Challenges of Anglophone Language(s), Literatures and Cultures

Challenges of Anglophone Language(s), Literatures and Cultures

Edited by

Alena Kačmárová and Bavjola Shatro

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Challenges of Anglophone Language(s), Literatures and Cultures

Edited by Alena Kačmárová and Bavjola Shatro

Proofread by Jonathan Eddy

This book first published 2017

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Copyright © 2017 by Alena Kačmárová, Bavjola Shatro and contributors

All rights for this book reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

ISBN (10): 1-4438-1751-1
ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-1751-6

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Illustrations and Tables ix

Editors' Preface xi

Part I: Language

CHAPTER ONE 3
Introducing FSPML 2.0M: A Markup Language for Multilevel Tagging of Functional Sentence Perspective
Martin Drápela

CHAPTER TWO 21
Changing Vocabulary in a Changing Culture: A Study of Contemporary Culture-related Vocabulary
Ľuboš Dudík

CHAPTER THREE 33
Skopos and Translating Slovak Tourist Texts into English
Jonathan Gresty

CHAPTER FOUR 49
The Development of the Usage of Address Forms in a Business Conversation in American English
Alena Kačmárová

CHAPTER FIVE 69
Lexico-grammatical Features of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) in Slovak and French Academic Settings
Diana Krajňáková

CHAPTER SIX 89
Representation of Sexes in Occupational Lexicon: Asymmetry across Languages
Marcela Michálková

CHAPTER SEVEN 109
Syntactic Complexity of English Spoken and Written Text Types
Rita Rafajlovičová

CHAPTER EIGHT 133
Figurative Language: The Analysis of Nautical Metaphors in English and Polish
Agnieszka Uberman

Part II: Literature

CHAPTER NINE 157
Self-Referentiality and Fiction Writing in Martin Amis's *Money*
Loran Gami

CHAPTER TEN 173
Tears behind the Laughter in Alexis Wright's *Carpentaria*
Jana Ščigulinská

CHAPTER ELEVEN 197
The Meaning of the Self in Contemporary American and Albanian Poetry (being a woman in the poetry of Marge Piercy and Natasha Lako)
Bavjola Shatro

CHAPTER TWELVE 219
The Visual and the Verbal in Storytelling (writers' (un)controlled deployment of narrative dynamism in semi-visual/hybrid novels and short stories)
Marek Tomášik

Part III: Culture

CHAPTER THIRTEEN 247
The Age of Fragmented Narratives: Challenges for the Traditional Role of Cultural Conceptualization and Social Cognition in Digital Culture
László Imre Komlósi

CHAPTER FOURTEEN 265
Invisible Revelations: Apocalyptic Technologies, Zombie Artefacts and the End(s) of History
Marcin Mazurek

CHAPTER FIFTEEN 279
Irish Language and Identity: Revitalization and Protection
Anna Slatinská, Jana Pecniková

CHAPTER SIXTEEN 295
Theory, Damned Theory: Approaches to Cultural Studies
James Sutherland-Smith

Contributors 311

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS AND TABLES

Figure 1-1 Representation of properties of annotation levels (layers) through the values of the FSPML attribute
Table 1-2 A comparison of markup for communicative functions in three FSP annotation schemes
Table 1-3 Interpretation of values in an example FSPML 2.0M attribute
Table 2-1 Occurrence of word-formative processes in the studied sources
Table 5-1 An Overview of Quantitative Distribution of the Progressive in Individual Corpora
Table 7-1 Independent and subordinate clauses in the corpus
Table 7-2 Distribution of types of subordinate clauses across text types
Table 7-3 Distribution of nominal clauses across text types
Table 7-4 Distribution of finite vs. non-finite relative clauses
Table 7-5 Distribution of restrictive vs. non-restrictive relative clauses
Table 7-6 Distribution of finite vs. non-finite adverbial clauses
Table 7-7 Distribution of semantic categories of adverbial clauses within the corpus
Table 12-1 Study corpus
Table 12-2 Basic terminology
Table 12-3 Distribution of ND in the textual layer of Audrey Niffenegger's narratives
Table 12-4 Distribution of ND in the textual layer of Edward Gorey's narratives
Table 12-5 Corpus statistics
Table 12-6 Tentative THL, TRL and RHL redundancy degrees

EDITORS' PREFACE

The present volume includes chapters related to the fields of language, literature, and culture, and what can be perceived as challenges within these three fields of Anglophone studies.

Part 1 offers eight papers on linguistics issues. They fall within two areas: language contact (English-Polish, English-Slovak) and language-culture relationship, and stylistic and syntactic perspectives on the English language. They deal with up-to-date issues and offer interesting analyses mostly of comparative/contrastive nature. The languages compared and contrasted with English are Slovak, Czech, and Polish.

Chapter One (*Introducing FSPML 2.0M: A Markup Language for Multilevel Tagging of Functional Sentence Perspective*) is a contribution to problems connected with the annotation of the information structure of language (IS). It aims to introduce a relatively complex multilevel scheme for the annotation of Functional Sentence Perspective (FSP), an approach to IS developed mainly by Jan Firbas and Aleš Svoboda, with major contributions to the approach by Libuše Dušková and other Czech and Slovak linguists (cf. Svoboda 1989, Firbas 1992, Dušková 2015, and Drápela 2015). The proposed annotation scheme is an expansion of an FSP tagging scheme introduced by the author in his 2008 dissertation (published in 2011). While keeping the annotation tag set as compressed as possible, the multilevel scheme seeks to address the need to provide a sophisticated, human- and machine-readable annotation scheme to capture multifaceted linguistic characterisation of communicative units within communicative fields. This paper describes mainly the FSP subset of the scheme, its relationship to previous systems of FSP annotation used in the Firbasian tradition, and its overlap with Svoboda's 1988 (published in 1989) generalization of communicative units into informemes. The FSP subset allows for the annotation of the degrees of communicative dynamism, the types of communicative units (theme, diatheme, transition proper, transition, rheme), the types of dynamic semantic functions, and the degrees of contextual dependence. The non-FSP subsets of this multilevel scheme, which are introduced here only in condensed form due to their complexity, provide for the annotation of a reduced set of static semantic (participant) functions, syntactic functions, and syntactic forms,

generalized word-class tags, generalized phrase structure descriptors, and selected semantic and discourse roles of communicative units.

Chapter Two (*Changing vocabulary in a changing culture: A study of contemporary culture-related vocabulary*) aims to study such neologisms that reflect cultural changes in the Anglo-American world. The paper investigates which aspects of current Anglo-American culture can be observed through the lens of contemporary vocabulary. The lexemes under analysis were selected from the open databases of Merriam-Webster Dictionary, Macmillan Dictionary and Oxford Dictionaries Online's quarterly updates from 2014 until August 2015. These lexical units were chosen based on whether they could be deemed informative of current culture or whether they denoted new cultural attitudes and values of the Anglo-American world. Lexemes not reflecting current cultural change and lexemes denoting already existing phenomena, products, and proper nouns were not included, as well as those for which synonyms already exist. Key word formation processes involved in creating these lexical units were identified in order to find out what word formation processes are characteristic for this area. These results are compared with the findings of Böhmerová (2014), Hickey (2006), and Szymanek (2005). The paper confirms that neologisms actively respond to cultural change and denote many characteristics of today's Anglo-American culture. Changing gender roles, ethnic, minority and gender discrimination and society's technological dependence all provided for a wide array of lexemes. As this area is quite broad and varied, it included a myriad of word formation processes such as blending, compounding and derivation, but it is not possible to pinpoint a single process that is indicative of this area or these lexical units. The paper also discusses the ephemeral nature of many of these lexical units, as well as their varying productivity. The lexemes collected in this research serve as evidence of current Anglo-American culture and can provide material for cultural studies.

Chapter Three (*Skopos and Translating Slovak Tourist Texts into English*) discusses the issue of Slovak tourist texts and their English translations. It aims to show how English target texts in Slovakia often fail to fulfill their operative function because of the translator's uncritical approach to the source text. Thus, it argues for greater application of *skopos* principles during translation. The study seeks to demonstrate how, because of the different cultural norms and expectations of Slovak and non-Slovak readers, target texts need to be carefully adapted if they are to be successful in their persuasive purpose. Drawing on the results of academic research and a reader survey, it shows how translators of

operative texts should always consider their target audience when making textual decisions.

Chapter Four (*The development of the usage of address forms in business conversation in American English*) calls attention to the address mode in the setting of business talk in American culture. A case study is presented and discussed in order to identify the linguistic relationship between interlocutors, native speakers of American English. The present study is descriptive rather than comparative; conversation analysis and the identification of contextualization cues are applied as tools of inquiry. The analyzed case study evidences the usage of linguistic means conveying informality from the very start, and the speakers' effort to project the image of lesser social distance, greater similarity and common ground. The study hints that, in everyday business talk, the mindset of native speakers of (American) English is set on symmetrical and reciprocal informal linguistic relationships, yet not necessarily on creating social bonds. At the same time it proposes the idea that the usage of first names carries a different meaning and serves a different function in American culture as opposed to the author's native culture. The study calls attention to specific linguistic pointers of informality, which might serve as a benchmark for non-native users of English.

Chapter Five (*Lexico-grammatical Features of English as a Lingua Franca in Slovak and French Academic Settings*) makes it apparent that the introduction of English as a lingua franca (ELF) to our sociolinguistic reality has been followed by numerous theoretical and empirical studies confirming its existence in spoken as well as written discourse. On the basis of the outcomes of two spoken corpora (VOICE and ELFA), one can identify a set of lexico-grammatical innovations characteristic of ELF. Amongst them, dropping the 3rd person '-s' in verb forms and the extended use of the progressive are features scrutinized here. The present study aims at revealing the frequency and functions of features drawing on academic discourse written by non-native English speakers with different L1s. Using a corpus consisting of English thesis abstracts written by Slovak and French postgraduates studying management, the corpus analysis employs a frequency-based approach and linguistic interpretation-oriented methods. Interestingly enough, the two investigated features do not appear to be frequent in the corpus of written academic ELF in question; however a higher occurrence of 3rd person zero in compound sentences is evident here. As to the progressive, it seems not to be characteristic of the analysed text type in general. More importantly, the qualitative perspective evidences the specific usage of the individual features reflecting the process of avoiding the linguistic redundancy of the morpheme '-s' and the

non-canonical function of the historic progressive and the progressive adding emphasis to the discourse. The investigated features can be thus considered characteristic linguistic tendencies in the chosen settings and demonstrate the rationale behind the study of ELF in academia.

Chapter Six (*Representation of Sexes in Occupational Lexicon: Asymmetry across Languages*) discusses the linguistic encoding of maleness and femaleness, an issue receiving growing attention (particularly within various feminist theoretical frameworks; e.g., Holmes and Meyerhoff 2005, Holmes 2006 a, 2006 b, Pauwels 1998, Romaine 1998). The current research does not primarily seek to explore the nature of bias in favor of men leading to women's linguistic invisibility. Instead, it examines selected ways in which gender asymmetry gets mapped onto the system of occupational terms both in West Slavic languages (Slovak, Czech, and Polish) and English, a representative of so-called genderless languages. The study investigates exceptions to general patterns of symmetrical "transcription" of sex into linguistic choices, including parallel designations for women and men, with semantic differences, e.g. The English word *governor*: the chief executive of a state in the US, an official appointed to govern a colony or territory, or a member of a governing body) – *governess*: a woman employed to educate the children of a private household, the Slovak *kňaz* (masc.): a priest, a clergyman in Christian churches who is authorized to perform various religious rites – *kňažka* (fem.): a priestess in the pagan sense, a non-Christian spiritual leader, the Polish *sekretarz* (masc.): typically a head of an administrative governmental office or international organization – *sekretarka* (fem.): a personal assistant who performs clerical tasks for a boss or an organization, and lexical gaps (Ø), e.g. the Slovak *hlásnik* (masc.), an armed guard or night watchman – Ø (fem.) and the Czech *letuška* (fem.), a person whose job is to ensure the safety and comfort of passengers aboard commercial flights – Ø (masc.). This study draws on research conducted by Michálková 2009, 2014 a), and 2014 b). The corpus database comprises over 6,000 Slovak personal nouns as identified among 60,000 entries in *Krátky slovník slovenského jazyka*, 2003, as well as Polish, Czech, and English data from various studies.

Chapter Seven (*Syntactic Complexity of English Spoken and Written Text Types*) deals with exploring syntactic complexity and patterns of inter-clausal relations as they are used in an interactional language in different texts of written and spoken English with the focus on the differences in subordination strategies in the two media. The aim of the study is to investigate the form-function dichotomy in the syntax of a small-size corpus (a collection of randomly selected authentic texts comprising four text types: conversation-interviews, academic prose,

newspaper articles, and fiction, all representing contemporary British and American English), and then to compare the obtained data with those from other corpora presented in previous quantitative studies and large reference grammar works of contemporary English, namely Biber's Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English (LGSWE) . Besides a brief account of some results of comparative analyses and views of some authors of comparative linguistic studies, it provides a comprehensive formal and functional corpus-based description of syntactic and semantic functions of different types of subordinate clauses (based on the theoretical framework of Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language (CGEL, 1985, and LGSWE, 1999) in English discourse. On the basis of quantitative as well as qualitative analysis of subordinate clauses of the four different naturally occurring texts of spoken and written discourse, the paper presents frequency counts of three kinds of subordinate clauses (nominal, relative, and adverbial clauses) and also offers functional interpretations explaining why the patterns exist and how they are used. Based on her comparative analysis, the author concludes that the distinctions in syntactic complexity are more likely to be found between text types which indicate the function of the text as well as the degree of formality rather than between its concrete manifestations, the media. The obtained results will serve as a basis for further contrastive studies into sentence structure, clause combining strategies and syntactic complexity in a similar corpus produced by non-native users of English.

Chapter Eight (*Figurative language: the analysis of nautical metaphor*) focuses on the figurative use of the contemporary language. The latter is abundant in expressions referring to diverse specialised areas of human existence. The application of metaphor has been extensively studied by numerous researchers (Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Lakoff 1987; Lakoff and Turner 1989; Cameron and Low 1999; Kövecses 2002; Croft and Cruse 2004; Evans and Green 2006; and many other experts). Metaphorical language is no longer the domain of poetic expression, it is omnipresent in everyday communication and it aims at evoking particular images. Phrases and expressions employing the nautical lexicon are frequently encountered and employed to refer to a diversity of phenomena. The present analysis is directed at investigating the use of such lexical items and their metaphorical extensions. Contrastive analysis is carried out on selected exemplars of such language in English and Polish. English phrases or expressions are discussed and, wherever possible, Polish equivalents are provided. The study aims to search for common underlying concepts as well as point to areas where both languages demonstrate a considerable diversity of linguistic representation. Finally, an attempt is

made at outlining some of the metaphors which motivate lexical representation in the form of exemplified expressions. The explanatory power of conceptual metaphors lies in their linguistic reflection of extralinguistic reality. It seems that English is more abundant in lexical representation pertaining to the maritime world, which might be related to its long naval history. In Polish, many of the equivalent phrases are unrelated to the nautical lexicon, as numerous corresponding meanings seem to have undergone the process of metaphorisation with the application of diverse images.

Part 2 includes four papers on Literature dealing mostly with twentieth-century American, English, and Australian literature. They focus both on poetry and prose and are concerned with topics of identity, gender, metafiction, postmodern conditions and other relevant theoretical issues in contemporary literature. The extended analyses and original interpretations designated by these papers shed light on the development of these literatures in English during the second half of the twentieth century, on their representative authors and some of the most distinguished work by these writers. The papers often suggest interesting comparative approaches for further in-depth research.

Chapter Nine (*Self-referentiality and Fiction Writing in Martin Amis's 'Money'*) focuses on *Money*, one of the best-known novels by the British author Martin Amis. Its plot revolves around John Self, a British producer of ads, who is about to embark on a seemingly lucrative project in a movie that is to be produced in the US. The study aims to explore the techniques that Amis employs, focusing on metafictionality. It briefly discusses what metafiction (or self-referentiality) is and how it differs from both the realist and the modernist novel. The study also focuses on how Amis discusses such aesthetic issues as realism, reality, fiction, motivation, and morality. The novel is stubbornly metanarrative and draws attention to the fictionality of its text and readers are constantly made aware that they are reading a text, a fictional construction. We see how *Money*, as a self-referential novel, inherently and unavoidably involves a "theorizing" of itself. In it, Amis discusses such issues as the relationship between the author and the text, the relationship between the reader and the text, as well as the relationship between the author and his own creations. In the novel, the writer himself becomes part of the story as a character (called Martin Amis) and he gradually takes over the writing of the protagonist's movie script. In such novels, the "workings" of the fiction are laid bare and the readers become part of the creation process.

Chapter Ten (*Tears behind the Laughter in Alexis Wright's 'Carpentaria'*) presents the contemporary indigenous literature of the Australian

Aboriginal writer, Alexis Wright, focusing on her novel Carpentaria (2006). Wright, one of the most appreciated writers of indigenous origin, is inspired by cosmology, various narrative strategies and the oral storytelling tradition of Australian Aboriginals, resulting in her specific style that goes beyond classical Western literary tradition. Many contemporary writers of indigenous origin have introduced a new concept of writing, as they started presenting a different point of view based mostly on the knowledge and experience preserved in oral traditions, the myths and stories of the communities they came from as their reaction against the dominancy of the white world. Among the characteristic features of Wright's novel is her specific kind of humour, irony, and allegory, present on many levels in the novel. The focus of the study is Alexis Wright and her creativity in order to achieve a critical reflection of the situation within the Aboriginal community and the dominant non-Aboriginal community. This is done through the depiction of the characters, the way they act in certain situations, and through observing how the elements of humour serve to confront the reader with contrasts and the tragic reality of Australian Aboriginals.

Chapter Eleven (*The Meaning of the Self in Contemporary American and Albanian Poetry. Being a Woman in the Poetry of Marge Piercy and Natasha Lako)* aims to analyze the complex (poetic) reality of being a woman and the poetic images related to this reality in the poetry of two representative poets in American and Albanian poetry – respectively Marge Piercy and Natasha Lako. The genuine meaning of the self in their poetry and the way a woman (poet) relates to herself and to the world – mainly expressed through references to everyday life, cultural heredity, social contexts, and symbolic and analogical systems widely based on nature, and the female body – is at the core of the analysis. Natasha Lako is the first famous woman poet in Albanian literature and one of the greatest innovators in contemporary Albanian poetry. Her poems are translated into some 14 languages. The focus of the analysis is her poetry during communism and the new perspective displayed in her volumes after the collapse of the regime in the 1990s. On the other hand, Marge Piercy needs very little introduction since she is a key representative of contemporary American literature. The paper focuses mainly on the poems found in her memoire "Sleeping with cats". Piercy's and Lako's poetry is analyzed in a comparative and hermeneutical approach with emphasis on several aspects of text analysis. This approach to the poetry of two eminent women poets aims to contribute to the study of literature in a transnational, and comparative perspective, which could help to read literatures that are seemingly very distant but nonetheless—through their

similarities as well as differences—shed light on the way we read literature in the globalization age.

Chapter Twelve (*The visual and the verbal in storytelling: writers' (un)controlled deployment of narrative dynamism in semi-visual/hybrid novels and short stories*) uses the 'narrative texture' of Audrey Niffenegger's visual novels and short stories as a springboard for analysing the communicative interplay between two channels that are often torn apart and treated separately, namely the visual and the verbal in hybrid narratives. In her relentless effort to widen the gap between text and image and re-entangle the visible with the readable, Niffenegger has crafted both short and extensive narratives that combine aquatint colours and shapes with prosaic imagery. In each and every story that she fashions in this way, the author subtly—perhaps even unknowingly—deploys varying degrees of what can be termed 'narrative dynamism'. The paper seeks to explore the relative distribution of narrative dynamism between the visual and verbal elements employed in Niffenegger's *The Adventuress*, *Three Incestuous Sisters*, *The Night Bookmobile*, and *Raven Girl*, extending the discussion to other non-comic hybrid narratives that manifest a certain amount of non-verbal imagery, such as those by Edward Gorey or Shaun Tan. Upon closer inspection, some hybrid stories employing images and texts turn out to be driven by forces that may very well lead to endless battles rather than clear-cut victories.

Part 3 comprises four papers on culture related to the topics of constant interest among scholars of Anglophone studies such as theoretical approaches in Cultural Studies that are vital in today's cultural context especially in Central European universities. Other issues include the Irish language and culture, contemporary cultural phenomena inspired by the growing ubiquity of technological intrusions into various fields of cultural production.

Chapter Thirteen (*The Age of Fragmented Narratives: Challenges for the traditional role of cultural conceptualization and social cognition in digital culture*) investigates the consequences of the unprecedented development and innovation in communication technologies that have already exerted impact on our perception, information processing, knowledge management, social cognition and learning styles. The paper introduces the concept *society of cognitive entities* as the driving force in digital culture and attempts to explain the controversy observed in the operational mode of cognitive entities according to which these active agents of infocommunication do not fully share, let alone negotiate cultural narratives as it used to be the case in the traditional practice of literacy. Instead, they thrive on a plethora of diverse information-sharing

channels in social space. The study proposes a revision of the tenets of mainstream cognitive anthropology and cultural linguistics in order to challenge the traditional role of supra-individual, monolithic cultural conceptualizations and consensual interpretation patterns for "collective life-world narratives" in the digital era. It looks at social cognition as a result of emergent and enhanced competences for contextualized interpretations of fragmentized information chunks constituting augmented virtual realities. The research objective is to prove that the digital environment amplifies the cooperation of complex cognitive skills (e.g. skills of selective evaluation, fast-track decision-making, multi-tasking and short-cut reasoning, presumptive argumentation, accommodating virtualization, etc.). It is claimed that such competences are vital for information processing and knowledge management in the digital environment. The study supports the conceptualization of a new type of social cognition which is based on continual participation in the information flow with emergent properties of vibrant interactive behavior. It is claimed that fragmented narratives become flexible building-blocks for novel contexts. The analysis acknowledges the innovative drive which resides in interactive informational frameworks consisting of a multitude of connections of a cognitive personality to other cognitive entities. The paper discusses the changing perception on discourse and interaction and depicts the foreseeable development of new learning styles affecting the role of informal education and secondary socialization. The analysis concludes that the traditional expectation of the outcome of socialization for human beings remains the development of competences for successful social cognition which is bound to be based on participatory engagement, regardless of the physical or virtual nature of the media involved. The paper also intends to point to a possible risk for human literacy called the *digital gap*: enhanced social cognition empowers the citizens in general while the lack of social competences in underprivileged segments of society leads to marginalization and social disintegration of many.

Chapter Fourteen (*Invisible Revelations: Apocalyptic Technologies*) aims to highlight and analyze a number of contemporary cultural phenomena inspired by the growing ubiquity of technological intrusions into various fields of cultural production. The phenomena in question range from diverse embodiments of technologically-mediated media representations to philosophical reflections concerning a redefined concept of Western history. What all of them have in common is their (sometimes involuntary) participation in the discourse of metaphorically appropriated apocalypse, which, in its broadest sense, narrates the demise of traditional Cartesian subjectivity and the emergence of the new, post-industrial

subject whose identity is contoured by electronic technologies. Drawing from such postmodern/post-Marxist theorists as Guy Debord, Jean Baudrillard or Fredric Jameson, the study identifies a radical socio-philosophical change in the contemporary perception of reality which has been significantly extended by virtual environments resulting in a relocation of traditional social activities (communication, exchange, travel) into the realm of representation embodied by the new media culture (spectacle, simulation, cyberspace). As a result, the contemporary Western subject seems to have undergone an irreversible transformation into a post-apocalyptic entity whose social positioning is determined by the global rituals of consumerist circulation and as such has been liberated from traditional identity constraints like locality or even corporeality. This change in turn produced a number of significant cultural consequences of which two seem particularly significant: (1) the popularity of the "recycling" phenomena (sequels, prequels, remakes, film-TV-computer game exchanges, retro-style in industrial design, etc.), all possibly characterized as the zombie products of culture, resurrected or exhumed from the realm of our cultural past and (2) a redefined concept of history whose end might be viewed either as a halted continuum of western social development, or from a post-modern perspective in which history has been absorbed by the timeless and spaceless void of media culture.

Chapter Fifteen (*The Revitalization of the Irish Language in the Republic of Ireland*) deals with the issue of Irish language revitalization in the Republic of Ireland taking into account the importance of language in the context of the cultural identity of the Irish. Language and ethnic revitalization are topical issues nowadays. Although the Irish language is a minority language today, it still deserves attention due to it being an invaluable part of Irish culture and identity. The aim of the study is to present cardinal information about the current state of the Irish language and the process of revitalization in the Eire. The authors focus on particular solutions for how to reverse the process of language death providing the reader with various significant data obtained on the basis of field research realized in the city of Galway and nearby areas. As for methodology, the authors worked in the area of qualitative research through the medium of semi-structured interviews, focus-group discussions and observations. In the final part the results of the research are summarized in the form of specific recommendations which could be possibly applied in the sphere of other minority and lesser used languages´ revitalization not only in the European context. All the recommendations are considered to be best practices that could be used in many spheres of life ranging from education to the family environment. The study is based

on a short-term research stay, awarded in 2015, by one of the authors within the National University of Ireland in the city of Galway.

Chapter Sixteen (*Theory, damned theory! The need for a theoretical approach to Anglophone cultural studies*) argues for a coherent theoretical approach to Cultural Studies in universities in Central Europe taking into account the extremely focused approach of universities in the English-speaking world and the broadly based separate "Introduction to …" cultural courses taught in Central European universities, for example as with the "landeskunde" tradition in German universities. The paper suggests that a coherent theoretical approach be required at Master's level which, not only introduces specific cultural studies theory, but also examines the cultural assumptions and ideologies that underlie the teaching of longer-standing disciplines such as anthropology, philosophy, history, geography, and their contribution to cultural studies theory. Moreover, the paper argues that clarity in the definitions of culture is essential to any teaching of Cultural Studies. Textbooks, such as Chris Barker's *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice* and Simon During's *Cultural Studies Reader* emphasize the present state of the art and tend to neglect long-standing academic traditions in the disciplines which have contributed to Cultural Studies. There is a concentration on the destination and a paucity of directions on how to get there. To illustrate this claim, the paper briefly examines the history of history in Britain and the USA to show history studies in the education system have been driven by an ideological and political agenda, a strand in Cultural Studies which is not always made explicit. The paper proposes that the appropriate objective for universities in Central Europe is to create awareness in students of the theoretical constructs underlying all the disciplines contributing to Cultural Studies and their interrelationships within that discipline.

PART I:

LANGUAGE

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCING FSPML 2.0M: A MARKUP LANGUAGE FOR MULTILEVEL TAGGING OF FUNCTIONAL SENTENCE PERSPECTIVE

MARTIN DRÁPELA

Introduction

The present study introduces a modest[1] markup language for multilevel corpus annotation, designed by a member of a group of linguists who want "structures to be marked in terms of such notions as 'center', 'theme' and 'rheme'".[2] These notions themselves are to be found among a mesh of differing views and approaches[3] and "as a consequence, it is very difficult to operationalize the concepts used in linguistic analysis to devise an annotation scheme."[4] Considerations of space will not allow me to offer even a rough overview of markup schemes developed and used by other

[1] In concord with Andrew Hardie, "Modest XML for corpora: Not a standard, but a suggestion," *ICAME Journal* 38, no. 1 (2014): 76, the markup language introduced has been created "by [an] individual researcher[s] for [his] own research interests, with" some expectation that it could be found useful by other FSP researchers.

[2] Roger Garside, Steve Fligelstone and Simon Botley, "Discourse annotation: Anaphoric relations in corpora" (In *Corpus Annotation: Linguistic Information from Computer Text Corpora,* edited by Roger Garside, Geoffrey N. Leech and Tony McEnery, 66-84. London: Longman, 1997), 66.

[3] Cf. esp. Mark Steedman and Ivana Kruijff-Korbayová, "Two dimensions of information structure in relation to discourse structure and discourse semantics" (In *Information Structure, Discourse Structure and Discourse Semantics (Workshop Proceedings),* edited by Ivana Kruijff-Korbayová and Mark Steedman, 1-9, Helsinki: The University of Helsinki, 2003), 4.

[4] Sandra Kübler and Heike Zinsmeister, *Corpus Linguistics and Linguistically Annotated Corpora* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2015), 134.

approaches to the study of information structure of language despite the fact that a number of such schemes exist today. Furthermore, owing to its relative complexity, the markup language is described below rather summarily, with special attention given only to the part that serves specifically for the annotation of selected aspects of information structure. It is important to realize that this markup language aims at establishing an annotation standard for a relatively narrow group of researchers who favour and/or follow the Firbasian approach to the study of information structure, commonly known in literature under the title *functional sentence perspective*, hereinafter abbreviated to *FSP*. In its current state, the Firbasian view of FSP posits that in written communication information structure of a sentence (clause) is determined by mutual cooperation of sentence linearity, dynamic semantics, and context; in spoken communication by cooperation of all these three factors plus prosody:

> ... Entering into the flow of communication, the meaning conveyed by a linguistic element acquires the character of information and participates in the development of the communication and in the fulfilment of the communicative purpose. If unhampered by other factors, linear modification produces the following effect. The closer to the end of the sentence an element comes to stand, the greater the extent to which it contributes towards the development and completion of the communication. Whereas the element occurring finally contributes most to this development, the element occurring initially contributes least to it. Elements occurring neither at the beginning nor at the end rank between the two. In this way, the element occurring finally proves to be the most dynamic element within the sentence, for it completes the development of the communication; it is the element towards which the communication is perspectived. The element occurring initially is the least dynamic. The other elements rank between them. In regard to the dynamics of the communication, all elements display different degrees of communicative dynamism (CD). ... I have found that in the written language this power is exercised by the contextual factor and the semantic factor, and in the spoken language also by intonation. Together with linear modification, these factors participate in modifying the communicative value of a linguistic element in regard to its place in the development of the communication, in other words, its degree of CD. The development of the communication is not reflected by language solely through linearity. It is reflected through a distribution of degrees of CD over the sentence constituents. This distribution is determined by the interaction, or rather, interplay, of factors enumerated. It induces the sentence to function in a communicative perspective, referred to as functional sentence perspective (FSP).[5]

[5] Jan Firbas, "A case study in linear modification (On translating Apoc. 21.6b)," *Brno Studies in English* 22 (1996): 23-24. See also especially Jan Firbas,

The fact that FSP is determined by the cooperation of three or four largely distinct factors makes it especially difficult to define a workable system of FSP annotation entities and annotation procedures. It is nevertheless believed that the annotation scheme introduced in the present chapter can be successfully applied to most annotation scenarios that operate with written communication, and together with a reasonably comprehensive scheme for the representation of prosodic features (not the subject of discussion in the present chapter) also for the annotation of spoken communication. This chapter is divided into two main sections. In the first section, I quickly review some of the most established markup schemes for FSP analysis used in the past and at present. In the second section, I introduce the FSP markup language itself, abbreviated further in the text as *FSPML*. Apart from the usual serif typeface, this study makes use also of a monospace typeface for text that functions as example text to be annotated with FSP entities, such as the monospace sequence "It is a nasty area and the Viet Cong roam it, mostly at night. Today they made an error and got themselves caught, in the open, in daylight. They can be made to make other mistakes." This sequence is used again further on in the chapter to set immediately relevant verbal context for the clause "[T]oday they made an error." The present study also uses two types of footnote text: citations of reference work in support of the main text and the author's comments on the main text.

1. Annotating FSP in the past and at present

The roots of the annotation of FSP functions in the Firbasian tradition[6] originate in the work of Vilém Mathesius, who himself actually recognized[7] a much finer segmentation of utterances in terms of their information structure. Contrary to what is commonly known to be asserted by him, namely that

---

Functional Sentence Perspective in Written and Spoken Communication (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), Libuše Dušková, *From Syntax to Text: The Janus Face of Functional Sentence Perspective* (Prague: Charles University, 2015), and Aleš Svoboda, *Kapitoly z funkční syntaxe* (Ostrava/Prague: Pedagogická fakulta v Ostravě/Státní pedagogické nakladatelství, 1989).

[6] Cf. Martin Drápela, "The FSP bibliography," (In *A Bibliography of Functional Sentence Perspective 1956-2011*, edited by M. Drápela, 33-186, Brno: Masaryk University, 2015).

[7] Cf. Vilém Mathesius, *Čeština a obecný jazykozpyt* (Prague), 238-239.

> ... [w]hen observing different utterances we find that they are more or less clearly composed of two parts. One part expresses what is given by the context or what naturally presents itself, in short, what is being commented upon. As we already know, this part is called the theme of the utterance. The second part contains the new element of the utterance, i.e. what is being stated about something; this part is called the rheme of the utterance,[8]

as early as in 1939, he clearly identified not only *the theme* and *the rheme*, but also their centers, i.e. *the center of the theme* and *the center of the rheme*, and also *transitional elements* mediating between the theme and the rheme.[9] Thus, apart from the widely accepted polar view of information structure, linguists adhering to the Firbasian tradition frequently—if not predominantly—work with the information structure seen as a scalar concept,[10] which is nonetheless considered to be backward compatible with the polar theme-rheme view of information structure.

In order to illustrate the way the system of FSP tags has developed over the course of several decades within the Firbasian tradition, I shall use an independent clause[11] (highlighted below) and tag it according to FSP annotation nomenclatures as were applied in selected publications of two key representatives of the FSP approach, Jan Firbas and Aleš Svoboda. It is essentially their annotation nomenclatures that have served as the basis for the definition of FSPML2.0M.

> It is a nasty area and the Viet Cong roam it, mostly at night. **Today they made an error** and got themselves caught, in the open, in daylight. They can be made to make other mistakes.[12]

---

[8] Vilém Mathesius, *A Functional Analysis of Present-Day English on a General Linguistic Basis* (edited by Josef Vachek, translated by Libuše Dušková, The Hague/Prague: Mouton/Academia, 1975), 156.

[9]Vilém Mathesius, "O tak zvaném aktuálním členění věty," *Slovo a slovesnost* 5 (1939): 173.

[10]Cf. Jarmila Tárnyiková, "Dichotomies and scales," *Anglica* 2 (2000): 53-64.

[11]For FSP analysis, "a reliable starting point seems to be the communicative field (also called the field of distribution of CD or simply distributional field) which is provided by the independent sentence based on verbal predication. The constituents of this field are such elements as can become carriers of certain amounts of CD". Aleš Svoboda, "The hierarchy of communicative units and fields as illustrated by English attributive constructions," *Brno Studies in English* 7 (1968): 57.

[12]William F. Lee, *The Light Side of Damnation* (Bloomington: AuthorHouse, 2006), 11.

As evidenced by Firbas's papers, it was approximately shortly before 1957 when he began to work with the scalar, three-element distribution of types/degrees of communicative functions over a clause: *theme*, *transition*, *rheme*. In order to delimit these functions in the clause, Firbas used different styles of underlining: dotted, interrupted, and full, respectively, together with subscript letters that "represent the gamut of the communicative dynamism as displayed by the elements within theme, transition, and rheme":[13]

Today$_b$ they$_a$ made an error

It is of course important to realize that the notion of a grammatical, not to say pragmatic or even FSP tag, was just in its infancy at that time, so it is obvious that more attention was given to the phenomenon itself rather than to the naming and tagging system which would delimit the phenomenon in the text.[14]

Two years later, Firbas modified his FSP annotation scheme into a system which used only numerals. Despite the fact that this scheme was later on used by Firbas interchangeably with a scheme that is based on abbreviations of names of communicative functions, it is in principle this numerical notation that forms the basis for the annotation of FSP functions in FSPML2.0M, as is shown in the second part of this chapter:

> The small figures placed above the line after a word or group of words represent the gamut of CD as displayed by the elements within theme ($^{11, 12, 13}$ ...), transition ($^{21, 22, 23}$ ...) and rheme ($^{31, 32, 33}$ ...) (The numbers $^{10, 20, 30}$ are used if no further differentiation within theme, transition, and rheme, respectively, seems necessary.) ...[15]

Today^{12} they^{11} made^{20} an error^{30}

---

[13]Jan Firbas, *Collected Works. Volume One (1951 – 1967)* (Brno: Masaryk University, 2010), 89. Whenever possible I will refer to the earliest Firbas' papers by quoting from Firbas, *Collected Works*....

[14]Cf. the discussion about pre-electronic corpora, especially the discussion about *the Survey of English Usage* e.g. in Graeme Kennedy, *An Introduction to Corpus Linguistics* (London/New York: Longman, 1998), 17-19, or more recently in Charles F. Meyer, "Origin and history of corpus linguistics - corpus linguistics vis-a-vis other disciplines" (In *Corpus Linguistics: An International Handbook*, edited by Anke Lüdeling and Merja Kytö, 1-14, Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 10-12.

[15]Firbas, *Collected Works* ..., 130.

In the mid-1960s, Firbas temporarily abandons this numerical notation in favour of the abbreviations: theme (th), transition (tr), and rheme (rh).[16]

Today(th) they(th) made(tr) an error(rh)

What is really interesting here is the fact that in some of his analyses, Firbas also employed a scheme that makes use of both annotation techniques, of numerals and abbreviations, thus eventually increasing the descriptive redundancy of his tagging scheme:

> The functions of the communicative units in the distributional fields are indicated by abbreviations placed beneath the units. The following abbreviations are used: Th/eme/, Tr/ansition/ Pr/oper/, Tr/ansition/ and Rh/eme/. ... Parallel to the abbreviations, FSP functions are also indicated by two-digit numerals added as superscripts to the abbreviations, e.g. Th^{10}, Rh^{32} ... The highest number within the rheme indicates the rheme proper. If only one rhematic element (indicated by the superscript 30) is present, it is this element that takes over the rheme proper function. Similarly, if more thematic elements than one are present, the element having the highest thematic number serves as the diatheme. However, if there is only one thematic element (indicated by the superscript 10), it can — depending on contextual conditions — serve either as theme proper or diatheme …[17]

Applied to the example clause, the resultant FSP tags would be rendered in the form of the following stand-off annotation:

Today they made an error
Th^{12} Th^{11} $TrPr^{21}$-Tr^{22} Rh^{30}

In his monograph *Functional Sentence Perspective* ..., which provides a comprehensive description of the FSP approach, Firbas decided not to employ numerals and relied solely on the following annotation scheme which—depending on the degree of detail of FSP analysis—allows an annotator to use either generalized two-letter tags for rough annotation or extended abbreviations which make it easier to distinguish even between -*proper*, -*oriented*, and *non-proper* communicative functions:[18]

---

[16] Cf. ibid. 273.
[17] Jan Firbas, "Thoughts on functional sentence perspective, intonation and emotiveness. Part Two," *Brno Studies in English* 17 (1987): 12-13.
[18] Firbas, *Functional Sentence Perspective*…, xiii-xv.

Th	theme
ThPr	theme proper
ThPro	theme proper oriented
DTho	diatheme oriented
DTh	diatheme
TrPro	transition proper oriented
TrPr	transition proper
Tr	transition
Rh	rheme
RhPr	rheme proper

Insofar as the degree of annotation detail is concerned, this scheme is in fact a slightly modified annotation scheme which was originally introduced into an FSP analysis in 1979 by Aleš Svoboda in his habilitation thesis, published in 1981 as *Diatheme*:[19]

(T_p)	ellipted theme proper
T_p	theme proper
$T_{(p)}$	theme-proper oriented theme
$T_{(d)}$	diatheme oriented theme
T_d	diatheme
0	"neutral elements"[20]
(Tr_p)	ellipted transition proper
Tr_p	transition proper
Tr	transition (non-proper)[21]
R	rheme (non-proper)
R_p	rheme proper

Following the use of these tagging schemes in two core monographs on FSP, i.e. Svoboda's *Diatheme* and Firbas' *Functional Sentence Perspective...*, the example clause would be annotated as is shown below, with Firbas' way employing both the in-line and the stand-off annotation, and also making use of the plus sign (+) either to "underline the linking or boundary function of transition proper"[22] or to replace the TrPr tag altogether.

---

[19] Aleš Svoboda, *Diatheme* (Brno: Universita J.E. Purkyně (=Masaryk University), 1981), esp. 74 and 198.

[20] Elements that according to Svoboda, ibid, 75, "might be regarded as belonging either to both the thematic and the non-thematic sphere or to neither of them (e.g. conjunctions)".

[21] Svoboda, ibid, 75, also calls this "transition-proper oriented rheme".

[22] Firbas, *Functional Sentence Perspective…*, 74.

Today(DTh) they(ThPr) made(+,TrPr;Tr) an error(RhPr)

Today they made an error
DTh ThPr +;Tr RhPr

Today they	made	an error
T_d T_p	Tr_p/Tr	R_p

With slight modifications and sometimes functionally motivated reductions, these two FSP annotation schemes have been widely used by a number of other, mostly Czech and Slovak researchers contributing to the study of FSP.

Aside from the tags describing the communicative functions of sentence elements, a fully-fledged FSP markup language should also ideally include tags representing Firbasian dynamic semantic functions[23] and tags specifying contextual properties of communicative units. The tags (or attribute values) of these types have, of course, been incorporated into discussions and analyses in Firbas' *Functional Sentence Perspective*... Owing to space constraints, however, I will not describe them here in detail, and will mention them only marginally in the following section in connection with the typology of annotation levels (layers) in FSPML 2.0M.

2. FSPML 2.0M

One of the reasons for the introduction of an updated markup language for the annotation of FSP has already been touched upon in footnote number one of the present chapter. Not unexpectedly, there exist further issues with FSP annotation schemes currently in use that have led me to embark on the quest for an innovated FSP markup language. It must be borne in mind again that the markup language introduced below is theory-specific and beyond all doubt only one of many possible annotation schemes fit for the purpose of capturing and parsing of the information structure, manually, semi-automatically, and/or automatically. The versioning[24]

[23]Cf. Firbas, ibid, 66ff.

[24] The first version of FSPML is to be found in the *FSP Tagset* introduced in Martin Drápela, *Aspects of Functional Sentence Perspective in Contemporary English News and Academic Prose* (PhD dissertation, Brno: Masaryk University, 2008), 42-45 and published as Martin Drápela, *Aspects of Functional Sentence Perspective in Contemporary English News and Academic Prose* (Brno: Masaryk University, 2011), 55-58) in spite of the fact that the abbreviation FSPML was not

which has been intentionally appended to the FSPML abbreviation signifies that even FSPML 2.0M is just a stage in the development of an FSP annotation scheme that will, ideally, crystalize into a useful and powerful tool for functional description of information structure phenomena in large text corpora.

At the outset it will be useful to mention that the markup language introduced here has been conceived against the background of *the principle of incompatibility*:

> Stated informally, the essence of this principle is that as the complexity of a system increases, our ability to make precise and yet significant statements about its behavior diminishes until a threshold is reached beyond which precision and significance (or relevance) become almost mutually exclusive characteristics.[25]

While aiming at a comprehensive multilevel annotation,[26] the core of FSPML 2.0M is still to be seen primarily in its capability to capture FSP phenomena, the annotation of other structural levels being only ancillary and providing an FSP analyst with the most elementary syntactic and

---

applied therein yet. This original FSP tagset differs from version 2.0 in several aspects: first, in the way the degrees of communicative dynamism are assigned as numerical values to the letters specifying the type of communicative functions, second, in the extent of both the subset of tags for dynamic semantic functions and the subset of tags for the degrees of contextual dependence, and last but not least, in the fact that version one could describe only the level of FSP.

[25]Lotfi A. Zadeh, "Outline of a new approach to the analysis of complex systems and decision processes," *IEEE Transactions on Systems, Man and Cybernetics* 3, no. 1 (1973): 28. For a more recent discussion on this see for example Eduard Hovy and Julia Lavid, "Towards a 'science' of corpus annotation: a new methodological challenge for Corpus Linguistics," *International Journal of Translation* 22, no. 1 (2010): 13-36. Also cf. a warning concerning "the overuse of ... tags" issued by John Sinclair, Trust *the Text: Language, Corpus and Discourse* (London: Routledge, 2004), 190.

[26] Considering projects such as the SUSANNE Corpus (Geoffrey Sampson, *English for the Computer*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995.), multilevel annotation is not a recent novelty in corpus linguistics despite the fact that this type of annotation has witnessed a marked increase of interest among corpus linguists especially in the first decade of the 21st century. See for example Jin-Dong Kim, Tomoko Ohta and Jun'ichi Tsujii, "Multilevel annotation for information extraction. Introduction to the GENIA annotation" (In *Linguistic Modeling of Information and Markup Languages*, edited by Andreas Witt and Dieter Metzing, 125-142. Dordrech/Hedelberg/London/New York: Springer, 2010) and references therein to other multilevel annotation projects.

semantic characteristics of communicative units. The annotation levels (layers) incorporated into FSPML 2.0M are as follows:

a) the level of FSP with attribute values specifying
   1. the types of communicative functions,
   2. the degrees of communicative dynamism (CD),
   3. the types of dynamic (Firbasian) semantic functions, and
   4. contextual properties of communicative units
b) the level of static semantic functions
c) the level of syntactic functions
d) the level of syntactic forms
e) the level of generalized parts of speech

Apart from the obvious expansion of this annotation scheme by means of inclusion of levels other than the level of FSP, the main reasons for the introduction of FSPML 2.0M are nonetheless still anchored to the level of FSP and can be summed up as the following aims

- to unify, formalize, and reduce the way communicative units and fields are annotated, especially in accordance with the most progressive generalization of communicative functions into *informemes* formulated by Svoboda,[27]
- to include into the scheme more complex annotation descriptors for contextual properties of communicative units,
- to establish a sub-scheme for the annotation of communicative fields, and in general,
- to ensure that the FSP markup will be processable without much trouble by both the human annotator and, through XML notation, also by a computer.

In what follows I concentrate on the general annotation principles adopted in FSPML 2.0M and the typology of attribute values serving for the purposes of annotation of communicative functions and degrees of communicative dynamism, i.e. the characteristics listed above in a) sub 1 and sub 2 in the above list.

In terms of general annotation principles, a portion of text recognized as a communicative unit (or units)[28] is in FSPML 2.0M enclosed[29] within a

[27] Svoboda, *Kapitoly* ... 136ff.

[28] From the point of view of FSP, the English predicative verb, for instance, usually represents two communicative units, one that functions as transition proper and the

dynamically formed markup construct that begins with the <> start-tag and ends with the </> end-tag. The inner contents of these tags are identical and depend on

– the number of communicative units the tag encloses, for English very often only one communicative unit, and typically more than just one unit in the case of morphologically richer languages,
– the degree of annotator confidence[30] about the FSP status of the given communicative unit(s) (HIGH vs LOW)

The result of the former condition is shown in the form of the 21st letter of the English alphabet (or a string composed of this letter); the latter condition is realized simultaneously with the former and is reflected in the letter(s) being rendered in either a lower-case or upper-case font face, representing LOW or HIGH confidence, respectively.[31] Thus, without actually ascribing any FSPML 2.0M values to the communicative units, their delimitation in the example clause should be rendered as follows, provided the annotator assigns, for instance, a high degree of confidence to each of the identified communicative units:

<U>Today</U><U>they</U><UU>made</UU><U>an error</U>

For the sake of simplicity and owing to page-width limitations, from now on I shall narrow the annotation of the example clause only to the annotation of its subject *they*. Once delimited in the actual text, the communicative units are assigned FSPML values by inserting the v="*value*" pair in the start-tag.[32] The following example makes use of the number zero as the only value attributed to the subject:

Today <U v="0">they</U> made an error

The FSPML value may take the form of either a 10-character string, optionally followed by a (chain) of context-specifying suffix(es) glued to the string, or just the number zero. The latter signifies that the given

---

other that functions as transition (non-proper).

[29] FSPML 2.0M uses in-line annotation.

[30] Cf. the discussion in Firbas, *Functional Sentence perspective...*, 11ff and 108ff about potentiality in FSP analysis.

[31] This entails that the tags, attribute names, and attribute values are case-sensitive in FSPML 2.0M.

[32] The number of strings should, logically, reflect the number of communicative units a tag delimits. Multiple strings are joined together to form a single string of values by using the string concatenation operator - a dot (.).

communicative unit has not been FSPML-analyzed yet.[33] The former is applied only when at least the type of communicative function has been identified for the communicative unit. In this case, the leftmost character of the string must be a non-zero character. In the following example, the 10-character string specifies that the communicative unit functions as theme proper in the clause:

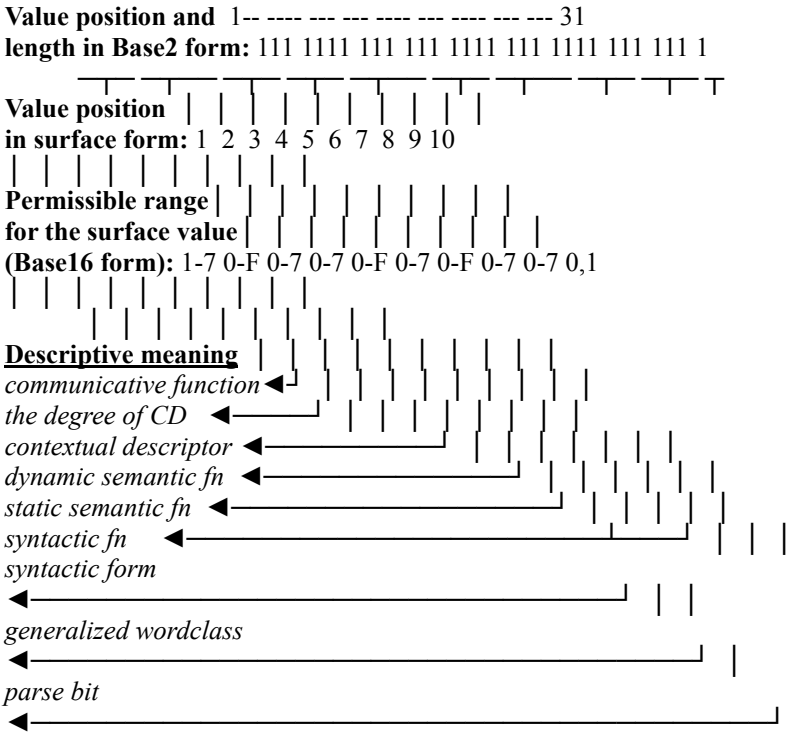
Today <U v="1000000000">they</U> made an error

The 10-character string, which uses a hexadecimal symbol in each of its positions but as a whole does not represent a hexadecimal number, has an underlying 31-bit long Base2 counterpart, and may optionally have two additional counterpart forms: one that also uses case-sensitive letters to facilitate the annotation process for a human annotator, and another one that uses a custom-designed Base74 representation which allows the 10-character string to be compressed—via the Base2 representation—into only half of its length for more economical digital storage of the annotated corpus. Owing to the relative complexity of these two additional forms I will nevertheless postpone an exposition of further computational aspects of FSPML 2.0M for a different occasion, and move on to a brief explanation of the way the structural levels are represented in the 10-character string.

The underlying Base2 string and the 10-character (surface) string have the following structure, value positions, value ranges, and descriptive functions:

[33] The number zero as a value can be considered a single character parse bit which otherwise normally appears as the rightmost character in the 10-character string.

Figure 1-1: REPRESENTATION OF PROPERTIES OF ANNOTATION LEVELS (LAYERS) THROUGH THE VALUES OF THE FSPML ATTRIBUTE



The most important descriptors in the FSPML 2.0M annotation scheme are represented by the two leftmost Base16 values of the FSPML attribute, i.e. the value specifying the type of communicative function and the value specifying the degree of communicative dynamism. As to the values specifying the type of communicative function, FSPML 2.0M introduces a value range [1-7] which has the following interpretation and correspondences with generalized abbreviations of communicative functions derived from the scheme used by Firbas, together with correspondences to Svoboda's informemes:

Table 1-2: A COMPARISON OF MARKUP FOR COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTIONS IN THREE FSP ANNOTATION SCHEMES

Traditional FSP Markup (after Firbas, *Functional Sentence Perspective...*)		**Svoboda's *informemes***	**FSPML 2.0M**
Thematic Elements (proper or proper-oriented)	ThPr(o)	i_1	1
Diathematic Elements (diatheme or d.-oriented th.)[34]	DTh(o)	i_2	2
Transitional Elements (proper or proper-oriented)	TrPr(o) +	i_3	3
Transitional Elements (non-proper)	Tr	i_4	4
Rhematic Elements	Rh	i_5	5
Focus Anticipator	FocA		6
function is ambiguous			7

As to the degrees of communicative dynamism, the proposed hexadecimal range [0-F], in which "zero" is used only together with the function of focus anticipator (rhematizer), should make it possible to assign the degrees of communicative dynamism to communicative units in most annotation situations. The application of the FSPML 2.0M scheme will transform the annotation form of the subject *they* in the example clause from

Today they(ThPr) made an error

into

Today <U v="1100000000">they</U> made an error

where the two leftmost characters indicate that the subject is functioning as the least dynamic theme proper in the clause. A fully completed annotation of the subject would result in the following string value in which a context-defining suffix ("%111") is also attached to the 10-character base ("1114111151"):

[34] The part “d.-oriented th.” should be read as “diatheme-oriented theme”.

Today <U v="1114111151%111">they</U> made an error

Such a string would have to be interpreted in the way that is detailed in the right column of the following table:[35]

Table 1-3: Interpretation of values in an example FSPML 2.0M attribute

1114111151%111	**Meaning**
1xxxxxxxxxxxxx	Communicative Function: Thematic (Proper)
x**1**xxxxxxxxxxxx	The degree of communicative dynamism, relative to other thematic (proper) elements in the communicative field
xx**1**xxxxxxx**%111**	a contextually dependent unit with endophoric reference (by the value in the third position from the left), with reference to a communicative unit in a communicative field ("%", communicative field number "1" (by "1xx"), communicative unit with function annotated as "11" (by "x11"), "the Viet Cong")
xxx**4**xxxxxxxxxx	Dynamic Semantic Function: Bearer of Quality
xxxx**1**xxxxxxxxx	Static Semantic Function: Agent (Hallidayan typology)
xxxxx**11**xxxxxxx	Syntactic Function: Subject
xxxxxxx**1**xxxxxx	Syntactic Form: Noun Phrase
xxxxxxxx**5**xxxxx	Generalized Word-Class Category: Pronominal Element
xxxxxxxxx**1**xxxx	Parse Bit: annotation of this unit is complete

[35] Unfortunately, due to its extent a full typology of values used in FSPML 2.0M cannot be presented here.

Conclusion

In the present study I have attempted to introduce FSPML 2.0M, an upgraded markup language for multilevel annotation of information structure of discourse.[36] This markup language is primarily aimed at a comprehensive annotation of the level of functional sentence perspective, but it also adds a reasonably sized tagging apparatus for the annotation of other types of structural levels, such as the level of static semantic functions or the level of syntax. Through the inclusion of these extra levels into the annotation scheme, FSPML 2.0M is thought to largely fulfill the requirements for the type of syntactic annotation and syntactic analysis carried out in the manner suggested long ago by František Daneš.[37] This second version of FSPML will furthermore make it easier for FSP researchers to work with FSP-annotated texts in digital form, and will provide them with, hopefully, a better insight into a wider range of phenomena connected with or influencing FSP than has been possible so far.

References

Daneš, František. "A three-level approach to syntax." *Travaux linguistiques de Prague* 1 (1964): 225-240.

Drápela, Martin. *Aspects of Functional Sentence Perspective in Contemporary English News and Academic Prose.* PhD dissertation. Brno: Masaryk University, 2008.

—. *Aspects of Functional Sentence Perspective in Contemporary English News and Academic Prose*. Brno: Masaryk University, 2011.

—. "The FSP bibliography." In *A Bibliography of Functional Sentence Perspective 1956-2011,* edited by Martin Drápela, 33-186. Brno: Masaryk University, 2015.

Dušková, Libuše. *From Syntax to Text: The Janus Face of Functional Sentence Perspective.* Prague: Charles University, 2015.

Firbas, Jan. "Thoughts on functional sentence perspective, intonation and emotiveness. Part Two." *Brno Studies in English* 17 (1987): 9-49.

—. *Functional Sentence Perspective in Written and Spoken Communication*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, (1992).

[36] At this stage, only written discourse is meant here. A typology of FSPML in-line tags for the representation of prosodic features is under development.

[37] Cf. esp. František Daneš, "A three-level approach to syntax," *Travaux linguistiques de Prague* 1 (1964): 225-240.

—. "A case study in linear modification (On translating Apoc. 21.6b)." *Brno Studies in English* 22 (1996): 23-48.
—. *Collected Works. Volume One (1951 – 1967)*. Brno: Masaryk University, 2010.
Garside, Roger, Steve Fligelstone and Simon Botley. "Discourse annotation: Anaphoric relations in corpora." In *Corpus Annotation: Linguistic Information from Computer Text Corpora*, edited by Roger Garside, Geoffrey N. Leech and Tony McEnery, 66-84. London: Longman, 1997.
Hardie, Andrew. "Modest XML for corpora: Not a standard, but a suggestion." *ICAME Journal* 38, no. 1 (2014): 73-103.
Hovy, Eduard and Julia Lavid. "Towards a 'science' of corpus annotation: a new methodological challenge for Corpus Linguistics." *International Journal of Translation* 22, no. 1 (2010): 13-36.
Kennedy, Graeme. *An Introduction to Corpus Linguistics*. London/New York: Longman, 1998.
Kim, Jin-Dong, Tomoko Ohta and Jun'ichi Tsujii. "Multilevel annotation for information extraction. Introduction to the GENIA annotation." In *Linguistic Modeling of Information and Markup Languages*, edited by Andreas Witt and Dieter Metzing, 125-142. Dordrech/Hedelberg/ London/New York: Springer, 2010.
Kübler, Sandra and Heike Zinsmeister. *Corpus Linguistics and Linguistically Annotated Corpora*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2015.
Lee, William F. *The Light Side of Damnation*. Bloomington: AuthorHouse, 2006.
Mathesius, Vilém. "O tak zvaném aktuálním členění věty." *Slovo a slovesnost* 5 (1939): 171-174.
—. *Čeština a obecný jazykozpyt*. Prague, 1947.
—. *A Functional Analysis of Present-Day English on a General Linguistic Basis*, edited by J. Vachek, translated by L. Dušková. The Hague/Prague: Mouton/Academia, 1975.
Meyer, Charles F. "Origin and history of corpus linguistics - corpus linguistics vis-a-vis other disciplines." In *Corpus Linguistics: An International Handbook*, edited by Anke Lüdeling and Merja Kytö, 1-14. Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2008.
Sampson, Geoffrey. *English for the Computer*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995.
Sinclair, John. *Trust the Text: Language, Corpus and Discourse*. London: Routledge, 2004.
Steedman, Mark and Ivana Kruijff-Korbayová. "Two dimensions of information structure in relation to discourse structure and discourse semantics." In *Information Structure, Discourse Structure and*

Discourse Semantics (Workshop Proceedings), edited by Ivana Kruijff-Korbayová and Mark Steedman, 1-9. Helsinki: The University of Helsinki, 2003.

Svoboda, Aleš. "The hierarchy of communicative units and fields as illustrated by English attributive constructions." *Brno Studies in English* 7 (1968): 49-101.

—. *Diatheme*. Brno: Universita J.E. Purkyně (=Masaryk University), 1981.

—. *Kapitoly z funkční syntaxe*. Ostrava/Prague: Pedagogická fakulta v Ostravě / Státní pedagogické nakladatelství, 1989.

Tárnyiková, Jarmila. "Dichotomies and scales." *Anglica* 2 (2000): 53-64.

Zadeh, Lotfi A. "Outline of a new approach to the analysis of complex systems and decision processes." *IEEE Transactions on Systems, Man and Cybernetics* 3, no. 1 (1973): 28-44.

CHAPTER TWO

CHANGING VOCABULARY IN A CHANGING CULTURE: A STUDY OF CONTEMPORARY CULTURE-RELATED VOCABULARY

ĽUBOŠ DUDÍK

Introduction

The Cambridge English Dictionary defines culture as

> the way of life, especially the general customs and beliefs, of a particular group of people at a particular time.[1]

It is no surprise that culture is aptly reflected in a language and its usage, as also evidenced by Kramsch.[2] John Ayto's *Movers and Shakers: A Chronology of Words that Shaped Our Age* testifies to this fact by introducing every decade in the book with an introductory text on the culture and sociopolitical situation that influenced the language of that time,[3] suggesting that language and culture are inherently linked and intertwined. In other words, culture or "the way of life" inevitably exerts influence over language. Today the English-speaking world is witnessing great technological progress, migration, globalization, liberalization, and the meeting and convergence of cultures and beliefs. The world is becoming more liberal and tolerant towards ethnic and other minorities,

[1] "Culture Meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary," http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/culture

[2] Claire Kramsch, "Language, culture and voice in the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language," *novELTy*, 8 (2003): 4.

[3] John Ayto, *Movers and Shakers: A Chronology of Words that Shaped Our Age* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

women are becoming more equal (so much so that the United States may soon see the first woman in history become their president) and the way of life, as well as customs and beliefs are changing as well. It is natural for a society that within it, certain cultural traditions remain intact, while other norms, values and attitudes are undergoing changes.[4] In order to cope with cultural changes, language has to reflect them, denote them, catch up and respond. This chapter studies what cultural changes are reflected in contemporary English vocabulary and how they are reflected, i.e. what word-formation means are used to create these words. This study looks at English neologisms and studies what can be inferred about the current culture and society of English-speaking countries.

Given their very nature, neologisms are a fleeting phenomenon. They are words which are in the process of entering common usage, but have not yet been accepted into the mainstream language.[5] We can differentiate between established and lexicalized neologisms[6] and neo-formations and occasionalisms, i.e. words created on the spur of the moment used to fulfill a momentary linguistic need. In this study, the author does not distinguish between these two types and uses them both as relevant sources of information. In her 2015 article *Words – Or Not Yet?*, Böhmerová[7] argues that nonce-words in fact aptly reflect the linguistic thinking of the users of a language and therefore can be used as a source of information on current word-formation tendencies and trends in a language. Likewise, even nonce-words may reflect cultural and social changes; however, they may be heavily influenced by the values and attitudes of an individual, rather than those of the society as a whole.

The most easily-accessible and available sources of these words are online dictionaries and databases. These are organized and compiled by users working in tandem with lexicographers and therefore spare the researcher the time they would spend looking for these neologisms on the Internet, in newspapers, media, etc. This research uses three main online databases of neologisms.

---

[4] Ronald Inglehart and Wayne Baker, "Modernization, cultural change and the persistence of traditional values." *American Sociological Review* 65 (2000): 21, accessed January 22, 2011, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2657288

[5] Kristen Malmkjaer, *The Linguistic Encyclopaedia* (London & New York: Routledge, 2006), 601.

[6] Laurie Bauer, *English Word-Formation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

[7] Ada Böhmerová, "Words – Or Not Yet?" *Hradec Králové Journal of Anglophone Studies* 2 (2015): 71.

1. Theoretical background

Several studies have been carried out in the area of current word-formation tendencies in English. In order to get a better understanding of the word-formation landscape in English, we must first look at the results of studies carried out by Böhmerová, Szymanek and Hickey.

Böhmerová's research is the most recent one, published in 2014. In this research, the author compared Ayto's findings in *Movers and Shakers* with the lexemes she found in the Oxford Dictionary's New Words List and the Merriam-Webster Open Dictionary. The author identifies the three most productive word-formation processes in the first source: compounding, collocation and shortening. In the second source, the author found that the most productive word-formation processes were blending, derivation, compounding, collocation, and shortening.[8]

Szymanek carried out his research by studying mostly written language from print media. His study is overall more theoretical, as he does not necessarily emphasize which processes are productive, but rather lists all word-formation processes found in his research. He suggests that the majority of neologisms are derivational and that the trends in English word-formation are analogical formation, derivation, compounding (specifically pseudo-compounds or neoclassical compounds with electro-hydro- etc.), blending, back-formation, conversion, shortening, and the lexicalization of affixes.[9]

Hickey discusses a number of lexical processes in his 2006 paper. Similarly to Szymanek, rather than concentrating on their productivity within the findings of a set database, he lists the processes found in a corpus he compiled over the course of four years. The sources of these words were print and spoken media, chiefly of British and Irish origin, but the author also used American media for comparison.[10] Amongst the lexical processes he mentions derivation with neoclassical prefixes such as cyber-, hyper-, or mega-, analogical formation, blending, clipping, phonoasthetic formations, compounding, conversion and talks about creating new

[8] Ada Böhmerová, "Recent Word-Formative Tendencies in English and Their Cross-Linguistic Impact," *Contemporary Issues on Linguistics and Language. LILA '14 Linguistics and Language Conference Proceedings* (2014): 63–75.

[9] Bogdan Szymanek, "The Latest Trends in English Word-Formation," *Handbook of Word-Formation* (2005): 430–48.

[10] Raymond Hickey, "Productive Lexical Processes in Present-day English," *Corpora and the History of English. A Festschrift for Manfred* Markus (2006): 153.

phrases in detail.[11] The neoclassical compounds, as labelled by Szymanek, or prefixes, as identified by Hickey, will be absent in the neologisms studied in this chapter, as they belong within the area of science and technology.

2. Methodology

The first source chosen is the online platform of the Oxford English Dictionary called Oxford Dictionaries. It is the collective work of lexicographers and linguists who work together and study the language of the Internet, blogs, e-mail communication, slang, etc. to gather neologisms and publish them in the form of regular updates. These are called quarterly updates and they are used as the first source of entries. These updates contain words deemed linguistically or sociolinguistically relevant by the lexicographers, along with comments on their use. Given that they are chosen by professionals, this source is likely to contain a small number of occasionalisms. However, this source often includes words listed as neologisms, but they, in fact, may have been in use for a longer period of time. One of these examples is the word SD card published in a quarterly update in 2014, despite its first use dating back to 1999. In comparison with the other databases, this particular source contains fewer entries.

The second database used in this research was the Merriam-Webster Open Dictionary: New Words & Slang. The history of this open dictionary database began in 2005. Böhmerová, in her article *Words – Or Not Yet?,* points out the ironic fact that the very first word in this open dictionary entered by lexicographers, the word *bougie*, never came to be recognized as a proper word by the Oxford English Dictionary.[12] This proves that even lexicographers cannot accurately predict the success of a word. Today this source is actually the work of English language users, whose entries are supervised and approved by lexicographers. Although the creators of the database claim on their website that every word that a user enters has to be a real one and has to be approved, this source, unlike Oxford Dictionaries, is often abundant in occasionalisms. Many of the words found in this source cannot be found in other dictionaries. This fact, as mentioned previously, gives the user a glimpse of the linguistic thinking of speakers of English, but may also provide an inaccurate picture of the English lexicon.

---

[11] Hickey, "Productive Lexical Processes in Present-day English," 153–68.

[12] Ada Böhmerová, "Words – Or Not Yet?" *Hradec Králové Journal of Anglophone Studies* 2 (2015): 69.

Macmillan Dictionary's Open Dictionary is the third source used is this research. It is an open dictionary database very similar to the previous one. Users are invited to enter their words and definitions, which need to be approved by lexicographers. The "younger cousin" of Merriam-Webster's Open Dictionary was born in 2009 and in many ways shares similar features with its predecessor. The entries are organized in chronological order and are easy to browse. Just like its older counterpart, this open dictionary is reviewed by professionals, but it still contains occasionalisms and words, which rather than fulfilling certain linguistic needs, just showcase the user's linguistic creativity. This dictionary mainly contains British expressions, while Merriam-Webster's provides Americanisms.

The accessibility and organization of these sources is their most significant advantage. They provide a wide array of entries and give valuable insights into the minds of English speakers. It is worth mentioning that not one of these sources provides a perfect and complete picture of English neologisms. It is practically impossible to effectively and reliably capture all of the existing neologisms in a language and therefore, although none of these sources is perfect on its own, together they give us a more complex idea of today's English lexicon.

The analyzed entries were chosen from the three online databases dating from January 1, 2014 till August 25, 2015. The lexemes found were analyzed and categorized within the source of their origin. Entries which appear twice in one source or entries given with alternative spellings and other overlaps within the same source were eliminated. The choice of entries was conditioned on whether these entries give evidence of changes in lifestyle, attitudes and values in the Anglo-American world. In other words, entries which denote products, slang, synonyms for existing words, or simply entries which are not indicative of contemporary culture or cultural change were eliminated. The lexemes found were categorized according to their word-formation processes with the intention of identifying possible word-formation trends and tendencies in this area. The lexemes as a whole are furthermore studied based on their semantics and classified into semantic groups to find out *what* one can glean about contemporary Anglo-American culture based on these neologisms. In other words, the aim is to learn which areas of life these neologisms denote (women's rights, dependence on technology, minority issues) and how they denote them (word-formation). The results of the three sources were then put together to define word-formation trends and the sociolinguistic reality that conditioned these entries.

The first hypothesis is that due to the number of concepts and connotations that the words "culture" and "cultural change" cover, the

word-formation processes will be varied. Based on previous research, compounding, derivation, shortening, and blending will be the most prominent processes, with blending and shortening being the most productive ones, due to their popular nature in slang. The second hypothesis is that the lexemes will inevitably denote current cultural changes and topics emblematic of today's Anglophone culture such as gender issues, minority rights, gender issues, the role of technology in our lives, or the legalization of marijuana.

3. Findings

3.1 An Overall Picture

Altogether, 393 lexical units were analyzed. The quarterly updates of Oxford Dictionaries Online provided for 260 entries altogether in this time frame. Out of those units, 48 were identified as culture-related, i.e. indicative of today's culture or reflecting cultural changes. Merriam-Webster Open Dictionary witnessed 975 entries being added in this time, out of which 152 were identified as culture-related. Macmillan Open Dictionary grew by 1132 entries in this time frame; out of these entries, 193 were identified as characteristic of today's Anglophone culture. The share of culture-related lexemes in these entries is 18.46%, 15.59%, and 17.05% respectively. The following table (Table 2-1) illustrates the key word-formation processes identified in the groups of analyzed lexemes.

Table 2-1: THE OCCURRENCE OF WORD-FORMATIVE PROCESSES IN THE STUDIED SOURCES

	Oxford Dictionaries	Merriam-Webster Open Dictionary	Macmillan Open Dictionary
compounding	23	8	71
borrowing	11	8	25
derivation	4	43	29
shortening	3	6	17
blending	2	80	40
other	5	7	11

As evidenced by the table, the word-formation processes in this area are highly varied and diverse. Each source is dominated by different word-formation processes. The entries from Oxford Dictionaries' quarterly updates contained 48% compounds and 23% borrowings. The lexemes

found in Merriam-Webster Open Dictionary were chiefly blends (52%) and derivates (28%). The entries from Macmillan Open Dictionary were identified mainly as compounds (37%), blends (21%), derivates (13%), and borrowings (15%). The third source was also the one with the highest number and share of words created by shortening (9%), which was a minor word-formation process on the whole. Conversion and analogical formation were nearly absent in this group of neologisms. Examples of analogical formation include *yummy* (from *yuppie*, young urban male), *al desko* (from *al fresco*, eating at work at one's desk), *glass floor* (from *glass ceiling*, the way in which successful professional parents ensure that their children do not fall below their own level of achievement) and *quarter-life crisis* (feelings of worry experienced by people reaching their late teens to early thirties). Conversion gave rise only to one lexeme, which was *to troll* (to post comments on the Internet that make people argue or become angry).

3.2 The occurrence of word-formative processes

Compounding was the dominant process in the first and third databases. Some of the compounds found were *three-parent baby* (a baby conceived using genetic material from three people), *Canadian tuxedo* (a denim jacket worn with a pair of jeans), *social justice warrior* (a person who promotes socially progressive views), *silver split* (divorce or separation between couples in late middle age), *peak beard* (the moment when wearing a beard no longer becomes fashionable), *body shaming* (attacking a person either for being overweight or underweight, especially on the Internet).

Derivation was mostly represented in the second database. This process gave rise to words such as *anti-vaxxer* (a person opposing vaccination of children), *childist* (a person showing prejudice or resentment against children), *fruiter* (a person who only eats fruit), *oversharer* (a person who excessively shares information about them on social websites), *inclusivity* (conscious effort to include people who might otherwise be marginalized, such as the handicapped, the learning-disabled, racial and sexual minorities), *ethnicism* (consciousness of or emphasis on ethnic identity or culture, ethnic self-determination or separation) or *colourism* (prejudice or discrimination against individuals with a dark skin tone, typically among people of the same ethnic or racial group).

The entries from Merriam-Webster's Open Dictionary were mostly created by blending. Given that this source tends to include occasionalisms, blending is probably a favoured process amongst English users. This may

be due to the fact that firstly, it is a way of creatively naming new phenomena, and secondly, the meaning of the naming unit may in fact be deciphered independently by English users who have never heard the word before.[13] Examples of blends include *feminazi* (from *feminist* and *nazi*, a derogatory term for radical feminists), *hypochristian* (from *hypocritical* and *Christian*, a person professing Christian values yet acting contrary to these beliefs), *carbageddon* (from *carbs* and *armageddon*, an overload of carbohydrates), *neblings* (from *nephew* or *niece* and *sibling*, a gender-neutral way of saying nephew or niece), *netdiction* (from *net* and *addiction*, addiction to the Internet), *procaffinating* (from *caffeine* and *procrastinating*, postponing something until after drinking coffee), *autonovore* (*autonomous* and *carnivore*, a person who gathers, grows, or hunts their own food).

Borrowing was chiefly used in relation to food and eating, specifically denoting a myriad of foreign dishes, reflecting the growing multicultural nature of Anglophone societies and the interconnectedness between the English-speaking countries and the rest of the world. Examples of borrowings include *omakase* (from Japanese, a type of meal consisting of dishes selected by the chef), *mochi* (from Japanese, a dessert made from sweet glutinous rice), *hibachi* (from Japanese, portable cooking apparatus), *cranachan* (from Scottish Gaelic, a dessert made with whipped cream, oatmeal, whisky, honey, and raspberries), *onigiri* (from Japanese, rice balls wrapped in seaweed), *ikat* (from Malay, fabric made using an Indonesian decorative technique in which threads are tie-dyed before weaving). It should be noted that the actual presence of these lexemes in the English vocabulary may be questioned since they may have been entered in the databases by travellers or people visiting foreign countries, not necessarily because they are actively used or present in the English language.

Shortening was expected to be one of the most productive processes, however, it was not as productive as compounding, derivation, blending and borrowing. Some examples of shortening include the words *vape* (from *vapour*, to smoke an electronic cigarette), *BME* (*black* and *minorityethnic*), *DWM* (*deadwhitemale*, specifically used when the death of a Caucasian person is seemingly overstated due to their skin color), *FTM* (*female-to-male* transgender person).

[13] Adrienne Lehrer, "Understanding trendy neologisms," *Rivista di Linguistica* 15 (2003): 371.

3.3 Semantic areas

As for the semantic areas, these were highly varied in every source. They can be narrowed down to four main areas such as food and eating, fashion and arts, gender roles and minority issues, and mass media, social media and technology. As for the legalization of marijuana, this is evidenced only by two examples found: *potpreneur* (from *pot* and *entrepreneur*, a person who grows or sells the drug as a business) and *hot-boxing* (smoking the drug in a confined space). These words, however, may not necessarily denote new phenomena; their presence rather reflects the growing trend of the acceptance of the drug.

