the end, the first hint of 'last' things, comes the issue of time, raised strangely in the phrase with which the stanza ends: 'Thou watchest the last oozings *hours by hours*'. This also seems like a species of synthetic construction, in this case a combination of two idioms. One idiom is exemplified by the phrase *one by one*, meaning 'one at a time' (i.e., successively), and the other is exemplified by the phrase *hour after hour*, indicating an excessive accumulation of hours, an exhausting persistence. Both idioms are relatively productive, meaning that they can be used with other nouns:

> Remember me when no more day by day
> You tell me of the future that you planned (Rossetti [1862] 2001)

> Day after day, day after day,
> We stuck, nor breath, nor motion (Coleridge [1834] 2004)

But both require at least that the nouns be singular. Both are, so to speak, semantically plural, in the sense that they suggest multiple elements (perhaps a sequence of two elements represented by the two nouns), but *one by one* keeps its eye on only one element at a time whereas *hour after hour* dissolves the individual units into an undifferentiated plural whole. Put another way, *one by one* achieves multiplicity by adding individual units one at a time, whereas *hour after hour* achieves multiplicity by breaking down the very boundaries between individual units. The phrase in the poem, 'hours by hours', seems to achieve multiplicity by adding multiples, suggesting a succession of persistences.

That which *oozes* is by definition slow-moving (*OED*, s.v. 'ooze, *v.*', 1a.), and the oozing cider here has been almost arrested even in that

slow movement through nominalisation as an *oozing*. But the 'oozings' are, like the 'hours', plural, as if the issue were not just distension, duration – the elongation of experience by concentration – but a multitude of unmediated and unmeasurable durations, a crowd of unique objects. Where does one oozing end and the next begin? One can count *drops*, but *oozings*? Both the mode of the watching ('hours by hours') and the mode of what is being watched ('the last oozings') display the same elusive structure, some kind of grouping which dissolves the rule by which it comes into being as a group, particulars that do not remain subject to a universal. Paradoxical as it may be, a time made up of successive durations (instead of successive instants) would be a time packed full, in which each cell of experience is bottomless and the last load of pomace never ceases to yield its thick slow juice.

But if these 'last oozings' were to last forever, the cider would never be made – and since cider (which must mature for five or six months after fermentation) comes of age in the spring, the thought of Autumn obeying Zeno's paradox calls spring to mind. Spring is the subject of the questions with which the third stanza opens: 'Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?' Our initial reading of these questions will no doubt take them to be rhetorical, much like the question that opened the second stanza. But whereas the question in the second stanza, taken rhetorically, can be glossed as a straightforward statement ('Everyone has often seen Autumn amid her store'), the question in the third stanza does not admit of a straightforward gloss. Does it mean *The songs of Spring are nowhere*? Or *There are no songs of Spring*? Is Spring being dared to sing? The following line clarifies matters in the sense that it takes the form of a reply to the question: 'Think not of them, thou hast thy music too'. But if the question actually elicits a reply, then it is not rhetorical at all. Moreover, if it is the speaker of the poem who replies and who refers to the questioner in the second person (*thou* hast *thy* music), and if *thou* and *thy* must refer to Autumn (since a comparison between Spring's music and Autumn's music is at issue), then the question is not only literal but is spoken by Autumn herself. Unlike the Grecian Urn, the addressee of this ode does not pipe up merely to mutter a consoling platitude; Autumn interrupts the speaker's discourse to interrogate him about Spring, attempting perhaps to derail the poem, to silence the apostrophe that conjures her into presence.

As Jonathan Culler has observed, the aim of apostrophe is to overcome man's alienation from the natural world, to reconcile subject and object by speaking to a non-human entity as if it were human (1977: 63-4). An apostrophe to Autumn presupposes, minimally, that Autumn is something capable of listening, even of talking back. But 'To Autumn' pushes the *prosopopoeia* to which apostrophe is bound considerably further than this bare minimum, moving from what Hegel would call natural divinity in the form of 'mere personification', a mere mask (Gr. *prosopon*), to natural divinity in the form of a free 'spiritual individual'. (1842: 454-5) Here we have an Autumn made fully human, which is a desirable state of affairs if we agree with Adorno that 'It is only through humanization that nature is to be restored the rights that human domination took from it'. (1957: 41) But Autumn's autonomy seems to have gotten a bit out of hand; as is typical in Keats, this poem takes the conventions of its kind (here, the ode) so literally that they reveal just how strange and wayward they always were. But taking the convention of apostrophe literally also involves taking it seriously, investing it with real power. In the first stanza Autumn's agency and activity suffer from a *chorismos* ('gap, separation') between universal and particular, and even the incarnation of the second stanza, much as it concretises Autumn, also leaves her listless and passive. Autumn's first real assertion of herself, in which she kindles into speech, would seem to be a triumph of apostrophe, an achieved reconciliation of man and nature, but just at that point the poem veers towards intransitive verbs and away from depicting a natural abundance earmarked for human consumption.

Our first glance at the question with which the final stanza opens is not only wrong because we take it to be a rhetorical question and because we take it to be issued by the speaker of the poem; we will likely also take 'the songs of Spring' to mean 'the songs *about* Spring'. In itself this is a plausible enough reading, since the *of* is ambiguous here and could mean either *about* or *by*. But the response that follows the question is not similarly ambiguous: 'thou hast thy music too' must mean the music which Autumn possesses or produces, not the poems about Autumn we euphemistically call *songs*. The answer retroactively disambiguates the question, making it plain that, although the speaker/poet responds affirmatively to the challenge issued by Autumn, he only succeeds in affirming Autumn's denial of

the poem – this poem is no longer the 'music' about Autumn, she is writing her own score with the speaker as a mere instrument.

Given the appeal to 'music' we might expect the lines immediately following to provide us with descriptions musical, or at least auditory. Instead we immediately get the tactile figuring the visual:

> While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
> And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue … (25-6)

And given the pattern Freeman has pointed to, we expect this stanza to be dominated by unergative intransitive verbs, but these two lines do not fit that expectation. Instead they recapitulate the pattern of the poem as a whole: from *bloom* in line 25, a causative transitive in this usage, to *touch*, a non-causative transitive, and then on to *mourn* in line 28, which is the first in a string of unergative constructions. Unlike the first stanza, however, the causative transitive *bloom* is not participating in a synthetic construction and has a perfectly transparent causal relation to its object (*the soft-dying day*). All problematic mediations of agency have gone, but here the causative transitive verb is not forming a link between a universal and a particular: both the 'barred clouds' and the 'soft-dying day' are particulars. Similarly, the non-causative transitive *touch* designates a direct, positive action, unlike the inactive or invisible actions of the second stanza ('*Spares* the next swath', '*keep* / Steady thy laden head', '*watchest* the last oozings'), and the subject of the verb is again the 'barred clouds'. What has disappeared, despite the identity at the level of pattern between this moment and the larger pattern of the previous stanzas, is the attempt to render Autumn human (the other meaning of the Greek *prosopon* is 'face, person'); *prosopopoeia* has fulfilled itself in its own dissolution.

These two lines are also marked by another synthetic construction: 'while *x*, then *y*.' *While* usually appears in parallel constructions of the following sort: *While bombs fell on civilians, the perpetrators spoke of 'liberating' them. Then* has a number of uses, but the relevant one in this context seems to be the deictic use, indicating a specific moment in time, as in *We usually take tea in the afternoon, then we wander the moors.* The 'while *x*, *y*' construction indicates simultaneous periods of time, whereas the '*x*, then *y*' construction indicates successive periods of time; put another way, *while* designates simultaneous durations whereas *then* designates successive instants. This construction, then,

recalls the difficulties at the end of the preceding stanza, but here the richness of duration calls out only to receive a bare instant in reply, a dearth that comes after (and hence puts an end to) duration instead of an answering parallel plenitude.

This collapse into a pure instant, in which sheep are simultaneously 'lambs' and 'full-grown', has all of the immediacy of music with none of its development over time. There seems to be something human in the music of the 'wailful choir' in which 'the small gnats mourn', but *mourn* is not only intransitive, it is unergative: they mourn without an object or a Theme, and mourning without an object is a pure immediacy of suffering that can never end and can never be worked through. This mourning is no more human than the *singing* of the 'Hedge-crickets', the *whistling* of the 'red-breast', the *bleat* of the 'full-grown lambs' or the *twitter* of the last 'gathering swallows'. There is no human Autumn to whom the speaker might address himself, no venturesome soul to seek her abroad – no human beings at all. If this music is spontaneous, it is only because it is thoughtless. If it is orderly, it is because it has no aim. If it is beautiful, it is because it is sublime. This poem does not present simply the epitome of that negative capability which seeks to enter into its object so fully that the speaking voice disappears; the poem succeeds at fully entering into a world in which there is no one to speak to, no one to hear, and nothing to say. What has made for uneasiness even among many critics who find this poem ultimately peaceful is just this sense that its peace is a result of dehumanisation or outright inhumanity – that it is not far from a call to collective suicide. The fissures in the smooth surface of the poem's patterned progression are the undialectical traces of the human subject upon whose sacrifice the universal reconciliation depends.

If linguistically informed criticism has often been thwarted by the gap between form and content, between description and interpretation, and has therefore fallen back on a creaky vocabulary of 'mimesis' and 'reflection', it is because it has focussed on patterns and not on local syntactic phenomena themselves. For it is at the level of the individual moment, the unrepeated and singular, that form and content intertwine in systematically explicable ways. The pattern Freeman describes in 'To Autumn' turns out to be useful (far more so than observations about patterns typically are) because it is drawn directly from the

analysis of the particular sentences that are its ground. In my reading of the poem, I have attempted to bring the issues the pattern raises back down to earth again, to follow a trajectory that remains *within* the individual sentences without lording it over them from above. One need not sail off in search of patterns to get from poetic form to poetic meaning. An observed pattern may serve as a useful foil, a pattern may provide useful clues, a pattern may inspire sheer mathematical delight, but a pattern cannot be converted into an interpretation and cannot be substituted for the analysis of particular sentences and lines. Pattern is, if anything, the opposite of poetic form. In the end, interpretations derived from patterns are always reductive, because patterns themselves are reductions, and it is the business of serious literary criticism always to thwart reduction just as poems thwart interpretation. Unlike pattern-hunting, the analysis of individual sentences has the virtue that it cannot possibly promise what Fish calls 'an automatic interpretive procedure'. (1980: 70) On the contrary, it makes the business of interpretation more difficult, and opens up possibilities that demand yet more nuanced labours of thought.

Endnotes

[1]These terms are extremely difficult to define abstractly, but the intuitions of native speakers about which arguments are Agents, which Themes, and so on, are extremely consistent. We can therefore use the terms with reasonable precision even in the absence of explicit definitions.

[2]This is not, of course, an adequate means for systematically distinguishing between literary and non-literary uses of language, as nothing prevents speakers from employing synthetic constructions in ordinary conversation; but presumably such constructions will be a good deal rarer in ordinary speech than in poetry.

[3]I have chosen to use the feminine pronoun rather than the masculine pronoun to refer to Autumn because seasons are traditionally represented as female (probably as a result of the prevalence of the Demeter myth) and would have been so represented in most of the artworks with which Keats was familiar (see Jack [1967] for a detailed discussion of Keats's interest in art). I do not, however, see any definitive evidence in the poem that Autumn is female rather than male. The selection of a pronoun is thus ultimately arbitrary in this case, and my use of the feminine pronoun is not intended to have any substantive implications (in terms of the reading I give of the poem, it does not matter whether Autumn is male or female).

[4]This is what is often called an *Acc-ing construction*, a construction in which the grammatical object (bearing accusative case) is followed by a verb bearing the *-ing* inflection, e.g., *Sally got the engine going*. See Reuland (1983) and Abney (1987).

[5]The intransitive use of *seek* in line 13 is an archaism derived from the Old English *secan*, common through the 16th century and revived in the 19th (*OED*, s.v. 'seek, *v.*', 12a).

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PART II

FORMAL ANALYSIS AND THE ANALYSIS OF FORM

Story Elements as Sets

Henrik Schärfe

Abstract

In 1928, Vladimir Propp (1895-1970) published his *Morfologija Skazka*, a truly groundbreaking book that is often referred to as the birth of modern narratology. When, 30 years later, this work was translated into English (1968 [first translated 1958]), it became the subject of massive attention, and Propp's ideas were commented on, critiqued, and elaborated by a number of important contributors to the field of narratology. Specifically, the idea of a narrative unit, called a function, turned out to very important. This essay, demonstrates how formal methods can be used to further analyse Propp's results, and in the process of doing so, demonstrates how formal techniques may be used to generate new questions and pursue their answers. The techniques employed here are Formal Concept Analysis and Prolog (Programming in Logic). In both cases, story elements are seen as members of sets and analysed accordingly.

Key words: Formal Concept Analysis; Prolog; narrative functions; set theory; lattice theory.

1. The Proppian Analysis

Through a detailed analysis of a corpus of 90 Russian folktales, Propp identified 31 distinct elements which he labelled functions. These semantic units are thought to behave as 'stable, constant elements in a tale, independent of how and by whom they are fulfilled'. (Propp 1968: 21) The notion of a narrative function became one of the most important concepts of structuralist narratology and was subsequently treated by Greimas (1966), Todorov (1981), Bremond (1980), and

many others. More recently, the notion of a narrative function has proven useful to research in interactive storytelling, for example, Szilas (1999) and Braun (2002). The major part of Propp's analysis consists of an account of the 31 distinct functions that he identified (the list of functions can be seen in Appendix B), but he also published his results of the analyses of half the corpus. In this essay, I shall reëxamine these results using contemporary formal methods. Although these methods draw on results in mathematics and logic, the argument presented here is not at core a formal one, but rather is intended to point to the usefulness of such methods. In particular, I shall consider two kinds of formalisation of the Proppian results. In Sections 2 and 3, I shall look at Formal Concept Analysis, and in Section 4, I shall investigate Propp's results in a Prolog implementation. Common to both approaches is the fact that the functional analysis is viewed under a set-theoretical perspective. The formal representation allows us to interact with the analysis in a very direct and sometimes playful manner. This is largely due to the possibilities that arise from having visual representations of the results.

2. Formal Concept Analysis

Formal Concept Analysis (FCA) is a mathematical theory based on set theory and lattice theory, originating from the work of Rudolf Wille in the early 1980s. Since then, a scientific community has emerged with conferences specifically dedicated to this topic – see, for instance, Schärfe, Hitzler & Øhrstrøm (2006). Here, I shall touch on only a few relevant elements of the theory, but for a thorough introduction to FCA, see Ganter & Wille (1997) and Burmeister (2003). A brief introduction to lattice theory is found in Sowa (2001).

Informally, we may say that in FCA, the point of departure is a simple cross table in which objects are listed in the first column, attributes are listed in the top row, and an 'x' in the table indicates that a given object is associated with a given attribute. Given the mathematical definitions listed in Appendix A, the cross table may be considered a formal context that contains a number of formal objects. A formal object is a pair with an intension and an extension. The intension of a formal object is the set of attributes that apply to a given object and, conversely, the extension is the set of objects that have precisely these attributes. Next, we can define an order over the formal objects and

arrange the formal objects in a lattice structure for closer investigation. Examples of graphical representations of such lattices are shown here in Figures 1-13. The graphics are generated by the OpenSource program ConExp (Yevtushenko 2003). It follows from these definitions that anything that can be represented in the form of a cross table can potentially be analysed by FCA methods. Propp's report of his results is thus an obvious candidate. However, some preliminary remarks regarding the preparation of the data are in order.

2.1. Preparing the data

In the first place, Propp's analysis of 45 tales is presented not only with functions themselves, but also with subtypes of the functions. For example, function A (villainy) is recorded as having subtypes such as A1 (kidnapping of a person) and A19 (declaration of war). In this study, however, any occurrence of a function will be represented by a simple label regardless of the subtype. The immediate reason for this is that the context must be a one-valued context, and, while it is possible to transform the many-valued context in question into a one-valued context (by means of conceptual scaling), that would not serve the present purpose. In the second place, the preparatory section is missing from the results – in fact, these functions seem to have been left out of consideration due to lack of space (Propp 1968: 116). In my opinion, that is a rather questionable manoeuvre because the initial Law and the consequent violation thereof is introduced in the preparatory section, and these functions constitute a major theme of the narrative in this particular genre. In the third place, results of only half the corpus are reported in the schema. Propp assures his readers that the rest of the material 'adds nothing new' to the analysis (Propp 1968: 144). In terms of establishing the framework that Propp set out to do, I am inclined to believe this statement. But, as will be evident shortly, the relations among the tales are of a more complicated nature than this remark indicates. Finally, the functions 'H' and 'M' and the functions 'I' and 'N' have been pairwise coupled in the schema, apparently without any comment by Propp. This obviously detracts from the idea of functions as stable individual elements.

As a result, the slightly modified formal context of Propp's analysis consists of 45 tales and 22 functions. This information can also be rendered as a lattice, as in Fig. 1 (the numbers refer to tales in Afanas'ev [1957]). A first glance at the lattice may suggest a very

diverse domain rather than the idea of a ‘single tale’. However, certain indications are immediately observable. At the top the lattice we find function A (villainy). This placement reflects the fact that this particular function is the only one present in every tale. Thus, the extension of this node is all 45 tales, shown in the lattice as numbers. The ordering entails that, read from the top down, a tale can first appear in the lattice when all the functions it contains have been introduced. It is also easily seen that some tales are identical with respect to their functional signatures: tales 131, 148, and 149, as well as tales 95 and 98 have identical function structures.

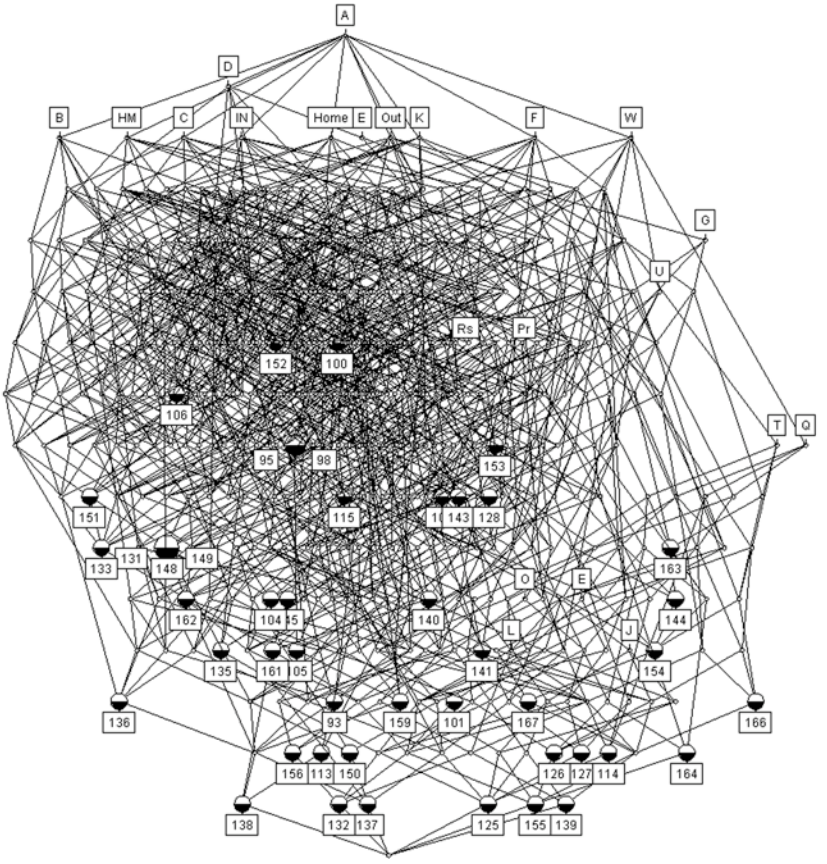

Figure 1 Lattice of the Proppian analysis

By selecting a formal concept in the lattice drawn by ConExp, a path consisting of all routes to the top and to the bottom of the lattice can

be highlighted. Selecting the object (tale) '140' results in the lattice shown in Fig. 2. Reading from left to right, it is easily seen from the lattice that tale 140 contains the functions {A, B, C, D, IN, Home, K, Out, E, F, W, and G}. Note that this sequence is not the actual sequence in which the functions occur. It is also easily seen that the formal concept containing tale 140 subsumes tales 161, 156, 138, 132, and 155, which, informally speaking, means that only these tales contain exactly the same functions as 140 and that other functions are present in these tales as well. The natural conclusion is that tales in this list can be seen as specialisations of tale 140, and as having more elaborate structures. The lattice reveals that this kind of subsumption is quite common.

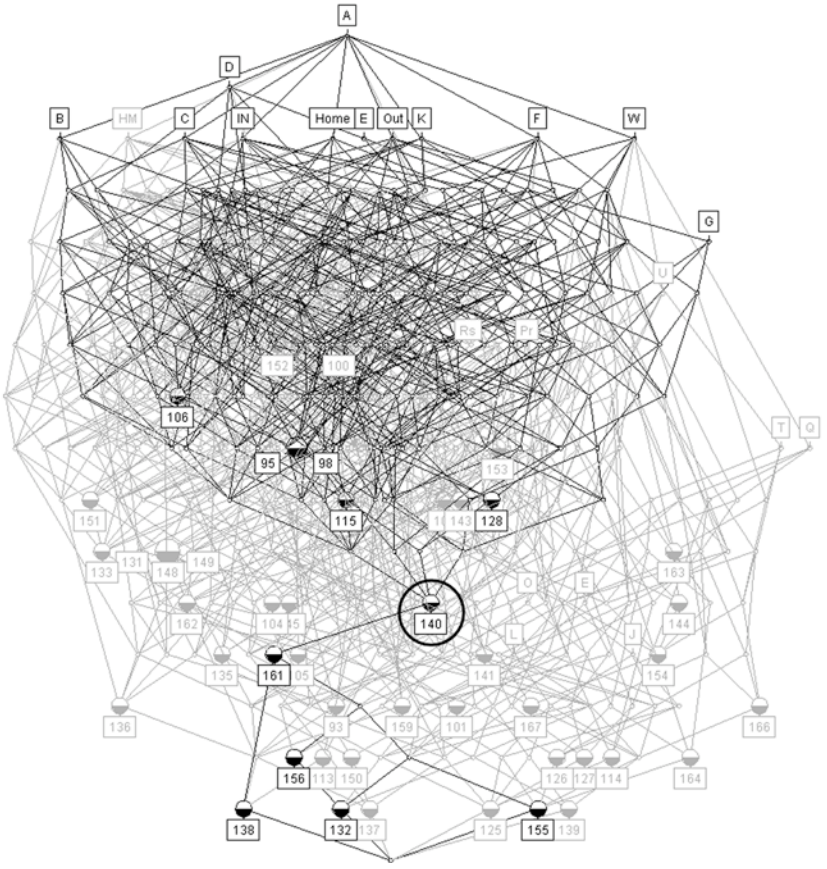

Figure 2 The selection of tale 140

It also appears from the lattice that certain functions act as prerequisites for other functions. Consider Fig. 3, the lattice displaying the path from top to bottom from function W, designating the wedding of the hero (the full designation of function W, is 'wedding and accession to the throne', but I will often abbreviate it to 'wedding').

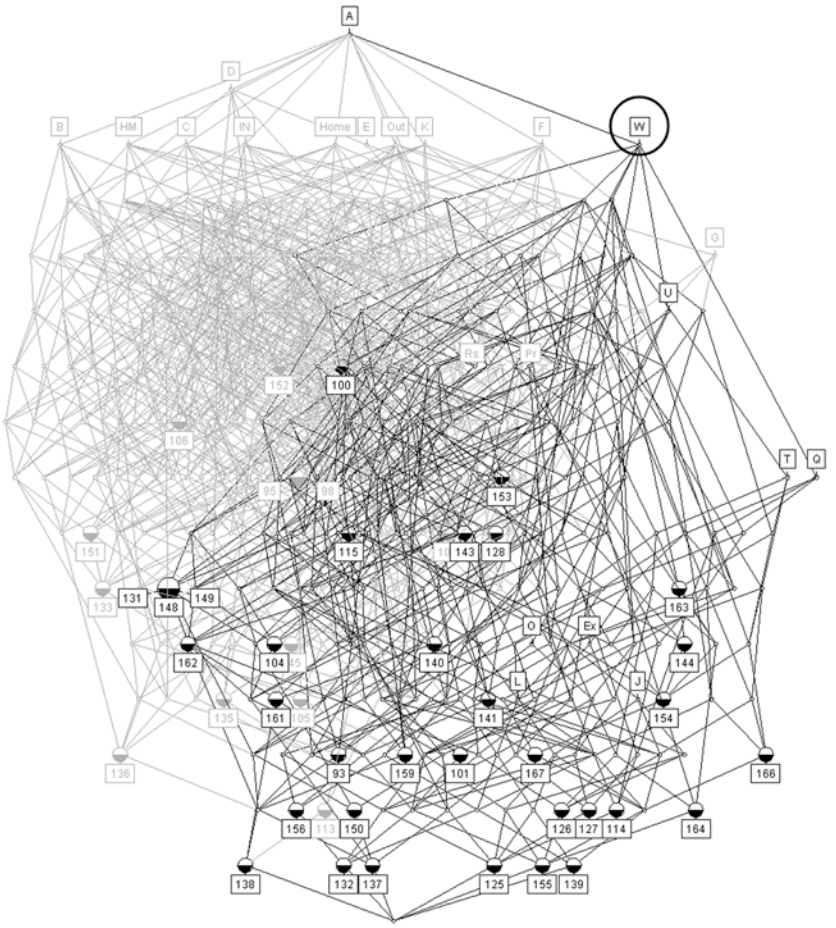

Figure 3 The selection of function W

It is easily seen in Fig. 3 that the functions U, T, Q, O, Ex, L, and J are all subsumed by W. This means that, for example, function T (transfiguration of the hero) only occurs in tales that end with a wedding. Since W and T both belong to the final sequence, this might lead to the hypothesis that the occurrence of function T actually marks

a special kind of ending, or more boldly, that the occurrence of function T is actually a specialised version of function W. But it also appears that function J (branding of the hero) only occurs in conjunction with a wedding. Notably, function J does not belong to the final sequence, but to the transformational segment in the middle, so that there is no immediate explanation for this. The lattice can, of course, also be read the other way around, so as to say that, if function J occurs in a tale in this corpus (in the middle of the tale), then the tale will end with a wedding. This particular instance of co-occurrence may indicate a wish to balance the suffering and the reward of the protagonist. In other cases, there seems to be some sort of semantic relation between functions. For instance, it appears that function F (receipt of a magical agent) is a prerequisite for function T (transfiguration of the hero). The functions A, Out, and W are also prerequisites for T, but the particular correlation between F and T is interesting because F belongs to the initial section and T to the final section. So the bond between them is not of a merely syntactic nature, but is rather a semantic feature that again points to the notion of balance between beginning and end, suggesting that the appearance of 'the magical' in the beginning prescribes the appearance of 'the magical' at the end.

2.2. Sublattices

The concrete examples obtained from the corpus are perhaps mostly of interest to Propp scholars, but the idea of using this sort of graphical representation to investigate a body of knowledge is potentially more generally appealing. As the following two examples illustrate, something happens to analyses when the results are represented in computational environments. The very fact that the results are displayed in a form that allows interaction may trigger an inquisitive mind to pose new questions and dig deeper into the relationships between elements. And, while it is true that the cross table and the lattice in principle contain the same information, the form of representation certainly adds something to the analysis. The examples given thus far are rather crude, but the visualisation may nevertheless deepen our understanding of the matter at hand. For instance, the information that the functional arrangement of some tales can be found embedded in other tales is present in the cross table, but it is not visible. The ordering relation thus points to a new theoretical insight that has not yet been addressed, even though the data is nearly

80 years old. As it appears, the entire lattice is somewhat confusing to the eye. And in fact it is equally interesting to look for more specific information extracted form the structure. This is done by restricting one of the sets G, M or I. In this case, I shall investigate the relations between some of the functions. One immediately apparent feature of the lattice containing all the tales is that certain functions have direct lines to the top node, whereas others do not. What this means is that the remaining functions always appear as subsumed functions. The dynamic environment allows us to follow this thought and experiment with the knowledge base accordingly.

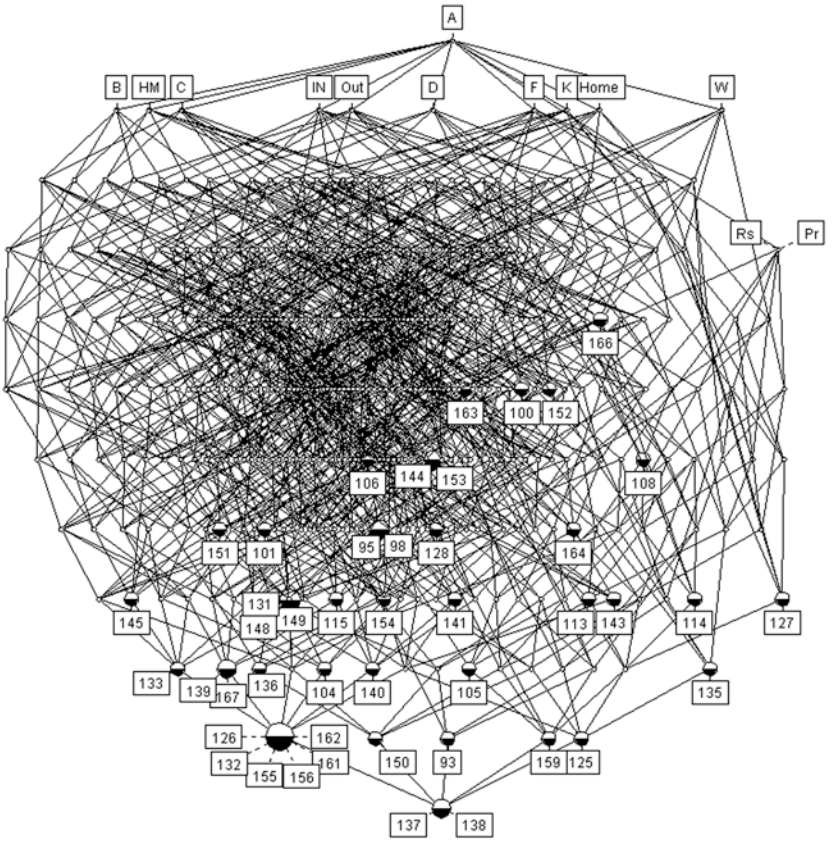

Figure 4 The lattice of functions that are never subsumed

The lattice in Fig. 4 is obtained by restricting the set of functions to include only those immediately below function A. It is immediately

visible that this lattice is much less complicated than the original one (see Fig. 1, section 2.1). On the other hand, it is not necessarily obvious how this result should be interpreted. As an example of what has been pruned away, consider function U (punishment of the false hero). This function occurs only in tales that also contain function W (wedding and accession to the throne). Function W on the other hand also occurs in conjunction with other functions. This could indicate that function U is in reality a variation of function W. But the reason that this conclusion presents itself as 'obvious' is the fact that the reduction only involves two functions. Other similar cases are more complicated. Thus function Q (recognition of the hero) only occurs in conjunction with the complex arrangement of functions U, W, G, Out, E, and F. And while Q could also be interpreted as a subtype of W, this inference is much more dubious, especially since it involves three functions related to the beginning of the tale, namely, E, F, and Out. Nevertheless, this analysis indicates that certain functions hold a privileged position.