Neologisms related to food are *food diary* (a detailed record of the food and drinks one consumes during the day), *dirty* (of a meal, e.g. *dirty burger*, used for junk food prepared with high-quality ingredients), *cruffin* (a blend of *croissant* and *muffin*), *clean eating* (a diet based on eating whole food and avoiding processed and refined foods), *forager* (a person who finds and collects food in the wild), or the previously mentioned *al desko* and *autonovore*. Overall, the lexemes from this category show the varying and distinct trends in eating, attitudes to a healthy diet and to ingredients, but also the growing number of different individual approaches to a person's diet.

Fashion, arts and design include words such as *lumbersexual* (from *lumber* and *metrosexual*, a young urban man who cultivates the appearance and style of dress, such as a beard and check shirt, suggestive of a rugged outdoor lifestyle), *pogonophobia* (an extreme dislike of beards), *shabby chic* (style of interior decoration that uses furnishings that deliberately appear old and worn), *normcore* (a style of dress that involves the deliberate choice of unremarkable clothing) and *manscaping* (from *man* and *landscaping*, removal or trimming of hair on a man's body). As evidenced by these examples, many of these neologisms refer to fashion trends amongst men, bearing witness to the fact that in mainstream culture fashion is no longer an area of interest exclusive to women.

Gender roles include several intriguing neologisms such as *man crush* (non-sexual admiration of one man for another), *bro hug* (a friendly embrace between two men), *sandwich woman* (a middle-aged woman who has to juggle a career, taking care of teenage children and ageing parents), *mommy track* (a career pattern that involves reduced opportunities for women with children), *granny track* (to sideline older women in the workplace) or *gender gap* (the differences between opportunities and achievement between men and women in specific areas). Words like *man crush*, *bro hug* or *man bun* on the one hand seemingly show a growing acceptance of men not being necessarily masculine; on the other hand,

they show a clear tendency to appropriate words like *hug*, *crush,* or *bun* and "inject" them with masculinity by introducing "*man*" or "*bro*" before them. *Mommy track*, *granny track* and *gender gap* point out the fact that women are still not seen as entirely equal in job and career opportunities. It may be interesting to note that there is no such word as *grandpa track*, showing that predominantly older women are seen as less capable of doing their job when they reach a certain age, while older men do not face this type of discrimination. Words like *nebling* or *Mx* (a neutral way of addressing someone regardless of gender, specifically used by those who do not wish to specify their gender or do not identify as male or female) indicate society's tendency to neutralize gender, for instance in order to be politically correct, but also in order to avoid confusion. Minority and ethnic issues include *colourism*, *ethnicism BME* or *DWM* and were already mentioned previously. They bear witness to the fact that racial equality is still a struggle in the Anglo-American world.

The words grouped under the label of mass media and technology do not denote devices or technological processes; rather, they denote human attitudes and interaction with technology being a part of their way of life. These words include *hate-watching* (watching a programme for the sake of mocking and criticizing it), *sharenting* (the overuse of social media by parents to share content based on their children), *media meshing* (using various devices all at once), *tweleb* (Twitter celebrity), *etroduce* (introduce over email)*, text neck* (problems with the neck resulting from using a phone for a prolonged period of time) and *cybermyalgia* (aches, pain and stiffness resulting from the overuse of computers). Not surprisingly, many of these lexemes reflect society's growing dependency on technology (but also its awareness of this dependency), the overuse of technology, and its negative effects on human health. The issues that these neologisms reflect are nothing new, but they also mirror English-speakers' coexistence and interaction with technology and their level of awareness of technology's influence on their lives.

Conclusion

The word-formation trends in culture-related neologisms are not homogeneous and vary highly based on the source. Nevertheless, in the present study, four key word-formation processes can be identified: blending, compounding, derivation, and borrowing. These results slightly deviate from the findings of Böhmerová, Szymanek, and Hickey, but it is presumably not because of temporal distance, rather due to the specific field of neologisms analyzed in this research. These findings disprove the

hypothesis of shortening being a productive process, while the prominence of blending can be attributed to the folk nature of many of these lexemes.

The analyzed neologisms denote a wide array of cultural changes in the Anglo-American world. They reflect changing gender roles, injustice and striving for equality, minority and ethnic issues, current fashion and design trends, food and eating, and the overuse of technology and its negative effects on people. The study shows that neologisms actively respond to the changes in society and culture and capture human behaviour and societal attitudes in the English-speaking world. Just as the term *culture* encapsulates a wide array of phenomena, these neologisms denote various aspects of life and are highly diverse, both in terms of their semantic content and in terms of their word-formation. At the same time they are also very informative on the Anglo-American reality and the changes this part of the world is experiencing and they give us a complex mosaic of contemporary Anglo-American culture.

It should be noted that many of these neologisms may be short-lived, being simple reflections of momentary fads and trends. The use and productivity of some of them may be debatable, as some are, in fact, found only in one source and could simply be nonce-forms pertaining to the idiolect of one user of English. Nonetheless, these neologisms bear witness to today's changing and evolving culture of Anglophone countries. As the way of life is changing, the English vocabulary actively responds. The studied neologisms can be seen as another way of observing and studying Anglo-American culture and can provide further material for cultural studies.

Bibliography

Ayto, John. 2006. *Movers and Shakers: A Chronology of Words that Shaped Our Age*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Bauer, Laurie. 1983. *English Word-Formation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Böhmerová, Ada. 2014. "Recent Word-Formative Tendencies in English and Their Cross-Linguistic Impact." In *Contemporary Issues on Linguistics and Language. LILA '14 Linguistics and Language Conference Proceedings*, edited by Farma Pinar Arslan 63–75. Istanbul: Dakam Publishing.

—. 2015. "Words – Or Not Yet?" *Hradec Králové Journal of Anglophone Studies* 2 (1). Hradec Králové: University of Hradec Králové

Hickey, Raymond. 2006 "Productive Lexical Processes in Present-day English." In *Corpora and the History of English. A Festschrift for*

Manfred Markus, edited by Mair, Christian, Reinhard Heuberger and Josef Wallmannsberger, 153–68. Heidelberg: Winter

Inglehart, Ronald and Baker, Wayne. 2000. "Modernization, cultural change and the persistence of traditional values." In *American Sociological Review*, edited by Charles Camic and Franklin D. Wilson., 19–51. Accessed January 22, 2011. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2657288

Kramsch, Claire. 2003. "Language, culture and voice in the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language." In *novELTy*, Volume 8, number 1. 4–21

Lehrer, Adrienne. 2003. "Understanding trendy neologisms" In *Rivista di Linguistica*, volume 15, number 2. 371–384

Malmkjaer, Kirsten. 2006. *The Linguistic Encyclopaedia*. London & New York: Routledge

Szymanek, Bogdan. 2005. "The Latest Trends in English Word-Formation." In Handbook of Word-Formation, edited by Pavel Štekauer and Rochelle Lieber, 429–48. Dordecht: Springer

Online Data Sources

Oxford Dictionaries recent updates at: http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/words/what-s-new

Merriam-Webster Open Dictionary New Words & Slang at: http://nws.merriam-webster.com/opendictionary/

Macmillan Open Dictionary at: http://www.macmillandictionary.com/open-dictionary/

CHAPTER THREE

SKOPOS AND TRANSLATING SLOVAK TOURIST TEXTS INTO ENGLISH

JONATHAN GRESTY

Introduction

Tourist texts generally conform to what Katharina Reiss describes as 'operative texts' in her classification of different types of text for translation[1]. By this, she refers to texts which are written in order to have a positive effect on the reader and persuade them to behave in a certain way, whether this is by buying a promoted product, visiting a recommended place or voting for a political party, for example. Whereas purely informative texts are written primarily to communicate information and presuppose the need of the reader to read through to the end, operative texts have the additional purpose of having to make a favourable impression on the target reader and to encourage them to go on reading. This places extra responsibility on the shoulders of the conscientious translator. If they are to replicate in the target text the same positive effect intended to be conveyed by the source text, they may have to make certain editorial decisions which go beyond the act of mere translation. Often a literal translation of the source text will simply not achieve the same effect in the target text either because of language asymmetry or cultural differences between the two language communities. Adapting the material in some way is thus required; a process which calls for sensitivity and awareness of the target audience. Unfortunately, research in Slovakia has shown that few translators consider the exact nature of the target reader[2]; the tendency of most translators here is, it seems, to translate the words on

[1]Jeremy Munday. *Introducing Translation Studies – Theories and applications* (2nd ed.) *(*Routledge, London and New York 2008), 72

[2]Martin Djovčoš. *Kto, čo, ako a za akých podmienok prekladá: prekladateľ v kontexte doby* (FHPV UMB, Banská Bystrica 2012), 18

the page without reflecting very deeply on the function of the text and the cultural norms of the target audience. Ideally, comparison of the source text and target text should reveal key differences between the two language cultures[3]. In reality, however, such differences are often minimal.

As Reiss[4] clearly indicates, it should be the task of the translator to reflect on the operative function of the source text and ensure the target text fulfills it:

> If the source language text is written to convey persuasively structured contents in order to trigger off impulses of behavior, then the contents conveyed in the target language must be capable of triggering off analogous impulses of behavior in the target language.

The *skopos* theory of translation, which elucidates this task, emerged during the 1970s and 1980s as one of the principal contributions of the German school of translatology led by Katharina Reiss and Hans Vermeer. *Skopos* focuses primarily on the importance of functional rather than linguistic equivalence in the process of translation: when producing the target text, the translator has to always consider whether it fulfills the function of the text in the same way as the source text does. The above translatologists demonstrate how it is a theory which is of especial relevance to operative texts and one which grants greater freedoms and with it responsibilities to translators. As Vermeer[5] states:

> ...the skopos…expands the possibilities of translation, increases the range of possible translation strategies, and releases the translator from the corset of an enforced—and hence often meaningless—literalness; and it incorporates and enlarges the accountability of the translator, in that his translation must function in such a way that the given goal is attained. This accountability in fact lies at the very heart of the theory: what we are talking about is no less than the ethos of the translator.

---

[3] Susan Bassnett. "Culture and Translation" in *A Companion to Translation Studies (*Multilingual Matters Ltd, Cleveland, Buffalo, Toronto 2007), 19

[4] Katharina Reiss. 1971. "Type, Kind and Individuality of Text: Decision Making in Translation" In: *The Translation Studies Reader*, edited by L. Venuti (Routledge, New York, 2000), 160-172.

[5] Hans Vermeer. 1986/2000. "Skopos and Commission in Translational Action" In: *The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. Lawrence. (Venuti, Routledge, New York), 232.

1. Skopos Theory and Slovak Tourist Texts

Skopos theory is of relevance to Slovak tourist texts because such texts are usually written to attract people to visit certain places and are very often translated into English in order to attract foreign tourists. When working with such texts, the translator has to make sure the target text fulfills its function in the same way that the source text does. To achieve this, however, is not always easy. Too literal a translation of the original may have a counterproductive effect by resulting in a dry and overwritten target text more likely to discourage the reader from visiting the specific place than otherwise. Sometimes source texts contain historical information which has little or no meaning to non-Slovaks; in other cases, the language of the original may be too elevated to work in the target text without being toned down. Translators may not feel it is their task to take responsibility for the operative success of the target text. As I try to demonstrate in this article, however, it is in the interest of both the customer and the translator to ensure that the target text fulfills its operative function. Whereas a purely informative text does not need *a priori* to engage the reader's interest, an operative text, to be successful, really does. Translators have to be aware of this fact if they are to do their work effectively.

In my research, I examined a number of tourist texts translated from Slovak into English. These were mostly published in the form of books, brochures, or leaflets though some were written specifically for tourist websites. In all cases, the Slovak source text and the English target text were together in the same publication and could be readily compared. These texts mostly described the history and geography of various tourist venues (towns, villages, mountain resorts etc.) or gave details about activities which tourists could do there (hiking, skiing, sightseeing etc.). In each case, the text was an operative one aimed at persuading readers to come and visit the venue or to try the activity described.

My dominant impression when reading many of the English target texts was that they suffered by being too faithful to the Slovak originals and because of this, failed to fulfill their operative purpose. In many cases, this was a result of too close adherence to the wording of the original and the translator's failure to adapt the language to the norms of the target culture. In other cases, the problem was more one of factual content: sometimes, for example, the source text contained references to people and events about which no non-Slovak could be expected to know. This, however, did not lead the translator to adapt the content of the target text to make it clear and accessible to the foreign reader.

On the basis of these observations, I decided the case for applying *skopos* principles in producing an effective target text was an imperative one. In order to test this hypothesis I chose three source texts which I felt were fairly typical in having been translated too faithfully and then did my own alternative translations of these in which I made certain textual changes in order to make them more accessible and appealing to readers and thus more likely to fulfill their operative function. I then sent the two English translations of each of the three source texts to approximately one hundred English speakers around the world, of whom about sixty responded. These respondents were of all ages, the majority of them had a university education. I asked them to imagine themselves as target readers of the texts, as visitors to Slovakia, and to state whether the texts stimulated their interest, conveyed the kind of information they would consider useful and thus fulfilled their purpose. Respondents were also asked to comment on the two parallel translations of each text and to decide which of the two versions made a more positive impression on them and why.

2. The Experiment

2.1 Text 1

The first text which I chose was about the history and architecture of Liptovský Mikuláš, an attractive historical town close to the Tatra Mountains and to several popular ski resorts. Below is the first half of the Slovak source text I worked with, the published English translation of that extract and my own (unpublished) translation of the source text:

> Mesto (576 m) leží uprostred Liptovskej kotliny na hlavnej ceste zo Žiliny do Vysokých Tatier. Je východiskom do Západných a Nízkych Tatier.
>
> História mesta siaha do mladšej doby bronzovej o čom svedčí nález bronzových predmetov. Bolo tu objavené kostrové radové pohrebisko z 11. – 12. storočia. Prvá písomná zmienka je z roku 1286. Liptovský Mikuláš sa najprv vyvíjal ako zemepanské mestečko. Prvé písomné výsady získal v 14. a 15. storočí, keď mu bolo udelené právo výročných a týždenných trhov. V roku 1677 sa Liptovský Mikuláš stal trvalým sídlom Liptovskej stolice, v roku 1713 tu popravili Juraja Jánošíka.
>
> V polovici 19. storočia sa mesto stalo centrom slovenského národného života. Nadviazalo sa pritom na staršie kultúrne tradície, napríklad na pôsobenie Juraja Tranovského (Tranoscia) v 17. storočí. Pôsobili tu Gašpar Fejérpataky-Belopotocký, Michal M. Hodža, Matúš Blaho a ďalší. Štúrovci tu založili roku 1844 literárny a vydavateľský spolok Tatrín.

Koncom 19. a začiatkom 20. storočia sa rozvíjal čulý kultúrny život (spolky, divadlá, vydavateľská činnosť). Národný pohyb vyvrcholil 10. 5. 1848 prijatím a vyhlásením Žiadostí slovenského národa.[6]

The city Liptovský Mikuláš is situated right in the middle of the Liptovská kotlina (Liptovská Basin) on the way from Žilina to the Vysoké Tatry (High Tatras). It is a very suitable starting point if you want to go to the Západné Tatry (West Tatras) or to the Nízke Tatry (Low Tatras).

Historically, this area was inhabited already during the Bronze Age, which was proven by archaeological findings of bronze instruments. A burying ground from the 11-th and 12-th century was found here, too. The first written reference about the city is from the year 1286. At that time it was a town of yeomen. The first royal privileges it gained in the 14-th and 15-th century: such as the right to organise annual as well as weekly open markets. In 1677 it became the main seat of the Liptov County. Juraj Jánošík (the Robin-Hood-like Slovak national hero) was executed here in 1713. In the middle of the 19-th century the town became a centre of the Slovak national cultural activities. They were based on old cultural traditions and activities of Juraj Tranovský (Tranoscia) in the 17-th century, of Gašpar Fejérpataky-Belopotocký, Michal M. Hodža, Matúš Blaho and others from the group around Ľudovít Štúr in the 19-th century. This group founded a literary and editorial association – Tatrín. By the end of the 19-th and the 20-th century the Slovak cultural life developed rapidly in this city (new associations, theatres and editorial activities were founded). National movement culminated on May 10, 1848 by the declaration of "Requests of the Slovak Nation".

The town lies in the Liptov basin on the main road from Žilina to the High Tatras and is a gateway to the Western and Low Tatras.

Bronze objects found here show that the town's history goes back to the Late Bronze Age. A burial ground from the 11th and 12th centuries has also been discovered here, with the first written record of the town dating from 1286. Liptovský Mikuláš grew up as a landowner's (and not royal) town, gaining its first privileges in the 14th and 15th centuries when it was granted the right to hold annual and weekly markets. In 1677 it became the permanent county town of Liptov and in 1713 the famous outlaw and so-called Slovak Robin Hood, Juraj Jánošík, was executed here.

In the mid-19th century the town became a centre of Slovak national life. This sprang from older cultural traditions begun by a Czech Protestant priest, Juraj Tranovský (Tranoscius) in the 17th century. In the 19th century a number of prominent nationalists, friends of the Slovak national revival leader, Ľudovít Štúr, lived and worked here; in 1844 they founded the *Tatrín* literary and publishing company and on May 10th 1848, the nationalist movement culminated with declaration of the Requirements of

[6] From the tourist website: http://www.nizketatry.sk/obce/lmikulas/en.html

> the Slovak Nation. At the turn of the 20th century cultural life here flourished with new clubs, theatres and publishing houses all opening.

I chose this text because it appears to be a fairly typical introduction to a Slovak town containing several standard tourist-text elements that can be found in many other similar texts. The first paragraph provides geographical information, the second outlines the history of the town giving a number of key dates (the *prvá písomná zmienka* reference, amongst others, is one which is included in almost all similar texts about Slovak towns), the third and fourth (not included here) describe the town's most important architecture and list the buildings worth seeing. Such a text conforms closely to Slovak conventions and strikes the experienced reader as being formulaic in its structure. Although it is an Internet text, it is very similar to many short town guides published as leaflets and given away free in tourist information offices.

The first (published) translation is very close to the Slovak original and is the work of a non-native speaker, most probably a Slovak. There are numerous examples of both lexical and grammatical first-language interference which undermine the quality and operative power of the text. These are compounded by the translation's overly close adherence to the source text. As a result of this, the historical events described in paragraph two are not presented in clear chronological order and the people mentioned are given little or no context (are readers of the English translation really expected to have heard of these people or has the question not even been considered?). As Vermeer says, "[t]ranslation, by definition, involves both linguistic and cultural transfer; in other words, it is a culture transcending process"[7]. Here, however, there is no cultural transfer and the Anglophonic reader is left feeling bemused by the lack of information provided; there appear to be no examples in the target text of the content of the original being adapted in order to meet the needs of a non-Slovak audience. Apart from the altitude of the town, which has for some reason been deleted, nothing from the original text has been changed for the benefit of Anglophone readers. The target text presupposes that they have the same cultural knowledge as Slovak readers. There is also a mechanical feel to the sentence structure, with one short, factual sentence following another, minimal subordination and very little fluency or cohesion. The style and discourse has not been adapted in any way to conform to English norms.

In the second translation, I try to present the information given in a more coherent and accessible way, both adding and deleting details where

[7] Vermeer, "Skopos and Commission in Translational Action", 232.

necessary. I omit the names of people who will be unknown to non-Slovaks (Gašpar Fejérpataky-Belopotocký, Michal M. Hodža, and Matúš Blaho) but retain those of greater cultural importance (Juraj Janošík, Ľudovít Štúr, and Janko Kráľ), adding background information about who they were in order to bridge the information gap between the Slovak and Anglophone reader. I add the detail about it being 'a landowner's (*and not a royal*) town' so that readers may better understand the different kinds of town which existed in the Middle Ages ('landowner's town' on its own would convey little). I also reorder the information in the third paragraph to make it more chronological as well as complete the incomplete sentence in the following paragraph about the features of the church's Gothic interior which survived the fire.

In terms of the syntax, this version blends together many of the first version's short sentences (in total there are only sixteen sentences in the text, seven fewer than in the first), alternating shorter and longer sentences to create fluency and cohesion through the use of conjunctions and subordination. The greater concision of this text is also achieved by removing what I see as lexical redundancies, 'gateway' replacing 'a very suitable starting point if you want to go to', for example. I also omit the Slovak names for the mountain ranges mentioned. This results in a text which is more than ten per cent shorter than the first translation. In terms of the lexis, I change the word *city* to *town* (the words are not interchangeable but in the first translation they are used as if they were). I use *townhouses* as a much more conventional English term than the non-standard *houses of yeomen.* I also use *rectangular*, which is a more formal and appropriate adjective than *oblong,* and *neoclassical,* which is the correct translation of *klasicistický,* rather than the basilectal *classicistic.* I also replace the uncapitalized nonce word *late-roman* with *Romanesque*, which is a common architectural term.

Despite having made these changes, however, I remain somewhat ambivalent about the operative impact of the text and wonder whether I should not have made further changes. In the ideal *skopos* motivated situation that Vermeer describes, in which the translator and client meet to discuss the target text and agree on a translational strategy, I would have suggested to the client rather different content with fewer names of famous people, fewer historical dates, less description of the church's interior and much more information about other buildings which can actually be visited and walked around (the museum and gallery, for example). Even without such a discussion, I perhaps should have added details about certain historical events mentioned in the text: Tranovský's 'cultural traditions' are not described or explained in any way; tourists interested in

the 'declaration of the Requirements of the Slovak Nation' would probably welcome much more political context and background information. Perhaps it would have been better to omit references to these events altogether than to retain them as I do without giving any additional details.

All the sixty native English-speaking respondents said that they preferred the second translation to the first, however. When describing the style of the first translation, they used words like 'stilted', 'long-winded', 'clumsy'; an American woman who had once lived in Slovakia said of it: 'it lacks the style to engage the reader in what is being written'. In terms of its form and content, one typical opinion expressed was 'The information is presented in a complex manner and I have to work hard at picking out the points of interest – in reality, I would give up reading it during paragraph number two. The sentences read like they have been translated.' An American woman married to a Slovak said of the text: '…as a reader, I lose interest because of the amount of detail that I am not familiar with. For example, paragraph 3 references individuals that I do not know. So, for me, I stop reading because I am bored.' A British woman who translates from Arabic into English said of it: 'So dull I couldn't be bothered to read more than the first two paragraphs.' One British man who has visited Slovakia several times and travelled widely around the world said: 'In Britain, this type of tourist brochure is considered outmoded because it is based on facts and has been replaced by a more 'impressionist' style designed more to attract tourists not academics.'

2.2 Texts 2 and 3

With the above text, I felt that the main task of the translator should have been to modify the information given in the source text in order to make it more accessible and appealing to the target audience, an assumption which was confirmed by the opinions of the survey respondents. With the other two texts I sent, however, my focus was less on the information given than on the language chosen to convey it. As I seek to demonstrate with examples in my research, there does appear to be a certain cultural difference between Slovak and English language cultures in terms of the emotiveness of the language used.

The following extract from a long (thirty-five-page) online tourist text about the Topoľčany region exemplifies the dangers which Slovak discourse may present to the uncritical translator:

> Jedinečnou udalosťou, ktorá nemá konkurenciu v celom regióne a jeho širšom okolí, je Svätojurajská púť, ktorá sa koná vždy pri príležitosti sviatku sv. Juraja v Nitrianskej Blatnici. Počas tohto veľkolepého podujatia

> sa už od roku 1530 každoročne vydáva k rotunde sv. Juraja nad dedinou mlčanlivý sprievod pútnikov, ktorý sa každým rokom rozširuje. Ak túžite zažiť na vlastnej koži neopísateľnú atmosféru Svätojurajskej púte, ktorej tradícia nebola doteraz prerušená, pridajte sa k zástupu veriacich tiahnucemu sa k tomuto nenápadnému kostolíku na skalnatom výbežku na úpätí vrcholu Marhát.
>
> Milovníci vína a vínnej kultúry si určite nesmú nechať ujsť tradičnú Výstavu a ochutnávku vín, ktorá sa pravidelne koná v starobylej dedinke Bojná. Tu môžu totiž pri svojej návšteve ochutnať zo širokej ponuky vín, ktorými sa môže Radošinský vinohradnícky rajón pochváliť.
>
> Pre tých, ktorí sa radi nechávajú unášať v rytme moderného tanca je zase ako stvorená celoslovenská súťaž v modernom tanci Top dancing, počas ktorej sa pravidelne koncom apríla zaplnia ulice mesta Topoľčany mladými tanečníkmi, súperiacimi o priazeň poroty v pôsobivých tanečných súbojoch.[8]

What is striking about discourse such as this is the insistently emotive nature of the prose, which, whether it works in Slovak or not, would certainly not work in English without stylistic adaptation. The second-person voice, rhetorical tone, and strongly affective choice of vocabulary (*Jedinečnou udalosťou, neopísateľnú atmosféru, Milovníci…..si určite nesmú nechať ujsť* etc.) combine to make it too hard and aggressive a sell. The translator should not feel any obligation to replicate the authorial tone of the original. Its function, which is to inform the reader about the region's tourist attractions and to promote the area to the potential visitor, is what matters.

The language, however, is too elevated and the claims it makes seem overstated to sceptical Anglophonic ears inured to decades of ubiquitous advertising and much softer sells. Effective translation of such discourse in order to make the English target text more acceptable would require above all a toning down and reduction of this insistent language. As Katan[9] said about translating from an HCC (High Context Communication culture) such as Slovak into an LCC (Low Communication Culture) such as English, "we have to look for the information, highlight it and reduce the context to a minimum so that the textual information can shine through". Thus, rather than faithfully rendering every epithet into English, careful translators should instead ask themselves what really needs to be retained and what can be removed; only by reducing, can they succeed in creating a

[8] Anonymous 'Vitajte v regióne Topoľčany' 2013, translated by FUDU agency, Bratislava.

[9] David Katan. *Translating Cultures – An Introduction for Translators, Interpreters and Mediators.* St Jerome Publishing, Manchester 1999, 181.

convincing target text. In the following line, for example: "Ak túžite zažiť na vlastnej koži neopísateľnú atmosféru Svätojurajskej púte, ktorej tradícia nebola doteraz prerušená…" I would ask what *na vlastnej koži* contributes to the overall meaning which the word *zažiť* on its own does not. How can the writer claim the atmosphere is *neopísateľná* if he has spent the previous three lines attempting to describe it? And why is the point about the unbroken tradition of the pilgrimage made again just two sentences after first being made? Removing such items would make the text more subtle and effective. Often with such texts, less really is more.

A literal translation of a text like the one above produces an emotiveness of language which is disproportionate to the subject and it is the task of the translator to temper this if the target text is to conform to the "conventions of the target culture" that Kelly[10] talks about. As she argues, the more the target tourist text is adapted to fit these conventions, the better it will fulfil its operative function. She illustrates the dangers of not adapting the style of such texts by referring to Spanish (also an HCC):

> There is an exceptionally common tendency in Spanish to adopt a 'literary' style with florid descriptive passages and extensive use of figurative language, much less common on the whole in English-language [tourist] texts.

Although there is a strong case for adapting the style of such a text as the one above, however, few translators actually think along such *skopos*-informed lines. As Hentai[11] says, however, such a literal approach almost always results in poor-quality texts written in the dull language of 'translatese', in what he describes as:

> ...hackneyed" or "trite" expressions [which] may be irritating because they are too frequent and there is a contradiction between frequency and claim to novelty. Too frequent use seems to wear down the expressive power of metaphorical, idiomatic and emotionally loaded words: familiarity breeds contempt.

Such language can be seen in the translation of the following source text, taken from another tourist guide to the Liptov region:

---

[10] Dorothy Kelly. 'The translation of texts from the tourist sector: textual conventions, cultural distance and other constraints', in *TRANS 2*, Madrid 1999, 35.

[11] Pál Hentai. 'Ready-made language and translation' in *Claims, Changes and Challenges in Translation Studies* [ed. Gideon Toury], John Benjamins, Amsterdam and Philadelphia 2001, 57

> Bezprostredná spätosť s okolitou prírodou a vzduchom, ktorého súčasťou sa stanete ako náhle odštartujete z kopca, vyvoláva v človeku silný a pre mnohých doposiaľ nepoznaný pocit voľnosti. Vietor v tvári, absolútne ticho, iba svišťanie šnúr vo vetre. Toto všetko môžete zažiť bez toho, aby ste o lietaní čokoľvek vedeli. Stačí sa len pohodlne usadiť v sedačke a vychutnávať si let. Pre mnohých sa stáva tandemový let nezabudnuteľným zážitkom na celý život.
>
> It is an immediate interference with the surrounding nature and the air which you will become part of as soon as you start from the hill. It evokes strong and for many people until now unknown feeling of freedom. Wind in your face, absolute silence, just swishing of lines in the wind. You can experience all this without having to know anything about flying. You just have to sit back in the seat and enjoy the flight. For many a tandem flight becomes an unforgettable experience for whole life. [12]

In this example, the text's operative function is very clear; its meaning, however, is much less so. The English text begins incomprehensibly: *It is an immediate interference with the surrounding nature* conveys nothing meaningful to the reader, the deictic having no antecedent and 'interference' having only negative connotations. *(T)he air which you will become part of as soon as you start from the hill* is slightly more meaningful but its wording is very non-standard with both verb-noun collocations highly unusual. Although meaning starts to emerge, in the next sentence, the deictic is again unclear and articles are missing in *[i]t evokes strong* and *for whole life*. *(S)wishing of lines* is another non-standard collocation which has been literally translated and conveys little. It is obvious from this how the target text could be improved by the translator adhering far less to the content and syntax of the source text. Rather than attempting to translate the first two sentences, I would have applied *skopos* ideas and adapted them to produce a much clearer and shorter text:

> Taking off from the hill, you will immediately feel a part of the natural world around you. For many, it will be a feeling of freedom like you have never had before.

This modification reduces the target text by over a quarter but retains its meaning and expresses it in a simpler, more direct way. Readers do not have to work hard to decipher the meaning of the text but instead have the

[12] Region Liptov. 2014. *Sprievodca objavovaním Liptova na bicycli (Guide to Discovering Liptov by Bike)*

feeling that they are being addressed personally. Less wordy and elevated in tone, this second English translation conforms to the conventions of the target culture described above. Using reduction effectively helps achieve this.

A few shorter examples from a travel brochure to the Tatry-Spiš-Pieniny region, a publication with a very clear operative function demonstrate the need for reduction. In it, we can find short single-paragraph descriptions of the main tourist attractions in the region. The following source sentences and their translations are taken from three of them. The problem areas in the translated sentences are highlighted, with grammar mistakes in bold and conceptual ambiguities in italics:

> Aj v súčasnosti patrí Kežmarok k najväčším a najkrajším spišským mestám.
> *Even now*, Kežmarok **belongs to** the largest and most beautiful towns of the Spiš region.
>
> Dedinka Strážky vznikla v druhej polovici 12. storočia.
> **The Strážky village has been established** in ***the second half of*** the 12th century.
>
> Stavebná rekonštrukcia areálu kláštora sa uskutočnila v rokoch 1956–1966 a pokračovala do 80-tych rokov 20. storočia.
> The building of the monastery **underwent reconstruction works** *from 1956 to 1966, and the reconstruction continued up to the 1980s*.[13]

The translator's semantic adherence to the source text is clear here. But the effects of it are clumsy Slovak-sounding sentences with L1 interference, grammar mistakes, and obvious redundancies. In each case, we can see unnecessary expansion resulting in target text sentences longer than in the source texts. Given that the descriptions in the brochure are intended to be concise, this should have been avoided. The use of transposition and modulation would have led to shorter and more effective English sentences:

> Kežmarok **remains one of** the largest and most attractive towns in the region.
> The village of Strážky **dates back to** the late 12th century.
> Restoration of the monastery **began in 1956 and continued for nearly thirty years**.

[13] Author unknown 'Tatry-Spiš-Pieniny – vaša zimná a letná dovolenka' 2012.

This is how the concepts would be expressed in everyday English (in the third sentence I have edited out certain factual minutiae in the interests of creating a livelier text). The task of the translator here should be to look at recurrent Slovak tourist-text expressions and find their functional equivalents in English, not merely bank on their semantic translation. But the instinct to translate in this way runs deep.

Conclusion

What I try to show in my research is that notions of good tourist texts differ from one cultural reality to another and that as translators we have to be aware of this if we want our work to have a positive effect on the reader. However proficient we may be at using the two languages, we will not be providing the very best service if we do not prioritize our target audience and adapt the text to meet their needs and expectations. With operative texts, we should therefore take the source text as an 'offer of information' but nothing more.

Saying what should be improved about such translated texts is relatively easy. Saying how it should be improved is very difficult, though, especially given the reality of the translation industry in Slovakia today. Obviously, one key improvement would be if every tourist text was translated or at least proofread by a native speaker. As both Djovčoš[14] and Ličko[15] demonstrate in their research, however, this is wishful thinking given the number of Slovaks who translate into English, many of whom do not even have a professional qualification, even more of whom do not use the services of a native proofreader. The unregulated and highly competitive nature of the translation business here often places a greater premium on low price and quick service than on merit and there seems to be little or no official quality control of translations generally. Both the above researchers show how many translators there are in Slovakia without any education, training or knowledge of translation theory; to expect them all to apply *skopos* principles to their work is unrealistic.

Another problem arises from the widespread translatorial approach adopted. As Djovčoš[16] shows, few translators reflect on the function of the text they are translating before they actually begin the translation process, a truth which applies both to Slovaks and native speakers translating texts

[14] Djovčoš, 18

[15] Ličko, Roman *Translation into English as a Foreign Language – A Slovak Survey*. Belianum. Vydavateľstvo Univerzity Mateja Bela v Banskej Bystrici 2014. 40-1

[16] Djovčoš, 131

into English. Because of this, Vermeer's[17] notion about the translator working closely with the commissioner to discuss a translation strategy based on the *skopos* of the text before starting the translation seems to be completely idealistic. Given the fact that so many translations are now distributed through agencies, it is probably rare that translators ever even speak to the commissioner of the translation, let alone *discuss* with them the *skopos* of the text. One effect of this lack of contact between translator and commissioner is that few translators will feel bold enough to make major changes to the text they are translating, either in terms of form or content. As an American translator[18] working here recently said about his work: "[i]t's not my job to turn bad, overblown prose into Hemingway, especially if doing so I then run the risk of getting negative feedback from the customer for deviating too far from the original. If they see the target text is shorter than the source text, they will want to know why." The question of whether the translator should try to produce a target text better than the original is thus a moot one and another possible topic for further research. The normative answer to the question would be that the translator should always try to produce the best possible target text they can. Many factors clearly militate against this, however.

Bibliography

Anonymous *"Vitajte v regióne Topoľčany"* 2013, translated by FUDU agency, Bratislava.

Anonymous *"Tips for Trips – Liptovský Mikuláš and Region – June – November 2012"*.

Anonymous *"Tatry-Spiš-Pieniny – vaša zimná a letná dovolenka"* 2012

Bassnett, Susan. "Culture and Translation" In *A Companion to Translation Studies,* Multilingual Matters Ltd, Cleveland, Buffalo, Toronto. 2007.

Djovčoš, Martin. *Kto, čo, ako a za akých podmienok prekladá: prekladateľ v kontexte doby,* FHPV UMB, Banská Bystrica. 2012.

Hentai, Pál. "Ready-made language and translation" In *Claims, Changes and Challenges in Translation Studies* [ed. Gideon Toury], John Benjamins, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, 51 – 72. 2001.

Katan, David. *Translating Cultures – An Introduction for Translators, Interpreters and Mediators.* St Jerome Publishing, Manchester 1999.

[17] Vermeer, "Skopos and Commission in Translational Action", 225

[18] Personal communication

Kelly, Dorothy. “The translation of texts from the tourist sector: textual conventions, cultural distance and other constraints” In *TRANS 2*, Madrid, 33 – 42. 1997.

Ličko, Roman. *Translation into English as a Foreign Language – A Slovak Survey.* Belianum. Vydavateľstvo Univerzity Mateja Bela v Banskej Bystrici. 2014.

Munday, Jeremy. *Introducing Translation Studies – Theories and applications* (2nd ed.) Routledge, London and New York. 2008.

Region Liptov *Sprievodca objavovaním Liptova na bicycli (Guide to Discovering Liptov by Bike)*. 2014

Reiss, Katharina. “Type, Kind and Individuality of Text: Decision Making in Translation” In *The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. Lawrence Venuti, Routledge, New York, 2000, 160 – 172. 1971.

Vermeer, Hans. “Skopos and Commission in Translational Action” In *The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. Lawrence Venuti, Routledge, New York 2000, 221 – 233. 1986.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE USAGE OF ADDRESS FORMS IN A BUSINESS CONVERSATION IN AMERICAN ENGLISH[1]

ALENA KAČMÁROVÁ

Introduction

One of the most striking differences between English and other languages is expressing social deixis, i.e. the verbal reflection of social relationships, the manifestation of social stratification in language. It is achieved through recognizing the level of formality and adopting appropriate language means. In this respect, English differs from other languages in that it lacks overt pronominal markers of social distance/closeness. Assumingly, for this reason, speaker-hearer interaction is motivated by different understandings of this phenomenon and/or it relies on other language means, most notably on forms of address. Consequently, conversation strategies of native speakers of English are governed by different principles than those of speakers whose first language possesses linguistic means of the *tu/vos* (thereof T/V) relationship. As a result, a non-native speaker of English is confronted with the problem of how to express more familiar and less familiar relationships linguistically. Ultimately, they may find themselves insecure when it comes to the proper way of expressing formality and informality (social distance or closeness) in English.

The issue of social deixis has been approached in several fields including discourse studies, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, or anthropology; both cross-linguistic and cross-disciplinary studies have been conducted. On one hand, to-date studies have dealt with the notions

[1] The study was undertaken as part of the Fulbright research grant in SUNY at Albany, NY (Feb – June 2015)

of power and solidarity with regard to social criteria[2]; on the other hand, with social deixis expressing T/V relationships in different languages. The latter includes, for instance, a study on Greek[3], American English[4], German, French, Swedish, and British English[5]. My knowledge is that studies involving Slavic languages are absent, except for the paper on power and solidarity in Czech and Japanese[6].

The above comparative analyses focus on the realization of communicative events by native speakers of those languages and ultimately compare how the idea of T/V relationships is executed using the language means available in the studied languages. All these studies are done from the perspective of a native speaker and provide insight into how the mind of native speakers of these languages is set, and consequently, what expectations they may have when they converse in a different language. The logical inference is that non-native users of English are prone to experiencing difficulties verbalizing social distance/closeness. In to-date research, a gap can be noticed with regard to providing justification for why a speaker whose first language has explicit T/V forms may encounter difficulties in communication using a language lacking those means. To my knowledge, the issue of linguistic expression of social distance and/or closeness has not been extensively examined. The present study aspires to start filling this gap through observing American English natural data and through analyzing them from a non-native speaker's point of view.

In intercultural communication, one of the most challenging situations is an encounter with strangers – it typically involves larger social distance, hence interlocutors have to opt for appropriate linguistic behavior. In speaker interaction, a communicative event bearing traces of an encounter with a larger social distance may be business talk in which the interlocutors are strangers. The decision to contemplate the linguistic

---

[2] Roger Brown, Albert Gilman, "The pronouns of power and solidarity." In: Sebeok, Thomas A. (editor). *Style in language* (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1960), 253–276.

[3] Deborah Tannen, Christina Kakava, "Power and Solidarity in Modern Greek Conversation: Disagreeing to Agree", *Journal of Modern Greek Studies 10:1*, 1992, 11 – 34.

[4] Susan M. Ervin-Tripp, "Sociolinguistic Rules of Address". Pride J. B. & J. Holmes (ed.) *Sociolinguistics* (Penguin books. 1972).

[5] Michael Clyne, Catrin Norrby, Jane Warren, *Language and Human Relations; Styles of Address in Contemporary Language* (CUP, 2009).

[6] Masako Ueda Fidler, "Solidarity and Power in Czech and Japanese: A Comparative Analysis", 2001 (online document), http://www.aatseel.org/100111/pdf/program/2001/abstracts/Fidler.html, accessed April 11, 2015

behavior of native speakers derives from the need to get an insight into how they establish their identity and how much they are willing to share common ground with a stranger based on their automated routines. The contemplation of how native speakers of American English establish and maintain relationships in a business conversation by means of address is done through the lens of a non-native speaker of English whose first language has in possession overt markers of acknowledging T/V relationships. Moreover, in encounters with strangers, the default address pronoun is the formal singular 'you'. This is in sharp contrast with the English language that may often look informal in this way, which may as well be due to the generic nature of the pronoun 'you'.

The present study aims to identify the level of how much a non-native speaker can relate the linguistic behavior of a language lacking formal T/V forms to the conventions of a first language that possesses such forms. Research into how social distance is comprehended by native speakers of (American) English may also bring insights into what is considered proper social manners in establishing and maintaining formal relationships in a language lacking the options and conventions that non-native language users rely on. For the purposes of the analysis a natural conversation is observed from two points of view: 1) the development of the usage of address forms during the conversation, and 2) the contextualization cues of the address used. Before moving to the research study proper, the ethnographic context of the study and the methodological design of the study are provided; the ethnographic context is included in order to give the background to the interpretation of the findings.

1. The ethnographic context of the research study

The English language has in possession a single pronoun 'you', which is why it carries a generic meaning. Since the verb form accompanying the pronoun does not change in form, explicit address is not, thus, expressed (except for vocatives). The author's friend, a native speaker of English, has contributed his experience at the post office in Slovakia. At the time, he was just getting acquainted with Slovak and was not aware of the cultural intricacies of the pronominal address and verb morphology so influenced. He applied his first language subject–verb concord regulations (singular you + singular verb, and plural you + plural verb) to the Slovak language and addressed the lady at the counter with the T form of the verb, which caused quite some amazement in her. This might illustrate what happens in the mind of native speakers of English upon an initial encounter with a stranger. They are aware of the social distance but, due to

the lack of pronominal means and verb morphology showing difference between formal and informal relationships in their native language, they opt for what is available and do not envisage the necessity to make a choice between more and less polite alternatives.

Languages with overt T/V markers share certain features; however, in some aspects different conventions may have found their way into the usage[7]. For this reason, the following information on the ethnographic background does not reflect general tendencies; rather it reflects a specific culture (the author's native culture). In present-day Slovak, the unmarked form adopted in encounters within a family and among friends is the T-form, i.e. singular 'you' signaling closer relationship between people. The unmarked form in encounters with strangers (regardless of age or gender) is the V-form, i.e. singular 'you' that is a sign of social distance among people. The usage of T-forms is associated with the usage of a person's first name (including various familiar versions). Analogically, the usage of honorifics and a person's last name indicates a V-relationship and social distance. Among strangers, the transition from a V-form to a T-form is a sign of a closer friendship, the expression of rapport, or a more relaxed relationship; yet in the context of Slovak culture, the transition takes time (even among contemporaries). In business talk, the default pronoun address is the V form, and rarely, if ever, is social distance decreased during the conversation; very often the tendency is to maintain distance. Upon the first encounter with a stranger, the default address form is Mr./Mrs./Miss + last name; even in the course of recurrent encounters with strangers, minimizing the distance is very rarely the case, hence the first name is often avoided, if the distance is ever minimized, then the form of first name accompanied by honorifics is the case (e.g. Mr. Peter, Mrs. Jane).

In both English and Slovak, a certain degree of social distance is present in encounters with strangers, especially at the beginning. "In the case of strangers, first encounters can become an opportunity for decreasing social distance and establishing common ground. However, in a first encounter there is often no obvious need to decrease social distance, for example in fleeting contacts such as a service encounter or asking a stranger in the street for directions."[8] In their understanding[9], the very nature of the social distance dimension lies in its being a non-hierarchical relationship, which is to say, such a relationship that may well lead to

[7] e.g. German, French and Swedish in Clyne, Norrby, Warren, *Language and Human Relations*

[8] Clyne, Norrby, Warren, *Language and Human Relations,*

[9] Ibid.

symmetrical (i.e. reciprocal) language use – either T or V. In addition to these aspects, one more agent is important in deciding on the mode of address in the social distance dimension, and that is age. What is considered a relevant variable in adopting the default V pronoun address in Slovak is not applicable in English. As Clyne–Norrby–Warren's research[10] shows, "in English data, there are indications from some participants that 'older' can be translated as late 50s and 60s", which is in sharp contrast to the Slovak culture, in which, with regard to conversation to strangers, 'older' translates as people aged around over 25.

2. The design of the study

The opposition of T/V pronouns makes it possible to establish polarized attitudes (either T or V); the generic nature of English 'you' projects an image of a continuum, on which a particular address form moves, rather than becomes anchored to either of the ends. The underlying idea of the present research is to unveil the means of address in American English used to establish and maintain the relationship during conversation/discourse/dialogue. In the case of Slovak culture, a business talk represents a symmetrical V relationship with no effort to minimize the social distance on either side throughout conversation/discourse/dialogue. My assumption is that in the case of American culture, the situation is reversed: the perceived degree of distance is low from the beginning and changes only slightly in that if the interlocutors do not minimize the distance, they show no intention of maximizing it. Hence, it can be assumed that in English, as opposed to Slovak, and/or languages with a clear borderline between formal and informal 'you', the first encounter of strangers is typified by informality with no effort to maximize the social distance. As much as a non-native speaker can be aware of the informal nature of conversation in American culture, they may as well wonder how specifically this informality becomes realized, what its particular pointers are.

The research material includes a conversation (a recording of natural speech) between native speakers of American English residing in the USA. The recording and transcript are part of The Santa Barbara Corpus of Spoken American English[11]. As (the?) authors claim, any names of

[10] Ibid, 61.

[11] John W. Du Bois, Wallace L. Chafe, Charles Meyer, Sandra A. Thompson, and Nii Martey, *Santa Barbara corpus of spoken American English, Part 2*. Philadelphia: Linguistic Data Consortium, 2003; the transcript of SBC029 Ancient Furnace.

speakers or other identifying information such as telephone numbers is replaced by pseudonyms in the transcripts. The conversation is "a business conversation recorded in Northern California between Seth and Larry, who are meeting for the first time. Seth works as an engineer who designs, installs, and sells heating and air conditioning units. Larry has invited him to his home to give him an estimate."[12]

In the focal discourse, the subject matter of the conversation is replacing an ancient furnace and other issues related to the remodeling of the heating and air-conditioning system of the house. The length of the conversation is 26.9 minutes. The recording provides the conversation from the very beginning of their appointment; however, it ends at the point when their business talk is not finished. Thus, it provides the language material on their initial meeting; unfortunately, the finishing exchanges (including the verbal realization of parting) are not included. The sample represents a two-party conversation the participants of which are a house owner (Larry) and an engineer (Seth) coming to Larry's place for a business reason (the conversation exemplifies a service encounter). The interlocutors meet for the first time. The dialogue is perceived as being cooperative, without conflict of goals; the choice of lexis is made on the neutral-to-informal scale, and grammar precision is standard.

The conversation is examined with regard to the address forms utilized. Two issues are observed:

1. The development of the usage of address forms in a conversation.
   - How do the interlocutors address themselves upon meeting for the first time? By the first name, by a combination of honorifics and last name, by the title itself, or is direct address absent?
   - Do they keep the same address mode throughout the conversation? If not, when do they use a different address mode? What kind of transition is this? Who offers the transition – the 'seller' or the 'buyer'?
   - What degree of social distance can be inferred and/or how much sharing of common ground can be inferred? At the mere core, is it formality or informality that is established and maintained?
2. Contextualization cues.
   - What does the linguistic environment of the used address forms reveal about the social distance in a business exchange?

[12] Ibid., http://www.linguistics.ucsb.edu/research/santa-barbara-corpus#SBC001, accessed Feb. 15 – May 10, 2015

– Does the conversation involve any social traps for non-native speakers of American English with minimal prior experience with American culture?

It has to be noted that the conversation can only serve the purpose of a case study. The author of the study has no expectations or intentions to use the analyzed language material to generalize the findings or stereotype communicative behavior. Every individual contributes their own life experience and judgement; hence their very own linguistic behavior can only sketch a picture and provide an impulse for further analyses.

3. Findings and discussion

3.1 The development of the usage of address forms in a conversation

The present concern is forms of address between the two participants and evaluating the degree of (in)formality of the analyzed talk. The focus is on how the interlocutors address themselves at the very beginning (whether by first name, by a combination of honorifics and last name, by the title itself, or whether direct address is absent); on what address mode they use as the conversation develops (whether any kind of transition is developed); and on the degree of social distance and/or sharing of common ground. After a brief chronological account of what address forms are used by the two interactants, a conversation analysis follows.

The conversation starts with "Excuse me" on the part of the visitor/engineer (Seth). The house owner (Larry) returns "Hey, how are you guy?" The greeting 'ritual' continues with Seth asking "Are you Larry? Are you Larry?" Larry affirms and asks "How are you?" Instead of the answer, Seth states "You're the guy. You're the guy to talk to, then." Larry agrees and Seth explains "I didn't know if I had the right place." The conversation continues with Seth inquiring about the very activity in which Larry is involved at that moment. In several exchanges to follow, Larry explains what he is doing and why. Only then do they introduce themselves to one another; it was Larry (the house owner) who initiated that: "Nice to meet you". Seth answers: "How you doing. Good to see you." Larry inquires about his name. The visitor/engineer provides his first name and offers his card. Larry accepts the card and thanks him while explicitly addressing him by his first name. In the rest of the conversation, the interactants discuss only the business matter concerned; no first names

are used; some instances of both more informal and more formal style appear in the exchange.

At the very beginning, the visitor (Seth) uses a neutral phrase "Excuse me" and a question "Are you Larry?" It can be assumed that the former is used instead of an explicit address as if he wanted to avoid the trouble of finding the appropriate address form or was not sure of the appropriate name of the house owner; the latter statement confirms it. This also becomes obvious later when he explains he was not sure whether it was the right place. From a non-native speaker's point of view, it is interesting to observe that already at this point Seth refers to the client by his first name.

The house owner in his first two turns asks a question "How are you?" In English, this sentence structure has an interrogative form; however, it only serves a phatic function. This is why Seth did not respond to Larry, rather he continued with what he needed to say. This is very different in comparison with Slovak culture (as it were also in other Slavic cultures), in which the general rule is "say what can be interpreted literally". In other words, this question makes an adjacent pair with an honest answer about somebody's well-being. Jokingly said, do not ask them how they are, because they may as well tell you.

What follows can be interpreted as a little small talk, at the end of which the house owner does the official part of the introduction ("Nice to meet you") and asks the visitor/engineer his name. The instant reaction is "Seth", which implies the non-hierarchical symmetrical/reciprocal nature of the relationship. As much as it can be odd for non-native speakers, according to Bargiela[13], "the general rule in English speaking cultures is that you move to first name terms as soon as possible". This conversation aptly exemplifies this; moreover, this tendency is reflected in the synopsis of the conversation – first names are used to refer to the interactants of the conversation.

The conversation comprises some pointers of the tendency to shift from a neutral to informal relationship on the part of Larry, the house owner. For instance, he refers to the engineer as 'guy' (1) right away upon meeting him. Other examples include imperative structures (2) and (3), and referring to things as 'baby' (4) or 'guy' (5):

(1) "Hey, how are you guy?"
(2) "So give me one second to lock this thing…"

[13] 2002 qt in Heather Bowe – Kylie Martin, *Communication across Cultures. Mutual Understanding in a Global World*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2007), 116.

(3) "... Ah ... Wait a minute."
(4) "We didn't get anything when we bought this baby"
(5) Seth: "How about the uh thermostat". Larry: "This guy?" … "One little guy there."

On the other hand, Seth, the engineer, keeps a more neutral stance. This can be exemplified by his attempt to be more polite by using structures like "I'm wondering…" instead of a direct question, as in (6) and (7); 'you may/might wanna' instead of 'you should', as in (8) and (9):

(6) "I'm wondering if you don't have a floor plan of the house, do you by any chance?"
(7) "I'm wondering if I should just sketch it out."
(8) "you might wanna leave 'em cracked open just a little bit though",
(9) "well some of these things you may wanna wait until you do the remodel"

The conversation was observed with several principles in mind. The principles were raised in Clyne, Norrby, and Warren[14]. The authors specify six principles:

1. *Familiarity Principle:* Do I know this person?
2. *Maturity Principle:* Do I perceive this person to be an adult?
3. *Relative Age Principle:* Do I perceive this person to be considerably older than me? Or younger?
4. *Network membership Principle:* Is this person a regular and accepted member within a group I belong to?
5. *Social Identification Principle:* Do I perceive this person to be similar or different from me?
6. *Address Mode Accommodation Principle:* If this person uses T (or V), or a T-like (or V-like) address with me, will I do the same?

With regard to the present conversation, the principles can be interpreted as follows: 1) familiarity principle: the two participants are strangers; 2) maturity principle: both perceive themselves as adults; 3) relative age principle: their age cannot be inferred, however, according to their linguistic behavior, it seems the difference in age (if there is any) does not have any impact on the verbal behavior; 4) network membership principle: the in-group membership, as it were, is relative – Seth, the

[14] Clyne, Norrby, Warren, *Language and Human Relations,* 158, their emphasis.

engineer, is not a regular member, yet seems to be or to become an accepted "member" of the household (at least for the time being) – based on Larry's (the house owner's) slight shift from neutral to informal, it can be inferred that he wants the visitor to feel a part of the household and help him decide what is best for those living in the house; 5) social identification principle: the interlocutors perceive themselves to be similar; 6) address mode accommodation principle: Seth triggered the conversation on the first name basis, and the house owner adopted the same address mode.

3.2 Contextualization cues

In the adequate interpreting of the deep structure of a conversation, a helpful approach is identifying contextual cues, in other words, the influence of extra-linguistic factors on the communicated meaning. These aspects might have impact on the perception of the message in a conversation between native speakers[15]; even more so it might be the case of a conversation between native and non-native speakers. The present section focuses on the mere discourse structure and the cues it offers so that a message can be communicated. These cues are looked into from the angle of what information they carry for a non-native speaker of English, for whom this represents second language pragmatics. This section addresses questions like what the linguistic environment of the used address forms is and whether or not the conversation conveys anything that helps identify the linguistic environment. In other words, what the linguistic environment of the used address forms reveals about the social distance in a business exchange and whether or not the conversation involves any social traps for non-native speakers of American English with minimal prior experience with American culture.

Contextualization, as defined by Gumperz[16] is a process enabling interactants to "foreground or make relevant certain aspects of background knowledge and underplay others." He (ibid) maintains that it "is not a static structure, but rather reflects a dynamic process which develops and changes as the participants interact." This is to say; one conversation is associated with multiple contexts appearing and receding as the conversation develops. What makes a conversation successful is the interactants' sharing common ground in terms of recognizing relevant

[15] *cf* John Gumperz. *Discourse strategies*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 133.
[16] Gumperz. *Discourse strategies*, 131.

contextualization cues. Useful contextualization cues are prosodic features or paralinguistic features like mimics, gestures, proxemics, as well as recognizing the figurative meaning of an expression, the (in)formal attitude of one's partner in a conversation.

As Gumperz[17] claims, a contextualization cue is "any feature of linguistic form that contributes to the signaling of contextual presuppositions." The target conversation goes smoothly, so contextual cues go undetected. In the present conversation, for a non-native speaker observing the conversation, several acts of linguistic behavior may seem outside the frame of a business exchange should it occur in a culture acknowledging *tu/vos* relationships; hence, they are worth contemplation. The analyzed conversation provided the following wealth of information. Below, five extracts comprising altogether nine linguistic acts are discussed (with reference to the names used, Seth is the engineer, Larry is the house owner.). The text is divided into extracts based on how utterances are clustered in the transcript of the conversation. They are presented here in order following the chronological arrangement of the utterances in the conversation. One extract may involve several issues, which I call linguistic acts.

EXTRACT 1:
[1] SETH: Excuse me.
[2] LARRY: Hey, how are you guy?
[3] SETH: Are you Larry? ... Are you Larry?
[4] LARRY: Yes. How are you.
[5] SETH: Are you – You're the guy?
[6] LARRY: Hunh?
[7] SETH: You're the guy to talk to then.

Linguistic act 1: Excuse me. → Are you Larry? ... Are you Larry?

[1] SETH: Excuse me.
[2] LARRY: Hey, how are you, guy?
[3] SETH: Are you Larry? ... Are you Larry?

Seth, the engineer, uses a politeness formula and continues with a question requiring the confirmation of his being at the right place. What strikes a non-native speaker as surprising is his addressing the house owner directly (using a yes/no question), and furthermore, using his first name. A non-

[17] Ibid.

native speaker without prior experience with American culture would, assumingly, opt for a statement and the usage of honorifics and full name ('I'm looking for Mr. Larry + last name'). The reasoning is as follows. 'Excuse me' is a simple sentence with the illocutionary force of apology; in this situation, it also serves the function of attracting attention, i.e. the phatic function. Within the frame of this communication event, to a non-native speaker, this form seems neutral-to-formal and establishes distance. Its combination with a stranger's first name deserves a tag of a formulaic utterance (here, 'formulaic' is used in accordance with Kecskes' understanding of formulaic language use[18]).

Linguistic act 2: 2a) Hey, 2b) how are you, 2c) guy

[1] SETH: Excuse me.
[2] LARRY: Hey, how are you, guy?
[3] SETH: Are you Larry? ... Are you Larry?

In this exchange, utterance [2] consists of three chunks that are worth considering both in unity and piecemeal.

2a) [2] LARRY: **Hey**, how are you, guy?

'Hey' can be used as an attention-getter and as a greeting. In either case, however, this is a colloquialism rather than a neutral expression. A non-native speaker anticipates 'hey' to be generally used when addressing someone of similar or lower social position, e.g. between/among peers who have known each other for some time.

2b) [2] LARRY: Hey, **how are you,** guy?

'[h]ow are you' is used here instead of a greeting; thus, fulfilling the function of a greeting and not anticipating an honest answer.

2c) [2] LARRY: Hey, how are you, **guy**?

The usage of the expression 'guy' is (from a non-native speaker's view) rather unexpected. This is mostly because its singular form used as a vocative is related to a different register due to the expressiveness that the

[18] *cf* Istvan Kecskes, *Intercultural Pragmatics*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

usage of a vocative carries. The speaker's intention and/or decision to use such an expression at the very start of the communication event derive from the speaker's willingness to establish linguistic informality from the very beginning.

The whole utterance, the combination of the three chunks (2a, 2b, 2c), projects the image of an informal communicative event, as if the interactants have known each other for a long time, and as if the speaker were honestly interested in the well-being of the hearer.

Linguistic act 3: Are you – You're the guy?

[3] SETH: **Are you Larry? ... Are you Larry?**
[4] LARRY: Yes. How are you?
[5] SETH: **Are you – You're the guy?**
[6] LARRY: Hunh?
[7] SETH: **You're the guy to talk to** then.

The engineer's questions in [3] and [5] follow a parallel structure at first; in the second part of the question in [5], the engineer accommodates to the house owner's speaking style and uses the expression 'guy'. A non-native speaker may anticipate the more specific (thus, more formal) expression 'home owner' or 'house owner' to be used. The reference suggests an informal relationship. However, in utterance [7], the definite article premodifying 'guy' is justified by a relative clause, which evidences that the two interactants are strangers and have met for the first time.

EXTRACT 2
[8] LARRY: ... and I have to spray the road.
[9] SETH: Ah.
[10] LARRY: Cause the road ... before ... you can drive on it,
[11] SETH: Interesting.
[12] LARRY: it needs ... more uh -- ... more ... stability ... Evidently ... So give me one second to lock this thing…

Linguistic act 4: So give me one second to lock this thing.

[12] LARRY: it needs...more uh--...more...stability...Evidently... **So give me one second to lock this thing**…

This utterance illustrates how Larry (the house owner) is involved in a certain activity and extends a request to the engineer to be patient a little longer so he could finish what he was doing. He uses a hearer-oriented imperative structure for conveying this idea; moreover, without the polite expression 'please'. To a non-native speaker, such usage may evoke an informal relationship. In this kind of situation, a non-native speaker may prefer an interrogative sentence with a conditional modal verb form (Could you …? Would you …?), or a speaker-oriented statement with the illocutionary force of a request (e.g. I would need one more minute.); both alternatives accompanied by 'please'.

EXTRACT 3

[13] SETH: I see ... So there's some chemical reaction that has to take place,
[14] LARRY: Yeah ... I guess ... ... That should hold it there. ... Okay ... Nice to meet you.
[15] SETH: How you doing. Good to see you.
[16] LARRY: What's your name?
[17] SETH: Seth.
[18] LARRY: Seth. Okay.
[19] SETH: Here's my card.
[20] LARRY: Thanks, Seth. I think it's warming up a bit here.
[21] SETH: Is this the house we're looking at?
[22] LARRY: I'll take you down in the basement.

Linguistic act 5: Nice to meet you vs. Good to see you

[14] LARRY: Yeah ... I guess ... ... That should hold it there. ... Okay ... **Nice to meet you**.
[15] SETH: **How you doing. Good to see you.**

A discrepancy can be seen between what Larry and Seth say: 'nice to meet you' vs. 'good to see you'. The discrepancy is related to the fact that the former indicates first encounter, while the latter creates the image of the two being acquaintances. My interpretation is that this is so only at first sight. Understanding the phrase 'how you doing' as a formulaic utterance, hence functioning as a greeting, helps realize that it can be paralleled with 'nice to meet you'. Consequently, the function of 'good to see you' can be interpreted as that adding further meaning, namely of 'I'm glad you have come to resolve my issue'.

Linguistic act 6: What's your name? – Seth.

[16] LARRY: **What's your name?**
[17] SETH: **Seth.**
[18] LARRY: Seth. Okay.
[19] SETH: **Here's my card.**
[20] LARRY: **Thanks, Seth.**

The question '[w]hat's your name' illustrates two issues. First of all, it seems to be very direct. It can be inferred that the assumed common ground permitted for lesser indication of respect (e.g. through the omission of introductory politeness formula such as 'excuse me' or 'I'm sorry'). Secondly, sharing the context and having prior experience enables the interactants to correctly interpret the presupposition 'I know that you know what name I'm asking for'; which is the first name in the case of American culture. A non-native speaker without prior experience, as a response to this question, may automatically provide his last name, as in accordance with his/her first culture. Hence, the noun phrase 'your name' can be considered an elliptical structure short of the specification whether first or last name is the case.

Linguistic act 7: we – I – you

[21] SETH: Is this the house **we're l**ooking at?
[22] LARRY: **I'll take you** down in the basement.

This micro-dialogue illustrates a different view of involvement in the task achievement. The engineer inquires in a way that is hearer-inclusive; contrariwise, the house owner (as the addresser) does not accommodate to the addressee's speaking style; he uses the structure indicating that cost (in Leech's terms[19]) is on his side (speaker's side: I'll take you…). The engineer uses this strategy in several other places in the conversation.

EXTRACT 4
[23] SETH: I'm wondering if you don't have a floor plan of the house, do you by any chance?
[24] LARRY: No … we don't.
[25] SETH: X
[26] LARRY: We didn't get anything when we bought this baby.

[19] *cf* Geoffrey Leech, *Principles of Pragmatics* (London: Longman, 1983).

[27] SETH: I'm wondering if I should just sketch it out.

Linguistic act 8: I'm wondering

[23] SETH: **I'm wondering if** you don't have a floor plan of the house, do you by any chance?
[26] LARRY: We didn't get anything when we bought this **baby**.
[27] SETH: **I'm wondering if** I should just sketch it out.

In the conversation, Seth, the engineer, performs an indirect speech act; he performs a request for information through a performative verb and a statement, which can be considered a politeness formula. In so doing, he resists accommodating to the speaking style of the house owner and tries to keep distance in this way. The house owner tends to be more informal; for instance, through referencing to objects as 'guy', 'baby' (as in [26]).

EXTRACT 5

[28] LARRY: and uh…I'm not too worried about the kitchen. I don't like hot kitchens anyway… Cause I mean y—you got a stove going, and-- Ah we're in good shape that way…Ah…**Wait a minute.** Did I forget something else?
[29] SETH: Utility room.

Linguistic act 9: Wait a minute.

[28] LARRY: and uh…I'm not too worried about the kitchen. I don't like hot kitchens anyway… Cause I mean y—you got a stove going, and-- Ah we're in good shape that way…Ah…**Wait a minute.** Did I forget something else?

The houseowner's speaking style is, in general, more relaxed and informal than the engineer's. This is also evidenced by uttering 'wait a minute'. The context makes it clear that the hearer should not take it literally, rather acknowledge its figurative sense, hence being used as a formulaic expression and/or a discourse marker signaling a change in topic. If taken literally, it might be perceived as impolite. Even though the figurative streak is foregrounded, to a non-native speaker such usage may well seem too direct, hence thought of as inappropriate, thus avoided.

3.3 Summary

The situations discussed above illustrate certain situations that may be misinterpreted by a non-native speaker if encountered. Their common feature is that they are performed in such ways that are not in harmony with the mindset of a non-native speaker whose first language possesses language means for expressing social distance and/or closeness. The reason is that due to the existence of such means in a language, social conventions have adapted to what language provides for. The above situations indicate that, overall, it is the house owner who is trying to minimize the distance. The engineer accommodates to the speaking style of the house owner to a certain degree. On the whole, he tries to keep the relationship neutral; he neither maximizes nor minimizes the social distance. It has to be noted that this conversation only serves the purpose of a case study and, by no means, is meant to set the standards. The cases pointed out should provide an idea of how a non-native speaker of American English with minimum prior experience of American culture can relate his/her knowledge of first language pragmatics to foreign language pragmatics.

The general interpretation of what has been observed can be done through Brown and Gilman's[20] classification of persons based on their relations. The classification includes six categories: 1) superior and solidary, 2) superior and not solidary, 3) equal and solidary, 4) equal and not solidary, 5) inferior and solidary, 6) inferior and not solidary. The categories can be interpreted as follows: 1) and 5) T or V relationship in equilibrium, 2) and 6) T or V relationship in conflict, 3) T relationship in both directions, 4) V relationship in both directions. I believe this classification reflects the mindset of a speaker of a language with explicit T/V markers; a native speaker of English lacks the knowledge and experience with such differentiation. Since English does not allow for formal differentiation in this respect, the mind of a native speaker does not have a frame for that. In the analyzed conversation, alongside other pointers, the interlocutors are on first-name terms from the very beginning throughout the exchange. As several authors maintain, the (American) English alternative for T forms is the usage of first names[21], which is in line with category 3) equal and solidary. The logical inference is that this is in contrast with most languages possessing explicit T/V markers; from

[20] Brown – Gilman, *The pronouns of power and solidarity*, 253–276.

[21] Tannen – Kakava, "Power and Solidarity in Modern Greek Conversation: Disagreeing to Agree" 1992; Ervin-Tripp, "Sociolinguistic Rules of Address", 1972

their perspective, such a conversation would be viewed as category 4) equal and not solidary. This can be considered a clash in conventions of communication strategies and a reason for insecure linguistic behavior of non-native speakers.

Conclusion

Anthropologists uphold the view that a culture belongs to a particular society; even more so if it makes that culture and/or society different from others. The concept of culture has acquired a multitude of readings and interpretations covering notions like assumptions, values, attitudes, beliefs, rituals, institutions, symbols, or artefacts[22]. Hofstede[23] understands culture as the collective programming of the mind of a particular group of people as opposed to a different one. Hall[24] views culture as an invisible mechanism controlling one's thoughts. For Spencer-Oatey[25], culture is "… a fuzzy set of attitudes, beliefs, behavioural norms, and basic assumptions and values that are shared by a group of people and that influence each member's behaviour and his/her interpretation of the 'meaning' of other people's behaviour." After one's exposure to a different culture, the then invisible control mechanism turns into a conscious contemplation of people's linguistic behavior. This is so since only after being immersed in a different culture, do we start to notice differences and ponder over the values and beliefs of our and foreign cultures. This very principle facilitated the emergence of this study.

The present study explores the culture-specific expression of social relationships that can be identified through language means. The non-native speaker's perspective made it possible to evaluate the level of formality and/or informality of the expressions used and to identify the contextualization cues that provide for a better understanding of verbal behavior of native speakers. In the studied conversation, several interesting

---

[22] E.g. Geert H. Hofstede, *Cultures and organizations: software of the mind* (London, New York: McGraw-Hil, 1991); Geert Hofstede, *Cultures and organizations : software of the mind : intercultural* (London: HarperCollins, 1994); Edward Twitchell Hall, *The dance of life: the other dimension of time* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press, 1983); Helen Spencer-Oatey, *Culturally speaking: managing rapport through talk across cultures* (London: Continuum, 2000).

[23] Hofstede, *Cultures and organizations: software of the mind: intercultural*

[24] Hall, *The dance of life: the other dimension of time*

[25] Spencer-Oatey, *Culturally speaking: managing rapport through talk across cultures,* 4.

issues occurred. In summary, at the very beginning, direct address was absent; "Excuse me" was used. Upon introduction, the interlocutors addressed themselves using their first names. Throughout the conversation, direct address was absent. During the conversation, no transition seemed to be necessary; the T relationship was indicated at the very beginning by the house owner referring to the engineer as 'guy', and by the engineer referring to the house owner by his first name. The symmetry and the reciprocity of the relationship were indicated by the house owner explicitly asking for the engineer's name and by the engineer providing his first name. This hints to/at the idea of lesser social distance and a greater degree of common ground in non-family relationships than a non-native speaker of English (e.g. one from Slovak culture) would anticipate.

The patterns applied to establish and maintain, to decrease, sustain or increase social distance can well be manifested through the mode of address. Apparently, social distance has a different understanding in cultures like English and Slovak. It seems native speakers of English are instantly willing to admit lesser social distance, greater similarity, and to act accordingly; they are ready to realize a communicative act on a first-name basis from the very start. This is a point to which, in business encounters in a Slovak culture, one may never get since the interlocutors do not feel the need for the transition to take place. In Slovak culture, in a business setting, with regard to the form, the shift from V to T is a long process; moreover, not necessarily wished for. On the contrary, in English speaking cultures, forms resembling T-like relationships are the default pattern; without any prior transition. While in Slovak culture the usage of first names is a sign of establishing a closer relationship, in English speaking cultures it seems to be merely a sign of the acknowledgement of similarity without the necessity to pursue any kind of closer social relationship.

"First names, middle names, last names, nicknames, pronouns and other terms of address all identify individuals in a society. Such address forms can contribute to a person's sense of identity and can characterise 'an individual's position in his family and in society at large. It defines his social personality'"[26] This is especially true in the case of the English language. Clyne, Norrby, and Warren[27] offer the idea that the selection of address mode is either rational or emotional; either way it depends on where we draw the boundary between ourselves and others. My tentative inference is that English/American culture is more emotive in this respect;

[26] Mauss 1974: 134, qt. In Bowe and Martin, *Communication across Cultures,* 95.
[27] Clyne, Norrby, Warren, *Language and Human Relations*

moreover, in pursuing social relationships, it appears to be more tolerant in establishing common ground and seems to promote equality. However, this needs to be further studied.

References

Bowe, Heather and Kylie Martin. *Communication across Cultures. Mutual Understanding in a Global World*. Cambridge: CUP, 2007.

Brown, Roger and Albert Gilman. "The pronouns of power and solidarity." In *Style in language* edited by Thomas A. Sebeok, 253–276. Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1960.

Clyne, Michael – Norrby, Catrin – Warren, Jane. *Language and Human Relations (Styles of Address in Contemporary Language)*, CUP, 2009.

Du Bois, John W., Chafe, Wallace L., Meyer, Charles, Thompson, Sandra A., and Martey, Nii. *Santa Barbara corpus of spoken American English, Part 2*. Philadelphia: Linguistic Data Consortium, 2003; the transcript of SBC029 Ancient Furnace.

Ervin-Tripp, Susan M. "Sociolinguistic Rules of Address." In *Sociolinguistics*, edited by J. B Pride and J. Holmes, 225 – 240. Penguin books, 1972.

Gumperz, John. *Discourse strategies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982.

Hall, Edward Twitchell. *The dance of life: the other dimension of time*. Garden City, N.Y., Anchor Press, 1983.

Hofstede, Geert H. *Cultures and organizations: software of the mind*. London, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1991.

Hofstede, Geert. *Cultures and organizations : software of the mind : intercultural.* London, HarperCollins, 1994.

Kecskes, Istvan. *Intercultural Pragmatics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.

Leech, Geoffrey. *Principles of Pragmatics*. London: Longman, 1983.

Spencer-Oatey, Helen. *Culturally speaking: managing rapport through talk across cultures*. London: Continuum, 2000.

Tannen, Deborah and Christina Kakava. "Power and Solidarity in Modern Greek Conversation: Disagreeing to Agree." *Journal of Modern Greek Studies 10:1* (1992): 11 – 34.

Ueda Fidler, Masako. "Solidarity and Power in Czech and Japanese: A Comparative Analysis". (Online document) 2001 accessed April 11, 2015.
<http://www.aatseel.org/100111/pdf/program/2001/abstracts/Fidler.html>

CHAPTER FIVE

LEXICO-GRAMMATICAL FEATURES OF ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA (ELF) IN SLOVAK AND FRENCH ACADEMIC SETTINGS[1]

DIANA KRAJŇÁKOVÁ

Introduction

According to Crystal[2], approximately one third of the world's population is able to communicate in English to a reasonable level. The reasons for such a figure range from the predominant status of English in commerce, media, or entertainment to reasons historically rooted or politically motivated[3]. Drawing on them, there have been a number of attempts to conceptualise different types of Englishes amongst which the most well-known is considered to be so called Kachruvian model[4]. His three concentric circles representing English as a Native Language (ENL), English as a Second Language (ESL), and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has survived for decades and still appear to be of frequent use despite their limitations and updated versions provided by Modiano[5] or

[1] The publication of this paper is supported by the KEGA grant project 030PU-4/2014.

[2] David Crystal, *English as a Global Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 155.

[3] David Crystal, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

[4] Braj B. Kachru, "Standards, codification and sociolinguistic realism: the English language in the Outer Circle," in *English in the World: Teaching and Learning the Language and Literatures*, ed. Randolph Quirk and Henry Widdowson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 11–30.

[5] Marko Modiano, "Standard English(es) and educational practices for the world's lingua franca," *English Today* 15, no. 4 (1999).

Graddol[6]. Nowadays, the strongest argument against such a classification lies in the fact that it does not reflect the current sociolinguistic situation. The problematic issues cover the concept of native language and its perception by different English language speakers[7], the blurred boundaries between ENL and ESL as well as ESL and EFL based on changing socio-political conditions, and the questionable right of ENL users to provide linguistic norms for ESL and EFL users who, in fact, outnumber native speakers of English[8]. As a result, the introduction of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) at the turn of the twenty-first century is believed to be the solution to this complex sociolinguistic reality and provides a framework for numerous empirical studies including the one at hand.