2.3. Segments

Even though the formal context does not specifically take the 'moves' into account (or any other syntactical information for that matter), it is still possible to consider only functions that pertain to a certain part of the sequence. (A 'move' is a sequence of functions; see Appendix B for Propp's four main types of moves.) For instance, we might consider specific sub-sequences for further analysis. If we consider the formal context of the most common functions in the initial sub-sequence (the beginning of the tale), the lattices in Fig. 5 appear, in which the size of a node indicates how many concepts it contains.

It appears that several combinations are present in the corpus, but also that some combinations are more typical than others. Thus, 44% of the corpus has the following arrangement of functions: A, B, C, D, and E, but the constellations A, B, D and A, B, D, E only occur one time each. It is also interesting to see that the combinations A, B and A, D (without any of the others) do not occur in any tale: the formal concepts labelled B and D do not have any objects of their own. In contrast, the sequence A, C (again, without any of the others) appears in six tales, and is almost as frequent as the sequence A, B, C. It is not surprising that function D (the first function of the donor) is usually found in connection with function E (the reaction of the hero) because

they are semantically linked. But what about the status of function B (the connective incident)? One might ask whether or not this function is really a function in the same sense as the others.

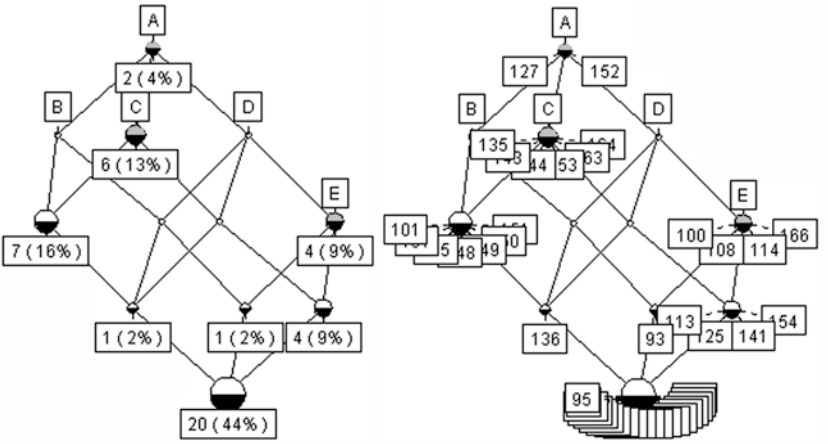

Figure 5 Beginnings

Similarly, we may consider the end sequence, shown in Fig. 6, where it appears that functions Q, Ex, T, and U only occur in conjunction with function W (the wedding). And again, the distribution among the functions is not equal. It also appears that one third of the corpus features function W without any of the other functions of the end sequence. Function A has been included in the lattice in order to assure that the entire corpus is taken into account.

The selection of the entire corpus (by the inclusion of function A) turns out to be quite interesting. It appears now, from the lattices in Fig. 6, that 12 of the tales do not exhibit an ending sequence at all. Indeed, the tales not featuring function W do not have any of the functions placed after the return of the hero. This information is also easily read from the cross table. It seems reasonable to suggest that indeed there are two kinds of endings in the corpus: one kind that ends with the return of the hero, and one kind that ends with a wedding. Intuitively, it makes sense that both these functions are strong enough to provide the sense of closure needed in order to finish a move. This observation could of course also be reached without the use of formal methods, but the diagrammatic display is clearly helpful in locating such relations. The sequence comprising the direct confrontation between hero and villain is also of special interest. In this case another

pattern appears that again illustrates the advantage that comes from investigating correlations in a dynamic environment. If we consider the crucial functions HM, IN, and K, we can generate the lattice that is displayed in Fig. 7.

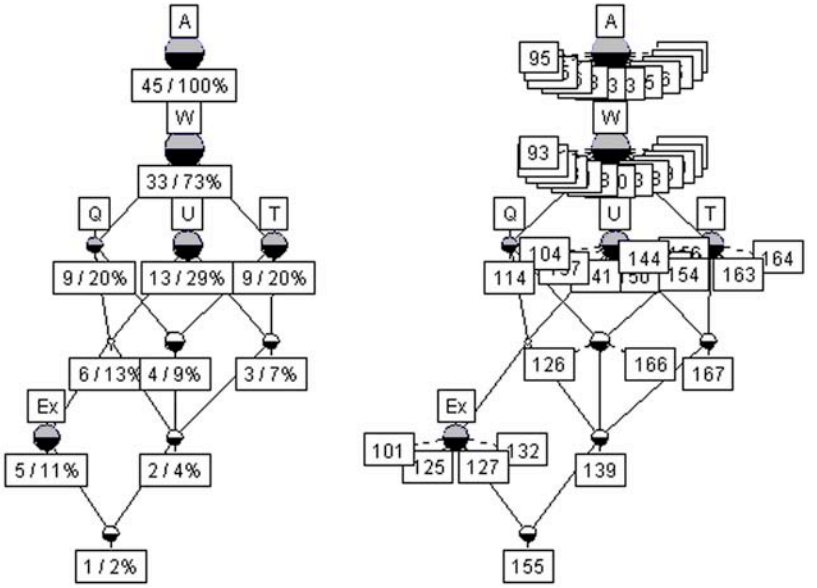

Figure 6 Endings

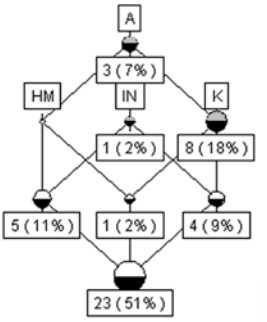

Figure 7 Sequence involving confrontation

Here we see the distribution between the functions. Function H (struggle) and function M (a difficult task) do not appear alone, but sometimes in connection with function I (victory) and function N

(solution). Most frequently, H and M appear in conjunction with both IN and function K (liquidation of the misfortune). But if we then include functions J (branding of the hero) and L (claims of a false hero), we obtain the lattices in Fig. 8.

By thus expanding the enquiry, we see that L and J both occur as specialisations of the constellation HM, IN, and K, but without disturbing the internal distribution among them. And while each of them only occurs once on its own, three tales have them both, which might indicate a deeper relationship between the two functions than the captions of the functions suggest. This kind of analysis is not suited to the drawing of any conclusions about the deeper semantics of the elements in question, but again we come across an example where the formal analysis can be used to formulate new hypotheses, for example, the hypothesis that these two functions are somehow connected. Is it possible that they both describe elements of the degradation of the hero? More analyses are needed in order to answer this question.

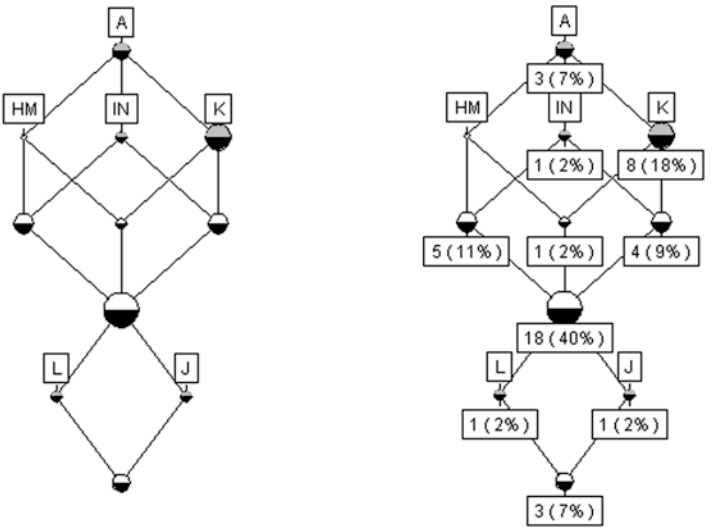

Figure 8 Expanded sequence involving confrontation

2.4. Journeys

Simply counting the number of times a function appears reveals a discrepancy between the number of tales with a reported departure of

the hero and the number with a reported return of the hero. The lattice in Fig. 9, which is restricted to the functions Out, Home, and A, to ensure analysing the whole corpus, shows that two tales report the return of the hero without mentioning the departure, that eleven tales report the departure of the hero but not the return, and that by far the most common style is to report both.

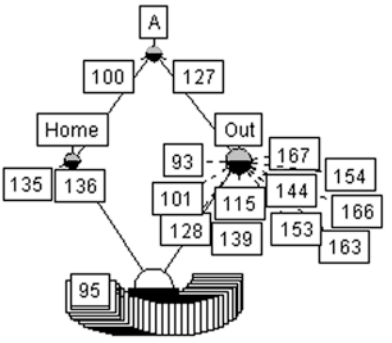

Figure 9 The discrepancy between 'departing' and 'returning'

From a cognitive point of view, it would be interesting to investigate further how these odd occurrences influence reading, and in particular the extraction of spatial information from text. But here I shall restrict myself to the observation that methods like this seem adequate to generate and investigate hypotheses regarding such matters.

2.5. Tales subsuming tales

So far, we have been interested in the relation between functions and the arrangements of functions. Now, let us consider the relations among the tales in the corpus. As we have already seen, certain tales subsume other tales with respect to the arrangement of functions. This observation can be further analysed by constructing another formal context in which we consider a tale an attribute of another tale if all the functions that appear in the first tale also appear in the second. Formally: Let (G) be the set of all the tales, let (M) be the set of all the tales, and let the relation $I \subseteq G \times M$, represent the fact that one tale subsumes another tale. In this way we obtain the lattice in Fig. 10. Again, at first sight this lattice appears to have a rather 'messy' structure. But if we restrict the set M to contain only those tales that are immediately subsumed by the top, we get the lattice in Fig. 11.

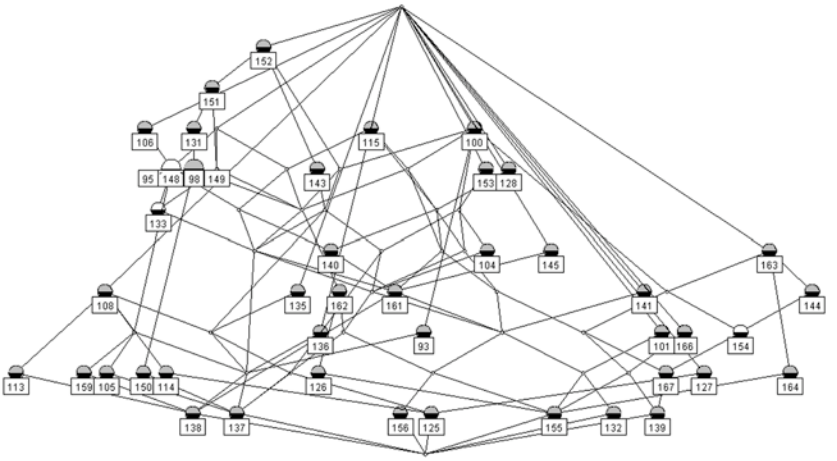

Figure 10 Tales subsuming tales

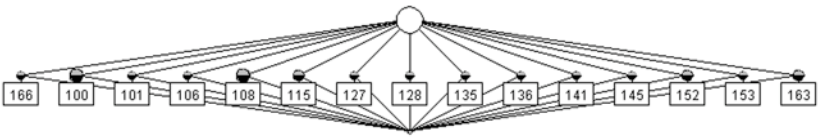

Figure 11 Tales that are never subsumed

These tales can be considered as prototypes of the corpus. And indeed, the lattice can be extended to include nine more tales that also conform only to ideal lines between top and bottom, shown in Fig. 12.

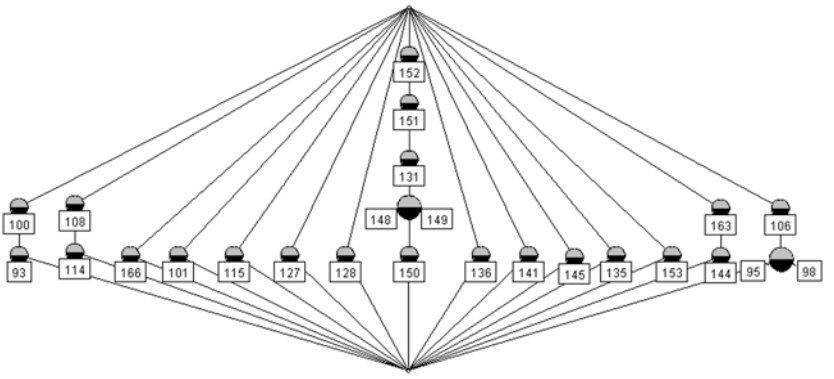

Figure 12 ‘Clean’ types of tales

This lattice represents approximately half the corpus and suggests that these tales somehow achieve a privileged status.

3. Broadening the scope

In order to further investigate the potential of this method, I have acquired a fairy tale written by three pre-school children at the age of five. The children and their classmates were taught about fairy tales for a period of approximately two weeks. One of their assignments was to make a story of their own. The story was told to their teacher, who wrote it down, and was also accompanied by a number of drawings. The fairy tale that I shall consider here is called 'Dragen og prinsessen' (The Dragon and the Princess). It is a sweet story about a prince named Frederik (appropriately named after the Danish crown prince) who rescues a princess. A dragon has unfortunately abducted Madonna, the princess, and the prince must rush to her aid, supported by a squirrel and a tiger. By the shrewdness of the squirrel and the strength of the tiger, the prince succeeds in saving the princess, and they live happily ever after. A Proppian analysis of this tale reveals 10 functions, which in this respect places the tale in the normal range. To match this tale against Propp's corpus, the sequence of functions must be added to the formal context mentioned in the beginning of this essay. Based on this information, a new lattice, shown in Fig. 13, can be generated.

There may be a considerable distance in style between the polished tales in Propp's corpus and the more naïve devices employed in the children's own tale. While the former have been refined through centuries of tradition, the latter is a fresh and playful way of inhabiting the realm of fairy tales, but in terms of functional arrangement there is nothing naïve about the story. In fact, the children came up with a unique combination of functions. Moreover, this combination subsumes combinations found in five other tales. No strong conclusions can be drawn from this one example, but the lattice in Fig. 13 suggests that the functional structure of the genre is fairly well understood by the children. It would be interesting to analyse more stories written by children at the same age (and by children from different age groups) to see if any development is detectable, but this must be left for others to carry out. This example also indicates that the method can be used in wider analyses of a comparative or contrastive nature.

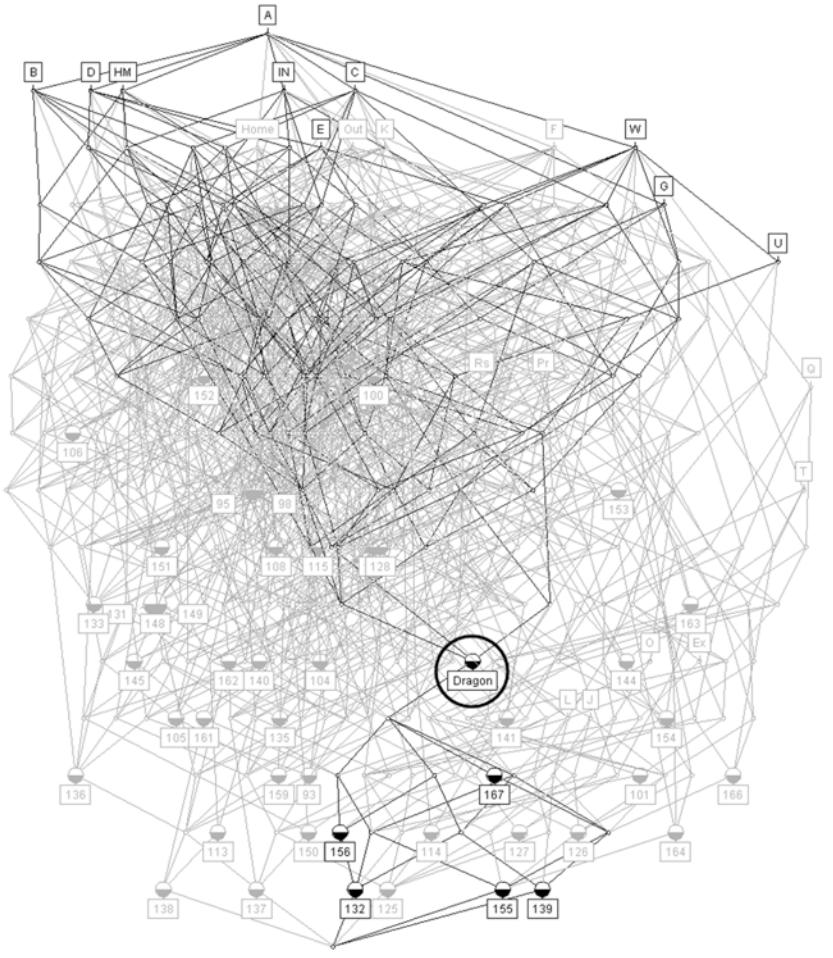

Figure 13 'The Dragon and the Princess' matched against Propp's corpus

4. Difference and similarity

Viewing story elements from a set-theoretical perspective also opens other possibilities. We may, for instance, construct a knowledge base containing the information from Propp's original analysis and represent it in such a way that we can direct more sophisticated questions to this knowledge base. In the following example, the tales are represented in conceptual graphs like these:

[tale100]-part→[function: {fcA, fcD, fcE, fcF, fcHM, fcIN, fcW}].
[tale152]-part→[function: {fcA, fcOut, fcHM, fcIN, fcK, fcHome}].

This means that a tale with a given number has a part that is the function sequence listed in the curly brackets. These graphs are then implemented in a system called Prolog+CG which combines the expressive power of conceptual graphs with the computational force of the programming language Prolog. For a thorough introduction to these matters, consult Petersen, Schärfe & Øhrstrøm (2002).

In this knowledge base, the predicate **ex1(a,b)** will now retrieve the full list of tales and the list of functions associated with the tales:

```
ex1(a,b):- [a]-part→[function: b].
```

This enables us to quickly search the knowledge base for occurrences of tales with a given function in them. Indeed, we may look for any combination of functions that we desire to investigate. A predicate designed to retrieve tales with specific combinations may look like this:

```
lookFor(a,b):-
  ex1(a,b), func(f),
    subsume ([function: f],[function: b]).
      fc([function: {fcB, fcEx, fcU}]).
        func(f):- fc([function: f]).
```

The predicate **lookFor(a,b)** will seek to resolve the variables *a* and *b*, such that *a* is the number of a tale (retrieved from **ex1(a,b)**), and such that *b* is the set of functions associated with *a*, if *b*, inserted as the referent of the graph **[function: b]**, is subsumed by the graph **[function: f]**, where *f* is a set of functions. Or, less formally: get from the knowledge base any tale that has a specific combination of functions; report the number of the tale and the functions that belong to that tale. In this particular case, the criterion that must be met is the presence of functions B, Ex, and U. This matches just two tales, namely numbers 101 and 155. The result of the query is seen here:

```
{a = tale101,
 b = {fcA, fcB, fcC, fcOut, fcHM, fcIN, fcK, fcQ, fcEx, fcU, fcW}}

{a = tale155,
 b = {fcA, fcB, fcC, fcOut, fcD, fcE, ecF, fcHM, fcJ, fcIN, fcK, fcHome,
      fcL, fcQ, fcEx, fcU, fcW}}
```

We may also want to compare the functional arrangement of two tales. This is done by generalising the findings from any two graphs that are reported by the query. The predicate below states the following: Let ‘x’ and ‘a’ be tales, and let ‘C’ be a list of functions that is common to ‘x’ and ‘a’ under the condition that ‘x’ and ‘a’ are different.

```
common(x,a,C):-
  ex1(a,b), ex2(x,y),
    generalize([function: b], [function: y],C),
      not(eq(a,x)).
```

The result of this query consists of all possible pairs of tales along with lists of functions that are found in both tales of the pair. The output of this query is quite long, but it is easy to replace *x* and *a* with the numbers of specific tales in order to investigate what they have in common. For example, we might be interested in seeing which functions are common to the tales 93 and 115. The result of this query is as follows:

```
{C = {fcA, fcB, fcOut, fcD, fcE, fcE, fcF, fcIN, fcW}}
```

We may indeed ask which functions the tales have in common rather than if they have any in common, because we already know for a fact that all tales at least share function A. Indeed, the **common(x,a,C)** predicate reveals that many tales have several functions in common, but also that some tales share only a few. This result gives rise to even more questions that can be evaluated in much the same way.

Once again the presence of a computerised model of the results facilitates the construction of more elaborate questions. For instance, does the corpus contain tales that have only one function in common besides function A? In order to answer this question, the set resulting from the generalisation operation must be converted to a list, and the list must have exactly two members – function A, which we already know of, and some other function:

```
twoInCommon(x,a,L):-
  ex1(x,y),ex2(a,b),
  generalize([function:y],[function:b],I),
  eq(I,[function:h]),
  set_list(h,L), length(L,n), eq(n,2).
```

This query reports 11 instances of pairs of tales sharing just one function besides function A:

```
{x = tale108, a = tale101, L = (fcA, fcOut)}
{x = tale108, a = tale144, L = (fcA, fcOut)}
{x = tale108, a = tale153, L = (fcA, fcOut)}
{x = tale108, a = tale163, L = (fcA, fcOut)}
{x = tale127, a = tale106, L = (fcA, fcK)}
{x = tale127, a = tale151, L = (fcA, fcK)}
{x = tale127, a = tale152, L = (fcA, fcK)}
{x = tale166, a = tale135, L = (fcA, fcF)}
{x = tale166, a = tale136, L = (fcA, fcD)}
```

{x = tale166, a = tale151, L = (fcA, fcOut)}
{x = tale166, a = tale152, L = (fcA, fcOut)}

It is quite remarkable that six out of these 11 pairs share the function Out (the departure of the hero) as the only function other than function A. Quite naturally, at least one tale of each of these pairs appears in the lattice derived earlier when we investigated the apparent discrepancy between reports of leaving and reports of returning. This may indicate that the surprisingly large number of tales with very little in common results from the fact that some narrative information is simply presupposed. But there may be other explanations as well. For instance, it might be the case that the tales in question are rather short. So let us investigate that. The following predicate will calculate the number of functions present in tales that make up one half of a pair with only two functions in common:

```
twoInCommonLength(x,Y):-
  ex1(x,y),ex2(a,b),
  generalize([function:y],[function:b],I),
  eq(I,[function:h]),
  set_list(h,L), length(L,l), eq(l,2),
  set_list(y,N),
  length(N,Y).
```

The result from this query is as follows:

{x = tale101, Y = 11}
{x = tale106, Y = 8}
{x = tale108, Y = 7}
{x = tale127, Y = 10}
{x = tale135, Y = 9}
{x = tale136, Y = 10}
{x = tale144, Y = 9}
{x = tale151, Y = 8}
{x = tale152, Y = 6}
{x = tale153, Y = 8}
{x = tale163, Y = 8}
{x = tale166, Y = 9}

Compared to the entire corpus, this analysis reveals that the tales in question indeed are in the lower half of the corpus in terms of functions present. In this way, the formal model can be used to generate and evaluate a hypothesis that would not easily come about from reading the paper version of the analysis.

We might want to direct the same kind of question to more than two tales at the same time. For example: do tales that have certain

functions in common also share other functions? The algorithm for this procedure can be described thus: search the knowledge base for the constellation {x, y, z} in a given tale, where *x, y,* and *z* are functions; gather the full sequence of functions from these tales; intersect the results.

In this case we search for occurrences of the functions B, Ex, and W in the same tale. It is the functional signatures of such tales that are transported to the predicate above. It turns out that exactly three tales have signatures that meet the criteria of the initial search; the presence of functions B, Ex, and W, namely tales 101, 132, and 155. And it turns out that these tales actually have many functions in common. The result of the intersection appears as follows:

(fcA, fcB, fcC, fcOut, fcHM, fcIN, fcK, fcQ, fcEx, fcW)

Queries of this kind may be used to further investigate connections between different parts of stories. In this particular example, the query has deliberately been designed to contain one function from the initial section and two functions from the final section of Propp's schema. As it appears, the reported tales all have the sequence HM, IN, K, which is the (fight) sequence in which the hero directly confronts the villain in order to remedy the initial lack.

We may also be interested in investigating the absence of certain functions, functions that are not present. Let us say that we want to find out which functions are common to tales that do not have function W (the wedding) present.

```
not_P(a,b):-
  et1(a,b),
  set_list(b,L),
  not(member(fcW,L)).
```

This description matches 12 tales. We may then call the intersection algorithm and instantiate the first query in the correct place in order to compare which functions these tales have in common. The answer to this query is a list of just two functions: the ubiquitous function A and the function Home. The 12 tales that do not end with a wedding only have two functions in common: the initial lack and the return of the hero. This result underlines the importance of reintegrating the protagonist in the society from which he is sent. The intricate relationship between these two functions is stressed by the fact that these are the only functions that, when inserted in the **not_P**

predicate, will produce any result in the **not_P_intersect** query. Further, they produce each other.

As a last example, we may once again consider the strange case of the 'lost heroes'. We look for tales that contain the function Out (departure of the hero) and not the function Home (return of the Hero). Then we intersect the result from this query in order to see if these tales have any other functions in common.

```
missingHeroes(a,b):-
  et1(a,b),
  set_list(b,L),
  member(fcOut,L),
  not(member(fcHome,L)).
missingHero_intersect(R):-  ini_res3(L), intersect(L,R).
  find_ini3(L) :- findall(b, missingHeroes(a,b), L).
  ini_res3(L) :- find_ini3(S),  sets_to_lists(S, (), L).
```

The result is perhaps no longer a surprise: the intersection contains exactly three functions: A, Out, and W. Function A is always present, and we specifically asked for tales with the function Out present, which leaves us with the third answer as the truly interesting one. Now we can finally answer the question of what became of the heroes whose returns are not reported: they got married.

5. Conclusion

In this essay, I have reëxamined the findings of Vladimir Propp, findings that were first published in 1928. Two related kinds of formal methods have been applied to the material, thus revealing a number of interesting concerns in the original findings. The description of the process stands as an illustration that formal methods, and in particular methods that make use of graphical representations, may be used to uncover new insights in old material, and that perhaps new methods may be applied to old theoretical frameworks in order to devise new ways of analysing the relations between story elements.

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Appendix A. Formal basis of FCA

Definitions:

$\subseteq$	subset	$s \subseteq S$	s is a subset of S
$\in$	element of	$a \in S$	a is an element of S
$\leq$	less or equal to	$a \leq b$	a is less than or equal to b
$\Leftrightarrow$	material equivalens	$A \Leftrightarrow B$	A is true if B is true, and A is false is B is false

Formally, if we consider the tales as a set of objects, called **G**, and the functions as a set of attributes, called **M**, then the fact that a given tale contains a certain function can be expressed by a binary relation, an incident called **I**, such that $\mathbf{I \subseteq G \times M}$. Here, the triplet **K: (G, M, I)** is called a formal context. A formal concept from **K** is defined as a pair **(A, B)**, where **A** is the extension of the concept covering the objects, and **B** is the intension, comprising all the attributes under consideration. Following Ganter & Wille (1997) a formal concept **(A, B)** is a concept of **K: (G, M, I)** if and only if

$A \subseteq G, B \subseteq M, A' = B$, and $A = B'$

Where for $\mathbf{A \subseteq G}$ and for $\mathbf{B \subseteq M}$, we define $\mathbf{A'}$ and $\mathbf{B'}$ respectively as follows:

$A' := \{m \in M \mid (g,m) \in I \text{ for all } g \in A\}$ and
$B' := \{g \in G \mid (g,m) \in I \text{ for all } m \in B\}$

Moreover, all concepts of the formal context are ordered by a subconcept – superconcept relation defined as follows:

$(A_1,B_1) \leq (A_2,B_2) \Leftrightarrow A_1 \subseteq A_2\ (B_2 \subseteq B_1)$

The ordered set of all concepts is called the concept lattice of the context **K: (G, M, I)**.

Appendix B. List of the Proppian functions

The preparatory section:

- α Initial situation
- β Absentation
- γ Interdiction
- δ Interdiction violated
- ε Reconnaissance by the villain
- ξ The villain receives information
- η The villain (attempts to) deceive(s) this victim
- θ The victim submits to deception

The Proppian functions are arranged into sequences called 'moves'. The four basic types of moves, comprising 24 of the functions, are as follows:

- I A Villainy / Lack
  - B Mediation, the connective incident
  - C Consent to counteraction
  - ↑ Departure, dispatch of the hero from home
  - D The first function of the donor
  - E Reaction of the hero
  - F The acquisition, receipt of a magical agent
  - G Transference to a designated place; guidance
- II H The hero struggles with the villain
  - J Branding or marking the hero
  - I Victory over the villain
  - K The liquidation of misfortune or lack
  - ↓ Return of the hero
  - Pr Pursuit of the hero
  - Rs Rescue of the hero
  - O Unrecognized arrival
  - L Claims of a false hero
- III L Claims of a false hero
  - M Difficult task
  - J Branding or marking the hero
  - N Solution of a task
  - K The liquidation of misfortune or lack
  - ↓ Return of the hero
  - Pr Pursuit of the hero
  - Rs Rescue of the hero

IV Q Recognition of the hero
Ex Exposure of the false hero
T Transfiguration
U Punishment of the false hero
W Wedding and accession to the throne

The Metrical Structure of Taiwanese Nursery Rhymes: A Corpus Study*

Yuchau E. Hsiao

Abstract

Traditional treatments of meter in nursery rhymes have two disadvantages. First, they focus on only a small number of lines. Second, they pursue derivational rules on a language-specific basis, but lack universal validity. This essay establishes a corpus of 3,155 lines of Taiwanese nursery rhymes and provides a non-derivational analysis of the data. The corpus shows a preference for masculine rhythm, which is found in 93.59 percent of the data. Metrical beat-sharing, then, allows feminine lines to be avoided. This essay puts forth a set of metrical constraints under the framework of Prince & Smolensky's (1993) Optimality Theory. The constraints are part of Universal Grammar, but are ranked language-specifically in Taiwanese nursery rhymes.

Key words: corpus; nursery rhymes; optimality theory; constraint ranking; rhythm.

1. Introduction

In Western nursery rhymes, there are usually realisation rules, after the tradition of generative phonology, that map the underlying metrical pattern into the surface output (Gueron 1973, 1974; Halle & Keyser 1971). A line is analysed as either left-headed or right-headed, consisting of strong (S) and weak (W) metrical positions. The derivation of l. 3 of the Italian tongue-twister shown in (1) illustrates this well. The line is parsed into two hemistichs, as indicated by the spacing. Each hemistich has a 'W W S W' pattern, which is derived from an underlying trochaic meter by a realisation rule that allows the strong position of a trochaic hemistich to be realised optionally by a weak syllable (Napoli 1978).[1]

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(1) S W S W S W S W **Underlying**
W W **Realization rule**
W W S W W W S W **Surface**
La tovaglia non e L'aglio
'the tablecloth not is garlic'
[The tablecloth is not garlic.]
(*Italian Trentino Rhymes*, l. 3; cited in Napoli 1978)

The mapping between syllables and metrical positions is not always on a one-to-one basis. In particular, a metrical position may be aligned with more than one syllable, as in (2) and (3). The third weak position in (2) is shared by *on* and *a*, and the second in (3) is shared by *par* and *la*.

(2) S W S W S W S
Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall
('Humpty Dumpty', l. 1)

(3) W S W S W S W S
Passant par la ville rencontre les gens du Roy
'passing by the city meet the men of the king'
[Passing by the city, the men of the king meet.]
(*Comptines de Langue Francaise*, l. 2)

Lerdahl & Jackendoff (1983) and Jackendoff (1989), among others, have referred to the fact that metrical beat (metrical position) contributes to linguistic rhythm in much the same way that musical beat does to musical rhythm. If we arbitrarily impose a metrical demibeat on each syllable, it can serve to indicate quantitative values for duration, and the syllable will be sounded in time with the demibeat.

Selkirk (1984) posits the idea of silent grid positions (or silent demibeats) in the sense that they may correspond to pausing or syllable lengthening. A close analogy is the music articulation mark (or breath mark). Singers can breathe before the articulation mark and have a short pause for rest in the song, or they can ignore the articulation mark and lengthen the note before it, singing through the subsequent notes without pause. At this point, a demibeat is realised as a pause when it remains unaligned, or it may result in syllable-lengthening when it is aligned with a syllable that is already aligned with another demibeat.

The rhythm of Taiwanese nursery rhymes can be comprehended as built from the count of demibeats. Nursery rhymes are an intermediate linguistic art that retains much of the neatness of poetry without sacrificing the natural vigour of ordinary speech; traditionally they are passed down by way of children's oral recitations in streets and alleys, and the rhythm follows from the children's clapping. The basic structure of clapping consists of two demibeats; namely, a downbeat falls on a clap, and an upbeat follows as the hands open. The final upbeat is frequently left unaligned, functioning as a silent demibeat. A line may consist of an odd number of audible demibeats, ending with a strong downbeat and followed by a silent demibeat, in which case it is called a 'masculine line'. Or it may have an even number of audible demibeats, ending in a weak upbeat, in which case it is called a 'feminine line'.

Several questions are thus in order. What is the metrical structure of Taiwanese nursery rhymes? How are demibeats and silent demibeats aligned with syllables in the nursery rhymes? Are there significant similarities between Western and Taiwanese nursery rhymes?

This essay is not intended to approach these questions along the lines of the derivational tradition, in which language-specific phonological rules are pursued; rather, it offers an analysis framed in terms of Optimality Theory (OT) (Prince & Smolensky 1993), which posits a grammar consisting of universal constraints that are language-specifically ranked. The present research is based on a corpus of 3,155 lines, and focuses on four types of information: the count of demibeats, the count of syllables, word categories, and the syntax tree.[2] Section 2 introduces the nature of the corpus. Section 3 proposes a metrical template, by which the various metrical patterns of the nursery rhymes can be generated. Section 4 addresses the particular patterns in which an asymmetry between syllable and demibeat occurs. Section 5 provides an OT account of the metrical patterns of the nursery rhymes. Finally, Section 6 offers some conclusions.

2. The Present Corpus

This corpus contains a collection of nursery rhymes in Taiwan from two major sources: (1) nursery rhymes available on the net (*Taiwan Kamma Tiam*) and (2) the book and CDs edited by Yang (2000). There are 515 nursery rhymes in this corpus, with a total of 3,155 lines, which are serially numbered, as in (4) – (5):

(4) Serial #: TN001-012
(5) Serial #: TY005-003

The prefixal abbreviation 'TN' represents the traditional nursery rhymes on the net, while 'TY' represents the traditional nursery rhymes in Yang (2000). The three numbers that follow, in this case, '001' and '005', indicate the first and the fifth nursery rhymes, respectively. The next three numbers, in this case, '012' and '003', indicate the 12th line and the third line of the relevant nursery rhymes, respectively.

The nursery rhymes are structured with lines of both regulated verse and unregulated verse. A nursery rhyme line may range from one syllable to 13 syllables. As shown in (6), the trisyllabic, pentasyllabic, and heptasyllabic lines constitute 80.85 percent of the corpus.

(6) The lengths of nursery rhyme lines

Syllables per line	Total # of lines	Percentage
1	1	0.03%
2	13	0.41%
3	852	27.00%
4	249	7.89%
5	999	31.66%
6	199	6.31%
7	703	22.29%
8	72	2.28%
9	52	1.65%
10	10	0.32%
11	2	0.06%
12	2	0.06%
13	1	0.03%
TOTAL	3155	≈100.00%

Both metrical demibeats and syllables are counted in the corpus, since the mapping between the two constitutes the basic rhythm of the nursery rhymes. A downbeat falls on a clap, and an upbeat follows as the hands open. What is of interest is that a demibeat may include one or more syllables. Comparing (6) with (7), we can see that the number of syllables in a line does not always match the number of demibeats. As (7) also shows, more than 91.59 percent of the nursery rhyme lines have an odd number of beats; furthermore, the rest of the lines are frequently parsed into smaller units that contain an odd number of beats.

(7) Demibeats

Demibeats per line	Total # of lines	Percentage
1	1	0.03%
2	13	0.41%
3	940	29.79%
4	166	5.26%
5	1116	35.37%
6	82	2.60%
7	776	24.60%
8	12	0.38%
9	44	1.39%
10	1	0.03%
11	4	0.13%
TOTAL	3155	≈100.00%

As shown in (8), a six-beat line often contains a pair of three-beat units, and an eight-beat line often contains a five-beat unit and a three-beat unit; there is only one 10-beat line, which contains a seven-beat unit and a three-beat unit.

(8) Demibeat grouping

Demibeats per line	Demibeat grouping	Total # of lines
6	3+3	63
	6	19
8	5+3	4
	8	8
10	7+3	1

Liberman & Prince (1977) and Hayes (1983) observe that in English, content words, but not function words, have priority in grid-marking. Chen (1991) shows that in Wunzhou Chinese, function words are invisible to intonational phrasing at an initial stage. In this corpus, word categories are coded to examine whether the categorical distinction between content words and function words affects the assignment of metrical demibeats. The content words are coded as V (verb), N (noun), and A (adjective or adverb). The function words are coded as F. The F category is intended to be an extended class that includes classifiers, conjunctions, directional markers, pronouns, complementisers, suffixes, particles, and auxiliaries, as well as the so-called coverbs and the be-verb.[4] Metrically speaking, coverbs and be-verbs behave quite differently from regular verbs. Like other function words, they often share demibeats with adjacent syllables, and thus are labelled as F. Numerals are rhythmically like nominals, and thus are

labelled as N, in contrast to classifiers. A sample of nursery rhymes is given in (9):

(9) Syntax and word category

Serial #	Syntax Tree	Simplified Tree
TN070-001	[A A A]	[3]
TN070-002	[V [NN F]][V NN]	[1 [2 1]][1 2]
TN070-003	[AA [V WA]]	[2 [1 2]]
TN070-004	[AA [V [N F]]	[2 [1 2]]
TN070-005	[[N F] V]	[2 1]
TN070-006	[N F][V NN]	[2][1 2]

As the line in (10) shows, the numeral *tsit* 'one' is coded as N, while the classifier *bue* is coded as F. A monosyllabic verb is represented as V and a disyllabic noun as NN. Likewise, VV represents a disyllabic verb (for example, *kiantang* 'frozen'), and AA a disyllabic adjective or adverb, (for example, *siosio* 'warm').

(10) CH-05-03-02

[N	F]	[V	NN]
tsit	*bue*	*ko*	*bok-tsiu*
'one	CL	glue	eye'
[One (fish)		glues	the eyes.]

A syntax tree is needed on the assumption that prosody is related to syntactic structure. There are 1,403 types of syntax tree out of 3,155 lines in a corpus in which only a few lines have identical bracketing. The large variety of syntactic patterns lowers the possibility of a global match between prosodic and syntactic structures. Hence, I focus on the correspondence between more local syntactic constructions and smaller prosodic units (cf. Section 4 and Section 5). In fact, Chen (1984) and Shih (1986) have suggested that foot formation may be affected by local syntactic relations such as immediate constituency and branching direction; Hsiao (1990, 1991b) has also observed that a pair of immediate constituents may share a single demibeat.

This essay adopts Duanmu's (2004) coding system, where both [AN] and [NN] are labelled [NN], as many have indicated that in Chinese dialects the combination of a monosyllabic adjective followed by a monosyllabic noun is actually a noun compound or is lexicalised into one (Shih 1986; Dai 1992; Hsiao 2000). The distinction between [A NN] and [N NN] is made when possible, but [N NN] is preferred

when the distinction is not clear. The choice is not critical, since both A and N are content words. A line in the corpus may sometimes exhibit a flat structure, where no internal bracketing is made, as in (11) – (12).

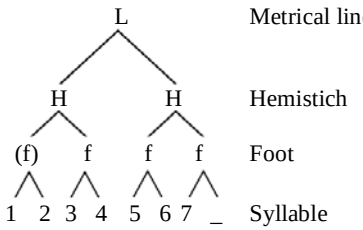
(11) CH-01-01-01
[N N N]
tsit neng saN
'one two three'
[One, two, three.]

(12) CH-05-02-01
[A A A]
Tshiu tshiu tshiu
'shame shame shame'
[Shame on you.]

3. Metrical Template

In spite of the fact that stress is not intuitively clear for Chinese speakers in speech (Chao 1968; Selkirk & Shen 1990), there have been some arguments over the meter in Chinese regulated verse. Chen (1979, 1980, 1984) has portrayed the verse as having an iambic meter. A metrical template can be summarised from his works, as in (13):

(13)



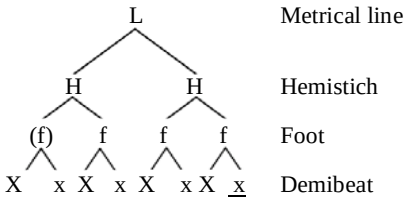
A metrical line consists of two hemistichs. A hemistich contains two feet. A foot then is made of two syllables, or one syllable followed by a vacant position in the final foot. This template yields two kinds of regulated verse: namely, the pentasyllabic pattern if the parenthesised foot is omitted, and the heptasyllabic pattern otherwise.

Hsiao (1990, 1991a, 1991b) observes that folk songs in Taiwanese Southern Min reflect metrical patterns of both regulated verse and unregulated verse (Chang Duan Ju),[5] and proposes a trochaic template to yield the rhythm. Duanmu (2004) considers the trochaic meter a part of Universal Grammar. He suggests that Chinese verse, like English verse, displays a system of stress and should be reanalysed

under trochaic meter. In this section, I show that the nursery rhymes also instantiate a case of trochaic meter: the stress falls on a clap (a downbeat), while a weak position follows as the hands open (an upbeat).

An essential difference between regulated verse and nursery rhymes is that the numbers of syllables and demibeats always match in the former but not in the latter. In spite of the fact that a line may have a wide range of lengths, the rhythm of nursery rhymes is substantially indebted to regulated verse. Given the fact that the recitations of nursery rhymes are based on clapping, I assume here that the meter can be best captured by the count of demibeats. I propose (14) as the basic template from which various metrical patterns can be accounted for.

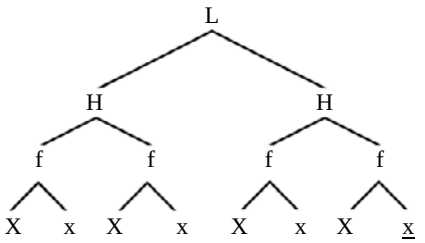
(14)



(X = strong position; x = weak position)

Several patterns are observed in the corpus. First, the line prefers an odd number of demibeats. A line of this type, referred to as a masculine line, may consist of three, five, seven, or nine demibeats, and so forth. Based on the template in (14), I posit the seven-demibeat line as the basic pattern, as in (15), where the seven demibeats are followed by a silent demibeat.

(15) TN073-001 Seven-demibeat line



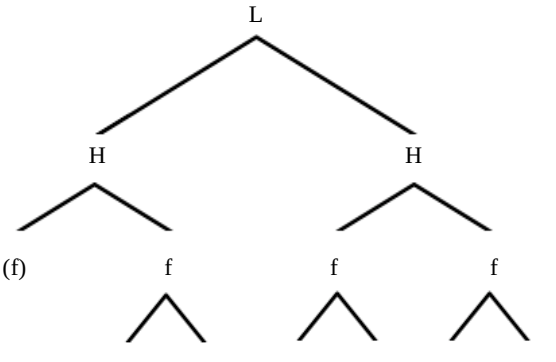
O niao tsheng kun bo tsheng kho

'black cat wear skirt not wear pants'

[The black cat wears a skirt but wears no pants.]

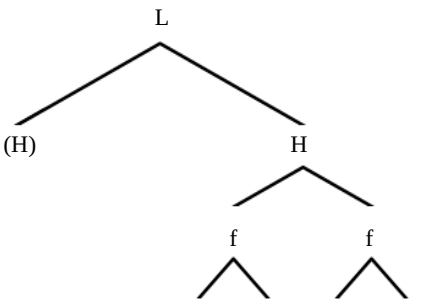
A five-demibeat line is then generated in the absence of the first foot, as in (16), and a three-demibeat line leaves out the entire first hemistich, as in (17).

(16) TY013-013 Five-demibeat line



[The cock teases the hen.]

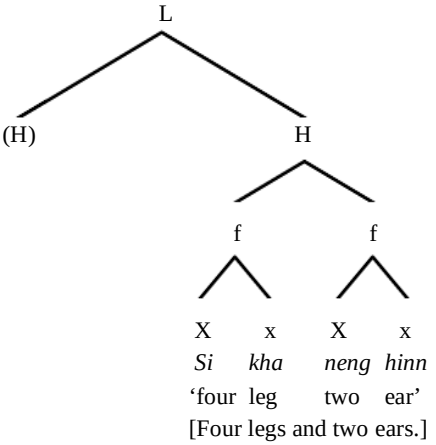
(17) TN017-001 Three-demibeat line



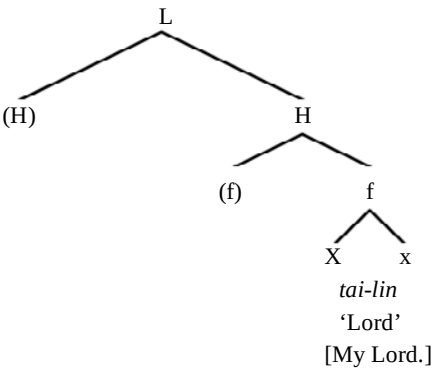
[The moon is bright.]

When the final silent demibeat becomes audible, the line will have an even number of demibeats. I refer to this as a feminine rhythm. In terms of the metrical template, a four-demibeat line fills the second hemistich, as in (18), and a two-demibeat line fills only the final foot, as in (19). There is only one one-demibeat line in the corpus.

(18) TY223-001 Four-demibeat line

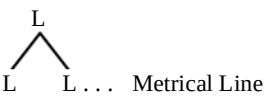


(19) TN-035-001 Two-demibeat line



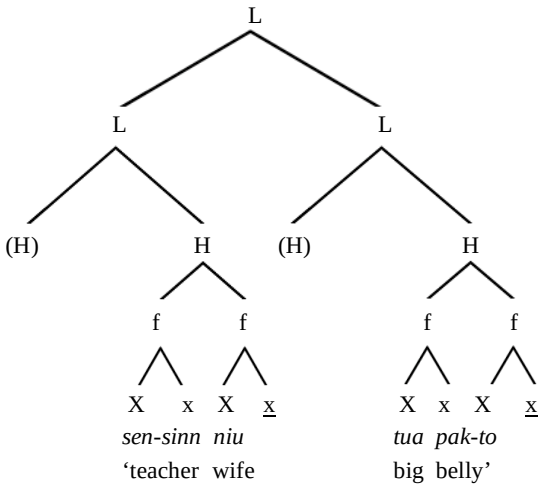
When a line contains more demibeats than the metrical template can accommodate, it is made of multiple metrical lines. The template will look like (20).

(20)



A feminine line also has a tendency to break into smaller metrical lines, particularly masculine ones, as has been shown in (8). There are 82 six-demibeat lines in the corpus; 63 of them are parsed as 3+3, as in (21), where a line is made of two consecutive three-demibeat metrical lines.

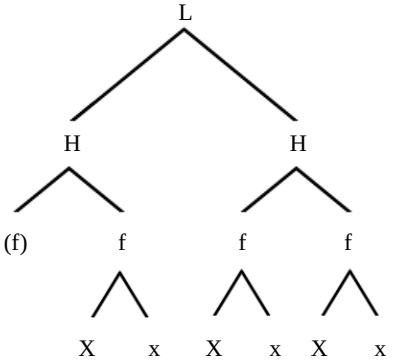
(21) TY010-004 Six-demibeat line: 3+3



[The teacher's wife is pregnant.]

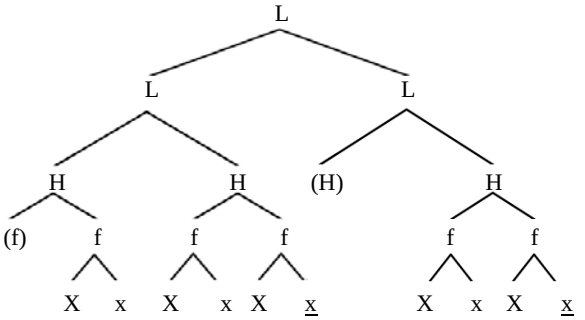
The remaining 19 are parsed as single six-demibeat lines, with the absence of the first foot of the template, as in (22). The 12 eight-demibeat lines in the corpus are parsed in two ways: four are parsed as 5+3, as in (23), and eight are parsed as single eight-demibeat lines, as in (24).

(22) TY371-002 Six-demibeat line: 6



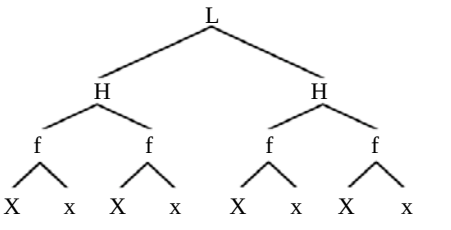
[Two eyes are in the centre.]

(23) TY007-012 Eight-beat line: 5+3



[Dug out long chicken-eggs and big duck eggs.]

(24) TY404-001 Eight-beat line: 8



[one square thing]

As has been shown in (21) and (23), a nursery rhyme line may consist of more than one metrical line. This facilitates analyses of longer lines. There is only one 10-beat nursery rhyme line in the corpus, parsed as 7+3.

One problem arises as to how to determine the masculinity or femininity of a line that consists of multiple lines. In particular, when a line is formed by combining a feminine metrical line and a masculine metrical line; for example, is 4+5 a feminine or masculine line? An appeal to clapping can solve this problem. That is, a masculine line ends in a clap, a downbeat, while a feminine line ends in an upbeat. The list in (25) shows all the combinations found in the corpus: each ends in an audible downbeat, followed by a silent upbeat. They are all masculine lines.

(25) Masculine lines

3+3	six-beat line
5+3	eight-beat line
2+7	nine-beat line
7+3	ten-beat line

In other words, the combination in which a feminine line is followed by a masculine line results in a masculine line. The opposite combination is not found in the corpus. In fact, the corpus shows an impressively high percentage of masculine lines, as given in (26):

(26) Lines

Line types	Total # of lines	Percentage
Masculine	2953	93.59%
Feminine	202	6.41%
TOTAL	3155	100.00%

The corpus shows that masculine rhythm is the prevalent pattern in the nursery rhymes: about 93.59 percent of the lines are masculine, while only 6.41 percent are feminine. The following sections will thus work toward an analysis of the preference for masculine rhythm.

4. Beat-Sharing

We have mentioned that the number of syllables in a line does not always match the number of demibeats. The question, then, is how the demibeats are assigned to syllables in the case of asymmetry between syllables and beats. In the corpus, such an asymmetry occurs only in masculine lines, not in feminine lines. The first pattern observed in this essay is that an F category shares a demibeat with an adjacent syllable. The F category includes classifiers, conjunctions, directional markers, complementisers, pronouns, suffixs, and particles, as well as coverbs and the be-verb. The be-verb falls in the F category because it is metrically less salient. Consider the three readings in (27):

(27) TY112-006

*a. X x X x X x X x
te-it huan-lo si ka-lai san

b. X x X x X x X x
te-it huan-lo si ka-lai san

c. X x X x X x X x
te-it huan-lo si ka-lai san
first worry be home poor
[The most worrying is being poor.]

In (27a), each syllable, including the be-verb *si*, is assigned a demibeat, and the resulting line has a feminine rhythm. However, the reading is unmetrical.[6] The be-verb shares a demibeat with a preceding syllable in (27b) and with a following syllable in (27c). Both readings are metrical.

Beat-sharing is a means of avoiding a feminine rhythm. Yet an F category item is not able to share a demibeat if the beat-sharing will result in a feminine line, since a line prefers a masculine rhythm, as illustrated in (28).

(28) TY092-021

a. X x X x X x X x
thao-ke kio gun khi tsang tshao

*b. X x X x X x
thao-ke kio gun khi tsang tshao

*c. X x X x X x
thao-ke kio gun khi tsang tshao
'boss tell me DIR wrap grass'
[My boss told me to wrap the grass.]

There are two F category items in line (28), above: the pronoun *gun* and the directional marker *khi*. In (28a), each syllable is assigned a single demibeat, rendering a metrical masculine rhythm. Both *gun* in (28b) and *khi* in (28c) share a demibeat with an adjacent syllable, and both create a feminine but unmetrical rhythm.

A second observation of beat-sharing is attributed to syntactic structure. In particular, immediate constituents (hereafter, ICs) share a demibeat to create a masculine line, as in (29):

(29) TN072-002

*a. X x X x
tsao tshut-lai khuaN

b. X x X x
tsao tshut-lai khuaN
run DIR-DIR look
[Come out to look.]

One may notice that the pair of ICs *tshut-lai* consists of two directional markers, that is, F category items, and thus, they must share a demibeat. This is true, but (30) shows that morphosyntactic ICs indeed play a role in beat-sharing. In (30a) the non-ICs *tsao tshut-*

share a demibeat, and in (30b) *-lai khuaN* share a demibeat; although both derive a masculine line, both are unmetrical.

(30) TY056-003

*a. X x X x
tsao tshut-lai khuaN

*b. X x X x
tsao tshut-lai khuaN
'run DIR-DIR look'
[Come out to look.]

The effects of morphosyntactic ICs are further revealed in lines like (31), where no F category is involved. The members of the disyllabic adjective *tsa-bo* share a demibeat to render a masculine line, as in (31b). Without the beat-sharing, a feminine line would be derived, as in (31a).

(31) TN021-004

*a. X x X x X x
tsap it tshiaN tsa-bo kiaN

b. X x X x X x
tsap it tshiaN tsa-bo kiaN
'ten one invite female child'
[On the 11th, invite the daughter.]

5. An OT Analysis

The emergence of Optimality Theory (Prince & Smolensky 1993, McCarthy & Prince 1995) has initiated a new era of non-derivational approaches. Linguists like Rice (2000), Hayes (forthcoming), and Kager (2001), among others, have pursued generative metrics from a constraint-based perspective, and have characterised poetic meter through constraint reranking. In this section, I develop an OT account of the rhythm of nursery rhymes. Several phenomena are worth noting. First, the basic metrical template posited in (14) preferentially maps syllables and demibeats on a one-to-one basis. Second, a masculine line is preferred to a feminine one. A pair of constraints can thus be formalised as follows:

(32) No Share: every syllable is assigned a single demibeat.

(33) Masculinity: a masculine rhythm is preferred.

No Share conflicts with Masculinity in the event that a one-to-one demibeat assignment results in a feminine line, which would sound

less metrical or unmetrical, as shown in (27). Because a masculine rhythm is preferred, Masculinity must rank above No Share. In other words, beat-sharing is inevitable in cases like (34). In (34a), which is identical with (27a), each syllable receives a demibeat so that a feminine rhythm is created, in violation of Masculinity. In (34b) and (34c), which are identical with (27b) and (27c), *si* shares a demibeat either with a preceding syllable or with a following syllable; both render a masculine rhythm, and thus both are selected as optimal outputs (shown by the happy face: ☺). The * indicates a violation of a certain constraint, and the *! indicates a fatal violation. The shading shows a point where whether a constraint is violated is no longer important.

(34) TY112-006 *te-it huan-lo si ka-lai san* = (27)
first worry be home poor

	Masculinity	No Share
a. x x -lo si	*!	
☺ b. x -lo si		*
☺ c. x si ka-		*

Note that not just any category of syllable may be subject to beat-sharing. A third observation is as follows: to prevent a feminine rhythm, it is an F category item that shares a demibeat with an adjacent syllable. As shown in (35), if *si* does not share a demibeat with an adjacent syllable, candidates (a) and (d) would be incorrectly selected (indicated by the upset face, ☹).

(35) TY112-006 *te-it huan-lo si ka-lai san* = (27)
first worry be home poor

	Masculinity	No Share
☹ a. x huan-lo		*
☺ b. x -lo si		*
☺ c. x si ka-		*
☹ d. x ka-lai		*

The constraint in (36) is thus indispensable:

(36) F-Share: an F category syllable shares a demibeat with an adjacent syllable.

F-Share should rank between Masculinity and No Share. This partial ranking allows the F category to share a demibeat with an adjacent syllable only if a feminine rhythm would otherwise occur. In (37b) and (37d), F-Share successfully eliminates candidates (35a) and (35d).

(37) TY112-006 *te-it huan-lo si ka-lai san* = (27)
first worry be home poor

	Masculinity	F-Share	No Share
a. x x -lo si	*!		
b. x huan-lo		*!	*
☺ c. x -lo si			*
☺ d. x si ka-			*
e. x ka-lai		*!	*

A fourth observation is that two syllables that are morphosyntactic ICs share a demibeat when no F category item is involved. The constraint in (38) serves to capture this insight:

(38) IC-Share: two syllables that are morphosyntactic ICs share a demibeat.

The ranking of IC-Share is also below Masculinity and above No Share. ICs share a demibeat in order to achieve a masculine rhythm. In (39), candidates (39c) and (39d) are ruled out by IC-Share, since the non-ICs share a demibeat. Candidate (39a) has no beat-sharing and derives a feminine rhythm, in violation of Masculinity. As a result, candidate (39b) is chosen as the optimal output, where *tsa-bo* shares a demibeat.

(39) TN021-004 *tsap it tshiaN tsa-bo kiaN* = (31)
ten one invite female child

	Masculinity	IC-Share	No Share
a. x x tsa-bo	*!		
☺ b. x tsa-bo			*
c. x tshiaN tsa-		*!	
d. x -bo kiaN		*!	*

The next question lies in the interaction of F-Share and IC-Share. Consider again (37), where the IC pairs *huan-lo* and *ka-lai* are not allowed to share demibeats, so the demibeat-sharing must involve the F category *si*. It thus becomes clear that F-Share is ranked higher than IC-Share, as shown in (40).

(40) TY112-006 *te-it huan-lo si ka-lai san* = (27)
first worry be home poor

	Masculinity	F-Share	IC-Share	No Share
a. x x -lo si	*!			
b. x huan-lo		*!		*
☺ c. x -lo si			*	*
☺ d. x si ka-			*	*
e. x ka-lai		*!		*

When adjacent ICs are both F category items, F-Share will be insufficient to prevent either member of the ICs from sharing a demibeat with an outsider. As shown in (41), candidates (41c) and (41d) are ruled out by IC-Share but not F-Share, so that candidate (41b) emerges as the optimal output.

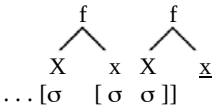
(41) TY056-003 *tsao tshut-lai khuaN* = (30)
run DIR-DIR look

	Masculinity	F-Share	IC-Share	No Share
a. x x tshut-lai	*!			
☺ b. x tshut-lai				*
c. x tsao tshut-			*!	*
d. x -lai kuaN			*!	*

In this corpus, 62 percent of the lines end in a right-branching syntactic tree, [σ[σσ]], where the symbol σ indicates a syllable. Interestingly, there is no instance where the final two syllables share a beat. What this means is that metrical structures do not necessarily match syntactic structures. Assuming the basic template in (14), we can expect a mismatch between prosody and syntax. Specifically, the

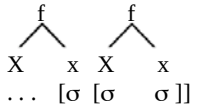
metricality in (42) can be comprehended in a gradient manner: (42a) > (42b) and (42c) > (42d) and (42e).

(42) a.

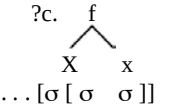


syntactic bracketing

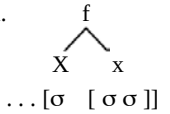
?b.



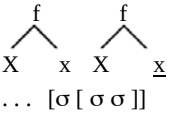
?c.



*d.



*e.



The foot-division and the syntax are completely mismatched in (42a), which, however, is masculine and metrically preferred. The feminine readings (42b) and (42c) sound less metrical. As to (42d) and (42e), they both are unmetrical; the reason for this non-metricality is that the final two syllables share a demibeat in both readings. A pattern is thus observed here: namely, the final syllable is not subject to beat-sharing, and a more primitive version of No Share can be derived, as in (43):

(43) No Share-Final: the final syllable is assigned a single demibeat.