It is evident that the majority of English users are aware of the function of English in the position of a lingua franca; however, their interpretations happen to be centred on its usage by virtually everyone and in every possible domain. In fact, there is much more behind this concept from theoretical as well as analytical perspectives. The former is briefly outlined by way of providing a definition of ELF and its linguistic characteristics common to all ELF users irrespective of their first languages (L1); the latter is in part approached through the present research, namely through a couple of lexico-grammatical innovations, *3rd person zero* and the non-canonical uses of the *progressive*. The present study investigates the evidence of chosen ELF-specific features in two L1 different university settings on which the to-date studies of ELF do not seem to focus. Given the corpus of the academic discourse is written by Slovak and French users, this study aims to reveal their quantitative distribution and, more importantly, to offer a functional interpretation of their usage in the target data. The outcomes may thus shed some light on the use of English in academic settings in Slovakia and in France.

---

[6] David Graddol, *English Next* (London: The British Council).

[7] Ida Mauko, "The native speaker of English–A clash of conceptualisations: A comparative analysis of self-ascribed and non-elective native/non-native English speaker identity," accessed August 5, 2015, http://www.academia.edu/11456890/The_native_speaker_of_English_-_A_clash_of_conceptualisations_A_comparative_analysis_of_self-ascribed_and_non-elective_native_nonnative_English_speaker_identity.

[8] Jennifer Jenkins, "Points of View and Blind Spots: ELF and SLA," *International Journal of Applied Linguistics* 16, no. 2 (2006).

1. A Brief Outline of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF)

As a linguistic concept, English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) is most frequently defined as "any use of English among speakers of different first languages (L1) for whom English is the communicative medium of choice, and often the only option"[9]. This definition is further elaborated on by Salakhyan who takes into account speakers of the same linguistic background motivated to opt for ELF as a means of communication by a variety of subjective or objective reasons, e.g. the use of ELF in the workplace[10]. Naturally, conversations produced solely by speakers of a common native variety of English are excluded from this definition. Another important case in point made by Jenkins[11] who has comprehensively investigated the position of ELF in English Language Teaching (ELT) and puts forth the distinction between learners of EFL and users of ELF.

Nevertheless, it is not only the linguistic description of this concept, but predominately its ultimate goal which distinguishes ELF from other linguistically similar phenomena. Its communicative aim focuses on the successful transfer of a communicative message which stands in opposition to native-like competence which learners of EFL aim for and to a geographically and community-specific form of English represented by ESL[12].

With regard to the communicative settings, the use of ELF ranges through all domains which are for the purpose of research studies compiled into several corpora. Amongst them, the most prominent position is held by VOICE (Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English) and ELFA (English as a Lingua Franca in Academic Settings) which enable theoretical conceptualisations to be underpinned by way of empirical research in the authentic data. While the former captures spoken non-specified discourse, ELFA focuses on spoken academic discourse only. Both similarly comprise approximately a million words transcribed from the records of participants from more than fifty different linguistic backgrounds. On their basis, researchers are able to provide a close-up

---

[9] Barbara Seidlhofer, *Understanding English as a Lingua Franca. A Complete Introduction to the Theoretical Nature and Practical Implications of English Used as a Lingua Franca* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 7.

[10] Elena Salakhyan, "Eastern European Manifestations of English as a Lingua Franca" (PhD diss., Universität Tübingen, 2014), 16.

[11] Jennifer Jenkins, "English as a Lingua Franca from the classroom to the classroom," *ELT Journal* 66, no. 4 (2012).

[12] Diana Krajnakova, "K problematike anglictiny ako lingua franca (ELF) [On the concept of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF)]," *Motus in verbo* 4, no. 1 (2015).

view of the use of ELF in different linguistic areas, e.g. phonetics and phonology by Jenkins[13] and Walker[14], lexico-grammar (see below), pragmalinguistics by Mauranen[15] and Kaur[16], up to and including its application in ELT and position within the Central European Framework of Reference (CEFR) by Hynninen[17] or its connection with the field of translation studies by Taviano[18].

From a diachronic perspective, it is the area of lexico-grammar in which the initial research and corpus studies were carried out by Jenkins[19], Mauranen[20], Seidlhofer[21], Torrado[22], and Vetchinnikova[23] to name but a few. Drawing on them, it is possible to identify a set of ELF-specific lexico-grammatical features including the linguistic characteristics of nouns (e.g. the use of articles), adjectives (e.g. the overuse of individual productive derivational processes), verbs (e.g. the specific use of verb tenses and aspects, the zero use of inflections), prepositions (e.g. their non-canonical use in nominal and verb collocations), conjunctions and connecting devices (e.g. their additional pragmatic functions), multi-word units (e.g. new phraseological preferences of ELF users resulting from blending individual existing units into new ones) as well as general

---

[13] Jennifer Jenkins, *The Phonology of English as an International Language* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

[14] Robin Walker, *Teaching the pronunciation of English as a Lingua Franca* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

[15] Anna Mauranen, "Signaling and preventing misunderstanding in English as lingua franca communication," *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 177 (2006).

[16] Jagdish Kaur, "Intercultural communication in English as a lingua franca: Some sources of misunderstanding," *Intercultural Pragmatics* 8, no. 1 (2011).

[17] Niina Hynninen, "The Common European Framework of Reference from the perspective of English as a Lingua Franca: What we can learn from a focus on language regulation," *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca* 3, no. 2 (2012).

[18] Stefania Taviano, ed., "Special issue: English as a Lingua Franca. Implications for Translator and Interpreter Education," *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer* 7, no. 2 (2013).

[19] Jennifer Jenkins, *World Englishes: A Resource Book for Students* (London: Routledge).

[20] Anna Mauranen, *Exploring ELF: Academic English Shaped by Non-native Speakers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

[21] Seidlhofer, *Understanding ELF*, 7.

[22] Alba Torrado, "English as a Lingua Franca: A Theoretical and Practical Approach," accessed May 20, 2015, https://prezi.com/k7_vf6mrujhv/english-as-a-lingua-franca-a-theoretical-and-practical-appr/.

[23] Svetlana Vetchinnikova, "Second Language Lexis and the Idiom Principle" (PhD. diss., University of Helsinki, 2014).

morphological regularisation (e.g. the issue of countability of nouns or regularity of verb forms). Considering the nature of the present data, i.e. written academic discourse, the evidence of the use of the 3rd person zero morpheme "-s" and non-canonical functions of the progressive within the word class of verbs are further scrutinized here. In doing so, the present research aims to blend appropriate methodological-analytical frameworks an overview of which is introduced hereinafter.

2. Literature Review

The first of the features analysed in the present research is regarded as one of the most prominent lexico-grammatical innovations employed by ELF users which was initially referred to as "'dropping' the third person present tense '-s'"[24]. Interestingly enough, from the traditional perspective of the EFL approach it is still considered a learner's mistake or a deficit in the process of acquiring Standard English. Accordingly, the EFL tradition conventionally refers to this feature as omitting the inflectional morpheme "-s" in the 3rd person singular of the simple present which inherently conveys a negative connotation and thus underlines the deficient nature of this feature. However, it is important to realise here that 3rd person zero is not an exclusive feature of non-native speech, as e.g. Trudgill[25] points out its use in East Anglian dialects. Therefore the EFL view stressing its erroneous nature caused by the fallacious use of non-native English speakers seems to be questionable here; this is, however, beyond the scope of the present study.

Looking back at 3rd person zero from the perspective of ELF, it is not considered a learner's mistake because of at least two striking reasons. Firstly, as mentioned above, users of ELF are not regarded as learners of EFL, mainly because of their different communicative goals. Secondly and more importantly, 3rd person zero is reflected as the use of a linguistic option rather than the process of omitting "-s"[26]. To put it in other words, in the context of ELF, 3rd person zero stands for a winner of the linguistic battle between two variants in communication, hence between 3rd person "-s" and 3rd person zero[27].

---

[24] Barbara Seidlhofer, "Research Perspectives on Teaching English as a Lingua Franca," *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 24 (2004): 220.
[25] Peter Trudgill, *Sociolinguistic Variation and Change* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press), 13.
[26] Martin Dewey, "English as a Lingua Franca: an Empirical Study of Innovation in Lexis and Grammar" (PhD diss., King's College London, 2006), 82.
[27] Ibid, 83.

Although 3rd person zero is generally regarded as an underlying lexico-grammatical characteristic of ELF interaction and earlier empirical outcomes happen to optimistically declare it a linguistic winner, in the recent period of time, discussions regarding the present linguistic feature have not been on the same page. On the one hand, the earlier qualitative research carried out by Breiteneder[28]; Dewey[29]; Mauranen[30] and Seidlhofer[31] to name but a few shows the evidence of 3rd person zero marking as a predominant linguistic choice in the corpora of ELF. Here, Dewey[32] and Mauranen[33] similarly hypothesise the future loss of "-s" as a result of language contact which implies changes in the English language system as such. Furthermore, studies drawing on spoken corpora of ELF provided by Dewey[34] and Breiteneder[35] investigate this lexico-grammatical innovation in a more empirical light and both come to the conclusion that 3rd person zero marking appears to be a particularly symptomatic trend of ELF[36] and even a noteworthy ELF-specific linguistic innovation in the area of lexical verbs in the present simple[37].

On the other hand, more recent and inherently quantitative analyses came to dissimilar conclusions. Carey[38] and Kavanagh[39] challenge Dewey's 3rd person zero 'winner' viewpoint and carry out research into this phenomenon by way of drawing on data retrieved from the enormous VOICE spoken corpus. Both claim that this so-called ELF-specific lexico-grammatical innovation is not statistically predominant in the data and not even characteristic of a special speech event, discourse type or L1 of its users. What is more, Kavanagh[40] compares the presence of 3rd person zero

[28] Angelika Breiteneder, "English as a lingua franca in Europe: An empirical perspective," *World Englishes* 28, no. 2 (2009).
[29] Dewey, „English as a Lingua."
[30] Mauranen, *Exploring ELF*.
[31] Seidlhofer, "Teaching ELF."
[32] Dewey, "English as a Lingua."
[33] Mauranen, *Exploring ELF: Academic English*.
[34] Dewey, "English as a Lingua."
[35] Breiteneder, "ELF in Europe."
[36] Ibid, 258.
[37] Dewey, "English as a Lingua," 83.
[38] Ray Carey, "In search of wild diversity: a closer look at 3rd-person zero marking in ELF," accessed July 30, 2015, https://elfaproject.wordpress.com/2013/08/31/in-search-of-wild-diversity-3rd-person/.
[39] Barry Kavanagh, "A Corpus Investigation of Two Non-standard Features, in ELF, Native Speech, and Learner Language" (Master's thesis, University of Oslo, 2014).
[40] Ibid.

of lexical verbs and the auxiliary "do" in three additional corpora, hence ELFA, LINDSEI (Louvain International Database of Spoken English Interlanguage) and the native BNC (British National Corpus) and reveals that the frequency of the 3rd person zero morpheme in the corpus of British English, thus a standard variety, overlaps those of VOICE and ELFA, representatives of ELF interaction. As can be seen, there is an evident contradiction between this generally accepted ELF-specific lexico-grammatical characteristic and its recent thorough investigation which reifies the impetus for the present analysis of 3rd person zero in the corpus of two L1 different settings of written academic discourse.

Turning to the second morphosyntactic feature investigated here, Erling and Bartlett[41] and Björkman[42] focus on the specific use of the progressive and investigate it in spoken interaction recorded in university settings in Germany and Sweden respectively. Their overall analyses are centred around a set of phonological, lexico-grammatical as well as pragmalinguistic manifestations of ELF and thus do not evince a detailed categorisation of functions and complex interpretation of the innovation in question.

Later, the most comprehensive studies so far which are based on spoken data of ELF are provided by two members of the VOICE and ELFA projects, Dorn[43] and Ranta[44]. The former scholar initially reveals the quantitative distribution of the progressive in the corpus VOICE and compares it to ICE-GB (the British component of the International Corpus of English). More importantly, she highlights four non-canonical functional categories that the progressive falls into in the sample of spoken ELF conversations captured by VOICE. According to her, the classification can be divided into two types: the first represents the usage of the progressive which seems to be present in native English interactions, too, and comprises the categories of historic progressive and the progressive adding emphasis to the discourse. Contrariwise, the second type appears to be peculiar to communication in ELF only and embodies

[41] Elizabeth J. Erling and Tom Bartlett, "Making English their own: The use of ELF among students of English at the FUB," *Nordic Journal of English Studies* 5, no. 2 (2006).

[42] Beyza Björkman, *Spoken lingua franca English at a Swedish technical university: An investigation of form and communicative effectiveness* (Stockholm: Stockholm University).

[43] Nora Dorn, "The '-ing thing': Exploring the progressive in ELF," *VIEWS* 20, no. 2 (2011).

[44] Elina Ranta, "Universals in a Universal Language?–Exploring Verb-Syntactic Features in English as a Lingua Franca" (PhD. diss., University of Tampare, 2013).

the categories of the progressive expressing frequent repetition and that which converges to someone's speech[45].

Ranta analyses the different nature of data generated from the spoken ELFA corpus and its native counterpart MICASE (Michigan Corpus of American Spoken English) and thus approaches the issue from a slightly different perspective. She claims that the attractiveness of the progressive seems to be a general linguistic tendency rather than an anomaly of ELF communication[46]. She also suggests there is an overall increase in the use of the progressive which comprises not only new areas of use, but also a return to some original ones. What is more, Ranta provides a classification of so called non-standard uses of the progressive in both native and ELF corpora, and further interprets the use of the progressive in connection with stative verbs, the non-standard progressive falling into the category of general validity or truth and the progressive used in reference to punctual events[47]. It is important to note here that the classifications brought up by Dorn[48] and Ranta[49] are not mutually exclusive as they partially overlap in individual categories. On the other hand, they are representatives of different methodological approaches employed in the course of research. Since the present analysis is not inherently contrastive concerning the functional opposition of native versus non-native English speech, the categories put forth by Dorn[50] are taken as a stepping stone here; however, more comments on the methodological choices are presented in the subsequent part.

3. Data and Methodology

Motivated by the contradiction in the research of 3rd person zero marking and the unexplored nature of written academic discourse in the context of ELF in general, the present analysis of the two chosen ELF-specific lexico-grammatical innovations draws on the corpus the data selection and collection of which is governed by the following external criteria. First and foremost, it is the choice of two morpho-syntactic features of ELF as the subject of the analysis. Secondly, the research is limited to the written academic discourse represented by the authentic data of English thesis abstracts written by PhD students of Management

[45]Dorn, "The '-ing thing'," 14–22.
[46]Ranta, "Universals in Universal Language," 101–102.
[47] Ibid. 94–100.
[48]Dorn, "The '-ing thing'."
[49]Ranta, "Universals in Universal Language," 101–102.
[50]Dorn, "The '-ing thing'."

Studies at the University of Presov, Slovakia and by students at French universities. The data reify a real context here as their production is neither set up for the purposes of the present analysis nor manipulated by the author. The abstracts are retrieved from the online electronic databases of *Centralny register zaverecnych a kvalifikacnych prac*[51] and *The Database of Theses Defended in France*. The overall data include eighty-six thesis abstracts with a total of 23,110 running words and thus exemplify a small-scale corpus of written academic ELF interactions. The overall size of the corpus is determined by the number of PhD theses with English-written abstracts available in the Slovak electronic database at the time of data collection; the identical number of PhD thesis abstracts were subsequently retrieved from the French database. All collected abstracts are transferred into text documents and labelled as S1 – S43 and F1 – F43 indicating the Slovak and French sub-corpora in order to be manageable in the corpus analysis provided by the software tools as well as in the additional manual analysis carried out by the present author.

The rationale behind considering the genre type of a thesis abstract as an example of ELF interaction in academia lies in: its main goal and the functions that its writers and readers aim to fulfill. By means of putting the genre of a thesis abstract into the model of communication consisting of sender, message, and receiver, one can see that the sender's role is embodied by the writer of a particular thesis abstract who encodes the information of the original thesis into a message in English and sends it to the receiver who happens to be other than a Slovak or French-speaking reader. The participants in this communication, i.e. writers and readers, are therefore of primarily different first languages, yet sharing the underlying aim of successful transfer of a communicative message corresponding to the definition of the interaction in ELF.

Based on what has been said, the study is centred on the following research questions. Firstly, are the selected lexico-grammatical features present in the target corpus? What is their quantitative distribution? In order to answer this question, a frequency-based approach is employed using the electronic corpus-analysing tools further described below. Secondly, what functions do these features reflect? This question is answered by way of linguistic interpretation regarding the functions fulfilled by the analysed features in the data. Finally, the study partially provides a contrastive view on the two non-native English academic settings and investigates potential differences between the Slovak and

[51] The author's translation: The Central Registry of Final and Qualification Theses.

French sub-corpora in terms of the frequency and functions of the examined linguistic innovations.

As stated above, the analysis is drawn from the two sub-corpora of abstracts written by non-native English users in the settings of Slovak and French academia. It is important to say at the outset of the analysis that the present corpus is of a small scale and its primary purpose is to reveal evidence of the chosen trends in lexico-grammar proposed by theoretical and empirical studies on the concept of ELF and not to make generalisations about the lexico-grammatical innovations characteristic of ELF at hand.

From a quantitative point of view, the investigation of 3rd person zero is, similarly to the previous empirical research, focused on lexical verbs and the auxiliary "do". In the search for zero marking of the 3rd person singular, the online *CLAWS7 POS tagger* is used and focused on the tags "VVZ" and "VDZ", representing all verb forms in third person singular in the simple present. These are in opposition to "VV0" and "VD0" tags which mark all other verb forms in the simple present. The outcomes of the online part of speech analyses are subsequently verified manually by the present author. As far as the progressive is concerned, the data subjected to research are also tagged with the aforementioned online tagger, but consequently submitted to electronic analysis provided by *AntConc 3.4.3*[52] searching for "-ing" forms tagged as "VVG". The revealed sample of the progressive is subsequently manually examined by the present author. At this point, it is important to mention that hits such as non-finite clauses, prepositional and other phrasal expressions, appositively used particles, predicative participles and gerunds are excluded from the sample in question.

Although a frequency-based approach appears to be vital in empirical studies in general, a qualitative view on the data represented by the linguistic interpretation of specific non-canonical functions appears to be even more essential in the context of ELF. As pointed out above, the previous studies of the two linguistic innovations characteristic of ELF tend to emphasise the analysis of their functional perspective rather than a formal and frequency-based view and thus imply that the linguistic form is, in the context of ELF studies, subordinate to the function of an ELF-specific lexico-grammatical item. In the same vein, the present analysis offers a functional classification of so-called non-standard uses of the revealed instances of 3rd person zero and the progressive in the sample at

[52] Laurence Anthony, "AntConc 3.4.3 [Computer Software]," accessed June 15, 2015, http://www.laurenceanthony.net/.

hand. In doing so, it aims to thoroughly investigate a potential motivation and regularities behind the use of zero marking. When examining the progressive, this study adopts Dorn's categorisation[53] since Ranta's three non-standard categories of the progressive[54] happen not to fit into the picture of the revealed items at hand. What is more, the quantitative and qualitative outcomes drawing on the present Slovak and French sub-corpora are concurrently contrasted in the course of the analysis.

4. Analysis and Discussion

4.1 3rd Person Zero "-s"

Starting with the quantitative view on the data, the most evident result seems to support more recent studies. In the Slovak sub-corpus, four occurrences out of all 145 3rd person verb forms of lexical verbs and "do" represent 2.8% of the linguistic option of 3rd person zero. In the French sub-corpus, eight instances out of all 153 3rd person singular verb forms of lexical verbs and "do" stand for 5.2% of the use of the 3rd person zero morpheme. However, here, five uses of 3rd person zero are limited to one abstract (F9); this can be thus characterised as a feature of an individual's idiolect rather than a general innovation of ELF. Therefore, excluding these five instances, the overall occurrence of 3rd person zero would be three out of 148 representing 2% of 3rd person zero in the French sample. Nevertheless, as the present analysis works on all data available, abstract F9 is included in the overall results. The average percentage is thus 4% of 3rd person zero in the whole corpus of abstracts.

Despite the univocal percentage presenting the non-characteristic nature of 3rd person zero in the target corpus, the analysis aims at revealing potential motivation or regularisation behind zero marking in the 3rd person singular. In the French data, it is interesting to note that the direct postposition of zero marking after the subject in the 3rd person is observable in four instances, all written in the aforementioned abstract F9. All other occurrences of 3rd person zero in both sub-corpora are characteristic of its relative "distance" from the subject they predicate. What is more, the predominant position in which they occur seems to be the second verbal element within compound type sentences.

It is evident that the low percentages of 3rd person zero in the present sub-corpora may be influenced by the inherent nature of written discourse

[53] Dorn, "The '-ing thing'."
[54] Ranta, "Universals in Universal Language."

which is not an online speech production; it is thus open to the possibility for planning, re-editing and software, self-, or other person correcting. Subsequently, the most plausible explanation for the non-occurrence of 3rd person zero in direct postposition after the subject appears to be the intervention of the grammar and spell checker tool which is customarily offered by electronic text documents and able to identify and highlight the missing morpheme "-s". Its function is in fact limited and it is likely that the second and further verbal elements are not checked and corrected, especially those post-modified by other parts of a phrase. Interestingly enough, in spite of the possibilities provided by written discourse in general, the non-canonical features seem to be still evident in the present corpus and thus not regarded as an obstacle in the overall readability of the text.

Linguistically speaking, the zero marking characteristic of compound sentences in the target corpus can be compared to the ellipsis employed to the grammatical subject in this type of sentence which pertains to Standard English features. This implies that the usage of 3rd person zero "-s", in this particular case, can be construed as a potential process of avoiding the linguistic redundancy of the morpheme "-s" in the second verbal element of compound sentences sharing the grammatical subject with the first standardly employed predicate with the 3rd person morpheme "-s".

In order to thoroughly investigate this assumption, the analysis changes its perspective at this point and takes a look at all compound sentences with the same 3rd person subject in the samples. In the Slovak sub-corpus, fifteen instances of zero marking out of all compound sentences with the 3rd person subject represent 27%; e.g. "*The third part focuses on [...] and further **analyze** each question [...]*" (S12). In the French sub-corpus, twelve such sentences are revealed, which implies that 33% of all compound sentences sharing the same 3rd person subject demonstrate the use of zero marking in the second coordinated predicate; e.g. "*The company tries to [...] and **tend** to adopt this model [...]*" (F6).

It is evident that the assumption is not underpinned by the frequency of such a case in the present corpus despite the considerably higher percentages of occurrences and thus needs to be further examined in a larger corpus of written academic discourse. Therefore, instead of interpreting 3rd person zero used in compound sentences as a characteristic or predominant lexico-grammatical innovation here, it can be rather regarded as a potential linguistic tendency in this particular case. However, the overall outcome of 3rd person zero investigation still demonstrates the infrequent occurrence of this feature in the target corpus.

4.2 The Progressive

Regarding the progressive, there is a significant quantitative decrease in its overall use within the present corpus. By way of comparison, the evidence of progressive employed by English speakers in the VOICE spoken corpus is 66 times / 10,000 words and 86 times / 10,000 times in the ICE-GB native corpus[55]. Ranta[56] reveals that the progressive is used 45 times / 10,000 words in her ELFA corpus and 76 times / 10,000 words in its native counterpart MICASE. In the present analysis, it is only 5 times / 10,000 words in the Slovak sub-corpus and 9 times / 10,000 words in the French one. Among them, all but two present perfect instances illustrate the form of present tense.

One of the explanations of this infrequent usage of the progressive may lie in the different nature of analysed discourse since the present research focuses on written academic data. For this reason, an additional corpus of academic English employed by native speakers BAWE (British Academic Written English) is investigated in order to find out the frequency of the progressive there. As supposed, the progressive is used 25 times / 10,000 words, which is approximately three times less than in the spoken counterpart in native English settings. Consequently, an average of 7 instances of the progressive per 10,000 words in the whole present corpus does seem reasonable, however still represents a low frequency; cf. the summary of quantitative results in Table 5-1.

Table 5-1: AN OVERVIEW OF QUANTITATIVE DISTRIBUTION OF THE PROGRESSIVE IN INDIVIDUAL CORPORA

	Native English Corpora	Frequency (per 10,000 words)	ELF Corpora		Frequency (per 10,000 words)
Previous Research	ICE-GB	86	VOICE		66
	MICASE	76	ELFA		45
Present Research	BAWE	25	Slovak Corpus French Corpus	Average	5 9 7

Sources: Data from Dorn[57]; Ranta[58].

[55] Dorn, "The '-ing thing'," 10.
[56] Ranta, "Universals in Universal Language," 86.
[57] Dorn, "The '-ing thing'."

According to the quantitative distribution of the progressive in the present corpus, the French sub-corpus demonstrates a slightly higher frequency of progressive occurrences; however, the functional distribution concerning their canonical versus non-canonical usage seems to be comparable in both sub-corpora. In detail, there are four clear instances of non-canonical use in the Slovak and three in the French sample, all in the form of the present tense. Interestingly enough, all these occurrences stand for two non-canonical functions of the progressive from which the predominant one represents the historic progressive which happens "[to make] the utterance livelier, more vivid and more immediate"[59] and "seems to be happening at the moment of speaking, yet not in reality, but in the mind's eye of the [reader]"[60]. Here, the difference between the individual sub-corpora analysed is insignificant since three examples are found in the Slovak and two instances in the French sample as follows: "*This paper **is examining** the implementation of public support programs and strategies with an emphasis on [...]*" (S25); "*This research **is overcoming** two limitations of previous researches [sic].*" (S27); "*The presented dissertation **is dealing** with the perception of actual fiscal system reform in Slovak Republic[sic] by the professional public which [...]*" (S29); "*We **are looking** at these two processes as places, which include a [sic] managerial logic contributing to [...]*" (F26) and "*This practice **is raising** a great number of questions concerning the managers' work [...]*" (F33). With a close-up view, one can see that this function implicitly expresses the actual engagement of the authors of the abstracts and original theses in the process of research and by means of the progressive they evince the time dedicated to the analysis which can also have a particular effect on the readership.

The other functional use of the progressive, which is similarly shared by the two sub-corpora, fulfills the role of adding emphasis to the utterance in each of the samples. What is more, it is evident that the stretches of discourse emphasised by means of the progressive tend to be in stark contrast to a previously-stated piece of information within the text. From the structural point of view, the present function is, in all instances, introduced by the conjunction "but" as a part of a Subordinate Clause, i.e. "*There are many factors which influence the field of HRM, but globalisation **is bringing** [the] greatest implications for this area.*" (S26) and "*Several studies have investigated the success factors of IS in the*

[58] Ranta, "Universals in Universal Language."
[59] Dorn, "The '-ing thing'," 14.
[60] Ibid, 15.

*context of SMEs. But managers **are struggling** to use these results because of the large number of factors [...]*" (F37). What is more, the contrastive nature of this function may be interpreted as ideologically-loaded[61] since the longer form of the progressive inherently aims to attract the reader's attention.

To sum up, it is interesting to note here that the functional categories employed in the present corpus are according to Dorn[62] also evident in the context of native English speech. The evidence thus may imply that these still officially "non-standard" uses of the progressive are not characteristic of a non-native speaker's deficient form of English; they represent a general linguistic innovation of the English language and thus similar linguistic tendencies to those in ENL. That is why ELF seems to perfectly reflect the language employed globally in the current sociolinguistic situation.

Concluding Remarks

Although nobody would argue against the fact that today's world has been constantly changing in almost every possible aspect over the past few decades, the linguistic models aiming to reflect the changes and challenge traditional academic thinking have not been taken up by the research world with such ease. One of these linguistic challenges is embodied within the concept of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), the means of communication among users of predominantly different first languages sharing the underlying goal of the successful transfer of a communicative message. ELF, theoretically and practically, ranges through all domains of current life and even in the context of academia there is evidence of a set of characteristic linguistic innovations common to all ELF speakers irrespective of their native linguistic backgrounds. In the present study, it is a couple of ELF-specific lexico-grammatical features, hence the 3rd person zero "-s" and non-canonical usage of the progressive, which are subjected to research.

In doing so, the small-scale corpus of written academic data in the form of English thesis abstracts written by management PhD students in Slovak and French academic settings appears to be an apt choice for the analysis in question. Since the participants in this written academic communication, hence writers and readers of the abstracts are of primarily different first languages, they meet the main communicative goal of ELF

[61] Lesley Jeffries, *Critical Stylistics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan).
[62] Dorn, "The '-ing thing'."

interaction. The universal nature of the chosen linguistic innovations is, in the study, underpinned by the negligible differences between the present Slovak and French sub-corpora in their quantitative picture as well as the functional interpretation.

In the course of the analysis, there are evident functional peculiarities for the corpus of written academic discourse in question although the quantitative distribution of the investigated features happens to reveal their infrequent occurrence in the present data. As to the morpho-syntactic feature of 3rd person zero marking, the research focuses on its usage in the second verbal element of compound sentences which seem to be most symptomatic for the analysed sample. A plausible interpretation of this usage stresses the existence of a potential linguistic process of avoiding redundancy in the investigated stretches of discourse.

The progressive and its non-canonical use demonstrate the occurrence of two categories, i.e. historic progressive and the progressive adding the emphasis to the utterance, which are also employed in the context of native English speech[63]. What is more, both can be partially interpreted as ideologically-loaded as they happened to aim at attracting the reader's attention by means of the longer, progressive form and the contrastive position after the conjunction “but”.

Overall, given that thesis abstracts represent written academic ELF, the research reveals that the ELF-specific lexico-grammatical innovations of 3rd person zero and the specific usage of the progressive do not happen to be frequent in the present data in terms of their quantitative distribution. On the other hand, the qualitative approach drawing on linguistic interpretation demonstrates that the peculiar uses of the features, hence zero marking in compound sentences and the functional use of the historic progressive and the progressive adding emphasis, can be considered to be characteristic linguistic tendencies employed in written academic discourse captured by the present corpus. Naturally, there is the need for further qualitative research focusing on written academic discourse and a larger corpus including thesis abstracts from different sociolinguistic backgrounds.

[63]Ibid.

References

Anthony, Laurence. AntConc (Version 3.4.3) [Computer Software]. Tokyo, Japan: Waseda University, 2014. Accessed June 15, 2015. http://www.laurenceanthony.net/.

BAWE. "British Academic Written English Corpus." Accessed June 2, 2015. https://the.sketchengine.co.uk/bonito/run.cgi/first_form?corpname=preloaded/bawe2;align=.

Björkman, Beyza. *Spoken lingua franca English at a Swedish technical university: An investigation of form and communicative effectiveness*. Stockholm: Stockholm University, 2010.

Breiteneder, Angelika. "English as a lingua franca in Europe: An empirical perspective." *World Englishes* 28, no. 2 (2009): 256–269.

Carey, Ray. "In search of wild diversity: a closer look at 3rd-person zero marking in ELF." Accessed July 30, 2015. https://elfaproject.wordpress.com/2013/08/31/in-search-of-wild-diversity-3rd-person/.

CRZP. "Centralny register zaverecnych a kvalifikacnych prac." [The Central Registry of Final and Qualification Theses.] Accessed May 2, 2015. http://crzp.sk/.

Crystal, David. *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

—. *English as a Global Language.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

THESES. "The Database of Theses Defended in France." Accessed May 2, 2015. http://www.theses.fr/en/

Dewey, Martin. "English as a Lingua Franca: an Empirical Study of Innovation in Lexis and Grammar." PhD. diss., King's College London, 2006.

Dorn, Nora. "The '-ing thing': Exploring the progressive in ELF." *VIEWS* 20, no. 2 (2011): 3–26.

ELFA. "The Corpus of English as a Lingua Franca in Academic Settings Project." Accessed May 15, 2015. http://www.helsinki.fi/elfa/elfacorpus.

Erling, Elizabeth. J. and Tom Bartlett. "Making English their own: The use of ELF among students of English at the FUB." *Nordic Journal of English Studies* 5, no. 2 (2006): 9–40.

CLAWS TAGGER. "Free CLAWS WWW Tagger." Accessed July 10, 2015. http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/claws/trial.html.

Graddol, David. *English Next*. London: The British Council, 2006.

Hynninen, Niina. “The Common European Framework of Reference from the perspective of English as a Lingua Franca: What we can learn from a focus on language regulation.” *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca* 3, no. 2 (2012): 293–316.

Jeffries, Lesley. *Critical Stylistics*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

Jenkins, Jennifer. *The Phonology of English as an International Language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

—. *World Englishes: A Resource Book for Students.* London: Routledge, 2003.

—. “Points of View and Blind Spots: ELF and SLA.” *International Journal of Applied Linguistics* 16, no. 2 (2006): 137–162.

—. “English as a Lingua Franca from the classroom to the classroom.” *ELT Journal* 66, no. 4 (2012): 486–494.

Kachru, Braj B. “Standards, codification and sociolinguistic realism: the English language in the Outer Circle.” In *English in the World: Teaching and Learning the Language and Literatures*, edited by Randolph Quirk and Henry Widdowson, 11–30. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

Kaur, Jagdish. “Intercultural communication in English as a lingua franca: Some sources of misunderstanding.” *Intercultural Pragmatics* 8, no. 1 (2011): 93–116.

Kavanagh, Barry. “A Corpus Investigation of Two Non-standard Features, in ELF, Native Speech, and Learner Language.” Master's thesis, University of Oslo, 2014

Krajnakova, Diana. “K problematike anglictiny ako lingua franca (ELF)” [On the concept of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF).] *Motus in verbo* 4, no. 1 (2015): 16–25.

Mauko, Ida. “The native speaker of English–A clash of conceptualisations: A comparative analysis of self-ascribed and non-elective native/non-native English speaker identity.” Accessed August 5, 2015. http://www.academia.edu/11456890/The_native_speaker_of_English_-_A_clash_of_conceptualisations_A_comparative_analysis_of_self-ascribed_and_non-elective_native_nonnative_English_speaker_identity.

Mauranen, Anna. “Signaling and preventing misunderstanding in English as lingua franca communication.” *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 177 (2006): 123–150.

—. *Exploring ELF: Academic English Shaped by Non-native Speakers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Modiano, Marko. "Standard English(es) and educational practices for the world's lingua franca." *English Today*15, no. 4 (1999): 3–13.

Ranta, Elina. "Universals in a Universal Language?–Exploring Verb-Syntactic Features in English as a Lingua Franca." PhD. diss., University of Tampare, 2013.

Salakhyan, Elena. "Eastern European Manifestations of English as a Lingua Franca." PhD. diss., Universität Tübingen, 2014.

Seidlhofer, Barbara. "Research Perspectives on Teaching English as a Lingua Franca." *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 24 (2004): 209–239.

—. *Understanding English as a Lingua Franca. A Complete Introduction to the Theoretical Nature and Practical Implications of English Used as a Lingua Franca*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Taviano, Stefania, ed. "Special issue: English as a Lingua Franca. Implications for Translator and Interpreter Education." *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer* 7, no. 2 (2013).

Torrado, Alba. "English as a Lingua Franca: A Theoretical and Practical Approach." Accessed May 20, 2015. https://prezi.com/k7_vf6mrujhv/english-as-a-lingua-franca-a-theoretical-and-practical-appr/.

Trudgill, Peter. *Sociolinguistic Variation and Change*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2002.

Vetchinnikova, Svetlana. "Second Language Lexis and the Idiom Principle." PhD. diss., University of Helsinki, 2014.

VOICE. "The Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English." Accessed May 1, 2015. https://www.univie.ac.at/voice/.

Walker, Robin. *Teaching the pronunciation of English as a Lingua Franca*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

CHAPTER SIX

REPRESENTATION OF SEXES IN OCCUPATIONAL LEXICON: ASYMMETRY ACROSS LANGUAGES[1]

MARCELA MICHÁLKOVÁ

Introduction

Societal scrutiny of biological sex translates into social gender. The term social gender refers "to the socially imposed dichotomy of masculine and feminine roles and character traits."[2] Similarly, Eckert[3] defines social gender as the social construction of the biological category of sex; according to some scholars, it is the outcome of social practices, in that it shapes the identity of men and women in terms of societal expectations, different social roles assigned to men and women, and differences in language practices for men and women, etc. (cf. Butler[4], among others). Semantic fields in which this socially determined dichotomy is most palpable include rank, position or function in a particular organization or company, religious hierarchies, evaluations based on one's behavior, and––most notably— the occupational sphere.

Example 1
The history of the flight attendants' career started at the beginning of the 20th century with male helpers – *couriers*, later called *stewards*, who were

[1] The study was supported in part by grantsKEGA 007PU-4/2015 and VEGA 1/0099/16.
[2] Cheris Kramarae and Paula Treichler, *A Feminist Dictionary* (Boston: Pandora Press, 1985), 173.
[3] Penelope Eckert, *The whole woman: Sex and gender differences in variation* (In: Language Variation and Change 1, 1989), 245.
[4] Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990).

slowly replaced in the late 1930s by *stewardesses* – unmarried, childless females, originally registered nurses, who assisted passengers on the aircraft. For approximately four decades, there was a restriction of hiring only women. This policy changed during the 1970s and 1980s, opening up *flight attendant* positions to both men and women. In contemporary American English, linguistically marked gendered words such as *steward* and *stewardess* seem to have decreased: *stewards* and *stewardesses* have become *flight attendants* or *cabin crew*, although the tendency to treat forms for the man as the norm continues. While English opts for a more gender-neutral language due to extra-linguistic factors including political correctness, other languages employ different strategies. For example, Nissen[5] cites Spanish *azafata* (f.[6]) 'stewardess' but *auxiliar de vuelo* (m.[7]) 'flight attendant', while Engelberg[8] notes the Finnish parallels *lentoemäntä* (f.) 'flight hostess, stewardess' but the borrowed *stuertti* (m.) 'steward'. On the other hand, Polish exhibits gender symmetry by using parallel loanwords as terms for female and male flight attendants: *stewardesa* (f.) – *steward* (m.).

Example 2

The English word *governess* denotes a woman who is employed to care for and supervise a child, especially in a private household. Since the masculine form g*overnor* refers to a chief executive of a state in the United States, an official appointed to govern a colony or territory, or a member of a governing body, given the generative potential of language, male governesses could be called, for instance, *governessors*. However, the nonce-formation *governessor* is an unattested word. Instead, within specific socio-cultural and/or historical contexts, male governesses who were trained and hired to home-school boys were called *tutors*. Notice that the primary *responsibility* of (male) tutors was that of *education* rather than caretaking. Their status in the household as well as their social status were typically higher than that of the governesses. Clearly, no one-to-one

[5] Uwe Kjær Nissen, *Gender in Spanish: Tradition and innovation* (In: Hellinger, Marlis and Hadumod Bußmann (eds.), *Gender across languages: The linguistic representation of women and men,* Vol. 2, Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 2002), 260.

[6] feminine

[7] masculine

[8] Mila Engelberg, *The communication of gender in Finnish* (In: Hellinger, Marlis and Hadumod Bußmann (eds.), *Gender across languages: The linguistic representation of women and men,* Vol. 2, Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 2002), 115.

semantic correspondence exists between *governess* and *governor* or between *governess* and *tutor. Tutor* additionally denotes a teacher who teaches one student or a small group of students, generally outside of school, or provides extra help with a subject they consider difficult, or a teaching assistant in some colleges and universities, or the guardian of a minor. The feminine counterpart of *tutor* in tme three last contexts above is *tutoress*.

Steward, stewardess, flight attendant, governor, governessess, tutor, tutoress illustrate some intricacies of the lingustic representation of maleness and femaleness. Many works in gender linguistics (e.g., Spender[9], Tannen[10], Bucholtz[11], Pauwels[12], Romaine[13], Swann[14], Holmes and Meyerhoff[15], Holmes[16,17], Cameron[18,19], Mills and Mullany[20]), particularly those using feminist frameworks in research, are concerned about the limited linguistic visibility of women, and they argue that linguistic androcentrism should be reduced. The gender neutral *flight attendant* would be an example of strategic avoidance of linguistic sexism.

The current research does not primarily seek to explore the nature of bias in favour of men leading to women's linguistic invisibility. Instead, it

---

[9] Dale Spender, *Man Made Language* (London: Routledge, 1980).
[10] Deborah Tannen, *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation* (London: Virago, 1991).
[11] Mary Bucholtz, *Bad examples: transgression and progress in language and gender studies* (In: Bucholtz, M. et al. (eds.) *Reinventing Identities: The gendered Self in Discourse*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1999) pp. 3-20.
[12] Anne Pauwels, *Women Changing Language* (London and New York: Longman, 1998).
[13] Suzanne Romaine, *Communicating Gender* (Taylor & Francis, 1998).
[14] Joan Swann, *Yes, but is it gender?* (In: Litosseliti, Lia and Jane Sunderland (eds.) *Gender Identity and Discourse Analysis*, Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2002).
[15] Janet Holmes and Miriam Meyerhoff, *The Handbook of Language and Gender* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2005).
[16] Janet Holmes, *Gendered Talk at Work: Constructing Social Identity through Workplace Discourse.* (Blackwell Publishers, 2006)
[17] Janet Holmes, *Gendered Talk at Work. Language and Social Change* (Blackwell Publishers, 2006)
[18] Deborah Cameron, *On Language and Sexual Politics* (London: Routledge, 2006).
[19] Deborah Cameron, *Sex/gender, language and the new biologism* (In: *Applied Linguistics* 31.2, 2010), 173-92.
[20] Sara Mills and Louise Mullany, *Language, Gender and Feminism: Theory, Methodology and Practice* (London: Routledge, 2011).

examines ways in which gender asymmetry gets mapped onto the system of occupational terms both in West Slavic languages (Slovak, Czech, and Polish) and English, a representative of the so-called genderless languages. In particular, the present study investigates the following exceptions to general patterns of symmetrical "transcription" of sex into linguistic choices:

a/ parallel designations for women and men, with a semantic difference, e.g. tme English *major*, an officer of middle rank in armed forces – *majorette*, a girl or a young woman in a uniform who makes choreographed movements with a baton by turning it and throwing it into the air, the Slovak *kartár* (m.) a person (male or female) who passionately likes playing cards – *kartárka* (f.)a woman fortune-teller, the Polish *sekretarz* (m.), typically a head of an administrative governmental office or international organization – *sekretarka* (f.), a personal assistant who performs clerical tasks for a boss or an organization,

b/ lexical gaps (Ø), e.g., the Slovak kat (m.), an executioner – *Ø* (f.), and Czech *letuška* (f.), a person whose job is to ensure the safety and comfort of passengers aboard commercial flights – *Ø* (m.),

c/ compound loanwords containing sex-specific stems *-man/-men* and *-boj*, e.g. tme Polish *biznesmen, businessman* (m.), a businessman – *biznesmenka, bizneswoman/bizneswomen, kobieta biznesu, kobieta robiąca/prowadząca interesy* (f.), a businesswoman.

This study draws on research conducted by Michálková[21],[22],[23].

1. Encoding gender in West Slavic languages and English

Work plays a defining role in human life. Throughout history, it has been conceptualized in various ways, and the lexicon relating to one's usual employment is extensive. While some vocational terms are generic in nature and can be applied relatively equally in various parts of the

[21] Marcela Michálková, *Gender Asymmetries in Slovak Personal Nouns* (PhD diss., Columbus, OH: The Ohio State University, available at https://etd.ohiolink.edu/!etd.send_file?accession=osu1262189760&disposition=inline, 2009).

[22] Marcela Michálková, *Insights into Gender A/Symmetry in Slovak* (Prešov: Filozofická fakulta Prešovskej univerzity v Prešove, 2014).

[23] Marcela Michálková, *Taxonómia rodových asymetrií v slovenčine* (In: Kesselová, Jana, Mária Imrichová, and Martin Ološtiak (eds.) *Registre jazyka a jazykovedy (2. zväzok),* Acta Facultatis Philosophicae Universitatis Prešoviensis. Jazykovedný zborník 51 (AFPhUP 465/498), Prešov: Filozofická fakulta Prešovskej univerzity v Prešove, 2014).

world, other terms are more regional or culture-specific in nature. Some occupations and their linguistic representations have been in existence for a long time; others emerged, became encoded in language, and then due to various extra-linguistic or linguistic factors, became obsolete.

Words to describe work and jobs make up a significant portion of the overall lexicon, and the manifestation of gender in occupational terminology exhibits variation across languages. Little attention has been given to Slovak despite the fact that a surge of academic interest in the linguistic representation of men and women in Slavic languages emerged in the late 1990s. *Slavic gender linguistics* was a ground-breaking collection of sociolinguistic studies edited by Mills[24]. It provided "a wealth of new data, methodologies, and preliminary findings to scholars in the broader fields of Slavic linguistic, cultural, and literary studies."[25] *Gender across languages: The linguistic representation of women and men*[26], a three-volume collection of articles on gender-related issues in thirty languages, including Russian, Polish, Czech, and Serbian, edited by Marlis Hellinger and Hadumod Bußmann, soon followed. Additionally, *relationships* and intersections *between language* and *gender* in Russian have been mapped by Zaitseva[27] and Martynyuk[28], among others. Polish gender linguistics has been represented, e.g. by Karwatowska and Szpyra-Kozłowska[29], Miemietz[30], and Kryk-Kastovsky[31]. Contemporary sociolinguistic

[24] Margaret Mills (ed.), *Slavic gender linguistics* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 1999).
[25] Ibid: vii
[26] Marlis Hellinger and Hadumod Bußmann (eds.), *Gender across languages: The linguistic representation of women and men,* 3 vv (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 2001, 2002, 2003).
[27] Valentina Zaitseva, *Referential knowledge in discourse: Interpretation of {I, You} in male and female speech* (In: Margaret Mills (ed.), *Slavic gender linguistics,* Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 1999), 1–26.
[28] Alla Martynyuk, *A contrastive study of male and female occupational terms in English and Russian* (In: *Papers and Studies in Contrastive Linguistics* 26, 1990), 103–10.
[29] Małgorzata Karwatowska and Jolanta Szpyra-Kozłowska, *Lingwistyka płci. On i ona w języku polskim* (Lublin: Wydawnictvo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, 2005).
[30] Bärbel Miemietz, *"Male person" vs. "Everything that is not a male person": Gender and sex in Polish,* (In: Helga Kotthoff and Ruth Wodak (eds.), *Communicating gender in context,* Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2002), 31–50.
[31] Barbara Kryk-Kastovsky, *Norm versus use: On gender in Polish* (In: Unterbeck et al. (eds.), 2000), 729–47.

research on gender in the Czech Republic has been mainly conducted by Valdrová[32], Čmejrková[33], Hoffmannová[34], and Nebeská.[35,36] A remarkably informative and inspirational paper on Czech has been written by Dickins: *Gender Differentiation and the Asymmetrical Use of Animate Nouns in Contemporary Czech* (in *Slavonic and East European Review*)[37].

Despite this growing interest in the linguistic encoding of maleness and femaleness across languages, Slovak continues to be underrepresented. Therefore, data from the Slovak language constitute the core of the current study. The studied corpus database is comprised of 6,133 Slovak personal nouns. They were identified among more than 60,000 entries in a prescriptive monolingual dictionary of the codified standard Slovak language *Krátky slovník slovenského jazyka*[38] [Concise Dictionary of Slovak Language, henceforth CDSL], 2003. Sixteen semantic categories were further established and examined, 'Descriptions based on one's occupation' – the class of personal nouns under investigation in the current study – being one of them; and the one with the strongest representation (28.6%); it contains 1,754 lemmas, the majority of which are masculine forms (1,059). While more than half of the masculine forms in the semantic category 'Descriptions based on one's occupation' co-occur symmetrically with feminine counterparts, a significant number of vocational terms engage in asymmetrical relationships. It should be noted though that even though CDSL lists 404 masculine nouns without feminine counterparts in this category, many of these nouns do in fact have feminine counterparts in actual usage, as searches in the following

---

[32] Jana Valdrová*, Stereotypy a klišé v mediální projekci genderu*. (In: *Sociologický časopis* XXXVII (2), 2001), 183-205.

[33] Světla Čmejrková, *Communicating gender in Czech* (In: Marlis Hellinger and Hadumod Bußmann (eds.), *Gender across languages: The linguistic representation of women and men,* vol. 3, Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 2003) 27–57.

[34] Jana Hoffmanová, *Feministická lingvistika?* (In: *Naše řeč* 78, 1995), 80–91.

[35] Iva Nebeská, *K prostředkům výstavby feministického textu* (In: Dobrava Moldanová(ed.), *Žena – jazyk – literatura,* 303–305. Ústí nad Labem: PF Univerzity J.E.Purkyně, 1996).

[36] Iva Nebeská, *Jak píší české feministky. Kontrasty ve stavbě feministického textu* (In: *Naše řeč* 80, 1997) 19–25.

[37] Tom Dickins, *Gender Differentiation and the Asymmetrical Use of Animate Nouns in Contemporary Czech* (In: *Slavonic and East European Review*79, 2001), 212–47.

[38] Ján Kačala, Mária Pisárčiková, and Matej Považaj (eds.), *Krátky slovník slovenského jazyka*, 4th ed. (Bratislava: Veda, 2003).

data corpora show: Slovak dictionaries (Slovník slovenského jazyka[39] [Dictionary of the Slovak Language] in six volumes, Synonymický slovník slovenčiny[40] [Dictionary of Synonyms in Slovak], Pravidlá slovenského pravopisu[41] [Handbook of Slovak Orthography]), Slovak National Corpus[42], and Slovak Google. Examples include *vodohospodárka*[43] (f.) 'female water economy manager', *vedátorka*[44] (f.) 'female pundit', *pumpárka*[45](f.) 'female gas station attendant', and many others. In fact, almost all vocational (and avocational) descriptors referring to men can be transformed into feminine counterparts by adding a derivational suffix. Exceptions include some brand-new loan words that have not been fully assimilated into Slovak morphology (e.g., *kouč* (m.) – **koučka* (f.)[46] 'coach, trainer') and historical words referring to certain contexts which did not include women (e.g., *hajdúch* (m.) – **hajdúška* (f.) 'heyduck', *paholok* (m.) – **paholka/paholkyňa* (f.) 'varlet'). Conversely, a limited number of professional terms are semantically derived from lexical gender nouns, such as *(zdravotná) sestra* (f.) 'nurse [literally, medical sister]' – *zdravotný brat* (m.) 'male nurse, [literally, medical brother]'.

English normally does not overtly encode gender in its occupational terms. Some words do take different derived forms depending on the biological gender/sex of the referent, such as *actor/actress*. However, this feature is rare, and, generally speaking, gender marking in the Modern English nominal system is insignificant. Most English words for occupations and/or social roles (and titles) are already linguistically gender-neutral: *pathologist, librarian, designer, firefighter, and lawyer.*

In languages like Slovak, Czech, and Polish, personal nouns are specified for grammatical gender – an inherent and invariant property of the noun (in contrast to the categories of number and case), controlling agreement between the noun and some adjacent elements both inside and outside the noun phrase. Grammatical gender in Slovak, Czech, and Polish

[39] Štefan Peciar (ed.), *Slovník slovenského jazyka*, 6 vv. (Bratislava: Slovenská Akadémia Vied, 1959–68).
[40] Mária Pisárčiková, *Synonymický slovník slovenčiny*, 3rd ed. (Bratislava: *Veda,* 2004).
[41] Matej Považaj (ed.), *Pravidlá slovenského pravopisu*, 3rd ed. (Bratislava: Veda, 2000).
[42] http://korpus.juls.savba.sk/
[43] Source: Pravidlá slovenského pravopisu
[44] Source: Pravidlá slovenského pravopisu
[45] Source: Pravidlá slovenského pravopisu
[46] In the case of a 'coach', Slovak lexicon contains only one female/feminine term – *trénerka* (f.), derived from *tréner* (m.). Masculine *tréner* co-exists with the borrowing *coach* (also written *kouč*).

is usually interpreted sexually: the so-called referential (natural, semantic, biological) gender links linguistic expressions with non-linguistic reality and refers to the property of extra-linguistic (i.e., "natural" or "biological") femaleness or maleness. The option to create gender-neutral replacements is linguistically unavailable in West Slavic languages, unlike in English; the only practical alternative is to use one gender (usually masculine) as the default for both sexes.

There are two types of correlation between grammatical gender and referential gender: gender symmetry/symmetrical relation and gender asymmetry/asymmetrical relation. Gender symmetry refers to the equal representation of both sexes[47] through pairs of lexemes differentiated by grammatical gender, such that male referents are conveyed by masculine forms and female referents by feminine forms. Lexical gaps, parallel designations for women and men, with a semantic difference, and compound loanwords containing sex-specific stems *-man/-men* and *-boj* represent gender asymmetry; double gender nouns and epicene nouns also represent gender asymmetry, but those are not of concern in this study.

2. The typology of gender asymmetry

2.1 Lexical gaps

Lexical gaps in the most general sense concern the absence of some words for women or men. Typically, feminine lexical gaps are much more frequent than masculine lexical gaps. Notice that virtually all Slovak masculine vocational terms have or can theoretically have feminine counterparts; this renders the given part of the Slovak lexicon highly symmetrical. Nevertheless, some female/feminine nouns fail to serve as sources of male/masculine derivatives.

In some cases, biological restrictions may be the cause of this asymmetry, e.g., the inability of men to nurse and be a child's *dojka* ('wet nurse').

However, the cause of the lexical gap is more frequently attributed to strictly prescribed social roles prior to the modern era. Feminine words like *baba* 'midwife', *babica* 'midwife', *guvernantka* 'nurserymaid, governess', *varovkyňa* 'babysitter', *priadka* 'weaver', *driapačka* 'quilter', *páračka* 'woman who strips feathers from quills', *trepáčka* 'swingle, a

[47] The plane of content should be differentiated from the plane of expression here: the same *concept* on the plane of content has two forms on the plane of expression; these words are virtual synonyms distinguished only by the sex of the referent.

woman beating flax', *práčka* 'washerwoman' are a reflection of this socio-cultural background.

Conversely, it must be noted that in Slovak there is also a limited class of masculine nouns denoting occupations which are exclusively associated with male agents, for which no feminine nouns can be derived. What is significant with respect to those terms is the fact that all the professions they denote were exclusively performed by men at some point of human history (mostly in feudal times), but nowadays are extinct. In other words, the socio-economic situation changed before there was any sociolinguistic need to coin feminine counterparts for masculine personal nouns, such as *furman* (m.) 'carter', *valach* (m.) 'chief shepherd's helper', *honec* (m.) 'herder of a flock of sheep'.

Another group of occupational terms that lack parallel feminine forms are those describing representatives of feudal military authority whose mission was to protect centralized Hungarian power[48], ensure public security, and provide a basis for the development of agriculture, industry, and commerce. The following male/masculine nouns fall in this group: *hajdúch* (m.) 'heyduck, a mercenary foot soldier in the Hungarian Empire; a halberdier of a Hungarian noble'; *dráb* 'feudal labor security provider, guard, messenger, performer of physical punishment'; *dragún* 'a mounted soldier who dismounts to fight'. Evidently, women did not serve as protectors of the feudal lords and nobles, thus no nouns were created to denote female soldiers and security guards in feudal Hungary. These words, which are all archaisms found only in historical contexts, are of Hungarian, Balkan, or Western European provenience. However, two native masculine lexemes *kat* 'executioner' and *hlásnik* 'armed guard and night watchman' also belong to this category.

One of those changes in the past decades which is reflected in language concerns a person who assists passengers on an aircraft. In one of the so-called "women's professions," a female flight attendant is referred to as *letuška* (*-ka* being the typical feminine derivational suffix). However, there is no masculine counterpart **letuš* in my primary source of data – CDSL; a male flight attendant is instead called *steward/stevard* (m.). CDSL lists *stevard* (originally spelled *steward*) and its less frequently used feminine counterpart *stevardka* (f.), as well as *letuška* (f.), for which, however, it does not cite any male/masculine counterpart. The masculine *letuš* was only found in three contexts, one of which is followed by a

[48] The Slovak lands were annexed to the Hungarian Kingdom in 1000 A.D. and remained part of Hungary (later the dual state of Austria-Hungary) until it collapsed in 1918.

comment/apposition in the parentheses that suggests that the word is not fully assimilated; it is an occasionalism or an idiolectic expression:

Už vidím nášho letuša (alebo stewarda?), prináša nám chladené nápoje na malom vozíku...
'I can already see our *letuš* (or steward?); he is bringing us refrigerated drinks on a small cart...'

In the Slovak National Corpus, 996 lemmas for '*letuška*' were identified, one of which, curiously enough, is feminine in agreement but clearly has a male referent:

Fúzatá letuška–chlap, nám namiesto občerstvenia doniesol na tácke klbko vaty. Do uší…[49]
'A moustached stewardess – a guy, brought us a cotton ball on a tray instead of refreshment. For the ears...'

Czech, it may be noted, has the same asymmetry: *?letuš/Ø* (m.) – *letuška* (f.), *stevard/steward* (m.) – *stevardka/stewardka* (f.). Curiously, the form *letuš* apparently can function as a female/feminine noun, too, as illustrated in the Googled example below:

Ve dveřích nás vítá sympatická letuš v červené uniformě.[50]
'At the door, an attractive$_{-F}$ flight attendant$_{-F}$ in a red uniform is welcoming us.'

Here, the seemingly masculine form terminating in a consonant is, based on its agreement pattern, in fact a feminine form, which is apparently non-declinable. One explanation for this may be that *letuš* is formed analogically with hypocoristics of women's proper names (e.g., *Maruška – Maruš*) in order to sound equally colloquial, familiar and/or "cool".

In addition to those lexical gaps which are constrained by social and biological factors, there is a small class of possible words that exhibit gender asymmetry due to formal constraints, e.g. the non-existent **koučka* (f.) 'female coach' with the cluster [wčk] seems to violate phonological constraints. As could be seen, most of the lexical gaps occur due to social changes.

[49]http://www.inzine.sk/support/article_short.asp?art=1939, accessed 8/14/09
[50]http://www.stevard.net/madrid.htm*, accessed 8/17/09*

In Polish, according to Koniuszaniec and Błaszkowska[51], numerous professions and positions lack feminine denotations. Koniuszaniec and Błaszkowska[52] specifically mention the following classes of masculine nouns denoting high-profile jobs for which feminine counterparts are missing:

a) many nouns terminating in *-og* (mostly loanwords): *archeolog* 'archeologist', *psycholog* 'psychologist', *kardiolog* 'cardiologist',
b) nouns ending in *-owiec*: *bankowiec* 'banker',
c) some foreign terms: *jubiler* 'jeweler', *dealer* 'car dealer', *inwestor* 'investor', *dystrybutor* 'distributor',
d) adjectival occupational terms such as *motorniczy* 'tram driver'*, leśniczy* 'forest-ranger.'

Notice that Polish contains entire classes of words that have been resistant to feminization rather than just the isolated lexical gaps seen in Slovak.

Łaziński[53] also points out the lack of feminine occupational and professional forms in Polish, particularly those denoting socially prestigious jobs, e.g., *minister* (m./f.) 'secretary, minister', *premier* (m./f.) 'prime minister', among others. This asymmetry is even more striking in light of the fact that derivation of feminine nouns from masculine ones is very common in Polish.

Additionally, Koniuszaniec and Błaszkowska[54] attempt to demonstrate the asymmetrical relationship between some masculine and feminine members of the pairs of related personal nouns using such examples as *dyplomata* 'diplomat'– *dyplomatka* 'kind of briefcase', *drukarz* 'printer (person)' – *drukarka* 'printer (object)', and *pielgrzym* 'pilgrim'– *pielgrzymka* 'pilgrimage', where the masculine forms are personal, i.e. denote holders of the respective professions, while the feminine forms denote non-personal entities. However, in my opinion, the authors seem to be misinterpreting the examples in an effort to identify a male bias. The correlation between masculine and feminine forms should be approached more carefully since it is primarily formal rather than sex/gender-related.

[51] Koniuszaniec and Błaszkowska, *Language and gender*, 269
[52] Koniuszaniec and Błaszkowska (2003, 269) also list some non-occupational personal nouns that block the derivation of feminine counterparts, such as nouns in *–ec* (*ślepiec* 'blind man', *głupiec* 'fool').
[53] Łaziński, Marek, Grammar and gender in Polish corpora, (In: Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk (ed.), *PALC 2001: Practical Applications in Language Corpora,* Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2003), 322.
[54] Koniuszaniec and Błaszkowska, *Language and gender*, 268–269.

The non-existent **dyplomatka* 'female diplomat' and *dyplomatka* 'kind of briefcase' would be homonyms synchronically[55]. Both are derivatives formed by means of the suffix *-ka*, which is itself semantically broad; it can denote both a female agent and a thing. The same applies to *drukarz – drukarka*, and *piegrzym – pielgrzymka*.

Slovak exhibits similar behavior. Just as in Polish, some Slovak masculine personal nouns also appear to be "paired" with non-personal nouns, as illustrated below; in some cases, homonymous feminine personal variants also exist:

Masculine personal and feminine non-personal nouns with the same stem:

kovboj (m.) 'cowboy', *kovbojka* (f.) 'western, horse opera'

furman (m.) 'carter, carrier', *furmanka* (f.) 'carrying trade, carter's business'

Homonymous feminine personal and non-personal nouns:

lekárnik (m.) 'pharmacist'– *lekárnička 1* (f.) 'female pharmacist', *lekárnička 2* (f.) 'first-aid kit'

detektív (m.) 'detective'– *detektívka 1* (f.) 'female detective', *detektívka 2* (f.) 'detective story'.

The masculine forms above are all agentive nouns, while the feminine forms are either agentive denotations for women holding the same kinds of jobs or homonymous non-personal nouns. In any case, the putative pairing of masculine personal nouns with homonyms of existent or non-existent feminine agentives in *-ka* should not be interpreted as evidence for androcentrism. Rather, it is an accident resulting from separate processes of word-formation.

2.2 Parallel designations for women and men, with a semantic difference

Some designations for women and men are parallel, with a semantic difference. Hellinger and Bußmann[56] claim that, on the plane of content, the female typically represents the lesser category; on the plane of expression, "their use may be stylistically marked and in many languages carries negative connotations, which makes them unacceptable in neutral

[55] Diachronically, there is a semantic relationship (metaphor).
[56] Hellinger and Bußmann, *Gender across languages*, 2002, 12

contexts."[57] Many works in contemporary gender linguistics argue that the linguistic features that contribute to "androcentrism," "linguistic sexism," "reinforcement of male dominance and social prestige," "the unequal status of men and women," "the marginalization of women" should be eradicated. The term gender equity has been proposed by some to replace gender symmetry. This study does not attempt to take into consideration the ideological ramifications of such feminist arguments, nor does it seek to determine the degree of correlation between language use and a woman's less prestigious position in society. Instead, it attempts to approach the problem from a purely linguistic point of view. Notice also that in this study the term gender symmetry (and asymmetry) is used since "equity" comprises far more implications of a moral, political, and social nature than "symmetry".

Within the domain of occupational terms in Slovak, it is rather rare to find semantic differences expressing negative attitudes between two members of a pair, other than the reference to biological sex.

In some languages, such gender-stereotypical asymmetries, or "pseudo-symmetries" exist, e.g. the English *governor/governess, mister/mistress, major/majorette*.

According to Romaine[58], while male terms are either neutral or positive, numerous feminine forms were devalued over time and acquired negative associations; such derogation often involves sexuality, e.g. *mistress* has mostly lost its original meaning 'a woman in charge of a household' and became 'a woman who has an ongoing extramarital sexual relationship with a man' (cf. also *headmistress* 'woman in charge of a preparatory school'.) Historically, *mistress* could also be 'female owner' or 'liege lady'.

In Slovak, derogation of this type typically is not present. Almost all existing pairs are semantically symmetrical. The only identified pair in which the feminine member may (though need not) have a derogatory nuance is *masér* (m.) 'masseur' – *masérka* (f.) 'masseuse', but this seems to be a matter of connotation rather than denotation[59]. Another semantically asymmetrical pair that does not involve any derogatory meaning is *sekretár* (m.) – *sekretárka* (f.),which reflects a difference in social status of a male and a female holder of the job: *sekretár* 'secretary' is characteristically a head of an administrative governmental department, while *sekretárka* is a personal assistant who performs clerical tasks for a

[57] Marlis Hellinger and Hadumod Bußmann (eds.), *Gender across languages,* vol. 2, 12.
[58] Romaine, *Communicating Gender*, 4
[59] http://www.*bratislava.olx.sk/maserka-iid-2549763, accessed 10/31/09*

boss or an organization. Similarly, *gazdiná* (f.) is a 'housekeeper', while *gazda* (m.) is either a 'householder', or a 'manager', or an 'administrator of an estate'. Two more pairs have been identified that exhibit partial asymmetry. The lexeme *kartárka* (f.) denotes a woman fortune-teller, while *kartár* (m.) means a person (male or female) who passionately likes playing cards. The noun *kňaz* (m.) refers to a clergyman in Christian churches who is authorized to perform various religious rites, while *kňažka* (f.) denotes a priestess in the pagan sense – a non-Christian spiritual leader.

2.3 Compound loanwords containing sex-specific stems -man/-men and -boj

Foreign compounds with 'man' or 'boy' as their second component were adopted by the Slovak lexicon and are treated as indivisible complexes. They are assigned a masculine gender, and when a feminine variant is required, a feminine derivational suffix (typically *-ka*) is attached to the word-formation base: [lexical morpheme$_1$ + lexical morpheme$_2$ (man, boy)]$_{base}$ + *-ka.* Constituents of a foreign masculine compound collapse together to form one lexical morpheme, a base for both genders, e.g. *kovboj* (m.) – *kovbojka* (f.) 'cowboy' – 'cowgirl'[60], *biznismen/businessman* (m.) – *biznismenka/businessmanka* (f.) 'businessman' – 'businesswoman'. Interestingly enough, foreign female/feminine compounds with 'girl' or 'woman' as their second member never enter the Slovak lexicon as independent loanwords, nor do they serve as bases for feminine derivatives: **kovgirlka*, **biznisvumenka/*businesswomanka* (cf. the recent Russian substandard borrowing *biznesvumen(ka)* alongside older *biznesmenka.*).

In contemporary English there is a strong tendency towards avoiding compounds involving generic gender-specific terms for human beings such as *-man, -boy* and *-woman, -girl, -maid*. Sex-specific occupational terms are almost exclusively used in contrastive meaning (men versus

[60] Out of 46 lemmas for *kovbojka* in Slovenský národný korpus, 45 denote 'Western/ horse opera', only one refers to a 'cowgirl': *"Scenár divertimenta je jednoduchý: kovboji na texaskom ranči prenasledujú každú ženu, ktorú vidia, a neuvedomujú si, že je medzi nimi krásna kovbojka, ktorej pôvab objavia až pri dedinskej sobotňajšej tancovačke."* ("The script of the divertissement is simple: the cowboys on a Texas ranch pursue every woman they see but do not realize that in their midst there is a beautiful cowgirl, whose attractiveness they don't discover until the Saturday village"; Robert Ainsley, *Encyklopédia vážnej hudby,* translated by Milada Pauleová (Bratislava: Perfekt 1998)).

women). The gender-neutral and politically correct form of *barman* and *barmaid* is *bartender* or *barkeeper*. Similarly, gender-specific *businessman* and *businesswoman* co-exist with the sex-indefinite, generic *businessperson*.

In Slovak, by contrast, sex-indefiniteness only exists in the generic masculine plural forms: *barmani* can be a group of male persons serving beverages in a pub, *bar,* or tavern, or a group of men and women. In Slovak*, biznismen/businessman* 'businessman' does not pose any problem (except for an orthographic one) as far as its feminization is concerned. *Biznismanka/biznismenka/businessmanka* 'businesswoman' is a term that has been coined in accordance with a productive Slovak word formation pattern, and adopted by the users of the language.

Sometimes masculine singular forms can also be used as generic/sex-indefinite, but this almost exclusively applies to predicative and appositional constructions. Some personal nouns belonging to other categories exhibit this behavior, for example, terms denoting identity based on behavior (*snob* 'prig'), skill or experience in performing an activity (*začiatočník* 'beginner'), or identity as determined by authorship (*kronikár* 'chronicler, recorder'). In occupational terms, however, Slovak tends to maintain a gender-distinction in the singular form, even in originally compound loanwords such as *barman*; in other words, it avoids using masculine forms for women even in predicative and appositional structures: Pracuje ako *barmanka* (f.)/ */?*barman* (m.) 'She works as a bartender'. The analysis of the data shows that in the field of vocational terms, masculine predicative and appositional nouns for female referents tend to occur chiefly in borrowings terminating in foreign suffixes such as *-ista* or *-óg* (*komparatista* 'comparativist', *ichtyológ* 'ichthyologist')[61].

Unlike in Slovak, in Polish, it can be a challenge to find appropriate, inoffensive designations for a female engaged in commercial or industrial business. Dunaj[62] lists possible Polish female/feminine variants of 'businessman' compiled from Polish daily newspapers. It includes the following expressions: *businesswoman/bizneswomen*, *kobieta biznesu*,

[61] In addition, masculine singular nouns can apparently be used predicatively in reference to women when the feminine counterpart poses the risk of homonymy, as in the following examples: *Pracuje ako vodič* (m.) *autobusu* 'She works as a female bus driver' (*vodička* (f.) 1. female driver; 2. water (dim.)); *Pracuje ako diplomat* (m.) 'She works as a diplomat' (*diplomatka* (f.) 1. female diplomat; 2. kind of briefcase); *Aneta, rodený básnik* (m.), *mlčala* 'Aneta, a natural poet, kept quiet' (*básnička* (f.) 1. female poet; 2. poem (dim.)).

[62] Bogusław Dunaj, *Żeńskie odpowiedniki wyrazu biznesmen: business-woman, kobieta interesu, biznesmenka* (Język polski 73, 1993), 167–172.

kobieta robiąca/prowadząca interesy, *biznesmenka.* Of these, native speakers tend to find the non-analytic expressions more acceptable.

Czech has masculine lexicalized loanwords such as *businessman/byznysmen* (also *gentleman/džentlmen*, *superman),* the vast majority of which have been borrowed from English, but lexicalized female counterparts with the English or Czech morphemes for 'woman' and 'girl' are not attested. In general, according to Čmejrková[63] compounding with the words *muž* 'man', *žena* 'woman', *kluk/hoch* 'boy'or *dívka/holka* 'girl' cannot be used to specify gender in Czech, nor can *žena* or *dívka/holka* be juxtaposed with masculine nouns (cf. the Russian *ženščina-vrač* 'woman doctor' or the English *female firefighter*). Instead of such compounds, Czech features what Čmejrková calls 'double gender nouns', e.g., *předsedající* (m./f.) 'chairperson (chairman/ chairwoman)', or else feminization by means of derivation, e.g., *obchodník* (m.) – *obchodnice* (f.) 'businessman – businesswoman'.

According to Čmejrková, the Czech language gives preference to the native *obchodník* and *obchodnice* to English loanwords. However, *obchodník* and *obchodnice* are prescribed terms which do not reflect the complexity of the actual usage. The meaning of *obchodník* and *obchodnice* is slightly different from tme modern-day 'businessperson'; they typically denote a person involved in a small-scale business or a tradesman/tradeswoman, and are slowly becoming obsolete. *Nová slova v češtině: Slovník neologizmů 2*[64] which captures the dynamics of the Czech lexicon between 1996 and 2002, does not contain Czech equivalents of 'businessman' and 'businesswoman', but it does list *sexbyznysmen* 'sex businessman' (with no feminine counterpart) and *byznysmenství* 'businessmanship'. In contrast, *Slovník spisovného jazyka českého*[65] contains an entry for *businessman*, with no female equivalent. In practice, however, *byznysman/byznysmen/businessman* and *byznysmanka/byznysmenka*, and even *businesswoman/byznyswoman* are frequently used in Czech to refer to people engaged in business. *Ústav pro jazyk český Akademie věd České republiky* in *Internetová jazyková příručka*[66] cites both *byznysmen* (along with businessman) and *byznysmenka*; the forms *byznysman* and

[63] Světla Čmejrková, *Communicating gender in Czech*, 43
[64] Olga Martincová et al., *Nová slova v češtině: Slovník neologizmů* (Academia, 2004).
[65] Bohuslav Havránek et al., *Slovník spisovného jazyka českého* (Praha: Academia, 1989).
[66] http: //prirucka.ujc.cas.cz

byznysmanka are unattested. *Byznysmen/byznysman* and *byznysmenka* (but no *byznysmanka*) are also cited in *Český národní korpus*[67].

To summarize, the formation of feminine forms of loanwords containing *-man/-men* or *-boj* by adding a feminine derivational suffix (typically *-ka*) to what in the input language is a compound is a common word-formation strategy in Slovak, Czech, and Polish. What all three languages also share is their tendency to avoid clumsy analytic expressions such as the existing but artificially sounding *kobieta robiąca/prowadząca interesy*. Slovak, unlike Polish and Czech, does not allow for feminine independent loanwords of the 'businesswoman' type.

Conclusion

In conclusion, asymmetrical gender relations in Slovak are primarily manifested by lexical gaps and parallel designations, with a semantic difference, marginally by using compound loanwords with 'man' or 'boy' as their second constituent. Characteristically, feminine lexical gaps are more frequent than masculine ones. The isolated lexical gaps seen in Slovak seem to be dissimilar from the Polish examples discussed above in that Polish is less prone to feminize previously masculine occupational terms. A comparison of the findings about Slovak gender asymmetry at large with Dickins's 2001 Czech language data indicates that while both Slovak and Czech gravitate towards gender symmetry, Czech seems to exhibit a lesser degree of systematicity than Slovak. English tends to create gender-neutral vocational terms, an option linguistically unavailable in the examined West Slavic languages.

Bibliography

Bucholtz, Mary. "Bad Examples: Transgression and Progress in Language and Gender Studies". In: Bucholtz, Mary et al. (eds.) *Reinventing Identities: The Gendered Self in Discourse*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1999. 3-20.

Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity.* New York: Routledge, 1990.

Cameron, Deborah. *On Language and Sexual Politics*. London: Routledge, 2006.

—. "Sex/Gender, Language and the New Biologism". *Applied Linguistics* 31.2, 2010. 173-92.

[67] https://www.korpus.cz

Čmejrková, Světla. “Communicating Gender in Czech”. In: Hellinger, Marlis and Hadumod Bußmann (eds.) *Gender Across Languages: The Linguistic Representation of Women and Men,* vol. 3, Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 2003. 27–57.

Dickins, Tom. “Gender Differentiation and the Asymmetrical Use of Animate Nouns in Contemporary Czech”. *Slavonic and East European Review*79, 2001. 212–47.

Dunaj, Bogusław. “Żeńskie odpowiedniki wyrazu biznesmen: business-woman, kobieta interesu, biznesmenka”. Język polski 73, 1993. 167–72.

Eckert, Penelope. “The Whole Woman: Sex and Gender Differences in Variation.” *Language Variation and Change* 1, 1989. 245–67.

Engelberg, Mila. “The Communication of Gender in Finnish”. In: Hellinger, Marlis and Hadumod Bußmann (eds.) *Gender Across Languages: The Linguistic Representation of Women and Men,* Vol. 2, Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 2002. 109–132.

Havránek, Bohuslav et al. *Slovník spisovného jazyka českého.* Praha: Academia, 1989.

Hellinger, Marlis and Hadumod Bußmann (eds.). *Gender across Languages: The Linguistic Representation of Women and Men,* 3 vv. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 2001, 2002, 2003.

Hoffmanová, Jana. “Feministická lingvistika? *Naše řeč* 78, 1995. 80–91.

Holmes, Janet and Miriam Meyerhoff. *The Handbook of Language and Gender.* Wiley-Blackwell, 2005.