No Share-Final ranks higher than F-Share, IC-Share, and No Share. That is, the final syllable does not share a demibeat with a preceding syllable even if an F category or a pair of ICs is involved. No Share-Final does not conflict with Masculinity; thus the enriched constraint ranking is as follows:

(44) Masculinity, No Share-Final >>
F-Share >>
IC-Share >>
No Share

6. Conclusion

Traditional studies of nursery rhymes and verse have focused only on a small number of lines (Gueron 1973, 1974; Halle & Keyser 1971; Napoli 1978), and the theoretical predictions are not confirmed in larger collections of data. This essay has offered an analysis of Taiwanese nursery rhymes based on a corpus of 3,155 lines, in which four types of information are coded, including the count of demibeats,

the count of syllables, word categories, and the syntax tree. As the corpus shows, the number of syllables and the number of demibeats do not always match in the lines, and the syllable-demibeat mapping may require beat-sharing to achieve a masculine line, as do 93.59 percent of the lines in the corpus. One factor governing beat-sharing lies in a categorical distinction between content words and function words, a tendency that is often found in Western nursery rhymes as well. A second factor that facilitates beat-sharing is syntactic immediate constituency. Such an influence of syntax on prosody is not at all surprising, as similar patterns have been addressed in English verse (for example, see Hayes 1989).

Theoretically, the convention of derivational phonology concentrates on rule derivations of metrical output on a language-specific basis. This study of Taiwanese nursery rhymes, on the other hand, employs a non-derivational approach and appeals to a set of constraints to account for the various metrical outputs. A partial constraint ranking is put forth as follows: Masculinity, No Share-Final >> F-Share >> IC-Share >> No Share. As I have shown earlier, about 93.59 percent of the lines in the corpus are masculine. This ranking ensures that a masculine line has priority to surface, and that F categories and syntactic ICs are subject to beat-sharing in the case of asymmetry between syllables and beats, except that the final syllable must receive a single demibeat. In terms of Optimality Theory, the constraints are part of Universal Grammar, but they are ranked differently in different languages; the differences in rankings detail the variations that occur in those languages. This research on Taiwanese nursery rhymes has shed light on a general theory of rhythm from both constraint-based and corpus-based perspectives.

Endnotes

[1]On the other hand, Halle & Keyser (1971: 169) propose a set of correspondence rules that align syllables to derive iambs in English verse.

[2]There are many considerations in the corpus, but this essay concentrates on these four aspects. The completed data of the corpus will be made available electronically on the author's website at <http://phonology.nccu.edu.tw>.

[3]The parsed 'units' will be referred to as metrical lines. In other words, a line may consist of one or more metrical lines (See Section 4 for further discussions).

[4]A coverb is a controversial term, but in this essay it simply refers to a semantically bleached verb, such as *ka*, 'have', etc.

[5]Chang Duan Ju refers to the verse of the Song Dynasty, where the length of a verse line is variable. A line of such verse can be as short as two syllables, or as long as nine syllables (or longer).

[6]A reading is considered 'non-metrical' if it does not sound like verse: namely, it either sounds like common speech or sounds ungrammatical. Metrical readings are those that render verse. Non-metrical lines are marked with an asterisk.

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Embodiment and the Irreducible Sign: Towards a Theoretical Anthropo-Semiotic Grounding for Literary Textual Analysis

Ulf Cronquist

Abstract

The objective of this essay is to outline a model for literary analysis located in the unrest between cognitive poetics and cognitive semiotics. Proceeding from the basic tenets that language always involves an irreducibility of semiotic signification, and that the cognitive system strives for comprehension through more restricted operations, I discuss primary, secondary, and tertiary embodiment (compare Sonesson, [in press]) in relation to possibilities for careful textual analysis. With John Hawkes's 'sex trilogy' (*The Blood Oranges* [1971], *Death, Sleep, and the Traveler* [1974], and *Travesty* [1976]) as an example, I also consider textuality in relation to two specific analytic tools that are widely applied in cognitive poetics: the figure/ground distinction and processes of conceptual blending. In the analyses of Hawkes's trilogy, I focus especially on the application of the cognitive-semiotic Aarhus blending model (Brandt & Brandt 2005), which includes a critique of the lack of context in canonical cognitive linguistics (for example, Lakoff & Johnson [1980], Johnson [1987], Lakoff [1987], Fauconnier & Turner [1998, 2002]).

Primary, secondary, and tertiary embodiment refer, respectively, to the relation of body and mind, the relation of self and other, and the relations among self-other-artefacts. My purpose is to introduce this triad into literary studies to provide a theoretical anthropo-semiotic grounding for analyses of literary texts that are in turn grounded in categories taken over from cognitive science.

Key words: cognitive poetics; cognitive semiotics; embodiment; blending; figure and ground; John Hawkes.

1. Introduction

To understand society, attention has to be paid to both the subjectivity of the individual citizen and the irreducible sign-system of the language that the citizens of a society use. On this note, the irreducibility of literature and literary practices of all kinds offers a gold mine for critical analysis and the understanding of any given society. As Joan Didion once put it, 'fiction is in most ways hostile to

ideology'. (Didion 1979: 112) In cognitive poetics, a combination of careful literary analysis is combined with recent developments in the study of mind within cognitive science. The difficulty is to bring together two entities that seem difficult to reconcile: the unrestricted economy of the sign in use by the citizen and in literature, and the more restricted economy of the cognitive system. To further the development of cognitive poetics, there is a need to include the perspective of mind-culture co-evolution – considering human cognition in a diachronic perspective, and also in terms of situated intersubjective, embedded, socially distributed cognition.

Cognitive literary studies needs first of all an anthropo-semiotic grounding. If cognitive poetics remains within the paradigm of traditional contextualised stylistics, it will remain largely ahistorical – perhaps 'contextualised', but without *real* context. Secondly, and logically connected, cognitive poetics has to take into account mankind's symbolic and subsymbolic activities: our everyday subjective and unrestricted processes of semiosis. Concentrating here on theoretical considerations, I will include analyses of John Hawkes's 'sex trilogy', a text that was considered ahistorical and not politically correct when it was published in the 70s, charges that were are also levied by several subsequent reviewers and critics (see Cronquist 2000). My purpose is to propose an outline for literary analysis as it might take place at the intersection of a cognitive poetics and a cognitive semiotics with society, politics, and the citizen.

2. Embodiment: A Cognitive-Semiotic Model for Literary Analysis

The insight that the mind is embodied has had a strong influence in cognitive science for some time, and, more recently in cognitive approaches to literature. In cognitive science we can now differentiate between the first wave of scientists who worked in a disembodied tradition of symbol manipulation, and a second wave that concentrated on neural-like models of self-organisation. The first generation defined cognition as the computation of symbols, where the system 'interacts only with the form of the symbols (their physical attributes), not their meaning'. (Varela, Thompson & Rosch: 43) Generally, this model is referred to as cognitivism and those responsible for the founding ideas were people like Chomsky, Minsky, and McCarthy.

The second generation of cognitive science, connectionism, which emerged some twenty years later in the late 70s, expresses two reservations towards cognitivism. The first is that symbolic representation is based solely on *sequential* rules. Parallel processing of algorithms has met with little interest, since it goes against the sequential orthodoxy of computationalism (Varela, Thompson & Rosch, 1991: 86). The second is that symbolic processing is *localised*, that is, malfunction of any one symbol causes malfunction of the entire system. What is of particular interest here is that the desire for knowledge about *distributed* operations is born out of the critique based on this second reservation (Varela, Thompson & Rosch, 1991: 86).

If there is an emerging *third generation* of cognitive scientists – as I see it, there is – it will have its roots in the cognitive and experiential forms of embodiment that Varela, Thompson & Rosch outline. In literature, we are now also under the influence of Katherine Hayles's (1999) poignant mapping of how we became posthuman, which entails considerations of how the reading mind is situated in a distributed, socially embedded, system of cognition. As regards literature, informatics, and society, Hayles examines with stringency how (the image of) information virtually lost its body in the global village, and calls for a careful consideration of what really goes on in an information-processing society with reference to *distributed cognition* (1999).

Critiquing the 20th-century (image of) the separation of mind and body, Hayles takes as a starting point Hans Moravec's *Mind Children,* where Moravec writes that it will soon be possible to download human consciousness into a computer. Moravec invents a scenario in which a human brain in a kind of cranial liposuction is puréed in molecular layers and transferred bit by bit into a computer. Hayles comments that, even if it were possible to separate mind from body, 'how could anyone think that consciousness in an entirely different medium would remain unchanged, as if it had no connection with embodiment?' (1999: 1) Hayles emphasises that Moravec is not alone: 'In fact, a defining characteristic of the present cultural moment is the belief that information can circulate unchanged among different material substrates. It is not for nothing that "Beam me up, Scotty" has become a cultural icon for the global information society' (1999:

1-2). In Hayles's account, 'the distributed cognition of the emergent human subject correlates with . . . the distributed cognitive system as a whole, in which "thinking" is done by both human and non-human systems'. (1999: 290)

I would like to propose here, for literary analysis, an embodied cognitive-semiotic model that is inclusive enough to address the entire system of distributed cognition and thus to include in the analysis primary embodiment (the relation between body and mental life), secondary embodiment (the relation between self and other), and tertiary embodiment (the relation between self, other, and cultural artefacts). Please see Fig. 1.[1]

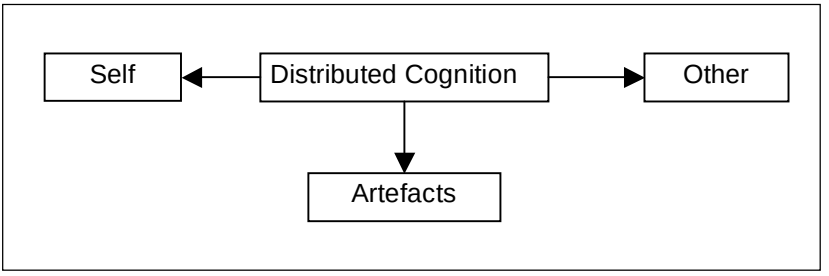

Figure 1 Embodiment: primary; secondary; tertiary

Such a model would begin by considering in descriptive terms how the embodied mind meets the text, proceed to consider how the embodied self meets the other, and further consider how the embodied self and the other relate to cultural artefacts.

2.1 Primary Embodiment

To begin with, we are concerned with the relation of the body and the reading mind. In cognitive poetics we can choose to analyse the micro-world of the text, concentrating for example on the notion of the figure/ground distinction or blending models. In Stockwell (2002) and Gavins & Steen (2003), areas for analysing micro-levels also include cognitive deixis, conceptual metaphor, and prototypes. And blending models are sometimes also referred to as conceptual integration networks; see, for example, Fauconnier & Turner (2000, 2002). Considering the macro-world of a text, we can use cognitive narratology as an umbrella term for approaches like text world theory, possible worlds theory, and contextual frame theory.[2]

The distinction between micro- and macro-worlds is useful for analytical purposes. It must be noted, however, that the cognitive notions of figure and ground and blending models can be used in macro-analyses, and that narratological strategies can be used in micro-analyses. In this limited space I will remain within the micro-approach, providing analyses of John Hawkes's trilogy, *The Blood Oranges* (1971), *Death, Sleep, and the Traveler* (1974), and *Travesty* (1976).

What the reading mind encounters in the opening paragraph of *The Blood Oranges* is a rather chaotic metaphoricity (see Appendix I). Love itself is the agent, weaving its own tapestry, functioning as a self-organising system, and blurring the subject-object distinction since love *is* also (in) the tapestry. In terms of figure and ground, no doubt the first phrase – with love as agent, the incongruous first noun-predicate combination and the subject-object reflexivity invoked – is *figuring* immediately to the background of the hitherto empty page. Because of this, 'Love weaves its own tapestry' is figuring in three steps: 'Love weaves' (agency), 'its own' (reflexivity), and 'tapestry' (textual object). This first phrase is thus densely rhetorical and engages the reading mind in several considerations and reconsiderations. But the text becomes even denser as we proceed: the paragraph contains at least 10 blends that relate to each other. It seems that this kind of ornamental writing is perhaps *too dense* to uphold a figure/ground distinction. However, if we examine the overriding blend that defines the two first sentences, we get a clear picture. That is, love weaves, spins, breathes, and creates. The personification of love starts from the components of love and creator/agent and results in the virtual blend 'Love is a creator'. Furthermore, we must consider a palpable level of (pragmatic) *relevance* for this blend to understand its emergent qualities – and the context here is 'Romantic textuality'. The blend thus emerges like this: 'love wilfully creates its own text, regardless of the poet/narrator', as shown in Fig. 2.

The blend that figures love as a self-organising force for creation is affirmed in the second paragraph, where the narrator takes 'whatever shape . . . destined . . . in the silken weave of Love's pink panorama'. He also tells us how he 'always went where the thread wound', and how we can see him as a 'bull' or a 'great white creature' in the corner of love's tapestry. Thus, love's agency is underlined, while the

narrator as textual being is defined as passive. It is no coincidence that Cyril, the narrator's name, phonetically reads 'lyric' backwards.

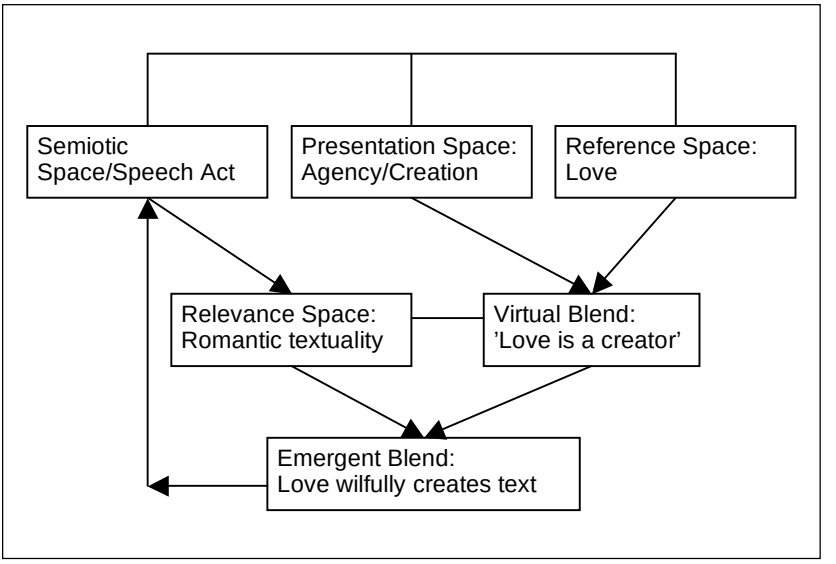

Figure 2 Blend: *The Blood Oranges*, first paragraph, Aarhus blending model.[3] (The graphics used here and below employ *squares* instead of *bubbles* to illustrate the structure of blending spaces.)

But the second paragraph not only mirrors the agent/patient opposition, it also furthers the notion of love as sexuality. This is what the reading mind addresses equally strongly here: the expression 'the gods fashion us to spread the legs of woman' is the first to denote an explicit eroticism – an eroticism that figures prominently in the established ground of the tapestry of love in which the narrator finds himself. (The text consistently evokes sexuality through a series of covert/overt metonymies. I have marked nine instances in the Appendix.)

The beginning of the second novel in the trilogy, *Death, Sleep, and the Traveler*, is less ornamented (see Appendix II). In the first paragraph we are told that Ursula is leaving and how she is dressed. The first phrase is matter-of-fact, but it nevertheless figures as a deictic piece of information that we are urged to process. What follows is a long descriptive sentence that finishes by repeating that she is leaving, stressing the urgency of the information that is also

repeated in the first phrase of the second paragraph. This repetition is thus figure to the background of Ursula's clothing. But to the background of the importance of her leaving, the description of her dress also stands out as a figure in the text, obviously so since she is both 'overdressed' and wears a combination of clothes and accessories that call attention to their combinatory effects. That is, we see how figure and ground shift back and forth in this paragraph.

In the second paragraph, the deictic 'the trial' is certainly working as a figure, as is the deadpan reference to the narrator being a Hollander. With the third paragraph, the title of the novel is embedded in 'death, sleep, and the anguish of lonely travel'. The fourth paragraph then introduces a transparent metafictional phrase, the 'phosphorescent messages breeding and rippling in the black waves'. We are now introduced to the overriding metaphor in *Death, Sleep, and the Traveler*: the reluctant voyager 'on a cruise for pleasure'. (Compare the metafictional Tapestry of Love in *The Blood Oranges*.) Like Cyril, the narrator, the character Alert is swept along by a mythical-textual force, but he is reluctant as to the ethics of such a *ludic* aesthetics, as can be seen in Fig. 3.

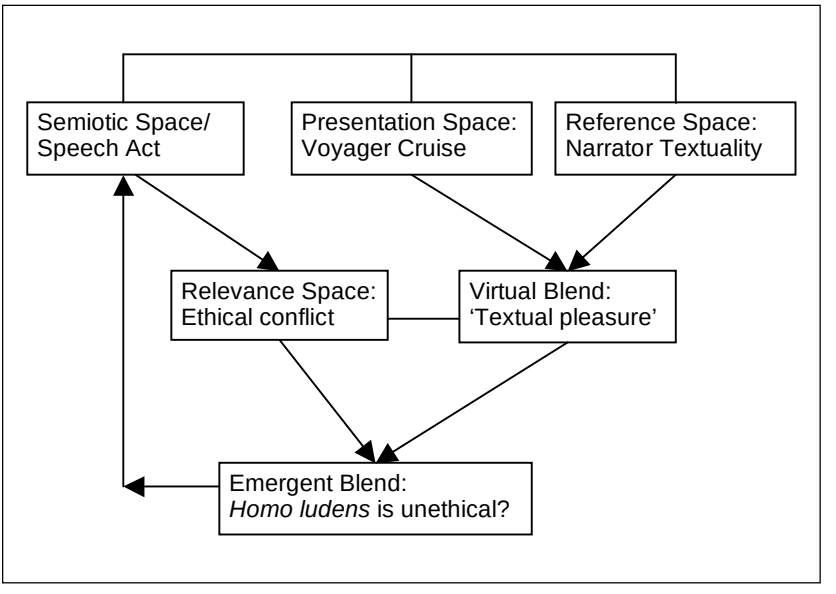

Figure 3 Blend: the opening of *Death, Sleep, and the Traveler*.

We also notice that the metafictional context relates to the stasis/motion opposition in both the fourth and fifth paragraphs. Our attention is certainly directed toward the narrator being startled by there being 'no forward progress' and his realisation that to stop 'could only put the vessel in gravest danger'. The information that even cruise ships were under the obligation to maintain steam blends with the cruise for pleasure (writing activity) to the effect that the narrator metafictionally questions himself as to whether he is going anywhere virtually with his textual pleasure.

Travesty, the third novel, opens abruptly (see Appendix III): its textual mode is dense, like *Death, Sleep, and the Traveler*, but not with the overwrought metaphoricity that defines *The Blood Oranges*. The opening double negation and the imperative are figures that sweep us into the text at high speed, and soon we are travelling at 'one hundred forty-nine kilometers per hour'. What is also figured in the first paragraph is the 'highway tragedy', a staged performance on the asphalt analogous (*via* the suicidal context) to the 'staged' car crash that is about to appear.

In the first paragraph, we also see the repetitive pattern of imperatives at the beginning, a pattern that continues in the second and third paragraphs. Here we also meet the metafictional narrator, 'Papa', an allusion to Hemingway. (Note that bullfighting is a [fragmented] textual motif in the novel, and Papa's doctor is an amputee, which points, although opaquely, to Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*.)

What is most striking, however, is the third paragraph, which measures out a description of the journey. Most eye-catching here is the phrase 'geometrics of joy', as in the two preceding novels, denoting a connection between the narrator and the ontology of the text. Thus, a blend emerges in which, through the relevant context of the question of textual ontology, the narrator, with deathly pleasure, narrates the aporia of his own suicide ride, as shown in Fig. 4).[4]

We can also notice that this opening chapter ends with yet another metaphor that is metafictive: that we are 'in the hands of an expert driver'. Initially, this reads as an everyday metaphor in the style of 'welcoming with open arms' or 'at the foot of the mountain'. But, given the relevance of textual play and (postmodern) metafiction, the metaphoricity says several things about the narrative situation. First,

we are at the mercy of the driver/narrator, rather than in safe hands, since what he is saying (given the suicide context) is that he will stage his car crash perfectly. This implies that we are also at the mercy of the narrator in the sense that we can choose to trust him to take us where he has promised, but also that we can choose not to trust him since the narrative situation is absurd.[5]

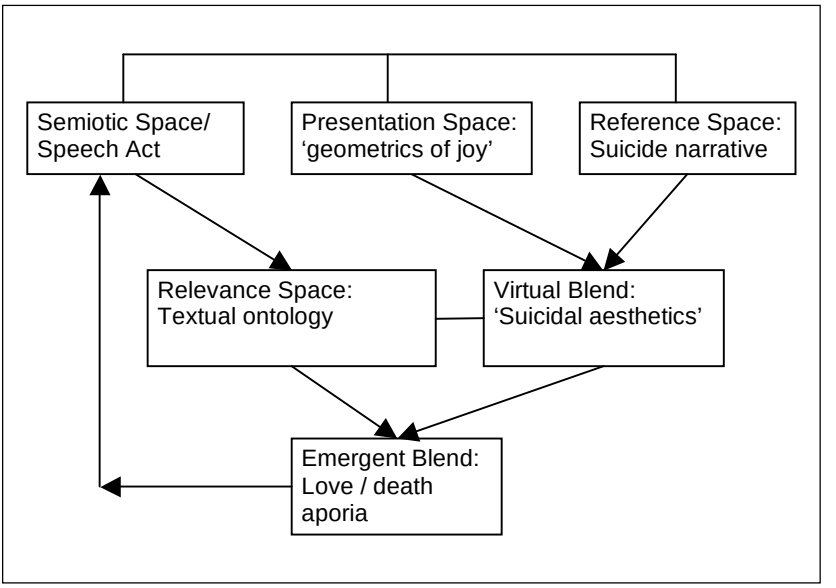

Figure 4 Blend: *Travesty*, chapter 1.

As far as primary embodiment goes, we have begun by applying the figure and ground distinction (the basis for a great deal of work in cognitive science) and the Aarhus blending model that prominently figures a relevance space, to catch the interplay of how the embodied mind meets the text. What is functionally *primary* here may seem redundant in terms of embodiment, in comparison with a first reading or explication of the text, since all reading is embodied from a cognitive perspective. The methodology of figure/ground and blending theory rests on cognition as embodied, in terms of mapping textual/mind territories. No doubt the strata of primary, secondary and tertiary embodiment are interconnected on a multitude of levels in human cognition and interpretation, and for systemic reasons I find it useful to outline the analysis according to this triad.

2.2 Secondary Embodiment

Who or what is the other in Hawkes's 'sex trilogy'? As we have seen, the metafictional quality of the novels makes the narrator a stranger, a patient to be operated on by the agency of the text. Thus, the relation between narrator and text is in focus and in a sense deconstructed. Subsequently, a reader must then engage with the body of the text in terms of a secondary embodiment. Generally speaking, this is typically what a reader has to face when confronted with a (post)modernist text, where he/she has to engage with the text to produce meaning.[6] One literally has to get into the architecture of the text by reading, re-reading, and re-writing it (re-building it). By contrast, a realist text is simply readable, has a relatively static *gestalt* – which nevertheless, through its content, can urge the reader to perform an embodied, mindful, open-ended, ethical reading. The example of Hawkes's aestheticism is an instructive one, since the metatextual levels point us directly to the shape/*gestalt* of the text and its materiality of signifiers. (It must be noted that Hawkes's writing is not simply art for art's sake. The ethical implications in his work always concern the 'other' in different respects; compare Cronquist [2000].)

A writer who wrote – with an embodied mind – about literature and embodiment long before cognitive science began to influence literary studies was Roland Barthes. Although he did not use the term *embodiment*, Barthes wrote extensively of the reader's bodily relation to the text. In this context, it is worth reconnecting to Barthes's notion of the pleasure of the text – and of the reader's capacity to read in a *writerly* (rather than *readerly*) way to take pleasure in the text (1974, 1990). It is interesting to notice that Barthes's distinction between writerly and readerly works on two levels. On the one hand, it can denote an active reading in contrast with a passive reading. On the other hand Barthes uses the notions of writerly and readerly to denote textuality itself. A writerly text is experimental and invites reader participation; a readerly text is a conventionalised, realist text, a product to be consumed (Barthes 1974: 4-5). The writerly text is 'othering' the reader while at the same time inviting him/her to embody textual 'writerliness', and where the readerly text, by contrast, is 'othering' the reader by boring him/her so that both reader and text remain disembodied.

What I want to suggest as regards secondary embodiment is that we bring in a cultural semiotics of careful, reflective reading, as practiced by Barthes, both when building our theory and for particular literary analyses. Göran Sonesson (2003) shows how the cognitive turn in linguistics has been followed by a semiotic turn in cognitive science, and also how semiotics and cognitive science have developed in parallel ways – although many semioticians and cognitive scientists do their best to deny it. It is in this context that I want to suggest an inclusion of a cultural semiotics in cognitive poetics, a cultural semiotics that is careful enough to exclude the problematic paradigm of 'Cultural Studies' and one that remains related to what is actually relevant in the text as regards sociocultural cues and their relevant context in the literary environment that they are produced.

An example: a very significant other in the writing of Hawkes is of course 'Woman' (compare Ferrari [1996]). The text immediately invites us to consider (white, heterosexual) male chauvinism in different forms – forms that are probably best analysed in relation to Norman Mailer's *The Prisoner of Sex* and its 'appraisal' of sexism conceived in the age of 'free love', as is the context of Hawkes's novels. As regards sexuality being a social construct, we would then proceed with a careful anthropo-semiotic grounding so as to avoid analyses of the mystical, disembodied signifier-signifier tradition in the often not-so-careful post-Heideggerian paradigm in literary studies.

There is nothing mysterious about sex in Hawkes's vision; it is indexically symbolic rather than indexically iconic: 'Fiona tilted up her pelvis area to meet me, and in my wet palm I held her eagerness and felt the center of her life beneath the brief pattern of hair like sandy down'. (*The Blood Oranges*: 77) Notice, for example, that 'the center of her life', for which Courbet's painting *L'Origine du Monde* is possibly an intertext, and which certainly exists within the cultural context of frivolous depictions of eroticised women by French males, is a metonymy for Fiona's sex. Fiona, her sex, is the embodiment of male desire, of course in a conspicuously objectified manner – but it would be rather unsophisticated to write this off as sexism, given the cultural context going back to Sade; libertines come in all shapes and sizes and have different genders.

A similar example: Ursula sits down 'in a white leather chair in such a way as to reveal . . . the promise of her casually concealed mystery'. (*Death, Sleep, and the Traveler*: 4) The overtly, male, metonymic 'gaze' here concerns the worshipping of the obscure object of desire, but it is also a moment of reciprocal erotic gesturing in which Alert and Fiona know what turns the other on. Ursula's concealed mystery is both sacred and holy, *and* it promises excess. Again a pedestrian feminist critique of Hawkes as sexist would remain rather limited if it did not take into account the semiosis of secondary embodiment.

In *Travesty*, Papa has a particular mistress, Monique, with whom he shares what she calls 'the dialogue of the skin'. (*Travesty*: 65) The notion here of a *dialogue* is of course paramount and in contrast with Papa's obsessive monologue that defines the novel at large. Monique's self-assertiveness is staggering, Papa remarks, with prideful volition, and yet she never fails to obey him. He even calls her 'one of the most inventive and strongest human beings I have ever known'. (*Travesty*: 66) This is not to indicate that Papa is uninventive or passive – he is not – but to underline that they have an erotic friendship; he is indeed fascinated by her as an erotic being, as Woman, mystical in her erotic ecstasy, but they have a relationship that is built on contractual *libertinage*. A blend that illustrates Hawkes's embodied (re-)presentation of woman as the sexual-textual 'other' is shown in Fig. 5.

2.3 Tertiary Embodiment

According to Richard van Oort, the cognitive paradigm cannot revolutionalise literary studies 'because the cognitive model lacks a theory of representation adequate to the task of interpreting human culture'. (van Oort 2003: 239) Most of the work of cognitive linguists like Lakoff & Johnson and Fauconnier & Turner utilise synchronic descriptions of causal mechanisms in representation.[7] As van Oort points out (2003: 240), a trait shared by all members of a species can be explained from four logically independent perspectives:

- Mechanistic: causal mechanisms (for example, neurological or psychological)
- Ontogenetic: genetic and environmental factors (for example, those that guide the stages of language acquisition)
- Phylogenetic: the trait's evolutionary history (when and how it appears in fossilised ancestors)
- Functional: fitness consequences of the trait; selection pressures

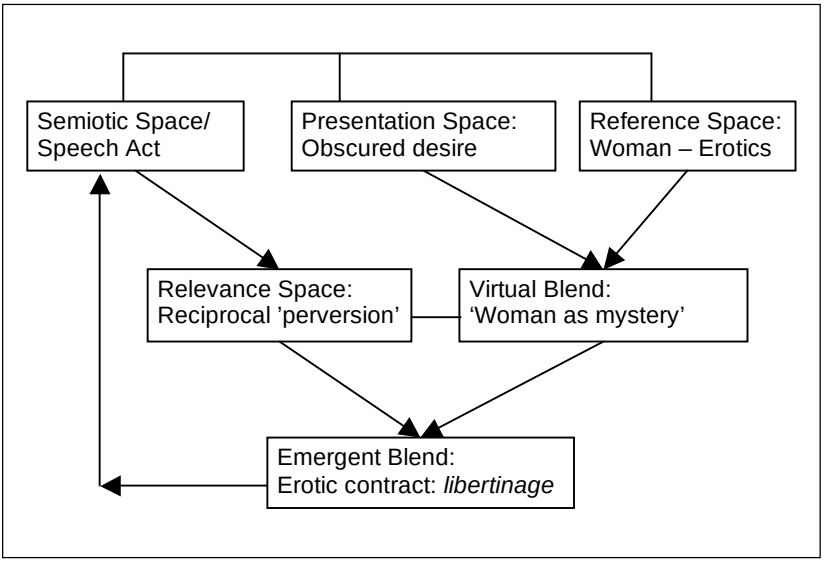

Figure 5 Blend: reciprocal male/female erotic 'othering'.

Why then, asks van Oort, can we not explain literature (or art, or religion) through these four perspectives (especially the mechanistic and functional)? His answer, citing Durkheim (1965), is that it has to do with how representation works: for example, religious acts such as the worshipping of the sun cannot be understood indexically but only through their *symbolic significance to a community* of worshippers (van Oort 2003: 243).

At the heart of tertiary embodiment stands this question of the origin of representation and the fact that iconic and indexical processes are supported by all nervous systems, whereas symbolic representation only exists through sociocultural practises. This evolutionary anomaly – 'language is a virus from outer space' as William Burroughs once put it – makes for a semiotic processing problem.

Indexical reference builds on iconic reference and vice versa, where the ability to perceive 'gestalt' and the ability to perceive 'traces' inform one another. As van Oort remarks, the difference between indexical and symbolic is 'a consequence of the multilevel hierarchy involved in the move from indexical (and iconic) to symbolic relationships'. (van Oort 2003: 254) Following Terence Deacon, we

can say that symbolic reference requires a shift in overall cognitive perspective, a shift that occurs when independently learned indexical signs are understood not only as referring to objects but are also seen as having relations with each other. Symbolic representation involves the added relationship between words referring to other words: 'Only by understanding the virtual system *first* can we then agree on its corresponding reference'. (van Oort 2003: 257) In other words, we cognitively inherit the bottom-up iconic and indexical strategies of our pre-symbolic past, but we are also positioned in a virtual, symbolic world – a cultural world – that we process top-down. Thus, we impose symbolic meanings on the world that cannot be explained by the inherent physical and biological structure of the world and our bodies, but are instead *constituted by* the process of symbolic reference (van Oort 2003: 257). Cognitive poetics, especially as proposed in Stockwell (2002), Gavins & Steen (2003), and Semino & Culpeper (2002), I fear, may thus run the risk of becoming a sort of 'naturalised' stylistics, with only vague or misguided references to cognitive science, since symbolic processes cannot be sufficiently explained on the basis of underlying neural (or general cognitive) processes.

In other words, the socially constructed nature of the symbolic system – for a sign to be understood its meaning must be accepted by other symbol users – prohibits genetic assimilation of symbolic reference. The acquisition of symbolic reference is thus not an inevitable outcome of the genotype. Indexical signals possess the long-term referential stability that allows for genetic assimilation, and over many generations such signals become innate. Symbolic reference, on the other hand, is defined by its open-ended nature of reference. What 'makes symbolic associations so difficult to learn also makes them *impossible to assimilate genetically.*' (Deacon 1997: 332)

So, the 'projection' of symbolic meaning onto directly perceivable objects is a socially mediated activity, and cannot be seen purely as reducible to cognitive processes, since symbolic reference is a social reality irreducible to any individual brain state (van Oort 2003: 272). In the final analysis, word-meaning is *nothing but* projection, because in order to refer symbolically, a word must be projected onto a separate mental space where it can be processed independently of the object-world. As van Oort puts it,

> [Mark] Turner's idea of the blended space . . . in which already existing concepts are combined to generate new meanings, is thus itself a metaphor for this symbolic world – which is to say, ultimately for the origin of language in the broad anthropological sense. (2003: 274)

Thus, what we have to face in any given society is a circulation of signs, where communication relies on the displacement of representation in symbolic practices. And since the usage of human signs always involves acts of *intentionality* in unrestricted self-consciousnesses and other-consciousnesses, we have to face an unrestricted economy of the sign (compare Grice [1975], Donald [1991], Dennett [1991], Gärdenfors [2000]). In this economy, as Sjölander puts it, the primary function of language is to communicate about what is *not* here and now (Sjölander 1995: 5-6). Symbols do not act as stand-ins for objects, they carry conceptual meaning. When we speak about an object, we have an idea about it, not the thing itself. Words produce intentionality toward the idea, the conceptual meaning (compare Langer [1958], and Gärdenfors [2000]).

For cognitive literary studies, this means that the species-unique mechanism of social-cultural transmission must be taken into account. As Michael Tomasello underlines, understanding others as intentional beings is crucial, because cultural artefacts (tools) and social practices (symbols) 'invariably point beyond themselves to other outside entities: tools point to the problems they are designed to solve and linguistic symbols point to the communicative situations they are designed to represent': to learn is to learn 'the intentional significance of the tool use or symbolic practice – what it is "for", what "we", the users of this tool or symbol do with it'. (Tomasello 1999: 6)

Tertiary embodiment involves this understanding of species-unique artefacts; for example, literature. John Hawkes's novels are artefacts that are sometimes insubstantially opaque as regards possible sign and meaning production. In the novels, many objects circulate in indexical metonymicity, leaving traces that are difficult to connect. But at the same time the novels have a palpable concreteness – especially when it comes to erotic fetishes. In *The Blood Oranges* a chastity belt plays a prominent part, in *Death, Sleep, and the Traveler* a goat's head appears in a key scene, and in *Travesty* there is a Nabokovian carrot-sucking competition. The metonymicity in these cases is rather overt, considering the iconic-symbolic qualities of the objects: the Chastity belt and the goat's head both function to conceal the female sex, while

the carrot-sucking is an open display of phallic power. What is striking here is that the fetishes are overtly overt, but sexuality in its most explicit form is indexical (traces that cannot be explicitly traced). The blend that figures here is that fetishism *is* sexuality, but structured through the relevant schema of cultural surface/depth; the emergent meaning is that the real (in the Lacanian sense) is an illusion. There is nothing but the fetish, as Fig. 6 shows.

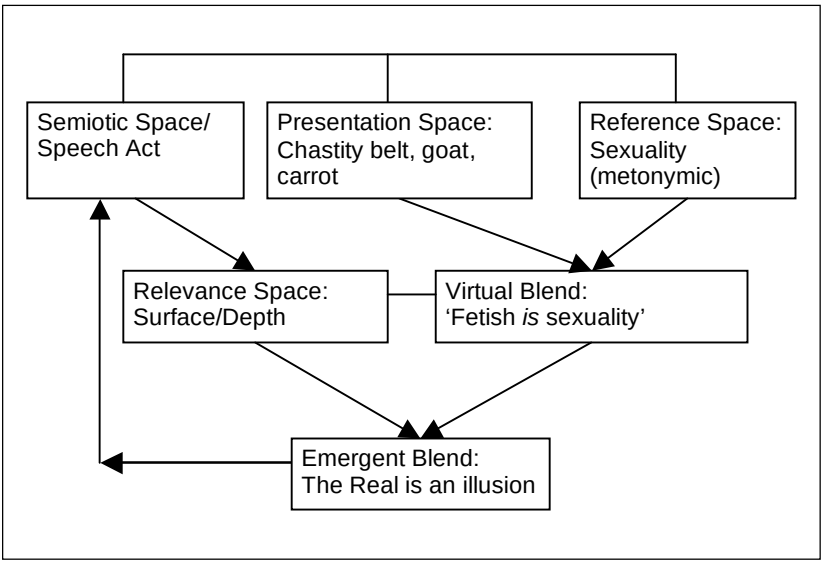

Figure 6 Blend: fetishism and mind-culture co-evolution.

3. Closing Remarks

In order to comprehend embodied artefacts fully we cannot reduce our analyses to comparisons between hypothesised causal mechanisms in the brain and language production. We must instead affirm the irreducibility of the sign – grounded in our species-unique anthropo-semiotic origins – in order to read literary artefacts in a mindful, consciously unbounded mode. We understand the cultural-political implications, for example Hawkes's visions of textuality and sexuality as 'others', not by reducing interpretation to speculation, but by analysing how we negotiate our readings and how we agree and disagree – the meeting of interpretive citizens in a dynamic, open-ended activity in a social space defined by social tools.

I hope that further research in the area of textual analysis related to distributed cognition will take into account and make clearer some of the variables as regards primary, secondary, and tertiary embodiment. The brain is a part of the body, but the mind does not reside solely in the brain – all of cognition is embodied since the mind is in the body. And artefacts like literature are not mystical objects; they are effects of mankind's irreducible sign-processing activities. Let us proceed not by reducing textual analysis to non-contextual mechanistics, but by acknowledging our natural species-unique unbounded cognitive-semiotic possibilities.

Endnotes

[1]My immediate reference here is Sonesson (in press), who refers to Peirce's early triad, Cassirer's 'basic phenomena', and Benveniste's ego/alter/non-personne.

[2]See, for example, Gavins (2001) and Werth (1999) for text world theory; Semino (1997) and Ryan (1991) for possible worlds theory; Emmott (1997) and Stockwell (2000) for contextual frame theory (compare Werth [1999]); see also Herman (2002).

[3]The Aarhus blending model is presented by Brandt & Brandt (2005). It is an elaboration of the model created by Fauconnier & Turner (see, for example, Fauconnier & Turner [1998], [2002], which involves a critique of their not paying attention to context, hence the relevance space that has been added to the model by Brandt & Brandt. Fauconnier & Turner talk of 'a frame completing the blend' (Fauconnier & Turner 2002: 43). Brandt & Brandt remark that without awareness of a relevance space, 'the blend cannot yield any emergent inferences and thus . . . it is questionable that the process of completion happens "automatically" as suggested by Fauconnier & Turner' (Brandt & Brandt 2005: 48).

[4]It should be noted that there is a great difference between the Camus intertext (*The Fall)* and Hawkes's novel since the latter is a narrative of combined suicide and murder.

[5]One can imagine, somehow, that the text is a transcript of a tape since it is narrated as a 'live' broadcast. This puts the question of the narrator in focus. We can even make the assumption that John Hawkes actually *is* the narrator, speculating, for example, that he produced a novel out of a tape he came into possession of. (The 'implied author' indeed!)

[6]As Iser (1979) shows, reading is all about filling in gaps. These gaps can of course be very different in different texts from different genres. I claim that the gaps to be filled when reading a modernist text are generally of a rebus-character where the reader is supposed to fill in the gaps according to a key (otherwise the reader has not understood the text). The postmodern text is by contrast generally open to multiple understandings, the gaps can be filled in different ways, and, as the gap-filling precedes the overall *gestalt,* it can also change in different ways (compare Cronquist [2000]). The modernist text can be said, metaphorically to have a 'good' *gestalt* and the postmodernist text a 'bad' *gestalt.*

[7]Van Oort underlines that synchronic cognitivism emphasises causal mechanisms involved in the production of representation in the brain, today *à la mode*, especially with reference to neurology and ontogeny. From a diachronic perspective, a gradually evolved genetic adaptation is a misinterpretation since symbolic reference is an anomaly. Compare Deacon (1997), to whom van Oort refers to extensively. As regards Lakoff & Johnson and Fauconnier & Turner, they assume ontogenetic natural progression from basic perceptual categories to *re*-presentation in language, which leads 'to reverse the causal order in their account of the origin of symbolic structures'. In doing so the displacement of symbolic reference is omitted, the originary displacement 'that needs to be explained, not the subsequent recruitment of perceptual and sensory experiences for symbolic purposes' (van Oort 2003: 245). George Lakoff, in recent years, has devoted time to issues of 'framing' cognitive structures – that is, analysing real texts in specific contexts, especially how George W. Bush and the conservatives frame their political rhetoric. However, Lakoff still grounds his analyses in displacement of symbolic reference for subsequent recruitment of cognitive categories. See, for example, Lakoff (2003).

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Appendix I: John Hawkes, *The Blood Oranges* (first two paragraphs).

Bold = figure / ground Underlining = metaphor or metonymy

LOVE WEAVES ITS OWN TAPESTRY, SPINS ITS OWN GOLDEN thread, with its own sweet breath breathes into being its mysteries – bucolic, lusty, gentle as the eyes of daisies or thick with pain. And out **of its own music creates the flesh of our lives**. If the birds sing, the nudes are not too far off. Even **the dialogue of the frogs** is **rapturous**.

As for me, since late boyhood and early manhood, and throughout the more than eighteen years of my nearly perfect marriage, I always allowed myself to assume **whatever shape was destined to be my own** in the silken weave of Love's pink panorama. **I always went where the thread wound**. No awkward hesitation, no prideful ravaging. At an early age I came to know that **the gods fashion us to spread the legs of woman**, or **throw us together for no reason except that we complete the picture** so to speak, and join loin to loin often and easily, humbly, deliberately. Throughout my life **I have never denied a woman young or old**. See me as a small white porcelain bull lost **in** the lower left-hand corner of **that vast tapestry**, see me as **great white creature horned and mounted on a trim little golden sheep** in the very center of Love's most explosive field. See me as a bull, or ram, as man, husband, lover, a tall and heavy stranger in white shorts on **a violet tennis** court. **I was there always**. **I completed the picture***. I took my wife, took her friends, took the wives of my friends and a fair roster of other girls and women, from young to old and old to young, **whenever the light was right** or **the music sounded**.

Appendix II: John Hawkes, *Death, Sleep, and the Traveler* (from the first two chapters, pp.1-3)

Bold = figure / ground Underlining = metaphor or metonymy

Ursula is leaving. **Dressed in** her severe gray suit, her gardening hat, her girdle, her negligée, her sullen silk dress, her black blouse, her stockings, her red pumps, and carrying a carefully packed straw suitcase in either hand, **thus she is leaving me**.

She is leaving me at last not because of what occurred on the ship or because of **the trial**, which has long since been **swallowed into the wet coils of its own conclusion**, but **because I am, after all, a Hollander.** . . .

Why did she refuse to join me on the white ship and so abandon me to **death, sleep, and the anguish of lonely travel**? . . . [P]uffing on **my small Dutch cigar** and staring down at the phosphorescent messages breeding and rippling in the black waves, suddenly I knew the ship was making **no forward progress** whatsoever. **The knowledge was startling**. One moment I was sweating and smoking at the ship's rail, **the most reluctant voyager to depart on a cruise for pleasure**. . . .

Even cruise ships, no matter how directionless, were under the obligation to maintain steam and at least minimum forward motion on the high seas. **To stop, to lose headway could only put the vessel in gravest danger**. . . .

Appendix III: John Hawkes, *Travesty* (first chapter, pp. 11-2)

Bold = figure / ground Underlining = metaphor or metonymy

No, no Henri. **Hands off the wheel**. Please. **It is too late**. After all, at **one hundred and forty-nine kilometers per hour on a country road** in the darkest quarter of the night, surely it is obvious that your slightest effort **to wrench away the wheel** will **pitch us into the toneless world of highway tragedy** even more quickly than I have planned. And you will not believe it, but we are still accelerating.

As for you, Chantal, you **must** be aware. You **must** obey your **Papa**. You **must** sit back in your seat and fasten your belt and stop crying. And Chantal, no more beating the driver about the shoulders or shaking his arm. Emulate Henri, my poor Chantal, and control yourself.

But see **how we fly**! And the curves, how **sharp** and numerous they are! The **geometrics of joy**!

At least **you** are **in the hands of an expert driver**.

PART III

SPEECH AND THOUGHT PRESENTATION

Historical Transformations of Free Indirect Style

Violeta Sotirova

Abstract

The technique of consciousness presentation in the novel has been approached from various angles: its characteristic linguistic features have been described and analysed (Banfield 1982; Brinton 1980; Fludernik 1993), taxonomies have been constructed of its various modes (Leech & Short 1981; Short et al. 1996; Semino, Short & Culpeper 1997), and its historical emergence has been traced back to earlier Puritan narratives and to the epistolary novel (Adamson 1994; Bray 1997). In this essay, I propose a new dimension for the study of free indirect style in terms of a changing language used by writers for the articulation of their characters' thoughts and perceptions. I will argue that the practice of free indirect style in a 19th-century novel differs significantly from the practices of modernist writers. In the process, I will analyse the linguistic makeup of free indirect style in selected passages from George Eliot's *Middlemarch* alongside counterparts from works by D. H. Lawrence and Virginia Woolf. This analysis will open up the possibility of historicising free indirect style, which will have an impact on the theories we construct for its conceptualisation.

Key words: free indirect style; dialogicity; repetition; connectives; perspectival shift.

1. Free indirect style: panchronic or diachronic?

It has generally been assumed that free indirect style, one of the linguistic forms used for the presentation of narrative viewpoint, is characterised by a set of linguistic markers which may vary from author to author and among varieties of the technique, but which remain constant throughout the history of the novel of consciousness. As far as the linguistic form of the free indirect mode is concerned, it is regarded by most authors as panchronic. It has been common practice among theoreticians of free indirect style to leave implicit the

assumption about the linguistic stability of the style and to support whatever theoretical model they propound with examples taken from across the whole range of 19th- and 20th-century novels that deploy the technique.

There has also been an interest in the historical emergence of free indirect style. For Leech & Short, the free indirect mode has arisen historically as a natural replacement of the more artificial form of thought presentation – direct thought (1981: 345), a view also shared by Cohn (1978). Leech & Short associate the prominence that free indirect style gains with the shared concerns of 19th- and 20th-century novelists 'with portraying the internal drama of the minds of their characters' (1981: 346). So, the presentation of viewpoint is historicised only in terms of its centrality in individual works. The literary historical view of the distinct concerns of the novel of consciousness is matched in linguistic criticism by an analysis of the changing ratio between the physical space allotted to the authorial voice and the space allotted to the character's voice as rendered in perspectivised passages. When the narration is more or less taken over by the perspectives of the characters, the modern novel is said to have emerged (Stanzel 1984).

Apart from the taxonomic account of the emergence of free indirect style, an attempt has also been made to trace its roots to earlier narrative tradition. Adamson (1994) finds the historical predecessor of free indirect style in Puritan accounts of self-conversion, which offer rich possibilities for self-exploration and doubt and seek to capture past experience and revivify it to immediacy. Bray (1997) locates the roots of Austen's practice of free indirect thought in Richardson's epistolary novels and views it as a natural development from the mode of free indirect speech.

The peculiar linguistic properties of the style – its ability to conflate two deictic systems anchored simultaneously in the character's present and the narrator's past, and to combine third-person reference with character-subjective idiom and expressivity – have fascinated scholars. But these linguistic properties have not been characterised diachronically. The aim of this essay is to advance a hypothesis, based on the careful analysis of selected passages of free indirect style, that the linguistic makeup of the style undergoes a change at the turn of the 19th century. This diachronic approach is in part inspired by

Fludernik's programmatic essay in which she observes that '[d]espite [an] impressive variety of new narratological approaches . . . there has been comparatively little interest on a theoretical level in the history of narrative forms and functions' (2003: 331).

My concern, therefore, is not with the literary roots of free indirect style, but rather with the forms of its own versatility. While Leech & Short acknowledge that free indirect style is characterised by an 'almost boundless versatility' (1981: 348), they see this versatility: (1) in syntactic terms because the process of embedding viewpoints within viewpoints within viewpoints is virtually infinite; and (2) in the subtle permutations of the different categories of speech and thought presentation, that is, the lack of discrete boundaries between them that causes indirect thought to be sometimes indistinguishable from free indirect thought (1981: 348). Others see the style's multifunctional versatility as manifest in the rendering of speech, as well as thought, as well as perception (Brinton 1980). The versatility I am going to explore is very much historically bound. It concerns the linguistic make-up of the style across time.

2. Development of the technique across time

I begin to chart the development of free indirect style with two examples from George Eliot's *Middlemarch* and D. H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* (indices of free indirect style are underlined in all literary passages below):

(1) Dorothea coloured with pleasure, and looked up gratefully to the speaker. Here was a man who could understand the higher inward life, and with whom there could be some spiritual communion; nay, who could illuminate principle with the widest knowledge: a man whose learning almost amounted to a proof of whatever he believed! (Eliot [1871-2] 1998: 21).

(2) On the whole she scorned the male sex deeply. But here was a new specimen, quick, light, graceful, who could be gentle and who could be sad, and who was clever, and who knew a lot, and who had a death in the family. . . . Yet she tried hard to scorn him, because he would not see in her the princess but only the swinegirl (Lawrence [1913] 1992: 174).

Similar in content, the two passages are also similar in form: they exhibit several of the indices of free indirect style which evoke the viewpoint of the two characters, Dorothea and Miriam respectively. In (1) we have a proximal deictic aligned with the spatio-temporal position of the character; we have one coordinating conjunction which

sequences two clauses as a minimal marker of cohesion; we have an interjection and an exclamatory construction which are associated with the character's emotional attitude; we also have three parallel constructions in the relative clauses and a number of lexical repetitions. In (2) the same proximal deictic positions us within the narrative world, and the emotive verbs, the evaluative nouns and adjectives, and the modal verbs tie in with Miriam's appreciation of Paul. What is different between (1) and (2) is that Dorothea's thoughts in (1) sound more literate and grammatically complex, while in (2) the reader gets a much stronger sense of following somebody's train of thought. Both passages contain strings of relative clauses, but their average length is smaller in passage (2), the longest consisting of seven words matched by seven words for the shortest in (1). The more colloquial ring of (2) is also achieved in part through a string of coordinating conjunctions – seven in total – whereas (1) contains only one connective *and*.

On the basis of this comparison, then, we can hypothesise that a linguistic shift has occurred in the rendering of characters' thoughts at the point of transition into the modernist novel. Such a shift would fit in with a more general shift in the literary language from 19th-century fiction to modernist fiction registered by scholars.

3. The history of the literary language

Biber, Conrad & Reppen's (1998) corpus studies yield interesting results on the development of fictional styles over time. On several parameters, which can be broadly correlated with oral vs. written styles, modern fiction scores more highly than 19th-century fiction. It is more involved as opposed to informational (that is, contains, among other markers, more private verbs, demonstrative and first-person and second-person pronouns, *be* as main verb, causative subordination, discourse particles, possibility modals, and non-phrasal coordination), contains more situation-dependent as opposed to elaborated references, and is more non-impersonal as opposed to impersonal (that is, does not contain conjuncts, agentless passives, past participial adverbial clauses, *by*-passives, etc.) (Biber, Conrad & Reppen 1998: 145-57, 222-9). On a continuum between orality and writtenness, 19th-century fiction would be positioned towards the written end, whereas modern fiction scores very low for features of writtenness and would be placed towards the orality end.

This quantitative estimate of the linguistic properties of fiction in two distinct periods is further elaborated on by Adamson (1999), who analyses the stylistic functions of specific linguistic patterns exemplified in modernist poetry and fiction. Among the more radical linguistic innovations of modernism she lists are the following: the representation of non-standard varieties, the practice of intertextual citation resulting in polyvocalism, the use of taboo, foreign borrowing and inventing, the breaking of hypotaxis and a move towards parataxis, the simplification of syntax, the use of progressive and perfect aspect as indices of subjective experience of time, etc. What I singled out as prominent in my second passage from *Sons and Lovers* were the coordinating conjunctions in clause- and sentence-initial position, two categories that fit under the shift registered by Adamson from hypotaxis to parataxis. This shift, she claims, is accompanied by a loss of information because in speech, links between sentences can typically be signalled by intonation, but in writing, writers have only logical connectors at their disposal to make these links explicit (1999: 641-3). One way of compensating for the loss of structural information has been to arrange clauses iconically, that is, in the order in which the events they describe occurred. And a way of compensating for the loss of cohesion has been found in the increase in the use of coordinating conjunctions such as *and* and *but* as minimal cohesive links and in the use of repetition as another device of cohesion.

My two passages seem to represent this historical shift in the literary language on a small scale. The situation-dependent references and repetitions that are indicative of oral styles unsurprisingly feature in both as devices evocative of a character's speech-like patterns of thought. But passage (2) further enhances this colloquial ring with the numerous connectives that link each new clause to the preceding one.

4. Complicating perspective

This quantitative difference between the two passages becomes more complicated if we explore further the role of orality markers in free indirect style. I deliberately withheld the continuation of the two passages quoted in (1) and (2). At this point it will be instructive to read beyond the portions of free indirect style which render the thoughts of the two characters and enrich the semantic analysis from a discourse standpoint.

(3) Dorothea coloured with pleasure, and looked up gratefully to the speaker. Here was a man who could understand the higher inward life, and with whom there could be some spiritual communion; nay, who could illuminate principle with the widest knowledge: a man whose learning almost amounted to a proof of whatever he believed!

Dorothea's inferences may seem large; but really life could never have gone on at any period but for this liberal allowance of conclusions, which has facilitated marriage under the difficulties of civilization. Has any one ever pinched into its pilulous smallness the cobweb of pre-matrimonial acquaintanceship? (Eliot [1871-2] 1998: 21)

(4) On the whole she scorned the male sex deeply. But here was a new specimen, quick, light, graceful, who could be gentle and who could be sad, and who was clever, and who knew a lot, and who had a death in the family. . . . Yet she tried hard to scorn him, because he would not see in her the princess but only the swine girl.

And he scarcely observed her. (Lawrence [1913] 1992: 174)

In (3) the narrative fabric is disrupted by an outside voice which may even appear intrusive when it speaks in the present tense of generic statements and delivers to the reader a universal judgement on how pre-matrimonial relationships develop. This authorial present of timeless truths hectors the reader into an alliance with the author at the expense of the character.

In (4) by contrast, a voice cuts in and interrupts Miriam's perspective, but only to juxtapose with it a different one, not to comment overtly on its limitations. The corrective statement that in spite of all her attempts to ignore Paul, he was the one who in fact did not notice her could come from either the narrator or from the character Paul himself. There is a sense of equality and of dialogue between the two perspectives. It is enhanced by the use at this point of another connective sentence-initially. Lawrence's *and* at the beginning of the new paragraph is a marker of orality in another respect, too: it functionally aligns the discourse with conversation where *and* and *but* are not simply shorthand forms for other conjunctions or a replacement of syntactic complexity, but act as discourse markers. While retaining their respective semantic core meanings of addition and contrast, the connectives *and* and *but* when used turn-initially also acquire the pragmatic meaning of commitment to the joint construction of ideas in conversation (Schiffrin 1986; 1987). As interactional markers, connectives signal that speakers jointly engage in constructing dialogue, that they share responsibility for the construction of talk, that each successive utterance bears relevance to

the topic and to the utterance of the previous speaker. In this way, participants' viewpoints relate to each other, and speakers can acknowledge the interlocutor's point of view by beginning their turns with continuative, and, at the same time, interactive discourse markers. Lawrence's use of the connective at the point of shift to a new perspective draws an analogy not only with oral styles, but more significantly, with conversational discourse.[1]

This use of sentence-initial connectives, closely mimicking the use of discourse markers, is part of the technique of cutting across perspectives for which the modern novel is well known. The connective in Lawrence's example is important because it situates two perspectives, one of which could well be read as the narrator's, on the same plane and relates them as if in dialogue.

George Eliot and D. H. Lawrence come at two successive stages in the development of the novel, Eliot being representative of the 19th-century realist novel and Lawrence writing at the beginning of Modernism. In terms of the history of free indirect style, Eliot can be viewed as Lawrence's immediate predecessor. Both can also be described, under Leech & Short's rubric, as writers engaged in 'portraying the internal drama of the minds of their characters'. But this internal drama, as we saw, is portrayed in rather different ways. While giving both Eliot and Lawrence a prominent place as *architects of the self*, Bedient argues that their ideas about the self are rather different:

> The two writers represent distinct categories of the human spirit. It was in morality that George Eliot believed; of life itself she was shudderingly sceptical. Conversely, Lawrence believed in life and in its name condemned morality. The term 'moral' or 'ethical' denotes in both Lawrence and George Eliot, as in ethical discourse generally, the principled control of life by mind. (Bedient 1972: 101)

We could elaborate on this distinction by saying that Lawrence's belief in 'life' is matched by a style of writing consciousness into the text that closely resembles language use in everyday contexts. More significantly, his experiential style is distinct from Eliot's in its faithfulness to life experience in another respect too: it manages to keep events and people in focus by simultaneously casting them through different perspectives.

5. Earlier practices of intersubjectivity

It is seldom that we find this dialogic juxtaposition of perspectives in pre-modernist fiction. Eliot, a practitioner of free indirect style, rather than cut across characters' viewpoints, keeps her narrator in control not least by overstepping the boundaries of narration and generalising about human experience. But the dialogic variety of free indirect style which Lawrence practises did not emerge in a vacuum. There are the odd examples of perspectival shifts accompanied by discourse links in *Middlemarch* too:

(5) Rosamond thought that no one could be more in love than she was; and Lydgate thought that after all his wild mistakes and absurd credulity, he had found perfect womanhood – felt as if already breathed upon by exquisite wedded affection such as would be bestowed by an accomplished creature who venerated his high musings and momentous labours and would never interfere with them; who would create order in the home and accounts with still magic, yet keep her fingers ready to touch the lute and transform life into romance at any moment; who was instructed to the true womanly limit and not a hair's-breadth beyond – docile, therefore, and ready to carry out behests which came from beyond that limit. (Eliot [1871-2] 1998: 331)

(6) He was not going to do anything extravagant, but the requisite things must be bought, and it would be bad economy to buy them of a poor quality. All these matters were by the by. Lydgate foresaw that science and his profession were the objects he should alone pursue enthusiastically; but he could not imagine himself pursuing them in such a home as Wrench had – the doors all open, the oil-cloth worn, the children in soiled pinafores, and lunch lingering in the form of bones, black-handled knives, and willow-pattern. But Wrench had a wretched lymphatic wife who made a mummy of herself indoors in a large shawl; and he must have altogether begun with an ill-chosen domestic apparatus.

Rosamond, however, was on her side much occupied with conjectures, though her quick imitative perception warned her against betraying them too crudely. (Eliot [1871-2] 1998: 333)

In both these instances, two viewpoints are presented, but rather than allow the transition to the other's mind to happen imperceptibly, Eliot makes this transition quite explicit. Although Lydgate's thoughts in (5) are linked to Rosamond's with a coordinating *and* which reminds us of Lawrence's use of connectives at such junctures, the repetition of the mental verb *thought* with a new subject makes us aware that we are reading someone else's thoughts. In this case the repetition establishes a parallel between the two protagonists' thoughts, but it also carries with itself a dose of artificiality because it is embedded in

two parallel constructions with a different subject, thus making the juxtaposition quite obvious.

If in (5) the two portions of text rendering Rosamond's and Lydgate's thoughts respectively could be interpreted as free indirect style, in (6) the comparison between the thoughts of these two characters is even more strongly handled by the narrator. Eliot makes an attempt to link Lydgate's and Rosamond's thoughts with an adversative connective, *however*, but this time the transition is not strictly speaking to a transcription of Rosamond's mind, but rather to narratorial description of it. The narrator's presence is made explicit and reinforced by the phrase *on her side*: obviously it is someone with an all-encompassing knowledge of the narrative world and the characters' thoughts who can announce such juxtapositions. The use of the characters' proper names, rather than pronouns, also has a distancing effect, so that ultimately the controlling presence of the narrator is felt by the reader.