Holmes, Janet. *Gendered Talk at Work: Constructing Social Identity through Workplace Discourse.* Blackwell Publishers, 2006.

—. *Gendered Talk at Work. Language and Social Change*. Blackwell Publishers, 2006.

Kačala, Ján, Mária Pisárčiková, and Matej Považaj (eds.). *Krátky slovník slovenského jazyka*, 4th ed. Bratislava: Veda, 2003.

Karwatowska, Małgorzata and Jolanta Szpyra-Kozłowska. *Lingwistyka płci. On i ona w języku polskim*. Lublin: Wydawnictvo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, 2005.

Kramarae, Cheris and Paula Treichler. *A Feminist Dictionary.* Boston: Pandora Press, 1985.

Kryk-Kastovsky, Barbara. “Norm Versus Use: On Gender in Polish”. In: Unterbeck, Barbara and Matti Rissanen (*eds.*) *Gender in Grammar and Cognition. II Manifestations of Gender*. Berlin, New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 2000. 729-747

Łaziński, Marek. “Grammar and Gender in Polish corpora”. In: Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk (ed.), *PALC 2001: Practical Applications in Language Corpora.* Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2003. 309–27.

Martincová, Olga et al. *Nová slova v češtině: Slovník neologizmů*. Academia, 2004.

Martynyuk Alla. “A Contrastive Study of Male and Female Occupational Terms in English and Russian”. *Papers and Studies in Contrastive Linguistics* 26, 1990. 103–10.

Michálková, Marcela. *Gender Asymmetries in Slovak Personal Nouns* (PhD diss., Columbus, OH: The Ohio State University, available at https://etd.ohiolink.edu/!etd.send_file?accession=osu1262189760&disposition=inline, 2009.

—. *Insights into Gender A/Symmetry in Slovak.* Prešov: Filozofická fakulta Prešovskej univerzity v Prešove, 2014.

—. “Taxonómia rodových asymetrií v slovenčine”. In: Kesselová, Jana, Mária Imrichová, and Martin Ološtiak (eds.) *Registre jazyka a jazykovedy (2. zväzok),* Acta Facultatis Philosophicae Universitatis Prešoviensis. Jazykovedný zborník 51 (AFPhUP 465/498). Prešov: Filozofická fakulta Prešovskej univerzity v Prešove, 2014.

Miemietz, Bärbel. “‘Male Person’ vs. ‘Everything that is not a Male Person’: Gender and Sex in Polish”. In: Kotthoff, Helga and Ruth Wodak (eds.) *Communicating Gender in Context*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2002. 31–50.

Mills, Margaret (ed.). *Slavic Gender Linguistics.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 1999.

Mills, Sara and Louise Mullany. *Language, Gender and Feminism: Theory, Methodology and Practice*. London: Routledge, 2011.

Nebeská, Iva. “Jak píší české feministky. Kontrasty ve stavbě feministického textu”. *Naše řeč* 80, 1997. 19–25.

—. “K prostředkům výstavby feministického textu”. In: Moldanová, Dobrava (ed.) *Žena – jazyk – literatura.* Ústí nad Labem: PF Univerzity J. E. Purkyně, 1996. 303–305.

Nissen, Uwe Kjær. “Gender in Spanish: Tradition and Innovation”. In: Hellinger, Marlis and Hadumod Bußmann (eds.) *Gender Across Languages: The Linguistic Representation of Women and Men,* Vol. 2, Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 2002. 251–280.

Pauwels, Anne. *Women Changing Language.* London and New York: Longman, 1998.

Peciar, Štefan (ed.). *Slovník slovenského jazyka*, 6 vv., Bratislava: Slovenská Akadémia Vied, 1959–68.

Pisárčiková, Mária. *Synonymický slovník slovenčiny*, 3rd ed., Bratislava: *Veda,* 2004.
Považaj, Matej (ed.). *Pravda slovenského pravopisu*, 3rd ed., Bratislava: Veda, 2000.
Romaine, Suzanne, *Communicating Gender.* Taylor & Francis, 1998.
Spender, Dale. *Man Made Language*. London: Routledge, 1980.
Swann, Joan. "Yes, But Is It Gender?" In: Litosseliti, Lia and Jane Sunderland (eds.) *Gender Identity and Discourse Analysis*, Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2002.
Tannen, Deborah. *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation*. London: Virago, 1991.
Valdrová, Jana. "Stereotypy a klišé v mediální projekci genderu". In: *Sociologický časopis* XXXVII (2), 2001. 183-205.
Zaitseva, Valentina. "Referential Knowledge in Discourse: Interpretation of {I, You} in Male and Female Speech". In: Mills, Margaret (ed.) *Slavic Gender Linguistics.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 1999. 1–26.
http: //prirucka.ujc.cas.cz
http://korpus.juls.savba.sk
https://www.korpus.cz

CHAPTER SEVEN

SYNTACTIC COMPLEXITY OF ENGLISH SPOKEN AND WRITTEN TEXT TYPES

RITA RAFAJLOVIČOVÁ

Introduction

The description of a particular language usually concentrates on accurate representation of the forms and structures used in that language. However, the study of language as a system of communication needs to do more than simply lay out its forms and structures. It needs to show what they are for and how they are used; in other words, how the grammar of a language serves as a resource for making and exchanging meaning. Thus, many interesting questions arise in connection with the way language is used, how it is organized to allow speakers and writers to make and exchange meaning, rather than what its components are. Put simply, it is not only important what we say, but also how we say it. It is assumed that variation in linguistic performance is determined by the choices made by the speakers/writers of the discourse and that these choices may be the result of a variety of influencing factors, such as the context, the participants of the interaction, the purpose of and reason for the interaction, and of course, whether the discourse is written or spoken. It is important to recognise that different types of texts produce different types of language and that the broad distinction between formal and informal or between public and private discourse is not the only categorial distinction.

The investigation of different text types in the present study is based both on formal and functional grammar, which Dik[1] characterises as a sentence grammar seen as part of a wider theory of verbal interaction and a sub-component of a model of a natural language using a system in which the human linguistic capacity is linked to epistemic, logical, perceptual,

[1] Simon C. Dik, *Functional Grammar*. (London: Academic press, 1978).

and social capacities[2]. The focus is on the appropriateness of a form for a particular communicative purpose in a particular context, rather than on the grammar of the form itself. The main concern is thus with the functions of structures and their constituents and with their meanings in context. In this kind of description, data from authentic texts in specific contexts are used for analysis[3]. However, functional analyses must at some stage take account of form, and formal analyses must at some stage take account of meaning and function.

The present study looks at the syntactic structures of subordinate clauses, in spoken and written English and aims to contribute to a better understanding of information packaging on the sentence and text levels. The use of subordinating strategies is examined in a corpus of naturally occurring, connected, contextualized language of four different text types or genres[4]. These are novels, radio conversation-interviews, newspaper articles, and academic prose. It is assumed that the texts chosen within a certain 'text type'[5] are similar to one another and differ from other text types not only in terms of grammar, but also in terms of style. There is no clear borderline in issues related to usage established in the nature of language, but it is assumed that there exists an informal-formal continuum between the four text types starting with the less formal radio conversation-interviews and novels, to newspaper articles and academic writings. Both the formal and functional description of the analysed structures offer an overall view on different types of subordinate clauses according to CGEL[6], their actual use and the extent to which they occur in spoken and written discourse.

1. Literature Review

Various aspects of the differences in spoken and written language have, for many years, been the subject of countless studies. The first

---

[2] Cf. Anna Siewierska. *Functional Grammar*. (Routledge, London. 1991), 1.

[3] Jack C. Richards. *Teacher Learning in Language Teaching*. Edited by Donald Freeman. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

[4] Biber refers to text categorizations made on the basis of external criteria relating to author/speaker purpose; Douglas Biber, Susan Conrad, and Randi Reppen. *Corpus Linguistics*. (Cambridge University Press, 1998), 70

[5] The term 'text type' is used here to refer to texts grouped together as one kind according to the media they are taken from.

[6] Randolph Quirk, Sidney Greenbaum, Geoffrey Leech, and Jan Svartvik. *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*. (Longman Group UK Limited, 1985).

grammatical analyses concerning the complexity of sentences in written discourse appeared in the 1920s. Stormzand and O'Shea[7] investigated sentences selected from the writings of children at various age levels and compared them with sentences written by adults in newspapers, fiction and letters. Since then, numerous studies and research papers dealing with syntactic complexity, subordination strategies, and formal as well as functional analyses of different grammatical structures in oral and written discourse have appeared. While some authors of comparative linguistic studies, such as Drieman[8], Chafe and Tannen[9] consider written language to be syntactically more complex than spoken language due to the high frequency of subordination, other linguists, such as Beaman[10], Halliday[11], McCarthy[12], Carter and McCarthy[13], and Biber[14] discovered that oral productions present a higher frequency of subordination than written language. The long-held belief that spoken language is less elaborate, superficial, and low in content than written language has changed. Now it is believed that spoken language has its own kind of complexity determined by the medium: "[…] spoken language is, in fact, no less structured and highly organised than the written. It could not be otherwise, since both are manifestations of the same system"[15], and as Chafe (1987) states, the differences in the syntactic complexity of the two media are due

[7]Martin, J. Stormzand, and M. O'Shea. *How much English Grammar?* (Baltimore, Warwick & York, inc. 1924).

[8]George H. J. Drieman. "Differences between written and spoken language." *Acta Psychologica* 20, (1962): 36-57.

[9] Deborah Tannen. "Oral and Literate Strategies in Spoken and Written Narratives." *Language"* Vol. 58, No. 1 (March 1982): 1-21. http://www.jstor.org/stable/413530, accessed May 23, 2015.

[10]Karen Beaman "Coordination and subordination revisited: Syntactic complexity in spoken and written narrative discourse." In *Coherence in spoken and written discourse,* edited by Deborah Tannen (ed.), 45-80. (New Jersey: ABLEX, 1984).

[11] Michael A. K. Halliday. *Spoken and Written Language*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).

[12]Michael McCarthy. *Spoken language and applied linguistics*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

[13]Ronald Carter and Michael McCarthy. *Cambridge grammar of English*: *a comprehensive guide*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

[14]Douglas Biber, Stig Johansson, Geoffrey Leech, Susan Conrad, and Edward Finnegan. *Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English.* (Pearson Education Limited, 1999).

[15]Halliday, *Spoken and Written*, 79.

to the differences in the level of formality, purpose and register of the discourse rather than genuine differences between speech and writing.

Since the last decades of the twentieth century, due to new research technologies, the study of grammar has seen an increasing number of analyses of spoken as well as written discourse focusing on particular syntactic structures. The results of these analyses revealed a number of previously unexplained grammatical facts. A number of linguists were interested in what determines the grammatical and lexical choices that speakers make in interaction. With the advent of Corpus Linguistics and the growing body of research into spoken and written discourse, researchers are able to obtain reliable and comparable data for their analyses and thus provide reliable, effective, and systematic descriptions of the grammatical features of the two media, which is undoubtedly a great advantage for the further development of the field.

One of the most prolific linguists on this subject is undoubtedly Conrad Biber, who provided a unified linguistic analysis of spoken and written registers in English, and whose works are considered a marker of a new departure in the study of language variation. Biber employs quantitative methods – frequency counts of specific linguistic features based on which he identifies co-occurring groups of features and describes them according to their function. In his Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English, he makes the distinction between genre and registers by reporting on frequency findings, and examines the reasons that determine grammatical choices in conversation, fiction, news, and academic prose. LGSWE presents which structures, tenses, and lexical choices occur and explains how their distribution differs in different text types, and precisely defines the syntactic differences between the genres and provides an advanced syntactic and semantic characterisation of spoken and written language[16].

2. Methodology

The present object of interest lies in investigating syntactic complexity and in exploring subordinating strategies employed in both spoken and written forms of the English language. The study focuses on the incidence of different types of subordinate clauses, on grammatical subordination

[16] Silva, G. Iglesias, "A Contrastive Study of Sentence Structure, Clause Combination Strategies and Syntactic Complexity in Oral Informal Narratives produced by Native Speakers of English and Advanced EFL Learners." Universidad de Chile. www.tesis.uchile.*cl./thesis/uchile/2008/.../silva_g.pdf, accessed March 15, 2015.*

strategies, as well as on patterns of inter-clausal relationships as they are used in interactional language within the mentioned small-size corpus compiled from differing texts of written and spoken English. The analysis goes beyond an interpretation of the quantitative patterns, and besides presenting frequency data and examples of the patterns it also offers functional interpretations explaining why the patterns exist and how they are used.

The present work, utilising a number of small specialized corpora for the description of language variation, is an attempt at testing grammatical theory and explaining the differences in the use of subordinating strategies rather than at developing certain theories. Therefore, rather than presenting a hypothesis, several research questions are addressed.

After reviewing some of the current English grammar descriptions of spoken and written language and theoretical frameworks concerning the topic, in the process of unfolding analysis, the following research questions have emerged:

1/ *which of the analysed text types is structurally most complex, i.e. integrates ideas into longer meaningful units by the use of subordinate clauses?*
Many previous studies claim that speaking is a cognitively demanding activity as it is unplanned, spontaneous and takes place in real time, and thus it cannot be structurally as complex as written language.

2/ *do different text types lead to the employment of different formal and functional types of subordinate clauses?*
In the past, some studies assumed that subordinate clauses were similarly distributed across different text types, and that they had similar functions. According to Biber[17], researchers considered the distribution of one type of subordinate clause and generalised their findings to all kinds of subordination.

3/ *which type of dependent clause is typical for particular text types and what profound differences in the use of subordinate clauses, if any, can be found between the investigated written and spoken text types?*
In order to study the differences between the investigated text types with respect to subordinate clauses, frequency counts of three kinds of subordinate clauses (nominal, relative, and adverbial clauses) are used, since making generalisations based on one type of subordinate clause might result in inaccurate conclusions about differences between the text types.

[17] Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad, and Finnegan. *Longman Grammar*, 139.

4/ *to what extent do the results obtained from tthe research carried out on a small corpus differ from research findings based on the LSWE corpus?* It is supposed that there will be some discrepancies between my findings and those based on other corpora and the LGSWE corpus; however, these may arise from the size and different character of the texts comprising the compared corpora.

In order to get qualified answers to the research questions and to find out to what extent subordination is employed in the differing texts and which forms of grammatical subordination are used in a particular text type, the subordination strategies used in different text types have been examined. The analyses presented here also investigate whether specific forms of subordination serve certain discourse functions in the four analysed text types. Similarities and differences in syntactic strategies and the use of dependent clauses in different functions are quantitatively and qualitatively established between the analysed texts. Furthermore, detailed descriptions of the distribution of particular structures and comparisons with their distribution in other text types are presented in this study.

The present research also demonstrates the usefulness of such an analysis as a tool for understanding the usage of the above-mentioned syntactic structures in different contexts. In order to perform a formal and functional comparative analysis of the examples of spoken and written language, delimitation of key terms such as spoken and written language, text type, subordination, embedding, dependent clause, classification of dependent clauses, etc. has to take place first.

The corpus used in the present study is a collection of authentic texts, comprising four text types (registers): *conversation-interviews*, *fiction, newspaper articles*, and *academic prose*, all representing contemporary British and American English of different degree of formality.[18] The various texts compiling the subcorpora chosen for the investigation were randomly selected regardless of the type of media, topics, level of language, age, and sex, or social group of the users. The analyzed texts within the subcorpora are of different length, but each subcorpus is of approximately the same length (30,000 words). The whole corpus thus includes more than 120,000 words. The texts chosen for the oral subcorpus

[18] It is hypothesised that an informal-formal continuum exists between the four text types – freely spoken language, fiction, newspaper columns, and academic prose – which can be seen in the significantly differing variation in the frequency of specific subordination strategies from one end of the scale (freely spoken language) to the other (academic articles).

are transcripts of conversational speech. The term *interview* was chosen to label this type of oral data as all the texts are transcripts of question/answer interaction between two speakers. The texts of contemporary fiction comprise several chapters taken from two books, Ian McEwan's novel *Enduring Love*, and Douglas Adams's *So long, and thanks for all the fish*. The analyzed newspaper columns were sampled from across the various topics found in most newspapers. The texts covered the following major areas: domestic news, foreign/world news, arts (including cinema, theatre, fine arts, fashion, etc.), and social news (including reports about society people, environment, crime, etc.). The last investigated corpus, academic prose, consists of research papers, academic articles, and passages from textbooks taken from different websites and study fields, such as economics, medicine, and psychology.

3. Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis: Subordination as the index of structural complexity

3.1 General Overview

Linguistic complexity, indicating the frequency of the usage of particular structures in language, is currently one of the most hotly debated notions in linguistics; it is seen as a dynamic and inherently variable parameter. Linguistic complexity refers to the amount of discourse (oral or written), the types and variety of grammatical structures, the organization and cohesion of ideas and, at higher levels of language proficiency, the use of text structures in specific genres[19]. Complexity is different in speech and writing, and it is determined by different factors, such as the planning time available, interpersonal involvement, purpose of utterance and last but not least the level of formality of the utterance. All these factors influence the speaker's choice for greater or less complex constructions as varying degrees of syntactic complexity can be used to represent the same event.

Descriptive linguistics recognizes a difference between simple utterances and those that are more conjoined in form, and again between those that are joined by coordination or subordination. Considering the complexity that can be applied to sentences or larger chunks of text, we speak about syntactic complexity, which is, in fact, structural. Beaman[20] determines

[19] Mary J. Schleppegrell. "Subordination and Linguistic Complexity." *Discourse Processes.* Vol. 15 Issue 1, (Jan-Mar 1992), 117-131.
[20] Karen Beaman "Coordination and subordination ", 51.

syntactic complexity of spoken and written discourse by simply comparing the percentage of subordinate clause structures in both discourse types. In her study, she claims that "syntactic complexity in language is related to the number, type, and depth of embedding in a text. Syntactically simple texts rely more heavily on coordinated structures, while syntactically complex texts make use of longer sentences and more subordinate clauses."[21] In a similar vein, Givón[22] appears to consider embedded and/or subordinate structures, as opposed to coordinated structures, cognitively more complex categories. He cites a sizable body of psycholinguistic studies which demonstrate that subordinate clause structures are more complex to process than coordinated main clause structures. According to Baker and Pederson (2009), complexity is relative: a two-word utterance is in a structural sense more complex than one word; conjoined phrases are more complex than a single phrase; one phrase embedded within another is still more complex. Then, it becomes clear that a short sentence in itself may be easier to comprehend than a long, complex one.

One option for defining linguistic complexity is in terms of processing load: utterances that are difficult to process (either in production and comprehension) are by definition complex.

Following the above mentioned linguists, the present study establishes the syntactic complexity of the given texts by calculating their Syntactic Complexity Index (SCI)[23], as well as by frequency counts of clauses having signs of grammatical subordinateness and embeddedness, such as the subordinating conjunctions, *that, wh*-words, and non-finite verb forms.

In addition to the quantitative analysis, it also examines the different semantic functions of subordinate clauses as a means of packaging information and events into longer meaningful units in both spoken and written discourse.

In order to obtain the Complexity Index (CI), first, the texts had to be examined for independent and subordinate clauses; then, I added up all the independent and subordinate clauses in each subcorpus and divided the total by the number of independent clauses. The obtained figures shown in Table 7-1 below present the values of syntactic complexity.

---

[21] Schleppegrell, "Subordination and Linguistic", 47.

[22] Talmy Givón. "The ontogeny of relative clauses: How children learn to negotiate complex reference." In *The Genesis of Syntactic Complexity*, edited by Talmy Givón, Chapter 8. (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2008).

[23] The pattern for calculating the CI was retrieved from: "How to calculate complexity index"
http://www.rehabmed.ualberta.ca/spa/enni/syntacticcomplexity.htm

Table 7-1: INDEPENDENT AND SUBORDINATE CLAUSES IN THE CORPUS

Text type	Independent clauses	Subordinate clauses	Complexity Index (CI)
Interviews	2489	1687	**1.67**
Acad. Prose	1546	1399	**1.90**
Newspaper	1750	1312	**1.74**
Fiction	**2177**	**1422**	**1.65**

Though the figures do not differ dramatically, a cline can be determined here. It can be assumed that the most complex text type in the corpus is academic prose (with the highest CI) and that complexity corresponds with the level of formality. On the other hand, spoken language, especially the most informal conversation, has the opposite characteristics. This finding corresponds with the results of the previous analyses by Beaman and Halliday, and agrees with the view presented by Greenbaum and Nelson[24], who claim that the more formal the written language the more elaborate and grammatically complex it is.

3.2 The form-function distribution of subordinate clauses

3.2.1 An Introductory note

The main area of investigation in this study is the distribution of different functional types of subordinate clause (both finite and non-finite) according to text type. A detailed description of the distribution of particular structures (nominal, relative, and adverbial clauses) within the analysed texts allowed a comparison of the mentioned text types.

[24] Sidney Greenbaum and Gerald Nelson. "Clause relationships in spoken and written English." *Functions of Language* Volume 2, Number 1, (1995): 1-21.

Table 7-2: THE DISTRIBUTION OF TYPES OF SUBORDINATE CLAUSES ACROSS TEXT TYPES

	Nominal		**Relative**		**Adverbial**		**Total**	
Text type	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%
Interviews	766	33.7	463	25.2	458	26.7	**1687**	**29.0**
Acad. P.	558	24.6	438	23.9	403	23.5	**1399**	**24.1**
Newspaper	471	20.8	451	24.6	390	22.7	**1312**	**22.5**
Fiction	475	20.9	482	26.3	465	27.1	**1422**	**24.4**
Total	**2270**	**100**	**1834**	**100**	**1716**	**100**	**5820**	**100**
Total %	**39.0**		**31.5**		**29.5**		**100**	

3.2.2 The form-function distribution of NOMINAL clauses

For a process of embedding a clause in another one in order to complete the meaning relationship of an associated verb or adjective in the main clause, grammarians use the term 'complementation'. The clause which is embedded in the independent clause is typically referred to as a *complement clause,* yet in the present study, the term *nominal clause* will be used (according to CGEL). The concept of nominal clauses (or noun clause) refers to a clause that can occur in positions where noun phrases occur and like noun phrases, function as subject (also extraposed), object, complement, appositive, and prepositional complement in the main clause.

The figures obtained from the analyses indicate that nominal clauses are the most common type of subordinate clauses and account for 39% of all subordinate structures found in the investigated corpus. Nominal clauses in English have certain syntactic and discursive functions.

The nominal structures found in the corpus fall into the following major categories: finite *that*-clauses and *wh*-clauses, and non-finite *to*-infinitive and *ing*-clauses. Zero *that*- clauses are also included into the category of *that*- structures. Out of all 2270 nominal structures found in the corpus, finite nominal clauses form 73.3%, and non-finite nominal clauses 26.7%. Table 7-3 below gives a clear picture of the occurrence of finite and non-finite nominal clauses in different text types.

Table 7-3: DISTRIBUTION OF NOMINAL CLAUSES ACROSS TEXT TYPES

	Finite		**Non-finite**		**all in the corpus**	
Text type	number	%	number	%	number	**%**
Interviews	587	35.3	179	29.5	**766**	**33.7**
Acad. P.	363	21.8	195	32.1	**558**	**24.6**
Newspaper	362	21.8	109	18.0	**471**	**20.8**
Fiction	351	21.1	124	20.4	**475**	**20.9**
Total	**1663**	100	**607**	100	**2270**	**100**
Total %	**73.3**		**26.7**		**39.0**	

The results in the tables above show that the largest number of nominal structures in the whole investigated corpus was found in the spoken text types, which is due to the extremely high frequency of such verbs as *think, say* and *know,* and other mental and speech act verbs that control *that*-clauses. Nominal clauses in the mentioned text type are to a large extent represented by finite structures, whereas non-finite nominal clauses prevail in academic texts. These findings support the theories of Beaman[25], Greenbaum[26], and Biber[27] that finite nominal clauses can be found significantly more frequently in spoken, than in written, texts.

The most commonly used structural types of nominal clauses in the investigated corpus are *that*- clauses and *wh*-clauses. The incidence of *that*-clauses in general is highest in academic prose and newspapers, where they identify or describe the subject of the main clause, or they are used to describe processes, the nature of a problem, mark a stance, report speech, thoughts, emotions, people's mental states or writers' attitudes, but they can also present conclusions, personal attitudes, opinions, reasons, results, facts, etc., which is typical for the given registers.

On the other hand, the occurrence of *wh*-clauses is the highest in informal text types (interviews and fiction), where they are mainly used with verbs such as *know* and *ask,* in indirect questions, or after verbs such as *tell, decide, realize* in situations when the speaker wants to present certain facts or problems.

While finite nominal *that*-clauses and *wh*-clauses account for more than 76% of all nominal structures found in the interviews and newspapers, non-finite nominal clauses (*to*-infinitive and *ing*-clauses) are

[25] Karen Beaman. "Coordination and subordination ", 45-80.
[26] Greenbaum Sidney and Gerald Nelson. "The Position of Adverbial Clauses in British English. "*World Englishes*", Volume 15, Issue 1, (March 1996): 69–81.
[27] Biber, *Longman Grammar of,* 673-675.

predominantly a feature of written language. They represent subordinate situations which are integrated into the main situation. As far as their distribution across the text types is concerned, the results suggest that they occur mainly in spoken data and fiction. By far the most common non-finite structure in all four text types (over 60%) is *to*-infinitive clauses, which dominate especially in interviews and fiction. Contrary to the findings in Biber et al.[28], *to*-infinitive clauses in the analysed corpus are more common in spoken language, though the difference is not significant. They perform specific functions in different text types, but most commonly take an object position after controlling verbs such as *want*, *would like, try, hope*, and *decide*, which are common in each text type. While the *to*-infinitive form is used when a specific occasion, usually of a future or hypothetical kind, is referred to, *ing*-clauses tend to be used when the implied reference is to repeated actions. The results of the analysis show that the most frequent occurrence of *ing*-clauses was found in academic prose, where 55.9% of all non-finite structures are of this kind. Moreover, this is the only text type where *ing*-clauses dominate over *to*-infinitive clauses.

The overall results concerning nominal clauses that were obtained from the investigated corpus show that the higher the frequency of nominal clauses, the less formal the text type, which suggests that nominal clauses are a feature of informality.

3.2.3 The form-function distribution of RELATIVE clauses

Relative clauses correspond in many ways to adjectives, thus are sometimes also called *adjective clauses*. Most commonly a relative clause is a restrictive or non-restrictive post-modifier in a noun phrase and it is this function that will be referred to here under the term *relative clause*.

The figures in Table 7-2 above indicate that relative clauses are the second most frequently used type of subordinate clause. The total number of relative clauses found within the investigated corpus is 1834, which accounts for 31.5% of all subordinate structures. The highest incidence of all relative postmodifying structures is in fiction, which supports Biber's corpus findings stating that "relative clauses are relatively frequent in all three written registers. Proportionally, they are most common in fiction."[29] Relative clauses, as a whole, regardless of whether they are finite, non-

[28] Biber, *Longman Grammar of,* 669. The discrepancies in the obtained results with those in LGSWE might be attributed to the choice of texts as well as to the different amount of analysed data.
[29] Biber, *Longman Grammar of*, 606-607.

finite, restrictive, or non-restrictive, are almost evenly distributed across the four analysed text types with a cline from the fewest in academic prose (23,9%) to the highest (26.3%) in fiction. As the differences in the frequency of relative clauses in the analysis are not significant, it can be assumed that relative clauses are not an indicator of formality. On the other hand, the distribution of finite vs. non-finite relative clauses shows that the proportion (figures in Table 7-4 below) of these two different structures is approximately 3 to 1 in favour of finite clauses.

Table 7-4: THE DISTRIBUTION OF FINITE VS. NON-FINITE RELATIVE CLAUSES

RELATIVE CLAUSES	Finite		Non-finite		Total
	1409	76.8%	425	23.2%	1834

Finite relative clauses have a particularly high percentage in interviews and fiction, whereas the lowest figures for finite relative clauses are to be found in academic prose and newspapers. These two more formal written text types, in contrast, have the highest percentage of non-finite relative clauses. Based on these findings, it can be said that finite vs. non-finite distribution is determined by medium and stylistic association. Postmodification using finite relative clauses has more informal associations and is, therefore, preferred in colloquial discourse – interviews, while postmodification using non-finite clauses has more formal, academic associations and thus is relatively frequent in written non-fiction registers, such as academic prose and newspapers.

The preferred use of participle and infinitive clauses in the mentioned text types is because of economy, since they communicate the same idea or meaning as finite relative clauses, but they do it in a concise way as in "[O]ne of the more thorny problems discussed at the conference was the new estates that had been built in the past 20 years"[30].

[30] Rita Rafajlovičová. *Subordination in Different Text Types*. (Prešov: Filozofická fakulta PU, 2013), 158.

Table 7-5: THE DISTRIBUTION OF RESTRICTIVE VS. NON-RESTRICTIVE RELATIVE CLAUSES

	Restrictive				**Non-restrictive**				**Total**	
Text type	Finite	Non-finite	Total No	%	Finite	Non-finite	Total No	%	**No**	**%**
Interviews	364	39	403	21.9	54	6	60	3.3	**463**	**25.2**
Acad. P.	261	110	371	20.3	47	20	67	3.6	**438**	**23.9**
Newspaper	233	102	335	18.3	90	26	116	6.3	**451**	**24.6**
Fiction	309	78	387	21.1	51	44	95	5.2	**482**	**26.3**
Total	1167	329	**1496**		242	96	**338**		**1834**	
Total %	**63.5**	**17.9**		**81.6**	**13.2**	**5.2**		**18.4**		**100**

If we look at the distribution of functional types of relative clauses, the results presented in Table 7-5 above show that restrictive relative clauses as a whole have particularly high results (81.6%) compared with non-restrictive relative clauses (18.4%). The occurrence of both restrictive (essential) and non-restrictive (non-essential) relative clauses is determined by the medium as well as the degree of formality; the less formal text type, the higher occurrence of restrictive relative clauses. The highest number of restrictive relative clauses is to be found in interviews and fiction. In these text types, common nouns (*thing*, *people, man, child, friend,* etc.) as well as indefinite pronouns (*somebody, someone, something, anything, and everything*) that need further identification or specification are very frequently used. On the other hand, non-restrictive relative clauses do not appear to be influenced by the degree of formality of the text, since the results show that they appear most commonly in newspapers and fiction, which are two media of different degree of formality. The relatively high incidence of non-restrictive relative clauses in these text types might be explained by the fact that newspaper articles as well as narratives are full of proper nouns, the identity of which is known to the readers, so they do not need further identification. The lowest incidence of non-restrictive postmodification is in the least formal text type, interviews and in the most formal one, academic prose.

3.2.4 The form-function distribution of ADVERBIAL clauses

The term "adverbial clause" is used here as a convenient traditional label, but in fact the function of this type of clause is not always to modify the verb, adjective, adverb of its main clause. It can also relate to other aspects of the main clause, like its illocutionary force, and it can have additional links beyond its immediate main clause. Analysis of the corpus gave a clear picture of the distribution of adverbial clauses, their semantic

categories, grammatical form (finite/non-finite) and position within the sentence. It also pointed out the basic differences between the use of different semantic categories of adverbial clauses, the types of subordinators introducing finite clauses, and other relevant features that influence the choice of a particular type of adverbial clause.

The results presented in Table 7-2 suggest that adverbial clauses are the least frequently used type of subordinate clauses in the four analysed text types. There are altogether 1716 finite and non-finite adverbial clauses in the corpus, which represents 29.5% of all subordinate clauses within the corpus. Their distribution in particular text types indicates that they are a feature of less formal registers as the highest number of adverbial clauses is in fiction (27.1%) and spoken texts (26.7%). In fiction, the accounts of events are further developed by additional information providing temporal, causal, conditional and other interpretation, which may account for the proximity to the informal spoken data.

As far as their formal distribution is concerned, there are almost three times as many finite adverbial clauses as non-finite ones (see Table 7-6 below).

Table 7-6: THE DISTRIBUTION OF FINITE VS. NON-FINITE ADVERBIAL CLAUSES

ADVERBIAL CLAUSES	Finite		Non-finite		Total
	1302	75.8%	414	24.2%	1716

Most finite adverbial clauses were to be found in the spoken data, while non-finite clauses are dominant in the written texts. These results suggest that the less formal the text the more finite and fewer non-finite clauses it contains. Thus, finite adverbial clauses can be considered a feature of informality, while non-finite adverbial clauses can be counted as a linguistic marker of more formal language used in written texts. The use of non-finite structures requires more planning than the addition of a final finite adverbial clause to the main clause, and as there is not so much time for planning speech as there is for writing, the spoken language logically uses fewer non-finite structures.

The overall distribution of adverbial clauses across the texts in the corpus shows slight preference of particular semantic categories for different registers. The figures presented in Table 7-7 below show that finite adverbial clauses are for the main part temporal, conditional, and of cause/reason. The occurrence of time clauses is relatively high compared with the other most frequently occurring semantic categories, which can

be attributed to their usefulness in relating certain actions or events to other activities described in the main clause (as in "[P]eople pre-judge you when you are involved in something like 'Fame Academy'"[31]).

Table 7-7: THE DISTRIBUTION OF SEMANTIC CATEGORIES OF ADVERBIAL CLAUSES WITHIN THE CORPUS

	Interviews	Academic Prose	Newspaper	Fiction	Total	%
Cause-Reason	92	56	63	62	**273**	**16%**
Comparison	25	12	22	24	**83**	**4,8%**
Concession	5	27	20	12	**64**	**3,7 %**
Condition	81	96	58	36	**271**	**15,8%**
Contrast	2	13	13	1	**29**	**1,7%**
Manner	23	10	13	24	**70**	**4,2%**
Place	3	4	1	5	**13**	**0,8%**
Proportion	1	5	1	2	**9**	**0,5%**
Purpose	53	75	68	71	**267**	**15,5%**
Result	3	2	5	10	**20**	**1,1%**
Time	170	103	126	218	**617**	**35,9%**
Total	**458**	**403**	**390**	**465**	**1716**	
Total - %	**26,7%**	**23,5%**	**22,7%**	**27,1%**		

In general, fiction and interviews, the less formal text types, are characterized by more time clauses than newspapers and academic prose. The high numbers in the mentioned registers suggest that adverbial clauses of time are a feature of informal spoken language in which they provide additional information by locating in time the events or actions described in the main clause. As there is a lot of conversation in fiction, the frequency of the use of time clauses is very high in this register. This finding agrees only in part with what is stated in LGSWE, which suggests a very high frequency of time clauses in fiction and news. There are, however, noticeable differences in the distribution of the other semantic categories across the text types.

Conditional clauses are very common in academic prose and interviews, but least common in fiction. Of the other categories, manner clauses and concessive clauses are moderately common, the former especially in interviews and fiction, the latter in academic prose. All these findings almost totally correspond with Biber's findings[32] .

[31] Rafajlovičová. *Subordination in Different*, 186.
[32] Biber, *Longman Grammar of*, 820-825.

Finite adverbial clauses are introduced by subordinators, which usually explicitly indicate the semantic relationship in the sentence. As time clauses are the most commonly used semantic category of adverbial clauses, it it, therefore, logical that the most commonly used subordinators are those indicating time relationships, of which *when* is by far the most popular, although there is a choice from a variety of other subordinators expressing time relationships (*as, till, until, since, after, before, while, by the time, now that,* etc.). However, there is a noticeable preference for the use of the subordinator *as*[33] to introduce time clauses in fiction.

Conclusion

In the present study, a small-size corpus of four different texts types (both written and spoken) and of different levels of formality were analysed with regard to their syntactic complexity, i.e. the frequency of use of different types of subordinate clauses. The aim of the study has been to investigate the formal and functional distribution of subordinate clauses in particular text types and the differences in their use, and last but not least, to compare the obtained results with findings based on the LSWE corpus. The study combines the general theoretical characteristics of particular grammatical constructions with their functional analysis, provides a quantitative study comparing the analysed structures within the four different text types, and offers semantic explanations for their distribution.

Based on formal and functional analyses of particular text types it can be stated that:

1/ the longest sentences occurred in academic prose, while the shortest ones were found in the spoken texts. The results indicate that the oral data, consisting mainly of simple sentences, are syntactically less complex than the written text types, most of which contain at least one subordinate clause. Our findings agree with those of O'Donnell[34], who also found that sentences in written language were longer and contained more dependent clauses than those in spoken language. This finding has also been reinforced by the calculated values of CI presented in Table 7-1. Based on the obtained results it can be suggested that subordination may be counted as an index of formality.

[33] The subordinator *as* has multiple meanings such as time, manner and reason-cause. When used to express time relationship, it shows simultaneous time, sequence of events, or indicates the time of an action.

[34] O'Donnell, Roy C. "Syntactic differences between speech and writing" *American Speech*, Volume 49, (1974): 102-110.

The more formal the text type, the higher number of complex sentences it contains. This confirms Thompson's results, which lead her to the conclusion that differences in the use of subordinate structures are due to the level of formality, rather than to the spoken/written distinction.

2/ as regards the second and third research questions concerning the distribution of formal and functional types of subordinate clauses across the four investigated texts, we can observe that the proportion of finite to non-finite clauses is 75.2% to 24.8%. The distribution of finite clauses shows a cline from fewest in the most formal academic texts and newspapers, followed by fiction to the highest number of finite dependent clauses in the spoken texts recognized as the least formal text type. As for the non-finite structures, their distribution is the other way round; the highest number of non-finite dependent clauses occurs in academic prose, while the incidence of non-finite clauses in the oral data is the lowest. Thus, from the data it can be assumed that certain linguistic features can be assigned the values of formal/informal strategies; finite clauses can be taken as a marker of informality and non-finite clauses are a feature particularly characteristic of formal writing[35].

3/ as to the distribution of the dependent clauses based on their function in the sentence, the most frequently occurring type is that of nominal clauses (see Table 7-2). The second most common clauses are relative clauses, followed by adverbial clauses. In general, nominal clauses are the most preferred type in spoken data, where their incidence is much higher than in written text types. The high incidence of nominal clauses in spoken texts can be explained by the range and high number of verbs (*say, tell, know, think, want*, etc.) that report speech, attitudes, thoughts and feelings and control nominal clauses. In academic prose they commonly occur after controlling verbs *see, believe, assume, suppose, show, mean, conclude,* and *suggest*, which enable the writers to present arguments that support their theories and identify their attitudes in relation to the discussed issues within the field. In newspapers, we can more commonly find verbs reporting cognitive states (*believe, realize*) and communication verbs (*admit*, *agree, announce, confirm, deny, inform,* etc.), which report speech, thoughts, emotions, mental states or the attitudes of the writers. The speech act verb *say* and others controlling nominal clauses are usually used in their past form since they report past events.

[35] Rafajlovičová, *Subordination in Different,* 173.

Relative clauses, as a whole, regardless of whether they are finite, non-finite, restrictive, or non-restrictive, are almost evenly distributed across the four analysed text types and are the second most commonly occurring type of subordinate clause within all four text types. The highest incidence of all relative postmodifying structures is in fiction (see Table 7-2 above), which supports Biber's[36] corpus findings stating that "relative clauses are relatively frequent in all three written registers. Proportionally, they are most common in fiction."

The differences in the frequency of relative clauses in the present analysis are not significant, thus it can be assumed that relative clauses are not an indicator of formality. However, there are some differences in the use of relativizers in particular text types. By far the most frequently occurring relativizer due to its high grammatical potential is *that.* It is considered to be the most flexible in its use as it is used with both animate and inanimate heads as well as with indefinite pronouns; moreover, it can be found in a wide range of gap positions. The second most frequently used relativizer across all registers is *which*, but it has a significantly different distribution when compared with *that*. While *that* was the most common in interviews and less common in fiction, with *which,* it is the other way round. *Who* is not as flexible as *that* and *which* in that its occurrence is limited to subject gap positions only, and it can be found almost exclusively with animate head nouns. *Who* is by far the most common in interviews modifying human head nouns.

The distribution of different relativizers across the four text types in the analysed corpus indicates that the choice among relativizers is determined not only grammatically (the role of the gap), but it is also influenced by other factors, such as register, head noun (animate/inanimate), and function (restrictive/non-restrictive).

The incidence of adverbial clauses in the analysed corpus is the lowest of the three types of investigated subordinate clauses. The distribution of adverbial clauses shows that they are a feature of less formal registers as the highest number of adverbial clauses could be found in fiction and spoken texts. As for the formal characteristics of adverbial clauses, they are mostly finite, introduced by a subordinator. Finite adverbial clauses are particularly frequent in less formal text types, and they express a wider range of semantic functions than non-finite adverbial clauses. There are significantly fewer non-finite clauses in the interviews than in any other text type, which proves that the less formal the text the more finite and

[36] Biber, *Longman Grammar of*, 606-607.

fewer non-finite clauses it contains. The use of non- finite structures requires more planning than the addition of a final finite adverbial clause to the main clause, and as there is not so much time for planning speech as there is for writing, spoken language logically uses fewer non-finite structures. Finite adverbial clauses are, for the main part, temporal, conditional and of cause/reason as interaction between participants is frequently concerned with actions that take place at a certain time, or it is done through reasoning and causes for action, as well as presenting possible situations with possible outcomes dependent on particular conditions. The figures for time clauses are relatively high compared with the other most frequently occurring semantic categories, which can be attributed to their usefulness in relating certain actions or events to other activities described in the main clause.

Based on the results of the analysis reported in this study, it can be stated that the different functions of the different types of subordinate clauses correspond to their functions in discourse and thus to their distribution across registers. Although there are some discrepancies between the present findings and those based on other corpora and the LGSWE corpus, these may be explained in terms of the differences of the samples of texts comprising the corpus involved. In the course of investigation I came to the conclusion that the differences in the distribution of particular types of subordinate clauses between the investigated text types might be determined by the text type and its level of formality.

The present study provides a comprehensive formal and functional corpus-based description of subordinate clauses as well as an analysis of their distribution in different contexts. As making generalizations based only on one type of subordinate clause might lead to inaccuracies in conclusions concerning the relationship between registers, the study investigates the ways in which nominal, relative, and adverbial subordinate clauses occur and what functions they serve. Since the study and acquisition of language and its grammar cannot be based only on sentence-level descriptions, the present study is based on a corpus of four different text types of different degrees of formality. The aim of this study was to describe the syntactic structures and investigate how they are used within different naturally occurring texts of spoken and written discourse. The results of the present study constitute a contribution to the application of a user-based approach to the formal and functional analysis of specific language structures, namely those of subordinate clauses. It can be hoped that future linguists, EFL professional teachers and researchers in the field

of the structure of the English sentence will benefit from the present analysis and will use it as a resource for their studies.

Bibliography

Barker, Marjorie, and Eric Pederson. "Syntactic complexity versus concatenation in a verbal production task." In *Syntactic Complexity: Diachrony, acquisition, neuro-cognition, evolution*, edited by Thomas Givón and Masayoshi Shibatani (eds.), 391–404. 2009.

Beaman, Karen. "Coordination and subordination revisited: Syntactic complexity in spoken and written narrative discourse." In *Coherence in spoken and written discourse,* edited by Deborah Tannen (ed.), 45-80. New Jersey: ABLEX, 1984

Biber, Douglas. *Variation across Speech and Writing.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988

Biber, Douglas, Susan Conrad, and Randi Reppen. *Corpus Linguistics*. Cambridge University Press, 1998

Biber, Douglas, Stig Johansson, Geoffrey Leech, Susan Conrad, and Edward Finnegan. *Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English.* Pearson Education Limited, 1999.

Biber, Douglas, and Bethany Gray. "Challenging Stereotypes about Academic Writing: Complexity, Elaboration, Explicitness." *Journal of English for Academic Purposes* 9, no.1 (March 2010): 2-20.

Carter, Ronald, and Michael McCarthy. *Cambridge grammar of English*: *a comprehensive guide*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Chafe, Wallace, and Deborah Tannen. "The Relation between Written and Spoken Language." *Annual Review of Anthropology.*, Vol. 16, (1987): 383-407.

Chafe, Wallace, and Jane Danielwicz. "Properties of Spoken and Written Language." In *Comprehending Oral and Written Language,* edited by R. Horowitz and F.J. Samuels, 48-73. New York: Academic Press, 1987.

Crystal, David. *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language* (2nd edition). Cambridge University Press, 1997.

DeVito, Joseph A. "Levels of abstraction in spoken and written language". *Journal of Communication* 17, (1967): 354-61.

Diessel, Holger. "The ordering distribution of main and adverbial clauses: a typological study." *Language 77*, (2001): 343–365.

Diessel, Holger, and Katja Hetterle. "Causal clauses: A cross-linguistic investigation of their structure, meaning, and use." In *Linguistic*

Universals and Language Variation, edited by Peter Siemund (ed.), 21-52. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2011.

Dik, Simon, C. *Functional Grammar*. London: Academic press, 1978.

Downing, Angela, and Philip A. Locke. *A University Course in English Grammar*. Prentice Hall International (UK), 1992.

Drieman, George H. J. "Differences between written and spoken language." *Acta Psychologica* 20, (1962): 36-57.

Ford, Cecilia E. *Grammar in interaction*." Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

Ford, Cecilia E., and Sarah A. Thompson. "Conditionals in discourse: a text-based study from English." In: *On Conditionals,* edited by Elisabeth C. Traugott. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

Givón, Talmy. "The ontogeny of relative clauses: How children learn to negotiate complex reference." In *The Genesis of Syntactic Complexity*, edited by Talmy Givón, Chapter 8. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2008.

Greenbaum, Sidney. *An Introduction to English Grammar*. Longman Group UK Ltd., 1993.

Greenbaum, Sidney, and Gerald Nelson. "Clause relationships in spoken and written English." *Functions of Language* Volume 2, Number 1, (1995): 1-21.

Greenbaum, Sidney, and Gerald Nelson. "The Position of Adverbial Clauses in British English." *World Englishes*, Volume 15, Issue 1, (March 1996):69–81.

Halliday, Michael A. K. *Spoken and Written Language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989.

Huddleston, Rodney. *English Grammar an outline*. Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Iglesias, Silva, G. "A Contrastive Study of Sentence Structure, Clause Combination Strategies and Syntactic Complexity in Oral Informal Narratives produced by Native Speakers of English and Advanced EFL Learners." Universidad de Chile. Accessed March 15, 2015. www.tesis.uchile.cl./thesis/uchile/2008/.../silva_g.pdf

McCarthy, Michael, and Ronald Carter. "Spoken grammar: what is it and how can we teach it?" *ELT Journal*, 49 (3), (1995): 207-218.

McCarthy, Michael. *Spoken language and applied linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

O'Donnell, Roy C. "Syntactic differences between speech and writing". *American Speech*, Volume 49, (1974): 102-110.

Pollock, Carroll W. *Communicate what you mean*. Prentice Hall, Inc. US. 1982.

Prideaux, Gary D. "Subordination and Information Distribution in Oral and Written Narratives." *Pragmatics & Cognition 1:1*(1993): 51–69, University of Alberta. http://dx.doi.org/10.1075/pc.1.1.05pri

Rafajlovičová, Rita. *Subordination in Different Text Types*. Prešov: Filozofická fakulta PU, 2013.

Richards, Jack C. *Teacher Learning in Language Teaching*.Edited by Donald Freeman. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Quirk, Randolph, Sidney Greenbaum, Geoffrey Leech, and Jan Svartvik. *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*. Longman Group UK Limited, 1985.

Schleppegrell, Mary J. "Subordination and Linguistic Complexity." *Discourse Processes.* Vol. 15 Issue 1, (Jan-Mar 1992):117-131.

Siewierska, Anna. *Functional Grammar*. Routledge, London. 1991

Stormzand, Martin, J., and M. O'Shea. *How much English Grammar?* Baltimore, Warwick & York, inc. 1924.

Tannen, Deborah. "Oral and Literate Strategies in Spoken and Written Narratives." *Language"* Vol. 58, No. 1 (March 1982): 1-21. http://www.jstor.org/stable/413530

Thompson, Sandra, A. "Subordination' in Formal and Informal Discourse". In *Meaning, Form, and Use in Context: Linguistic Applications,* edited by Deborah Schiffrin, ed., 85-94. Georgetown: Georgetown University Press, 1984.

—. "Grammar and written discourse: initial vs. final purpose clauses in English." *Text 5*. 1/2: (1985): 55-84.

Thompson, Sandra A., and Robert E. Longacre. "Adverbial clauses" In *Language typology and syntactic description: Complex constructions,* volume 2, (1985):171–234. Edited by Shopen, Timothy. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

CHAPTER EIGHT

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE: AN ANALYSIS OF NAUTICAL METAPHORS IN ENGLISH AND POLISH

AGNIESZKA UBERMAN

Introduction

The present discussion aims to focus on certain aspects of the figurative use of contemporary language which is abundant in expressions referring to diverse specialised areas of human existence. The application of metaphor has been extensively studied by numerous researchers. Metaphorical language is no longer the domain of poetic expression, it is omnipresent in everyday communication and it aims at evoking particular images. Phrases and expressions employing the nautical lexicon are frequently encountered and are employed to refer to a diversity of phenomena. The present analysis is directed at investigating the use of such lexical items and their metaphorical extensions. Contrastive analysis was carried out on selected exemplars of such language in English and their available Polish equivalents. The study attempts to search for common underlying concepts as well as to highlight the areas where both languages exemplify considerable diversity of linguistic representation. However, owing to the fact that English abounds in nautical phrases and metaphors, only those selected expressions which employ salient lexemes of maritime reference are analysed here. Examples of metaphors embedded in nautical expressions are also listed.

1. The nature of metaphor

While considering the uniqueness of language, Pinker and Jackendoff[1] state that "language expresses mental representations in the form of conceptual structure". Metaphors are believed to be employed in this capacity. A metaphor represents a type of conceptual relation based on similarity between concepts. It is noted as "a figure of speech in which a word or phrase is used to describe something it does not literally denote".[2]

Metaphorical use of language has been studied extensively by numerous scholars (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Lakoff 1987; Lakoff and Turner, 1989; Cameron and Low, 1999; Kövecses 2002; Croft and Cruse, 2004; Evans and Green, 2006; Geeraerts and Cuyckens, 2007; to mention but a few), therefore, its features and structure are not analysed in detail in the present discussion.

As noted by Renton, "a cynic once defined a metaphor as 'a simile with the words of comparison left out'".[3] He[4] also asserts that "a metaphor is often used because it can convey a particular shade of meaning much more succinctly than other words".

Based upon extensive research into the nature of language it appears that conceptual metaphors organise human perception of the world. Kövecses[5] suggests that the interpretation CONCEPTUAL DOMAIN (A) IS CONCEPTUAL DOMAIN (B) is "a convenient shorthand way of capturing this view of metaphor". Thus, conceptual metaphors "consist of two conceptual domains, in which one domain is understood in terms of another".[6]

Commenting on the implications of metaphorical thought Lakoff and Johnson[7] point out the following:

> The metaphoric character of philosophy is not unique to philosophic thought. It is true of all abstract human thought, especially science.

---

[1] Steven Pinker and Ray Jackendoff, "The faculty of language: what's special about it?" (*Cognition* 95, 2005), 205.
[2] Matthew S. McGlone, "What is the explanatory value of a conceptual metaphor?" (*Language & Communication* 27, 2007), 109.
[3] Nick E. Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking. A Dictionary of 3,800 Picturesque Idiomatic Expressions* (New York: Warner Books, Inc, 1990), 3.
[4] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 3-4.
[5] Zoltán Kövecses, *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 4.
[6] Ibid.
[7] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh. The Embodied Mind and its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 129.

> Conceptual metaphor is what makes most abstract thought possible. Not only can it not be avoided, but it is not something to be lamented. On the contrary, it is the very means by which we are able to make sense of our experience. Conceptual metaphor is one of the greatest of our intellectual gifts.

As aptly noted by Lakoff and Johnson in a different publication[8], "metaphor is pervasive in everyday life; not just in language but in thought and action.Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature". This aspect of language use is the core of the present consideration.

2. The Analysis

While the presidential campaign was in full swing in April 2016, in their political discourse, reporters and journalists frequently resorted to nautical metaphors to discuss the situation of a candidate or a party which supports him/her. The language that is thus applied seems to be a description and reflection of political reality. Clearly, such expressions are not solely or exclusively reserved for presidential candidates. Noticeably, in daily discourse this terminology is equally frequently utilised and the observations that are made via its application relate to various walks of life. In the following discussion, attention focuses on nautical metaphors exemplified by metaphorical linguistic expressions accommodating lexical items pertaining to this domain.

The era of sailing ships has left its legacy in the form of a number of expressions employed in contemporary language. Metaphorical linguistic expressions, according to Kövecses[9], are "words or other linguistic expressions that come from the language or terminology of the more concrete conceptual domain".

I analyse those selected expressions employed in English which have originated in the *language/world of the seas*. Wherever available, Polish equivalents are provided.

Full speed ahead, rendered in Polish as "cała naprzód"[10] is a form of encouragement to work hard with a keen eye on the anticipated success of said hard work.

---

[8] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1980), 3.
[9] Kövecses, *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction*, 4.
[10] Jadwiga Linde-Usiekniewicz, ed., *Wielki słownik polsko-angielski* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2004), 81.

To come adrift – "(of a plan) not to work out as intended",[11] in Polish, talking of plans, "pokrzyżować się",[12] literally designates a situation experienced by sailors when the wind has stopped and the only force pushing the ship is the movement of the sea and waves, rather than the wind. *Adrift* means "at the mercy of wind and tide, floating or being carried aimlessly".[13]

To stay afloat means "to remain solvent"[14]; as opposed to getting overcome (drowned) by financial problems and losing financial stability. The Polish equivalent "utrzymać się na powierzchni" (literally: 'to remain on the surface')[15] makes a similar reference to the nautical lexicon.

The sheer anchor is an expression interpreted to mean "the source of one's confidence".[16] *Anchor* apart from its literal meaning of "a heavy metal object that is attached to a rope or chain and dropped over the side of a ship or boat to keep it in one place" is also meant to represent a person or thing that gives somebody a feeling of safety.[17] Hence, it seems apparent that *to anchor* means "to fix firmly"[18] so that the object cannot move or be moved. In Polish, the meaning is rendered as "zakotwiczyć".[19] *To weigh anchor*, however, represents the notion of "mov[ing] to another address".[20] The phrase has no direct equivalent in the contrasted language.

Backwash is "consequence".[21] Hence, in language teaching, testing in particular, the *backwash effect* is a consequence, the effect that the test has on teaching.[22] The Polish term "następstwa"[23] is a direct translation equivalent, which however, makes no reference to the world of the sea.

---

[11] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 386.
[12] Jadwiga Linde-Usiekniewicz, ed., *Wielki słownik angielsko – polski*, (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2002), 17.
[13] Adrian Room, ed., *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* (London: Cassell, 2002), 12.
[14] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 386.
[15] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 21.
[16] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 386.
[17] Sally Wehmeier (ed.), *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. 6th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 42.
[18] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 386.
[19] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 39.
[20] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 386.
[21] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 386.
[22] Jack C. Richards, John Platt and H. Platt, *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics* (Harlow: Longman, 1993), 31.
[23] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 74.

To give someone a wide berth is a phrase explained as "to go out of one's way to avoid contact with a person".[24] Since berths on boats are not usually of considerably large size, *a wide berth* appears to be synonymous with comfortable personal space, typically not available on sailing boats. The Polish language expresses the above meaning with the application of the phrase "omijać kogoś/coś z daleka; trzymać się od kogoś/czegoś z daleka",[25] and it is in no way related to nautical lexicon.

To pipe someone on board means "to welcome a person".[26]

To take something on board is interpreted as "to offer to give further consideration to a matter".[27] Neither of the Polish translation counterparts, i.e. "wziąć pod uwagę; uwzględnić"[28] originates in nautical terminology.

While on board, all members of a crew are subjected to the same situation and conditions, therefore *to be in the same boat* means "to share a common set of difficulties".[29] Hence, *to get off the boat* is interpreted to mean "to disassociate oneself from a project".[30] *To miss the boat* refers to the situation in which one "fails to exploit an opportunity".[31] *To rock the boat* means "to disturb the comfortable status quo"[32], "to spoil the good or comfortable situation that exists".[33] *To paddle one's own canoe*, on the other hand, means *"*to do something unaided and in one's own way".[34] Thus, a *boat* seems to assume negatively-loaded connotations, while a *canoe* appears as a metaphorical extension of single-handedly succeeding in a task. Such a way of perceiving vessels might be related to their construction. Boats are aimed at transporting more people as compared to a canoe, which is designed to carry two people at most, and has to be moved by a paddle. The Polish equivalents of the above boat-related expressions are in no way related to the language of the seas. *To be in the same boat* is expressed by the Polish phrase "jechać na tym samym wózku"; *to miss the boat* means "stracić okazję" ('miss a chance'), while *to rock the boat* corresponds to "narozrabiać, namieszać".[35] Similarly, *to*

[24] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 386.
[25] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 101.
[26] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 386.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko – polski*, 122.
[29] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 386.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Della Summers (ed.) *Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture*. 3rd ed. (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2005), 1194.
[34] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 386.
[35] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 123.

paddle one's own canoe is translated into Polish as "samemu sobie radzić".[36] No equivalent is noted for the expression *to get off the boat*.

Shots across the bow signify "warnings",[37] and in Polish the phrase is rendered as "postraszyć kogoś",[38] thus making no reference to the nautical lexicon. As reported by an Internet source *a short across the bows* "derives from the naval practice of firing a cannon shot across the bows of an opponent's ship to show them that you are prepared to do the [sic] battle".[39]

To be on course is an expression interpreted as "to be progressing satisfactorily toward one's goal"[40] similarly to a ship which sails according to a pre-planned route, i.e. course. The same reference is also noted in the Polish equivalent "trzymać kurs".[41]

To learn the ropes means "to be taught the elementary features",[42] therefore the phrase *to know the ropes* is used to express the meaning "to know how to do one's job"[43] or "to be thoroughly familiar with what is to be done; to be up to all the tricks and dodges".[44] The source states that the expression has its origin in sailing terminology, as "a sailor or apprentice had to become thoroughly familiar with the details of the rigging and how to handle the ropes".[45]

An online source[46] defines the phrase *know the ropes* as originating from nautical jargon claiming that sailors needed to learn and know which rope raised which sail as well as how to tie numerous types of knots. *To show someone the ropes* is used to express the meaning "to teach a beginner how to do something".[47] The ropes therefore signify skilful/practised ability or expertise. Neither of the Polish equivalents, i.e. "wiedzieć o co chodzi" or "pokazać komuś co i jak"[48] refer to the language of the sea.

---

[36] Ibid, 170.
[37] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 386.
[38] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 133.
[39] http://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/16900.html
[40] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 386.
[41] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 264.
[42] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 388.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 664.
[45] Ibid.
[46] http://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/221800.html
[47] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 386.
[48] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 1015.

Deck is "a floor built across a ship over all or part of its length",[49] therefore as a significant part of a ship it is featured in a number of expressions. *A loose cannon on the[sic] deck* refers to "a mistake likely to cause trouble"[50], while *all hands on deck* means that "everybody is requested to help out"[51], which is rendered in Polish as "wszystkie ręce na pokład".[52] *To be back on deck* represents the meaning "to have returned after an absence"[53] and *to clear the decks* stands for "to get ready for action".[54] The corresponding phrase in Polish "przygotować grunt"[55] makes no reference to the deck of a boat.

Sails are essential for ships or boats to move forward as well as to change direction. A *sail* is "a piece of fabric sewn together and fitted to the spars and rigging of a vessel so as to convert the force of the wind into forward motion".[56] Thus, it appears that their paramount importance to the process of sailing (i.e. moving and/or progressing) is frequently reflected in metaphorical linguistic expressions featuring analogous phenomena and processes.

When a voyage starts it is phrased as the nautical expression *to set* sail.[57] Its Polish equivalent "wypłynąć w morze"[58] employs the destination, i.e. the sea. *To trim one's sails* means "to modify or reshape one's policy or opinion to meet the circumstances, as the sails of the ship are 'trimmed' or adjusted according to the wind".[59] *To sail against the wind* suggests difficulty and the necessity to overcome adverse conditions; hence it is interpreted as "to swim against the tide; to oppose popular or current trends, opinions and the like".[60] *To sail before the wind*, however, renders the meaning "to prosper; to go on swimmingly; to meet with great success, as a ship sails smoothly and rapidly with the following wind".[61] *To sail close to the wind* means literally "to keep the vessel's head as near as possible to the quarter from which the wind is blowing yet keeping the

[49] Summers, *Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture*, 359.
[50] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 386.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko – polski*, 296.
[53] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 386.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 296.
[56] Joseph P. Pickett (ed.), *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*. 4th ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2000), 1532.
[57] Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 1065.
[58] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 1027.
[59] Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 1201.
[60] Ibid, 1031.
[61] Ibid.

sails filled". However, figuratively, it represents the notion defined as "to go to the verge of what decency or propriety allows; to act so as to just escape the letter or infringement of the law; to take a risk".[62] The corresponding Polish expression "balansować na krawędzi"[63] does not refer to sailing.

Once a sailor learns the ropes and basic techniques necessary to appropriately manoeuvre the ship/sailboat, the management of the course and reaching a destination can be called (*to be) plain sailing*, i.e. "to be quite straightforward and very easy";[64] "something is perfectly straightforward; there need be no hesitation about the course of action".[65] The origin of the phrase is explained by Room[66] as referring to and influenced by *'plane sailing'* i.e. "the art of determining a ship's position on the assumption that the earth is flat. She is sailing, therefore, on a plane, instead of a spherical surface, which is a simple and easy method of determining the course and distance over short passages". The consulted Polish dictionary renders the expression as "być całkiem prostym, pójść jak po maśle"[67] with no mention of sailing.

An essential prerequisite for sailing on a sailboat is the power of wind. As soon as it quiets down, the boat cannot move forward. Hence, *to take the wind out of someone's sails* is understood to mean "to forestall someone; to frustrate a person by utilising their own material or methods. Literally, it is to sail windward of a ship and so rob its sails of the wind".[68] Similarly, Renton (1990: 388) stresses the fact that a person is distressed and hindered in their progress; for the meaning of the phrase is interpreted as "to upset a person by anticipating his actions or using arguments which he was proposing to use".[69] No reference is made to the nautical lexicon in the Polish counterpart of the expression – "przygasić kogoś, pozbawić kogoś satysfakcji".[70]

Contrary to the example outlined above, the phrase *to sail into someone* presupposes a sufficient amount of power in order to proceed. Therefore, it represents the meaning "to attack or reprimand [someone]

[62] Ibid.
[63] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 1027.
[64] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 388.
[65] Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 917.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 889.
[68] Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 1273.
[69] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 388.
[70] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 1027.

forcefully"[71] – "zaatakować gwałtownie";[72] while the phrase "to sail into a task or the like is to set about it vigorously, as attackers 'sail into' an enemy to commence a naval engagement".[73]

Another instance of a phrase employing the lexeme *sail* is *to strike sail*, which represents the meaning *"*to acknowledge oneself beaten; to eat humble pie".[74] Room[75] offers an explanation for the phrase origin in the following words: "When a ship in a fight or on meeting another ship, lowered her top sails at least half-mast high, she was said to strike, meaning that she submitted or paid respect to another". No Polish equivalent is noted for the discussed phrase.

A sailboat or a ship usually hoists a flag at the mast showing its colours, i.e. affiliation. Hence, *to sail under false colours* means "to pretend that one's real character and beliefs are different from what they really are"[76] or "to pretend to be what one is not with the object of personal advantage".[77] The equivalent Polish literal meaning "pływać pod fałszywą banderą"[78] is of nautical origin, however, the figurative meaning expressed as "stroić się w cudze piórka",[79] is unrelated to the set of nautical lexicon. Room[80] also states that the phrase originated from the allusion to pirate ships which "approached the object of their prey with false colours at the mast".

The contrary situation is verbalised by means of the expression *to show one's true colours* which refers to the situation where one "reveals one's true nature or proper character"[81] – "pokazać swoje prawdziwe oblicze".[82] *To nail one's colours to the mast* is a phrase employed to express the meaning "to publicly declare one's position and to maintain it in the face of criticism".[83] The phrase in Polish "obnosić się ze swoimi poglądami"[84] does not employ any nautical term. Room[85] provides a more detailed

[71] Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 1031.
[72] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 1027.
[73] Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 1031.
[74] Ibid, 1133.
[75] Ibid.
[76] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 386.
[77] Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 1031.
[78] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 223.
[79] Ibid.
[80] Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 1031.
[81] Ibid, 1081.
[82] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 223.
[83] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 387.
[84] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 730.
[85] Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 806.

explanation and states that to *nail one's colours to the mast* means "to refuse to admit defeat. Colours nailed to a ship's mast in battle cannot be lowered as a sign of defeat or capitulation". Thus, the *colours* stand for one's character, opinion or standpoint.

The lexical item *ship*, a representative of seafaring vessels, is frequently employed as an essential component of numerous nautical phrases. A ship is defined as "a. a vessel of considerable size for deep-water navigation; b. a sailing vessel having three or more square-rigged masts".[86] The quoted definitions highlight its size and purpose. It has to be thoroughly checked prior to sailing out to sea and only its good condition qualifies it to set sail. Therefore, *ship shape* (also *shipshape*) suggests that someone/something is "in excellent condition",[87] or "in proper order; as methodically arranged as things in a ship. When a sailing vessel was properly rigged and equipped she was said to be 'shipshape'".[88] The phrase in Polish is rendered as "w idealnym porządku"[89] and is unrelated to the lexicon of the sea.

The opposite impression, i.e. of a negative condition, is rendered by the phrase *a case of rats leaving a sinking ship*, which is interpreted as "the desertion of an enterprise in anticipation of imminent failure".[90] Its Polish equivalent, i.e. "uciekać jak szczury z tonącego statku, okrętu"[91] designates a corresponding situation.

While referring to the number or amount of something by means of the phrase *enough to sink a battleship* one describes a situation in which the said number or amount is "more than sufficient".[92]

To run one's own ship suggests independence in making decisions, hence the expression renders the meaning "to do things and organise subordinates in one's own way",[93] while *to run a tight ship* denotes the sense expressed in words: "to manage an efficient organisation"[94] – "trzymać wszystko silną ręką".[95] On the other hand, *to be a rudderless ship* means "to be a project not managed properly",[96] as the rudder is "the

[86] Pickett, *The American Heritage Dictionary*, 1606.
[87] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 388.
[88] Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 1077.
[89] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 1072.
[90] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 388.
[91] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 966.
[92] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 388.
[93] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 234.
[94] Ibid.
[95] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 1072.
[96] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 388.

tool essential for properly navigating a vessel, i.e. to control the direction in which it moves".[97] *To abandon ship* is a nautical phrase referring to the situation in which someone "abrogates one's responsibilities or abandons a project".[98] An instance of success can be verbalised by employing the phrase *when one's ship comes in*/*home*. It is utilised to represent the meaning "when one's business venture is successfully completed or when luck arrives"[99] or "when one's fortune is made".[100] "Kiedy zbiję fortunę"[101] expresses the same meaning; however, the metaphorical process does not resort to nautical images.

Seafaring vessels have rare chances of frequent encounters at sea. Therefore, the expression *ships that pass in the night* refers to "chance acquaintances encountered only once",[102] or "persons who fail to meet up".[103] In Polish, when mentioning an analogous condition a speaker might say "znamy się tylko przelotnie".[104]

Owing to the similarity of deserts to the sea, the former of which covers vast stretches of land with sand rather than water, the *camel* (*wielbłąd*[105]) as the animal employed for carrying goods across deserts has been frequently referred to as *the ship of the desert*.[106]

To drive a ship is "in nautical parlance, to sail or command a ship".[107] A *happy ship* is "one in which the crew work together harmoniously",[108] however, a disorderly crew member might *break* or *jump ship*. *To break ship* is used to talk of sailors and means "to fail to return to one's ship on the expiration of leave",[109] while *to jump ship* is "to desert a ship in which one is serving",[110] which is in Polish "uciec ze statku".[111] *To scuttle a ship* means to purposefully destroy it, i.e. "to hole it in order to make it

[97] Summers, *Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture*, 1209.
[98] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 388.
[99] Ibid, 389.
[100] Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 1260.
[101] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 1072.
[102] Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 1078.
[103] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 388.
[104] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 1072.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 1077.
[107] Ibid, 367.
[108] Ibid, 548.
[109] Ibid, 166.
[110] Ibid, 644.
[111] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 639.

sink".[112] Polish equivalents for other expressions in the above group are non-existent.

No sailing would be possible without vast stretches of water, i.e. seas or oceans. Those elements are also featured in linguistic expressions of nautical origin describing daily lives.

To be in uncharted waters is an expression describing the fact that someone is "the first to experience something".[113] This phrase has its Polish equivalents in the form "wypłynąć na nieznane wody; poruszać się po nieznanym terenie".[114]

Owing to the considerable size of the sea, which might result in the lack of ability to realise when someone is at a particular moment, the expression *to be all at sea* describes a situation in which one is "confused as to what is going on and what to do next".[115] Room[116] more extensively discusses the phrase as meaning "wide of the mark; in a state of uncertainty or error, like someone at sea who has lost their bearings". The origin in nautical language is not represented in the Polish equivalent of the phrase, i.e. "mieć mętlik w głowie".[117]

A sea change, however, is "an apparently magical change, as though brought about by the sea";[118] "a complete change in the character or nature of something".[119] This designation seems to be related to the fact that the sea might exhibit entirety different features owing to external weather conditions even within one day. "Całkowita przemiana"[120] does not belong exclusively to the nautical domain.

Seadog is an expression referring to "an old and seasoned sailor, an old salt",[121] "a sailor with long experience".[122] In Polish, however, a different animal is employed to designate the sailors, i.e. *wolf*, for the expression is "wilk morski".[123]

To put to sea means "to start a voyage".[124] Similarly, "wyjść w morze"[125] in Polish is clearly related to the sailing lexicon.

---

[112] Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 1054.
[113] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 389.
[114] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 1274.
[115] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 388.
[116] Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 70.
[117] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 1044.
[118] Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 1055.
[119] Summers, *Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture*, 1244.
[120] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 1044.
[121] Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 1055.
[122] Summers, *Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture*, 1244.
[123] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 1044.
[124] Summers, *Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture*, 1244.

Between the devil and deep blue sea is a linguistic expression denoting a difficult situation, i.e. "to be faced with two equally unpalatable alternatives which cannot both be avoided."[126] The Polish equivalent phrase "między młotem a kowadłem"[127] belongs to the domain of a blacksmith's trade and activity, thus it is in no way related to the marine domain.

Some cities are built on water. Venice in Italy has been named *the bride of the sea*. Room[128] offers the following explanation to the etymology of the phrase:

> [t]he Italian city is so called from the ancient ceremony of the wedding of the sea, when the doge threw a ring into the Adriatic saying: "We wed thee, O sea, in token of perpetual domination". This took place annually on Ascension Day, and the custom was enjoined upon the Venetians in 1177 by Pope Alexander III, who gave the Doge a gold ring from his own finger in token of the Venetian fleet's victory over Frederick Barbarossa, in defence of the pope's quarrel. At the same time his Holiness desired the even[t] to be commemorated each year.

No Polish equivalent is noted for the above mentioned phrase.

Half-seas over refers to someone who is "drunk. The phrase originally meant 'halfway over the sea', hence halfway between one state and another. A drunk person is halfway between sobriety and oblivion".[129] The consulted lexical source provides "pod dobrą data"[130] as the corresponding phrase in Polish.

The phrase *to have good sea legs* refers to sailors and designates one who is "a good sailor", and is "able to stand the ship's motion without getting seasick".[131] The Polish counterpart "przyzwyczaić się do kołysania"[132] is only indirectly linked to the marine lexicon.

The high seas is a term referring to "as defined in international law, all the area of sea not under the sovereignty of any state",[133] whereas *the narrow seas* describes "the Irish Sea and the English Channel, especially

---

[125] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 1044.
[126] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 388.
[127] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 316.
[128] Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 168.
[129] Ibid, 539-540.
[130] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 535.
[131] Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 531.
[132] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 1044.
[133] Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 571.

the area around the Straits of Dover".[134] The former is equivalent to Polish "pełne, otwarte morze",[135] while the latter does not have its phraseological counterpart.

Some expressions owe their origin to children's stories. As pointed out by Room[136], one of the characters in *Sinbad the Sailor* in the *Arabian Nights,* was *the Old Man of the Sea*, who

> …hoisted himself on Sinbad's shoulders and clung there for many days and nights, much to the discomfort of Sinbad, who finally got rid of the Old Man by making him drunk. Hence, any burden, real or figurative, of which it is impossible to free oneself without the greatest exertion is called an old man of the sea.

Starzec Morski[137] is the Polish equivalent of the character in *Sinbad the Sailor*; however, the figurative meaning of the phrase is not represented in Polish.

Stretches of water that are far superior in size to the seas are known as oceans. Therefore, *oceans of* is a term applied while referring to "a great mass or amount".[138] The expression is of informal character; similarly to its Polish equivalent "morze czegoś; masa czegoś"[139] figuratively describing large numbers or quantity. It has to be noted that the Polish counterpart makes use of the lexeme *morze*, i.e. the *sea*. Conversely, when mention is made of an insignificant amount or quantity, the phrase *a drop in the ocean* is suitable. However, it assumes a slightly negative overtone, as it refers to "a very small amount, especially when compared with a larger amount which is needed or wanted",[140] "a negligible or tiny quantity; something that makes little difference".[141] Its Polish counterpart, "kropla w morzu potrzeb",[142] similarly to the previous phrase, employs the name of the less extensive mass of water, i.e. the *sea*; while the meaning it represents is equivalent.

An ocean full of fish expresses the meaning "plenty of opportunity",[143] based upon the similarity of a relatively easy catch while fishing in a

---

[134] Ibid, 809.
[135] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 561.
[136] Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 847.
[137]https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sindbad_Żeglarz
[138] Summers, *Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture*, 967.
[139] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 812.
[140] Summers, *Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture*, 421.
[141] Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 368.
[142] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 357.
[143] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 387.

sizeable water area. *A fishing expedition*, on the other hand, describes "an exercise designed to get information to which one is not strictly entitled".[144] References to the above phenomena are not present in Polish.

Surprisingly, the lexeme *ocean* is less readily and frequently employed in figurative expressions as compared to *sea*; the situation is the reverse in Polish.

While at sea, a strong wind creates waves. Their presence signifies some form of disturbance or commotion, hence *to cause/make waves* is interpreted as "to disturb the status quo".[145] In Polish, the figurative meaning is represented by the verb "rozrabiać".[146] However, when one is said *to be on the crest of a wave*, they are likely "to enjoy success which may not last,"[147]similarly to the duration of a wave which is transient as the waves crash against the shore. In Polish no reference to waves is made, as the phrase is rendered by "przeżywać dobry okres".[148]

Strong wind, high waves as well as unfavourable weather conditions are fundamentals of any storm. *The calm before the storm* is "the quiet period before an expected or inevitable crisis".[149] In Polish, the analogous situation is rendered by means of the phrase "cisza porzed burzą",[150] which is an exact equivalent.

Any port in a storm, is a phrase which similarly relies on the need to avoid an encounter with stormy weather, for it is interpreted to mean "anything which helps to avoid difficulties is welcome",[151] or "when one is in a difficulty and has to take whatever refuge, literal or metaphorical, offers itself".[152] Thus, a *port* denotes safety, while a *storm* stands for the trouble experienced. The Polish counterpart "lepsze to niż nic"[153] is again unrelated to the naval domain.