These two extracts can perhaps be taken as the historic precedent for the kind of dialogic interrelatedness of perspectives that we observe in Lawrence. Rather than have a narrator frame the comparison between two characters' perspectives, Lawrence sets them side by side and suggests their interrelatedness through various discourse links with strong conversational overtones.

6. Prospect and retrospect

The more complex presentation of narrative viewpoint in a modernist writer like Lawrence is matched by a different linguistic makeup of free indirect style. The extent to which he uses sentence-initial connectives at points of perspectival shift is indicative of an effort to bring conversational, or dialogical, patterns into the technique of consciousness presentation. Eliot's use of repetition in extract (5) also finds its later correlates in modernist fiction:

(7) He laughed at her fancy. Her voice was shrill and strange, calling from the distance. He watched her as she paddled away. There was something childlike about her, trustful and deferential, like a child. He watched her all the while, as she rowed. And to Gudrun it was a real delight, in make-belief, to be the childlike, clinging woman to the man, who stood there on the quay, so good-looking and efficient in his white clothes, and moreover the most important man she knew at the moment (Lawrence [1921] 1972: 183).

The repetition of *childlike* traversing the zone of one character's thoughts and immediately being reflected into the thoughts of the

other creates an almost uncanny effect in *Women in Love*. Gerald's perception of Gudrun is evidently something that she is aware of. Her take on the idea of being childlike is different, not one of fascination, but more cynical and detached, as if she has decided to play the role that he had cast her into. In this instance, unlike Eliot's repetition of thought to frame the respective thoughts of two characters, we see a dialogical response of one character to the other. Like the conjunction, the repeated word echoes conversational uses of repetition that bind interlocutors in a relationship and a commitment to the creation of talk.[2]

All of the examples considered so far illustrate a shift in the language of consciousness presentation towards a more dialogical and complex interweaving of perspectives. What contributes to the enactment of simultaneity in the presentation of viewpoints is the preponderance of discourse features, such as sentence-initial connectives and repetition, which also poeticise our everyday conversational exchanges. These discourse features characterise not only Lawrence's use of free indirect style. In a similar manner, Woolf too intertwines the perspectives of two characters and interrelates them through the use of sentence-initial conjunctions functioning as discourse markers and through the use of interactive repetition in *To the Lighthouse* (Tannen 1989):

(8) Getting up she stood at the window with the reddish-brown stocking in her hands partly to turn away from him, partly because she did not mind looking now, with him watching, at the Lighthouse. **For** she knew that he had turned his head as she turned; he was watching her. She knew that he was thinking, You are more beautiful than ever. **And** she felt very beautiful. Will you not tell me just for once that you love me? He was thinking that, for he was roused, what with Minta and his book, and its being the end of the day and their having quarrelled about going to the Lighthouse. **But** she could not do it; she could not say it. Then, knowing that he was watching her, instead of saying anything she turned, holding her stocking, and looked at him. **And** as she looked at him she began to smile, **for** though she had not said a word, he knew of course he knew, that she loved him. He could not deny it (Woolf [1927] 1977: 133).

In (8) we begin by reading Mrs Ramsey's perspective and her projected thoughts of Mr Ramsey. Then, with the direct interior discourse of Mr Ramsey, *Will you not tell me just for once that you love me,* we move away from her mind. The second interesting shift occurs at the point of *But she could not do it,* a sentence which I read as Mrs Ramsey's response to his plea. Not only is it semantically

congruent with his unvoiced wish, the sentence is also linked to the preceding discourse with the contrasting connective *but* and the pro-form *do*, which stands in place of the main verb *tell me* in Mr Ramsey's discourse. Once again, we move to Mr Ramsey's mind at the point of *for though she had not said a word*, which is a shift in mid-sentence, and again enacted with a connective *for*. The oddity of the connective is here perhaps felt most starkly because as a causative at this point, it does not seem to give us the reason why Mrs Ramsey begins to smile in a grammatically coherent way. Rather, it jerks readers out of their perspective and reorients them to read what follows from Mr Ramsey's perspective.

Some of the connectives in this extract appear at points where a shift between the two characters' thoughts and perceptions is enacted. It is impossible to disentangle this passage and attribute each sentence to one of the characters, but even if we imagine that all of this takes place in Mrs Ramsey's head, her responses to the projected thoughts of Mr Ramsey are still prefaced by a conjunction and accompanied by numerous repetitions which very much resonate with their interactive use in conversation.

The Eliot passage and the Lawrence and Woolf passages, then, are representative of two stages in the history of the novel of consciousness. On a small scale, this shift is illustrated by the difference in technique when characters' perspectives are portrayed. What would appear as a syntactic simplicity in the organisation of discourse results in greater complexity in the presentation of character thought. The earlier examples from Eliot belong to an earlier tradition in novel-writing in which each character's consciousness is discrete and impenetrable and in which the author's voice is prominent and judgmental. The examples from Lawrence and Woolf, on the other hand, complicate perspectives and present them in interrelation, relying to a great extent on discourse features that pervade our everyday interactions. These dialogical features parallel different aesthetic concerns.

If these examples are representative of a larger shift in the language used for the rendering of consciousness, they will bear significantly on the theories we construct in an attempt to explain the phenomenon of free indirect style. These theories will have to be sensitive to the kinds of interactive links that are used across perspectives and to the

dialogical effects they create. They will also have to take into account the changing expressivity of free indirect style and refrain from trying to explain the linguistic mechanics of a style that is not a universal and stable phenomenon. It is plausible to suggest that the evocation of subjectivity in narrative changes linguistically along with changes in our ideas about subjectivity.

Endnotes

[1]For a full treatment of the role of connectives in Lawrence's use of free indirect style, see Sotirova (2004).

[2]I explain the effects of repetition in free indirect style more fully in Sotirova (forthcoming).

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Using Speech and Thought Presentation to Validate Hypotheses Regarding the Nature of the Crime Novels of Andrea Camilleri

John Douthwaite

Abstract

This essay investigates the possibility of using speech and thought presentation (S&TP) as a major linguistic analytical tool both at a high level of generalisation, namely in investigating the nature of a text and determining which genre it may be assigned to, and at a low to middle level of generalisation, namely in accounting for specific effects created in the text, such as positioning, distancing, observing, and comprehending mental processing. The testing ground is the detective story. Two major sub-genres are identified: a lowbrow variety whose two major functions are entertainment and the conveying of an unstated conservative ideological stance; and a highbrow variety, which accounts for only a minor part of the production in this domain, and whose major functions include offering a critique of society, debunking the classic detective genre, and innovating within the genre of the novel. The principal hypothesis tested is that the lowbrow texts employ a restricted number of S&TP forms, limited to more traditional modes of presentation and excluding those forms which give access to characters' inner mental states and processes, while the highbrow forms deploy the entire gamut of S&TP modes, making significant use of those modes which enable the reader to observe the mental and emotional states and thoughts of the detective. This latter phenomenon has two major consequences for novels of this sub-type: (a) in part it 'defeats' one of the major audience-related functions of the traditional crime novel, namely that of the reader trying to work out the identity of the criminal before the sleuth does, thereby diminishing the game value of this sub-genre; and (b) observing the characters' mental processes enables inferences to be made regarding personality, emotions, and values, thereby broadening the canvas from one of pure entertainment value to one of social, political, and/or philosophical investigation.

Key words: detection; speech and thought presentation; foregrounding; narration; focalisation; mental processing; hypothesis formation; hypothesis testing; informativeness; emotion; positioning.

This essay is in four parts: first, an introduction on aims and methods; second, an overview of speech and thought presentation (S&TP) in Arthur Conan Doyle's novels featuring Sherlock Holmes; third, an

analysis of S&TP in Andrea Camilleri's novels featuring Montalbano, a latter-day Sicilian detective in the regular police force; and finally, a conclusion.

The premise underlying my basic thesis is that there are two kinds of detective stories, the classic whodunit and the critical social or innovative novel. The thesis I will posit is that the nature of the classic detective story necessarily imposes a highly restricted use of S&TP forms, while social crime fiction necessarily prompts the deployment of the whole gamut of S&TP forms. This radical linguistic difference may summarily be accounted for by the fact that the social novel presents a much more variegated and complex canvas than the lowbrow whodunit. I will take the detectives Sherlock Holmes and Salvo Montalbano as my testing ground.

The prospects of this type of analysis have been enriched by the recently issued new model of S&TP (Semino & Short 2004) which includes new categories, such as the narration of internal states, which enable this linguistic tool to act as a basis for even more refined analyses, analyses which, I hope to show, enable high-level operations to be performed, such as assigning a specific text to a specific sub-genre on the basis of the deployment of S&TP in that text. A sub-objective of this paper, therefore, is to indirectly validate the Short-Semino model.

1. Introduction

In Douthwaite (1995) I briefly outlined the history of the development of the detective story as a genre and charted the features which the critical literature on the subject posits as constituting the prototype of the detective[1]. With regard to history, the analysis yielded two main results: Sherlock Holmes emerged as the prototypical detective, the figure against which all other figures are defined and measured; and two main trends were identified in the development of crime fiction. The major, and more traditional, lowbrow trend performs a conservative ideological function: it consists of a closed story with a happy ending that makes good reading and reassures the reader that society will continue in the form the reader knows and likes, for the detective hero is always there to protect society from the subversive attacks perpetrated by evil-doers of every possible kind. The main developmental pathway of this tradition moves from Poe through Doyle to the Golden Age, and still constitutes the majority trend

today. The second and more minor movement is the critical trend which emerged with the American hardboiled school, which in turn is partly a product of American literary realism, and which performs functions antithetical to mainstream crime writing, varying from a critique of society to a debunking of the classic detective genre and to innovation in the novel (Kafka, Borges, Robbe-Grillet, Gadda, feminist writing, Black writing, etc.[2]).

With regard to the constitutive features of the classic mainstream detective story, the principal traits identified were as follows: (1) the crime is apparently insoluble. It therefore requires an extra-special detective to solve it; (2) the story works back from effect to cause (though there are major variants, such as the inverted T, where the story begins with the planning and execution of the crime leading either to its prevention or to the apprehension or the escape of the culprit). This feature makes of the detective story an intellectual puzzle which brings logical and analytical powers into play, producing a game in which the reader can try to outsmart the great detective by working out the solution before the latter does; (3) the amateur detective functions as the central figure in the story. Here too, variants have developed, such as the super-professional detective, the lawyer, and other figures not even directly connected with the business of crime, such as noblemen, university professors, and commercial travellers; (4) the detective is portrayed as an infallible god, a superman, hence a stereotype and not a round character in Forster's sense of the term; (5) a confidant exists who also acts as a narrative foil; (6) there is a wide range of credible suspects, many of whom are red herrings to keep the reader engaged in the guessing game he is playing against the author/detective to try to outwit him; (7) a significant quantity of irrelevant information is skilfully deployed throughout the narrative to put the reader off the scent; (8) a startling and unexpected ending maintains both a high level of motivation in the reader and the game status of the detective genre.

In Douthwaite (2004), I compared and contrasted Sherlock Holmes and Salvo Montalbano according to the scheme developed in the 1995 work in order to determine what *type* Montalbano belongs to, and I identified the function of the Montalbano detective novels through placing them in their sociohistorical setting and, consequently, locating them in the crime writing tradition. What emerged from the

analysis was that while the Montalbano novels are bona fide detective stories, exhibiting the majority of the classic features of the genre, such as a difficult crime to solve, many irrelevant details, a variety of credible suspects, the need for great powers of observation, a wide knowledge base on which to reason, excellent powers of induction, and deduction, and so forth, nevertheless, highly significant differences emerged. Crucially, Montalbano is human. While he no doubt has excellent powers of logic and observation, as well as strong determination, he nevertheless makes many mistakes, some of which are rather stupid. Furthermore, his mistakes allow us to uncover his mental and emotional workings. In other words, he is not a stereotype, but approaches Forsterian roundness. For instance, he never gets married because he is incapable of establishing a solid emotional relationship with a woman. Although he likes children, he is afraid of fatherhood. In other words, he exhibits the fears and insecurities that make us human. Furthermore, he not only externalises moral, social, and political opinions, often in open debate or polemic with his friends or colleagues, he also carries out acts which turn his values into concrete deeds embodying those values. And those values are radical rather than conservative. By contrast, there is no political and social debate in the Sherlock Holmes stories, and the rare times he does openly express or indirectly convey ethical values, those values are generally conservative.

In sum, in addition to exhibiting differences from the Sherlock Holmes stories, the Montalbano novels also contain material or ideational content that is extraneous to the telling of the classic detective story – Montalbano's love life, his criticism of contemporary Italian society and of the modern world in general (political crime, drugs, international terrorism, the world situation, the economy), and so forth. Indeed, the nature of many of the crimes investigated leads naturally into the political debates contained in the novels. In the 2004 article, I thus concluded that while the Montalbano novels are excellent detective stories with strong story lines[3], suspense, logical puzzles, and so forth, nevertheless Camilleri employs the detective story genre as a *container* or *cover* for an additional and deeper set of readings or goals: to debunk the detective story; to create a social novel; and at an even deeper level, to question the nature of reality, perhaps even positing a nihilist view of life in a somewhat similar vein to Pirandello, to whom intertextual references are not infrequent in

Camilleri's work. In conclusion, the Montalbano novels belong to the minor, highbrow trend in crime fiction.

Now, if the claims made in that paper are correct, it can be hypothesised that the Montalbano novels might employ different patterns of S&TP[4] from those employed in the Sherlock Holmes stories, patterns which are in keeping with their differing goals. And indeed, in the present paper, I will argue that the local effects of the differing exploitation of S&TP that I will identify constitute one crucial linguistic device producing middle-level to high-level foregrounding effects (Douthwaite 2000) which help create those deeper readings of the Montalbano novels as comedy, social criticism, and philosophical enquiry.

2. Speech and Thought Presentation in Sherlock Holmes Stories

I take as my prototypical Sherlockian story 'Silver Blaze'. Although the choice is in one sense arbitrary, a *prima facie* case may be made for considering it as a reliable sample of its genre. The story is considered a Sherlock Holmes classic: it exhibits all the prototypical features of the Sherlockian master tale, as a glance at the other Sherlock Holmes stories will immediately confirm. Finally, the figures relating to S&TP and reported below are so clear as to their import that little can go wrong in using the story for comparative purposes[5]. It is to these figures that we turn. The number of occurrences for each S&TP mode in 'Silver Blaze' is as follows:

Free Direct Speech (FDS)	406
Direct Speech (DS)	91
Narration of Internal States (NI)	17
Narrative Report of Speech Acts (NRSA)	3
Narration (N)	79
Total	596

The most salient point emerging from the statistics is the small variety of S&TP modes deployed. In fact, three modes of presentation dominate the Sherlockian tale, accounting for 96 percent of the utterances: FDS (68 percent), DS (15 percent), and N (13 percent). The other side of the coin to this conclusion is that on the one hand, NRSA represents 0.5 percent, and on the other hand, IS and FIS are totally absent, as are all modes of thought presentation, with the sole exception of NI, which represents less than 3 percent of all utterances.

What functions do these modes of presentation realise in the Sherlockian narrative? The three statistically major modes of S&TP identified above perform four basic ideational or communicative functions. First of all, they inform – Holmes informs Watson (and hence the reader, for Watson is the narrative foil) of states, events, and actions, and Watson informs Holmes (and hence the reader) of states, events, and actions. Secondly, they carry on the detective work; namely, Holmes forms and tests hypotheses, at times debating the situation with Watson, with the detective in charge of the case, and with the witnesses. In other words, they advance the story. Thirdly, the DS mode is employed to present Holmes' explanations.

Thus, as the figures demonstrate, there are long stretches of text where one character (Sherlock) expounds on the situation and which are almost uninterruptedly in FDS, or where a discussion is taking place, for once the identity of the speaker(s) has been established, no further reporting clauses are required, since no turn-taking occurs. Where turn-taking does occur, the identity of the speaker needs no further clarification – graphology (page layout), turn-taking itself, semantics (ideational content), co-text, and context almost invariably being more than sufficient to determine who has the floor at any given point.

For instance, consider the beginning of the story (approximately three pages of this 16-page story), in which Sherlock initially fills in Watson on the plot to date (Text 1). After the introductory sentence in DS to inform the reader that the speaker is Sherlock, all the sentences are in FDS, bar two which are in DS and constitute turns taken by Watson. The shift to N at the end of the extract focalised through Watson signals the fact that Sherlock has terminated his account:

Text 1

> 'Silver Blaze,' said . . . [Sherlock], 'is from the Isonomy stock, and holds as brilliant a record as his famous ancestor. He is now in his fifth year, and has brought in turn each of the prizes of the turf to Colonel Ross, his fortunate owner'. (336) . . .
>
> 'There you have it all in a nutshell, Watson, and if you can give me any light I shall be infinitely obliged to you'.
>
> I had listened with the greatest interest to the statement which Holmes, with characteristic clearness, had laid before me. (339)

These three functions account for the massive presence of FDS and DS (83 percent).

Fourthly, the three modes indirectly provide the clues that readers are supposed to identify and whose significance they are implicitly invited to fathom in an attempt to beat Sherlock at his own game by guessing who the culprit is before the culprit is identified by Holmes, who then proceeds to explain how he solved the crime (note that original paragraphing has not been respected in order to identify S&TP modes):

Text 2

N As we stepped into the carriage one of the stable lads held the door open for us.

NI; N A sudden idea seemed to occur to Holmes, for he leaned forward and touched the lad upon the sleeve.

DS 'You have a few sheep in the paddock,' he said.

FDS 'Who attends to them?'

FDS 'I do, sir.'

FDS 'Have you noticed anything amiss with them of late?'

FDS 'Well, sir, not of much account; but three of them have gone lame, sir.'

NI, N I could see that Holmes was extremely pleased, for he chuckled and rubbed his hands together.

DS 'A long shot, Watson; a very long shot!' said he, pinching my arm.

FDS 'Gregory, let me recommend to your attention this singular epidemic among the sheep'.

FDS 'Drive on, coachman!'

NI; NI Colonel Ross still wore an expression which showed the poor opinion which he had formed of my companion's ability, but I saw by the Inspector's face that his attention had been keenly aroused.

DS 'You consider that to be important?' he asked.

FDS 'Exceedingly so.'

FDS 'Is there any other point to which you would wish to draw my attention?'

FDS 'To the curious incident of the dog in the night-time.'

FDS 'The dog did nothing in the night-time.'

DS 'That was the curious incident,' remarked Sherlock Holmes.

N Four days later Holmes and I were again in the train bound for Winchester, to see the race for the Wessex Cup. (346-7)

This is a typical passage in which a mix of S&TP modes is to be found. The three main modes dominate, but the minor mode, NI, is also present. As will be noted, the extract sees Sherlock carrying forward the investigation. FDS predominates. In addition to being sparingly employed, with devices other than the reporting clause enabling the reader to identify the speaker, utterances presented in DS perform functions which are not related to clarifying speaker identity.

For instance, the reporting clause 'remarked Sherlock Holmes' in the final example of DS in the extract may be hypothesised to be acting as a signal that brings the conversation to an end, thereby confirming the status of Sherlock Holmes as the most powerful person in the story. Stated differently, many of the (relatively few) reporting clauses infringe the Gricean quantity maxim, since in one sense they could have been omitted without impeding comprehension. The N mode which follows flags a change in context, thereby confirming that the previous sentence had indeed brought the episode to an end.

Text 2 is of further interest, since it contains three of the seventeen instantiations of NI. Significantly, in all three cases the mental state is inferred by the narrator/focaliser, Watson. Two refer to Sherlock Holmes, one to Colonel Ross. Significantly, this form of deploying NI means that we do not penetrate Sherlock's consciousness, the mental centre where the real information lies, where the real mental processing takes place. Access to Sherlock's mind is generally through Watson, through the narrative foil. Support for this observation comes from the indirectness of the clue in the last three utterances, with their violation of the quality maxim, since *incident* deliberately contradicts *did nothing* at a semantic level and the quantity maxim, since Sherlock provides only a snippet of information which is calculated to provide little help to the audience in fathoming its import. Sherlock simply indicates an external event and leaves the audience to work out its significance.

At a more general level, the phenomenon of the mode of presenting information and mental processes means that the reader can never be sure of the truth value of propositions, viz. of the information received; is under the control of the author; and, like Watson, occupies a subordinate position, since the quantity and quality of the information that is filtered to him via the narrative foil effectively denies him any real opportunity of solving the crime before Sherlock.

The four communicative functions realised by S&TP in the Sherlock Holmes stories are directly related to the deeper narrative functions of the traditional trend of the genre. The story is narrated in the first person by the confidant, Dr Watson, who thus acts as narrative foil, thereby creating internal focalisation. As the statistics show, S&TP is limited to the *traditional* modes N, DS, and FDS. This leads to four considerations.

The first, and most crucial consideration is that these modes employed are all *external* modes, denying us access to the mind of the detective. Thus, all the information provided is under the full control of the author, for the internal focaliser, Watson, is not omniscient, and Sherlock gives nothing away he does not wish to when communicating (in DS and FDS). This has two complementary consequences: (a) information possessed and thought processes enacted by the detective are hidden from the reader – a constant of crime stories – otherwise the reader would be placed in a position to discover the solution and consequently lose interest in the story and the genre; by contrast, in *stream of consciousness* writing, *secrets* can be inferred from the privileged access given to the inner mental workings of the character; (b) if *internal* modes of S&TP were employed, the function of that type of novel would most probably step beyond the bounds of the classic detective story.

The second consideration is that the loss of the game function of the detective story would also undermine the other essential function of the detective story, the ideological function of conserving extant social structure. For the detective is generally a superman, or at the very least an exceptional human being whose powers enable society to be defended against even the most radical and dangerous attacks. If the reader can guess the solution, then the detective is no longer the intrepid guardian angel of society. Thirdly, such a view of the detective virtually obliges the author to create a stereotype and not a real, fully rounded human being, for humans are fallible, while gods are not, a necessary condition if society is always to win out, and preferably win out without incurring extremely serious losses. Fourthly, given the functions of the detective story as amusement and ideological conservatism, and the consequently stereotypical nature of the figure of the detective, the tale is generally simple in both content and style, and hence accessible to all readers. The simplicity offered by the modes of S&TP employed by Doyle is bolstered, in Gricean terms, by the lack of any material which is *extraneous* to the telling of the story or moral fable (the relevance maxim).

3. Speech and Thought Presentation in the Montalbano Novels

With regard to present concerns, the most important point to note about the Montalbano novels[6] is that they deploy the entire gamut of modes of S&TP illustrated in the Short-Semino model. Two high level

generalisations may be made with regard to the use made of S&TP modes. First, the *traditional* modes employed in the Sherlock Holmes stories – N, DS, and FDS – may be found in abundance performing exactly the same canonical ideational and narrative functions as they do in classic crime fiction, as listed above. However, they also perform other narrative functions not realised by these modes in the Holmes stories. The most important of these is the non-canonical function of furnishing access to Montalbano's mind. Second, the use of the more modern modes of S&TP by definition gives access to the detective's inner mental and emotional life.

I will now examine extracts from the novels to illustrate how S&TP modes are deployed. The first example, from *The Snack Thief*, shows how N is deployed non-canonically, for in addition to its standard function of describing states, events, and actions, narration is also used metafictionally to comment on the story. Montalbano has been talking to two Carabinieri police officers about the case and one makes a hypothesis to which Montalbano gives no credit. However, he does not wish to let the colleagues from the other police service know that he disagrees, so he ends the conversation in the following way:

Text 3

The Inspector stood up, threw up his hands, and shrugged:

'Well, what can we do? The people in Trapani and Mazàra have taken over the investigation'.

A consummate actor, Montalbano. (61)

The final comment in Text 3 is clearly the author's or narrator's voice. In addition to authorial commentary constituting a novel function in crime fiction, a second significant point with regard to Text 3 is that this is one of the many times – and ways – in which Camilleri is drawing the reader's attention to the fictional nature of the novel, in this case through invoking theatricality. Montalbano is acting a part. References to the theatre, to film, to fiction, abound in Montalbano novels. Fictionality is foregrounded. Thirdly, the scene is one of many where colleagues (theoretically, defenders of the state, therefore working for the same side) do not cooperate, thus introducing a social comment on the events. Thus, narration is made to perform functions which are not prototypical of the detective story. A fourth function performed by the target utterance is the expression of a positive value judgement. The evaluative adjective *consummate* aligns the reader ideologically and emotionally with Montalbano (and against the

numerous policemen the novels criticise). Furthermore, through praising his ability as a detective, as well as illustrating the fact that the job requires a variety of skills, the utterance also helps to construct the detective story proper. Note how form is foregrounded through graphology (a short, one-sentence paragraph which brings the section to a close) and right dislocation (or fronting, to be more precise), together with ellipsis to underscore the special functions the utterance fulfils (compare the more ordinary sentence 'Montalbano was a consummate actor')[7].

The second example is a self-contained episode from *The Snack Thief* (5-6), in which Montalbano is talking to the Chief of Police. It occurs just after the beginning of the novel, and Montalbano does not yet know what crime has been perpetrated. The episode which follows this will clarify that a Tunisian gunboat opened fire on an Italian fishing boat, perhaps in international waters, killing one member of the Italian boat's crew, one who happened to be a Tunisian. Contents of this nature immediately set the scene for a social novel.

Text 4

FDS; FDS; FDS; FDS [1] 'Montalbano! [2] How are you? [3] Officer Augello told me everything. [4] This is a very big deal, one that will have international repercussions, don't you think?'

NI; NI; NRTA/FIT [5] He felt at sea. [6] He had no idea what the commissioner was talking about. [7] He opted for a generic, affirmative answer.

FDS [8] 'Oh, yes, yes.'

FDT [9] 'International repercussions?'

FDS; FD [10] 'Anyway, I've arranged for Augello to confer with the Prefect. [11] The matter is, how shall I say, beyond my competence'.

FDS [12] 'Yes, yes'.

FDS [13] 'Are you feeling all right, Montalbano?'

FDS [14] 'Yes, fine. [15] Why?'

FDS [16] 'Nothing, it just seemed . . . '

FDS [17] 'Just a slight headache, that's all'.

FDS [18] 'What day is it today?'

FDS [19] 'Thursday, sir'.

FDS [20] 'Listen, why don't you come to dinner at our house on Saturday? **FDS** [21] My wife will make you her black spaghetti in squid ink. [22] It's delicious'.

> **FDT; NI/FIT; FDT** [23] Pasta with squid ink. [24][8] His mood was black enough to dress a hundred pounds of spaghetti. [25] International repercussions?

What is immediately striking about this passage in contrast to the Sherlock Holmes stories is the mix of presentational modes employed, despite the fact that the passage is dominated by the traditional modes. Thus, the canonical features are there, such as extensive use of FDS, which provides information taking the story forward (we learn that the case is of primary importance [3]), and no reporting clauses signalling speaker identity.

However, advancement is slow (little information forwarding the detective story proper is provided), for FDS also introduces material which is both absent from the Sherlock Holmes stories and extraneous to the telling of the detective story. For instance, though a hierarchical gulf separates Montalbano and the Chief, nevertheless their relationship is intimate, as is shown by the greeting [2], the chief detecting Montalbano's abnormal condition over the phone [13], and the invitation to dinner [20], cunningly enticing Montalbano with one of his favourite dishes [21], thus denoting intimate knowledge, and the encouragement of the final comment [22], increasing phatic communion. This contrasts starkly with the Holmes stories, where intimacy and phatic communion are generally kept to a bare minimum, if not debarred. In other terms, politeness maxims are frequently, deliberately, and blatantly ignored or violated in the Holmes stories and underscored in the Montalbano novels (Douthwaite 2005: 19).

NI is also present, but in this case there is no mediation through a narrative foil. NI provides direct access to the detective's inner workings. Furthermore, NI does not describe stereotypical states in stereotypical situations. Instead, NI helps construct a portrait of a detective who is human, by representing *real* emotions [5] in situations which are not relevant to the advancement of the detective story, for Montalbano does not know what has happened [6], and so has to take a decision as to how to deal with the problematic situation, [7] (this utterance thus constitutes an instantiation of mental processing). But the problematic situation arises because of the enormous amount of conflict in the workplace (a theme in all the Montalbano novels, as we have seen). For instance, Augello, who is

lower in the hierarchy than Montalbano, does his best to try to get a promotion and outdo Montalbano, often employing means which are not overly ethical. This element too has no pertinence to the telling of the crime story, but is one constituent of the portrait of Italy that Camilleri carefully builds up in his novels. And it accounts for Montalbano's emotions expressed in NI: [5] expresses bewilderment and surprise, and [24] expresses Montalbano's anger at Augello, who, Montalbano surmises, has managed to get to the crime scene before him and has not reported anything back to his superior as he should have done. Indeed, Augello has managed to work the situation so that he and not his boss gets to see the Prefect, a trick to try to give the impression he is superior to his superior officer. There is thus no stereotypical picture of a stupid police force highlighting Sherlock's brilliance, but a detailed picture of men out for their own personal gain, the police being no exception.

Content together with linguistic devices of the type described above account for the two occurrences of FDT in the episode where Montalbano's thought is represented and consequently presented as absolute truth: [9] and [25]. The utterances convey the illocutionary forces of surprise and anger, standing in for a DT form such as 'What the hell is going on here?' As in the Joycean extract analysed by Short (1983: 82), FDT (re)presents the high points, the moments of intensity in the passage (in Joyce, the moment of epiphany). Foregrounding underscores the point. The two utterances show both literal repetition (parallelism) and graphological salience ([9] constitutes a paragraph in itself; [25] is in paragraph-final and section-final position and constitutes an extremely short sentence following a long one – [24] – the latter also foregrounded by its original and stimulating metaphor).

The third example (three excerpts from one scene) also illustrates the mix of modes in *The Snack Thief*. Lapecora, a fifty-year-old man, has been found murdered in a lift. Montalbano is talking to a mother and her daughter who live in the block of flats where Lapecora lived and was found dead.

Text 5a

FDS [1] 'What do you want?'

FDS [2] 'I'm Inspector Montalbano'.

N/NI [3] The woman looked away.

FDS [4] 'We don't know anything'.

NI; FIT [5] Immediately, Montalbano smelled a rat. [6] Was this the woman Lapecora had gone one flight up to see? . . .

Text 5b

N/NI; FDT [7] A girl appeared, just turned twenty, wearing jeans. [8] Cute, but very pale and literally terrified

NI; NRTA [9] The rat smell grew even stronger and the Inspector decided to launch an attack. . . .

Text 5c

FDS; FDS; FDS; FDS [10] 'The truth is slightly different and more unpleasant. [11] You both immediately realised the man was dead. [12] But you didn't say anything; you acted as if you'd never seen him at all. [13] Why?'

DS [14] 'We didn't want everybody talking about us', Signora Piccirillo admitted in defeat. [15] Then in a sudden burst of energy, she shouted hysterically: 'We're honest people, we are!'

FDT; FDT; FDT [16] So those two honest people had left the corpse to be discovered by someone else, perhaps someone less honest. [17] And what if Lapecora hadn't been dead yet? [18] They'd left him there to rot, to save . . . to save what?

N [19] He went out slamming the door behind him. . . . (22-4)

The general point to note is that FDS, the most frequent mode in the Sherlock Holmes stories, is here interspersed with other modes. [1], which is in FDS, represents the lady of the house's aggressiveness towards the policeman. Indeed, the function of the absence of a reporting clause in which the referent would be mentioned is to make the utterance short and curt in order to underline the lady's lack of both politeness and a willingness to cooperate. The illocutionary forces conveyed by [2] are those of Montalbano introducing himself through identifying his social role, thereby justifying his presence and forewarning the gentle lady that cooperation is necessary. The non-verbal signal (a behavioural process, in Hallidayan terms) conveyed by the N of [3] constitutes the lady's rejection of Montalbano's invitation, confirmed by the illocutionary force of [4] in FDS. Note that although [3] is presented in N mode, it can nevertheless be argued that it is focalised through Montalbano. We see what Montalbano sees. There is no Watsonian narrative foil acting as intermediary and preventing information from reaching the reader. [5] constitutes NI and represents Montalbano's reaction to the negative signals emitted by Mrs Piccirillo in [1] and [3]. That is, Montalbano interprets Mrs

Piccirillo's behaviour as suspicious and in [6] immediately forms a tentative hypothesis which could account for her reticent behaviour by linking her to the murdered man and to the evidence available in the preceding co-text, namely that the lift with Lapecora's dead body had been found on her floor, one floor below the one where the dead man lived. The interrogative form of the utterance is a clear indicator of FIT, and the test of shifting the tense forward yields a perfect DT form (viz: 'Is this the woman Lapecora went one flight up to see?'). FIT thus represents the climax of the excerpt, since it conveys one of the main tasks a detective must carry out – forming an explanatory hypothesis.

Moving on to the next part of the same scene, [7] again narrates what Montalbano perceives visually. While the first clause might appear to be external narration, the broken language represented by the second and third clauses (an effect produced by ellipsis) argues for NI. [8] continues presenting Montalbano's perception of the girl, but in FDT mode (ellipsis again furnishing the evidence: 'She is cute, but . . . terrified'), another apex, for in this case it represents Montalbano's realisation of the emotional state of the girl, which confirms his previous hypothesis that the mother's behaviour was suspicious, as the feedback provided by the first clause of [9] confirms. Not surprisingly, this latter clause is in NI mode. The second clause of [9] represents the consequence of Montalbano's realisation – a decision as to the tactic to employ to realise his goal of testing his hypothesis as to whether Lapecora really had gone up to see Mrs Piccirillo when he was killed.

What is radically new here compared to the Sherlock Holmes stories is that the reader accesses the detective's mind, recording his perceptions, his emotional and psychological reactions, his value judgements, and the mental operations he performs in gathering information and in formulating and testing hypotheses. The consequences of this are crucial in relation to the classic crime story: the reader is placed on the same level as the detective, since everyone has the same information, and one of the two classic functions of the detective story, that of creating the guessing game in which the reader competes with the detective, is undermined. (Note that not all of the information available to Montalbano is furnished to the reader; otherwise, the novel would cease to be a crime story.) A third consequence is that of building up a fuller portrait of the detective – in

a situation in which he must be on his toes to check his suspicions – he nevertheless finds the time to make an appreciative value judgement of the girl. Sherlock would have frowned.

Text 5c adds other important non-canonical features. In chapter 2, Montalbano questions all the inhabitants of the block of flats where Lapecora lived. The questioning not only advances the detective story proper, but it also enables Camilleri to provide a social description of the variety of human beings living there. Social description is tantamount to social criticism, thanks to the scathing sarcasm that is achieved through the use of FDT in [16] to [18][9]. Montalbano is rightly incensed because of the bourgeois attitude of the women in not wishing to be involved in anything that might even remotely smack of scandal, to the point that they might have omitted helping a dying man. Thus, FDT is deployed to present Montalbano's feelings and values. In addition to vouchsafing the genuineness of Montalbano's emotions, FDT also distances the detective from the women whose words and thoughts are presented exclusively through FDS and DS. The use of FDT also helps to build up a picture of Montalbano as a sincere political agent. He is not simply a stereotypical traditional cop doing his job defending society from wrongdoers, but a real person who will probably vote left-wing (moderate?) at the elections and who does what he can in his day-to-day life to protect the values he believes in. Note also that emotions are not standardly part of the menu in the Sherlock Holmes stories.

Returning to the social critique of *face*, the attack is one on social mores which are not just Sicilian, nor even only Italian, but world-wide, just as the abundant strictures on politics, economics, terrorism, and other major themes Camilleri deals with in the Montalbano novels are supranational and not local, as the next example will bear out.

Montalbano has discovered that the Tunisian sailor killed on the Italian fishing boat was in fact a terrorist, and that the executioners were the Italian secret service working hand in hand with the Tunisian government who wanted the man out of the way. However, since the Italian secret service wished to cover their tracks, they had then proceeded to kill off all those people who might have been acquainted with the facts. One person murdered was Karima, the snack thief's mother. Although Karima had absolutely nothing to with the terrorist plot herself, she had the great misfortune of being the terrorist's sister.

The secret service had also tried to kill the young snack thief but had failed. Montalbano is approached by the secret service and asked to refrain from making his knowledge public. Montalbano knows that if he does not agree, he too will be killed. However, he sets a trap for the secret service boss and manages to film the unofficial meeting between himself and the agent, in which he adroitly gets the agent to recount the entire story in all its repulsive detail. He then tells the agent the price to be paid for his silence. Karima had prostituted herself to keep her son, but since the secret service had hidden her body, the large amount of money which she had put in the bank could not go to her son, since there was no proof of her death. Montalbano demands her body be turned up so positive identification can be made and the child can claim his inheritance. This places the secret service in a spot, for this would mean risking their cover. However, since Montalbano insists, they pay the price rather than murdering a policeman and a child and running the risk of Montalbano handing over the videotape to the television networks. So a body is miraculously found and death is dated about 10 days before the body was discovered. Unfortunately, the body is wrapped in a newspaper which is only three days old! Here is Montalbano's comment in FDT:

Text 6

FDT If only those shithead secret service agents could get it right for once! Like the time when they needed to make people believe that a certain Libyan plane had crashed in the Sila on a certain day, they staged a show of flames and explosions. Then the autopsy had shown that the pilot had died fifteen days before the crash. The flying corpse. (238)

In addition to FDT conveying sarcasm, strong emotion, and Montalbano's critical attitude toward the society he lives in, what should be noted is the indirectness of the criticism, for the single specific event relevant to the detective story being recounted is also included as a means for referring to other important political and social events in Italian and world history. The reference to the Libyan plane evokes the skies of Ustica and an international crisis which occurred in 1980[10]. Now Camilleri does not openly debate such events. He does not get Montalbano to take sides. However, the attitudes and emotions expressed through the use of FDT and FIT make the author's stance crystal clear.

Since extracts such as this and the criticism levelled at Mrs Piccirillo and her daughter do not forward the plot of the detective story; they

flout the Gricean maxim of relevance. Two hypotheses may therefore be made at this point. Either Camilleri is a bad writer (hence we ignore what he does), or else he is creating a high-level implicature, namely that what he is writing *is* relevant at a deeper level, as Grice argues, relevant not to the detective novel, but to the social novel he is writing.

In the following text, FIT is deployed to convey opinions, and consequently social criticism. Montalbano is talking to the Chief of Police:

Text 7

FDS 'Well, we can meet in the afternoon. But please don't fail to come. I need you to provide me with a line of defence, because the Right Honourable Pennacchio is here . . . '

FDS 'The one charged with criminal association with mafiosi?'

FDS 'The very same. He's preparing a question to ask the Minister during Question Time. He wants your head'.

FIT You bet: it had been Montalbano himself who had conducted the investigation into the Honourable Member's affairs. (*The Snack Thief*: 139-40)

The final utterance appears to begin in FDT and move into FIT. However, the first clause is a fixed expression; hence, the entire sentence can be taken as being encoded in FIT. Clearly, it conveys Montalbano's opinion and constitutes a direct attack on a member of Parliament who is accused of being part of the Mafia machine. The fact that the Chief of Police agrees with Montalbano reinforces the critical stance adopted, a stance which most probably coincides with the author/implied narrator, Camilleri, as well as with the many state servants fighting such criminal institutions, a significant number of whom have been killed in the course of their duties, sometimes in a spectacular fashion.

I now turn to a highly significant use of FIS, contrasting starkly with the S&TP forms in the Sherlock Holmes stories. The following extract is a small part of Montalbano's questioning of an old Tunisian woman, Aisha, who rented a small apartment to Karima. The passage is extremely long (73-8) for a Montalbano novel, so only short excerpts can be quoted:

Text 8

N; NI Buscaino, the officer who knew Arabic because he was born and raised in Tunisia . . . was there in less than forty-five minutes. Hearing the new arrival speak her tongue the old woman became anxious to cooperate.

DS 'She says she'd like to tell her uncle the whole story,' Buscaino translated for them.

FDT First the kid, now an uncle?

DS 'And who the fuck is that?' asked Montalbano befuddled.

DS; FDS 'Oh, the uncle, that would be you, Inspector,' The policeman explained. 'It's a title of respect . . .'

. . .

N Montalbano picked out a photograph of a pretty, dark-skinned young woman of about thirty . . . holding a little boy's hand.

DS 'Ask her of this is Karima and François'.

DS 'Yes, that's them,' said Buscaino.

DS 'Where did they eat? I don't see any stove or hot plate here'.

NV; IS The old woman and the policeman murmured animatedly to each other. Buscaino then said the little boy always ate with the old woman, even when Karima was at home, which she was, sometimes, in the evening.

FDS Did she receive men?

NI; FIS; FIS; ff. As soon as she heard the question translated, the old woman grew visibly indignant. Karima was practically a djin, a holy woman halfway between the human race and the angels. Never would she have done *haram*, illicit things. She sweated out a living as a housemaid . . . . As the uncle – Montalbano that is – was clearly a man of honourable sentiment and behaviour, how could he ever think such a thing about Karima?

DS 'Tell her,' the inspector said while looking at the photographs from the drawer, 'that Allah is great and merciful, but if she's bullshitting me, Allah is going to be very upset, because she'll be cheating justice, and then she'll really be fucked'.

N; N; FIS; FIS Buscaino translated carefully and the old woman shut up as if her spring had become unwound. But then a little key inside her wound her back up, and she resumed speaking uncontrollably. The uncle, who was very wise, was right; he'd seen things clearly. Several times in the last two years, Karima had received visits from a young man who came in a large automobile.

DS 'Ask her what colour'.

N The exchange between Buscaino and the old woman was long and laboured.

DS 'I believe she said metallic grey'.

DS 'And what did Karima and this young man do?'

FDS; N What a man and a woman do, uncle. The woman heard the bed creaking over her head.

FDS Did he sleep with Karima?

FDS Only once and the next morning he drove her to work in his automobile.

FDS; FDS; FDS, FIS But he was a bad man. One night there was a lot of commotion. Karima was shouting and crying, and then the bad man had left.

FIS She had come running and found Karima sobbing, her naked body bearing signs of having been hit. Fortunately, François hadn't woken up.

FDS Did the bad man by any chance come to see her last Wednesday evening?

FIS How had the uncle guessed? Yes, he did come, but didn't do anything with Karima. He only took her away in his car.

FDS What time was it?

FDS It might have been ten in the evening. Karima brought François down to the her saying she'd be spending the night out. And in fact she came back the next morning around nine, then disappeared with the boy.

FDS Was the bad man with her then?

FDS No, she'd taken the bus.

The most striking point is the highly unusual use of FIS to present a scene in which the policeman is interrogating a witness. Defamiliarisation is a mild label for it. It topples *normality* completely, giving the entire conversation a strange air. At the most superficial level, it appears to mimic the fact that a translation is going on. Montalbano and Aisha talk to each other through an interpreter. But this is indeed a superficial level. At a second level, we can identify a distancing effect of Montalbano from the topic of conversation. Since he is, in the final analysis, a moralist, (for this *is* a social novel), this distancing through S&TP may be seen as distancing himself from the participants and their views and values. A second, and parallel, function realised by distancing is that Montalbano must obtain information from someone who is lying. However, this someone is obviously an old woman who is both a foreigner and in a weak financial situation. In other words, Montalbano is doing something he does not particularly like.

There is, therefore, a third and deeper level of interpretation. The use of FIS is anti-canonical. This in itself is a symbol of Montalbano's distaste for what he is doing, for he is on the side of the weak, the poor, and the humble, and he in no way wishes to inflict pain of any sort on this category of people. Indeed, a variety of linguistic devices are deployed to bolster this impression – first and foremost, ambiguity. Utterances such as *Did he sleep with Karima?*, *Did the bad man by any chance come to see her last Wednesday evening?* and *What time was it?* may be classified as FDS in formal terms. It is only

because they appear in a flow of utterances which are basically in FIS that we ask ourselves how to classify such utterances. Secondly, those utterances which could formally be claimed as being presented in FDS may be said to highlight crucial points in the interrogation. While the first example quoted directly concerns the moral sphere, the second and third questions directly concern the circumstances of the murder. Thus, the ambiguity of form highlights their importance. Thirdly, certain forms appear even more convincingly to be presented in FDS. For instance, 'What a man and a woman do, uncle'. The difference here is that the utterance is preceded by a DS form. And in utterances like this, Montalbano and Aisha seem to be achieving some form of intimacy, they appear to be constructing a real, human, interpersonal relationship. Aisha is not simply the witness to be put under pressure to get out of her what she knows. This, I would say, is the deepest reading of the deployment of FIS: ironically, it signals intimacy, and not distance, and does so by differentiating itself from *standard* usage of this form.

Thus, deployment of S&TP modes can be seen to fulfil a wide variety of functions, quite complex narrative functions that are well beyond the range of functions realised in classic crime fiction.

Humour is another trait exhibited by the Montalbano novels that is generally alien to classic crime fiction. Montalbano novels are riddled with humour. One example was seen earlier, in Text 6, where the final comment in FDT – 'the flying corpse' – conveys heavy sarcasm, the humour underlining the stupidity of the secret service and acting as social criticism. The following text, in which Montalbano calls on Mrs Gulisano, who lives on the fifth floor, where Lapecora was found dead, shows humour employed to another non-canonical detective story end.

Text 9

[1] 'Excuse me, ma'am, I'm Inspector Montalbano'.

[2] The young housewife who had come to the door – about thirty, very attractive but unkempt – put a finger to her lips, her expression complicitous, enjoining him to be quiet.

[3] Montalbano was disconcerted. [4] What did that gesture mean? [5] The devil take his habit of going about unarmed! [6] Cautiously the young woman moved away from the door and the inspector went in, looking around what was a small study full of books.

> [7] 'Please speak in a low voice, if the baby wakes up we're done for, we won't be able to talk, he screams his head off'. (29-30)

The narration in [2], in which the woman places her finger over her mouth, causes worry as an internal state in Montalbano in [3]. [4], which is in FIT, conveys the illocutionary force of Montalbano wondering what has caused the woman's gesture. Relating that utterance in FIT increases the immediacy, hence the intensity, of the emotion expressed, underscoring just how worried Montalbano is. [5], also in FIT, is an association Montalbano makes stemming from his emotional state and from the question he sets himself in [4]. Clearly, the degree of reduction in explicitness is high and several missing links must be recovered to fully explicate his thoughts. Thus, Montalbano relates the signal to the immediate context he is aware of, namely that the murder had taken place in that building a short time previously, and that the body had been found on that floor, from which he derives the hypothesis that the murderer might not yet have left the building, hence drawing the implicature that the woman's non-verbal signal constitutes a warning that the killer is in her apartment. This implicature leads him to curse himself for never carrying a weapon for protection in cases such as these, as externalised by [5]. A second function performed by FIT in this extract is that of debunking the detective story and of making the detective human and fallible. Taking up the story at [6], this utterance narrates a prototypical detectional event: silently entering a dangerous place, moving towards a climax of discovery, only to end in a comic anticlimax reported in DS in [7] – the baby must not be awakened!

Humanity in Montalbano includes fear, an emotion the god-like Holmes never expresses. In the following example from *The Terracotta Dog*, Montalbano is recovering after having been wounded by several bullets from the machine gun of a Mafioso who had every intention of putting an end to Montalbano's days.

> **Text 10**
>
> Before falling asleep, he asked himself a question: if the doctors had assured him his recovery would be complete, why did he feel his throat being throttled by melancholy? (221)

Note how the expression of emotion in Text 10 would weaken considerably if it were presented as NRSA or N. A technical point here is the fact that Camilleri not only constantly changes mode of

presentation inter-sententially, he also does so intra-sententially, in this case moving from N to NRSA to FIT.

4. Conclusion

The deployment of all forms of S&TP identified in the Short-Semino model, together with the skilful deployment of the more *internal* forms of S&TP modes that are absent in the prototypical model of the detective story, furnish concrete stylistic evidence in favour of the thesis that the Montalbano novels are not just detective stories, but are much more. The deployment of mixed modes within and across sentences, as well as of ambiguous forms, constitutes further evidence of a complexity which goes well beyond that of the writing of classic crime fiction. Furthermore, the use of the entire gamut of S&TP modes is only one domain of the myriad symbolic devices which Camilleri skilfully deploys to mask the plurality of his goals through dressing them up as a detective story. The analysis carried out above also demonstrates the validity of employing a more refined model of S&TP, such as the one produced by Short and Semino.

Endnotes

[1]The line I trace in that work is confirmed in a state-of-the-art collection of essays edited by Priestman (2003).

[2]See Marcus (2003). This brief summary cannot do justice to the subject. To give just one example of the complexity of this topic, it has been argued that detectives such as Raymond Chandler's Marlowe are fake critics of society, an excuse for a modern 'love story'. Thus, Porter (2003: 106-7) states that 'at the heart of all the mystery and intrigue, . . . the murders, the thefts and the blackmail typical of crime fiction, one finds a tale of old-fashioned romance', and compares Chandler to Fitzgerald. Hilfer (1990: 54) declares that 'The hero's quest in the Hammett-Chandler-Spillane tradition, is not, as in the English form, to rescue a social world because . . . his is always already irredeemably corrupt but to preserve his own isolated ego from losing itself in commitment to some other, usually female'. In addition to pointing out the romance element in Chandler, Knight (1980: 158-9) also underscores Chandler's anti-feminist stance and his 'sexual anxiety', with its homoerotic or homosexual elements, an aspect to which several critics have drawn attention.

[3]They generally have a dual, parallel plot, the two plots coming to overlap at some point in the novel, thereby complicating matters in true detective tradition, but also making for a more complex novel.

[4]The S&TP model used is Semino & Short's recent one (2004) with its inclusion of new categories, such as Narration of Internal States (NI), which the present analysis of the Montalbano novels shows refines the accuracy of the model and increases its productiveness.

[5]With regard to the selection of the story to analyse, in his critical edition of Sherlock Holmes, Hodgson (1994) includes 'Silver Blaze' as one of the 15 major Sherlock Holmes stories. With regard to 'Silver Blaze' being representative stylistically, I carried out a double check on another two short stories from the classic crime tradition. The first, also by Doyle, was 'The Musgrave Ritual', which is also included in Hodgson's selection, and the second was 'The Mysterious Visitor' by R. Austin Freeman (1925) obtaining virtually identical results. In order to eliminate the hypothesis that genre (short story versus the novel form) might impinge on results, I also scrutinised the novel *The 12.30 from Croydon* (1934) written by Freeman Wills Crofts, another associate of the major trend in crime fiction. While a slightly higher density of utterances in such internal modes as NI were found, their use was not stylistically significant, no alteration of form or sub-genre was produced by the slightly higher number of instantiations of NI. To give just one instance, the first chapter sets the scene by having a father and very young daughter fly from Croydon to Paris where the mother has had an accident. The chapter describes the journey. Sentences describing the perceptions and feelings of the child take up a significant part of the chapter. Typical utterances such as 'Presently she [the daughter] noticed that a large area of the cloud below had darkened in colour. For a moment she gazed at it with a rather listless attention. Then, realizing what it was, she was suddenly thrilled.' Internal states of this kind referring to a five-year old's inner states can hardly be said to presage a social, critical novel.

[6]The findings are based principally on an analysis of two Montalbano novels by Camilleri: *Il Ladro di Merendine* (1996) and *Il Cane di Terracotta* (1996). No statistical analysis has been carried out on these novels, for it is unnecessary for the aims of this study. I have employed English translations where available, but modified slightly translations I felt were inappropriate. In other cases, I have translated the Italian extracts into English myself. Page references are to the English edition.

[7]Indeed, the foregrounded syntactic form could equally represent FDT/FDS. Here classification as N is preferable because it constitutes narratorial comment and not the detective's thoughts.

[8]I have classified [24] as ambiguous between NI and FIT, since the transformation test would yield an utterance which is not 100 percent credible as DT ('My mood is black enough to dress a hundred pounds of spaghetti'); nevertheless, the utterance comes between two other utterances which are clearly presented in FDT.

[9]Given the use of the past tense, the clauses could be hypothesised as being in FIT. My reading is that Montalbano turns to go out and has these thoughts as a closure, hence as FDT. However, whether these utterances be in FDT or FIT, the *effect* does not change – as 'radical' S&TP forms, they represent and vouchsafe Montalbano's inner mental workings and have a distancing effect.

[10]On 27 June 1980, an Itavia DC-9 flying from Bologna to Palermo fell into the sea, causing 81 deaths. Various hypotheses have been advanced as to a cause, including missiles launched from a NATO plane in an attempt to shoot down a Libyan MIG-23 flying parallel to the Italian plane, and a bomb placed on board the DC-9. It has been asserted that the Libyan Leader Col. Muammar Qadhafi was believed to be aboard the Libyan plane. Camilleri refers to the fact that remains of a MIG-23 were found on the Sila on 18 July. Initially the authorities declared that the MIG had crashed in July, but

it appears that the crash had occurred the night on which the DC-9 also crashed. So far, the real cause of the crash has not been officially established.

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How to Make a Drama out of a Speech Act: The Speech Act of Apology in the Film *A Fish Called Wanda*

Mick Short

Abstract

My main aim in this essay is to explore in some detail how the speech act of apology runs as a structuring *leitmotiv* through one of my favourite comedy films, *A Fish Called Wanda* (1988). My essay thus constitutes a contribution to the stylistic analysis of film, an area which deserves more work. Through a detailed examination of apology sequences in *A Fish Called Wanda*, I will show, in particular, (a) how almost every apology in the film is deviant, and so foregrounded, and (b) how contrasting styles of apology bring out, in a very clear way, the contrast between the two main male characters. As a prelude to that analysis, I outline, in Section 1, some general aspects of speech act analysis in relation to characterisation which I will then use in the discussion of the film.

Key words: *A Fish Called Wanda*; apology; film; speech acts; stylistics of film.

1. Speech acts and drama

In spite of the early suggestions (for example, Ohmann 1971a, 1971b; Pratt 1977; Short 1981; and cf. Leech & Short 1981: 290-4) that speech act analysis could be of considerable use in the stylistic analysis of character interaction in drama, there has been relatively little detailed discussion of how speech acts are used in dramatic texts and, to my knowledge, no detailed discussion of speech acts in particular films. There have been a number of works which have used speech act analysis in a rather general way to try to throw light on literature in general, for example, Miller (2001), Petrey (1990), or a group of plays (Porter 1979). Hurst (1987), Lowe (1994), and Rudanko (2001) are honourable exceptions to the trend of stylistic work avoiding detailed speech act analysis.

It is well known that character contrasts can be achieved by virtue of two characters being assigned contrasting speech acts, for example, questions and answers, or orders and the carrying-out of those orders.

But it is also worth noting that differences in the realisation of the same kind of speech act can also produce such contrasts. Compare, for example, the two threats below from near the beginning of Shakespeare's *King Lear*. Lear has decided to retire from the throne and makes his three daughters each declare that their love for him is above all others, in a competition to receive an appropriate part of his kingdom. Unlike her power-hungry sisters, Goneril and Regan, Cordelia has refused to play the game, and Lear has angrily said that he will give his favourite and loving daughter nothing. Kent has interceded to try to prevent Lear from giving the whole kingdom to Goneril and Regan, but Lear refuses to listen. Kent is thus forced to become more and more extreme in his remonstrances, until he actually threatens his king:

KENT: Revoke thy gift,
Or, whilst I can vent clamour from my throat,
I'll tell thee thou dost evil.

LEAR: Hear me recreant …
… if on the tenth day following
Thy banish'd trunk be found in our dominions,
The moment is thy death. (I.i.166-78)

The contrast between the two characters here is 'little threat – big threat'. In order for a threat to be felicitous, in Searle's terms, the person who makes the threat has to be able to carry it out. But Kent has little power to threaten his king, who still has absolute control at this moment in the play. So all he can do is threaten to be impolite – to attack Lear's positive face, in Brown and Levinson's (1987) terms. On the other hand, Lear's warning to Kent is life-threatening. The huge disparity in the sizes of the threats thus contrasts the injudicious but powerful Lear with the brave but powerless Kent. It is also possible for the same speech act to be delivered with contrasting styles, and this is one of the things we will see in *A Fish Called Wanda*.

I should make it clear that, although I will be applying speech act theory to a set of film extracts, I am well aware that there are problems with that theory.[1] We have names for some speech acts, most of which pre-date speech act theory (for example, *command*, *threat*), but there could well be speech acts we don't have names for, and it is difficult, perhaps impossible, to know how many speech acts there are in a particular language. This is partly because of the naming problem and partly because there is the usual problem of delineating

categories. If I beg someone to do something, is that a kind of request or a separate speech act? Are orders and commands the same thing? And so on. Thomas (1995: 93-114) provides an enlightening discussion of these sorts of issues.

The original Searlean specifications for particular speech acts (for example, Searle 1969: 57-62) often do not seem to fit real data very well either. So, for example, a promise relates to a future act of the speaker, but parents can promise that their children will do things, and my wife can make promises on my behalf too (though I am less clear about whether this works so felicitously in the other direction!). Thomas (1995: 107-14) suggests that the rules for speech acts are not constitutive, like grammatical rules, but more like Gricean maxims. I prefer to think of them as schemata. Just as there are many legitimate variations possible on the famous restaurant schema, so there can be many variations on the schemata for particular speech acts. In some restaurants we pay for food when we order it, and in others we pay just before we leave. This sort of variation seems to be of the same sort as the variations on promising noted above. But other aspects of the schemata are more rigid. Leaving a restaurant without paying would not be a possible variation, except under very special circumstances. In effect it would be deviant and thus foregrounded. Similar things can be said about speech acts. Although I can promise that my wife will bring a gift to a friend, I can't promise that I will dissolve tomorrow, except under very special circumstances. So some speech act variations can be foregrounded, as we will see in *A Fish Called Wanda*.

The original Searlean account of speech acts tended to use single-sentence examples of speech acts, but it was recognised relatively early on that speech acts might be realised by a combination of sentences or even whole texts. For example, a speech in a court of law might be a plea for mitigation. Levin (1976) suggested that a whole poem might constitute a speech act. Searle himself noted in an important article (1975) that speech acts could be performed indirectly and that a chain of pragmatic inference was involved in arriving at the intended speech act. For example, if A asks B 'Would you like to go and see Clint Eastwood's film *Bird?*' (about Charlie 'Bird' Parker, the American jazz saxophonist), B is most likely to interpret what A says as an invitation to go to see the film, not a question about what she

would like. The basis for this would seem to be that the question is about a felicity condition that would have to be in place for the invitation to be successful. This sort of indirect speech act is often felt to be polite, precisely because of its indirectness. In effect, by framing his invitation in the above ambiguous way, A allows B a get-out which is less threatening socially than turning the invitation down flat. She can answer the question about her likes, (for example, by saying that she doesn't like jazz) rather than rejecting the invitation more straightforwardly. This kind of ambiguity also means that speakers can 'negotiate' the speech act value of utterances socially (cf. Leech 1983: 107-10), and so the production of a speech act and its uptake might take a number of turns in a conversation, for example:

A: Are you free tomorrow night?
B: I think so.
A: Have you seen Clint Eastwood's *Bird*?
B: No, but I love Charlie Parker's music.
A: I'm going to the late showing. Would you like to come too?
B: Yes, that would be lovely.

In this invented example, A asks a question about one felicity condition which needs to be in place for the invitation speech act to work, and once that hurdle has been crossed, asks another and another before the invitation and its uptake are finally completed.

This kind of account of speech acts, when combined with other styles of analysis, can allow us to describe interactions in plays quite accurately and sensitively. Consider, for example, the excerpt below from the beginning of Robert Bolt's *A Man for All Seasons* ([1960] 1970). Sir Thomas More, Henry VIII's Lord Chancellor, has just come back home from the palace, where Henry has been trying to persuade him to agree to his proposed divorce from Catherine of Aragon (something which More consistently refuses to do for religious reasons and which results in his execution at the end of the play). In this brief extract, Bolt is establishing More's gentle, benevolent character. As he enters the room, he asks his steward to bring him some wine:

More: The wine please, Matthew?
Steward: It's there, Sir Thomas.
More (*looking into jug*): Is it good?
Steward: Bless you, sir! *I* don't know.
More (*mildly*): Bless you too, Matthew. (Act 1)

Given that More is master of the household and the steward is his employee, his first utterance is easily understood as a command to the steward to bring him some wine. But its elliptical structure and the rising intonation suggested by the question mark implicates that More is being polite to his servant, using an indirect, questioning speech act like 'Can I have some wine, please, Matthew?'. The fact that the indirect command is elliptical enables the steward in turn to interpret More's utterance wilfully, not as a command, but as a question about the location of the wine (for example, 'Can you tell me where the wine is, please, Matthew?'). This response helps us to see the steward as someone who is perhaps a little lazy and willing to play things to his own advantage.