Storms are customarily violent and abrupt, thus these features are foregrounded in the expression *to take by storm* which means "to seize by a sudden and irresistible attack".[154] Room[155] additionally states that this

[144] Ibid.
[145] Ibid, 389.
[146] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 1332.
[147] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 389.
[148] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 270.
[149] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 389.
[150] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 167.
[151] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 388.
[152] Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 47-48.
[153] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 905.
[154] Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 1130.
[155] Ibid.

term is of military origin, yet it is also "used figuratively of someone who becomes suddenly famous or popular or of a new performer who 'takes the town by storm'". "Podbić, zawojować"[156] are the translation equivalents in Polish.

Following the same interpretation of stormy weather, *to ride out the storm* is meant as "to come safely through some dangerous situation",[157] but the Polish rendition "przetrwać"[158] makes no clear reference to the naval domain.

Adverse meteorological conditions and stormy weather doubled with the insufficient navigating skills of crew members can lead to a ship getting wrecked. Thus, *to salvage something out of the wreck* is understood as "to achieve some minor benefits out of a disastrous situation".[159] In Polish, the phrase "ocalić coś z rozpadającego się np. małżeństwa"[160] (*to salvage something out of the wreck of one's marriage*) does not employ the concept of a wreck.

Icebergs can contribute to difficulty in sailing boats and driving ships both due to their presence and size. Customarily, "only about 10 percent of [their] mass is above the surface of the water",[161] which causes a considerable threat to the ease of navigation. This characteristic feature is highlighted in the phrase *to be the tip of the iceberg* which represents the meaning "to be only a very small proportion of a much larger but less obvious whole".[162] Polish "wierzchołek/czubek góry lodowej"[163] clearly adopts the same image and lies within the scope of nautical lexicon.

Unfortunately, accidents take place and people get shipwrecked. In such a case, the survivors are rescued by life rafts. The prototypical designation of a *life raft*, as the name itself suggests, is to save lives; hence the expression is used figuratively to mean "financial assistance sufficient to avert insolvency";[164] where the lack of help, i.e. *life raft,* would result in drowning – *insolvency*. In Polish, any help provided to someone in need is named "koło ratunkowe" i.e. *lifebelt, life ring*, thus, a different element of life-saving equipment featured in boats and ships has undergone the metaphorical process. The equivalent of *life raft* in Polish is "tratwa

[156] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 1155.
[157] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 388.
[158] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 1005.
[159] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 389.
[160] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 1374.
[161] Pickett, *The American Heritage Dictionary*, 868.
[162] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 387.
[163] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 583.
[164] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 388.

ratunkowa",[165] yet it is not used metaphorically to refer to the situation described by the English phrase.

To sink without trace refers to a situation when someone or something "disappears completely",[166] while *sink or swim* means "no matter what happens".[167] Room[168] elaborates on the origin of the phrase stating that "convicted witches were thrown into the water to 'sink or swim'. If they sank, they were drowned, but if they swam it was clear proof they were in league with the Evil One. They were thus in a Catch-22[169] situation". Renton[170] points out that the expression *it is a case of sink or swim* suggests that "an attempt is worthwhile, despite the risk of failure". In Polish, the equivalent of the phrase *to sink without trace* i.e. "zostać całkiem zapomnianym"[171] makes no reference to sinking, while the other expression does not seem to have its direct equivalent.

The oceans and seas are infrequently calm for longer periods of time. They are moved not only by the force of winds but also owing to the "gravitational attraction of the moon and sun, [i.e.] the tide".[172] This type of movement periodically affects "the surface level of the oceans, bays, gulfs, inlets, and estuaries". Thus, *to tide over* means "to support through a difficult period"[173] – "pozwolić przetrwać (komuś); pomóc komuś".[174] *Tide* is also used "figuratively of a tendency, a current or flow of events or the like, as in a tide of feeling"[175] and it is rendered in Polish in a similar fashion as "fala, przypływ".[176]

When conditions change, we can talk of a turning tide, thus the phrase *the tide has turned* is applied to mean "conditions have changed",[177] in Polish "los się odwrócił",[178] just as in the case of a receding tide, i.e. ebb. Similarly, the phrase *at a low ebb* describes the situation in which

[165] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 685.
[166] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 389.
[167] Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 1088.
[168] Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 1088.
[169] *A Catch-22* is "a 'no-win' situation: whichever alternative you choose, you will lose or be in trouble" Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 214.
[170] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 389.
[171] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 1087.
[172] Pickett, *The American Heritage Dictionary*, 1807.
[173] Ibid.
[174] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 1266.
[175] Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 1088.
[176] Ibid.
[177] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 389.
[178] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 1226.

someone or something is "in a bad or inactive state".[179] "Przechodzić kryzys; spaść do minimum"[180] are the corresponding meanings in Polish, which are beyond the scope of nautical lexicon. *To turn the tide*, however, means "to reverse the direction of something". [181] Its Polish equivalent is "odwrócić bieg".[182] Ebb and flow are the sea and ocean movements in opposing directions, the phrase *ebb and flow*[183] is meant as *fluctuations*, while *to ebb away*, similarly to the movement away from the shore, designates the process of "gradually declining":[184] in Polish "stopnieć, zmaleć".[185]

To be caught by the tide, on the other hand, is interpreted as "to be dealt with by something inevitable".[186] When *the tide is running in favour of some proposition*, it relates to the situation in which "public opinion supports some proposition".[187] *Swimming (to swim) against the tide* entails opposing some mainstream behaviour, activities or opinions, thus it is used to mean "to take up a minority position", while *stemming (to stem) the tide* presupposes "making progress against something"[188], i.e. in Polish "poruszać się pod prąd".[189] *To swim against the tide* is equivalent to "płynąć pod prąd"[190], where the element of swimming is preserved, the *tide*, however, is absent.

It is said that *time and tide wait for no man* is a proverb "denoting the folly of procrastination".[191] In Polish, the aspect of time is highlighted, and it translates as "nie da się zatrzymać czasu",[192] which clearly makes no reference to the tide.

An encounter with pirates and pirate ships can prove to be a life-threatening experience. The feature of illicit behaviour associated with their activity is stressed in the adjective *pirate* which refers to "(of radio) unlicensed; (of recordings or computer software) published in breach of

---

[179] Summers, *Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture*, 436.
[180] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 368.
[181] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 389.
[182] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 1226.
[183] *The ebb and flow (of feelings and moods)* – "zmienne (uczucia i nastroje)" (Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 368).
[184] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 386.
[185] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 368.
[186] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 389.
[187] Ibid.
[188] Ibid.
[189] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 1146.
[190] Ibid, 1226.
[191] Room, *Brewer's Dictionary*, 1181.
[192] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 1226.

copyright law".[193] In Polish, the same image is evoked, as the term is translated as "piracki".[194]

Conclusions

Owing to the location of the British Isles and their rich history of sea voyages, the nautical lexicon is well-represented in the English language. Even though Poland is not a land-locked country, Polish naval history is by far less prominent. This phenomenon seems to be reflected in language, which hosts far fewer examples of marine-related metaphorical linguistic expressions. Based upon the selected examples analysed in the present discussion it is fair to state that the English language is far more representative of the world of the seas.

Despite the visible differences in the number of expressions and phrases present in both compared languages, it must be noted that those expressions which do occur in English and Polish seem to share the underlying concepts embedded in them. It has to be stressed, however, that only a representative, yet definitely not exhaustive, set of phrases was analysed. A detailed discussion of all nautical phrases and metaphors would be welcome and more informative, yet it not possible in the project in its present scope and size.

In search of the metaphors embedded in the elements of the above discussed expressions, the following instances might be quoted:

DIRECTION (IN LIFE) IS THE COURSE OF THE SHIP – as exemplified by the expression *to be on course*.

ENCOURAGEMENT / ENERGY IS WIND – as illustrated by the phrase *to take the wind out of someone's sails*, but at the same time PROBLEM IS WIND which is rendered in the expression *to sail against the wind*.

The metaphor A CURRENT SITUATION IS A BOAT appears to be supported by the expressions *to be in the same boat*, *to miss the boat*, *to rock the boat*.

EXPERTISE AND KNOWLEDGE ARE ROPES is a metaphor which can be derived from the expressions *to learn the ropes*, *to know the ropes*, *to show someone the ropes*.

The discussed phrases which employ images that are observed in nature (e.g. *ebb and flow; to cause waves; to be caught in the tide*) are reflected by human behaviour and the surrounding reality. The world of

[193] Renton, *Metaphorically Speaking*, 387.
[194] Linde-Usiekniewicz, *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*, 885.

the seas is a rich source of analogy to human activity, which resembles the features exhibited by the marine realm.

A striking observation which can be made relating to the range of the nautical lexicon in English and Polish is that the former is by far more numerous, and many of the Polish counterparts (as exemplified in the discussion above) fall beyond the domain of the seas.

Bibliography

Cameron, Lynne, and Graham Low. *Researching and Applying Metaphor*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Croft, William, and D. Alan Cruse. *Cognitive Linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Evans, Vyvyan, and Melanie Green. *Cognitive Linguistics: An Introduction*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd., 2006.

Geeraerts, Dirk, and Hubert Cuyckens (eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Kövecses, Zoltán. *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Lakoff, George. *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1987.

Lakoff, George, and Mark Johnson. *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1980.

Lakoff, George, and Mark Johnson. *Philosophy in the Flesh. The Embodied Mind and its Challenge to Western Thought*. New York: Basic Books, 1999.

Lakoff, George, and Mark Turner. *More than Cool Reason. A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1989.

McGlone, Matthew S. "What is the Explanatory Value of a Conceptual Metaphor?" *Language & Communication* 27 (2007): 109-26. DOI: 10.1016/j.langcom.2006.02.016.

Pinker, Steven, and Ray Jackendoff. "The Faculty of Language: What's Special about it?" *Cognition* 95 (2005): 201-36. DOI: 10.1016/j.cognition.2004.08.004.

Lexicographic sources

Wehmeier, Sally, ed. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. 6th ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003. (*OALDCE*).

Linde-Usiekniewicz, Jadwiga, ed. *Wielki słownik angielsko-polski*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2002. (*WSAP*).
Linde-Usiekniewicz, Jadwiga, ed. *Wielki słownik polsko-angielski*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2004. (*WSPA*).
Pickett, Joseph P. (ed.). *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*. 4th ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2000. (*AHDEL*)
Renton, Nick E. *Metaphorically Speaking. A Dictionary of 3,800 Picturesque Idiomatic Expressions*. New York: Warner Books, Inc., 1990.
Richards, Jack C., John Platt, and H. Platt. *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics*. Harlow: Longman, 1993.
Room, Adrian, ed. *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*. London: Cassell, 2002. (*BDPF*)
Summers, Della (ed.). *Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture*. 3rd ed. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2005. (*LDELC*).

Online sources

"A Shot across the Bows." *The Phrase Finder*. Accessed August 7, 2015. http://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/16900.html
"Know the Ropes." *The Phrase Finder*. Accessed August 8, 2015. http://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/221800.html.
"Sindbad Żeglarz." *Wikipedia*. Accessed August 31, 2015. https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sindbad_Żeglarz

PART II:

LITERATURE

CHAPTER NINE

SELF-REFERENTIALITY AND FICTION WRITING IN MARTIN AMIS'S *MONEY*

LORAN GAMI

The chapter focuses on *Money*, one of the most acclaimed novels by the British writer Martin Amis and discusses the self-referential techniques in the novel. It summarily gives an explanation of the concept of metafiction and the importance that it has in the development of the twentieth-century novel by focusing on Amis's novel. The term "self-referential" is used throughout the chapter interchangeably with such terms as "metanarrative", "metafictional", and "self-reflexive"[1], all of which refer to the fact that metafictional novels draw attention to their being texts, fictional constructions. Self-referentiality is present everywhere in this novel, starting with the names of the most important characters. The protagonist is "self-referentially" and "solipsistically" called John Self. One of the most important female characters is called Martina Twain, whose first name is the female version of the author Martin (Amis) and whose last name refers to the fact that she is a "double" and a fictional construction.

The novel centers on John Self, an advertisement producer, who embarks on his first movie production with the help and encouragement of Fielding Goodney, his producer and fundraiser. In the end, it turns out that Goodney is a con-artist who has been lying to Self and cheating him out of his money. Although the novel displays all the basic elements of formal

[1] Critics have often used these terms interchangeably, even though there are minor differences between the two terms and usually the term "metafiction" is larger and usually includes the "self-referential". Other terms that the critic Linda Hutcheon uses are narcissistic, introspective, introverted, self-conscious, self-reflective, self-informing, self-reflexive, auto-referential, auto-representational. (See Linda Hutcheon, *Narcissistic Narrative: The Metafictional Paradox*, (Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1980), 1-2).

realism – characterization, motivation, action, and verisimilitude – at the same time it undermines all of these elements. It is the self-referential (or metafictional) technique that contributes to the shattering of the readers' realistic expectations. Patricia Waugh defines *metafiction* as a "term given to fictional writing which self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artifact" and she adds that metafictional techniques result "in writing which consistently displays its conventionality, which explicitly and overtly lays bare its condition of artifice."[2] Barry Lewis uses the term "vicious circle" to refer to the writings of "postmodernist fiction when both text and world are permeable to the extent that we cannot separate one from the other."[3] Amis's novel makes use of a number of metanarrative devices. One of these is the inclusion of the author in the story. Amis appears as a character; he is the writer who takes up the revision and improvement of the movie script that Self is producing, *Good Money*, after the first writer disappoints Self's expectations and produces an impossible-to-be-produced script. The inclusion (and intrusion) of the author in his own work is not something new and it features in a number of plays and novels. It is interesting, however, the way Amis makes use of this self-referential technique. The story is told from Self's point of view and it is from Self's perspective that we see the writer Martin Amis, who, coincidentally, happens to be living in John Self's neighborhood in London and dines at the same pub as Self. Amis gradually becomes more and more involved with the story and in the end he is in charge of Self's script and, eventually, of the whole novel.

Self and Amis (the character in the story) discuss the motivation and the "realism problem" of Self's movie script:

> 'The distance between author and narrator corresponds to the degree to which the author finds the narrator wicked, deluded, pitiful or ridiculous. I'm sorry, am I boring you?'
> '—Uh?'
> 'This distance is partly determined by convention. In the epic or heroic frame, the author gives the protagonist everything he has, and more. The hero is a god or has godlike powers or virtues. In the tragic ... Are you all right?'
> 'Uh?' I repeated. I had just stabbed a pretzel into my dodgy upper tooth [. . . .]

---

[2] Patricia Waugh, *Metafiction: The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction* (London, New York: Routledge, 1984), 2, 4.
[3] Barry Lewis, "Postmodernism and Literature," in *Routledge Companion to Postmodernism*, ed. Stuart Sim (London, New York: Routledge, 2001), 131.

> 'The further down the scale he is, the more liberties you can take with him. You can do what the hell you like to him, really. This creates an appetite for punishment. The author is not free of sadistic impulses.'[4]

When discussing metafictional writing, Waugh appropriately asserts that: "novelists have tended to become much more aware of the theoretical issues involved in constructing fictions" and that what connects "the very different writers whom one could refer to as broadly 'metafictional', is that they all explore a *theory* of fiction through the *practice* of writing fiction."[5] She also argues that metafictional writers, being concerned about the problems of artistic legitimacy might have "sensed a need for the novel to theorize about itself."[6] Even though the raising of theoretical questions in the literary works themselves is not an entirely new phenomenon, in metafictional writing this aspect of literary work is much more pronounced and becomes inextricable from the text. This theorizing is not merely a gloss that the author might insert to clarify his view of art and aesthetics. In metafictional works, the theorizing is deeply ingrained in the very texture of the work. *Money* can very well illustrate this tendency in postmodernist writing. In the above-quoted passage from the novel, it seems as if the "real-life" Amis is discussing is the potential of literature and the way it can deal with twentieth-century life. What kind of characterization is plausible and suitable for twentieth-century postmodernist, chaotic life? Not the tragic, certainly. The epic will not do either. The author has to go "further down the scale" and unavoidably the distance between him and his fictional creatures becomes wider. This dialogue between Amis and Self is interesting as one can see it in the way Martin Amis (the flesh-and-bone one) raises important theoretical and aesthetical issues, without, however, sounding pedantic or too philosophical. Metanarratively, this dialogue reflects the way that the protagonist is constructed and that Amis (the writer) sees him. John Self is not a heroic or epic figure, he belongs "further down the scale". When talking about the metafictional novel, Hutcheon writes that "the narrator-novelist has, from the start, unrealistically entered his own novel, drawing his reader into his fictional universe.[7]" It is, however, the "aesthetic presence" of the author, which "draw[s] the reader's attention to the storytelling process."[8] The script itself, the ending of which features a

[4] Martin Amis, *Money* (London: Penguin Books, 1986), 229.
[5] Waugh, *Metafiction*, 2.
[6] Ibid. 10.
[7] Hutcheon, *Narcissistic*, 9.
[8] Ibid. 9.

fight between the father and the son over a woman, resembles the fight that Self and his father, Barry, have at the end of the book after Vron (Barry's new wife) has seduced Self. "[T]he impulse behind my concept, my outline, it was personal, it had to do with my life. Autobiographical. Yes, it had to do with this old life of mine,"[9] says John Self when talking about the script of his movie. The story in the screenplay self-referentially reflects the episode near the end of the novel, a story within a story, which is a reflection of the bigger-frame-story and constitutes another metafictional element in the novel. Such self-referential (metanarrative) techniques direct attention to the fact that what we are reading is not real life, but a work of fiction. Waugh writes that metafictional writing "self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artefact."[10]

Martin Amis further explains to the uninterested Self that "the twentieth century is an ironic age − downward-looking" and that "even realism, rockbottom realism, is considered a bit grand for the twentieth century."[11] "'Reality'", Nabokov writes in his afterword of *Lolita* "is one of the few words which mean nothing without quotes."[12] In a postmodernist fashion, *Money* flouts all the elements of realism and of "reality" and shows that these traditional concepts cannot be easily defended and that they are always in flux, never fixed. Even though critics of metafictional writers accuse them of creating make-believe worlds that do not bear resemblance to reality, metafictional writers, like the modernist writers before them (or even more than them), are very much preoccupied with the relationship between reality and text. They:

> [s]trengthen each reader's sense of an everyday real world while problematizing his or her sense of reality from a conceptual or philosophical point of view. As a consequence of their metafictional undermining of the conventional basis of existence, the reader may revise his or her ideas about the philosophical status of what is assumed to be reality. . . .[These writers] are hoping . . . that each reader does this with a new awareness of how the meanings and values of that world have been constructed and how, therefore, they can be challenged or changed. To some extent each metafictional novel . . . aims to unsettle our convictions about the relative status of 'truth' and 'fiction'.[13]

[9] Amis, *Money,* 94-95.
[10] Waugh, *Metafiction*, 2.
[11] Amis, *Money*, 231.
[12] Vladimir Nabokov, "On a Book Entitled Lolita", in *Lolita* (Penguin, 1995), 312.
[13] Waugh, *Metafiction*, 34.

Besides Amis's appearance as a minor character who gradually becomes a significant one, another important feature that contributes to its self-reflexive and non-representational qualities is that, in the end, everything turns out to have been merely a setup, an illusion. The whole storyline focuses on Self trying to produce the script for his first movie and his endeavors to find suitable actors that would appear in his movie. In the end, it is revealed that his "moneyman" and producer, Fielding Goodney, has swindled him and that the actors they have recruited were not real actors but fake artists who were part of Goodney's scheme to dupe an unsuspecting Self. Thus the plot of the novel is dependedent on an illusion and the main storyline on which the novel as a whole depends is annihilated. Everything was a deception, a trick that Goodney plays on Self and that Amis plays on us, the readers. One cannot help but think of Prospero's words at the end of *The Tempest*:

> *Our revels now are ended. These our actors,*
> *As I foretold you, were all spirits, and*
> *Are melted into air, into thin air:*
> *And like the baseless fabric of this vision,*
> *The cloud-capp'd tow'rs, the gorgeous palaces,*
> *The solemn temples, the great globe itself,*
> *Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,*
> *And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,*
> *Leave not a rack behind.*

Just like Prospero—the magician who creates an imaginary world out of fairies and spirits, only to dissolve them in the end—Amis has created a non-realistic, "fairy" novel, in which the "actors" (not really actors, but con artists) are melted into thin air. Everything is dissolved, leaving "not a rack behind". The novel is an "insubstantial pageant," in that the plot becomes secondary and that, being self-referential, is non-realistic and, from the traditional point of view of plot construction, "insubstantial". The opening words of the novel are quite interesting and revealing: "By the time you lay [the book] aside (and you should always read these things slowly, on the lookout for clues or giveaways), John Self will no longer exist."[14] In the end there is no script, no movie, no actors, and Self is left penniless. Thus, being self-referential, the plot—from the traditional perspective—is also self-annihilating, that is, it undermines what it promises to construct and what we are left with is simply the text, words. We should, however, not regard this "annihilation" of plot as a negative

[14] Amis, *Money*, 3.

aspect of self-referential writing, as both Hutcheon and Waugh make very well clear in their books.[15] Rather, they see this drive of the new novel as a trend that has existed since the early forms of novels (starting with *Don Quijote* and *Tristam Shandy*) and which have become more prominent from the 1960s onwards in the works of John Fowles and John Barth. These novels—like the modernist novels before them—reject the traditional concept of plot construction and the primacy that has historically been given to the plot. Metafictional novels, most of which belong to postmodernist literature, go beyond modernist novels and they expose the mechanisms of plot construction, thereby accentuating the fictionality of the text.

Motivation, too, as a *sine qua non* of plot construction is dealt a severe blow in *Money*. Throughout the novel, the question of motivation is discussed by Self, Goodney and Amis. The motivation issue is raised in the story within the story–the question why the father fight the son, why should the woman betray the lover with the son. What about Goodney's motivation for creating such an elaborate scheme and destroy John Self? In the end, we learn that Self's movie producer is in fact a con-man and also that Goodney had been the loony who has been harassing Self over the phone (Frank the Phone) as well as the transvestite who had stalked him and who on one occasion had physically assaulted the drunken Self. What are Goodney's motivations? The motivation "question" has been shattered and dissolved during the twentieth century, especially in the work of such writers as Samuel Beckett and Eugene Ionesco. In *Money*, too, motivation—one of the pillars of the socio-psychological realistic and naturalistic novel—suffers greatly. When Self asks Frank the Phone why Frank is stalking him and wants to do him harm, the latter replies:

> 'Oh it's motivation you want. You want motivation. Okay. Here. Have some motivation.'
> . . . . He said to me, 'Remember, in Trenton, the school on Budd Street, the pale boy with glasses in the yard? You made him cry. It was me. Last December, Los Angeles, the hired car you were driving when you jumped that light in Coldwater Canyon? A cab crashed and you didn't stop. The cab had a passenger. It was me. 1978, New York, you were auditioning at the Walden Center, remember? The redhead, you had her strip and then passed her over, and you laughed. It was me. Yesterday you stepped over a bum in Fifth Avenue and you looked down and swore and made to kick. It was me. It was me.'[16]

[15] See Waugh, *Metafiction,* 7-19 and Hutcheon, *Narcissistic*, 1-16.
[16] Amis, *Money*, 202.

The motivations Frank provides are not to be believed (at least not all of them). It is virtually impossible for both of them to have been in the same places so many times. So rather than a realistic character, we might also regard Fielding/Frank/the stalker as imaginary materialization, an embodiment of the comeuppance against Self's flaws, arrogance, unconcern, and lack of sympathy. In a doppelganger-like way, we might even make the assumption that Goodney represents Self's consciousness, that part of his consciousness that he suppresses with drinking, drug addiction, and pornography and that haunts him all the time, reminding him of his transgressions.

Is motivation a plausible standard in twentieth century (and twenty-first century) literature? In twentieth-century life? This is the (fictional) Martin Amis's reply: "Actually I'd like to return to the motivation question. It seems to me it's an idea taken from art, not from life, not from twentieth-century life. Nowadays motivation comes from inside the head, not from outside. It's neurotic…"[17] It seems that both Amises (the novel's Amis and the one in flesh-and-blood) seem to favour randomness and inconsequentiality when it comes to explaining motivation in life and literature:

> 'Why?' I asked. 'Why did he do it? Where's the motivation? On the phone he was always saying I'd fucked him up. How could I have? I'd remember . . . .
> Martin considered . . . . 'I think that was all a blind. You never hurt him.'
> 'Really? But then it's senseless.'
> 'Is it? These days? I sometimes think that, as a controlling force in human affairs, motivation is pretty well shagged out by now. It hasn't got what it takes to motivate people any more. Go for a walk in the streets. How much motivation do you see?'
> 'Why me? That's what I want to know. Me, why me?'
> 'Well, you fitted the bill in all kinds of ways. But I've got a hunch it was to do with your name.'
> 'What about my name?'
> 'Names are awfully important . . . .'[18]

We also have here an instance of Amis the writer discussing fiction writing and aesthetics with readers – via his fictitious characters. Metafiction inherently involves a theoretical discussion of what fiction is and how writers can still write fiction in the twentieth century. Throughout the novel, we see Self trying to find patterns and shapes in his life in order to give meaning and motivation to his life and the world he inhabits. Self's

[17] Ibid. 335.
[18] Ibid. 332.

endeavors are also Amis's own endeavors to find patterns and shapes in life. Can it be that in our post-1945, electronic, digitalized, near-apocalyptic age it is still possible—though much more difficult than before—to find these patterns and shapes (which might be just hidden in this vast flow of information that we are bombarded with every single moment by the media and computers)? Or is it just chaos and randomness and reality does not even exist anymore? As a novelist, Amis is concerned with such issues and he is always testing the elements and techniques of fiction writing in *Money* and in his other novels. Are writers really, as Shelley buoyantly affirms, the unacknowledged legislators of the world? There seems to be no such optimism and confidence in Martin Amis. Writing in our postmodern world the writer is not even certain of the reality and the world in which he lives. Is he even responsible for his own creations? When thinking about the movie he is about to produce, Self worries that:

> [e]verything is happening and I can't stop it. I am a director now and I must do what directors do. I must keep the whole swirl in my head and stop it flying off into the state it loves, which is chaos. I must keep form […] I must balance motivation and character, and be realistic, who, me? ...[19]

Is it not this Amis's concern too, or any writer's concern, for that matter? Here we have Amis metanarratively talking about the fiction-writing process and the difficulties writers encounter when having to deal with imposing shape and form on the chaos and with resisting entropy.

Concerns about writing techniques, fiction and realism are subtly interwoven in *Money* and they do so without impairing the aesthetic value of the book. One of the novel's aesthetic strengths and appeals is its multiplicity of layers. Intertwined in the story of John Self and his failed endeavor to produce his first movie are the considerations of the role that the author has in his book, his responsibility towards his creations, the moral considerations in the novel or the lack thereof. At certain points in the novel—especially the second half—these layers reach a higher level of interpenetration with Amis the author addressing directly the readers and telling them what it is for him to write this novel at a specific point of the story. At one point in the novel, where the main thread of the plot (the writing of the movie script) seems to be at an impasse, we read:

[19] Ibid. 293.

> 'Is there a moral philosophy of fiction? When I create a character and put him or her through certain ordeals, what am I up to — morally? Am I accountable. I sometimes feel that —'
> . . . .
> 'And the characters have a double innocence. They don't know why they're living through what they're living through. They don't even know they're alive. For instance, if —'
> . . . . At ten o'clock this morning Selina walked out of my life and into a whole new story. . . .She's going to hit Ossie Twain with a paternity suit, and she's going to win, too. . . .That's why she wouldn't... ah, but you guessed. You're not blind. You know the score. Me, I feel duped, dead — and yet impressively resilient. *Stay strong*, I tell myself. Disappointment breeds an odd determination. That must be why I'm throwing myself into my work like this.
> . . . .Yes, you see, readers are natural believers. They too have something of the authorial power to create life and —'
> 'Hey, the fight,' I said. 'How you doing with the fight.'
> 'The fight's all fixed. No problem.'
> '— How?'
> 'Simple. By beating him up, Lorne deliberately provokes Spunk into killing him in order to save Butch and keep Caduta in ignorance. . . .'[20]

In passages like these the division between the layers collapses and the fiction becomes metafiction. The first layer (that of the storyline) is visible from the conversation between Self and the Amis of the story when they discuss the plausible motivation in the script's story and how they can find a suitable conclusion to it. Another layer has to do with Amis as a writer who is actually revealing his working technique and who stands beyond the story (Joyce likens the artist to the God of creation, who "remains within or behind or beyond or above his handiwork, invisible, refined out of existence, indifferent, paring his fingernails"[21], though I do not think Amis shares the same approach when creating his people) and considers the possible alternatives of the story. Is Amis in passages like this honestly revealing the difficulties of writing a work of fiction? Is he referring to the fact that as a writer he often feels "duped" himself, or "dead" (imagination-wise)? Is he confessing to us that at this point he probably does not really know where the story will lead? Or is he simply teasing us, readers, and coaxing us into keeping on reading his story? Hutcheon claims that metafictional writings went against the idea that literature is mimetic and that the novel now has become "more self-conscious" and it

[20] Amis, *Money*, 242.
[21] James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (Wordsworth Editions, 1997), 166.

sees itself as a "thing in itself worthy of literary treatment: the novelist and his novel itself became legitimate subject matter."[22] "The process of narration" has "beg[un] to invade the fiction's content,"[23] by becoming itself the subject matter of the novel. *Money* is "metafictionally" laying bare before the readers its own mechanisms and also revealing the author's challenges in writing his fiction. This novel, thus, like many other fictional novels, "reflect[s] upon [its] own genesis and growth."[24]

A third layer has to do with the relationship between the author and his own creations. The author as a creator feels responsible for his people and at times it seems as if Amis is trying to redeem John Self. Does he feel that he had probably been too harsh with him, had put him "through" unjust "ordeals"? The Amis within the story admits that "[t]he author is not free of sadistic impulses"[25] and the characters, after all, he adds, "have a double innocence. They don't know why they're living through what they're living through."[26] A fourth layer in this multi-layered literary work is related to the dialogue between the author and the reader. As readers, we are also actively engaged in endowing meaning to the story through our own experiences, expectations and speculations. Such ambiguous passages as the one already cited above can be seen both as ironic and "tongue-in-cheek"—the author is playing with the reader and playfully teasing his understanding of the novel ("You're not blind. You know the score.")—and as a very serious appeal for the reader to fully and actively engage in the story. The readers too, Amis asserts, "have … something of the authorial power to create life,"[27] and when discussing the events in the novel, Self "accuses" the readers of knowing something that he himself does not know and that they too are collaborating with Amis into dumbfounding him: "And you're in on it too, aren't you. You are, aren't you,"[28] he growls at the reader. The reader's involvement is of utmost importance in the self-referential novel and critics agree that in these novels the readers "step in" and become active participants in the creation of the meaning. Unlike the reader of the realistic novel who usually has a passive role, the self-referential novel asks a lot from the readers. Metafictional writers—unlike realist and even modernist novelists—are

[22] Hutcheon, *Narcissistic*, 11.
[23] Ibid. 11.
[24] Ibid. 12.
[25] See Footnote 4.
[26] See Footnote 16.
[27] See Footnote 16.
[28] Amis, *Money*, 264.

highly conscious of the fact that the meaning of the text depends as much on the readers' interaction with it as on the actual writing of that text.

Yet another layer in the novel is related to the protagonist's view and consideration of Martin Amis. This is, too, another metafictional, self-referential element in the novel. Here the reader can enjoy Amis's auto-irony, one of the most exhilarating and hilarious features of this novel. John Self, the raw, coarse, talkative, and "culture-less" protagonist of the story meets the writer, Martin Amis, who is his exact opposite – enjoys reading, is reticent, reserved, and refined. Self badly needs Amis for his movie script. *Money* shares a common characteristic with other metafictional novels, in that they "reject the traditional figure of the author as a transcendental imagination fabricating, through an ultimately monologic discourse, structures of order" and they "show" that "the 'author' is a concept produced through previous and existing literary and social texts."[29] There is no reverence when Self approaches Amis in the novel and it seems as if it is the fictional protagonist now who, paradoxically, is striking back and taking revenge at the author who has "sadistically" given him a number of flaws. That is how Self patronizingly and mockingly describes his approaching Amis: "I proceeded carefully. Writers—you have to be gentle with them. They're an odd bunch, sitting at home all day as they do."[30] Also John Self thinks that the sum of money they are paying Amis is exaggerated and that the writing "thing" is really overrated. Amis the writer does not position Amis the character as standing above or as better than the rest. Rather, the story is told from the perspective of the flawed and uncultured protagonist, who looks down on Amis on account of the latter's obsession with reading books, of his sobriety and his simple life:

> I tell you, this Martin Amis, he lives like a student. I had inspected his flat … mindful of outlay and lifestyle. . . .And there was nothing, no tape recorders or filing cabinets or electric typewriters or word processors. . . . Just biros, pads, pencils . . . And he earns enough. Why isn't he living right up to the hilt of his dough? He must have a bad book-habit, this character.[31]

There is even, at a certain point in the story, a kind of physical tension between the two, even though Self senses that he can never do harm to the writer and somehow feels "protective" of him:

---

[29] Waugh, *Narcissistic*, 16.
[30] Amis, *Money,* 217-218.
[31] Ibid. 220.

> For some ambiguous reason (and I think it's to do with his name…), I feel strangely protective of little Martin here: in a way, I would hate to damage him … But on another level, on another night, I can hear myself—I can smell myself—giving Martin the pasting of his life, a real bad one, roused, blind, with nothing mattering. I sense he senses this sometimes, this stickiness between us. I scare him, for all his talk. Yes, he's clever, and I wish I had his articulation, but I sussed him for a wimp, right from the start.[32]

Passages like these are probably some of the best in the book. As the story progresses, Amis even seems to be picking up some habits that are typical of Self, like drinking and smoking: "Martin drinks and smokes a fair bit, or he does now. Generally speaking, he has gone up in my estimation,"[33] says Self. There is a special bond between them and even though he does not understand it and cannot articulate it, John Self feels it in his guts – after all Martin Amis is his creator.

Nevertheless, despite this special bond they have, it is clear that the book is ironic and also that, as the fictional Amis says, our century too "is an ironic age—downward-looking"[34]. The book is permeated by irony, a structural irony, which means that the author does not identify with his protagonist and he does not want us to identify with him either. It is a century that is going "downward" in terms of morality and value and/or it is a century that "looks down" on its subjects – the twentieth-century man. Is the author, too, looking down on his protagonist, John Self? Is John Self the butt of his irony and satire? Is the protagonist merely a parodic version of the twentieth-century man? There is ample evidence in the novel to corroborate this interpretation. In the final pages of the novel, when the scheme organized by Goodney to cheat Self of his money is revealed and Amis explains to Self how Goodney had arranged everything and had duped Self into believing that they were really producing a movie that was going to land them a fortune, Self gets angry at Amis and yells at him: "'I'm the joke. I'm it! It was you. It was you.'"[35] It is as if Self realizes for a moment that he is just a puppet in Amis's hands and the whole story is in fact invented by Martin Amis and that his is simply a character in the story. This is a great metafictional situation in the novel with the fictitious creation bringing his creator to account for what has happened to him.

---

[32] Amis, *Money,* 222.
[33] Ibid. 230.
[34] See Footnote 11.
[35] Amis, *Money,* 349.

At certain points, however, Martin Amis (the flesh-and-blood one) shows marked sympathy with Self. He feels he might have been too severe with him and in one of the already-quoted passages he asks: "Is there a moral philosophy of fiction? When I create a character and put him or her through certain ordeals, what am I up to—morally? Am I accountable?"[36] Though he does not state any moral point of view—at least not openly—in this novel Amis is undoubtedly concerned with moral and ethical issues. On one level, they refer to universal human values, such as generosity, sympathy and kindness; on another level, these issues are related to the morality of fiction writing and the responsibility the writer has towards his characters and fiction writing in general. By using the technique of self-referentiality, Amis is discussing the role fiction has in our postmodernist world, the relationship that fiction has with reality, as well as the moral and ethical implications of artistic activity. Though, as already discussed above, Amis does not propound any moral or ethical "philosophy" in this novel, we, nevertheless, might find a message that has moral and ethical implications, that of sympathy and understanding. Self urges the readers: "Hey, brother, give me a drink here. I need it. Let's feel your hand on my shoulder. Identify. Sympathize. Lend me your time."[37] The lack of sympathy seems to be one of the greatest problems in *Money*'s (and our) rapid-moving world: "My theory is", Self says "— we don't really go that far into other people, even when we think we do. We hardly ever go in and bring them out. We just stand at the jaws of the cave, and strike a match, and quickly ask if anybody's there."[38]

At the end of the novel, Self "has been punished" – he has been cast off from the movie and advertisement industry, is penniless and has incurred high debts, has lost both girlfriends (Selina and Martina), has learned that his father was not really his father and is now learning how to make do with what he has. In an interview, Amis says that "it did him a lot of good to be deprived of money" and that the book does have a moral[39]. There are no "great expectations" for Self anymore and he "learns the lesson" the hard way and, from this perspective, one might even be tempted to see Amis's novel in the tradition of the *bildungsroman*, in which the protagonist, after committing many mistakes and desiring the wrong things, finally understands the real values in life and is able to see life

[36] See Footnote 16.
[37] Amis, *Money*, 298.
[38] Ibid. 287.
[39] Patrick McGrath, "Interview with Martin Amis" *Bomb - Artists in Conversation*, 18 (Winter 1987). http://bombmagazine.org/article/874/martin-amis, accessed October 17, 2015.

realistically, free of illusions. This reading of the novel, however, is extremely didactic, too thematically-oriented and would unjustly "categorize" a book whose primary aesthetic virtues are freedom from conventional formal categories, experimentation with traditional elements of fiction and rich linguistic playfulness. The book is ambiguous and playful in that though it does display certain features of the highly respected fiction genre of the *bildungsroman*, at the same time it parodies these features.

Conclusion

Money is a difficult book to categorize and this chapter often employs the all-embracing and much-debated term—"postmodernist"—to refer to the metafictional (or self-referential) techniques that Amis uses in it. These techniques contribute to the novel's high level of ambiguity and playfulness and the conventional elements of fiction writing—characterization, point of view, setting, or verisimilitude—become distorted and are turned upside down in Amis's novel. Through the metafictional technique, Amis is always reminding the reader of the fictionality and non-mimeticism of the text, that what we are reading is not life but words. As I have shown in the chapter, the metafictional plot refers ultimately to itself since the "story" that the words purport to build reflects itself, and, as a consequence, the expectations readers traditionally might have of the novel having a plot that represents a world "out there" become problematic and tenuous.

Apart from thwarting the expectations readers have of a novel having a plot, self-referential novels often seem to endanger even the concept of the author and we might very well ask: "What prevents the author's reality [in a metafictional work] from being treated in its turn as an illusion to be shattered?"[40] Even though quite a number of critics and readers were apprehensive of the wave of metafictional novels in the 1960s, some of them even talking about the end of the novel as such, the metafictional (or self-referential) novel has proven itself a successful technique for those writers who—dissatisfied with the realistic mode of representation—make use of metafictional techniques to come to a better understanding of the relationship between fiction and reality. Without neatly categorizing Martin Amis's *Money* in the pigeonhole of the "metafictional novel", it can be, however, safely asserted that this novel has extensively and

[40] Brian McHale, *Postmodernist Fiction* (London, New York: Routledge, 1987), 197.

fruitfully used the self-referential technique(s), thereby attesting to the aesthetic vigour of metafiction.

Bibliography

Amis, Martin. *Money*. London: Penguin Books, 1986.

Hutcheon, Linda. *Narcissistic Narrative: The Metafictional Paradox*. Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1980.

Lewis, Barry. "Postmodernism and Literature." *Routledge Companion to Postmodernism*. Ed. Stuart Sim. London and New York: Routledge, 2001. 121-133.

McGrath, Patrick. Interview with Martin Amis. Magazine *Bomb - Artists in Conversation*. 18 (Winter 1987). http://bombmagazine.org/article/874/martin-amis, accessed October 17, 2015.

McHale, Brian. *Postmodernist Fiction*. London and New York: Routledge, 1987.

Waugh, Patricia. *Metafiction: The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction*. London and New York: Routledge, 1984.

CHAPTER TEN

TEARS BEHIND THE LAUGHTER IN ALEXIS WRIGHT'S *CARPENTARIA*

JANA ŠČIGULINSKÁ

Introduction

Alexis Wright as one of the most appreciated writers of indigenous origin, a member of the Waanyi people, and winner of the Miles Franklin Literary Award, has found her inspiration in traditional Aboriginal cosmology (very closely related to her people) as well as in the beauty of South American magic-realist authors (Carlos Fuentes or Gabriel Garcia-Márquez). Her *Carpentaria* (2006)[1] represents one of the most unique views on the Aboriginal communities in Australia, as the novel points at a set of serious problems and conflicts resulting from the clash of indigenous and Western cultures, common for most of the indigenous population in Australia. Wright has also been inspired by the history of the Waanyi people who had been largely dispossessed from their traditional lands. Through her own memories and the memories of her people, Wright incorporates "cultural memory" and gives it its "literary representation,"[2] moreover, what makes her work extraordinary is the fact that she goes beyond pure transcription of historical events or the genre of life-writing known from the works of other Aboriginal writers. Even though she reflects the traditional way of storytelling, covering many spiritual aspects of Aboriginal culture that she was exposed to as a child she deals with the effects of transformation of the oral tradition into other forms enabling the preservation of the knowledge of her people. She smartly uses tools of Western colonial society, the English language, and the genre of the novel, and adjusts them to the needs of self-expression in the spirit of Aboriginal

[1] Alexis Wright. *Carpentaria*. (Artarmon, New South Wales: Giramondo, 2006).
[2] Eleni Pavlides, *Un-Australian Fictions: Nation, Multiculture(alism) and Globalisa-tion*, *1988-2008* (New Castle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), 151.

oral traditions. As Martin Renes[3] maintains when referring to Wright's work, she has employed some characteristic features of Dreamtime narrative within the Western tradition in order to create the work as it enables a different view and "opens new horizons". Molloy[4] reasons that "[…] accepting that the Aboriginal people must adopt Western forms to have a voice, the novel demonstrates that these forms can be changed and redrawn to reflect Aboriginal concerns, storytelling styles and language use." Bill Ashcroft deals with that process more deeply in his *Empire Writes Back* (2004)[5] as he analyses the formation and characteristics of post-colonial literature.

Issues of racial and social injustice presented in most post-colonial literature have increased with the growing number of indigenous writers who decided to point out the urgency of awareness and of the need to solve acute problems. This, in turn, led to the creation of valuable pieces of writing expressing the reality of the contemporary situation while keeping remnants of colonial experience which, as stains of past, still influence the Aboriginal population in Australia in relation to the whites as well as to their own community. Critical voices from the Aboriginal community of writers, having reacted to all the wrongs done to Aboriginals, very slowly found another way of expressing feelings of injustice. Instead of attributing ineffective direct blame, the writers started to use more creative methods of exposing and reflecting the behaviour of the white population with roots in the colonial past by depicting attitudes based on relationships with Aboriginals and other minorities. Humour and irony have become among the most effective means of resistance against the remnants of colonialism which had caused such harmful consequences seriously influencing, even today, relationships between whites and Aboriginals but also relationships within Aboriginal communities themselves. For example, Marie Munkara[6] depicts the situation among the

---

[3] Martin Renes. "Dreamtime Narrative and Postcolonisation: Alexis Wright´s Carpentaria as an Antidote to the Discourse of Intervention. " *The Journal of the European Association of Studies on Australia, Vol.2. No.1*, Accessed: February 3, 2016, http://www.easa-australianstudies.net/files/jeasa29renes.pdf.

[4] Diane Molloy. *Finding Hope in the Stories: Alexis Wright's Carpentaria and the Carnivalesque Search for a New Order.* Monash University. Accessed: February 10, 2016, https://www.nla.gov.au/ojs/index.php/jasal/article/viewFile/2253/3343.

[5] Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin. *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-colonial Literatures*. 2nd ed. (London; New York: Routledge, 2002).

[6] Marie Munkara, *Every Secret Thing.* (St. Lucia, Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 2009).

Aboriginal and the white communities and the impact of colonialism on both communities. In her novel *Every Secret Thing*, she employs issues that used to be considered very unpleasant and almost restricted due to their controversial nature, namely sexual abuse, racial conflicts, domestic violence, or religious conflicts on both sides of camps. However, the interpretation she offers in a collection of stories is presented with ease and biting humour; she takes aim at those who dominate the local Aboriginal communities. It bristles with irony and sarcasm in order to open the readers' eyes to see the sad past that influences the contemporary reality and life of Aboriginals.

On the contrary, Alexis Wright´s *Carpentaria* offers a quite different kind of humour, even though still ironic. She chooses words very carefully in order to express the sad reality hidden behind them. The aim of this study is to focus on the problematic aspects of coexistence between Aborigine and white communities and those trapped in between. Even though in the individual stories of her characters Alexis Wright deals with a set of serious problems including racism, domestic violence, murder or abuse in various forms, she questions more than the social breakdown in the Aboriginal community caused by the devastating impact of Western culture, for she goes even further. Wright challenges deep-rooted stereotypes in both communities, as she presents their unusual stories − mixtures of myths, Dreamtime stories and realism, where behind the initial laughter only tears and sorrow hide.

1. Humour and Irony in *Carpentaria*

Linda Hutcheon[7] reasons that by employing a powerful element of irony Wright "´disarms´ and therefore offers access to a material which is not, in fact, very funny at all […]." So Wright's aim is not only to present it as "a means of exposing or subverting oppressive hegemonic ideologies […]", she sees in it much more, "'an art for affirming life in the face of objective troubles […]'"[8]. While Mudrooroo[9] claims that humour and

[7] Linda Hutcheon. *Irony's Edge: The Theory and Politics of Irony.* (London; New York: Routledge, 1995) 25.

[8] M.M.J. Fisher, "Ethnicity and the Post-modern Arts of Memory," in *Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, ed.by J. Clifford and G. E. Marcus (Berkley University Press, 1986), 224. Cited in Linda Hutcheon, *Irony's Edge: The Theory and Politics of Irony* (London; New York: Routledge, 1995), 25.

[9] Narogin Mudrooroo. *Writing from the Fringe: A Study of Modern Aboriginal Literature*. (Melbourne: Hyland House, 1990), 173.

irony diminish the authenticity of narrative reality, Molloy[10] disagrees with his argument, saying that in *Carpentaria* it works in an opposite manner and that "the humour in *Carpentaria* intensifies the reality and the violence rather than lessening it." Wright[11] works with irony in a way that not only helps "to point to the complexities of historical and social reality but also has the power to change that reality—at least for a time […]." The positions of the oppressed and the oppressor exchange at least for a while as the citizens of Uptown are trapped between two mobs of the Pricklebush community after the conflict caused by Angel Day. However, the real power still remains in the hands of the white authorities represented by Truthful and Bruiser.

As Mikhail Bakhtin[12] said, "[s]eriousness burdens us with hopeless situations, but laughter lifts us above them and delivers us from them. Laughter does not encumber man, it liberates him." The quote covers one of the characteristic ideas of post-colonial literature, and distinguishes it from previous periods in literature. Post-colonial literature often reacts to the historical and social experience of the peoples who used to be or still are under some form of colonial oppression. In the case of indigenous literatures, irony and laughter turned out to be useful media of reaction against inequities caused by colonial society and expressed through these literatures.

By employing irony and humour, Wright brings these problems to light; yet, she gives them a different, gentle, but still a very powerful form that catches the readers' attention regardless of their origin or background. She questions the cultures and their ability to adjust to the progressing world not only with regard to the changes caused by elements of nature but also by another; the still powerful influence of globalised societies. As mentioned above, the relationship between the white Australian and the Aboriginal population is influenced by various factors arising from historical experience; therefore, the stories and their interpretation are focused on those issues. On the other hand, such stories imply hope and an attempt to find solutions. Paula Anca Farca[13] uses an example introduced by Eva Gruber, focusing on the position of those indigenous writers who

---

[10] Molloy. *Finding Hope in the Stories: Alexis Wright's Carpentaria and the Carnivalesque Search for a New Order*, 6.

[11] Hutcheon. *Irony's Edge: The Theory and Politics of Irony.* 28.

[12] Mikhail M. Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, trans. V. W. McGhee, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), 134.

[13] Paula Anca Farca, "Humour in Contemporary Adult Fiction". In *A Companion to Australian Aboriginal Literature*, ed. Wheeler, Belinda. Camden House Companion Volumes. (Rochester; New York: Camden House, 2013), 133

inject their writing with indigenous content covering stereotypical indigenous characters, narration or elements with the aim of introducing a different notion of the relationship between whites and the indigenous, or among the indigenous communities themselves, in order to create "original and witty forms of self-expression."

It is said that history is written by the victors but in *Carpentaria* it is often unclear who the real victor is, and whether the victory has to really be written somewhere. Such ambiguity in the perception of reality refers to what Ashcroft[14] defines as a "struggle over the representation […] the struggle between the ways of seeing, ways of naming and ways of narrating memory." In the novel, the cultural dominance and the oppressive power of the white population is represented in various forms, e.g. the local government, police executives or even the recorded evidence dealing with almost two hundred years of existence of Desperance locked in the archives of the library. Altogether they remind the reader of the cultural dominance of those who had taken control over the Australian land since the times of colonization. Yet, the written records are just symbolic remains of the colonial dominancy from the times of the early Western-Christian settlements, accompanied with and empowered by the impression that events could happen that way and no one was to question it; because the records represent the "true" version of history that has been written, as in the Bible. However, such written history may easily turn to ash and disappear. As Molloy[15] concludes, all the credible information is then gone as well as the people who recorded it, and every following attempt to resurrect it cannot be successful for such a process may distort the original facts.

Even though the events depicted in *Carpentaria* are fictional, they generally reflect the situation of Aboriginal communities in Australia and the problems they have been facing for almost two hundred years. The crucial difference often expressed in literature is the fact that the history and information based on oral culture is shared by living people, from one generation to another in almost the same form and content. Wright's novel represents an example of the power hidden in oral traditions and in their adaptability; for the latter helps to survive not only in everyday reality, but also in the world of literature within the context of Western literary tradition and keep old traditional stories and knowledge alive in order for

[14] Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin. *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-colonial Literatures*. 2nd ed. (London, New York: Routledge, 2002).

[15] Molloy. *Finding Hope in the Stories: Alexis Wright's Carpentaria and the Carnivalesque Search for a New Order*, 4.

them to maintain contact and a presence with readers and raise their cultural and historical awareness beyond the borders of colonial history.

In *Carpentaria*, Wright[16] ironically emphasises the question about claiming which history could be more real than the one arising from the people who really lived or live it. It is the history they can share with others by means of the form of their "cultural memory."

2. Every Community Has Their Own Stories

The novel *Carpentaria* presents various stories of people living in a fictional town called Desperance, which, logically, should be located somewhere in the Gulf of Carpentaria. Even though sadness and sorrow often prevail over laughter, Wright has incorporated several amusing moments. Her aim is not to lighten the depicted situation of the Aboriginal community, rather to refer to the consequences of colonial history and the imposing of white cultural domination on this community through moments of ironic or almost absurd humour.

In the novel, the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities reflect a tangled mutual coexistence. It is important to include also those people who live in communities across the frontiers, as they often represent specific interconnections between these contrasting communities. In order to create such specific characters, Wright combines aspects of indigenous storytelling and colonial history to achieve realistic protagonists, who at the same time are far removed from the characters of Western literary tradition. Just like tributaries meet at one common point and create a large river, the personal stories of the members of the Phantom family, the members of the Pricklebush people, as well as their friends, enemies and the citizens of Uptown altogether co-construct such a bizarre community in a place such as Desperance. The cast of characters represents a colourful sample of quite quirky people. Wright's depiction of characters from both cultural camps is related to certain issues and necessarily carries the function of irony which according to Hutcheon[17] challenges "the hierarchy based on social relations of dominance."

Wright uses the juxtaposition of differing notions of relationships with the land. The Aboriginals have strong bonds with the land of their origin dating back to the times of the Rainbow Serpent, the creator of the land of Carpentaria. They are descendants of the people to whom the country had

[16] Pavlides. *Un-Australian Fictions: Nation, Multiculture(alism) and Globalisation,* 151

[17] Hutcheon. *Irony's Edge: The Theory and Politics of Irony,* 29.

belonged hundreds or even thousands of years before the establishing of Desperance. Even though this land later turned into a dump, it still has its old spirit representing their heritage, which is worth fighting for. This traditional relationship with the land represents one of the core characteristics of Aboriginal culture, though, Wright points to changes as previous respect for the land is now infected by the desire for power and control over the land and has spread to the Pricklebush people. It brought about Joseph Midnight's waiver of "his Native title rights"[18] for a thousand dollars and the right to shoot wild boars. The social structure was disturbed as the Western mob insults at the Eastern mob for "being just rubbish," who "knew nothing about culture," and were "living in car bodies and whatnot."[19]

The two camps both live in ways far from the traditional ones of their ancestors, as they live on land which has turned into a rubbish dump and despise each other for their ways of life. These facts reflect the consequences of postcolonial influence on the Aboriginal community.

Using the Aboriginal and English language is a great challenge for many postcolonial writers of Aboriginal origin. Therefore, the language in the novel is specifically adjusted as it has an oral and informal character to some extent. The structure of the sentences as well as the vocabulary used intentionally differs from Standard English. Wright plays with the language; moreover, she uses it as a tool of communication especially when she comments on topics and themes which are often delicate. Her unconventional narration offers a perspective not only from the point of view of the individuals but also that of the Aboriginal people in general, representing the voice of a community which is often in contrast with that of the dominant white society.

The narration is not a fluent set of stories, for individual stories follow each other without continuity, which may seem distracting to readers. The stories often change at a critical point in the plot, as in the case of storytelling; the readers are eager to find out their follow up. As in the case of other indigenous peoples, e.g. Native Americans, there are critical discussions about the purpose of recording traditional forms of oral tradition, or the language these records are transcribed into. Many critics from indigenous camps suggest strict refusal of Western strategies and tools in order to record their cultural heritage of oral traditions. Some writers, on the other hand, are criticised for excessive conformity to the Western literary tradition and for twisting the original value of the oral

[18] Wright,*Carpentaria,*53
[19] Ibid.,52

traditions. The position of Alexis Wright as a contemporary Indigenous writer is therefore specific. She uses the tools of the Western literary tradition; yet, her nonconformity resides in the fact that her interpretation of the stories closely follows the tradition of storytelling characteristic of Aboriginal culture. Traditional images, mythological characters or ceremonial procedures together with elements of one of the Aboriginal languages in the new setting of the stories serve not only to show the beauties of the oral and cultural traditions of Aboriginals, but also they reconnect them with their cultural past and the heritage they had been deprived of due to the historical issues which triggered the phenomenon of the "stolen generation."[20] At the same time, Wright's interpretation presents a critical reflection on the impact of colonialism on the Aboriginal world also to the non-Aboriginal audience; that way the Aboriginal viewing of the situation can be communicated.

Wright ironically refers to misusing the stories, which have a deep meaning for the Aboriginals and their culture, by white men in order to distort the truth about their own past. The white citizens of Desperance instead of accepting their past and the fact that many of them are descendants of convicts—a subversive group of people who had been rejected and humiliated by their own white society in their homelands—rather hypocritically present about themselves that the "Uptown whitefella mob was full of people claiming they had no origins."[21] As Ashcroft[22] says, "[l]anguage is power because words construct reality," words create stories about their origin and new identities, and this enables people to produce a completely new history, the history recorded in the local library. Their "true" version of reality and history is not completely true because "…you had to think about Uptown more carefully, for those people had more than one legend about how they got to belong to a place."[23]

Wright's interpretation of the different understanding of time by Western culture is reflected in the naïve belief of the people of Uptown. In order to declare their rights to the land, they make stories on how and when the boundaries were created during the two hundred years of their existence on the Australian continent. In doing so, they try to persuade not only Aboriginals, whose history reaches a thousand years back to the period of Dreamtime, but also themselves:

---

[20] See *Stolen Generations' Testimonies* web site. Accessed: March, 3, 2016. http://stolengenerationstestimonies.com/index.php/about_stolen_generations.html
[21] Wright, *Carpentaria*, 52.
[22] Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin. *Empire Writes Back*, 88.
[23] Wright, *Carpentaria*, 57.

> Then the folk Uptown showed their boundaries which they said had been created at the beginning of their time. […] To prove what they were saying, they said it was invisibly defined on the surface of the earth by old surveying methods, methods long in the grave with the original surveyors, when the original pioneers came along and developed the town.[24]

With an ironic allusion to the previous colonial superiority of the white settlers, she refers to tensions within the white community itself. She[25] depicts them as those in charge of Desperance, who "were the apostles of all matters local"[26], and as those proclaiming that they want to prove their independence from "'Southerners,' their own true countrymen government who unbelievingly could not care less." Such "allegory of postcolonial history"[27] refers to the fact that the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized does not have to be necessary between the indigenous population and the settlers. The position of the Government residing in the south of the city even though far away, but still with significant power and feeling of importance over the small town, stands for the position of the colonizers, who use their power as a dominant body to make decisions about those considered to be incapable of making serious decisions. The moment when the town of Desperance is being renamed Masterton, evidences that "the process of naming is fundamentally the act of power […]."[28] Wright offers straight away two depictions of such an act of power, and at the same time she introduces a witty violation of it. The first case depicts the reaction against the power of State Government against a small town far away from the political centre, and the fight by its citizens against "colonial" supervision:

> When the name Masterton, the new name given by an infamous State government [decision] to change the name from Desperance, appeared on all the modern maps … the locals of Uptown said by their actions – a two fingers [sic] V shaped in the air – *Go and get stuffed*. The town kept all their nicely painted Desperance town signs up and waged an intense battle with the disinterested proletarians of the Main Roads Department

[24] Ibid. 58.
[25] Ibid. 58.
[26] Ibid. 58.
[27] See Bill Ashcroft. "*Reading Post-Colonial Australia*". Edited by Nathaniel O'Reilly. *Postcolonial Issues in Australian Literature* (New York: Cambria, 2010), 1-14.
[28] Ashcroft, *Reading Post-Colonial Australia*, 10.

> whenever they arrived in town with an arsenal of signs[sic]-making equipment […][29]

The other one reflects the same hangover of colonial dominance represented by the Government. This time it is used by the authorities of Desperance in order to apply the same act of power in order to rename the river after Norm Phantom, the river that is has been known by its Aboriginal name for ages, even among the people of Uptown.

> All of the sudden this someone of no consequence thought of changing the name of the river to Normal. […] A taut occasion, despise these dramatic interventions; enough time for the now disposed-of State Premier to complete the ceremony of officially changing the name of the river from that of a long deceased Imperial Queen to ´Normal´s River.'[30]

In addition, Wright mocks the importance and dominancy of the Eurocentric cultural model, where colonial language is supposed to be privileged over indigenous languages. Her manifestation is provided through the speech of one of her characters, Norm, who talks in a mixture of English and local language, who instead of saying "*Thank you! Thank you!"*[31] expresses the utterance as understood only by Aboriginals, for "the river only had one name from the beginning of time. It was called *Wangala*."[32] What Wright presents here is what Ashcroft defines as "demonstration of the ambivalence of linguistic and literary resistance,"[33] through the realisation of the language itself.

3. The People of Desperance

3.1 On the Crossroads of Two Worlds

Wright's choice of characters in the novel is not accidental. They are precisely formed to represent and mirror the community consisting of the Aboriginal and the white part with all the characteristics that can be considered almost stereotypical but at the same time she also gives space to show them in a different light. Sometimes with irony and sometimes with sadness, she highlights the effect of colonialism on the Australian

[29] Wright, *Carpentaria*, 58.
[30] Ibid. 8-9.
[31] Wright , *Carpentaria*, 10
[32] Ibid. 10.
[33] Ashcroft, *Reading Post-Colonial Australia*. 10.

population, on those living there for a thousand years and on those who took control over the land in order to turn it into something that may remind them of a kind of civilisation that forced their ancestors to live in an unknown country. By that, Wright touches upon an area which Ashcroft[34], in his *Empire Writes Back,* defines as "a special post-colonial crisis of identity". Moreover, she presents not only the contrast between the Aboriginal and the non-Aboriginal people but also among the individuals within each of the communities. Her criticism is skilfully targeted by means of well pointed irony and gentle humour. She calls readers' attention to the impact of colonialism and the position of Aboriginal populations, and to their existence beside white populations in small towns all around Australia.

Three main groups of characters can be established according to origin and relationship towards the place where they live. The first group is represented by the Aboriginal population of Pricklebush, the original inhabitants of the land around the Gulf of Carpentaria. Cosmology as a law embodying their Aboriginal beliefs, the traditional lands still occupied with the spirits of ancestors, all is confronted with the changes that Aboriginals have had to face since the arrival of white settlers and the onset of their culture.The second group includes people whose life is somehow interconnected with the Aboriginal as well as with the white community, yet, they cannot be fully accepted by either, as they come from the world outside the communities. The third group is represented by the white authorities of Desperance, the representatives of Uptown, those who have in their hands the power to control everything, and dare to misuse it as they want.

The progress and development introduced by the colonising society turns into destructive authoritative power leading to a gradual supressing and to the erasing of the original form of Aboriginal culture and knowledge also creating tensions within the Aboriginal population itself. Wright describes the Aborigines' ambiguous ways of dealing with such changes originating in the colonial past of their country, yet, shaping their reality.

[34] Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin. *Empire Writes Back,* 8.

3.2 The Pricklebush People

In his article *Dreamtime Narrative and Postcolonisation: Alexis Wright´s Carpentaria as an Antidote to the Discourse of Intervention*, Renes[35] characterises Normal Phantom as "a powerful shaman able to defy storms at sea and return safely where others perish. Desperanians feel compelled to honour his legendary life-saving powers, believed to enhance the local fishermen's survival." Silke Hesse[36] compares him to Hemingway's Santiago from *Old Man and the Sea*, yet, existing in a more contemporary setting somewhere in the Australian Gulf of Carpentaria. His artistic abilities and his knowledge of the sea and the stars make him a person to whom his people assign magic powers. On the other hand, his supernatural powers over nature are juxtaposed to his failure to control the human beings around him enough to become an object of ridicule, as he is weak and "incapable of handling his wife."[37] His attitude towards the reality he lives in seems to be passive or at least tries not to bother with most of the troubles and the people who cause them, and which in fact makes him content with one part of his life. Norm is like the sea; calm and indifferent to the activities his wife does, because that gives him some peace of mind from her eccentricity, from all her obsessions and manners that were driving most of the Pricklebush people crazy. Even the actions of the white authorities, such as his being charged with murder, make him inactive and almost passive. Even though Normal obviously struggles with feelings caused by injustice, as his family members, Girlie, Kevin, and Will have become victims of abusive deeds committed by the white authorities of Desperance, he still remains passive, even though his mind is full of desire for payback,

> […] if Girlie did not kill the cop soon, then he might just about do it himself. He pictured the two of them, he and Truthful, out at the sea." Would you want to go fishing tonight, son? It could easily happen – an accident. He had taken Truthful out enough, though not far, never too far, because he judged a man [sic] seaworthiness, what was worth out there.

---

[35] Renes. *Dreamtime Narrative and Postcolonisation: Alexis Wright´s Carpentaria as an Antidote to the Discourse of Intervention*.113.

[36] Silke Hesse. *Alexis Wright's Carpentaria: A Poetics of Aboriginality?* Monash University. Accessed: December 15, 2015. http://thingsgermanaustralian.blogspot.sk/2013/07/alexis-wrights-carpentaria-poetics-of.html

[37] Wright, *Carpentaria,* 33.

> The trips inside the shallow eater line, not journeys, were far enough to give Girlie a chance.[38]

Normal's character shares some features of ambiguity; on one the hand, he turns his frustration and powerlessness from the situation of their life under the white authorities against his own people and some members of his family or when his hot-blooded temper erupts while the long-term conflicts related to the East mob are brought to light; on the other hand, he seeks to escape from those inconveniences of his life into the world where he feels safe and where he can feel peace of mind: the world of fish, sea, and stars. Instead of looking for a way to unite the mobs and improve their way of life, as a leader of the West mob, he despises the other mob. In his eyes, the East mob is just a bunch of people whose leader betrayed their ancestral heritage and culture because of selling the part of their traditional land, which belonged to the spiritual entities. Joseph Moonlight's family and the whole East mob is, in his eyes, lower than any "whitefella" and for Norm "the thought of mixing their [the Midnights'] blood with his was like a hex."[39] Wright presents the sad reality of the complicated relationships within the Aboriginal communities, where the intermingling of family relatives resulted in non-functional families where the tradition of parenthood and partnership have been distorted into a wild and uncontrolled bunch of feelings often resulting in domestic violence. Even though the relationship between Will, his son, and Hope is an exception and suggests some faith in better days, ironically, it represents a bigger source of pain than the guerilla fighting against the mining company and its employees who were responsible for the destruction of the environment, for serious injuries or murders.

On the other hand, Angel Day is the very opposite of her husband. Depicted as an energetic, beautiful and independent woman whose stubbornness leads her way, she makes decisions and no one can change her mind no matter what. Even though her name sounds innocent, Wright has given her characteristics that are far from that, as she has the tendency to disturb the everyday life of the Pricklebush community. Angel Day's decisions and actions seem as progressive steps to improve the communal awareness of Aborigines in the reality of Desperance. However, all she does is only like a shot in the dark, as her concepts are misunderstood not only by both her tribesfolk and the people of Desperance, but also by herself, as she misinterprets ideas about white people and wants to apply them to the Aboriginal way of life. Her speculative mind dares to go even

[38] Wright, *Carpentaria*, 232.
[39] Wright, *Carpentaria*, 281.

further as she is able to break the taboo established by Aboriginal laws, and builds their family dwelling on "top of the nest of a snake spirit."[40] Progress and the so-called improvement of living are based on the leftovers found on the dump established by Uptown around the dwellings of the Pricklebush people. "Her [Angel Day's] fortunes were growing out of hand. She now possessed dozens of Heinz baked bean tins and pickle bottles full of nails, loose screws and bolts. She became a genius in the new ideas of blackfella advancement."[41] The same dump is the only piece of sacred traditional land that was left in the hands of the Aboriginal community after the white citizens of Desperance set borders of their town.

Angel Day represents an element that disrupts the stabilised order in the community established even involuntarily under the colonial tradition, where the colonisers dominate the colonised. The old land right wars are revived as new conflicts that she causes while usurping the piles of rubbish from her position as self-proclaimed "queen" of the dump; this leads to dividing the community into two mobs, the East and the West. Certain attempts to change the situation of her people put Angel Day into a new position, for she becomes a kind of coloniser in her own homeland. Yet, she uses the tools of the dominant culture, the meaning and purpose of which are not fully clear to her, and that is one of the reasons she gets into so many conflicts with her people as well as with the people of Desperance. The Christian religion and faith are, to Angel Day, the means of prosperity and luck that the white citizens of Uptown possess. Through her ownership of the statue found on the dump, she does not become a worshiper of the religion of the white people, because her only interest is to get closer to the level that the white citizens have. Her preconception that a statue with the face of a white woman should bring luck to the white people led her to think that a statue with the appearance of an Aboriginal woman should provide luck and prosperity to her and to her family in order to improve their status:

> […] for she knew that with the Virgin Mary in pride of place, nobody would be able to interfere with the power of the blessing it would bestow on her home. "Luck was going to change for sure, form this moment onwards," because she, Mrs. Angel Day, now owned the luck of the white people […] they would be also prosperous. They would become like the

[40] Wright, *Carpentaria*, 13.
[41] Ibid. 16.

> white people […] rich by saving up enough money, so they could look down on the others, by keeping statues of their holy ones in their homes.[42]

She thinks of the colour of the skin as to whom the statue should bring luck; therefore her dance while "brandishing her statue, held up high above her head as she danced around the delegation,"[43] was not an act of provocation or impiety. Yet, it affects her to stand against them to pronounce the words presenting an opinion about the situation of the Aboriginals straight into their faces, yet with no effect as the situation is perceived by the white audience as something ridiculous or almost as blasphemous. Even though Aboriginal people understand and perceive time differently, according to the cycles of nature, the clock found by Angel Day on the dump introduces an absurd situation as she wants to improve the situation of the other Pricklebush people by means of a tool that is used to tell the time to white men. Her exaggerated obsession with the statue and the clock may clarify Renes's words; "Angel Day's predilection for the town's rubbish tip reads as an ironic metaphor for incomplete, even impossible assimilation into whiteness."[44] Her desire to be independent and share similar privileges to those she sees that the "white fellas" have, instead of happiness and fortune leads Angel only to her self-destruction. For all her attempts to become more than just an ordinary Aboriginal woman she must pay a high price, as she loses people she used to love, like Normal. She leaves him for another man. She loses some of her children as she cuts the emotional bonds, or she loses them literally as in the case of the youngest boys who commit suicide in prison. Her final destination is far from the place she once used to rule. Her previous glamour fades out as she vanishes in the shadows and dirt of the distant city, in the place where souls with a similar fate have ended up.

The character of Will Phantom stands for a progressive way of thinking, similarly to his mother, yet, with a crucial contrast, as he fights against everything that has been brought by or that represented the dominant culture, embodied in the Gufurrit mining company and its destructive impact on the environment and the people who have been somehow involved in its issues. Some might call him the black sheep of the family, but some might call him a courageous rebel fighting against the system harming his homeland. His character and sense to protect what is close to his heart is obvious since his childhood, as he sets light to the

---

[42] Wright, *Carpentaria*, 23.
[43] Ibid. 39.
[44] Renes. *Dreamtime Narrative and Postcolonisation: Alexis Wright's Carpentaria as an Antidote to the Discourse of Intervention*. 114.

dump in order to save his outlandish mother rather than leaving her to be lynched by the other members of the mob during one of their "treasure hunts" on the dump. Also his all-the-rules-breaking relationship with the East mob chief's granddaughter represents an act of resistance, this time against his own family. Even so, his relationship with Hope and with their son Bala reflects the only clear and fixed point in his life, even though he is forced out from his own community and pursued by the white authorities of Desperance. Yet, his name resonates strongly with the desire for life as it should be lived, in harmony with and with respect for nature and all the beings in it:

> Will has a good way with nature, all of the natural things, except he is not too good with human nature. The boy was in one hell of rush to throw fuel on man-made adversaries. If it had anything to do with mankind, he had the knack to rub it hard, right up the wrong way.[45]

Will's joyful moments spent with his small family are seriously disrupted because of his fight and hiding in front of evils bigger than the old conflicts questioning the land rights. The power of corruption he sees around is like tentacles touching, clasping and pushing people (even his own family members) to do things they would normally never do. The mine is continuously destroying the countryside as well as the people living around it; not only physically but it damages their minds, too. Instead of being a hero, he becomes an outcast yet fighting for the right things, even though it means losing his own father and breaking ties with the rest of his family. His situation is ironic in that his actions against the mining company are a lower sin than his own marriage based on love, but with Hope,the granddaughter of his father's greatest enemy Joseph Midnight.. All that Will does for his family and the whole Pricklebush community may seem pointless, and even Alexis Wright in her "*On Writing Carpentaria*"[46] compares him to the main hero of Cervantes's novel fighting with windmills, as an allusion to Will fighting to "save the world."[47] Yet, the price he pays for his fight is not only his status of being an outcast, the shadow of which is thrown even on his wife and son. He must struggle with moments of insanity as he tries to hide the dead body of Elias. It is Elias and his dead body that enable the first step in order to reconstruct broken family ties between Will and Normal as Will brings Elias's body back to his father's sanctuary in order to ensure a proper

[45] Wright, *Carpentaria*, 162.
[46] Alexis Wright, 'On Writing *Carpentaria*.' *Heat Magazine* 13. 2007. 79-95
[47] Wright, *Carpentaria*, 238.

burial by people who used to like old Elias. All his fight for a better and cleaner world endangers his own life as well as the lives of his beloved. In an ironic twist of fate, the world saves him in return, as instead of drowning during a great, almost apocalyptical, storm purifying the land from all the "dirt", he is saved and finds himself on a floating artificial island made of various kinds of rubbish.

Out of the female characters of the Phantom family, there are two more who differ not only from each other, but also from the rest of the women in the family: Girlie, the daughter of Angel Day and Normal, and Hope, their daughter-in-law and Will's wife. Both sorely tried, yet, each in a diverse manner. Girlie's depiction is closer to many young Aboriginal women than that of any other female character in the novel. As a passionate young woman, she has a turbulent and sometimes even violent relationship with one of her cousins from the East mob. Wright's ironic voice reacts to the problem of domestic violence, rape or conceiving children by close family members; in her lucky case all four were healthy. It is more passion than motherhood that rules in Girlie's life. Even though she has her own opinions about her life, she is still trapped in the worlds of the whites and of her divided Aboriginal community, where her life seems more like a bad joke and sometimes only as a sad joke. She courageously faces her "black fella" ex-lover, though she gives up with hatred any gesture of defiance as she must share her bed with officer Truthful––a white policeman seriously obsessed with her––anytime he appears under pretences of investigating her rebellious brother, Will, or to inform her about another of Kevin's troubles. Her helplessness turns into frustration for which Girlie compensates through her abusive treatment of Kevin during one of his fits, when she wraps him in a piece of cloth to immobilize him, and hits him with her fists to calm him down. Normal's attitude towards his own daughters' way of life, including the number of (their) illegitimate children under his roof, is in deep contrast with the way he treats his daughter-in-law even though he does not know her at all; except that she is a family relative of Joseph Midnight. Therefore, she represents another reason to resolutely deny his son, Will. Hope willingly accepts her fate of being an outcast's wife even though she is aware of all the costs, for she understands and admires Will's attempt to change the world. She raises their son, Bala, mostly on her own and in the best way she can, while her husband is on his mission to make the world a better place. She might seem simple and a bit naïve, though her will to protect her family is strong enough, even in moments when her own life is in danger.

While Normal is described as a man with shamanic powers to control the sea, but also as a man who completely fails with the people around him, Mozzie, on the contrary, owns powers just over the other people and the way he acts, makes him an extraordinary character with the features of a trickster, a character that is a representative of the indigenous culture. His unusual visions often full of ancestral spirits of the lands previously belonging to his people make of him an admired zealot, but at the same time *persona non grata* among the people of Pricklebush as he criticises their way of life. His devotion is not always shared by his followers in the same way. For many of them it is just a way of escaping the problems of the world of white people. So, those who decide to follow Mozzie must follow strict rules in order to be accepted and to be able to remain in his peculiar wandering community. The way he lives and leads others alludes to the biblical story about Moses who led his people to find their promised land, but was not allowed to come to the land God had promised to his people, therefore the resemblance of their names is not coincidental, for neither Mozzie is allowed to get to the land of his ancestors, even though he abides by a higher law, the Aboriginal Law, practices the songs and traditional dances in order to preserve and share the traditional knowledge among younger generations. Wright questions Mozzie's "holiness" in many ways, for example through his anarchistic actions against the mine belonging to the Guffurrit Company and juxtaposes their influence upon the people around him. He revels in discussions with the other "holy man," Father Danny, about questions of belief, or as he preaches to his listeners from Pricklebush or Uptown and uses "grandiose words"[48] to impress and affect them in various ways. His zealot's reputation is questioned through his attitude towards a seductive relationship with his best friend's wife, Angel Day, with whom he conceives two boys. His powers and reputation as a leader and father are more than undermined as he fails in bringing up his children, as both teenage boys became petrol sniffers accused of murder, were beaten almost to death by Bruiser and Truthful in jail, where they finally commit suicide.

3.2 Carpentaria's Men on the Frontiers

Desperance has been given the position of frontier crossing where two completely different cultural communities mutually intermingle in the same space. However, their members attempt to stay separated from each other as much as possible in order to protect their cultural status. Still,

[48] Wright, *Carpentaria*, 133.

there are characters that have been placed by the will of God, or other divine natural guidance, directly in the middle of nowhere, to Desperance. What is obvious is that they cannot belong to any of these communities for certain reasons. They bear resemblance to first settlers who came to Australia, with a past many of whom would rather forget and start again from the beginning or who could follow their fate as destined by the Lord.

Elias Smith is a character whom Wright presents as a man who has appeared out of the blue on the sea shore and without memories about himself. Wright alludes to the arrival of the first settlers who had come to the shores of Australia, yet, the way he appears, reminds us of Boticelli's painting *The Birth of Venus*, as he comes naked from the sea with a spirit-like appearance. No memories, no opinions, no worries about the place where he has arrived – a place he would otherwise avoid, as the narrator or the author herself comments. He must be given a name, Elias Smith, which is used to name those whose identity is unknown. All of that influences the way the local Pricklebush community sees him from the beginning, making his figure somewhat tragicomic. From his very arrival, the Aboriginal women are charmed by his sea-god appearance and harbour sinful thoughts, while the children see him as a Santa Claus who might have crashed nearby. The personal dilemma of his unknown identity troubles him much. Even though he is quite popular among them he cannot be accepted by the Aboriginal community because of the simple fact that he is a white man without any past. On the other hand, the citizens of Uptown hypocritically reject him for his strange behaviour, for having no past and because of his friendship with Normal. Even though their friendship may seem to be an ideal meeting of two soulmates due to their fondness for the sea and fishing, these things are perhaps the only things these two men have in common. Being trapped between two completely different communities where he does not fit at all as he has no historical or cultural bonds with either of them, and where he has no bright prospects for his future, it is obvious that the only solution is to follow an enchanting call luring him to leave Desperance. The man, who has been known by everyone, but at the same time by no one, disappears in the same way he had appeared before: suddenly. Not even Normal knows where his good friend has gone, till the moment he finds his dead body in his fishing hut, where it was hidden after being murdered by the employees of the mining company.

Another man on the frontier crossing is a man in the service of God, Father Danny, who as an unusual priest within the Roman Catholic Church; instead of having a calm and comfortable parish somewhere in Europe, he decides to move to the hostile land of Australia, where his final

"Lord's destination is in Desperance […]."[49]A hot-tempered, ex-heavy-weight fighter, now wearing the robes of priesthood drives his old car sitting on a bucket instead of a seat, destroys the conservative stereotype of representatives of the Church. Some of his stories, about Noah and the flood, or Moses and the journey to the Promised Land are very similar to the personal stories of people he already knows. Instead of forcing his faith on others, he prefers doing good for those living around Desperance, and to those who act against or threaten him or anyone else in front of him; he makes use of "God's permission to fight like an ordinary man"[50], as in the case when the employees of the mining company slashed the tyres on his "Lord's cathedral." Wright's decision to depict a Catholic priest as an Irishman is not coincidental, for Ireland and its inhabitants had been under the colonial domination of Britain with all its implemented cultural changes as the most powerful means of colonisation, therefore his peaceful and more constructive attempts to spread his faith among people, mostly among Aboriginals, through doing good to others make more sense.

3.3 People of Uptown

Wright's depiction of the Aboriginal community and its individual characters shows all the aspects of their life reflecting the impact of white colonial dominance even on the generations who followed after gaining some independence from the official colonial burden. Even though the the Aboriginal characters outnumber the whites, it is obvious who holds the power in the hands of the individuals. The rest of Uptown blindly follows those authorities, even though their actions are often not in accord with the sense of humanity. Wright also presents obvious parallels with colonial dominance within white society itself as the white population of Desperance, the Uptown people, rejects the tendencies of the Federal government to keep them under control and make decisions about them. The Mayor of Desperance, Stan Bruiser serves as an example of pure domination and power. A violent, greedy opportunist detesting all Aboriginal people in line with his motto, "If you can't use it, eat it, or fuck it, it's no use to you. [...] Everyone in town knew how he bragged about how he had chased every Aboriginal woman in town at various times, until he ran them into the ground and raped them."[51] He is an unscrupulous man

[49] Wright, *Carpentaria,* 184.
[50] Ibid., 187
[51] Wright, *Carpentaria*, 35.

wicked enough to be able to beat everyone in line with his other motto, "Hit first, talk later"[52], even if it was the case of young children whom he had beaten almost to death.

His right hand man is a local representative of justice, Constable Truthful. Wright presents him with an amount of irony as a man whose passion is the cultivation of roses. He even turns his office into a greenhouse, and at the same time he is a man who misuses his position of authority in order to make the Phantom family's life hell. Not only does he pursue Will for his activities against the mine and Kevin for the mischiefs of his ill mind, but he also abuses Girlie Phantom in order to share her bed as she has become the object of his obsession. Blindly following the orders of Bruiser results in his psychical breakdown after finding the tortured boys hanging in the cell of his office. His madness is just a natural consequence of the split parts of his character caused by his feeling of guilt. A bizarre picture of him sitting surrounded with the decaying corpses of the boys while having dinner barricaded inside his office is topped off with him shooting himself in the head as his final act of reason.

Wright's characters, even though fictional, reflect the reality of the people within many Australian communities all around the continent and their historical experience that has also an impact on contemporary generations. On the other hand, the author interprets the personal stories of each of the characters in order to present their own ways of survival in their old world (the world they have known till the moment it was destroyed by the storm), and start over at the dawn of a new world.

Conclusions

Through this novel and the depiction of the town of Desperance, Alexis Wright has introduced a wonderful insight into the world of post-colonial communitiesn, with focus on the groups of Aboriginal and white citizens shaping the final form of the town. The whole book is created in the spirit of the Aboriginal tradition of storytelling including elements of Aboriginal mythology. Moreover, the novel contains much humour which is not biting. Her humour is gentle yet containing enough irony to make readers think about the events and issues her characters have to face. Through a playful flow of text combining Western literary tradition with intentionally modified grammar and vocabulary, her interpretation introduces a unique view on the harsh reality that Australian Aboriginals have been facing since the arrival of the first settlers, and the

[52] Ibid. 325.

consequences influencing further generations, thus intensifying the final effect of the novel on its readers.

Bibliography

Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin. *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-colonial Literatures*. 2nd ed., London, New York: Routledge, 2002.

Ashcroft, Bill. Reading Post-Colonial Australia. Edited by Nathaniel O'Reilly. *Postcolonial Issues in Australian Literature*. New York: Cambria, 2010. 1-14

Bakhtin, Mikhail M., *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, trans. V. W. McGhee. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986.

Farca, Paula Anca. "Humour in Contemporary Adult Fiction". In *A Companion to Australian Aboriginal Literature*, Ed. Wheeler, Belinda. Camden House Companion Volumes. Rochester, New York: Camden House, 2013. 125-138

Hesse, Silke. Alexis Wright's Carpentaria: A Poetics of Aboriginality? MonashUniversity.http://thingsgermanaustralian.blogspot.sk/2013/07/alexis-wrights-carpentaria-poetics-of.html, accessed: December, 15, 2015.

Hutcheon, Linda. *Irony's Edge: The Theory and Politics of Irony.* London; New York: Routledge, 1995.

Molloy, Diane. *Finding Hope in the Stories: Alexis Wright's Carpentaria and the Carnivalesque Search for a New Order*. Monash University, https://www.nla.gov.au/ojs/index.php/jasal/article/viewFile/2253/3343. Accessed: February 10, 2016.

Mudrooroo, Narogin. *Writing from the Fringe: A Study of Modern Aboriginal Literature*. Melbourne: Hyland House, 1990.

Marie Munkara, *Every Secret Thing.* St. Lucia, Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 2009.

Pavlides, Eleni. *Un-Australian Fictions: Nation, Multiculture(alism) and Globalisa-tion*, *1988-2008.* New Castle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013.

Renes, Martin. 'Dreamtime Narrative and Postcolonisation: Alexis Wright´s Carpentaria as an Antidote to the Discourse of Intervention.´ In: *The Journal of the European Association of Studies on Australia, Vol.2. No.1*, http://www.easa-australianstudies.net/files/jeasa29renes.pdf. Accessed: February 3, 2016.

Stolen Generations 'Testimonies. http://stolengenerationstestimonies.com/index.php/about_stolen_generations.html. Accessed: March, 3, 2016.

Wright, Alexis. *Carpentaria*. Artarmon, New South Wales: Giramondo, 2006.

—. 'On Writing *Carpentaria*.' *Heat Magazine* 13 .2007. 79-95

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE MEANING OF THE SELF IN CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN AND ALBANIAN POETRY (*BEING A WOMAN IN THE POETRY OF MARGE PIERCY AND NATASHA LAKO*)

BAVJOLA SHATRO

Introduction

It is a widely accepted fact that contemporary American poetry is founded on the personal and the intimate but also addresses sociopolitical and cultural issues that have not been dealt with by poets of previous periods. Even though such a pursuit of the political in poetry raises long-standing questions about the boundaries between poetry and propaganda or poetry and politics, it is an undeniable fact that American poetry is not an escape from personality but "…a fuller cultivation and use of personality".[1]

On the other hand, there is a different relationship between literature and politics in Albanian literature, which does not, however, lessen the importance of the above questions but rather makes them all the more important. Since the relationship between politics and literature in Albania follows a completely different path from that of American literature—and considering that this relationship was greatly distorted during the communist rule—there is reason to believe that a comparative approach between representative poets of these two literatures would shed light on the type of (political) engagement that women poets have had in different political and cultural backgrounds as well as on the significance of (political) engagement in contemporary world poetry.

---

[1] *American Contemporary Poetry*. Edited by A. Poulin, Jr., Fourth Edition (Boston: State University of New York, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1985), 687.

Marge Piercy, one of the classical writers of American poetry of the last decades of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, belongs to that group of poets who are at the same time essentially political and very sensitive to the intimate feelings of individuals, bringing to light the most suppressed aspects of personality – especially that of a woman. The study analyzes the meaning of self viewed from a comparative perspective, comparing the work of Piercy with that of an eminent poet of contemporary Albanian literature, Natasha Lako, who is to all extents and purposes the first famous Albanian woman poet. In both Piercy's and Lako's poetry, the meaning of self is related to womanhood and in both authors it implies the concept of the self's purpose and of one's place in the world. Both authors acknowledge that the individual, and particularly a woman, is surrounded by myriad forces that tend to shape her according to their own views. Moreover, both poets seem to look for an equilibrium that is mostly represented as a very open-minded relationship between the self and the world.

The chapter mainly focuses on those poems by Marge Piercy that are part of her memoir *Sleeping with Cats*, and it aims to analyze the relationship between memory and the self as well as the autobiographical strata of her poems pointing to the social, cultural and political events that she witnessed and that influenced her viewpoint on poetry and literature in general. On the other hand, Natasha Lako's poetry is analyzed by focusing both on her pre-1990s poetry and on her poetry volume *The Skin of the Water*, published in Tirana in 2004, a collection of some of her best poems written in a time span of almost four decades.

As noted here, there are significant differences—and striking similarities as well—in how these two poets perceive the image of the self and the concept of womanhood. Both aspects of comparison—be it similarities or differences—point to the benefits of a comparative approach between poets who belong to very distant literary environments but share similar political, social, or cultural concerns and have comparable poetic sensibilities. Such an approach would greatly encourage further study on the communication of literatures that are seemingly distant. It can also help us to better grasp the concept of world literature today and the place that national literatures have in the literary process in the present globalizing age.

1. M. Piercy's poetry in her memoir *Sleeping with Cats*; remembering and visualizing the self

Marge Piercy's poetry constantly reminds us of the role that poetry has in contemporary society. At its best, her poetry corroborates the idea that it is quite possible to write beautiful poetry while at the same time to address sensitive social and political issues:

> The subjects of many of Marge Piercy's poems are objects and experiences in the natural world, as well as love, sex, and day-to-day human relationships. A central theme in her work is the powerful tension between one's inner identity and the force of outer (personal, social, and cultural) pressures. […] Piercy is especially concerned with the extent to which the sexual identity and the individual personality of a woman in contemporary society is in conflict with those outer forces attempting to determine who and what she is.[2]

Piercy also sees herself as part of the landscape and of the wide net of life and living beings, especially since she moved to the Cape[3], even though she has been equally and inseparably an active participant in political and cultural life. It is in this dual context that she addresses the question of being a woman and the meaning of the self. "In her poetry, she bears thanks to what she has been given as well as bearing (sic) witness to what is withheld from us and what is taken away."[4] Therefore meditation on the self and on womanhood unavoidably implies a very sensitive response to memory and to remembering. As she has stated in her acclaimed memoir *Sleeping with Cats*:

> Remembering is like one of those old-fashioned black-and-white-tile floors: wherever I stand or sit, the tiles converge upon me. So our pasts always seem to lead us directly to our present choices. We turn and make a pattern of the chaos of our lives so that we belong exactly where we are. Everything is a prefiguring of our current loves and antipathies, work and faith. We compose a future that leads from where we believe we are at the moment. When the present changes, past and future change significantly with it. This is, after all, my perspective on my life, not anyone else's.[5]

---

[2] *Contemporary American Poetry*, 65.
[3] *Biography*, accessed December 20, 2015, http://margepiercy.com/about-marge/biography/
[4] Ibid.
[5] Marge Piercy, *Sleeping with Cats* (New York: Harper Collins E-Books, 2003), Kindle Edition, 2.

Meditation on the self and on being a woman unavoidably implies a very sensitive response to memory and to remembering. As a result, memory is critical to the meaning of the self in Piercy's poetry because it represents the conjunction of time, space, and subjectivity. The way we see our own selves is essentially influenced by memory since we cannot remember except through the tricks and traps of memory. Memory has the ability to make things real for us and sometimes to persuade us about things that we have not directly experienced or witnessed. Therefore, to a considerable extent, we are what memory allows us to be. Thus, to Piercy the story of one's life is nothing but a mixture of loves, lies, desires, and daydreams. This is the first dimension of the meaning of self in these poems, one which sheds light especially on the theme of sexuality and the nature of life cycles (the poem *Digging in* may very well illustrate this idea). Symbolism based on nature or various analogies with the natural are at the heart of the rich allusions in this poem. Life could be seen as a straight line but as one realizes their relationship to nature they understand that we live in circles, i.e. the intertwining of different life lines that bend to one another. These circles are inevitably aligned to nature and in Piercy's poetry the symbols of earth, water, soil, plants and other agricultural elements point at the sexuality of our being which strongly connects us to the meaning of life. A woman's sensitivity to her own self and to life in general has a particular voice in this discourse. The cats that are mentioned in the last stanza add a mystical and polysemantic dimension that appropriately caps such a revelation about the self and the world. To Piercy the world is three-dimensional: literary, intellectual, political. Nature seems to be a key element to understanding all of these dimensions.

Natasha Lako (b.1948) is the first famous woman poet of Albanian literature. As she is the first woman to have become widely known in contemporary Albanian poetry, one might be inclined to consider her a feminist poet or a political poet like Piercy; however, as I attempt to analyze in this chapter, though the two poets bear some resemblance, they also have striking differences which have to do with the relationship of the lyrical self and womanhood. Natasha Lako debuted in Albanian literature when she was sixteen and wrote the bulk of her literary work during the years of the dictatorship. Consequently, she had to keep her writing under control due to the ideological limits imposed on Albanian literature by socialist realism and censorship. We have to consider that censorship—as it was exercised in Albania—was unimaginable even in other former

communist countries of the Eastern Bloc[6], let alone the USA, which in the 1960s experienced a revolution in culture and literary production, with Marge Piercy being an important representative of this change. Considering that in Albania—unlike in other former Eastern European communist countries—there never existed a real dissident movement during communism, there was no feminist movement or feminist poetry either, at least the way feminism was conceived of in western countries or—to some extent—even in other communist countries of the Bloc. In this context, the topic of womanhood is discussed quite differently in Lako's poetry and there are considerable differences in how the self is perceived and how "womanness" is perceived by a woman poet who addresses women in a communist country. However, Lako's poetry also shows affinities with the otherwise diametrically different model offered by Marge Piercy's poetry.

Piercy is a widely-acclaimed poet and novelist, closely related to political and feminist themes. She has also admitted to her having a very strong sense of class in her work.[7] Lako, on the other hand, has a very distinctive profile in Albanian literature, being among the first poets to contribute to the modernization of Albanian literature. Her poetry displays unquestionable innovations in terms of themes and motifs as well as in the rich impressionistic and surrealistic poetic imagery. One of her essential contributions is that she paid particular attention to the woman's world and perspective in poems written both before the fall of communism and after 1990.

Natasha Lako published her first volume *Mars Inside Us* in 1972 and since then she has published several other volumes of poetry and one novel. She is also well-known as a screenwriter. She is one of the four Albanian poets who was translated and became part of the anthology titled *Ismail Kadare et la nouvelle poésie Albanaise*, published in France by Michel Metais in 1973. Her poetry was also published in the anthology *An Elusive Eagle Soars*, published by Robert Elsie in New York in 1993 and in the anthology published by Alexander Zotos *Antologie de la poésie Albanaise* in France in 1998. Lako is also known as a translator, mainly for her translation of the famous Nobel prize-winning poet Tomas

[6] For a synthetic view of communism in Albania and its devastating role on Albanian literature see Bavjola Shatro, "Literature and Ideology: Aesthetical and Political Aspects of Albanian Literature in Dictatorship" in *The International Journal of the Humanities*, Vol.9. (Illinois- Champagne: Common Ground Publishing LLC, 2012), 95-108.

[7] Marge Piercy, *Parti Colored Blocks for a Quilt* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2001), 129.

Tranströmer's works into Albanian.[8] In 1990, Bonnie Forlag in Sweden published Lako's poems in the *Anthology of World Poetry: Women Poets*, where Lako featured alongside famous poets such as Gabriele Mistral, Sylvia Plath, Margaret Atwood, Marina Tsvetaeva, Nelly Sachs, Anna Ahmatova, etc.

I focus first on Marge Piercy whose poetry seems to envision a strong connection between the inner world of the individual and the natural world, as well as a constant meditation on intimate relationships. Piercy's own life experiences as a woman engaged in the important political and social issues of her time played a significant role in her poems. Her love and deep understanding of plants, cats and her affinity with various forms of natural life suggest that her poetry may be viewed as *tactile poetry*, one that seems to create its poetic images by touching, through words, all things around the lyrical self. On the other hand, the lyrical self is deeply touched by nature and is constantly in contact with nature and with the most concrete sides of social life. Therefore the body—especially the woman's body—is one of the derivatives of the physical realm and the relationship that the self has with the world. Piercy's affection for cats is also another aspect of the relationship with the world and with the self, issues which are at the heart of the poems that are part of her memoir:

> I get on very well with cats. They almost all recognize me. Nothing feels more pleasant to the fingers and palms than the fur of a healthy cat. I like their sensuality and their independence; I see myself mirrored in them. We have our anxieties and our moods and our fierce appetites and our razor sharp curiosity. Often both men and women, but especially men, project onto cats what under patriarchy they have learned to fear in women, which is why cats were burned when the witches were burned all over Europe in the millions. Women and cats were viewed as equally sexual and equally evil. What cannot be broken to obey must be destroyed, by that reasoning. Cats are seen as sneaky. They are considered without loyalty because they have a will and life of their own. But cats form intense passionate attachments and loyalties. I always knew with my old cat Arofa how long I could stay away from home – at what point she would simply refuse food and go on a hunger strike until I reappeared.[9]

[8] See Agim Vinca, foreword to *Lëkura e ujit* by Natasha Lako (Tirana: Toena, 2004),vi.

[9] "Afterthoughts". A Conversation between Ira Wood and Marge Piercy, accessed September 26, 2015, http://margepiercy.com/about-marge/interviews/afterthoughts-a-conversation-between-ira-wood-marge-piercy/

Sometimes her poems are very colloquial – like a meditation that one has while looking at a garden, or a cat, or a plant, or as if the lyrical self, primarily a woman, is seeing all her past and the important people of her life in photographic or cinematic images in her memory. In one of the poems of this collection is a striking image of a woman who is configured as a projection of herself in a cat and vice-versa. Sensuality, aromas, energy, the need for intimacy, a unique way of being independent, and the utmost privacy, all of these are aspects of the personality that she finds both in cats and in the woman.

Sleeping with Cats

I am at once source
and sink of heat; giver
and taker. I am a vast
soft mountain of slow breathing.
The smells I exude soothe them:
the lingering odor of sex,
of soap, even of perfume,
its afteraroma sunk into skin
mingling with sweat and the traces
of food and drink.

They are curled into flowers
of fur, they are coiled
hot seashells of flesh
in my armpit, around my head
a dark sighing halo.
They are plastered to my side,
a poultice fixing sore muscles
better than a heating pad.
They snuggle up to my sex
purring. They embrace my feet.

……..
Every one of them cares
passionately where they sleep
and with whom.
Sleeping together is a euphemism

for people but tantamount

to marriage for cats.
Mammals together we snuggle
and snore through the cold nights
while the stars swing round
the pole and the great horned
owl hunts for flesh like ours.

The poem accomplishes a very sophisticated melding of the physical and the metaphysical and a sense of narration while projecting the lyrical self onto the cats and constructing the image of marriage and genuine sense of sharing. Therefore, in her poetry there is constant movement, breathing, and a very distinctive voice that is able and willing to negotiate a relationship with the world around. Cats are among the things she knows how to observe best, and crucial to her poetry, because to her:

> Cats continue to teach me a lot of what is important in my life, and also, how short it is, how we need to express our love to those for whom we feel it, daily, nightly, in every way we can. With everyone we love, we have only a limited time, so we must learn to celebrate it body and soul. They have taught me how precious every moment we can enjoy can be with whatever we love, because it all passes and so do we.[10]

Memory is an important element that is found exactly in the intertwining of the political and the personal, and in the relationship of the self with the world. Piercy is deeply moved by both personal and societal memory, whereas Lako is mostly sensitive to personal memory – even though the social dimension is also necessarily present in her poems due to the political situation during the communist regime. However, the social is often and successfully filtered through the individual's perspective and bears abstract and quite remarkable signs of one's personality and individual viewpoint.

Each chapter in Piercy's book *Sleeping with Cats* ends with a poem in which the woman, the poet, the daughter, the sister, the aunt, the friend, the lover, the wife, the nature lover, the explorer of life and relationships, the social and political activist, the visionary, all of them are united in an essentially organic and symbiotic way. In all of these positions, which Piercy filled in her life, she always remained a woman. Relationships are essential to her and her poems abound in meditations about the relationship that we have with the world, people, cats, nature, etc. And it looks as if it is not the entity that seems to fascinate her but the

[10]Marge Pierce, *Sleeping with Cats*, 345.

relationship that it has with everything else. This fits well into the logic of the memories which never focus on one person but strongly emphasize the relationships one has had in life and how the individual has been shaped or influenced by these relationships.[11] Thus, her memories start with her present life at the time she was writing them and then goes backwards, further down in her past, while keeping a vivid sense of present tense, a device which accentuates her remarkable narrative style. Much of Piercy as a poet and as a person is related to her mother and grandmother and this relationship greatly contributes to a wider understanding of the self and the way she perceives womanhood in her poetry, as well as the essential need to remember and to be remembered:

> I am a woman with my mother inside, inside her my grandmother, her mother, reaching beyond memory, all of us making the same ritual gesture. It comforts me. I have lost so many people that I need ways to remember and cherish my dead.[12]

Mother and grandmother seem to have had a balanced influence on Piercy even though the two women were also quite different in many ways.

In her memoir's poems Piercy refers to herself as a stray cat that has finally found a home after very long wanderings. Home implies quite a few things: love, nature, cats, books, meditation, tranquility, and rich memories of times, places, people, or events. Desire for love, for calmness and silence, for observation and for cherishing her own space in order to be able to face the difficult times of life is as obvious in these poems as it is true that she hates emptiness and being detached from the relationships in which she believes things are meant to be in the world. She insists by saying that she comes from a long line of storytelling women[13] and, indeed, she always narrates something that the lyrical self quietly and conscientiously observes. Directness, a sense of irony, deep solemnity followed by open grittiness have been considered as some of the main characteristics of her poetry and are intertwined similarly to the personal and political or the emotional and the intellectual judgment which are usually combined in her work. Such a balance might be better expressed by the concept of *being of use*:

> In her poems Marge Piercy repeatedly affirms the necessity for the self to be in conflict with those outer forces intent on shaping it into something

[11] Piercy, *Sleeping with Cats*, 4.
[12] Ibid. 11.
[13] Ibid, 14.

> other than it is or wants to be. However while recognizing the symbolic relationship between the self and nature, in a variety of ways she also discovers the means to reaffirm the need for both meaning and purpose. In short, her poems repeatedly assert that the genuine meaning of the self and of all natural or human creation is "to be of use"[14].

Thus, it has been rightly maintained by scholars that she successfully reconciles the physical and the metaphysical in an impressive relationship that enriches her poetry with a wide specter of images and a universal echo. This complex imagery inevitably implies real experiences in her life, and most of all relates to her perspective as a woman. When asked about the difference between writing fiction and poetry Piercy answered:

> Poetry comes far more directly from my life. Basically I get to exercise my autobiographical impulses in poetry. I explore other people's lives in my fiction. Often for me fiction embodies the choices I did not make, the paths I did not follow. Poems are built out of sounds and silence. Rhythm and sound values are far more important in poetry than in fiction. Images are central. Poetry to me is more organic, more passionate, more spiritual, more intense. Fiction is about time – what happens if you make one or another choice. […] Each novel is like a small world I inhabit for a period of two or three years, and then move on to another small world.[15]

Therefore, any analysis of her poetry must necessarily consider her very close inclination to the poetical genre and the fact that poetry to her is probably her real autobiography – not because everything she writes derives from specific life experiences but because every poem constitutes an intense and deep meditation on something that has impacted on her sometime in life. Consequently, although not all her poems are autobiographical, nevertheless, the ones that are part of her memoir have an autobiographical flair without, however, losing the universal echo.

She seems to elaborate on the fact that we all have to strive to make sense of the events of our lives and have to endeavor to find a pattern proving that where we are has a meaning and that can help us figure out how we arrived there. Piercy[16] also admits that "writers may have a

---

[14] *Contemporary American Poetry, 655.*

[15] "Marge Piercy, Novelist, Poet, Memoirist," accessed December 18, 2015 http://margepiercy.com/faqs/

[16]" Interview with Marge Piercy"by Charlotte Templin,*TheWriter's Chronicle*, Volume 36, Number 6, May/Summer 2004 accessed December 18, 2015**,** http://margepiercy.com/about-marge/interviews/the-writers-chronicle-interview/Ibid.

slightly stronger compulsion to make sense of contradictions and misprisions, but I think we all do this."

The image of the self is a logical result of an open-minded meditation on life, on the world, and on being a woman in the world. Images related to these topics and motives are based on nature, traditions, beliefs and folklore, as well as social and cultural references. Often, time and memory are fused in several symbolic figures which are based on Jewish culture and folklore. The very meaning of the self, of life and of womanhood is remarkably embodied in the image of:

> […] the wheel of the sun and The Twelve-spoked Wheel Flashing is the wheel of the year which turns but doesn't return to the same place, which is an image that's haunted me for a long time: the wheel that turns but doesn't return.[17]

On the other hand, *Sleeping with Cats* best preserves the memories of such an image and the inner struggles and tendencies of the lyrical self in her poems. Thus, the search to understand the self through poetry and to remain a woman during this quest will echo everywhere in Piercy's poetry.

2. *A Woman with the Skin of Water*; Approaching Natasha Lako's Poetry

As already mentioned, Natasha Lako's view of the woman was definitely an innovation in Albanian literature, even though writing about women can be seen as quite normal for a woman poet in communist Albania, considering that women's emancipation was seen as a core political and social priority during the communist regime. Needless to say, as with many other areas of life, communism had an uncommon and unsound view regarding the emancipation of women. Considering the alienating view of a woman that was created by the communist regime—akin to the alienating model of the new "communist man"—one might wonder what it is that makes a poet want to write in such difficult conditions and especially to write about womanhood. I believe Marge Piercy's answer to that question may very well explain the impetus women poets have to write in different—and often difficult—conditions:

> […] Because no matter how active you are, you have to know why, you have to know who you are, you have to know what you're doing and why

[17] *Afterthoughts*. accessed September 26, 2015, http://margepiercy.com/about-marge/interviews/afterthoughts-a-conversation-between-ira-wood-marge-piercy/

> you're doing it. You have to know what you believe in. You need affirmation of the parts of you that the media doesn't affirm–the core of you. That's mostly poetry.[18]

One of Lako's first poetical volumes *The World's First Word* got its title from one of her poems dedicated to mothers. Of course, as with Piercy, there have been critics who have erroneously considered Lako's poems as purely autobiographical probably on account of her being a woman writing about women. Among Lako's poetry are many poems that are not directly linked to womanhood or to her life but are based on erotic, social, and meditative motives, as well as poems about nature.

The figure of a mother in Lako's poems was depicted sometimes with features that departed from the image of the heroic mother in wartime, the stoic although not very realistic woman that was much acclaimed during socialist realism and that, to some extent, has its predecessors in Albanian oral literature or in previous literary tradition. Thus, in communist Albania, the literary establishment fabricated a model of how one would expect women to be represented in poetry. This female image was loving, willing to sacrifice anything for her children, her family and her country; she had gone through a lot of suffering and believed in important national causes, such as the liberation of the country, the building of socialism, the correct and flawless line of the Party and State, and the like. What constitutes the core of a woman—her inner world, her worldview and unique individuality—was often left outside poetry or was at least marginalized.

Although Lako, too, wrote poetry where women are the female versions of the "new communist man", her women often appear in a different light, they are often seen as having a closer look at their own inner self. The woman finally appeared in Albanian poetry as an individual with unique attributes and an inner world of her own, one who is capable of freely meditating on herself and the world around her. The fact that she was able to carry life in her womb and to give birth were no longer seen—as it was customarily done in an almost Orwellian manner—as doing one's duty to the country and the Party thereby adding one more solider or worker. Lako's woman tried to understand herself as a unique individual – as a mother by finding and preserving the genuine natural connection with her child, as a partner, as a lover, as well as a poet, who examined and

[18]"Fighting Words, Marge Piercy's Powerful Poetry and Prose", by Johnette Rodriguez, *The Providence Phoenix*, Sept., 27, 2002, accessed September 26, 2015, http://margepiercy.com/about-marge/interviews/the-providence-phoenix-interview/

experienced the world in her own irreplaceable and unrestricted way. Although in the beginning this quality of her poetry was displayed modestly and almost imperceptibly, Lako's attempt to poeticize the woman and to understand her through poetry was definitely significant and became more pronounced, as was shown in her volume *Still Life*, published in 1990. Her ability to explore the woman's world and the ability to detect emotional resonances and to carefully observe details are among the most important characteristics of her poetry.[19]

Marge Piercey's poems emphasize the relationship between womanhood and memory and she broadens this relationship by also including the ability or the art of loving which often means the art of letting go and walking away. Such elements are indispensable to understanding what it means to be a woman in her poetry. Something of the past is never gone, it is preserved inside one's self, and the woman seems to be the key figure associated to such complex and almost metaphysical memory that goes beyond a lifetime. That is why the connection with the figure of the mother is crucial in this respect. When meditating on the meaning of the self, Piercy embraces the history of her mother, her grandmother and other important female members of her family which are the core of a number of impressive poetic images of the woman in a world that does not seem to understand, accept, or even notice her. Still, the woman is a great survivor. Conversely, in Natasha Lako's poetry the woman is not a survivor; she has just finally discovered that she is meant to be many things but not what she has been told to be. She has thus embarked on a voyage searching for something that she has been dissuaded from approaching or understanding but which she firmly believes to be the core of her being. She seems to finally start to discover herself, to be fascinated with it and gradually get to understand it more deeply and—at last—to express it openly. Both Lako and Piercy seem to direct attention to the issue of role models and gender roles, which appear to be at the heart of the obstacles the woman faces in her quest to be who she is or who she wants to be.

In Marge Piercy's memoir's poems, the reader is not presented merely with a unique perspective of a poetic autobiography but also with deep and universal presentations of the individual and particularly of a woman in different states of being and in different moments in her life. She elaborates on contradictions—either intellectual or social—that successfully reach equilibrium only in a woman's world, even though this world is often crowded with inherited and fresher wounds, unfulfilled dreams and needs

[19] See Robert Elsie, *Historia e letërsisë shqipe* (Pejë: Dukagjini, 2001), 424.

and the desire to stop the transmission of pain and lack of freedom to future generations. The contradictions I am referring to are: fear, knowing the path and walking it, suffering and easing suffering in a small corner that is your own place in the world, where you and (your) nature are left alone and freed from the bonds of gender roles and the role models that you have been taught to occupy. Eventually, the lyrical self in Piercy's poems discovers who she really is, why and how she is, and what she cannot and must not become.

Though this process develops in different stages in Natasha Lako's poetry, it is as illuminating and emotional as in Piercy's poems. I will refer here to one of Lako's earliest volumes, *The World's First Word*, where we find the poem by the same title, and that is obviously influenced by socialist realism. Despite this discouraging fact, she makes it to insert two important and unexpected verses in this poem that allow for more interpretation than one would expect:

Oh mother, mother! In your bodies
homeland itself begins,
by your name every little baby
calls to joy and life.[20]

This is one of the first poems were she witnesses what would later become one of her most important and representative poetic concerns: being a woman, discovering the meaning of the self as a woman. The technique she has used in this poem—which consists of complying with the directives of socialist realism while also adding some crucial elements of her real individuality as a (woman) poet—has also been applied in many other poems where the lyrical self succeeds in escaping from the ideological frame and enters into meditation on womanness and the way how, as a woman, she sees the world and life. In the poem *And Thus We Grew Up…,* Lako melds the concept of the emancipation of women with the theme of liberation during WWII which was one of the few available and permitted backgrounds during realist socialism. This poem clearly configures the limited and discriminating role of the woman in family in a society that has already defined sex roles and was predominantly patriarchal:

[20] Natasha Lako, *E para fjalë e botës*, (Tiranë: SH.B. "Naim Frashëri", 1979), 3. All poems or fragments by Natasha Lako's poems used in this study have been translated by the author of the study.

Life would tell us – cry
mother would tell us - cry
the matchmaker would tell us -cry…[21]

The idea of submitting to the *sad destiny* of being born a woman is partly rooted in the commonly accepted idea that existed for quite a long time in Albania according to which when a girl leaves her parents' home to get married, her freedom is forever gone; a marriage was seen as a separation from what was dear to her. This was an indispensable price to pay in order to start living in another family, even though she will always be in part a stranger in her new family. Hence, we find here a strong urge to cry. The poet suggests that when the woman took part in the fight for liberation during WWII and when her own country became finally free, she found freedom for herself, too. Although this is far from being true, the poem sheds light on both the image of women in Albanian literature under communism and the concept of emancipation promoted by socialist realism. Such a concept excluded feminism and its derivates considering them inadequate and rudiments of western imperialist societies.

In other poems, Lako is more explicit when addressing women. *This Autumn* plainly refers to pregnancy. The woman relates to her body in a very intimate, private and thoughtful way. She quietly but fondly observes her own body, which is now changing. The poetic images are based exclusively on the imagery of nature and more precisely the imagery of fall:

This fall somehow relates to my body
how come otherwise I'd feel myself so heavy…
……
Autumnal soil glides
on my pregnant self squeezes the juice.[22]

Albanian scholars have maintained that Lako is a poet that aims at formulating a complex and sophisticated poetic mosaic out of the unique experience of every moment in life[23] and that makes her poetry essentially lyrical. For Lako, poetry is always the harmony between action and meditation. In her poetry, the woman is the first to perceive and understand the logic and cycle of life with all its harmonious elements; she is the key to understanding the universe we live in and many of its

[21] Ibid. 53.
[22] Ibid. 27
[23] See Agim Vinca, *Orët e poezisë*, (Prishtinë: Rilindja, 1990), 357-358.

multifaceted meanings. She is the first to perceive everything, be it simple and concrete or deeply complex and sad, such as the ending of love. Thus, Lako is said to be the poet of women, the poet that makes woman the core of her meditation. She sees in the figure of the woman a very strong, sensitive, intuitive person, essentially limitless in her spirit, created to be free as the birds that represent the free and unsurpassable spirit of nature:

Everything… is firstly perceived by the woman
this fawl-like human being, inside every solemn moment[24]

As was mentioned earlier in this chapter, part of her perception of the woman is based on the literary tradition of Albanian literature at the end of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, particularly poets such as Naim Frashëri, Andon Zako Çajupi, Lasgush Poradeci. However, starting with the early 1990s, her image of the woman in poetry expressed strongly and more freely the role models that the woman had imposed upon her by various cultural, political, social, and ideological frames. Thus she rebukes the *man's world*, while at the same time reveals a very sensible and clear perception of the meaning of the self.

A very direct and piercing perception of role models and gender roles in the family is found in Lako's poem *Scene of Family Life*[25]. One can see here how the leading role of the man in the family is taken for granted and ends up reducing the woman to the role of passive follower, in a miniature and almost useless mirror of the man, since she is expected only to echo and support but never to question or to have her own opinions. Safety, strength, leadership, vision are all embodied in the figure of the man while the poem ends:

Even words are so similar –man said,
Are so similar- woman said,
This is what a family is –man said
This is what fam(e)-(r)use is –woman said.

In the last verse of this poem, Lako uses a pun with the word *family*, which in Albanian (*familja*) has an almost similar pronunciation with the words *fam(ë) –s* fame and (*h)ilja* – trick, ruse. Therefore, the verse mostly reads: that is what family is—fame, ruse and use.

[24] Natasha Lako, *Lëkura e ujit* (Tiranë: Toena, 2004), 42. This poem was written in 1987 although it was published about 17 years later in this volume.
[25] Lako, *Lëkura e ujit*, 72.

In *A Woman Tries to Attract the Birds to Herself*, Lako elaborates on the relationship between identity and freedom. She implies that when identity is defined, there comes slavery, too. It is a clear allusion to the woman's condition, in which the woman is seen as suffering under different forms of slavery and subject to several forces that tend to repress her identity and the right to have a voice of her own.

A woman is trying to attract birds to her,
Turning in circles on every side.

The poem could be a reference to the fact that since she was born a woman she is meant to be someone that has already been modeled by society, to dress in a predetermined way, to live in a predetermined way, and thus she is meant to have a life similar to that of the bird in the cage, which she mentions in the poem but she does not give it a name. If she did give it a name, the bird would end up being caught and placed in the role society has prepared for it, a role which the woman unwillingly plays all the time:

My heavenly one, my scared one, my unnamed one,
if you knew who you are, they'd lock you in a cage.[26]

Another very important source of allusions and poetic imagery is the woman's body. Since it is a main reference to life, to the cycle of nature and the logic of existence itself, the female body or, rather, female organs become a key reference to understanding and revealing the human condition in general:

Destruction

It is a ruined soul,
Rotten first in the vagina.

Perhaps outside still rains.[27]

While Piercy is afraid of emptiness, Lako is afraid of closings. In the poem *The Closed Window*, she says:

[26] Ibid. 120.
[27] Ibid. 123.

I'm scared of infertility,
Of my weary uterus,
The windows in night-colors
Close the closing.[28]

The image of a woman first and foremost as a mother is probably a model that has been most strongly imprinted in the conscience of a woman. On the other hand, the way the woman perceives the world in Lako's poetry is always a unique individual perspective instead of being merely a direct voicing of the rights of women or a denunciation of their exploitation. Still, her poems resonate with universal concerns that relate to the way women see themselves in the world and the way they see the world as women. Lako highlights that the lyrical self's viewpoint in her poetry is something exceptional to her as it addresses specific and unique aspects of a woman's inner being. However, it also alludes to the way the whole society might suffer when a woman is stripped of her identity and of her right to decide about her own life, body, intellect, and soul.

In another poem, *The Woman in Front*, Lako elaborates on the topic of memory and how some memories make a woman who she is and how memories that are shared by different generations of women seem to find a way in every woman who lives in different times. Every woman is another self or even your own self standing in front of you which you do not understand, which you maybe do not know, but that belongs with you.

Similar to Piercy, she is particularly fond of her grandmother to whom she dedicated one of her most beautiful poems *Smell of Basil*. It is from her grandmother that she heard the first narrative in her life and that is how she remembers her: as her first storyteller. In the figure of the grandmother, Lako sees whole generations of daughters, mothers, and sisters. With reference to storytelling, that is what she writes in her poem *I fear*:

On the lips of the woman history is always firstwritten
love itself may go crazy then.[29]

In another poem of the same volume *The Woman of Egnatia*[30] *Street*, Lako refers to the figure of the woman as *my stranger* and converses with her in the name of endless generations of women:

---

[28] Ibid. 213.
[29] Lako, *Lëkura e ujit*, 184
[30] Egnatia Road refers to the ancient Via Egnatia constructed by Romans during the 2nd century B.C. It crossed the Roman provinces of Illyricum, Macedonia, and

My stranger, I would ask, why,
In us they created the model
Of all wanderers.[31]

Needless to say, this is not a question but rather a complex statement that requires much effort and openness to be understood and accepted. Maybe women seem to wander between roles imposed on them by society and their own natural tendencies to be someone they want to be. The same idea is developed from a new perspective in her poem *Still Life*, which is also the title of one of her best poetry collections. In this poem, Lako writes:

A piece of my silence of woman
I've left in the space[32]

and describes with some autobiographical references a woman's life between books, pencils and paper as well as the needle which is used for knitting and embroidery. All these objects are somehow stuck in her silence which she calls a woman's silence, thick enough to be cut with a knife. No matter how much she runs to her books, she knows that her needle is still waiting for her, but that needle which she refers to in the poem as *a small invisible woman's needle* pains the hearts of the people around her. It looks like the fate of the woman is still pre-written and doubled, thus Marge Piercy's and Natasha Lako's poetry is also destined to have a wider echo for quite a while as things change slowly or sometimes change only in their appearance.

In *The Woman Gives Thanks*, the woman looks at her own body and realizes that love is hidden inside her, remains there and cannot come out. Her being is associated with night, darkness and dreams because it is only in such a dimension that she can create her own reality without being punished. This is a reality of equilibrium and harmony between water and fire, sand and shore, strength and weakness, i.e. a world where continuity and contradictions live peacefully like in a mosaic. All that she experiences is necessarily kept inside her body; the sensations, and all her experiences are not meant to be expressed or exposed and it is only inside her body that these experiences are safe, nothing perishes there, and nothing freezes, or spills over there. In the last stanza, Lako (not) shockingly writes:

Thrace, running through territories that are now part of Albania, the Republic of Macedonia, Greece, and European Turkey.

[31] Ibid. 127

[32] Ibid. 61

Now, she takes on her hands a small kitchen knife,
As if just awakened from the sleep, she instantly thinks,
This knife should have been sharper.[33]

The woman's world has been so extremely isolated that it is now hermetically closed, unaccepted, and *un-understood*. Only by cutting herself can she make herself known and can she come out at last, bringing to the world what lives inside of her; there is an analogy and a hint in this image with a woman giving birth or committing suicide, both of which are unique and extreme acts. Giving birth is a miracle that is hardly understood except through the individual experience of every woman. On the other hand, suicide is neither understood nor accepted when committed by the woman. Maybe it is an act of rebellion, an extreme attempt to voice her thoughts and feelings which the world is not ready to accept.

One of the representative poems in Lako's volume and a key reference to the multi-faceted perspective on the woman in Lako's poetry is *The Skin of the Water*:

Maiden horseback on a bridle-free horse,
unbound by the embryonic engraving,
silhouette-drawn by pencils of man,
I still see you striving to turn into skin,
all that's made of soul,
the skin of the water you've taken for your own self,
the water has shucked the skin to know not where it goes.[34]

In this poem some of the most remarkable poetic images for which Lako is well-known in Albanian poetry and praised in those countries where her poems have been translated can be found. A woman's being and her inherent harmony with nature and her natural desire to free herself from frames imposed on her are among the first—although not the only—arresting images and impressions that this poem imprints on the reader. Sensuality, mystical references, mythical elements, references to folk tales, which are found in elements such as the horse, the water, the skin, the maiden, and the embryo are at the core of the poem's rich imagery and allusions. The lyrical self describes the maiden as eternal, as whole and as embracing the most inherent and essential aspect of being a woman. The

[33] Ibid. 280
[34] Lako, *Lëkura e ujit*, 237.

lyrical self seems to identify with the maiden or to search for the maiden in her own soul. And this search crosses time, space, dreams and lifespans.

Conclusion

The focus of this study was an analysis of the image of the self and womanhood in Marge Piercy's and Natasha Lako's poetry, two representative poets of contemporary American and Albanian poetry, respectively. In discussing some of the most significant differences in the way Piercy and Lako regard the position of the woman and how she relates to her own self the article emphasizes the role that their very different cultural, social and political contexts have contributed in these differences. However, the study also pointed out striking similarities between the two poets, similarities which favor an in-depth analysis of contemporary American and Albanian poetry with regard to the role of women poets in these literature environments and how society is perceived by the woman in their literary work.

Both poets see the fate of the woman as related and, to some extent, conditioned by the social, cultural and political context of their countries but also as an interaction with the self and also with the world that lies beyond the city limits, i.e. with nature. The body, beliefs, narrative and folklore, the figure of the mother and/or grandmother, as well as the concept of searching and that of a quest for equilibrium rather than a noisy rebellion are commonly found in their poetry. Memory and metaphysical references are also important to their conception of the self and of the purpose of the self in the world, especially from the perspective of a woman.

These differences and similarities could serve as important points of departure for a future in-depth analysis of their poetry and of contemporary world poetry. By comparing these two poets we can draw conclusions not only about their respective poetics and what makes them representative voices in their respective literatury environments, but also about various aspects of cultural studies, feminist studies, and literary comparativism. This effort would contribute to a better understanding of the way world poetry has developed at the end of the 20th century and the first decades of the twenty-first, especially poetry written by women that addresses the world (of women) through women.

Bibliography

"Afterthoughts". A Conversation between Ira Wood and Marge Piercy, accessed September 26, 2015, http://margepiercy.com/about-marge/interviews/afterthoughts-a-conversation-between-ira-wood-marge-piercy/

"An Interview with Marge Piercy" by Charlotte Templin, *The Writer's Chronicle*, Volume 36, Number 6, May/Summer 2004 accessed December 18, 2015**,** http://margepiercy.com/about-marge/interviews/the-writers-chronicle-interview/Ibid.

American Contemporary poetry. Fourth Edition. Ed. A. Poulin Jr. Boston: State University of New York, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1985.

Elsie, Robert. *Historia e letërsisë shqipe*. Pejë: Dukagjini, 2001.

"Fighting Words, Marge Piercy's Powerful Poetry and Prose", by Johnette Rodriguez, *The Providence Phoenix*, Sept., 27, 2002, accessed September 26, 2015, http://margepiercy.com/about-marge/interviews/the-providence-phoenix-interview/

Lako, Natasha. *E para fjalë e botës*. Tiranë: SH.B. Naim Frashëri, 1979.

—. *Lëkura e ujit*. Tiranë: Toena, 2004.

"Marge Piercy, Novelist, Poet, Memoirist," accessed September 26, 2015, http://margepiercy.com/about-marge/biography/

Piercy, Marge. *Sleeping with Cats*. New York: Harper Collins E-Books, 2003, Kindle Edition.

—. *Parti Colored Blocks for a Quilt*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2001.

Shatro, Bavjola."Literature and Ideology: Aesthetical and Political Aspects of Albanian Literature in Dictatorship". *The International Journal of the Humanities*, Vol.9. Champaign IL: Common Ground Publishing LLC, 2012. 95-108.

Vinca, Agim. foreword to *Lëkura e ujit*, by Natasha Lako. Tirana: Toena, 2004.

—. *Orët e poezisë*. Prishtinë: Rilindja, 1990.

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE VISUAL AND THE VERBAL IN STORYTELLING (WRITERS' (UN)CONTROLLED DEPLOYMENT OF NARRATIVE DYNAMISM IN SEMI-VISUAL/ HYBRID NOVELS AND SHORT STORIES)

MAREK TOMÁŠIK

Introduction

Crucial to both discovery and experience, hybridisation is a concept that allows creative encoders and observant decoders to identify novelty, originality and/or quality. Very much like any effective industry products based on carefully selected parts that somehow work together (i.e. they produce the desired effects) despite being seemingly incompatible with one another, hybrid products in the sphere of literature are essentially mixtures of elements and structures that push the existing horizons of both creation and reception. Simply by combining any number of established trends, traditions, patterns, customs or conventions, they primarily draw attention to themselves no matter how original or unoriginal they might actually be. Although excruciatingly mind-numbing in many cases, hybrid works of art hide the kind of potential that would probably be sought in vain in products that are—overtly or covertly—conformist. Regardless of quality, then, hybridisation in literature (and beyond[1]) is an intriguing and inspiring process worth exploring for its own sake – simply because it

[1] For an excellent (albeit short) probe into the complexity and value of hybrid narratives in the light conformist literariness, see Jan Baetens, "Graphic Novels: "Literature Without Text?" In *English Language Notes*. Vol. 46, Issue 2 (2008), 77-88.

challenges our established (i.e. conformist) interpretive approaches and decoding strategies.

1. Corpus

Rather than relating to the well-established textual patterns and forms in what is traditionally called narrative fiction, the present study is primarily designed to revolve around texts characterised by eccentricity (almost no matter what perspective one takes to categorise them). Combining (narrative) images and textual elements to varying degrees, the stories are borderline examples of collected visual art and narrative fiction. As a consequence, they employ two distinct channels, namely image and text, which establish themselves by either taking turns, *running* side by side, or overlapping with one another typically from start to finish. One of the two channels pertains to the visual, the other to the verbal: the dynamism that results from their interplay is what makes the samples discussed herein quite distinct from (admittedly lesser-known) wordless narratives and (somewhat monopolistic) *straight* fiction alike.

For the sake of simplicity, the primary springboard of this study is limited to Audrey Niffenegger's "visual novels"[2], particularly those characterised by a relatively stable (and uniform) interplay of two distinct *carrier* channels of information and imagery (in their most general senses). In what seems to be a relentless effort to erase the line between text and image and re-entangle the visible with the readable, Niffenegger has crafted relatively extensive narratives that combine aquatint colours and shapes with *prosaic* imagery, *The Adventuress*[3] and *The Three Incestuous Sisters* being the author's finest achievements in this sphere. Though still hybrid, Niffenegger's recent ventures entitled *The Night Bookmobile*[4] and *Raven Girl*[5]—the former being a comic book, the latter an illustrated short story—employ the same two channels, albeit more conventionally. *Raven Girl* reiterates the format Niffenegger used in her unpublished artist booklets called *The Spinster* (dating back to 1986) and *Spring* (dating back to 1994)[6], which cannot be categorised as novels due to their very limited extent and complexity. Due to their insufficient

[2] Audrey Niffenegger, *The Three Incestuous Sisters* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2005), 172.
[3] Audrey Niffenegger, *The Adventuress* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2006).
[4] Audrey Niffenegger, *The Night Bookmobile* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2010).
[5] Audrey Niffenegger, *Raven Girl* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2013).
[6] Cf. Audrey Niffenegger, *Awake in the Dream World: The Art of Audrey Niffenegger* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2015), 54-61.

compatibility with the *preferred* format (see further for more details), however, the present study does not deal with Niffenegger's *Raven Girl*, *The Spinster*, or *Spring*, focusing on *The Adventuress* and *The Three Incestuous Sisters* instead (hereinafter referred to as TA and IS, respectively; in this study, this couple of texts is also referred to as "Text Group 1" or "TG1").

For the sake of comparison (as well as for further illustration of the points made in this study), additional texts falling into the category of hybrid narratives are referred to and subjected to scrutiny, namely a selection of Edward Gorey's hybrid narratives: *The Object-Lesson*, *The Bug Book*, *The Hapless Child*, *The Remembered Visit*, *The Beastly Baby*, *The Gilded Bat*, *The Deranged Cousins*, *The Eleventh Episode*, *The Lost Lions*, *The Disrespectful Summons*, *The Abandoned Sock*, and *Story for Sara*.[7] The hybrid narratives in this *control* group (hereinafter referred to as "Text Group 2" or "TG2") serve the purposes of the present study mainly on account of their striking similarity to Niffenegger's visual novels, employing structural patterns that seem to corroborate the theoretical assumptions made here and substantiating the potential of the proposed methodology.

2. Corpus in Close-up

Comprised of two relatively extensive and complex hybrid narratives by Audrey Niffenegger (the author prefers to call them "visual novels" or "stories in pictures"), Text Group 1 (TG1) is characterised by regularity and uniformity, as a result of which the narratives lend themselves easily to structural analysis, making the identification and classification of narrative elements relatively straightforward. *The Adventuress* (TA) and *The Three Incestuous Sisters* (IS) combine texts and images in relatively equal portions, the former being invariably situated on the left-hand side, the latter on the right-hand side.

Though not unique (like most things, these visual novels have their own variety of inspiring precursors), TA and IS are unconventional by comic book (or graphic novel) standards as well, because it is not exactly customary to avoid verbalising meaning in this popular genre (or let the images prevail to such an extent as to render the textual component narratively insignificant, for that matter). On the contrary, most comic

[7] For the first four narratives in the list, see Edward Gorey, *Amphigorey* (New York: Perigee Books, 2004); the rest of the narratives can be found in Edward Gorey, *Amphigorey Too* (New York: Berkley Windhover Books, 1977).

books, especially extended ones (such as *graphic novels* in the true sense of the expression), rely on text balloons/bubbles and captions/comments (e.g. temporal and spatial deixis or storytelling) as crucial conveyors of meaning and feeling. In contrast, TA and IS dispense with speech balloons and thought bubbles altogether, using verbal elements almost exclusively to provide the ever-dominating images with a skeleton of deictic references, associations (e.g. relationships among objects, events, states, actions, and/or characters), descriptors (setting- and emotion-related comments), and focalisers (elements drawing the reader's attention to specific elements within the frame of an image).

Both TA and IS are based on a design that keeps texts and graphics strictly separate, with all textual narrative elements and the odd fragment of direct speech printed on the left-hand side of the page spread and the aquatint reproductions on the right. Given the dimensions of the books (IS measures 64 by 24 centimetres and TA measures 45 by 28 centimetres when opened flat), the gap between the textual material and the images inevitably leads to separation rather than complementarity, although the span of TA is more *compact*. It is not so much the presence of the fold that separates/binds the facing pages of the novel, but rather the sheer *distance* the reader's eyes have to cover to get from the textual to the visual (or vice versa, or back and forth a few times, as the case may be). More importantly, the relative simplicity and brevity of the texts are heavily overshadowed by the relative complexity and richness of their images (as suggested by the author in her *Afterword* to IS), rendering the visual element more dominant and overpowering. In theory, the content of each of the two narratives can be skim-*read* in a matter of minutes (which conventional novels, novellas, or short stories do not really allow us to do) or skim-*viewed* within the same amount of time (which conventional comic books do allow us to do, albeit not without losses and sacrifices). Nonetheless, it may be argued that the reading time becomes considerably extended as soon as the reader starts combining the two imperfectly complementary sources of narrative information.

If you consider separating the verbal from the visual, it might seem that IS and TA are narratively twofold, the reader having the option to choose which aspect (or level of extraction) to focus on. However, the verbal soon turns out to be less coherent than the visual, which further detracts from its relative significance. The incoherence within the verbal channel is, in this case, down to its dependence on the visual, whereas the visual can do without its textual accompaniment. It is fair to say, however, that the caption-like textual components are not entirely dispensable because they enrich the overall impact of the double-channelled narrative,

somewhat narrowing down the reader's interpretive possibilities related to the visual component, as well as emphasising the presence of the story's narrator. In other words, the verbal *structures* the visual by providing "focalising elements", i.e. elements that limit the reader's interpretive possibilities – at least initially, before the reader overcomes this limitation and chooses to focus on whatever they will, wandering from one spot to another.

Admittedly, the individual *stories* of TA (as well as IS) are each told by two different, though largely overlapping narrators: one clearly identifiable on the left-hand side and a second one *emerging* from the images on the right, so to speak. The reason why it is possible to make this distinction is that each side of the narrative is selective in its own way (hence relatively biased – but authors have every right to manipulate the reader in this way), though both of them equally *laconic*. While the former seems to aim at establishing a constant speed of narration, selectively and dynamically, albeit succinctly, serving the story's hinge-points, the latter places emphasis on selected visual elements (such as crucial moments frozen in time, locations, or character features – i.e. what is called imagery, description or characterisation), ignoring whatever is meant to remain invisible by simply not giving it any visual representation. Consequently, both *narrators* make their own selection, rendering the elements that *do* find their way into the two narratives somewhat stereotypical (which is, after all, customary in fairy tales).

To illustrate the plainness and minimalism of Niffenegger's approach, a whole number of additional observations can be made with respect to IS (TA being very similar to IS). Early on in IS, the simplicity of the descriptive passages on the left is complemented by the simplicity of the visual stimuli on the right (with a few important exceptions, the images contain large areas devoid of *conventional* patterns and *standard* details). For instance, the first sentence of the verbal side of the novel (page 8) and the first image (page 9) are equally simple, both of them emphasising the notions of sisterhood and being a threesome/trio. Though the image inevitably signals more than one sentence, e.g. the sisters' unique hair colours (suggesting three different mindsets) and shared intimacy (they are holding hands), it is eerily plain in all other respects (very much like the blank space surrounding the two lines on the left): the background is homogeneous (devoid of time and space deixis, i.e. temporal and spatial locators); the characters' clothing is uniform, patternless and almost the colour of the background; the sisters' bodies are minimally outlined – only their outer features are indicated (e.g. their slim hands, flat bellies, thin waists, slender hips, spindly arms, triangular skirts hiding their feminine

buttocks); and their faces could very well be three different views of the same face. Despite their simplicity, Niffenegger chooses to portray these features on the right rather than verbalise them on the left. Yet, the sentence on the left reveals the characters' names – the kind of thing that is impossible to etch in a plate (the images are aquatints) without resorting to the alphabet. Regardless of these relatively minor contributions specific to one or the other of the two channels in question, what the two components of the introductory page spread share, at least initially, is minimalism. Niffenegger's minimalist approach thus establishes itself right from the start, varying only here and there throughout the narratives. In fact, it is used as a major focalising tool, complemented by verbal focalisers on the left-hand side of the novel's page spreads. Some of the major focalisers that Niffenegger uses include an extensive use of plain colour fields for backgrounds; a very limited (and consistent) number of colour shades throughout the novel; and a preference for outlined objects and characters (all of these features are fairly typical of aquatints, which is largely down to the techniques used in their creation). Significantly, Niffenegger also shows her controlled writing skills on the left-hand side: with very few exceptions (e.g. page 16 of IS) much of the verbal component of her novels is apparently kept neat and free from complex sentence structures. What is more, she often goes below the sentence level, combining her images with elliptical constructions and caption-like phrases, as a result of which her images are given their full significance and dominance (e.g. pages 58, 60, and 62 of IS).

Moving on to another part of the corpus, TG2 is comprised of hybrid narratives that are included to exemplify the *productiveness* of the methodology proposed here. To avoid chance-based generalisations and to achieve at least a certain degree of universality, the control text group (TG2) is more numerous than the initial couple of texts (TG1). It includes 12 hybrid narratives by Edward Gorey, which are comprised of either 30 or 14 pairs of texts and images each. In fact, TG2 is a group of texts that bear significant resemblance to Niffenegger's IS and TA – more precisely, their format and structure are *reflected* in IS and TA as Niffenegger evidently drew on Edward Gorey's style and narrative patterns. Although somewhat more heterogeneous, the control text group is considered here to put the basic methodology to the test with a view to identifying areas that need to be addressed and explored to make the theory more reliable and revealing both now and in the future.[8] All in all, the material subjected to

[8] Importantly, the text types included in TG2 are quite unlike Audrey Niffenegger's *The Night Bookmobile* (2010), which has already been the subject of a channel reversal experiment previously with considerable success, namely in

scrutiny in this study includes the following hybrid narratives (see Table 12-1):

Table 12-1: STUDY CORPUS

No.	Text group	Author	Full Title	Abbrev.	Year of publication	Number of text-and-panel pairs
1	TG1	Audrey Niffenegger	*The Three Incestuous Sisters*	IS	2005	83
2			*The Adventuress*	TA	2006	78
3	TG2	Edward Gorey	*The Object-Lesson*	OL	1958	30
4			*The Bug Book*	BB	1960	30
5			*The Hapless Child*	HC	1961	30
6			*The Beastly Baby*	BY	1962	30

Marek Tomášik, "When Images in Visual Narratives Become Secondary: The Distribution of Narrative Dynamism in Audrey Niffenegger's *The Adventuress*," in *Language, Literature, and Culture in a Changing Transatlantic World II*, edited by Magdaléna Bilá and Sandra Zákutná (Prešov: Filozofická fakulta Prešovskej univerzity v Prešove, 2012), 131-143. For experimental purposes, it was assumed that readers of Niffenegger's visual novels approach the textual channel first, only subsequently moving on to *absorb* whatever contributions the visual channel might make in the light of the textual. Arguably, this kind of reversal is only plausible with respect to texts such as those included in TG1 and TG2. Similarly to conventional comic books, then, the narrative structure of Audrey Niffenegger's *The Night Bookmobile* (2010) does not allow the reader to choose their preferred channel (textual or visual). On the contrary, the reader finds it difficult to follow one single channel because the visual and the textual get mixed up due to the layout of the narrative, as a result of which the reader cannot ignore *the other* channel completely and they are *forced* to decode both. In terms of text type characteristics, such extended graphic novellas/novels are based on heavily intertwined strings of textual and visual elements, and it is precisely due to their complex, DNA-style structure that they are not included here.

7			*The Remembered Visit*	RV	1965	30
8			*The Gilded Bat*	GB	1966	30
9			*The Deranged Cousins*	DC	1969	14
10			*The Eleventh Episode*	EE	1970	14
11			*The Lost Lions*	LL	1973	14
12			*The Abandoned Sock*	AS	1978	14
13			*The Disrespectful Summons*	DS	1975	14
14			*Story For Sara*	SS	1975	14

3. Methodology

Although it may be surprising that this study primarily draws on theoretical sources dealing with linguistics (particularly syntax and semantics), the links between hybrid text characteristics and syntactic functions will soon become evident. Inspired by the Prague School of Linguistics (especially Jan Firbas' and František Daneš' papers[9]), this study aims to explore the structure of Audrey Niffenegger's visual novels vis-a-vis other samples of hybrid narratives, focusing on the contribution of textually expressed meanings/feelings (possibly also additional aesthetic qualities) to the development of the narrative in the light of all narrative-propelling meanings/feelings conveyed by visual elements. To grasp this subtle matrix of functions and semantics, the corpus under scrutiny is analysed with a view to revealing the distribution of what is called "narrative dynamism" – a concept loosely inspired by Jan Firbas'

[9] E.g. František Daneš, "Functional Sentence Perspective and the Organization of the Text," in *Papers on Functional Sentence Perspective*, edited by František Daneš (Prague: Academia, 1974); "O identifikaci známé (kontextově zapojené) informace v textu," in *Slovo a Slovesnost*, 4/1979, 257-270; or František Daneš, *Věta a text: Studie ze syntaxe spisovné češtiny* (Prague: Academia, 1985).

"communicative dynamism", as employed in his theory of functional linguistics[10].

Whether conveyed by words or images (or both, for that matter), "narrative dynamism" is essential to the process of storytelling. Based on a couple of studies published by the author a few years ago[11], it turns out that, in IS and TA, it is the images that do the storytelling most of the *time*, the accompanying texts asserting themselves only by chance. Surprisingly, just the opposite tendency is revealed in the case of Niffenegger's *The Night Bookmobile*. Consequently, stories get told *through* visual novels in two different ways, verbal and visual narrators taking their turns and establishing themselves to varying degrees. Whatever means of storytelling happen to be employed, they eventually serve the primary goal Niffenegger[12] reveals in her afterword to *IS* – to combine alphabetical semiotics with visual expressions into a narrative complex: "I make books because I love them as objects; because I want to put the pictures and the words together, because I want to tell a story.".

Hardly unique in this day and age (with the ever-expanding spectrum of content characterised by hybridisation), such multi-channel communication can actually be argued to have a life of its own. The author can thus be seen as forever torn and taught between being fully in control (as a mere composer) and being at the mercy (as a medium controlled by its *language*) of the tension between the textual and the visual. Indeed, upon closer inspection, hybrid stories employing images and texts turn out to be driven by deep-structure forces that reveal an endless battle between texts and images (with or without clear-cut victories). It will be argued

---

[10] Cf. Jan Firbas, *Functional Sentence Perspective*. For another non-linguistic application of Firbas' theory, see Marek Tomášik, *Reshuffled Lyrics: a comparative study of Christina Rossetti's "Remember" and Robert Smith's "Treasure" based on Jan Firbas' theory of functional sentence perspective* (Prešov: Prešovská univerzita v Prešove, 2013).

[11] Cf. Marek Tomášik, "A Clash of the Arts' Titans: Texts and Images in Audrey Niffenegger's Visual Narratives," in *Literary and Visual Dimensions of Contemporary Graphic Novels*, edited by Mária Kiššová, Simona Hevešiová, Dana Mihailescu, Dan. H. Popescu, Michal Szawerna, and Marek Tomášik (Nitra: University of Constantine the Philosopher in Nitra, 2012), 106-127; and Marek Tomášik, "When Images in Visual Narratives Become Secondary: The Distribution of Narrative Dynamism in Audrey Niffenegger's *The Adventuress*," in *Language, Literature, and Culture in a Changing Transatlantic World II*, edited by Magdaléna Bilá and Sandra Zákutná (Prešov: Filozofická fakulta Prešovskej univerzity v Prešove, 2012), 131-143.

[12] Audrey Niffenegger, *The Three Incestuous Sisters* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2005), p. 172.

further on that, in her visual novels, Niffenegger deploys—very subtly, perhaps even *unknowingly*—varying degrees of "narrative dynamism". Although the format of her visual novels is perhaps more revealing than any other format currently used (with a wide range of comic book text types available), Niffenegger is actually joined by an infinite number of other *producers* of hybrid narratives and sequential art[13]. Since Niffenegger's *The Adventuress* and *The Three Incestuous Sisters* have already been previously subjected to this kind of analysis[14], the present study aims to enhance the methodology outlined here by extending the discussion related to narrative dynamism to another author's hybrid narratives that manifest a certain amount of non-verbal imagery, namely those by Edward Gorey (TG2).

It is crucial to see the notion of "narrative dynamism" (hereinafter also referred to as "ND") as a very subtle quality that pervades narrative texts and manifests itself in degrees, constituting an unbroken mapping layer that concerns at least all *narrative* elements[15]. Although narration is a phenomenon that also appears in audio-visual products and works of art, the present study is limited to printed (i.e. relatively static) storytelling whose dynamism is controlled by the receiver in terms of pace (in this sense, films are typically designed to impose their pace on their viewers). It is further assumed here that, in addition to event-type elements, the dynamics of a narrative are also determined by certain non-narrative elements that can be carriers of narrative dynamism, particularly elements that carry meanings and/or feelings (in other words, elements of semantic and/or emotional value).[16] The overall distribution of ND is therefore established and shared by two static (*printed*) carrier channels, namely the textual and the visual, and any dynamism that can be *measured* in this way (in relative terms) is actually generated in the act of decoding (i.e. reading/viewing). By analogy, this corresponds to the way conventional writers (those that only use some sort of alphabet) turn (i.e. encode) their abstract notions, concepts, feelings, etc. (in the course of their creative act)

---

[13] The term was coined by Will Eisner in his book *Comics and Sequential Art* (1985).

[14] Cf. Marek Tomášik, "A Clash of the Arts' Titans…," 106-127; and Marek Tomášik, "When Images in Visual…," 131-143.

[15] It is yet to be explored to what degree such dynamism can be observed in non-narrative elements, such as aesthetic ones (e.g. textual or visual elements that are included in works of art for the sake of *pure* embellishment).

[16] As indicated by the previous footnote, the list of such non-narrative elements could be expanded to include a whole range of aesthetic elements, but these are not considered here due to the complexity of the issue and limited space.

into printed sentences, which are subsequently decoded (or *back-formed* into *utterances*) by readers in an act that renders the printed code *temporarily* dynamic (assuming that the act of reading is only dynamic in the present moment).

Of course, *absorbing* or decoding images is a process that is considerably more complex than conventional reading, which is nowhere near as extended in time and space. Arguably, viewing a picture comes with more liberties, the viewer being almost absolutely free to focus on, ignore, refocus on, or dwell on any specific detail/aspect, in any order, and for any amount of time. In the present study, however, these issues are dealt with only marginally, which (given the limited space for this study) also applies to visual composition as a crucial factor that guides the viewer's attention and interpretation of visual content (similarly to the way in which syntax-related choices, among other factors, determine our understanding of utterances). Suffice to say that visual design determines the degree to which an image appears balanced: "It is the selection and control of a number of competing elements for the audience's attention within the frame."[17] In hybrid sequential art represented by comic books or graphic novels employing both texts and images, the composition of picture content also plays a crucial role in identifying the relative significance (and contribution) of individual elements to narrative development: no matter how complex, all visual elements have the potential to make a contribution to the narration underway in the same way every word uttered has the potential to make a contribution to the development of communication (in the broadest sense possible). Assuming that every textual/visual element does have weight in the light of the narration/communication it is part of, it must also act as a carrier of certain qualities that keep the narration/communication going. Furthermore, if every element does carry a certain quality that has the potential to be meaningful in the first place, some sort of distributional structure is bound to emerge in the process of narration/communication: a structure that cannot only be purposefully *encoded* by combining elements using whatever standard methods are available to the producer (linguistic or artistic means), but also *decoded* using whatever standard methods are available to the receiver. Finally, assuming Firbas' "communicative dynamism" is a universal category identifiable in any utterance, "narrative dynamism" can be seen as a *populated* distributional field that is kept alive by both textual and visual hybrid narrative elements alike.

---

[17] Cf. Peter Ward, *Picture Composition for Film and Television* (Oxford: Focal Press, 2003), p. 54.

Unfortunately, the composition of picture content is an issue that goes beyond the extent of the present study, which is why it can only be dealt with here marginally. After all, the comparative analysis that follows also ignores the distribution of communicative dynamism on the micro level of individual sentences, so it is only fair that the distribution of what could be called "visual dynamism" (for lack of a better term) on the micro level of individual images is ignored. Instead, this study seeks to transgress such micro levels and explore the mezzo/macro levels that are crucial to the dynamics of hybrid narratives. More precisely, it aims to reveal the interplay and areas of overlap between the visual and the textual in a text type whose potential goes beyond both conventional textual narratives and conventional visual art.

Returning to the Prague School of Linguistics, it is important to explain several other terms, including "theme", "transition", and "rheme", in the context of the analysis to come. It could be said that in Firbas' world, every micro-, mezzo- and macrostructure (as well as sub-micro structures, such as morphemes) becomes an *element* functioning as a *carrier* of qualities that render the communicative outcome relatively dynamic. The assumption that every element has a relative potential is easily transferrable into the world of images and texts, where it reveals the inner workings of hybrid narratives (among other things). The abstract layer formed by images and texts can be seen as a distributional field—a layer that becomes a map as the narrative unfolds—which *allows* (via the artist/writer) pictures and verbal elements to assert themselves (or not, as the case may be). These artistic *efforts* give rise to meaningful communication - called narration in this case. If an element is dynamically overshadowed or dominated by other elements, its function is thematic (or diathematic[18]); if an element asserts itself to some extent, it assumes a transitional role; and if an element asserts itself fully, it becomes rhematic. In practice, these three types of *assertion* correspond to relatively low (thematic) contributions; relatively moderate (transitional) contributions, relatively high (rhematic) contributions to hybrid text ND, respectively. Crucially, all contributions have relative weight: strictly speaking, there is no such thing as a zero contribution as it would lead to redundancy. In theory, then, even a blank page where an image is expected can make a relatively high contribution to the distribution of narrative dynamism. While themes have a low degree of ND, rhemes propel the narrative

[18] Cf. Aleš Svoboda, *Diatheme – A study in thematic elements, their contextual ties, thematic progressions and scene progressions based on a text from Ælfric* (Brno: Filozofická fakulta Masarykovy univerzity, 1982).

considerably, usually backed up by in-between elements whose function is transitional (and somewhat transient, too).

On a mezzo level, texts make contributions to images and/or vice versa: unless a given book's design is structured like Niffenegger's IS or TA, images are typically viewed first on account of their spatial and perceptive dominance, the accompanying texts asserting themselves secondarily to *accompany* the images. Of course, this directionality can be reversed experimentally[19], but experience suggests that most hybrid narratives are primarily viewed rather than read. The kind of freedom that Audrey Niffenegger's extensive visual novels (only IS and TA) provide is extremely rare, the visual channel being primary on most occasions. Nonetheless, there are also hybrid narratives whose narration is primarily established on textual grounds, such as Posy Simmonds' *Gemma Bovery* (2000), Shaun Tan's illustrated stories (such as *Eric*)[20], or Audrey Niffenegger's *Raven Girl* (2013)[21]: their graphics are relegated to an inferior position to serve as mere accompanying embellishments or—to use a more common term—nothing more than illustrations. Although such illustrations may have a certain impact on their imagery, illustrated stories are not dependent on images in terms of narrative development. In contrast, hybrid narratives rely on graphic content at least to some extent, their relative reliance/dependence rates ranging from very low to extremely high and structurally corresponding to the distributional field of narrative dynamism that the author creates (consciously or not) in the production phase.

Using the theory outlined herein, it is not only possible to measure how dependent a hybrid narrative is on either its textual or visual content (always relatively speaking, one in light of the other), but also how its dependence varies (or fluctuates) throughout the process of storytelling and what the proportion between visual and textual contribution is in any given moment of storytelling. In the light of the observations and assumptions made above, truly hybrid narratives lend themselves to functional analysis and reveal their inner workings, which are graspable in terms of thematic, transitional, and rhematic contributions (or tautological, marginal and vehicular elements, respectively[22]). For the sake of brevity

[19] Cf. Marek Tomášik, "When Images in Visual…," 131-143.
[20] Cf. Posy Simmonds, *Gemma Bovery* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2000) and Shaun Tan, *Tales from Outer Suburbia* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2008), respectively.
[21] Audrey Niffenegger, *Raven Girl* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2013).
[22] This working terminology was used in my previous two studies concerning narrative dynamism. Cf. Marek Tomášik, "A Clash of the Arts' Titans…," 106-127; and Marek Tomášik, "When Images in Visual…," 131-143.

and simplicity, only the distribution of narrative dynamism along textual lines is considered here. Naturally, the same kind of analysis can be performed in the opposite direction although, as suggested above, it does not make much sense in most cases because visual content seems essential in hybrid narratives as a rule.