More appears to accept the speech act value that the steward imposes on his first utterance, and goes over to the jug. But, instead of pouring himself some wine, he asks the steward what it is like. This question presupposes that the steward has tasted some of the wine, which he then denies in his response. In producing that response, though, he uses the mild exclamatory form 'bless you', which was originally derived from a performative speech act of blessing. More now picks up on the mild exclamation and turns it into a real blessing, apparently presupposing in turn that the steward was trying to bless him, not just produce a little exclamation. What we see in this extract, then, is an intricate social comedy between master and servant, based on speech act ambiguity and negotiation, which establishes More as a person who knows full well that his steward is pushing the limits but who chooses not to upbraid him. Instead, he puts the steward in his place gently and in a sophisticated way. We thus see More as a kindly man, adept socially, but one who will not allow his steward to make a fool of him, nevertheless.

It is worth noting that, although it does not work in every case, there appears to be a rough scale of ambiguity in relation to the different kinds of speech acts, with performative constructions being the most unambiguous, indirect speech acts being the most ambiguous, and direct speech acts behind somewhere in the middle.

2. The speech act of apology

Below I outline my own Searlean description of the felicity conditions for the direct speech act of apology:

Propositional content	S expresses regret for a past act A of S or others who S is responsible for.
Preparatory conditions	1. A was offensive to H or not in H's interests, and H did not want S, or those S is responsible for, to perform A. 2. S and H both know this.
Sincerity condition	S is sorry about A (for example, is not apologising under duress).
Essential condition	Counts as an apology for act A.
Afterwards	S or those S is responsible for should not do A again.

Figure 1 A set of felicity conditions for the speech act of apology (S = speaker, A = act, H = hearer)

Part of the problem with producing such speech act specifications is that, as with other schemata, it is not at all clear what counts as central to the schema and what does not (cf. Gibbs 2003). Nonetheless, it is helpful to provide the above specification, as it helps to make clear exactly what I am assuming in my analyses. In the specification above, I try to take account of the fact that it is possible for us to apologise not just for our own actions, but also for actions of those who are, theoretically at least, under our control. Parents can apologise for the behaviour of their young children, for example, though it gets less easy to do this the more mature the children become. I mention duress under the sincerity condition because it is specifically relevant for my analysis of some of the apologies in *A Fish Called Wanda*, and I have added an 'afterwards' condition, as, although the speech act of apology is expressive, not commissive, the utterance of an apology would appear to constrain future behaviour.

There has been quite a lot of work on the speech act of apology by pragmaticists, sociolinguists, and corpus linguists which is relevant to our analysis. Thomas (1995: 35-6) notes that the performative apology 'I apologise' seems less sincere than the more usual 'I'm sorry', which is a counterexample to my description of the prototypical scale of ambiguity of speech acts which I suggested at the end of section 1. In some cases, it may be needed for reasons of formality. Aijmer (1996: 84) points out that of the 215 apology expressions she found in the London-Lund corpus (Svartik & Quirk 1980) (a 435,000-word corpus of spoken English with samples of around 5,000 words each), 83.7 percent consisted of 'I'm sorry', 'sorry', or other variants on this

phrase. So 'I'm sorry' and its minor variants would seem to be the prototypical apology form. Aijmer (1996: 88-9) also notes that the prosody used in the utterance of an apology can affect our perception of how stylised it is, and thus how sincerely it is meant. Holmes (1989) suggests that there is a gender difference in apologies, with women apologising more than men and focusing more on apology strategies which recognise the claims of the victim. Fraser (1981) analyses data which seems to go against Holmes's view to some degree, and so more research is needed for us to be sure; but we probably expect women to apologise more than men, as this would accord with the gender stereotype that women are more polite than men (even if, in the UK at least, some young women seem to be challenging this stereotype in their current behaviour).

3. Apology sequences in *A Fish Called Wanda*

I will now examine in some detail the various apology sequences I have transcribed from the film *A Fish Called Wanda*. They are presented in the order they occur in the film. I number the turns in all extracts of more than one turn, and indicate non-linguistic 'screen description' information, where relevant, in italics inside square brackets. In Extracts 2 onwards, I add various graphological devices into the dialogue to indicate different analytical factors in relation to the speech act of apology. The significance of each of these graphological devices, which vary somewhat from extract to extract, is made clear immediately before each extract.

We will see that just about all of the apologies in the film are deviant in some way or other, and so are foregrounded. The different styles of apology produced and the differing attitudes towards the speech act of apology help to delineate the characters and the contrasts among them, and are also a clear source of humour in the film. I contextualise each extract in turn before proceeding to discuss them, and immediately below I provide some general contextual notes about the film.

The film has four main characters, Archie (played by John Cleese), Wanda (Jamie Lee Curtis), Otto (Kevin Cline), and Ken (Michael Palin). A gang of British thieves run by a man called George are planning a jewel robbery. Two Americans, Otto and Wanda, have infiltrated the gang, pretending to be brother and sister, in order to rob the robbers. Wanda has become the mistress of George in order to dupe him. Otto is violent, reckless, continually insults others, and also

appears to have difficulty understanding anything remotely subtle. In the early part of the film, Wanda tells Otto twice that he is stupid. Each time he reacts by telling her not to. But, although Wanda has insulted Otto and he has complained, she demonstrably does not apologise, even though standard turn-taking assumptions would seem to demand it. Thus the beginning of the film establishes, through Wanda's conversationally disruptive behaviour, an attitude towards apology in relation to Otto which goes against the female stereotype and implicates that Otto, besides being stupid, also has assumptions about himself which are at odds with reality.

After the jewel robbery, George is arrested by the police because Otto has secretly informed on him. But before he is arrested, George manages to put the jewels in a safety deposit box and gives the key, and the location of the safe deposit box, to Ken, his loyal henchman. Ken hides the key in his flat, inside a tiny chest at the bottom of his fish aquarium. He has named his favourite fish 'Wanda' because he has a crush on the human Wanda.

3.1 Extract 1: Wendy insults Otto and does not apologise

Wanda manages to get hold of the key to George's safe deposit box by playing on Ken's attraction for her, and hides it in her locket. She then makes up to Archie, George's lawyer, in the hope of discovering the location of the safety deposit box. Archie is very attracted to Wanda and invites her to his house while his wife, Wendy, is out. However, Wendy comes back unexpectedly, and Wanda has to hide behind the settee, losing her locket in the process. Wendy sees the locket, assumes Archie has bought it for her, and takes it. Otto, who has been waiting outside, decides to rescue Wanda from her predicament. He is discovered, and then ludicrously pretends to be a CIA agent warning the public that they are interrogating a KGB spy in the area:

1. OTTO: You obviously don't know anything about intelligence, lady. It's an XK Red 27 technique.
2. WENDY: My father was in the Secret Service, Mr Manfredjinsinjen, and I know perfectly well that you don't keep the general public informed when debriefing KGB agents in a safe house.
3. OTTO: Oh you don't, huh?
4. WENDY: Not unless you are congenitally insane or irretrievably stupid, no.
5. OTTO: Don't call me stupid.
6. WENDY: Why on earth not?

Here we see another example of Otto's foolhardiness, and another woman, Wendy, calling him stupid and refusing to apologise. Like Wanda, Wendy is clearly very impolite to Otto, and prefers to conform to Grice's maxim of quality rather than provide the preferred apologetic response to Otto's speech act of complaint.

3.2 Extract 2: Archie's extended legalese apology

Wanda manages to escape, unnoticed by Wendy, but she now needs to persuade Archie to get the locket back for her, as it has the key to the safety deposit box inside. She and Archie arrange a love tryst in an empty apartment overlooking the river Thames which belongs to one of Archie's friends, who is away on holiday. Otto secretly follows them to the flat, where he hears Wanda tell Archie in graphic detail how stupid Otto is while they are on the bed together, in a kind of verbal foreplay leading up to an impending sexual act. Archie is lying on the bed, and Wanda is kneeling over him:

> [My 'screen descriptions' are in square brackets, and graphological changes in the dialogue indicate the following: *Italics = expression of regret*; **bold = performative construction**, underlining = commitment to future action as a consequence of the apology; SMALL CAPITALS = SPELLING OUT OF PREPARATORY CONDITIONS REQUIRING THE APOLOGY.]
>
> 1. WANDA: I love the way you laugh.
> 2. ARCHIE: I love you. You're funny. How come a girl as bright as you could have a brother who's so – *[OTTO rises up next to the bed.]*
> 3. OTTO: Don't call me stupid … *[OTTO throws WANDA off the bed, wrestles with ARCHIE, and then throws WANDA out.]*
> 4. OTTO: I'll deal with you later.
> 5. ARCHIE: What have you done with her?
> 6. OTTO: She's all right.
> 7. WANDA: Otto!
> 8. OTTO: Now. Apologise.
> 9. WANDA: *[knocking on the door]* Otto!
> 10. ARCHIE: What?
> 12. OTTO: Apologise.
> 13. WANDA: Oh shit.
> 14. ARCHIE: Are you totally deranged?
> 15. OTTO: You pompous, stuck-up, snot-nosed, English, giant, twerp, scumbag, fuck-face, dickhead, asshole.
> 16. ARCHIE: How very interesting. You are a true vulgarian, aren't you?
> 17. OTTO: You are the vulgarian, you fuck. Now, apologise.

18. ARCHIE: What? Me? To you?
19. OTTO: Apologise.
20. ARCHIE: All right. All right. **I apologise.**
21. OTTO: You're really sorry?
22. ARCHIE: *I'm really really sorry.* **I apologise unreservedly.**
23. OTTO: You take it back?
24. ARCHIE: **I do. I offer a complete and utter retraction.** THE IMPUTATION WAS TOTALLY WITHOUT BASIS IN FACT AND WAS IN NO WAY FAIR COMMENT AND WAS MOTIVATED PURELY BY MALICE. ***And I deeply regret any distress that my comments may have caused you or your family*, and I hereby undertake not to repeat any such slander at any time in the future.**
25. OTTO: OK.

The apology sequence in this extract is long, complex and deviant in various ways. First of all, Archie does not actually say that Otto is stupid in turn 2 because Otto interrupts him before he has the chance to. It is Wanda who has called Otto stupid in the sequence just before this extract begins. So Otto's insistence in turns 8 and 12 that Archie apologise is deviant, as Archie has nothing to apologise for. Indeed, if anyone should apologise, it is Otto. He has interrupted Archie and Wanda in their private love-making and has physically ejected Wanda from the apartment. This is what presumably motivates Archie's impolite question in 14, which sets Otto off on an extraordinary act of verbal abuse in 15. Apart from the initial pronoun, each of the other eight pre-modifiers and the head noun in the noun phrase he utters are extremely abusive. So, if anything, Otto should apologise to Archie. Moreover, as Otto orders Archie to apologise in 8 and 12, he is also putting him under duress, thus nullifying any apology that Archie does utter.

Archie is impolite to Otto again in 16, which prompts Otto to order him to apologise again in 17. Archie clearly refuses in 18, and Otto repeats his command in 19. In terms of camera work, this sequence involves a series of close-ups, with cuts from the face of one speaker (with the back of the head of the other disputant partly in the side of the shot) to the next as the turns unfold. In turn 19, Otto steps back and smiles as he says 'apologise' again. Then, suddenly, in turn 20, Archie begins an apology sequence. The camera cut to this turn focuses on Archie's face, which has a different background wall, and is followed quickly by a cut to Otto in 21 as he asks for confirmation

that Archie has indeed apologised. Then, as Archie confirms his apology in 22, the camera shot twists round through 180° and pulls back to reveal that Otto is dangling him by his ankles out of a window a long way above the ground. This, of course, explains the *volte-face* in Archie's behaviour, and it is clear that his long apology sequence through turns 20, 22, and 24 is defective. The sincerity condition cannot apply because Archie is under severe physical duress, and throughout this entire sequence, the idea of speech act values being negotiated conversationally is also undermined, as Otto does not negotiate at all, but effectively threatens injury or death if he does not get his way.

Archie begins his lengthy apology sequence by using the formal-sounding 'I apologise' performative construction. If the pro-form 'do' is included, he effectively utters four performative apologies, taking up 14 of the 22 words he utters in turns 20 and 22, and the first sentence of 24. This formal quality of the performative apology is appropriate for the language of a lawyer, of course, and the apology sequence as a whole also appears to be parodic of legal language, in that Archie manages to cover all the felicity condition bases. In addition to the four performative apologies, he expresses regret twice (using both the 'I'm sorry' form – the other five words in the 25-word sequence referred to above – and a performative expression of regret later in turn 24). He also makes it very clear that the preparatory conditions for an act of apology are in place, and ends by performatively committing himself not to say that Otto is stupid again in the future (in spite of the fact that he didn't call him stupid in the first place).

This apology sequence is thus very deviant and foregrounded, as well as funny, and establishes an antagonistic relation between Otto and Archie. Archie, the very polite English lawyer, uses legal-contract-like language in his extraordinary final apology, and Otto demonstrates his unreasonableness and violent nature both physically and linguistically in the scene.

3.3 Extract 3: Wanda tells Otto to apologise

Otto's ridiculous treatment of Archie means that Wanda still hasn't managed to get the locket back, and Otto's attack on Archie makes it unlikely that Archie will feel able to continue his romantic attachment to Wanda. So she decides to persuade Otto to apologise to Archie, in a

scene that takes place on the edge of the Thames, near the apartment in which Extract 2 occurs. At first Otto and Wanda are walking while arguing, but then they come to a stop. Wanda is clearly angry. She is shouting with wide pitch movement, and her facial expression and actions, including moving very close to Otto, face to face, also indicate hostility:

[My 'screen descriptions' are in square brackets, and graphological changes in the dialogue indicate the following: *Italics = expression of regret*; **bold = naming/reference to the speech act of apology**; underlining = insult.]

1. WANDA: *[Angrily]* Was it shrewd, was it good tactics or was it stupid?
2. OTTO: Don't call me stupid.
3. WANDA: All right. To call you stupid would be an insult to stupid people. I've known sheep who could outwit you. I've worn dresses with higher IQs. But you think you're an intellectual, don't you, ape?
4. OTTO: Apes don't read philosophy.
5. WANDA: Yes they do, Otto. They just don't understand it. Now let me correct you on a couple of things, OK? Aristotle was not a Belgian. The central message of Buddhism is not 'every man for himself'.
6. OTTO: You mean –
7. WANDA: And the London Underground is not a political movement. Those are all mistakes, Otto. I looked them up. *[WANDA sits OTTO down on a low wall, sits next to him and puts her arm round him, changing her tone of voice to persuasive mode.]* Now, you have just assaulted the one man who can keep you out of jail and make you rich. So what are you going to do about it, huh? What would an intellectual do? What would Plato do?
8. OTTO: *[Very indistinctly, with a low and narrow intonation contour, looking away.]* **Apologise**. *[Again very indistinctly, with a low and narrow intonation contour, looking away.]* **Apologise.**
9. WANDA: What?
10. OTTO: *[Half-looking at her and pronouncing the word loudly and antagonistically.]* **Apologise**. *[Looking at her.] I'm sorry.*
11. WANDA: No. Not to me. To Archie. And make it good or we're dead *[Cut to OTTO arriving at Archie's house in his car, practising his apology.]*
12. OTTO: *I'm so very, very, very, very* fuck YOU!
    I'm …
    I'm very very s– [Gets out of car and walks towards ARCHIE'S house.]
    I'm so very –
    Very very very …

In turn 1, Wanda begins her 'persuasion' by insulting Otto's behaviour towards Archie, suggesting it was stupid. He tells her not to call him stupid, and, as usual, she does not apologise. Indeed, she goes on in turns 3, 5, and 7 to demonstrate repeatedly how stupid he actually is, before, in the remainder of turn 7, making it explicitly clear what he has just done wrong and asking him what he is going to do to repair the situation. Effectively, Wanda, who by this time is sitting next to Archie, looking at him as she speaks in the normal interactive fashion, has produced a complaint on Archie's behalf which clearly warrants an apology to Archie by Otto. But Otto's personality is unlikely to make it easy for him to apologise, and in this extract he even has difficulty referring to the speech act when the scenario hypothetically involves him using it, let alone producing it felicitously for real. This contrasts with Extract 2, where he has no problem using the verb *apologise* when ordering Archie to do so. In turn 8 in this extract, he does utter the word *apologise* in answer to Wanda's question, but his linguistic and non-linguistic behaviour clearly indicate that he is very reluctant to do so. He looks down to one side and away from Wanda as he says 'Apologise', and he does it in a very indistinct style, very quietly and with an abnormally low pitch level and a narrow pitch range. He then repeats the word in a similar way, but a little more clearly, which leads us to infer that he is still struggling even to pronounce the word. Wanda's 'What?' in turn 9 then pushes him to say 'Apologise' more clearly, while looking at her, and he does this in antagonistic mode (loud, with wide pitch movement and hostile facial expression). Then, in 10, after this third utterance of 'Apologise', Otto actually apologises, using the standard 'I'm sorry' expression-of-regret form. But this 'apology' does not work because, as Wanda makes clear in turn 11, it is not being made to Archie, the person Otto needs to apologise to.

The scene now cuts to Otto in his car, practising the act of apology as he drives along, coming to a halt outside Archie's house and walking towards it as he practices. We thus infer that he has agreed to the tactical sense of what Wanda wants and is on his way to find Archie in order to apologise. However, his practice is not going well. He appears to be trying to say the standard 'I'm sorry' form, along with the intensifier 'very', presumably to make his sincerity clear. But in spite of five attempts, he never manages to utter the word 'sorry' at all. On four occasions he does not even manage to start the word, and

in his first attempt 'sorry' is replaced by the insult 'fuck you', which is said very loudly and with an angry facial expression and a high falling intonation. In the other attempt, he does manage to utter the first phoneme of 'sorry', but can get no further. This clearly represents a significant battle within Otto between tactical demands and his state of mind. His facial expression and the paralinguistic and prosodic characteristics associated with his utterance of the insult indicate clearly where his emotional commitment really lies.

3.4 Extract 4: Otto 'apologises' to Archie

At the end of the previous scene, Otto arrives at Archie's house. He now goes down the drive and enters the house, where, meanwhile, Archie is trying to make it look as if a robber has broken in, to provide cover for his removal of the locket, which he wants to return to Wanda. Otto, who sees Archie from behind, mistakenly thinks he has caught someone robbing Archie's house and decides to help out. From behind he puts a coat over the 'robber's' head, knocks him unconscious and kicks him repeatedly. Then, he realises that the unconscious figure is Archie:

> [My 'screen descriptions' are in square brackets, and graphological changes in the dialogue indicate the following: *Italics = expression of regret*; **bold = expression of accounts** (in the sense of Edmonson 1981; see below), underlining = insults.]
>
> OTTO: *Oh, God, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry – [OTTO kneels next to ARCHIE on the floor, with his face very close to ARCHIE's, patting his face as he tries unsuccessfully to achieve communication.]* Please, *I'm sorry, I'm sorry.* **I didn't know it was you. How could I know it was you?** *[OTTO stands up.]* **How could you expect me to guess.** Stupid jerk, **what the fuck are you doing robbing your own house**, you arsehole? *[Kicks the unconscious ARCHIE again.]* You stupid, stiff, pompous English *– [Kicks him some more. Pauses, with a facial expression indicating that he now realises what he has just done.] I'm sorry, I'm sorry – [Runs off.]*

In this sequence, Otto produces the 'I'm sorry' form of the expression of regret an extraordinary seven times. This contrasts with his inability to say 'sorry' in the previous scene, and so it is made very clear that he really does mean to apologise this time. However, this very explicit apology sequence is still not felicitous. He is now apologising to Archie, not Wanda, but because Archie is lying on the floor, unconscious, he is not 'mentally' present, even though he is physically present, and so cannot 'receive' the apology offered. In other words,

uptake of the speech act cannot take place. Moreover, Otto is not apologising for his attack on Archie in the apartment, but for his new, 'accidental' assault, and, although the repetition of the expression of regret suggests that he really does regret that he has just hurt Archie, there are, nonetheless, other factors in his utterance which suggest that it is not entirely sincere. Firstly, he angrily insults the unconscious Archie three times in the middle of his apology sequence, and in bald, extreme terms. Secondly he uses the expression of what Edmonson (1981) calls *accounts*, suggesting that there were mitigating factors which reduce his responsibility for the action he is apologising for. Three times he indicates that he could not have known that the person he was attacking was Archie, and he also indicates that his victim was himself responsible for what has happened ('what the fuck are you doing robbing your own house, you arsehole?'). Thirdly, he repeatedly kicks Archie as he insults him in the second half of the extract. Finally, at the end of the scene he runs away, suggesting that he does not want Archie to know who was responsible for the attack on him.

3.5 Extract 5: Otto 'apologises' to Archie again

Otto still needs to apologise to Archie, and for two attacks now, not one. So in the evening he waits outside Archie's house for him to come home. It is dark by the time Archie returns in his car, and Archie is, in any case, terrified of Otto, something which is not surprising, given that Otto has already insulted him, threatened to kill him, and beaten him up:

[My 'screen descriptions' are in square brackets, and graphological changes in the dialogue indicate the following: *Italics = expression of regret*; **bold = expression of accounts**, underlining = expression of the sincerity condition; SMALL CAPITALS = SPELLING OUT OF PREPARATORY CONDITIONS REQUIRING THE APOLOGY]

[ARCHIE gets out of his car]

1. OTTO: Uh ... OK ... uh.
2. ARCHIE: Oh no no.
3. OTTO: Uh.
4. ARCHIE: Please.
5. OTTO: Look, I want to apologise. *[ARCHIE doesn't hear]*
6. ARCHIE: *[backing away and breaking into a run]* I just finished it, all right?
7. OTTO: *[chasing ARCHIE]* OK. OK. Wait I just want to – wait – Look. Look. Where are you going? I want to speak with you

8. ARCHIE: I just ended it for Christ's sake, all right? Will you leave me alone.
9. OTTO: Wait, wait. I just want to say I'm sorry**.** *[OTTO rugger tackles ARCHIE to the ground.]*
10. ARCHIE: It's all over, OK? It's all right. *[OTTO pulls out a gun and pushes the end of the barrel hard up against ARCHIE's nose. He maintains this position through the rest of the extract.]*
11. OTTO: It's all right. Shut up.
12. ARCHIE: Jesus Christ.
13. OTTO: Will you calm down. Shut up.
14. ARCHIE: Please believe me.
15. OTTO: It's all right.
16. ARCHIE: Don't beat me up again. I've had a terrible day.
17. OTTO: Will you shut up?
18. ARCHIE: Jesus Christ. Don't kill me please.
19. OTTO: Shut up. OK. Look. I just want to apologise sincerely. Uh. *[Archie whimpers in fear.]* What? When I dangled you out of the window. *Well, I'm really really* – WELL, IT WAS NOT A NICE THING TO DO. And then when I attacked you in there, *I'm really really s*– **How could I know you were trying to rob your own house? I was just trying to help.** *[WENDY appears at bedroom window, overhearing them, unnoticed.]*
20. ARCHIE: Yes. Thanks. Thanks.
21. OTTO: **I wanted you to trust me.**
22. ARCHIE: Yes please, IT WAS MY FAULT. IT WAS MY FAULT.
23. OTTO: **That's true.**
24. OTTO: Now about my sister. Look, she's a very sexy girl. I understand you wanting to play around with her. It's OK. I was wrong. *I'm sorry I was jealous.* Just go ahead. Pork away pal. Fuck her blue. I like you Archie. I just want to help.

In this sequence, Otto again has a problem with Archie's uptake of his intended apology. Archie runs away in terror at the prospect of another beating, and so, to have him present for his apology, Otto has to chase after him and tackle him to the ground. During this sequence (turns 1-9), in which the darkness adds to the general confusion, as Otto chases Archie, he tries ineffectually to apologise indirectly (in turns 5, 7, and 9) by stating the sincerity condition for the speech act of apology in a series of 'I want to ...' constructions. But it is not at all clear that Archie has heard. Even after Otto tackles him to the ground, the terrified Archie babbles so much that Otto still can't get his apology heard, and so he draws a gun and pushes the end of the barrel up against Archie's nose in order to get him to shut up. So now we

have an extraordinary inversion of the sequence in the apartment (Extract 2), where Otto forced Archie to apologise. Otto has to put Archie under severe duress (which he maintains through the rest of the extract) in order to begin his own apology with what is now a guaranteed 'out of a gun' prospect of uptake. Otto begins his apology sequence in 19 with another indirect apology in the form of a stated wish to apologise. But, as in Extract 3, when he tries to produce the standard 'I'm sorry' expression of regret, he can't manage to get the word 'sorry' out. In his first attempt he stops just before the 'sorry', and in his second attempt he only manages to get the word's first phoneme out. In between these two unfinished sentences he does manage an indirect apology in the form of a statement of one of the preparatory conditions for the speech act. But he also produces two expressions of account in this turn, and another in turn 21, suggesting that he is still not completely committed to the idea that he needs to apologise.

One of Otto's expressions of account is a statement that he was trying to help when he knocked Archie unconscious, and in 20 Archie thanks him for his efforts and then apologises indirectly to Otto in 22 via a statement of a preparatory condition for the apology speech act. So it is still not at all clear that Archie is in the right mental state to accept Otto's attempts at apology, and thus the comedy is heightened further when Otto actually accepts Archie's own apology in 23. He agrees to Archie's preparatory condition statement, which, from Otto's point of view, is an account which reduces the need for him to apologise to Archie. Otto does finally get the word 'sorry' out in one piece in turn 24, but he says that he is sorry for being jealous, not for assaulting Archie. So even now he has not really apologised for the right thing.

In the meantime, Wendy has heard the noise and is now looking down on the scene from an open bedroom window. This means that she hears Otto's rather explicitly stated permission to Archie to make love to his Wanda (yet another deviant speech act, as he is not in a position to give such permission), and so now knows that Archie is being unfaithful to her, with obvious consequences for the plot.

3.6 Extract 6: Otto 'apologises' to Ken

By the end of the film, Archie and Wanda have fallen in love, located the safety deposit box, and absconded with the jewels. They have decided to flee the country by plane, and Otto chases them to the

airport, catching up with Archie (who is in his barrister's outfit) on the tarmac (Wanda is already on the plane). Otto fires his gun at Archie's feet to force him to climb into an upturned barrel full of waste oil next to some building works. He is preparing to shoot Archie when Ken arrives, driving a huge road roller. Ken has followed Otto to the airport in order to exact his revenge, because, earlier in the film, Otto has eaten Ken's favourite pet fish, Wanda, as part of his attempt to force Ken to reveal the location of the safety deposit box. The road roller demolishes a metal wheelbarrow as it comes across the tarmac:

> [My 'screen descriptions' are in square brackets, and graphological changes in the dialogue indicate the following: *Italics = expression of regret.*]
>
> *[OTTO is standing in some wet cement, and KEN is bearing down on him with a huge road roller.]*
>
1. KEN:	REVENGE!
2. OTTO:	Hah, hah, hah. It's K-k-k Ken. C-coming to k-k-k-kill me! How are you going to c-catch me, K-k-k-Ken? Hah, hah, hah. Now where was I? *[Discovers he is stuck in the cement.]* O shit! Fucking limey cement. *[OTTO fires his last bullet at KEN.]* Ken, Ken – Wait, wait Ken – Kenny, may I call you Kenny?
3. KEN:	Remember Wanda?
4. OTTO:	I've got the deal of a lifetime. 50:50, you and me. What do you say? OK, OK, OK. 60:40. It's my final offer.
5. KEN:	REVENGE!
6. OTTO:	I've got an idea. You take it all. Yeah. Here's my boarding pass. Ken.
7. KEN:	I'm going to k-k-k-kill you.
8. OTTO:	*[calling Ken's bluff]* OK, fine, fine Ken. Come at me. Give it your best shot. Go on Ken. You don't have the guts, admit it. OK, you have the guts. Good. Wait. *I'm sorry I ate your fish*, OK? *I'm sorry.*
9. KEN:	REVENGE!
10. OTTO:	*I've said I'm sorry.* What the fu– *[The road roller runs him over.]*

At the end of the film, after trying to shoot him, trying to bargain with him, and making fun of him in the above extract, Otto does finally say that he is sorry – to Ken. But even then there are problems over whether the apology is felicitous. After his ineffectual attempts to deter Ken, in turn 8 he does say that he is sorry (twice) for eating the fish called Wanda, and reports what he has said in 10 as an indirect way of performing the apology. But the prosody he uses suggests that

he does not really mean it, and in any case, the apology is defective for two other reasons. Firstly Otto, like Archie in the second extract, is now under duress, and secondly Ken is so intent on revenge that he does not accept the apology (indeed he may not even have heard it, as he is so worked up). Immediately after Otto's indirect apology in 8, Ken runs him over with the road roller.

4. Concluding remarks

Because the film is so uproariously funny, it is possible to enter the land of cartoon comedy at the end. Otto ludicrously survives death by road roller and tries to climb in through a window on Archie and Wanda's plane as it takes off. He is blown off as the plane gathers speed, but will presumably survive again, and the film ends with Archie and Wanda escaping with the jewels, to live happily ever after.

Clearly, their different attitudes to, and differential operation of, the speech act of apology help to delineate and contrast the two main male characters in the film. Archie, the parody of the English lawyer, will apologise at the drop of a hat and in extraordinarily complete and complex ways, if need be. Otto, the parody of the American gangster, on the other hand has great difficulties in apologising at all, or even referring to the speech act, when the scenario being referred to involves him using it. The women, on the other hand, don't seem to apologise at all, and certainly not to the men, even when they are rude to them. If the men are parodies of stereotypes, the women are parodic *inversions* of their stereotypes, in relation to apology at least.

I hope to have shown that the speech act of apology runs through *A Fish Called Wanda*, providing an important *leitmotiv* in the comedy. All the apology sequences are defective in some way or other, which makes them highly foregrounded as well as amusing. The longer apology sequences, in particular, involve many different aspects of what is a complex and socially important speech act, and make considerable use of the fact that speech acts can be negotiated over a number of turns in conversations. Hence, besides being a wonderful comedy, *A Fish Called Wanda* contains a complex exploration of what is involved in the speech act of apology. Indeed, it could be used effectively to explore with students what it means to apologise and the various ways in which the apology speech act can be effected.

Endnotes

[1]This is a problem that text analysts have with all theories, of course. Every theory has its problems, as does every text analysis.

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Bibliographical note: For ease of reference, in this Bibliography and in the References sections of this volume's articles we have regularised the names of authors so that each appears only in one form. For example, we have listed under 'Michael H. Short' all cited works published under that name, under 'Mick Short', and under 'M. H. Short'; similarly, we have listed under 'Jèmeljan F. Hakemulder' all cited works published under that name and under 'Frank Hakemulder'.

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