The following (Table 12-2) is a list of crucial terms and concepts used in the analytical part of this study:

Table 12-2: BASIC TERMINOLOGY

No.	Term	Abb.	Definition
1	narrative dynamism	ND	An underlying property of narratives that reflects their development from start to finish (subconsciously) encoded by the author/artist and decoded by the reader/viewer.
2	thematic layer	THL	An abstract plane or field comprised of elements with relatively low ND.
3	transitional layer	TRL	An abstract plane or field comprised of elements with relatively moderate ND (developing THL and developed by RHL).
4	rhematic layer	RHL	An abstract plane or field comprised of elements with relatively high ND (developing both THL and TRL).
5	theme	TH	A textual or visual element that is characterised by a relatively low-ND contribution to the development of the narrative.
6	transition	TR	A textual or visual element that is characterised by a relatively moderate-ND contribution to the development of the narrative.
7	rheme	RH	A textual or visual element that is characterised by a relatively high-ND contribution to the development of the narrative.
8	thematic contribution	THC	A volume of ND that makes a relatively low impact on the development of the narrative. Also referred to as “tautological”.
9	transitional contribution	TRC	A volume of ND that makes a relatively moderate impact on the development of the narrative. Also referred to as “marginal”.

10	rhematic contribution	RHC	A volume of ND that makes a relatively high impact on the development of the narrative. Also referred to as "vehicular".
11	distributional field	DIF	Occupied by carriers of ND, distributional fields are abstract micro-, mezzo- or macro-layers of narratives that show the fluctuations of narrative dynamism.
12	relative contribution	REC	An impact that a specific narrative element makes in the light of all other narrative elements occurring in its proximity (within the relevant distributional field).
13	hybrid narrative	HN	A text that tells a story employing at least two distinct types channels, typically a textual/verbal layer and a visual/graphic layer.

4. Distribution of Narrative Dynamism in the Corpus Texts

This section of the study contains a comparative and contrastive analysis of the corpus specified earlier with a view to demonstrating several features related to the narrative text type in question, including the relative contribution of the selected hybrid narratives' textual layers to the corresponding visual layers, the fluctuations of narrative dynamism inherent to their narrative structures, and the overall and progressive dependence (as well as overall thematicity and *redundancy*) of what is considered to be an optically secondary or supplementary narrative layer. The corpus narratives are also assessed with respect to their narrative-propelling characteristics, one of the main goals of this effort being to determine which narrative channel is dominant in driving the storytelling, i.e. developing it forwards. Of course, all of these goals are approached with regard to the type(s) of narratives this study involves, the observations made towards the end being text-type sensitive rather than generally applicable to all hybrid texts. In other words, the present study does not seek to embrace the whole range of existing hybrid narrative text types.

Taken over and adapted from one of the author's previous papers focusing on issues related to narrative dynamism[23], the first two tables below capture the distribution of ND in Audrey Niffenegger's *The Three*

[23]Marek Tomášik, "A Clash of the Arts' Titans…," 106-127.

Incestuous Sisters and *The Adventuress* (Table 12-3). They are followed by a series of 12 tables corresponding to narratives by Edward Gorey (Tables 12-4), which are selected for the purpose of testing the proposed methodology. Comprised of 30 pairs of images and texts each, the first six control narratives are relatively long (i.e. quite comparable to Niffenegger's visual novels); the second half of the control narratives are rather short, each of them being only 14 pairs of texts and images long.[24]

Table 12-3: DISTRIBUTION OF ND IN THE TEXTUAL LAYER OF AUDREY NIFFENEGGER'S NARRATIVES

Table TG1.1: *Distribution of ND in the textual layer of Audrey Niffenegger's* The Three Incestuous Sisters

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39
RH	■	■	■		■		■											■					■												■			■	■
TR				■		■		■				■				■	■		■	■						■	■	■			■	■	■	■		■	■		
TH									■	■	■		■	■	■						■	■		■	■				■	■									

	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78
RH																		■		■										■	■	■							
TR	■			■			■			■			■				■		■		■								■							■			
TH		■	■		■	■		■	■		■	■		■	■	■						■	■	■	■	■	■	■					■	■	■		■	■	■

Table TG1.2: *Distribution of ND in the textual layer of Audrey Niffenegger's* The Adventuress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39
RH		■												■	■	■	■							■	■					■		■		■					
TR			■	■		■	■							■	■	■	■					■				■		■					■		■		■	■	
TH	■				■			■	■	■	■	■	■					■	■	■	■		■				■		■		■						■			■

	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66
RH				■		■		■										■									
TR					■		■				■	■							■	■	■		■			■	
TH	■	■	■						■	■			■	■	■	■	■					■		■	■	■	

[24] Please, note that the numbers in the first row of each table do not correspond to page numbers; they refer to text and image pairs instead.

Table 12-4: DISTRIBUTION OF ND IN THE TEXTUAL LAYER OF EDWARD GOREY'S NARRATIVES

Table TG2.1: *Distribution of ND in the textual layer of Edward Gorey's* The Object-Lesson

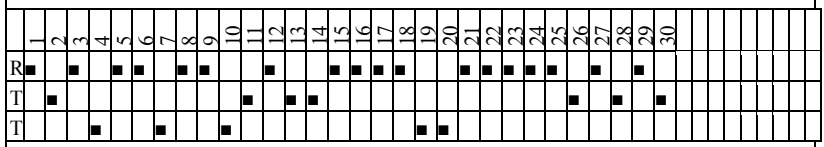


Table TG2.2: *Distribution of ND in the textual layer of Edward Gorey's* The Bug Book

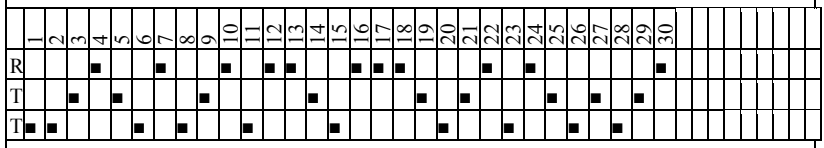


Table TG2.3: *Distribution of ND in the textual layer of Edward Gorey's* The Hapless Child

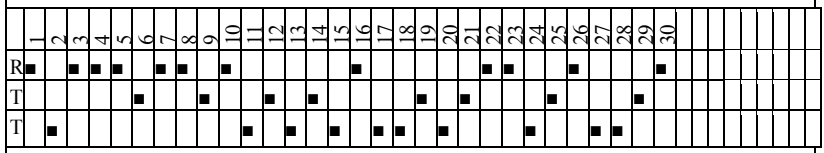


Table TG2.4: *Distribution of ND in the textual layer of Edward Gorey's* The Beastly Baby

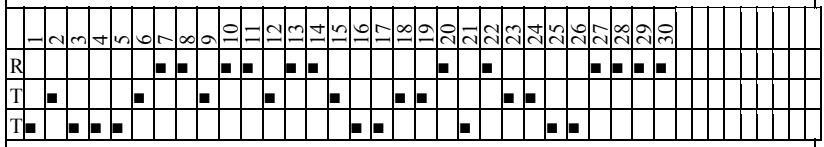


Table TG2.5: *Distribution of ND in the textual layer of Edward Gorey's* The Remembered Visit

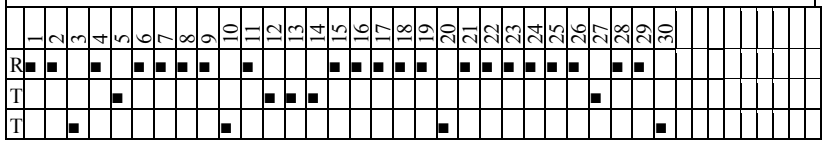


Table TG2.6: *Distribution of ND in the textual layer of Edward Gorey's* The Gilded Bat

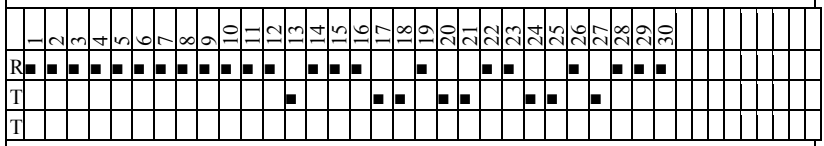


Table TG2.7: *Distribution of ND in the textual layer of Edward Gorey's* The Deranged Cousins

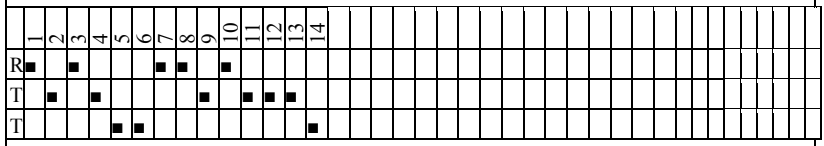


Table TG2.8: *Distribution of ND in the textual layer of Edward Gorey's* The Eleventh Episode

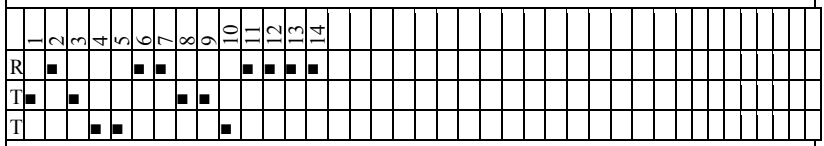


Table TG2.9: *Distribution of ND in the textual layer of Edward Gorey's* The Lost Lions

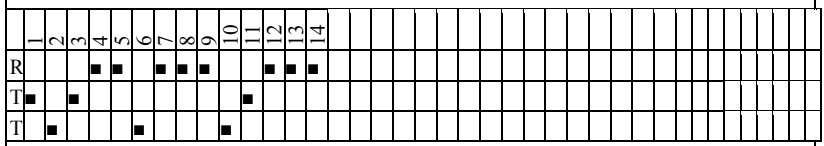


Table TG2.10: *Distribution of ND in the textual layer of Edward Gorey's* The Abandoned Sock

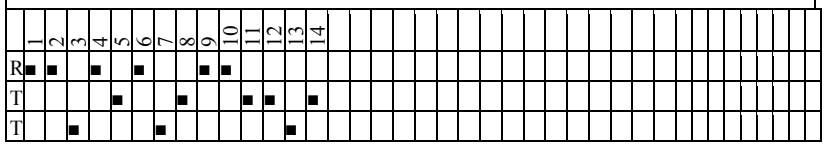


Table TG2.11: *Distribution of ND in the textual layer of Edward Gorey's* The Disrespectful Summons

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
R			■	■	■	■		■			■			
T	■						■		■			■	■	
T		■								■				■

Table TG2.12: *Distribution of ND in the textual layer of Edward Gorey's* Story for Sara

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
R		■		■	■			■	■		■			
T			■				■			■		■		
T	■					■							■	■

Table12-4 summarises the weight of the textual layer in the distributional fields of the chosen narratives, revealing the relative proportions among the thematic (tautological), transitional (marginal), and rhematic (vehicular) elements employed throughout the narratives. One of the benefits of this type of visualisation is that it shows the fluctuations of narrative dynamism from start to finish, in addition to extensive periods of level ND, the volume (i.e. potential/impact) of layer-specific contributions, and the overall balance among ND carriers. These data types are, in turn, potentially useful in identifying text type specifics related to the distribution of ND in hybrid texts in general. Table 12-5 provides a summary of just this sort of information:

Table 12-5: CORPUS STATISTICS

	Rhematic (vehicular) **elements**		**Transitional** (marginal) **elements**		**Thematic** (tautological) **elements**			**DOMINANCE**			**REDUNDANCY**	
	Number	**Relative proportion**	**Number**	**Relative proportion**	**Number**	**Relative proportion**		**RH-dominated**	**TR-dominated**	**TH-dominated**	**THL**	**THL & TRL**
IS	15	19%	27	35%	**36**	**46%**		19%	35%	■ **46%**	Mod	**Ext**
TA	10	15%	24	36%	**32**	**49%**		15%	36%	■ **49%**	Mod	**Ext**
OL	**18**	**60%**	7	23%	5	17%		■ **60%**	23%	17%	Very low	**Mod**
BB	**11**	**37%**	9	30%	10	33%		■ **37%**	30%	33%	Low	**High**
HC	**12**	**40%**	8	27%	10	33%		■ **40%**	27%	33%	Low	**High**
BY	**12**	**40%**	9	30%	9	30%		■ **40%**	30%	30%	Low	**High**
RV	**21**	**70%**	5	17%	4	13%		■ **70%**	17%	13%	Very low	**Low**
GB	**22**	**73%**	8	27%	0	0%		■ **73%**	27%	0%	Very low	**Low**
DC	5	35,5%	**6**	**43%**	3	21,5%		35,5%	■ **43%**	21,5%	Low	**High**
EE	**7**	**50%**	4	28,5%	3	21,5%		■ **50%**	28,5%	21,5%	Low	**High**

LL	**8**	**57%**	3	21,5%	3	21,5%		■ **57%**	21,5%	21,5%	Low	**Mod**
AS	**6**	**43%**	5	35,5%	3	21,5%		■ **43%**	35,5%	21,5%	Low	**Mod**
DS	**6**	**43%**	5	35,5%	3	21,5%		■ **43%**	35,5%	21,5%	Low	**Mod**
SS	**6**	**43%**	4	28,5%	4	28,5%		■ **43%**	28,5%	28,5%	Low	**Mod**

It must be borne in mind, of course, that the figures in Table 12-5 are all relative and approximate, their only purpose being to map the distribution of ND and to explore some of the workings of the hybrid narratives in question. In part, this also applies to decision-making concerning the thematic ("tautological"), transitional ("marginal"), and rhematic ("vehicular") elements (potential carriers of ND), which are also tentative *for the time being*: in some cases, the relative weight of an element is a matter of debate – or, more precisely, a matter of *interpretation* on the part of the receiver (reader/viewer). Somewhat problematic in the existing linguistic theme-rheme methodologies[1], this exactness-defying elusiveness only calls for additional research into the proposed methodology. Nonetheless, the figures shown in Table 12-5 are revealing enough.

Conclusions

The difference between Niffenegger's visual novels and Gorey's hybrid narratives is evident—quite abysmal, in fact—in both quantitative and qualitative terms. While the textual channels of Niffenegger's *The Three Incestuous Sisters* and *The Adventuress* are both characterised by a low percentage of rhematic contributions (RHCs), a moderate percentage of transitional contributions (TRCs), and an incredibly high percentage of thematic contributions (THCs), Gorey's hybrid narratives show the opposite tendency: although their structures are not in perfectly ascending order compared to Niffenegger's visual novels,[2] Gorey's hybrid narratives obviously rely on textual contributions, with at least two thirds of all textual elements being transitional or rhematic (i.e. either relevant—however marginally—or downright crucial to the development of the hybrid narratives). Structurally speaking, Niffenegger's and Gorey's hybrid narratives seem to run in opposite directions, the former incorporating a large amount of what can be called thematic tautology, the latter relying more than considerably on the textual channel. This can be translated into qualitative characteristics: while Niffenegger's hybrid narratives prompt their reader to focus on what the narratives deliver visually, Gorey's hybrid narratives seem to be more balanced, requiring that the reader divide their attention between the two communicative

[1] For more details, see Marek Tomášik, *Reshuffled Lyrics: a comparative study*, 2013.

[2] BB, HC, BY, LL, SS, and, of course, DC (the only TRC-driven narrative) being cases in point here.

channels (alternatively, narrators or narratives) more or less equally. In other words, while the narration running through Niffenegger's *The Three Incestuous Sisters* and *The Adventuress* is predominantly image-propelled, the narration in Gorey's HNs depends on the old-fashioned means – verbal storytelling.

From another perspective, the quantitative/qualitative differences described can be seen as a matter of redundancy. Using the results shown above, it is actually possible to determine (in approximate and relative terms) the degree to which this or that particular narrative employs elements that are relatively redundant in terms of narrative (or, by extension, *communicative*) development. Table 12-6 below shows five redundancy degrees that are approximate enough to enable a qualitative assessment of the narratives in question:

Table 12-6: TENTATIVE THL, TRL AND RHL REDUNDANCY DEGREES

0-19%	**Very low**
20-39%	**Low**
40-59%	**Moderate**
60-79%	**High**
80-100%	**Extreme**

Assuming that one of the primary intentions of using (narrative or non-narrative) communicative elements is to push things forward, the *alphabetical* elements of Niffenegger's HNs seem to do just the opposite (on average): almost half of them are thematic, serving as cohesive devices at best. On the other hand, Gorey's HNs are marked by a relatively low degree of cohesion because what their verbal channels provide is crucial, narrative-propelling information – in other words, rhematic contributions. A certain degree of what can be called redundancy is absolutely necessary, though. Without being provided a sufficient amount of redundancy, readers are left to their own cohesive devices, so to speak: they are forced to establish cohesive links themselves, which may be quite demanding or daunting at times – needless to say, an overly rhematic narrative can be an absolute nightmare to read. Therefore, in terms of redundancy-sensitive text-type characteristics, Niffenegger's visual novels and Gorey's hybrid narratives cannot be lumped together by any means.

If we combine the conclusions made in the previous two paragraphs, another crucial category seems to emerge, namely dependence. While some hybrid narratives evidently work with texts and images as pertaining to two relatively loosely coupled channels (e.g. Niffenegger's *The Three*

Incestuous Sisters and *The Adventuress*), other narratives (most of the other stories in the corpus) are established on more complex patterns that do not allow the reader to choose their *preferred* channel – at least not without considerable losses or sacrifices. To put it differently, while Gorey's stories are marked by *intricate and reciprocal cooperation* between images and texts, which get intertwined to the point of being inextricable from each other, the relationships between the two narrative channels in Niffenegger's *The Adventuress* and *The Three Incestuous Sisters* appear to be rather loose, the textual layer being dominated by the visual one.

Finally, there are the issues of how narrative dynamism is deployed, when exactly it is deployed, and who it is deployed by. Arguably, narrative dynamism is dispersed in narratives on a level that is not overtly discernible to either writers/artists or readers/viewers. Whether deployed in a controlled manner or not, narrative dynamism is—as an abstraction that materialises in the form of visually or textually expressed elements—evidently present in at least all the narratives in question. Far from just being something that enables researchers to identify abstract structures that may be relevant to text-related typologies[3], narrative dynamism is—however *aware* of it writers may be—something that also *controls* writers' creative process to some extent. Needless to say, it is something—especially when wielded *inappropriately*—that may render the final product ineffective or unsatisfactory in the eyes of its readers. An unbalanced map of ND—or *wrongly* distributed narrative dynamism—can lead to serious semantic and aesthetic repercussions.

Bibliography

Baetens, Jan. "Graphic Novels: "Literature without Text?" In *English Language Notes*. Vol. 46, Issue 2 (2008): 77-88.

Daneš, František. "Functional Sentence Perspective and the Organization of the Text". In *Papers on Functional Sentence Perspective*, edited by František Daneš, 106-128. Prague: Academia, 1974.

—. "O identifikaci známé (kontextově zapojené) informace v textu". In *Slovo a Slovesnost*, Vol 4 (1979): 257-270.

[3] For a brief classification of hybrid narratives, see Francesca Goldsmith, *Graphic Novels Now: Building, Managing, and Marketing a Dynamic Collection* (Chicago: American Library Association, 2005), 16-26. For a more in-depth study of hybrid narrative text types and characteristics, see Karin Kukkonen, *Studying Comics and Graphic Novels* (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2013).

—. *Věta a text: Studie ze syntaxe spisovné češtiny*. Prague: Academia, 1985.
Eisner, Will. *Comics and Sequential Art.* Tamarac: Poorhouse Press, 1985.
Firbas, Jan. *Functional Sentence Perspective in Written and Spoken Communication*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
Goldsmith, Francesca. *Graphic Novels Now: Building, Managing, and Marketing a Dynamic Collection*. Chicago: American Library Association, 2005.
Gorey, Edward. *Amphigorey*. New York: Perigee Books, 2004.
—. *Amphigorey Too*. New York: Berkley Windhover Books, 1977.
Kukkonen, Karin. *Studying Comics and Graphic Novels*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2013.
Niffenegger, Audrey. *The Three Incestuous Sisters*. London: Jonathan Cape, 2005.
—. *The Adventuress*. London: Jonathan Cape, 2006.
—. *The Night Bookmobile*. London: Jonathan Cape, 2010.
—. *Raven Girl*. London: Jonathan Cape, 2013.
—. *Awake in the Dream World: The Art of Audrey Niffenegger*. London: Jonathan Cape, 2015.
Simmonds, Posy. Gemma Bovery. London: Jonathan Cape, 2000.
Svoboda, Aleš. *Diatheme – A study in thematic elements, their contextual ties, thematic progressions and scene progressions based on a text from Ælfric*. Brno: Filozofická fakulta Masarykovy univerzity, 1982.
Tan, Shaun. *Tales from Outer Suburbia*. Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2008.
Tomášik, Marek. "A Clash of the Arts' Titans: Texts and Images in Audrey Niffenegger's Visual Narratives." In *Literary and Visual Dimensions of Contemporary Graphic Novels*, edited by Mária Kiššová, Simona Hevešiová, Dana Mihailescu, Dan. H. Popescu, Michal Szawerna, and Marek Tomášik, 106-127. Nitra: University of Constantine the Philosopher in Nitra, 2012.
—. "When Images in Visual Narratives Become Secondary: The Distribution of Narrative Dynamism in Audrey Niffenegger's *The Adventuress*." In *Language, Literature, and Culture in a Changing Transatlantic World II*, edited by Magdaléna Bilá and Sandra Zákutná, 131-143. Prešov: Filozofická fakulta Prešovskej univerzity v Prešove, 2012.
—. *Reshuffled Lyrics: a comparative study of Christina Rossetti's "Remember" and Robert Smith's "Treasure" based on Jan Firbas' theory of functional sentence perspective*. Prešov: Prešovská univerzita v Prešove, 2013.

http://www.pulib.sk/web/kniznica/elpub/dokument/Tomasik1

Ward, Peter. *Picture Composition for Film and Television* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Focal Press, 2003.

PART III:

CULTURE

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THE AGE OF FRAGMENTED NARRATIVES: CHALLENGES FOR THE TRADITIONAL ROLE OF CULTURAL CONCEPTUALIZATION AND SOCIAL COGNITION IN DIGITAL CULTURE

LÁSZLÓ IMRE KOMLÓSI

1. Backgrounds for Cultural Narratives and Social Cognition

Researchers involved in social communication and information processing must be intrigued by the challenge of looking at the changing relationship between the three components of the triangle: culture – language – literature, where culture provides for seamless interpretation patterns, language secures the embodiment of thought and human experience, and literature offers a means of making sense of possible worlds articulated in culture-driven narratives and discourse.

We are bound to acknowledge the rising need for reconceptualizing the nature of the above concepts and revisiting the relationship of culture(s), natural language(s) and social discourse(s). It is also to be acknowledged that interdisciplinary research on the relevant issues in humanities and social sciences are vital and imperative. We are talking about findings in linguistics, literary studies, cultural studies, psychology, pedagogy, social anthropology, philosophy, cognitive science, and the over-arching discipline called pragmatics. I take pragmatics to say important things about social interaction constituting contextualized social discourse. Social interaction has many forms, e.g. economy, legislation, logistics, marketing, politics, arts, philosophy, migration[1], etc. However, the focus

[1] Think about the consequences of the socio-cultural interaction induced by the nomadic invasions to the Roman Empire in the 2nd to 5th centuries by the Huns, Goths, Visigoths, Ostrogoths, Vandals, Franks, etc., for the future of Europe.

of the present chapter must be restricted to verbal interaction that constitutes social behavior patterns by discourse. It will be argued in the present chapter that acquiring the norms and patterns of socially situated discourse is a prerequisite for both formal and informal education and primary and secondary socialization. It will also be argued that the prospects for integrity and dignity of human beings are warranted by the development of the ability for effective social cognition based on participatory engagement.

Cultural narratives are inherited in the process of acculturation and adaptation to social orders pertaining to respective communities. Thus, the backbone of social order is the integration of individual members into the fabric of social practices and behavior patterns determined by the cultural conditions set by a community. Culture, as such, provides for interpretation patterns that facilitate social orientation and consensus-based assessment of verbal and non-verbal behavior in the community. Cultural narratives create a framework for permanent learning: members of a community are compelled to develop competences for social cognition based on reciprocity and solidarity with fellow citizens and loyalty and commitment to shared values of the community. We have to acknowledge the two sides of cultures: it is restrictive and protective at the same time. Most of the theories about social behavior agree with the above assertions and acknowledge that the dialectical nature of culture and its described parameters function as supportive pillars of traditional (tribal, oriental, western, utilitarian, utopian, etc.) societies and communities.

At this point I feel inclined to put forward a hypothesis: the traditional framework secured by mechanisms of consensus-based social cognition and "collective life-world narratives" supported by homogenous cultural conceptualizations is loosening up and is bound to decrease in dominance.

The following points will be looked at:

(i) the invaluable findings of modern cultural linguistics and cultural anthropology whose claim is that social discourse is regulated by *linearly-constructed cultural narratives* which are the manifestations of cultural and linguistic conceptualizations,
(ii) the *paradigm change* in cultural conceptualization and cognition in digital environments the result of which is *fragmented cultural narratives* that call for and enhance context-driven social cognition (based on encapsulated information chunks) in order for us to observe the appearance of *connected cognitive entity* (CCE) generation in the Digital Era.

(iii) In addition, an examination of the notion of *literacy* seen as a synergic outcome of a number of socially developed phenomena, such as education, erudition, primary and secondary socialization, cultural and social cognition, discourse skills and intentionality (attributing mental states to others), social attitudes (tolerance, sympathy, empathy, commitment, etc.), social practices (as in relational pragmatics), multilingualism and intercultural competences will be proposed.

However, it will be argued, we cannot fail to consider the notion of *digital literacy* since we are continuously talking about digital economy, digital public administration, digital production systems, digital smart systems, digital highways, digital information processing–generically about *digital cognition*.

What, then, is *digital*?

Do we need to develop different or modified competences in the digital environment, such as different interactive discursive skills, information processing skills, text processing skills, (*cf* fiction, printed media, social media, text messages, blogs), social perception, etc.?

Are we going to count on having multiple identities or even Internet identities? How shall we go about virtual realities and the human competences for coping with virtualization and augmented realities?

Through the present analysis and arguments, it is the intention of the present chapter to call attention to the *steady shift* in the patterns of information management and social cognition. There is today an increased interest in language studies to shift focus from seeing human language as a special and autonomous cognitive ability to treating the language phenomenon as *a bundle of interacting cognitive skills and social competences*.

Based on a study of human verbal interaction in various social contexts, it is assumed that language use requires the *integration of highly diverse cognitive, affective, social, and cultural schemes* together with interactional perceptions which result in *contextualized, socially situated discourse*. This is what will hence be called *cultural cognition*: an umbrella term that integrates the inputs of individual cognitive skills (reasoning, pattern recognition, categorization, interactants' perceptions, etc.) and skills determined by social cognition (mentalization, theory of mind, mental projections, intentionality and mental causation, consciousness, self-awareness, etc.).

Cultural cognition presupposes the *ontology of cultural conceptualizations that are supra-individual affordances* to facilitate language acquisition and

language use. Cultural cognition develops through interactive social activities and joint, participatory meaning creation.

The present chapter proposes briefly looking at the two notions of *discourse* and *interaction*.

Discourse has several basic meanings:

- verbal interaction among interlocutors – discourse structure
- a restricted conceptual domain (universe of discourse) within the confines of a professional/vocational setting (limitations imposed by the professional or vocational community)
- a set of beliefs and conceptualizations underlying the interpretation schemes of community narratives (political discourse, religious discourse (*quasi* self-imposed limitations)
- an origin of ethnic (nation) discourse (an inherent part of cultural cognition with inherited contents)
- thought-regulating views and conceptualizations /gender discourse, racial discourse, nationalistic discourse, power discourse/ (directed, biased interpretation mechanisms)

Discourse may require—among other things:

- linguistic awareness (knowledge of language)
- adherence to ideas and beliefs (mental contents)
- loyalty to communities, groups and sub-groups (relational aspects)
- participatory efforts (cooperative aspects)
- dependency within social hierarchies (identity seeking)
- devotion to causes (moral stance)

Some rhetorical questions in order to play devil's advocate) could be:

- How much is linguistic activity *per se* in the realization of discourse? What constitutes the phenomenon of discourse? Answer: *cultural conceptualizations*.

Interaction may require—among other things:

- linguistic behavior (intentional, creating joint meanings)
- non-linguistic behavior (creating meaningful acts and responses)
- intentionality: attributing mental states to others (predictive meaning creation – optimalization of predictable behavior)
- human-machine interaction (meaning creation across system – interfaces)

- chemical interaction in the neural system: *learning* understood as chemical information which creates increased connectional weight to induce the growth of new synapses and dendrons
- physical (sub-atomic) interaction in material sciences (periodical table – unstable but new elements)

Meaning creation in *discourse*	and	*interaction*
- linguistic		not necessarily linguistic
- not necessarily interactive (= mental architecture: conceptual structures,		participatory, reciprocal (= patterns of activities)
- mental projections)		
- cultural narratives and cultural memes		acting, role playing
- imagery		meaning by doing
- projections		reading intentions and mental contents
- metaphoric and metonymic		Theory of Mind (ToM)
- meaning-structures		intentional stance

A major tenet of cultural linguistics claims that culture-based categories and models *develop through social interaction and are socially distributed* to different degrees among the various members of a cultural community. Here we recognize the idea of the *linguistic division of labor*.

Cultural linguistics explains the possibility of *emergent features of meanings and interpretations* in socially situated discourse /*cf* community of social practices/. This framework explains how language innovation and novel meaning generation happens in natural language. It is *social interaction* that is responsible for language change and linguistic innovation to a great extent, rather than motives from the internal language system.

2. Cultural Narratives as Manifestations of Cultural Conceptualizations

It is worth looking at a fascinating field of research fundamentally committed to knowledge management in the social space. Current theories of cognitive anthropology adopt two constitutive notions: (i) the concept of *cultural conceptualizations and situated cognition* manifested in

socially situated discourse[2] and (ii) the concept of *distributed cultural conceptualizations and emergent cultural cognition*[3]. The major claim found in both approaches is that cultural narratives are collectively constituted which provide for commonly shared interpretation patterns for the members of a cultural community. In other words, it is claimed that the sociocultural frame underlying the interactive communicative patterns of a community can be perceived as a mental framework providing a *virtual fabric of a cohesive narrative* to accommodate and determine *culture-specific interpretation schemes* for the members of cultural groups. Frank[4] describes *sociocultural situatedness* as a vital interaction of the individual mind with social and cultural structures (such as other agents, artifacts, conventions, etc., in short, tangible and intangible cultural participants), thus facilitating social cognition involving learning, socialization, collective memory, mental maps of events, rituals, norms and patterns of behavior. The gist of *situated cognition* is warranted by the socio-cognitive involvement of the individual mind which gets realized via interactions with other individual minds and with other social and cultural entities where the community of individual minds collectively creates cohesive and supportive narratives in the course of these interactive processes.

It is easy to recognize the influence of the philosophical tradition established by Habermas's consensus-seeking communicative acts[5] at this point. His foundational claim is that discourse has a socially situated nature which determines and restricts communication as an interactive meaning-creating activity to be realized within the horizon of shared, unproblematic convictions which automatically constitute consensus-

---

[2] Roslyn M. Frank. "Introduction: Sociocultural Situatedness", in Frank Roselyn M., Dirven René, Ziemke Tom and Bernárdez Enrique (eds.), *Body, Language and Mind. Sociocultural Situatedness, Vol. II*, (Berlin/New York, de Gruyter, 2008), 1-18.

[3] Farzad Sharifian, "On cultural conceptualizations", *Journal of Cognition and Culture* vol. 3, n° 3, (Leiden, Koninklijke Brill NV, 2003), 187-207.; Sharifian Farzad, "Distributed, emergent cultural cognition, conceptaulisation and language", in Frank Roselyn M., Dirven René, Ziemke Tom and Bernárdez Enrique (eds.), *Body, Language and Mind. Sociocultural Situatedness, Vol. II*, (Berlin/New York, de Gruyter, 2008), 241-268.; Sharifian Farzad, *Cultural Conceptualization and Language*, (Amsterdam, John Benjamins, 2011)

[4] Frank, Introduction

[5] Jürgen Habermas, "Actions, speech acts, linguistically mediated interactions and the lifeworld", in Fløistad Guttorm (ed.), *Philosophical Problems Today*, *Vol. 1*, (Dordrecht/Boston, Kluwer, 1994), 45-74.

generating interpretative patterns[6]. It goes without saying that the communicative actors are always moving within the horizon of their *lifeworlds* since they cannot step outside of them. Lifeworld is the invisible and indispensable background of everything we do and of everything we are.

Frank[7] identifies the outcome of the community of "lifeworlds", which are the results of fairly homogeneous cultural conceptualizations, as follows: their manifestation is a culturally transmitted and linguistically organized stock of interpretative patterns. Lifeworld can be understood as a kind of non-thematic knowledge that is characterized by an unmediated certainty and a holistic constitution. It is composed of cultural patterns, legitimate social orders and personality structures, forming complex contexts of meaning.

Sharifian[8] proposes a complex theory of cultural conceptualizations that function as collective representations to secure permanence in culture. This process, despite its permanence-creating outcome, is dynamic and highly interactive within a cultural community as conceptualizations are deemed to be represented in a distributed fashion across the minds of a cultural group. Cultural dynamics manifests itself in discourse the conditions of which are bound to be permanently modified as the members negotiate and renegotiate these conceptualizations across generations. It is important to distinguish between the terms *narrative* and *discourse*. In Sharifian's theory of *distributed, emergent cultural cognition*[9]*,* collective narratives secure permanence in culture while discursive processes permit the renegotiation of cultural conceptualizations across generations. It is a novelty in the formulation that renegotiated and augmented cultural narratives reveal emergent properties in the flow of cultural interactions. Sharifian's dialectically integrative view sees *cognition as a complex adaptive system* that emerges from the interactions between the actors of a cultural group who negotiate and renegotiate their emergent cultural cognition across time and space. Although this theory offers an interesting perspective on augmented cultural narratives that overarch generations, it does not explain what exactly guarantees permanence in collective cultural representations.

---

[6] Habermas, Actions, speech acts, linguistically mediated interactions and the lifeworld, 66.

[7] Frank, Introduction

[8] Sharifian, On cultural conceptualizations

[9] Sharifian, Distributed, emergent cultural cognition; Sharifian, *Cultural Conceptualization and Language*

It is important to emphasize that collectively created cultural narratives have had a decisive function in shaping social cognition and social behavior across generations functioning in a *linear mode of information processing*. These narratives—as results of the complex adaptive cognitive systems of its members—have been successful in creating culturally controlled and augmented realities by allowing interaction and renegotiation of emergent cultural cognition. These cultural competences orientated, encouraged and empowered members of the cultural group to cope with hierarchically-built, conceptually-derivable and ideologically-driven meaning structures, to develop binding forces of cultural belonging and to seek permanent roles in given hierarchical structures.

3. The Cognitive Culture System and Language – Culture Parallelism

Cultural linguistics has paved the way for treating language and language use as outcomes of underlying cultural conceptualizations and shared interpretation patterns in a cultural community. A remarkable attempt to dig even deeper into the foundations of culture and language, i.e. those of the cognitive language system and the cognitive culture system, can be found in the cognitive theory of Leonard Talmy[10]. Talmy offers an evolutionary perspective on the cognitive language system and presumes and acknowledges the evolutionary advantage of a high-level and complex cognitive system termed *cognitive language system* with specific linguistic structure and linguistic meaning characterizing natural languages. In a similar vein, Talmy offers an evolutionary perspective on the cognitive culture system and assumes the evolutionary advantage for human communities which have developed a high-level and complex cognitive system termed *cognitive culture system* with specific cultural behavioral patterns, social structures and social practices. Talmy advocates individual-based cultural cognition just as he does with individual-based linguistic cognition assuming that neither of these cognitive systems has autonomous existence beyond the cognition of individual humans. The functions of the cognitive culture system include the acquisition, exercise, maintenance, transmission and imparting of culture. Further, cultural cognition presumes an innately determined brain system to guide the development of cultural patterns through the existence of cognitive organization in individuals who collectively make up a society. Cultural

[10] Leonard Talmy, *Toward a Cognitive Semantics*, *Vol. II: Typology and Process in Concept Structuring*, (Cambridge, MA / London, The MIT Press, 2000)

patterns are the content of this highly differentiated and systematically structured cultural complex which pertains to both conceptual-affective patterns and behavior patterns internalized by the individual humans belonging to given cultural-social groups.

> The cognitive culture system within an individual assesses the conceptual-affective and behavioral patterns that it sees others exhibit, as well as attending to instruction on such patterns, and internalizes what it has abstracted from this assessment and instruction. It performs the process of assessment in a highly structured way. The process includes determination of the outside groups most relevant to the self, abstraction across the members of each such group, attention to only certain categories of phenomena manifested by those members, and resolution of conflicts among the patterns of different groups. [...] The cognitive culture system implements the cultural patterns it has acquired, both to produce them and to comprehend new instances of production by others.[11]

The parallelism between the linguistic and the cultural cognitive systems may arise from their evolutionary history. According to Talmy, these were the last two cognitive systems to have co-evolved interactively, presumably conditioned by other cognitive systems (e.g. perception in different modalities: visual and kinesthetic, memory, attention, causal reasoning, inferencing, abstraction, planning, anticipatory projection, mental-state attribution to others, etc.) already in use.

> We can note here that, of all the cognitive systems, only language and culture extensively exhibit patterns of a universal abstract structure underlying a variability of instantiation determined by the social group (i.e. various particular languages and cultures. Despite such parallelism, though, language and culture have evolved as distinct cognitive systems.[12]

Leonard Talmy has much to say about narrative structures as well. His research on the different cognitive systems suggests that they might be distinct; however, they are not autonomous complexes by any means. Human cognition is a complex way of mental life in which the interaction of different cognitive systems, cognitive skills and competences is imperative. Talmy has offered the recognition and analysis of yet another comprehensive framework which makes the production and comprehension of narratives possible. At the center of this comprehensive cognitive system is “narrative work” with the participation of “sentient

[11]Talmy, *Toward a Cognitive Semantics*, *Vol. II, 374.*
[12]Talmy, *Toward a Cognitive Semantics*, *Vol. II, 377.*

entities". Narratives can be stories, histories, cultural narratives, discourse narratives, life narratives, etc. that presuppose the existence of individual minds that produce the narratives as well as minds that cognize the narratives, exerting both generative and interpretative mental abilities. "Narrative work" requires a particular chunk of space and time and a society of minds (sentient entities) that have assembled the narrative and have perceived and cognized it as such. Thus, a narrative requires a cognizant producer and a cognizant perceiver in a concrete narrative work. Talmy argues—with his phenomenological orientation—for a generic case that opens up new perspectives on conceptual organization in human cognition.

> An intentional sentient producer is not strictly necessary for the construal of something as a narrative. A perceiving mind by itself is capable of experiencing some naturally occurring formation or some unintended formation by a sentient entity, as being a narrative work. More systematically, a perceiver regularly construes the external events she has witnessed over a period of time as narrative–a type that might be termed "history". And a perceiver regularly construes the sequence of personal experiences he has had over time–both interior and externally based experiences–as constituting a narrative, that of his "life".[13]

Thus, narrative work can be seen as a *pattern-forming cognitive system* which consists of a set of mental capacities that interact with each other to perform a particular integrated and coherent mental construal. In other words, the function of a narrative cognitive system is to interconnect an assembly of mental experiences in order to form a single overall pattern called "narrative". Talmy's analysis further supports the evolutionary perspective when he argues for selective pressure in the evolution of the narrative. In his view, the application of the narrative cognitive system to temporal sequences may have evolved through selective pressure to bring about great scope and attention attraction to facilitate the cognizing of larger patterns and longer-range plans. Also, we have to note here that narratives are not void of cultural context: cultures and subcultures constitute a relatively coherent cognitive system which in turn can affect and determine particular sets of narrative characteristics. Thus, the narratives will reflect the conceptual structure, the affective structure, the presuppositions, the values and in general the "world-view" of the individuals producing or experiencing the narratives.

[13]Talmy, *Toward a Cognitive Semantics*, *Vol. II, 418.*

In the light of my own research on digital culture[14], it is the intention of the present chapter to question and challenge both Sharifian's theory that supports an integrative view of social cognition based on homogeneous cultural conceptualizations and Talmy's theory of "narrative work" supporting long-term interpretative mental abilities.[15] My own research suggests that permanence in collective cultural representations cannot be secured under the circumstances of contemporary digital environments which produce *a plethora of fragmented narratives* due to the alternative, parallel mode of information processing. Digital culture enables cognitive entities in the digital environment to cope with network-generated, associative meaning structures and to make sense of fragmented narratives and emergent contexts.

4. Fragmented Narratives in Digital Communication

The notion of *narrative work* is closely connected to *contextualization* in connection with which we also acknowledge that context-building and context-identification figure as special creative mental activities. In my own earlier research[16], I offered an analysis of a systematic hierarchical

[14]László Imre Komlósi and Patrick Waldbueeser, The Cognitive Entity Generation: Emergent Properties in Social Cognition. In: Baranyi Péter (ed.): 6th IEEE Conference on Cognitive Infocommunications. (Piscataway/Budapest, CogInfoCom. Proceedings, 2015), 439- 442; László Imre Komlósi, Digital literacy and the challenges of digital technologies for human learning. In: Daniel Dejica, Gyde Hansen, Peter Sandrini, Iulia Para (eds.) *Language in the Digital Era. Challenges and Perspectives* (Warsaw/Berlin: De Gruyter Open; Cognitive Systems), 162-171; László Imre Komlósi, Semantic Constraints and Fragmented Narratives in the Digital Age. In: "Et le reste est point de vue", Mélanges offerts á Pierre-Yves Raccah, sous la direction de Zsuzsa Simonffy et Zsófia Várkonyi. (*Corela: cognition, representation, langage* [On-line journal], Vol. 14-1, 2016.

[15]Talmy, *Toward a Cognitive Semantics, Volume II*

[16]László Imre Komlósi, "Contextualization and Cognitive Synergism. The Interaction of Ontology and Epistemology in the Interpretation of Contexts", in Hölker Klaus und Marello Carla (Hrsg), *Dimensionen der Analyse von Texten und Diskursen / Dimensioni dell'analisi di testi e discorsi. Festschrift für János Sándor Petöfi zum achtzigsten Geburtstag / Festschrift per János Sándor Petöfi in occasione del suo ottantesimo compleanno*, (Berlin - London - Zürich - Wien, LIT Verlag, 2011), 186-203; László Imre Komlósi, "Linguistic Context, Pragmatic Context, Mental Context: Meaning Construction and Interpretation via Contextualization", in Dontcheva-Navratilova Olga and Povolná Renata (eds), *Discourse Interpretation: Approaches and Applications*, (Newcastle upon Tyne, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012), 19-38.

relationship between foundational settings, ontological commitments and epistemic states in connection with contextualization:

1. Situations and faithful mappings of situations;
2. Contextualized situations (selective mental representations of situations);
3. The linguistic context (texts and discourse depicting contextualized situations);
4. Pragmatic contexts (constructed contexts based on users' perspectives);
5. The context of social interaction and culture (social reality, knowledge of others);
6. The context of the self (figuring in individual and social cognitive situations);
7. Instantiated mental contexts (situated language use);
8. The context of the web-experience (cognition in virtual reality)

We can see that (1-2) manifest *situational contexts*, (3) represents a *linguistic context* and (4-8) realize *mental contexts*. Social interactive skills require and entail those higher level cognitive skills that facilitate adaptive, context-sensitive interpretations. Here we have to observe that *social cognition* is a cover term for a vast number of different cognitive activities responsible for information processing and knowledge management with relative independence of the types of informational inputs. A *mental context* is constructed out of selected properties of mental content, thus serving as background for evaluating the meaningfulness of particular arrangements in information structures. Linguistic structure in itself is not sufficient to determine contextual meaning. A mental context yields added value with the help of which linguistic meaning is to be complemented.

A good deal of contemporary research suggest that we are experiencing a new paradigm in perceiving, conceiving and managing information, especially with those people who have been socialized in the digital era and have internalized the very nature of digital culture. The members of the digital community function in connected networks created by a number of different types of cognitive entities. These people are cognitive entities themselves who feel at ease with digitalization and virtualization[17]. In their environments all sorts of smart devices are at their disposal such that they

[17] Frank Siegemund, *Cooperating Smart Everyday Objects – Exploiting Heterogeneity and Pervasiveness in Smart Environments*, (PhD dissertation, Zürich, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich, ETH Zurich, 2004)

can cope with a plethora of information and can communicate effectively in accordance. One can assert today that these social actors function as cognitive entities. The notion *cognitive entity*[18] encompasses both human and non-human agents, digital and mechanical entities that behave smartly and who/which are presumed to exist within a highly interlocked framework of a multi-channel information flow and exchange.

In the case of the community of cognitive entities we talk about *chunks of information* that might be seen as *fragmented narratives*, rather than about *collectively constituted cultural narratives*. Any piece of information can be related to any other information by creating suitable or agreeable *contexts for interpretation*. Therefore, we can still envisage information chunks that might fit into narratives of some sort. However, the narratives created on-line are not based on negotiation, let alone renegotiation. They are results of non-deterministic interpretations, accepted for current states of affairs. These information chunks might be ephemeral and seemingly arbitrary. Creating contexts for interpretation means an innovative challenge for interactive agents. Fragmented narratives become flexible building-blocks for novel contexts. As opposed to cultural narratives which are based on cultural conceptualizations and are linear in design, fragmented narratives are non-linear, non-deterministic and distributed in a parallel design.

The present chapter has attempted so far to point out, in my research, that digital culture should be seen as a novel environment for social cognition that inevitably undermines the permanence of cultural narratives. Instead, cognitive entities seek connection to each other in a parallel but non-deterministic fashion in order to exploit the immense potential in a plethora of information sources. The consequences for the nature and mechanisms for social cognition based on digital culture cannot be predicted reliably as of today. A new perspective on and the unprecedented practice of information management is, however, part of an irreversible process.

The new phenomenon is termed *Connected Cognitive Entity Generation* (CCE Generation)[19] referring both to the process and/or to the participants of the new information management practices induced by the very nature of the digitalized information environment.

---

[18]Komlósi and Waldbueeser, The Cognitive Entity Generation: Emergent Properties in Social Cognition

[19]Komlósi and Waldbueeser, The Cognitive Entity Generation: Emergent Properties in Social Cognition.

The post-Generation Y has broken out of hierarchically structured, authoritative knowledge distribution due to the unprecedented advancement and development of digital technologies and to the resulting uncontrolled information sources. Unlike Generation X or Generation Y, cognitive entities constituting the digital space will continually generate connected cognitive entities (CCEs) who will no longer be confined to a population-based generation. They will be actors functioning as interacting cognitive entities.

It is to be observed that cognitive entities in a digital environment are related to each other *not by commonly shared cultural narratives but by random interest in networking, information sharing and emergent cognition*. This type of networked information exchange is not teleology-driven. What we witness under such conditions is an exponential growth of potential information sources due to the parallel design of connections.

5. Marginalization and the Digital Gap: the Need for Empowerment via Cultural Cognition

The undesirable phenomenon of the digital gap in education and socio-economic status that is a consequence of exclusion and marginalization of certain social groups in a society ought to be acknowledged. It is well-known that individual, social and cultural competence motivations will be blocked for young children in social settings in which

- there is a lack of physical-object manipulation,
- there is a lack of free and active movement in space,
- there is no developing environment (primarily at a microsystem level in mother-child and father-child interaction) due to a lack of parental behavior skills,
- there is an insufficient level of pedagogical and teaching skills (supportive maternal teaching strategy),
- there is a lack of access to the digital environment.

Underrepresented groups will develop if their members have limited access to a supportive competence and skills-developing environment in very early childhood and early school-years.

1. Early child care: a plethora of stimuli with speech, conversation, narration, interactive playing, role playing, enhancing fantasy and imagination via fairy tales and discursive behavior;

2. Vocabulary explosion at the age of 3 – 4.5 years which results in enhanced conceptualization and the development of reasoning skills;
3. The importance of fairy tales and stories between 4 and 7 to enhance event representation and text coherence (deep involvement and identification with protagonists and roles);
4. The beginning of systematic reading between 5 and 7 years of age.

In addition, educational systems should be aware of the stages of socio-ecological development and possible intervention points for young children, taking into consideration the following:

(i) Primary socialization: family socialization + school socialization (early experience of social relationships, development of individual, social and cultural cognition);
(ii) The educational process: formal education + informal education (degree of control over information access, information processing and interpretation schemes);
(iii) Secondary socialization: peer group and work place.

Competence motivations for developing social discursive skills in early child development:

(i) individual competence motivation: self-awareness, self-esteem, acceptedness, kinesthetic needs, comfort, self-protection, identity, integrity, independence;
(ii) social competence motivations: personal bonding, belonging, group and hierarchy formation;
(iii) cognitive/emotive competence motivations: stimulations, curiosity, recognition, combination, discovery, eagerness, need for experimentation, play and playfulness, reflective interpretation, interactional perceptions, procedural understanding, creativity, encouragement of desire for success seeking and of coping with frustration and conflicts.

Conclusion

The main argument of the present research has been to help see digital culture as a novel environment for social cognition that inevitably undermines the permanence of cultural narratives. It was claimed that cognitive entities seek connection to each other in a parallel but non-deterministic fashion in order to exploit the immense potential in a

plethora of information sources. The consequences for the nature and mechanisms for social cognition based on digital culture cannot be predicted reliably at present. A new perspective on and the unprecedented practice of information management is, however, part of an irreversible process. An attempt has been made in the present chapter to show that interaction, cognition and discourse have a complex, intertwined, reciprocal relationship. Cultural conceptualizations seem to constitute a decisive and dominant layer in the process of making sense of the world around us and inside us. Cultural cognition, social cognition and individual cognition contribute in their own right to the development of context-sensitive, socially situated discourse which seem to be fundamental prerequisites for learning and social cognition. The question of the consequences of the Digital Era with the predominant interaction of Connected Cognitive Entities in a digital environment was also addressed. The present chapter has called attention to the danger of the digital gap which may lead to marginalization and exclusion within communities.

Bibliography

Frank, Roslyn M. "Introduction: Sociocultural Situatedness." In *Body, Language and Mind. Sociocultural Situatedness, Vol. II,* edited by Frank Roselyn M., Dirven, René, Ziemke, Tom and Bernárdez, Enrique, 1-18. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 2008.

Habermas, Jürgen, "Actions, speech acts, linguistically mediated interactions and the lifeworld." In *Philosophical Problems Today*, *Vol. 1*, edited by Fløistad Guttorm. 45-74. Dordrecht/Boston: Kluwer, 1994.

Komlósi, László Imre, "Contextualization and Cognitive Synergism. The Interaction of Ontology and Epistemology in the Interpretation of Contexts", in Hölker Klaus und Marello Carla (Hrsg), *Dimensionen der Analyse von Texten und Diskursen / Dimensioni dell'analisi di testi e discorsi. Festschrift für János Sándor Petöfi zum achtzigsten Geburtstag / Festschrift per János Sándor Petöfi in occasione del suo ottantesimo compleanno*. 186-203. Berlin/London/Zürich/Wien: LIT Verlag, 2011.

—. "Linguistic Context, Pragmatic Context, Mental Context: Meaning Construction and Interpretation via Contextualization". In *Discourse Interpretation: Approaches and Applications,* edited by Dontcheva-Navratilova, Olga and Povolná, Renata, 19-38. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012.

—. "Digital literacy and the challenges of digital technologies for human learning. In: *Language in the Digital Era. Challenges and Perspectives,*

edited by Daniel Dejica, Gyde Hansen, Peter Sandrini, Iulia Para. 162-171. Warsaw/Berlin: De Gruyter Open, 2016.

—. "Cognitive Systems, Semantic Constraints and Fragmented Narratives in the Digital Age. In: "Et le reste est point de vue", Mélanges offerts á Pierre-Yves Raccah, sous la direction de Zsuzsa Simonffy et Zsófia Várkonyi. *Corela: cognition, representation, langage* [On-line journal], Vol. 14-1, 2016.

Komlósi László Imre and Patrick Waldbuesser, "The Cognitive Entity Generation: Emergent Properties in Social Cognition", in: *Proceedings of the 6th International IEEE Conference on Cognitive Infocommunications* (CogInfoCom2015), edited by Baranyi Peter, 214-221. Piscataway/Budapest, IEEE, 2015.

Sharifian Farzad, "On cultural conceptualizations" In: *Journal of Cognition and Culture* vol. 3, n° 3, 187-207, Leiden, Koninklijke Brill NV, 2003.

—. "Distributed, emergent cultural cognition, conceptaulisation and language", In: *Body, Language and Mind. Sociocultural Situatedness, Vol. II*, edited by Frank Roselyn M., Dirven René, Ziemke Tom and Bernárdez Enrique, 241-268, Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 2008.

—. *Cultural Conceptualization and Language*, Amsterdam, John Benjamins, 2011.

Siegemund Frank, *Cooperating Smart Everyday Objects – Exploiting Heterogeneity and Pervasiveness in Smart Environments*, PhD dissertation, Zürich, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (ETH Zurich), 2004. [En ligne: http://www.vs.inf.ethz.ch/publ/papers/diss-siegemund-final-small.pdf. Downloaded 30.01.2016].

Talmy Leonard, *Toward a Cognitive Semantics*, *Vol. II: Typology and Process in Concept Structuring*, [A Bradford Book], Cambridge, MA / London, The MIT Press, 2000, Chapter 7: The Cognitive Culture System, pp. 373-415, Chapter 8: A Cognitive Framework for Narrative Structure, pp. 417-482.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

INVISIBLE REVELATIONS: APOCALYPTIC TECHNOLOGIES, ZOMBIE ARTEFACTS AND THE END(S) OF HISTORY

MARCIN MAZUREK

Only after disaster can
we be resurrected.
—Tyler Durden,
Fight Club[1]

1. Redefining Apocalypse

The overall assumption behind this chapter is that the very notion of apocalypse—contrary to its habitual catastrophic associations—may in fact serve as a powerful metaphor of almost any kind of a radical and irreversible paradigmatic change in a given cultural environment including its philosophical background. After all, the original meaning of apocalypse is that of "revelation" and even if we bothered to track down its biblical origin we would clearly see that the biblical vision is as much preoccupied with the detailed description of how "that great city of Babylon be thrown down,"[2] as it is with revealing the new order symbolised by the city of New Jerusalem. Details of the new city are also carefully outlined: "And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: […] twelve thousand furlongs."[3] In other words, the origin of the very term is just as much about the dramatic demise of the old as it is with the emergence of the new, the latter element often bypassed in numerous

[1] *Fight Club*, directed by David Fincher (Linson Films/Fox 2000/Regency Enterprises, 1999).
[2] Rev. 18:21.
[3] Rev. 21:16.

textual or cinematic representations whose main emphasis is on the spectacular nature of the catastrophe itself.

Of course, the very act of revealing the new order is inseparably connected with the violent decomposition of the old one and this irreducible link between destruction and creation seems to constitute the essence of the apocalyptic scenario. As such, it not only often combines the religious with the secular, but also, if not in the first place, points to a newly created order built on the ashes of the previous regime. To summon the urban-biblical allegory once again, apocalypse narrates a violent socio-philosophical reconfiguration, constantly oscillating between Babylon and New Jerusalem.

Naturally, it is not only the literal representations of *apocalypse-as-destruction* that constitute the concept's cultural attractiveness. Once approached as—to repeat the already-mentioned definition—the (usually) violent decomposition of the old and the (usually) dramatic revelation of the new, does apocalypse reveal its full cultural significance. And if, instead of merely celebrating demise, we concentrate on the emergence of the new conceptual horizon, we might notice that apocalypse, seen in philosophical terms, appears surprisingly close to a whole series of socio-cultural phenomena associated with various manifestations of postmodernism.

Much as it is not the purpose of this chapter to even briefly characterise the postmodern condition and its intricate relationships with the preceding culture of Modernity, suffice to mention that one of the most easily detectable features of postmodern reality goes along the lines of media and cyber technologies, more and more effectively contouring the territory of our daily practices and cognitive horizons alike. Again, though immediately associated with the avalanche of techno-gadgetry from mobile phones to the onboard cameras of our vehicles, the real importance of this peculiar cyber-ubiquity lies at the intersection of technology and consumerism, the latter virtually impossible without its technological foundation. But the merger of technology and consumer culture does more than just outline the borders of our lifestyles.

"The whole life of those societies in which modern conditions of production prevail presents itself as an immense accumulation of spectacles. All that once was directly lived has become mere representation,"[4] reads the thesis of one of Guy Debord's famous 1967 diagnoses of consumer society which he referred to as The Society of the Spectacle. Though hardly ever addressing things directly, Debord is in no doubt that the post-war

[4] Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (New York: Zone Books, 2006), 12.

technological acceleration embodied by media culture is largely responsible for producing what he calls the Spectacle: "In all its specific manifestations – news or propaganda, advertising or the actual consumption of entertainment the spectacle epitomizes the prevailing model of social life."[5]

Though of clearly political character, at least as approached today—often in view of the 1968 social protests—Debord's ideas nevertheless reveal an apocalyptic transformation in the fabric of late-capitalist reality. Resting on the clear-cut binarity between "[a]ll that once was directly lived" and the sphere of "mere representation," the Spectacle appears to emerge as the apocalyptic force of change in the Western perception of the real, which is no longer informed by materiality of experience. Instead, it is mediated by what Debord refers to as "the autonomous image,"[6] whose collections, "detached from every aspect of life merge into a common stream, and the former unity of life is lost forever."[7]

Naturally, contemplating Debord's ideas today, we may formulate a number of critical responses the majority of which would probably revolve around a rather pastoral vision of pre-consumerist life which he idealistically describes in terms of life "directly lived," or pointing to "the former unity of life." But it is difficult not to notice that the discourse of separation between reality and its supposedly autonomous representation narrates a disturbing crack in the fabric of the real: "[The Spectacle] is not something added to the real world, not a decorative element, so to speak. On the contrary, it is the very heart of society's real unreality."[8]

Of all those inspired by Debord's uneasy recognition that under the banner of excessive consumerism reality and various modes of its representation seem to be going their separate ways, Jean Baudrillard appears to be the most popular, if not the most notorious, especially in light of his theory of simulation. Almost in equal terms praised for the metaphorical accuracy of his socio-philosophical analyses and condemned for his controversial cultural diagnoses, Baudrillard seems to follow the line of distrust towards the real adopted by Debord. Of course, to call Baudrillard Debord's disciple would probably be an exaggeration and in fact provoke serious denial by both thinkers (Debord was actually younger than Baudrillard), but as Scott Bukatman has aptly noticed, "[t]he passage from Debord's 'spectacle' to Baudrillard's 'simulation' is precisely a shift

[5] Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*, 13.
[6] Ibid. 12.
[7] Ibid. 12.
[8] Ibid. 13.

from a state which constructs the spectacle, to a spectacle which now constructs the state."[9]

In other words, we may observe a surprisingly consistent evolution between two of the key concepts characterising the contemporary Western condition, that of "the spectacle" and of "simulation" which Baudrillard later famously developed into "simulacrum" and a number of related concepts, notably that of the hyper-real void. True, looking at both Debord's and Baudrillard's ideas one has to acknowledge the politically radical and sometimes even anarchistic tone of Debord's proclamations, and the much more metaphorical resonance of Baudrillard's observations. But what they both share is a disturbing suspicion that the sense of reality based on an uninterrupted belief in the power of Reason and going back to the Enlightenment Project is losing its relevance when confronted with the overwhelming merger of consumerist rituals and the power of media technology.

Clearly, to offer even a brief account of the philosophical foundations of the Enlightenment Project lies far beyond the scope of this chapter. Still, to provide a philosophical background for our considerations we may recall the basic premises of Cartesian philosophy which introduce conceptual foundations for the notion of Reason forming in turn one of the baselines not only for the Enlightenment period *per se* but for the whole of Modernity. To cut a long story very short, for Descartes the self-conscious component of the subject, *res cogitans*, is responsible for the uniquely human "power of judging correctly and of distinguishing the true from the false."[10] Against *res cogitants* Descartes places *res extensa*, "the extended thing," which refers to corporeality and the external world. *Res extensa* follows the laws of physics or mechanics but as such is incapable of self-consciousness and represents the material component of existence. In other words, Descartes inaugurates a cognitive perspective based on a series of clear binarities between the spiritual and the mechanical, and, by extension, between the original and the artificial. His philosophical obsession with binarities does not end, however, at the division of human cognitive potential. In practical terms, the human subject is defined by his or her (though in Descartes' case it was mostly "his") ability to tell the true

[9] Scott Bukatman, *Terminal Identity. The Virtual Subject in Postmodern Science-Fiction* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 68-69.

[10] Rene Descartes, *A Discourse on the Method of Correctly Conducting One's Reason and Seeking Truth in the Sciences*, trans. Ian Maclean (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 5.

from the false and discarding as false "anything that was no more than plausible."[11]

The tone of human superiority reverberates throughout Descartes' *Discourse* and, by extension, throughout the ensuing rhetoric of Western progress and development. It is the superiority over the natural environment discreetly supported by the dominance of Western culture over non-Western societies and, most importantly, by the advantage of the human over the technological. The latter is aptly illustrated by Descartes himself when he contemplates the possibility of creating "clever" machines which he immediately rejects as ridiculous. Descartes explains:

> For we can well conceive of a machine made in such a way that it emits words, and even utters them about bodily actions which bring about some corresponding change in its organs […]; but it is not conceivable that it should put these words in different orders to correspond to the meaning of things said in its presence, as even the most dull-witted of men can do.[12]

Of course, we can hardly blame Descartes for not predicting the late 20th century developments of electronics, cybernetics, media and information technologies or even for not foreseeing the late 19th century industrial acceleration; after all Descartes formulated the premises of his philosophy in the first half of the 17th century. But from today's perspective, it is difficult not to notice that when considering the human relationship with technology, Descartes' fallacy seems to revolve around what Mark Hansen refers to as a *machine reduction of technology*, a desperately Modern conviction that all technological devices are ultimately bound to be perceived (and represented) as machines and as such fulfil the sole purpose of their existence. And this purpose is simple: to serve humans and make their lives better, safer or more comfortable, but under no circumstances be capable of challenging human superiority over the inanimate. As Hansen puts it, traditional

> [...] discourses constrain technology to the figure of the machine–a static and mechanical figure that is by nature secondary and posterior to the primary and constitutive movement of thought and to whose sway, consequently, it can pose no threat.[13]

---

[11] Descartes, *A Discourse on the Method of Correctly Conducting One's Reason and Seeking Truth in the Sciences*, 10.
[12] Descartes, 46.
[13] Mark Hansen, *Embodying Technesis. Technology Beyond Writing* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 8.

Leaping again into the late 20th century, it seems rather undisputable that the neat Cartesian picture of clear-cut divisions into the human and the technological, supported by the hitherto uninterrupted belief in the power of Reason, is no longer to be approached uncritically. From medical interventions into human corporeality to our everyday dependence on private communication devices to the ubiquity and ever-presence of media culture encompassing social mythology, advertising, politics, and entertainment, to complex and invisible systems of data circulation, machines have long ceased to be tools in the traditional sense of the word. Instead, they have opened up multiple spaces which we not only use for communication, self-identification or various forms of social exchange, but which, to quote Mark Hansen again, allow "for the existence of the social as such."[14] J.G. Ballard, one of the most prolific prophets of the technological milieu, in his famous introduction to *Crash*, a techno-erotic novel contemplating the auto-destructive dimension of technology, put it even more aptly: "[s]cience and technology multiply around us. To an increasing extent they dictate the languages in which we speak and think. Either we use those languages, or we remain mute."[15]

Obviously, this particular technological rite of passage whose final stage coincides with the emergence of post-industrial society, does not remain untouched by philosophical reflection, let alone its inspiration for cinematic and literary culture, suffice to mention the abundance of apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic representations, from Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* to *The Matrix* franchise, to the AMC channel's *The Walking Dead*. Still, much as the popular visions seem to explore the visual aspect of the end, philosophical contemplations travel around the whole collection of apocalyptic contexts perhaps best summarized by Fredric Jameson's observation,

> [...] that something has changed, that things are different, that we have gone through a transformation of the life world which is somehow decisive but incomparable with the older convulsions of modernization and industrialization, less perceptible and dramatic, somehow, but more permanent precisely because more thoroughgoing and all-pervasive.[16]

---

[14] Ibid. 3.

[15] J. G. Ballard, "Introduction to *Crash*," *Re/Search* 8/9 (1984), 96-97. http://www.ballardian.com/introduction-to-crash

[16] Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), xxi.

Naturally, to even briefly describe all of the potential applications of apocalypse to contemporary cultural discourses would deserve a separate chapter; suffice, however, to highlight some of its crucial contexts in contemporary cultural theory. From Donna Haraway's cyber-feminist appropriation of the intricate merger between technology and femininity to various post-structuralist claims announcing the end of theory and/or the subject, to post-Marxist analyses of the inescapably ideological foundations of reality, to the emergence of post-humanist studies, it is difficult not to identify a pervasive sense of the end that permeates the contemporary cultural landscape, subtly indicated by the popularity of the prefix *post-* in a variety, if not the majority, of contemporary discourses.

Zombie Culture

In the context of technologically-inspired metamorphoses of late capitalist scenery and their apocalyptic significance at least two socio-cultural phenomena seem worthy of deeper evaluation. Even a casual look at the contemporary landscape of cultural representations would probably strike the observer as desperately repetitive, especially with regard to visual culture. The popularity of sequels, prequels, and remakes, the ongoing exchanges between film, television and computer games—although also explainable through commercial requirements—might as well be characterised in much more apocalyptic terms as signifying the end of cultural imagination. And yet, instead of mourning mankind's arrested creativity, we face the industrial-scale re-production of past artefacts, modified, updated, linked with one another through a series of intertextual connections but nevertheless incapable of severing their own roots and forever looking backwards into their own histories, negotiating their pasts and re-living their original plots, often to the point of self-parody.

Following Jean Baudrillard's observation concerning the reversal of historical continuity under the regime of media ubiquity, the basic quality of the aforementioned visual products is their orientation towards the past, somehow illustrating the process of history making "a turn in the opposite direction,"[17] and thus bringing us "imperceptibly closer […] to its starting point."[18] In his typical manner, Baudrillard goes even further, metaphorically crossing the "starting point" of recorded history and entering the realm of

[17] Jean Baudrillard, "The Reversal of History," in *The Illusion of the End*, trans. Chris Turner (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 10.
[18] Ibid. 10.

cultural archaeology. Baudrillard identifies a new cultural dominant at work: the obsessive digging out of past stories and injecting them with secondary lives in an endless cycle of artificial resurrection. This dominant is motivated by some sort of a collectively unconscious urge not to let anything once produced be wasted or discarded in the "dustbins of history."[19] Recycled artefacts, just like recycled water, plastic or paper come back in a disguise of novelty only to be immediately replaced by their identical successors, all following the supposedly pro-environmental logic of careful waste management: "[n]othing disappears, nothing must disappear: that is the watchword of this new therapeutic overzealousness, the overzealousness of memory and archaeology."[20]

In contemporary media culture, the phenomenon of artificial resurrection of long dead entities inevitably brings about a morbid association with the figure of the zombie – a creature at the same time dead and strangely alive whose mortal bite spreads the disease of artificial existence all around. Early zombies from George Romero's films bothered to rise from the graves or at least hang around cemeteries. Today the hastened transformation takes place just seconds after one's death subtly implying that in a period of accelerated cultural production there is no time for ancient rituals like proper burials or funerals. But the popularity of the zombie genre—suffice to recall probably hundreds of films and television shows since Romero's defining 1968 film *Night of the Living Dead*—delivers in fact a bitter self-reflective comment on the general condition of popular culture, which seems to be exploring its own exhaustion and repetitiveness, in other words, its own end.

For the sake of interpretive accuracy one should nevertheless probably point to the fact that the most popular strategy of decoding zombies in terms of their cultural significance is along the lines of uncontrolled consumerism. As Kyle William Bishop notices in his *American Zombie Gothic*, "the zombies represent the existing horrors of a society brainwashed by the capitalistic need to consume."[21] Deprived of all other human desires, the need to devour is stronger than death, turning a zombie into "a new monster for a New World," which allows it to "remain relevant in a postindustrial, cyberspace era."[22]

---

[19] Jean Baudrillard, "The Event Strike," in *The Illusion of the End*, trans. Chris Turner (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 26.
[20] Jean Baudrillard, "The Dance of the Fossils," in *The Illusion of the End*, trans. Chris Turner (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 72.
[21] Kyle William Bishop, *American Zombie Gothic* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2010), 140.
[22] Bishop, 32.

But the zombie figure clearly stands for much more than just a repulsive vision of a reanimated corpse doomed by the irreducible urge to consume. If one tried to decode the zombie figure through a singular metaphor, one could probably choose the one of *excess*, represented by extreme consumption followed by disproportionate multiplication. Unable to quench their deadly thirst, zombies hardly ever appear alone: their virus-like power to multiply through contamination probably forms their bigger strength. Zombies stand for—and at the same time ridicule—our obsessive desire for immortality which can only be reached through death and closure of life. Motivated by pure consumption they are at the same time a caricature of our obsessions with personal beauty and physical perfection pointing to a bitter conclusion that immortality is simply ugly.

And it is precisely this corporeal ugliness of reanimation that contemporary cultural zombies try to conceal. Improved in terms of computer processing, smoother plots and better special effects, the sequels, prequels and remakes flooding our screens carefully hide their zombie origin. Steven Soderbergh's 2007 crime comedy *Ocean's Thirteen* following the 2004 *Ocean's Twelve* which in turn followed the 2001 *Ocean's Eleven*, the last film in fact a remake of Lewis Milestone's 1960 movie of the same title, provides just one of the numerous examples of the process in question. But the zombie product phenomenon is by no means restricted to cinematic culture. The recent popularity of what is often referred to as retro design seems to permeate a number of social spheres not immediately connected with visual culture, although usually linked to consumerist rituals of self-identification. Car manufacturers are clearly a case in point here: Mini Cooper, Volkswagen Beetle, Fiat 500 have all been resurrected from the reservoir of Europe's motoring history, and thus have joined the phase of recycled immortality.

Still, the ubiquity of revived corpses, whether populating our streets or our screens, does not end with the application of recycling paradigms to social reality. Coming back for a moment to the previous concepts of spectacle and simulation, seen as a form of social space of communication, mythology, self-reflection and self-identification, we may clearly notice that the sphere of representation has conquered other areas of social existence. Of these, the most important for our considerations is the redefined concept of history, being the second of the previously mentioned consequences of the ever-presence of consumerist technologies.

Death and Resurrection of History

In the course of Western cultural development the end of history has been declared more than once and not only in the context of the apocalyptic substitution of the real by the combined forces of the spectacle and the simulacrum. Francis Fukuyama sees the end of historical continuity in post-Marxist terms, as an interrupted development of social systems rather than as the sudden absence of events of historical significance. For Fukuyama, the end of history is in fact caused by the ultimate stage which this very history has reached, namely Western liberal democracy. Though openly critical of some of the realities of contemporary liberalism Fukuyama, nevertheless, sees it as the final phase of Western telos which, contrary to previous social systems, does not need to be replaced by any other form of social organization for the simple lack of alternatives. Fukuyama says:

> What we may be witnessing is […] the end of history as such: that is, the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government. This is not to say that there will no longer be events […], for the victory of liberalism has occurred primarily in the realm of ideas or consciousness and is as yet incomplete in the real or material world. But there are powerful reasons for believing that it is the ideal that will govern the material world in the long run.[23]

Fukuyama, clearly inspired by the post-Marxist conceptual framework, seems in fact to imply something of an apocalyptic significance. The victory of Western liberalism, though happening without any spectacular catastrophe of biblical proportions, reveals the new and final order of Western existence, paradoxically a-historical though not deprived of events; events, which nevertheless are incapable of shaking Western foundations. And again, if we adopt Marxist logic here—promoting the assumption that it is the social form of "being" that shapes individual "consciousness"—then the present social order is at the same time the last one we are likely to experience. In other words, no new "man" will ever be created leaving us with the ambiguous task of being the last people on earth, at least in ideological terms. This is because if social ideologies are capable of producing particular forms of social consciousness then, with a

[23] Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History?" *The National Interest,* Summer 1989. http://www.wesjones.com/eoh.htm. Accessed June 10, 2015

lack of viable ideological alternatives, a new type of social consciousness is unlikely to ever appear.

In an interesting opposition to Fukuyama's theory, Jean Baudrillard also contemplates the end of history, although from a rather different angle. For him, the apocalyptic redefinition of history lies in its relocation into the sphere of simulation, "the peripheral void of the media."[24] The first victim of this relocation is the event itself, which, after having been sucked into the void and turned into a mediated sign, loses its potential significance in the real world and, as Baudrillard puts it, goes on strike: "[t]he prodigious event, the event which […] creates its own stage and its own dramatic effect, no longer exists. […] Events now have no more significance than their […] programming and their broadcasting."[25]

Drawing from a number of real-life events and interpreting them along the lines of the "event strike" Baudrillard identifies their "refusal to signify anything,"[26] and the denial of their own signifieds. The most notorious example would be his 1991 collection of essays called *The Gulf War Did Not Take Place*.[27] In it, he provocatively declares that because of controlled media coverage promoting propagandist images of, for instance, onboard cameras of attacking jet-fighters carefully avoiding civilian losses, the Western mind appropriated the war pretty much in cinematic terms, almost as a war movie in the process of "[e]xchanging war for the signs of war."[28]

But this new type of event, one turned into a momentary spectacle, is never meant to signify anything for yet another reason. Its ultimate purpose is simply to be forgotten as soon as possible in order to make room for its successor; equally dramatic and equally insignificant, bathing momentarily in the glory of breaking news rhetoric and then disappearing into the abyss of oblivion. "Forgetting," explains Baudrillard, "is built into the event itself in the profusion of information and details,"[29] paradoxically protecting the human mind from information overload. In fact, the substitution of an event by its mediated copy seems to be one of

---

[24] Jean Baudrillard, "The Ascent of the Vacuum towards the Periphery," In *The Illusion of the End*, trans. Chris Turner (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 19.
[25] Baudrillard, "The Event Strike," 21.
[26] Baudrillard, "The Event Strike," 21.
[27] Jean Baudrillard, *The Gulf War Did not Take Place*, trans. Paul Patton (Bloomington, IN.: Indiana University Press, 1995).
[28] Jean Baudrillard, "The Illusion of War," in *The Illusion of the End*, trans. Chris Turner (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 62.
[29] Baudrillard, "The Illusion of War," 63.

the most effective methods of institutionalized oblivion releasing the subject from the moral obligation to contemplate the event and its possible consequences by delegating it to the infinite social sphere which Baudrillard characterises as "a synthetic memory which serves as our primal reference, our founding myth."[30]

In other words, just as for Fukuyama the end of history was caused by the victory of Western liberalism supported by globalized consumerism, for Baudrillard history not so much ended but stopped. Historic events are being replaced by their artificial and self-reproducing equivalents relocated from the nostalgic sphere of the real into the "vanishing point – the peripheral void of the media."[31] For the sake of accuracy, however, we should notice that Baudrillard's point of reference coincides with the fall of the Berlin Wall which he saw as the last event of the old type, that is, an event bearing real consequences, in this case the disappearance of the division into the free-market prosperous West and the late-communist totalitarian East. This is where Baudrillard and Fukuyama seem to agree: the latter also locates the beginning of the end of history in the Berlin Wall collapse signifying the victory of Western globalized liberalism. Still, Baudrillard modified his views after the attacks of 9/11, pointing to the fact that just as in 1989 the binarity between the liberal West and the Eastern Bloc began to disappear, in 2001 it was again reanimated. This time however, it was the binarity between the "new" West (including former central European countries) and the potentially irrational, terrorism-prone and fundamentalist East.

Yet even though the collapse of the WTC Towers signifies the end of the "event strike," and, by extension, a return of meaningful historical continuity, one might still doubt whether in the long run the Western attitude towards history as a collection of consequential events will be seriously redefined. This is because what permeates Baudrillard's view on this matter is a deep conviction of Western passivity framed by mediated visions of reality even when confronted with the horrors of history. In his typical manner, he sees this passivity as always having the upper hand over even the most disturbing and potentially influential events whose real significance is unable to break through the thick wall of mediated events, prominent and trivial alike.

* * *

[30] Baudrillard, "The Event Strike," 23.
[31] Baudrillard, "The Ascent of the Vacuum towards the Periphery," 19.

Are the zombie products flooding our experiential horizon, combined with a redefined vision of history replaced by its own simulacrum, enough to qualify our cultural milieu as an apocalyptic one? If we refer to the definition of apocalypse mentioned at the onset of this chapter, as the decomposition of the old and the revelation of the new, the answer would have to be yes. And a lot seems at stake to confirm this claim. For most members of contemporary Western society, hardly a day goes by without being immersed in the technological setting, regardless of whether we communicate with others, perform habitual duties at work, drive our cars, entertain ourselves, or contemplate our political situation trying to weave the fabric of our own history out of the breaking news horizon whose sensationalist rhetoric is often the only one we are familiar with. But, again, apocalypse also signifies *revelation*, which means that at least two possible approaches are at hand. One approach is to mourn the long gone sense of reality in a nostalgic recollection of what Guy Debord called "the former unity of life." The other approach, perhaps a little more constructive, is to concentrate on the revelatory potential of our cultural zeitgeist, which may at least increase our awareness of our own moment in history, however, redefined or transitional. In any case, it seems barely possible to turn a blind eye on the formative power of our cultural setting composed of globalized consumerism, technological ubiquity and the ever-present media culture, by which, to quote one of *The Walking Dead* series characters, "we are all infected."[32]

Bibliography

Ballard, J. G. "Introduction to *Crash*." *Re/Search*, 8/9 (1984). http://www.ballardian.com/introduction-to-crash

Baudrillard, Jean "The Ascent of the Vacuum towards the Periphery." In *The Illusion of the End*, translated by Chris Turner, 14-20. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994.

—. "The Dance of the Fossils." In *The Illusion of the End*, translated by Chris Turner, 72-77. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994.

—. "The Event Strike." In *The Illusion of the End*, translated by Chris Turner, 21-27. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994.

—. "The Illusion of War." In *The Illusion of the End*, translated by Chris Turner, 62-65. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994.

[32] *The Walking Dead*, season 2, episode 13, "Beside the Dying Fire," directed by Ernest Dickerson (AMC, 2012).

—. "The Reversal of History." In *The Illusion of the End*, translated by Chris Turner, 10-13. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994.
—. *The Gulf War Did not Take Place*. Translated by Paul Patton. Bloomington, IN.: Indiana University Press, 1995.
Bishop, Kyle William. *American Zombie Gothic*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2010.
Bukatman, Scott. *Terminal Identity. The Virtual Subject in Postmodern Science-Fiction*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1993.
Debord, Guy. *The Society of the Spectacle*. Translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith. New York: Zone Books, 2006.
Descartes, Rene. *A Discourse on the Method of Correctly Conducting One's Reason and Seeking Truth in the Sciences*. Translated by Ian Maclean. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.
Fight Club, directed by David Fincher. Linson Films/Fox 2000/Regency Enterprises, 1999).
Fukuyama, Francis. "The End of History?" *The National Interest,* Summer 1989. http://www.wesjones.com/eoh.htm. Accessed June 10, 2015
Hansen, Mark. *Embodying Technesis. Technology Beyond Writing*. Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2000.
Jameson, Fredric. *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1999.
The Walking Dead, season 2, episode 13, "Beside the Dying Fire," directed by Ernest Dickerson (AMC, 2012).

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

IRISH LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY: REVITALIZATION AND PROTECTION

ANNA SLATINSKÁ, JANA PECNIKOVÁ

Introduction

The present chapter is devoted to the topic of the Irish language in relation to Irish identity in the modern world, taking into account crucial aspects of the language's revitalization and protection. The focus is predominantly on particular ways of achieving the ambitious goal of societal bilingualism in Ireland in the long term. The idea that language and identity are interrelated is the leitmotif of this chapter. Approaching the issue from socio-linguistic and ethnographic perspectives, the revitalization of the Irish language might trigger the interest of the general public, assuming that language is an invaluable part of spiritual, non-material culture. We suppose that the death of the Irish language would be a serious loss not only in the sphere of Ireland's cultural and national heritage, but also in the wider European sphere.

The acquisition and use of a minority language is obviously a key element in any language's revitalization process. The authors stress the significant position of the Irish language not only in Irish society, but also in a worldwide perspective, taking into account the added value generated by all languages, not omitting minority and lesser-used languages which create an integral part of wider European identity.

The topic of linguistic and ethnic revitalization is intensely debated nowadays in all parts of Europe. Certain efforts have recently been made to reverse the process of "the death of language" and thereby to prevent the assimilation and/or extinction of the majority of the world's languages. These efforts can be traced in different regions of the world, not only in the European context. On the one hand we can observe various globalizing and unifying tendencies, while on the other we can also notice considerable

interest in the preservation and cultivation of specific, localized phenomena connected with minority languages threatened with extinction.

Linguistic and cultural diversity is one of the core elements on which "European" identity is built. Therefore, we stress the importance of European language policy in terms of the need to protect minority, regional and lesser-used languages. The Irish language is the first national and official language of the Republic of Ireland, whereas the English language is defined as its second official language, according to the Irish Constitution. Although the majority of people in the Republic of Ireland speak only English, Irish (or Irish Gaelic) is arguably one of the most important elements of Irish national and cultural identity despite its minority position in the public sphere and in daily life.

It is very difficult to measure in a quantitative way the extent to which people value any given language. It is the same with identity. Language is viewed as a part of its users' identity, and both language and identity evolve in time. They are not static but fluid, undergoing changes in time. The topic of language and identity is approached in an interdisciplinary way.

It is assumed that language, culture and identity are interrelated. Therefore, the loss of any language could have serious consequences on the preservation of an original culture, and vice versa. Although the public is hugely polarized in its views on what would happen if a minority language died out one day, it must be supposed that it is very important to pay attention to the revitalization of any minority or lesser-used languages in view of the fact that other European languages might face a similar problem at some stage in the future. In the following sections, the emphasis is on some aspects of why language and identity are intertwined, and on specific ways of revitalizing the Irish language.

1. The Present State of Affairs

One might assume that the more people are exposed to Irish Gaelic through the medium of various Irish-language services and cultural activities, the more viable and vivid their participation in Gaelic ethno-culture will be. As has been found, economic support for the *Gaeltacht* (the Irish-speaking area predominantly in the west of Ireland) plays a crucial role in language revitalization. In addition to this, attention should be paid to the dissemination of information about the benefits of bilingualism. It is also suggested that families should be supported in bringing up their children through the medium of Irish, in view of the fact that they can play a huge role in preserving the language and reversing the

language shift. In many Irish-speaking communities there is a tendency to prefer English as the language of communication nowadays. Thus, the role of the family as well as of educational institutions is of utmost importance in the case of the intergenerational transmission of Irish. A successful transfer of language habits depends, however, on a positive attitude and on a more enthusiastic approach to the establishment of the Irish language, or more realistically of bilingual households in view of the fact that monolingual speakers exist no more (with the exception of a tiny percentage of children brought up solely through the medium of Irish).

Currently, the Irish language is being revitalized as a unique cultural element. There are many organizations which support language revitalization, among them *Conradh na Gaelige, Foras na Gaelige, Údarás na Gaeltachta, the National University of Ireland Galway, and the Irish Language Theatre.* All the above organizations have the use of the Irish language in their agenda and Irish language revitalization is one of their key goals.

The Irish language was declared one of the official working languages of the European Union in 2007, generating new working positions for prospective translators, interpreters, and teachers. The Irish language is a compulsory subject in mainstream schools as well as being a language of instruction within Irish-language middle schools (*gaelscoileanna*). Currently, there are many students studying the Irish Language, Irish Studies or Celtic Studies at universities in Ireland and abroad, which is also a sign of interest in the language. The language itself has gained popularity and prestige in comparison with an earlier period when it was considered to be of inferior status.

2. Methodology

The decision to use any particular language can, in the case of a minority language, be the democratic choice of every individual, simultaneously being an expression of that individual's identity. Language, in this context, is thus viewed as the very condition of an individual's identity. The interrelation of language and identity can therefore be examined from different perspectives (linguistic, sociolinguistic, psychological, and historical).

The aim of this chapter is to present the information gathered through the medium of field research realized in the City of Galway, within the National University of Ireland (abbreviated as NUIG), as well as outside the city, accentuating the cardinal aims and priorities of the officially adopted *20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030* and the

Official Languages Act, which came into force in 2003, on the current state and position of the Irish language in the Republic of Ireland, focusing in a more detailed way on how the language positions itself within the cultural identity of the Irish. Furthermore, we focus on possible techniques for revitalizing and protecting the language for future generations. All the data acquired was gained using the techniques of qualitative research, through the medium of semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and direct and indirect observations realized during a short-term stay in the Republic of Ireland.

The field research aimed at uncovering both the real state of the Irish language today and the attitudes of people towards language revitalization and towards different issues concerning the probability of Irish language survival in the future.

3. Language and Identity

Each language is obviously an invaluable element in terms of national cultural heritage. Language is therefore a significant cultural and social construct. Language usage can generate feelings of pride, but it can also cause the emergence of fear ("the fear factor"), uncertainty and shame, especially in the case of minority or lesser-used languages. They were regarded in the past as inferior languages spoken by backwards or rural people in comparison to the dominant language, the language of "progress". "Language symbolizes who we are and where we belong, it is a sign of affiliation to ethnic community (language as an ethnosignificant element) although the ideal of one language and one state cannot be realized anymore[1]."

Simultaneously, language intertwines with the collective awareness (the historical awareness) of a given community. Cultural groups can be defined by language, which is believed to be the key aspect of human capital. People tend to construct their identities through the semiotic character of language, taking into account the communicative and identificational performance of identity following the fundamental categorization principle ("us versus the others").

Language is one of the nodal cultural expressions of individuality. It enables the transfer of memories and experience to play a pivotal role for

[1] Slavomír Ondrejovič – Viktor Krupa. *My a tí druhí v modernej spoločnosti. (*Bratislava: SAV, 2009), 113

future generations. Language has the power to unite and divide. According to Bilovesky[2]:

> Language is a cultural product of man's having the ability to cultivate human beings. Human language develops together with man and the cultural environment in which it exists. Language is very tightly connected with the culture of its bearer.

In addition, language plays a key role in terms of social interaction although this is more difficult with minority, regional and lesser-used languages. "Languages reflect the culture and environment of those who use them in everyday communication. Languages react and adapt to the needs of the culture. Through the medium of language we observe the world."[3] A significant part of culture is reflected in the language. Thanks to language use we also connect with the culture of the relevant cultural environment.

The studies mentioned above include frequent references to the fact of language acting as a determinant of social stature in terms of social class. Individuals speaking the Irish language in Ireland were seen in the past as backward oriented. The Irish language can, however, be described today as a phenomenon of middle-class culture concerning Irish language schools (*gaelscoileanna*). Language as a part of culture reflects the perception of the world by its speakers. Language embodies, interprets, and constitutes the world. Language creates a language worldview reflected in the relevant culture on the basis of its own narration, and thus the historical consciousness of the inhabitants of the given states emerges (also through the medium of school history).

As the previous comments show, language can be perceived as a key aspect of cultural and national identity. For Schröder[4], language creates a fertile ground for the identification of the individual with the community. Identity expressed through language can be manifested through the means of language communication which anticipates social interaction, maintains interpersonal relationships and creates a feeling of togetherness, solidarity

---

[2] Vladimír Biloveský. Does Integrating Europe Need Polylingualism and Multiculturalism? In: *European Researcher.*2012, (Vol. 42, no. 2-3, 455-461), 120.
[3] Robert F. Murphy, *Úvod do kulturní a sociální antropologie*. (Praha: Slon, 1997), 39.
[4] Konrad Schröder et al. *What is Europe? Aspects of European Cultural Diversity*. (London: Routledge, 1995), 84.

and belonging. In the words of Ripka[5], national language plays invaluable part in preservation and creation of national and cultural identity.

Nowadays, the issue of language and identity is a central issue. One reason may be the negative prognosis concerning the very possible extinction of the majority of the world's languages in the future. "It is estimated that until [sic] 2050 there will be approximately 1,000 living languages in the world. More than 80% of [those] languages are threatened with extinction."[6]

In connection with the process of preventing the death of languages we should also be more aware of the possibility of the revitalization of minority languages. Languages are conceived of as a part of the spiritual cultural heritage of mankind, which is perceived by Bitušíková[7] as a fundamental element supporting and enriching a cultural identity. In a similar way, the Irish language is also viewed as one of the key aspects of the cultural and national identity of the Irish. It is a unique phenomenon which could be used very productively in the future in the sphere of cultural tourism. There are many students nowadays studying the Irish language and having very clear ambitions linked to their future employability through the medium of the Irish language. This gives any minority language hope for a better future and is a prerequisite to its preservation. For most people, it is a challenge to learn the Irish language and to use it within the family. Enthusiasm to make the effort to protect and use the language in daily life is therefore needed in order to preserve the language for future generations.

Nowadays, a new relationship between language and identity in the context of postnationalism can be observed. There is a new element present between them – globalization, or, alternatively, resistance to globalization. In the Irish context we can see this resistance to globalization in terms of consolidated support for the Irish language in different spheres of life.

On the one hand, globalizing tendencies enrich diversity, but on the other hand, they are also catalysts of uniformity and are viewed as a threat to the existence of small or less dominant cultures or languages. In this case, the encroachment of English in the *Gaeltacht* and the dominance of English in the sphere of education, economics and politics threaten local

[5] Ivor Ripka. *Jazyk ako fenomén kultúry.* (Bratislava: Jazykovedný ústav Ľudovíta Štúra, 2000), 44.
[6] Leoš Šatava. *Etnicita a jazyk*. (Trnava: Tribun EU, 2013), 38.
[7] Alexandra Bitušíková. *Kultúrna a sociálna diverzita na Slovensku. Štúdie, dokumenty, materiály I. (*Banská Bystrica: UMB, 2007), 45.

languages[8]. However, there exists another view of globalization not as a counterproductive element for national identities and cultures, which are considered to have a unique and specific place in the mosaics of global identity. Exogenous changes can be then reinterpreted and transformed in the local culture in terms of global and local coexistence.

We view the Irish language as an important marker in the context of Irish cultural identity. Irish Gaelic today performs more a symbolic than an instrumental role. Although official language policy is focused on Irish language revitalization, the fact is that the perception of the language as a mere symbol prevails among the predominantly Anglophone inhabitants. Even so, it would be good to think that investments put into the Irish language revitalization can be of benefit in the sphere of cultural identity enhancement. Any effort dedicated to language revitalization in the context of its original culture and autochthonous language maintenance is therefore to be seen as worthwhile.

4. Languages as Unique Elements of European Diversity

The European Union is a kaleidoscope of languages, nationalities, cultures and local identities united in diversity. It has never desired to create a monolithic culture based on one single expression of identity related to one dominant language. "Support for national and local languages can be a successful alternative to western Anglocentrism in order to foster centripetal tendencies to support non-dominant languages[9]."

The maintenance of linguistic diversity is also of crucial importance, considering the fact that approximately 3,000 languages are now spoken around the world although the precise number is difficult to obtain. Moreover, without support for regional and minority languages, this heritage could have been lost forever. Several activities were therefore undertaken and documents adopted in order to foster and officially support the cultivation and preservation of lesser-used languages.

Furthermore, it could seem unenlightened and not in accordance with the main principles of the EU to concentrate on the adoption of only a few core European languages as they could then marginalize other languages. Nowadays, the idea of one European language that would fit all occasions is often discussed. Schröder[10] concurrently views the introduction of one

[8] Simon Feeney et al. Measuring Attitudes to National Identity and Nation-Building in Papua New Guinea. In: *Political Science*. (Vol. 64, no. 2 2012, 121-144), 27

[9] Ondrejovič – Krupa, *My a tí druhí v modernej spoločnosti,* 127.

[10] Schröder, *What is Europe?* 115.

uniform language as a utopian dream because it could bring about the possible end of a Europe "united in diversity". In his view, the post-Babel world should not be viewed as a failure, but on the contrary, as a huge treasure. Linguistic diversity should be viewed as a gift to humanity. This is also connected with the idea of nationhood, which will not be lost in the decades to come, but will probably continue to gain importance. Moreover, national languages are considered manifestations of national cultural traditions.

However, it is important to avoid the failures of the past concerning the ideology of Social Darwinism. The main aim of such ideology was to create a homogenous environment and to engage in resettlement policies which repudiated members of minority communities who spoke a language other than the dominant one. Furthermore, today it is viewed as a myth that a single language constitutes a guarantee of peace and mutual understanding. Such a linguistic programme was carried out in the 19th and 20th centuries by large empires which pursued and realized their aims through imperial or colonization policies aimed at other countries´ subjugation[11].

According to Grindheim and Lohndal,[12] language as a crucial part of cultural identity does not have to be an obstacle in achieving an ever-closer union in Europe. The EU can be seen as an advocate for individual languages and identities. Linguistic diversity is not only about dominant languages, but also about dialects and other regional and minority languages. According to the ´Eurobarometer Survey´ (2006), 72% of European citizens think that all languages should be treated equally, thus favouring both multiculturalism and multilingualism. As Stein Rokkan has remarked, language is only one of several expressions of identity but it is deemed the most pervasive one and an obvious factor of distinctiveness.

5. "The Death of Language" – Saving the Irish Language

Language is a crucial part of cultural, national and indeed of European identity. Language enables us to pass on experience which is also vital for future generations. With regard to linguistic diversity and protection of regional and minority languages, one should pay close attention to the topic of *"the death of language"* as cited by various authors. According to

[11] Crystal, David. *Language Death*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 23

[12]Grindheim Erik, Jan - Lohndal, Terje. Lost in Translation? European Integration and Language Diversity. In: *Perspectives on European Politics and Society*. (Routledge, Taylor & Francis, 2008, Vol. 9, No. 4, 451-465), 459.

Crystal[13], languages can be classified into several groups according to the number of their speakers and thus their future viability. They are, therefore, divided into "viable languages", "viable but small", "endangered languages", "nearly extinct languages", and "extinct languages" (Cornish and Manx languages). Little-used languages can be further divided into "endangered languages with few or no children learning the languages", "seriously endangered, moribund languages and extinct languages".

Language and culture are inextricably linked although they should not be equated. Language and culture can both die. The death of one of them can imply the death of the other. They are mutually interconnected and artificial preservation (in museums and other, mainly cultural, institutions) cannot substitute for the loss of a living language. This has been the case with Cornish (spoken in Cornwall, situated at the south-western tip of England) and Manx (spoken on the Isle of Man). The former became extinct in the 19th century and the latter in the 20th century (1780, 1891, 1974). It is very important to stress that both of them have been revived. In the case of Irish, "the death of language" was almost achieved by the English policy of supplanting the Irish language with English. Elizabethan officials in Ireland believed that Gaelic bred sedition.

Later, during the Victorian era, the Irish people and their native language were viewed as backward and "inferior". There were many negative stereotypes of the Irish depicting them as wild, reckless and indolent, and hostility toward them was extended to their language.

Nowadays, in contrast to the past, Irish Gaelic, the first official and national language of the Republic of Ireland, is considered to be the supreme embodiment of independent Irish-Celtic culture. However, it is threatened with extinction (belonging to a group of endangered languages) because of the rapid decline in the number of active users. Irish Gaelic, however, as well as other Celtic languages, is supported financially in terms of broader Celtic heritage enhancement, language and culture being conceived as part and parcel of an ecological approach towards society.

Nowadays, we can observe more efforts to bring minority languages to life. This is also because language is viewed as an important ethno-significant element which constitutes identity. It may be noticed that many dormant elements of national and cultural identity are being re-introduced in this period of ethnic and cultural revitalization. It is often claimed by various authors that without the Irish language Ireland would not be Ireland, just as without Finnish Finland would not be Finland. That is why, from a psychological point of view, the marginalization of autochthonous

[13] Crystal, *Language Death*, 54

languages could be considered as a threat to the quality of national existence. This can then be viewed as a stimulus for national mobilization and agitation for the protection of original (regional, minority, lesser-used) languages.

The national renaissance of the Irish language in the Republic of Ireland has become of crucial importance for the national and cultural identification of the Irish. The Irish language can be perceived as an important element in terms of cultural identity enhancement. This means that the use of the language should be transmitted to all parts of Ireland in order to not be confined only to the western coastal areas known as the *Gaeltachts*.

In the Republic of Ireland thereare many significant institutions and organizations which play a pivotal role in Irish language revitalization and normalization, for instance: *Údarás na Gaeltachta (the Gaeltacht Authority), Ealáin na Gaeltachta Teoranta, Conradh Gaelige (the Conradh League), Gaillimh le Gaelige (Galway with Irish), National University of Ireland Galway (NUIG), Foras na Gaelige, National Irish Language Theatre (An Taibhdhearc)*. Such institutions play a pivotal role in making Irish people more aware of the significance of the Irish language as an invaluable part of their cultural identity and of the history of the Irish nation. This is done through various activities ranging from Irish language courses, cultural events and festival organizations (*Seachtain na Gaelige, Fleadh na Gaillimhe, Sean-nós, etc.*), translation of international stage plays into Irish and counselling services offered to all firms and companies that wish to include Irish in their agenda, thereby creating an added value to their business. In this way, all those concerned participate actively in the promotion of the Irish language as a unique element, national and European, and part of the world's heritage in the context of distinctive identity creation.

Furthermore, the media also play an important role in minority language maintenance. In the Republic of Ireland there are TV and radio channels called *TG4* and *Raidió na Gaeltachta* respectively which try to make the language more generally popular. Their support is therefore crucial in saving the language for future generations.

6. Revitalization and Protection of the Irish Language

This chapter suggests the following recommendations for revitalizing the Irish language in the future and thus preventing the possible "death of language". These recommendations might conceivably be applied in the

context of other minority, regional or lesser-used languages in the European context.

The first recommendation is connected with the appointment of a Language Commissioner, a very important position or authority which was established in the Republic of Ireland in order to protect the rights of the linguistic minority. It is very important for any minority language to have a language commissioner, who could be described as an ombudsman for the rights of minority language users.

Another means of revitalizing the Irish language could be through the medium of new *Gaeltacht* creations (Irish-speaking areas or networks) in urban centers which could be equipped with a range of different Irish-language services (nursery schools, youth clubs, Irish-language kindergartens, religious services, sports clubs, groups for adults and for pre-school children). The establishment of such services could facilitate in the long-term communication in Irish and enhance the identity of the affected community.

Counselling and advisory services to parents (also realized by *Údarás na Gaeltachta*) in the area of Irish-language education seems to be another potentially key factor in the intergenerational transmission of language. However, the success of such activities depends hugely on the future implementation of the *20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030*. This strategy interacts with support for bilingualism, stressing the positive effects and benefits of bilingual education beginning at an early, pre-school age. The dissemination of information about how positive bilingualism, or even multilingualism, can be for children is really necessary and future parents should be made aware of such potential benefits for their children. This could happen in counselling centers for future parents or for young couples who have decided to start a family. Future parents have to be aware of all the possible benefits which raising their children in two languages, namely Irish and English, would bring to them ranging from the development of cognitive, creative and communication skills to other social and personal competences the child could easily acquire through such an elaborate and thoughtful upbringing. Awareness of the benefits of bilingualism could also involve prenatal services in hospitals, reminding future mothers that such an upbringing could undoubtedly have a positive long-term impact in broadening the child's future horizons.

Another recommendation involves the creation of a new curriculum which could be divided into two parts, the first one for native (L1) speakers, while the second would be suitable for non-native (L2) speakers. If this is the case in the future, then it will be necessary to develop new

students' and teachers' books for both language categories of students, too. It could also be beneficial to think about a division of the subject of "Irish" into two subjects, firstly the Irish language and secondly Irish literature or Irish studies. The first subject would be devoted to the development of the main receptive and productive language skills, while the second, optional, subject would be selected by those students interested in topics related to Irish literature or Irish Studies. However, this could make the Irish language optional and society is highly polarized over the question of making the Irish language optional or having it compulsory. There are certain views that making Irish optional at secondary level would not do any harm to the language, but the question remains as to how many students would choose to attend Irish language lessons if it was not mandatory. All such decisions should be discussed openly in public. It might be a good recommendation to create another subject besides Irish language lessons proper, but the realization of such a step remains the subject for future debates.

Students are potential transmitters of language, so it is crucial to make them more aware of the importance of the Irish language through different subjects (history, geography, civics, arts) and cultural events, so that their interest in the Irish language as a unique product and part of their identity can be increased. In this case, constantly reminding people how effectively the Irish language could be used even in the sphere of business activities and future employment is necessary. Moreover, it should be stressed that improving one's language skills and using the Irish language really counts, so it becomes more than a symbolic item of culture.

As far as the minority media are concerned, it is necessary to make a platform for new media which would support the promotion of Irish. The Irish language media which currently ensure Irish language coverage are, as mentioned above, *TG4* and *Raidió na Gaeltachta*. Both of them play a crucial role in making the Irish language visible and audible. Still, however, there is no Irish language daily newspaper which could effectively promote the language among the public.

Support for bilingualism, or even multilingualism, is important in terms of effective minority language revitalization in the context of our multicultural and globalized world. In the Republic of Ireland there are many European and non-European residents giving the country an added value shaped by their different cultural and language practices reflected in specific lifestyles and attitudes towards life. This fact could be viewed as an incentive to changing people's opinions towards studying foreign languages. Upon encountering people from different countries we can see that mastering different languages can bring many long-term benefits.

Non-Irish nationals speaking several languages can demonstrate that language skills are crucial nowadays and monolingualism is not a blessing anymore, if it ever was. Even the trite saying that the more languages you know the more human you are may be worth following. The value of monolingualism as a norm is nowadays shattered in the context of the linguistic and cultural diversity of the world. Constantly reminding people about the benefits of multilingualism can also increase their wish to study languages other than the dominant one.

As for education, the key point is immersion in language beginning with pre-school education and continuing through to tertiary education. Generally, it has been shown that students attending *gaelscoils* (Irish-language schools situated outside the *Gaeltacht*) have attained better results than students studying within mainstream schools. It was stressed many times by respondents that innovative forms of teaching can provide an impetus for motivating pupils to study the given language. Furthermore, increased pressure is put on teachers of Irish to use innovative materials in an extensive way, and to bring more enthusiasm and positive thinking to the classroom. Many respondents agreed that an Irish language lesson should be focused more on the development of communication competencies (oral language skills) which could be used in real life situations. In terms of education at mainstream schools it would help to realize another subject in Irish (arts, civics, and drama) in order to make students aware of the enormous value of the Irish language.

The organization of summer schools was identified as another significant activity, which is part of youth culture. Summer schools support the social and communication skills of students through immersion in the Irish language and participation in different extracurricular activities in which Irish dominates (e.g. sports or other cultural activities realized in Irish). For young people such exposure to Irish can make learning the language fun, "cool" and "trendy" which is really crucial for the future transmission of language. Summer schools also help to keep the *Gaeltacht* more economically sustainable.

As far as tertiary education is concerned, more courses in Irish could be possible in the future. Such a step, however, demands active use of Irish and increased interest in full or partial studies in Irish. One good sign for this language is that many students take the opportunity to study Irish or Celtic studies at foreign universities in the USA, Canada, Australia, and continental Europe. Such study programs organized outside the borders of Ireland can ignite foreign learners' interest in the Irish language. Any external help counts in revitalizing the language and keeping it alive for future generations.

Students (future primary and secondary school teachers) will hopefully have the chance to spend an extended period of their study in the *Gaeltacht*. Such long-term exposure to Irish-language-speaking communities could itself help to sustain the language and make young people aware that studying a language really matters. The revitalization of the Irish language presupposes the creation of new working posts for new users of the language, so then people would see real material benefits based on language acquisition. Unless new working posts are created or a number of services effectively provided in Irish, no demand for such posts or services will arise.

In addition, financial support for the *Gaeltacht* is crucial. The successful implementation of all activities that are deemed necessary for the sustainability of *Gaeltacht* regions could also alleviate the outflow of young people from areas deprived by unemployment. All in all, in order to retain the strong presence of the young generation in the area, the *Gaeltacht* economy must receive investment because economy and culture are interdependent. In particular, it is important to bear in mind the support of small and middle-sized businesses and creative use of the rural environment, with all its natural and historical treasures for which the region is well-known. This could ensure more income for the inhabitants, making the Irish language an asset in the area of cultural tourism. The Irish language is conceived of not only as a cultural but also as an economic asset. The Irish language can be viewed as an added value for any business. It has got the potential to make each business distinctive by introducing it into the everyday agenda, enhancing its sustainability. Bilingualism may be another added value, helping to keep the language visible and alive.

Conclusion

It is more than evident that a large number of world languages will be threatened to a greater or lesser extent by extinction in the coming decades. Therefore, the success of specific revitalization efforts is directly dependent on the particular position of Irish in the value system of the community in which it is used. Furthermore, the question of language selection is clearly multifactorial and it also depends on the personal choice of an individual to use the specific language. For the majority of inhabitants in Ireland, the Irish language is important as a symbol, while for the minority of active Irish language users it is an element important for identification, performing both a demonstrative and an instrumental function. The usage of any minority, regional or lesser-used language is

hugely connected with the material benefits provided to individuals on the basis of minority language acquisition.

The unambiguous relationship between the Irish language and ethnicity is not absolute in the case of Irish. However, the Irish language still fulfils the role of significant economic and cultural capital, which is used by different organizations and institutions. We can see that language as a cultural construct generates the potential to create new work places. In order to make this happen, however, real support and implementation of all the officially-accepted provisions for the revitalization of the Irish language are crucial.

In spite of the fact that total societal bilingualism is not realistically achievable in Irish society even in the long term, exposing people to Irish and reminding them of its importance within different spheres of life can create reasonable conditions for appreciation of Irish culture and history. It must be bore in mind that distinctive culture and history expressed through Irish could be regarded as a condition for full individual Irish existence.

The Irish language is supported more than any other minority language spoken in the Republic of Ireland. Despite this, the very existence of Irish-language-speaking communities is still fragile. The case of the Irish language is very peculiar as it is the autochthonous language of Ireland, which was spoken widely until the second half of the 19th century by the majority of the island's inhabitants. We hope that this data will spark interest in the issue of minority language preservation not only in Europe (Scottish Gaelic, Manx, Welsh, Cornish, Breton, Saami, Basque, Catalan, Flemish languages and so on) but also in the worldwide context (the Maori language in New Zealand, the Hawaiian language and others).

According to Šatava[14], "Those who describe language revitalization efforts as a mere waste of time for something that counts only for a few hundred or a few thousand people, reduce human existence to only one aspect." This assertion reflects well the importance and significance of any minority language in the context of the cultural identity of a particular community. All languages spoken in the world generate immense national cultural wealth and help to make their community distinctive and idiosyncratic. All languages are crucial and invaluable parts of cultural and linguistic diversity, while at the same time they are the unique elements of the spiritual heritage of humankind.

[14] Šatava, *Etnicita a jazyk*, 23.

Bibliography

Biloveský, Vladimír. Does Integrating Europe Need Polylingualism and Multiculturalism? In: *European Researcher.*2012, Vol. 42, no. 2-3, 455-461.

Bitušíková, Alexandra. *Kultúrna a sociálna diverzita na Slovensku. Štúdie, dokumenty, materiály I.* Banská Bystrica: UMB, 2007.

Crystal, David. *Language Death*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Davis, Thomas C. "The Irish and their Nation: A Survey of Recent Attitudes." In: *The Global Review of Ethnopolitics*, 2003, vol. 2, no. 2, 17-36

Feeney, Simon et al. "Measuring Attitudes to National Identity and Nation-Building in Papua New Guinea" In: *Political Science*. 2012. vol. 64, no. 2, 121-144.

Gómez-Estern, Maciaz Beatriz et al. "Literacy and the Formation of Cultural Identity." In: *Theory and Psychology*, 2010, vol. 20, 231-250.

Grindheim Erik, Jan – Lohndal, Terje. "Lost in Translation? European Integration and Language Diversity." In: *Perspectives on European Politics and Society*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis, 2008, Vol. 9, No. 4, 451-465.

Murphy, Robert, F. *Úvod do kulturní a sociální antropologie*. Praha: Slon, 1997.

Ondrejovič, Slavomír – Krupa, Viktor. *My a tí druhí v modernej spoločnosti.* Bratislava: SAV, 2009.

Ripka, Ivor. *Jazyk ako fenomén kultúry.* Bratislava: Jazykovedný ústav Ľudovíta Štúra, 2000.

Schröder, Konrad et al. *What is Europe? Aspects of European Cultural Diversity*. London: Routledge, 1995.

Šatava, Leoš. *Etnicita a jazyk*. Trnava: Tribun EU, 2013.

20 Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030. 2010. Accessed October 10, 2014, http://www.ahg.gov.ie/en/20YearStrategyfortheIrishLanguage/Publications/20-Year%20Strategy%20-%20English%20version.pdf

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

THEORY, DAMNED THEORY: APPROACHES TO CULTURAL STUDIES

JAMES SUTHERLAND-SMITH

In this chapter, the argument will be made that there is a need for a coherent theoretical approach for the teaching of Cultural Studies not just at the university in Slovakia where I teach but, by extension, to universities generally in the Central European and South-East European region. Furthermore, it will be argued that teaching of subjects in Anglophone studies under the umbrella of Cultural Studies or "Culturology" is fragmented and theoretically incoherent at best if not without any evident explicit theoretical justification. This has led to this particular area of study being undervalued in comparison with linguistic and literary studies with the consequence that few new graduates will engage in PhD studies focused on Cultural Studies and that although Cultural Studies has an equal status in State Examinations, the level of knowledge insight required even at Master's level would not satisfy secondary education requirements in Great Britain.

There are a number of practical problems. The first is shared with literary studies in that the sheer volume of text, as is the case with the number of Anglophone literary works, resists adequate summary into mainstream courses. The second is also shared with literary texts in that original texts are expensive. With literary studies much can be recovered electronically if the author died before 1935 as their copyright will have expired in Great Britain although perhaps later for American editions. However, contemporary works are more difficult to come by and in Cultural Studies, as a relatively new discipline, this can be debilitating. Money might solve access to contemporary materials, but money is the least of issues with Cultural Studies.

The first real issue is the sheer range of the content of Cultural Studies which draws in subject matter from archaeology to contemporary Pop Music, from the effect of climate on economic activity in North America

to looking at the emergence of London as a centre of high fashion in the 1960s, from differences between Anglicanism and Presbyterianism to the contrast between influence of the BBC with that of Fox News in the USA. It is difficult to cover a range like this without succumbing to the temptation of focusing on the most student-friendly topics so as to retain their interest.

The second issue is the background knowledge of students when they begin a course on cultural studies. Twenty five years ago after the Velvet Revolution (Nežná revolúcia) students at secondary school and at university in the then Czechoslovakia had the benefit or rather hindrance of snippets of cultural information in home-grown English "realie" textbooks specially written by the likes of Professors Jaroslav Peprnik of Olomouc University and Karel Veselý. Peprnik's *Británie a USA – Ilustrované reálie* had a new edition in 2004 and Veselý's *The* [sic] *English Speaking Countries*, first published in the 1980s, was cited for state examinations in language schools in 2008 (see bibliography for online link.) In these books, one can read profiles of Anglophone cultures, perfectly accurate with regard to general fact, but devoid of any awareness of the cultural processes and tensions which operate in these cultures. Students at schools were often taught fictional stereotypes in their language classes from EFL textbooks to enliven this dry as dust information so that they tended to emerge from their secondary education with cartoon-like notions of, for example, the British (meaning the English). The pipe-smoking reserved English male who ate bacon and eggs for breakfast lives on and on. Teaching students, who brought this stereotype to seminars in the early 1990s, was a matter of disabusing them of illusions. Some of them, of course, possessed an alternative vision of Anglophone culture, but this was often just as superficial; an encyclopaedic knowledge of heavy metal music, conspiracy theories on the assassination of JFK and the occasional enthusiast who had learnt enormous passages of Shakespeare by heart. This issue is reinforced when humanities subjects are taught at university. This legitimizes surveys of Anglophone History and Geography, Art and Music without theoretical insight.

A third issue is the expertise of Cultural Studies lecturers. Very few native speakers teach Cultural Studies in the Eastern European region and those that do so are likely to be amateurs in the sense that their academic qualifications are often not directly relevant to the discipline. This is always going to be the case with a new academic discipline with the founders of the discipline emerging out of other disciplines. For example, Richard Hoggart (1918-2014) studied and taught English literature.

Raymond Williams (1921-1988) moved from Literature to Political Science and Stuart Hall (1932-2014) was a Rhodes Scholar at Cambridge studying English. However, all three progenitors of British Cultural Studies were born and educated in Anglophone cultures, interestingly from outside bourgeois intellectual families with Hoggart and Williams emerging from working class backgrounds in Northern England and Wales respectively and Hall from a middle-class black family in Jamaica. All three received their education as a result of academic brilliance at primary and secondary school and therefore regarded the dominant and artistic culture from a sceptical viewpoint. None of them took on the political attitudes of the intellectual milieu in which they lived and worked. Indeed, their early work was on the periphery of academic power in adult education colleges, day-release colleges, and secondary modern schools. Only when their work gained academic eminence did they move towards more conventional academic careers.

Non-native teachers of Cultural Studies are certainly also outsiders, but not in the same way. The most obvious aspect of this is that their experience of Anglophone cultures is not native-like and consequently the cultural processes at work in Anglophone cultures cannot be internalized. Native speaker Cultural Studies scholars, of course, have an intrinsic problem with subjectivity. As Easthope[1] observes, "Awareness of the empirical reader must include the person who's doing the cultural analysis." Moreover, Raymond Williams[2] offers valuable insight into how much cannot be recovered by any cultural analyst, native or non-native:

> The most difficult thing to get hold of, in studying any past period, is this felt sense of the quality of life at a particular place and time: a sense of the ways the particular activities combined into a way of thinking and living.

Non-native speakers of English might have an advantage in terms of objectivity of static analysis, but there are other issues which constrain their ability to achieve insight. Many university lecturers in Eastern Europe emerge from locally powerful petit bourgeois networks of family and personal connections, from which our three Anglophones did not. Consequently, to begin with, they have a less sceptical approach to Anglophone cultural products and, embedded within their own class, less able to recognize the cultural processes operating to produce those

[1] Anthony Easthope. *But What is Cultural Studies? Studying British Cultures* (London, New York: Routledge, 1997), 11.
[2] Raymond Williams. *The Analysis of Culture from Cultural Theory and Popular Culture* (Athens, USA: University of Georgia Press, 1998), 52.

products. Anglophone cultures represent desirable societies for the ruling strata that emerged after 1989 as their opposition to the previous regimes had been based on perceptions that opportunities for expanded consumerism and gaining wealth were intrinsically bound up with the processes of a democratic society, a perception which confused a coincidence of economic efficiency and the social and psychological processes enabled by more open societies. The quarter of a century since 1989 has seen changes in personnel and national government, but not many changes at the micro-level of local urban communities. Antonio Gramsci's observations[3] are prescient about the problem of both educators and students:

> Previously, the pupils at least acquired a certain "baggage" or "equipment" (according to taste) of concrete facts. Now that the teacher must be specifically a philosopher and aesthete, the pupil does not bother with concrete facts and fills his head with formulae and words which usually mean nothing to him, and which are forgotten at once. It was right to struggle against the old school, but reforming it was not so simple as it seemed. The problem was not one of model curricula but of men, and not just of the men who are actually teachers themselves but of the entire social complex which they express.

A further limitation to their potential ability to grasp how cultural processes operate is their academic education, which is heavily biased towards systematic linguistics and consists of mastering terminologies for scraps of language which are invariably analyzed out of their original context. As English Studies at university level were viewed with suspicion by the pre-1989 regimes, examining the meaning of the English language above and beyond the level of the sentence was likely to lead the scholar into what Stuart Hall[4] described as "the linguistic turn" in Cultural Studies:

> What decentred and dislocated the settled path of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies certainly, and British cultural studies to some extent in general, is what is sometimes called 'the linguistic turn': the discovery of discursivity, of textuality.

---

[3] Antonio Gramsci. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci* edited and translated by Hoare Quintin and Nowell Smith, Geoffrey. (London: Lawrence & Wishart, Kindle Edition, 1971), Kindle Locations 2356-2360.

[4] Stuart Hall. *Cultural Studies and its Theoretical Legacies: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, ed. Morley, David and Chen, Kuan-Hsing. (London: Routledge, 1996), 269.

At the level of the sentence, connotation is restricted and certainly reveals little of the power relations which extended discourse expresses and reveals. A good example is the two-part textbook "English Grammar in Discourse" by Milan Ferenčík, which the present author proof-read. In the preface, Ferenčík[5] claims: "The focus of the description and explanation of English grammar…is the second principal area of meaning in language, that of experiencing processuality."

It can be observed that in the course of reading the book the reader experiences descriptions and explanations and the only process experienced is that of understanding Ferenčík's prose. Processuality is a term in the domain of linguistics, which as far as I know, was invented by Ferenčík and which has yet to pass into standard scholarly terminology. The textbook is full of contemporary scraps of Anglophone discourse, invariably extracted from their cultural context despite the further claim that they "represent current societal issues and problems." Overall the book, despite a sprinkling of contemporary general buzzwords such as "software" and "infrastructure," is a version of a descriptive grammar based on the functional perspective approach which has dominated Anglophone linguistics in Central Europe long before 1989. It is little more than a complex and sometimes baffling exercise in parsing.

British and American Cultural Studies scholars have created a discipline that does not fit with conventional Central and Eastern European conceptions. The German tradition of "landeskunde", for example, translated by the Institute of Linguistics in Petrozavodsk in Northern Russia as "Country Studies", (personal communication during author's visit in 1994) is more relevant. This tends towards the description of phenomena rather than looking for the processes which motivate them. This creates problems when material from longer established disciplines, such as Geography and History are concerned. Thorough scholarship requires academic geographers and historians and, besides, there is not so much room in the curriculum to cover, say, British History or the Geography of the United States except in the most cursory way. Cultural Studies becomes merely a way of teaching general facts. Why it has to be done in English instead of by a specialist from an appropriate department is another question, which will probably be raised when Ministries of Education are compelled to initiate root and branch reform. If Cultural Studies has not established itself as a valid discipline with its own indispensable personnel it will come under severe pressure.

[5] Milan Ferenčík. *English Grammar in Discourse* (Slovakia: Filozofická fakulta Prešovskej univerzity v Prešove, 2013), 7.

In Anglophone Cultural Studies there is a problem with subject matter. Even as late as the 1990s there was an uncertainty as to whether Cultural Studies included literature as well as social, historical, and contemporary issues. As described earlier in this chapter, the three founders of British Cultural Studies emerged from Literary Studies not from Sociology or Political Studies. Having literature as a separate branch of study and one which is driven by the structure of the state examination certainly might simply reduce the potential range of what is called Cultural Studies and within its procrustean limits lead to more efficiency in devising syllabi. However, the consequences of doing so mean that the teaching of the social setting of literary works is taught outside the Cultural Studies syllabus and is likely to be schematic. On the other hand, literary, visual and musical arts are included where they have a social dimension and popular audience. Aesthetic considerations are likely to be neglected. Moreover, there is also the danger of being seduced by surface and contemporary attractions. Who will listen to Amy Winehouse in twenty years' time without immediately associating her with that necrophiliac Hall of Fame, "Dead at twenty-seven" rather than examining her music in its cultural and artistic context? As Easthope[6] observes, "Hardly anyone who enjoys Madonna also enjoys Milton and fans of ABBA generally have little enthusiasm for Aeschylus."

However, Stuart Hall[7] is most definite in arguing that Cultural Studies is a discipline with its own identity:

> It does matter whether Cultural Studies is this or that. It can't be just any old thing which chooses to march under a particular banner. It is a serious enterprise, or project, and that is inscribed in what is sometimes called the 'political' aspect of cultural studies. Not that there's one politics already inscribed in it. But there is something at stake in cultural studies, in a way that I think, and hope, is not exactly true of many other very important intellectual and critical practices.

The British Studies literary tradition had a powerful legacy from Matthew Arnold's "Culture and Anarchy"[8] which argued for cultural knowledge in terms of its aesthetic, moral and educational value:

> But there is of culture another view, in which not solely the scientific passion, the sheer desire to see things as they are, natural and proper in an

[6] Easthope. *But What is Cultural Studies? Studying British Cultures*, 5.
[7] Hall. *Cultural Studies and its Theoretical Legacies*, 262
[8] Matthew Arnold. *Culture and Anarchy*. (Project Gutenberg, 1960), Kindle Locations 623-638.

> intelligent being, appears as the ground of it. There is a view in which all the love of our neighbour, the impulses towards action, help, and beneficence, the desire for stopping human error, clearing human confusion, and diminishing the sum of human misery, the noble aspiration to leave the world better and happier than we found it,—motives eminently such as are called social—come in as part of the grounds of culture, and the main and pre-eminent part. Culture is then properly described not as having its origin in curiosity, but as having its origin in the love of perfection; it is a study of perfection. It moves by the force, not merely or primarily of the scientific passion for pure knowledge, but also of the moral and social passion for doing good.

Acquiring "high" culture benefited an individual and the society. In her introduction to *Studying British Cultures,* Susan Bassnett claims that the Arnoldian definition of culture was replaced by the insights of Richard Hoggart, Raymond Williams and E. P. Thompson[9] and a shared belief that "culture involved a whole way of life." I would argue that this is a simplification and that to a certain extent both Hoggart and Thompson were extending the range of the arts and history in a way that would be recognizable to Arnold. Their work is underpinned by the sense that popular arts and pastimes contain systems of value compatible with Arnoldian culture. Thompson's classic work on the working classes extends "the Whig interpretation of history" in a parallel way. History is still progressive although not exclusively through the gradual sharing of political power and its ameliorating effects in a top down way. Arnold's definition is not so much overturned as extended or, to put it another way, the franchise of high culture is democratized. However, with Raymond Williams's Cultural Materialism there is an entirely different perspective where the "improving" value of culture and the progressive notion of history become irrelevant. Gramsci's[10] insight into the consensual nature of power structures in Western industrial societies means that regarding culture as part of a bourgeois superstructure in the old Marxist fashion does not understand its role in the continuing negotiation of power in a society and how cultural phenomena express these relationships:

> The "spontaneous" consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group; this consent is "historically" caused by the prestige (and consequent

[9] Susan Bassnet, *Introduction: Studying British Cultures* (London: Routledge, 1997), xiv.

[10] Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, Kindle Locations 1883-1885.

> confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production.

Allied to insights from American anthropology that culture is the expression of a society in terms of its language, artefacts and customs, Cultural Materialism examines culture in terms of its social processes and context. The notion of culture as a moral improving force is no longer relevant except as a social process. Raymond Williams[11] distinguishes three levels of culture:

> We need to distinguish three levels of culture, even in its most general definition. There is the lived culture of a particular time and place only fully accessible to those living in that time and place. There is the recorded culture, of every kind, from art to the most everyday facts: the culture of a period. There is also, as the factor connecting lived culture and period cultures, the culture of the selective tradition.

Williams goes on to argue that 'the selective tradition' is the result of sheer logistical constraint. He chooses the example of the Victorian novel claiming that even the most comprehensive specialist will not have read all the examples that exist and that the specialist is at the apex of a readership which extends downwards to the average reader who might have read only one example, say, of a novel by Dickens. However, the selective tradition is also determined by the interests of different generations. What is deemed relevant by one generation might not be regarded as important by a succeeding generation. The study of culture is continually remade in the image of the generation which studies it and in this sense it is always contemporary rather than an accurate representation of the past. Williams[12] argues for the documentary function of Cultural Studies:

> […] the relevance of past work, in any situation, is unforeseeable. There is a natural pressure on academic institutions to follow the lines of growth of a society, but a wise society, while ensuring this kind of relevance, will encourage the institutions to give sufficient resources to the ordinary work of preservation, and to resist the criticism, which any particular period might make with great confidence, that much of this activity is irrelevant and useless.

---

[11] Williams, *The Analysis of Culture from Cultural Theory and Popular Culture,* 54

[12] Ibid. 55.

Gramsci[13] has something of similar insight:

> Previously, the pupils at least acquired a certain "baggage" or "equipment" (according to taste) of concrete facts. Now that the teacher must be specifically a philosopher and aesthete, the pupil does not bother with concrete facts and fills his head with formulae and words which usually mean nothing to him, and which are forgotten at once. It was right to struggle against the old school, but reforming it was not so simple as it seemed.

Stuart Hall[14] ultimately rejects the notion of Cultural Studies stabilizing into clearly delimited content or disciplinary boundaries:

> There's always something decentred about the medium of culture, about language, textuality, and signification, which always escapes and evades the attempt to link it, directly and immediately, with other structures. And yet, at the same time, the shadow, the imprint, the trace, of those other formations, of the intertextuality of texts in their institutional positions, of texts as sources of power, of textuality as a site of representation and resistance, all of those questions can never be erased from cultural studies.

He[15] insists on a paradoxical position for the Cultural Studies worker:

> That is to say, unless and until one respects the necessary displacement of culture, and yet is always irritated by its failure to reconcile itself with other questions that matter, with other questions that cannot and can never be fully covered by critical textuality in its elaborations, cultural studies as a project, an intervention, remains incomplete.

Despite the theoretical positioning work, the notion of value in definitions of culture will not go away. There is still a sense in common linguistic usage that "culture' and "cultured' carries prestige and that distinctions are made between "high" and "low" or "popular" culture. These persist at the "common sense", to use Gramsci's construct, level of discourse. Moreover even within the discipline itself there is often an implicit set of values. Hall constantly refers to political engagement and this is echoed by Chris Barker in his "Cultural Studies" where he promotes Cultural Studies as a necessary prelude to social action. Given the theoretical constructs that he cites one can reasonably surmise what kind

---

[13] Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci,* Kindle Locations 2356-2360.
[14] Hall, *Cultural Studies and its Theoretical Legacies*, 270.
[15] Ibid. 271.

of social action he has in mind all of which presuppose a set of values which, for example, might privilege social justice over individual liberty.

> The forms of power that cultural studies explores are diverse and include gender, race, class, colonialism etc. Cultural studies seeks to explore the connections between these forms of power and to develop ways of thinking about culture and power that can be utilized by agents in pursuit of change.[16]

The impact and political commitment of Cultural Studies was informed by the development of Media Studies and serious work on feminism, with a number of intellectual workers from the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) which was founded by Richard Hoggart in 1964 and operated until 2002, undertaking notable work in these disciplines. Gramsci had anticipated Stuart Hall, who was Director of the CCCS from 1968 to 1979, and wrote of feminism: "For cultural studies (in addition to many other theoretical projects), the intervention of feminism was specific and decisive. It was ruptural. It reorganized the field in quite concrete ways."[17] In the same essay, he also cited the issue of race and AIDS as extending the subject matter of Cultural Studies and effecting changes in which the concept of power was studied. Consequently, Cultural Studies has provided more than an abstraction and development of certain salient issues from other disciplines. It initiates and promotes new areas of study. Even before the contact of Cultural Studies with post-revolutionary Central and Eastern Europe a fit with the "landeskunde" tradition was unlikely. Moreover, the contribution of these disciplines to Cultural Studies courses in this post-revolutionary environment has raised questions about the role of women and long-standing ethnic tensions in post-communist countries.

Cultural Studies might seek to reveal underlying ideologies, but it itself has an ideological origin. A comment by Gramsci chimes oddly with the aspirations Matthew Arnold proposes in *Culture and Anarchy* although Gramsci[18] is pointing analytically at one of the devices that the ruling strata use to obtain consent from the ruled in order to maintain their hegemony:

---

[16] Clive Barker, *Cultural Studies* (London: Sage Publications, 2008), 6.
[17] Hall, *Cultural Studies and its Theoretical Legacies*, 268.
[18] Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, Kindle Locations 7044-7050.

> In my opinion, the most reasonable and concrete thing that can be said about the ethical State, 70 the cultural State, is this: every State is ethical in as much as one of its most important functions is to raise the great mass of the population to a particular cultural and moral level, a level (or type) which corresponds to the needs of the productive forces for development, and hence to the interests of the ruling classes. The school as a positive educative function, and the courts as a repressive and negative educative function, are the most important State activities in this sense: but, in reality, a multitude of other so-called private initiatives and activities tend to the same end-initiatives and activities which form the apparatus of the political and cultural hegemony of the ruling classes.

The potential for social and political change in Cultural Studies is limited by its objects of study. Sue Bassnett[19] in her introduction to *Studying British Cultures*, raises the concept of national identity as a fundamental component in Cultural Studies:

> Many of the chapters in this book are concerned with the need to analyse these terms, as part of a process of reassessment and revision that derives in part from the end of empire and in part from a cultural revival in many parts of the British Isles that has provoked a resurgence of questions of national and cultural identity.

This presupposes an acceptance of the notion of the nation state and the notion of individual identity which is self-sufficient and separate from the community in which an individual lives. These two notions in turn require both historical and philosophical investigation. In creating a Cultural Studies syllabus university educators at some point have to be arbitrary otherwise only scepticism is taught and other intellectual qualities have to be fostered in diploma courses. In this respect I have to note that university courses are underpinned by consent to the arrangements a society and state have made to complete formal education, itself dependent on an ideology which equates youth and maturity with non-production and production, sets 'irresponsible' childhood against 'responsible' adulthood, and subordination of the propertyless to the authority of wealth. A certain displacement of student consciousness might be achieved by locating the geography of study to Anglophone countries, but the construct of "childhood, youth and maturity" is a proper object of Cultural Studies. The electronic revolution of the 1990s and the freedom to move, which was one of the demands of the Velvet Revolution, has meant that the Anglophone model of this area can be more than an object of study to

[19] Bassnett, *Introduction: Studying British Cultures,* xxii.

university students especially when some part of student studies are undertaken in Anglophone countries. Lest this seem an over-optimistic counter to my remarks about university courses reinforcing current ideology on youth and maturity, I have to note that students visiting Anglophone countries often find the relationships of young people and so-called grown-ups mirror those of their own society. Gramsci[20] once again was prescient about this:

> The revolution which the bourgeois class has brought into the conception of law, and hence into the function of the State, consists especially in the will to conform (hence ethicity of the law and of the State). The previous ruling classes were essentially conservative in the sense that they did not tend to construct an organic passage from the other classes into their own, i.e. to enlarge their class sphere "technically" and ideologically: their conception was that of a closed caste. The bourgeois class poses itself as an organism in continuous movement, capable of absorbing the entire society, assimilating it to its own cultural and economic level.

Inputs from cultural agencies such as the British Council and the United States Information Service reinforced traditional disciplines such as Geography and History, but without much encouragement to analyze the political purposes of such help despite rueful nods at the propaganda benefits of such an exercise by lecturers deployed to teach in targeted universities. The copious supply of materials relating to Civil Rights in America and, say, the Irish issue in the British Isles might seem to indicate an openness to criticism, but are in fact a double bluff whose primary message from their respective governments is that the great Anglophone democracies have had their troubles but have learnt their lessons. One might listen to the speeches of Donald Trump or the 12% vote that UKIP received in the last British General Election to check whether this is true.

For a short period in the 1990s, the British Council sent a slew of British Studies lecturers to countries that had emerged from behind the Iron Curtain. The project was based on the assumption that universities would engage in a whole-hearted reform of humanities in curricula. However, what emerged was an encounter between the British literary humanistic tradition and the European philological and pedagogic traditions with their emphasis on language studies, a tradition established in the nineteenth century and which pre-dated Communism. Given the petit bourgeois nature of political and social culture which maintained the

[20] Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, Kindle Locations 7083-7087.

pre-revolutionary culture and which maintained its hegemony after the revolutions in these countries, this tradition wasn't going to be shifted in a hurry. Moreover, the British lecturers reflected the differences in approach to British Studies with some being avowedly literary and others more in tune with the new Cultural Studies discipline. An analogy might be made with a team of sportsmen and women some of whom played football, others cricket and others athletics. They were placed in faculties where the philological and pedagogic traditions played more or less the same game. The legacy that the project left was not a curriculum expanded by new insight reflecting plurality and diversity as fondly hoped by its devisers, but simply incoherence.

This incoherence was perhaps allied to caution by local academic counterparts in English and American Studies when it came to identifying the theoretical origins of much Cultural Studies theory, which is unashamedly Marxist. One of the first changes in universities in the former Czechoslovakia was to abandon the compulsory course in Marxist-Leninism for students. To use a contemporary trope the Marxist brand was, and perhaps still is, toxic despite the philosophical showmanship of Slavoj Žižek.

Scepticism may have led to incoherence in the theoretical bases of Cultural Studies. Others might cite a post-modernist atmosphere which admits a plurality of values and regards cultures as inherently diverse. The end of history and the triumph of liberal democracy were put forward by Francis Fukuyama as a historian's equivalent of the end of the grand narrative in literature. But is the grand narrative really dead? When I consider what I learnt in history at secondary school it is clear that a grand narrative operated in the syllabus, the Whig Interpretation of History which associated eight hundred years of English history (not British) with the rise of world democracy, a powerful ideology to inculcate in the minds of students aged nine to nineteen and one which surfaces even today particularly in the rhetoric of British politicians both conservative and progressive. It may have even led to the persistence of the ambition of British politicians to keep Britain "at the top table" in world politics. Grand narratives may not be all-powerful or are now forced to compete with other narratives, but their effect lingers on becoming mythical, as Roland Barthes[21] so persuasively argues in the paragraph, *The Privation of History* in his essay, *Myth Today*, collected in Mythologies:

> Myth deprives the object of which it speaks of all History. In it, history evaporates. It is a kind of ideal servant: it prepares all things, lays them out,

[21] Roland Barthes, *Mythologies* (London: Jonathan Cape. 1972), 151.

> the master arrives, it silently disappears: all that is left for one to do is enjoy this beautiful object without wondering where it comes from.

What is to be done? There are now excellent history texts, for example *The Oxford History of Britain* edited by Kenneth O. Morgan. These can provide a basis of information and argumentation of conventional scholarly formations such as the Reformation in the British Isles, why that strange hybrid doctrine and religious practice of the established Anglican Church came into existence and why Scotland developed a full-blown Calvinist Presbyterian church or kirk. There is plenty of meat for undergraduates to get their teeth into. However, constraints of time and pressure to achieve some kind of encyclopaedic input in Cultural Studies limits the conventional scope of what can be done with history. In the university where I teach, the curriculum contains two baccalaureate courses, a first year course lasting one semester with twelve weeks of study split between British and American history with a forty-five minute lecture plus a forty minute seminar each week. In the second year, there is an optional *History of Great Britain* course which consists of two seminars each week for twelve weeks. It is impossible to sail from the Beaker Folk to Mrs. Thatcher in this time with any useful detail.

There is a further course called *Aspects of British History,* again optional, which is another course of two seminars a week lasting twelve weeks. Here there is more scope to develop certain issues which tie in closely to the central preoccupations of Cultural Studies, the creation of stereotypes, and maintenance of power. For example, instead of cherry-picking, a possibly enthralling aspect of history such as the Black Death and its effect on late Middle Age society in England and the rest of the British Isles I have drawn a contrast between medieval rulers and the fictionalized operations of the Mafia in various media products such as *The Godfather* or *The Sopranos*. I attempt to focus students' attention on the arbitrary nature of medieval power and the use of military force and sometimes plain and simple murder to either gain power or preserve it. We then look at the pretexts for the legitimation of gaining or preserving power, specious dynastic claims and often invention as with the myth of King Arthur created by the twelfth century historian, Geoffrey of Monmouth. We examine the persistence of the myth with further histories of Arthur being produced even into the seventeenth century and other cultural products as the various sites of Arthur's court and battles, the habit of English royal dynasties of including Arthur, either as a first name or as one of the royal forenames even to the present royal family. We look at art culture, novels, poems, opera which have preserved the myth. Why? Because it was a true fact? Perhaps because it served to maintain royal

power. Looking at the Arthurian myth leads into looking at how British history came into being, the historiographic project implicit in much of Raymond Williams' work. We look at the first scholarly work of history, Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England* and ask why did Charles II's first minister, later exiled, write this. Then moving on more than a century we ask why Macaulay and then George Trevelyan supersede David Hume's history in the nineteenth century and how their histories coincided with British imperial expansion and its accompanying civilizing and educational mission to the colonies. We look at the dominance of the narrative underpinning "The Whig Interpretation" exerted on the teaching of history until well into the twentieth century. Providing students not so much with an inadequate survey of history, but a notion of how history from whatever national origin is constructed rather than assembled objectively from available contemporaneous documentary evidence, providing them with a tool for investigating some of the origins of power in contemporary society.

The philological and pedagogical tradition is not the problem. A tradition which produces excellent users of the English language cannot be regarded as an opponent. One advantage is that a Cultural Studies lecturer can use linguistically complex texts. However, the slavish replication of summaries aping traditional subjects such as History and Geography could be changed. At Baccalaureate level, more contrastive analysis could be practised, for example what was happening in Upper Hungary (Slovakia) and in Britain in the late seventeenth century; at Master's level, history can be investigated in historiographical terms, how it has supported existing power structures, for example in the Whig Interpretation mentioned earlier in this chapter. A systematic exploration of the principles of the disciplines which have contributed to Cultural Studies, anthropology, philosophy, sociology, for example, will yield a coherent theoretical basis for exploration of clearly defined Cultural Studies areas, such the media and sub-cultures, and thus enable students to gain insight into hegemonies and social processes which underlie Anglophone cultures.

Bibliography

Arnold, Matthew. *Culture and Anarchy*. Project Gutenberg, 1960.

Barker, Clive. *Cultural Studies.* London: Sage Publications, 2008.

Barthes, Roland. *Mythologies*. Translated by Lavers, Annette. 151. London: Jonathan Cape, 1972

Bassnet, Susan. *Introduction*: *Studying British Cultures.* London: Routledge, 1997.

Easthope, Anthony. *But What is Cultural Studies? Studying British Cultures*. London: Routledge, 1997.
Ferenčík, Milan. *English Grammar in Discourse*. Slovakia: Filozofická fakulta Prešovskej univerzity v Prešove, 2013.
Gramsci, Antonio. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*. London: Lawrence & Wishart, Kindle Edition, 1971.
Hall, Stuart. *Cultural Studies and its Theoretical Legacies: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, edited by Morley, David and Chen, Kuan-Hsing. London: Routledge, 1996.
Morgan, Kenneth (ed.) *The Oxford History of Great Britain*. Oxford: OUP, 1987.
Peprnik, Jaroslav. *Británie a USA – Ilustrované reálie*. Olomouc, 2004.
Veselý, Karel. *The English Speaking Countries*. Bratislava: Vydavateľstvo SPN, 1983.
Williams, Raymond. *The Analysis of Culture from Cultural Theory and Popular Culture*. Athens, USA: University of Georgia Press, 1998.

On-line

Jazyková škola Dunajská streda, 2008. http://www.jsds.sk/stateexams.php?page=examajz accessed February 2, 2016.

CONTRIBUTORS

CHAPTER 1 Introducing FSPML 2.0m: A Markup Language for Multilevel Tagging of Functional Sentence Perspective

MARTIN DRÁPELA graduated from Masaryk University in Brno with a PhD (2009) in English Philology. His main research area includes the information structure of language and corpus linguistics. As a disciple of Aleš Svoboda he adheres to the Firbasian approach to the study of information structure, established by Jan Firbas and known as the theory of Functional Sentence Perspective.

CHAPTER 2 Changing vocabulary in a changing culture: A study of contemporary culture-related vocabulary

ĽUBOŠ DUDÍK is a second-year PhD student at the Department of British and American Studies of the Faculty of Arts of Comenius University in Bratislava and specializes in linguistics. The author is a teacher of English and Spanish and also works as an interpreter in Slovakia and for the European Commission, European Parliament, and the Council of the European Union.

CHAPTER 3 Translation of tourism texts from English into Slovak

JONATHAN GRESTY is a lecturer at the Institute of British and American Studies at Prešov University, where he currently teaches British Institutions, Academic Writing and Translation. His area of special interest is in translation of both literary and non-literary texts from Slovak into English and he is the translator of more than twenty publications. Gresty originates from the north-west of England but has been living in Slovakia for over twenty years.

CHAPTER 4 On Conveying (In)Formality in Communication: The Perception of Social Distance in American English by a Non-native Speaker

ALENA KAČMÁROVÁ is Associate Professor at the Institute of British and American Studies at the Faculty of Arts, Prešov University. Her research interests include discourse studies, intercultural pragmatics, and anthropological linguistics. She has authored and co-authored monographs on research in the above field, and textbooks on academic English

grammar. She has also published numerous papers in Slovak and international journals, and edited five volumes of collections of papers. In 2015, she successfully completed a Fulbright Scholarship Program at State University of New York at Albany, NY, USA.

CHAPTER 5 Lexico-grammatical Features of English as a Lingua Franca in Slovak and French Academic Settings

DIANA KRAJŇÁKOVÁ is a PhD student at the Institute of British and American Studies; Faculty of Arts at Prešov University, Slovakia with her main research interest being English as a Lingua Franca used in academic settings (ELFA) and in the structural, functional and linguistic properties of written academic discourse with the focus on the genre of abstract written by non-native English users.

CHAPTER 6 Representation of Sexes in Occupational Lexicon: Asymmetry across Languages

MARCELA MICHÁLKOVÁ is Assistant Professor of American Studies and Linguistics at Prešov University, Slovakia, where she joined the Institute of British and American Studies in 2012, after having worked as Czech Program Coordinator, Russian Individualized Instruction Supervisor, and Assistant to the Director of Language Programs at the Ohio State University, and Lecturer in Czech and Slovak Languages and Cultures at the University of Pittsburgh and Indiana University, Bloomington, USA. She holds a Master of Arts in English and Slovak Languages and Literatures from Prešov University, Slovakia, and a Master of Philosophy in Linguistics from the University of Tromsø, Norway. She received her PhD. in Slavic and East European Languages and Cultures from Ohio State University. Her main research interests include language, gender and identity, West Slavic languages and cultures, and contemporary American society. She is the author of Gender Asymmetries in Slovak Personal Nouns and Insights into Gender A/Symmetry in Slovak and various linguistic studies. She has presented her papers at international conferences in the USA, Germany, Spain, Sweden, Norway, Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Poland.

CHAPTER 7 Syntactic Complexity of English Spoken and Written Text Types

RITA RAFAJLOVIČOVÁ is Associate Professor of English Language at the Institute of British and American studies at Prešov University, Slovakia, where she has been working for 25 years. Her current teaching is focused on linguistics, namely Syntax and Pedagogical Grammar. She also teaches courses on English Language Test Development and Testing Grammatical

Competence. She has written a number of papers and published in areas of English grammar and language testing and assessment. She is also the author of several university course books including A Survey of English Syntax (2004), English Syntax : A student`s grammar book and workbook (2012), The Structure of the English Sentence (2015) and two monographs: Testing grammar and its assessment (2000) and Subordination in Different text types (2013). She has been involved in research in applied linguistics in a variety of research projects.

CHAPTER 8 Figurative language: the analysis of nautical metaphors in English and Polish

AGNIESZKA UBERMAN is Associate Professor at the Institute of English Studies, University of Rzeszów, Poland. Her academic interests include cognitive linguistics, applied linguistics and methodology of teaching foreign languages. In her recent research she has focused on cognitive frame analysis, metaphorical use of language as well as the colour lexicon and her contrastive studies have been devoted to similarities and differences between the considered areas in English and Polish lexicon.

CHAPTER 9 Self-referentiality and fiction writing in Martin Amis's Money

LORAN GAMI is a lecturer of British Literature at the Faculty of Foreign Languages, University of Tirana, Albania (since 2003). His fields of interest include British and American literature and translation. His PhD thesis (2013) focused on various aspects of Samuel Beckett's aesthetics. He has published several papers on Beckett's aesthetics and other twentieth-century – mainly British – writers. His most recent publications deal with the fiction work of William Golding, Graham Swift, JG Ballard, Martin Amis, Julian Barnes and other post-War British writers. He has also taken part in a number of conferences focusing on literature, culture, and linguistics. His academic experience includes a successful scholarship at *George Washington University*, in Washington, DC.

CHAPTER 10 Tears behind the Laughter in Alexis Wright´s Carpentaria

JANA ŠČIGULINSKÁ is a PhD student at Prešov University, Institute of British and American Studies. She graduated from the study programme English Language and Literature. Her PhD study is focused on Native American and Australian Aboriginal contemporary literature and culture, especially the fiction of the Native American writers, Leslie Marmon Silko and Gerald Vizenor, and the Australian Aboriginal writers, Alexis Wright and Marie Munkarra.

CHAPTER 11 The Meaning of the Self in Contemporary American and Albanian Poetry (Being a Woman in the Poetry of Marge Piercy and Natasha Lako)

BAVJOLA SHATRO is associate professor of Albanian Contemporary Literature and World Literature of the Twentieth Century at Aleksandër Moisiu University, Albania. She holds a doctorate in Literary Studies – on Poetry and Comparative Literature – from the Institute for Linguistic and Literary Studies at the National Center for Albanian Studies in Tirana and attended the University of Tirana were she received her BA with an Excellent Student Award and her Master's degree specializing in Contemporary Albanian literature and Comparative literature. She has had numerous papers published in different peer-reviewed journals in the USA, UK, Italy, Albania, Macedonia, Kosova etc. She is the author and co-author of 6 books in the field of literary studies and has contributed to three volumes of selected essays published by Cambridge Scholars Publishing. She has presented her papers at almost 30 conferences in the USA, UK, Spain, Germany, Poland, Italy, Slovakia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Kosova etc. She has wide academic experience as a researcher and lecturer in different universities such as Pennsylvania State University (USA), University of Salamanca (Spain), Abo Akademi University (Finland), University of Turku (Finland), University of Pavia (Italy) etc. She is a member of several academic boards and peer reviewed journals. She is Vice-President of South East European Studies Association (SEESA).

CHAPTER 12 The visual and the verbal in storytelling writers' (un)controlled deployment of narrative dynamism in semi-visual/hybrid novels and short stories

MAREK TOMASIK is a lecturer at the Institute of British and American Studies, Faculty of Arts, Prešov University, Slovakia. His research activities fall in the fields of American literature/film, translation studies, and visual narratives. In addition to lectures and seminars on selected issues in contemporary American literature and film, he also runs practical translation courses focused on public relations and information technology.

CHAPTER 13 The Age of Fragmented Narratives: Challenges for the traditional role of cultural conceptualization and social cognition in digital culture

LÁSZLÓ I. KOMLÓSI is Professor of organizational communication and argumentation studies with a research background in cognitive pragmatics,

cultural linguistics, formal philosophy and argumentation theory at the István Széchenyi University in Győr, Hungary. In his professional career he has taught at several universities in Hungary and abroad, has been an active participant in and frequent keynote speaker at international conferences. He has conducted research with the help of Hungarian and international grants and has published extensively over the years. He has supervised dozens of PhD dissertations. Professor Komlósi is a member of several international academic societies and is an editorial board member of a number of international journals.

CHAPTER 14 Invisible Revelations: Apocalyptic Technologies, Zombie Artefacts and the End(s) of History

MARCIN MAZUREK is a lecturer at the Institute of English Cultures and Literatures, University of Silesia, Poland. His research interests are in postmodern theory, culture-technology relationship and visual culture. He is the author of a number of papers in the above-mentioned fields and the 2014 book *A Sense of Apocalypse. Technology, Textuality, Identity*.

CHAPTER 15 The Revitalization of the Irish Language in the Republic of Ireland

ANNA SLATINSKÁ has been working at the Department of English and American Studies at the Faculty of Arts, Matej Bel University since 2014. In her research she deals with Irish language and identity, Irish language revitalization and cultural identity. She has published many papers on the topic of Irish language revitalization and preservation. Currently she teaches Irish studies and is actively engaged in the issues of minority, regional and lesser-used languages revitalization.

JANA PECNÍKOVÁ is a University lecturer at Matej Bel University, Faculty of Arts. She works at the Department of European Cultural Studies as a teacher of academic subjects focused on cultural studies and European active citizenship. In her research she deals with cultural identity, interculturality and cultural-social forms of active citizenship. She participates regularly in conferences organized in Slovakia and abroad, she publishes regularly in Slovakia as well as abroad (Paris, Gliwice, Brno, etc.). She has participated in many Slovak and international projects in cooperation with Vienna University, the University of Waterloo, Canada and the University of Tampere, Finland, etc. She often attends educational and research activities abroad (e.g. France, Poland).

CHAPTER 16 Theory, damned theory! The need for a theoretical approach to Anglophone cultural studies

JAMES SUTHERLAND-SMITH was born in Aberdeen, Scotland in 1948 and is a lecturer in British Cultural Studies at the Institute of English and American Studies at Prešov University. He has lived in Prešov since 1989, but from 2002 to 2009 he ran Peacekeeping English Projects in Serbia and Montenegro. He has published six full collections of his poetry, the last being his poem cycle, *Mouth*, published by Shearsman Books in 2014. He reviews and writes papers on poetry, especially for PN Review and the Bow-Wow Shop. He has translated a number of Slovak poets into English for which work he received the *Hviezdoslav Prize* in 2003. In 2014 he was awarded the *Zlatko Krasni Prize* at the Smederevo Poetry Festival for his translations of the Serbian poet, Ivana Milankov and Selected Poems of Miodrag Pavlović was published by Salt Publications in 2014. This year he received the Presov University Rector's prize for Mouth and next year he will publish a translation of a selection of the poems by the Slovak poet, Ján Gavura, under the title *The Other Monk* in Canada, and *Multiple Visions,* a textbook for university students on the theory of Cultural Studies.